



Kerrie Burow in Ressel Cave - Photo by Ingrid Ølberg



C.D.A.A. Newsletter

No. 162 - DECEMBER 2022



CAVE DIVERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

(Incorporated in South Australia)

Print Post No. PP 100023987

SENTINEL DIVER

TEC TRAINING

In Mt Gambier

"With Rubens Monaco - Australia's most experienced Technical Diving Instructor"

TDI Advanced Nitrox
TDI Decompression Procedures
TDI Extended Range
TDI Trimix
TDI Sidemount & Cave Sidemount
TDI CCR Cave - All 3 Levels
TDI CCR Courses - Multiple Units
TDI CCR Helitrox & Mixed Gas
TDI Cavern, Intro to Cave, Full Cave
TDI DPV Cave
TDI Stage Cave
TDI Instructor Training
All CDAA Cave Courses....

For more information or to make a booking please contact Rubens on **0413-429-533**

Email: info@deepblueventures.com.au

Website: www.deepblueventures.com.au

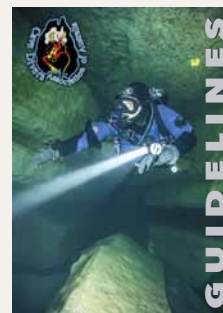


CONTENTS

Editorial - Hope Berry	5
National Committee Updates	6-9
AGM 2022 stories	10-15
Emergency Planning Information	38
Instructor List	39

Articles...

My First AGM - Dave Berry	10
SROP Course - Helen Spencer	14-15
Interview with Hope Berry	16-17
Lot, France - Kerrie Burow	18-25
Scapa Flow Wrecks - Kurt Storms	26-32
Off The Track - Komodo - Dave Bryant	34-37



Front Cover:

Ressel Cave,
Lot, France

Photo by
Kerrie Burow.

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 necessarily those of the C.D.A.A.

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 - Grant Pearce Mobile: 0438 833 103
Email: national@cavedivers.com.au

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 - Grant Pearce Mobile: 0438 833 103
Email: national@cavedivers.com.au

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

STANDARDS DIRECTOR - Chris Edwards Mobile: 0417 116 372
Email: standards@cavedivers.com.au

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

BUSINESS DIRECTOR - Mathew Rochford Mobile: 0411 529 512
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 Mobile: 0448 147 927
Email: tim@divessentials.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

PUBLICATIONS & RECORDS DIRECTOR - Hope Berry
Email: publications@cavedivers.com.au - Mobile: 0434 808 626

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: benwalton@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.
Incorporated in Massachusetts, USA.
Name Insured: Cave Divers Association of Australia Inc. Policy# 441680
Public Liability: \$20,000,000 any one claim. Expiry: 30th September 2023.

Pine Tank Lodge



Photo by Liz Rogers

Lodge Features:

- Accommodates 14 divers in 7 rooms; three double bedrooms and four rooms each with two single beds.
- Two separate socialising areas
- Endless hot rainwater showers in two separate bathrooms.
- Airfills, Nitrox, Trimix, high pressure O₂
- Undercover gear drying
- Barbecue facilities

Courses:

- Deep Cavern to Cave
- Approved IANTD Facility offering full range of Technical Courses, Nitrox, Trimix, Deco Procedures and Extended Range.
- CCR Training
KISS CCR Mod 1 – 3 Trimix



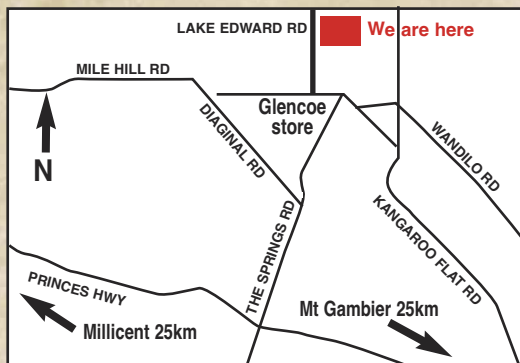
AquiferTec Australasia

- Specialist importers of Technical Cave Diving Gear.
- **KISS Rebreathers**
Australasian Agent/Distributor – Sidekick, Sidewinder, Classic and Spirit!
- IANTD KISS CCR Training Mod 1-3, Inc. New Zealand and Asia Pacific.
- Full range of Scurion Lights, Cave Diving Lights.
- Drysuits: Black Pearl Sole Australian Agent and Distributor.
- Shearwater Computers full range and best prices.
- SANTI Drysuits and undergarments
- Full range of Analytical International Instrument (AII) CCR O₂ Cells and analysers.
- Full range of Golem Gear tech gear (Inc. CCR BOVs, Side mount DSV,s, Armadillo side mount system).
- Fill whips, digital gauges.
- Light Monkey full range
- Spools & Reels.



Pine Tank Dive Lodge AquiferTec Australasia

Lake Edward Rd Glencoe, Sth Australia
Mobile: 0438 833 103
Email: stay@ptdivelodge.on.net
Email: admin@aquifertec.com.au
Web: aquifertec.com.au



Publications Report Hope Berry

Hi All,

Firstly a big thank you to Nat for all of her time and effort as Publications Director, and getting me through my first week while i find my feet.

Another big thank you to all the Directors for the opportunity to contribute, I am very excited to join the role and looking forward to working with you all.

If you have any contributions or suggestions for Social Media or Guidelines, please contact me directly. Looking forward to meeting some new faces and talking all things cave diving.

Hope Berry (#5375)

Publications & Records Director
publications@cavediving.com.au

HERE'S WISHING YOU ALL A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS...

IN 2023 WE HOPE YOU MAKE THE TIME TO DOCUMENT
YOUR DIVES AND TRAVELS AS WE ALWAYS NEED
MORE GREAT AUSTRALIAN READING AND STUNNING PHOTOS.
THE NEXT ISSUE ISN'T TIL JUNE 2023, SO DIVE SAFE AND
PLEASE SUBMIT A STORY FOR GUIDELINES, THANK YOU!

NOTE: RE MARCH 2023 GUIDELINES...

*In 2023 I will be away during February, March and April.
As such I won't be able to create the March issue of Guidelines.
The next issue of Guidelines won't be until June 2023.*

My sincere apologies, Dave Bryant.

The good news is, the CDAA will celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2023 so it is my intention to fly over and join you in celebrating this wonderful achievement and meet the members of the CDAA.

Articles for Guidelines June 2023 - Deadline is May 10th

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

National Committee Update

DECEMBER 2022

Update from the National desk...

This year's symposium and AGM were very well attended, with a host of great speakers including Josh Richards with the new Engelbrecht's East Extension. I would like to thank Meg as MC and Damo; Steve for IT support and Vic for supporting our merchandise. Dr. Harry hosted another great SROP course for members, and this was supported by our SES friends and Jan from Engelbrecht's Cafe.

Over 50% of the membership voted electronically for our new Directors, the highest-ever member participation in voting. Please welcome Hope Berry from WA to the National Committee as Publications and Membership Director. In terms of Guidelines production, sourcing cave diving-specific content from our members has increasingly evolved to become a challenge for our editor i.e., whilst also producing a publication each quarter on time. For this reason, the National Committee proposes to trial a new format and a biannual publication, including an e-version for ease of reading on mobile devices. In turn, we expect to be sourcing cave diving stories from around the globe.

Whilst our financial position remains, it is noteworthy that since Covid our membership has decreased by approx. 30%. However, we are now seeing past members renewing and Basic Cave courses increasing, notably a growing number from New Zealand. Also, on behalf of the National Committee, I would like to welcome our new instructors to the organisation.

