

FATHOMS

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 2010



www.vsag.org.au

Postal Address:

VSAG

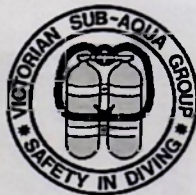
145 Johnston St

Newport VIC 3015



FATHOMS

Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group



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VSAG General Meetings
3rd Thursday in the month

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Bell's Hotel
157 Moray Street (cnr Coventry Street)
South Melbourne, 8.00 pm
Alan Storen
15 Regal Court Vermont South Vic 3133
storens@bigpond.net.au



EDITORIAL

Alan Storen

This is my 50th edition as editor and I have just 'volunteered' to do it again for the next year with Lloyd Borrett assisting. There was a spill of positions at the committee meeting as required by our constitution but most were reappointed to their current jobs.

In this edition you will read about the recent combined VSAG/GetUnder trip to the Bunker Group of Islands/Reefs and many of the photos are from this trip. Thanks to all that contributed photos – Jen Hoskin, Deb Laurie, Mary Malloy, Benita McDonough and several from my new toy – a Cannon G11. A great trip and two are being planned for 2011 – one to NZ in February and one to Sipadan in mid year. See Greg Richards or Breese re the NZ trip and Mick Jeacle re Sipadan. Get in quick while the US dollar is down and the Aussie is up!

One of the many highlights of the trip to the Bunkers was the 'Celebrity Heads' game organised by Mary on the last night. Each of the three players have the name of a celebrity stuck on their forehead and then get to ask questions of the audience (us), attempting to guess their celebrity first. They can ask any question but this must be able to be answered with a yes/no. eg Am I male?, etc. If the answer is yes they get to ask another question, if the answer is no then the next player gets to ask a question. Alex asked about 20 questions before he was able to get a yes and this proved to be the source of much amusement for the audience – and probably frustration for Alex. It went something like this: Am I male – no; am I in the film industry – no; am I a politician – no; am I a cartoon character – no; am I Australian –no; etc; etc; etc. He was the Queen! Only selected after many, many hints.

Bunker articles by Jen Hoskin, Christine Reynolds, JL and me.

Other articles including the usual contribution by Mac Gregory and others by JL and Lloyd and reports on the AGM.

Enjoy.

Alan

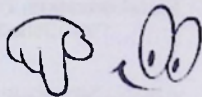
"So much Water, So Little Bottom Time!"



Bunker 'Celebrities'

COMING SOON

- Blues Train— 13 November—JL
- XMAS Party— Mount Martha— 4 Dec
- Xmas trip away—26 Dec—Alan S
- NZ trip—Feb 2011



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

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.

Three little ducks go into a Bar.....



"Say, what's your name?" the bartender asked the first duck.

"Huey," was the reply.

"How's your day been, Huey?"

"Great. Lovely day. Had a ball. Been in and out of puddles all day. What else could a duck want?" said Huey

"Oh. That's nice," said the bartender.. He turned to the second duck, "Hi, and what's your name?"

"Dewey," came the answer from duck number two.

"So how's your day been, Dewey! ?" he asked.

"Great. Lovely day. I've had a ball too. Been in and out of puddles all day myself. What else could a duck want?"

The bartender turned to the third duck and said, "So, you must be Louie?"

"No," she said, batting her eyelashes.

"My name is Puddles."

.....
MY NAME IS ALICE SMITH AND I WAS SITTING IN THE WAITING ROOM FOR MY FIRST APPOINTMENT WITH A NEW DENTIST. I NOTICED HIS DENTAL DIPLOMA, WHICH BORE HIS FULL NAME.

SUDDENLY, I REMEMBERED A TALL, HANDSOME, DARK HAired BOY WITH THE SAME NAME HAD BEEN IN MY SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASS SOME 30-ODD YEARS AGO. COULD HE BE THE SAME GUY THAT I HAD A SECRET CRUSH ON, WAY BACK THEN?

UPON SEEING HIM, HOWEVER, I QUICKLY DISCARDED ANY SUCH THOUGHT. THIS BALDING, GREY HAired MAN WITH THE DEEPLY LINED FACE WAS FAR TOO OLD TO HAVE BEEN MY CLASSMATE. AFTER HE EXAMINED MY TEETH, I ASKED HIM IF HE HAD ATTENDED MORGAN PARK SECONDARY SCHOOL .

'YES, YES I DID. I'M A MORGANNER!' HE BEAMED WITH PRIDE.

'WHEN DID YOU LEAVE TO GO TO COLLEGE?' I ASKED

HE ANSWERED, IN 1965. WHY DO YOU ASK?

'YOU WERE IN MY CLASS!' I EXCLAIMED.

HE LOOKED AT ME CLOSELY.

THEN THAT UGLY, OLD, BALD, WRINKLED, FAT ****D, GREY HAired, DECREPIT, BASTARD ASKED....

'WHAT DID YOU TEACH?'

Xmas in July 29 July 2010

VSAG had its now traditional xmas in July function at the Graduates Restaurant in Dandenong. This restaurant is run by students in their HSC years and studying Hospitality. The meal was as always great and the company equally so. Those attending were: John and Yvonne Lawler, Alan and Jude Storen, David and Pam Geekie, Lloyd Borrett and Cheryl Lees, Peter and Carol Briggs, Greg and Jan Richards, Christine Reynolds and Matthew.

Alan Storen



HURRICANE WRECK/ROSEBUD REEF/SCALLOP DIVE REPORT— SATURDAY 17TH JULY 2010

DC: JL

Six divers had booked in for the dive on 17th but by Friday we were down to 4 with two pulling out for various reasons. David Geekie was the nominated dive captain but having just arrived back from the Fiji trip passed the role over.

John Gladding made his boat available for the meeting time of 10AM and Safety Beach was the launch venue for the run over to the dive sites. Greg Richards, Deb George and myself made up the crew for John's fine Stacer boat and with the plastic clears around the wind inside the boat was almost non-existent making the run over in the 20knot Northerly and testy swells very dry and almost cozy.

The Hurricane wreck is now well and truly almost gone except for some of the metal bow and bits and pieces but most is covered by sand. The shot was dropped (right on the wreck as we found out a bit later!) Deb and John dropped in for their plan to have a look at the wreck and then pick up scallops.

First plan was just achieved as the current swept them past the wreck allowing for a passing sighting and the second plan failed as the area was almost bare of good sized shellfish with only tiny ones sighted.... Dive over.

Deciding to pull the shot line also failed as it was well and truly stuck into the wreck...our hero Greg kitted up and did a five minute bounce dive to retrieve the heavy shot which, thanks to John's perfect drop was wedged into a piece of V shaped metal....all was now well and the next drop was Rosebud Reef just a quick 1.5kms away. The slack tide was here by luck and not too much planning and so for Greg and I the dive was just perfect....this reef, made apparently from past early dredging materials, is a haven for a plurality of fish life, colour and coral growth.... and on this occasion some lost rope with two large stainless steel clips attached....not there any more.

Rosebud Reef is a favorite dive site and one that gives divers a long underwater bottom time as the depth is around 10 mtrs (38 20 710 144 52 360) and even with tidal flow it is still an easy dive.

Sea sickness is the worst type for those who suffer from it and when the K wells are forgotten and sickness takes hold it is time to deliver the patient back to land...and so it was with Deb who was by now very unwell and so back to the ramp and boat retrieved...and an almost immediate recovery.

Good cheer, some lively dive chatter, dive gear offloaded ended our dive day...thanks to all for a fine day.



Presidents Annual Report:2010

Another great year has passed for VSAG. Firstly the sinking of the Canberra, plus the "Sinking" Ball, numerous social events, a photo competition, many well attended local dives as well as Long weekends and the Annual Overseas trip.

Socially, we had a great year with the highlight being the 70 plus turnout for the Christmas Party at Deb Georges Mt Martha shed. We had good numbers turn up for Lawn Bowls, Xmas In July, Imax nite, Mentone Bakery and a tour of the Maritime Museum. Many thanks, to John Lawler for organizing most of the above.

On the membership front we had several new members join and we welcome them to the club and it was good to see them on a few dives and joining in the weekends away as well. Overall membership numbers remain strong.

On the subject of weekends away we had our usual suspects again this year. The Queens Birthday at Boarfish was well supported except by the weather gods. Cape Jaffa on the March Long Weekend was a roaring success. The Prom at both Easter and the Cup Weekend were blessed with mostly good diving weather and had large numbers of divers turn up. We had over 35 campsites at Easter and the first day of diving saw over 20 divers taken out. The first ever, annual Kilcunda Anzac weekend although dogged by appalling weather, still managed to get a few hardy souls wet.

The club ran a very successful overseas trip to Fiji during winter and more recently we had 12 members out on the MV Venus 11 diving the southern Great Barrier Reef.

The backbone of our club is the common as mud garden variety "Day Dives". This year we have had the best roll up of divers in the last 5 years. Over summer and Xmas in particular it was not uncommon to see 18-22 VSAG divers milling around the shotlines from up to 5 boats. When the weather was good, which was often, we had no trouble filling boats and even had to twist the odd boat owners arm occasionally, to meet demand.

Our meetings this year continued to offer a guest speaker more often than not and the standard again was high. These topics ranged from Diving with Whale Sharks, The Port Phillip Pilots, Fiji Shark diving, Safety in Diving, Predicting the weather

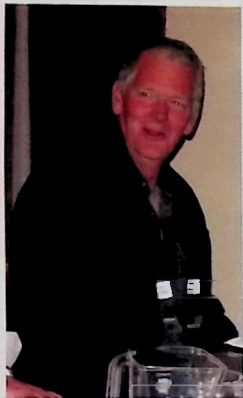


and Diving the Deep Wrecks of Victoria. We even had a session on Hard Hat diving.

