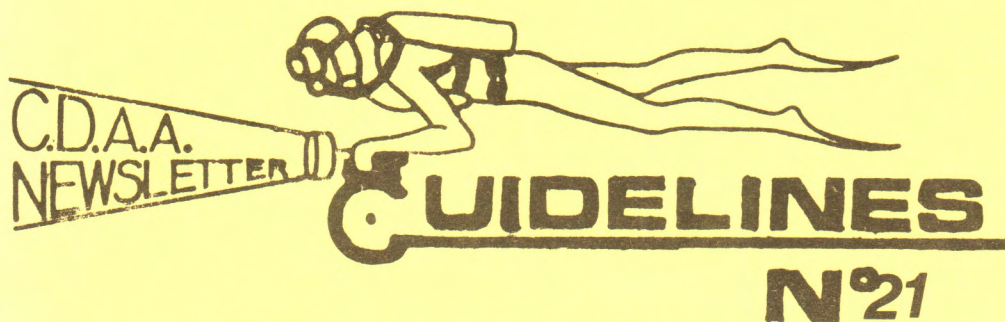


JUNE / JULY

1985



**CAVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA**

(Incorporated in South Australia)

C.D.A.A.

P.O. Box 2161 T

G.P.O. Melbourne. 3001

C.D.A.A.

P.O. Box 290

North Adelaide 5006

DIVERS DIARY



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

C.W.A. Hall
Laurence Street,
Mt Gambier.

Saturday 14th September 1985, 8pm.

VICTORIAN STATE MEETING

Wednesday 14th August 1985, 8pm.
Room 2, Y.W.C.A. Headquarters,
489 Elizabeth Street,
Melbourne.

Guest speaker: Professor Neil Hallam,
Monash University.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STATE MEETING

Mead Hall
Flinders Street,
Baptist Church,
Adelaide, (opp. Flinders Street
Y.M.C.A.)

19th August 1985 7.30 pm.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS.

Due on 30th June 1985.

Bi-annual membership \$20.00

Annual membership \$10.00

See page 9 for details.

GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER OF THE CAVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

No. 21 June / July 1985

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EDITORIAL

Since the inception of decompression tables in the early days of diving history, most divers have taken their credibility as fact.

However, as diving technology has advanced, so too has diving medicine. Research into D.C.S. has broken new ground over the past 18 months with the outcome being a probable revision of present decompression and diving procedures.

We owe it to ourselves, and our buddies, and the diving community as a whole, not to become another statistic in diving history.

Decompression and the problems associated with it have always been foremost in diver training, cave diving being no exception. So follow the rules, and stay out of the history books.

Dennis Thamm.

DIVER'S ROLE

"The cave environment with its associated logistic problems is about the worst place in the world to be bent. If you are conservative about decompression in open water, be ultra conservative in caves. If you are not conservative in open water diving, consider sticking to dry caving."

excerpt from N.S.S. Cave Diving Manual.



1. "TO BEND OR NOT TO BEND"

As mentioned in edition 20 of Guidelines, a report on the above mentioned seminar held in Adelaide on November 10th 1984 would be published in this edition for those members unable to be present. The afternoon saw 200 people in attendance, including professional divers and medical practitioners.

Dr. Tony Swain from the Adelaide Diving Medical Centre, chaired the afternoon, while those present were informed of the latest findings on Decompression Sickness and Lung Barotrauma by Des Gorman, Ran diving medicine; Marine Bites and Stings Dr. Carl Edmonds; and Barotraumas of the ears and sinuses by Dr. Dean Beaumont.

Although not all the presentations were relevant to cave diving, two particularly interesting points were raised:

1. Doubt now exists about the value of Asprin as a treatment / first aid measure for DSC (decompression sickness) or gas Barotrauma. It has been found that there is no solid proof that it actually works.
2. That future first aid treatment for either of the above ailments may see the use of an O₂/CO₂ mixture instead of 100% of O₂. It has been found that small amounts of CO₂ enhance the body's ability to pass gas bubbles through the venous system!

