



Fathoms

APRIL - MAY 2017

Peter Campisano in Cathedral Cave

Cover photo by Carole Campisano

**VSAG dive trip to Tasmania
November, December, January, February**
Photo Competition Winners
Lord Howe Island and more...

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VSAG, Inc., P.O. Box 596, Cranbourne Vic 3977

www.vsag.org.au

February Guest Speaker



Geoff Skinner
Director
Allways Dive Expeditions

Geoff Skinner is certainly one of the dive industry's best known presenters and a larger than life

personality....a former Australian spearfishing Champion, past scuba gear importer and now a very long standing member of Ian Lockwood's team at Allways Dive Travel....the presentation by Geoff was a wonderful overview of diving Truk Lagoon, a very special place in International Dive Locations...an excellent presentation!

Geoff was our Guest Speaker for February and the evening was very well supported with an overflow of VSAG members!

For detailed information on the VSAG Club Dive Trip to Truk Lagoon scheduled for August 18-30 August, 2018. Please see pages 98-100 of this edition of Fathoms.

Enquiries regarding the Truck Lagoon Trip or Tawali Extension please contact Ian Scholey.





Fathoms

Est. 1954

Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group, Inc.

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NOTICES

VSAG Committee meets at 8 p.m. every 2nd Tuesday of the month
(except in January)

All Members Welcome

The Water Rat Hotel, 256 Moray St, South Melbourne VIC 3205



**VSAG Monthly meetings are at 8 p.m. on the
3rd TUESDAY of each month**

**at THE WATER RAT HOTEL
256 MORAY ST, SOUTH MELBOURNE**

All are welcome to join us for a meal at 7 p.m.
before the meeting.

VSAG on Facebook

Did you know VSAG now has a
Facebook page? Check it out at
[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/vsag.divers/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/vsag.divers/) and 'Like'
us.



Check out St George Scuba Club at :

<http://www.stgeorgescubaclub.org.au/news.php>

Peter Beaumont joined the club in 2012 whilst living in Sydney
and is still a member . They are a very active and a nice bunch
of people.

We are delighted to announce that we have
now established another relationship with an
interstate club that will allow you to dive with
them if you wish to and vice versa.

The club is the Tas Uni Dive Club. You can
check them out at : www.tudc.org.au



Your VSAG Committee 2016–2017

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VSAG TASSIE TRIP

3-7 March 2017

VSAG ran a very successful Club trip to Tasmania in March 2017. Split into two groups over two long weekends, here are the stories of some very happy campers on the weekend of 3-7 March 2017.

The first group of attendees were:

Peter and Carole Campisano, John Ashley, Darren Pearce, Christine Reynolds and Benita McDonough.

Peter and Carole made their way aboard the Spirit of Tasmania, driving their own vehicle to Eaglehawk Neck Dive Centre. We found them comfortably installed in the Eaglehawk Dive Centre Lodge with two dive days already completed.

Darren also made his own way in his own vehicle while John, Benita and myself took the faster option of a Qantas flight from Melbourne Airport direct to Hobart airport where we picked up a hire car for a very pleasant one hour drive to Eaglehawk Neck.

We arrived in bright sunshine which meant we had some excellent photographic opportunities along the way.

The Dive Lodge was a comfortable backpacker style accommodation with

two dorms holding 6 bunks each, two shared bathrooms downstairs and upstairs a family room with ensuite and balcony. All bedding supplied and a well equipped kitchen right beside the dive centre making easy access to gear washing facilities.

Our first day diving began at 6:30 am with flat seas followed by bright sunshine. It was a lovely day to be out on the water. As we had such great conditions the decision was made to dive the SS Nord.

By Christine Reynolds ❖



Eaglehawk Neck Dive Lodge

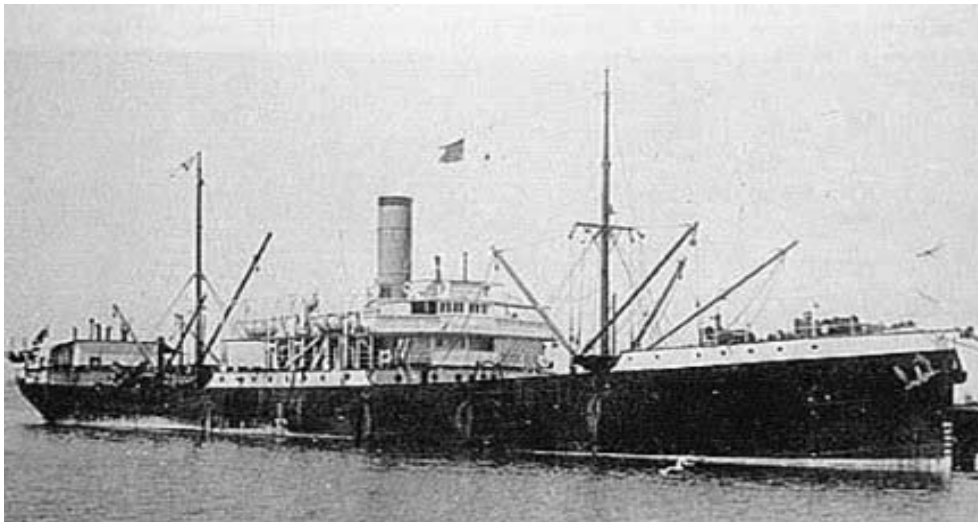
Story by John Ashley

The first day's diving at Eaglehawk Neck has been superb bright blue skies and 18 degree water temp. First

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

up, we dived the SS Nord with 15-20 metre viz and more fish life than I can count followed by a great second dive at the under water cave complex, was absolutely breathtaking again in 20-25 metre viz..

the best Tasmanian wreck dives you could do. The bow and stern are fully intact and the midship's still recognisable as such. The fish life is superb with masses of schooling fish not unlike the Kermode on a good day. After

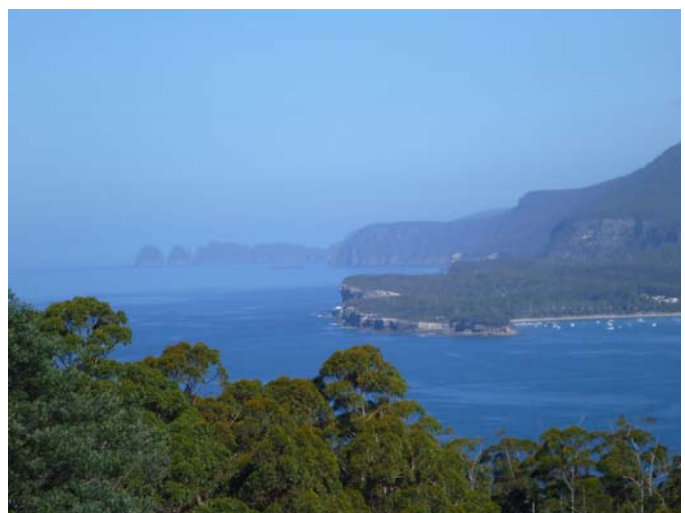


*The
SS Nord
in her
hey day*

Even though this wreck is in another state (Tasmania) enough VSAG divers have graced her bones to include her in Fathoms. The SS Nord was a cargo ship built in 1900 weighed in at 1057 tons and for 15 years plied her trade round the southern states and overseas until 8th November 1915 when travelling just west of Hippolyte Rock struck the submerged Needle Rock off the Tasman Peninsula. There she lay until she was rediscovered during the late 1960s by abalone divers, sitting perfectly upright in 42 metres and mostly intact. Any divers who have dived her will tell you this is one of

the ship struck the rock the Captain tried to sail her to Port Arthur to run her aground .

Dive Sites from lookout
Pirates Bay and Waterfall Bay



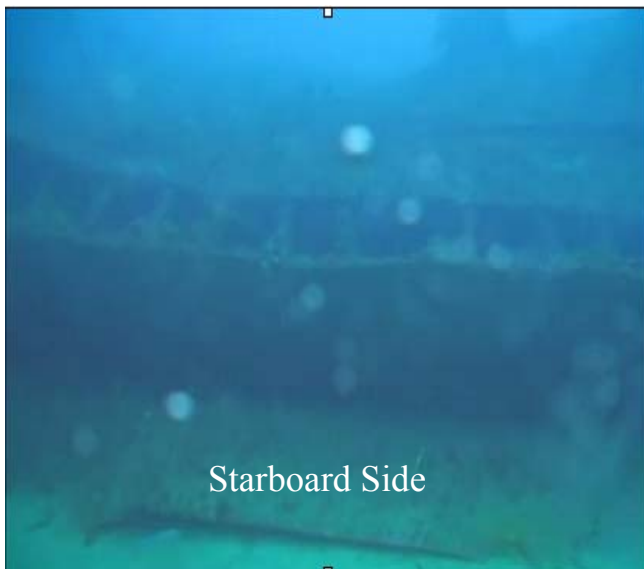
VSAG TASSIE TRIP

Realising she was filling fast, ran her close to the cliffs so she was sheltered and then abandoned the ship. All 42 crew members got off safely.

By John Ashley



Mid Ships



Starboard Side



Bow

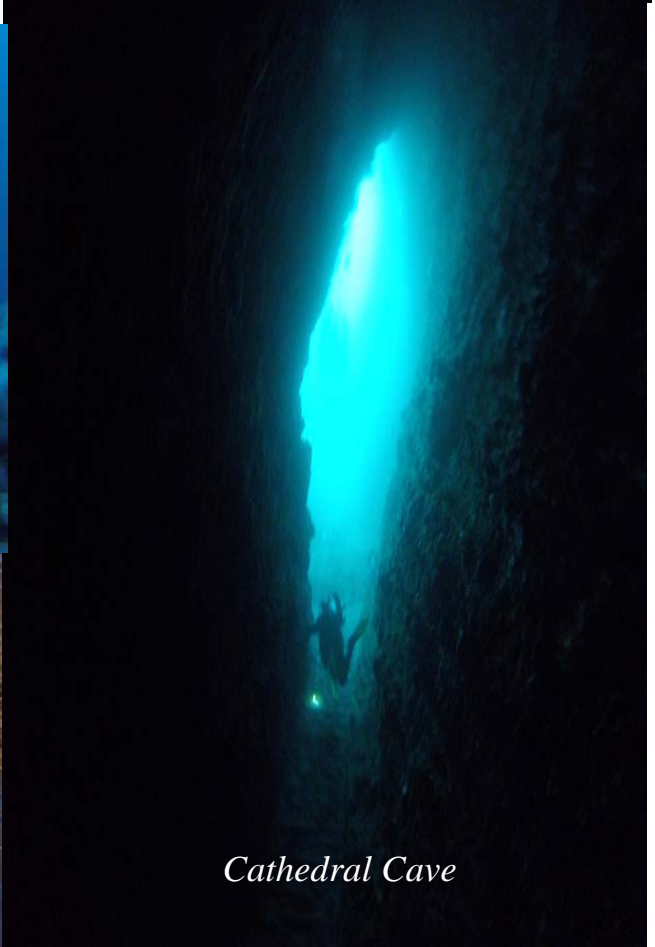
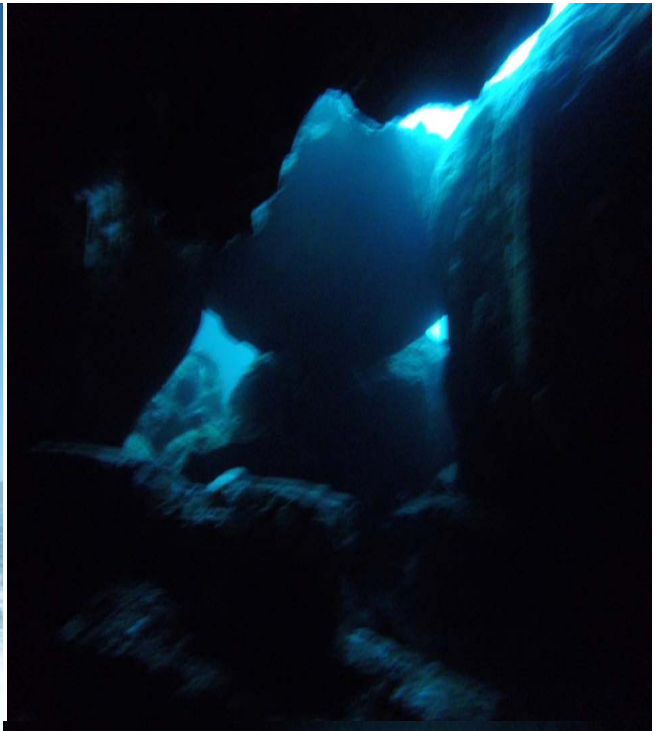
Pictures by John Ashley



Port Side



VSAG TASSIE TRIP



Cathedral Cave

VSAG TASSIE TRIP



*Christine Reynolds and Darren Pearce
In
Cathedral Cave*



Peter and Carole Campisano,
Benita McDonough, Captain Mick Baron
and
Christine Reynolds



VSAG TASSIE TRIP

Story By Peter Campisano

Photos by Carole Campisano

In March, this year, two groups of VSAG divers went to Eaglehawk Neck in Tasmania to dive with Eaglehawk Dive Centre.

Carole and I arrived two days earlier than the rest of our party and Mick (The Skipper and Owner) took us for two day's diving, on our own.

One of the dives we did was the Waterfall Bay Caves.

This was not the sort of dive site we were used to.

This site is a series of interconnecting caves that resemble a honeycomb of passages, archways and domes.

I hadn't seen this sort of diving since the caves of Mt. Gambier, S.A.

Mick took the boat near an area known as the Cathedral Dome.

He described what we would see on the bottom. He produced a map of caves and proceeded to talk us through the plan.

I kept asking him if there was daylight in the caves and whether it was easy to lose your way. With a smirk on his face, he would answer,

"No, no- you should be able to get through. It's USUALLY ok!"

This didn't sound very reassuring, but when Carole and I hit the water and descended to 27 metres, we understood what he meant. The place looks like a piece of timber that's been hollowed out by termites. Some caves were very wide and some were very dark and narrow. The water temperature was 18 degrees and we dived comfortably in our wetsuits.

We passed through the "Aisles" to "Skull Cave."

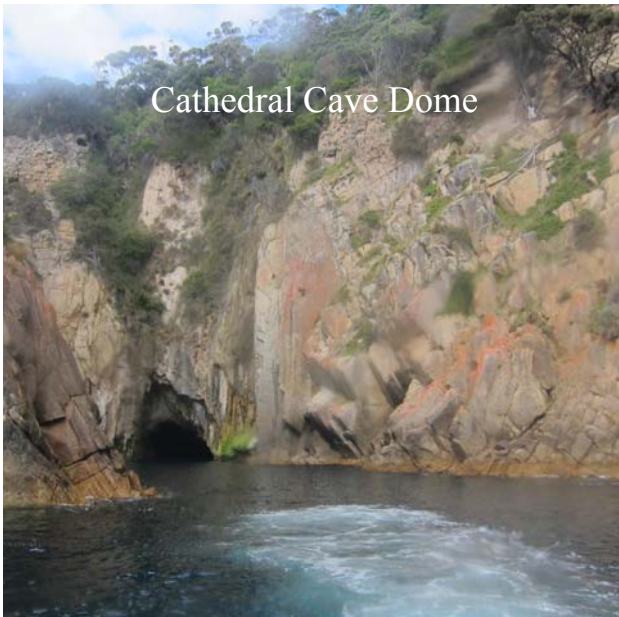
Skull Cave is a huge conglomerate of boulders where two strong shafts of light pierce the dark passageways, resembling two beaming eyes in a human skull. This was an amazing sight!

The water was crystal clear and deep blue. There was some fish life, but not as much as I would have liked.

There were plenty of juvenile crayfish around and some evil person took great delight in grabbing them, then setting them free.

We dived into the "Bullseye Chapel" (18 metres) and around to the "Catacombs." There were some abalone on the rocks and several large Boarfish. The shafts of light in the

VSAG TASSIE TRIP



passages up ahead, looked an eerie sight as they penetrated the darkness.

We then made our way around the front of the Bullseye Chapel and back to the Cathedral Arch.

When we surfaced, Mick was waiting for us with his boat.

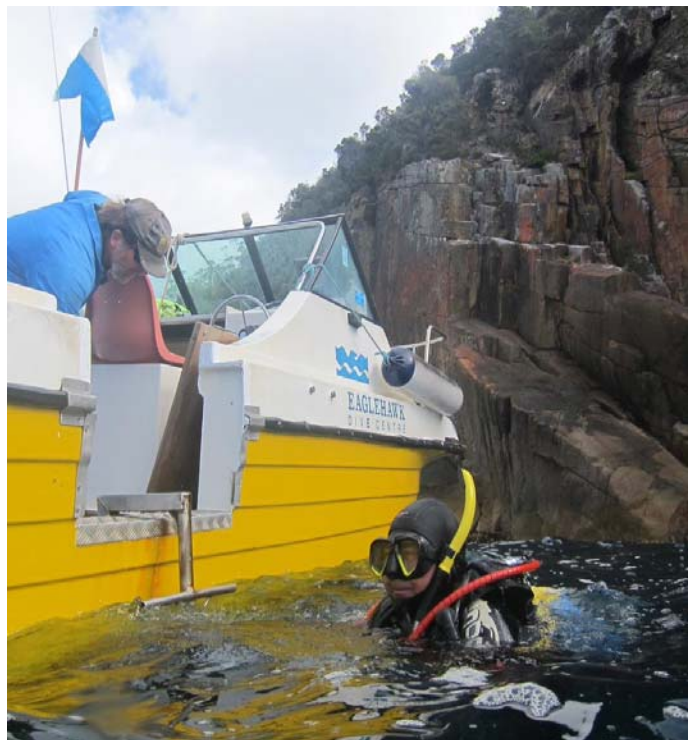
This was the second dive we had done here and it was mind blowing! If only we had something like this in Melbourne!

Carole and I will definitely put our hands up to do this, next year.

For YouTube video of these caves, look up: “Waterfall Bay Caves-Eaglehawk Dive Centre” on you devices.

Peter and Carole Campo ❖

Peter Campisano being helped back on board by Captain Mick from Eaglehawk Neck Dive Centre



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Pirate's Bay Pier and launch site



The Totem Pole

Juvenile Crayfish



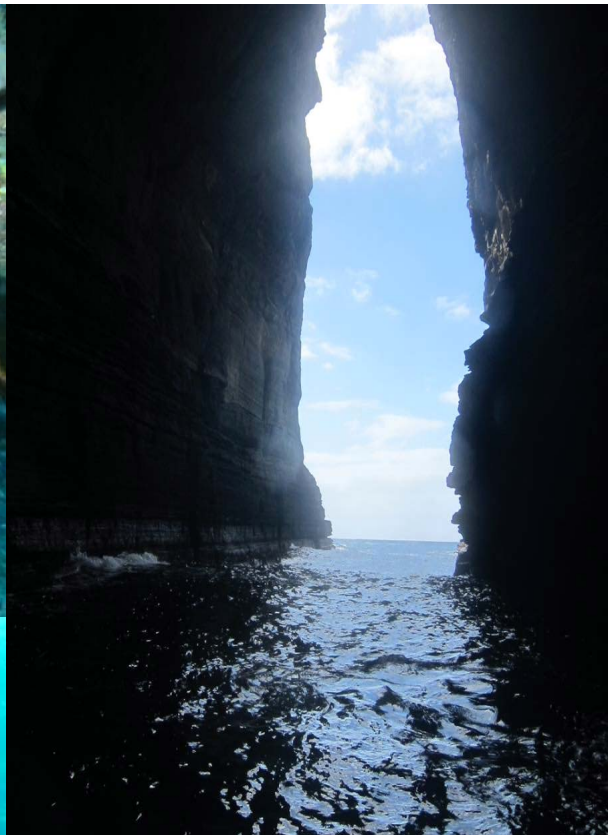
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Photos by Carole Campisano



Boarfish



Story by John Ashley

Last days diving for us today and we're all sad to be leaving as the weather, diving and our hosts Jim and Karen at Eaglehawk will be missed.

