

FATHOMS

DECEMBER 2010 — JANUARY 2011



VSAGers at Sims Lodge
after a night on the Blues
Train—story on page 15

www.vsag.org.au

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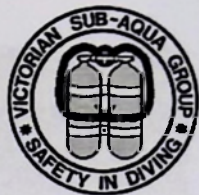




**VSAG XAMS PARTY—and no surprise who won the wetsuit at the raffle!!
(again) - more photos on the back pages**



FATHOMS



Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group

In this December 2010—January 2011 issue...

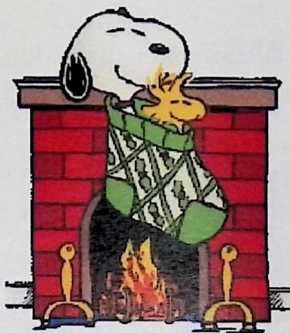
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VSAG General Meetings
3rd Thursday in the month

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Best Wishes
for a
Merry Christmas



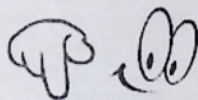
Season's
Greetings

COMING SOON

Xmas trip away—26 Dec—Alan Storen

NZ trip—Feb 2011—Greg Richards

Sipadan Trip—6-15 June - Mick Jeacle



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

storens@bigpond.net.au

EDITORIAL



Alan Storen

Having recently returned from Queensland -the combined VSAG/GetUnder Trip to the Bunker Group of Islands, which was reported on in the last edition, I was looking forward to some 'Melbourne Diving'. The weather gods were obviously not into diving as the weather conditions and the viz has made diving almost impossible over the past couple of months. Apart from a couple of shore dives the wet suit has stayed dry! As a result you will find very

few local dive reports in this edition with only Greg Richards reporting on the Prom Cup Weekend. There are however many interesting articles to read and a report on the Blue's Train Trip and Xmas party. Many photos not just to fill the space but to let those not able to attend just what they missed out on! Both were great social events and many thanks to JL for his organisation of both of these. Our trip to NZ is now all but finalised but if interested please contact Greg Richards ASAP and he might be able to sort something out.

Mick Jeacle has arranged a trip to Sipadan, Borneo in June and bookings need to be made very soon – please contact him asap if interested. There is a flyer in this edition for you to find out some of the details.

On the social scene we have partied in true VSAG tradition with a very memorable night on the Blues Train out of Queenscliff – read the report on pages 15+ and the xmas party lunch at the home on the 'Georges' (parents of Deb George) - read the report on page 47. With many great prizes on offer we are indeed fortunate to have the support of many people – Pat Reynolds again got some great gear from Oceanic and Sonar, Chris Llewellyn and National Equestrian, The Scuba doctor, AB Ocean Divers and Aquability as well as support from some of the committee. Many thanks to Mick for again being master chef on the spit roast and the many others that supported with salads, bread, nibbles, etc.

With Christmas not far away and our trip to Beachport already locked in I hope the diving conditions improve and we will have many more tales to tell in the next edition – please send those reports and photos in. Letters to the Editor are most welcome and encouraged! Thanks to Hrerb for several article he has sourced.

All the best for Christmas and the New Year and I hope to see you out diving with the club soon. Have a safe and enjoyable holiday.

"So much Water, So Little Bottom Time!"

Committee 2009 - 2010



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Committee meets 2nd Thursday of the month (except in January)

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME

Leighoah Hotel 1555 Dandenong Rd Oakleigh.

President's page

Well the year has gone and as I look back on the program it seems that we had a very successful year. The trips to Fiji, Bundaberg/Great Barrier Reef and Easter at the Prom all were very successful and well attended.

Lately, the day dives have been severely affected by the drought breaking heavy rains and the subsequent rough and dirty seas. Notwithstanding that we have still managed to get a boat or two out lately and a few crays were landed once the cray season opened.

The recent November meeting was not held due to the lack of numbers. This is in part due to the 30 or so we had at the Blues Train only days before hand and the fact that a record number of members (15), had to offer an apology for being unable to attend. The committee wanted to hold a serious discussion on Safety, in regard to upgrading our Oxygen systems that we carry on our boats and I will briefly summarize our position.



The current O2 kits we have need to be upgraded for 2 main reasons.

The current cylinders are being phased out and no longer meet the Australian Standards. We lease them for \$400.00 per year.

The actual face mask/regulators that we carry to attach to the cylinders are antiquated, perished and unserviceable. They can only service one diver at a time and only if conscious.

It is the intent of the committee to purchase 3 units at a cost of around \$850 each, which are up to date, meet Aust standards, & able to be used on both conscious & unconscious divers and set up to be used by anyone, regardless of training. To put it simply, they are assembled and require to be simply turned on and mask put on victims head.

We currently have around \$12K in the bank. This year just gone we have had a ruling from ASIC that removed the onerous reporting and auditing requirements we have suffered from for years. This means around \$1000 per year saved. Our treasurer has renegotiated our banking fees and our term deposit has been shifted to a higher interest rate account. This means another \$400-\$600 per year coming in.

The net balance from all this is we will be roughly \$1900 per year better off per year (lower bank fees, Increased interest, nil audit fees & no tank leases) and out of pocket \$2500 once. We can afford it and it will only serve to make the club stronger.

The VSAG motto of “Safety in Diving” means more than just adhering to the Safe Dive Guidelines and being fit to dive. It also means taking a responsible position on making sure if a situation arises we can deal with it until professional help arrives. The current units have outlived their usefulness, and the new units will serve us well into the future.

On behalf of the Committee I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and look forward to diving with you all soon

Regards.

Greg Richards

Scuba diving is still an incredibly safe sport when done properly, with a fatal accident rate of approximately 1 death per 200,000 dives. This would mean to even be inside the chances of having a fatal accident, statistically you'd have to dive 12 times a day, every day, from the age of 18 years old to 65 years old: No breaks!



Dear VSAG Editor

Thanks to a contact within the Paparazzi, VSAG members will be delighted to see that club stalwart Mick Jeacle has found a new and invigorating way to lose those nagging extra pounds that diving & bike riding with the old hogs won't loosen up - Belly Dancing !

With a little encouragement hopefully Mick will give a demonstration at a future club meeting .

A caring but anonymous friend



Port Lincoln Incident Friday 8 Oct Grain Carrier "Grand Rodosi" and \$25million tuna trawler Apollo S



Ed. Is this an attempt by SA to get another dive wreck to rival the Canberra!!!



Hi Alan,

Saw this gem bit of work on Dive Oz....no doubt it is the work of our leader Grrrrr...
might be good for the next Fathoms huh!

Cheers,
JL

With apologies to Clement Clarke Moore

Twas the night before Cup Weekend, when all through Tidal River
Not a wombat was stirring, not even a quiver.
The wetsuits were hung by the tents with all care,
In hopes that calm weather soon would be there.

The divers were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of clear water danced in their heads.
And SWMBO in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just pickled our brains for a long drunken nap.

When out on the avenue there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my deflated mattress to see what was the matter.
Away to the tent door I flew like a flash,
Tore open the zipper and threw up the sash.

The sight of rain on the new-fallen tent
Gave the impression of hopelessness as the campers they went .
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But someones esky, and eight more tinnys of beer.

Then a little old diver appeared, as thick as a tree,
I knew in a moment it must be AB.
As rapid as Beagles his Getunderlings they came,
And he held court whilst drinking straight Coke with no shame!

And then, in a twinkling, I heard a small scratch
The clawing and pawing of a farcan wombat.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Thru the wall of the tent it came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his claws,
And his eyes were aglow as he smelt out my draws .
After a shout of anger he went thru the other side,
The fat prck was a waddler, just out for a ride.

Over in first avenue, Black Rock raged and roared!
Till the Rangers gave up threatening them and gave in, quite bored!
The Monash mob, were quiet like a collection of mice
As they sat around spellbound in the thrall of guru Fordyce.