Other points of interest were the general feeling that deep diving is dangerous, and that the current tables may not be as accurate as they claim. New evidence has shown that gas theory laws break down on the commencement of a repetitive dive, and the risk of "The bends" is increased.

It was also noted that the joke of your blood "Fizzing" after a deep dive is not far from the truth. Recent Ultra Sonic and Audio tests have revealed just that - "Fizzing".

The highlight of the afternoon was the announcement by the Health Minister Dr. Corwall that the South Australian State Government would purchase, refit and pay for the running of a (currently) privately owned Hyerbaric Chamber at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This is much needed and long awaited acquisition.

So many thanks to all those concerned. Papers given at the seminar will be published and I'm sure all those who attended gained from the afternoon's proceedings.

Dennis Thamm.

2. NATIONAL TESTING OFFICER'S REPORT:

March 1985 Category 3 Test.

Despite dismal weather all nine candidates (5 S.A. and 4 Vic.) put in sterling performances to attain category three qualification. It was pleasing to see a number of people who had not succeeded at previous category 3 tests returning with much improved performances. The people repeating the test were generally the better candidates, which serves to emphasise that training and experience are the only way to improve cave diving skills.

As a general comment line following with a blacked out mask through the cathedral in Piccaninnie Ponds was one of the weaker areas. Candidates tended to follow the line in an upright position, much as a novice diver attempts to walk along the bottom. The easiest method of following a line is with the body parallel to the line and relatively close to it. This presents the least surface area of diver possible to any objects such as torches hanging from the divers' body on tethers as these will invariably get tangled with the line. The diver should also be neutrally buoyant so as not to pull on the guideline at all and to make manoeuvring through squeezes and around obstacles easier. If ever in the position of having to follow a guideline out of a cave in zero visibility after a torch failure or loss of a mask, line following technique may well become the most important cave diving skill one possesses.

Following the testing, several candidates enquired which category 3 holes they should attempt first. While in theory category 3 holes should demand the same level of expertise in practice some require more experience than others. My advice would be that Allendale East, Fossil Cave and Pines are good dives for newly qualified category 3 cave with some-one who has dived it before, although as one candidate pointed out, This would lessen the sense of adventure quite markedly. Most of the category 3 caves, can be dived safely and enjoyably by new category 3 divers without a more experienced diver to lead them. However some caves are better "discovered" with assistance.

Reg Watson requires this for Bullocks, and Englebrecht would also fall into this category. In the final analysis the responsibility lies with the diver. If at any stage during any dive the situation looks like developing into something beyond the proven capabilities of all divers involved,

NTO'S REPORT continued:

then the dive should not be continued.

Finally, thanks to the seven examiners who gave up time to assist in the testing. The next test will be in conjunction with the AGM on Saturday September 14th.

Peter Rogers NTO.

3.

FASHION UPDATE:

More stocks of Windcheaters and t-shirts will be available from mid July. Windcheaters are available in grey and dark blue as well as the red, gold and pale blue which were available previously. Prices are \$15.50 for Windcheaters and \$7.50 for T-shirts by mail order, or \$14.00 and \$6.00 respectively if purchased at the coming meetings.



"Of course they're chewy, your supposed to take the peel off!"

4.

5.

4. MEETING WITH MINISTERS FOR ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AND RECREATION
AND SPORT

Discussion re Role of C.D.A.A., Piccaninnie Ponds Diving and
Proposed Fees:

As a result of questions received from several members concerning the comments made regarding the proposed Pic's permits in the last Guidelines Editorial and later in the magazine, it is hoped that the following will alleviate some members' fears or at least clarify the current situation.

The meeting involved a discussion between Peter Horne as Immediate Past President of the C.D.A.A., Steve Clark (C.D.A.A. National Secretary) Dr. Don Hopgood (Minister for Environment and Planning) and Mr. Jack Slater (Minister for Recreation and Sport), at Parliament House on 6th December 1984.

The discussion was arranged as a result of the sensational headlines which conveyed a somewhat distorted impression about the State Coroner's findings into the 7th April double fatality at Piccaninnie Ponds. Several newspapers of considerable public importance, notably the Adelaide "News" and the Mount Gambier "Border Watch", presented these findings with misleading headlines such as "Look at law on sinkholes says Coroner" and "Diving law changes urged", respectively, clearly implying that Government legislation was being considered to control cave diving.

