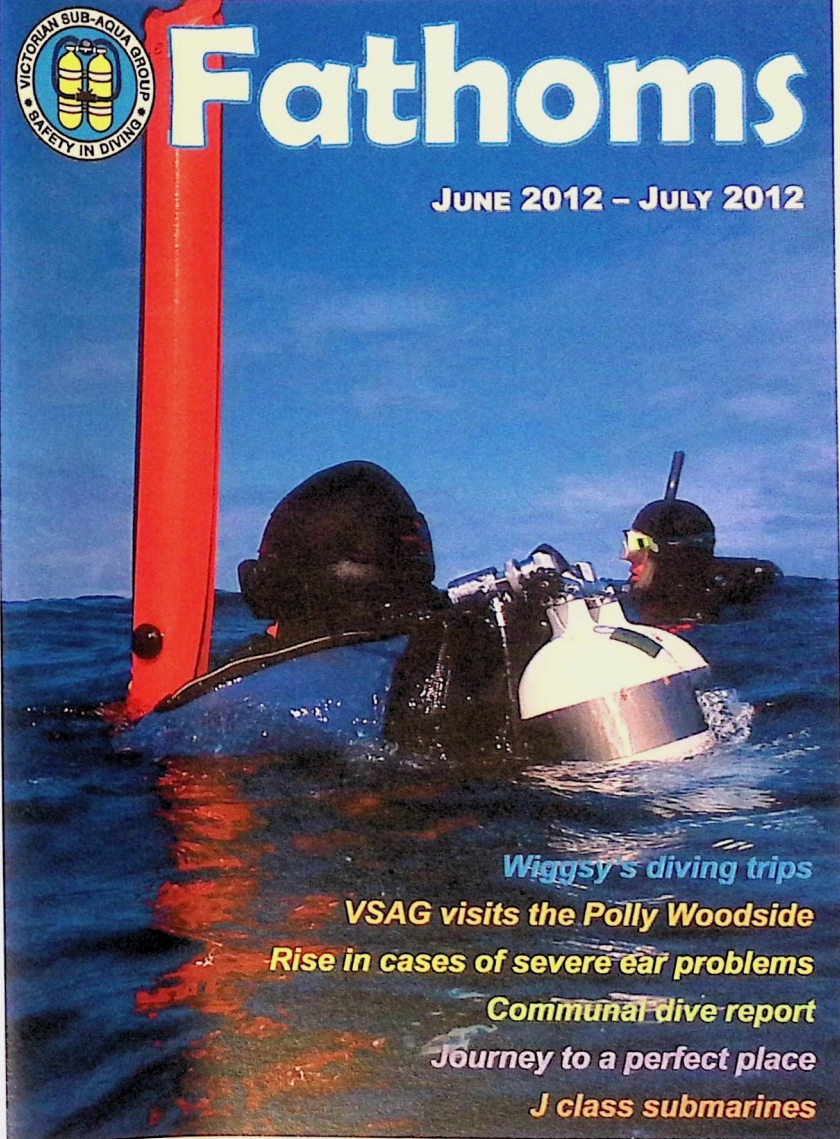




Fathoms

JUNE 2012 – JULY 2012



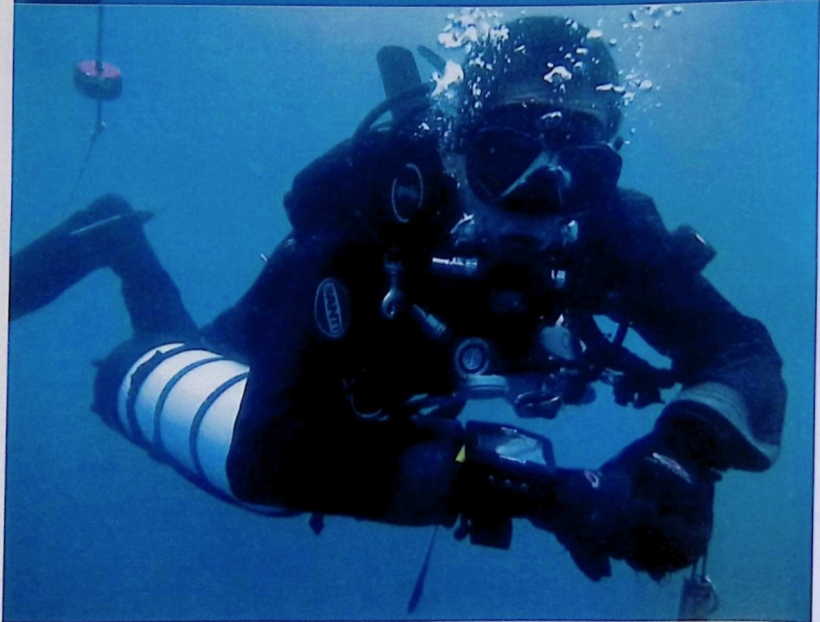
Wiggys's diving trips
VSAG visits the Polly Woodside
Rise in cases of severe ear problems
Communal dive report
Journey to a perfect place
J class submarines

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Michael Ngai goes side mount diving on a VSAG dive day.





Fathoms

Est. 1954

Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group

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VSAG General Meetings

Maori Chief Hotel

3rd Thursday in the month 117 Moray Street (corner York Street)

Meeting starts at 8.00 pm South Melbourne VIC 3205

(Dinner starts from 7.00 pm) Melway: ID L11

Editorial Submissions:

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Tasmanian Combined Dive Clubs Weekend

On the Queens Birthday Long Weekend in June the Tasmanian dive clubs gather at Bicheno on Tasmania's east coast.

Last year some Getunder and VSAG dive club members joined them and had a great time. They travelled over on the ferry on Friday night. Most came back on the ferry on Monday, but some stayed on a bit longer.

If staying on, one option is to head down to Eaglehawk Neck, which is a highly regarded Tasmanian dive destination. Another is to just go into tourist mode.

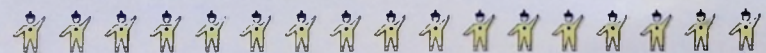
David Geekie went to Bicheno last year and had such a great time that he's looking to do it again this year.

If you're interested in being a part of this interstate trip, then please contact David by email to dgeekie@bigpond.net.au or call 0419 300 686. ❖



VSAG Dive Equipment Box

VSAG now has a private transient equipment box located at The Scuba Doctor dive shop, 1/49 Peninsula Avenue, Rye VIC 3941. Equipment that is not in-use by VSAG divers and boat owners can now be held in our black storage box. Please use this facility responsibly. ❖



Reports to the editor on VSAG dive days and other activities are actively encouraged. If possible please identify the dive captains, boat owners and other divers with you on the dive day.

Any photos of club dive days, trips and social activities are also most welcome. Please provide captions and identify people where possible. ❖



Editorial



Well we have another jam-packed edition of Fathoms for you. A lovely item from Alan Storen about the recent social outing to the Polly Woodside. Plus John Lawler suggested a new communal way to compile a dive report and you get to read the result starting on page 16.

We have a thought provoking contribution from John Lippman about the "*Rise in cases of severe ear problems*". Plus there are new VSAG member profiles of two divers from the Campisano family.

I've been thinking about the "*Journey to a perfect place*", plus we have "*J class submarines*", being the first in new series of articles by Trevor Williams.

Diving into the past

This edition also includes two items from the June/July 1991 edition of Fathoms. The first is a trip report by Don Abell on *Easter 1991 at Tidal River*. Great stuff!

The second, on "*Safety in diving*", is also by Don Abell and makes for thought provoking reading. I'd like to think that the opinions and attitudes Don expressed back then are still very much those of the VSAG membership today.

Still been too busy to dive

Another two months have passed and Cheryl and I still haven't managed to get

out diving. But we have sold our two places (well Cheryl's is currently "under offer") and moved into our new digs at 14 Sheoak Road, Frankston South VIC 3199.

We've settled in very quickly. Quite a few friends have been calling us and then dropping by as they pass nearby on their way to and from the lower reaches of Mornington Peninsula and other parts of Melbourne. Please feel free to do likewise.

I'm still in the process of working out how best to arrange things in my workshop, where to store all of our dive gear, plus how to best arrange our dive gear washing and drying areas.

It seems every time I now go to do something I realise I already have what I need but that it's currently in my 40 foot shipping container, which is a 5 hour round trip drive away. So getting the setup right is still very much a slowly evolving work in progress.

Hopefully before the next edition of Fathoms the weather gods and our schedules will align and we'll be able to actually get back out diving again.

Best Regards, Lloyd Borrett. ❖

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New 2011-2012



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VSAG Committee meets at 8.00 pm every 2nd Thursday of the month (except in January)

All Members Welcome

Maori Chief Hotel, 117 Moray St, South Melbourne VIC 3205

Meeting Report

Thursday, 17 May 2012

Wiggsy's Diving Trips

We were joined at the May 2012 VSAG general meeting by Alan 'Wiggsy' Wiggs, a long-time local diver, underwater photographer, plus teacher at The Peninsula School in Mount Eliza. Alan has run a diving programme for students at the school for many years and it features one or two dive trips each year. (Seems very similar to what Alan Storen did while teaching.)

These "school" dive trips typically see some 40 or so teachers, students, parents, past students and other blow ins heading off for a diving adventure somewhere in Asia or the South Pacific. (A few VSAG members have been on one or more of these trips.)

