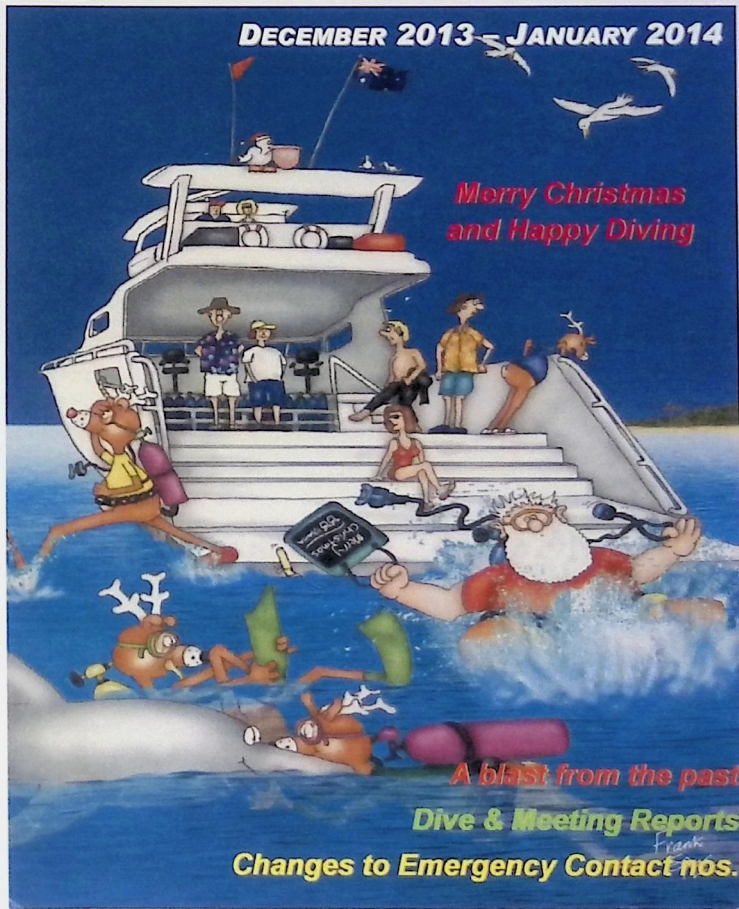




Fathoms

DECEMBER 2013 - JANUARY 2014

*Merry Christmas
and Happy Diving*



A blast from the past

Dive & Meeting Reports

Changes to Emergency Contact nos.

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Tasseled Anglerfish—Blairgowrie

Photos by Ian Scholey





Fathoms

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In this December 2013 – January 2014 issue...

Article	Author	Page
Notices		4-5
VSAG Committee 2013–2014		6
Congratulations Sandy	Phil Watson	7
Meeting Reports	John Lawler & Lloyd Borrett	8-9
Member Profile : John Bowden	John Lawler	10
MONUC visit to Hyperbaric Chamber	Adrian Vinnell	11-13
On Polperro with Crispie	Rob Kirk	14-16
Dive Report : Boarfish Reef & Queenscliff drift	Michael Ngai	17-18
Dive report : Phillip Island	John Lawler	19
Dive report : Coogee	John Lawler	19-20
Dive report : Inverloch & Phillip Island—Cup Weekend	Peter Galvin	21-22
Dive report : Buddy Reports—Dive Reports with a Difference—Cup Weekend	Anthony Parsons & Sarah Speight	22-24
Dive report : David's Reef	Tony Hood	25
Redmap Organisation		26-27
VSAG Christmas Party 2013	Cheryl Lees	28-30
VSAG Photo Competition	VSAG Committee	31
Cranky Old Man	Robert Scott	32-33
Emergency Contact Information		35
VSAG dive and meeting calendar	Graham Ellis	36
Tidal streams at the heads: Dec 2013 to Jan 2014	Graham Ellis	37-39
Vale Mike Letch	Phil Watson	40

VSAG General Meetings

3rd Tuesday in the month
Meeting starts at 8.00 pm
(Dinner starts from 7.00 pm)

Bells' Hotel
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NOTICES

Fathoms is now online!