As a result of this, with regards to the great power of public opinion, however ill-informed that may be, it was felt that this meeting should be arranged so that we could present the CDAA's role, in person, to the two Ministers who are responsible for the Departments of concern to us - namely, National Parks and Wildlife Service (Piccaninnie Ponds) and the Department of Recreation and Sport (which helped the CDAA establish itself after the 1973 S.A. Government Committee of Enquiry into the safety aspects of cave diving). This would serve to help the CDAA and the Ministers plan for suitable public responses to possible future accidents, issues which are clumsy to handle in correspondence.

During our 45 minute discussion, we presented what we believe were the key facts and matters of concern to the CDAA and the Government, and we feel the meeting has resulted in excellent liaison and support for the CDAA by both Ministers, who clearly understand the problems associated with controlling cave diving in the Lower South East.

Several particular aspects were discussed, and these are presented below.

1. C.D.A.A.'s Origin and Role:

The CDAA's copy of the Report on the S.A. Government Committee of Enquiry into Safety Aspects of Cave and Sinkhole Diving was presented to the Ministers, explaining that the Committee recommended against legislation and that the Committee members saw the CDAA as the key to successful cave diving controls. Both Ministers were unaware of the fact that the Government had already conducted such an investigation in the past, and after some discussion we agreed that little has changed in the decade since 1973 with respect to the problems of control - hence, the findings of that committee are as valid today as they were then. With a history of 11 deaths before regulations in the years 1969 - 1974 inclusive, the 1984 accident (which involved an illegal diver and excessive depth) was the first in 10 years. The fact that the divers broke several key safety rules showed that the CDAA's role has not been undermined and is still as effective as ever.

2. Problems with Controls:

The situation at Piccaninnie was raised as a point of concern, as the last 2 accidents involved people who were diving illegally without an N.P.W.S. permit or CDAA qualifications. The problems of inadequate N.P.W.S. staffing and fund shortages

were discussed. The possibility of heavy Statutory fines (e.g. \$500 for being caught diving without a permit) was also raised as perhaps the key deterrent to illegal diving.

3. Piccaninnie Ponds Permit Fees:

We also mentioned our concern about the possible \$10 - \$20 p.a. charge for Piccaninnie Ponds permits which is currently under consideration because we feel that such an exorbitant fee would result in an even greater problem of illegal diving at Pics. It was pointed out that many of the divers who visited Pics infrequently (e.g. perhaps twice a year) would object to paying in effect, \$5 - \$10 per dive, and many would rather risk being caught by the Ranger. The odds of being caught are low due to Pics' relatively isolated locality. With qualified cave divers deciding not to bother maintaining CDAA membership because of the cost of Pics permits, it would only be a matter of time until the quality of diver in the Ponds (illegally) deteriorated to what the situation used to be like 10 years ago - that is, many uncertified AND inexperienced divers. Heavier policing of Pics under these conditions would encourage these divers to explore elsewhere, in perhaps far more dangerous caves, thus compounding the problem our Association is concerned with - the negative impact an accident causes in the eyes of the public.

PICCANINNIE PONDS:

1. Have you undertaken any Scuba Dives in Piccaninnie Ponds during 1984 / 1985?

Yes / No (strike out whichever is not applicable).

2. If the answer is Yes, please complete the following:-

NUMBER OF DIVES UNDERTAKEN PER MONTH SINCE JUNE 1984

| | | | | | | |
|-------|---------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1984: | <u>JULY</u> | <u>AUGUST</u> | <u>SEPTEMBER</u> | <u>OCTOBER</u> | <u>NOVEMBER</u> | <u>DECEMBER</u> |
| | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1985: | <u>JANUARY</u> | <u>FEBRUARY</u> | <u>MARCH</u> | <u>APRIL</u> | <u>MAY</u> | <u>JUNE</u> |
| | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |

OTHER SINK HOLE DIVING EXPERIENCE:

Please list total number of dives Since June 1984 to present:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| EWENS PONDS: <u> </u> | GOULDEN'S: <u> </u> | THE SISTERS: <u> </u> |
| BABY BLUE: <u> </u> | HORSE & CART: <u> </u> | TEA TREE: <u> </u> |
| TEN-EIGHTY: <u> </u> | BLACK HOLE: <u> </u> | ONE TREE: <u> </u> |
| ELA ELAP: <u> </u> | SWIMTHROUGH: <u> </u> | HELLS HOLE: <u> </u> |
| THE PINES: <u> </u> | FOSSIL CAVE: <u> </u> | ALLENDAL: <u> </u> |
| BULLOCKS: <u> </u> | ENGLEBRECHTS: <u> </u> | MUD HOLE (L97): <u> </u> |
| MAXS HOLE: <u> </u> | | |

Your assistance in providing these statistics is very much appreciated as it will provide a better understanding of the popularity of our activity - especially useful in recent times when the pressure of the public re. closure of holes has once again been aroused through the recent unfortunate accidents.

On this point, Dr. Hopgood stated that he was unaware of any proposals to introduce any fees and that it was general policy only to introduce fees when there was some form of service provided by the Government, e.g. the maintenance of campsite and toilet/shower facilities in designated camping areas. He further stated that it was normal policy for any fees to be reviewed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service on an annual basis and any changes to the fees structure must receive his ratification. If he did receive a proposal to introduce a fee for diving permits he agreed to give the Association the opportunity to discuss the proposal and its implications before a final decision was made.

4. Summary:

The Ministers both clearly understand our problems and concerns, and were appreciative of the opportunity to discuss the subject for the possible near future.

It was felt that liaison is excellent and hope that responsible contact between the CDAA and the Ministers is maintained.

5. FLYING AFTER DIVING (DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION ADVICE: DECEMBER 1984).

Exposure to reduced atmospheric pressure, such as flying, after dives using compressed gas will increase the risk of decompression sickness (DCS).

After a recent incident in Queensland, the Department issued the following advice to sports and professional divers.

Flight up to a cabin altitude of 2500m (8000ft) should be delayed according to the type of preceeding diving activity:

- (a) Diving which does not require decompression stops may be followed by flying after a rest at sea level of four hours.
- (b) Diving which requires decompression stops and is less than four hours duration may be followed by flying after a sea level rest of twelve hours.
- (c) Diving which requires decompression stops and is more than four hours duration may be followed by flying after a sea level rest of forty eight hours.

This advice is the recommendation of the UK Diving Medicine Advisory Committee and is the recommended practice in the U.S.A.

If you were unfinancial as of 30th June (CHECK YOUR CARD NOW)
send:

- 1) Your Card
- 2) \$10 annual subscription (or \$20 Bi-annual subs).
- 3) This Form.

to the respective C.D.A.A. address: S.A., W.A. & N.T. members:-
P.O. Box 290, NORTH ADELAIDE S.A. 5006.
VIC., QLD., N.S.W., A.C.T. and TAS.
members:-
G.P.O. Box 2161T, MELBOURNE VIC. 3001

PLEASE PRINT:

Use this form to notify us of CHANGES/ERRORS on your current card.
Do not fill in details which have NOT changed.

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER: PRESENT CATEGORY HELD:
SURNAME: GIVEN NAMES:
POSTAL ADDRESS:
..... POSTCODE:
TELEPHONE NUMBERS: (Home) (Work)
OCCUPATION:
DATE OF BIRTH: ALLERGIES:
DOCTOR: (Name)
(Address): POSTCODE:
NEXT OF KIN: (Name)
(Address): POSTCODE:
HEIGHT (Metres): WEIGHT (Kg): BUILD:
HAIR COLOUR: EYE COLOUR:
VISIBLE FEATURES:
QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

An updated photograph can also be placed on your card if enclosed.

Any interested person who would like to receive C.D.A.A. literature
(such as Guidelines, Occasional Papers ect.) but who does not at this
time wish to become a member can do so by forwarding \$5.00 per year
to the C.D.A.A.