With regards to the recent member data security incident, a forensic investigation has been

conducted, and a plan to secure Member Jungle and our data will be headed up by Matt. Planning for our 50th anniversary has commenced with Meg now appointed as event organizer and manager. Please feel free to contact Meg with suggestions for events and speakers.

Happy new year and safe diving.

Grant Pearce, CDAA 1382
Acting National Director



On behalf of the National Committee



Mathew Rochford,
Business Director



Kelvyn Ball,
Site Director



Chris Edwards,
Standards Director



Hope Berry,
Publications and
Records Director

Standards Report

Chris Edwards

Hi and welcome to my first missive as Standards Director.

First up many thanks to Joe Monks who has been filling in as interim Director after Tim Featonby's resignation. As I know well from my previous time as Director all the key roles require significant work and time. Joe selflessly stepped into the job and that act is gratefully appreciated by all. Thanks also to Tim for his time up to then.

I would also like to welcome new Instructors Damian Bishop, Ryan Duchatel, Hee Man Lee and John Wilson to the fold. It is terrific that the Instructor base is once again expanding which will help encourage new divers to share our love of cave diving.

Shortly I will be contacting all the Instructors with the purpose of organising a meeting in the New Year, either in person or virtual, to review our teaching/diving standards. This is an ongoing exercise to help ensure that we are still meeting or exceeding world standards across all levels.

Next thank you once again to Harry, Phil Croker, Tim Payne, JDZ, Ken Smith and all the others who helped

run yet another successful SROP over the AGM week-end. Whilst work commitments prevented me from being there, I understand that the feedback, as usual, was extremely positive.

Held this year at Englebrechts it gave participants a very real experience at stabilising and evacuating a diver from within the cave following a simulated accident. If you have never participated in the program I would encourage you to do so, particularly if you are planning a trip to the Nullarbor or any other remote location for that matter.

Lastly a reminder to all members to ensure that they are financially current and to carry their card with them when in the Mount. Please understand that diving any controlled site whilst un-financial will not only void your insurance cover but also that of the association and possibly put future access at risk. Remember to renew as the financial year end approaches and perhaps remind your regular buddies to do likewise.

Thanks,
Chris Edwards - Standards Director. #2247

Site Report

Kelvyn Ball

Welcome to the New Committee and a massive thank you to all the Interim Directors (Grant, Ben, Nat and Joe) who had a huge task on catching up on business as this was very time consuming for all.

I would like to thank Ben Walton (Vic State Rep) for his past work. He is stepping down. If there are any members who would be interested in fulfilling this role please get in contact with me.

TANK CAVE - can I get all AO's to please check that the water to the toilet is turned off before leaving the site and also to check the level on the holding tank (gauge located behind the tank) and if it is $\frac{3}{4}$ full please contact me as I will need to get it emptied. MEMBERS please leave toilet block clean at all times for the next person.

KILSBY - Please note - A no refund policy has been introduced for any cancellations 21 days prior to your booking.

ENGELBRECHTS - All divers need to report to Jan before diving if the café is open. If diving East extension in arvo slot - can you please text Grant or Myself your time in and expected return time and then also when you return. This is essential, as an emergency will be called if you do not return on time.

Trust everyone will have a fantastic summer of diving. Keep safe.

Kelvyn Ball - Site Director #3276.



Well, what a fantastic symposium and AGM this year. What a way to get back to an in-person event. Big shout out to all those who helped put the day together, from sponsor involvement (so much support for our members!), to catering, speaker scheduling, dive planning, venue booking, door prize photos, audio visual setup, it's a big day. Extra big thank you to Meg and Stephen who made sure everything on the day ran so seamlessly.

I'd also like to take a minute to acknowledge the excellent discussions had during the AGM. The desire to see our association and all that we do be made more accessible to members, to put in place the facilities to allow those just getting started to make connections really stood out. To build a more inclusive community is something we should aspire to and I will ensure this is considered in my approach to the administration of the portfolio.

A big thank you also to all those who put their hand up to serve on the National Committee, it was fantastic to see so many members volunteering their time to run our association.

Continuing the theme, I need to also thank all those who have served in the Business portfolio over the last 4 years, it has been great to see the improvements put in place, the reduction in effort to manage the ongoing administration of our operations.

On what can expect to see from me over the next two years, I am looking to continue work on the digital voting processes. Working with our officer holders and voting partners to ensure our processes enable you to elect the team you want. With a move back to in-person AGMs, it was interesting to be at my first "digital voting" announcement and see how things ran. There was further excellent comment at the AGM on the need to reform parts of our constitution around National Committee composition and I will take a lead on consultation and building a case for future change here.

Given our recent information security incident, I am also taking lead on a review of our security posture, developing a forward plan for improvement and maturing our resilience.

Our 50th anniversary is up next year and planning is already underway to make the most of the celebrations but expect to hear more about this one as we develop ideas. I will be reaching out in the new year for your input and any interest in helping out. Looking forward to a big 2023.

Cheers,
Mathew Rochford, Business Director. #4827

Australian Drysuit Repairs



Suppliers of Scuba Force - drysuits,
Light Monkey - pee valves,
She P - female urination solutions.

Facebook: @Australian Drysuit Repairs
Email: info@australiandrysuitrepairs.com.au
phone: 0404 84 5050
Based in Mount Gambier, SA

TECDIVEGEAR

**Dive Rite
Shearwater
Omniswivel
Light Monkey
Fourth Element**



www.tecdivegear.com.au

E: info@tecdivegear.com.au

0414 926 374

My First AGM

By Dave Berry

Being from WA, we can at times feel somewhat insulated from the CDAA. With all my cave diving done on the Nullarbor, I guess I've had a different outlook on it than what the rest of the country does. It's been long drives to get to a cave, and hard work hauling gear in/out. Weather ranges from stinking hot to near flood conditions and sleeping in a wet swag. When my mate Alex enquired whether I'd be interested in doing my advanced cave before the AGM, I jumped at the opportunity to spend a couple of weeks in The Mount to see what it was all about.

What can I say? How bloody nice is it to be able to back your car up to a cave, kit up, walk down some stairs and go for a splash, hang your gear up to dry, and then go to the pub for a feed?

The AGM was a great event with some really interesting presentations from Peter Buzzacott on French Caves, Ryan Kaczowski on Ground Penetrating Radar, Josh Richards on the Engelbrecht's East Extension, and Stephen Fordyce on his Australian caving record increase of 4 meters. All the presenters were really approachable and super enthusiastic to talk about all facets of their presentations.

Participating in the SROP ended up being another great experience. Most of the theory and planning were based around a hypothetical scenario on the far side of the rockpile in Toad Hall at Cocklebidy. The amount of time it would take to get an injured person to the hospital was a real eye-opener, it would be optimistic to get someone there in 2-3 days.

This really highlighted the necessity to be well prepared for an expedition like that and I believe it sunk in for everyone involved just how difficult and how many people would be

required to extract someone from a sump. A huge thank you to the course facilitators in Richard Harris, Tim Payne, Ken Smith, Phil Crocker, and John Dalla-Zuana.

What I enjoyed the most was the great sense of community over there, whether a chat over drinks after the AGM, working as a team during the SROP, the social night at the Habby, or conversations at dive sites/accommodation.

Everyone was warm, welcoming, and genuine, with a common love of cave diving. I think you may see a larger Sandgroper contingent at the 50th next year.