VSAG were absent, their President quite mad,
Too afraid of a weather report that said the weather would be bad.
The BSAC crew had stayed at home in no fear,
Not the weather report for them, simply, there were no charter boats here!

This Weather God swine was a mischievous elf,
And I laughed when I googled him, in spite of myself!
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

I'd stayed at home with my new wetsuit so snazzy
Got drunk and dreamt of my favourite map of Tassy.
Then I realized my stupidity, during my long Promless plight
"Happy Cup weekend to all, and to all a good-night!"





VSAG SIMS THE BLUES

The forecast wasn't that bad, a 20 knot sou'westerly developing with the outlook of a months rain in a day. After all, the plan was to go out and get wet, isn't that what scuba diving is all about?

So the plan to go diving before our night on the famous Blues Train was shelved. Twenty seven members of the Victorian Sub Aqua Group were joined by 3 members of the Getunder Dive Club at Queenscliff for a weekend of fun, food and blues music. Our accommodation was taken care of by Andrew Kidd of the YMCA, when he offered us the chance to try out their new acquisition, Sims Lodge.



As this modern and attractive facility was formerly an elderly peoples home, specialising in Alzheimer's disease, I knew our group would fit right in. The layout with bedrooms for 2 or 3 people, a huge commercial kitchen, 2 lounge areas, and a large dining room was perfect for our group. The bedrooms are at the opposite end of the building to the eating and entertainment areas, meaning you can get a good night's sleep while the party continues, and have somewhere to banish the snorers and drunks!

The rain did come, but didn't dampen the fun. Brollies and jackets were the go while we lined up for drinks and then settled in our allocated carriage on the vintage train. The call came to get our meals, which were served on the platform and most ate in the carriages. All agreed the fare was most enjoyable, but we were keen to get the show on the road, or rails in this case.

The Blues Train is 4 carriages long and takes 200 guests on a unique ride through the Bellarine Peninsular. Each carriage has its own rock or blues band, and the train stops for refreshments and so the guests can change carriages to enjoy all 4 performances. The fun is infectious, and barely 5 minutes out of the station, patrons were up and dancing in the aisles. Our group was spurred on by a bunch of lively ladies celebrating a birthday.

You can't help getting into the rhythm as the carriages sway almost in time with the beat of the band. This was most obvious in our third carriage, which was set up for dancing. Just standing caused you to sway to the beat of Chubby Rae and the Elevators as the carriage moved almost in



cartoon like action.

The rain petered out as we arrived back at Queenscliff Station, and ferried our revellers back to Sims Lodge, just 5 minutes away. Most went to bed, but a few kept going into the wee hours. By 9 am Sunday the crew were up and about. John Lawler had arranged a big breakfast, and all pitched in to prepare eggs and bacon for 30 people. The facilities were great, and that commercial kitchen included a large dishwasher. We ate in the dining room, looking at the views of the Swan Bay wetlands, a RAMSAR significant water bird area.



The next activity was a tour of the Department of Primary Industries Fisheries Research Queenscliff facility. This included over an hour watching fish in the tanks of the Marine Discovery Centre and an overview of the education programs conducted by the centre. This allowed the non divers a glimpse into what robs them of their partners weekly, as they marvelled at the colour and diversity of the marine animals of the area.



Despite not getting a dive in, all agreed it was a fantastic weekend. The Blues Train is a must do experience, and a perfect activity for Melbourne dive groups. The YMCA Sims Lodge accommodation has 2, self contained wings, each catering for up to 25 people and is well set up for dive groups. If you are looking for a great activity for your dive group, this weekend is highly recommended.

Check out the Blues Train website
<http://www.theblustrain.com.au/default.aspx>





VSAG— 'On the train'





NO Blue moments with VSAG!





A great time was had by all!!!!

The Story of Strappy: From www.diveoz.com.au courtesy of Jaws of Mt Martha.

Thumbs up to the the crew at Rodney Fox on this amazing rescue:
The Destiny of Strappy
by Jennifer Taylor, Rodney Fox Shark Expeditions

For all those still awaiting the final video conclusion, here is a written account of what happened. Please enjoy this while our video production is being finished. More photos will also be added soon.

...

On the 19th September 2010, a great white shark, around 2.5m long visited our expedition vessel Princess II at North Neptune Islands, South Australia. From the surface it could be seen this shark had a distinct white band over his gray back, was rather shy, slow swimming and by his marks it became rather obvious something was very wrong with him.

On closer inspection, we could see that this band was a deep white cut that showed so vividly against his gray skin and that the wound encircled his entire torso. There was much speculation trying to establish what could have caused this.

Also aboard was Patrice Heraud, pro photographer and founder of French conservation group SOS Grand Blanc. Using his photos taken during our dives, we eventually established that this was not a rope or fishing line, but plastic packaging strapping, the type used for flat- pack furniture, discarded from the cardboard cartons. This strapping was slowly embedding its way deeper and deeper into his flesh. It was quite apparent that this shark would die a slow, painful death if we could not remove it.

We fondly nicknamed this shark Strappy and confirmed him as a male, most likely around 4 or 5 years old, based on his length.

Surprisingly, he was still able to swim quite well, albeit a little slower than most other sharks, however the use of his left pectoral fin was extremely limited due to the strapping, and to turn, he had adapted a very strange struggling movement with the use of his head.

The next step was to work out how we were going to remove this strap.

Strappy was not very visible topside or even from the surface cages, so Andrew Fox and the crew of Rodney Fox Shark Expeditions took our ocean floor cage down repeatedly to 20m. Armed with an assortment of knives, we were hoping that he would swim close enough to allow the strap to be removed.

On the first couple of dives, Strappy would not come close enough to our cage to allow this to happen. Eventually, he started swimming as close as a couple of metres away, still too far to relieve him from his predicament, but it did allow a closer view of just how much damage this strap had created. The strap had embedded itself into his back, and very deep into his gills, with his 3rd gill plate completely destroyed.

Underneath, Strappys right side showed a gaping wound at least 2 inches across. With the strap embedded so deeply, this was not going to be easy.

One of our other regular winter season sharks Carlos, a large 4m powerful male, then dominated our cages, making it harder to get out to Strappy and



also his presence seemed to keep Strappy away from us as he circled only at the edge of our vision.

Several dives later, darkness demanded that we surface for the last time, and to our disappointment, we had not seen Strappy on this final dive at all. We ended our 3 day expedition, leaving for port feeling frustrated, unhappy and extremely uneasy not knowing Strappys fate nor even if we would see him again. Our next liveaboard expedition was not for over a week, and many of the large male sharks with acoustic tags were pinging off on our

receiver stations in the bay. It was great knowing the sharks were there, but would Strappy hang around with these larger and far more powerful sharks, that could easily intimidate a smaller shark, let alone one with injuries and impaired movements?

Mid morning on the 28th we arrived back at the North Neptune Islands, and, anchoring in our favourite spot in the bay, we started our berley trail.

Within half an hour, unbelievably, Strappy arrived! We had been given another chance to try and save him, this time we were determined to make it work.

Andrew Fox, changed the days dive plan to attempt a strap-cutting operation at the surface where Strappy was swimming. The plan was to lure Strappy in close enough to the duckboard with a chunk of tuna to keep the pointy end interested, while Andrew cut the strap off him. Andrew has done this several times previously with sharks caught up in fishing long-lines. It was as though Strappy wanted to be freed, he hung around while Andrew with Fox crew Craig and Jeff quickly worked to put the plan into action.

Volunteer decky Craig, slowly attracted Strappy closer and closer to the platform with the tuna head, and after about 20 minutes he finally came close enough to take hold of the bait.

Jeff, our cook and first mate, grabbed his tail and held on tight, trying to keep him in a position close to the platform. Craig kept the bait in his mouth and Andrew reached down underwater to try and cut the strap but it was too tough. Strappy stayed deep, struggling to free himself from us, and with amazing power for his condition, succeeded and swam off.