SURNAME: GIVEN NAMES:
ADDRESS: POSTCODE:

June 1985.

ARE YOU FINANCIAL?

As the 30th June has passed, all members are advised to check their Cave Diver Certificates to ensure that they are financial with the Association. If your card has a sticker with 1985 printed on it, your membership expired on 30th June, and your Piccaninnie Ponds permit will also have expired. Bi-annual membership is still available and costs \$20.00, or you can pay yearly for \$10.00. Members from S.A., W.A. and N.T. should send their subscriptions to P.O. Box 290 North Adelaide 5006, while members from other States should send their subs to P.O. Box 2161T Melbourne 3001. Perhaps more significant are those members who have stickers with 1984 on their cards. That means your membership expired on June 30th last year. Unless you send \$30.00 for Bi-annual membership, or \$20.00 for annual membership by return mail, you will lose your membership with the Association. This means that complete retesting will be required should you wish to rejoin the C.D.A.A. So get those cheques posted!

ALL CATEGORY 2 & 3 MEMBERS:

PICCANINNIE PONDS PERMITS CANNOT BE ISSUED UNLESS MEMBERS STATE THEIR DIVING EXPERIENCE IN THE PONDS IN THE LAST YEAR AS IS REQUIRED BY THE SOUTH EAST REGION OF THE NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.

Please complete the card update section as well and forward this centre page to your respective State Records Officer, who will compile a list of information for National Parks requirements.

IMPORTANT: Please fill in the following questionnaire supplying all relevant information. NOTE THAT PICCANINNIE PONDS PERMITS WILL NOT BE ISSUED by National Parks and Wildlife Service unless the information is supplied.

Return this form to the C.D.A.A. with your subscription fees.

A NARROW ESCAPE (Anon).

This is a story of how easy it is to end up in a very worried state during a routine dive.

One bright Friday morning, two friends and I went for a dive in Piccaninnie Ponds - Ralph was a Cat 3 diver, Sophie a Cat 2 diver, and I was also a Cat 2 diver (the names have been changed to protect the innocent). We had planned to go down the dog - leg for a while, and then up into the cathedral for the remainder of the dive. Ralph and I had also planned to swim through the side exit from the cathedral to the surface and return to the cathedral. The purpose of this was to experience some real silting and to practice some reel - and - line work. I had dived in Piccaninnie Ponds about a dozen times before, but I had never penetrated the side exit.

The dive progressed as planned, down the dog - leg to 30m for 5 minutes and then up into the cathedral. Ralph tied off the line inside the cathedral and started off into the narrow, silty side exit, I followed tethered to the line. Sophie remained in the cathedral because she and Ralph had penetrated the side passage and returned (uneventfully) on a previous occasion. As the purpose was to experience bad silting, I did not take particular care with my finning, and I soon became enveloped in thick, black silt. Since it was of no further use to me, I turned off my torch and tucked it into my jacket.

As I progressed (completely silted out) through the passage, I heard a deep rumbling sound, and for a fleeting moment I had visions of the passage collapsing around me. Then I realized that what I was hearing was Ralph's tank scraping the roof. Soon after, my tank contacted the roof and our progress slowed. At this stage I became a little concerned because my face was fairly close to the thick silty mud, and the passage was turning out to be a lot tighter than I had expected! With faith and a little shuffling, however, I eventually saw the green light of day filtering through, and popped up to the surface.

NARROW ESCAPE (continued),

Ralph was on the surface with his reel, and I was still tethered to the line, so I told him I would return on the line, and asked him not to follow too closely as I would probably be very slow. I descended and started following the line back into the cathedral. I felt my fins brush against Ralph before I carefully wormed my way along between the roof and the floor. It seemed even tighter than on entry, but as I knew that the line led back to the wide open interior of the cathedral, I pressed on and eventually emerged from the silt and saw Sophie hovering near to the line.

I shook the silt from my octopus, jacket and combo gauge, and it floated away in small black clouds. Continuing on into the cathedral, I unclipped from the line and turned around expecting to see Ralph close behind me. He didn't appear immediately, so I waited, and waited, and waited! As I was a little concerned, I held onto the line and felt some small movements and heard the now familiar rumbling sound of tank-on-roof. This reassured me, and I waited, expecting to see Ralph emerging at any moment.

