

# SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS

OCTOBER 1981





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

Well, another year has drawn to a close and I hope all members will be present at the Annual General Meeting on the 20-7-8. for the election of the new committee.

Looking back over the year's activities, one of the highlights for me was the achievement by Bob Smith of Life Membership. Certainly a well deserved award just based on Bob's work this year.

In another vein, an event that also sticks in mind is Terry and Audrey Mansfield's devotion to the task in hand to the exclusion of all else (enclusing Ferries) This fine example also paid dividends for Brenda Taylor as evidently, Dick finally got serious instead of mucking around.

On the Dive scene, it's pleasing to see new members along at the dives and even more pleasing to see the old members helping out. Apparently the policy of having a dive the second week after the meeting is a popular one judging by the roll ups. Some trips didn't work out earlier in the year, mainly due to poor organization and communication, but as we progressed these problems tended to lessen.

Most of the dives we've had are oldies but goodies, such as the Birchie, Jervis Bay, Tuggerah, Bass Point, Undolla etc, (wonder how all these wrecks got in?) Water conditions have been good and lets hope they continue (have'nt heard about 'THE DIVE'? ask Martin) Another pleasing aspect is that socializing after the dive also appears to be on the upsurging and no doubt has contributed to a few late dinners on Sunday nights.

Socially it's been a very hectic time with some of the highlights being the Xmas party, 'Singing in the Rain' night at the Smith's and naturally the Audio Visual Night at Revesby Workers'. Unfortunately I missed out on the 'Old Timers' Night at the Harpers' place, but from all accounts quite a few old members were there.

Undoubtly the highlight of the year was the Photographic Competition at Bankstown Sports Club. What can one say about it, a superb effort by Pat Nanly, Bob Smith and Tim Long in the organization of the event and a superb effort by all club members in getting people to come along and readily lending their assistance on the night and make all the people feel welcome. I've heard nothing but praise about the whole evening and some entrants in the competition expressed amazement in receiving their entries back before the presentation, Well done Pat.

I feel I should particularly point out to members, two committee members for their fine work over the year, and I refer to Lyn Manly and Brenda Taylor. Both members do a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes, are always cheerful and nothing is too much trouble for them, a fine effort and gratefully appreciated ladies.

Our Treasurer Mark Livermore also did a sterling job, and thankfully has not left town after the Photographic Competition, although I hear he's buying a new house.

My personal thanks also to Garry Ryan for the guidance and encouragement given over the year, for the printing of the programmes and newsletter, and to all club members for their support.

The year has been a reflection on the efforts of the club as a whole and the willing co-operation of club members to work together.

I like to wish the new committee an even better year.

Regards,

RICK LATIMER.

# **SOUTH PACIFIC DIVER'S CLUB - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

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Held at Bankstown Sports Club on Monday, 20th July, 1981.

The new Committee for 1981-82 was elected:

President:	Rick Latimer, 42 Flinders Rd. Georges Hall.	Ph. 726 7818
Secretary:	Diane North, 132 Aitchison Street, Crows Nest.	Ph. 438 1951
Treasurer:	Mark Livermore, 4 Attunga St. Baulkham Hills.	Ph. 686 1315
Photographic Officer:	Bob Smith, 60 Fontainebleau Street, Sans Souci.	Ph. 529 3818
Social Secretaries:	Brenda Taylor, 2 Scarbrough Street, Bundeena.	Ph. 523 4403
	Karen Smith, 60 Fontainebleau Street, Sans Souci.	Ph. 529 3818
Publicity Officer:	Audrey Mansfield, 37 Weber Crescent, Emerton.	Ph. 628 8172

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## L I V E    O R    D I E ?

Natural beauty, a product time has produced and now man slowly destroys with huge expressways which carve their way through mountains and over rivers, with housing and industry spreading wider day by day.

Natural foliage meets fate with a bulldozer, and the animals perish with no homes or camouflage. We now live in a time when natural beauty dies and concrete replaces it. If not for the very few national parks all would perish under the huge development.

As a child on a day's outing, my parents would take the family to Manly, I would love to stand by the wharf and watch the clear waters, the sandy bottom, small fish, and the occasional stingray swimming by. Now, 20 years later, you may peer upon the dirty brown water with newspapers, pieces of timber, cardboard cartons and watery debris which has been thrown into our harbour.

Some years ago I entered a domain where the weak or injured perish, only the strong and alert survive. With gardens of vegetation and animal colonies displaying wonders of unbelief. It has taken millions of years for nature alone to attempt to cover each grey and white rock with a splash of colour to decorate every room for its inhabitants.

The balance of life was perfect. Those who were weak or slow as an ova or as a juvenile were given life in large numbers so that some survive and others survive on those who don't.

The story is now changing - with million of gallons of whatever flowing from our estuaries and harbours, the growths are dying, the fish are moving.

Without their natural homes they will not survive. Is man going to survive much longer?

\* \* \* \* \*

T.J. Mansfield



## BOAT OWNERS

Bob Smith  
Sans Souci

Telephone: 529 3818

Pat Manly  
Lansvale

Telephone: 728 6808

Rick Latimer  
Georges Hall

Telephone: 726 7818

Penny Sullivan  
Cronulla

Telephone: 523 6302

Garry Ryan  
Farnborough Heights.

Telephone: 042 29 2111

Mark Livermore  
Baulkham Hills

Telephone: 686 1315

Martin Kandilas  
Georges Hall

Telephone: 726 3570

Rick Croucher  
Cronulla

Telephone: 523 0080

Peter Stratford  
Ashfield

Telephone: 798 5757

John Blaszczak  
Yagoona

Telephone: 709 5535

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## REPORT ON CLUB DIVE - BASS POINT 13.9.81

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Three club members, Sandra, Tom, Dave Bailey and self arrived at the Shellharbour Pub 8.00 a.m. Sunday. Weather conditions were as ordered - light westerly, 24°C, clear skies, etc.

We waited until 9.00 a.m. and satisfied that we were the only SPD people alive on the South Coast that day, sallied forth in our 2 boats - yes folks - 3 divers, 2 boats.