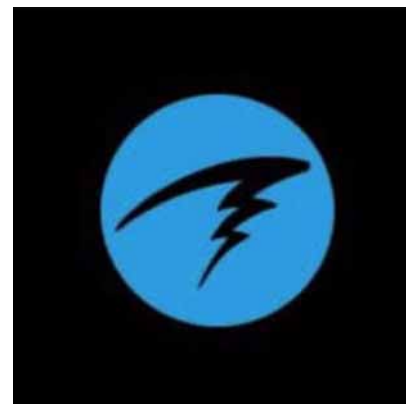
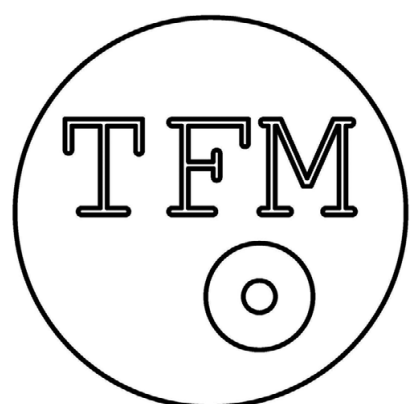
Dave Berry.

The CDAA sincerely wish to thank these sponsors who supported our 2022 AGM / Symposium weekend. Thank you for your support.



The CDAA sincerely wish to thank these sponsors who supported our 20223 AGM / Symposium weekend. Thank you for your support.

The CDAA sincerely wish to thank these sponsors who supported our 2022 AGM / Symposium weekend. Thank you for your support.



SROP Course AGM Weekend 2022

by Helen Spencer #5238

With COVID restrictions relaxed, the SROP course finally went ahead on the same weekend of the 2022 AGM.

On Day 1 we eagerly arrived at the SES headquarters and with introductions completed, the course content was delivered through a series of presentations and practical exercises by our instructors Phil Croker, Tim Payne, Ken Smith and Richard Harris.

Tim ran through a rescue planning exercise for Cocklebidy cave. It could literally take days to assemble a team and equipment to carry out an effective rescue. Wow!

Ken offered some great advice during his presentation, saying simply "don't get into trouble in the 1st place". He did say this after telling us of the numerous incidents he has been involved in, which was quite reassuring?

We set up the Michie radios and practised moving our 'victim' Darren on a stretcher around the car park. We laughed and joked, and I believe I recall the instructor's saying what a good job we did with the stretcher. Surely moving him across the uneven ground of the rock pile, in the dry section of Engelbrechts cave, wearing dry suits and in total darkness couldn't make this that much harder...

End of day 1 we all laughed our way to the Habby for a BBQ. One way to ensure your survival, Throw a great party!

Day 2 of the course, we arrived at 8.30am at Engelbrechts cave. Everyone was excited about the dive ahead and kit quickly filled the lawn area outside. The SES volunteers were in attendance.

Harry gathered the group together for a briefing and we are interrupted by a panicked Jan from Engelbrechts to inform us of an over-due diver. This is starting to feel real.

Sherryn assumed the role of Surface Operations Manager SOP, a key role in any rescue situation. Although the Police have overall control, the SOP has to liaise with all emergency services and offers support from a CDAA perspective.

A plan was formed, and we all move kit down to the bottom platform and the 'hasty team', Nino, Alex and Pat jumped in. This initial group of 3 divers were sent to locate the missing diver and report back.

About 10 minutes later, Nino emerged from the cave and described the critical situation. Darren, with the help of Instructors, Phil and Tim, had managed to wedge himself, fully kitted up, in a gap at the furthest most point of the rock pile. Seriously Darren?

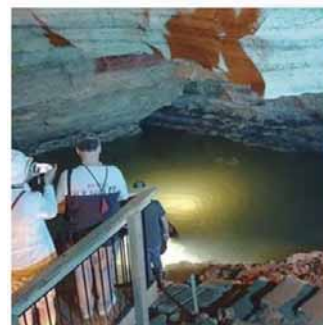
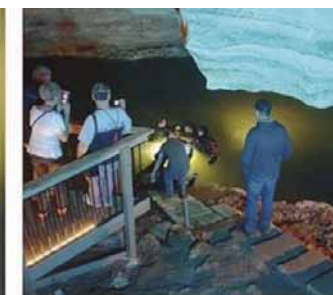
He had a suspected broken leg and wrist, was conscious but very vague and so it was assumed that there was a possible head injury/concussion.

The surface crew, guided by Harry and Ken (when they weren't making guest appearances in the guided tours or being interviewed by the ABC) worked well together - discussing options and Sherryn assigned roles based on divers' knowledge and experience.

Divers were sent in to put a substantial rope through the cave and remove the cave reel our initial responders (hasty team) were following. Also, a wire was run for the comms. Other divers, including our medic, Chloe, were tasked with taking in first aid supplies and a stretcher.

As I mentioned earlier, the SES were with us throughout. They provided guidance on stretcher manoeuvres, and it was interesting to question them about rescues and that chain of command in a real situation.

After 3 hours of staring at water that resembles Gouldens on a really bad day, urging a torch light to appear or the radio to crackle into life, the decision was taken to send in a 'runner' for a quick swim in, to find out what was happening with our



non-existent comms link, and report back to the SOP.

On return the diver reported that the lack of comms was due to the team not being able to locate all parts of the radio. However, the victim was now being kitted up for the final swim out. No ketamine or cables ties were used.

A very cold Darren was finally brought out of the cave, placed on a stretcher at the cave entrance and the SES volunteers came to evacuate him up to the second viewing platform. Job done.

What we learnt:

Don't get in trouble in the first place! Although that's easier said than done.

- Cave slowly and carefully.
- Don't push your limits.
- Have adequate equipment. Simple things like if you will be walking around a dry section of a cave, wear a helmet. It offers head protection and somewhere to mount a torch, keeping your hands free.
- When you assemble a team for a remote trip, know their skill set. Having someone with strong medical knowledge could be invaluable.
- Familiarise yourself with all equipment. Know where it is and how to use it.
- Most importantly, take it with you. If you don't have it, you can't use it.

Introducing Hope Berry, the CDAA's newest Publications Director

In past issues of Guidelines I interviewed CDAA members to get to know some of our fellow divers a little better.

Just a day before we went to print with this issue and with two pages to fill, I did a quick interview with the CDAA's newly appointed Publications Director from WA, Hope Berry.

1. Hope, where did you start diving, what got you into the sport and how soon were you introduced to Cave Diving?

I started diving in Perth in 2017. I was actually quite scared of the ocean and Sharks, so I decided to learn to get over my fear. I was introduced to cave diving in 2020, completing my Basic Cave course at Weebubbie.

2. What's your most passionate part of Cave diving, is it the gear, the depth, the enclosed spaces or something else?

Mainly the sense of adventure and exploration, especially in WA. It's a 12 to 14 hour road trip to the nearest diveable cave. A day or two of hauling gear in, before you even touch water. As well as the discipline required to successfully complete a cave dive. I find it very rewarding. I also swore I would never cave dive, but ended up completely addicted.

3. You're a photographer so tell us about your gear of choice, and your favourite dive for stunning shots... it doesn't have to be a Cave dive!!

My choice of gear was focused on wide angle style shooting. I predominantly shoot larger animals (Sharks, whales and the odd diver) as well as wrecks, reefs, and of course caves. I chose the Nikon D850 because of its versatility in capturing high quality wide angle images

while still having the ability to do heavy crops and retain clarity in the image. I couldn't choose just one favourite site to shoot, they're all beautiful and unique in their own ways.

4. What led you to become the Publication Director and why?

Initially I was going to wait until the next round of elections to put my name forward, but a gentle (or not so) push from another passionate diver put me in the right direction and here we are. For me, I believe photography and media can be an incredibly powerful tool, to show people who may never see the inside of a cave, or even underwater, what we see, and why we love it and hopefully encourage conservation and the same passion we have.

5. What's the diving future for you Hope, Instructor, Travel, Tech?

Anything that involves me diving! My current goal is to continue on the deep tech path and as many caves as possible. A sneaky trip via the Nullarbor to the mount for the 50th next year and a long, long bucket list of dive travel.