After a while, I became very concerned and re-tethered myself to the line and started inching forward towards the silty passage. I could no longer feel any movement on the line, and was very worried. Even knowing that Ralph was Cat 3, had plenty of air, and had a reliable reel to lead him to safety, I feared the worst. I turned around and signalled to Sophie to go get some help. We knew that outside, on the surface, there were two Cat 3 instructors, so Sophie shot off, and I continued my reluctant inching into the passage, still hoping to see Ralph appear.

I looked back, hoping for the sight of a Cat 3 instructor racing to the rescue, but instead I saw Sophie returning. I looked behind her, desperately hoping to see someone following her, but there was no one. She gave me an OK signal, but in the gloom I didn't catch it, and then, to my great surprise, she began to untie the tied-off line! I swam over and tried to prevent her, as I couldn't see how untying the line would help the situation. She again signalled, and this time I got the message - Ralph was on the surface and was going to reel the line through the passage, from the surface. I was so relieved!

A NARROW ESCAPE (continued),

Sophie and I both swam out of the cathedral to the surface, and sure enough, there was Ralph reeling in his line. Sophie had found him on the surface just as she was about to summon help. We asked what had happened, and Ralph replied that he had been following the line, reeling in, but the line has taken him into a tighter and tighter space. Eventually, after becoming wedged and experiencing a brief moment of extreme anxiety, he freed himself, turned around and after travelling a short distance saw the dim glow of daylight and re-surfaced. We had a calming down, slow return to the jetty and a reflective drive home.

Two days later we conducted a post-mortem and revisited Piccaninnie Ponds to have a good look at the silty side passage from the safety of the cathedral. We came to the conclusion that we had tied off too close to the cathedral entrance, and that as a result, the line had pulled tight to one side of the passage where the roof slopes down to meet the floor. This was why we found the passage so tight and became wedged.

The lessons learned from this narrow escape are that under no circumstances should the side passage be attempted without the use of a guideline, and the tie off point should be carefully selected to ensure that the line runs down the centre of the passage and will not be pulled to one side. Hopefully, the next time we penetrate the side passage it will be a more enjoyable experience.

FRESH WATER DIVING IN AUSTRALIA:

If you thought Mt Gambier was the only fresh water diving location in Australia then you were wrong! A very interesting report from Tasmania and another from Queensland outline the "State of the Art" in those two locations.

TASMANIAN NEWS:

Cave diving activity in Tasmania has been rather limited over the winter months due to high water levels. Some exciting dives were undertaken earlier in 1984 and the coming dry (hopefully!) months should see some results.

In the June / Florentine area a major resurgence cave was dived for the first time. Lawrence Creek resurgence is a large spring carrying water from a stream sink several

FRESH WATER DIVING (continued):

kilometres distance. A submerged passage was explored through several constricted sections to a depth of 20 metres. The water proved relatively clear but cold and with a strong outward current. The potential of breaking into dry cave passage is poor and long dives are likely. The limit of exploration in Junee Cave, the other important resurgence in the region, has reached a depth of 30 metres in the second sump. With the aid of recently acquired dry suits some serious pushes will be made in the future.

Another notable achievement was the connection of Pendant Pot and Growling Swallet. Pendant Pot is a vertical cave which was explored to a depth of 200 metres. A survey revealed that a sump at its deepest point was very close to another sump in Growling Swallet, an extensive cave nearby. The connection was confirmed when a diver entered the sump from the Growling side and surfaced in Pendant Pot. This allowed a through-trip involving a vertical descent of Pendant Pot, a sump dive, followed by a strenuous uphill grovel to emerge from the main Growling Swallet entrance. It must rate as one of the most varied and challenging through-trips in the State and was first completed solo.

At Mole Creek a through-trip and exchange dive was undertaken in Kubla Khan Cave. Two divers entered the resurgence and laid the line through three sumps of 496, 117 and 38 metres in length. A second team descended the main dry entrance and met the other divers where they surfaced inside Kubla Khan. Diving gear was exchanged and the two continued on their respective exit routes. Despite some minor complications the traverse was successfully completed by both parties.