Wiggsy told us about high-lights from five of their recent diving destinations, including: Fiji; Palau; Siladen Island Resort, Bunaken Marine Park, Indonesia; and Atmosphere Resort at Dumaguete in the central Visaya Islands in the Philippines.



Alan's presentation included plenty of stunning underwater and surface photos he'd taken on these trips. Alan's knowledge of underwater critters shone through as he described the photo contents and the features of various dive sites.

Many thanks for a great night Alan.

Ed: More photos on next four pages. ❖



Photos: Alan Wiggs — Left: Apo Island in the Philippines lacks nothing for colour and fish life. Right: A porcelain crab unfurls its fishing mittens at Apo Island.



Photo: Alan Wiggs — Trumpetfish poses with Red Squirrelfish and yellow gorgonian fan at Beqa Lagoon, Fiji.

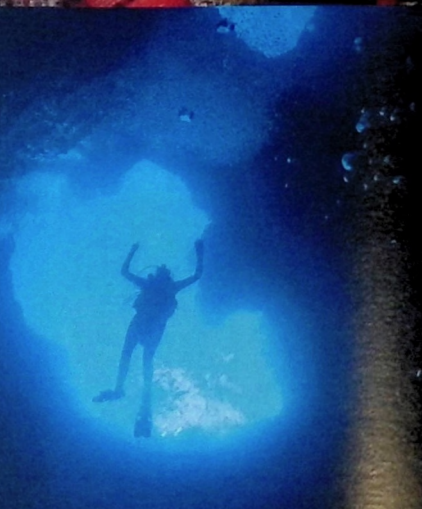


Photo: Alan Wiggs — Sally Gregory dives the cavern at Blue Holes, Palau.




Photo: Alan Wiggs — Situated between Beqa and Vatulele in Fiji, is "Short Reef" a never before dived site that included gargantuan gorgonians and epic visibility.



Photo: Alan Wiggs — Barracuda Point at Sipadan Island North Borneo, certainly lives up to its name.



Photos: Alan Wiggs — Gorgeous Tiger Shark — one of seven or eight species of sharks divers are likely to see at the famous Beqa Lagoon Shark dive.



Photo: Alan Wiggs — Cute little Pygmy Sea Horse at Siladen Wall,
Bunaken Marine Reserve, North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

VSAG Social Outing

Saturday, 21 April 2012

Polly Woodside

by Alan Storen, VSAG.



The *Polly Woodside* was built in Belfast in 1885 and operated as a cargo vessel, carrying coal, nitrate and wheat between England and South America, and also visiting North America, Africa, Asia and Australia. It now resides/parked (if that is the right nautical term!) at South Wharf for the public to visit. It is floating so it probably is berthed!

It is a three-masted iron barque: gross tonnage was 678 tons. The hull length is 59 m, overall length is 70 m, beam 9 m and the estimated area of sail when all sails are set is 1110 sq metres.

The motley VSAG crew (I would not have liked to set sail with this group!) that visited on 21 April 2012 comprised:

John Lawler, David and Pam Geekie and daughter (Merri) and two grandchildren (Tigerlilly and Evan), David and Raye Flew, Benita McDonough, Denys Smerchanskyi and wife Bei, Alan and Jude Storen with grandson Liam, Jackie Storen with daughter Olivia.

We 'set sail' from the wharf/reception shed after watching a number of films and slideshows, and a great display of artefacts from the 'Polly' and other sailing ships of that era. All members were allocated a role on the ship ranging from cabin boys, sail maker, bursar, deckhand, etc. and their roles and cabins were pointed out as we were shown over the vessel by a very knowledgeable and 'entertaining' guide.

Grandson Liam was most impressed that the 'toilet paper' was in fact a rope of diameter about 3cm, and used after one



Photo: Alan Storen — Liam checks out the 'toilet paper'.



Photo: Alan Storen — VSAGers visit the Polly Woodside.

had 'done the job'. It was then dropped down a hole near the seat into the water to be washed before being pulled up and used by the next person.

The cabin boys — Liam, Tigerlilly and Evan can be seen washing down the decks.



Photos: Alan Storen — Grandkids scrubbing down the decks of the Polly Woodside.



Photos: Alan Storen — Everyone having fun at the Polly Woodside.

During the visit the guide indicated that some vandals (or was that Pirates) boarded her and threw some material overboard. JL and David F kindly offered the services of VSAG to salvage the bits. Any takers to assist can contact JL — I think the viz on the day was about 50! (no, not metres and possibly not cm, most likely mm!

For those who have not visited, or have visitors from overseas/interstate it is well worth the visit.

After the tour we found a bar/food place very close nearby and spent the rest of the balmy night enjoying each other's company. That was equally as good as the visit.

Thanks to JL for his organisation. ❖





Photos: Alan Storen.

Time for some food!



Safety In Diving

DAN Asia-Pacific See a Rise in Cases of Severe Ear Problems



by John Lippmann
OAM, DAN Asia-Pacific Executive Director

One of the first skills divers learn is how to “equalise” their ears.

Failure to adequately equalise the ears results in ear barotrauma (pressure injury). This is often apparent by a feeling of pressure, soon followed by pain, during descent (or sometimes ascent).

The most common and usually the most effective method of equalising involves the diver holding his/her nose and blowing gently. This is known as the “Valsalva Manoeuvre”. Although this method is very effective, damage can occur if it is done too vigorously. Overly-forceful equalisation should be avoided.

Other methods include swallowing (with or without the nose blocked), wriggling the jaw, squeezing the tongue against the soft palate, or a combination of these. Divers need to ensure that whatever technique they use is effective in preventing pressure build-up.

If the pressure is not equalised, swelling and bleeding of the lining within the ear will occur, which helps to equalise the pressures and relieve the pain, although this can often lead to infection. In some cases the eardrum can rupture and, in very severe cases, delicate membranes within the inner ear can tear, enabling fluid to leak from the inner ear and creating the potential to damage this delicate organ, possibly affecting hearing and balance.

Bubbles from decompression can also form in or around the inner ear and so disrupt its function — inner ear decompression illness. In addition, a variety of other non-diving-related conditions affecting the ear can cause symptoms in divers during or after a dive.

Signs and symptoms associated with inner ear dysfunction may include hearing loss, vertigo (spinning), dizziness, ringing or other ear sounds (tinnitus), nausea and vomiting.

Any diver with these signs or symptoms after diving should promptly call a DAN-supported diving emergency hotline for advice. The doctor or medic will take a thorough history including the dive profile, the mode of equalisation and any equalisation issues, and the time of onset and progression of symptoms. A suitable course of action will then be determined.

An inner ear barotrauma or decompression illness needs to be managed swiftly and appropriately to minimise the potential for permanent injury.

Although ear injuries very commonly result from diving, especially with novices, historically, DAN AP has had relatively few Members who sustained severe ear injuries. However, this appears to be changing and over recent years, we are receiving an increasing number of reports of divers with serious ear injuries. Following are examples of four very recent cases:

Case 1: This 51-year-old male is a dive master with a history of around 500 dives. He conducted a single 22m dive during which he had no noticeable equalisation problems, although at one point he mentioned pushing a finger under his hood to allow water entry. On surfacing and removing his hood he noticed an echo in one ear, muffled hearing, a buzzing noise, and very slight dizziness. He went to a general doctor several hours later and was given decongestants. Still rightly concerned, he consulted a specialist two days later and various tests were conducted. However, by the time the diagnosis of inner ear barotraumas (IEBT) was made, he sustained permanent severe hearing loss and tinnitus in the affected ear.

Case 2: A 34-year-old technical diver had completed two deco dives and sur-

faced with “a feeling of fullness in his ears and sinuses”. Back on the boat when later he forcefully equalised his ears (Valsalva), he heard a loud popping and felt sudden dizziness and complete hearing loss in one ear. Believing this not to be serious, he did not call DAN and remained on the boat for the next 3 days, not diving but with persistent hearing loss and dizziness. On returning to Singapore, he contacted DAN and was directed to a nearby hospital with an Ear Nose and Throat Specialist. A diagnosis of IEBT was made and he remained in hospital for week. However, the damage was irreversible and he was left with permanent hearing loss and ringing (tinnitus) in one ear.

Case 3: While on a diving vacation in the Solomons, this 51-year-old diver with a history of more than 3000 dives noticed a full feeling in one ear, dizziness and hearing loss while boarding the boat after the second of two 50–60m decompression stop dives. He reported that he had no equalization difficulties. Believing that he had an ear infection, he self-medicated with antibiotics and did another three dives. After flying home, he contacted DAN some 5 days after the injury and was referred to an ENT specialist after discussion with a hyperbaric doctor. He was diagnosed with IEBT. By this time, irreversible damage was done and he is left with profound hearing loss and tinnitus in one ear.

Case 4: This diver had done 30 dives over two weeks in Indonesia to a maximum depth of 23m. Despite suffering severe diarrhoea, he decided to continue diving, although likely to still be dehydrated. On the final day he did 3 dives with no reported equalisation or other problems. However, about 1.5 hours after surfacing, and while having a hot shower, he suddenly suffered severe vertigo (spinning), accompanied by nausea and vomiting. He was taken to the local navy chamber and he was already inside and receiving treatment by the time DAN was called. The chamber was small and it was very hot inside and he continued to vomit continuously. He became very distressed and later said that he thought he was going to die in there. DAN arranged to evacuate him to Singapore where he was diagnosed with inner ear decompression illness and received several more recompression treatments. Fortunately, his symptoms improved greatly.