The first dive was the cave outside Bushrangers Bay. Sandra, Dave and I, did a 40 minute dive in visibility around 60 ft. My flash decided to be obstinate and thus I had to be content with a few natural light shots. Still, minor photographic problems aside, we had a most enjoyable dive.

We then adjourned to bushrangers where a veritable feast was consumed - but alas somebody forgot to bring the booze. (Much to Dave's chagrin).

Our second dive was the site of the "Alexander Berry" wreck. Looked like a sponge garden to me - guess someone gave me the wrong marks, but then again I couldn't remember which side of the bommie we should have been. North, South, East or West? Oh well, they say its not a very good wreck anyway.

We had a most enjoyable dive on a delightful sponge garden, with one highlight - the biggest blue groper I have ever seen in ten years. Must have been 70 lbs, and we could feel his prop wash from several feet away. Got some good shots of a friendly moray, too.

In all, a great day's diving. A shame more people didn't turn up.

Martin

## "BIRCHGROVE PARK" WRECK DIVE - 29.9.81

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A beautiful day and excellent calm conditions greeted us as Rick, Ross and I arrived at Long Reef and sat down to wait for Gary and his rubber duckie. Gary made it in a short while and we set off to what promised to be an excellent dive.

We made the dive site in about half an hour. The wreck lies in about 160 ft. on her side. The visibility was good, around 70'. Although part of the hull is starting to collapse it is always well worth a dive. Ross and Garry made a 15 min. dive whilst Rick and I made a 20 min. dive with our larger twins. After the necessary deco stops, we up anchored and headed back to Long Reef. Prevailing winds and rising seas made the trip back uncomfortable. There were some exciting moments but Gary assured us that you just can't flip his rubber duckie, (he's tried). To show us how great it performs, Gary cut the motor and ran it up the beach. Not satisfied we pushed it back into the water to run up on the beach a second time.

Anyway, a good morning's dive was enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Gary for the use of his boat.

Bruce Meyer



## CLUB MEETINGS

19th October, 1981.

Four members of "SYDNEY AND DISTRICT ANTIQUE BOTTLE COLLECTING CLUB" will be coming along to:

Identify SPD member's bottles.

Give brief histories on these bottles.

Answer questions.

Give a brief resume on their club and activities including how members (of SPD) can sell their unwanted bottles through the Bottle Club's auctions.

Show us books available on glass bottles, stoneware, etc.

16th November, 1981.

An open discussion will be held regarding underwater photography. Member's can, if they wish, bring along a few of their slides for group discussion and criticism.

Next committee meeting will be held on 11th November, 1981, at Rick Latimer's place.

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We still have a few T Shirts available for sale in sizes SM and M.

If you want one please contact Mark Livermore.

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## COMING DIVES AND ACTIVITIES

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### 3rd, 4th, & 5th October, 1981.

Dive with the seals! Our front cover and an enclosed article pictures and describes these cute mischievous animals.

Montague Island, situated off Narooma on the South Coast, is the home of these playful animals.

This will be a weekend to remember for those who have not dived with seals before.

A shark cat has been hired for use by the members who have not got their own water transport.

All details on this weekend are available from Di, our Secretary.

Meet 9.00 a.m. at Narooma Boat Ramp.

### Monday, 12.10.81, and Thursday, 15.10.81.

Parachuting Theory Lectures will be held in the Poker Room, Bankstown Sports Club at 7.30 p.m.

Parachuting weekend 17th & 18th October, 1981 in the Hunter Valley.

For further enquiries your contacts are Bob Smith and Rick Latimer.

### 31st October – 1st November, 1981.

Caving weekend at Tuglow Caves – Kanangra Boyd National Park.

Your liaison officers for this weekend are Terry Mansfield Ph. 628 8172 and Bob Smith, Ph. 529 3818.

Please contact either of these persons for details of where to meet or any other queries you may have on this fun weekend. A must for the photographer!

For those of you who will not be going to the above, a local dive will be arranged.

Please contact Rick Latimer for further details.

### 8th November, 1981.

Wreck Dive –

Meet Watson's Bay Wharf at 8.30 a.m. Liaison Officer will be appointed at October Meeting.



29th November, 1981.

Dive at Gunamatta Bay.

Meet Launching Ramp at 8.30 a.m. This will be a family picnic day. A good chance for the kids and families to get together for a day out.

Christmas Party

The S.P.D. Christmas Party will be held on the 19th December, 1981, at Gledswood Winery at Leppington. The theme for the night will be Country and Western with a prize awarded for the best fancy dress. Should be a fun night in the true S.P.D. style.

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CLUB NEWS

Penny Sullivan of "DIVE MASTER" dive shop, Cronulla, has offered all S.P.D. Club members 20% discount on all dive gear.

Carl and Angie will be back in Sydney on 13th October, 1981, and hope to be at the next club meeting in October.

There has been a suggestion for a Ladies Luncheon to be held. Just have a think about it and it will be brought up at the next meeting.

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"WHITE-POINTERS"

The "white-pointers" shown to us by Peter Fields at the September meeting were once common in Australia although rarely seen. Now they are an endangered species. These once very shy creatures are regularly seen exposed on beaches along the Sydney coastline. Naturalists at first thought that this trend was a step in the right direction as it gave them a chance to study the various varieties. Alas they now realize that the majority are not worth a second glance and in some cases the first glance can be off putting. The main danger to the species is that the harmful rays from the sun are changing the once pale delicate colouring to varieties of red brown and wrinkled. To save these delicate creatures is quite simple. St. John's Ambulance suggest that if no padding or covering is available a hand can be used just as effectively!



# Common seal

Known as the harbor seal in the United States, this is a true seal—that is, the hind flippers trail behind it and cannot be tucked forward under the body as in a sea lion. This means that the common seal can only crawl overland. Although they move on their bellies with the assistance of the foreflippers, common seals can move surprisingly fast when in a hurry, especially down a smooth, sloping sand bank. Common seals belong to the group of earless seals, in contrast to the eared seals, although they do have very small external ear 'flaps' which are usually concealed in the ear opening.