Rolan Ederhard.

THE QUEENSLAND STORY:

Alan Brundy, a Queenslander of some 3 years sent some news to us from Northern Queensland. Alan, in conjunction with Bob King, a long term resident of Northern Queensland, will be working on a comprehensive article for Guidelines for the future. However, here is some information for the present.

1. ATHERTON TABLELANDS:

There are three old volcano craters in this area, two are dived regularly and the third, Lake Hyppipamee was dived in the early 1960's. One of the divers in the group was Bob King. The following is a brief description of each lake.

FRESH WATER DIVING (continued):

(a) LAKE EACHAM:

Easy access, definite thermoclines, visibility usually 5 - 6 metres, very silty, dead trees underwater, depth 70 metres plus.

(b) LAKE BARRINE:

Similar to Lake Eacham, but much bigger, depth 70 metres plus.

(c) LAKE HYPPIPAMEE

Very difficult access (vertical sides 30 metres high) visibility - ?, surface usually covered with duckweed, depth 70 metres plus.

2. WEST OF RAVENSHOE:

Limestone cave full of water. No known map. To be dived and mapped in the near future.

3. CHILLAGOE:

I don't have much reliable information about this area. I have heard that some diving has been attempted in the area although nothing has been confirmed or reports produced that I know of.

4. CAMOOWEAL:

Ian Lewis has dived this area. If anyone is planning a trip to this area, I would be interested in joining them.

5. BURDEKIN RIVER:

There are reports of "bottomless" holes in limestone on a property in the Burdekin district. We have access to investigate the reports.

As you can see there is good potential for freshwater diving in the area although there are sometimes large distances to cover.

A. J. Grundy.

8. LETTER SUBMITTED TO CDAA BY: AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Dear Sir,

As outlined in the recent Draft Management Plan of Ewen's Ponds; "Divers effect the aquatic vegetation by silting and physical damage". We would like to suggest that this comment could apply to other sink holes in the South East, re:- their associated diver use.

The plant systems found in the sinkholes have fragile root systems, imbedded in fine silt substrate and thus are easily damaged by a flipper kick. As plants become covered with silt their ability to photosynthesise is reduced and this is complicated by a decrease in water clarity, due to diver activity.

Control of divers was considered necessary in the majority of submission to the Ewen's Ponds Plan. As CDAA is so involved in the testing of fresh water cave diving in the South East we ask you to inform your divers adequately of the natural features of our sinkholes and urge you to test diving techniques which reduce damage to the vegetation.

The sinkholes in the South East are unique to the world and we ask your group to ensure that divers' impact is reduced to a minimum.

Yours Sincerely,
Pat Tedder,
Secretary Mt. Gambier Branch.

(Below are printed excerpts from a booklet produced by the Department of Lands in association with the re-opening of Ewen's Ponds to Divers in December 1984).

GUIDELINES FOR SCUBA AND SNORKEL DIVING IN EWENS PONDS

Guidelines for SCUBA diving and SNORKELING in EWENS PONDS have been developed to protect the ponds from damage, reduce the impact of divers on the aquatic environment and maintain the amazing water clarity.

1. SCUBA DIVERS:

SCUBA divers in EWENS PONDS must wear a bouyancy compensator at all times. They are essential for bouyancy control to prevent crash landings on the floor of the ponds and to keep divers off the bottom when finning around.

2. DIVING SUITS AND WEIGHT BELTS:

- (a) Diving in fresh water requires approximately half the weight required for diving in the sea.