First up today was back to the SS Nord. After a sloppy, wind-chopped ride to the site, which was sheltered from the wind, we had one of our best dives so far. Again 20-25 metres viz and even at 40 metres, with more fish life than the first dive here. We were treated to a lovely sight seeing Peter and Carole cuddling at the deco stop and I just had to join in. Sorry

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

guys!

Next up by popular demand it was off to the caves again where we all had a blast. What great diving in and through this labyrinth of caves - some with ceilings of up to 15 metres high and some so small it was a squeeze to get through. The warmish waters of 19 degrees has made the diving much more enjoyable. Hope the next crew to dive here have the same condition as we had. ❖



*SS Nord
Photos by
John Ashley*

VSAG TASSIE TRIP



John Ashley with
Peter and Carole Campisano



Peter Campisano



Darren Pearce

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A huge big thank you to John Ashley for organising our holiday weekend on the apple isle and for the magnificent cooked breakfasts each morning.

Many thanks to our Boat Captain Mick Baron, Dive Centre Manager Karen Gowlett-Holmes and staff at the Eaglehawk Neck Dive Centre for a very enjoyable stay and awesome diving.



Peter Campisano and John Ashley



Crew from left:

Benita McDonough, John Ashley, Carole Campisano, Peter Campisano, Christine Reynolds, skipper Mick Baron and Darren Pearce.

*Launch Site
at
Pirate's Bay*



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With our diving out of the way at 1 pm each day we had plenty of time for site seeing.

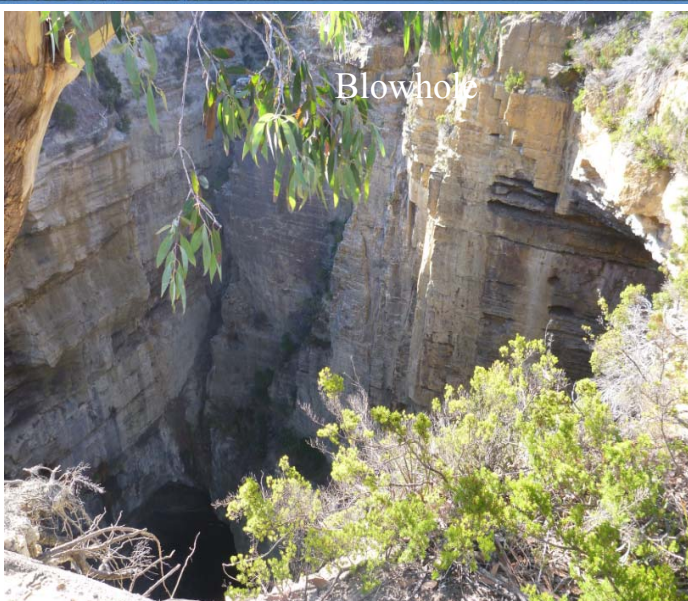
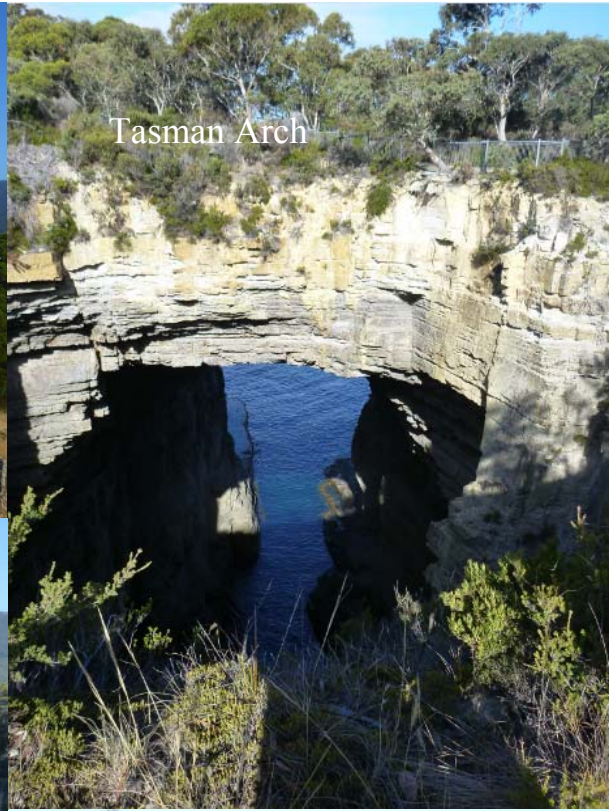
Our regular afternoon coffee stop at a mobile café had a magnificent view over Pirate's Bay and Waterfall Bay, past Tasman Arch and Devil's Kitchen, taking in all the popular dive sites stretching all the way down to the Totem Pole. ❖



*From Left:
Peter and Carole
Campisano,
Darren Pearce
John Ashley
Benita McDonough
Christine Reynolds*



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Our site seeing included Tasman Arch, Devil's Kitchen, The Blowhole and Tessilated Pavement which was collected by convicts for use on site at Port Arthur.



Tessilated Pavement

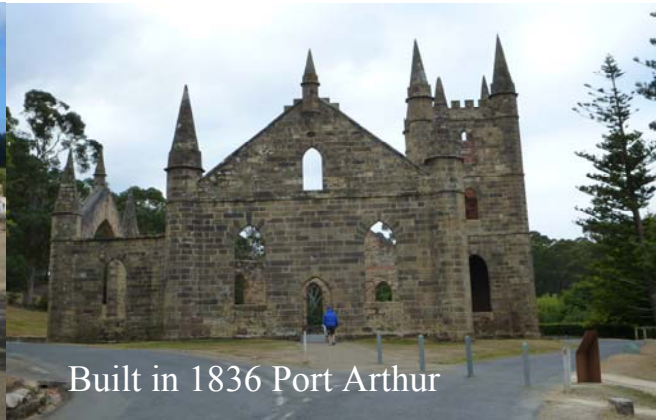


John, Christine, Carole, Peter and Benita visited the historic site of Port Arthur where we delved into Tasmania's eerie past and were treated to roving players reliving the olden days. Later we explored the vast expanse of Port Arthur and tasted some of the locally grown produce from the orchards on site.

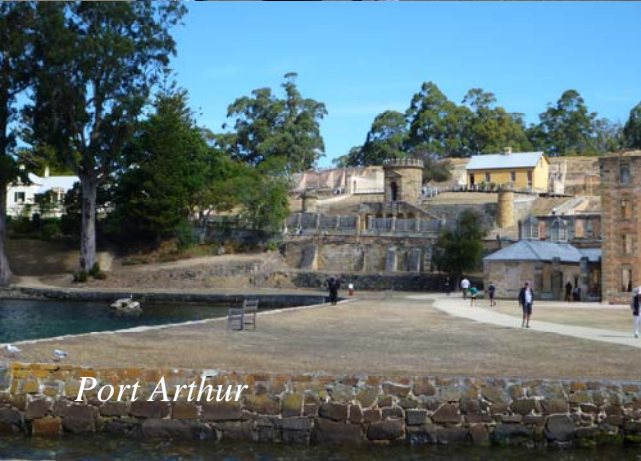


Prison Building

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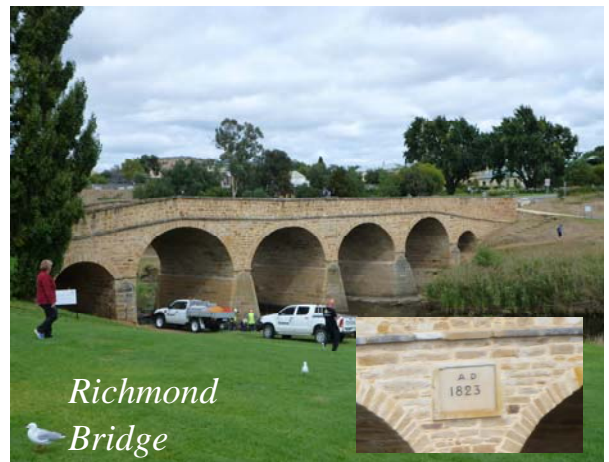


Built in 1836 Port Arthur



Port Arthur

On our way back to Hobart Airport we stopped at the Historic Town of Richmond. Home of the oldest bridge in Australia built in 1823 and opened for use in 1825.



Richmond Bridge



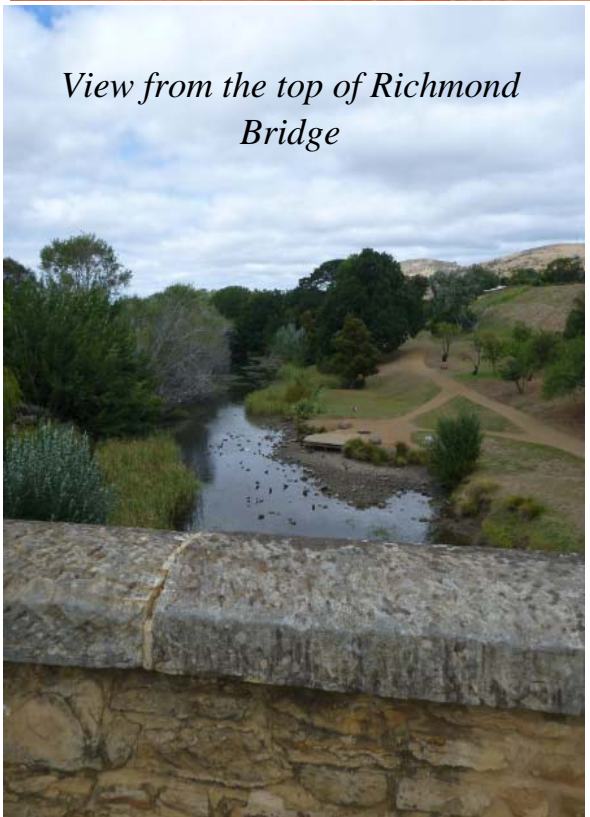
Port Arthur



Richmond

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Quaint Buildings in Richmond, Tas.



View from the top of Richmond Bridge



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Story by Ian Scholey

Eaglehawk Neck Report

After seeing the photographs of calm seas and sunny skies from the previous weekend, our group boarded the 20.00 flight down to Hobart the following Friday, expecting more of the same. In fact, two brave souls even decided to leave their dry suits at home and travel with semi dries. Arriving in Tassie an hour later we picked up two hire cars and did the 45 minute drive down to Eaglehawk Neck. In the past we have stayed at the dive centre but this time opted for the increased comfort of the Lufra Hotel.

In the morning we grabbed a quick breakfast and from the window enjoyed the view out over a relatively calm Pirate's Bay.

At the dive centre discussions with skipper Mick revealed an Easterly swell which would make most of the shallower dives unsafe. We discussed options and agreed to stay deeper and away from the cliffs. Mick recommended the SS Nord and we didn't take much persuading to agree to that as the plan. By the time we started to load the gear onto the boat the rain had started and low clouds were streaming overhead. Not ideal

conditions but we were looking forward to the dive.

The coastline at Eaglehawk Neck is just stunning with massive cliffs and weird and wonderful rock formations. Fair to say we didn't see it at its best as the cloud obscured the tops of the cliffs as we motored South to the dive site. The Nord is 10km south of the boat ramp at Pirate's Bay and we had a fairly bumpy ride down. Arriving at the site, Mick dropped a shot and we eagerly kitted up.

With Carol Penfold sitting out the first day's diving there were 3 buddy pairs. Mick Young and Sherryn Meagher were first in kitted out with their side mounts quickly followed by David Geekie and Pam Dagley and myself and Marcus Campbell. There was a reasonable current to deal with on the surface so we drifted onto the shot and quickly descended using the line. With top side conditions as they were it was pretty dark as we headed down to the wreck at 40m. Arriving on the bottom we found the shot in mid ships and vis a respectable 10m. The wreck was covered in life with fish everywhere you looked. Marcus and I were both taking pictures so we took a leisurely swim towards the stern section. There were large schools of Butterfly Perch close in to the upright parts of the wreck and we

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hung there for several minutes engulfed in the fish. The wreck is



and it now seems locked in place.



relatively intact towards the stern and is covered in yellow zoonthids in



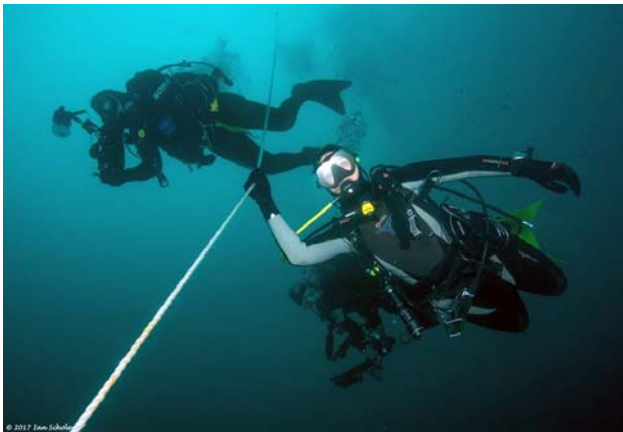
places. We continued to head towards the stern and dropped to the seabed to check out the rudder and prop. Until recently the rudder still moved but the wreck has collapsed slightly following some rough winter weather



We headed back towards the shot into

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

the current and hooked up with Dave and Pam along the way. We were a little like flags hanging off the shot line during the ascent as the current was slightly stronger towards the surface. We extended our stops for added safety as we planned to do a second dive on the wreck that morning.



Back on the boat we discovered that Mick and Sherryn had missed the wreck and despite a quick search at 40m had decided to abort their dive. A disappointing decision to make but very sensible at those depths, especially with the current running. Mick served up hot soup during our extended surface interval which was good in the cold and wet. The swell played havoc with Sherryn and Marcus with both suffering with a little bit of sea sickness. It's a miserable thing as we all know and I felt very sorry for them. There isn't

really anything you can do once you get it apart from put up with it and they both soldiered on manfully. In the past our second dive in this area has always been Monroe Bite kelp forest and the discussion soon turned to the sad fact that this area is no more. We noticed it was in decline 12 months ago but it is shocking to realise that this area has now joined the forests in Fortesque Bay as a thing of the past. Anyone who has any doubts about the impacts of climate change needs to head down to Tassie. It's very sad that these areas have gone.

We gave it an hour and 45 minutes before jumping in for dive two. Sherryn decided to sit the dive out so Mick joined Marcus and I for the dive.

We knew we would have reduced bottom time so our plan was to keep the travel distance to a minimum and get inside the wreck a little more than on the first dive.

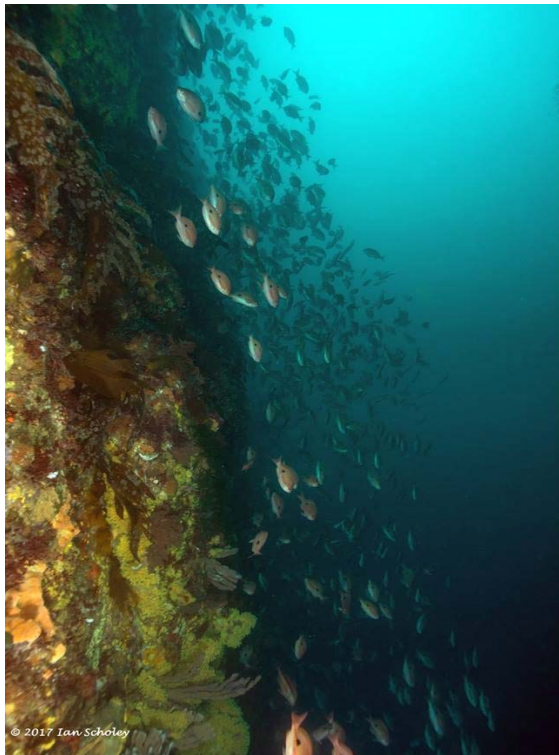
We had a pretty cruisy dive just enjoying the fish life and taking our time. We almost got back to the prop and I wanted to get there as I knew Mick hadn't seen it. However the deco was creeping up and in the end I turned the dive just short of the stern. Sorry Mick.

We headed back to the boat ramp to

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

swap the cylinders over. It was getting late in the day and with an evening out booked at Port Arthur, Mick and Sherryn called it a day. The rest of us headed back out and this time turned North for Deep Glen Bay. I have dived this spot a few times now and always enjoy it. The site is basically a wall at the base of the cliffs that drops down to a boulder field that slopes down to the sand at 38m. The wall is covered in growth and is home to a large school of Butterfly Perch.

waterfalled down the wall and then seemed to follow us as we headed north east along the wall.



We decided to dive as a foursome and to stick to the wall on this occasion. We descended and were immediately engulfed in the Butterfly Perch who



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As we continued deeper we encounter larger fish like Banded Morwong, Longfin Pike and Long Snouted Boarfish. Towards the end of the dive we found several Crayfish in the cracks and crevices towards the surface.



Thankfully it was a short boat ride back to the ramp as we were all cold after a long day on the water. We arrived back at the dive centre at 6.45pm, 15 minutes after our dinner booking at the hotel. With gear still to wash up we hastily rearranged our booking at the fully booked hotel. I



Pam Dagley and David Geekie



From Left:

Sherryn Amor, David Geekie, Carol Penfold, Mick Young

chatted with Mick about the plan for the next day and he was scratching his head. The weather forecast was more of the same but with winds picking up to 15-20 Knots. He looked up from his computer and said, "I don't know what I'm going to do with you guys tomorrow."

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The following morning we were back at the dive centre just before 8.00. After a quick conversation with Mick we decided we would check out a dive site called the Sisters. We once again headed North this time with a full crew on board. The sea conditions were once again sloppy with the easterly swell still present. Arriving at the Sisters it looked do-able but borderline. A quick group decision saw us err on the side of caution and decide to head to more sheltered waters. With options limited we headed back to Deep Glen Wall. The four of us who had dived it the day before discussed our plan and agreed that this time we would explore the boulder field at the base of the wall eventually heading down to the sand. We kitted up first, leaving Mick and Sherryn a little more deck space to get into their side mount gear. Carol teamed up with Mick and Sherryn for her first ocean dive since surgery on her leg. Once again the fish life was sensational and we had a really good dive checking out the overhangs and cracks. There were Crayfish absolutely everywhere and I just couldn't help myself and grabbed one for the skipper. With my camera in one hand and the Crayfish in the other it was a particularly bad time to

have weight belt problems but that's what happened. I signalled to Dave Geekie and tried to pass him my camera so I could sort myself out. He looked at me, registered the request and promptly raised his camera and took my picture. Not what I had in mind at all, you have to laugh. Eventually we sorted out our communication and I managed to sort out the weight belt.

We headed to the surface and I still had the Crayfish in hand. It was just biding its time though and just as the safety stop was about to end the little bugger got a claw into my hand and I dropped it. Heartbreaking to see it dropping back down but I decided it wasn't wise to chase after it. The second dive was a special request from Marcus who was keen to see the Tassie Weedy Sea Dragons. These animals are a bit larger than those we get at Flinders and have a much redder colouring. The best spot for finding these is at Deep Glen Bay so that's where we headed. Although we were as protected as it was possible to be, the swell was still evident and today it was Marcus's turn to suffer with sea sickness. As with Sherryn the day before he soldiered on manfully and did the dive anyway. Mick gave us a briefing and explained where we were likely to

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

find the dragons and we splashed in. It took us about 5 minutes to find our first one.

