



# Fathoms

*FEBRUARY 2013 - MARCH 2013*

***VSAG Xmas Party Report & Photos***

***Seven VSAG Dive Day Reports***

***Safety: Action in Fog***

***Visit to Bodalla Fishing and Maritime Museum***

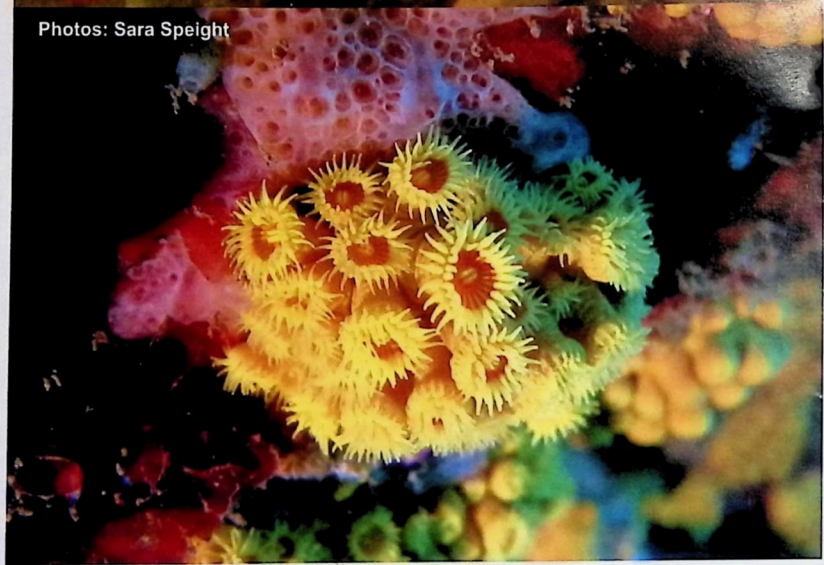
***Explore, Dream, Discover***

Postal Address:  
VSAG, 15 Regal Ct, Vermont South VIC 3133

editor@vsag.org.au  
www.vsag.org.au



Photos: Sara Speight





# Fathoms

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## VSAG General Meetings

## Maori Chief Hotel

3<sup>rd</sup> 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: 1D L11

## Editorial Submissions:

Email to [editor@vsag.org.au](mailto:editor@vsag.org.au)

Lloyd Borrett M: 0418 170 044

Cheryl Lees M: 0448 863 455

14 Sheoak Rd, Frankston South VIC 3199

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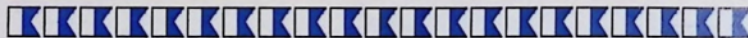
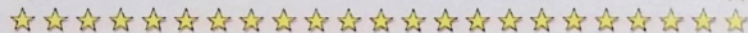
## Fathoms is now online!



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 your account the appropriate permission.



## 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. ❖



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



Wow, what a great time we've been having since the last edition of Fathoms. It started with the VSAG Xmas Party, and then moved into lots of diving over the Xmas and New Year period.

An inconvenience was the large number of VSAG dive days that had to be cancelled due to poor weather, but even so, plenty of diving was still managed by members. We even got to explore an exciting new dive site out from Rye discovered by Graham Ellis.

We have the dive reports in this edition of Fathoms to prove we're a very active club. But actually, quite a lot more diving was done than we had dive reports submitted, so you'll just have to imagine what happened on these dive days, unless you were there.

Plus, I've been involved in some new club initiatives. Fathoms is now available online (see the details on the previous page). The updated boating safety guidelines have been distributed to boat owners. The group purchase of Nautilus Lifelines has been completed.

## VSAG History

I'm fortunate to be on the working sub-committee for the VSAG 60th birthday celebrations coming up in August 2014. It's been really interesting learning about the rich diving heritage that VSAG has,

plus just how much the club has played a vital role in Victorian scuba diving.

We've been able to scan some of the documents from the past and make them available for you on the VSAG website in the downloads section. One is the 1968 VSAG Handbook. It makes for an interesting look back into VSAG history and activities.

## Dive Reports & Photos

We're absolutely delighted at the quality of the items being submitted for Fathoms, especially the dive reports. We know that plenty of you agree from the positive feedback we're getting.

A number of members are now posting dive photos on the VSAG Facebook Group page. Some are accompanied by amusing captions and many attract interesting comments. Plus we get to include the photos in Fathoms.

While it's the responsibility of the Dive Captain to produce a dive report, we encourage any of the divers on the day to do so. It can either lighten the burden for the Dive Captain, or give members a different perspective on the day. But it really helps if you identify all of the boats used and divers participating.

*Best Regards, Lloyd Borrett. ❖*

# VSAG Committee 2012–2013



## **President / SDFV Representative**

**David Geckie** 145 Johnston St, Newport VIC 3015  
0419 300 686 [president@vsag.org.au](mailto:president@vsag.org.au)  
[dgeckie@bigpond.net.au](mailto:dgeckie@bigpond.net.au)

## **Vice President**

**Peter Briggs** 37 Blue Ridge Dr, Mooroolbark VIC 3138  
03 9727 3947 (H) 0412 585 546 [vicepresident@vsag.org.au](mailto:vicepresident@vsag.org.au)  
[pbriggs@bigpond.net.au](mailto:pbriggs@bigpond.net.au)

## **Secretary**

**Alan Storen** 15 Regal Ct, Vermont South VIC 3133  
03 9803 3573 (H) 0417 017 446 [secretary@vsag.org.au](mailto:secretary@vsag.org.au)  
[storens@bigpond.net.au](mailto:storens@bigpond.net.au)

## **Treasurer / Property/Equipment Officer**

**Peter Galvin** 6 Dawson Glen, Heathmont VIC 3135  
0417 061 564 [treasurer@vsag.org.au](mailto:treasurer@vsag.org.au)  
[pgalvin@au.ibm.com](mailto:pgalvin@au.ibm.com)

## **New Member Coordinator**

**John Lawler** 7 Cloris Ave, Beaumaris VIC 3193  
03 9589 4020 (H) 0414 922 916 [membership@vsag.org.au](mailto:membership@vsag.org.au)  
[jlawler@aapt.net.au](mailto:jlawler@aapt.net.au)

## **Webmaster / Newsletter Editor**

**Lloyd Borrett** 14 Shoak Rd, Frankston South VIC 3199  
03 5904 9005 (H) 0418 170 044 [editor@vsag.org.au](mailto:editor@vsag.org.au)  
[lloyd@borrett.id.au](mailto:lloyd@borrett.id.au)

## **Social Secretary / Assistant Newsletter Editor**

**Cheryl Lees** 14 Shoak Rd, Frankston South VIC 3199  
03 5904 9005 (H) 0448 863 455 [socialsecretary@vsag.org.au](mailto:socialsecretary@vsag.org.au)  
[cheryl\\_marj@hotmail.com](mailto:cheryl_marj@hotmail.com)

## **Dive Calendar Coordinator**

**Graham Ellis** 2A View Rd, Glen Waverley VIC 3150  
03 9803 0069 (H) 0403 070 920 [divecoordinator@vsag.org.au](mailto:divecoordinator@vsag.org.au)  
[graham\\_ellis@optusnet.com.au](mailto:graham_ellis@optusnet.com.au)

## **Point Scorer / SDFV Representative**

**Trevor Williams** 168 Newman St, Kensington VIC 3031  
03 9372 6189 (H) 0404 069 572 [pointscorer@vsag.org.au](mailto:pointscorer@vsag.org.au)  
[trevor.j.williams@westnet.com.au](mailto:trevor.j.williams@westnet.com.au)

To email all VSAG committee members: [committee@vsag.org.au](mailto:committee@vsag.org.au)

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

# VSAG committee news

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

The following is a summary of main points raised at the December 2012 committee meeting.

- VSAG boat safety policies, recommendations and aids approved for distribution.
- Peter Galvin is setting up VSAG's account with the ANZ so that electronic payments can be made.
- Group buy of 30 Nautilus Lifeline units for sale to members has arrived. Lloyd Borrett to distribute.
- 60th birthday sub-committee has made contact with Bruce Owen, VSAG's first president.
- A discussion was held on ways to encourage more members to be more active divers. Ideas from members most welcome.
- Legal liability issues were discussed. Lloyd Borrett to update forms.
- 2013 Trips: Pat Reynolds is organising a Chuuk Lagoon dive trip. David Geekie looking into Tonga dive trip. Trevor Williams looking into Heron Island dive trip. David Geekie organizing Tassie Combined Clubs trip for Queens Birthday long weekend in June.

- Trevor Williams reported on the makeover of the points system for Club Member of the Year.
- Committee agreed to support the introduction of a 'Club Member of the Month' award.
- Cash reserves of the club as at 13 December 2012 were approximately \$16,000.

## VSAG welcomes new member

Would all VSAG members please extend their welcome Stephen Vajda (Dec 2012) and help him settle into VSAG's unique culture. ❖



# ***VSAG President's Comments November 2012***



Summer is now upon us and the weather is becoming much more appealing for diving. The water temperature has improved and I have had reports of 17°C and climbing rapidly. Visibility has been good, even on slack water dives so it is time to pull out your gear, have it looked over and then check in for an easy club dive if you feel out of practice.

