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C.D.A.A. Newsletter

No. 160 - JUNE 2022



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Front Cover:

Patrick Widmann
with a crocodile,
Cenote Carwash,
Mexico.

Photo by
Alvaro Herrero.

CAVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

ABN 65 062 259 956

P.O. BOX 544, Mt Gambier, SA 5291

GUIDELINES is a newsletter of the Cave Divers Association of Australia. All articles for the following issue are to be sent to the Publications Director, Email: publications@cavedivers.com.au

All articles and submissions shall automatically constitute an expressed warranty by the contributor that the material is original. We assume no responsibility for unsolicited material. Articles may be reprinted in part or in full in other magazines as determined by the CDAA and authors provide full permission. Private advertising for caving and diving equipment may be advertised free at the discretion of the Editor. Opinions expressed in GUIDELINES are those of the individual authors and are not

CONTACT LIST

Please contact the most relevant person or, if unsure write to:
C.D.A.A. P.O. Box 544 Mt Gambier SA 5291 www.cavedivers.com.au

NATIONAL DIRECTOR - Rick Nash
Email: national@cavedivers.com.au Mobile: 0438 815 643

Science Officer - Ian Lewis Mobile: 0427 284 051
Email: ian.lewis2@sa.gov.au

Media Contact - Rick Nash Mobile: 0413 083 644
Email: national@cavedivers.com.au

Risk Officer - Rick Nash Mobile: 0413 083 644
Email: national@cavedivers.com.au

Search & Rescue Officer - Richard Harris
Email: info@cavedivers.com.au Mobile: 0417 177 830
Phil Croker 0423 393 347

STANDARDS DIRECTOR - Tim Featonby Mobile: 0402 129 253
Email: standards@cavedivers.com.au

Quality Control Officer - Tim Featonby Mobile: 0402 129 253
Email: quality@cavedivers.com.au

BUSINESS DIRECTOR - Benn Walton Mobile: 0412 751 873
Email: business@cavedivers.com.au

CDAA Products - Email: info@cavedivers.com.au

Bookkeeper - Vacant Email: business@cavedivers.com.au

SITE DIRECTOR - Kelynn Ball Mobile: 0428 842 259
Email: site@cavedivers.com.au

Mapping Officer - Tim Payne
Email: tim@divessentials.com Mobile: 0448 147 927

Tank Cave Booking Officer - Damian Bishop
Email: damian.bishop@live.com.au Mobile: 0433 345 743

Kilsbys Booking Officer - Craig Larkin
Email: kilsby@cavedivers.com.au Mobile: 0418 821 191

Lady Nelson Booking Officer - Corrie Harry
Email: corrie@scubacapers.com Mobile: 0400 008 460

Shaft Booking Officer - Gary Barclay
Email: garinda@bigpond.com Mobile: 0407 527 921

Bakers Booking Officer - Kelynn Ball
Email: site@cavedivers.com.au Mobile: 0428 842 259

Little Blue Booking Officer - Email: site@cavedivers.com.au

PUBLICATIONS & RECORDS DIRECTOR - Nathalie Mahler
Email: publications@cavedivers.com.au - Mobile: 0452 002 893

Records Officer - Brendan Moore Mobile 0407183522
Email records@cavedivers.com.au

Guidelines - Graphics & Advertising - David Bryant
Email: seapics.davebryant@gmail.com - Mobile: 0417 125 710

STATE REPRESENTATIVES

ACT: Ryan Post. Mob: 0439 855 067 Email: ryan@ryanpost.com.au
NSW: Matthew Pridham. Mob: 0410 598 859. Email: matt.pridham@yahoo.com.au
N.T.: Jeffrey SWANN. Mob: 0419 561 515 Email: jeff@darwin.ortho.com.au
QLD: Ben SHIELD. Mob: 0405 260 276 Email: benray80@hotmail.com
SA: Damian BISHOP. Mob: 0433 345 743 Email: damian.bishop@live.com.au
WA: Jamie HARDWICK Mob: 0488 552 427
Email: jhardwick@scubaimports.com.au
VIC: Benn Walton Mob: 0412 751 873 Email: bennwalton@hotmail.com

Public Officer - Andrew Seifried Mob: 0404 275 637
Email: info@cavedivers.com.au

CDAA INSURANCE

Web Site PDF: <http://www.cavedivers.com.au/public-documents>
Policy Type: Affinity Combined General & Products Liability Policy - LIU-CAS-AEAL-14-01
Insurer: Affinity Insurance Brokers Level 1, 1265 Nepean Highway, Cheltenham. VIC 3912.
Underwritten by Liberty International Underwriters ABN: 61 086 083 605.
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Pine Tank Lodge



Photo by Liz Rogers

Just 5 minutes drive from the best Cave & Advanced Cave dive sites.

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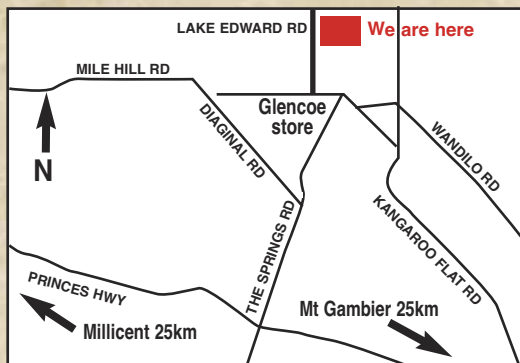
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Email: stay@ptdivelodge.on.net
Email: admin@aquifertec.com.au
Web: aquifertec.com.au



Publications Report

Nathalie Mahler

I just want to thank everyone for their patience as I settle into my new role as Publications Director, and particularly Vic Hudson who's done the absolute most in helping me make sure everything is running as smoothly as it can through the handover period. Thank you also to Brendan who's been fantastic in answering membership questions and queries.

We've all spent some time working through the kinks of using a new system, but hopefully everyone is finding their way around by now. If you run into any trouble, please don't hesitate to contact me on publications@cavedivers.com.au or give me a quick call.

As Sherryn said in the previous Guidelines, we're also still always looking for members to send in pictures and stories both for Guidelines and the bi-monthly DiveLog Magazine that we contribute to. Particularly as I'm looking to expand our social media, image submissions without stories are also more than welcome, whether it be from overseas or from some local cave diving.

Cheers and happy diving,

Nathalie Mahler (#5413)
Publications & Records Director
publications@cavediving.com.au

AGM - Symposium ~ 5 & 6 Nov. 2022.

Nominations to be received no less than 45 days before polling date!

Venue - 'Dress Circle'

(to my understanding still the same complex, just a different room).

With travel restrictions lifted, we're looking to bring divers back together in person this year.

More details will follow and be communicated to members as things are confirmed.

If you are interested in presenting at the symposium, please send expressions of interest along with a brief summary to publications@cavedivers.com.au.

Did you know?

You can opt for an electronic copy of Guidelines rather than a paper copy.

Simply Log in and Edit your Membership Details by these steps...

1. 'My Profile' - 2. View My Membership - 3. View Membership - 4. Edit

Articles for Guidelines Sept. 2022 - Deadline is August 19th

- Send articles and jpeg images by email to seapics.davebryant@gmail.com •

National Committee Update

JUNE 2022

Hi all,
Moving into Winter, with the dreaded virus seemingly under control and movements much less restrictive, it is great to see the pent-up demand for diving resulting in very strong bookings and attendance in both Mt Gambier and Nullarbor regions.

Updating the situation with ACE I am pleased to announce that agreement was able to be achieved which has resulted in the winding up of ACE in an orderly fashion.

Ace members voted to affirm their Directors recommendations, Landowners/Shareholders have been officially informed including DEW, NPWS, Forestries, Grant Council.

Ace has confirmed it has cancelled its insurances an submitted an application for deregistration to ASIC.

Thank you the the ACE Group representatives involved in negotiations.

Thanks also to the various CDAA Commitee members involved in what was at times a highly charged environment. Some friendships may have been stretched during this time, which is testament to the passions around the arguments being presented.

In the end we have been able to work our way through our differences and a multitude of complications to deliver a result that is overwhelmingly to the benefit of the CDAA, giving our organisation clear air to move forward with the many important projects in the pipeline.

Recommencement of Landowner meetings is very high on that list. Landowner Liason meetings give us a unique opportunity to meet with these very important people/organisations, to listen to and respond to their concerns in a personal setting.