Male common seals are 5–6 ft long and females 4–5 ft, with a short tail of 3 or 4 in. hidden between the rear flippers. The coat of short coarse hair varies in colour from silver and grey to brown and almost black. Light coats are spotted and blotched with dark markings, and dark coats with light markings. The usual colour is light grey marked with black, lighter on the undersides.

## In northern seas

Common seals are found around the shores of the northern oceans. Off Europe, they are found along the western shores as far south as East Anglia and Holland, into the Baltic Sea as far as Stockholm and north to the North Cape of Norway. On the eastern seaboard of America they reach Maine and extend as far north as Ellesmere Island. They occur on both sides of the Pacific Ocean, reaching Lower California and Korea.

In Britain, there are breeding colonies in the Shetland and Orkney Islands, the Firth of Clyde and Moray Firths, the west coast and outer Hebrides and on Scroby Sands off Norfolk. The Irish population breeds in the counties of Londonderry, Antrim and Down. Common seals are also seen on other parts of the coast and sometimes go up rivers. They have been seen near Arundel in Sussex and at Teddington on the River Thames, upstream from London.

Common seals are found in sheltered places in deep sea lochs, or on rocky coasts where archipelagos of small islands and skerries provide shelter. The Wash of eastern England houses 6,500 common seals, the largest population in Europe.

## Feeding on the sea bed

The main food of seals is fish, and the diet of the common seal is no exception. Most of the fish they eat live on the sea bed, such as flatfish, gobies, soles and sand eels. They also eat prawns, crabs, cockles and whelks. More active species are caught, including mackerel, trout, salmon and squid.

Once weaned, the young seals are mainly shrimp-eaters, then during their first winter they add fish, crabs and molluscs to their diet. Adults are mainly fish eaters but the diet varies in different localities. The fact that they will eat sea-trout and salmon has



◁ Common seal colonies are found along quiet shores of the northern oceans.

△ Young common seal. The slit behind the eye is the external opening of the ear.



△ Seals are able to close their nostrils when diving, so preventing water entering the lungs.

▽ A seal's whiskers or vibrissae pick up vibrations, helping in the tracking of prey.





made common seals unpopu- lar with fisher- men. Some learn that an easy meal is to be had by robbing nets. Unfortunately they do a disproportionate amount of damage by injuring and leaving more fish than they eat, and the younger seals sometimes get caught in the nets, which are torn as they wrench themselves clear.

### Water babies

The pups are born in June and July, when the females gather in shallow and sheltered coves. The pups are born on sandbanks or tide-covered rocks between one high tide and another. For this to be possible, birth must be rapid and the new-born pup must be in a sufficiently advanced state to be able to swim almost immediately. Most seal pups are born with a fluffy coat of fur called the lanugo, which is shed before they take to the water. The pups of common seals lose their lanugo, which is white, just before they are born, or some- times just after. Thus they are born with the adult coat, a necessary adaptation, as they must be able to swim immediately. It sometimes happens that there is a strong swell and a high tide in the breeding cove, and the pups are born without harm while the mothers are in the water.

For the first few days of their lives the pups rarely come ashore. They spend their time floating in the water near the shore with their mothers in close attendance, often touching them. Within 2 days they can swim and dive in the shallow water, some- times being assisted by their mothers, who shepherd them with their foreflippers. Later they can come on land, the initial landing sometimes being made on the mothers' backs. Suckling takes place for 4 weeks, during which time the pup grows its teeth, puts on a layer of blubber and begins to learn how to look after itself. It is then abandoned and the mother leaves to moult and then mate. Gestation takes 9 months be-

cause there is delayed implantation (see armadillo p 83), the embryo not starting to develop until autumn.

### Clubbed for their fur

Killer whales and polar bears are the main danger to common seals, although in many parts they are shot or clubbed, either as pups for their fur, or as adults because of the damage to fishing nets. Common seals are very wary of man, taking to the sea at the slightest disturbance.

### A woolly birthday suit

The soft fluffy fur with which most baby seals are born lacks the coarse guard hairs of the adult pelage. This coat is moulted and replaced by the adult coat before the pups take to the water. The pups of seals living in the Arctic have white coats, which are much sought after by hunters, but it is not known whether they are white to reduce heat loss in the cold atmosphere or to prevent enemies seeing them against the ice and snow. There are objections to both theories and there may be a totally different reason.

Common seals are different, their pup coat, or lanugo, is shed before they are

born or just afterwards, and this is probably because they have to take to the water just a few hours after birth. One population of common seals, however, behaves like other seals. From the Bering Sea to Korea com- mon seals breed slightly earlier, from February to April, and the pups are born on ice floes where they stay for 2 or 3 weeks. Like the other Arctic seals, these common seal pups have a fluffy white coat which is moulted just before they enter the water.

Not only are most common seals born with their adult fur, they also have their adult teeth just appearing. This is a feature of all seals; the milk teeth develop while the pup is still inside its mother and are lost before it is born.

class	<b>Mammalia</b>
order	<b>Pinnipedia</b>
family	<b>Phocidae</b>
genus	
& species	<b><i>Phoca vitulina</i></b>



and now ..... What we've all been waiting for

## TITTLE TATTLE

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THE FOLLOWING TRUE STORIES ARE BASED ON FACT. THE NAMES HAVE NOT BEEN CHANGED TO IDENTIFY THE GUILTY.

How do all the attractive female divers end up on Prince Porcupine's boat? Even when his wife is present. Could it be his tough masculine appeal - his glib tongue - or a detour sign pointing to his boat saying "All female divers this way."

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We hear Raymond and Kathy Fuchs have an addition to the family - a baby girl. Glad to see they have time for other things besides diving. Congratulations to you and your baby daughter.

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There's a certain lady whose birthday is in November (around 28th isn't it Di?) whose birthday wish is to go for a nightdive. I wonder if it will be in her birthday suit? (Shiprock, I believe, gentlemen).