The club couldn't exist without our boat owners assistance. A big thank you goes out to Mick Jeacle, John Lawler, John Gladding, David Geekie, Peter Briggs, Andy Mastrowicz and more recently David Kelly. Without these guys commitment we wouldn't be the strong vibrant club we are today.

Lastly, I want to thank the entire committee for organizing all the events, dives, raffles, social nites, magazines, trips away and keeping the club financial and functioning. I won't single any one out, just to say, they do all the work, I just get to run the meetings. Without them it just wouldn't happen. Thanks guys for a great year!





The Treasurer's Annual Report

VICTORIAN SUB AQUA GROUP

A.C.N. 004 591 575

BALANCE SHEET

AT 30TH JUNE 2010

	Notes	2009	2010
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	4	\$ 11,131	\$ 11,168
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>11,131</u>	<u>11,168</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	—	—
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		—	—
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>11,131</u>	<u>11,168</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		—	—
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		\$ 11,131	\$ 11,168

The accompanying notes form an integral part of this statement.

11:12 AM
6/6/09/10
Cash Basis

VICTORIAN SUB AQUA GROUP
Profit & Loss Standard
July 2009 through June 2010

	Jul '09 - Jun '10
Ordinary Income Expense	
Income	
Blues Train Social Night	2,413.35
Christmas Party 2009	1,140.00
Clothes VSAQ Logo	1,890.00
Member Subs	3,630.00
Raffle	800.20
Social Night	450.00
Term Deposit Interest	271.21
Wilson's Prom Easter 2010	2,301.00
Wilson's Prom Nov 2009	246.00
Total Income	11,461.76
Expense	
Advertising	166.43
AGM Expenses	630.00
ASIC (Registration & Fine)	105.00
Audit	590.00
Bank Service Charges	220.00
Boat Ramp Fees	240.00
Christmas 2009	1,243.63
Fathoms printing	1,510.00
Guest Speaker	201.31
Miscellaneous	1,501.19
Oxygen	330.58
Postage and Delivery	566.10
Raffle Prize	110.17
Social Night (Blues Train)	2,412.45
Stationery	12.38
Trophies	60.00
VSAQ Web	118.89
Wilson Prom Easter 2010	2,300.00
Wilson Prom Nov 2009	276.00
Total Expense	11,431.40
Net Ordinary Income	30.36
Net Income	30.36

Please refer any queries to Peter Briggs—Treasurer
[Editor: He has the books!!!]



Page 1

The AGM - Club Awards

**Club Member of the Year:
John Lawler**



**Literary Prize:
Alan Storen**



**Assistance to the Editor of Fathoms:
Jude Storen**





The Bunker Trip

Alan Storen

The combined GetUnder/ VSAG live aboard trip was proposed by Alan Beckhurst in 2009 but due to last minute boat problems it was put off till 2010. Not sure how many of the originals (2009 lot) could not make it this year but their places were quickly filled. The Starters were Alan Beckhurst, Mary Malloy, David Geekie, Pam Dagley, Rob and Deb Laurie, John Lawler, Alan Storen, Benita McDonough, Christine Reynolds, Cameron Davey, Steve Jones, Jenny Hoskin, Alex Ivanov.



The Boat



The MV Venus II was a 20m cruiser, all steel construction, and handled the sea conditions reasonably well. I did not see anyone sea sick but I think some were popping pills on a regular basis. There were 5 accommodation areas and if the brochure is to be believed they were spacious fitted with ensuite and ample storage. They did have ensuite but

JL, Alex, Cam and Steve took the 4 berth – not much room with these guys and all their gear! I was in a cabin with David and Pam; Deb and Rob in another cabin;

Benita, Christine and Jen in another and Alan and Mary in the 'honeymoon' suite at the back of the boat. Pity about the noise from the engine and the crew using the toilet and little if any privacy!



The Bunker Group

The **Capricorn Bunker/ Bunker Group of Islands and Reefs** is a group of islands and reefs located off the Southern Queensland coast between latitudes 22'S and 24'S, stretching from Lady Elliott Island up to North Reef. This lies between 45 and 75km from the towns of Yeppoon, Gladstone 1770 and Bundaberg. This Southern-most section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, including 9 vegetated coral islands or cays, is possibly the most pristine of all the accessible sections of the reef, being at least 60 kilometers off shore and not affected by coastal runoff

The islands were formed from the ancient remains of animals and plants which once lived in the surrounding reefs. The area consists of Fitzroy, Llewellyn and Boulton Reefs, and Hoskyn, Fairfax, Lady Musgrave and Lady Elliott Islands. The Islands have had a colourful history, which includes stories of shipwrecks, guano mining, whaling and turtle soup industries and devastation by goat populations. – See separate article.

The trip started on a high – we went on a tour over the Bundaberg Rum distillery. This was after a flight to Sydney then flight to Jervis Bay and a bus trip to Bundaberg. I know many will not believe this but I did not have a single drop of Rum – I was not drinking (alcohol) for the month of September! The tour was very interesting and many took up the offer of a taste of rum. Two tasting glasses were included in the entrance ticket and I had no trouble giving mine away. Several bottles somehow found their way onto the boat. We boarded about 10pm.

The diving

As this was a 5 day trip the first night was spent motoring up to the North end of the bunker group – Fitzroy Reef. Noisy for most especially Alan and Mary at the back of the boat and next to the motor! Some got some sleep – or so I am told!

After breakfast we were ready for the first dive – we kept as a big group (of 14) for this dive, and for most other dives, but this did not appear to cause any problems. The viz was good enough that you could do your own thing eg photography without losing contact with the group. I don't think we lost anyone on any dive!

The entry to the water was by giant stride at the bow of the boat. It was about a 2—3m drop so all gear need to be on tightly. Cameras were passed down by rope and the dives were underway. If you were first in there was often a 5 – 10 minute wait before the last got in.

The first three dives were at Fitzroy Reef and the water temp was a warm 23C; water was flat and depth 15 – 20 m. Diving was good (first dive- checkout!) to great (2nd and 3rd dives). The many varieties of corals, fans, fish including reef sharks, olive sea snake and turtles gave an idea of what to expect on the rest of the trip. The last two dives were slow drift dives and this was the norm for many of the day dives.

The first night dive was also at Fitzroy Reef – lots of sand but some very interesting bommies with very good coral.

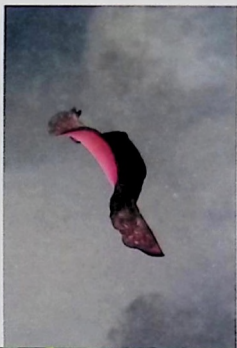
Next day we dived Llewellyn's Reef - I could not find any connection to our Chris but it was a fantastic dive so I am sure that he will find something to link. Sharks, turtles, great coral – the usual stuff! Whales on the surface!



After a second dive at Llewellyn's we motored to Hoskyn Reef and this was another good site – more fish than at the other sites - including turtles, morays and sharks.

We motored to Musgrave Lagoon and then did a night dive on a site called the Aquarium. We split into two groups (A and B team – what else); I was in the A team and we saw more than a dozen turtles – some huge! A

very good night dive. The B team also had a good dive but their turtle count was small – I think 1!! While they were in the water we were entertained by a Spanish Dancer – the nudibranch type, which waved it magic for several minutes at the back of the boat.



Next morning we moved to Fairfax Island for a drift along Birthday beach – great dive with turtles, sharks, good reef and fish life. The second dive was outside the Lady Musgrave Lagoon where we saw surface mantas and whales. The dive was very good and I was able to spot one of the whales from below.

Next dive was on the weather face of Musgrave (the caves) and again saw good reef and fish life. Sharks, turtles, morays, etc

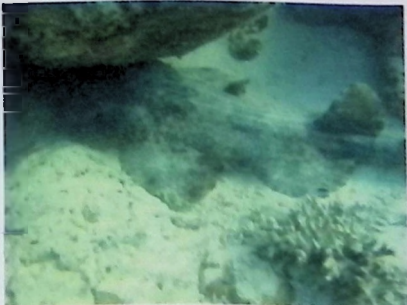


The night dive was on the mooring bommie at Musgrave. Excellent dive with lots to see



Next morning we dived the Aquarium again and saw many of the things we missed on the night dive. Clams, turtles, schools of fish and excellent reef. Trouble Bay was the next dive (apparently the operator has had trouble with the other tour group – day trippers from 1770). Very

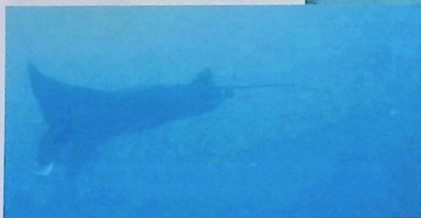
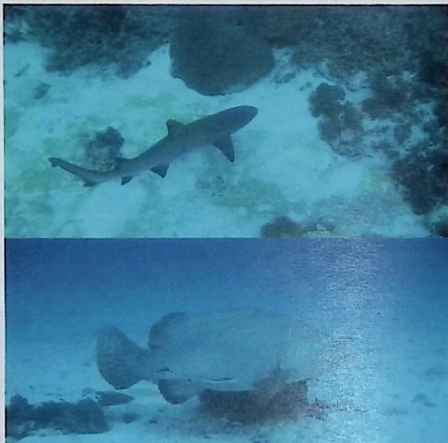
good dive – fewer fish than the aquarium but some huge schools were sighted and of course turtles. The Stepping Stones was the last dive of the day and huge wobbegong shark was sighted – was very placid with about 14 photographers wanting several shots each and blinding him/her with flashes and video lights. The rest of the reef was also great.