Important Lesson to Be Learnt from these Cases

The above cases highlight the importance of seeking specialist diving medical advice as soon as symptoms develop. Although it can sometimes be very difficult to differentiate between inner ear barotrauma, decompression illness, and certain other disorders, a specialist can make a provisional diagnosis and advise the best course of action based on the

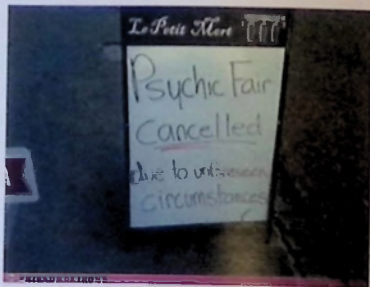
likely problems and the severity of the symptoms. Sometimes permanent injury may be unavoidable but on other occasions, quick action can minimise the likelihood of permanent hearing or balance problems.

Safe diving.

Divers Alert Network Asia-Pacific

As a diver, it's important to be prepared for unexpected diving accidents/illnesses. Being a Member of the Divers Alert Network (DAN) means that wherever you live or dive around the world you have peace of mind knowing that DAN is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week to assist in the event of an accident/illness. DAN provides Members with Worldwide Emergency Evacuation Coverage and offers optional Dive Injury (Treatment) Insurance. DAN coverage really is as essential as your mask, fins and air! www.danasiapacific.org

Ed: See page 33 for another "Safety in diving" item. ❖



VSAG committee news

The following is a summary of main points raised at the April and May 2012 committee meetings.

- The updating of VSAG's first aid kits for member boats is progressing.
- The purchase of a fourth OxyPro oxygen set for member boats was approved.
- Some 11 starters for the Heron Island dive trip. Others are off to Palau, Chuuk and Guam.
- Cash reserves of the club as at 12 April 2012 were \$12,725.11.
- Total of 81 members, including 14 life members.

VSAG welcomes new members

Applications for membership from the following people were approved by the committee in April and May 2012:

- Peter Campisano (April)
- Carole Campisano (April)
- Denys Smerchanskyi (April)
- Luke English (May)

Would all members please extend their welcome to Peter, Carole, Denys and Luke and help them settle into VSAG's unique culture. ❖



VSAG contact details

We'd like to update our records with the current contact details, including emergency contact details, for all VSAG members.

Could you please visit the web page <http://www.surveytool.com/s/183106EC2> or <http://bit.ly/1.86Rx1>

and complete the online form found there.

We require one submission per VSAG member. This means we require a separate submission for each person on a family membership.

This information will assist dive captains to better organise dive days and handle any emergencies.

❖



Dive Reports

Sunday, 1 April 2012

J4 Submarine & Chimney Rock

John Lawler was Dive Captain for the VSAG Dive Day on Sunday 1 April 2012. But this time, John decided to try something different as a way for everyone participating to help out with the dive report. Here is what JL suggested...

Firstly a big thanks to all for making last Sunday a whopping great VSAG dive day. It was a WOW for sure.

Apart for some sea sickness, a bit dirty on the J4 and some swells there also, the rest was brilliant. And the weather gods looked after us for most of the day.

Chimney Rock area has a lot to offer as I believe from some sounding around there are many more sites that offer excellent diving. A bit of a way from Sorrento so the conditions would have been good.

To my crew, Benita and my "newbies" Michael and Mark thank all for your fine company and good laughs.

So now that I have patted you all on the back I ask you to consider this...

As the DC for the day I am obliged to do the dive report. Frankly after doing so

many over the years I could simply "cut and paste" 'em and get away with it so that's a bit boring!

Would each of you submit a one paragraph "snapshot" of your dive experience of say, around 12 lines... or more if you so wish. Need to have this done by the end of April.

If we agree to this it will be a first of this type of multiple dive reporting where all divers have a chance to express their experiences. What do you think?

And the dive reports flowed in.

John Lawler, Dive Captain

On March 31st three boats had booked in for the April 1st dive and not enough divers to fill one boat. Somehow the dive gods got messages through to some VSAG'ers as the dive numbers spiralled high enough to fill three boats with the last coming at around 4 pm on the eve of the dive day.... amazing!

Conditions out in Bass Straight... swelly to say the least... quite lumpy crossing the rip... but enough courage to warrant a dive on the J4. A good call as the second dive was to be the new 'hot' dive site "Chimney Rock" off Barwon heads so the sub was well on the way there.

The site was already shot by a charter boat... not a common one... I have never seen this one before... about six divers on board.

My shot went in with a counter weight but the swells lifted the big orange buoy and the 9 kg bottom weight skipped away from the wreck. Most divers used the charter shot and one boat dropped anchor near the site. General opinion... a very swelly and dirty dive.

Barwon Heads next and seems all three boats had numbers for Chimney Rock... ours was not one!

But we dived in excellent reefy terrain and it was a very satisfying dive and, unusually for me, not cold. Loads of a fish I had not seen before... a school of white fish and plenty of sweep.

One dive crew did find the Chimney and this is covered further in their dive report. A bit swelly here and the vis was a bit down but all in all a great dive... we will be back!

Round dive trip approx. 50 kms. My crew was Benita, Michael Sesin and his son Mark.

Michael Sesin

My dive day experience is a perspective from a visiting newbie, a snap shot of the sub was, murky and dull due to the large swell, need I say more.

Chimney Rock being first time there was excellent large over hangs swim throughs and gullies, with lots of various marine life, covering a large area this dive site is worth investigating further. I could have spent more time there but just got cold.

And a big thank you to John and the rest of VSAG for a great day and looking after us newbies Michael and Mark so well.

Andrew Quested

I was on Peter and Carol's boat — a vessel as unfazed by waves as it is by age. If only my stomach had proved so robust.

We started off on the J4. It was my first dive on this sub and while the visibility was not great it was clear that this is a wreck with plenty to offer. Moments after I tentatively poked my head into a hole on the top to see what was inside I was sucked in. Literally, in this case.

There was quite a swell, and the rush of water meant there would be no dithering around those entrance holes. It wasn't exactly dangerous, but it was just edgy enough to make the dive interesting.

Shining my light around the interior of the sub was eerie and surreal — I'm sure most of you are familiar with the experience. Looking back out into the hazy green light was a photo opportunity waiting for better viz. Or at least for a diver who hadn't left his camera at home.

The highlight of this dive, however, was outside the sub. A huge school of ... erm... fish... enveloped us. (I am totally clueless at fish names.) Whatever they were, they presented a beautiful moving mosaic that was an enticing delight and an unexpected treat.

Some other divers turned up just as we were leaving. I know because they parked their boat on top of us during our safety stop and dropped a shot line so close that I could hear it whoosing past. I'm glad they missed and hope they enjoyed the dive as much as I did.

Next we headed off to Chimney Rock. Peter pulled out a book of old markers from the days before GPS was invented. Might have been before computers were invented, I suspect. Anyway, after a while of lining up no-longer-existent trees with the roofs of buildings that have long since turned into whole suburbs we found the right spot. And it was worth every bit of falling about.

If this place wasn't hidden by 20 metres of water it would be on postcards. The Chimney itself is a big bommie with a hollow running through it. You can swim in and the bottom and out at the top. Or in the top and emerge at the bottom like Santa Claus. Surrounding the bommie are wonderful gullies, swim-throughs, ledges and hidey-holes for crabs. It's definitely worth taking a torch for this dive.

Chimney Rock has rocketed to the top of my list of favourite dive sites. Although, as always, the top of the list of my favourite dive is... the next one.

Thanks to all for a great day.

Greg Breese

My experience started with loading gear into Dave's boat at 7.30 am. A quick meet and greet morning moment and we were all on-board Dave's car for the trip down.

The launching ramp parking lot was pretty full by the time we got there, so I knew conditions out there must be okay if the Fisho's were out in force.

Out on the water and through the rip without any drama, meeting up with the other VSAG boats, and we headed off to dive one of the subs (I never remember which one is which).

Denis and myself were first in and decided to follow the shot line instead of Pete's anchor. John is usually pretty accurate with his lines, but today must have been an off day. The shot never hit bottom, and was floating a few feet above, might need a slightly heavier weight eh JL?

Neither Denis or I thought to check which direction the sub should be in before hitting the water, so we swam in a squarish pattern hoping to come across it. At least that's what I think we were do-

ing, it was a bit hard to tell as Denis had his head under every second rock looking for AB's.

Water was quite milky and without chancing on the sub we headed back up to find Pam and David had gone in for their first as well. Unlike us they followed the anchor line and hit the sub no problems...

For our second dive we headed off to Barwon heads. David has mentioned this spot a few times so it was time to see if it was all talk.

We tied off to Peter and all 4 of us went in. This spot is one of my favourite places I've dived in and around the bay (lunnily enough one of the furthest from the bay too!) The terrain is magnificent with swim throughs and odd rock formations to poke in around and under, there is plenty to keep the diver occupied.

Denis had a crack at a modest cray, we spotted a large ray on the sand who didn't mind us getting quite close, and I saw some 'god knows what kind of eel like in appearance and movement fish hiding in the back recess of a cave' which I've never seen before.

Denis ran low on air and I still had well over half a tank (that's a genuine over half a tank Grrr) so Denis headed up and I opted to stay down. I kept Dave and Pams bubbles in sight and kept poking around the rocks having so much fun I

earnt myself a deco obligation on the way up, I signalled to Pam and Dave I was heading up.