Come stay at the Divers Church, Kongorong

The Huge open plan living room and kitchen is warmed by a wood burning stove with all the cooking appliances you could ever need.



- Several sofas, LCD television, DVD, Stereo
- Bunks for 10, 1 double upstairs
- Doonas and pillows supplied
- Drying areas – indoor and out
- Plenty of parking
- Trestle tables for teaching/gear setup
- Large outdoor table and bench seats
- Private double downstairs
- 2 spacious bathrooms
- Compressors welcomed
- Gas BBQ
- Whiteboard

**Bring 6 friends
and stay for free!**

\$32 pp per night.

E: deb@bbkk.com.au Ph: 0419 882 800

www.debwilliams.com.au



Diving the Magical Lot Caves: A First Timer's Perspective

Story by Kerrie Burow. Photos as credited.

Breathtaking karst caves peppered between charming French villages and stunning river valleys, the Lot district in the central area of southern France is one of the most famous cave diving areas in the world. The three rivers in this area, Dordogne, Lot and Cele, feed dozens of caves including some of the deepest siphons in Europe – many of which are diveable.

In early October 2022, I had the opportunity to attend a multi-day cave photography workshop in the Lot. The workshop was being run by cave diving instructors and photographers JP Bresser and Kirill Egorov. It was open to any diver with at least a cave-level rating.

Having heard so much about cave diving in the Lot, long being an admirer of the cave photography of JP and Kirill, and itching to start spending regular time in Europe again after a few years of closed Australian borders due to Covid, I jumped at the opportunity.

Getting to the Lot from Australia:

My journey to the Lot from Sydney consisted of three flights: Sydney to Hong Kong, Hong

Kong to Paris, and then a domestic flight from Paris to Toulouse in southern France.

At Toulouse airport, I had arranged to pick up a small hire car to drive the approximately two hours north to **The Cave to Be dive shop**, where the photography workshop was being held, and for daily travel between my accommodation, the dive shop and the caves sprinkled around the Lot district.



Besides a few airport transfers at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport on my biyearly trips to Europe, I had never been to France before and had never taken French language reading lessons. It had also been a very long time since I'd driven on the other, "wrong", side of the road.

Picking it up very quickly again after a couple of laps of the airport carpark, I took off north with just a Google Maps voice to direct me to Gramat, the town closest to the Cave to Be.

The Cave to Be - The Mothership:

Gramat is a small town in central, southern France with a population of about 3,500 and, much like Mount Gambier, is surrounded by farmland. The town has a very large supermarket and every facility you may need during your stay.

The Cave to Be is an excellent TDI / IANTD / GUE dive facility on the outskirts of Gramat run year-round by well-known cave diving instructor Olivier "Oli" Bertieaux.

As well as offering cave diving courses from beginner to Advanced to CCR, it's fully stocked with cave diving gear for sale (Halcyon, XDeep, Shearwater, Santi, Tecline, Aqualung) as well as equipment rentals (tanks, scooters, etc), guided dive services and an excellent filling station offering trimix, nitrox and oxygen.

The Cave to Be can also arrange accommodation in a multi-level farmhouse just a two-minute walk from the dive shop. This is where I stayed,

along with the other photography workshop participants. The large farmhouse is split into small apartments with all the basics (and more) you may need, including excellent showers and Wi-fi. There's a very large BBQ area with a wonderfully long outdoor table, parking, a basic dryroom for drysuits and plenty of clothes-line space. It's very much like a French country version of the Habitat in Mount Gambier.

The Workshop:

The cave photography workshop ran for three days at The Cave to Be. It was a truly international mix of participants with four Europeans (each from a different country), a cave diver based in Dubai and myself coming from Australia. The divers were also a mix of cave to advanced cave level, sidemount, backmount and CCR divers.

We spent half of each day in the classroom learning cave photography theory and techniques from JP and Kirill. As usual, I found the technical lessons, especially those on lighting, the most interesting as well as the most challenging.

At the end of each classroom session, we would be given an assignment to focus on during the next cave dive. We chose our buddies for the day, decided on a cave to dive, and then went off to different caves to practice the assignment underwater.

The next day, together we would critique the photography results from the cave dive and dis-



Ressel Cave carpark

cuss what worked and what didn't. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to get targeted instruction on areas of my own cave photography I wanted to improve as well as a challenge to master new techniques introduced in the workshop.

The Cave Dives:

I was able to dive in three different caves while in the Lot: Source du Marchepied, Emergence du Ressel, and Gouffre de Cabouy.

Source du Marchepied is, like many of the caves in the Lot, about a 25-minute drive from The Cave to Be. The cave is accessed via a small entrance on the edge of a river. There's a 30-metre restriction at the entrance which has only just become possible to do in backmount though it's still more comfortable for sidemount diving. After the restriction, the cave opens up into a beautiful passageway with water so clear, it's like diving in gin. This was my first cave dive there, and I must admit I was so enthralled by how beautiful it was that I didn't take many photos!

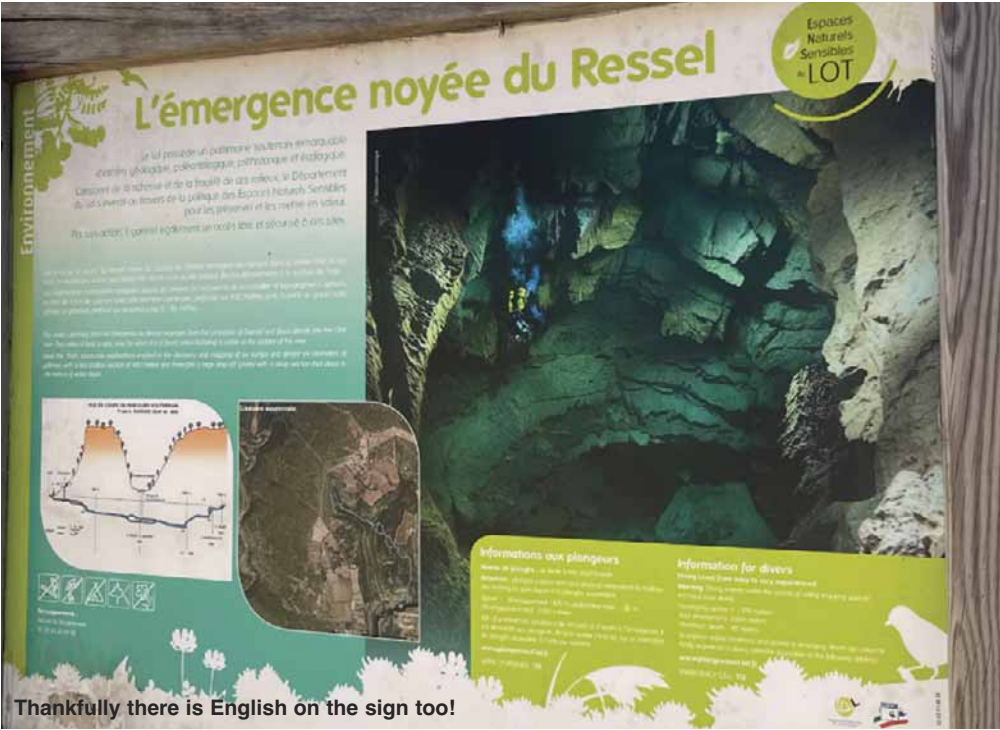
The next cave I dived was Emergence du Ressel - a very large cave and probably the most well-known cave in the Lot as it's also considered the training cave.