Last dive of the trip was to Manta Bommies and the dive lived up to the name. As well as a manta we saw sharks, a huge groper and cow tail ray. Excellent dive to finish the trip. Next dive Melbourne in water less than half the temperature!

A great trip and I am sure all who went had a great time enjoying the diving, the company and the socialising. Thanks to AB and Mary for their organisation.

Alan



My comments from Jen Hoskin

Oh what a wonderful experience. It was joy from the first moment and continued to be so throughout the trip. The Queensland sunshine was pure bliss, the water temperature a warm 22 degrees, good visibility and the scenery awe inspiring. This was my first visit to the Great Barrier Reef. The whole trip had many highlights for me. I loved the live-aboard experience, the marine life, the caves, the night dives and the company. Diving from a vessel in such a beautiful location away from the mainland and mobile reception, allowed me to fully immerse myself in the experience. Thanks for inviting me along.

Jen

I even managed to get a photo of a Harlequin Turkfish (*Choerodon fasciatus*), see above



Jen as a 'Celebrity'

Member Profile: DAVID POLITAKIS



Year joined VSAG: June 2009

How long have you been diving? Since Sept 1991

First diving experience: Got hooked on skin-diving as a teenager off Mt Eliza around 1984/85 after moving down from the country. The natural progression upon being able to generate an income was to arrange a SCUBA course - the then P.D.I. in Mornington and so that was my first intro.

Favorite diving location in Melbourne: Under the right weather conditions (strong northerly's ideally for clarity) I just love certain pockets of the M'ton Peninsula back beach. Wave formed rocky outcrops, swim throughs, deep crevices, over hangs, collapsed platforms, fish life and colorful plant/sponge/marine life with a chance of a cray - can't get much better!

Most memorable diving experience:

All dives are great experiences but this one sticks out for all the wrong reasons. In my early days one cray dive on the Rye back beach a buddy and I were sucked out by an undercurrent well & truly offshore; we think about 2 klm. Under hot summery conditions, after a long walk to entry point carrying all the gear, thunderstorm brewing upon surfacing, having drifted a little down coast as well & a long tiresome return swim; we were 2 scared little novice divers bobbing around out of our depth. On return couple that with trying to avoid swell breaking reefs, clambering around the rock platforms with swell breaking everywhere (extremely tired now) while trying to get back to safety it was a nasty but necessary shock/experience into diving safely & conscientiously. We spent about 2 hours recovering once on a beach and both missed our shifts at work obviously unable to inform them of what had happened/happening.

Remember it vividly.

Most amusing diving experience:

Like most of us at some point, I forgot my weight belt but unlike most I still persisted & went ahead with a pier dive. After stuffing my pockets with anything I could find I attempted to stupidly flap myself in a downwards motion hoping I would stay there. Lasted all of about 5 minutes after extreme exhaustion. In a last ditch effort my buddy was riding my back tank & attempting to hold me down in all sorts of unusual positions (some may say compromising) but I was just too buoyant. Her husband who witnessed the whole thing to boot said it was one of the funniest & dumbest things he'd ever seen diving. We all have a good laugh when we catch up.

Most valued piece of diving equipment:

I really enjoy my camera. It allows me to reflect on great encounters and relive the joys of diving trips and associated people and shows others who don't dive an appreciation of the other world

Do you have a dive boat?: Yes & NO. Not really. I own a small open 4.5 mtr centre console Ally mainly used for fishing; however I have occasionally dived from it but its tight & with gear onboard a bit sluggish. Not an enjoyable outing.

If you could dive anywhere in the world, where would you most like to dive?:

I'm yet to travel overseas; must be one of the rare ones? When I get there, I understand the Maldives are supposed to be pretty good however diving with whales/whale sharks is a dream of mine I want to fulfill first wherever that may take me?

Any diving words of wisdom:

Be there for a buddy should they need you, diving can throw anything at you on the spot.

Any other comments:

Due to unforgiving work commitments at my end my diving has been limited to mostly Victorian (local) diving. Only a handful of dives in Qld make up my numbers. Till I joined VSAG, I had never dived any of the wrecks off Barwon Heads - some of those are great. Thanks to all those who make their expertise, boats & time available to allow others the enjoyment of great dives. You won't be surprised - I'm still to get out on the HMAS CANBERRA.



In the Bunkers

Christine Reynolds

Big thank you to Alan Beckhurst and Mary Malloy for organising our escape from winter to the lovely scenic diving of the Great Barrier Reef.



Having overcome the first night of sea sickness and not sleeping a wink, I arose to find our first dive of the day on unexplored Fitzroy reef.....what?? No land in sight! Not quite as intrepid as I thought I was, I had visions of being lost at sea and I admit to being just a little bit apprehensive. Nevertheless I braved the wilderness with the 13 other intrepid divers and very glad to have done so. With marker bouy and tender boat we had a myriad of fabulous drift dives and thank you to all that took turns in holding the marker bouy so that we could explore the reef safely as a group, brilliant idea.

We explored underwater canyons, bommies and swim throughs delighting in all the photographic opportunities. We sheltered in safe lagoons overnight and gradually made our way south to Lady Musgrave Island where we explored the facinating Aquarium both by night and by day. We had some lovely photo opps with turtles and a giant moray eel which was just too big for us to get close enough for a decent photo, we'll let him keep his cave to himself!

Thank you to all who showed us their underwater movies during the evenings, some wonderful footage taken by all. Thank you also to Alex Ivanov for being a terrific buddy. A big big thank you to Debbie Laurie and Alex Ivanov for helping recoup some of the photos I lost due to my camera malfunctions, I really appreciate your help. Thanks to Mary for keeping us all entertained with Celebrity Heads, a fun night had by all.

An exciting trip which encompassed all the goodies we planned to see. We had sharks, an abundance of turtles and whales, a giant Queensland groper and the mighty majestic manta ray to crown our last dive.

Thank you to the wonderful crew of the Venus II as none of this would have been possible without you!



Cheers

Christine 🍷

FROM Des Williams for information

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

From: Hanna.Stevne@dpcd.vic.gov.au

To: jpil@ozemail.com.au

Sent: Friday, August 20, 2010 4:21 PM

Subject: Heritage Victoria Public Access to Historic Shipwrecks: guidelines 2010

Dear PT,

Please could you distribute the following to MAAV members.

Heritage Victoria, in conjunction with the Maritime Heritage Advisory Committee to Heritage Council of Victoria is pleased to announce the publication of the **Public Access to Historic Shipwrecks: Guidelines 2010**.

The publication clarifies the decision making process regarding public access to historic shipwrecks and the restriction of access to some sites in Victoria. The rationale behind decision making and Heritage Victoria's use of the historic shipwreck legislation is explained in relation to current restrictions on public access to Victoria's most significant and fragile historic shipwreck sites.

The guidelines are now available to download from the Heritage Victoria website: <http://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/Forms-Guidelines/Access-to-Shipwrecks.aspx>

Hard copies of the guidelines will be available from Heritage Victoria in the coming months.

If you have any questions regarding the guidelines feel free to contact me.

With thanks

Hanna

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JUST ASK DAN

Q: What are the present guidelines for flying after diving? And what is the statistical analysis behind this?

DAN: The current DAN guidelines were developed after extensive research involving numerous chamber trials. For this study, more than 500 subjects participated in the experiments at the Centre for Hyperbaric Medicine and Environmental Physiology at Duke University Medical Center. Dives spanned the typical recreational depth range: 12m, 18m, and 30m, and dive times were near the recommended recreational limits. Researchers tested both single and repetitive dives. Following the dives, participants took a four-hour flight at a simulated altitude of 8,000 feet in the chamber. This is the maximum cabin altitude allowed by the Federal Aviation Administration for pressurized commercial aircraft. The guidelines apply to air dives followed by flights at cabin altitudes of 2,000 to 8,000 feet (610 to 2,438 metres) for divers who do not have symptoms of decompression illness (DCI). The consensus recommendations should reduce DCI risk during flying after diving but do not guarantee avoidance of DCI. Preflight surface intervals longer than the recommendations will reduce DCS risk further.

Dives Within the No-Decompression Limits

A Single No-Decompression Dive:

A minimum pre-flight surface interval of 12 hours is suggested.

Multiple Dives per Day or Multiple Days of Diving:

A minimum pre-flight surface interval of 18 hours is suggested.

Dives Requiring Decompression Stops

- There is little experimental or published evidence on which to base a recommendation for decompression dives. A pre-flight surface interval substantially longer than 18 hours appears prudent.

DAN is a global network of not-for-profit, member-based organisations.

Wherever members live or dive around the world they have peace of mind knowing that DAN is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week to assist.

Join DAN today "www.danseap.org" event of an accident.

A NEW BOOK BY
Mackenzie Gregory

Our President and noted naval war historian has just self-published a book entitled

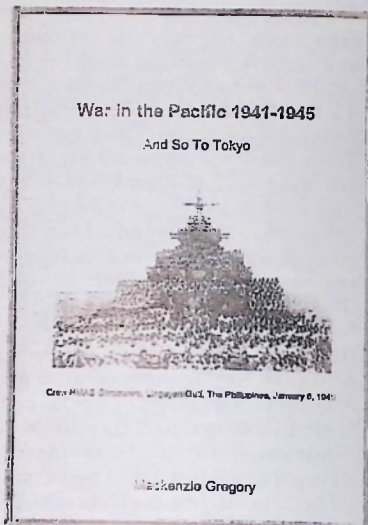
“War in the Pacific 1941 – 1945
And so to Tokyo”

265 pages, 22 chapters, covering all the naval actions in the war against Japan, from the attack on Pearl Harbor to the planned invasion of Japan itself. No other book has dealt with this four year period so well from a naval aspect, highlighting Australia's contribution to victory in the Pacific.