Discussions continue with DEW regarding access requirements to Heritage listed Fossil Cave, and we hope to have more news on this in the next issue of Guidelines.

Feedback I get from Landowners involved in all these areas is a sense that they are happy to be dealing with an reinvigorated CDAA and are looking forward to being involved in a collaborative approach.

Thank you to all members for your patience through these trying times and again thank you to all Committee members involved.

Thanks also for the messages from members in support of the path taken.

Cheers Rick Nash #4187
CDAA National Director



On behalf of the National Committee



Benn Walton,
Business Director



Kelvyn Ball,
Site Director



Tim Featonby,
Standards Director



Nathalie Mahler,
Publications and
Records Director

Site Report

Kelvyn Ball

Thank you to everyone who replied to my urgent callout. I passed on to the committee all the names I received and they have chosen who they want. I apologise to a few emails that I did not receive, seems to be a glitch in the system and sometimes I am still not receiving some, so please ring me if you need an urgent reply for follow up.

A Land Liaison Meeting was held in early March which went really well and was great to catch up with landowners together in person. Ela Elap is still going to remain closed at this stage, however we have ongoing contact with the owner.

Kilsby is running a 3 month trial where you can book on anytime/day of your choice. Please make sure you read the new entry requirements as they have changed.

Tank Cave reminder that scooters in Tank Cave are not permitted without preapproval by the Committee. They are only allowed for research and mapping purposes and to be used only on the last dive for the weekend, which doesn't really fit anymore since we are open 7 days a week. Maybe that is something that we will have to be looked at when the time comes.

AO Applications/renewals are being worked on at the moment. They have been hindered by Committee and website issues and we will let you know when they are processed.

Hope to see everyone out and about diving and enjoy your sport for what it does for the soul. Safe diving!

KELVYN BALL
CDAA SITE DIRECTOR

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Business Report

Benn Walton

Hi Members,
It's been a busy four weeks settling into the role of Business Director and catching up on individual tasks, fortunately I've been able to spend some time on the phone with previous Business Directors Mary-Anne McLeod and Michael Liarakos who were able to assist with the handover. I would like to thank them for volunteering their

time in the role and the excellent work they have done for the CDAA.

From here it's commencing the AGM & Symposium planning and working with the National Committee on other CDAA projects that are underway.

Cheers,
Benn Walton, Business Director. #4671



Standards Report

Tim Featonby

Gday fellow stygobionts.

I hope everyone is doing well and getting back into diving.

On the standards front we have had a few new members who have failed to follow access conditions getting into Kilsby's sinkhole and some members used scooters in Tank cave against site rules. I ask that everyone please follow all the rules, and new members READ THEM. The rules are there to keep access open and for safety. Failure to follow procedures could jeopardise access for all members. If there is any doubt or anyone wished to do something outside the procedures, give me a call. We are not here to hinder people and if your request is sensible, we will work out how to make it happen. Otherwise follow the access conditions and rules for everyone's benefit.

We have had progress on the A.C.E. front. A.C.E. has stopped its insurance, notified its members and landowners of its closure and has submitted paperwork to ASIC to wind it up. As per our negotiations one previous member who has completed his penalty has been accepted back into the CDAA. A second will be joining shortly. Once ASIC takes A.C.E. off the record, they would have fulfilled their obligations. The final step will then to allow an appeals tribunal hearing into the severity of penalty for the last member. The appeals tribunal will be assembled and conducted as per the constitution and the CDAA directors will recommend a slightly reduced sentence as per our deal

to shut down A.C.E.

The appeals tribunal will then review all evidence and make an independent and final decision. This will be binding on all parties.

Now that A.C.E. has gone we look forward to re-establishing relationships with landowners and being the unified voice for all cave divers in Australia, without the distractions of the last couple of years.

Our goals have not changed and continue to include:

- Maintaining and improving safe access to cave diving sites, including continuing to attempt to gain access to more sites;
 - Maintaining our world leading cave diver safety training standards;
 - Continue providing an easily accessible and safe route for all people interested in cave diving to access our sport through training and ensuring visitors are suitably qualified and safe to enter our sites;
 - Conservation of caves & research.
 - Continuing to provide advice to landowners and being the voice for all cave divers within Australia.
- We have two instructors currently doing internships as basic cave instructors. We expect that they will do well and be up and running boosting our ranks shortly.

Be safe and follow the rules (they will keep you alive).

Tim Featonby.

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Notice of 2022 Annual General Meeting, Election of National Committee Members and Voting for Member Motions & Constitutional Amendments

This notice is issued pursuant to Clause 12 of the Constitution and serves to advise members that the Annual General Meeting of the Cave Divers Association of Australia Inc. will be held on **Sat. 5th November, 2022 at the Main Corner Complex – City Hall, Mt. Gambier, SA**

The Annual General Meeting will commence at 11:00am and will conclude no later than 12:00pm.

This notice also serves to call for:

- *Nominations for Standards Director, Business Director and Publications Director.
- *Member motions.
- *Amendments to the Constitution.

NOMINATIONS:

The Returning Officer must receive nominations for the National Committee positions no later than the close of business **Friday 26th August, 2022.**

Mail to: Returning Officer, CDAA - PO Box 9286, Mt. Gambier West, SA 5291

Email: waltersd_nbn@iinet.net.au.

MOTIONS & AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:

The Business Director must receive member motions and proposals for amendments to the Constitution no later than close of business **Friday 26th August, 2022.**

Mail to: Benn Walton, CDAA Business Director – PO Box 544, Mount Gambier SA, 5291.

Items received after this date will not be accepted nor will any extensions to this date be granted.

ELECTION CRITERIA:

Members intending to nominate for a National Committee position must be eligible members of the Association as defined in the Constitution. Nominations should be accompanied by a précis not exceeding two hundred and fifty [250] words detailing skills, experience and achievements relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the nominated position. The responsibilities of National Committee members are contained in the Constitution of the Association. Nominations must be in writing and be signed by the nominee, the proposer and the seconder all of whom must be eligible members of the Association.

POLLING:

The polling date close for the election (if required) is Friday, 28th October, 2022.

The election of National Committee members and voting on amendments to the Constitution will be conducted entirely by electronic ballot.

Voting will be conducted via an electronic ballot according to instructions to be sent via email to members. To be eligible to vote you must be a current member of the Association.

The electronic ballot must be completed by close of business, Friday, 28th October 2022 for management of the Returning Officer (Darren Walters #3555).

Detailed voting information will be provided via email and in the next issue of Guidelines. Questions may be directed to Darren Walters, Returning Officer at waltersd_nbn@iinet.net.au or Benn Walton, Business Director at business@cavedivers.com.au

Please note that Australia Post quote 2-6 days for standard delivery from capital cities to Mount Gambier.

Detailed voting information will be provided with the ballot papers.

Questions may be directed to the Returning Officer at waltersd_nbn@iinet.net.au.

Benn Walton, Business Director - business@cavedivers.com.au.



Cave Island, Burrunjuck Dam

Story and Photos by Nathalie Maher

The last weekend of February 2022 seemed perfect for a cave diving adventure. Around 15 people ranging from Basic Cave to Advanced divers descended on the holiday park on the shores of Burrinjuck Dam to explore Cave Island, one of Australia's only decorated underwater caves. With a rather grim looking forecast, the first order of business was to put up a big tarp as shelter. This turned out to be the right call, as a few hours later the rain was pounding down, and we were all happy and dry around our makeshift kitchen. While most of us chose camping, a few stayed in Yass and were probably quite happy with their Motels being warm and dry.

The next morning started dry and sunny, and it would stay like this all day. A makeshift map was drawn for everybody, and dive teams got sorted. A good chunk of the morning was also spent standing around and chatting with people we perhaps hadn't met previously. A few group pictures were taken, and Ryan was presented with his certificate to officially welcome him to the CDAA as a new Basic Cave Instructor.

Eventually, boats got loaded up and the first set of divers were on their way. Strong winds were blowing the boats away from the cave entrance

quite quickly, so we were more than happy we'd spent 2 hours the previous afternoon searching for the line and attaching a buoy to it for easy location. Divers were shuttled in and out, while we enjoyed ourselves on the boats waiting for them to return. Besides the cave diving skills, boat entry and exit skills were extremely important as we were rating and ranking these based on our amusement. Simultaneously, on shore, a cave class was being run, with students going through theory and land drills in order to practice in the water the next day.