## **VSAG Xmas Party**

VSAG held it's Christmas party last weekend and a what a great day it was. Thanks to all who turned up, it was great to catch up with you all. Cheryl and Lloyd's new abode was a fantastic location and I very much appreciate the opening of their home to us — and all the work put in to make us feel welcome. The committee again did a great job in organizing and preparing the food as well as obtaining raffle prizes, resulting in a significant financial gain for the club.

The day highlighted the need to have more non diving activities to deepen the friendships within the club so any suggestions would be welcomed by the committee. I was recently encouraged by the group that supported the 'rebirthing' of

JL's trailer, these kinds of activities strengthen a club at many levels.

## **Safety in Diving**

The committee has continued to focus on ways to ensure we maintain our exceptional safety record whilst diving. Last year we invested in more small oxygen kits and have upgraded our First Aid gear. It is likely we may purchase a larger oxygen kit this financial year more suitable for remote trips.

I have attended several presentations on DCI that have highlighted our need to continue a conservative approach to adequate surface intervals, safety stops and ascent rates.

## **Boat Owner's Starter Pack**

John Lawler and Lloyd Borrett have now put together a 'Starter Pack' for boat owners presenting their boats for use within the club. We are always appreciative of having boats made available to the club to take divers out for diving, but have done little 'officially' to help ensure these are set up for optimal diving.

Historically we have tended to mentor new boat owners (I was certainly given



assistance) but now we have a pack of data to ensure that VSAG boat owners are well prepared. Additionally boat owners met and agreed to having other boat owners and committee members check their boats out early in the season to ensure the basic legal requirements for safe boating as well as safe diving are in place.

Our objectives are to put in place some minimum standards, encourage our boat owners to work together to pass on helpful experiences and ensure our club divers are given great diving experience.

### **Xmas Diving**

Last year the diving at Christmas was superb and hopefully it will be repeated again this year. Keep an eye out for emails notifying of upcoming diving trips but also let us know if you are planning something during the week.

*David Geekie.* ❖



Above and Below:  
David Geekie out diving recently.  
Photos: Sarah Speight.



# Meeting Reports

Saturday, 24 November 2012

## VSAG Xmas Party

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

*The 2012 VSAG Christmas Party was another magnificent success.*

A total of some 40 plus VSAGers with partners and kids came together for the first time at the home of Cheryl Lees and yours truly in Frankston South. Cheryl's family keep referring to our place as a resort, and this was to be its first outing

as a party venue since moving in back in late April, 2012.

As always, the VSAG committee worked together magnificently to put on a great spread. Even though John Lawler decided to see just how big and hot a fire could be created in a Webber BBQ, the raging inferno was eventually brought under control and the lamb, chicken and fish cooked to perfection.

The kids, big (that's me) and small (that's the rest of them) enjoyed the pool



Photos: David Geekie. More Xmas party photos over the page and inside the back cover.



games. The weather gods smiled upon our joyous gathering and conditions were just right. Those wanting a place out of the sun seemed to prefer the shelter of the gazebo and the large tree in Bay 13.

As always, a highlight of the event was the VSAG Xmas Raffle with a diverse range of great prizes on offer. We were again well supported by sponsors including, but not limited to: Oceanic, Scuba Repairs, Aquability, National Equestrian Wholesalers, The Maori Chief Hotel and some of your fellow VSAG members.

Yours truly had the first ticket drawn only to find that for the first time in years, a wetsuit wasn't in the prize picks!

David Geekie did leave a chair behind, so I decided to have a bit of fun with it. See the "Lonely Chair" photo album on VSAG's group page on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/Y4myeM> and read the captions. ❖





Photos: David Geekie.



Thursday, 20 December 2012  
**Nautilus Lifelines**

*by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.*

The December meeting of VSAG is traditionally not a formal meeting, but a social gathering together of those interested for a meal and/or drink before Xmas.

Numbers at the Maori Chief Hotel were up on recent years. Quite a few VSAGers were there to collect the Nautilus Lifeline units they were getting for Xmas.

With number swelled, a mixture of new and old stories were told and yarns swapped. And who knows, some of it may have actually happened! ❖

# Dive Reports

Saturday, 22 December 2012

## The Day of Davids at Uralba and Phil's Reef

by John Lawler, VSAG.

### Who

Karingal: David Flew, Michael Mallis, Phil Watson, Helen Marano.

Geckie Signature: David Geckie, Pam Dagley, Greg Breese, Emma

Signature One: David Politakis, Adam Borge, John Lawler

Dive Captain: John Lawler

*Three boats, each with a David on board... a day of Davids!*

David Geckie did some maths about the distance and complications of driving from his home to Patterson River launching ramp (ramp busy with fishos as the

snapper are still running hot). Decided the weather was safe enough to launch at Newport and run down to the dive site... a distance of around 27 kms and a 40/45 minute boat drive... it was a brilliant idea... and it worked!

Karingal, despite an overheating problem, loaded and launched from its berth at Mordialloc and steamed comfortably down to the dive site and had it well shot upon our arrivals. Thanks David Flew.

My crew arrived to load up at the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron... despite the ramp and parking being very busy (snapper fishing!) we launched quite quickly and all soon on our way through the Fisheries Officers and rangers around the place... and one amazing scene right out of a "James Bond" movie... a person elevated about 3 meters off the water on a back pack powered from a hose from a jet Ski! Amazing!



Pam Dagley, Emma, Greg Breese and David Geckie on David's boat. Photos: John Lawler.

## **Uralba**

Approaching the Uralba site at a distance of some 2 kms it looked as if the site was covered by fishos boats, but as it turned out getting closer the boats were quite clear of the site.

The dive site already shot and with Karingal anchored the other two boats "daisy chained" and prepared to dive... so easy.

The Port Phillip Bay bed out from shore is mostly muddy so any strong winds stirs it up... and the viz is low as a result... this was the case on this day... probably about 4 meters... however the dive was still excellent! With good strong

lights and safe conditions at 15 metres this still one the better wreck dive on offer to Melbourne divers.

Despite low viz fish life can be detected... old wives and schooling fish that we seemed to agree were pike... a massive school.

Plus the Uralba has some other advantages!

Lodged firmly in the cross members at the bow was a Sarca anchor with a good length of chain and stainless clips... I pointed this out to DF who then attached it to his SMB line and after the dive it was eventually dragged hand over hand



Phil Watson, David Flew, Helen Marano and Michael Mallis on Karingal. Photo: John Lawler.

into the boat... (this anchor was probably from a charter boat as it was large... probably in the range of \$300 to replace... sold on eBay this would pay for a mighty lot of air fills... and it is the second Sarca DF has extracted from this wreck... and me one large anchor as well.

### Phil's Reef

Second dive seemed a foregone conclusion... the wonderful Phil's Reef off Mentone... first to arrive this time we anchored on top of the reef... Dave Geekie tied off and Karingal anchored.

Always there is a large school of Old Wives who are so friendly they come up

to you and seem to say "Hi... back again!"... rays under the ledges and some just outside in the gullies seemingly getting some sun rays on. This place is very small but very special... always good to dive and remember..

All divers up and ready for the boat run to their respective home destinations... David Flew a short run into Mordialloc, me and my crew an even quicker run into BMYS and our last sight of David Geekie heading off into the distance for a long run back to Newport.

A mighty dive day... full of fun and safe happy diving! ❖



John Lawler, Adam Borge and David Politakis. Photo: John Lawler.





## Traditional Post Christmas Dive

Get out and dive using the new goodies  
you got for Xmas, or just the old ones!

Thursday 27 December 2012 • Sorrento Boat Ramp

Captain: Lloyd Borrett, 0418 170 044, lloyd@borrett.id.au

[www.vsag.org.au](http://www.vsag.org.au)

Thursday, 27 December 2012

## Post Xmas Dive

by Andrew Queded, VSAG.

Stocked-up with new Christmas goodies (Nautilus Lifelines, mostly) and squeezing Christmas kilos into unyielding wet-suits, we headed out for the VSAG post-Christmas dive day. Lloyd Borrett had organised the day, John Lawler kindly offered his boat, Cheryl Lees, David Poltakakis and myself made up a group of five.

As we were loading the boat the weather was looking challenging. There was a firm northerly blowing, and it was predicted to strengthen and swing around to become a stiff southerly in the middle of

the afternoon. The bay was bristling with white caps that looked concerning from the top car park at Sorrento, and would probably look a lot worse close-up. Nevertheless, we thought we'd give it a go, and it turns out that we're very glad we did.



John, Lloyd, Cheryl, David and Andrew load "Miles Ahead". Photo: Lloyd Borrett.



John Lawler follows a container ship through The Rip. Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

We had a wet, rough and bumpy ride toward the heads, but John snuck in behind a cargo ship to make a surprisingly smooth journey through the heads. From there we headed west to have a great day of diving off the Lonsdale coast, protected from the northerly wind.

First up I joined Lloyd and Cheryl for a dive at Lonsdale Arches. We were greeted immediately after our descent by a

juvenile cat shark, and saw scores of other fish throughout the dive. We explored plateaus, rocky outcrops, undercuts and a few swim throughs.

Visibility was good, but not great, at about five or six metres, and a swell wafted weeds back and forth across the rocky bottom. It was a very pleasant, easy and pretty dive, with lots of interest but no single outstanding feature. For me, it was just great to be back in the water again on my first VSAG dive for this season.



Andrew Quested at Lonsdale Arches.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.