There is a chapter on every major battle; Coral Sea; Midway; Savo Island; Eastern Solomons; Cape Esperance; Santa Cruz; both first and second battles of Guadalcanal; and Tassafaronga.

Also Operation Hailstone, Submarine Activity around Australia, Kamikaze Attacks on HMAS Shropshire and how the Mount Hood exploded.

You can read about the loss of the Hospital Ship Centaur, the Australian POW's lost in the Montevideo Maru, and the sinking of the Iron Knight. Mac also recounts many of his personal experiences including being on the bridge of HMAS Canberra when he miraculously escaped injury or death. Also the lucky escape from certain death for himself and his wife when terrorists crashed flight 77 into the Pentagon, Washington in 2001.



Obtainable only from the author. \$ 35 posted.

Call Mac on 03-9510 0128

Or write: 301 / 598 St.Kilda Road, Melbourne 3004

The Discovery of Port Phillip Bay, Victoria, Australia, and its early settlement 1802 - 1835

Introduction.

The discovery of this large bay on the southern coast of Australia is largely tied up with a small brig *Lady Nelson*. When fully loaded, her freeboard was just under three feet. Lieutenant James Grant in 1799, had been commissioned by the then First Lord of the Admiralty The Duke of Portland, to survey the south and south west coast of Australia. He was given *Lady Nelson* with a crew of twelve and stored for a nine months voyage.

Grant sets out, then sails the southern coast of Victoria.

Lady Nelson sailed from Portsmouth on the 17th. of March 1800, reaching the Cape of Good Hope on the 8th. of July, and stayed in that port until the 7th. of October.



Replica of the *Lady Nelson* 200 years later than when she sailed into Port Phillip Bay.

By the 3rd. of December he raised a promontory which he called Cape Northumberland, and the two mountains behind it Gambier and Schank, he altered course to the south, passed two islands at the entrance of a bight which he now named Portland Bay after his First Lord.

Grant coasted eastwards, passed the already named Cape Otway, until reaching Wilson's Promontory where he was unsuccessful in trying to go ashore there. He passed through Bass Strait and pressed on up the east coast to Sydney where he arrived on the 16th. of December.

Lady Nelson was the first ship to go "sounding on, a dim and perilous way" through the Strait named after the explorer Bass, and now used by all ships proceeding along the south of Australia to Sydney or other ports of the Pacific Ocean.

Grant's second exploration.

James Grant, again in *Lady Nelson*, set out from Sydney on a second voyage on the 8th. of March in 1801. He sailed south, passed Wilson's Promontory, named Cape Patterson, then entered Western Port. On Churchill's Island he planted a garden, surveyed the coast between this inlet and the Prom, and retraced his steps to Sydney, arriving on the 14th. of May. Grant now sailed from the colony to return to England, and John Murray, his chief officer assumed command of *Lady Nelson*.

Murray sails south.

Lieutenant Murray now sailed *Lady Nelson* out of Port Jackson on the 12th. of November 1801, to visit Western Port, here he reaped the grain sown by Grant earlier in that year, then tried to sail to the north west to explore that coast.

Grant was thwarted by the prevailing winds, and was unable to enter what seemed to be an inlet leading perhaps to an estuary, but was really the narrow entrance to Port Phillip Bay.

He sent off Bower, his first mate, with five sailors in a launch to examine this inlet, Bower rounded the promontory which Grant had named Point Nepean, and his launch was swept by the rushing tide of the rip through the narrow entrance into the wide expanse of this new waterway on the 1st. day of February 1802.

Bower and his crew now viewed a great inland sea opening up before them, they stayed until the 4th. when they returned to *Lady Nelson* to report the exciting news. Now, on the 15th. of February, the brig sailed through the heads into this new found expanse of water.

I do not know who first penned the following four lines:

The fair breeze blew,

The white foam flew,

The furrow followed free;

They were the first that ever burst Into that silent sea.

Lieutenant Murray was pleased with the landscape scenery of the "noble harbour" that unfolded before his eyes, and compared it with that of Greenwich Park and Blackheath. When he went ashore he found native huts, and several hundred acres which had been cleared by fire. An island sitting in the West channel he called Swan Island, and on the eastern shore a lofty rise was named Arthur's Seat, as it reminded him of the massive hill behind Edinburgh.

A tourist chair lift which ran from the base to the top of Arthur's seat had one of the pylons that supported the chair lift structure collapsed only a few days ago, it stranded many of the passengers, leaving them stuck up in the air for hours before they could be rescued. A number of the riders on the chair lift facility were injured, some seriously, and they are still hospitalised. Fortunately there were no fatalities, it is doubtful that the chair lift will ever run again.

The reason that a pylon collapsed is still to be established.

Grant spent three weeks exploring the land adjacent to where his ship was anchored, and on the 9th. of March took formal possession of the country in the name of the King, hoisted a flag on Point Patterson, and discharged three volleys of small arms, and artillery.

On the 12th. he sailed his ship through the rip, on an ebb tide, and returned to Port Jackson by the 24th of March 1802.

Lady Nelson faded from history, the last heard of her was in January 1825, she was reported trading in Torres Straits, where she fell into the hands of the Malays, her crew massacred, and the ship seemingly destroyed, she was not heard of again.

Flinders enters Port Phillip Bay.

On the 27th. of April 1802, Flinders sailed into Port Phillip Bay, at first he thought he was in Western Port, but soon found his mistake, and sailed towards its western arm, although impressed with the fine grazing possibilities of the country he failed to find fresh water, although he was actually but three miles from such a supply. On returning to Sydney his favourable report to Governor King found him urging the Duke of Portland to authorise the formation of a settlement at Port Phillip, as it appeared to have both good soil and a suitable climate, and also to stop the French from colonising this area.

Before King could get a decision from the authorities in England, he told his Surveyor General Grimes, and Lieutenant Charles Robbins to survey the area around the harbour. Grimes now discovered the Yarra River, but his report on the suitability of the area for settlement was strangely negative.

Meantime, the British Government had decided to go ahead with setting up a settlement at Port Phillip, and ordered Lieutenant Governor Collins to proceed to Port Phillip and establish a settlement there.

His choice was unfortunate, he seems to have come to Australia with a preconceived idea that his mission was bound to fail.

Collins sailed on the 24th. of April 1803, in *Calcutta*, with the storeship *Ocean* in company, on board were 299 male convicts, 16 married women, a few settlers, and 50 men and Petty Officers of the Royal Marines.

Calcutta made the journey to enter Port Phillip Bay on the 18th. of October, only to find that *Ocean* had already arrived. A landing was made just inside the heads at what is now Sorrento, and Lieutenant Tuckey and two assistants were sent off in *Calcutta's* launch to survey the harbour, this task occupied the next 9 days.

Collins did not like what he saw, "The disadvantage of Port Phillip, and the unsuitability of the bay itself, when viewed in a commercial light, for the purposes of a colonial settlement" were strongly dwelt upon by Collins in his report to the Admiralty, he predicted that the harbour would never "never be resorted to by speculative men."

Lord Hobart now ordered Collins to break up the settlement and proceed to the River Derwent, in Van Dieman's Land, Collins happily pulled up stumps and quit, leaving the area on the 27th. of January, 1804.

Although the settlement had only been in existence over 15 weeks, there had been 21 deaths, one birth, the first white child to be born in Victoria on the 25th. of November 1803, was named William James Hobart Thorne, but the wedding did not take place until the 28th. of that month between a convict Richard Garratt and Hannah Harvey a free woman, the first deal was that of a settler, John Skilthorne on the 10th. of October.

Victoria unexplored for the next 20 years.

The interior of Victoria remained unknown and unexplored for the next 20 years, until Hamilton Hume and Captain Hovell with a party of eight set off on the 3rd. of October 1824 traveling south west, they crossed the Murray River on the 17th. of November, found the Goulburn River, and reached the shores of Corio Bay on the

western side of Port Phillip on the 17th. of December, they commenced their homeward journey to arrive back near Lake George on the 18th. of January 1825
Another attempt to Colonise in the Port Phillip area is made.

Although Hume and Hovell had arrived at Corio, Hovell a former sea Captain had mistakenly made an error in recording the longitude and thought he was in Western Port, although Hume insisted they had made it to Port Phillip Bay, but the Governor chose to accept the report of a retired sea Captain, and he now sent off a glowing report to Earl Bathurst the Secretary of State of colonies.

He in turn asked that a formal colony now be set up there, and Sir Ralph Darling as the new Governor at Port Jackson sent off 20 soldiers and 20 convicts to colonise the area on the 9th. of November 1826, although he was confused by previous reports of poor land, etc. from Collins.

HMS *Fly* sailed into Western Port on the 2nd. of December, and a settlement was started on the eastern shore near Corinella. Hovell, who had been sent along with this group to continue exploration of the area had to admit this was not the same area he had previously explored with Hume.

The site soon proved very unsuitable, little fresh water was found, the shore line mudflats and mangroves made life difficult for the new settlers. The colony did not last long, by July the next year 1827 the colony was no more.

Even today, Corinella has a very limited population and is an essentially farming area, my wife Denise, has a brother there, Kevin O'Brien with his wife Tanith have a large land holding, Lauriston, where they breed and train race horses, run cattle, have a vineyard, and olive groves. A beautiful new home faces the waters of Western Port with French Island in the distance, as one looks out to sea it is virtually the scene that Bass might see in 1798.