As I slowly ascended the thought crossed my mind that Dave and Pam might beat me to the surface. My computer giving me a 10 minute stop! By the time I broke surface I was getting just a little bit bored of the view at 5 metres. The inside of my mask is not that interesting! Seems my longer than expected stop caused a little concern for the others! Sorry chaps.

All in all I had a great day. The second dive made everything well and truly worth while and I can't wait to get back down there!

Peter Campisano

Good day fellow Aquanauts,

We went out through the Heads using the "Small Ship's Channel" — we still coped a bit of a pounding getting out. We dived the J4 (90' Sub). There was another dive boat on the site, so this made it easier for us.

We were lucky enough to drape the anchor over the sub just to the rear of the conning tower. The water wasn't as clear as we'd hoped but penetration was still good. There was a bit of a swell pushing and pulling us as we negotiated hatch after hatch. After about 17 minutes Carole and I had had enough and spent about 8 minutes doing deco.

David Geekie suggested our second dive be at Chimney Rock, near Point Flinders at Barwon Heads. We hadn't dived this area for 25 years, but I was keen to see how much my photo marks had changed.

I couldn't believe that the lone house I lined up with the pine tree in the background, was now a small township. So much had changed! We managed to line up the remaining marks and landed smack-on the Chimney!

This dive was magnificent! Even the crap viz couldn't detract from the underwater scenery. It was like seeing the brilliance of the 12 Apostles underwater with blue devils and huge dusky morwongs swimming around them. WOW!

My only regret was that this wasn't our main dive. Two dives in this area is definitely worthwhile. Carole and I swam up through the Chimney just like the good old days, but this won't be the last! Fantastic Dive!

David Geekie

The weekend started for Pam and I with a drive from Newport to the Kylesyth Club on Friday night for a work retirement party, and a return trip on Saturday night to the Bayswater RSL to celebrate Leo's 60th birthday — a great night catching up with many diving folk. It was never going to be an early night so we were grateful for the 9:30 meeting time at Queenscliff.

Late Saturday afternoon nearly proved disastrous as I prepared the boat. I pulled out the oxygen kit that had been sourced through Robin to ensure I was familiar with its use. The kit was in perfect condition and Pam and I discussed how we would use it in an emergency. I then checked over the trailer and decided I needed to adjust the tension on the trailer brake cable. Just after 5 pm I succeeded in tightening the adjustment and then snapped the threaded rod, dropping the assembly to the ground. A panic trip to Bunnings around 6 pm allowed me to fit a stainless section and fix the rakes. Not a good start to the dive trip.

Greg and Denys were joining us for the trip down and once we had loaded the gear in the boat around 7:30 am we headed down to AB's to pick up our tanks. We then launched quickly and prepared to depart in time to meet up with JL and Peter C out on the water. As soon as we left the Queenscliff channel I spotted the two other boats heading for the rip and we met up as planned.

Given Peter had dropped an anchor at the J4 and JL was 'live' we tied up to Peter's boat and followed Greg and Denys into the water. We followed the line to the sub and headed along the deck. The surge was incredible, at one stage we were 'blown' off the sub as we crossed over a hatchway, we must have ascended more than 2 metres, possibly 3 before we were

able to head back down. We decided we had had enough and headed back up. Viz was quite poor.

All three boats headed off for Chimney Rock, now one of my favourite spots to dive around Melbourne. I had noticed an interesting spot on my last visit so decided to anchor and investigate. It was incredible terrain with lots of fish life, swim throughs and gullies. I will definitely be back.

Greg gave us a scare when he was not back in the boat when we surfaced. He had signalled he was going up before we turned around and headed back to the anchor line but did a 10 minute deco. When working out statistics on the various diving computer models do they build in heart attacks from worried crew when divers spend half a lifetime at deco?

We headed back with Peter C and parted company after passing through the Rip. Once back at the boat ramp we washed out the boat, trailer and even our dive gear, then finished with a hot, free shower in the ramp facilities. We Queencliff divers do it tough!

Another great dive day.

Ed: I quite liked this concept of a communal dive report and think it works a treat. Let's try it again soon. But can we please have some photos next time. ❖

Easter Bunny

A man was blissfully driving along the highway, when he saw the Easter Bunny hopping across the middle of the road. He swerved to avoid hitting the Bunny, but unfortunately the rabbit jumped in front of his car and was hit. The basket of eggs went flying all over the place.

The driver, being a sensitive man as well as an animal lover, pulled over to the side of the road, and got out to see what had become of the Bunny carrying the basket. Much to his dismay, the colourful Bunny was dead. The driver felt guilty and began to cry.

A woman driving down the same highway saw the man crying on the side of the road and pulled over. She stepped out of her car and asked the man what was wrong.

"I feel terrible," he explained, "I accidentally hit the Easter Bunny and killed it. What should I do?"

The woman told the man not to worry. She knew exactly what to do. She went to her car trunk, and pulled out a spray can. She walked over to the limp, dead Bunny, and sprayed the entire contents of the can onto the little furry animal.

Miraculously the Easter Bunny came to back life, jumped up, picked up the spilled eggs and candy, waved its paw at the two humans and hopped on down the road. 50 yards away the Easter Bunny stopped, turned around, waved and hopped on down the road another 50 yards, turned, waved, hopped another 50 yards and waved again!

The man was astonished. He said to the woman, "What in heaven's name is in your spray can?" The woman turned the can around so that the man could read the label. It said:

"Hair spray. Restores life to dead hair. Adds permanent wave." ❖

Friday 6 April 2012

Nudie Reef & North Wall

by Michael Ngai, VSAG

Divers: David Geekie, Pam, Tim, Michael Ngai

Forecast for the Easter long weekend doesn't look good, the only 2 diveable days appears to be Friday (6th) and Sunday (8th). We launched both days with varying results.

Dive #1:

Site:	Nudie Reef
Bottom Time:	43 min
Max Depth:	21.9 m
Bottom Temp:	18 C
Visibility:	4 m

Sunny and calm day on the sea, definitely not what we've expected from the forecast. Goes to show that sometimes you've got to go out and test the waters!

We immediately decided to head outside towards Chimney Rocks, the rip was so calm that it was no different from boating in the bay! David commented it was one of the easiest trips out the rip.

It was my first time side mount diving off a boat, let alone a smaller private boat. I was nervous, better not fall and put a hole in the boat, I said to myself! Got geared up and into the water without too much

of a hassle, all those shore dive practice definitely paid off!

Pam and myself for the "guinea pig" dive, as this was a new site. Due to the poor visibility and fairly strong surge it was a little challenging. That didn't stop millions of sweep in schools following us and swimming around us constantly. It's the first time I've seen that many of them in a school and they are not shy either, a few came within centimetres of me! As we were ascending, there was a gully with literally millions of those... um... little salmon like pinky fishy creatures and sweep just swimming about. Amazing is an understatement!

David and Tim on the second dive, they were equally impressed.

Dive #2:

Site:	North Wall
Bottom Time:	34 min
Max Depth:	24.4 m
Bottom Temp:	18 C
Visibility:	4 m

Wind started to pick up and David decided it's best to head back into the bay and catch the slack. David showed off his boating skills and we were back in no time. Dropped the shot, Pam and myself dropped in... Struggled towards the buoy... made some headway, David called us back onto the boat as the tide appears to be still running.

Saw two other charter boats in the water, all waiting for the slack. We kept an eagle eye on them, we'll jump in as their divers jump in we reckon. Waited a couple more minutes and David decided that he's going to be the "human buoy"! David grabbed his fins and jumped into the water!!! Swam towards our buoy and occasionally looked down on the line to report the tide status!!! I think I should get him a few beers for that type of service! Hm... but then again beer tend to disappear quickly once they get to my home.

Slack is here, Pam and I jumped in, well err... back rolled in. Got to the bottom and realised David forgot to tell us which direction to head. Oh well... we'll just swim around. Didn't actually find the wall (I headed in the wrong direction) but it was a good dive nevertheless. There were a few rock structures and overhangs with plenty of fish life scattered about. Viz was pretty lousy here too, but that certainly didn't dampen the fun one bit!

David and Tim decided not to do their second dive as conditions were getting rough.

Ed: See the inside front cover for photos of Michael Ngai side mount diving. ❖

One Liners

A man was blissfully driving along the highway, when he saw the Easter Bunny hopping across the middle of the road. He swerved to The Grim Reaper came for me last night, and I beat him off with a vacuum cleaner. Talk about Dyson with death.

A mate of mine recently admitted to being addicted to brake fluid. When I quizzed him on it he reckoned he could stop any time.

I went to the cemetery yesterday to lay some flowers on a grave. As I was standing there I noticed 4 grave diggers walking about with a coffin. 3 hours later and they're still walking about with it. I thought to myself, they've lost the plot!

My daughter asked me for a pet spider for her birthday, so I went to our local pet shop and they were £70! Blow this. I thought, I can get one cheaper off the web.

I was at an ATM yesterday when a little old lady asked if I could check her balance, so I pushed her over.

I start a new job in Seoul next week. I thought it was a good Korea move.

I was driving this morning when I saw an RACV ute parked up. The driver was sobbing uncontrollably and looked very miserable. I thought to myself that guy's heading for a breakdown.

Statistically, 6 out of 7 dwarves are not Happy.