Cheryl Lees at Lonsdale Arches.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

Next up, we headed further west and John and David jumped in for a cray bash while Lloyd, Cheryl and myself enjoyed our lunch. (Ham and turkey sandwiches, of course.) The sea had flattened out, the sun was strong enough to keep us warm but didn't feel like it was burning us, and a seal flip-flopped about the boat here and there, keeping us amused and distracted. The guys came back with a couple of crays, and then we had another break before setting up for the last dive of the day.

We stayed in pretty much the same spot for the next dive, with Lloyd, Cheryl, David and myself heading under. Again it was a very pretty dive with plenty of ledges, undercuts, rocky outcrops and lots of fish life.

I managed to get up-close and personal with a Blue Devil who seemed quite happy to pose for my camera. David was teased by a couple of crays who stayed just beyond his reach, and Lloyd and



David and Cheryl watch John coming back aboard. Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

Cheryl found a weedy sea dragon humming away under a ledge. Again, this was a very pleasant, relaxed and easy dive. But things were not staying so relaxed on the surface.

The wind had shifted and the sea was beginning to be whipped up. John revved the engine a few times. As we had mostly been between 5 and 8 metres throughout the dive, we aborted safety stops and popped up to be greeted with mildly angry waves. After a bit of splashing about we all managed to get back on the boat and no one had to use their Nautilus Lifeline — although we were all glad we had them.

Another bumpy ride back through the heads and we were among sailing boats racing for Tasmania. Once back at Sorrento, we got the once-over from some friendly members of the Transport Safety Victoria team who wanted to see PFDs and flares and torches and so on, but who also got a quick lesson from Lloyd on the Lifeline units. Meanwhile, the wind was really picking up and was trying to rip our ears off, making it clear that we had come back just in time.

The weather tried to dissuade us but failed, and we succeeded in having a great day of diving. It never fails to impress me how fun, friendly and well-run a VSAG diving day is, and I would especially like to thank John for a great day out on his boat. ❖

**Saturday, 29 December 2012**

## **Diving in Heaven**

*by John Lawler, VSAG.*

VSAG had teamed up with Getunder Dive Club for this day and the initial plan was to head out into Bass Strait. Arriving at the heads the swell looked testy so we held back and after watching Freediver thread through the swells, discussed the scene with David Geckic's crew and made our decision to stay in the bay. Freediver then soon returned to advise conditions outside were not comfortable... good decision by us.

Diving on a slack water ebb generally means low, sometimes very low, and sometimes very, very, low viability... not so today!

New for a VSAG checkout dive, Alan Balmer and I got the nod for the first dive... drift lines set to ensure the boat could collect us if we headed towards the

shipping channel, off we went... and into amazing 15 metre viz and almost slack water that seemed like slack time had already arrived... just a very slow running tide and things got better.

We were in the most exciting terrain of small swim throughs, bommies, drop-offs and a huge variety of fish life... including the spiny ones. Well, after all the plan was to be dropped off 100 metres north of Rob's Reef and to drift into the zone... it worked like it was meant to as that was where we found ourselves.

This really was diving in heaven! A nice 45 minute dive and we surfaced with great satisfaction after the experience. Robs Reef is never a dive place a diver would tire of... can't wait to get back

The next plan for our other divers was for a dive in the shipping channel... Lonsdale advised no shipping for the next few hours so AB put a shot line on the brilliant "Knawesome Reef"... by now the



Denys rescues a mermaid.  
Photo: John Lawler.



David Geckic's crew resting at Popes Eye.  
Photo: John Lawler.



New member Ian Scholey at Popes Eye.  
Photo: John Lawler.



Resting at Popes Eye.  
Photo: John Lawler.

conditions were perfect... no swell... low winds and right on slack water.

Divers from three boats descended the line... most surfaced around 30 minutes with yells of excitement at the brilliance of the dive site. One diver said, "that is the best dive I have had in the bay"... others were of the same opinion!

A later post on DiveOz started an interesting round of discussions... there is the huge anchor on this site... but is the site a "Reef or a Wreck"? Seems it is possible

it could be a wreck... a magnetic sounder could be one way to confirm this.

After a break for lunch in the very busy Popes Eye, divers challenged the full on flow of the flood tide, a testy ride on the south side.

A very good dive day for all divers! ❖



The rescued mermaid.  
Photo: John Lawler.



Andrew Quested at Popes Eye.  
Photo: John Lawler.

Thursday, 3 January 2013

## Scattered We Were

by John Lawler, VSAG.

Well three VSAG boats lined up for the Thursday dive but we never ended up together throughout the whole day... we were scattered. David Geekie's team wanted an early start out of Barwon Heads at 8.30 am for dives on the wrecks at the graveyard. My team and Peter Briggs team opted for a later start (gentleman's hours) at 9.30 am from Sorrento.

Congestion was rampant (ooppsss) at the boat ramp and parking for trailers saw them almost up to the shopping centre and Hotham Road. We got lucky as one trailer right next to us pulled out and Peter found a park under the trees.

We launched, yelled out to Peter to advise our departure to collect Mary Malloy at Queenscliff and got a wave "ok"... well as it turned out "NOT OK". Check-



David Flew, John Lawler, Hannah Smeeton and Cheryl Lees after a scattered dive day.

Photo: John Lawler.

ing my mobile voicemail at Queenscliff we were advised Peter's boat battery was dead and they were off to find a new one. Time consuming but they got it done.

With Mary and gear loaded up we headed out to the iconic "Coogee" wreck. Conditions... perfect... calm... safe exit through the rip and just a slight swell "en route".

David Flew and Mary first in... reports on surfacing was viz around 18/20 metres... no swell and all the magic that this wreck normally offers.

Hanna Smeeton and me in next... and what magic we had... there was so much to see at the stern section we spent most of the dive time in that area... the colour from the bright yellow zoanths that cover almost the whole of the stern structure was stunning. Underneath we saw a monster boarfish seemingly not concerned about the visitors to it's territory. We moved a slight distance from the main body to the east side rubble in the hope a spiny crustacean might lurk there... there was one.

Safely back on the boat a stiff 15 knot easterly had sprung up so next plan was to move closer to shore... this was a good move... then good news from Peter. The boat was running with the new battery and they were staying inside the bay and doing some drift dives and aiming for the 2pm slack... great news!

During our lunch break the next dive options were discussed and the GPS set for nearby sites. We were about 4 kms west of Pt Lonsdale and about three kms

out from shore. I had pinged some interesting reefs some time ago and gave them the name "excellent reefs". This was the agreed dive site for dive number two for the day.

For each set of divers these new reefs were "excellent"... so many and stretched in all directions... fish life seemed to like hovering on top of the of these bommies but the small families of crays still hung out in the deep ledges... a long 40 minutes and the cold crept in despite water temp being around 19 degrees... home time. ❖

Sunday, 20 January 2013

## **Robb's Reef, Cave Wall, Cottage by the Sea & Shortlands Bluff**

*by David Geekie, VSAG.*

Three boats launched early today to catch the flood slack at 9:18. Given the nearly 2 metre swell outside the heads we were aware it was likely to be the best dive of the day.

JL had a new potential club member so decided to do Robb's Reef, well inside the heads. (JL later commented some one must have moved it overnight as they did not find the expected area.) John had Andrew Quested, Peter Altis and a new member (Bob Pavlich) on board well as a boat driver friend (Alistair).

Peter Campisano dived just inside the heads in around 8 metres and reported good conditions. Peter stayed with the boat allowing Carol, Denise Rodgers and Denys to enjoy the slack.

David Geekie dropped a shot line on the Cave Wall section of the Lonsdale wall in around 25 metres and Greg Breeze volunteered to look after the boat allowing David, Phil Watson and Hui King Ho (visitor from BSAC) to take the slack.

After an early lunch break David and Peter headed to Cottage by the Sea for the final dive, Phil came back with some fantastic squid shots. All enjoyed the dive, particularly the variety of creatures seen. JL's crew decided on a drift dive from around Shortlands Bluff towards the Lonsdale lighthouse.

The day ended early as all boats effectively only had two dive periods rather than the normal 4. At Queenscliff we headed into the town for a quick coffee and cold drinks before heading home.

Thanks to all who participated, we made the best of the conditions and had safe, enjoyable dives. ❖

Sunday, 27 January 2013

## 8th Wonder Fantasy Hole & Rosebud Reef

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

A few years ago, VSAG committee member Graham Ellis came across a very interesting anomaly in the hydrographic survey information for Port Phillip Bay. There was a fairly large hole out from Rye where the seabed dropped from 15 metres down to 32 metres deep. And on the southeast side, the drop was almost vertical! Could this be another site similar to Portsea Hole, with a rocky wall?

Graham started testing the waters by asking other VSAG and Getunder members if they knew anything about this location. No, was the consistent reply.

A few of us would regularly natter away about the potential of this location as a new dive site and kept saying we'd go there to check it out one day. A few times we tried to schedule an exploratory dive

expedition. I'd get envious if the timing meant I couldn't go along. I didn't want to miss out on being in on a new discovery.

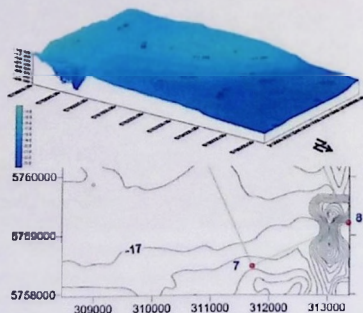
People find different reasons to go diving. For some it's the interaction with marine animals. Others are dedicated to underwater cave exploration, or the history of shipwrecks. For some it's the depth, or just the feeling of getting somewhere no man has been to before.