Once again, sunset brought with it copious amounts of rain, and the next day would start



beautiful and sunny just as the previous one. Dive teams were once again sorted out and mixed up, and we set out on the water for the last dives of the weekend. While one diver decided that the visibility wasn't worth the effort, everyone else returned for some more dives, and teams managed to push further in than the day before, seeing some of the decorations this cave has to offer. The course students dived from shore in order to

practice their skills to eventually return and come see the cave.

While conditions underwater were not the best, at about 2m visibility at surface, and about 30cm in the cave, it was an extremely enjoyable weekend full of cave diving, camp life, and fun. Thank you to Matt for organising, and all divers as well as those that supplied additional equipment for making it possible.



The team!

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Diving in the old Nuttlar slatemine

Story and Photos by Kurt Storms.

It was time to go diving again in an old slatemine. This time we headed to Sauerland Germany. There is a little town called "Nuttlar". Nuttlar is a district of the municipality Bestwig in the northern Hochsauerlandkreis (North Rhine-Westphalia) and has about 1700 inhabitants.

A bit of History

From the middle of the 19th century Nuttlar lived mainly from slate extraction from the local mine. Five men founded the Gessner company in 1857 and through constant modernisation the business developed favourably, so that in 1878 it was approved for underground mining. This was the beginning of "the Nuttlar slate mine".

The number of employees rose to about 100 in 1900; children and young people also worked there. Slate mining did not have any negative effects due to the "First World War", as the arms industry needed slate for insulating the electric moulds.

But due to competition from cheap-

er slate from Spain and the use of Eternit, slate mining stopped in 1985.

The Dive Site

It is an enormous labyrinth of mile-long tunnels and large spaces. After the closure, the electricity was turned off, causing the pumps to stop, so the water reached its maximum level after 7 years. Of a total of 5 floors, the 2 lower ones are flooded. These passages have a length of 12 kilometres and the maximum depth is 14 to 30 metres.

The drive to Nuttlar takes around 3 hours from my home town.

Together with my wife Caroline and my regular buddy Willem Verreycken. The drive went smoothly, and once we arrived we were pleasantly received by the owner.

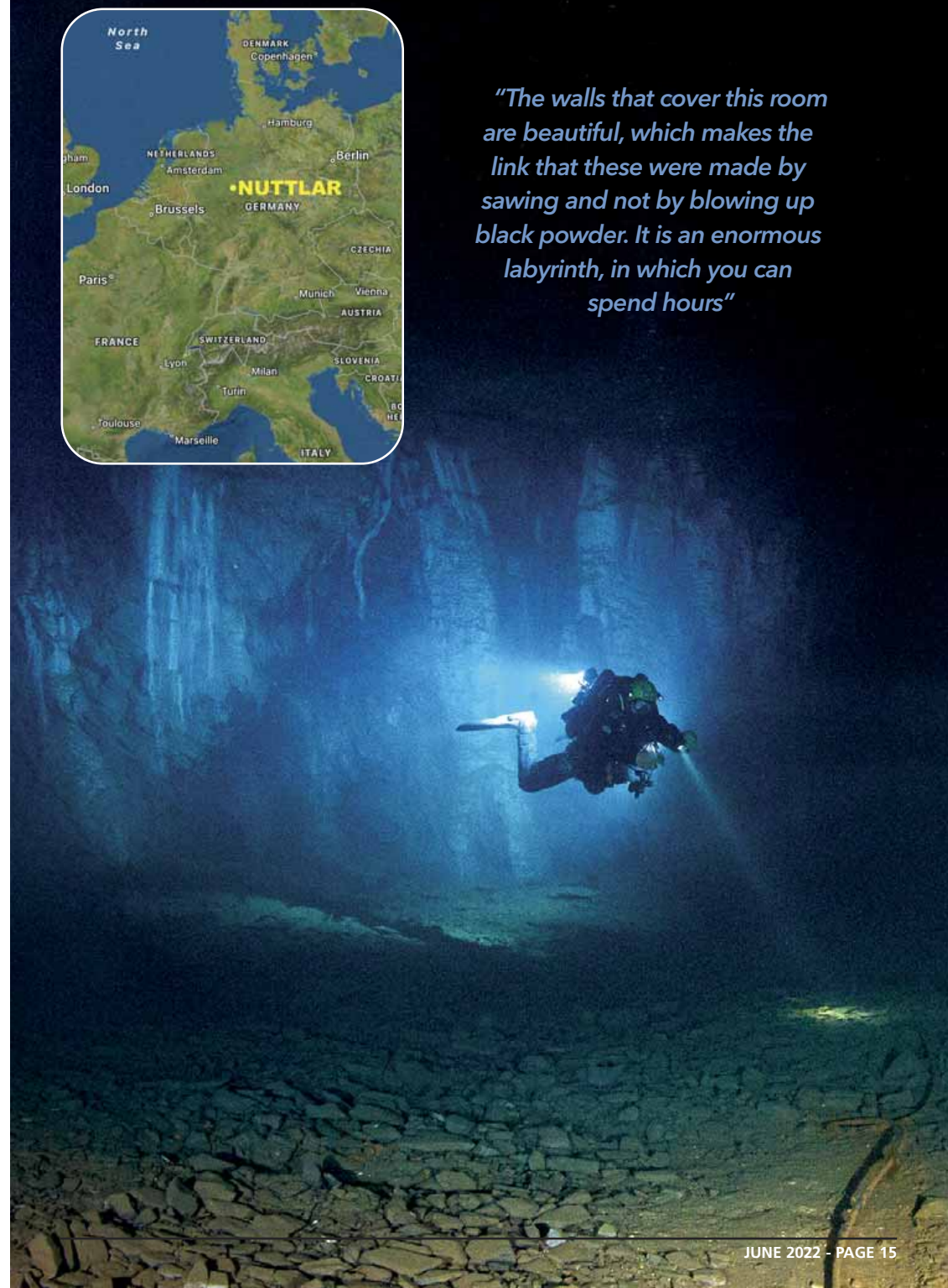
We got a briefing, about the operation, and where the compressor is to possibly fill between dives. They fill here air, Nitrox, Trimix and O2 for the rebreathers.

Once this briefing was given, we went back to the car to take the right road to the entrance of the mine, where there is parking for 7 cars.

The entrance to the mine can be easily recognised by the yellow con-



"The walls that cover this room are beautiful, which makes the link that these were made by sawing and not by blowing up black powder. It is an enormous labyrinth, in which you can spend hours"



tainer. Here we get our second briefing. What we have to pay attention to, where we have to sign in and out.

Once this briefing was over, we could get ready with excitement.

Wim and I put our Bail-out on the waterfront, and here we took our first glimpse in the direction of the water, wow, how clear was my first thought and we continued to get ready. Me and Wim both dived on our Rebreather. We spent some time getting the Rebreather ready for diving and going over the tests. Today I am diving with the Divesoft Liberty SM.

Once in the water and having done our S-drill, we descend below the surface and our dive begins. The agreement was that we would do a dive of about 2.5 hours.

After a few minutes, we arrived at a junction where several cars were shunted around, not knowing that they would never move from their places. It is a spacious corridor, but you have to be smart not to touch another wagon to avoid a Silt-out.

We follow the line where we have to place a

'cookie' in between, the water is cold at 8 degrees. So I am obliged to put on my heating. The view is extremely clear. There are pipes and cables everywhere so that light bulbs could be provided with electricity.

The mainline is clearly visible everywhere between all the stuff we come across. In between, Willem turns to take a photo. We have only just left, and are already as happy as a child. Willem swims in through a small passage and we end up in a beautiful room as big as a house.

The walls that cover this room are beautiful, which makes the link that these were made by sawing and not by blowing up black powder. It is an enormous labyrinth, in which you can spend hours. The splendour of the past is shown to its best advantage here. The carriages, the rails, this gives you even more respect for the people who once worked here. When we get back to the top after 2,5 hours, we have only seen the first part, but we are satisfied. Immediately we are making plans to explore the deeper part.



Willem in the door opening to the grand hall.



Ladder in one of the corridors



Willem in a small passage to another corridor

Slate Mine information

The slate mine (Schieferbau Nuttlar) is open from April to mid-November on weekends. In winter, the mine is closed due to the hibernation of the bats. Reservation is compulsory. A maximum of 12 cave divers can enter per day and a day ticket costs €69.