Civilian interests move into Victoria.

All official attempts at settling Port Phillip and its surrounds had failed when using both soldiers and their convict charges, as land ran out in Van Dieman's Land, the land hungry squatters now cast their eyes on the Western District of Victoria, to the west of Port Phillip Bay.

Around Portland Bay had been used annually by whalers and sealers during the season each year from April to October.

William Dutton in 1828 appears to be the first to have landed here when he in December of that year he went sealing later than normal, the next July he was back again, put up a hut, stayed a few months and planted potatoes to help feed his party.

He claimed to have lived in this area at different times from March 1831 to March of 1833, and always wanted to be known as the founder of the first settlement in Victoria.

But our history gives that honour to Edward Henty, one of seven sons of Thomas Henty, a farmer from Sussex England, who had become unhappy with his prospects in both New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land.

Edward had got wind of the good land on the south coast of the mainland, and in

July 1833 had visited Dutton at Portland Bay, returning to urge his father to take a look at the Portland area, and then make moves to secure land there.

Another brother James, approached the Secretary of State for the Colonies seeking to purchase land in the Portland Bay district, Lieutenant Governor Arthur, of Van Dieman's Land, gave his support to this request, he could see this was a way to extend his authority across Bass Strait into the mainland in Victoria.

Edward Henty decided he would not wait for a formal approval from the Home Government in England, off he went, to land at Portland on the 19th. of November 1834, and by the middle of 1836, this new colony was well and truly up and away, much involved in whaling.

James Henty went off to London to try and legally purchase the land where the family had squatted, he was unsuccessful, but this first settlement in Victoria continued to thrive, although it was founded illegally.

By 1836, Crown land grants had ceased in the now called Tasmania, and the Port Phillip District became a viable option.

A number of people moved across the water from Tasmania to Portland and into the Western District, and now a Tasmanian farmer John Batman, sailed the *Rebecca* across the strait into Port Phillip Bay on the 29th. of May 1835.

In the northern Tasmanian town of Launceston, Batman had earlier formed the Port Phillip Association, and had wanted to settle there for some seven years.

With his crew they explored the bay, liked the look of the land, made friends with the local aborigines, he now did a deal with the Dutigalla Aborigines, for 30 small tomahawk axes, 100 knives, 40 blankets, 200 handkerchiefs, some flour, scissors, small mirrors, a few shirts and beads, he obtained 240, 000 hectares of land (all the way from Point Lonsdale to Black Rock.)



John Batman meets aborigines to conclude treaty with them for 600,000 acres of land at Port Phillip.

He marked out a spot on the Yarra River for a settlement (this is the place for a village, so our folk history records) he settled three servants and five Aborigines from Sydney at Indented Head to mark his purchaser, and returned to Launceston to report back to the Port Phillip Association, and get ready for consolidating this new settlement on the Australian mainland.

These Batman servants were very surprised a few weeks later when a tall white man dressed in kangaroo skins arrived, it was William Buckley, a convict who had made good his escape from the ill fated Collins settlement at Sorrento back in 1804.

He had lived with the local aborigines for 30 years, and had come to warn the small party of a planned attack on them by the Aborigines, for this act, he was pardoned by Governor Arthur, he returned to Tasmania in 1837.



William Buckley escaped convict meets Batman's party 30 years after escaping from the Collins settlement at Sorrento.

Batman, back in Launceston and trumpeting how he had become “the largest land holder in the world” sparked the interest of another farmer, John Pascoe Fawkner. He organised an expedition, and under Captain John Lancey they sailed in the Enterprise through the heads of Port Phillip Bay on the 16th. of August 1835. They soon found the Yarra River having no idea that Batman had already been here, they landed, built a sod house to hold stock, but were soon visited by John Wedge who had arrived to survey Batman’s acquisition, he warned the new party they were on private property. Lancey stayed on, and Wedge soon moved the Indented Head settlement to a site by the Yarra.

Fawkner came over from Launceston on the 10th. of October, and wanted to name the river after himself, as had Batman before him, but it was already called it Yarrow Yarrow by Wedge, who found out later that Yarra Yarra meant waterfall, a native name for the rocky falls they used to exist at the end of what in modern Melbourne is Queen Street, this is the area where Batman chose for his house and a future settlement.



Fawkner made an agreement with Batman, and moved his settlement to the south bank of the Yarra River, in November 1835, Batman returned with 500 sheep and 50 cattle, and by April of 1836 had finally established the township near today’s Queen’s Bridge.

Conclusion.

Fawkner always saw himself as the founder of the Port Phillip settlement, and disputed Batman's treaty with the Aborigines, but Batman believed he had acquired all his land legally, and viewed Fawkner as an interloper upon his property. They remained bitter rivals and harassed each other for years, even after Batman had died, Fawkner continued to be bitter about the man who set up a small settlement that blossomed to become the world class city of Melbourne, with a population of over two million people, and the place I call home.

Mackenzie Gregory

"War has broken out between Great Britain and Germany."

This was the message received by the Australian Naval Board, from the British Admiralty on the 5th of August 1914, at 1100 (11 AM) Australian time.

The Melbourne Argus of the 6th of August 1914, reported under the following banner headline:

AUSTRALIA AND THE EMPIRE.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Cook) said last night:-

"We have just to sit tight and see the thing through. Whatever the difficulty, and whatever the cost, we must be steadfast in our determination. Our resources are great, and the British spirit is not dead. We owe it to those who have gone before to preserve the great fabric of British freedom, and hand it on to our children. Our ancestral home is the repository of the great liberties, the great traditions, and the great pieties, and on our very lives we must cherish them. Our duty is quite clear - namely, to gird up our loins and remember we are Britons.

German ship in Melbourne when WW1 dawns

On the day war broke out, there was one German ship in Melbourne, it was the 6,560 ton steamer *Pfalz*, which had taken on board the Consulate staff from Melbourne, and was proceeding down Port Phillip Bay to pass through the heads, into the freedom of the open sea.

Captain Robinson was the Australian pilot navigating this vessel towards the Rip.

Port Phillip Bay, is a large body of water, but it narrows at the entrance, and is overlooked by protecting Forts on each side of the entrance, these two areas are collectively known as the Heads.

A narrow dredged channel between the Heads is called the Rip, it is the only means of entering into, or exiting from the Bay, the tide races through this narrow gap as it ebbs or flows to and from Bass Strait. Ships entering or leaving Port Phillip usually do so at high tide, so that they have the maximum depth of water under their keel as they transit these dangerous waters.

The morning war was declared by Britain on Germany, the Forts situated each side of the Bay, and guarding the Rip, were warned that Australia was now also at war with Germany.

The first shot to be fired by Australia in WW1, came from a 6 inch gun emplacement at Queenscliff, it was aimed across the bows of *Pfalz* as she was about to enter the Rip. Captain Robinson now observed the signal flying at the Fort, was against the vessel he was piloting, notwithstanding an argument with the German Merchant Captain, Robinson prevailed, he turned *Pfalz* about, and sailed her back to Melbourne and captivity.

A subsequent inspection uncovered 4 inch guns stowed in her hold, plus evidence came to light that this ship had been built to enable these guns to be mounted to turn her into an Armed Merchant Ship. It had been a close run thing!

The Germans now became Prisoners of War, and Captain Robinson barely escaped the title of "Australia's first POW of WW1."

Early Visits of Russian Warships to Australia

Introduction.

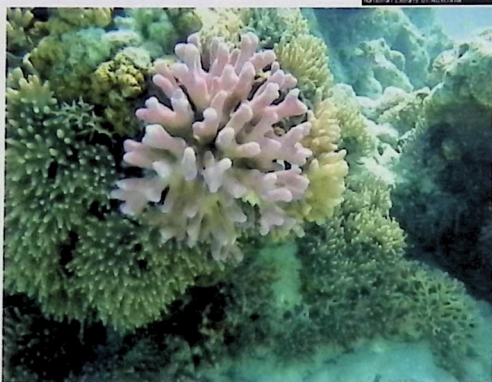
In the early days of the Australian Colonies, a number of Russian warships made visits, they were slated as goodwill visits, but there seems little doubt they also masked intelligence gathering activities.

Locally there was a high degree of concern, especially after the discovery of gold in Victoria, this precious metal was stored in Melbourne awaiting shipment via fast sailing ships to England.

Both the French and Russians were feared as it was believed that they had designs on this GOLDEN HOARD.

As a result, Pinch Gut was built in Sydney as a fort to combat any threat from foreign countries, and Gun batteries were built in Victoria at both Point Nepean and Point Lonsdale to defend the entrance to Port Phillip Bay.

In 1862 the Russian Corvette *Svetania* entered Port Phillip Bay and fired a salute to Queenscliff, it was an embarrassing moment for the locals, as they could not return this salute, as they were not supplied with gunpowder. There were those who contended that the Russian ship was merely testing out the local defences.



What has Rum and scuba diving got in common?

Well not much really except that from time to time some might be consumed at sea....well there was a connection with the excellent trip that was put together by Alan Beckhurst as part of a Getunder/VSAG combined trip to the Bunker group of islands in the South Barrier Reef .

Departing from Melbourne at the very uncivilized hour of 7AM we flew onto Hervey Bay via Sydney to then taken by coach (1 ½ hour trip) to Bundaberg where we went on a tour of the Bundaberg rum refinery (\$22 admission fee)...very interesting.