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Wanted: Live in nurse for Richard Taylor (36-24-36) to look after Richard Taylor. Brenda will be too busy looking after their baby son Clint (Teapot) Taylor.

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It seems that while Mick was only playing around Chris took things serious. Well, Spring is certainly here.

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News Item: Boats are now being used to fill holes in fences. Enquiries: Mark Livermore.

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From the sublime to the ridiculous - One day covered in bat's "droppings", guzzling port, and falling over logs. Then we have him donning top hat and tails and strutting off to attend a wedding, acting like a total gentleman.

Tell us Mark. What are you really? P'pot or penguin.

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Talking about P'pots: Their annual meeting was apparently held at Gary Ryan's. It seems that he really believes in celebrating his birthday. He bought out the local grog shop for his birthday party.

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Ross Hipwell in discussion on the parachuting weekend:

"Well, if your chute doesn't open, you can always get your money back."

Rumour: Boat launching party on the 5th December, at Shell Pt. Taren Pt.

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We certainly do get them:

Amercan tourist asking directions: "Hey Mac, can you tell me how to get to GUN – GODDAM – DAGGI ?" (Gundagai!)

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Which certain lady is chatting up the guys in the club while her husband is overseas?

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Saturday morning shopping it seems has its hazards. One guy bought a knuckle sandwich courtesy of our President.

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Would someone please tell Rick about Grecian 2000.

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Bob's got a new Taylor made extension – and Karen approves – One wonders if Brenda's seen it – she probably has – she had the baby.

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# SKYLINE INTERIORS

CURTAINS, FABRICS, WALLPAPERS, BLINDS  
SCREENS, TRACKS, ETC.

Shop 6, New World Centre,  
James Cook Drive,  
Kings Langley

674 3293



The nights' watch had been long and fatiguing. The only sounds that had disturbed the darkness had been the clicking of the gheco's and the incessant monotone of the rain on the iron roofs of the buildings in the compound. Dawn was bringing him no relief from the wet, it would go on for months yet. Relief would come in part at 0800 when the watch would change and exhausted sleep would take his mind from the reality of the war.

Barges were leaving the docks and ferrying supplies to the waiting flying boats that were now silhouetted against the dawn sky. Suddenly, from out of that same sky, through the rain and cloud came the shattering stammer of machine gun fire and roar of propellers cutting through the air. Fuel on the docks exploded into an inferno. Reflecting from the clouds above, the dawn sky was lost to the orange glow that lit the whole scene.

People running scared and confused, planes swooping like hawks, bullets tearing at the earth, fuel exploding and raining fire, a flying boat shattering into fragments as the ammunition in it's hull erupted. Three landing craft that had been tendering it are swamped by the resulting waves. They sink immediately, belching bubbles and oil as they settle on top of each other on the coral fifty feet below; and the war is still raging on the surface.

His mind, fatigued and exhausted, finally snapped. He ran from cover along the wooden docks towards the landing craft, shooting wildly at planes, boats, crates, anything. His mind raged, What could he do! The landing craft exploded, the shock wave hit him and knocked him from the dock. His helmet slowly sank with each wave and finally came to rest in the warm clear tropical sea; away from the war.

The bottom was white sand reflecting the sunshine in everchanging patterns; adding colour to the pattern was orange and red starfish that looked like big cookies on a table cloth. We all swam across the shallow sand towards a coral drop-off. The visibility as we approached the three landing craft is about 40 feet. They were sitting at the bottom of the coral, the way they had landed many years before and had created a pattern of shapes. The rusting steel now had growth of corals and anenomes. In the top of one was a butterfly cod showing all the beauty and snootiness they are renowned for. As divers approached this veiled little fish, it would turn its back and shun any attempts to photograph it. We move further along the coral until we come to another landing craft lying by itself upside down on the coral. In the coral around this rusting garden could be found bottles that were now quite coral encrusted and EMPTY! We moved towards the sand



and the surface and the reality of 1980, and not the reenactment of the horror of that done many years before. Swimming across the sand, I came across a dark metallic shape. After a few minutes of digging, the piece of metal had grown somewhat, and had taken the shape of a G.I.'s helmet. Finally, extracted from the sand, it created a lot of interest back at the boat. We could not keep it because it would disintergrate and really belonged where it was. The next best thing would be a photo. Everyone had run out of film. It is times like these you need Minties!

The sun glared across the bow of the ketch Coongoola as her nature crew strained muscles, on the winches, to weigh anchor.

The Coongoola, that was to be our home for the next eight days, had been built in Brisbane in 1949. Her captain and owner, Owen Drew, is former Australian diver who has lived in the islands for some years. Coongoola is 79 feet long and draws only about 12 feet almost ideal for reefs. At the moment she is sporting two brand new masts and riggings. The creature comforts are not four star luxury but they are definately liveable. Fresh and salt running wa showers, (you do the running if the header tank runs out). Four berths at the bow of the boat that were ideal unless travelling into a big sea, then it was necessary to keep the port holes closed and because the engines were so close, and the other bodies were all such heavy breathers, the air tended to become thick. The back stalls at the stern of the boat were similarly appointed with somewhat of a similar port hole problem. This was really brought to light one afternoon when Mike, the youngest member of the crew, forgot to close Owens' port hole. The mattress was flooded, even the papers in the drawers were floating. I thought we may have had a real keel hauling that night, so did Mike, as he gave Owen his mattress to sleep on!

The first night we anchored about ten feet from shore in a small bay that was surrounded by mangroves. Coongoola looked in all its glory in these magestic surroundings, after the sun had set the full moon began to rise up throught the rigging, reflecting from the new masts and the water.

Twenty minutes by small boat from our anchorage at Buena Vista was a Mitchell bomber. It was parked neatly in 90 feet of water, sitting on the sand beneath a sloping coral drop-off. It appeared to have slid from the drop-off. The top gun turret was still in place althought the plexiglass was missing, inside could be seen clips of bullets and the other components that made up the workings of this weapon. The nose of the plane was missing and so was the tail section. The wings were still intact and they now hovered 5 feet from the sand.