This new dive site might be my opportunity to go where no other man has been before. However, for some reason the planets never seemed to align properly. Other things kept drawing us all back to the usual dive sites.

Well in the last week of January 2013, Graham was rostered as Dive Captain. The forecast weather conditions were such that a VSAG dive day incorporating checking out the mystery hole was a distinct possibility. Graham put out the call to VSAGers and the available dive boats quickly filled.

### Who

Graham Ellis' boat: John Lawler, Benita McDonough, and Denise Ridgway.





Peter Campisano's boat: Carol Campisano, Bob Pavlich, Andrew Qusted, and Greg Breese.



Lloyd Borrett's boat "Raydon": Cheryl Lees, Tony van den Blink, and guest diver David Goodwin.



And so it was that on Sunday, 27 January 2013, we all gathered at The Scuba Doctor to load dive kit onto the three dive boats and prepare for the big adventure. Safety briefings done, we headed down to Rye Boat Ramp and launched.

Peter Campisano took the lead and headed out towards South Channel Fort at speed. Graham was still at the boat ramp jetty, so I made my way out of the channel and slowly headed in the same direc-

tion, trying to keep both Graham and Peter in sight.

Eventually Graham was underway. By then Peter Campisano had reached South Channel Fort. I was about halfway between the other two boats. Graham then announced we were headed in the wrong direction! (Maybe, just maybe, we should have shared the GPS marks for the dive site before leaving shore!)

### 8th Wonder Fantasy Hole

We arrived at our destination and spent some time trolling around, getting a feel for the place using our depth sounders.

Everything we were seeing on the instruments just peaked our excitement. We soon located the top of the almost vertical wall and dropped a shot line in. There was very little current running.

Tony van den Blink and I geared up, rolled backwards over the side and headed down the shot line. John Lawler and Benita McDonough were a few minutes in front of us. (We could tell from the silt kicked up on the silty bottom!) Still, the visibility was crystal clear.

Yes, the silty bottom under us was not very exciting. But any doubts we may have had about the potential of this new dive site were quickly swept away as we dropped over the side of the wall. The transformation was simply sensational. What an amazing underwater spectacle lay before us!

The rocky wall was covered by the most amazingly coloured marine growth. (It's



Tony begins his descent.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

at times like this I wish I knew how to properly identify marine life so as to be able to better describe it to you.) If you thought some of the spots on Lonsdale Wall or the Great Barrier reef were colourful, then this was twenty times better.

Massive schools of small inquisitive fish and the less sociable weedy sea dragons were all loving their rainbow coloured habitats in this lush sanctuary. Brightly coloured, incredibly delicate and beautiful iridescent nudibranchs were everywhere.

There were huge schools of the larger bay species we're all familiar with. Flocks of old wives and flights of blue devils. Squadrons of bronze whaler sharks out in the middle distance, massed seven gilled sharks trying to mimic a slow-

moving juggernaut, and a flight of large eagle rays watching the show.

Ledges cut deep into the rocky escarpment were like apartment blocks for the monster crabs crammed along them. I'd heard tales about the size and quantity of crabs at Cape Jaffa, but this had to be twice as good. I could imagine the eyeballs leaping out of JL's sockets and bouncing around in his mask at the sight of it.

As we came to the end of the wall we found a gently sloping decline carpeted with huge, plate sized scallops. We'd better not let the Black Rock club know about this site or it will be cleaned out within a month!

We ignored the plentiful swim throughs and moved back onto the wall where at a depth of 25 metres we found a 3 metre diameter entrance to a cave. I signalled to Tony, asking him if he wanted to go in. He signalled "OK" and followed me.

The cave was completely dark. Switching on our torches, I thought to myself that this was not so much a cave, as it was a curved tunnel, about the size Steve McQueen might have crawled through in *The Great Escape*.

My heart rate increased. My mind filled with trepidation. Then the tunnel opened into a flooded chamber about the size of a small church. Stalactites and stalagmites untouched by human hand contrived a magnificent scene. It was a cathedral, dressed in what looked like white marble.

I turned around to see if Tony was still there. He signalled he was okay. Then something bumped into my back in the dark and I quickly spun back around. Nothing to be alarmed about! It was only a huge Potato Cod, about the size of a VW minibus! It had obviously come to investigate the bubble blowing divers who had disturbed it from its slumbers.

The Potato Cod looked on as the two of us passed it by. I gazed back at it after we'd passed. To my amazement, it came up behind Tony and opened its mouth. It opened its mouth wider and wider. The animal had teeth reminiscent of piano keys. It then plunged down and encompassed Tony's head in the voluminous opening. Oh my God!

I hit the huge animal as hard as I could. It was like hitting a sofa with a paper handkerchief. It didn't seem to make an impression, yet it had the desired effect. The Potato Cod released its victim, looked at me reproachfully, and swam off offended. Tony continued on unfazed. What a cool dude!

Later at the surface, Tony asked me what had happened in the chamber when everything went dark. "I think I accidentally turned off my torch," I replied. Some things are better left unexplained.

Everywhere we shone our dive torches, the chamber revealed more of what no person had ever cast their eyes upon. It was a visual treasure.

On the far side of the room I spotted a small exit tunnel with a glimmer of day-

light at its end. We made our way into this 2 metre diameter passage, illuminated by the blue window of daylight from the cave's end.

After exiting the cave's second opening, I was looking back, waiting for Tony to come out. A large pod of bay dolphins came by to take a cheeky look into our new discovery. They seemed excited that divers had finally found this underwater secret spot.

The dolphins distracted me from the delights of the cave entrance and the vibrantly coloured wall in front of me. As I turned my back to the wall I was surprised to come almost face to face with a baby humpback whale calf and its mother. The calf was barely 5 metres long.

It was surreal to see this leviathan mother, about 15 metres in length, suspended just 5 metres away. Then with her massive pectoral fins she moved forward and gently pushed the baby calf, riding the pressure wave just above her head, towards me. She stopped and watched on as the inquisitive calf came up and nudged me. I stopped breathing. My mind was racing.

Then I was suddenly aware that the bottom was no longer 5 metres below me. My fins hit something solid and I looked down, thinking I'd been nudged by the whale calf onto a rocky ledge of the wall.

Wrong! There was a massively huge male humpback whale directly below me, having been masked in the gloom before. He now had his sights on moving up to

place himself between his family and me. This monster of the ocean was directly between my legs! I had always wanted a close whale encounter, but this was ridiculous.

I moved back toward the wall and the male humpback continued to rise, stopping when I could look the big guy in the eye, just a metre away from my face. He articulated his gaze and sized me up. After about a minute, that seemed like a year, he slowly moved away.

While I was wondering if I was suffering from a severe case of nitrogen narcosis, all three whales moved off into the distance. I turned around to see Tony, with his head sticking out of the cave entrance, and his eyeballs out on stalks!

We both started to breathe normally again and dropped to the bottom of the wall. There we found seas of waving sea grass, drifts of bright green sea lettuce and kelp on the rocky bottom with abalone attached in the rock crevices.

As we ventured away from the wall over the 32 metre bottom, we noticed a large dark foreboding shape in the distance.

Upon moving closer, I started to make out the shape of a submarine. Surely not?

But yes, there right before us was a small submarine, covered with bright yellow coloured marine life. It was less than half the size of the J-class submarines we regularly dive on outside the heads.

How is this possible? We moved in close and inspected it from end to end. There

was no obvious signs of why it had sunk. All of the hatches we found were closed shut.

I found what looked like some Japanese or Chinese markings on the small coning tower. Could it be that a Japanese mini-sub had made its way to Melbourne in World War II and come to grief in our treacherous bay? Or could this be the rumoured Chinese submarine that was speculated to have kidnapped Prime Minister Harold Holt on Sunday 17 December 1967 from Cheviot Beach on Point Nepean near Portsea?

Bottom time up, I shot my SMB and we reluctantly started our ascent. A deep stop completed and then a safety stop, eventually we were back on the surface, taking in the fresh air, bathed in warm sunlight.

Had we just had an amazing experience diving what must certainly be the eighth wonder of the world? Or, had it all been a fantasy, fuelled by the excitement and anticipation of exploring a new dive site?

Back aboard the boat, Tony and I were speechless. Just how could we relate such an experience and have anyone believe



Raydon moves in to pickup Tony and Lloyd.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

us? The others fired off questions, but we just couldn't provide answers.

Over the radio we heard a report from Graham's boat that there was nothing below but a boring, virtually lifeless, uninteresting mud hole. Obviously this was the work of the wily John Lawler. The cagey bugger wanted to keep all knowledge of the wonders and mysteries of this too good to be true dive site in the hands of as few people as possible. He'll now be extremely upset with me for having revealed all.

We waited for the divers from Peter Campisano's boat to surface and then recovered our shot line. Meanwhile, Graham took off to Rosebud Reef.

My mind was still reeling from what I'd just experienced, but it was time to put all of that behind me and continue the dive day as if it hadn't happened.