VSAG's venerable Fathoms magazine is now available online. Yes, the **previous 46 editions of Fathoms are now available for members to download from our web site.** That's from the 'Fathoms December 2004 to January 2005' edition to the most recent edition you've received.

To see the list of Fathoms magazines available online, and download them if you already have the right permissions, go to <http://www.vsag.org.au/Downloads/c-8.html>. The magazines are in the 'Downloads' section of the web site, in the 'VSAG Fathoms Magazines' category.

You'll need to be logged onto the VSAG website using your account Nickname and password in order to access the magazine files. If you don't have access, email your website Nickname to Lloyd Borrett and he'll give you

REMINDER

We love to receive your dive reports, articles, and photos for Fathoms—big or small — the more details, the better.

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*** Please don't forget to put names and captions with photos when possible.

VSAG on Facebook

Did you know VSAG now has a Facebook page? Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/vsag.divers> and 'Like' us.



New Meeting Day, New Meeting Place!

VSAG will now be holding Monthly meetings at 8pm
on the **3rd TUESDAY** of each month at **BELL'S HOTEL** —
157 MORAY ST, SOUTH MELBOURNE

All are welcome to join us for a meal at 7pm before the meeting

All meals \$14 on Tuesday nights

Tuesday Night Special—all meals \$14

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

All Members Welcome

Bell's Hotel, 157 Moray St, South Melbourne VIC 3205

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. Currently: 2 x Oxygen kits, 1 x DAN first aid kit, plus 1 x Boat Ramp Permit. Please use this facility responsibly. ❖

VSAG Committee 2013–2014



Back row : John Lawler, Ian Scholey, Lloyd Borrett, Graham Ellis, Trevor Williams

Front row : David Flew, David Geekie, Peter Galvin, Benita McDonough.

Absent: Christine Reynolds



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Congratulations Sandy!

Sandy Webb recently enjoyed her 1,000th logged dive. She learned to dive in 1980 and has dived as far afield as Antarctica. These photos were taken at Sorrento back beach, where she did the 1,000th dive.



Photos by Phil Watson ❖

VSAG Meeting Reports

October—Richard Casley

Written by John Lawler



To a full house at our October meeting, our guest speaker was Richard Casley, an expert in MEGALADONS (means big tooth!) Richard's presentation was on "Fossil Megalodon Shark Teeth". These were the biggest prehistoric sharks that ever lived and Richard has had an interest in this field since he was just 15 years of age. In fact, he has been searching and finding many of his megaladons from around the Beaumaris Bay area since that time and says there are still teeth to be found in that region.

We heard about where he has dived (some impressive locations) and his most recent overseas searches and finds. Richard also brought along a collection of large and small samples for us to see and touch. One large specimen was offered for the raffle, so one member went home

with a megalodon that could be aged between 2.5 million and 28 million year old!

Richard and his buddy recently went on a very successful search, 55 miles off the coast of North Carolina. In around 40 metres they were rewarded with excellent results as can be seen in the photo below.



The youtube link below shows Richard training off JL's boat on the Uralba, and the eventual expedition & dive in North Carolina



If this shark mouth was still around today we probably wouldn't be diving!

November—

Anthony O'Connell

Written by Lloyd Borrett



Anthony is in the process of launching some new Australian designed and manufactured dive gear under the brand "Gadget Design". He is an engineer and this shows in the design and engineering aspects of the products, plus the attention to detail in the production process.

While the initial products are aimed more for technical and rebreather divers, I believe the VSAG members at the meeting found what Anthony had to say and show most interesting.

It directly links the modern VSAG back to the early days nearly 60 years ago when VSAG members built their own dive gear, or obtained it from local manufacturers who were some of the world's leading dive equipment innovators. ❖



New Member Profile—John Bowden



Year joined VSAG: 2013

How long have you been diving?