The ocean, over the years that the plane had lay on the bottom had slowly been claiming it as its own. Now under the wings were



large growths of gorgonia and black coral and elsewhere on the plane anenomes were growing and turning the one-time war machine into an under sea garden.

After the dive, on the way back to the Coongoola, we stopped at a native village. As we approached the children of the village ran down to the beach to greet us or maybe it was to laugh at the strange white people in rubber suits. Whatever the reason our landing created quite a lot of giggles. Owen was the only person who could talk in pidgin to them. Although some of us could understand the basics of the conversation, we still could not put our own words together. Owen wanted to buy some fruit and vegetables, none were available; to a farewell of screaming and skylarking and handwaving we headed back to the Coongoola.

It is Thursday and we have been in the islands now for three days. All of this time has been spent in the Florida Islands. Now we are on our way back to Honiara to pick up Tom who had missed the plane because of sickness. Honiara was not a welcome sight because we were all keen to dive and get on with the trip. Once Tom was on board and we had picked up a few supplies we headed back out to sea. So that diving time would not be lost, we decided to travel all night.

Friday morning saw the different effects of the nights' travel on each individual. Sea sickness and red eyes hanging out of their sockets were common place at the breakfast table. By popular request the regular menu of bacon and fried eggs was changed to scrambled eggs and even then, quite a number of the participants renigged.

The tropical beauty of the South Pacific was in all its glory as we approached the lagoons and islands of the New Georgia Group. The main islands were surrounded by lagoons that were in turn protected from the open ocean by small palm-waving islands and coral reefs. We anchored off one of these lagoons late in the morning. Most of the tiredness of the night before was lost in the excitement of getting geared up for a dive on a coral drop-off. The water was clear, perhaps 100 feet visibility, but still the bottom was a long way from the deep blue that lay beneath us as we commenced our descent down the side of the 1200 foot cliff. The side of the cliff was alive with colour and movement.

Fish of all shapes and sizes moved out of our way and hid in the brightly coloured coral caves that were formed by the closeness and amount of coral growing on the cliff. At about 60 feet two small whalers came in to have a look at the aliens that were venturing into their territory. As we moved deeper, they were joined by others, some that hung off in the deep blue void and some that came in for a closer look and to proclaim their ownership rights to us, the intruders. At one stage I was posing for a photo for Pat, in behind a fan of coral, when through the water



I heard my name being called. As I looked around, one of the more curious sharks passed over my right shoulder. The warning had come from Kelly on the cliff about 15 feet away. Off in the void, silver shapes began to multiply and move around and cause some concern in my mind. They moved closer and became more, then, to my relief, I realised that these flashing silver shapes were not sharks but a large school of tuna.

By the time we got back to the boat and talked about the dive over one of Philip's lunches, the sun was setting and we were heading back to sea and onto Giza Island. As we were going to travel all night again I put cotton wool in my ears to quieten the engine noise and Ralph's jokes. This worked so efficiently that I did not even hear us run aground just before dawn. Apparent nothing too serious because we were off again by the time that I woke up.

We approached an island that was surrounded by reefs and with some slow and calculated sailing it was not long before we were safely in the lagoon. Beneath the surface could be seen the shape of a ship. Ralph and Jim donned tanks and chained us to this sunken ship, with an anchor like this we would not drift. When they came back they were full of stories of what they had seen and what lay ahead for all of us over the next three days. I had nine dives on the wreck both during the day and at night. Everybody dived just as hard as I did and each person found something special to relay to the other members of the party after each dive.

The ship was a Japanese freighter about 350 feet long lying on its side with its bow towards the shore and the stern lying in deeper water. The sand under the rudder was about 120 feet. The prop was missing, all that was left was the bare shaft pointing at the huge rudder. The missing prop and port holes and some of the holes that had been blown in in the wreck, were not results of the war, but the results of post war money-hungry diving pirates. Despite the efforts of Wally Gibbons and friends, this ship is very much in tact compared to other wrecks that we saw.

Items still on the ship were of no monetary value. Moving along the deck took quite a bit of getting used to because it was vertical. Huge masts and gantries lying horizontally through the water. Cables and rigging hanging from them are now encrusted with coral and anenomes. The aft deck still has its winches in tact and complete with cable, looks almost functional. The hold forward of this deck has had a lot of timber in it which is now decomposed and forms a fine silt which when disturbed, does not take long to blanket the area. So, care has to be taken not to disturb this underwater fog. The deck plates are missing from parts of this hold so the deck beams which are now vertical, form a grand collonade for divers to swim along to the next hold.



The bridge towers out from the deck level like a castle. It's interior is a maze of passageways and rooms, some were not meant for people to move along, but being divers, most of us tried to find our way along any crack or crevice that looked like it went anywhere. Across the front of the bridge was what had once been the long passageway that ran from one side to the other. Now, because of the way the Captain had parked this ship, the passageway became an elevator shaft from the topside of the ship to the underside. It was an exhilarating feeling to "fall" down this long shaft and emerge at the sand under the other side. It was possible to swim between the side of the ship and sand in a number of places along the wreck. In those places we usually found quite good specimens of black coral and other fan type corals. Not far behind the bridge was a large Wok or rice bowl. It was about 5' diameter and about 2' deep. It was used by the Japanese throughout the South Pacific during the war to prepare rice, which was almost their staple diet. The finding of this bowl sparked renewed interest in finding the galley, which seemed to be a popular goal among some members of the party. Forward of the bridge were more holds, the first was empty, but the second had a small armoured tank lying on its side. The tank was very coral and rust encrusted, but the controls inside were quite distinguishable, and detail in the tracks and sprockets had not been lost. Around the same area were quite a number of 4" shells and clips of bullets. The next hold was full of Saki bottles, some broken, some whole, most were encrusted in some way by coral, but all were empty. I tried each one! Between the last two holds there was another gantry or mast, lying across it was the remains of a truck. The chassis, the engine, wheels and tyres, all coral encrusted and all rusty. Hanging from the bow were two danforth anchors, still in place as they were forty years ago. At night the top of the wreck was alive with shells and dazed sleeping fish. One night, Ian rigged up some underwater spot lights, it was like a green underwater sun that cast eerie patterns on the wreck and allowed us to see, to a certain extent, without our torches.