My neighbour knocked on my door at 2:30am this morning, can you believe that — 2:30am?! Luckily for him I was still up playing my Bagpipes. ❖

Sunday 8 April 2012

Barwon Buff #2 & Chimney Rocks

by Michael Ngai, VSAG

Divers: David Geekie, Pam, Tim, Michael Ngai

David wanted to try launching from Ocean Grove Ramp and we decided to meet up at the ramp. I got there early. Hm... this is a lot different from Quencscliff / Sorrento. There were plenty of parking spaces and it's probably only 10% of capacity. Great, no more parking miles away like 2 days ago.

Dive #1:

Site:	Barwon Bluff #2 / Chimney Rocks
Bottom Time:	30 min
Max Depth:	23.6 m
Bottom Temp:	18 C
Visibility:	3-4 m

David did a bit of asking around fellow boaties and got an idea of how to get out of the bar. It was a long trip until we finally reached the bar. One part involved travelling through a fairly low bridge! I reckon if the canopy of the boat was any higher we would have been stuck! I ducked just in case, didn't want to go diving just yet.

Originally we wanted to try this new site called Barwon Bluff #2, we found what

appears to be the spot, dropped the shot. It's Pam and me for the first guinea pig dive again. Got to the bottom and we started swimming... Yes swimming in the WRONG direction again. Sorry Pam and David, we didn't manage to explore this site!

We surfaced after 13 mins swimming over sand in the wrong direction and we decided to move to Chimney Rocks. Next time just swim in the opposite direction I'm going and you're bound to find the site! Oh well, we can come back next time when viz improves.

Viz was worse than 2 days ago, saw a huge smooth ray in a little gully that just managed to fit him, how cute is that! He blinked his eye as we swim above him.

Continued swimming, trying hard to follow the rock structure as we can't see very far, it's easy to go astray and end up on barren land. At this moment a dolphin suddenly appeared, does a few circles around us checking us out. He swims away momentarily, only to appear again with his mate. Now there are 2 dolphins doing laps around us, they were so close that I could see their eye moments looking at us as we were spinning around like idiots trying to keep up with their circling. I'm sure in their minds they're saying "Look at these 2 idiots spinning around in the water!" Definitely my first confirmed dolphin encounter during a dive! Totally worth it coming out today!

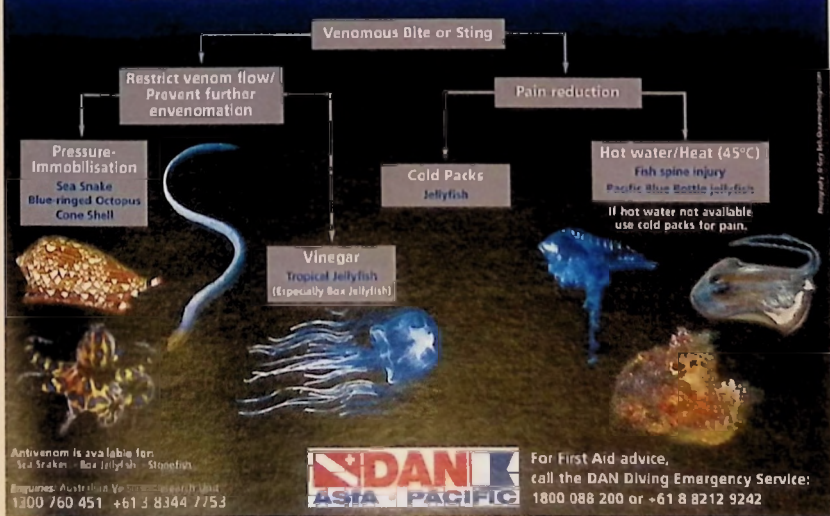
David and Tim did their first dive after us. No dolphins, but I thought I overheard them saying they had a Port Jackson sighting... Hmm... Dolphins are way cooler ;)

Conditions turned for the worse after our first dives, David decided it's best we head back. Ended the day early, we were back at the ramp around 1pm.

Despite the poor viz and bad conditions on the second day, it was a fantastic 2 days of diving over Easter! ❖



Venomous Marine Creatures



Thursday 19 April 2012

Bodaci & Phil's Reef

by John Lawler, VSAG

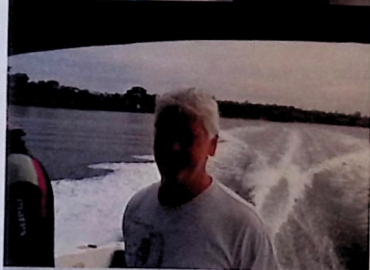
"Bodaci"

Dive one... What may well be an old steel fishing trawler called Bodaci (TBC) has been sunk out in Port Phillip Bay for a long time judging by the amount of growth on the structure. The wreck is located about 20 kms due west of Ricketts Point in about 18 mtrs. It is about 6 kms North of the protected wreck City of Launceston site.

I first dived this wreck with other VSAG'ers in 2006 in very good conditions for the area. A latter VSAG dive was planned but aborted as the divers failed to find the wreck, which is a bit surprising as it is about 20 mtrs long and the shot would have been right on the site...however!

The top end of PPB is generally not well regarded for good visibility and for good viz to eventuate conditions need to be subjected to basically North winds and calm conditions for about two weeks.

As the 19 April 2012 arrived the said conditions made a trip out to the site a good plan so a dive crew was called for... Trevor Williams, David Flew, Tim Foster and I made up the dive team for



Photos: Trevor Williams — David Flew, Trevor Williams and John Lawler.

the adventure... departing from BMYS around 9 am we were greeted by absolute dead flat waters and clear sunny skies. The trip out was covered in about 20 minutes on the Haines Signature.

At the site the sounder picked up the mass and the shot line was assembled but despite several runs back over the site the sounder could not pick up the mass... the sounder did however continue to show a spike so that was where the shot was dropped... strange.

Trevor and I got the nod for the first dive (guinea pigs!) and descending the line we were greeted by about 10 mtr viz... and the shot line was right next to the wreck... amazing.

The wreck is lying on the portside with a list of about 20 degrees. Entering a hatch forward on the bridge we moved to the bow area with care as the slightest kick of a fin caused silt to rise... not much is left only bits of metal and fallen internal structure bits... but interesting to be in there.

Outside a slow enjoyable trip around allowed for inspection of the various old port hole openings, huge amounts of empty shells all over the wreck, a lone Boarfish and under the stern a school of Catfish unnerved by the bright torch lights.

On the South side was what appeared to be the gantry, probably fallen off and into the silt after many years of stress.

Our next two divers had similar experiences and in all a huge and exciting dive.

“Phil’s Reef”

Second dive... Sometimes divers have to be grateful for the “local knowledge” of our diver colleagues as they provide us with some great dive sites otherwise not known about. David Flew has an abundant knowledge of reefs around the Mordialloc, Ricketts Point, Black Rock areas and beyond.

On one dive trip on his lovingly restored wooden boat “Karingal”, David and his team sounded and came over a reef a few kms out from Mordialloc in about 10 mtrs. VSAG member Phil Watson checked the reef and hence it got named after him... why not!

This reef/bommie is just magic, small, pretty, full of life... on the day we dived there were at least 100 old wives schooling around us... so calm they would come in just centimetres from the face mask! Small rays under the lower ledges sleeping, puffer fish, leather jackets and lots of colour... a photographer’s paradise!

A very fine day... it had the lot!

Ed: See rear cover for more photos from this dive day. ❖

Diving the web

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG

The Great White Shark Kayak Story



When this photograph was first published in Africa Geographic, BBC Wildlife and later in Paris Match and the Daily Mail (London) it resulted in a flurry of e-mails, phone calls and letters from around the world asking if the image was a fake.

Well it's not. For the full story behind this stunning picture, please visit:
www.thomaspeschak.com/kayak-great-white-sharks/

Read Dive Log For Free Online

Most of you will be familiar with the monthly print magazine Dive Log, which has been around for 20+ years.

Well now it's no longer available in printed form from your local dive shop. Instead you can read it for free online, or on your iPad. See www.dive-log.net.au/



Nautilus Lifeline



Some of you may have heard about this great new diving safety device which is unlike any other available today. It's a combined VHF radio and GPS for divers. I liked the concept so much I purchased one as soon as they became available in Australia. Unfortunately I haven't had a chance to dive with it yet.

You can learn more about it online at: www.nautiluslifeline.com

Or read what Scuba Gear Review has to say about it at: <http://bit.ly/JwTHyR>

Or checkout the review in the US edition of DAN Alert Diver at: <http://bit.ly/LTRNFt>

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Diving into the past

Articles from the June / July 1991 edition of Fathoms

Diving into the past returns for this edition of our great magazine.

Most VSAG divers have a love affair with the diving at Wilsons Promontory, however that love affair has been shattered by the forces of Mother Nature sending massive torrents of water onto the camping grounds and all but destroying the tidal river as we knew it. This has closed down any opportunity for diving at the Prom out of Tidal River.

But all is not lost... seems mother nature has had sympathy for the plight of divers and recent indications are that the Prom could be open for boat launching for the November long weekend... YIPPEE!

In the meantime we go back in time to remember some earlier fun times (and there were/are plenty!) at the Prom provided by an article from the mighty pen of Life Member, Don Abell.