Attempt failed.

And now understandably, Strappy was understandably suspicious of us and not coming anywhere near the boat.

If Strappy wouldn't come to us, then wed have to go to him. Bring on Plan B.

Andrew, along with 3 other passengers in our unique ocean floor cage, slowly descended beneath the gentle waves in the bay. The rest of us left onboard were very doubtful that they would even get a glimpse of Strappy, this was going to be a long wait.

As we paced the deck above, 22m below Andrew Fox along with Matthias Dorsch, Director of MARES Australia and Mark Mooney, MARES Sales

Manager SA/WA, were eagerly on the look out for the distinctive shark with the white band. Luck! After only a couple of minutes Strappy appeared to them!

10 minutes later, he was circling the cage more closely, could this be our chance? Andrew waited, knowing that sudden movements could scare him away. Strappy continued to circle anti-clockwise with his left side to the cage and eventually drew close enough for an attempt. At full reach out of the cage, Andrew, with one thrust of the knife in a downwards slicing motion managed to hook the strap with the line cutter and slice it through as Strappy glided past.

Although the strap was cut, Andrew could clearly see the strap still flapping from his body, as it was still wrapped around him, deeply embedded into his flesh and gills. Perhaps this shark knew that this was his best chance of survival and amazingly, Strappy circled close again once more, enabling Andrew to lean out, grab one end of the strapping and as the shark swam off, the entire strap pulled through and came free of his body.

As if to say thank you, Strappy then hung around the cage for the remainder of the dive. On the top deck, the rest of us onboard were in blissful ignorance of the activity over 20m below, but soon heard the ecstatic cries of the divers as they broke the surface on their return.

With his distinctive scar and his other identifiable markings, we have now profiled Strappy in our Fox Shark Research Foundation ID catalogue. With more sightings in the months or years to come, you can keep up to date with Strappys progress at www.rodneymares.com.au and on facebook at Rodney Fox Great White Shark Expeditions.

Mares provided the line cutter knife that Andrew used to cut the strap and have since purchased an elite/acoustic tag adoption for Strappy. This adoption gives naming rights to the shark and Mares have kindly kept Strappy as Strappy! If you'd like to sponsor Strappy and receive a picture and bio of him, then please go to www.sharkfoundation.com with all proceeds going to the work of the Fox Shark Research Foundation.

Fox Shark research Foundation sponsorship and Shark adoption are very important to enable us to keep on with our research programs. please consider them for gift ideas.

Thank you to Matthias and Mark from Mares for your support.

LARRY MAY BECOME MY NEW FAVORITE!!!!



A new teacher was trying to make use of her psychology courses. She started her class by saying, 'Everyone who thinks they're stupid, stand up!' After a few seconds, Little Larry stood up. The teacher said, 'Do you think you're stupid, Larry?' 'No, ma'am, but I hate to see you standing there all by yourself!'

Larry watched, fascinated, as his mother smoothed cold cream on her face. 'Why do you do that, mommy?' he asked. 'To make myself beautiful,' said his mother, who then began removing the cream with a tissue. 'What's the matter, asked Larry 'Giving up?'

The math teacher saw that Larry wasn't paying attention in class. She called on him and said, 'Larry! What are 2 and 4 and 28 and 44?' Larry quickly replied, 'NBC, FOX, ESPN and the Cartoon Network!'

Larry's kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station where they saw pictures tacked to a bulletin board of the 10 most wanted criminals. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person. 'Yes,' said the policeman. 'The detectives want very badly to capture him. Larry asked, "Why didn't you keep him when you took his picture? "

Little Larry attended a horse auction with his father. He watched as his father moved from horse to horse, running his hands up and down the horse's legs and rump, and chest. After a few minutes, Larry asked, 'Dad, why are you doing that?' His father replied, 'Because when I'm buying horses, I have to make sure that they are healthy and in good shape before I buy. Larry, looking worried, said, 'Dad, I think the Foxel guy wants to buy Mom'

WALKING THE DOG!!!!



A WOMAN was flying from Melbourne to Brisbane .Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sydney along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was Blind.

A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Guide Dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight.

He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, 'Kathy, we are in Sydney for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?' The blind lady replied, 'No thanks, but maybe **Buddy** would like to stretch his legs.'

Picture this:

All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Guide dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses.

People scattered.

They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!



True story... Have a great day and remember...

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR.

A DAY WITHOUT LAUGHTER IS A DAY WASTED!!!

Chilean Miners Rescued.

October 14, 2010.

Trapped No More: All 33 Chilean Miners Safe.

Rescue Brings End To 69-Day Ordeal.

MICHAEL WARREN, Associated Press Writer

SAN JOSE MINE, Chile -- The last of the Chilean miners, the foreman who held them together when they were feared lost, was raised from the depths of the earth Wednesday night - a joyous ending to a 69-day ordeal that riveted the world. No one has ever been trapped so long and survived.

The mine collapsed on Aug. 5, trapping 33 miners until rescue workers were able to bore a 28-inch diameter hole, a project that took two months.

Luis Urzua ascended smoothly through 2,000 feet of rock, completing a 22½-hour rescue operation that unfolded with remarkable speed and flawless execution. Before a crowd of about 2,000 people, he became the 33rd miner to be rescued.



Capsule brings rescued miner to surface.

The rescue workers who talked the men through the final hours still had to be hoisted to the surface.

When Urzua stepped out of the capsule, he hugged Chilean President Sebastian Pinera and shook hands with him and said they had prevailed over difficult circumstances. With the last miner by his side, the president led the crowd in singing the national anthem.

One by one throughout the day, the men had emerged to the cheers of exuberant Chileans and before the eyes of a transfixed globe. The operation picked up speed as the day went on, but each miner was greeted with the same boisterous applause from rescuers.

"Welcome to life," Pinera told Victor Segvia, the 15th miner out. On a day of superlatives, it seemed no overstatement.

They rejoined a world intensely curious about their ordeal, and certain to offer fame and jobs. Previously unimaginable riches awaited men who had risked their lives going into the unstable gold and copper mine for about \$1,600 a month.

The miners made the smooth ascent inside a capsule called Phoenix - 13 feet tall, barely wider than their shoulders and painted in the white, blue and red of the Chilean flag. It had a door that stuck occasionally, and some wheels had to be replaced, but it worked exactly as planned.

Beginning at midnight Tuesday, and sometimes as quickly as every 25 minutes, the pod was lowered the nearly half-mile to where 700,000 tons of rock collapsed Aug. 5 and entombed the men.



Then, after a quick pep talk from rescue workers who had descended into the mine, a miner would strap himself in, make the journey upward and emerge from a manhole into the blinding sun.

The rescue was planned with extreme care. The miners were monitored by video on the way up for any sign of panic. They had oxygen masks, dark glasses to protect their eyes from the unfamiliar sunlight and sweaters for the jarring transition from subterranean swelter to chilly desert air.

As they neared the surface, a camera attached to the top of the capsule showed a brilliant white piercing the darkness not unlike what accident survivors describe when they have near-death experiences.

The miners emerged looking healthier than many had expected and even clean-shaven. Several thrust their fists upwards like prizefighters, and Mario Sepulveda, the second to taste freedom, bounded out and led his rescuers in a rousing cheer. Franklin Lobos, who played for the Chilean national soccer team in the 1980s, briefly bounced a soccer ball on his foot and knee.

"We have prayed to San Lorenzo, the patron saint of miners, and to many other saints so that my brothers Florencio and Renan would come out of the mine all right. It is as if they had been born again," said Priscila Avalos. One of her brothers was the first miner rescued, and the other was due out later in the evening.

Health Minister Jaime Manalich said some of the miners probably will be able to leave the hospital Thursday - earlier than projected - but many had been unable to sleep, wanted to talk with families and were anxious. One was treated for pneumonia, and two needed dental work. "They are not ready to have a moment's rest until the last of their colleagues is out," he said.