Guided Tours

Would you like to go further down into the mine but don't have a cave diving licence? Or do you doubt that cave diving is something for you? Here you can have a fantastic experience under supervision. Under strict guidance you can go further in a small group where there is no ascent possible. Floating above the rails, you dive along tubes, cables and old materials. The gas planning is conservative, the experience is

great! However, there is a prerequisite for participation. You have to have a preliminary technical basis. This means that you dive with a double set, long hose and lights, but also that you master all the procedures such as gas sharing and valve turning. So it's not for everyone, but an absolute must if you have the level. So you don't have to go to France or Mexico for your first unforgettable cave diving adventure!

Sport divers without a cave diving licence can also enjoy this underwater world under supervision. You will be accompanied by an experienced cave diver from the Nuttlar. It is compulsory to dive with equipment that is suitable for cold water, i.e. separate breathing systems, a suitable suit and some diving experience. There is no possibility to rent equipment on site. The cost is 69€ per dive. Don't forget to bring your



Abandoned wagon in one of the corridors.



Wooden support bar

valid medical certificate, your certification and a valid diving insurance, which will be checked before you dive.

If you already have your certification, and you want to dive with a guide, this can be done in addition to the normal entrance fee for 50€ per person extra. You get a guide who dives with a maximum of 3 participants.

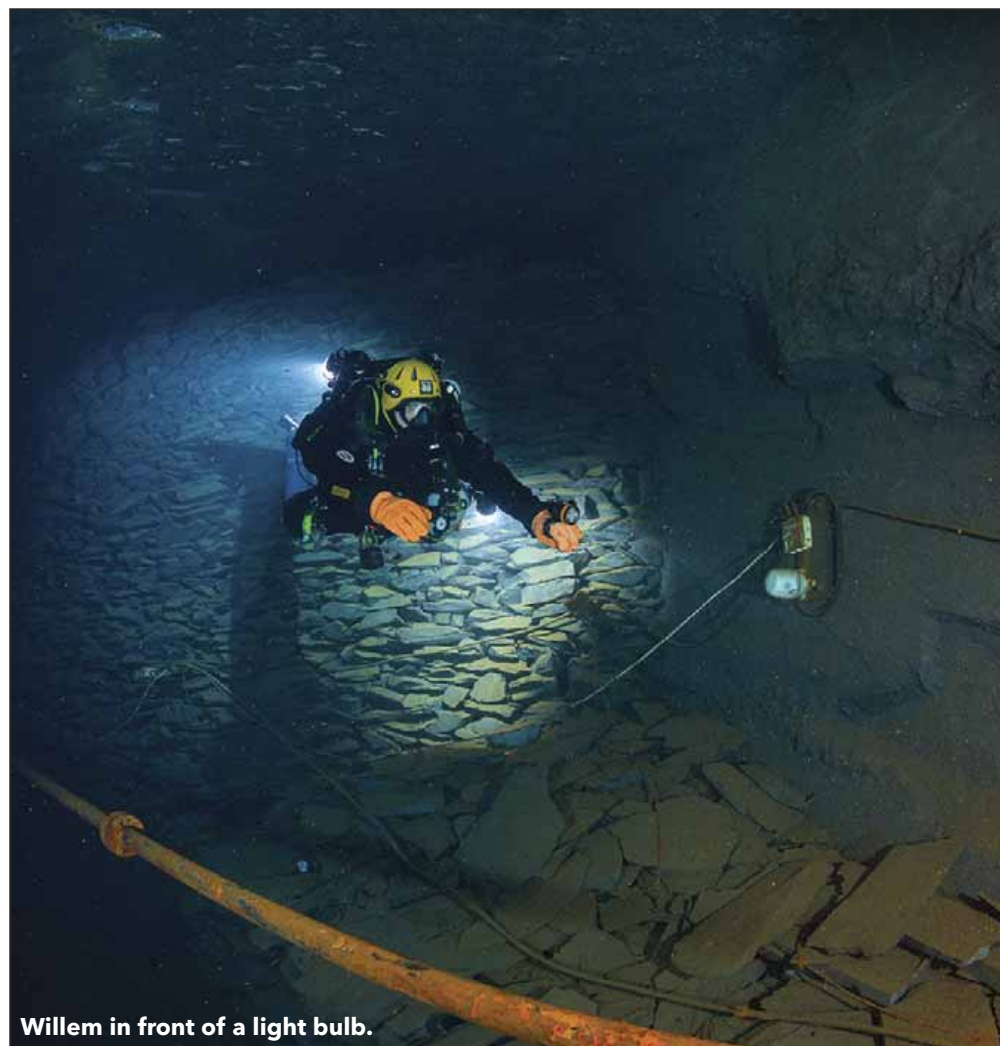
Staying in the area:

There are many possibilities to stay overnight. A good hotel is Gasthof Sauerwald, which is only 3 km away.

Don't want to dive but still want to visit the mine? This is possible in the form of a dry tour in the non-flooded part. A 2hr tour costs 23€, a 4hr tour costs 33€ and a 7hr special tour for photographers costs 65€. These prices include a small snack and a drink.

Address: Briloner Str. 48a, D-59909 Bestwig, Germany, from Brussels it is a 3:30hr drive.

Website : www.schieferbau-nuttlar.de



Willem in front of a light bulb.

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PO Box 9286, Mount Gambier West, S.A. 5291

P O R T F O L I O

Alvaro Herrero



Cenote Xulo in Tulum.

P O R T F O L I O

Álvaro Herrero is originally from Spain and has always had a fascination with nature in all of its forms. At the age of five, he was given his first pair of fins, mask, and snorkel by his grandfather and hasn't looked back. Since then he has always had a deep connection with the sea.

He started experimenting with photography when he was eight years old using his father's old camera. Alvaro has now been diving for more than 15 years and more than 11 as a professional diver. He has worked as a driving instructor, commercial diver, boat skipper, underwater photographer and trained as a technical diver with the JJ-CCR rebreather as Advanced Mixed Gas and full cave CCR diver with the Kiss Sidewinder. He has have worked as an underwater photographer in Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Maldives, Spain, Polynesia and Mexico in dive centres, resorts and liveaboards.

Álvaro Herrero has published photos in various journals including those of a scientific nature and collaborated with government environmental organisations, and featured in some magazines. He has been recognized in the prestigious GDT European Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition 2017, 2018 and 2020,



2021, Underwater Photographer of the Year 2021, Aspherico International photo contest 2021. He took his deepest picture at 110m in Indonesia and now is working in Mexico as a cave photographer.

He currently works for Protec dive centres and offers services as a cave photographer and also does cave photography workshops if someone wants to learn. He also offers deep photography services worldwide.

Alvaro is BigBlue dive lights Ambassador and TDS (Technical Diving System) ambassador.