Part of the deal was two free rum drinks..some in our group found rum liquor to their taste and so purchased a bottle which later was totally consumed whilst at sea on the livaboard Venus 11 mixed with champagne..a new drink was invented!

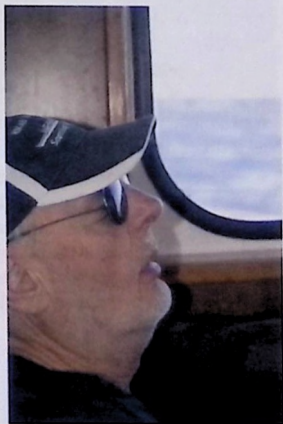
We boarded our great dive boat (80 tons) and steamed out over night to the outer reefs for 5 days of magic diving and lots of fun. Our crew of just three were just the best..skipper, dive master/coordinator Stacy and excellent chef Craig also the deckie. Most days were made up of three dives and on two occasions four dives of which one was a night dive. We did one 50 minute night dive in the quiet and peaceful lagoon of Lady Musgrove island at a place called the aquarium..such a night dive was had to be seen to be believed....fish life in abundance, busy but relaxed turtles and schooling fish wary of these strange beings in their world..magic stuff.

Whales breaching far out to sea and one occasion came to within 50mtrs of our boat..

We had a short (damp!!) tinnie boat ride to visit Lady Musgrave Island which, whilst it looked uninhabited, was actually housing temporary campers, some permanent government buildings, and what looked like one or two permanent private lodgings..really an idyllic setting just metres from the calm clear waters edge.

On the last dive was the one of the highlights..we had a visit by the majestic manta ray...

There were so many highlights on this trip, made easy by the blending in of new dive friends, great food (still working off the excess kilos) and some excellent diving in clear warm waters of the Great Barrie Reef.



Olive Sea Snake

Description

The Olive Sea Snake is a dangerous venomous snake from the coral reefs of northern Australia. It has a sturdy body and is purplish brown above with paler brown on underside. Usually has some creamy white scales scattered over body. The tail is vertically compressed and mostly creamy white with a brown ridge down the back.



Fifteen species of sea snake live on Australia's Great Barrier Reef, and *Aipysurus laevis* is commonly encountered by divers.

This large snake is not usually aggressive, but since it is both very curious and venomous it is considered dangerous.

The Olive Sea Snake

Aipysurus laevis (The Olive Sea Snake) is found on coral reefs in Australia and in the Coral Triangle. It can grow to over six feet in length, and is usually a brownish colour.

- **Warning Colouration**— most sea snakes advertise their poisonous nature with bold patterns and striking colours. Many are yellow and black, with regular banding, a universal warning in the animal kingdom – think wasp and hornet. So the Olive Sea Snake is somewhat unusual with its drab colouration. The fact that it seems to be camouflaged might well be to do with its habit of feeding on reef fish, and the lack of warning colours might be to do with its large size. A big snake might well be warning enough!
- **Breathing** – all sea snakes need to surface at regular intervals to get air. The Olive Sea Snake can stay submerged for half an hour at a time, and when underwater it can close its upwardly-pointing nostrils with valves which prevent water getting in as it dives down to feed.
- **Venom**— **poison is** injected through two fangs at the front of the upper jaw, and it causes a **breakdown of muscle tissue and paralysis**. If the muscles responsible for breathing become paralysed death usually follows. Bites can also lead to kidney failure and cardiac arrest. Despite the fact that the venom is so dangerous few people actually die from sea snake bites. Most need to be thoroughly provoked before they will bite, and even then they often inject very small amounts of venom. But they are still dangerous!

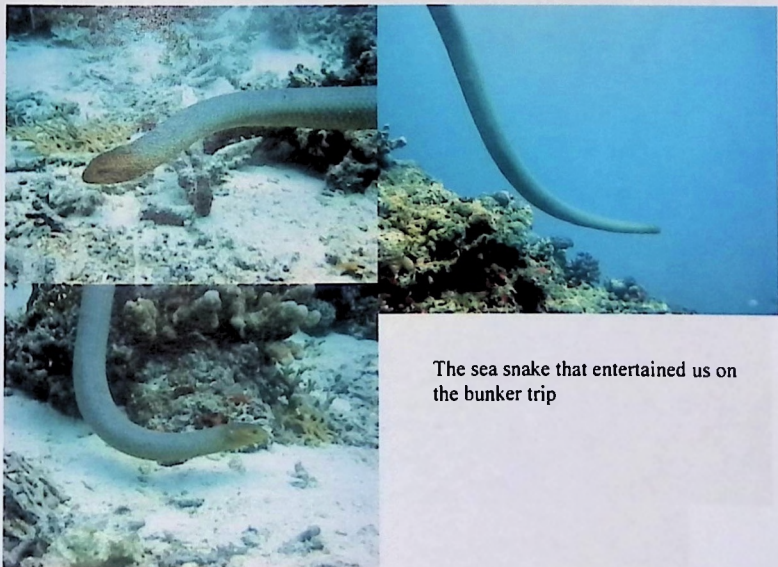
- **Swimming**– like all well-adapted sea snakes *Aipysurus laevis* has a flattened, leaf-like tail and swims very well. It can dive to depths of over forty metres to hunt fish and crustaceans, usually over coral reefs.

Reproduction– The Olive Sea Snake gives birth to live young at sea. It never needs to come ashore. It gives birth to 2-5 live young

Photographing Olive Sea Snakes Underwater

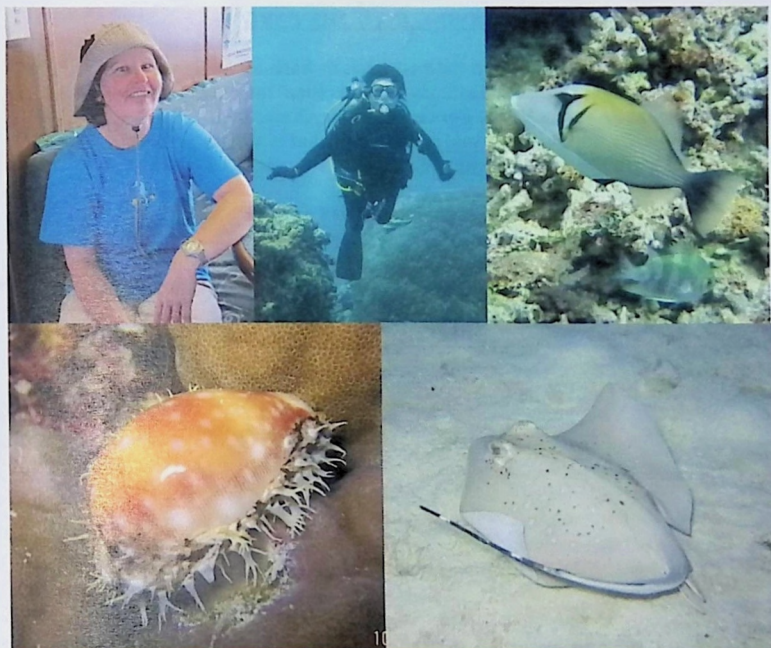
Many divers photograph creatures while scuba diving on coral reefs. Anywhere in the coral triangle, or on Australia's Great Barrier Reef divers can encounter Olive Sea Snakes. Since they are unusually curious it is quite likely that they will approach a diver, rather than try to escape. They are not normally aggressive, so it might be very tempting to try to photograph one, but any diver doing this should be thoroughly aware that this is a dangerous animal. They should never be provoked.

Alan Storen



The sea snake that entertained us on the bunker trip





Benita's collection of photos from the 'Bunker Trip'



DIVING INTO THE PAST

This edition of *Diving Into the Past* takes us back to the February/March 1995 (15 years ago) edition of *Fathoms* to an excellent long article by Life Member Mick Jeacle on the VSAG Forster-Tuncurry Xmas trip. The article contains the usual good humor that is always present in most of Mick's articles and some scary comments from one dive in particular.

So please read on and enjoy another edition of DITP.....

JL

PAGE 18

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1995

XMAS TRIP 1994/95 *FORSTER-TUNCURRY, N.S.W.* MICK JEACLE

Following a fairly easy drive of about 1 1/2 hour duration, and only one disintegrated boat trailer bearing, we arrived at Tuncurry around mid-day on Friday 23rd December.

I had been assuring Annie that it never rains in Tuncurry and we chose what we thought to be a choice site in Shangri-la Caravan Park.

Hindsight is a marvellous thing and in future I shall endeavour to select the high spots upon which to erect the tent.

You see, the next day it rained virtually non-stop, as it did on Christmas Day. We were once again ankle deep and had the dubious pleasure of watching ducks paddle in our very own lake at the rear of the tent. Annie took all this quite calmly really, and in fact she almost forgot the episode entirely after 6 or 7 days of beautiful sunshine that followed. More on that later.

On Christmas morning I called at the Forster Dive Centre to meet up with Sue Proudfoot with whom I had corresponded prior to arrival. Sue introduced me to Ari Braak and we discussed the various dive sites around the area.

I informed Ari that the rest of the crew would be arriving within the next 3 days and that I would appreciate it if he would show me where the sites were. Not only was Ari very obliging and helpful, he even gave me the co-ordinates for our GPS unit.

Not bad, considering we were diving out of our boats and all we could offer in return was for all of our divers to purchase air from Ari and Sue, although they did get some extra business in servicing Alex's 'green' regulator which I suspect lives in the car boot. Thanks folks for your co-operation, I hope we can return the favour if ever you visit Melbourne.