As it traveled down and up, down and up, the rescue capsule was not rotating as much inside the 2,041-foot escape shaft as officials expected, allowing for faster trips.

The first man out was Florencio Avalos, who emerged from the missile-like chamber and hugged his sobbing 7-year-old son, his wife and the Chilean president.

No one in recorded history has survived as long trapped underground. For the first 17 days, no one even knew whether they were alive. In the weeks that followed, the world was captivated by their endurance and unity.

Chile exploded in joy and relief when the rescue began just after midnight in the coastal Atacama desert. Car horns sounded in Santiago, the Chilean capital, and school was canceled in the nearby town of Copiapo, where 24 of the miners live.

News channels from North America to Europe and the Middle East carried live coverage. Pope Benedict XVI said in Spanish that he "continues with hope to entrust to God's goodness" the fate of the men. Iran's state English-language Press TV followed events live for a time. Crews from Russia and Japan and North Korean state TV were at the mine.

The images beamed to the world were extraordinary: Grainy footage from beneath the earth showed each miner climbing into capsule, then disappearing upward through an opening. Then a camera showed the pod steadily rising through the dark, smooth-walled tunnel.

Among the first rescued was the youngest miner, Jimmy Sanchez, at 19 the father of a months-old baby. Two hours later came the oldest, Mario Gomez, 63, who suffers from a lung disease common to miners and had been on antibiotics inside the mine. He dropped to his knees after he emerged, bowed his head in prayer and clutched the Chilean flag.

Gomez's wife, Lilianett Ramirez, pulled him up from the ground and embraced him. The couple had talked over video chat once a week, and she said that he had repeated the promise he made to her in his initial letter from inside the mine: He would marry her properly in a church wedding, followed by the honeymoon they never had.

The lone foreigner among them, Carlos Mamani of Bolivia, was visited at a nearby clinic by Pinera and Bolivian President Evo Morales. The miner could be heard telling the Chilean president how nice it was to breathe fresh air and see the stars.

Most of the men emerged clean-shaven. More than 300 people at the mine alone had worked on the rescue or to sustain them during their long wait by lowering rocket-shaped tubes dubbed "palomas," Spanish for carrier pigeons. Along with the food and medicine came razors and shaving cream.

Estimates for the rescue operation alone have soared beyond \$22 million, though the government has repeatedly insisted that money is not a concern.

The men emerged in good health. But at the hospital in Copiapo, where miner after miner walked from the ambulance to a waiting wheelchair, it became clear that psychological issues would be as important to treat as physical ones.

Dr. Guillermo Swett said Sepulveda told him about an internal "fight with the devil" that he had inside the mine. He said Sanchez appeared to be having a hard time adjusting, and seemed depressed.

"He spoke very little and didn't seem to connect," the doctor said.

The entire rescue operation was meticulously choreographed. No expense was spared in bringing in topflight drillers and equipment - and boring three separate holes into the copper and gold mine. Only one has been finished - the one through which the miners exited.

Mining is Chile's lifeblood, providing 40 percent of state earnings, and Pinera put his mining minister and the operations chief of state-owned Codelco, the country's biggest company, in charge of the rescue.

It went so well that its managers abandoned a plan to restrict images of the rescue. A huge Chilean flag that was to obscure the hole from view was moved aside so the hundreds of cameras perched on a hill above could record images that state TV also fed live.

That included the surreal moment when the capsule dropped for the first time into the chamber, where the bare-chested miners, most stripped down to shorts because of the underground heat, mobbed the rescuer who emerged to serve as their guide to freedom.

"This rescue operation has been so marvelous, so clean, so emotional that there was no reason not to allow the eyes of the world - which have been watching this operation so closely - to see it," a beaming Pinera told a news conference after the first miner safely surfaced.

The miners' vital signs were closely monitored throughout the ride. They were given a high-calorie liquid diet donated by NASA, designed to prevent nausea from any rotation of the capsule as it travels through curves in the 28-inch-diameter escape hole.

Engineers inserted steel piping at the top of the shaft, which is angled 11 degrees off vertical before plunging like a waterfall. Drillers had to curve the shaft to pass through "virgin" rock, narrowly avoiding collapsed areas and underground open spaces in the overexploited mine, which had operated since 1885.

U.S. President Barack Obama said the rescue had "inspired the world." The crews included many Americans, including a driller operator from Denver and a team from Center Rock Inc. of Berlin, Pa., that built and managed the piston-driven hammers that pounded the hole through rock laced with quartzite, some of the hardest and most abrasive rock.

Chile has promised that its care of the miners won't end for six months at least - not until they can be sure that each man has readjusted.

Psychiatrists and other experts in surviving extreme situations predict their lives will be anything but normal. Since Aug. 22, when a narrow bore hole broke through to their refuge and the miners stunned the world with a note, scrawled in red ink, disclosing their survival, their families have been exposed in ways they never imagined.

Miners had to describe their physical and mental health in detail with teams of doctors and psychologists. In some cases, when both wives and lovers claimed the same man, everyone involved had to face the consequences.

As trying as their time underground was, the miners now face challenges so bewildering that no amount of coaching can fully prepare them. Rejoining a world intensely curious about their ordeal, they have been invited to presidential palaces, to take all-expenses-paid vacations and to appear on countless TV shows. Book and movie deals are pending, along with job offers.

Sepulveda's performance exiting from the shaft appeared to confirm what many Chileans thought when they saw his engaging performances in videos sent up from below - that he could have a future as a TV personality.

But he tried to quash the idea as he spoke to viewers of Chile's state television channel while sitting with his wife and children shortly after his rescue.

"The only thing I'll ask of you is that you don't treat me as an artist or a journalist, but as a miner," he said. "I was born a miner and I'll die a miner." --

National Anthem of Chile.

The Chilean national anthem seems, unsurprisingly, to be ringing out across the length of the skinny Latin American nation. Lyrics below. Notice heavy mention of sky, fields, mountains and shores, but nothing about mines. Perhaps that will change.

Pure, Chile, is your blue sky:
Pure breezes cross you as well.
And your flower-embroidered field
Is the happy copy of Eden
Majestic is the white mountain
That was given to you as a bastion by the Lord
That was given to you as a bastion by the Lord
And that sea that calmly washes your shores
Promises you a future splendour
And that sea that calmly washes your shores
Promises you a splendid future

Sweet fatherland, accept the vows
With which Chile swore at your altars:
Either the tomb of the free will you be
Or the refuge against oppression
Either the tomb of the free will you be
Or the refuge against oppression
Either the tomb of the free will you be
Or the refuge against oppression
Or the refuge against oppression
Or the refuge against oppression
Or the refuge against oppression

Bizarre twist to miner's rescue.

Chilean miner Yonni Barrios emerged this afternoon from the underground shaft where he had been trapped for months and straight into the arms of his mistress, not those of his wife of 28 years.

His wife had said she would not attend his rescue after discovering that Barrios had been cheating on her with a lover for years.

When Barrios stepped out of the mineshaft, Susana Valenzuela was there to greet him emotionally, kissing him and hugging him while she sobbed. Barrios stood stoically but did not appear to be overly affectionate in return.

Barrios' wife, 56-year-old Marta Salinas, had said earlier that she would not attend his rescue after discovering that he had been seeing Valenzuela on the sly for years.

"I'm happy because he was saved. It's a miracle from God. But I won't attend the rescue." Salinas told South American newspaper Clarin.

Barrios was the 21st miner rescued from the mine, located in the northern Chilean city of Copiapo, 500 miles north of Santiago.

In contrast to the mine collapse in Chile, a coal mine disaster in Wales back in 1913 resulted in 439 miners dying.

Senghenydd Colliery Disaster, October 14, 1913.