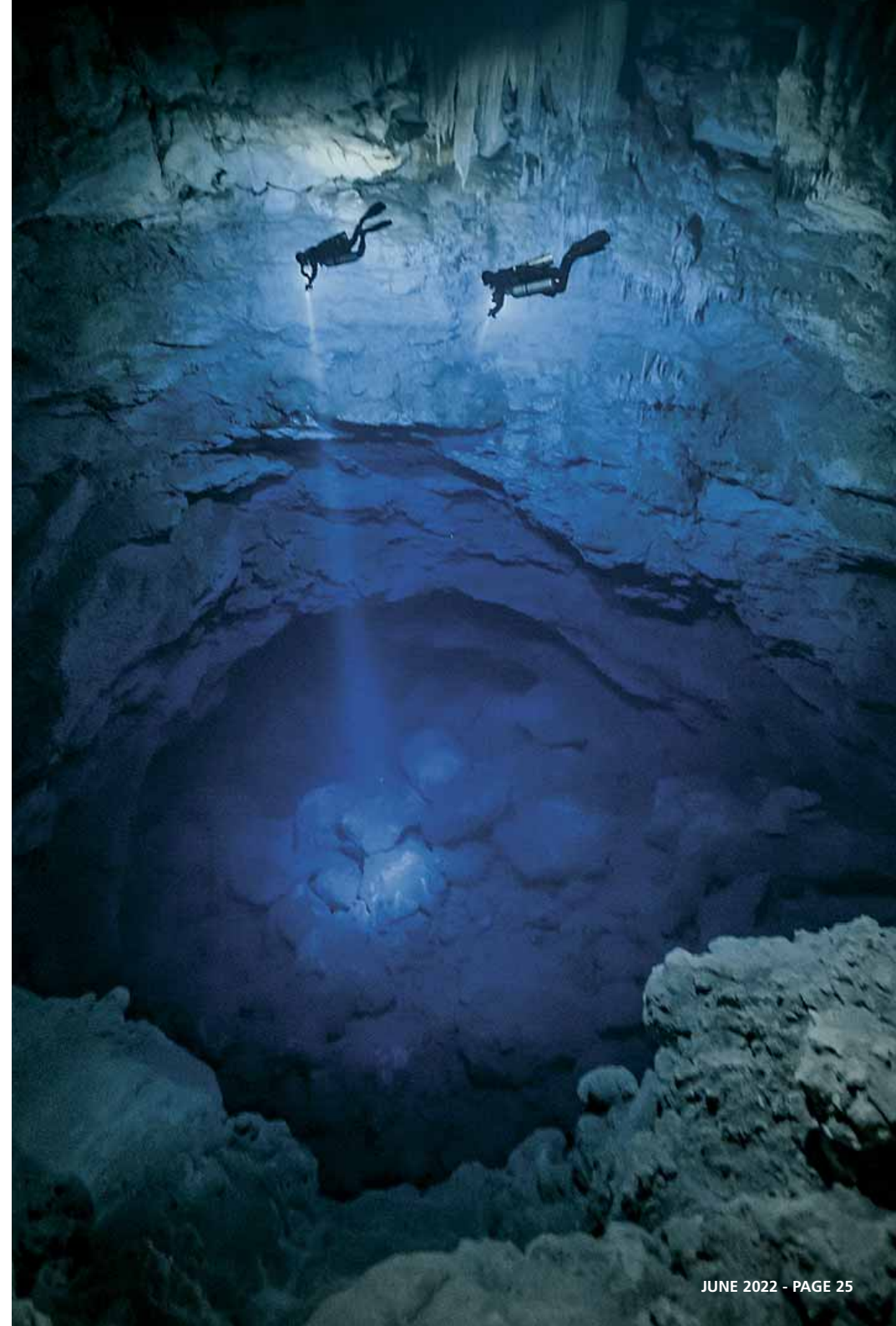
Instagram: @mekanphotography.

Website: www.mekanphotography.com

Facing page: **The blue Abyss, the deepest part of the biggest flooded system in the world.**
Divers Tamara Lenani, Laura Leusko.

Page 26: **Nohoch Nah Chich - part of Bigger flooded system in the world. Diver Mikko Passi.**

Page 27: **Cenote Xulo in Tulum.**

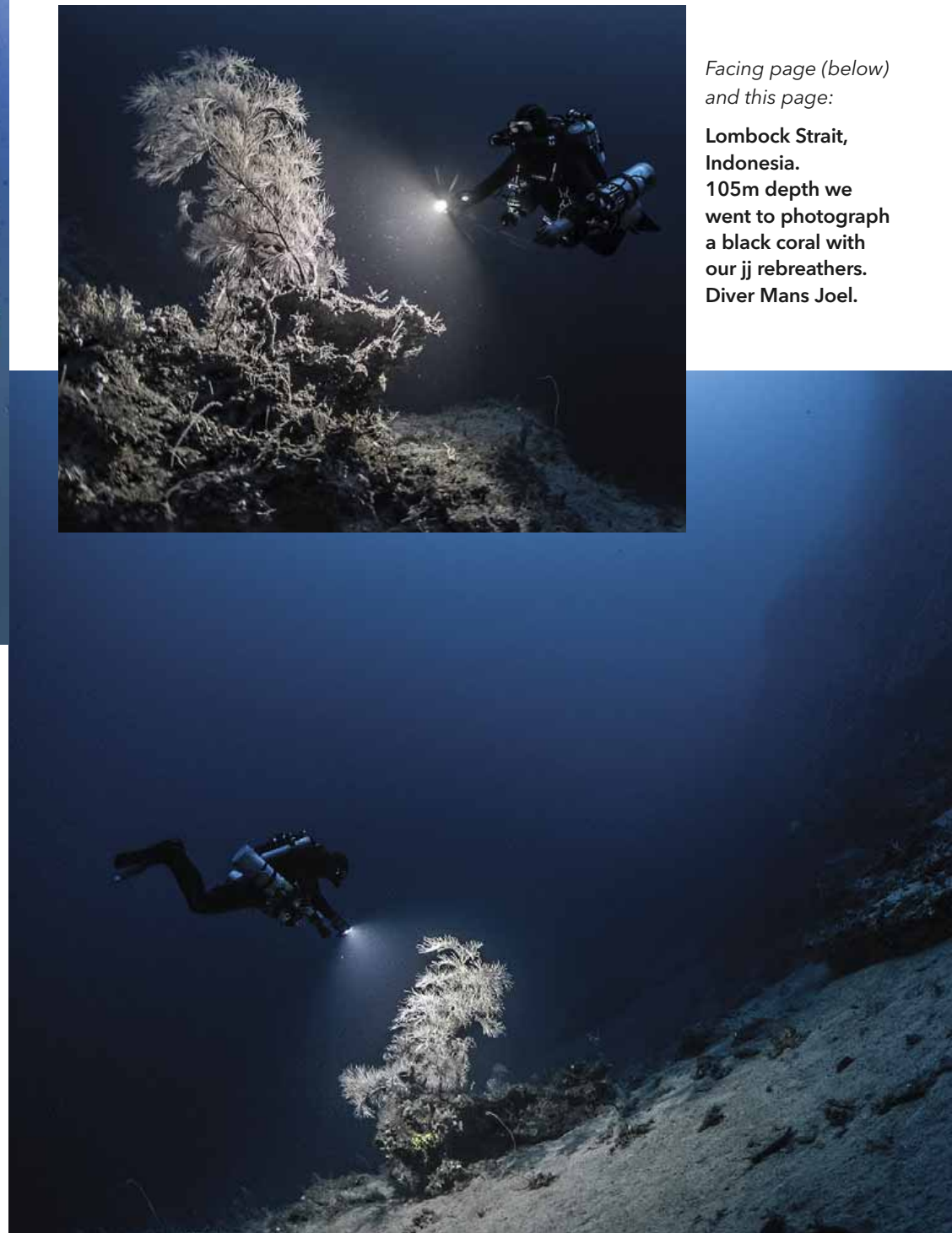






*Facing page (below)
and this page:*

**Lombok Strait,
Indonesia.**
105m depth we
went to photograph
a black coral with
our jj rebreathers.
Diver Mans Joel.



'Down Under Byron'

BOOK REVIEW by Dave Bryant

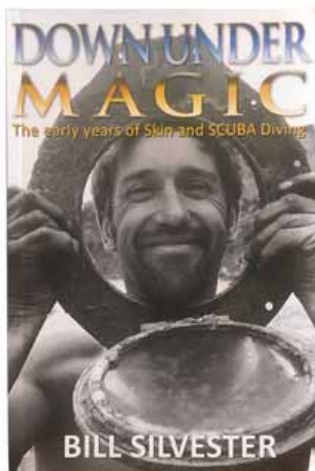
They say Age is just a number, but any diver at the age of 85 who was diving in their late teens and early 20's has to be considered a pioneer of the sport. The name Bill Silvester might not mean much to the average younger diver but to the ageing fraternity of cave and scuba divers Bill was a true pioneer of scuba diving in Australia. From the 1950's through to the 1980's, Bill did things that taught him (and many other early divers) there was a right way and a wrong way to dive, especially in the Mount Gambier sinkholes where he and a mate breached the 30+ metre mark and into the 'dark zone'...

Mount Gambier, October 1962.

Bill wrote a book titled *Down Under Magic* (published 2012) and the 15th chapter talks about his first visit to the Mount and the dives he did with a single dolphin torch and gear that you and I would now consider primitive. What ever could go wrong, did, and Bill lived to tell the tale.

In the book Bill writes...

"Just before David Perry and I joined as co-owners of the Associated Divers Academy he drove to Mount Gambier to dive Piccaninnie and Ewens Ponds. It was in the days we used early twin



26 cubic foot army disposal cylinders and primitive regulators. A local named Nick Potter showed David the dive sites".