I started spearfishing as a small boy during our annual holidays at Mornington, did a diving course with Ern Ireland in 75, and then did a Padi course in 85

First diving experience: Mornington pier

Favorite diving location in Melbourne: Bushrangers Bay

Most memorable diving experience:

Diving at Meriumbula on the Empire Gladstone- I buddied up with a beautiful, young Marine biologist who was working at the local aquarium. An absolute blue ribbon day—mirror calm, warm, lots of Marine life and a terrific wreck ... and of course the girl—a ripper day!

Most unusual or amusing diving experience:

Diving off Popes eye, I came across what I thought was a dead body -a diver lying absolutely still in the weeds .I eventually saw the slightest bubbles coming from his regulator, I knocked on his face mask and he waved me away and pointed to the film crew all set up below the ledge he was on -I found out that I had interrupted the film shoot they were on.

Most valued piece of diving equipment:

Anything borrowed (pinched) from Peter Galvin

Do you have a dive boat?

No, better to know someone who does

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

Probably Truk Lagoon -I enjoy diving on wrecks

Any diving words of wisdom:

"Better to be up here wishing I was down there, than down there wishing I was up there"

Any other comments:

Thanks to Peter Galvin for getting me back into diving!

I'm looking forward to a long and enjoyable association with VSAG

A MONUC visit to the Hyperbaric Chamber at the Alfred Hospital

written by Adrian Vinnell

While not as dramatic as the subject suggests, a group of MONUCers and about 30 divers from other clubs and shops recently visited the Alfred Hospital Hyperbaric Medicine Department for a tour of the hyperbaric chamber and associated facilities. It included presentations from the medical and technical staff and continued with a tour of the chambers, control panel and equipment.

The night started with a presentation covering what hyperbaric medicine is all about. We learnt it can be used to treat a range of conditions such as:

- Tissue necrosis (dead flesh)
- Radiation exposure injuries
- Diabetic blood flow problems
- Sports injuries
- Gangrene
- **Decompression illness (DCI)**

Being divers, the majority of the presentation covered DCI aspects, also known as 'the bends'. We looked the types of events that lead to a diver visiting the chamber (for real) and they types of treatments used.

First some stats:

- 75% of divers that get bent, dived within tables, computer limits and did not exceed ascent rates. – e.g. They followed a NORMAL plan. This suggests, if you

dive enough you will eventually get bent regardless of your profile.

- The number of divers treated at the chamber has decreasing over the last 15 years. 16 divers were treated last year.
- In most cases symptoms start within 6 hours of surfacing and often within 10 minutes. Some cases (particularly after a conservative dive profile) can take 24 or more hours to show symptoms.
- Most injuries are fully treatable if they receive prompt treatment. **Fast provision of 100% oxygen** is a key to success and may even resolve a potential bend without visiting the chamber.

Case Studies:

With names changed to protect the innocent we were shown a few case studies of actual divers the Alfred has treated. These included:

- A very experienced tech diver who conducted two dives to 27m on air
- A diver on a 5 day trip to the Coolidge wreck (Vanuatu) diving to 67m on air
- A 19 year old inexperienced diver at Wilsons Prom doing normal recreational diving
- An experienced cave diver conducting training dives using normoxic trimix to around 50m

In all of these cases the dives were within limits of tables/computers with no unusual circumstances. However, all these divers also denied having any DCI symp-

toms and did not seek fast treatment. Most continued diving (one even flew home from Vanuatu with DCI symptoms, which got much worse on the plane).

Unfortunately only one of these divers escaped without permanent injury, the others were left with some degree of permanent disability, including deafness and bone necrosis (bone death). It is possible early treatment could have prevented this.

After the presentation we were all very much more aware of the DES phone number (1800 088 200) and headed over to the chambers for a tour (and nibbles).