Ressel is very close to the village of Marcilhac, and the cave begins in the Cele riverbed. The size of the car park is a testament to how popular this cave is - both times I was there, on week-days, the parking lot was almost full of customised "cave vans" - the vehicle of choice for European cave divers. Not an Australian-style "cave ute" to be seen.

Entry to Ressel is easy: walk your gear about 100m from the carpark to the edge of the river, climb down a few steps into the river, then a

short surface swim until you're over the entrance of the cave. You then drop down to about 8 metres and follow the slope into the cave. The entrance, and the passageways I dived in, are quite wide, making the cave popular for scootering. It's the go-to cave for cave divers of all levels due to its multiple long passages. Dives here can be at the beginner level to the very technical. This means it can get quite busy, especially just inside the entrance where we saw a few cave classes happening. Being focused on doing the photography workshop assignments on my dives here and not penetrating too far, I really look forward to diving this cave again as I only experienced a small part of the adventures it offers.

Finally, Gouffre de Cabouy. I actually dived this cave after the workshop. It was my last cave on the trip, and the one which left the biggest impres-

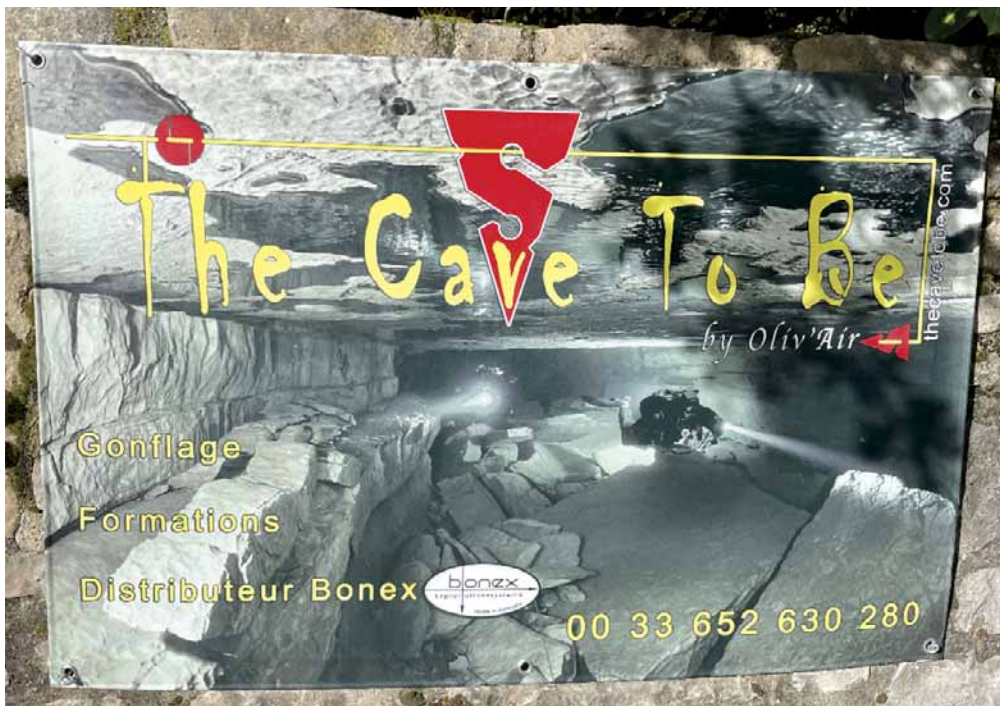




Cabouy Cave Diver - Photo Kerrie Burow



Ressel Cave - photo by Roel Ter Heide



Ressel Cave - Photo by Ingrid Ølberg

sion (and an itch to return).

The entry to the cave is via a short surface swim to the opposite riverbank, where there is a buoy indicating the cave below. Dropping down, we followed a rope in zero visibility to the cave entrance, after which the visibility started to clear significantly. The cave then drops to about 20 metres after which it becomes shallower, opening up into a huge passageway that seems endless. I remember thinking how it seemed like a semi-trailer truck could be driven through it. I was told Cabouy is an example of a "Power Cave" and it's easy to see why! "Epic" is another word to describe it.

What were the highlights of the trip?

- The workshop with JP Bresser and Kirill Egorov was excellent. I managed to correct a few technical areas of cave photography I'd been struggling with. I also learnt quite a few new techniques I've already started to implement on my dives in Mount Gambier.

- The other cave divers on the course - friendly, inclusive, and fun! I really look forward to more cave dives with them the next time I'm in Europe.

- The caves themselves. Just breathtaking with, mostly, wide and long passageways and very good to excellent visibility.

- Entries and exits for Ressel and Cabouy were extremely easy. Marchepied was a bit more difficult but certainly nothing compared to some of the cavern/ cave dive sites in Mount Gambier.

- Temperatures - in and out of the water. Surprisingly, the caves were no colder than the caves in Mount Gambier with an average of 14c. And the topside temperatures in early October were perfect - warm, dry, sunny days. I was in a t-shirt and thongs during the day. Take a jumper for the evenings if you're diving at this time of year.

- The drives to and from the caves - usually 30-minute car journeys weaving in and out of beautiful small French villages, oozing history and tucked into river valleys. Passing by stunning Rocamadour, an historic town built into the side of a limestone cliff, while driving back from a cave dive is something I'll always remember.

- The French language - I don't speak or read any French, and it was never a problem like I heard it would be in rural France. All the European cave divers I met spoke excellent English. Many non-diver locals were happy to speak English to me, and non-English speaking locals were very kind and patient with my attempts to communicate with them. As for menus and other signs, even the non-French speaking Europeans I was diving with used Google Translate.

- The food and wine are wonderful! It's a foodie paradise!



Notes for the next trip:

- Next time, I'll drive directly to the Lot from Paris (a 6-hour drive) and save myself the third flight and the 2-hour drive from Toulouse.

- Take a thicker undergarment - I was mostly fine in my Santi 190 undergarment, but most divers do use a thicker undergarment. I expect to be doing longer dives next time (when I don't have a daily photography assignment and want to explore the caves more) and will probably get colder.

- Wear drygloves. Almost no one I saw diving in the Lot wears wet gloves - especially with the fingers cut off like I do. When I did get cold on a dive, it was often my fingers which suffered.



Marchepied Cave - Photo by Max Masu



Ressel Cave - Photo by Max Masu



The German 7 of Scapa Flow

Story and Photos by Kurt Storms.

Who wouldn't want to go diving at Scapa Flow? I had these thoughts for years. But due to circumstances I had not made it there yet, until a friend of mine, Stijn Moortgat, sent me a text message to ask if I would like to go on a trip to the far north of Scotland for diving the famous German 7.

Of course I did not have to think long, and after about 4 hours Stijn had a charter full. The charter we were going to dive with was the MV Huskyn, with Emily Turton as skipper. Wow, I had never seen such a diving charter. The boat is finished to perfection, and specially developed by and for divers.

The German Fleet of Scapa Flow:

Scapa Flow is a huge natural harbour on the Orkney Islands with over 100 square miles of relatively calm water within its boundaries. The islands were used as protection for the British fleet in both World Wars. With the signing of the Armistice, the German fleet was quartered at Scapa with a minimal crew until its fate could be decided. Admiral von Reuter mistakenly thought that war was about to break out and therefore gave the order to scuttle the fleet on 19 June 1919. This was quickly carried out while the British surveillance ships were out on an exercise and

could not stop them. In the end, 51 ships went to the bottom of Scapa Flow; others were grounded to prevent them from sinking.

After the war, most of the ships were salvaged for scrap, but seven remain submerged in Scapa Flow's waters forever.