Bill goes on to say.... "The first dive I had was with Geoff Hume and it was both fascinating and fateful. The dive took us to the Piccaninnie Ponds lagoon and then down to the Chasm. This is where we had the feeling of near vertigo being suspended in mid air as we passed over the deepest portion of the ponds. It was spectacular. The Cathedral lay dead ahead"... **later in the chapter Bill writes...** "We had a torch - just one between us, and a rope which was let out as we descended to the bottom of the Chasm at 30 metres. Finding that we no longer needed weight belts we removed them, tied off the rope to both belts and kept on descending.

I led and Geoff followed. We soon passed 50 metres and there was still more depth to go. We could not see the bottom and it was now very dark.

What we didn't realise was as we descended we were dislodging particles from the limestone and it was silting up the clear water."

"The flash light of my torch was our only available light and it was a narrow yellow beam. Without any warning I felt Geoff tug at my torch. He wrenched it out of my hands and I was left in total darkness. The next thing, my mask was kicked off my face and a blast of cold water struck my eyes. No torch, no mask, black, freezing water, in a narrow tunnel... where was up? Was I scared?... you bet I was!"

"I managed to clear and replace my mask and Geoff was long gone. The sound of air bubbles thundered in my head. Panic rising! The blackness was indescribable. I touched the exhaust of my regulator and began to follow their ascent. Still no light, it was all feel. After what seemed ages I finally saw a tiny glimmer of light above me. It was the top of the Chasm. I was going to make it. We both did!"

Bill's book goes on to talk about other caves they explored but with more safety in mind. As we know the 'safety aspect' eventually led to the formation of the CDAA in 1973.

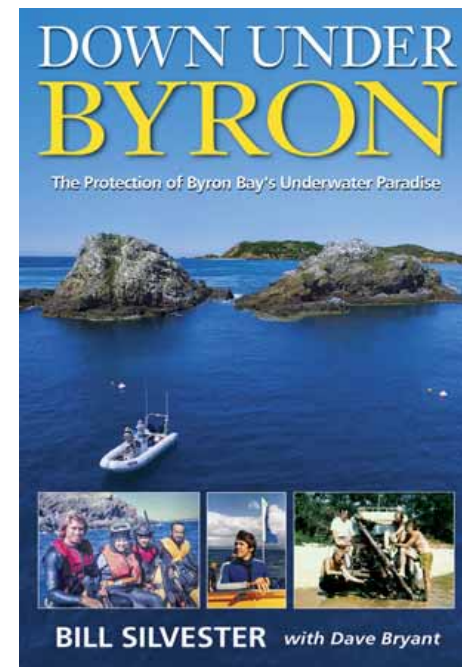
I was fortunate to meet Bill in 2013:

Bill's third book 'Down Under Magic' was sold in a cafe I used to frequent on the Mornington Peninsula. At the time I was inspired by the first pioneers of Australian scuba diving and I thought, surely this old fella wouldn't mind being interviewed?

I contacted Bill's sister (and publisher) who lived in California at the time, and she put me on to Bill who was living near Byron Bay. By chance he planned to be in Melbourne to re-stock the books at that cafe, and a few weeks later we met for the first time.

In 2015 I too moved to live in Byron Bay but in the meantime I managed to interviewed Bill about his earlier days in the Australian diving industry and also have a few dives with him at Julian Rocks.

Bill is now 85 and though his wife would forbid him to dive ever again you can see he is a water baby, he was meant to be there and he would like to do it just one more time. Our last trip together was to dive Lady Elliot just before Covid took over our lives.



Bill has written 4 books in his 60+ years of diving, in fact one of his earliest books titled *The Down Under Scuba Diver* published in the mid 1960's became the first Australian Diver Instruction manual ever written. It sold around 70,000 copies.

Another book titled *The Magic of Scuba* was first published in 1987 and later he published a Children's book called *Mr Gloop* followed by his adventure novel titled *Down Under Magic* which features the early days of snorkelling, spear fishing and scuba diving in Melbourne with adventures to the far south coast of NSW, Mount Gambier and Byron Bay, amongst others destinations.





The Book, Down Under Byron:

Bill always wanted to produce a book about his years operating the first dive centre in Byron Bay so back in 2019 Bill and I we started discussing it.

I volunteered my graphics ability to lay out the book. We sourced pictures from Bill's early 35mm slides as well as some of my own underwater images from 1991. The new owners of Sundive in Byron also offered us some spectacular underwater photos too.



Above: Ron Taylor inspects Bill's new dive boat.

Right: Salvaging an historical anchor, Byron Bay.

Below: Trainee divers at Julian Rocks.



Bill has an incredible memory when it comes to scuba diving so the book very quickly came together but it needed editing which his sister Ray helped with. The graphic layout took 12 months.

You'd think a book would just miraculously create itself but it's a huge exercise, and as we added smaller B&W pictures and colour shots we eventually created a 288 page book. A month before going to print we also added a hard cover and the book has a very impressive look and feel.

The introduction is written by Valerie Taylor and she compliments Bill on his passion as a diver and the man who fought for over a decade to have Julian Rocks declared a protected marine habitat.



The book talks about early road trips in the 1960's. Bill and his spearfishing buddies were some of the first to ever see the marine life at the Rocks but so to Bill's foresight as an environmental warrior led to his desire to protect the same marine life he once speared, but of course that were the days of blokes with power heads and bikini clad girlfriends!

The end result is very impressive but I am somewhat biased as I not only designed the book but also managed the printing and logistics. The book is available for sale from June 2022. Bill would like to offer it to CDAA members for a special rate inclusive of postage in Australia.

Buying a copy of Down Under Byron:

If you have gotten this far Bill would like to offer a copy of the book including postage for just \$35 to anywhere in Australia. Bill asks that you pay by bank transfer and allow a couple of weeks for



Top: some of the colour photos from the book.

Above: One of the last photos of Bill diving at 83.

Bill posing with an aerial photo of Julian Rocks, showing all the dive sites he named in the 1970's.



delivery. He is also selling the books through book stores and the two dive centres in Byron Bay, and in time, to other book stores and dive centres.

As I write this story and look back at the history of scuba diving around the world I regard Bill Silvester as a true pioneer of the sport. The dive gear in the 1960's was expensive and generally unreliable. The divers were foolhardy but gutsy, and driven by adventure and the unknown. They broke the rules, made their wives and girlfriends ever so nervous, and each diver learnt from their mistakes.

I am glad to say that Bill lived to tell many, many tales and in reality he cheated death many times, and yet writes about his explorations and adventures.

Down Under Byron is a great Australian adventure novel and encompasses the days when mates would set off for an underwater adventure while the majority of the population thought these men and woman would be swallowed up by sharks. They were the true pioneers of the sport that you and I love.

Here's to Bill and his life long passion for diving and the people he educated along the way.

To order a copy of the book, email Bill:
sbsilvester@gmail.com



Amoco Milford Haven Wreck

Story and Photos by Kurt Storms. Buddy: Willem Verrycken

After a long time of not being able to travel because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we can and may travel back to Italy. The first days will be spent completing my instructor course CCR-OC Trimix Instructor under the supervision of IANTD ITT Paul Lijnen. After a few exciting and heavy days I can proudly call myself a full fledged IANTD CCR/OC Trimix Instructor. I owe this title to my good students, and help and support from 2 other instructors who also obtained this title.

Wreck History

The course took place on the most beautiful wreck of the Mediterranean. The *MT Haven*.

MT Haven was a VLCC-Class Oil-Tanker (Very Large Crude Carrier), build as Amoco Milford Haven in 1973. The ship was incredibly big: 334m long with a beam of 51m and a displacement tonnage of 110,000 tons.

In 1987 it was hit by a missile in the Persian Gulf during the Iran-Iraq War. Extensively refitted in Singapore, it was then sold to ship brokers who leased it to Troodos Shipping.

Around 12:30 pm on April 11, 1991, the *Haven* was unloading a cargo of 230,000

tons crude oil on a floating Platforms, seven miles off of the coast of Genoa, Italy. Having transferred 80,000 tons, it disconnected from the platform for a routine internal transfer operation, to allow oil to be pumped from two side-holds into a central one. While still loaded with 144,000 tons of crude oil, the ship exploded and caught fire, killing five crew members. As the fire engulfed the ship, flames rose 100m high and, after a series of further explosions occurred, between 30-40,000 tons of oil poured into the sea.

The Italian authorities acted quickly, with hundreds of men fighting a fire which was difficult to access and control, they distributing more than six miles of inflatable barriers, submerged a meter below the surface, around the vessel to control the spillage.