### **Rosebud Reef**

With our shot line safely aboard I looked up the GPS marks for Rosebud Reef and found I had two: one just inshore from the Hurricane; and the other some distance east of that. I headed to the latter one and Peter followed, not having marks for Rosebud Reef in his GPS. Graham informed us on the radio that they were already on the dive site.

As we closed on the mark, Graham's boat was no-where to be seen. A radio call to them revealed they had gone to the other mark but hadn't found the reef. We arrived at our destination and found the

reef on the sounder, so Graham's boat headed over to join us.

Rosebud Reef is a lovely shallow dive situated about a kilometre offshore from Rosebud. An area of shallow reefs rising two or three meters off the seabed in an otherwise sandy oasis. The masses of fish all congregate here to feed. This in turn attracts some lovely harmless sharks predominantly the wobbegongs and the seven gills. Port Jackson shark eggs are often found on the site. It's just a great dive site.

Peter Campisano anchored on the mark, Graham deployed a shot line, and I deployed a buoy line. Cheryl Lees and David Goodwin went in. Graham and Denise Ridgway were to join then, but I was later informed that didn't happen. Tony and I ate our lunch.

Cheryl and David covered a lot of ground to the west of the mark. JL kept wondering why they were still down, as all he could see on the sounder was a flat sandy bottom. But Tony and I kept finding



Bob Pavlich on Rosebud Reef.  
Photo: Andrew Quested.



Marine life abounds on Rosebud Reef. Photo: Andrew Qusted.

some reef structure close to where the divers were, so we were confident they were having fun. And indeed, that was the report when they surfaced and were safely back aboard the boat.

After a suitable surface interval, David, Tony and I tumbled back into the water and explored the reef. It's always just such a delightful dive with plenty of interesting small stuff to look at.

We came upon a large school of old wives. The others moved on, but I stayed there and gradually the old girls accepted me, with some moving in for a close look.

Eventually it was time to go back to the surface. With everyone aboard the dive boats we headed to Rye Boat Ramp, and then back to The Scuba Doctor to unload gear, get air fills and have a chat on the couch.

Yet another magnificent VSAG dive day that will never be forgotten. ❖

Sunday, 3 February 2013

## Elsa's Reef, Hurricane & Scallops

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

*"You'll never, never know if you never, never go."* Well two boats loaded with VSAG divers decided to go and were well pleased with the results.

### Who

"Miles Ahead": John Lawler, Trevor Williams, Bob Pavlich, and Andrew Qusted.



"Raydon": Lloyd Borrett, Cheryl Lees, Stephen McMaster, and Tony van den Blink.



### Conditions

The weather forecast looked very marginal when planning for this dive day began, but improved in the days leading up to decision time. However, in deference to the forecast we thought it best not to venture outside of the bay or dive near the heads. So we decided to meet up and load boats at The Scuba Doctor in Rye and launch from the Rye Boat Ramp.

### Elsa's Reef

We'd been hearing about an artificial reef someone has built about 50 metres out from the end of Rye Pier. No, not the mini wall that Michael Mallis has built along the end of Rye Pier.

So we motored over to the site. JL dropped anchor and everyone on the boat went in. We kept "Raydon" live and Tony, Cheryl and myself dropped in with a buoy line in tow.

There is a sign pointing to Elsa's Reef at a spot near the mini wall Michael Mallis has built, and a set up steel posts to mark the way to Elsa's Reef. We dropped in about half-way along the guide-way.

There's a brick paved entrance, a small statue of a cute lion cub off to the left, and a park bench seat to the right. There is another park bench seat, plus a concrete bench seat also in situ.

Off to the far left is a small wall a few metres long of bricks with slabs leaning against them to create a shelter for marine critters.



Lloyd Borrett and Andrew Quested reflected in the mirror on Elsa's Reef.  
Photo: Andrew Quested.

There's a metal frame that has been put in place to create an open shelter area, plus numerous concrete objects with hollows. On the metal frame is a nice circular mirror and it's quite interesting to see



Metal frame habitat at Elsa's Reef.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

the way the various marine critters react to the mirror.

We only stayed on the site for about 15 minutes before surfacing and getting back aboard the dive boats. This site has plenty of potential and is certainly well worth a visit.

### ***Hurricane***

We motored up the coast to the wreck site of the *Hurricane*, a 1200 ton iron ship, built in 1853. On 20 April 1869, while entering Port Phillip Heads, 3 months out from Liverpool, she struck a submerged rock off Point Lonsdale



(probably Lonsdale Rock). Her Master, Captain Johnston, inspected the hole, and finding no water continued to Melbourne.

A short time later, the Hurricane was found to be taking water rather badly. She eventually sank off Rosebud in about 12 metres of water. Only half the 2000 tons of cargo was ever salvaged. Being close to the South Channel, the wreck represented a hazard to shipping and was blasted.

I had four GPS marks for the Hurricane, and had never dived the site. Two of the marks were close together and that's where JL anchored "Miles Ahead". They then sent two divers down to take a look.

Soon after the divers were back at the surface reporting they couldn't find the wreck. So we decided to drop a shot on the mark that was about 100 metres away and give that a try.

Unfortunately, just as the shot line was almost all out, it jammed between the hydraulic steering arm and the transom. We couldn't clear it from above, so I went in only to find the line had also wrapped around the propeller. It was soon cleared and Cheryl and Stephen joined me for the dive.

The current was much stronger than we expected, but we made our way down the shot line to the bottom. No wreck!

Thinking we'd probably dragged the shot, we headed off in the direction it had come from. Still no Hurricane wreck.

The sea bed was covered with clumps of hundreds of very tiny baby scallops. It made for an interesting sight.

We abandoned the search and ascent up the shot line, no doubt dragging it further in the process. Just as we started a three minute safety stop, two other divers headed down the shot line past us.

### Scallop Drift

After a luncheon on the water we decided to go and get some scallops. John Lawler headed out to GPS marks he had from Mick Jeacle near the spoil grounds. They went in to check it out. We waited to see what the report would be, and headed over to check out the seals and birdlife on the nearby pile.

The divers were soon back above water suggesting we give the site a miss. We headed over to our usual scallop drift area out from Rye and towards White Cliffs. Conditions were now absolutely magnificent. It just doesn't get any better than this out on the bay.



Scallop platform. Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

JL and Trevor started to get ready on “Miles Ahead”. Tony, Stephen and I geared up on “Raydon”.

Unfortunately JL’s catch bag and new scallop lift bag setup were lost over the side as they prepared to dive, so JL ended up going down to look for it. His search for it was unsuccessful.

Time to gather some scallops. There are times when the sea floor is carpeted with scallops, but this wasn’t one of them. However, we had a nice long dive collecting what we found.

On surfacing with our bag limits of scallops in possession, we decided to head back to Elsa’s Reef to use up the remainder of our air. JL stayed in the scallop area and put in the rest of his divers for their scallop drift.

### **Elsa’s Reef second take**

Tony captained “Raydon” as Cheryl, Stephen and I went in to look under Rye Pier, checkout the mini wall built by Michael Mallis, and follow the trail out to Elsa’s Reef.

There were quite a few other divers under the pier, so we didn’t spend long there. We found large schools of small fish and squid off the end of the pier just out from the mini wall.

But on this dive we spent longer on Elsa’s Reef. I kept trying to interact with a little octopus, but Cheryl kept scaring it into hiding. So I then went and watched the fish interacting with the mirror.

With air low, it was time to surface. But at 3 metres I came across a large jellyfish and played with it for a while before finally surfacing. Yet another great dive.

Tony reported that JL had already headed in, and we did too. We headed back to The Scuba Doctor to unload and get air fills. JL and his boat load of divers had already all departed. I went out the back and shucked my catch bag of scallops.

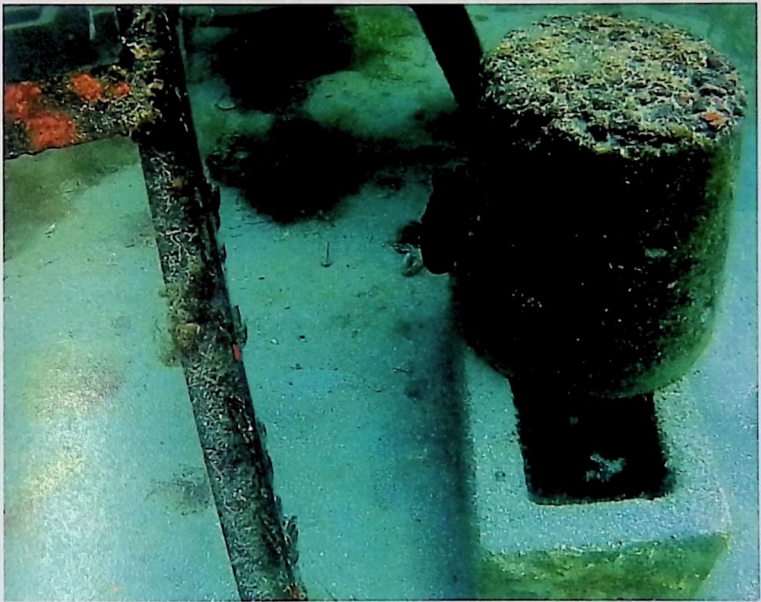
So in summary, we’d decided to go in spite of an iffy weather forecast and had all had a wonderful day. It’s days like this that make it great to be a VSAGer and get to have fun together enjoying the delights of our bay. ❖



Steve McMaster swims through ring on Michael’s Wall. Photo: Lloyd Borrett.