Scapa Flow is one of the jewels in the crown of British scuba diving. The remnants of the German fleet still lie in the current, heavily protected from any salvage or diver interference. Their legacy is some of the best scuba diving in the world, the behemoths of battleships rising from 47m to 20m, guns pointed into the green, seemingly on perpetual patrol. The battered cruisers on their flanks, their superstructures slowly falling to the seabed after more than 100 years under water.

How To get to Scapa:

Getting to Scapa Flow is a logistical challenge for us from the mainland of Europe.

I went together with my regular diving partner Willem and my wife Caroline with the van.

The route was as follows: we drove to 'De Hoek of Holland' and there we took the ferry to Harwich. This trip took about 6 hours, so we could rest a bit before our trip to the far north. We had to drive about 12 hours before we arrived in Scarbster. Here we already met another part of the team that had come via a different route. In Scarbster we took the ferry to Stromness, this was a 90 minute trip.

The accommodation is in a cottage, which is equipped for 12 people. It has all the facilities you

could want. And the big advantage is that it is only a 3 minutes walk from the Harbor where our boat MV Huskyn is moored.

Our equipment consisting of rebreathers and OC double sets could be put on the boat that evening, so we had time the next day to get an extensive boat-briefing and preparing the rebreathers. I will dive this week my Divesoft Liberty SM.

At about 8:30am each day, Emily left with the boat. The dive sites were always about 1 hour away, giving Emily the opportunity each time to

give her extensive briefings on the wrecks. The knowledge this lady has about the history of and about Scapa is unprecedented. I would only want to go out with her for this. Especially since most of the group are cave divers, the knowledge and recognition of parts is very difficult for us. But by describing everything nicely, making routes how to dive the wreck, taking nice pictures. Every dive was a pleasure to do. Yes, we even recognise parts, which otherwise would be just a piece of metal.



The famous wrecks we have dived are:

‘SMS Dresden’

The Dresden lies on its port side at a depth varying from 23m at the bow to 38m at the stern. From the surface to the hull is about 20-22m.

History:

SMS Dresden was a light cruiser of the Cöln class, one of only two ships of this class to be completed. The other was her sister ship SMS Cöln, which also lies on the seabed of Scapa Flow.

SMS Dresden was built by Howaldtswerke in Kiel and launched on 25 April 1917. She was a replacement for the earlier SMS Dresden, which had sunk off Robinson Crusoe Island off Chile after the Battle of the Falklands in 1915.

Dresden and her sister ship SMS Cöln were completed during WWI.

After the surrender of Germany in 1918, the SMS Dresden became one of the last two ships to be interned at Scapa Flow. Due to a turbine failure, the SMS Dresden was unable to sail to Scapa in November along with the rest of the High Seas Fleet. Instead, the cruiser arrived at Scapa Flow on 6 December 1918, badly damaged.

‘SMS Cöln’

The Cöln lies on her starboard side in 34-36m, with the top of the wreck at about 22m.

She is in very good condition with plenty of life and very little current, the shotline is tied in at about 22m making it a very easy dive.

History:

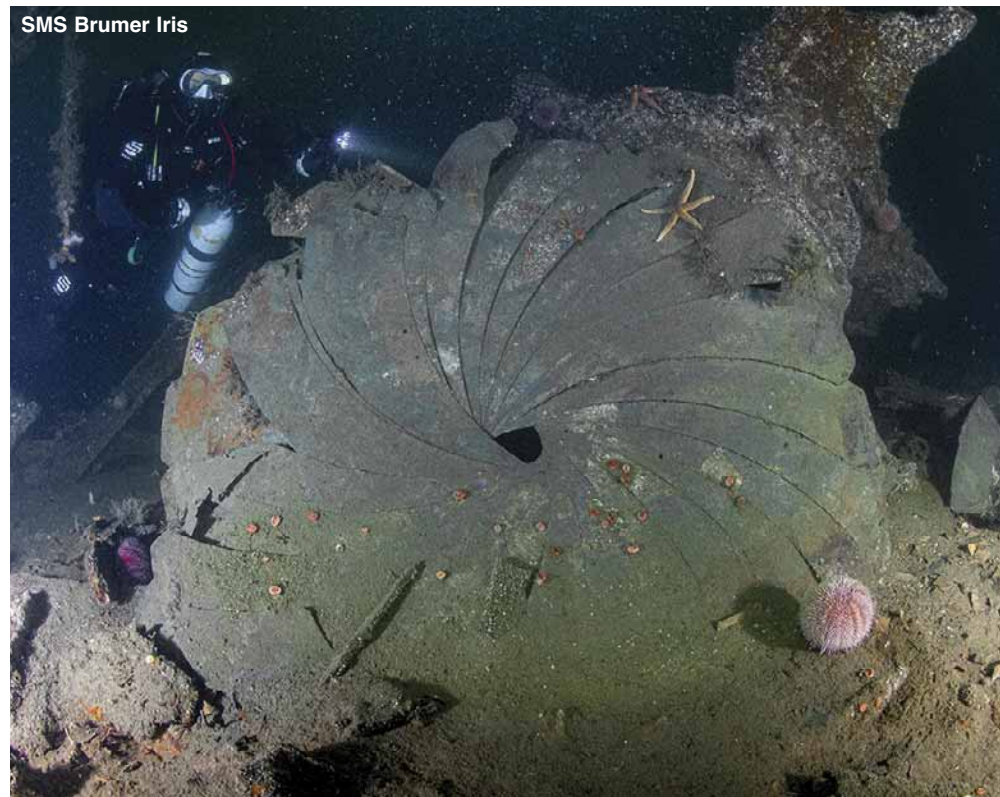
SMS Cöln was a light cruiser of the Cöln class and one of only two ships of this class to be completed. The other is her sister ship SMS Dresden. She was built in Hamburg by Blohn & Voss as construction number 247. The construction of SMS Cöln started in 1915 and she was launched on 5 October 1916. She was the second ship to bear this name, the previous Cöln (1909) having sunk during the Battle of Heligoland Bight, the first naval battle of WWI on 28 August 1914.

There has been some confusion over the years about the spelling, is it Cöln or Köln? Köln is the name for the city of Cologne, Cöln is the correct spelling, as can clearly be seen on the ship's bell in the Lyness museum on Hoy. SMS Cöln saw little action during the war. On 21 November 1918, the SMS Cöln arrived in the Firth of Forth and then sailed further north for internment at Scapa Flow.

SMS Karlsruhe backside canon



SMS Brumer Iris



SMS Karlsruhe - what is left of a turbine

‘SMS Karlsruhe’

The Karlsruhe lies on her starboard side with a heel of about 45 degrees, she rests at a maximum depth of 27 metres and rises to about 16 metres.

She is the shallowest and most broken up of all the German fleet wrecks, but she is also the most beautiful with lots of fish and marine life.

History:

The SMS Karlsruhe was a light cruiser of the Königsberg class, built in Wilhelmshaven at Kaiserliches werf as construction number 41. She was named Karlsruhe after her namesake which sank in the Caribbean in 1914.

SMS Karlsruhe had three sister ships, Emden, Königsberg and Nürnberg. Karlsruhe was commissioned into the High Seas Fleet in November 1916. She served in the II Scouting Group alongside SMS Königsberg and Nürnberg. The ships patrolled the Helgoland Bight in the North Sea, where they protected minesweepers from British light troops.

The Karlsruhe was the only one of her class to be successfully sunk by the Germans, as the SMS Nürnberg and Emden were both sunk by the British. The wreck was sold in 1962 and partially broken up between 1963 and 1965.

‘SMS Kronprinz Wilhelm’

The ‘Seiner majestät Schiff (SMS) Kronprinz lies tilted in 38 metres deep water with port side up and rises to 12 metres at its shallowest.