On day two, the *MT Haven* was to be towed close to the coast, in a bid to reduce the coastal area

affected and make intervention easier. As the bow slipped beneath the surface, a steel cable was passed around the rudder and tugs applied towing pressure. On 14 April, the 250m-long main body sank a mile and a half from the coast, between Arenzano and Varazze, flooding the Mediterranean with up to 50,000 tons of crude oil.

Location

The *Haven* is the Mediterranean and Europe's largest shipwreck in the sea and lies at a depth of 33m to 83m off the coast of Arenzano (Genoa).

I have been diving on this beautiful and unique wreck for the last 3 years and I can really say that I am in love with this big baby. But I want to warn every reader before going any further. The baby can be a killer and a dangerous monster for untrained or inattentive divers.

Diving the Haven

Depending on the day, the current can go

from nothing to strong, the visibility can change from a perfect +30 meters to a very poor 5 meters, it is a giant labyrinth inside which one can get lost, like in any cave system, with sharp metal cutting edges, and huge amounts of silt that can turn water milk-like and trap you. The wreck is huge and deep, and you can lose your orientation as well as your notion of time and gas consumption. So plan your dive, and dive your plan.

No heroes allowed here, you must be humble and patient enough to discover the wreck step by step, piece by piece and according to your own level of training and experience.

The 250 meter long main section of the *Haven* peacefully lies in an upright position. Part of the superstructure which originally reached up to 24 meters of depth were removed, therefore the shallowest part of the entire wreck, the smokestack, now stands at 33 meters deep.

At a depth of 40m you find the wheelhouse, from which the captain Petros Grigorakakis maneuvered the Tanker and which is completely



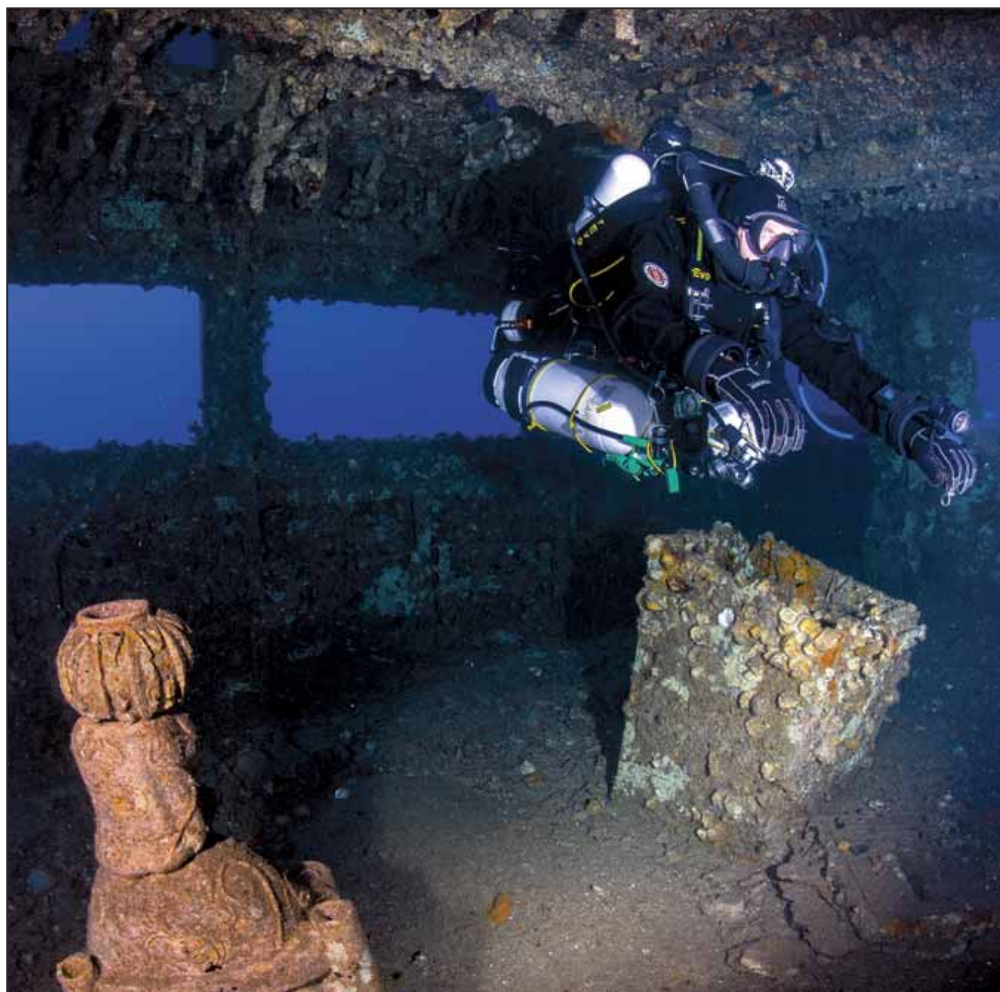
empty. All the instruments, controls as everything was burned away before sinking. On the upper deck you find a memorial plate and the statues of the Virgin Maria.

You can easily penetrate steer house. - you can go down or up the inner stairs. It is also very easy to go up or down the main lift opening that goes through all bridges or just follow the outside walls. The windows on the side are numerous but sometimes quite small and most of the time too small to go through, every room has a door though.

There bridge is about 23 meters high, here you find bedrooms, the kitchen, workroom etc....

You can penetrate almost everywhere, but it's a labyrinth, so you should consider it as a cave and use a guideline.

From the bridge, technical divers can descend to the deck in the back of the tanker, past the winches, pipes and valves that are proportional to the size of the ship and free fall down to the propeller at 81 meters. Here excessiveness still strikes with a rudder 20 meters high and a propeller more than 7 meters in diameter. The dark becomes darker as the cant is important and we lose light from the surface. The depth is maximal but this place is breathtaking and looking up from this point, the tanker is majestic.



The engine room entrance is located just under the chimney below -52 m and from there you can go deep inside the ship.

Here you find a gigantic 8-Cylinder stroke



Diesel Engine, The Various panels and counters are still in perfect shape and intact.

Going up on port side, there is a gigantic opening left by one of the two explosions. The gaping hole is so large that it is difficult to comprehend its dimensions and the plates are twisted like a broken can.

Diving requirements and facilities

For diving the MT Haven you need to be a Technical diver, and complete these dive's with hypoxic gasses. Don't do this dive's without proper training.

There are 2 dive centers who provide all the facility for diving The Haven, both are in the Marina of Arenzano. Organization is perfect and safety non-negotiable. There is a fixed deco station with decompression bars at -6m and -3m with sufficient spare tanks. The descent lines are fixed and lead you down to the quarterback at -33m.

Getting to Arenzano

Arenzano is a municipality in the Italian province of Genoa and has 11,624 inhabitants. The area is 24 km², the population density is 475 inhabitants per km².