The Senghenydd Colliery Disaster, also known as the Senghenydd Explosion, occurred in Senghenydd 3.], near Caerphilly, Glamorgan, South Wales on 14 October 1913, killing 439 miners. It is the worst Mining accident in the United Kingdom, and one of the most serious in terms of loss of life globally since.

Background

The demand for Welsh steam coal before World War I was enormous, especially from the Royal Navy and its huge fleet of steam battleships, dreadnoughts and cruisers, and also foreign Navies allied to Britain and the British Empire. Coal output from British coal mines was at its peak in 1914, and there were a correspondingly large number of terrible accidents. The worst of these was at the Universal Colliery in Senghenydd and occurred as a result of a coal dust explosion that travelled through most of the underground workings.

Probable cause

It was probably started by a firedamp (methane) explosion, itself possibly ignited by electric sparking from equipment, such as electric bell signaling gear. The initial firedamp explosion disturbed coal dust present on the floor, raising a cloud that then ignited in its turn. The shock wave ahead of the explosion raised yet more coal dust, so that the conflagration was effectively self-fueling. Those miners not killed immediately by the fire and explosion would have died quickly from afterdamp, the noxious gases formed by combustion. These include lethal quantities of carbon monoxide, which kills very quickly by combining preferentially with haemoglobin in the blood. The victims are suffocated by lack of oxygen.

Memorial

Three memorials to the disaster are located in Senghenydd. The first is a memorial outside Nany-y-parc Primary School, which is built on the site of the old mine. At St. Cenydd Comprehensive School, lies a list of names of those who died from the explosion, and they have a truck of coal as a memorial. On Senghenydd square, inscribed upon the big clock centred in the middle of the road, are the names of the many miners who perished in the disaster.



Divers engulfed in millions of sardines

It's the ultimate full body massage — diving head-on into a school of millions of sardines.

Filipino Jun Lao has posted video of his encounter with the massive swarms of fish while on a tour at Pescador Island in the Philippines.

In the video he and his diving buddies can be seen swimming in and out of thick clouds of fish, which rapidly twitch and change direction in unison.

Mr Lao told ninemsn the dive early this month was one of the most exciting experiences of his life.

[MORE VIDEO: Mr Lao's YouTube channel](#)
[RALPH: World's most dangerous shark dive](#)



"It was a transition of shapes, of shimmers and shadows, it was amazing, it

was out of this world, literally, figuratively," the 34-year-old said.

"They swam inches away, engulfing you. There are moments you feel dizzy by their vast numbers and you don't know what's up from down."

But the confusion nearly led to disaster for one of his buddies, who was having trouble with her buoyancy compensator — a device scuba divers use to maintain a constant depth in the water.

"She blew an inflator hose, coupled with the swarms of sardines causing disorientation," he said.

The experienced diver then dove down, thinking she was going up, before the dive guide managed to guide her back.

"After this, everyone [was told] to follow the directions of the bubbles as a reference to be buoyant.

"We were lucky we had a very good dive master with us, Jaime Sabanate of Savedra Dive Center. He looked after everyone."

Despite the slightly nerve-wracking moment, Mr Lao said he "loved the rush" and urged other divers to contact the dive school and arrange a tour.

"It's nice being in the middle of the storm," he said.

Workers at Savedra Dive Centre have estimated the amount of fish in the area as over 100 million.

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/world/8142485/divers-engulfed-in-millions-of-sardines>



Hello Alan

Another article I spotted this evening, passed onto me by one of my old [regular] South African dive buddies.

Might be worth reprinting in FATHOMS

Herbert Epstein

In the seventies, I belonged to the INNER SPACE DIVE CLUB of Johannesburg, as well as ATLANTIC UNDERWATER SCUBA CLUB and both clubs used to do an annual EASTERN WEEKEND Dive Trip to SODAWANA Bay on So African Eastern northern border, very close to Mocambique.

Great diving, but plenty of ZAMBESI and Great White sharks too.

Have a look at <http://www.unrealdive.com/marine/zambezi.asp>

My most unforgettable dive ever, was being kitted up first, jumping off the dive boat and straight into a rip.

In ten minutes I was 200 meters from the boat, and was being circled by about a dozen Great White and ZAMBESI sharks.



I signaled to the boat to come fetch me and kept my eye on the circling pack of sharks [while literally thinking my end was NIGH] - but am here to tell the tale.

Obviously they were not hungry, probably just curious - but I was quite unnerved for about 2 days, before got the strength to venture back into the water.

Being 21 years old back then, I guess I was a lot less cautious, and somewhat Gun-hoy as most 21 year olds are at that stage of their "testosterone filled" lives !

Yellow submarine in coelacanth search

It's yellow, light on fuel and drives best in wet weather. Now the National Research Foundation's first fully owned underwater research vehicle is on a mission to find a mysterious fish - 100m below rush-hour shipping traffic.

WATERY EYE: Marine scientists aboard the research vessel *Ellen Khuzwayo* get to grips with the new *Sea-eye* remotely operated vehicle



The remotely controlled 90kg Falcon *Sea-eye* will plumb the depths of the country's East Coast near Sodwana Bay early next year in search of the rare coelacanth, a strange "legged" fish once hailed as a "missing link".

The government-owned vehicle - which cost around R3-million, including support equipment - was tested last year off the coast of Mossel Bay.

"There is more territorial area under water in South Africa than there is on land. The deep ocean really is a new frontier that we know very little about," said Dr Angus Paterson, manager of the African Coelacanth Environmental Programme within the South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB). "Almost everything we do is new."

The *Sea-eye* has already provided useful information and images, thanks to cameras mounted on its back. It also carries lights, a laser-scaling device to measure object size and distance, and a manipulator arm that can pick up small objects.

The driving team sit on the surface in a research vessel and watch the journey on a large TV screen.

Said Paterson: "Basically there is a need for South Africa to have its own research capacity in the deep-water environment. This ROV (remotely operated vehicle) currently goes down to about 300m, but we are looking to get one that could go down to 1000m."

He said the SAIAB team were also keen to research the effect of deep-sea trawling on the ocean bed. Results could assist in setting up offshore marine reserves in areas where the seabed and fish stocks need protection.

But first it will go in search of the coelacanth, last spotted nibbling on a sea cucumber about 100m down.

The fish, thought to have died out 65 million years ago, became the underwater poster-child for South African research after a specimen was caught in a net off East London in 1938 and identified by Rhodes University professor JLB Smith. It was not seen again in South Africa until 70 years later, when deep-sea divers spotted some swimming in an underwater canyon near Sodwana Bay.

Professor Paul Skelton, SAIAB managing director, said of the Sea-eye: "It is a fantastic instrument, and we have an exciting platform and prospect - our early work is showing clearly the potentials for (deep sea) work off the South African coast."

A scientific progress report released earlier this year said the Sea-eye marked a new dawn for South African deep-sea research. "The shelf areas of the world's oceans constitute some of the most productive and ecologically important marine habitats. Unfortunately, more than 95% of the sea floor is situated in waters deeper than 50m, which makes researching these areas by scuba diving unfeasible," the report said.

In terms of the UN Law of the Sea Convention, South Africa was recently granted one million square kilometres of underwater territory off the mainland and around its sub-Antarctic islands.

XX

An older, white haired man walked into a jewellery store this past Friday evening with a beautiful much younger gal at his side. He told the jeweller he was looking for a special ring for his girlfriend. The jeweller looked through his stock and brought out a \$5,000 ring.



The old man said, 'No, I'd like to see something more special.'

At that statement, the jeweller went to his special stock and brought another ring over. 'Here's a stunning ring at only \$40,000 the jeweller said. The lady's eyes sparkled and her whole body trembled with excitement. The old man seeing this said, 'We'll take it.'

The jeweller asked how payment would be made and the old man stated, 'by cheque. I know you need to make sure my cheque is good, so I'll write it now and you can call the bank Monday to verify the funds and I'll pick the ring up Monday afternoon.'