Once you find the first one it gets easy and we quickly found 2 more. At one point a Draughtboard Shark swam straight at me. Marcus was busy



photographing a Weedy and I couldn't raise his attention before it swam off again. We took a load of photographs before switching our attention to the overhangs, cracks and small caves on the cliff face. As on the previous dive the Crayfish were plentiful and we also found a Nudi or two. Back on the

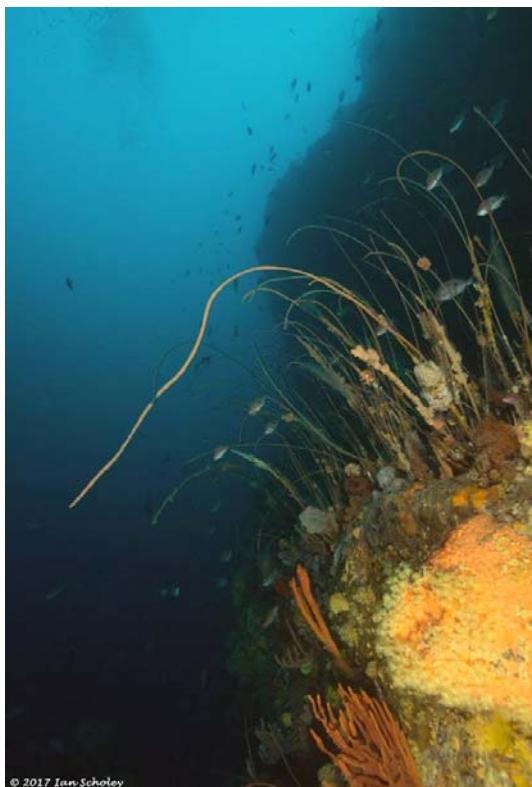
surface it was raining again and the promised winds had arrived. We decided to call the day at that point and have a relaxing afternoon. Anyone who knows either David Geekie or myself will know we both have a severe coffee addiction. This can be a bit of a problem in the wilds of Tassie. Fortunately at Eaglehawk Neck there is a couple who operate a mobile coffee spot at the lookout above Pirate's Bay. Naturally that was the first stop for our car load. Not only is the coffee great but the girl seems to have a photographic memory. As Dave and I walked up to order we were greeted with "you've been here before," not bad after 12 months.

We had a very lazy afternoon followed by a fantastic group meal. We had agreed on a 7.00am start the next day so we skipped breakfast and headed straight to the dive centre. The weather had finally broken and the sun was shining and the wind seemed to have dropped. Tassie is undoubtedly a beautiful place but a bit of sunshine takes it up a level. The group today was down to six with Marcus heading back to work. We decided to try again for the Sisters with the swell still making Cathedral Cave impossible.

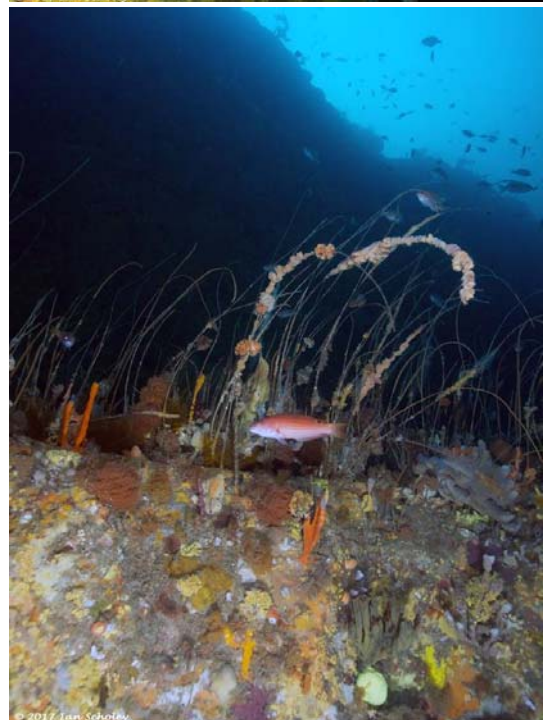
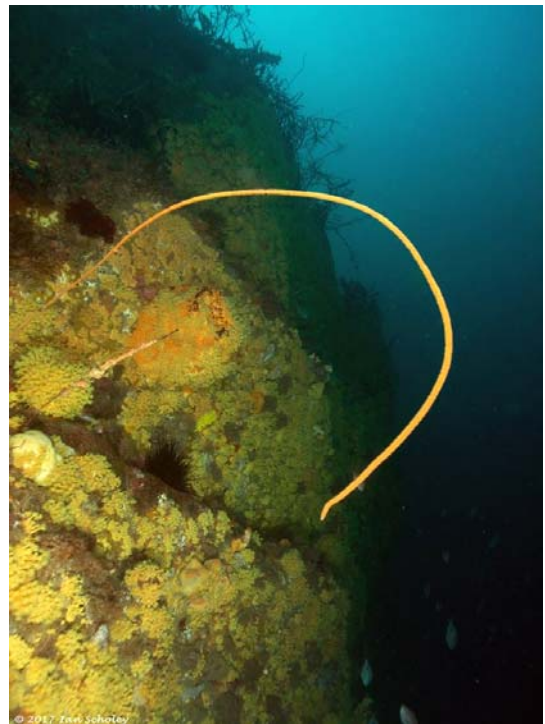
Leaving the protection of Pirate's

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

Bay the sea was much calmer and it was looking good. The Sisters was very different to yesterday and we eagerly kitted up. For me, the Sisters is the best dive on offer in this part of Tassie. The Sisters are a series of rocks running out from the shore. In



front of the last rock there is a bommie at 12m and a canyon that runs out to sea. Each side of the canyon has a wall that is covered in growth. The wall on the left is covered in yellow zoanthids with the occasional whip coral or sponge. Close to shore the wall bottoms out at 25m and as you head out to sea it drops to 45m. The sea bed is covered



in whip coral.

Today I dived with David and as we started our dive I settled onto a ledge

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

in 15m. I was immediately engulfed in Butterfly Perch and stayed put for several minutes taking pictures. Eventually I followed Dave down the wall to the sea floor. We took our time following the gentle slope to 37m. Signalling to turn the dive I indicated to Dave that we should check out the other wall as we headed back to shore. It was nice but nowhere near as good as the other side. About halfway back we swam out into the open water and headed back to the first wall. As we followed the wall we bumped into Mick, Sherryn and Carol coming the other way. It's difficult to miss Mick who has such powerful lights that he lights the ocean up in front of him. I popped my SMB on top of the 12m bommie but it was pretty surgy so headed out into open water for the ascent.

We opted for a shallow dive for our last dive of the trip and headed into Waterfall Bay.

This spot is noted for Sea Spiders and I was wishing I had a macro set up with me to grab some pictures. Immediately we descended we swam to a small wall and found our first Sea Spider. It was bright yellow and a little larger than I had expected. I snapped a few futile shots with my wide angle before getting out of the

way so that David could capture some better shots with his camera. We followed the wall along seeing another Spider and a couple of Nudi's. The territory wasn't all that interesting so we quickly headed back and went the other direction, passing the others on the way. Close to shore it was much better territory and we were soon into a series of gullies with overhangs and cracks. This was Crayfish central and I have never seen so many in one area. I found one crack with 10 Crayfish in it all lined up.



© 2017 Ian Scholey

VSAG TASSIE TRIP

Many of them were quite small but it was great to see so many obviously thriving. Being our last dive and slightly shallower we took our time and had a good hour's dive before reluctantly heading up.

With our diving done we washed up gear, grabbed coffee and lunch and then headed back to Hobart for our last night.

The weather really was very nice as we arrived in Hobart so Dave, Pam

and I decided to take the opportunity and head up to Mount Wellington. We were treated to some fantastic views across Hobart and the Derwent Valley from the top. With our sightseeing complete, we headed into Hobart and had a sensational meal. A fitting end to another fantastic Tassie trip. We are already planning next year's trip.

Ian Scholey ❖



March Guest Speaker

GRAHAM ELLIS

Graham Ellis is one of our club's Committee Members...a boat owner and another valuable club member... Graham gave a very special presentation on



LORD HOWE ISLAND



LORD HOWE ISLAND

Lord Howe Island has some of the world's best diving. UNESCO records the Lord Howe Island Group as a World Heritage Site of global natural significance. If you haven't visited Lord Howe you are missing out because it is unique. At our March Club Meeting Graham talked about the diving, the tricks on making the most of a trip (there are many), what it costs, the options for accommodation and the many activities available.

About the island

The island is just over 700 km North East of Sydney, 11 km long and between 0.6 and 2.8 km wide. Its highest point is Mt Gower at 875 metres. Lord Howe island is World Heritage listed and a NSW Marine Park. Heavily protected from development, there are no big resorts or high rises, not even a traffic light. There is no mobile reception but there is an internet kiosk at the museum and numerous hot spots around the island, charged per Mb it is not cheap. Lord Howe Island is a very safe family destination.

The island was discovered by Europeans in 1788 by Lt Ball. It was named after Richard Howe, First Earl Howe, who was First Lord of the Admiralty at the time. The name chosen by Lt. Henry LidgeBird Ball,



who also named a mountain after himself. In 1834 three men were left to establish a supply station on the island. They would supply ships that were transferring goods between New Zealand and Sydney.

On the island there are no snakes and no venomous or stinging insects with the exception of errant red backs which are in the township. There are 18 land bird species that breed on the island including the world's rarest living bird - the Woodhen. Over 14 species of seabirds nest on the island. The island is home to turtles, Whales,

LORD HOWE ISLAND

coral, sea stars, tunshells, crayfish, sea jellies, salps, squid, kingfish, dolphins and lots more.

Getting There

Qantas Link fly there daily from Sydney approximately a 2 hour flight. Baggage restrictions 15 kg checked luggage, 7 kg cabin. Additional bags cost \$35 if booked with your fare. Non-school holidays they will arrive with you or worst case next day.

Flights from Melbourne can be as low as \$650 each way up to \$750-\$800 per leg.

Goods can be shipped to the island if you wish to self cater. MV Island Trader visits the island twice per month, this requires a bit of planning. Deliveries by ship need to be coordinated with your accommodation, not all places will do this



Weather:.

Windy months are June - September, prevalent north west winds. Water temperatures vary from 17 degrees celsius July to August to 26 degrees Celsius January to June.

Weather

	Average high °C	Average low °C	Rainfall (mm)	Average rainy days	Average humidity
Jan	25.3	20.6	113.5	13.1	69
Feb	25.7	21	112.6	13.2	66
Mar	24.8	20	131.9	15.9	67
Apr	23.2	18	134.2	18.6	67
May	21.4	16.3	157.7	20.8	66
Jun	19.8	14.8	173.1	21.7	66
Jul	18.9	13.9	141	23.2	66
Aug	18.9	13.5	107.7	20.4	64
Sep	20	14.6	110.7	16.5	68
Oct	20.8	15.7	106.1	14.3	68
Nov	22.3	17.4	110.3	13.6	67
Dec	24	19.2	102.4	13.5	66

Accommodation

There are 18 family owned guest lodges from luxury units to modest self contained. Priced from \$85 per person per night to \$700 per person per night off peak. Peak rates are 50% to 100% higher. If self catering, you need to make sure your accommodation has cooking facilities.

Dining

If dining out in peak season, bookings are essential. Prices for example, a two course meal for 3 adults including a bottle of wine, couple of beers, soft drink and coffees cost \$200. Cheaper eats are the Bowls Club and Golf

LORD HOWE ISLAND

Club but these are not open every night. The Clubs are great value with quality food and prices from \$15.

Getting around

Bikes can be hired for \$8 per day from Wilsons. Thumb a lift, the locals will pick you up. A limited number of hire cars are available for big dollars from Wilsons. Restaurant and accommodations 'taxi' you for evening meal time gratis.

Diving

There are 2 main operators on the island, pre-book before arrival is recommended. Costs are \$420 for a six dive package including weights and tanks. Dive operators will tailor dives to your needs. Balls is an additional cost of \$280 but I have been told well worth it.

Visibility is average 25-30 metres in the summer to 10-20 metres in cooler months.

Lord Howe Island has a very vibrant reef system with a large variety of both tropical and temperate water marine life. Most dive sites are a quick 15 minute boat trip from either dive shop. There are over 60 dive sites catering for all experience levels.

Dive Sites are Lagoon, Surrounding Reefs, Admiralty Islands, Balls

Pyramid, offering macro or wide angle photography at all sites.. Shore dives and snorkelling as well



Shopping

Thompson's Store, Liquor Store, Joy's Store and Co-op.

Activities for non-divers

Kayaking, Mount Gower climb weather dependent and booking is essential, bush walking in rain forests, palm fronds, orchids and grasslands, around the island boat trip is recommended, North Bay has very good facilities for picnics including BBQ's, getting there is a challenge. There is golf, lawn bowls, tennis, surfing, etc. Day Spa and beauty facility.

Layback lifestyle

Surf boards on beach, accommodation without locks, no need to lock up your bikes.

Gellibrand Pile light

Constructed by Ports and Harbours the Gellibrand Pile light commenced operating on 1 August 1906 and operated for 70 years. In replacement to lightship vessel. The first lightship to mark the reef off Gellibrand's Point was the former barque New Constitution which the Government purchased in October 1856.

Gellibrand Pile Light was decommissioned in June 1976 after being severely damaged in a shipping accident on the foggy morning of 21 June 1976. The fog horn was not operating on the day, and the pile light was hit by the Melbourne Trader, a vessel of 7,000 tonnes. The force of the collision snapped the piles at waterline area, the light was

sheared off its piles at water level, pushed 7 metres (20 feet) sideways precariously on several of the remaining piles.

The harbour master of the day was not prepared to risk any of his men to secure or repair the structure, as it was considered to be on the brink of tumbling into the sea, so reluctantly Ports & Harbours gave the order to set fire to it at 11 am on 23 June 1976. Just before the fire was lit, the lantern and dome of the light were salvaged, and were later set up in the maritime museum complex alongside the barque Polly Woodside in the old Duke and Orr's Drydock at South Wharf in the River Yarra.

By Darren Pearce. ❖



Picture of The Gellibrand Pile light located off Williamstown on fire. It was deliberately set alight by the ports and harbour authority back in 1976.

BIVALVES

As the name suggests these molluscs have two shells. Usually the valves are paired and more or less equal in size. There are many shapes and sizes, but always the two valves are joined together at the top – the hinge line, where a tough ligament helps keep the valves together.

The valves are also held closed by a large internal adductor muscle which can pull them tightly closed or when relaxed allows the shell to open. It is the adductor muscle that we eat in scallops and those of us who clean scallops will appreciate the strength of the adductor muscle. So that the two shells stay firmly in line when closed, shells have fitted teeth and grooves along the hinge line.

The animal inside the valves has a stomach, a foot for gliding or digging in sediment, and if it lives in sediment – an incurrent siphon for inhaling water and an excurrent siphon for exhaling waste water. Many bivalves are filter-feeders, that is, they sieve particles of food from the water by gills held within the internal mantle cavity. Some bivalves such as mussels live in the water column or intertidally and so have a byssus, a tough bunch of threads (often called the “beard”) which firmly attaches them to the substrate.

Bivalve reproduction is by development of male or female gonads within the mantle cavity and release of eggs and sperm into the water. It is the coloured gonads most gastronomically appreciated in scallops and mussels: remember next time you eat them - the paler ones are male, the orange ones are female!

There are about 115 species of bivalves around the Victorian coastline, many being buried in sediments so as divers we don't see them. Strolling along the beach after a shore dive (which we usually don't do!) will reveal shells, many of which have small holes near the hinge line. This is the work of predatory sand snails which drill a neat round hole through the shell to dissolve and suck out the bivalve's tissue.

Predators such as the large eleven-armed seastar *Coscinasterias muricata* attack mussels by forcing the shells open and sucking out the contents. Blue mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) are world-wide in (probably anthropogenic) distribution and can be used as ecological monitors of water pollution and contamination. Ropes of mussels are hung for several weeks at selected locations then retrieved and analysed for uptake of toxicants.

BIVALVES

Another common native mussel that nobody notices much is *Electroma georgiana*, a small smooth-shelled mussel which can be in huge populations from November to February, usually on seagrass and algae. The fragile striped brown and green shell is easily crushed in the fingers, and is a favoured food of fish.



Electroma Georgiana on seagrass, Clifton Springs, 1 m.



Left, *M. galloprovincialis* on rope in Western Port, monitoring metal uptake. 2 m.
Right, seastar *C. muricata* feeding on mussels, St Leonards pier, 2 m.



Bivalves shells often have beautifully coloured patterns, predominantly for camouflage. Many also have external raised ornamental patterns on the shell, for camouflage or for traction when ploughing through sediment. A

truly beautiful bivalve, which you will see only in the channels of North Arm of Western Port is *Neotrignia margaritacea*. It has a deeply ridged pale brown shell and an internal smooth pearl-like and purplish in

BIVALVES

colour – so much that it was known in the old days as the “brooch shell”. In the 1970s-80s it was very common in the Western Port channels, with populations of up to 30/m² but has now declined to rare.

The raised ornamentation on some species attracts some invertebrates to settle, for example the small scallop *Mimachlamys asperima* which we occasionally see is usually covered by an orange or yellow sponge. An interesting adaptation of *M. asperima* are its primitive eyes – light sensitive blue organs around the mantle that warn the shell to snap shut at threat of danger. The edible scallop *Pecten fumatus* also has light and movement sensitive organs, which we all know about when one claps away from the collecting bag.



Mimachlamys asperima. Blue eyespots and orange sponge on shell. Popes Eye, 6 m.



Common scallop Pecten fumatus showing equal size, but unequal shape of shell. Scallop bed, off St Leonards, 10 m.

Katelesia scalarina is a very common bivalve on quiet bay coastlines. It lies buried and ploughs through sediment in shallow water. Dead shells are often heaped in thousands along the strandline. I have counted hundreds per m² of live shells in sandy patches between seagrass beds on the Bellarine coastline. Unfortunately (or fortunately for *Katelysia*) when cooked the adductor muscle shrinks to about fingernail size so it's not particularly prized as a seafood dish. Local skates prey on *Katelysia* - hollows in the sand are left by snuffling through the sediment in search of a meal.

BIVALVES



Katelysia scalarina. Left, coloured patterns on the shell. Right, two shells from fine sandy sediment. Clifton Springs, 2 m.