Read on and enjoy! *John Lawler.* ❖

EASTER 1991

by Don Abell

Each year the Club books more camp sites at Tidal River, with the aim of making everyone more comfortable and allow us all more room. Each year we seem to get more members and families wanting to attend and so things are no more comfortable. Perhaps the tents, caravans, etc., are also getting bigger.

For 1991 we moved up to 18 camp sites. We matched that with a record attendance of 80 people with 7 boats. Next year we will probably try for 20 camp sites.

Numbers are limited only to the extent of the number of divers we can put onto boats. Four per boat is about right for diving at Tidal River. About 28 divers listed to attend, so I called some favours and managed to get 7 boats.

I had forgotten that we have some retired divers in the Club and some getting tired as old age catches up with them. The result was that we did not require more than 5 boats on either day. However, I do appreciate those members who towed their boats to ensure all divers could dive. Boats in attendance were those of:-

Mick Jeacle
Barry Truscott
Bob Scott
Andy Mastrowicz
John Lawler
Neville Viapree
Ian Jagger

I would also like to list all those attending, but we would be up for additional postage for Fathoms. Thanks also goes to Mick Jackiw for towing down the compressors.

Diving on Friday was in excellent weather and on flat seas. We were lead astray to Scotty's folly, which was rated as a non dive off Norman Island. We took the boats to Skull Rock for a relaxing lunch and swim with the seals.

We had a visit from Fisheries & Wildlife Officers, much to the delight of members. Mick Jeacle applied his usual wit, and suggested that all 5 boats speed away in different directions and see what happened. Equally witty, Murray Black suggested that we tell them that Murray's Japanese friend Mitsu Ho was in charge. Now Mitsu Ho new some words of English, but it was a good bet that the boys from F. & W. didn't know much Japanese. Anyway, they were okay, and even tried to entertain us with some old vaudeville routines, getting on and off our boats.

Saturday was a lay day, much to the disappointment of Bill Jansen, who had brought down his famous boat to once again try the fickle waters of Bass Strait. This was not to be. I am starting to feel that Bill is as lucky for the Club at Tidal River, as our old jinx, Des Williams.

Sunday was not brilliant, but certainly diveable. First dive was okay and some said brilliant. I guess it depended where the boat anchor dropped in. The second dive was on Great Glennie, at a spot that Mick and I thought showed no promise at all. After assurances from Jenny Large and Sally Staddon, we dropped in to a dive that lead us through a myriad of underwater caverns and swim throughs for the entire dive. It was definitely something to rave about, and we know exactly where it is for next time.

Apart from diving, we had just a few other moments to remember. John Lawler had his 29th birthday celebration. (I suspect there are some he forgot to celebrate). The ranger thought that singing "Happy Birthday" eleven times was a little excessive.

Neville Viapree appeared to be risking starvation - unable to get a feed. I found out later that this ploy earned Neville about 5 main meals each night in various tents. Then he washes it down with Navy Rum - overproof. Perfect when Neville does not have to drive home.

And our man Tipping was sporting the latest in Jayco pop top caravans. A great advancement from roughing it in Africa, Tony. There is obviously money in the Tipping family, proved when Marcus informed me that he had found 20 Easter eggs.

To his credit, old Tone gave me a lot of help in organizing tank fills. Without Tony chasing people, it wouldn't have happened.

I used to try to put my tent where there were not too many kids waking up early. Wrong. I camped next to the Jeacles, and can the old Mick snore. I lay awake all night thinking that a freight train was about to come barrelling through my tent.

To Mick's credit, I like the way he gets rid of guests who overstay their welcome.

I also met Andy Mastrowicz's mum, who told me that she won't let Andy go camping without her until he's just a little bit older. After all, some children get lost at Tidal River.

It was good to see some new faces at Tidal, like Ruth and Marita. Ruth has learned a little about picking tents. Marita has also made a good tent acquisition. If she had asked the Club we could have loaned her one just like it.

Again I got caught talking to Judy Hennike about the meaning of life, late at night. Despite my assurance to her that I am basically a very shallow person, I tried to understand (infact standing at all is an achievement at that hour) protection of societies morals, the hitchhikers guide to the galaxy and Club safety procedures. When Judy moved on to the sexual plight, oppression and physical agony of the women in Africa, I lost bulk points on the basis of apathy. So I stumbled over tent ropes and passed out on my half blown up lilo.

Well Easter has passed for 1991. Two days diving must give me a pass score.*

SAFETY IN DIVING. WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

by Don Abell

Those members and friends who attended the Easter long weekend will remember good diving and, as always, a lot of fun. As I have said on many occasions, that is what V.S.A.G. is all about, diving and good fun.

Some of those who dived at Easter, may also remember that we had an unfortunate incident where a member experienced dizziness and a slight loss of orientation during a dive, suspected Nitrogen Narcosis. Some 3 weeks later the same diver spent some time in the recompression chamber at the Alfred Hospital, possibly as a result of the Easter incident.

It was an unfortunate incident, and one I hope we all learn from. My real concern is that there was some suggestion at the time (not much, but some) that the Club and the Dive Captain were responsible for the incident happening.

As the current President of V.S.A.G., I have a strong opinion on that sort of attitude among members and others. The V.S.A.G. is an organization which comprises members who have gathered for the purpose of their common pursuit - diving. Each of us joins the Club as a qualified diver, who has been trained in the technical aspects of the sport, as well as the safety aspects. The Club is "not a training organization, it is not a regulatory body."

Responsibility for "Safety In Diving" rests with the individual member. Furthermore, each individual is responsible for safe diving practices so as to not risk the safety of fellow divers.

As you are all aware, as a Club we are endeavouring to focus more on safety so that each member improves or maintains their standards. Like the diving industry as a whole, we are learning more about our sport. This improves equipment and standards. I have no doubt that this will continue as long as each of us continues to dive.

The Club will always attempt to make our diving environment as safe as possible. But the Club is made up of individual members who make their own assessment of their diving capabilities and procedures. The Club will not:

- Tell you when to dive.
- Tell you where to dive.
- Tell you how deep to dive.
- Tell you how long to dive for.

Each member should be capable of making their own decisions in regard to such matters.

If you don't like the conditions - Don't dive.

If you don't like the depth - Come up.

Do not expect V.S.A.G. or the Dive Captain to make such decisions. It is not possible to make decisions to cater for 15 individuals on a dive. The Club schedules a dive and a Dive Captain. The Dive Captain makes the arrangements to get you on the water and to a dive site. The Dive Captain cannot, and is not, responsible for planning the individual dives on four or five boats.

Basic training tells us all to plan the dive we are about to do, and discuss that plan with your buddy. Once decided - dive to your plan. Personally, I generally discuss with my buddy how we may vary the dive if the underwater scenario changes. When underwater, if one person feels that they want to surface, we surface.

The buddy system is a safety device, but a diver should not unduly risk the safety of their buddy. I would not want any diver to risk their own safety, because their buddy does not follow normal safety procedures. The Club does not want to lose any member in a diving accident, but more importantly, it does not want to lose two members in a diving accident.

So my opinion is clear. The Club will try to provide a diving environment to the benefit of all members. Where possible we will adopt safety procedures which facilitate safe diving. However, the responsibility for "Safety In Diving" rests with the member - no-one else.

If you need a group which will control you and tell you how to dive. If you want someone to be responsible for your diving, the V.S.A.G. is probably not for you.

It is appropriate that I emphasize, that this is my view of V.S.A.G. membership.

At the time of writing, I have not sought further discussion with the V.S.A.G. Committee.*

President's Communique

by David Geekie

As we head deeper into Autumn it seems an appropriate time to reflect on the last diving season and where we are headed as a club.

Early summer diving was certainly good year this, better than the last few years. Visibility was excellent, even ebb slack visibility was good and many great dives were experienced both inside and outside the bay. More recently some of us have been exploring further west, around the Barwon area, finding some exceptional reef.

The club was active most weekends but frequently boats were available but left behind as the demand for spots was generally light. This is also happening in other Melbourne based clubs and it is pleasing to see the clubs working together to maximize the number of members able to dive each weekend. In particular we work regularly with Getunder and sometimes Monash and Black Rock.

The committee has been giving thought to how we can ensure the diving experience for members is better than diving privately outside the club and a totally different experience to diving from charter boats. Providing safety equipment is one way to benefit members.

Last year we purchased three new oxygen kits that will be significantly cheaper to maintain. A fourth unit is being purchased now, reflecting the number of boats and varied launching arrangements we now have. We have at least one kit and a first aid box kept at The SCUBA Doctor, so that members can easily access these on their way to launching at Sorrento.

Our objective is to have several oxygen kits available on boats each weekend that we operate. If you are not familiar with how to operate these oxygen kits please see a committee member, or have a look at the units displayed at the monthly meetings. It is likely we will look at another kit later in the year that will be fitted with a larger O2 bottle more suitable for longer trips where backup oxygen may be some distance away.

A major issue is developing with dive clubs being specifically included in the AMSA regulation of domestic marine safety to come into affect in January 2013. We will work proactively with other clubs to see what we can do to protect our favourite way of diving. Please keep your ear to the ground on this one and let me know of any developments that could be useful.

At this stage we have had encouraging news regarding diving at The Prom in November so please consider a trip to Tidal River for the cup weekend. ❖

VSAG Member Profiles

Peter Campisano

Year joined VSAG:

2012.

How long have you been diving:

33 years.

First diving experience:

Flinders Pier –teasing spider crabs on the sand below.