Seat and birdbath at Elsa’s Reef. Photo: Lloyd Borrett.



Octopus on left side of concrete habitat at Elsa's Reef. Photo: Lloyd Borrett.



Lion cub statue on Elsa's Reef.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

Large jellyfish near surface.  
Photo: Lloyd Borrett.

# Safety In Diving

## Nautilus Lifeline

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

It was three months in the making, but finally the group purchase of Nautilus Lifeline two-marine radio and GPS locator eventuated in early December 2012.

This started out with me seeing a special offer from Nautilus to dive shops for the DEMA show in the USA. Enquiries were made and the VSAG committee approved the purchase of six units for sharing around on dive days. In the end we were able to obtain 30 units direct from Nautilus Lifeline in Canada via The SCUBA Doctor in Rye at a great price of \$210 each with the dive pouch.

Thus 30 divers (mostly VSAGers but with a handful of Getunder hitchhikers) got their hands on these innovative safety devices in time for Xmas. It's been great to see these units out on the water since.

The airwaves have been ablaze with people testing out how they work. From all reports, everyone is well pleased.

### MROCP

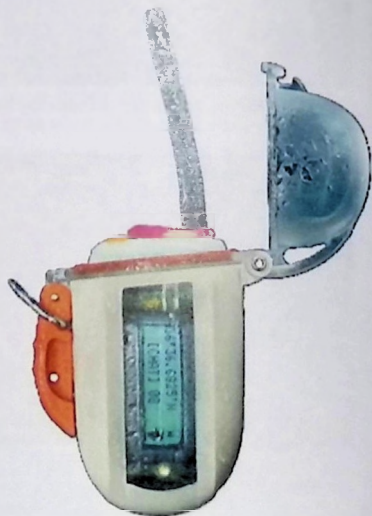
In order to use the Nautilus Lifeline legally in Australia, and get the MMSI number required to be able to use the emergency DSC feature, you need to have a *Marine Radio Operator's Certificate of Proficiency (MROCP)*. You only really need the VHF certificate of proficiency, but for the little extra effort in-

volved, you may as well get the full MF/HF and VHF one.

### Getting Your MROCP

You can self-study for the MROCP licence exam and then arrange to be tested. **Andrew Quested** has arranged for a group of VSAGers to be tested at 7 pm on **Wednesday 13 February 2013 at Diveline in Frankston**. Please contact Andrew on 0419 347 012 if you're interested.

Alternatively, you can go and do a course where you'll be taught what you need to know, and then be tested. ❖



Nautilus Lifeline two-way VHF marine radio and GPS locator.

# Action In Fog

by Doug King,

Boating Instructor, Boating Victoria.

Fog can be one of the scariest situations at sea. With the time of year fast approaching where fog becomes a real possibility, it is a good time to discuss ways of navigating in fog and restricted visibility.

Fog is caused when water vapour condenses into tiny liquid water droplets in the air. It is particularly common over salt water due to the salt promoting condensation. The most common fogs this time of year are radiation fogs. These form when air is stable and relatively moist. The sky must be clear as well which causes heat loss by radiation. Light winds are also a requirement for the formation of radiation fogs.

Radiation fogs can be accurately predicted and normally "burn off" after the sun has risen but can be slow to dissipate over water. Advection and Sea Fogs can occur along the coast and pose the same challenges.

If possible, avoid fog by not going out on the water. If it is imperative that you make a trip or get caught out, sensible precautions and pre-planning will make it easier and safer.

**Navigating in poor visibility can be stressful and dangerous. If you are inexperienced in restricted visibility it is easy to get lost or imagine that you**

**are travelling in a direction that is different to reality.**

**Don't forget that Restricted Visibility situations which includes Fog are defined as "heightened risk". If you are not already wearing a PFD on you must put one on.**

There are a number of dangers in fog. They are:

- **Collision.**  
This is probably the biggest danger particularly if you are operating in a busy area or in a Port area such as Port Phillip, Geelong, Westernport or Portland.
- **Hitting a Hazard.**  
GPS is a great aid to knowing where you are but high levels of skill are required for accurate navigation and they do not predict accurately where you might be in the future. Hazards appear suddenly out of the fog and it can be hard to assess the path of moving vessels.
- **Getting Lost and Not Being Able To Locate Your Launching Position or Marina.**  
While GPS aids significantly in position fixing it is not acceptable as good seamanship to enter a Marina or narrow channel or river using GPS alone. Errors in placing waypoints, currents and tidal flow

can all play a part in taking you off course sufficiently to have an incident that will spoil your day. Most boaties would have heard of people coming to grief by relying solely on their electronic aids.

There are a number of strategies that good boaties employ to deal with risks posed by fog and restricted visibility.

**In all cases you should slow down to a safe speed and turn on your navigation lights.** A safe speed is a speed which allows you take action to avoid a collision. In heavy fog you will most certainly be down to a walking pace. It is up to the skipper to determine visibility distances and set an appropriate speed.

### **To Minimise Risks of Collision**

**Sound a fog signal.** On small boat underway the correct sound signal is one long blast every two minutes. Vessel under 12 metres may use any means to make sound signals. If you don't have a horn, consider carrying a whistle on board for such occurrences.

**Post lookouts and keep a sharp lookout.** Lookouts should also keep a keen ear out for other vessels sounding fog signals. It is a good practice to stop from time to time and shut down the engine to listen.

Be aware on hearing another vessels fog signal that sound travels in varying ways through fog and the apparent direction of

the signal or the intensity of the sound may not be what it seems.

**If you are in a port or approaches to a port, monitor the working channel for the Vessel Traffic System.** In Port Phillip it's channel 12 VHF and in Westernport it's channel 14. You will hear ships reporting positions and can use that information to build up a picture of large shipping traffic.

If you are in a small boat, stay in water that is too shallow for large vessels.

### **Avoiding Hazards**

**If necessary, find shallow water out of high traffic areas and drop the anchor. Wait until fog clears and continue your journey.**

You may be able to change your route and take a track that provides greater clearance from dangers such as reefs, shoals and headlands than you normally allow in clear conditions. That is – build in a greater safety margin.

Use the GPS to set clearing distances from dangers and have the alarm set.

Monitor depth and use a depth alarm to alert you when you start reaching shallow water. This can also help you fix position.

### **Avoid Getting Lost**

Good boaties will plan their trip in detail before leaving even if fog is not forecast. They also maintain situational

awareness – they know where they are all the time and what compass course to steer home.

**If fog rolls in, fix your position immediately and re confirm a compass course to safety. Review your position and double check for dangers en route including the possibility of encountering other vessels.**

**If you have radio contact with your local Volunteer Marine Rescue Group (VMR), radio your position and intentions to them.**

**Use your compass to steer a course.** GPS units and plotters will have screens such as a “roadway” to guide you but they take your eye off a wider outlook. Compass steering allows you to maintain a steady course without your eyes being diverted constantly to a screen.

If you have planned your trip before heading out, getting home will be a little slower but won't pose too many problems. If you haven't planned you have put yourself under unnecessary pressure when fog rolls in having to plan “on the spot”.

Don't rely solely on the GPS to solve your problems as they arise. It is easy to become confused or hit the wrong button. In fog, preparation is everything. But then preparation is good practice all the time.

## **Finally**

Safe boating in fog or restricted visibility relies on *seeing and being seen, hearing and being heard.*

There are a number of legal requirements such as Sound Signals, safe speed and lighting requirements. These are only a re-enforcement of good seamanship practice.

Put your PFD on, fix your position and radio your position to the local VMR.

A good tip if travelling with other vessels is to have the lead vessel trail a life ring or other suitable floating object on a light line behind them. This object creates a wake that others can follow at a safe distance.

### ***Notes from the Editor:***

*Having found myself out on VSAG boats where fog has severely restricted our ability to navigate out on the water, the above advice is great. You should also consider creating a set of waypoints and routes in your GPS that can help you in fog. Have a waypoint for where you begin to enter the bay, and another for where you begin to exit the bay. Then use these as a route to safely cross The Rip. Also create waypoints for the boat ramps we commonly use and even some routes to get you from known safe points into these boat ramps. ❖*

# Visit to Bodalla Fishing and Maritime Museum

by Judy Brincat, VSAG.

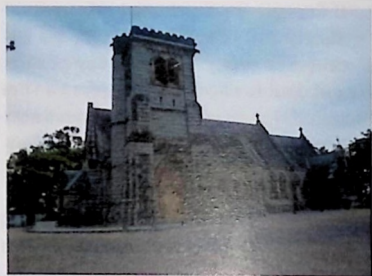
It is unusual to spend a week at Narooma or Bermagui and be able to spend every day at the beach or out on the water. For when one of these lay days occurs, a trip to Bodalla, 53 km from Bermagui and 19 km from Narooma, is well worth the effort.



Wagonga Inlet (foggy!!), Narooma

Besides the old stone church, and an Irish-named pub, Bodalla now boasts a fishing and maritime museum. This unassuming building in a quiet street off the Princes Highway houses an absolute treasure trove of all things maritime.

Housed within several rooms are collections of shark and fish whole-mounts, teeth and jaws, fossils and shells, rods, reels, lures and fish hooks, whole-mounts



Anglican Church, Bodalla

of crabs and crayfish as well as scuba diving displays.