So next dive, look for and treat bivalves with the respect they deserve as an important component of the ecosystem. ❖

Jan Watson
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Mob: 0457 981 875

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

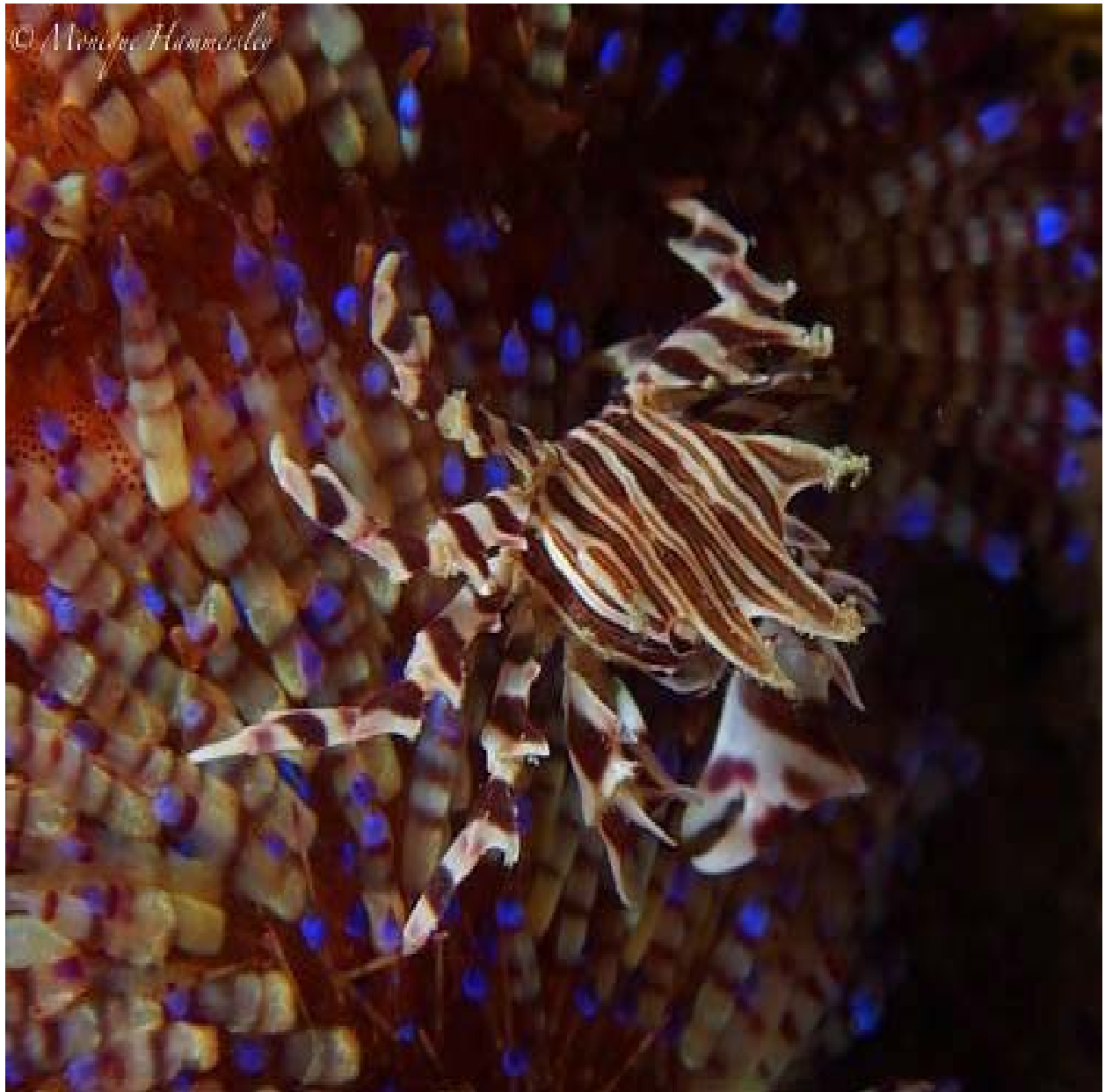
First - November 2016



1st Monique Hammersley - Komodo

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

2nd Place - November 2016



2nd Monique Hammersley - Komodo

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

3rd Place - November 2016



3rd Charmaine Alford
Eviota - found only at Christmas Island

NOVEMBER 2016 PHOTO COMPETITION

Congratulations to Monique Hammersley, the November 1st and 2nd place photo competition winner, with her photos of a Manta Ray and Crab at Komodo. Third place went to Charmaine Alford for her photo of an Eviota - found only at Christmas Island. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



Phil Watson - Ozone



Sherryn Amor - Piccinini Ponds



Sherryn Amor—Piccinini Ponds



*Charmaine Alford
Spawn Star Christmas Island*

NOVEMBER 2016 PHOTO COMPETITION

Phil Watson - Baby Pipe Fish



Carole Campisano Jervis Bay



Carole Campisano Jervis Bay

Ian Scholey—Blue Devil



Ian Scholey—Old Wives



Karingal Restoration

When Will it be Finished – or “Why did I ever Start This?”

Progress report on the “Karingal” renovation project.

The answer to both questions is that while progress has been made, I’m not sure!

Internally things are progressing well, the new engine is in place, new fuel, exhaust, cooling, and steering systems completed. Re-wiring progressing. All rotten timber removed and replaced, and the carpentry required by the engine change is almost done. Painting of loose pieces like floors, lockers, cupboard doors etc has started.

Externally nearly all the old paint has been stripped, although I keep putting off getting under the boat to remove the last of the antifoul. We have to replace two badly spilt planks – another job I’m putting off. Once these are done it’s just a matter of covering the heads of all the copper nails with “stuff”, filling assorted dings and small areas where rot was removed, sanding, filling, and several coats of paint – and putting everything back together!

Anyone who would like to see how old wooden boats go together is welcome to visit – boat is in a factory in South Dandenong. David Flew



Yes! It looks like a boat again!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

Equal First - December 2016



Equal First Mark Jeffrey Octopus in a Bottle - Drift Dive off Point Nepean

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

Equal First - December 2016



Equal First - Sherryn Amor - Seahorses, Blairgowrie Pier

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

2nd - December 2016



2nd place - Ian Scholey - Herring Kale, Flinders Pier

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

3rd - December 2016



3rd place - Mark Jeffrey - Seahorse, Blairgowrie Pier

DECEMBER 2016 PHOTO COMPETITION



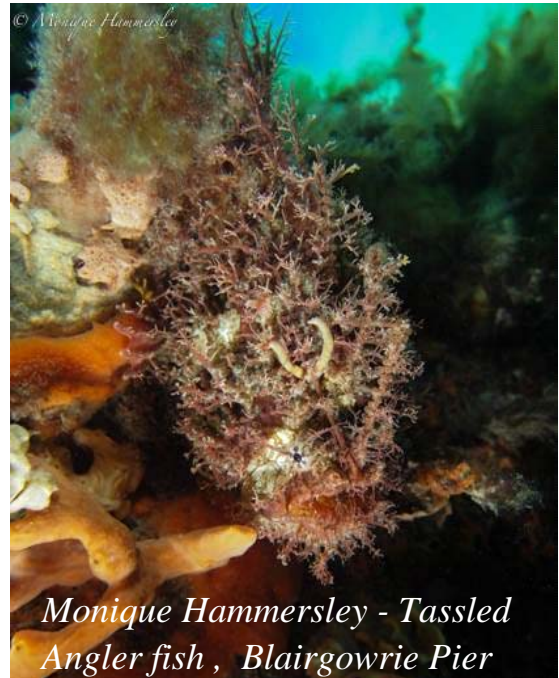
Charmaine Alford - Balmaine Bug



Ian Scholey - Weedy Sea Dragon Flinders Pier



*Monique Hammersley - Nudibranch
Blairgowrie Pier*



*Monique Hammersley - Tassled
Angler fish , Blairgowrie Pier*



Sherryn Amor - Diver, Blairgowrie Pier

DECEMBER 2016 PHOTO COMPETITION

Congratulations to our Equal First photo competition winners, Mark Jeffrey with his photo of an Octopus in a Bottle, Drift Dive off Point Nepean and Sherryn Amor with her photo of a Seahorse at Blairgowrie Pier. Second place went to Ian Scholey with his photo of a Herring Kale at Flinders Pier. Third place went to Mark Jeffrey with his photo of a Seahorse at Blairgowrie Pier. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



Phil Watson Cow Fish - Flinders Pier



Phil Watson Cuttlefish - Portsea Pier



Sherryn Amor - Stargazer Blairgowrie Pier, with Hannah Smeaton
© SherrynA 2016



Charmaine Alford - Blue Bottle

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

1st - January 2017



1st Place - Mark Jeffrey - Piccinini Ponds

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

2nd - January 2017



2nd Place - Charmaine Alford - Monet's Garden, Ewens Ponds

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

3rd - January 2017



3rd Place - Monique Hammersley - Juvenile Sea Horses

JANUARY 2017 PHOTO COMPETITION

Congratulations to our First Place photo competition winner, Mark Jeffrey with his photo of Piccini Ponds. Second place went to Charmaine Alford for her picture of Monet's Garden, Ewens Ponds. Third place went to 3rd Place - Monique Hammersley - Juvenile Sea Horses. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



Arthur Kotsanas - Ray, Coronet Bay

Arthur Kotsanas - Ray, Coronet Bay



Mark Jeffrey - Piccinini Ponds



Phil Watson - Nudibranch, Williamstown



JANUARY 2017 PHOTO COMPETITION



Phil Watson - Weedie Sea Dragon, Flinders Pier

Charmaine Alford - Grumpy Blenny, Blairgowrie Pier



Sandy Webb - Phlyctenanthus Australais, Flinders Pier



Michael Kotsanas - El Nido, Phillipine



Sandy Webb - Weedie Sea Dragon, Flinders Pier

WEIRD

Ever wonder at what you share the ocean with?
We know about most things or do we?



Magnapeena Squid.
Up to 6 metres long.
Found in depths 1000
feet, give or take.

Frilled Shark.
Up to 2 metres
lives in depths
up to 4000
feet.



Isopod
Up to 1 metre
found at depths
at up to 7000 feet.
Looks like a Star
Wars character.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

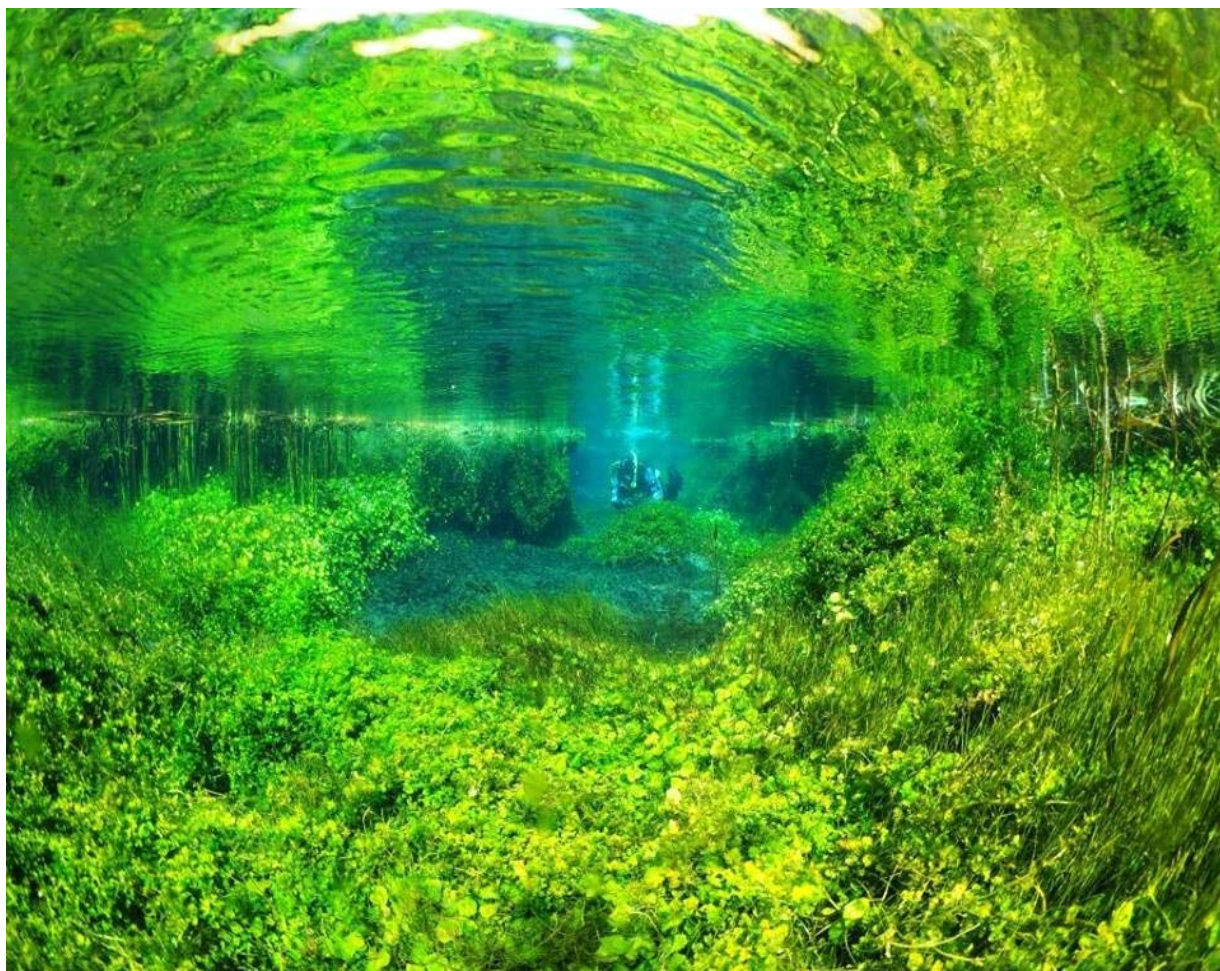
1st - February 2017



1st Place - Ian Scholey

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

2nd - February 2017



2nd Place - Phil Watson - Ewens Ponds

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

Equal 3rd - February 2017



3rd Place - Charmaine Alford - Doughboy Scallop

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

Equal 3rd - February 2017



3rd Place - Fiona Karney - Alien Attack

FEBRUARY 2017 PHOTO COMPETITION

Congratulations to our First Place photo competition winner, Ian Scholey with his photo of a cuttlefish. Second place went to Phil Watson for his picture of Ewens Ponds . Equal Third place went to Charmaine Alford for her photo of a Doughboy Scallop and Fiona Kamey for her photo of Alien Attack. Thank you to everyone who contributed.



Ian Scholey—Diver on J4

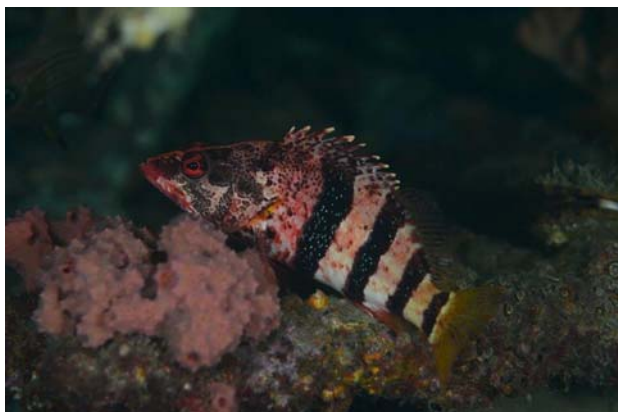


Phil Watson - Leafy Sea Dragon



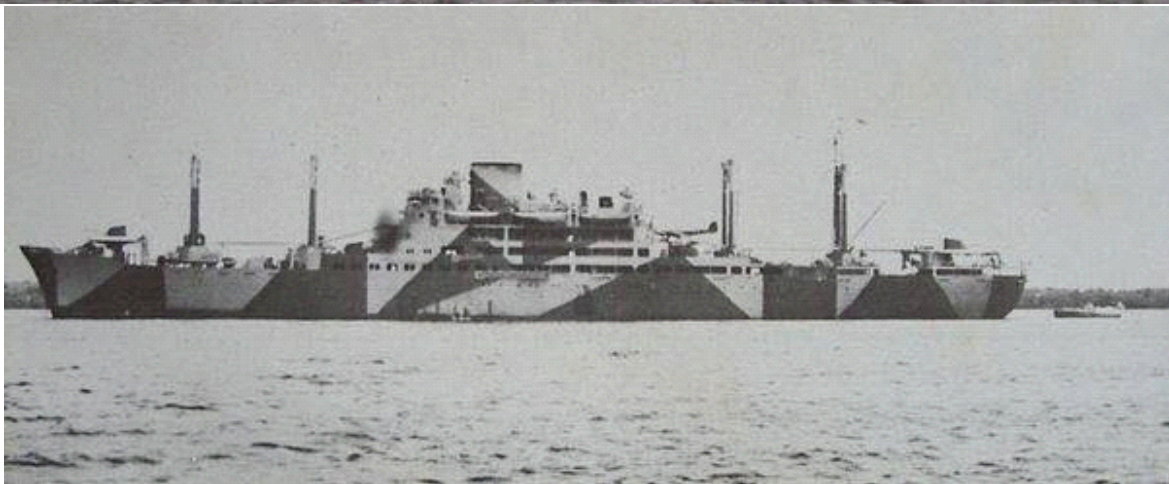
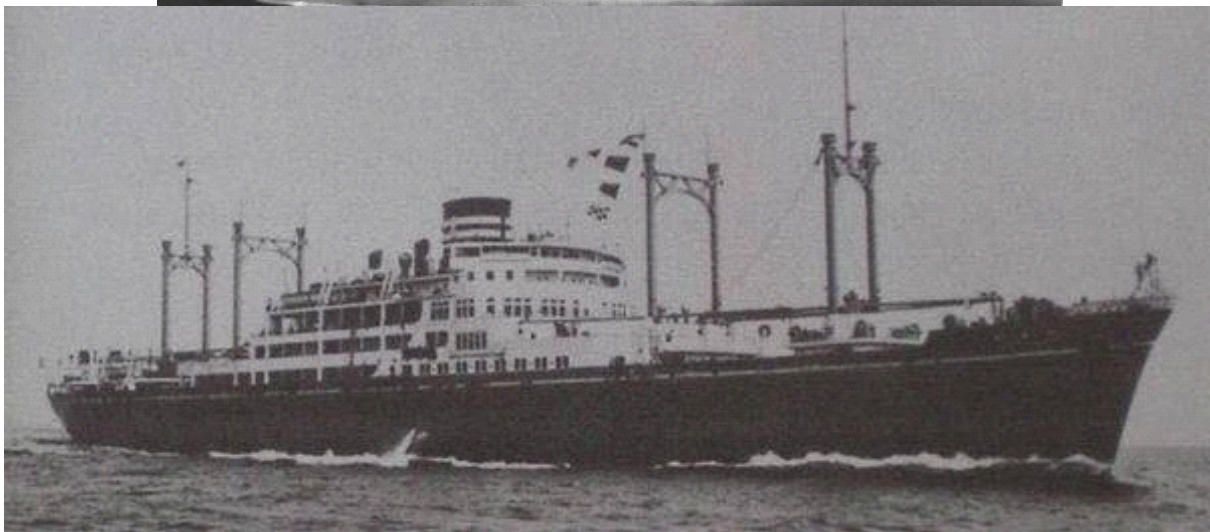
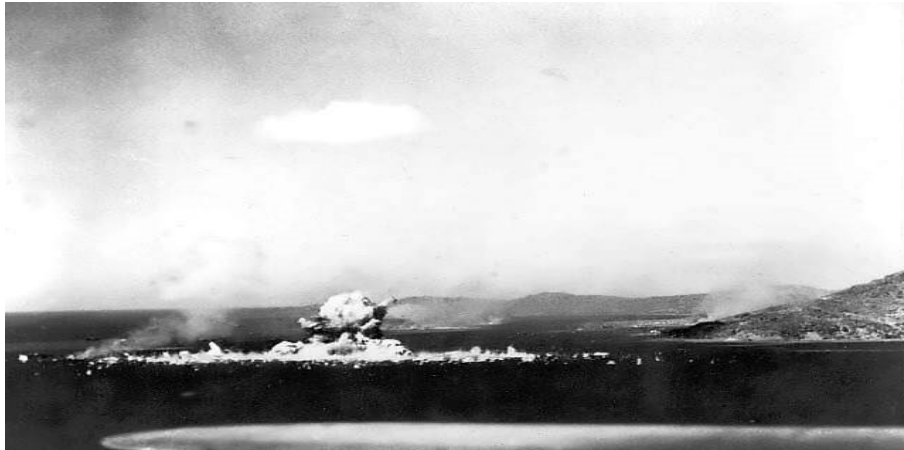
Two photos from Mark Jeffrey

*Arthur Kokkinos
Cray and Peter Galvin*



KAIKOKU MARU

Some interesting shots of the Kaikoku Maru. Transformed from civilian freighter to military transport before being blown in half by a direct hit to a hold full of munitions at Truk Lagoon. By Ian Scholey ❖



Boat Trailer Maintenance 101

By John Mills

I remember when I became a boat owner my brother in law the fisherman and mechanic said “you will learn about hubs and how to pack wheel bearings with grease”. I thought “Nah why should I bother with such things”.