- (b) To dive in EWENS PONDS you are required to wear a warm, well insulated diving suit (wet or dry)

3. DIVING BEHAVIOUR:

- (a) Before entering the Ponds please ensure that all equipment is properly adjusted and comfortably fitted.
- (b) Entering and exiting the water should only occur at the landings in Ponds one and three or Eight Mile Creek downstream of Pond three.
- (c) Entering the Ponds as carefully as possible to avoid disturbing the bottom or damaging plants. Once in the water move quickly and carefully to open water (more than 5 metres deep and 5 metres from the nearest edge). Make all adjustments and organise your buddy and group before proceeding.
- (d) It is best to avoid touching or disturbing anything. Please explore from a respectable distance. Plants should not be touched or disturbed by your wash because the surface of each large plant supports its own community of delicate algae and small plants and animals. Disturbing and catching larger animal life will only make them timid and harder to observe next time. Aimless exploring amongst the reeds and in shallow areas will achieve little but a trail of destruction.
- (e) Try to swim at a height above the bottom that does not disturb silt or vegetation. Use a finning technique developed by cave divers called "shuffle kicking" - swim with one foot above the other, the top one finning, the bottom staying motionless to break the surge. SCUBA divers should use their bouyancy vests to control ascent and descent particularly when close to the bottom.
- (f) Breath hold divers should avoid disturbing the bottom; dive well within your capacity so that rushed, violent movements are not required to return you to the surface and air.
- (g) The plants and bottom in the channels are equally as delicate as those in the ponds even though the current is quite swift. Before entering the channels or races make sure you are adjusted and prepared to move through to the next pond. Swim with the current, do not stand up or hold on to vegetation, and pick the clearest channel to swim through. If you want to have a slow look at everything, don't swim at all, drift with the current.

(h) Around the landing in the third pond there is usually a lot of floating weed and very loose silt. To exit cleanly approach the landing one at a time, the remainder of the group floating in open water as each person leaves.

(j) Whenever possible look back over your path, and if there are large clouds of silt or holes in the vegetation, adjust your diving behaviour to make the least impact.

4. PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT:

(a) Compressors and hookahs are not allowed in EWENS PONDS.

(b) Testing diving equipment in EWENS PONDS is not allowed.

5. DYES AND OTHER SUBSTANCES are not to be released in the ponds whether for photography or any other purpose.

6. CAVE DIVING: Divers are not to explore or dive in caves, cracks or crevices in EWENS PONDS. EWENS PONDS has been left uncategorised by the Cave Divers Association of Australia because it is relatively safe compared with other sinkholes in the South East. To maintain safety, any aspect of cave diving is strictly prohibited.

7. GROUPS: Groups larger than 6 divers or snorkellers should book dives with the Department of Lands.

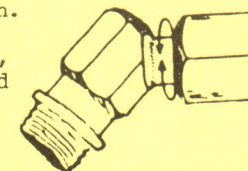
8. DIVER TRAINING AND TESTING: Diver training and testing is not permitted in EWENS PONDS.

FOR SALE

(This section is available free of charge to CDAA members who have personal cave diving equipment they wish to sell (reels, torches, tank manifolds and the like). Please state prices and contact numbers).

1. Elbow swivel joints can be purchased from the Association.

They are good quality chromed, brass type and can be attached to any brand of second stage regulator.



Send \$19.00 ea. to : CDAA
P.O. Box 290
NTH ADELAIDE
5006

The item will be sent by mail.

SCUBA DIVING ACCIDENTS

can include:

- decompression sickness
- pulmonary barotrauma

FIRST AID FOR BOTH OF THESE:

1. OXYGEN
2. FLUIDS
3. ASPIRIN
4. OBTAIN EXPERT ADVICE

CONSCIOUS PATIENT

- :100% O₂ mask. High flow
- :Fluids - salted and sweetened 1 litre/hour
- :Two tablets of aspirin

UNCONSCIOUS PATIENT

- :Intubate O₂ 100% High flow
- :LV. fluids (saline or Hartmann's Solution) 1 litre/hour

LOCAL CONTACTS

MOUNT GAMBIER (087) 242211
HOSPITAL A.H. (087) 242213

ROYAL ADELAIDE (08) 223 2855
HOSPITAL

Ask for intensive care unit.

Duty Diving Medical Officer
R.A.N. School of Underwater Medicine
02-960 0444 (0800-1600 hrs)
02-960 0231 (after hours)
Please state:

- The diving medical emergency
- Ask for the Duty Diving M.O. to be contacted
- Give your telephone number