Whaling is featured, ice-fishing and tuna poling rate a mention, and there is even a collection of vintage outboard motors, and a collection of hand-lines that only the old-timers (I include myself in this category) would recognise.

Given the propensity for fishermen and scuba-divers alike to enjoy a yarn or two, there is no doubt that a visit to this gem of a museum on the Sapphire Coast will invoke all sorts of memories and tale-swapping.

The collection comprises items sourced locally, as well as a considerable investment in eBay (I'm told) and a growing number of donations. The girls and I spent an hour there, I'd be surprised if any VSAGer spent less time, so it's a





Old diving suit



Superseded hand-lines

possibility, however in the meantime it is well worth a visit.

Like most museums and galleries, one visit is usually not enough, it's always worth re-visiting later to see the latest additions.

Photos: Judy Brincat. ❖

great way to spend a day when the diving is no good.

As well as the preserved specimens, there is a tank with a modest collection of live specimens. The potential for expansion is unlimited, and even re-location to a more maritime location such as Bermagui is a



Mounted game fish



Crustaceans

# Explore, Dream, Discover

by Rob Kirk, *Getunder* (ex VSAG).

Living in hospital for a while has given me time to slow down and think. Seriously, there's nothing really wrong with me, I just fell out of my van and broke my leg, but a lot of the people here are nearing the end of their lives. Now that it's too late for them, I wonder how many of these people have really known life? Did they actively seek adventure in their lives, or did they just live grey little lives of quiet desperation?

Did any of them know the pure joy of swimming with dolphins in blue water? Or to have seals buzzing them on a deco line? How many of them know what it's like to crawl through the guts of a wreck, or work their way out of a cave in pitch blackness? Can they even imagine the sheer joy of drifting, bird-like, over undulating reef, then the adrenaline rush of trying to hook the line in to duck under a ledge, hoping to find a cray?

I feel sorry for people who don't dive. I don't know about you, but diving is the one thing that I've known all my life that I wanted to do. And yet, somehow we structure our lives, (or our lives get structured for us) so that diving becomes something we only get to do on the odd, rare occasion. Maybe it's shift work, or travelling for business, or excessive un-

paid hours at office and home trying to build a career or a business or just hoping that you get to keep your job. And even after driving ourselves to earn money to support our lifestyles and build for our futures, many of us also know the misery of desperately wanting to dive, but not being able to afford it.

This Club is fortunate that we have boat owners who are keen to dive at any opportunity, so we can generally dive any time the weather is right.

Unless of course, there aren't any takers. I hope that you're getting the point I'm making. Get out there — make some time for diving! Life is short, but a reasonably high quality of life can be a LOT shorter!

A lifetime ago, back when I was chained to a desk at that mongrel of a bank, in a vain attempt at keeping sane I kept this quote from Mark Twain and a photo of the Southern Ocean beside my computer screen:

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the things you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the Trade Winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.” ❖

# Wanted: Vintage Dive Watches

by Peter Altis, VSAG.

Dear VSAG Members,

I collect old dive watches and like to restore them, mainly for my personal collection. They can be working or not, listed below or not.

I collect mainly mechanical, automatic and electric watches (pre quartz) with the occasional quartz watch if it 'looks interesting'. If you or our buddies would like to donate or sell such a watch I would be grateful to hear from you, discuss it in detail and hopefully negotiate a donation, swap or sale.

Some of the known brands that come to mind are...

- Omega, Seiko (the 150 metre models from the 60s and 70s)
- Tudor, Rolex, Tissot

Some of the not so common Swiss brands are...

- Enicar, Roamer, Nivada
- Zodiac, Fortis, Certina
- Doxa, Eterna, Technos

My contact number is 0417 843 783, or an email to [altispa@optusnet.com.au](mailto:altispa@optusnet.com.au).

PS: I would also be interested in some normal watches too. ❖

As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a Funeral Director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man.

He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a Pauper's cemetery out bush. As I was not familiar with the area, I got lost and, being a typical man, I didn't stop for directions.

I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral bloke had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight.

There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch.

I felt badly and apologised to the men for being late. I went to the graveside and looked down and saw that the coffin already in place. I didn't know what else to do, so I started to play.

The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends.

I played like I've never played before for this homeless man.

And as I played 'Amazing Grace,' the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, we all wept together.

When I finished I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car, though my head hung low and my heart was full.

As I opened the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, "I've never seen nothin' like that before and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."

# Diving the web

by Lloyd Borrett, VSAG.

## Apple of your eye

**iGills SE-35 iPhone Housing** — If you suffer from separation anxiety and can't bear the thought of being without your iPhone when diving, then the iGills SE-35 can transform your iPhone 3GS, 4 or 4S into a fully functioning dive computer complete with dive log, stills and video camera, underwater compass and back-up flashlight.

Constructed from rugged polycarbonate and stainless steel with a depth rating of 40 metres, the SE-35 is equipped with on-board electronics including precision depth and temperature sensors. Accessed by a six-button interface, the housing provides simple and intuitive navigation from within the iGills dive app.

The device displays and records your dive parameters, tracks no deco limits via a simple and intuitive user interface, while on the surface your full dive log, pictures and videos are accessible right away on your iPhone and can be shared and posted as easy as the rest of your digital creations. [www.igills.com](http://www.igills.com)



## 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.



## Dream machine

### C-Explorer 5 Submersible



This luxury sub accommodates up to five people and is propelled by six powerful thrusters to a maximum speed of three knots.

A host of optional features include a robotic manipulator arm, imaging sonar, an LED lighting system and an on-board Remote Operated Vehicle.

Depth rated to 300 metres, the C-Explorer 5 can remain underwater for eight hours and has no need of those long decompression stops! Now you just have to choose the luxury dive boat that this little beauty could be operated from and start exploring.

[www.uboatworx.com](http://www.uboatworx.com)



Home: Covered   
Car: Covered

# Are You?



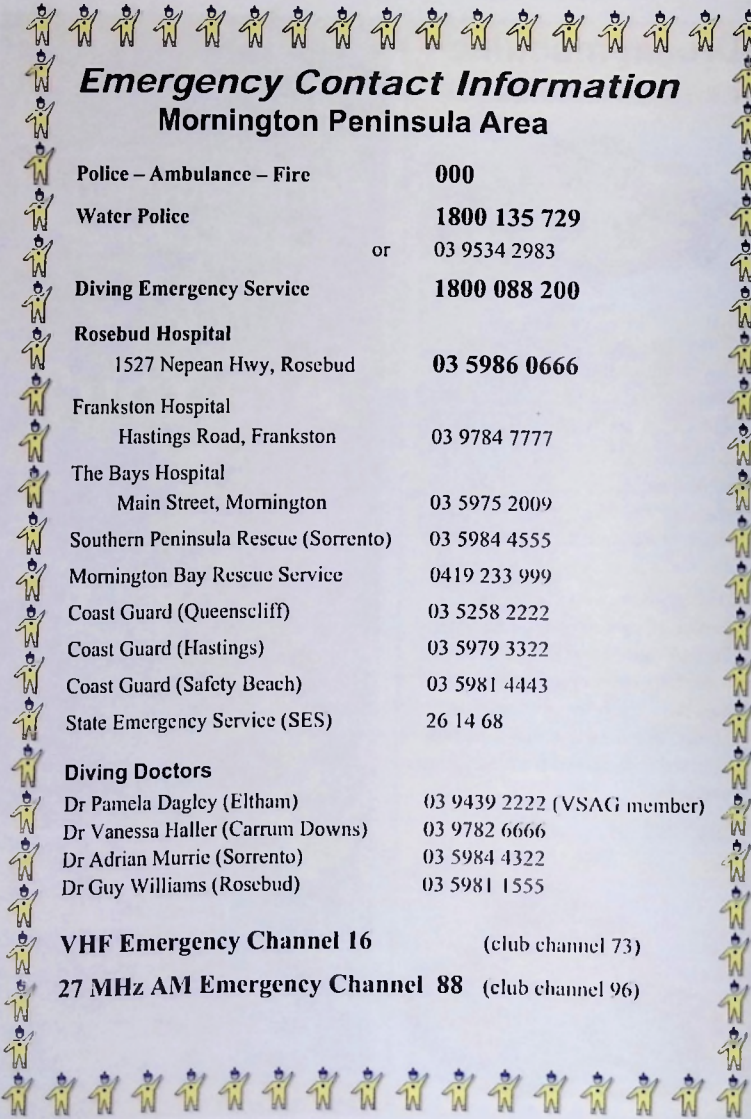
**DAN**  
ASIA • PACIFIC  
Divers Alert Network

### Can You Afford Not to be a DAN Member?

DAN Membership Costs Less than AU\$6\* per month  
Be Prepared. Join the Experts in Dive Accident Management.

[www.danasiapacific.org](http://www.danasiapacific.org)

\*DAN Membership provides up to US\$10,000 Standard Emergency Evacuation Coverage. DAN Dive Injury Insurance is additional.