On Monday morning, the jeweller angrily phoned the old man and said 'There's no money in that account!!!'

'I know,' said the old man, 'But let me tell you about MY GREAT WEEKEND!!!'

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CONTACT MICK JEACLE FOR FULL DETAILS

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06JUN11

Dunlop Agency
06JUN11 - 07JUN11
Dinner 1 Night
Taxi

Room rates include buffet breakfast

Transfer Kuala Lumpur
07JUN11

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Taxi share
All meals
2 good 8 dives and 2 shore dives a day
Tank weight cards

Excludes Dive Permit Paid Locally \$42.00/US per person per day
(approx \$13 US)

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14JUN11

Dunlop Agency
14JUN11 - 15JUN11
Dinner 1 Night
Taxi

Room rates include buffet breakfast

Transfer Kuala Lumpur
15JUN11

COSTING:

Diver: \$2850

Non-Diver: \$2532

DOES NOT INCLUDE:

Excess baggage, items of a personal nature,
Travel Insurance (unless specified), Taxes
(unless specified), Visa and
passport costs, meals and beverages not
detailed in the above inclusions.

The Melbourne Cup Weekend: 2010

By Greg Richards,

The weather forecast leading into this years Cup Long Weekend was as ominous as I have ever seen it. A months rain forecast to fall over 2-3 days and storms with windy days predicted right across Victoria.

Now, any of you that know Wilson Prom will attest to the fact that if the weather is crap in Melbourne it is going to be worse by a factor of 10 at Tidal River.

This prior warning kept vast numbers of divers safely tucked into their beds back home. It seemed that only the foolhardy would venture past the letter box, let alone go camping, or worse still - go out to sea and dive!



It was with this forecast in mind that I took up the kind offer from my beloved to stay home Friday night and lay safely tucked up in bed with my favourite teddy. I listened to the house shake and wail as the rain teemed in relentless squalls against the groaning roof. Snugly warm, and smugly satisfied, I had made the right decision for once.

I awoke early Saturday and against my better judgement drove down to Peter Galvins Holiday resort at Inverloch. The weather at this point was calming by the minute and really quite benign.

Arriving at 9.00am I found Peter, Ian Fleet, and some other non VSAGers(Len Joyce and Peter Cronin) kitting up and loading the boat in preparation of diving. Having nothing better to do I threw my lot in as well and decided to humour them that we would go diving. To my horror they were serious and soon we had launched and were on our way thru the notorious and treacherous Inverloch bar.

Did I say treacherous?? I could have swam out backstroke. The sea was as calm as it ever gets. The swell was completely absent and we flew across the water as if it was glass. The wind had dropped to zero.

The first dive was inside the Marine Reserve in about 8-12m of water. We could see the bottom as if there was no water there! All 5 off us swam around the twin

bommies, and the crayfish seemed to understand that not only were they in a Marine Reserve, it was still a few weeks till cray season. Fish life was excellent, and some of the reef formations were very impressive.

I tried out my new custom made one piece wetsuit and after 50mins in the 14C water I was as warm as toast. The christening or the disgracing (depending on your point of view) of the new wetsuit would have to wait until another dive. For a second dive we chose another shallow spot right in close where you wouldn't normally be able to get due to the swell (or lack of it today). Again crays were plentiful and seemingly aware of their protected status. I actually saw one from the surface before I descended, it's not too often that happens. Again, the reef was very good and the amount of fish life was quite impressive.

Late afternoon as the storm clouds gathered in the distance, and gradually approached from the north, the white caps appeared and we headed for home. After retrieving the boat we drove the 400m back to base and began cooking the roasts in the Weber, whilst heavy rain storms lashed the house. Meanwhile we relaxed by the Coonara and ate and drank like kings.

That night I rang my daughter who was camping at Tidal River to say I would still join her some time Sunday morning, hopefully after the worst of the storms had passed. She sounded somewhat forlorn and a bit dejected by the dreary weather. I pretended to care, and went back to the feast.

The drive from Inverloch to The Prom is quite short and after leaving early Sunday morning, I had arrived and had the tent up before 9.00am. The scene around me was stark. Three empty sites either side of me and probably about half the entire camping ground was empty. Huge puddles of water and mud lay everywhere. People wandered around with that 1000 yard stare that war veterans get after seeing too many atrocities whilst several fully laden cars and trailers passed me going home.

Excellent!

I wandered over to some neighbouring divers from the Black Rock Dive Club and the Getunder Dive Club to see how the weekend was going. It seemed that the Friday and the Saturday had seen the best diving conditions at the Prom for years. Dead calm, crystal clear water, massing fish life, wrecks, Orcas, Whales, seals, no current- just superb apparently. Grrr!!

As the day was nothing short of miserable weather wise at this point, I thought I'd saunter along the beach to check out the new track the Rangers had cut for us to get the boats down to the launching site. On arriving at the beach I saw the annual ritual of the Monash Uni Club digging their trailer out of the sand and then re-bogging it a few minutes later. This sight always cheers me up!¹⁰¹² Page 41

I told their Leader Steve Fordyce- who was on all fours shovelling sand from the axle, (in my normal subtle way), that they must have manure for brains to even contemplate going out in that weather and then be dumb enough to bog their trailer. I then discreetly left before he could summon the strength to undo all my dentists good work.

My daughter meanwhile and her friends were trying to encourage me to join them on ever more challenging walks. I declined their kind offers and settled into a good book and a bad red.

The weather pattern at this stage did not bode well for diving again this weekend and all the sane divers were resigned to the fact that Saturday (and Friday for a lucky few) may well have been it for the 4 days.

In the midst of this inclemency Peter Altis and his side kick Eddie had appeared about 8.00am Sunday morning, set up their van and gone looking for a dive. After hearing from all the skippers the likelihood that the diving was probably over for the weekend, they made a value judgment call, and were packed and gone by 11.00am. Surely a record for the shortest ever Prom Visit by 2 divers - with a van no less!

Needless to say the diving wasn't over for the weekend and they, along with most of the Melbourne dive fraternity got it wrong. Can't say as I blame them! The odds of diving again, were on a par with the chance of me riding the winner of the Melbourne Cup in my dive gear.

One afternoon whilst reclining in my comfy chair and preparing a sumptuous spread of drinks and nibbles my daughter and her girlfriends stuck their beaks inside my tent and told me that they had met some old friends from Uni. One of them was a diver and he said he knew me. Uh oh..

With that the tent flap was pulled back to reveal the aforementioned Steve Fordyce smiling at me like a Cheshire Cat. Indeed, revenge is a dish best served cold, as I found out, as he promptly ate me out of house and home over the next few hours. Next time I won't be so subtle!

The good club VSAG was well represented this year at the annual Cup Weekend. When I say well, I mean in a quality sense not quantity. Pat Reynolds and myself were the only attendees. We did however spread ourselves around so it seemed like there was more of us than just 2.

On the Monday and Tuesday some divers got out and reports of excellent diving

filtered thru the grapevine. By late Tuesday afternoon the camp ground again reverted to its normal graveyard like stillness.

I had climbed a few mountains, dived in perfect conditions, relaxed, watched some magnificent sunsets (not from the top of Mt Oberon though, like my daughter & Co), met some incredible people, and had yet another memorable Prom Cup weekend.

The weather god gave it his best shot, but we beat him.



: lloyd@borrett.id.au

Subject: Ted.com

G'day,

If you haven't already found TED.com on the web, then you've been missing out on something special.

TED is a small nonprofit devoted to **Ideas Worth Spreading**. It started out (in 1984) as a conference bringing together people from three worlds: **Technology, Entertainment, Design**. Since then its scope has become ever broader.

On TED.com, you get to see the **best talks and performances from TED and partners available to the world, for free**. More than 700 TEDTalks are now available, with more added each week. The talks vary from jaw-dropping, inspirational, persuasive, fascinating, ingenious, beautiful, funny and informative plus whatever combination of the above you can think of.