Anyway I have launched and retrieved Waverider without incident for nearly 3 years.

However after the last ex HMAS Canberra dive in February I noticed before I put her away that there was a suspicious brown stain around the right wheel. Upon further examination I noticed the hub seal was gone and there was a brown oily substance spread around the wheel. I did the standard test and jiggled the wheel and it was loose. “Uh Oh” I thought “that’s a wheel bearing gone”. I thanked my lucky stars that I got it home before I noticed the wheel was overtaking me on the freeway and I was left with the remnants of a boat and shards of fiberglass beside the road. I carefully put “Waverider” away and resigned myself to the fact I was going to have to learn how to service the trailer.

This was an after work project so the next night I jacked up the offending

wheel and put the safety stands in place. I had done heaps of research on the interweb determining how a hub worked and what parts I’d need. Upon removing the wheel I was presented with a handful of metal fragments and filings. This indicated that the front bearing had failed.

The next step was to remove the hub. Not so easy as the trailer has cable disc brakes which need to be removed. At this stage I realised my toolkit was hopelessly inadequate, as I needed to remove nuts in impossible to reach places. So it was off to the tool shop to get a set of ratchet spanners, a decent socket set, marine grease and a grease gun. I also purchased three marine bearing kits (Two to replace what was on the trailer plus a spare). I managed to get the hub off and set about replacing the bearings. The next step was to pack the bearings with grease. This involves getting globs of grease in your hands and working them into the bearings. Luckily my profession is an industrial chemist so I have access to disposable gloves and paper towels, this was done without too much mess. The bearings were placed in the hub and it was packed with grease. I also installed a set of bearing buddies, which require periodic pumping with

Boat Trailer Maintenance 101

the grease gun to keep them lubricated.

Having fixed the failed bearing I did the same process on the other wheel. As luck would have it, there were no problems as I had perfect green grease in the hub. Nevertheless I repeated the process and rebuilt the hub and installed a bearing buddy.

Having done the bearings, the brakes were another story. I loosened the cable and removed the calipers. The brake pads were pretty good so I thought, "I'll just reinstall them". Even though the tension was released I could not get the bolts to bite. I decided to go to bed and sleep on the problem.

The next night I resumed the 'attaching calipers to the hub' problem. Being farsighted I need to take my glasses off to see up close, so they were on the ground. As I was wrestling with the problem I wondered what the crunching noise was. It was me rolling over my glasses and crushing them. So I now had to spend the next week and a half wearing contact lenses until my new glasses were ready. Someone at work asked me if I had laser eye surgery done.

I disassembled the brakes completely and re-attached the calipers. I am not sure that Priya understood my excitement as I did my best Leonardo Di Caprio, when I came excitedly bounding into the house exclaiming, "I am the king of the world".

Anyway at the end of the day I had managed to rebuild my trailer's bearings. So far all is good as it has endured a trip to Phillip Island and everything looks good.

The outcomes from this experience are:

- I now know about hubs and wheel bearings.
- I own a set of ratchet spanners.
- I have a socket set.
- I own a grease gun.
- I know how trailer brakes work
- I have a new set of glasses.❖

Gear Configuration

Peter Mosse

Part 1 Regulators

As the complexity of diving gear has increased over the years so too has the need to configure the gear in a streamlined safe fashion and in such a way that it allows the gear to be used for the purpose that it was developed.

A number of equipment and dive philosophy systems have been promoted. Some are quite rigid while others allow quite a bit of flexibility within some basic well thought out principles. The DIR system and the Hogarthian System are examples. Anyone interested can look these up but what I want to present here is a considered, common sense approach. And there is nothing wrong with common sense as long as it is based on careful thought.

Before I go any further, this article is not about advanced or technical diving. It is for **all** divers from day one onwards.

Much of what I will present is consistent with the Hogarthian System which is based on the following basic principles, many of which I consider to fit the bill of common sense!

Gear should be a cohesive unit, and not a haphazard collection of parts.

Think about what you are doing with your gear, and ensure that you are not trying to solve problems that will not occur.

Make sure that in solving a problem you do not create other problems.

Less is best. Less gear means less clutter, more streamlined, more comfort, therefore safer.

What is not needed should not be carried. **REDUCE. REDUCE. REDUCE.**

Hogarthianism relies on simplicity and skill, rather than complexity and additional equipment.

Have nothing dangling. All accessories, hoses, and torches and SMBs and reels are tucked away.

As a high level instructor for many years (actually 2 decades), a penetration cave diver and deep air wreck diver, and now diving just for pleasure without the responsibility of looking after divers whose training in many cases is questionable, I see many divers with poorly configured equipment. The aim of this series of articles is to challenge you to think about your gear configuration. You may not agree. You may have

Gear Configuration

different thoughts, but each diver needs to think carefully about their gear configuration and not become complacent with it.

Regulators

We all carry octopus regulators of one form or another. But why do we carry them? The answer you say is obvious, to share air with a buddy. Agreed, but let's consider the dynamics of such an event. A diver is breathing fairly heavily for any number of reasons and notes the air is getting low and is getting a bit harder to breathe. They might ignore it at first but then realisation dawns. His/her breathing rate goes up while they look for their buddy. They are a good few meters away, not at all uncommon in a buddy pair system and the buddy is not looking towards them. Panic is welling up. The stressed diver swims to their buddy, rapidly consuming air. In doing so they become fixated on the regulator they can see, the one their buddy is breathing on and clearly delivering air. It doesn't matter where the spare regulator is, they are going for the one in the mouth. OK so best practice is to provide that regulator to your buddy who is stressed out big time. It is there and immediate and all you do is pass that to your buddy and then get

your spare regulator. The idea of giving the stressed diver the spare regulator is fundamentally flawed. In a panic situation the out of air diver will be close enough to grab. So give them what they want, the one they can clearly see, the one delivering air to you! Panic can be defined as "Blind Terror Filled Responding". Don't expect anything rational from your buddy if panic has set in. Their mind is on one track, get air and get UP!

So now that leaves you with the task of getting your spare regulator. Where is it? It was clipped to your shoulder in the little yellow pocket gadget but it is no longer there. Is it in your BC pocket but you can't quite reach it because your stressed buddy is in the way. Or worst of all is it tucked through your BC waist band?

So now you are feeling awkward and wondering whether to try the good old fashioned buddy breathing that is no longer adequately taught in training. Unfortunately your spare regulator pulled out of the little pocket or fitting while you were under that ledge or in the wreck and is now dangling around your back more or less between your legs! Need I say more? Now your stress levels are

Gear Configuration

building right at that time when you need to take control of the situation.

Unfortunately one of my ex-students died at Beware Reef as a result of a scenario very similar to the one above. This was before the reef was declared a marine park and they were in a hunter gather frenzy, taking crabs and spearing. Alistair was a new diver, his breathing was up and he seemingly didn't adequately monitor his air consumption. An absolute tragedy!

So, let's now consider a better system of spare regulator configuration.

The spare regulator is placed on a bungee cord just below the chin near the top of the sternum. You know where it is and your buddy knows where it is. At the time of the out of air event, you simply pass your regulator, the one you are using, to your buddy, take hold of their shoulder with that hand and use your other hand to transfer the regulator from just below your chin into your mouth. You can remain calm **and take control!** The light weight bungee cord can be set just long enough so that when the regulator is in your mouth there is no tension on the cord.



A diver on a decompression stop. Note the tightly arranged regulator hoses, the spare regulator on the chest with the mouthpiece turned down to minimise the risk of free flowing (perhaps the bungee cord could be a bit shorter; it has actually stretched a bit and needs replacing!) and the combo gauge clipped in close to her chest. She is simply extending the bungee cord holding the combo gauge to allow her to monitor deco time and depth. Note also the camera is not held in her hand but attached to her wrist meaning she has virtually full unimpeded use of the hand and doesn't run the risk of dropping the camera.

Gear Configuration

Hose Lengths

So how long should the hoses be? Well if the primary regulator is the one you plan to give off, that hose should be longer than the spare regulator. The hose should be about 38-40 inches. You can fine tune it. Mine is 40 inches with a 90 degree bend at the second stage for easier use in the mouth of the recipient and easier positioning of the recipient in a shared air event.

As for the spare regulator, you are the only one who is ever going to use it so the hose can be much shorter. 21-22 inches is sufficient if it is worn with the hose over the shoulder. The reason it is this short is so that it doesn't form a huge loop just ripe for entanglement. Alternatively you can use a slightly longer hose and pass it under your arm. I have both my hoses routed under my arm (40 inch primary and 38 inch secondary) and with 90 degree bends for easier placement in the mouth and easier use by the buddy if required, however recognise that by introducing another piece of equipment you have another potential failure point. You need to weigh up the pros and cons. I have many years of experiences with angles with no problems but you will need to replace the swivel O rings

frequently. And remember, in an out of air situation you will be using the spare regulator. There is a bit of a tendency to buy a cheaper regulator for the spare one. This is incorrect thinking. In many ways you want the best one there or at very least a good one, because when the event happens you want a reliable comfortable regulator that will deliver plenty of air when your breathing rate is likely to be elevated while you and your buddy are managing the situation and hopefully both exiting the water safely.



Two divers with different equipment configurations. The diver on the left (in the photo with the yellow glove on) is well set up with both regulator hoses going under his arm. The diver on the right is less well set up with one long hose regulator over his arm/shoulder rather than under the arm where it should have been. The diver

Gear Configuration

on the right also has his contents gauge dangling. You can see it just behind his computer on his wrist. And, the BC inflator hose is much too long (Yellow arrow). Note that there is no contents gauge visible on the diver on the left, it is not visible because it is clipped in close to his body.

While on the topic of hose lengths, there are a number of combined BC inflator and air breathing systems. The idea is good but make sure it is good for you. I had one for a while and tested it in a shared air exercise. If you find it good and comfortable on the way up and with sufficient flexibility to allow you to look around and help your stressed buddy then the system is OK for you but make sure it is. Don't just trust the manufacturers and designers. You may find the combined air inflation hose and BC hose very unforgivable as I did, so I ditched it!

Hose Protectors

Hose protectors are another example of equipment that was invented when there was in fact no problem. The only thing hose protectors do is hide deteriorating hoses. I have seen many hoses in very poor condition once the hose protector is removed.

In normal use on a tank, there is no stress on the hoses. If the tanks and regulators are carefully placed in a boat there is also no stress on the hoses. Just make sure the tank is not resting on a bent regulator hose. Finally when storing regulators in dive bins, simply coil the hoses loosely and once again there will be no tension on the hoses.

So there is no need for hose protectors!

Contents Gauges (and computers in some cases)

The very worst thing is to see a diver swimming along with their contents gauge or combo gauge ploughing below them in the sand, or worse, destroying beautiful and delicate marine life. Perhaps that is why they sell the metal cages. If there ever was an example of unnecessary equipment these are one good example. Choose a HP hose length that allows you to comfortably clip the contents gauge to your chest with a bungy cord but long enough to allow you to easily see the gauge by looking down. The face of the gauge is now facing your chest not destroying the marine life and not stirring up silt and destroying the visibility for you and your buddy.

Gear Configuration

Another way often used by technical divers is to clip the gauges off to your waist beside your body, but this means you need to unclip them each time you want to look at them and this is an action not really recommend for less skilled and disciplined divers. I do plenty of tech style diving but I personally have evaluated this option and don't like it but it is up to the individual to think about it and try it. There are occasions in a squeeze when the gauge in front does create a minor problem but if this happens, unclip it then and after you have negotiated the squeeze, or wrestled the red beast, reclip it...don't leave it to dangle.

Computers, Wrist or Console?

Where is it best to wear your computer? On the wrist or in a combo gauge console. The decision is largely a personal choice but let's consider a few things. What is one of the weaknesses of the wrist option? In this position it is generally put on last. (It can be a real hassle trying to get your arm through your BC with the computer on your arm, that's why it is often left until last.) I can count numerous times when experienced divers (including myself) have forgotten to put it on and are well on

the way down before they realise they have left it behind. When a diver enters the water, there is no need for air in the BC, there is no need to come to the surface and with well paired divers they simply roll over the side and start their descent and are aware of their buddy's position on the way down. Discovering a missing computer at 25 or more meters, most divers choose to keep going and use their buddies computer. Not the smartest decision, but one commonly taken. The option of having a computer in a console removes this risk.

But if you decide on the wrist think it through. Anything worn on the arm/wrist needs to be well and tightly fastened. Watches and computers have a habit of becoming loose and spinning as the water pressure compresses the wetsuit (less of a problem with dry suits). And as luck has it it could well become loose and a problem when another problem arises. So yes wear it on your arm by all means but make sure you know it will stay there during the whole dive. And if you do opt for the wrist option have some little reminder somewhere in your gear up sequence to remind yourself to check the computer is on before entering the water.

Gear Configuration

At the End of the Dive!

With everything now clipped off nice and close you really will have to remember to unclip everything before you take your gear off.

Once you have only 1 or 2 minutes left at the safety stop/deco stop

- Loop your spare regulator from around your neck and bring the loop over your head
- Take your primary regulator out of your mouth and let it go. If it free flows all the time get it fixed!
- Place your spare regulator in your mouth. This way you check your spare regulator each and every dive.
- Unclip your contents gauge and place it beside you where you can just scoop it up to check that last minute has timed out.

And One Other Thing

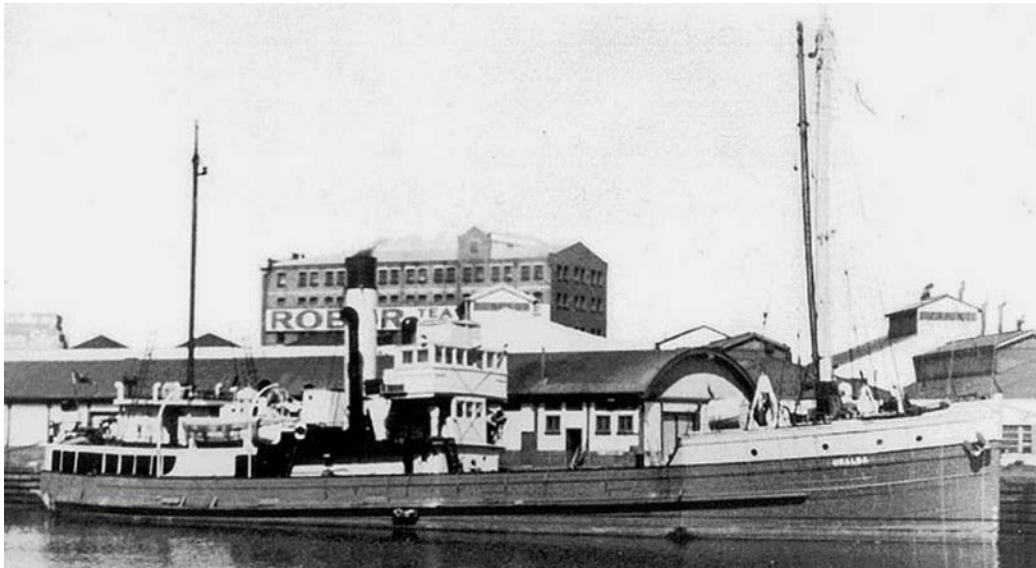
And when is the last time you practiced sharing air. My children who are both very experienced divers know that it is not that unusual for “Dad” to pull an out of air “stunt” at 25 or 30m. If you have it, practice it. If you don’t use it you lose it. This is blatantly true with air sharing skills.

And a Final Word

No, what I have described above is not just for technical diving. It is for entry level diving as well. One of the reasons I left diving instructing was that at the time when alternative dive instructor organisations were blooming in Australia, training in basic good equipment deployment and configuration was allowed to drop to the lowest common denominator, the so called recreational dive. Why wouldn’t a “recreational diver” not want a safe, sound well configured dive equipment system? Go figure. It beats me. So if you dive, have a close look at your gear, ask your buddy to have a look at your gear while you are under water and discuss what he/she sees when you come up. And make changes and try it. You will be surprised how you naturally adopt the basic Hogarthian configuration and move towards the norm with respect to gear configuration.

In part 2 of this article I will consider other equipment such as weight belts, SMBs, safety reels, hose protectors, tank nets, torches, computers, air gauges, fin straps, gear bags.

URALBA



MID WEEK DIVING

“DIRTY DIVING”

With the good BOM weather report advising low winds and a sunny day a crew assembled at the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron for a mid week dive....

Sandy Webb, Charmaine Alford, Andrew Maines and I were the fine crew and gear was loaded leisurely onto “Miles Ahead” AKA “Signature One”, then after safety briefing done off for the 12 km run south to the famous URALBA.

Built in 1942 in Australia, Uralba was a wooden hulled boat with coal fuelled boilers. She was requisitioned

by the (then) RAN in 1942 and used as a mine tender.

Uralba was used for coastal trading until 1953 when she apparently sank in the Maribyrnong River in 1960. On the 5th November 1971 she was towed to the current site (S38.04.630 E145.02.342) off Frankston and severely blasted to form an artificial reef....(known to fishos as the “outer artificial reef)

Traditionally the visibility on this wreck is very, very poor however I did one dive about 15 years ago when the viz was excellent....a rare day however! The plan today was for the first divers in, to carry a small white styrene float and if the conditions were good to let the ball go...this did happen. This signalled the go ahead for my buddy and I to

kit and be ready to dive when the others got back on to boat.

Depending on your interpretation of “good conditions” my assessment of the conditions on the site were not as expected ,read poor, as the viz was about 2 mtrs with some improvement at different depths and locations..like 3mtrs! However I was happy to be there and a good test for the check out dive for my buddy who was excellent in tough conditions...

This can be a dangerous wreck to dive on in poor conditions as it is severely fouled with anchors, anchor chains ropes and fishing lines dropped from the fishos boats anchoring on the wreck and getting the lines caught in the structures...over time we have retrieved many good quality anchors from this wreck (Owen Green/Phil Watson/David Flew note)

After a debrief and lunch we set off to the “Artificial Reef Balls” off Aspendale...this is one of three sites on the Eastern side of Port Phillip Bay where the specially made reef balls, which are actually round mounds of special cement formula to allow for fish breeding, are positioned. Not a lot of fish life around on this dive!

In around 7-10 mtrs, the visibility here was much improved at around 5 mtrs....a very pleasing easy dive to end our diving.....Thanks to Charmaine for skippering the boat when I was diving.

Back to the club, gear unloaded and boat washed down it was the end of a great dive day with excellent dive buddies....thanks to you all.

By John Lawler ❖

*From Left:
Sandy Web, John Lawler, Charmaine Alford, Andrew Maines.*



Puerto Galera and El Nido, Philippines January 2017

Michael and I went on our own to the Philippines in January to dive Puerto Galera/ Mindoro and El Nido/ Palawan. While the country may have its challenges the diving is excellent. Balmy calm water and lots of tropical fish.

Mindoro Island, Puerto Galera, Sabang

You get to Mindoro via ferry from Batangas, 3 hours south of Manila. If you want to splurge you can also catch a small plane to fly there directly (not a bad idea!)

At Puerto Galera we dived with a very professionally run Danish dive Centre ABWonderdive. Unfortunately the Taifun had just battered the Island quite badly and the visibility suffered a bit, but we still had plenty of good diving.