The island itself offered us an escape from the confines of the Coongoola. In the water near the beach were corroded shells that had been taken from the wreck. They lay in only a few inches of water, and their shape and colour contrasted greatly to the surrounding tropical beauty. The island also supported a small "wildlife" population. Mostly insects, mosquitoes, sandflies, stinging red ants and wasps nest. I found out from personal experience just how a wasp sting feels from the receiving end of the sting; while Pat was trying to photograph them. During a walk on the island we also came across a monitor lizard very similar to a goanna, only more green in colour. At one end of the island was a native built shed. It was constructed from palm and timber and was built in two levels. It was a kiln used to dry coconut meat into copra. On the ground around the shed were a lot of cleaned coconut shells; these were recycled and used for fuel for



the fire.

We sailed from here to a town that was quite close called Giza, on an island of the same name. Giza appeared to exist only to supply and service fishing vessels that followed the tuna around the Solomons. It was very small and had many Chinese merchants who sold exactly the same as each other for almost the same price. We stayed only long enough to take on supplies and have a quick look around.

As we rounded the small point that jutted across the millpond smooth water of Biaroko Harbour, two rusting masts stood as grave markers to the small Japanese freighter that lay on the bottom close to the jungles. The ship had been unloading supplies at a wharf when it was attacked by American aircraft. Also sunk in the same attack were two landing craft. We used the two masts to moor the Coongoola. The island was covered in very thick jungle which came right down to the water. The surface water in this harbour was about 300 mm of dirty fresh or brackish water floating on the salt water. The inside of the freighter was quite full of silt. We found some broken crockery and a small stack of grammophone records that over the years had cemented themselves together. The hold was full of ammunition and detonators. At the time of the attack it appears that the freighter had been unloading a motor vehicle. On the island side of the wreck under one of the derricks, the chassis, motor and wheels of a motor vehicle sitting the right way up just waiting for a driver to come along and sit in it. Several did and had their photos taken to record the event.

Someone made the comment that good photos could be taken from the top of the mast looking down through the wreck below. Not being one to miss an opportunity like this, I decided to go up in the bosun's chair. Other photographers also not wanting to miss the great opportunity either, gave me their cameras to take up! I really did not mind, it was my insurance policy that they would let me back down gently before dark.

Eupi Island is a small coral island in the New Georgia Group, so small in fact that it is not even called by name on the admiralty charts. But what it lacks in size it makes up for in tropical beauty and peacefulness. This island is the home of Bob and Jan Lewis, Bob had arranged for some of the best carvers on the islands to show us their work. A lot of the carvings were done in ebony, a very hard black wood that is becoming very rare in the world. The deep black of the wood accentuated the mother of pearl inlay that was used on a lot of the carvings. The most well known of the Solomon Island carvings is the "dozu dozu" which is a strange looking face. It almost has a dog-like snout. It is used as a figurehead on their canoes. After much money had changed hands, we left to go back to the other side of the island and a barbeque that the natives had been preparing. We had two dolphin fish wrapped in pandanus leaves and baked in the coals of a fire. We washed this down with a few tinnies and some wine,



while the rain fell out of the sky, soaking everybody. The rain was warm so the party went on regardless.

We travelled all night back to Guadalcanal through seas that were 20' high and winds to about 35 knots. This moved quite a few things around on the Coongoola. Diving gear had to be tied down, pots and pans in the kitchen were shuffled around in side their cupboards, all the residents of the forward cabin move up stairs and "slept" on the tabled and the floor. I even heard tell of things inside peoples stomachs moving around. The calm waters off Cape Esperance in the lee of Guadalcanal were quite welcome relief.

Lying in these calm waters was the remains of a U1 type german submarine that had been sunk during the war by the New Zealand Corsair "Moa". The submarine even though German built, was as the time of its loss crewed by Japanese. The Conning tower had been blown off and much of the forward section destroyed so it was hard to visualise a submarine. Even so, closer inspection showed the cramped conditions that the crew had to work and live under. The hatches and passageways were very small. A flying fortress damaged in action and returning to the safety of Henderson airfield one evening forty years ago never made the land and sank in 40' of water only minutes from its destination. Now it was a popular diving site for the divers from Honiara. The only part missing was the tail. The guns in the gun turret still point towards the sky and with a small amount of squeezing, it was possible to get into the pilots seat and think how it felt on that last flight many years before.

Honiara, to me, was not a real welcome sight because it meant the end of the trip, but I did not knock back the hot shower and the motionless bed.

In the humid tropical rain that also plagued the men who fought on Guadalcanal many years before, we searched for the places that were made famous during the battles that brought these small islands to world headlines. Edisons or Bloody Ridge is marked only by a small concrete memorial and the rusting grill from an american jeep. There are no signs to mark the track to it and even the track does not encourage visitors. The jungle has grown back and hides many scars and hideous mementos of the war that senselessly ravaged these islands. Red Beach was equally hard to find. The sands are no longer run red with blood or have bodies littering the shoreline. We walked along the beach toward a solitary, rusting anti-aircraft gun that was pointing out to sea, a lonely sentry reminding the world of the past. To me, this scene was the Solomon Islands, behind the gun was tropical palms, coconut trees, native villages with friendly people. In front



of the gun was the Iron Bottom Sound, warships lying on its bed forming beautiful coral gardens and havens for fish. A juxtaposition of man and nature that is found throughout the Islands.

A tropical paradise ravaged by man that nature has restored and given a second chance.

The Solomon Island Government seems to have realised the treasure they have and are not encouraging development that will be detrimental to the environment, the history and the customs of the islands or its people.