Favorite diving location in Melbourne:

Pinnacles: Phillip Island.

Most memorable diving experience:

Yongala, on Mike Ball's Spoilt Sport.

Most unusual or amusing diving experience:

When one of my dive buddies had run out of air and was buddy-breathing with my other dive buddy- and I reached up and held onto an arm to slow down their ascent rate. As I did my best to control their ascent rate by focusing on my gauges as I hung below them, I didn't realize that I was actually weighing down the arm that held the only working reg between them. Therefore, when the owner of the arm wanted to breathe, he had to lift my weight to get the reg into this mouth. Boy, did I cop it on the surface!

Most valued piece of diving equipment:

My Scuba Pro Double Black Buoyancy Vest.

Do you have a dive boat:

Yes. A 21-foot half cabin Kayfa dive



boat, with divers' walkway and ladder at the rear.

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

Truk Lagoon and Palau (already booked).

Any diving words of wisdom:

Always check the bung BEFORE you launch your boat.

Any other comments:

Carole and I were really impressed by Peter Galvin's generosity at the Inverloch Long Weekend. It was great to meet and dive with other divers from VSAG and Black Rock. Everybody seemed to get on really well and we felt very welcome. We even enjoyed sharing a few laughs with the "LOVE WEAPON" as we sat around the open fire eating cray. ❖

Carole Campisano

Year joined VSAG:
2012.

How long have you been diving:
33 years.

First diving experience:
22 September 1979, Beaumaris, a cold and overcast Saturday morning, we saw a small stingray and a sleeping banjo shark among the weeds.

Favorite diving location in Melbourne:
Ship's graveyard.

Most memorable diving experience:
Summer 1981 Shark Gutter, Montague Island, NSW. We have done a lot of diving here over the years but this summer on a couple of times we were surrounded by 12 to 14 grey nurse sharks circling us. I took my glove off and let a couple of them rub their bellies along my fingers as they swam over me, soooooo cool!

Most unusual or amusing diving experience:
In 2008 we snorkeled with whale sharks in Exmouth. We were on the backboard ready to jump off, snorkeling gear and camera ready. We got the call to go, and we really had to move it because we had to swim like crazy to keep up with the shark. The fella in front of me just sat there, frozen to the spot, damn him! I was paying good money for this, so I



pushed him in and I followed. He was in shock, but I had things to do!

Most valued piece of diving equipment:
Seuba Pro Double Black Buoyancy Vest.

Do you have a dive boat:
Yes, A 21-foot half cabin Kayfa.

If you could dive anywhere in the world, where would you most like to dive:
Micronesia or the Galapagos Islands.

Any diving words of wisdom:
Maintain your fitness, especially be swim fit. ❖

Journey to a perfect place

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

The breakers boomed along the dark beach at Tidal River, flickering blue-green-phosphorous like gentle peaceful howitzers firing in the dark. I watched the salt ocean rush in swift and steady, slow and back, hissing softly.

"Hey, John," I said, "This is not too bad a place, is it?"

He was watching the rise of the moon, and the way that the moonlight moved in the water.

"This is a good place," he said at last.

But strange: though this was indeed a good place to be, we had no wish to remain here. In that short time, the beach went familiar and vaguely boring. By morning we were ready to launch the dive boats from the beach and head out to the islands offshore, leaving the beach and the sand dunes to the beach goers.

A few hours after sunrise, we were miles out from the shore, with the dive boats droning along together in loose formation over a sea the colour of the sky, cutting our paths through the pristine waters.

John Lawler was at the helm of "Miles Ahead" his Haines Signature, concentrating on the demands of a boat captain. I

looked over the side and wondered if there was such a place in all the world as perfect. Maybe that's what we're really looking for, I thought, with all this seeking out new dive sites — maybe we are all looking for one, single, perfect place down there under the water, and when we find it, we will drift down to explore it and we will never need to dive anywhere again.

Maybe divers are just people who aren't quite happy with the dive places that they've found so far, and as soon as they can locate that one dive spot where they can be as happy under the water as other people are on the land, they will stop seeking out new dive locations and not go exploring any more under the water.

Our talk about the fun of diving must be talk about the fun of disappearing under the water. Even the word "dive," after all, is a synonym for disappear. Why, if I were to see, at our next dive site, my own perfect place, I would have no more wish to dive anywhere else.

It was an uncomfortable thought, and I looked at John, who paid me no attention other than to smile without looking at me because he was still enjoying speeding over the sea.

I looked out again, and the sea below changed for a moment to some of the most perfect dive places I had seen. Instead of water beneath, suddenly there was the delightful sea cave at North-East Dannevig Island, Wilsons Promontory, Victoria. Instead of water there was the huge letters on the magnificent stern of the SS President Coolidge, 62 metres down at Espiritu Santo, Vanuato.

Instead of water there was the thousands of fish enveloping me at Blue Maomao Arch in the Poor Knights Islands, New Zealand. Instead of water there was the colourful marine growth on the upturned hull of the HMS Hermes aircraft carrier, 55 metres down at Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Instead of water there I was taking in the stunning beauty of the diverse marine life on Steve's Bommie at Ribbon Reef #3, Queensland.

Instead of water there was the wreck of the San Francisco Maru at Chuuk Lagoon, Micronesia and schools of Hammerhead Sharks at Darwin's Arch, Darwin Island, Galapagos and the unique, colourful marine life at North Wall Corner in Port Philip Bay, Victoria.

Day and night, dusk and dawn, storm and calm. All of them interesting, most of them pretty, some of them beautiful. But not one perfect.

Then the water was back below us and the engine power was coming in as John

pushed the throttle forward to close up with "Freediver", Alan Beckhurst's Trailcraft 610. He turned the helm over to me, and for a while, I nearly forgot about disappearing and diving and perfect places.

But not quite. Is there such a place that found, will bring an end to a diver's need to dive?

"It's all good," John said, over the sound of the engine.

"Yeah."

By now, the water was mirror smooth, reflecting the clouds in the sky. It was difficult to tell where the sea ended and the sky began.

It was about that time that the answer reached out and grabbed me by the neck. Why the water itself is the place to which we are disappearing, into which we dive!

No beer cans and cigarette butts strewn around the waves, no street signs or stoplights, no bulldozers changing sea to concrete. No room for anxiety, because it is always the same. No room for boredom because it is always different.

What do you know about that! I thought. Our one perfect place is the water itself! And I looked across at "Freediver" quickly skimming across the water and I laughed. ❖

J class submarines



from "Submarines — The Illustrated Guide to Submarines" by John Parker. Arness Publishing, 2007.

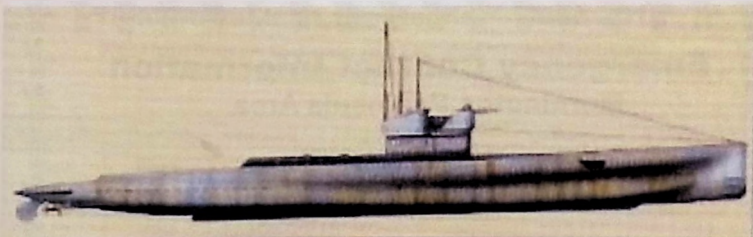
The J-class submarine came into being because the UK Admiralty wanted a craft capable of sailing with the surface ships of the Grand Fleet at a speed of 21 knots on the surface. It was not to be achieved. Because of the extra power needed, the boat's length was increased by more than 50 per cent over the E class that it was intended to replace. An extra shaft and third diesel engine would be needed to try to increase the power. However, all this achieved was a bigger and heavier hull with an increase in speed of just four knots, bringing it to 19 knots on the surface.

Once this became apparent the Admiralty turned their attention to the even larger K class, which was also under construction, and the J-class boats were reclassified as overseas boats. Eight J-class boats had

been ordered in January 1915, but by April two had been cancelled. Another boat had been ordered with a modified design but, again, there was no great improvement in performance.

J7 had a different layout to others of the class, with the control room positioned between the two engines rooms and the conning tower built slightly further back, giving better access space for the bow torpedo tubes.

They operated from their base in Blyth with the Grand Fleet, but because of their insufficient performance saw little action. However, J1 attacked four German warships with a salvo of torpedoes, seriously damaging the battleships *Kronprinz* and *Grosser Kurfurst*. At the end of World War I the six remaining J-class boats were transferred to the Royal Australian Navy. ❖



J class submarine

Displacement: 1,223.26 tonnes/1,204 tons (surfaced); 1,849.12 tonnes/1,820 tons (submerged)

Length: 83.74m/274ft 9in

Beam: 7.16m/23ft 6in

Armament: 6 x 457mm/18in torpedo tubes (4 x bow, 2 x beam); 12 x torpedoes; 1 x 76mm/3in gun; 1 x 12pdr gun; and depth charges

Propulsion: 3 x 894.8kW/1,200bhp Vickers diesel engines; 3 x 335.6kW/450chp electric motors

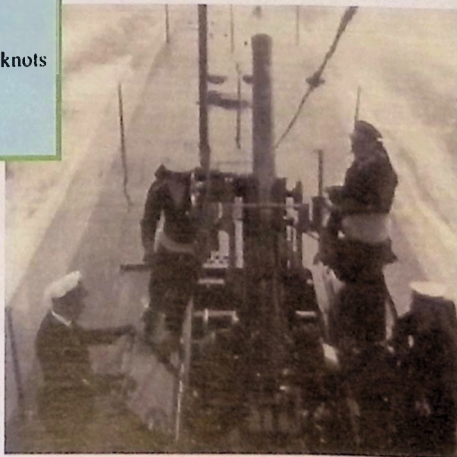
Speed: 19 knots (surfaced); 9.65 knots (dived)

Complement: 44 men

Left Page: Most of the J-class boats were in action by mid-1916. *J1* had a spectacular initiation under Lt Commander Laurence when, sighting four battleships off Horns Reef, he fired four torpedoes and hit two enemy dreadnoughts.