Facilities:

There are three chambers at the Alfred facility, one large one suitable for a number of patients and beds, and two smaller ones. The smaller chambers are capable of pressures around 500kpa (-40m), with the large one around 300kpa (20m). Being engineer types we asked a lot of overly technical questions and ended up on the "backstage tour" based on the "don't touch anything" principle. I won't bore you all with the details, but there was lots of piping, valves, connections, welds, wires tanks etc... etc... It was great! (Ok, so we're a strange bunch)



Control panel



Checking out the compliance stamp

Treatment:

Treatment for DCI usually involves a "dive" to 18m or so over 3-4 hours. Different profiles are selected based on the type of injury presented and diver history. Sometimes a number of these 'dives' will be required to treat a severe bend. During the dive the patient will be on 100% oxygen for around 75% of the time (do the maths nitrox people! – this is why in-water decompression doesn't work). For non-nitrox people – Breathing pure oxygen at these pressures and lengths of time is dangerous and can result in all sorts of complications such as seizures, convulsions and blackout. Fortunately these can be managed within a chamber with proper facilities and staff.

To summarise, the main take home messages were:

- We are lucky to have some excellent facilities and highly trained staff right here in Melbourne.
- Symptoms of DCI are varied, however can include one or more of the following: joint pain, tiredness, nausea,

prickly rashes, numbness and a whole raft of other things.

- If you think you might have the bends, **urgently get in contact with trained and experienced hyperbaric medical professionals**. Do not ask the internet, do not self-treat, do not conduct in-water decompression. *Do* use pure oxygen (at least until you get in touch with the professionals).

- If you cannot get in touch with the professionals then **urgently get in contact with trained and experienced hyperbaric medical professionals** (seen this before?)

- If you don't know already the number to call for the abovementioned professionals is DIES on 1800 088 200.

- If Overseas +61-8-8212 9242 or the relevant DAN number.

- DENIAL and delaying treatment can make a treatable injury, a permanent disability – we are talking to YOU!

Finally, a **big** thanks to Chan for organising the night and an even **bigger** thanks to Andrew, Robyn and Lester from the Alfred Hyperbaric Unit for their presentation and giving us their time to show us around. We learnt a lot and took away some valuable lessons.

For anyone that missed this session, it is highly recommended for all divers. The Alfred runs these sessions occasionally, please check their website for more details.

Happy diving!

... and don't forget, if you think you could be bent – and 1800 088 200.

More Information:

<http://www.alfredicu.org.au/assets/Documents/Services-Docs/Hyperbaric-Docs/Hyperbaric-Patient-Information-Version-2.pdf>

<http://www.alfredicu.org.au/assets/Documents/Services-Docs/Hyperbaric-Docs/Hyperbaric-Patient-Information-DC1.pdf>

<http://www.londondivingchamber.co.uk/index.php?id=theory&page=2>



The spacious interior

Article and photos provided with kind permission by Adrian Vinnell - MONUC (Monash University Underwater Club) ❖



A Blast from the Past

ON POLPERRO WITH CRIPPSIE *written by Rob Kirk*

Sometimes when we launch from Sorren-to you'll see me staring nostalgically at the Dolphin Swim Tours boat "Polperro". For me it brings back years of memories, of fantastic diving with terrific company and one of the best skippers ever to sail Bass Strait. In fact, it really was "the skipper" and his great personality that made those trips so memorable.



Master Mariner, Alan Cripps fished from Port Franklin in Corner Inlet. He saw that there was a market for tourism around the Prom, and Black Rock Underwater Diving Group (BRUDG) were regular pa-

trons on his old boat, AB Hunter. That boat was a bit too small for divers, so Crippsie had Pompeii's of Mordialloc build a 43 footer capable of carrying 10 passengers.



Polperro was soon booked solid in the warmer months for a year in advance. Competition was fierce for the long weekends, and once a club had booked one they kept it for years. We did our first trip on it down to the Prom in about 1981.

Viz on the east coast of the Prom is usually a bit dirtier than the Tidal River side, but it was still great diving. BRUDG and Crippsie had taught each other well – he knew just the sort of territory divers wanted to see, and in those haleyon days pre-Marine National Park he certainly knew how to find crayfish!

A typical Polperro trip would start with everyone arriving on the Friday night to load the boat. Polperro would be tied up at a very narrow hand-made jetty, and since in those haleyon days, pre-booze buses, most of us were 3 sheets to the wind from the drive down, lugging gear down that jetty was a definite challenge! With all the gear secure, Crippsie would head home to return for an early morning