History:

The Kronprinz Wilhelm was initially named Kronprinz, and later renamed Kronprinz Wilhelm in 1918 in honour of Crown Prince Wilhelm. The ship was a König class Battlecruiser, one of four ships of this class. The other three were König, Grosser Kurfürst and Markgraf.

The Kronprinz was built in Kiel in 1911 and launched in February 1914. In March 1917, the Kronprinz was also rammed by sister ship Grosser Kurfürst, which was beginning to become a bit of a habit. The collision left tons of water flowing and forced her back to the dry dock in Wilhelmshaven for repairs.

The Kronprinz took part in the Battle of Jutland, and was part of the vanguard fleet, she suffered no damage or loss of life.

‘SMS Markgraf’

Probably one of the most impressive dives you'll ever make, from a maximum depth of 47 metres at the bow, to 24 metres at its shallowest. This really puts the scale of these things into perspective, with her twin rudders being 3.5 metres high, this is probably Scapas most iconic wreck.

History:

Seiner Majestät Schiff (SMS) Markgraf was built in Germany as No 186 by A. G. Weser in Bremen, to the same specifications as her sister ship König, Kronprinz and Grosser Kurfürst.

She was the third of the four Konig-class battle-

SMS Markgraf Turbine



SMS Brummer compass mount



SMS Markgraf Rudder

ships, carrying a crew of 1136 officers and sailors. She was launched on 4 June 1913.

Two years later in 1916, her six 3.4-inch guns were removed under the bridge section, making room for additional accommodation and for additional radio rooms.

She took part in the Battle of Jutland under the command of Kapitän Seiferling. During the battle she was hit by three 15-inch shells, the first two did not explode, but the third tore a huge hole in her side, just behind her rear turret.

‘SMS König’

Today this wreck lies completely upside down with its bow in northern direction. The König lies in 40 metres deep water with the hull rising to 24 metres, offering something for almost every level of diver.

She is the most damaged of all the German fleet wrecks due to the extensive salvage operations by Nundy's (Metal Industries). This makes it a very interesting dive, as it is the only wreck where we can see the inner workings of these mighty battleships.

History:

Built in 1911 and launched in 1913, the König was one of four König-class battleships in the Imperial High Seas Fleet. She was commissioned in 1914 and led the fleet in the Battle of Jutland.

She began her life with a bit of bad luck in December 1914, first by running aground in the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, and then by being rammed in the ass by the sister ship Grosser Kurfürst.

The König was involved in the heaviest fighting during the Battle of Jutland. At 19.32 hours on the first day she was hit and listed to port.

She suffered 10 heavy and six medium hits, 45 men were killed including one officer and another 27 men were wounded. On December 6th 1918, the König and the cruiser Dresden were the last two ships to arrive in Scapa Flow for their internment.

‘SMS Brummer’

The Brummer lies on her starboard side in a water depth of about 36 metres, rising to a depth of about 22 metres. A nice easy dive for all levels with very little current.

History:

The Brummer was a fast mine-laying cruiser and was lighter armoured and less heavily armed than the light cruisers. She could carry 400 mines, two to four times as many as the light cruisers, and was very manoeuvrable.

She was built by A. G. Vulcan in Stettin as construction number 422. She was launched on 11 December 1915.

In October 1917, the Brummer was one of two ships used to intercept a British convoy en route from Bergen to Lerwick. She was chosen for this task because of her high speed, and the fact that she resembled a British cruiser.

In preparation for the attack, the crew painted the ship a dark grey to further camouflage her from looking like a British ship.

SMS Brummer arrived at Scapa Flow for internment in November 1918.



Afterward:

The wrecks are enormous. A pleasure to dive on them, but time has already done some damage. However, these will always be beautiful dives.

Especially with all the information we got from the crew "Duncan, Jeffrey and Emily", this week was one we will never forget.

Contacts:

Emily Turton - **Huskyan Dive Charters**
<https://www.huskyan.com>

venture **HEAT**

Over 5 hrs Heat
Rated to 100m
Wet or Drysuits
Remote Control
3 Haptic Settings
Twin 5.2ah
Lithium Batteries
Back and Front
Heat Panels
Machine
Washable

32W
Waterproof
Heated
VEST

www.firststage.com.au

Off the Track - Flores & Komodo

Story and Photos by Dave Bryant

Back in the early 1990's after completing my apprenticeship in pre-press around the same time I learnt to dive, my dream job was to work for Sportdiving magazine. Every few months my employers Barry Andrewartha and Belinda Barnes would travel to a new location, not always for diving, but a 'remote' location which they would write a regular column titled... 'Off The Track'. One location was Flores in Indonesia and to this day I have always wanted to go there myself.

About Flores...

In my mind, Flores was a 'mystical' destination. The 'adventure' of just getting to a location like Flores meant traversing islands in a beaten up 4WD or taking an old timber boat across the sea. The scuba diving in the far east of Flores was said to be 'out of this world'. You could be one of the first divers to experience what we now call 'untouched reefs'.

My first trip to Indonesia in 2002 was to Bali for my brothers wedding. I booked a day trip to Tulamben to dive the Liberty wreck. It was simply spectacular! I've been back 5 times since and only now had the guts to see more of Indonesia.

Why did we go to Flores?...

Flores is a huge group of islands and in the west is the mystical location of Komodo National Park. The capital city of Flores is Labuan Bajo. You soon realise Labuan Bajo and Komodo have become an extremely popular destination for Liveaboard adventures, both for scuba divers and relaxed adventurers who want a few days of luxury.

Miranda and I were drawn to the 'luxury' style of adventure. It still offered daily snorkelling but it did

have a relaxed style about it rather than a 'dive, dive, dive' itinerary. I know, you're saying 'but you've dreamt of diving Flores for 3 decades and you go there to eat, drink and snorkel'... what the! Any way, our 4 day liveaboard was very relaxing and the snorkelling always made me wish I had a scuba tank on my back.

The Attraction...

Komodo is the main attraction... the Dragons of which you see for around 30 minutes (or maybe not at all). Labuan Bajo is just the departure point, otherwise it is a tired seaside village which has dozens of new hotels, BnB's and westernised shops, cafes, etc. The surprising thing is, there are many brand new super hotels being built here, on cliff faces, and one overkill hotel right on the waters edge which supposedly was built by the Indonesian Government just for the G20 Conference. Maybe they think the tourism will boom. Either way there's lots of money being invested here because the diving and snorkelling are stunning!!

What about the Diving!...

Unfortunately I never got to scuba dive, not even once. We snorkelled 3 times every day and witnessed world class reefs and then wished I had done the liveaboard diving trip instead, but I can always go back. In Labuan Bajo there are dozens of dive stores and they all offer liveaboard trips as well as day trips with 2-3 dives. The distances they travel to get to the actual dive sites means very fast boats and early mornings but it is well worth it.

I only have pictures shot with my my GoPro4 that illustrate the diversity and brilliance of the coral reefs so I can only 'imagine' that seeing it from 50 feet under would have been more spectacular. The general destinations our boat visited meant we were snorkelling on fringing reefs, jetties and shallow cays but every time we could see down a

drop off and it looked amazing!

The diving attractions here include Manta Rays, Turtles, wall and drift dives... what's the difference between that and the Coral Sea I hear you say?... well that's just it I guess, but it's also about seeing the Dragons and climbing Padar Island at first light. And of course there's no better way to do it than from a liveaboard.

Our boat for 4 days...

I searched on the internet a few months earlier and found this spectacular vessel called Samara. Now that we have been to Labuan Bajo and seen the hundreds of other similar vessels, all of them are pretty much the same - it's just a matter of how well they are marketed with spectacular photos and drone shots. Samara is very luxurious but each boat here has it's own pro's and con's. Samara had a lovely shaded area on the bow in front of the saloon while many other boats were open to the sky for guests who just wanted to be 'in the sun' and lets face it there are so many tourists who just want to be high up on a sundeck fubbing on their mobiles watching the world go by.