Frogfish, hiding in sponges

There are plenty of dive sites to choose from, but my favourite location was "Hole in the Wall" - an exhilarating drift dive with plenty of big fish like snapper, batfish, jack fish, turtles and some swim throughs. Puerto Galera is mainly known for macro diving and has plenty of nudibranches, Pygmy sea horses, dancing shrimps etc. We also did a





● Easy for all divers
● Easy but currents can be strong
● For Advanced/Open Water Divers
● For experienced AOW Divers

■ Wall dive
■ Large coral blocks
■ Great macro
■ Soft dive
■ Wreck
■ Recommended for night dive

Dive site	Depth Range	Category	Highlights	Photo/video
1 Boulder (14 min)	5-32 m	Easy, Soft	Reef, black fishes, purple sea fans, soft corals, sponges	Macro/under
2 Coral Cove (12 min)	3-20 m	Easy, Soft	Stronger currents, blue, black branches, soft corals	Macro/under
3 Straight Wall (11 min)	5-30 m	Easy, Soft	Sponges, soft fish, soft coral, blue purple soft corals	Macro/under
4 Kilbar Steps (10 min)	5-25 m	Easy, Soft	Soft corals, sponges, bright blue sea fanfish	Macro/under
5 Kilbar Wall (10 min)	5-25m	Easy, Soft	Sponges, small soft corals, sea urchins	Macro/under
6 Shark Caves (Reef) (7 min)	15-35 m	Easy, Soft	Reef sharks, groupers, sea urchins, soft corals	Macro/under
7 Cargano (5 min)	18-32 m	Easy, Soft	Large schools of fish, sponges, turtles	Wide
8 Hole in the Wall (5 min)	5-30 m	Easy, Soft	Open trough of hole, small fish, sea urchins, fish, turtles	Macro/under
9 West Escanlon (5 min)	5-30 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, soft corals, sponges, hard and soft corals, sea urchins	Macro/under
10 Wreck Point (5 min)	5-24 m	Easy, Soft	Wreck, small, large fish, black fish, large sponges	Macro/under
11 Dungan Wall (5 min)	5-25 m	Easy, Soft	Reef fish, sea urchins, soft corals, turtles	Macro/under
12 Emerald Caves (5 min)	5-30 m	Easy, Soft	Small soft corals, groupers, marine sponges	Macro/under
13 Monkey Beach (5 min)	5-25 m	Easy, Soft	Reef, sponges, groupers, sea fan, yellow fish	Macro/under
14 Tubbataha Point (5 min)	5-30 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, sea urchins, soft fish, sponges, purple sponges	Macro/under
15 Tubbataha Wreck (5 min)	15-25 m	Easy, Soft	2 wrecks, soft corals, large fish, sea urchins, sponges	Macro/under
16 Tubbataha Bay (5 min)	8-25 m	Easy, Soft	Wreck site, strong currents, bright blue water	Macro
17 Panthera Reef (5 min)	4-20 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, giant sea fan, soft corals, sponges	Macro/under
18 Alma Site (5 min)	20-30 m	Easy, Soft	Reef, sponges, soft corals, sea urchins, purple sponges	Macro/under
19 St. Christopher (5 min)	20-25 m	Easy, Soft	Reef fish, groupers, soft corals, sea urchins, giant sea fan	Macro/under
20 Mandurao Hill (5 min)	5-20 m	Easy, Soft	Mandurao fishes, sponges, soft corals	Macro/under
21 House Reef (5 min)	3-25 m	Easy, Soft	Wreck, sea urchins, soft fish, sea urchins, purple fish	Macro/under
22 Lufegina Point (5 min)	5-24 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, sponges, sea urchins, soft corals, sponges	Macro/under
23 Big Lufegina Bay (5 min)	5-20 m	Easy, Soft	Artificial reef, strong currents, sea urchins	Macro/under
24 Dry Dock (5 min)	20-30 m	Easy, Soft	Sea urchins, sponges, soft fish, soft corals, purple sponges	Macro/under
25 Batangan Channel (in case)	6-20m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, soft corals, sponges, giant sea fan	Macro
26 The Hill (5 min)	5-18 m	Easy, Soft	Reef fish, sponges, soft corals, sea urchins	Macro/under
27 Giant Clam (5 min)	5-18 m	Easy, Soft	Wreck site, sponges, soft corals, soft corals, sponges, bright blue water	Macro/under
28 Elephant Reef (5 min)	5-18 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, sponges, soft corals, sea urchins, sponges	Macro
29 Top of the Pop (10 min)	3-14 m	Easy, Soft	Yellowfish, sea urchins, purple fish	Macro
30 Manila Channel (5 min)	5-14 m	Easy, Soft	Purple sponges, sponges, turtles, soft corals	Macro/under
31 Coral Garden (12 min)	5-14 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, sponges, soft corals, sponges, soft corals	Macro/under
32 Alon's Delight (15 min)	5-24 m	Easy, Soft	Turtles, sponges, soft corals, sponges	Macro/under
33 Rice Cargano (15 min)	5-40 m	Easy, Soft	Schools of fish, sea urchins, sponges, soft corals and sponges	Macro/under
34 Drop Off South (15 min)	5-50 m	Easy, Soft	Reef wall, sponges, turtles, groupers, sponges	Macro/under
35 Drop Off North (15 min)	5-50 m	Easy, Soft	Sponges, sponges, sponges, soft fish	Macro/under

wreck dive to the "Alma Jane" just off shore. One could easily swim to it. All the dive locations are not further than 5-15 minutes boat ride from the shore.

Palawan, El Nido, Bancuit Archipelago

Our next location was El Nido, a beautiful location at the Northwestern tip of the island Palawan. It takes a while to get there from the main airport, but you can also fly directly in a small plane from Manila. The town itself was very busy, but once out on the water you get rewarded with excellent diving. The Taifun had not affected the island much so the visibility was much better than the previous location.



The dive locations are around spectacular looking limestone cliffs, about 30-40 minutes boat ride from the shore. The boats (called bangkas) go out for the whole day and lunch is



oyster" - an oyster giving off visible electric pulses. My favourite was Miniloc Island, so much so that we managed to get there again a few days later. Lovely large cabbage coral and huge schools of yellow snapper. Also commonly seen in other locations were pipe fish, jawfish, turtles, growers, green mantis shrimps, cuttlefish, nudibranches. I also really enjoyed the "Dilumacad Tunnel", a 40m long cavern with red striped pipe fish,

cooked on deck. Our dive crew was from "Tabanka Divers", a well run German operation.

A great dive location we visited in the archipelago was Entalula - a great wall dive. I saw my first "electric

schools of "big eyes" and a larger easiest porcupine fish.

Basically every dive location in the area is good. We even spotted a dugong when walking along the shore.

One thing we regret is not having enough time left to travel to Cebu Island further southeast to see the whale sharks. Maybe next time... ❖



By Bettina Brill

UECWA

Every now and again having to travel for work has its benefits. I was lucky enough to have to be in Perth on a Thursday and Friday which presented an ideal opportunity to extend my stay and finally catch up with our friends at the Underwater Explorers Club of Western Australia. A flurry of emails between myself, Mel Turner a UECWA committee member and Michaël Roelens a member of St George Scuba Club in Sydney now residing in Perth and 2 night dives and a day's boat diving were locked in. Both Mel and Michaël have been our guests in Melbourne previously and both share my passion for photography and unusual critters.

I had to tough it out to get the first night dive in which came at the end of a 20 hour day having got up at 4am to get an early flight to Perth and then having to deal with the 3 hour time difference. We met up at Ammo Jetty which is 30 minutes south of Perth and according to Mel is the Perth equivalent to Blairgowrie. It was great to meet up with Mel and Michaël and by sheer coincidence our very own John Ashley who had timed his visit to Perth to perfection. John has finally kicked off his retirement and was

travelling up the west coast after crossing the Nullarbor in his camper.

Mel had kindly lent John and I cylinders and weights for the dive and we grabbed these and kitted up. The Jetty is a short walk from the car park. The Jetty is only 100m in length but is quite wide giving plenty of territory to explore. We entered from the beach with a plan to slowly swim up one side before turning and coming back down the other side. There were plenty of fishermen on the pier so we agreed to stay underneath as much as possible. There was a little bit of chop on the surface and a very slight current but overall conditions were very good.



We dived as a group with Mel and Michaël pointing out the local critters as we went. It really does make a difference to have that local knowledge and I'm sure they helped us see stuff we would have missed.

The growth on the pier was fantastic and very different to our own having a quite different look but equally as colourful. The fishlife was excellent with a mixture of the slightly familiar and the very different. I recognised many of the fish types but the species were different. Instead of Banded Morwong there were Crested Morwong, Instead of Cowfish there were Western Smooth Boxfish and instead of Southern Toadfish there were Banded Toadfish, you get the picture.



The pylons were covered with Nudibranch and again they were familiar but different. There were plenty of Red-Netted Chromodoris which had much tighter patterning than ours and Long Tailed Ceratosoma which were bright Orange instead of our Cream version. My favourite of the night was a beautiful one called the Strawberries and Cream Nudibranch. This had bid red spots on a cream background.



The other standout finds on the dive were a multitude of both Octopus and Sea Horses. I have never seen quite so many Octopus in one place.

The dive was shallow with a maximum depth of 9m which gave us a nice long dive time. All in all a very

enjoyable dive with loads to see, it's somewhere I would like to go back to.



With John taking a day trip to Rottnest Island he skipped the Friday night dive. The site was another Jetty. This time it was Kwinana Grain Terminal another 20km further south than Ammo Jetty. This is a working Jetty serving a huge grain processing plant. It's on a totally different scale to

Ammo Jetty though at 650m long. The Jetty is quite protected from swell by the nearby Garden Island which is good considering most of the dive is very shallow. This time Mel, Michaël and I were joined by local divers Shane and Kirsty.



We had no chance of covering the whole length of the Jetty so the plan was take it slow and see how far we got. The locals were diving in wet suits so we agreed that they would leave us to it when they got cold and come back in and fire up the BBQ for a post dive snag. We were really looked after by the good folks in WA and I can't thank the guys enough for the post dive BBQ and beers. I can see this catching on in Melbourne, great concept.

Once again the Octopus were around in abundance. With Mel and I diving together we were stopped in our tracks while watching an eel swimming across the sand. It got too close to a hidden Octopus and was grabbed. Mel and I were so shocked that neither of us thought to take pictures. The two

animals swirled around in a ball for several seconds before the rather lucky eel managed to break free and escape. I swear you could hear the screams of delight as Mel and I looked at each other after the show finished.

The abundance of fish life around the pylons was excellent with plenty of exotic species found. There were less Nudibranch but we did manage to find a particularly nice purple example. Other highlights included the biggest Sea Hare I've ever seen, it would have been 20 inches long and a giant Sea Star that would have been half a meter across.



After an hour and a half the others headed in, leaving Michaël and I to make our way back in slowly. We exited the water after 2 hours 10 minutes and headed back to the car park. The snags were already cooked and immediately we got our kit off a cold beer was thrust into our hands and we happily munched a late night BBQ. It was a late night as we didn't get out of the water until 10.15pm.



Myself, Mel Turner and Michael Roelens enjoying a beer and BBQ after our night dive at Kwinana Grain Terminal

With an early start the next morning I was lazy and didn't bother to wash my gear aside from my camera rig, leaving it to fester in the trunk of the hire car.

The weather on the Saturday was sensational with light winds and clear blue sunny skies. I grabbed a quick breakfast on the way down to pick up the UWCWA dive boat at Coogee Marina, 20 minutes south of Fremantle. When I arrived the crew were already preparing the boat but otherwise I was first to arrive. I retrieved my wet gear from the car and laid it in the sun to dry out a bit before loading it onto the boat.

The UWCWA boat is spectacular. The boat "Cape Cruiser" is 15m long and takes 14 divers in comfort. It comes complete with an upstairs seating area and a toilet. Most of the

club diving is done from this boat with Rottnest Island trips running every weekend.

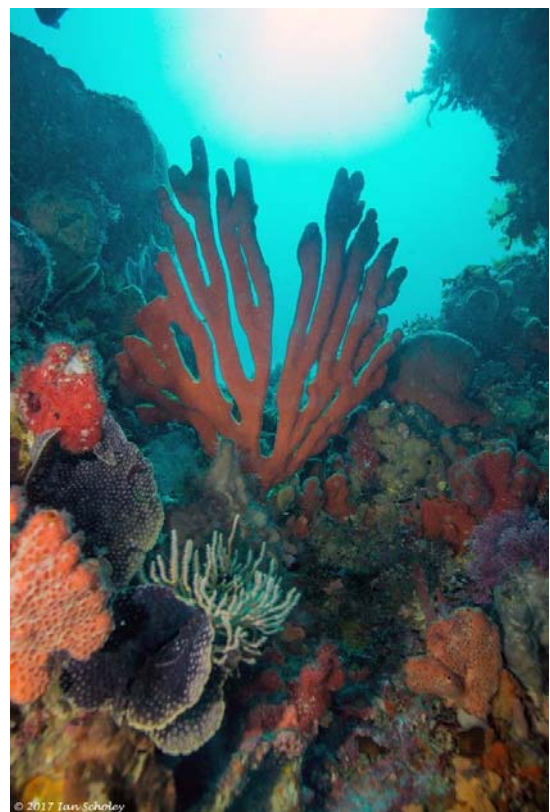
Mel and John Ashley arrived together with the other club members diving and we loaded our gear onto the boat. With everything set we headed off at 8.00am for the hour's trip to



Rottnest. Sea conditions were good with a gentle swell of 1-2m with a long interval making for a comfortable trip over. The club publishes the dive sites planned for each day's diving to the membership but the skipper and dive captain make decisions on the day with sites changing to suit the conditions. After anchoring on our first planned site a decision was made to move to the other side of the Island. With an obvious swell making the planned site unsafe.

The other side of the Island was flat tack and we anchored above a Ste called Angela's Cave. The usual approach for UECWA is to mix the two sites up to give the Cray bashers a chance and then satisfying the fish

fanciers with a dive in the marine protected areas of Rottnest Island. John and I were made to feel very welcome and everyone was incredibly friendly. We were quizzed on Victorian diving and particularly about our Crayfish dives. There were incredulous looks when we explained we had to catch our Crayfish by hand and that we had a bag limit of two. There were loops everywhere on the boat and apparently the bag limit is 8 in WA although it goes alongside a boat limit of 24 which keeps things in check a little I suppose.



The operation on the boat was extremely professional with excellent boat safety and dive briefings being given by the Diving Officer for the day. In the WA club the skipper and

Diving Officer don't dive. The pay back for this is that when they aren't doing this role they get to dive for free. Club members pay \$70 for a day's diving from the boat with all the profits contributing to the costs associated with running, insuring and birthing Cape Cruiser. John and I were able to dive with the club by taking advantage of our reciprocal agreement and becoming inter state



colourful wrasse. We also found some old favourites like the Blue Devilfish although they were lighter in colour than those we see locally.



The dive was reasonably deep at 28m and with everyone being good on air we crept into deco and extended our bottom time. With my computer indicating 9 minutes TTS we found the anchor and headed up. We were the last ones back on the boat with most of the other divers covering much more ground in their hunt for Crayfish. There were a few caught and everyone seemed happy with the dive.

members of the club at a cost of \$10.

Mel, John and I dived as a trio. As we descended the vis was ok although there were a lot of particles in the water. I put it at about 10m. As we descended we were surrounded by inquisitive and colourful Football Sweeps. The dive site was a collection of caves, swim throughs and arches which made for a spectacular dive.

With the divers tucking into lunch the boat moved to our second site for the day a spot called Kingston Spit. As we pulled up we saw Perth Diving Academy's large charter boat already moored on the site, so anchored a safe distance away over the sand.

The walls were covered in growth and numerous Nudibranch which made me wish I hadn't switched to a wide angle lens. In the caves we found decent schools of sweep and

As the last ones out from the first dive Mel, John and I were the last ones in. The site is shallow at a maximum of 9m and is a reef with

lots of compartmentalised holes, caves and swim throughs. Crossing the sand we easily found the Reef and with Mel's expert local knowledge we headed straight to the best spot on the Reef, a large cave.

The entrance was obscured by huge schools of both Bulleyes and the larger Silver Drummers. There were literally thousands of fish and at times it was impossible to see the other divers as I was engulfed by fish. We stayed in this spot for a good half hour photographing the schools and exploring the caves. We found a snoozing Wobbegong inside a large hole, Blue Devils and plenty of other



fish types.

Eventually we continued our exploration of the Reef dropping down into the many holes to explore.

The variety of fish to be found on this dive site is extraordinarily and I lost count as I snapped away happily. Amongst the other stuff we found were Crayfish, Octopus, Cuttlefish and Scorpionfish. We had agreed that

Mel would end her dive early and leave John and I to max out on the generous 75 minute dive limit from the Diving Officer. Exiting one hole I found Mel and John gone so continued to dive solo. I was a little nervous about navigating back to the boat but managed to find it ok much to my relief. I wouldn't have wanted to surface away from the boat and take the surface swim of shame in front of our WA friends.

Back on board the boat there were plenty of Crayfish this time and happy smiling divers. Mel really did go over and above looking after John and I and once again she provided the cold beer as we cruised back to Coogee enjoying the view from the upper deck. I had a good chat with Mike Buchanan the UECWA President and Diving Officer for the day on the way back who kindly answered all of my questions.

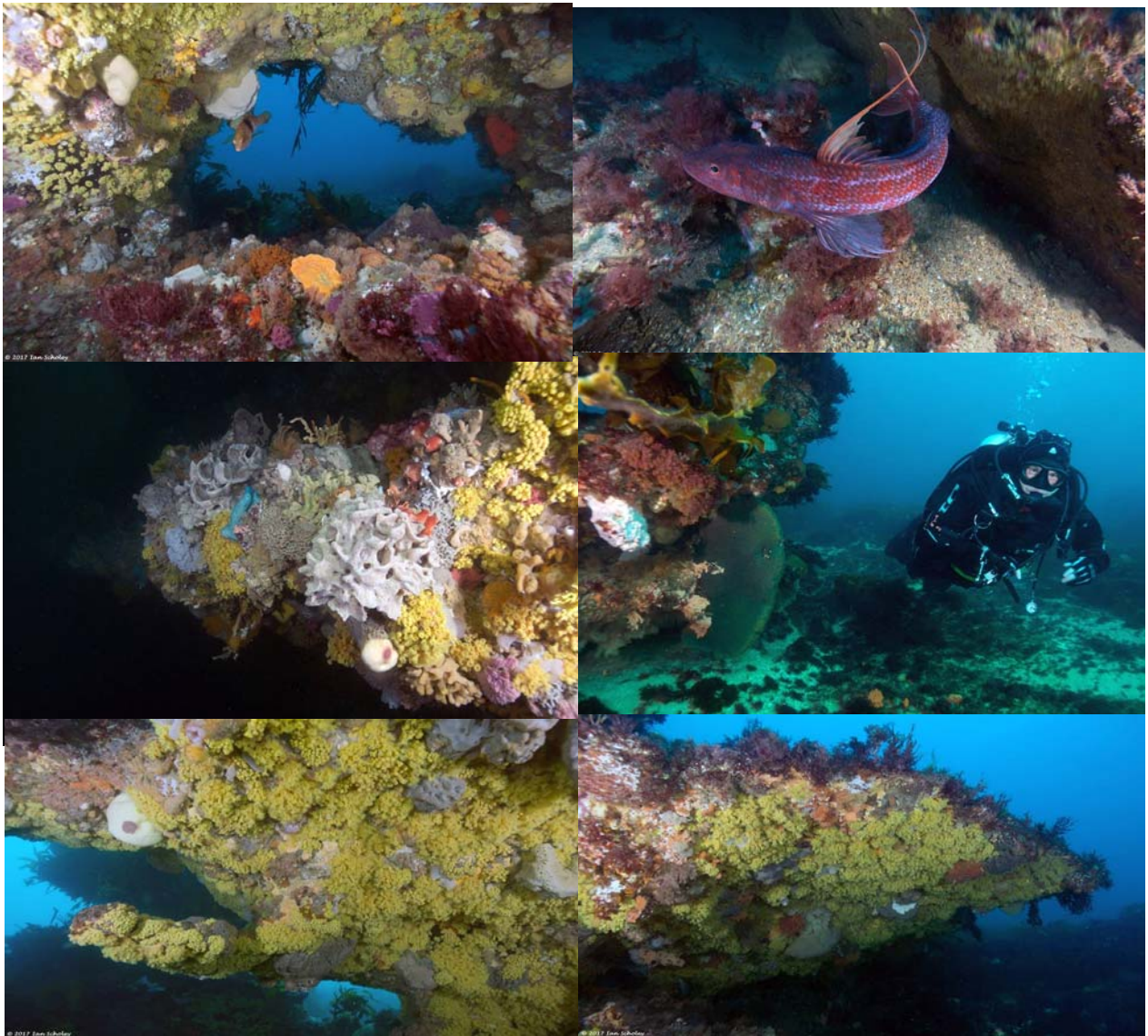
We had a fantastic time in Perth with excellent diving. However the overriding memory for me will be the sensational hospitality of our hosts and especially Mel Turner who really did go over and above to look after us. I can't recommend a visit to the excellent people enough and hope that more of our members will take advantage of the arrangement with have with UECWA. If anyone would like more details then check out their website at www.uecwa.com.au or feel

Captain Nitro's Drop Off & Lonsdale Arches

With Chris Porter and Ian Scholey

Sometimes you just need some colour in your life. You can keep the GBR, I will take our very own Lonsdale Wall every time. The vis may have been ordinary today but the colours were extraordinary as usual.