Divers in attendance:

Peter Wleugel	Mick Jeacle
Jerry De Vries	Barry Truscott
Alex Talay	Pat Reynolds
Gail Mastrowicz	Nicole Mastrowicz
Andy Mastrowicz	Doug Catherall
Tony Tipping	

Doug did not intend diving during his short stay due to his broken wrist. However, he did manage a 5 minute dive to explore a shallow wreck off Old bar in about 20 feet of water, to use up about 800 psi in my tank. No wet suit either, what a man!

As usual Tony Tipping arrived after the rest of us were already there for a week. I reckon he's got a bird in Coll's Harbour or Marg's got a bloke, as a visit there seems to be a must every Christmas. This time he paid the penalty as we did not dive after his arrival on 2/1/95 due to all the rain which wiped out the visibility.

The first dive we did as a group was the much heralded "Pinnacles". As it turned out this spot is easy to find as you just look for the fishing boats. The spot is also regularly buoyed with fish traps as Kingfish frequent the area.

We anchored in about 26 metres of water and quickly dropped over the side, (after Alex finished his fag that is). The anchor was ideally placed just on a rise of rock that fell away on the other side to form a deep gutter. It was here that I met up with pizza from Peter's boat who gave the familiar shark sign and pointed in the direction of the gutter. As I made off in that direction I could hear Alex screaming my name and upon turning observed a large grey nurse shark that was only a few feet away. Whilst the visibility was good, the day was overcast and it was fairly dark at 100 feet. We were to see about 6 sharks on this dive but they were difficult to make out against the gloomy background at times. There were also a few King Fish but these were not in great numbers.

We all agreed upon surfacing that we would re visit this spot again, hopefully when the skies were sunny to light up the bottom.

Some of us then dived Latitude Rock on the way back. Here fish are prolific and the usual blue groper abounds, demanding to be fed. Moray eels come from everywhere once you cut up the odd sea urchin. Depth is around 60 feet and it was quite colourful with growth on the rocks for a change, not unlike parts of Wilson Prom. This area does not have the same "feel" as the deep dive at the Pinnacles, but it is quite enjoyable.

The next day was a "pearler" with bright sunshine and glassy seas. We decided to head North to Snapper Rock which can also be a shark dive, and then dive the wreck off Old Bar Surf Club or drop in somewhere else on the way back.

On the way up the coast we came across a large pod of dolphins, but it was difficult to maintain their interest in the boats. A great sight indeed and one which we shall never tire of.

We anchored on the GPS mark but upon descending there seemed to be nothing but rocks and sea urchins. I dived with Peter Vleugel and we spent much of the dive feeding/stroking/cuddling a large and very tame blue groper. It wasn't until near the end of the dive that we in fact came across Snapper Rock. Fish life was very prolific and in fact difficult to see through. We came across a foreign anchor which turned out to belong to the boat of a couple of spearos who arrived after us.

When we surfaced 5 minutes later they were already on their way with a Kingfish that must have weighed 50 pounds. Our other divers missed the rock and its teeming fish life.

We then moved to the wreck site which we easily located thanks to Ari. Once over the site, we could see parts of the wreck from the boats. It was here that Doug donned my gear and surveyed the scene. Visibility was fairly poor but he reported it would be worth a look on a clear day. Most of us then didn't bother, although the old bazza couldn't help himself and just had to have a look.

As the next day was New Year's Day, we all rested after the frivolities, and planned a return to the Pinnacles on Monday, 2/1/95. This dive I shall never forget for as long as I live.

DEJA-VU

Most of you will remember that at about this time last year I wrote about a fantasy dive that encompassed virtually everything a diver would like to see or do in his/her diving life. Here is a small quote from that article:-

"But onward I went. It was here that I almost aborted the dive, as from out of nowhere appeared a 14 foot White Pointer, which on first impression was about to spoil my day. To this day, I don't know if he had just eaten his fill or whether the sight of the big "error" was just not appealing to him, as he just afforded me a cursory glance and disappeared into the blue".

Folks, let me tell you that this is exactly what happened. The only departure from the 'fantasy' was that I was accompanied by Barry Truscott and Alex Talay on the real dive. Upon entering the water, it was evident that visibility was somewhat down on the previous dive here, and I would estimate it to be about 40/50 feet. We commenced descent down the anchor line, with Bazza leading, yours truly close behind, and Alex bringing up the rear. At 70 feet Bazza came to an abrupt stop, and was seen to be pointing at something rising from the depths. At this point we all simply froze and watched in awe as this huge Great White Shark glided past a mere 12 feet away from us at a speed of about 1 knot. There was no mistaking the species as we were afforded an excellent side on view of this monster, which had to be 13/14 feet. It was difficult to estimate the length through because of its huge girth, and this clearly stuck in our minds as the most predominant feature and was the main topic of our later numerous discussions. As you will read more about the shark in this issue in an article written by Alex, all I will now add is that the amazing thing was that there was no fear on our part, we also discussed this later at length and a number of conclusions/views were aired viz:-

- The shark came in to check us out, and showed no interest or aggressive characteristics
- We were in its natural habitat and it had not been "chummed" or lured to the area.
- The size of its girth indicated that perhaps it had just swallowed a volkswagon and was therefore not hungry.
- It had eaten a diver before and didn't like the taste.

Therefore we watched it fin slowly out of sight, and then went and did the dive. The sight of the grey nurse sharks after this was indeed a non event and we couldn't wait to surface and tell the others. As it turned out Peter had lost his anchor off his chain and he and Pat ended up jigging up and down on the anchor line at about 130 feet and completely missed the Pinnacle. When we informed them what great bait they would have made to the Great White, they didn't know whether to laugh, or freak out. Nicole Mastrowicz only got to about 60 feet due to car trouble and had to abort the dive. Hope she was not put off for good by our extremely rare sighting. Stick with it Nicole.

Well that was it for the diving, as we had further deluges in the following days. I won't bore you with the details but it totalled a further 9 inches or so, causing:

- Peter Vlougel and me to move our tents
- Almost everybody sleeping in the recreation Hall for a night.
- Andy and Gail pulling up camp a day early due to the mud in everything (Gail reduced to tears).
- The lovely blue ocean being reduced to a colour resembling the Yarra River.

It was disappointing that we did not get to dive the Seal Rocks area. Maybe next time.

Forster Tuncurry townships are ideally situated and have everything that the tourist could hope to find. There are plenty of shops and eating establishments and the Lake system is superb.

The dive shop is situated right on the water, and after the diving all we had to do was tie up at the jetty at the rear of the shop and drop off the tanks to be filled.

It is certainly worth another trip in future.

Thanks to all those in attendance, and especially to Andy and Peter for bringing their boats.

BOOK REVIEWS

Caverns Measureless to Man by Sheck Exley

A book review by Lloyd Borrett.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

During the second and third quarters of 2010, I worked on completing the TDI Advanced Nitrox Diver and TDI Decompression Procedures courses with Mark Ryan from Aquability as my instructor.

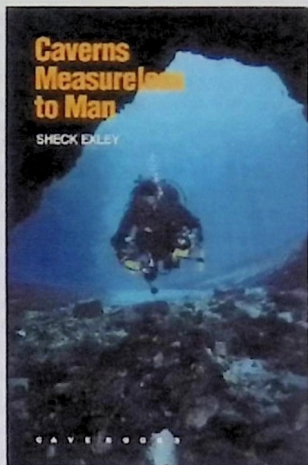
During our first theory session the conversation turned to a discussion of various books related to scuba diving that we'd read. I said to Mark that one of the most interesting and enlightening books I'd read was "The Last Dive: A Father and Son's Fatal Descent into the Ocean's Depths" by Bernie Chowdhury. This book chronicles the tragedy of Chris and Chrissy Rouse, an energetic father-son dive team who met with disaster while attempting to explore a German U-boat 70 metres (230 feet) deep in the waters off New York. Certainly a tragic ending, but the book was also highly informative about how cave diving techniques made their way into wreck diving.

Mark suggested I should read "Caverns Measureless to Man" by Sheck Exley. So I duly ordered it from Amazon.com.

Caverns Measureless to Man is the story of the passion of an extraordinary individual who spent his life exploring underwater caves. For nearly 30 years, Sheck Exley was the leader of the explorers. He set the records, he developed the techniques, and he maintained the highest standards of excellence. Sheck lived a life of adventure, danger and excitement of a degree that few people can even dream of, or, if they do, those dreams are nightmares. But just what does the word "explorer" mean. Bill Pogue was the Command Pilot for the Skylab 4 mission, a test pilot and spent a tour as an US Air Force Thunderbird pilot. He once said, "Basically, I believe that since the turn of the century (1900) the (American) population has selectively bred out the 'explorer gene' and replaced it with the 'adventurer gene'."

"The explorer is a person that has a goal and reads voraciously all the available information concerning the proposed activity. The explorer practices any skills required to perfection. The explorer understands that there are risks, evaluates these risks and takes the necessary steps to minimise risk. But inevitably, the explorer must accept the risks, that there is danger and personal injury or death is a possibility."

"The adventurer is the neophyte. They are not really interested in learning all the nitty gritty



details, they want to hire someone to take them white water rafting and ensure their safety. At the end of the run, they want a picture and a T-shirt that says, 'I rafted the Monster Killer run.' The reality is, the 18 year old summer high school kid maneuvered the raft, the clients just got wet."

I was reminded of the words of Bill Pogue earlier in the year when hearing about the around the world solo sailing exploits of Jessica Watson. I wondered if she'd ever read "Sailing Alone Around the World" by Joshua Slocum, or any of the books by Sir Francis Chichester. Was she just doing it by the numbers? Sheck Exley certainly wasn't.