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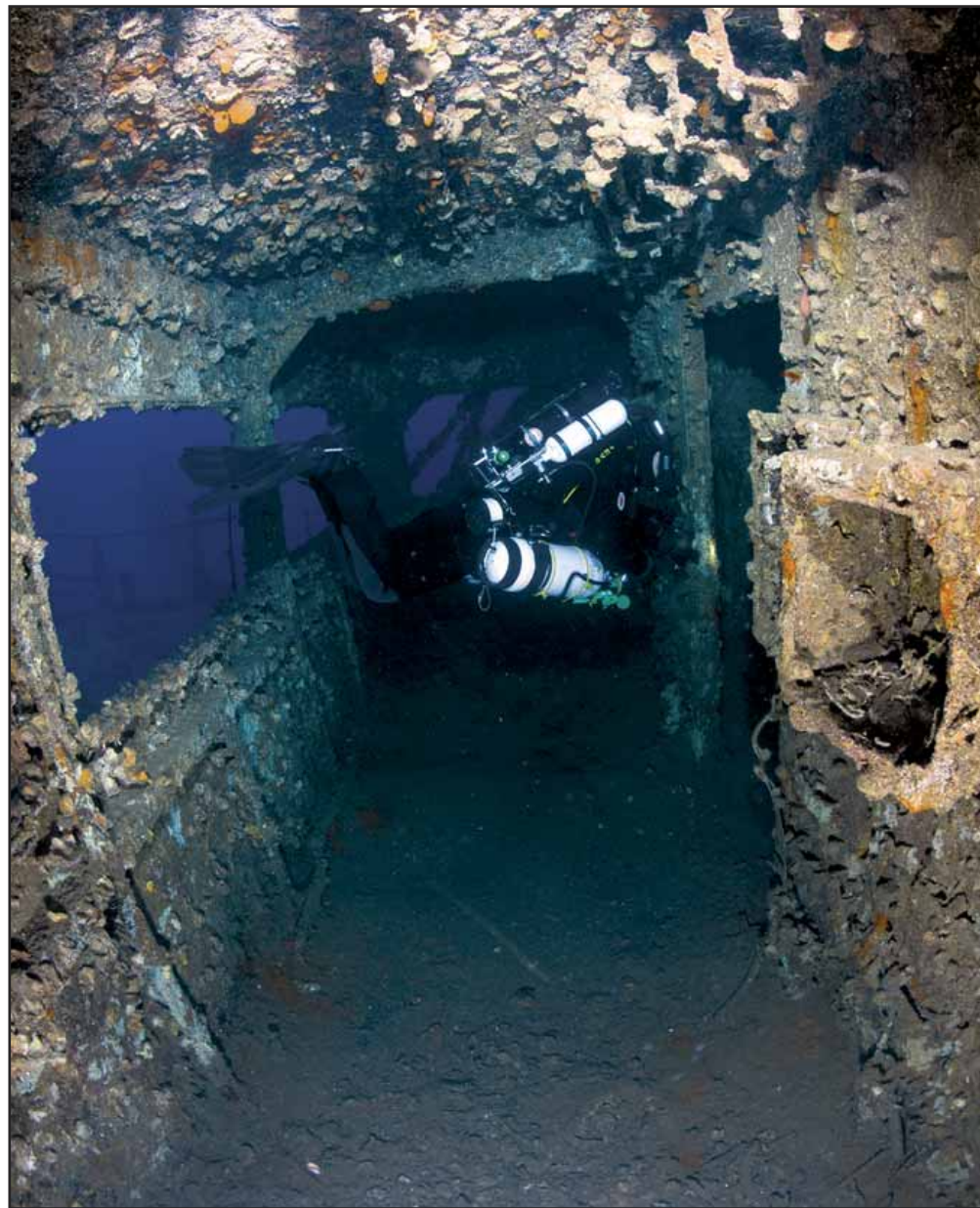
You can get there by road on the mainland, Arenzano is about 1200 km from Brussels. This road is the easiest one to transport all our equipment, rebreathers, bottles, etc...

Those coming from outside Europe can take the plane to Genoa airport. Genoa-Cristoforo Colombo Airport is the airport of the Italian port

city of Genoa. The airport has an important function for the port of Genoa, it is the main port of call for cruise passengers embarking in Genoa.

If you come by plane, you can also rent the necessary bottles and equipment at one of the two diving centres.

Enjoy your Dive!



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OZDive Show - showcasing everything great about diving: Travel, Training, Equipment and Photography, including talks and workshops to inspire and motivate.

Pic: Alison Perkins
2019 OZTek
Cave Category

OZTek
ADVANCED DIVE CONFERENCE
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OZDive Show '22
OZDIVESHOW.COM.AU

EMERGENCY PLANNING INFORMATION

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- Always inform someone (who is not part of your dive team) of your dive plan
- Be prepared, and ensure you can provide critical information (such as your location) to emergency services when required
- Always plan your dive and dive your plan!
- Be trained to administer First Aid and CPR. It's better to have it and not need it, than need it and not know what to do!

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT RESPONSE:

In the event of an incident or accident, CDAA members are to:

1. Assist the person or persons injured.
2. Contact emergency services (if needed) and provide clear and accurate information:
 - a. **WHAT** is the emergency?
 - b. **WHERE** is the emergency? Provide relevant information – street address, GPS coordinates, nearby landmarks.
 - c. **HOW** do emergency services access the site? If possible, direct another member to meet emergency services at the road or a nearby intersection and direct them towards the emergency
 - d. Provide the **NAME** of the injured person/s.
 - e. Provide **YOUR NAME** and contact details.
3. While you are waiting for emergency services record as much relevant information as possible, including times, names and contact details and events leading to incident.
4. Contact the CDAA National Director and/or the CDAA Site Director as soon as possible

MISSING/OVERDUE DIVER:

In the event that a diver has not returned to the surface by the expected time, it is important that members act quickly as time is of the essence. As a guide, if a diver is 15 MINUTES or more over their expected run-time, members are advised to;

1. Contact the CDAA Search & Recovery (SAR) Officer. In the event that the SAR Officer cannot be contacted, call the National Director, or Site Director. Follow the directions provided by the SAR Officer or relevant Director.
2. Provide as much information as you can – names of the missing divers, summary of the dive plan, time the divers entered the water, equipment configuration used, expected run time, time overdue.
3. Establish an appropriate course of action. Consideration should be given to the dive plan, extent of penetration and gas reserves of the missing/overdue divers. Are there other divers on site (or nearby) who may be able to assist with an emergency search. **Note: a search should ONLY be considered if divers available are suitably experienced, equipped, and have sufficient (additional) gas to undertake a search and provide assistance.**
4. If no other divers are available to conduct a search or the missing/overdue divers are not located and have not otherwise returned within the timeframe decided, enact the **ACCIDENT/INCIDENT RESPONSE** procedures listed above.

DECEASED DIVER:

1. If a diver is found to be deceased within the cave, do not disturb the scene. If possible, try to note down pertinent information - location, position, remaining gas, computer runtime, then return to the surface as soon as possible.
2. Contact the CDAA National Director and the CDAA Search & Recovery (SAR) Officer immediately. The SAR Officer will liaise with the relevant authorities as required.

NOTE: Members are advised not to make any statements regarding incidents or accidents to members of the public, to landowners, to the media, or via any other platform/media. Please direct all associated enquiries to the National Director for comment.

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

Police, Ambulance, Fire	000 or 112 (mobile)	CDAA National Director – Rick Nash	0438 815 643
State Emergency Services	132 500	CDAA Site Director – Kelyvn Ball	0428 842 259
Mt Gambier Hospital	8721 1200	CDAA SAR Officer – Richard Harris	0417 177 830
Divers Emergency Service (DAN)	1800 088 200	CDAA SAR Officer – Phillip Croker	0423 393 347

PARTING SHOT















Divers cutting through the crystal clear water on the Bone Line at Devil's underwater cave system. Ginie Springs, Florida.

A GALLERY OF PHOTOS WILL APPEAR IN OUR SEPTEMBER ISSUE!

Photo: Fan Ping - www.bewaterimaging.com

CDAА INSTRUCTORS

NAME	Basic Cave	Cave	Adv. Cave	NAME	Basic Cave	Cave	Adv. Cave
NEW SOUTH WALES				VICTORIA Continued			
 FEATONBY, Tim (CDAА 3327) Worworing Heights, NSW Mob: 0402 129 253 E: tim.featonby@hotmail.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 DALLA-ZUANNA, John (CDAА 236) Mob: 0407 887 060 E: jdz@paintandcustom.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes
 Ryan Duchatel CDAА 4983 Mobile: 0419 268 714 E: ryan@totalimmersiondiving.com.au	Yes			 DALE, Steve (CDAА 3926) Mob: 0468 417 211 Email: info@extremewatersport.com.au	Yes	Yes	
SOUTH AUSTRALIA				 EDWARDS, Chris (CDAА 2247) Mob: 0417 116 372 Email: chrisedwards01@me.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
 PAYNE, Timothy (CDAА 2640) Mob: 0448 147 927 E: Tim@diveessentials.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 MONACO, Rubens (CDAА 1731) Mob: 0413 429 533 E: info@idcscuba.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes
VICTORIA				WESTERN AUSTRALIA			
 BARCLAY, Gary (CDAА 1735) Mob: 0407 527 921 E: garinda@bigpond.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 BICANIC, Josip (CDAА 4691) Mob: 0412 571 779 Email: joseph_b@me.com	Yes	Yes	
 BOWMAN, Jane (CDAА 1880) Mob: 0407 566 455 E: janelbowman@hotmail.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 PAYNTER, Geoff (CDAА 3784) Mob: 0407 445 112 E: gpaynter60@bigpond.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
 CLARIDGE, Linda (CDAА 2214) Mob: 0408 052 070 E: garinda@tpgi.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes				



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