# THINGS I REALLY LIKE.

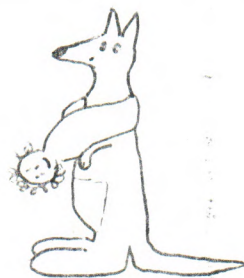
I really like animals. Animals are usually cuddly. When animals attack it's usually because you stir them. Would you believe that most animals, for instance spiders and snakes, only attack because they are more scared of you than you are of them or their just protecting their nests.

We should protect animals. I and probably a lot of others think if people come in and put an animals fur or something like that down on top of something they should be fined \$1399.00. It is cruel and heartless. Why? Why should <sup>we</sup> (us humans) kill animals when they do nothing at all to hurt us. They have as much right to live as we have, even more, they were here, on Earth, before us. It is downright, utterly, tremendously despicable.

Ladies walk around with fur coats hanging around their necks. I'd laugh if an animal came up, skinned a human and went around with human skin hanging around their necks.

You might have to keep warm but please think about the rightful owner to the fur, they must keep warm also.

by  
Lisa Mansfield.





# JINGLE BELLS...



Driving through the bush  
In a four wheel drive today  
Over hills we go  
Bumping all the way, Bump, Bump  
Bump.

Bells on possum's ring  
Making Rooka's laugh  
Oh, what fun it is to ride  
In a four wheel drive tonight. Oh

Jingle Bells, the clutch it smells  
Skidding all the way  
Oh, what fun it is to ride in a four  
wheel drive today. Hay!

Jingle Bells, the clutch it smells  
Skidding all the way  
Oh, what fun it is to ride in a  
wheel drive today. Hay!



Taken from THE VANCOUVER SUN Tuesday, Jan. 27. 1981.

### CANADA'S COUSTEAU FINDS SUNKEN SHIP A METAPHOR

by Tim Padmore, Sun Science Writer

TORONTO — The man is almost too good to be true. Firm of jaw, steely of eye, rippling of muscle. Physician, scientist, diver Arctic explorer. Film-maker, lecturer, author and poet. Patriot and leader of men.

He is Dr. Joseph MacInnis, or plain old Joe MacInnis as he prefers to be known, head of Undersea Research Ltd. and father of the James Allister MacInnis foundation (named for his own father, a pilot who died in an air crash when Joe was less than a year old). Through the company, he consults for government, industry, universities and the media. The foundation sponsors research on ocean resources and environment.

But his real business is adventure.

Since 1970 he has mounted a dozen Arctic expeditions.

Last year he consummated a three-year passion with one of the most remarkable finds of all times: a sailing ship lying at the bottom of Lancaster Sound between Devon and Baffin Islands, almost perfectly preserved after 127 years thanks to the extreme cold.

This spring — while the sound is still covered with two metres of ice — he will return with a team of divers, cut through the ice, lower batteries of powerful lights and descend in sophisticated gear to explore the wreck lying in the crystalline depths 100 metres below.

For Dr. MacInnis .... let's do it his way .... for Joe, the wreck symbolizes much of what has drawn him to the Arctic. "The ship is a metaphor ... it sank at the height of the golden age of Arctic exploration," he says.

Joe, 43, returns frequently to his admiration for those explorers, whose ships were often locked in the ice for a year or more. "We're not like those old guys who really had to endure." The Arctic is still hard, of course. There is discomfort, pain and exhaustion. But the modern subsea adventurer cannot afford too much of this sort of thing. Sophisticated technology is of little use if the body and mind are not sharp. "You don't let yourself get cold. You don't get tired. If you do, you can kill yourself."

The Arctic dead are a distinguished company. In 1845, Her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror set out from London under the command of Sir John Franklin, with 128 men and provisions for three years, on the last great Admiralty expedition to search for the Northwest Passage. They were caught in ice at the western end of Lancaster Sound and spent the winter of 1845-46 there, a winter that took three lives.

Later, almost through the Arctic Islands, they were caught again in a huge tongue of ice from the Beaufort Sea and were held for 19 months. Finally, the survivors set out to walk 1,930 kilometres to a Hudson's Bay post. None made it.

The disaster sparked the greatest naval search in history, with 40 ships sent out in the following years. One was the barque HMS Breadalbane, which was holed and sunk by shifting ice August, 21, 1853, near the spot where Franklin spent his first winter.

The Breadalbane crew escaped, and they and other witnesses described the place where she went down. So it was that Joe, "with a bad case of ship fever," found himself combing century-old naval records at Cambridge University in England, finally narrowing the possible search area to a two-square-mile area off Beechey Island.



What made the ship so exciting was the likelihood that it and its contents are preserved in near pristine condition by the extreme cold (minus 1.5 degrees celsius) of the sea at a latitude only 200 kilometres from the North Pole.

Three summers of searching with sonar equipment followed. Ice hampered the search, which at one point was conducted from the fantail of a helpful Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker.

The sonar revealed a disturbing sight: Gouges, two, three, even ten metres deep scarring the ocean floor, mementoes of the keels of ice ridges heaving through the Sound. Would the search uncover only a pile of kindling?

The answer came last summer when the sonar picked up a remarkable image: A hull, two intact masts, even a hint of furled sails.

The expedition this spring to explore and photograph the wreck will cost about \$1 million – but most of the cost in people and equipment will be donated. Divers and diving gear are being provided by Can Dive Services of North Vancouver.

The scientific studies will be of practical as well as academic interest. The amount of decay of the ship and its contents, for example, will give clues to the likely fate of oil spills in the Arctic.

The Breadalbane discovery is the latest in a lifetime of highlights.

As a child Joe was fascinated by "that big white space at the top of the map" of Canada. He became enchanted by the sea while swimming competitively. (He came close to qualifying for the 1956 Olympics). Joe qualified as a physician, but never practised, instead applying the knowledge to the science of diving. He hired on as a U.S. Navy aquanaut, and was medical director of a major U.S. diving firm.

In 1970, he returned to his own country, which he loves, and to the Arctic. "The most challenging ocean in the world .... it's awesomely beautiful. It's just like you're looking at the beginning of the earth."

His family – wife Debbie, young daughters Lara and Jordan, and teenagers Tracy and Jeff from a previous marriage – share his enthusiasm.