Here is what I shot before I got badly distracted by the big Crayfish at 40m. I certainly learned a few things today, such as, divers with twins and stage bottles don't fit in holes and it's best to take a catch bag with you to avoid getting your hand shredded by irate Crayfish.



Hurricane Wreck

Mon 27 Feb 17

Water temp: 18c

Vis: 10 + mtrs

Divers: Peter Beaumont & Herb Mackay

Photo's: Peter Beaumont

Herb & I went out for a Monday double dive on the Hurricane as the predicted tidal flow rate was in the vicinity of 3 knots outgoing/incoming. The wind forecast was predicting 10 - 15k North Easterly winds dropping off which turned out to be quite accurate (for once). With the boat anchored we watched the GPS distance to the mark for the next 10 minutes & with the distance remaining steady we geared up then entered the water.

Once on the bottom we ran a line from the anchor & swam to the stern section of the wreck. The tide was still outgoing at approximately 2k & there was heaps of fish life . We saw the usual leather jackets, ornate cow fish, boarfish, rockling, schools of fish, small rays etc. After 45 minutes we ascended, completed our safety stop then climbed back onboard to have morning tea & change tanks. I also considered changing to a wide angle

lens set up but decided against it as I was still looking to find a goblin fish.

For the second dive we had a good look around the middle, bow section for cuttle fish & goblin fish. Finally back at the anchor rope I moved a small piece of timber & found a goblin fish trying to blend in with the shells etc. After snapping a few pics I found I was down to 50 bar so we ascended for our safety stop. Once back in the boat we packed the gear away, recovered the anchor & headed back to the ramp. ❖

By Peter Beaumont



GEORGE KERMODE

George Kermode double dive

Saturday 11th March 2017

Depth: 22mtrs

Water temp: 18c

Vis: 8-10mtrs

Divers: Peter Beaumont & guest diver Tim from the Dive Oz Forum

<http://www.diveoz.com.au/index.php/diveoz-discussion-forums/hanging-on-the-deco-line/27716-diving-on-weekdays.html#303033>

Saturday's forecast was looking really good for diving Phillip Island so I contacted Tim & asked if he was available to do a Saturday double dive at Phillip Island. Tim was pretty keen (full time student with OW qual limited to 18mtrs) so we launched from Newhaven at 8am and headed off to the George Kermode for a double dive. The other VSAG boats launching from Newhaven at 830 were Peter Galvin's "Stroker" (cray bashing), Angus & Walter's "Mistress" (cray bashing) and John & Priya's "Waverider" (cray bashing/George Kermode dive).

The run down to the Kermode saw the usual array of seals & fairy penguins sitting on the surface then ducking below as the boat

approached. Tim had never seen this before so I played tour guide & pointed out the various seals etc along the way. Once at the Kermode we anchored (surface conditions benign ie: glassy flat, no wind) & spoke to Stroker on VHF 73 detailing our dive plan. Once geared up we completed buddy checks, rolled over the side & descended to the anchor. With the anchor & chain set, we ran a reel up one side of the wreck and had a look around. This was Tim's first wreck dive so we took our time & had a good look around the outside of the wreck as well as some of the more open sections. We saw the usual boarfish, dusky morwong, longfin pike, whiting etc swimming around. It wasn't long before we were both down to 60 bar so we did a slow ascent with a 5minute stop at 5 mtrs before climbing back onboard the boat.

Given the benign surface conditions we decided to stay on site for the surface interval/morning tea then do a second dive around the bow of the wreck. Meanwhile Stroker, Mistress & Wave Rider were all parked at Cape Woolamai chasing crayfish so I gave them a heads up on our 2nd dive plan. This time I took Tim around the dredge buckets at the bow of the

wreck then we moved along & into some of the open sections around the steel girders etc. There was plenty of resident fish life around so we slowly moved along & watched as gaps appeared in the schools of fish as we swam through. After swimming around the boiler room we exited, set the anchor for recovering then ascended for a 5 minute stop at 5mtrs. Once back onboard we stowed the gear & called up the VSAG boats. Waverider answered the call as they were preparing to recover their first group of divers & were keen to dive the Kermode so we remained anchored & had another bite to eat. About 20 minutes later Waverider arrived on site so we shortened in on the anchor line so they could put their shot line down. After recovering the anchor we had a 10 minute chat before heading off to Cape Woolamai to say g'day to Stroker & Mistress's crews. With the boat recovered to the trailer & gear offloaded/packed by approx 1:15pm we headed off to the local coffee shop for a brew/ bite to eat before heading off home.



GOBLIN FISH

Blairgowrie Marina

Friday 24th Feb 2017

Water temp: 19c

Vis: maybe 1mtr if we were lucky

Dive time: 75 minutes

Divers: Peter Beaumont, Herb Mackay, Tim from DiveOz Forum

<http://www.diveoz.com.au/index.php/diveoz-discussion-forums/hanging-on-the-deco-line/27716-diving-on-weekdays.html#303033>

Went back for a Friday morning dive as conditions the day before were reasonably good with 5mtr vis. After meeting & greeting in the carpark we geared up & headed towards the marina. Herb used a trolley to take his gear from the carpark to the jetty & entered the water from the lower landing (minus the trolley) whilst Tim & I walked out from the beach carefully avoiding the spider crabs which were in close to the shore. Before descending we checked our gear, then slowly swam along the bottom under the jetty into an ever increasing wall of muck being brought in by the incoming tide. With the vis down to < 1mtr we soon lost sight of each other so we surfaced, regrouped & decided to navigate the dive using the edge of the wave screen matting &

the bottom of the wave screen panels as reference points. Along the way we saw adult & juvenile cuttlefish, small rays, spider crabs, a blue ring occy as well as a rarely seen goblin fish. With the dive completed, we packed our gear away and headed off for a cup of coffee/morning tea at a local Blairgowrie Village Café.



Photo: Goblin Fish



Home: Covered

Car: Covered

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Diving Hoi An – Vietnam.

My Vietnam holiday was absolutely not about diving, however a trip on a boat is always on our family agenda. So the day snorkeling trip to Cham Island seemed like a good idea.

When we went to book, turned out (at least this early in the season) they use the same boat, and go to the same places for snorkeling as for diving. And you can decide on the day if you want to dive.

Not too hard to work out who snorkeled and who dived....

This was a very relaxed, full day outing on a typical SE Asian wooden junk. Capacity 49 people, the season had only just started and I'd say half that number in total on board. Everything well organized, gear and boat good, small groups of around 5 to 6 divers led by multi-lingual guides. Might not be so good with a full boat! 3 course lunch under palm trees on a tropical island.

We did two dives, Zin Vien and Hon Mo. Spent only a few minutes on each dive at 16 – 20 m, most of the “good” stuff is in the 3 to 10 m range. Water was a bit murky, supposedly typical this early in the season.

I thought the coral was quite ordinary, with fewer fish, and less variety, than I'd expect given the structure. It's supposedly a marine park,

and whilst questions about illegal fishing received assurances it was “rare”, a hint at there being some cyanide fishing for aquarium trade would better explain what I saw.

We enjoyed the day on the boat, and it's another place I can say I've dived, but not somewhere I'd recommend. ❖ David Flew

The Pinnacle

Wednesday 01 Mar 17

Water temp: 18c

Vis: 15 + mtrs

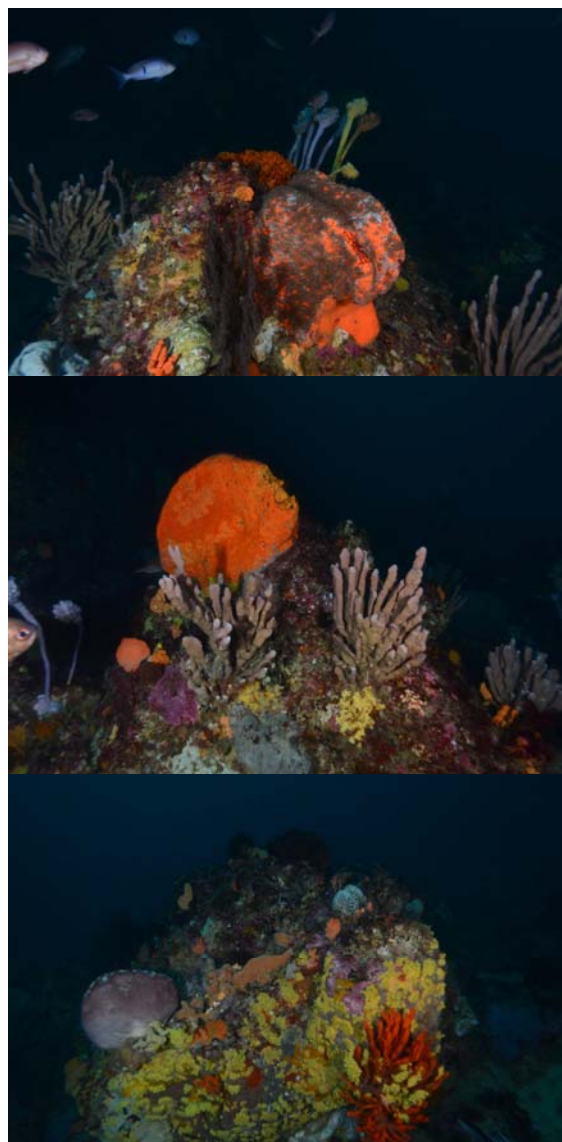
Divers: Peter Beaumont, Herb Mackay

Photos: Peter Beaumont

Herb & I went out for a Wednesday dive on the Pinnacle as the forecast indicated light SE winds & a 1mtr SE swell. With the boat anchored we checked for a surface current then watched the GPS mark distance for the next 10 minutes. Satisfied there was no surface current & the mark distance was steady we geared up & entered the water.

Once on the bottom we hooked the lift bag (uninflated) to the anchor then ran a reel & had a swim around one of the gullies at the base of the Pinnacle. We saw the usual yellow xanthoids, soft sponges, fan corals, magpie perch,

wrasse, rockling etc. It wasn't long before we ran out of bottom time (no deco dive) so we returned to the anchor, unclipped the reel, partially inflated the lift bag then ascended. Once back onboard it became obvious the surface conditions had deteriorated with the wind & surface chop picking up. The change in surface conditions meant a dive on the George Kemode was out of the question so we decided to call it quits, return to the ramp & have lunch at the local café. ❖ By Peter Beaumont



CAPE WOOLAMAI PHILLIP ISLAND

MONDAY 9TH JANUARY 2017

DIVE :1

DIVERS: Peter GALVIN, Arthur KOKKINOS

DECK HAND: Frank VAN PELT

Early rise this morning launching from Newhaven Boat ramp (PHILLIP ISLAND). The weather was just perfect sunny and clear skies for a great day of diving on Peter Galvin's boat (STROKER). We launched at approximately 8.20am and navigated the boat under the San Remo Bridge through the channel opening and then out and around Phillip Island to Cape Woolamai. Peter found a nice location to anchor the boat. The sea swell was around 1 metre with light wind. After Peter gave his dive brief we geared up and attached the Hookah Regs to our BC'S. Deck hand Frank signalled the ok and we both disembarked off the boat one at a time. I followed Peter around the starboard side, to the back and around to port side where we met the anchor line. Peter descended first then I followed. When I got to the bottom I observed Peter repositioning the anchor to a better location, making it easier to pull back up when finished diving for the day.

Peter immediately began searching for crays diving in and around rock ledges and looking in every hole. When Cray diving on Hookah, Peter is in his element and keeping up with

him was not easy. The dive started off at 14 metres and as we made our way towards the rocky outcrop we got to a final depth at 17.9 metres. During the dive we were surrounded by many varieties of fish such as leatherjackets, parrotfish, old wives and few schools of bream and small whiting. Visibility was clear at around 5 to 8 metres all depending on how close you were to the various rock formations. The underwater vegetation was spectacular with many different colours illuminating from the light above. The sea weed was also flowing graciously back and forth from the sea bed swell which at times was quite forceful. Keeping one eye on Peter and the other on the wonderful scenery all around me I was just in diving paradise. Diving through some very large openings and in and around some overhanging ledges made this dive quite enjoyable. We dived around a very large rock formation and near the bottom I observed Peter focussing on a small opening. Peter stuck his hand in and pulled out a huge crayfish which caught me by surprise. I first wondered on how he spotted it and then how he managed to catch it. Absolutely amazing, Peter carefully placed the cray into his catch bag and then off we went, we continued diving looking for some more crays. After 58 minutes of bottom time and only one cray we decided to finish our dive. We started

our ascent to the surface. I followed Peter as he was pulling himself up and towards the boat using the hookah hose. As we got to a depth of 5 metres we did our deco stop and after 3 minutes we ascended to the surface within 3 metres from the boat. Total dive time was 62 minutes.

DIVE :2

After having a lunchbreak and discussion for approximately 45 mins we decided to dive the same location but in the opposite direction. Peter wanted to dive in and around a large rock formation that was protruding through the surface located on the edge of the small inlet where we had anchored. This particular location appeared to have a strong surface swell and extreme caution was a high priority. We geared up and entered the water and followed the anchor line to the bottom. Visibility was still ok at around 5 to 6 metres and temp 19 degrees. I followed Peter and this time I was carrying his catch bag. We reached a depth of 13.5 metres and right throughout the dive we stayed at this depth. As we approached the rock structure I couldn't help but

noticing how beautiful it looked. The rock extended in one piece from the bottom right out above the surface. At the bottom It was surrounded by many species of fish small and large and many varieties of underwater vegetation. In some areas large

seaweed extended all the way down from the top, covering large areas of the rock. Again our dive took us in and around many other rock formations and through enormous swim through openings. Half way through the dive Peter spotted a huge crayfish and again managed to capture it and place it in the catch bag. I was left wondering, how Peter spotted this particular cray when all I could see were many small openings and holes but no crays. The dive was superb and again was most enjoyable. After 55 minutes of bottom time we both decided to finish the dive, we started making our way towards the boat. We completed our Deco stop and then surfaced. Total dive time 60 minutes.

By Arthur Kokkinos



Arthur Kokkinos and Peter Galvin

Phillip Island

We hadn't had "Waverider" out for about 3 weeks. When we got home from the last dive on the ex HMAS Canberra, we had a collapsed wheel bearing. It took me about 3 weeks to learn how to disassemble and reassemble the trailer's hub and braking systems. (That's another story).

I noticed that Peter G was diving out of Newhaven on the Saturday and the conditions looked good. We booked in and were assigned Denys as our passenger. It was looking good to do a hunting and gathering dive and then head over to the George Kermode wreck for a second dive.

Upon arriving I checked the trailer hubs and all was well. We launched without incident and waited as Priya parked the trailer. This took a little while as the ramp parking was full. We had a borrowed tank from Peter G which we were to return after the dive. We headed out around Cape Woolamai and found the others. I jumped in with Denys and we foraged around the rocks and weed for about an hour, no crays were to be seen, we did get a feed of abalone though.

Priya picked us up. We gave the loan tank back to Peter G. I radioed Peter B who was on the Kermode and he said he'd wait for us to make it easier to find it. Our previous attempt at diving this wreck was pre depth sounder and

was spectacularly unsuccessful. This time we dropped a shot where Peter was anchored and he motored off having completed his day's diving. I decided to sit this dive out so Priya and Denys could do the dive. We had some lunch to allow Denys some surface interval.

I dropped them down the line, stripped my tanks and tidied up the boat. I also got changed into my nice dry gear. I then just hovered around the bubbles until they surfaced. I retrieved two happy divers who'd had a good dive with excellent visibility. Everyone got organised. All we needed to do was retrieve the shot and head back. As luck would have it, the anchor was stuck fast on the wreck. No amount of cajoling, trying different angles, etc. was going to release it. I eventually resigned myself to the fact that I was going to have to suit up, strap on a tank and do a dive to free it. So it was off with the dry clothes on with the wetsuit and back into the water. On the way down I noticed the rope was stuck in a little eyelet, surely "this isn't the snag" I thought. I was right, when I got to the weight I noticed it had dropped into a hole just barely larger than the diameter of the weight. The chances of doing this were extremely low, yet we'd managed it. I fished the weight out of the hole. Lifted it up onto the

main section of the wreck to prevent snagging and surfaced. One thing that impressed me on this albeit short dive was the nice blue water and great visibility.

We retrieved the shot without incident. Priya drove back and I spent most of the trip home untangling and stowing the shot rope. Upon arriving back at the ramp. There was quite a queue for

retrievals. I dropped Denys and Priya off and motored around until Priya got the truck to the ramp. We retrieved the boat without incident. Sorted out the gear and headed for home.

When I got home I checked the bearings again. They were still nicely sealed and greased. So far so good!

By John Mills. ❖

BOAT RAMP PERMITS—MORNINGTON PENINSULA SHIRE COUNCIL

Annual Boat Ramp Permits are valid for a 12 month period from 01 November to 31 October. The annual permit fee is \$125.00 (GST free).

The permit comes in the form of a vehicle windscreen sticker that **must** be attached to the bottom left hand side of the vehicle windscreen. To purchase an annual boat ramp permit complete the application form or visit one of our Customer Service Centres during business hours 8.30am – 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding Public Holidays).

You must pay a fee for each day that you use and park at a Shire boat ramp.

This has been made easy with the introduction of cashless parking meters at boat ramps across the peninsula.

Online with Parkmobile

Set up an account online with Parkmobile by visiting www.parkmobile.com.au call 1300 564 564 or download the free smart device application at iTunes, Google Play or Windows markets. You will be guided to register your vehicle (car) registration number and your credit card details.

Parking vouchers

Users who do not have a credit card, or who are infrequent users of the ramps, can pre-purchase vouchers (\$12) from any of the Shire's customer service centres during business hours. The vouchers are 'one use' only and do not have an expiry date; therefore, you can buy a few and use them when you want. Just complete the details on the voucher and display on your dashboard. ❖

DIARY DATES



Hi all,

I am pleased to announce that the club will offer a Truk Lagoon trip in 2018. With flights via Port Moresby there is also an optional extension in Milne Bay, PNG.

Please see the flyers for both the Truk trip and the optional extension.

If anyone has any questions about the proposed trip or about the diving in Truk Lagoon then please don't hesitate to contact me.

If anyone would like to join the trip then please complete a booking form and return it to me and pay the required deposit of \$440 to secure your place.