Samara accommodates 12 people in 6 cabins. The food was always plentiful, lots of fish and chicken for dinners, simple breakfasts and damn good lunches. We never starved. They did have a cappuccino machine which was free and I have never drunk so much coffee after every snorkel.

Onboard they offered masks and

snorkels and basic closed-heel fins. The dinghy could take everyone at one time for snorkel trips. The bonus of Samara was an onboard photographer who was always taking pictures onboard, on shore excursions and from his drone as well, and two weeks after our trip Samara emailed me a link to a G-Drive where I was able to access all photos and videos, some of which I used in my own video edit. The photos were all complimentary.

Accommodation in Labuan Bajo...

There are literally dozens of accommodation options in LB. On our first night we opted for a cheaper (older style) hotel called Centro Bajo which was away from the town centre, but for just \$40 a night it came with free shuttle from the airport and a really great buffet style breakfast. We learned that the hotel caters to many businessmen who travel throughout Flores so the hotel provides a really awesome breakfast.



An hour before dawn we hiked Padar Island to watch the sunrise.

Accommodation in Labuan Bajo...

There are literally dozens of accommodation options in LB. On our first night we opted for a cheaper (older style) hotel called Centro Bajo which was away from the town centre, but for just \$40 a night it came with free shuttle from the airport and a really great buffet style breakfast. We learned that the hotel caters to many businessmen who travel throughout Flores so the hotel provides a really awesome breakfast.

We unfortunately made the error of booking another hotel for \$110 a night called Seaesta which is right in town near the Muslim Mosque for 4am prayers and at the hotel they played live music 3 nights a week til midnight. Fortunately the two nights we were there it was quiet but for \$100+ you'd think you would get breakfast in the price, but oh no. I wished I had stayed at Centro Bajo for our last two nights. Oh well.



Jetties servicing 5 star resorts are a great snorkel but an even better dive!

As we walked around the town we discovered there are so many Homestays, BnB's and dive shops with accommodation. In my opinion Centro Bajo was hard to beat. It was a 15 minute walk to town but it was quiet, cheap and the staff made you feel welcome, unlike the bigger hotels where it was just a cattle truck.

Other Costs - National Park Fees...

If you visit the National Park there is a daily entry fee. Weekends and weekdays have different fees. Our day in the Park to walk on Padar Island and see the dragons set us back 550,000 rupiah or \$55.00 AUD each. National Parks are proposing a hefty one-off \$250 USD (annual) fee, but even if you were only there for one day you might still pay the fee. Local workers went on strike just days before we arrived to protest against the price hike, and so far the existing fee structure remains.

Best time to visit Flores...

We travelled in peak season. July and August command the highest prices but by November at the start of the wet season the prices drop 20% on average. Another positive, the dive sites have less visitors and places like Manta Point (of which there are two of in the island group) have much larger aggregations of Mantas. We were told that typically you'll see 50+ mantas swimming in sync from November thru to March, which would be so awesome to see!



The Costs on Samara...

Our 4 day / 3 night trip was \$1250 AUD per person including pick up from our hotel and drop off on the last day. Each day has a similar layout with shore excursions, walks and snorkels... In between you can relax, check your emails with free wifi, snooze, sip coffee or just watch the world go by.

Getting to Flores...

There are daily flights by various carriers from Denpasar to Labuan Bajo. We flew Batik Air for \$250pp AUD return. It's a 55 minute flight. The airport is only 3km from town and a one way taxi costs 50,000 rupiah or around \$5.00 though many of the motels offer a courtesy shuttle if you pre-organise and book your accommodation directly.

Taxi's and general Transport...

There is an Uber equivalent in Indonesia called Gojek. Download the App to your phone, it's a no brainer and so easy... it just works!



Time to eat an unsuspecting tourist!



Samara is the middle vessel. Below: Sunsets here are spectacular every evening!



What Travel Insurance doesn't cover?...

Scooters are more popular than ever but Travel Insurance won't cover you if you have an accident, so we just chose to get taxis using the GoJek app. Yes life is to be lived and Bali seems to be a place more people are living and loving... the new breed of influencers, social junkies, etc. Bali is such a great place to visit right now and with places like Flores just an hour's flight away it makes for a great dive holiday!

Other important considerations...

From everything I have learnt about travelling to Indonesia is that not everything goes as planned, but if you don't worry about it, you will have a great time... because things like traffic are pretty much always busy, BUT, taxis are cheap, food is cheap and you can stay in a 5 star hotel for \$150 a night or a 2 star for just \$30 with breakfast. In Amed on Bali's east coast we stayed for \$35 a night on the beach, with breakfast and bbq fish for dinner!! The snorkelling and diving here is awesome too, and the Liberty wreck is just 20km up the road!

If you want to see my edited video, look for my channel by typing in [seapicsdavebryant](#) on YouTube and you'll see my Komodo video. I hope it inspires you to have a dive trip that doesn't feature any caves... but there is actually some good sea caves off Candi Dasa, but that's another story! Dave Bryant.

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 – Grant Pearce	0438 833 103
State Emergency Services	132 500	CDAA Site Director – Kelynn Ball	0428 842 259
Mt Gambier Hospital	8721 1200	CDAA SAR Officer – Richard Harris	0417 177 830

CDAA INSTRUCTORS

NAME	Basic Cave	Cave	Adv. Cave	NAME	Basic Cave	Cave	Adv. Cave
NEW SOUTH WALES				VICTORIA Continued			
 FEATONBY, Tim (CDAA 3327) Worworing Heights, NSW Mob: 0402 129 253 E: tim.featonby@hotmail.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 DALE, Steve (CDAA 3926) Mob: 0468 417 211 Email: info@extremewatersport.com.au	Yes	Yes	
 Ryan Duchatel CDAA 4983 Mobile: 0419 268 714 E: ryan@totalimmersiondiving.com.au	Yes			 EDWARDS, Chris (CDAA 2247) Mob: 0417 116 372 Email: chrisedwards01@me.com	Yes		
SOUTH AUSTRALIA				 LEE, Hee Man (CDAA 5064) Mob: 0413 422 850 E: hfclee@hotmail.com		Yes	
 BISHOP, Damian (CDAA 4738) Mob: 0433 345 743 E: Damian.bishop@live.com.au	Yes			 MONACO, Rubens (CDAA 1731) Mob: 0413 429 533 E: info@idcscuba.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes
 PAYNE, Timothy (CDAA 2640) Mob: 0448 147 927 E: Tim@diveessentials.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 WILSON, John (CDAA 4283) Mob: 0408 030 401 E: john@baycityscuba.com	Yes		
VICTORIA				WESTERN AUSTRALIA			
 BARCLAY, Gary (CDAA 1735) Mob: 0407 527 921 E: garinda@bigpond.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 BICANIC, Josip (CDAA 4691) Mob: 0412 571 779 Email: joseph_b@me.com	Yes	Yes	
 BOWMAN, Jane (CDAA 1880) Mob: 0407 566 455 E: janelbowman@hotmail.com	Yes	Yes	Yes	 PAYNTER, Geoff (CDAA 3784) Mob: 0407 445 112 E: gpaynter60@bigpond.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
 CLARIDGE, Linda (CDAA 2214) Mob: 0408 052 070 E: garinda@tpgi.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes				
 DALLA-ZUANNA, John (CDAA 236) Mob: 0407 887 060 E: jdz@paintandcustom.com.au	Yes	Yes	Yes				