Some of the talks (not all diving related) I've viewed and recommend you take a look at are:

Bill Stone explores the world's deepest caves

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/bill_stone_explores_the_earth_and_space.html

Bill Stone, a maverick cave explorer who has plumbed Earth's deepest abysses, discusses his efforts to mine lunar ice for space fuel and to build an autonomous robot for studying Jupiter's moon Europa.

Seth Godin: This is broken

http://www.ted.com/talks/seth_godin_this_is_broken_1.html

Why are so many things broken? In a hilarious talk from the 2006 Gel conference, Seth Godin gives a tour of things poorly designed, the 7 reasons why they are that way, and how to fix them.

Greg Stone: Saving the ocean one island at a time

http://www.ted.com/talks/greg_stone_saving_the_ocean_one_island_at_a_time.html

Scientist Greg Stone tells the story of how he helped the Republic of Kiribati create an enormous protected area in the middle of the Pacific -- protecting fish, sea life and the island nation itself.

Randy Pausch: Really achieving your childhood dreams

http://www.ted.com/talks/randy_pausch_really_achieving_your_childhood_dreams.html

Sunday morning and pick
the computer geek



In 2007, Carnegie Mellon professor Randy Pausch, who was dying of pancreatic cancer, delivered a one-of-a-kind last lecture that made the world stop and pay attention. This moving talk will teach you how to really achieve your childhood dreams. Unmissable.

Richard Pyle dives the reef's Twilight Zone

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/richard_pyle_dives_the_twilight_zone.html

Ichthyologist Richard Pyle is a fish nerd. In this illuminating talk, Richard shows us thriving life on the cliffs of coral reefs and groundbreaking diving technologies he has pioneered to explore it. He and his team risk everything to reveal the secrets of undiscovered species.

Jill Bolte Taylor's stroke of insight

http://www.ted.com/talks/jill_bolte_taylor_s_powerful_stroke_of_insight.html

Jill Bolte Taylor got a research opportunity few brain scientists would wish for: She had a massive stroke, and watched as her brain functions -- motion, speech, self-awareness -- shut down one by one. An astonishing story.

Mike deGruy: Hooked by an octopus

http://www.ted.com/talks/mike_degruy_hooked_by_octopus.html

Underwater filmmaker Mike deGruy has spent decades looking intimately at the ocean. A consummate storyteller, he takes the stage at Mission Blue to share his awe and excitement -- and his fears -- about the blue heart of our planet.

Rory Sutherland: Sweat the small stuff

http://www.ted.com/talks/rory_sutherland_sweat_the_small_stuff.html

It may seem that big problems require big solutions, but ad man Rory Sutherland says many flashy, expensive fixes are just obscuring better, simpler answers. To illustrate, he uses behavioral economics and hilarious examples.

David Gallo shows underwater astonishments

http://www.ted.com/talks/david_gallo_shows_underwater_astonishments.html

David Gallo shows jaw-dropping footage of amazing sea creatures, including a color-shifting cuttlefish, a perfectly camouflaged octopus, and a Times Square's worth of neon light displays from fish who live in the blackest depths of the ocean.

Capt. Charles Moore on the seas of plastic

http://www.ted.com/talks/capt_charles_moore_on_the_seas_of_plastic.html

Capt. Charles Moore of the Algalita Marine Research Foundation first discovered the Great Pacific Garbage Patch -- an endless floating waste of plastic trash. Now he's drawing attention to the growing, choking problem of plastic debris in our seas.

Julia Sweeney on letting go of God

http://www.ted.com/talks/julia_sweeney_on_letting_go_of_god.html

Julia Sweeney (*God Said, "Ha!"*) performs the first 15 minutes of her 2006 solo show *Letting Go of God*. When two young Mormon missionaries knock on her door one day, it touches off a quest to completely rethink her own beliefs.

Dee Boersma: Pay attention to penguins

http://www.ted.com/talks/dee_boersma_pay_attention_to_penguins.html

Think of penguins as ocean sentinels, says Dee Boersma -- they're on the frontlines of sea change. Sharing stories of penguin life and culture, she suggests that we start listening to what penguins are telling us.

Venturing away from TED.com, check out this very amusing video:

A Christmas Chill: An Encounter with Hypothermia-Induced Tourette Syndrome

<http://video.google.com/vidconlay?docid=6348623902330871640#>

WARNING: This video contains language that is inappropriate for children, and may be offensive to some adults.

In search of new species of fishes, ichthyologist Richard Pyle and marine biologist Brian Greene descend down a deep coral-reef drop-off at Christmas Island in the Central Pacific, using high-tech closed-circuit rebreathers and breathing a mixture containing mostly helium. As they pass a depth of 100 metres (330 feet) on the way down, they discover what it feels like to penetrate a thermocline from the balmy 85-degree equatorial sea-surface temperatures, to the 50-degree deep upwelled water below. The diver carrying the camera, who was wearing only a t-shirt and swimsuit under his rebreather gear, had no idea that every helium-affected word he was saying was being picked up by the camera's microphone.

Best Regards,

Lloyd Borrett



VSAG celebrates an early Christmas

Alan Storen

Yes it is that time of the year again when we all get together and have fun. This year the VSAG party was at the home of Deb George and parents (again) and the weather gods blessed the event with a fantastic day. As can be seen by the photos many enjoyed the pool and others the shade under the pergola. The event was self catered with Mick Kakafikas on the spit roast and BBQ, ably helped by John Lawler and others. The salads and desserts were provided by several on the committee, or their wives (thanks Jude) and the day went without a hitch. The raffle was a good fund raiser and the wetsuit was won by Mick Jeacle for a second year in a row!! How fantastic is the shed – not sure of the dimensions but it easily held all when needed.

The raffle sponsors are already mentioned in the editorial so I will not repeat but if you can support then when you need some gear I am sure it would be appreciated.

I did not see anyone consume too much wine or beer but I did leave at about 7:30pm and there were a few 'players' still in attendance. I am told this would not

be typical of 15+years ago. It was great to catch up with Bob and June Scott and others we have not seen at club activities for a while.

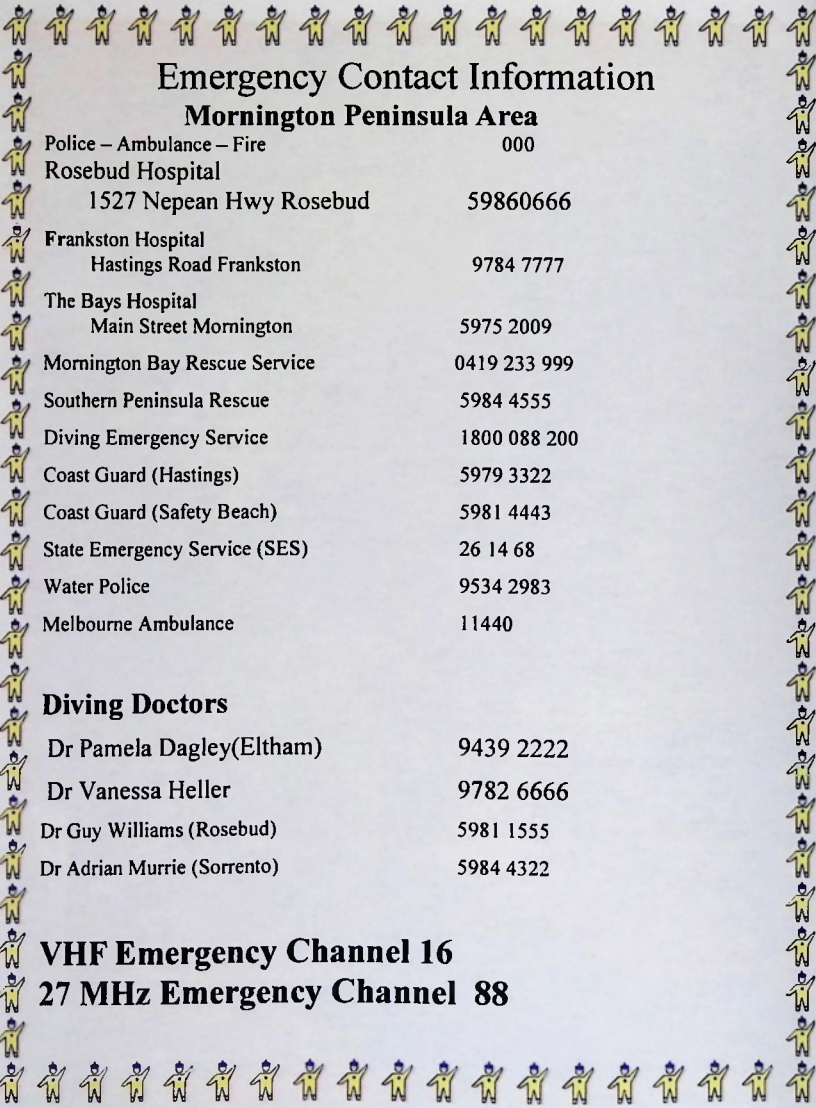
I am sure all that could make it had a great time and if you were one of those not able to attend then make it a priority next year.