For those who have dived Truk you know how great it is. For those that haven't, please be warned that if you go once it will almost certainly not be your last visit. The place is addictive!

Ian Scholey❖

DIARY DATES



VICTORIAN SUB AQUA GROUP PRESENTS **TRUK LAGOON** MICRONESIA



February 1944, US Forces launch Operation Hailstorm on Truk Lagoon, Japan's Pacific base during World War II. The Japanese are caught unaware and lose over 275 aircraft and 45 ships. See plane wrecks, artillery shells, torpedoes, tanks, bow and stern guns and an abundance of anemones, tropical fish, sharks and eagle rays. With depths ranging from 10m to 60m and little current, Truk is the ultimate wreck diving destination.

**OPTIONAL
TAWALI, PAPUA
NEW GUINEA
EXTENSION!**

FLY

AIR NIUGINI

- Return flights ex Brisbane to Truk Lagoon
- Flying via Port Moresby
- Airline taxes & fuel surcharges

SLEEP

AIROLDGE INTERNATIONAL, BRISBANE

- Standard twin share room - 1 night
- BLUE LAGOON RESORT, TRUK LAGOON**
- Standard twin share room - 11 nights
- Late checkout on final day until 6PM
- Return airport transfers

ADDITIONALLY FOR GROUPS OF 7 OR MORE

- FREE welcome drink upon arrival
- FREE use safety deposit box
- FREE lunch or dinner on last day
- FREE use of dive lockers & kayaks
- FREE additional dive

DIVE

BLUE LAGOON RESORT DIVING

- 20 dives per diver
- Tanks, weights, airfills & dive guide

CONTACT IAN SCHOLEY FOR MORE INFORMATION

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allways@allwaysdive.com.au | 1800 338 239 | www.allwaysdive.com.au

Exclusions: Equipment rental, Dive permit USD\$50 per person, Departure Tax USD\$20 per person & transfers within Brisbane.

TRAVEL DATES
18 - 30 AUG 2018

DIVER \$ 4,364
NON DIVER \$ 2,771

REFERENCE
DI9273

Lic # 32511

DIARY DATES



VICTORIAN SUB AQUA GROUP PRESENTS

TAWALI EXTENSION PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The diving surrounding Tawali is renowned for its world-class macro life: explore a sandy ocean floor alive with rhinopias, pygmy seahorses, mimic octopus and much more! Beyond the macro diving, there are a myriad of dive sites that have something for every diver including dramatic drop-offs, coral encrusted walls and fast-paced drift dives. And if all of that isn't enough, the house reef boasts a 60 metre drop off filled with marine life with everything from mandarin fish closer to shore, to schooling pelagics and rays out in the blue.

TRAVEL DATES
30 AUG - 05 SEP 2018

ADDITIONAL
DIVER \$ 2,770
NON DIVER \$ 1,790

REFERENCE
D19273

FLY

AIR NIUGINI

- Return flights Port Moresby to Milne Bay
- Airline taxes & fuel surcharges

SLEEP

TAWALI RESORT, MILNE BAY

- Deluxe twin share room - 6 nights
- All meals including coffee & tea
- Return airport transfers

DIVE

TAWALI RESORT DIVING

- 3 boat dives per day over 5 days (total 15 dives)
- FREE shore diving on the house reef
- Lunch & snacks on dive boats
- Tanks, weights, airfills & dive guide
- Reef, chamber fees & fuel surcharges

CONTACT IAN SCHOLEY FOR MORE INFORMATION

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D I A R Y D A T E S

First Aid Refresher—29 April 2017 TBC

Vanuatu 2-12 July 2017 School holidays

Dili Trip 18-28 August 2017

Truk Lagoon/ PNG 18-30 August 2018

VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar

By Peter Beaumont, Dive Calendar Co-ordinator, VSAG

Activity Details

Dive Co-ordinator (DC) nominated below.

Dive site determined by DC and advised by email based on forecast conditions.

Boat Captains for the dive will be confirmed by email prior to the weekend.

Dive day can swap between Sat and Sun depending on conditions!

Dive Coordinator is responsible for organising a dive report after their weekend.

Dive sites adjusted on the day to suit divers and conditions.

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.

Tidal Stream information for Port Phillip Bay Heads is located here:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/tides/#!/vic-the-rip>

Rates in **RED** are the maximum forecast outgoing (**ebb**) tidal rate.

Rates in **BLUE** are the maximum forecast incoming (**flood**) tidal rate.

Apr 8/9	Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
Apr 14/15/16/17 Easter weekend	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
Apr 18	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Apr 22/23	Boat DC Michael Ngai 0414 894 684
Apr 25 Anzac Day	Boat DC Ross Walker 0417 376 192
Apr 29/30	Boat DC David Geekie 0419 300 686
May 6/7	Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
May 13/14	Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
May 16	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
May 20/21	Boat DC John Lawler 0414 922 916
May 27/28	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
Jun 3/4	Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
Jun 10/11/12 Queens B'day W/E	Boat DC Michael Ngai 0414 894 684
Jun 17/18	Boat DC Ross Walker 0417 376 192
June 20	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Jun 25 June 24/25	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC David Geekie 0419 300 686
Jul 1/2	Shore DC Carol Penfold 0434 374 044 Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
Jul 8/9	Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
Jul 15/16	Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
Jul 18	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Jul 22 Jul 22/23	Christmas in July Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
Jul 30 Jul 29/30	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC David Flew 0418 446 530
Aug 5/6	Shore DC Carol Penfold 0434 374 044 Boat DC Benita McDonough 0419 399 000
Aug 12/13	Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
Aug 15	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm

Aug 19/20	Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
Aug 27 Aug 26/27	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC Michael Ngai 0414 894 6844
Sep 2/3	Boat DC Ross Walker 0417 376 192
Sep 9/10	Boat DC David Geekie 0419 300 686
Sep 16/17	Boat DC Benita McDonough 0419 399 000
Sep 19	Annual General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Sep 24 Sep 23/24	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
Sep 29/30/Oct 1	Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
Oct 7/8	Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
Oct 14/15	Boat DC Michael Ngai 0414 894 684
Oct 17	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Oct 21/22	Boat DC Ross Walker 0417 376 192
Oct 29 Oct 28/29	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC David Flew 0418 446 530
Nov 4/5	Shore DC Carol Penfold 0434 374 044 Boat DC David Geekie 0419 300 686
Nov 7 Melb Cup	Boat DC Benita McDonough 0419 399 000
Nov 11/12	Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
Nov 18/19	Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
Nov 21	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Nov 25	Christmas Party Sat 25th (Date TBC)
Nov 26 Nov 25/26	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
Dec 2/3	Shore DC Carol Penfold 0434 374 044 Boat DC Michael Ngai 0414 894 6844
Dec 9/10	Boat DC Ross Walker 0417 376 192
Dec 16/17	Boat DC David Geekie 0419 300 686
Dec 19	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Dec 23/24	Boat DC Benita McDonough 0419 399 000
Dec 30/31	Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725

Websites for Tidal Streams & Weather Conditions

Peter Beaumont

Tidal Stream information for Port Phillip Bay Heads is located here:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/tides/#!/vic-the-rip>

Port Phillip Bay winds and temperature information is located here:

<http://www.baywx.com.au/>

Tide information for Cape Woolamai is located here:

<http://tides.willyweather.com.au/vic/gippsland/cape-woolamai.html>

VSAG Dive Equipment Box - Update

VSAG has a private transient equipment box located at:

The Scuba Doctor 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.

It currently holds :

- ◆ 2 Oxy-Sok Oxygen Resuscitation Kits
- ◆ 1 Oxygen Medical Tank *Yearly Ramp Passes and occasional parking vouchers are now available from Mornington Peninsula Shire Council. Pay by credit card at payment machines on the day or pay on line at: www.parkmobile.com.au*
- ◆ 1 Oxygen Medical Kit
- ◆ 1 DAN First Aid Kit
- ◆ 2 Scuba Tanks.

Please use this facility responsibly and handle Oxygen equipment safely. ❖

Tidal Streams at the Heads — April 2017

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.

Times have been adjusted for Daylight Savings

March					April	
<i>MON 27</i>	<i>TUE 28</i>	<i>WED 29</i>	<i>THU 30</i>	<i>FRI 31</i>	<i>SAT 1</i>	<i>SUN 2</i>
2:44	3:37	4:21	5:01	0:03	0:49	1:32
9:03	10:04	10:54	11:40	5:39	6:17	5:56
14:29	15:46	16:50	17:46	12:25	13:09	12:54
21:16	22:20	23:15		18:36	19:25	19:13
<i>MON 3</i>	<i>TUE 4</i>	<i>WED 5</i>	<i>THU 6</i>	<i>FRI 7</i>	<i>SAT 8</i>	<i>SUN 9</i>
1:15	1:57	2:42	3:31	4:30	5:44	0:41
6:37	7:21	8:08	9:02	10:06	11:23	7:09
13:38	14:24	15:10	16:00	16:56	18:05	12:51
20:01	20:50	21:41	22:36	23:36		19:24
<i>MON 10</i>	<i>TUE 11</i>	<i>WED 12</i>	<i>THU 13</i>	<i>FRI 14</i>	<i>SAT 15</i>	<i>SUN 16</i>
1:44	2:39	3:24	4:03	4:36	5:06	0:19
8:22	9:20	10:06	10:45	11:20	11:52	5:36
14:14	15:22	16:16	17:00	17:38	18:13	12:23
20:38	21:39	22:28	23:09	23:46		18:46
<i>MON 17</i>	<i>TUE 18</i>	<i>WED 19</i>	<i>THU 20</i>	<i>FRI 21</i>	<i>SAT 22</i>	<i>SUN 23</i>
0:50	1:21	1:53	2:26	3:04	3:49	4:46
6:06	6:38	7:11	7:47	8:27	9:17	10:22
12:54	13:26	13:58	14:32	15:10	15:54	16:50
19:19	19:53	20:30	21:09	21:52	22:41	23:36
<i>MON 24</i>	<i>TUE 25</i>	<i>WED 26</i>	<i>THU 27</i>	<i>FRI 28</i>	<i>SAT 29</i>	<i>SUN 30</i>
6:00	0:34	1:30	2:22	3:10	3:56	4:42
11:45	7:15	8:19	9:15	10:07	10:56	11:44
18:04	13:14	14:34	15:40	16:36	17:27	18:16
	19:29	20:45	21:47	22:41	23:30	

Tidal Streams at the Heads — May 2017

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.

Times have been adjusted for Daylight Savings

May						
<i>MON 1</i>	<i>TUE 2</i>	<i>WED 3</i>	<i>THU 4</i>	<i>FRI 5</i>	<i>SAT 6</i>	<i>SUN 7</i>
<i>0:17</i>	<i>1:03</i>	<i>1:50</i>	<i>2:38</i>	<i>3:30</i>	<i>4:29</i>	<i>5:36</i>
<i>5:28</i>	<i>6:17</i>	<i>7:08</i>	<i>8:02</i>	<i>9:02</i>	<i>10:11</i>	<i>11:30</i>
<i>12:31</i>	<i>13:17</i>	<i>14:03</i>	<i>14:49</i>	<i>15:35</i>	<i>16:28</i>	<i>17:31</i>
<i>19:03</i>	<i>19:49</i>	<i>20:34</i>	<i>21:20</i>	<i>22:08</i>	<i>23:00</i>	<i>23:56</i>
<i>MON 8</i>	<i>TUE 9</i>	<i>WED 10</i>	<i>THU 11</i>	<i>FRI 12</i>	<i>SAT 13</i>	<i>SUN 14</i>
<i>6:46</i>	<i>0:52</i>	<i>1:46</i>	<i>2:33</i>	<i>3:14</i>	<i>3:50</i>	<i>4:24</i>
<i>12:54</i>	<i>7:50</i>	<i>8:43</i>	<i>9:27</i>	<i>10:06</i>	<i>10:42</i>	<i>11:15</i>
<i>18:50</i>	<i>14:11</i>	<i>15:13</i>	<i>16:03</i>	<i>16:44</i>	<i>17:20</i>	<i>17:53</i>
	<i>20:08</i>	<i>21:12</i>	<i>22:03</i>	<i>22:45</i>	<i>23:22</i>	<i>23:56</i>
<i>MON 15</i>	<i>TUE 16</i>	<i>WED 17</i>	<i>THU 18</i>	<i>FRI 19</i>	<i>SAT 20</i>	<i>SUN 21</i>
<i>4:58</i>	<i>0:29</i>	<i>1:02</i>	<i>1:35</i>	<i>2:10</i>	<i>2:48</i>	<i>3:32</i>
<i>11:48</i>	<i>5:32</i>	<i>6:08</i>	<i>6:45</i>	<i>7:24</i>	<i>8:09</i>	<i>9:04</i>
<i>18:25</i>	<i>12:21</i>	<i>12:53</i>	<i>13:26</i>	<i>13:59</i>	<i>14:36</i>	<i>15:18</i>
	<i>18:57</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>20:03</i>	<i>20:38</i>	<i>21:15</i>	<i>21:56</i>
<i>MON 22</i>	<i>TUE 23</i>	<i>WED 24</i>	<i>THU 25</i>	<i>FRI 26</i>	<i>SAT 27</i>	<i>SUN 28</i>
<i>4:25</i>	<i>5:27</i>	<i>6:35</i>	<i>0:29</i>	<i>1:27</i>	<i>2:24</i>	<i>3:19</i>
<i>10:12</i>	<i>11:33</i>	<i>13:00</i>	<i>7:40</i>	<i>8:41</i>	<i>9:37</i>	<i>10:30</i>
<i>16:09</i>	<i>17:17</i>	<i>18:41</i>	<i>14:20</i>	<i>15:27</i>	<i>16:24</i>	<i>17:15</i>
<i>22:42</i>	<i>23:33</i>		<i>20:06</i>	<i>21:17</i>	<i>22:17</i>	<i>23:11</i>
May			June			
<i>MON 29</i>	<i>TUE 30</i>	<i>WED 31</i>	<i>THU 1</i>	<i>FRI 2</i>	<i>SAT 3</i>	<i>SUN 4</i>
<i>4:13</i>	<i>0:01</i>	<i>0:51</i>	<i>1:41</i>	<i>2:31</i>	<i>3:23</i>	<i>4:17</i>
<i>11:22</i>	<i>5:08</i>	<i>6:03</i>	<i>6:59</i>	<i>7:58</i>	<i>9:00</i>	<i>10:09</i>
<i>18:02</i>	<i>12:11</i>	<i>12:58</i>	<i>13:43</i>	<i>14:27</i>	<i>15:10</i>	<i>15:58</i>
	<i>18:48</i>	<i>19:31</i>	<i>20:14</i>	<i>20:55</i>	<i>21:37</i>	<i>22:21</i>

Tidal Streams at the Heads — June 2017

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.

Times have been adjusted for Daylight Savings

May			June			
MON 29	TUE 30	WED 31	THU 1	FRI 2	SAT 3	SUN 4
4:13	0:01	0:51	1:41	2:31	3:23	4:17
11:22	5:08	6:03	6:59	7:58	9:00	10:09
18:02	12:11	12:58	13:43	14:27	15:10	15:58
	18:48	19:31	20:14	20:55	21:37	22:21
MON 5	TUE 6	WED 7	THU 8	FRI 9	SAT 10	SUN 11
5:14	6:13	7:09	0:46	1:35	2:21	3:04
11:23	12:39	13:51	8:00	8:46	9:28	10:07
16:54	18:05	19:25	14:52	15:42	16:23	16:59
23:07	23:56		20:36	21:32	22:18	22:58
MON 12	TUE 13	WED 14	THU 15	FRI 16	SAT 17	SUN 18
3:46	4:26	0:09	0:44	1:18	1:54	2:32
10:44	11:20	5:05	5:45	6:26	7:10	7:59
17:32	18:04	11:54	12:28	13:01	13:36	14:13
23:34		18:36	19:07	19:38	20:09	20:42
MON 19	TUE 20	WED 21	THU 22	FRI 23	SAT 24	SUN 25
3:15	4:04	5:00	6:03	7:09	0:43	1:48
8:56	10:03	11:20	12:43	14:03	8:13	9:14
14:54	15:41	16:42	17:59	19:27	15:11	16:08
21:17	21:57	22:45	23:41		20:48	21:55
June					July	
MON 26	TUE 27	WED 28	THU 29	FRI 30	SAT 1	SUN 2
2:53	3:55	4:56	0:38	1:28	2:16	3:04
10:11	11:04	11:54	5:55	6:52	7:50	8:50
16:59	17:45	18:28	12:41	13:24	14:05	14:45
22:53	23:47		19:09	19:48	20:25	21:02

Emergency Contact Information

Anywhere on water in Victoria Ch 16 or 88 should be your first choice using Mayday or Pan Pan

VHF Channel 16
27 MHz AM Channel 88

Note: VSAG uses VHF CH 73 and 27 MHz CH 96 for routine communications. Check you are using the correct emergency channel.

VSAG Nautilus will be tuned to Ch 73 (Green button for routine comms) and Ch 16 (Red Button for distress comms)

Speak slowly and clearly

<p>Mayday Call – for grave & imminent danger requiring immediate assistance</p>	<p>Urgency Call – when the danger is not grave or imminent</p>
<p>Distress Call:</p> <p>Mayday, Mayday, Mayday</p> <p>This is: <u>“Boat call sign x3”</u> (Boat owners insert your call sign)</p>	<p>Urgency Call:</p> <p>Pan Pan, Pan Pan, Pan Pan</p> <p>All Ships, All Ships, All Ships (or the emergency service you want to contact)</p> <p>This is: <u>“Boat call sign x3”</u> (Boat owners insert your call sign)</p>
<p>Distress message after contact made:</p> <p>Mayday</p> <p>“2 DIVE 4”</p> <p>Give position-(see GPS for co-ordinates), nature of the problem, number on board plus any other relevant information</p> <p>Over</p> <p>Follow advice given by the emergency agency – DO NOT “Sign off” until told so by agency.</p>	<p>Urgency message after contact made:</p> <p>Pan Pan</p> <p>“2 DIVE 4”</p> <p>Give position-(see GPS for co-ordinates), nature of the problem, number on board plus any other relevant information</p> <p>Over</p> <p>Follow advice given by the emergency agency – DO NOT “Sign off” until told so by agency.</p>

All passengers on a boat should be familiar with the use of marine radio(s) in case of emergency.

Emergency Contact Information

Telephone contacts

Police – Ambulance – Fire : 000

Water Police no longer use the 1800 088 200 number

The new 24/7 No is : 03 9399 7500

**DAN International Emergency Hotline: +1-919-684-9111 (from mobile)
0011 1 919684 9111 (from landline)**

State Emergency Service (VIC): 132 500 (new number)

Alfred Hospital Hyperbaric Unit: 03 9076 2269

Alfred Hospital switchboard: 03 9076 2000

Mornington Peninsula Area

Diving Emergency Service: 1800 088 200

Dr. John Roth:

Mornington Medical Group **03 5975 2633**

Rosebud Hospital:

1527 Nepean Hwy, Rosebud **03 5986 0666**

Frankston Hospital:

Hastings Road, Frankston **03 9784 7777**

The Bays Hospital:

Main Street, Mornington **03 5975 2009**

Southern Peninsula Rescue: (Sorrento) 0417 038 944

Mornington Bay Rescue Service: 0419 233 999

***Coast Guard (Queenscliff) 03 5258 2222**

***Coast Guard (Hastings) 03 5979 3322**

***Coast Guard (Safety Beach) 03 5981 4443**

***Coast Guard is not always manned & operates mainly during daylight hrs**

Diving Doctors:

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**

Dr John Roth (Mornington) **03 5975 2633**



Photo by Monique Hammersley—Komodo
November 2017 Photo Competition Winner