Through his diving research, he believes he is helping reconcile the demands of technology and the needs of the ocean environment.

Joe pioneered deep diving in cold water, using a mixture of oxygen and helium to prevent decompression sickness. Near Resolute Bay, he set up a eight-foot plastic dome on the sea bottom as a refuge for divers, the first time such a technique had been used in polar waters. One year, Prince Charles dropped in for a dive, an event commemorated by a famous newsphoto of the prince blimp-like in a heavy diving suit.

"I like to do things that are different," Joe says. "I also like to do things that are fun. I like the excitement of doing something very difficult with a good group of human beings".

There's more to it than that, of course. Our interview came just after Joe had given a slide, music and lecture show on his work to the annual meeting here of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. A dash of ham, a dollop of boyish enthusiasm and a slathering of grown-up wonder. The people loved it. He loved it too. The plaudits of an audience are emotional nourishment for him, he admitted.

After his lecture, weary from a day heavy with travel, rehearsals and a family death, he stood in a crowd of people who offered him congratulations, donations or just a handshake.

Teenagers, their eyes glowing as teenage eyes don't often do these days, wanted to know how they could have undersea adventures too. (Finish your education, he said, somehow not sounding nearly as corny as he should have).



When we started the research for this piece, the file was labelled "Canada's Cousteau." Aside from aliteration, that label doesn't fly. In retrospect, it might be fairer to call Jacques Yves Cousteau "Monaco's MacInnis."

\* \* \* \* \*

PRESSURE DAMAGE TO DIVERS

Taken from "SUN" 5.8.81.

Scientists believe they have discovered a cause of irreversible bone damage.

The university department of surgery at the Royal Victoria Hospital at Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, has found that the supply of blood to the bone marrow decreases and increases to the bone cortex under diving conditions.

One result is that microscopic bubbles of gas which become trapped between the bone marrow cells may later erode the bone.

Increasing importance is attached to finding the cause of bone necrosis and whether there is a connection with the other, more widely known, illness of "diver's bends," because the incidence of the disease is rising.

Specialists in diving medicine estimate from examinations of men working below 300 m that one in five can expect to suffer damage.

\* \* \* \* \*

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## BUSHMAN'S RECIPE

=====

### COCKATOO DINNER

First catch a large fat white cockatoo - a mouse trap with a lead weight on a branch is very successful.

1. Find a nice clearing and clear away any burnables - we don't want a bush fire.
2. Dig hole approximately 1 m x 1 m x 1 m deep.
3. Line hole with green leaves - eucalyptus preferably. Then nice dry timbers.
4. Find a large flat rock - limestone or quartz is best but sandstone will do.
5. Light fire and place rock in the centre. Heat to "spit hot". That means if you spit on the rock it will bubble.
6. You should have your cockatoo with you. DO NOT clean or pluck feathers.
7. Place bird on rock and when feathers burn off turn him over.
8. Sprinkle bird with salt, pepper, garlic salt and a generous sprinkle of PMU relish sauce and mint.
9. Allow to simmer for two hours - no longer.
10. Remove bird from rock and turn the rock over. Restore fire and replace bird on rock.
11. Repeat with salt, pepper, garlic salt, PMU and mint.
12. Cover the pit with green leaves and allow to smoke for yet another two hours.
13. READY TO SERVE.

Remove what's left of the green leaves off top - remove the burnt bird -  
AND EAT THE BLOODY ROCK!

Yet another wonderful recipe from "TJ's" collection.



## S.P.D. IN DAYS GONE BY .....

### Club Meeting, December, 1969.

A few visitors along with some old faces present, such as John Luton back from W.A. and Peter Burr, who has been hibernating for quite some time. Discussion took place regarding a letter received from C.M.A.S. proposing record swimming races to be held with swimmers wearing fins. Slides shown by Bob Smith and Joan Harper.

### Past Activities

November 24th: Dive to Montague with about 10 members attending, where Dennis finished filming the sharks and seals for United Artists.

December 7th: Night jump in Kiama Blowhole.

December 8th: Trawler day to Bowen Island with about 25 divers. Dives were made to 150 ft. for the benefit of some members who have not been that deep. Second dive at the Torpedo Tubes.

December 14th: Christmas beerbecue at Boat Harbour. About 50 bods turned up to make this a successful night, although there would have been some sore heads in the morning. How about you, Dick?

Bob, Tom and Renee have just returned from Heron. Between them they managed to shoot off several hundred photos with Tom's coming out beautifully even though they were shot at F2.8  $\frac{1}{4}$  sec. with an electronic flash.

At last the young 'un is settling down with Dennis and Robyn becoming engaged. Congratulations from all the club. You have got to admit, this Dennis has his head screwed on, as the wedding and honeymoon to Heron Island conveniently coincide with the convention next November.

Talking about marriages, two old club members have been recently married. They are Graham (Eyes?) Dyson and Rob Wilson.

Bob tells me that he is building a shark cage so he can go out to the Peaks and check out all the pointers?

Over Christmas there are no official club activities as members will be scattered all over Australia. Most are going to Picaninny, South Australia and Victoria, while Alan Moule is off to Heron and yours truly is shooting off to Perth for a bit of a dive there.

The next club outing will be January long week-end, when we will be diving in the Jervis Bay area.

All correspondence other than publicity to Alan Moule, 30 Wolli Street, Kingsgrove (50-4859).

DES HENNESSY.

Taken from Australian Skindivers Magazine January-February, 1969.



# Engaged, wed underwater



**GLUG, GLUG, I DO** — Robert Heck and Gimme Brown became man and wife in a tank at Marineland, a tourist attraction north of Daytona Beach, Florida, with several curious dolphins as witnesses. Clad in a diving helmet the Rev. Hal Marchman, Daytona Beach, performed his first underwater wedding. The newlyweds, a pair of diving enthusiasts who come from Westpoint, Pennsylvania, were engaged on the ocean floor and hope their double underwater feat will earn them a place in the Guinness Book of Records. — (AP Laserphoto).

DOES THIS REMIND ANYONE OF SOMETHING .....?