Cave diving is arguably the world's most dangerous sport. Certainly it seemed to be during the time Sheck was pushing the boundaries. If you participate on the highest level, you know that some of your best friends are going to die and in this book Sheck relates how many of his did. If you continue to push yourself and your equipment to the limits – if you persist in being a world class diver as Sheck was – the chances are very high that you, too, will die.

In this book, Sheck tells of his nearly fatal beginnings as a cave diver, of his instant obsession with the sport, of his evolution into a master teacher of safety and cave diving techniques, and of the many dives on which he set length and depth records.

Sheck literally "wrote the book" (several books, actually) on safe cave diving practices. He was the first in the world to log over 1,000 cave dives. In over 29 years of cave diving, he made over 4,000.

From this book you truly get an appreciation on the history and development of cave diving techniques and how equipment evolved based off the experiences of the diving pioneers of the 1960's to 1990's. Also the sheer planning and preparations it took to accomplish some of the more aggressive explorations that were done by Sheck and others.

Some of the milestones Sheck set during his diving career included:

- Diving Depth Record on Air: 142 metres (465 feet), 11 December 1971, Andros Island, Bahamas. Sheck was actually a safety diver on this dive, not planning to go below 90 metres (300 feet) even though he'd been down to 122 metres (400 feet) during the practise dives. But when two of the three divers attempting to set the record failed to return, he descend further to look for them. He made it to within 15-20 feet of them before being forced to turn back. Those two divers died and their bodies were never recovered.

- World Record for Underwater Cave Depth: 264 metres (867 feet) on mixed gas, 28 March 1989, Mante, Mexico.

- World Record for Underwater Cave Penetration: 3,334 metres (10,939 feet), 16 December 1990, Cathedral Canyon, Florida USA.

On the 22 April 1987, Sheck set out to establish a new American depth record at Mante in Mexico. He made it down to 157 metres (515 feet) but at 88 metres (290 feet) on his ascent he paused to check the time and discovered his dive watch was gone. Ahead of him were 26 decompression stops, each of which varied in length and had to be precise in order to avoid the bends.

Sheck had taught CPR for years and the 60-beats-per-minute pace of chest compressions was firmly imbedded in his mind. He proceeded to count off each 60 beats making a tally mark on his slate to keep track of the minutes.

During his 15-minute stop at 24 metres (80 feet) – ever try counting off 9,000 seconds – a support diver came down to check on him and Sheck was able to use that diver's watch from then on.

Some human beings live and die by convictions so strong that most people cannot even comprehend them. Sheck Exley was one of those who lived and enjoyed life at the knife-edge limit.

Born on April Fools' day, 1949, Sheck was also a mathematics teacher. He died six days after

his 45th birthday, on a dive in Zacaton, a water-filled pit in Mexico estimated to be 335 metres (1,100 feet) deep. Sheck was going for "a nice round number," 1,000 feet (305 metres). His depth gauge read 906 feet (276 metres).

This book may terrify you, but it will unquestionably fascinate you, and in the end, Sheck Exley will convince you that his death came to him in the midst of the incredibly intense joy he took in diving into the depths of the earth.

Today we have poseurs driving four-wheel-drives that never leave the pavement and lawyers who put on leather jackets and parade around on \$20,000 Harleys to show they are free spirits. It seems that everything is style over substance. This book can take you back to the days when there were still a few explorers out there who quietly let their actions speak for them, at least to the few people who are there to listen.

As Sheck Exley wrote in the book, "Every field of human endeavour from Tidily Winks to space exploration has its champions and its marks for human endurance and achievement. Without them there would be little or no human progress for we would have nothing to measure our efforts by or encourage us to try harder. It is difficult to imagine any aspect of our lives that is not enhanced by competition, the drive to excel and the recognition of excellence." Personally, while I enjoy penetrating wrecks and the odd sea cave, this book is as close as I think I'll ever want to get to taking up serious cave diving. But as Molly Meldrum would say, "Do yourself a favour" and read this book. It will provide you with a fascinating look at a true explorer and pioneer of modern cave diving.

Caverns Measureless to Man,

Sheck Exley,

Cave Books, 1994

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What If It Happened To You?

by Sheck Exley.

Before the Dive, What if...

- The gas company put the wrong gas in the cylinders you fill from?
- The wrong grade of helium is in them?
- There are impurities in the gas?
- You miscalculate your mixtures and have too much Oxygen?
- Too little Oxygen?
- Too much Nitrogen?
- Too much Helium?
- The gauge for mixing is wrong?
- The filling temperatures are different?
- The dive shop filling your tanks allows the gas to bleed back into their bank system?
- Your cylinders contain flammable materials and you put in pure Oxygen?
- The dive shop tops your deep tanks with bad air?
- A pinhole leak allows the helium to leak but other gases remain?
- You get the cylinders mixed up while filling?

On the Descent, What if...

- You do not have enough Oxygen when you submerge?
- Your depth gauge reads shallow?
- A tank you thought had Trimix was really Nitrox, etc?
- You over breathe your regulator?
- You have a delay before ascending?
- You have a delay on the way down?

You have to exert a lot on the bottom?
You have a five minute line entanglement etc.. on the bottom?
You lose your dive partner on the bottom?
You get blown from the dive site?
You lose your mask?

During Decompression, What if...

The decompression tables you have don't work?
You lose your decompression tables?
You lose your watch?
You lose your depth gauge?
You run out of decompression gas?
You drop one of your decompression cylinders?
Someone steals one of your decompression cylinders?
Your decompression cylinders have leaked?
You are delayed at a decompression stop?
Danger from hazardous marine life keeps you from completing your decompression?
Your drysuit floods?
You get hypothermia?
You get the bends?

Comment from Lloyd Borrett:

While doing the TDI Extended Range and TDI Trimix courses with Richard Taylor in Sri Lanka, I was shown a copy of this article and told, "These are some of the situations one should think of when Technical Diving. Be sure you can accept the risks! Otherwise do not do it!" In his book "Caverns Measureless to Man" you read that Sheck Exley actually had some of these situations happen to him and you learn about how he dealt with them.

Dive Reports — Lloyd Borrett

25 Jul

Ex HMAS Canberra

Boat Captain: John Lawler, VSAG

Boat: "Miles Ahead", John Lawler's 6.5m 175HP, Sorrento

Cheryl came along as a deckie to accompany John Lawler, Dave Kelly and myself on a dive to the HMAS Canberra.

I had my twin setup along together with a single stage cylinder so that I could see what it would be like moving through the wreck with a stage cylinder for the first time.

We headed out from Sorrento and tied up to the public mooring. John and David went in for their dive. On their return, I geared up and went in solo.

The visibility was pretty bad but I made my way to the bridge and started to move around the area behind and blew the bridge. So got the hang of tucking the stage under as I moved through narrow doorways etc.

Made my way up to the forward mast and shot my DSMB. Took a compass reading and headed in what I hoped would be the right direction. I was having images of the others laughing as they watched my DSMB heading off course. However, the mooring buoy eventually came into view 2 metres ahead and I then changed track to where I thought the boat would be.

We headed back inside the bay and had lunch. Then Dave and John did a drift dive on Boarfish Reef.

We'd given Cheryl lessons on driving the boat, so left her to do so while the guys were in the water. She did an excellent job. So JL left her driving the boat as we headed back into Sorrento. Once we'd retrieved the boat and transferred our gear we all headed back to The Scuba Doctor in Rye.

25 Sept Blairgowrie Pier

Divemaster: John Lawler, VSAG

Boat Captain: Mick Jeacle

Boat: "SS Jeacle", Mick Jeacle's Hayes Hunter

On the Saturday morning of the AFL Grand Final I headed down to The Scuba Doctor to setup my newly arrived Apeks XTX200 regs for use on my single cylinder setup. I'd also got an XTX200 second stage for use as my secondary second stage (Occy). This means I've now got Apeks XTX200 second stages on every reg I breathe from. In due course I had the Miflex hoses sorted and everything connected.

I then headed home and arrived just as the AFL grand final game started. I proceeded to get my gear ready for diving on Sunday, plus make some changes to my single cylinder setup, bringing over a few ideas learnt from Mark Ryan while doing my technical courses to this single cylinder 'recreational' diving setup. During the third quarter, the footy game started to get rather interesting so I stopped fiddling with the diving gear and watched it properly. Dramatically, the game ended with a draw.

On Sunday morning I headed down to the Sorrento boat ramp, chatted with Alan Storen for a bit and started changing. Eventually the three dive boats arrived. I was assigned to Mick Jeacle's boat along with Greg Richards and Steve Lamb. We loaded our dive gear onto Mick's boat.

JL called us all over for an onshore briefing and pointed out that conditions looked marginal for getting out and diving on the ex HMAS Canberra as planned. We decided to head out anyway and take a look.

We launched Mick's boat and headed out. But even off Portsea it became obvious that the huge swells we were seeing inside the bay didn't look good for us getting outside and diving the ex HMAS Canberra. Before we reached the heads we called off going outside.

Allan Beckhurst came on the radio and said they were about to depart from Queenscliff and head over to dive Blairgowrie Pier. VSAG decide to join them. Thus we had four boats full of divers heading over to do a pier dive. It felt very strange.

Mick and Greg decided to sit the dive out. I got the impression that Mick was struggling with the concept of pier diving from a boat! I suspect its many many a year since he did a pier dive.

Steve and I rolled in and started to look around. Steve was taking photos and what with both of

Recreational Abalone Open Days for Central Victorian waters

There is a permanent closed season on the take of abalone from central Victorian waters, except for 60 nominated open days of the year.

The 2009/10 season is closed!!