Thanks again to all involved in running this very successful function and John Lawler for his co-ordination.









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 Pamela Dagley(Eltham)	9439 2222
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 are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack)
[RED = best diving conditions near the Heads]
TIMES ADJUSTED FOR DST

<i>Mon 29</i>	<i>Tue 30</i>	<i>Wed 1</i>	<i>Thu 2</i>	<i>Fri 3</i>	<i>Sat 4</i>	<i>Sun 5</i>
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
149	230	314		100	131	249
838	908	942	405	511	641	822
1439	1528	1626	1021	1107	1201	1304
2016	2121	2237	1733	1842	1947	2047
<i>Mon 6</i>	<i>Tue 7</i>	<i>Wed 8</i>	<i>Thu 9</i>	<i>Fri 10</i>	<i>Sat 11</i>	<i>Sun 12</i>
354	447	533	615	651	30	105
936	1033	1121	1204	1245	723	750
1409	1512	1611	1705	1755	1323	1400
2142	2230	2313	2353		1842	1927
<i>Mon 13</i>	<i>Tue 14</i>	<i>Wed 15</i>	<i>Thu 16</i>	<i>Fri 17</i>	<i>Sat 18</i>	<i>Sun 19</i>
138	212	245	322	404	458	153
816	844	911	939	1009	1044	624
1436	1514	1553	1638	1729	1826	1127
2013	2100	2155	2302	2430		1925
<i>Mon 20</i>	<i>Tue 21</i>	<i>Wed 22</i>	<i>Thu 23</i>	<i>Fri 24</i>	<i>Sat 25</i>	<i>Sun 26</i>
301	358	445	525	601	636	19
832	946	1036	1115	1151	1229	709
1224	1329	1432	1534	1635	1735	1308
2023	2118	2208	2254	2338		1833
<i>Mon 27</i>	<i>Tue 28</i>	<i>Wed 29</i>	<i>Thu 30</i>	<i>Fri 31</i>	<i>Sat 1</i>	<i>Sun 2</i>
100	139	219	300	347	442	111
741	811	840	912	947	1029	555
1351	1436	1525	1616	1714	1813	1119
1931	2030	2131	2240	2356		1917

Tidal Streams at the Heads—January

Italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack)

[RED = best diving conditions near the Heads]

TIMES ADJUSTED FOR DST

Mon 3	Tues 4	Wed 5	Thurs 6	Fri 7	Sat 8	Sun 9
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
226	332	428	514	553	626	654
736	912	1018	1111	1155	1233	1307
1221	1335	1452	1601	1700	1749	1834
2022	2122	2215	2300	2340	2416	
Mon 10	Tues 11	Wed 12	Thurs 13	Fri 14	Sat 15	Sun 16
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
49	120	150	221	254	330	411
719	743	807	830	855	921	951
1339	1410	1442	1516	1553	1635	1726
1916	1959	2042	2129	2223	2330	
Mon 17	Tues 18	Wed 19	Thurs 20	Fri 21	Sat 22	Sun 23
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
56	216	323	415	456	532	606
503	624	850	1000	1047	1128	1209
1029	1123	1241	1404	1524	1636	1741
1829	1939	2048	2148	2240	2326	2409
Mon 24	Tues 25	Wed 26	Thurs 27	Fri 28	Sat 29	Sun 30
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
639	50	130	209	249	331	419
1251	711	742	813	845	920	1001
1839	1335	1420	1507	1554	1644	1739
	1936	2031	2130	2229	2331	2438

Tidal Streams at the Heads—February

Italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack)

[**RED** = best diving conditions near the Heads]

TIMES ADJUSTED FOR DST

Mon 31	Tues 1	Wed 2	Thurs 3	Fri 4	Sat 5	Sun 6
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
	148	300	359	445	522	552
519	650	847	1001	1053	1134	1207
1050	1155	1320	1449	1601	1657	1744
1843	1954	2102	2200	2247	2328	2403
Mon 7	Tues 8	Wed 9	Thurs 10	Fri 11	Sat 12	Sun 13
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
	35	104	132	200	230	303
618	643	706	730	752	816	843
1237	1306	1336	1408	1440	1515	1552
1825	1904	1943	2022	2103	2149	2244
Mon 14	Tues 15	Wed 16	Thurs 17	Fri 18	Sat 19	Sun 20
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
		109	225	324	410	449
340	424	527	715	913	1012	1059
914	952	1049	1218	1359	1528	1641
1637	1733	1848	2014	2127	2225	2315
Mon 21	Tues 22	Wed 23	Thurs 24	Fri 25	Sat 26	Sun 27
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
526	600	635	117	156	235	316
1143	1227	1311	709	744	820	859
1744	1840	1933	1356	1440	1524	1609
2358	2438		2026	2117	2208	2300

VSAG Meeting and Dive Calendar

Date	ACTIVITY DETAILS
	(probable date of dive is listed but could be changed subject to weather—ring/ email DC— see page 6) Can swap between Sat and Sun depending! Dives adjusted on the day to suit divers and conditions
Dec 11	Canberra dive DC Alan Storen on 0417 017 446
Dec 16	Social meeting at Bells—no formal meeting
Dec 18/19	Magic Reef Heads Area DC Mick Kakafikas
XMAS 26Dec—2 .Jan	Trip to Beachport SA DC Alan Storen 0417 017 446
Local Diving	Xmas In Melbourne: Dive Co-ordinator John Lawler 0414-922 916. Check with local boat owners for availability.
Jan 8	DC Alan Storen Flinders at 9.00am Cape Shank exploratory diving
Jan 16	Slack water at 10am Meet at Sorrento 8.30 am DC Lloyd Borrett 0418 170 044
Jan 20	General meeting at Bells
Jan 23/24	Phillip Island DC D Geekie 0419-300 686 Meet at Newhaven 8.30am
Jan 26	Australia Day: Scallop Day and BBQ Cook off DC Greg Richards 0408 287 754 Depart Rye 9.30am
Jan 29/30	DC John Lawler. Wreck and Reef Meet Sorrento ramp 9.00am
Feb 5/6	Cape Shank Cray Day: Meet at Flinders 9.00 am DC Greg Breese. 0431-832 344
Feb 12/13	Pinnacles and George Kermode DC Mick Jeacle 0438-712 786
Feb 17	General meeting at Bells
Feb 26	26th Feb – 5th March “Poor Knights and The Bay of Islands” NZ Trip DC Greg Richards. 0408 287 754
Jun 6-15	SIPADAN TRIP - Contact Mick Jeacle