## **Emergency Contact Information**

### **Mornington Peninsula Area**

<b>Police – Ambulance – Fire</b>	<b>000</b>
<b>Water Police</b>	<b>1800 135 729</b>
	or 03 9534 2983
<b>Diving Emergency Service</b>	<b>1800 088 200</b>
<b>Rosebud Hospital</b>	
1527 Nepean Hwy, Rosebud	<b>03 5986 0666</b>
<b>Frankston Hospital</b>	
Hastings Road, Frankston	03 9784 7777
<b>The Bays Hospital</b>	
Main Street, Mornington	03 5975 2009
<b>Southern Peninsula Rescue (Sorrento)</b>	03 5984 4555
<b>Mornington Bay Rescue Service</b>	0419 233 999
<b>Coast Guard (Queenscliff)</b>	03 5258 2222
<b>Coast Guard (Hastings)</b>	03 5979 3322
<b>Coast Guard (Safety Beach)</b>	03 5981 4443
<b>State Emergency Service (SES)</b>	26 14 68
<b>Diving Doctors</b>	
Dr Pamela Dagley (Eltham)	03 9439 2222 (VSAG member)
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 — February 2013

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

All times have been adjusted for daylight saving.

<b>Mon 28</b>	<b>Tue 29</b>	<b>Wed 30</b>	<b>Thu 31</b>	<b>Fri 1</b>	<b>Sat 2</b>	<b>Sun 3</b>
<b>515</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>615</b>	24	101	137	213
1119	1159	1235	<b>643</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>807</b>
<b>1611</b>	<b>1706</b>	<b>1756</b>	1309	1344	1420	1458
2305	2346		<b>1842</b>	<b>1927</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2102</b>
<b>Mon 4</b>	<b>Tue 5</b>	<b>Wed 6</b>	<b>Thu 7</b>	<b>Fri 8</b>	<b>Sat 9</b>	<b>Sun 10</b>
249	325	405	454	<b>111</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>334</b>
<b>837</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>948</b>	<b>1036</b>	601	735	917
1539	1623	1714	1814	<b>1140</b>	<b>1302</b>	<b>1433</b>
<b>2155</b>	<b>2252</b>	<b>2358</b>		1923	2039	2150
<b>Mon 11</b>	<b>Tue 12</b>	<b>Wed 13</b>	<b>Thu 14</b>	<b>Fri 15</b>	<b>Sat 16</b>	<b>Sun 17</b>
<b>431</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>559</b>	32	113	150	225
1035	1135	1226	<b>636</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>813</b>
<b>1556</b>	<b>1707</b>	<b>1808</b>	1310	1351	1428	1503
2252	2346		<b>1901</b>	<b>1949</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>2115</b>
<b>Mon 18</b>	<b>Tue 19</b>	<b>Wed 20</b>	<b>Thu 21</b>	<b>Fri 22</b>	<b>Sat 23</b>	<b>Sun 24</b>
258	330	403	441	<b>29</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>842</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>1017</b>	529	641	824
1538	1614	1653	1736	<b>1101</b>	<b>1201</b>	<b>1320</b>
<b>2156</b>	<b>2240</b>	<b>2330</b>		1829	1933	2043
<b>Mon 25</b>	<b>Tue 26</b>	<b>Wed 27</b>	<b>Thu 28</b>	<b>Fri 1</b>	<b>Sat 2</b>	<b>Sun 3</b>
<b>342</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>533</b>	8	47	125
945	1039	1122	1201	<b>603</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>706</b>
<b>1444</b>	<b>1557</b>	<b>1658</b>	<b>1750</b>	1238	1316	1355
2147	2240	2326		<b>1837</b>	<b>1923</b>	<b>2008</b>

## Tidal Streams at the Heads — March 2013

**RED** italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack) which are the best diving conditions near the Heads. **BLUE** are Ebb Slack. All times have been adjusted for daylight saving.

Mon 25	Tue 26	Wed 27	Thu 28	Fri 1	Sat 2	Sun 3
<b>342</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>533</b>	8	47	125
945	1039	1122	1201	<b>603</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>706</b>
<b>1444</b>	<b>1557</b>	<b>1658</b>	<b>1750</b>	1238	1316	1355
2147	2240	2326		<b>1837</b>	<b>1923</b>	<b>2008</b>
Mon 4	Tue 5	Wed 6	Thu 7	Fri 8	Sat 9	Sun 10
203	240	318	400	451	<b>39</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>739</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>1039</b>	600	732
1435	1517	1603	1653	1751	<b>1140</b>	<b>1308</b>
<b>2055</b>	<b>2144</b>	<b>2236</b>	<b>2334</b>		1900	2018
Mon 11	Tue 12	Wed 13	Thu 14	Fri 15	Sat 16	Sun 17
<b>254</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>522</b>	16	55	131
905	1017	1113	1200	<b>558</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>705</b>
<b>1442</b>	<b>1604</b>	<b>1710</b>	<b>1805</b>	1249	1317	1351
2134	2238	2331		<b>1861</b>	<b>1932</b>	<b>2010</b>
Mon 18	Tue 19	Wed 20	Thu 21	Fri 22	Sat 23	Sun 24
204	235	307	339	416	500	<b>26</b>
<b>735</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>1032</b>	603
1424	1457	1531	1606	1645	1731	<b>1134</b>
<b>2045</b>	<b>2121</b>	<b>2159</b>	<b>2242</b>	<b>2330</b>		1829
Mon 25	Tue 26	Wed 27	Thu 28	Fri 29	Sat 30	Sun 31
<b>127</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>517</b>	30
729	851	951	1039	1123	1205	<b>555</b>
<b>1256</b>	<b>1426</b>	<b>1546</b>	<b>1649</b>	<b>1742</b>	<b>1829</b>	1247
1944	2103	2208	2301	2348		<b>1914</b>



## Tidal Streams at the Heads – April 2013

**RED** italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack) which are the best diving conditions near the Heads. **BLUE** are Ebb Slack. All times have been adjusted for daylight saving which ends on Sunday 7th April.

Mon 1	Tue 2	Wed 3	Thu 4	Fri 5	Sat 6	Sun 7
111	152	233	316	403	459	<b>5</b>
<b>633</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>1037</b>	509
1329	1413	1458	1545	1634	1728	<b>1054</b>
<b>1959</b>	<b>2045</b>	<b>2131</b>	<b>2219</b>	<b>2309</b>		1733
Mon 8	Tue 9	Wed 10	Thu 11	Fri 12	Sat 13	Sun 14
<b>5</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>453</b>
632	749	853	944	1027	1105	1140
<b>1225</b>	<b>1355</b>	<b>1509</b>	<b>1608</b>	<b>1656</b>	<b>1736</b>	<b>1812</b>
1851	2011	2117	2211	2256	2335	
Mon 15	Tue 16	Wed 17	Thu 18	Fri 19	Sat 20	Sun 21
10	43	115	148	221	259	344
<b>526</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>913</b>
1214	1246	1319	1352	1425	1500	1541
<b>1845</b>	<b>1918</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2102</b>	<b>2141</b>	<b>2224</b>
Mon 22	Tue 23	Wed 24	Thu 25	Fri 26	Sat 27	Sun 28
439	548	<b>6</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>1019</b>	<b>1141</b>	659	801	856	945	1033
1630	1739	<b>1310</b>	<b>1431</b>	<b>1535</b>	<b>1628</b>	<b>1717</b>
<b>2313</b>		1905	2026	2130	2223	2310
Mon 29	Tue 30	Wed 1	Thu 2	Fri 3	Sat 4	Sun 5
<b>418</b>	<b>505</b>	41	127	215	308	406
1120	1207	<b>554</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>950</b>
<b>1802</b>	<b>1847</b>	1254	1341	1427	1514	1604
2355		<b>1931</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2058</b>	2143	2230

## ***VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity Details</b>
	<b>Dive days can swap between Sat and Sun depending! Dive sites adjusted on the day to suit divers and conditions.</b>
9/10 Feb	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Twin Bommies and Eliza Ramsden DC: Peter Galvin, 0417 061 564
16/17 Feb	Sorrento/Queenscliff — HMAS Canberra and Chimney Rock DC: Peter Briggs, 0412 585 546
<b>21 Feb</b>	<b>General Meeting @ Maori Chief — 8.00 p.m.</b>
23/24 Feb	Sorrento/Queenscliff — Torpedo Reef Drift & North Wall Corner DC: Trevor Williams, 0404 069 572
2/3 Mar	DC: John Lawler, 0414 922 916
9/10 Mar	DC: Lloyd Borrett, 0418 170 044
16/17 Mar	DC: David Geekie, 0419 300 686
<b>21 Mar</b>	<b>General Meeting, Maori Chief, 8.00 pm</b>
23/24 Mar	DC: Lloyd Borrett, 0418 170 044
29 Mar	Easter Wilson Prom Trip DC: Andy Mastrowicz, 0402 060 711
29 Mar	Easter Local Diving DC: Graham Ellis, 0403 070 920
6/7 Apr	DC: Alan Storen, 0417 017 446
13/14 Apr	DC: Peter Galvin, 0417 061 564
<b>18 Apr</b>	<b>General Meeting, Maori Chief, 8.00 pm</b>
20/21 Apr	DC: Peter Briggs, 0412 585 546
25 Apr	ANZAC Day Diving DC: Trevor Williams, 0404 069 572
27/28 Apr	DC: John Lawler, 0414 922 916

*by Graham Ellis, Dive Calendar Coordinator, VSAG*

Book in for a dive day ASAP after receiving notification via email. Please provide the Dive Captain with your full name, mobile phone number and e-mail address.

You are required to call the Dive Captain between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. the evening prior to the dive day to confirm that you will still be coming on the dive.



Photos: David Geekie.