Above: A profile of a J boat.

Below: *J6* came to an unhappy end due to friendly fire, having been mistaken for *U6* and sunk by gunfire from the Q ship *Cymric* off Blyth on October 15, 1918. Fifteen survivors were picked up, but 19 other crewmen were killed.





Emergency Contact Information Mornington Peninsula Area

Police – Ambulance – Fire	000
Water Police	1800 135 729
	or 03 9534 2983
Diving Emergency Service	1800 088 200
Rosebud Hospital 1527 Nepean Hwy, Rosebud	03 5986 0666
Frankston Hospital Hastings Road, Frankston	03 9784 7777
The Bays Hospital Main Street, Mornington	03 5975 2009
Southern Peninsula Rescue (Sorrento)	03 5984 4555
Mornington Bay Rescue Service	0419 233 999
Coast Guard (Queenscliff)	03 5258 2222
Coast Guard (Hastings)	03 5979 3322
Coast Guard (Safety Beach)	03 5981 4443
State Emergency Service (SES)	26 14 68
Diving Doctors	
Dr Pamela Dagley (Eltham)	03 9439 2222
Dr Vanessa Haller (Carrum Downs)	03 9782 6666
Dr Adrian Murrie (Sorrento)	03 5984 4322
Dr Guy Williams (Rosebud)	03 5981 1555

VHF Emergency Channel 16 (club channel 73)

27 MHz AM Emergency Channel 88 (club channel 96)

Tidal Streams at the Heads — June 2012

RED italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack) which are the best diving conditions near the Heads.

Mon 28	Tue 29	Wed 30	Thu 31	Fri 1	Sat 2	Sun 3
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
131	203	239	321	353	456	611
<i>642</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>808</i>	<i>902</i>	<i>958</i>	<i>1116</i>	<i>1253</i>
1342	1418	1458	1546	1621	1728	1848
<i>1948</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2047</i>	<i>2122</i>	<i>2214</i>	<i>2310</i>	
Mon 4	Tue 5	Wed 6	Thu 7	Fri 8	Sat 9	Sun 10
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
<i>18</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>241</i>	<i>343</i>	<i>438</i>	0	45
731	846	951	1046	1135	<i>527</i>	<i>614</i>
<i>1420</i>	<i>1529</i>	<i>1626</i>	<i>1714</i>	<i>1757</i>	1218	1258
2011	2122	2221	2312		<i>1836</i>	<i>1913</i>
Mon 11	Tue 12	Wed 13	Thu 14	Fri 15	Sat 16	Sun 17
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
129	213	259	351	453	600	705
<i>659</i>	<i>746</i>	<i>839</i>	<i>940</i>	<i>1052</i>	<i>1207</i>	<i>1318</i>
1338	1419	1505	1558	1700	1813	1928
<i>1949</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2059</i>	<i>2138</i>	<i>2222</i>	<i>2313</i>	
Mon 18	Tue 19	Wed 20	Thu 21	Fri 22	Sat 23	Sun 24
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
<i>9</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>209</i>	<i>302</i>	<i>349</i>	<i>432</i>	1
803	855	940	1020	1057	1132	<i>512</i>
<i>1421</i>	<i>1514</i>	<i>1558</i>	<i>1637</i>	<i>1713</i>	<i>1746</i>	1207
2035	2130	2215	2254	2329		<i>1817</i>
Mon 25	Tue 26	Wed 27	Thu 28	Fri 29	Sat 30	Sun 1
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
32	103	136	211	253	345	431
<i>553</i>	<i>634</i>	<i>717</i>	<i>804</i>	<i>856</i>	<i>958</i>	<i>1107</i>
1242	1317	1354	1434	1520	1617	1656
<i>1846</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2043</i>	<i>2128</i>	<i>2233</i>

Tidal Streams at the Heads — July 2012

RED italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack) which are the best diving conditions near the Heads.

Mon 2	Tue 3	Wed 4	Thu 5	Fri 6	Sat 7	Sun 8
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
548	709	100	217	327	428	523
1237	1400	825	930	1026	1115	1200
1816	1943	1508	1604	1651	1733	1812
2344		2101	2205	2300	2349	
Mon 9	Tue 10	Wed 11	Thu 12	Fri 13	Sat 14	Sun 15
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
34	116	157	238	321	412	509
613	701	748	837	931	1031	1135
1242	1322	1403	1444	1527	1616	1716
1848	1922	1954	2025	2056	2132	2214
Mon 16	Tue 17	Wed 18	Thu 19	Fri 20	Sat 21	Sun 22
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
610	711	8	116	223	322	413
1241	1342	806	855	939	1021	1101
1831	1948	1435	1521	1601	1638	1712
2306		2051	2140	2221	2257	2330
Mon 23	Tue 24	Wed 25	Thu 26	Fri 27	Sat 28	Sun 29
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
500	3	36	110	147	230	323
1140	546	631	717	804	856	955
1743	1218	1255	1333	1412	1455	1546
	1813	1841	1910	1942	2020	2108
Mon 30	Tue 31	Wed 1	Thu 2	Fri 3	Sat 4	Sun 5
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
428	544	643	34	159	319	425
1105	1221	1333	757	904	1003	1055
1654	1819	1918	1440	1537	1625	1708
2208	2320		2042	2149	2245	2334

Tidal Streams at the Heads — August 2012

RED italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack) which are the best diving conditions near the Heads.

Mon 30	Tue 31	Wed 1	Thu 2	Fri 3	Sat 4	Sun 5
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
428	544	643	34	159	319	425
1105	1221	1333	757	904	1003	1055
1654	1819	1918	1440	1537	1625	1708
2208	2320		2042	2149	2245	2334
Mon 6	Tue 7	Wed 8	Thu 9	Fri 10	Sat 11	Sun 12
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
	17	57	135	211	249	329
521	611	657	741	826	913	1003
1143	1226	1305	1342	1417	1452	1531
1747	1823	1855	1924	1951	2019	2052
Mon 13	Tue 14	Wed 15	Thu 16	Fri 17	Sat 18	Sun 19
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
413	504	601	659	34	150	300
1057	1154	1251	1346	756	850	940
1618	1721	1840	1955	1435	1519	1559
2133	2224	2325		2052	2138	2218
Mon 20	Tue 21	Wed 22	Thu 23	Fri 24	Sat 25	Sun 26
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
400	454	544	8	46	127	211
1028	1113	1155	632	719	806	854
1635	1710	1743	1234	1312	1349	1428
2255	2331		1816	1849	1926	2007
Mon 27	Tue 28	Wed 29	Thu 30	Fri 31	Sat 1	Sun 2
Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack	Slack
302	400	507	620	35	151	315
948	1050	1158	1307	735	838	942
1516	1619	1745	1920	1412	1505	1557
2056	2154	2306		2038	2132	2226

VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar

Date	Activity Details Can swap between Sat and Sun depending! Dive sites adjusted on the day to suit divers and conditions.
2/3 June	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Coogee and slack water dive DC: Cheryl Lees 0448 863 455
9/10/11 June	Queens Birthday Weekend — Details TBA closer to the date DC: John Lawler 0414 922 916
16/17 June	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Twin bommies and slack water dive DC: David Geekie 0419 300 686
21 June	General Meeting @ Maori Chief — 8.00 p.m.
23/24 June	Newhaven, Philip Island — Crack Cave and George Kermodé DC: Andy Mastrowicz 0402 060 711
30 June / 1 July	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Slack water dive and outside dive DC: Michael Kakafikas 0439 044 122
7/8 July	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Drift Dive and Outside Reef DC: Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
14/15 July	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Slack Water Dive and Coogee DC: Alan Storen 0417 017 446
19 July	General Meeting @ Maori Chief — 8.00 p.m.
21/22 July	Newhaven Philip Island — Pyramid Rock and Pinnacles DC: Lloyd Borrett 0418 170 044
28/29 July	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Slack Water and Outside Reef DC: Peter Briggs 0412 585 546
4/5 August	Newhaven Philip Island — George Kermodé and Pinnacles DC: Greg Richards 03 9783 4249
11/12 August	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Slack Water/Drift Dive and Outside Reef DC: John Lawler 0414 922 916
16 August	General Meeting @ Maori Chief — 8.00 p.m.
18/19 August	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Canberra and Slack Water Dive DC: Cheryl Lees 0448 863 455
25/26 August	Newhaven Philip Island — Dive Captains's Choice DC: David Geekie 0419 300 686
1/2 Sept	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Twin Bommies and Slack Water Dive DC: Andy Mastrowicz 0402 060 711

by Graham Ellis, Dive Calendar Coordinator, VSAG



Photos: Tim Forster — Spider crabs at Rye Pier, 17 May 2012.



Photo: Trevor Williams — Loan Boarfish on the Bodaci, 19 April 2012.



Photo: David Flew — Sponge at Phil's Reef, 19 April 2012.