



NEWSLETTER

W E T R A G

THE NEXT CLUB MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY DECEMBER 17 AT 8.00 p.m.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

For those that were not present at the November meeting, Penny Sullivan resigned as Club President. We all wish her well and thank her for the job that she has done.

Re-elections has found myself elected as Club President and I hope to up-hold the standard of previous Presidents. As the estimated cost of running next years Audio Visual is approximately \$ 3,000 the committee is working on means of raising funds , such as raffles etc. I would also like to hear from any member who may have some thoughts on this matter.

Diving could be described as a selfish sport, as when one goes diving there is not really a lot for non-divers such as wives, girlfriends and families to do. With the use of social events that B.J. is masterminding, mayby we can bring sport and social activities closer together. I would like to conclude this short letter by reminding all members and friends of the Club Christmas Party. This will be held on 15 - 12 - 84 at Miriam Roberts home, 487 Henry Lawson Drive Picnic Point.. I hope to see you all there.

TERRY MANSFIELD

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

BAR - B - QUE

B.Y.O.G

For the remarkably small fee of \$ 10 per person (children exempt) you will be served the culinary delights of bar-b-qued steak and sausages, tropical salads fruit salad and ice-cream, christmas pudding and custard but be sure to bring your own grog. Any profits will be channeled into the 1985 Audio Visual. As already stated by Terry, the Roberts will host the night at their house (suckers), which has views of the Georges River, large grounds, 2m deep swimming pool and a covered area in case of rain. Gary and Miriam insist on persons who are over the limit staying the night, if possible bring an air bed and sleeping.

1985 AUSTRALASIAN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR.

Progress on next years A.V. is very promising as a number of dive packages and fine prizes have already been donated. Bankstown Sports Club will again be the venue for which we thank the management for their kind co-operation

The emphasis in 1985 will be more on Audio Visuals than films. This I believe will be a popular move as I for one relate more to the personal aspect of a good Audio Visual.

S.P.D. FORTHCOMING SOCIALS

Because a large number of club members will be in Jervis Bay at New Years time an impromptu new years party will be held on 31-12-84 probably in the Callala area - come to the christmas party or next club meeting for more information.

The Club has received a permit to enter the TUGLOW CAVES near Oberon on the long week-end in January. More information in the January newsletter.

WHATS ON IN CLUB DIVING

SAT 15 - 12 - 84 TUGGERAH : wreck dive
SUN 6 - 12 - 85 PORT HACKING : dive to be decided
TUE 8 - 1 - 85 DUNBAR : shallow wreck dive
TUE 15 - 1 - 85 TUGGERAH :
SUN 20 - 1 - 85 UNDOLA : wreck dive

running

All dives out of Port Hacking will be from Dolans Bay boat ramp and will depart promptly at 8.30 a.m. A fee of \$ 7.00 to cover running costs will be payable to the boat owner

PETER STRATFORD PHONE 798 5757

FOR SALE

Two 6 ft by 18 in by 18 in AQUARIUMS, with stands , lights , air pumps fittings and accessories galore

I need the cash !!! For further details contact :
PETER JERMYN A.H. 707 3086

THE TERRIBLE NINE AND THEIR ADVENTURES ON HIDEAWAY ISLAND



This is going to be pretty disjointed as I can't remember which day was which.

I remember the aeroplane flight at 8 a.m. I remember the bourbon at Mascot before the flight and I remember the drinks on the plane after breakfast. Oh, now I remember it all.

It was overcast when we arrived in Vila around 1 p.m. Jimmy, Keith, Fab & Peter (friend from Newcastle) were flying out to Santo that afternoon at 3.30. A decision had to be made whether they were going to come to Hideaway first and booze on or stay at the airport and booze on. They decided to booze on and come to Hideaway. Why? I still can't figure out, as we could have taken their gear with us. But they were safely seen on their way to the airport at 3.00 p.m.

Nothing much happened for the next couple of days except that I think we just unwound and got to know the island. Which took 5 mins. as it is a very small island. Oh yes, one of us got lost on her way to the bungalow one night and was rescued by Terry and it wasn't me because I was with Terry. No names of course.

The other guys joined us on the Tuesday afternoon after two nights and four dives in Santo including one magic night dive. Sure didn't waste their time or Allan Power's.

A good story came out of their visit. It seems that dear F... (sorry, no names, otherwise he won't print this story) saw this dog with eight huge nipples hanging down to the ground, sauntering up to them and he called, " Come here, fellow." They always said he was a bit slow. I also heard that two of the guys slept together in a double bed. I wondered why Jimmy was not talking to Fab when they came back to Vila until Fab said that he'd had a headache for the last couple of nights.

F... also adopted the island cat. No it wasn't one of our guys. It was a furry cat. It was so sweet to watch. It would saunter up to him, jump up on his lap, back up and sit down between his thighs. The guys called him a deviate, but I think he just likes pussies.

So, now we get serious and on to the diving. Excellent so they tell me. For the first few days on Hideaway you could ask them where they dived and they would say the "Pinnacles". They were wrapped in the "Pinnacles". After they had blinded all the fish there, they explored "The Ghost Train", "Mele 1 & 2", "Hideaway 1 & 2" and a few others, but their favourite was still the "Pinnacles." I went out there with them once, just snorkelling, and can see why they liked it. That one area was a photographer's delight with just about every coral and fish available within a small radius and a dropoff to boot.

Enthusiastic divers they were although they did cut their dive short one day. The dive mustn't have been any good. It couldn't have been the talent that came off the Fairstar to spend the day on the island. They said it wasn't anyway. They just wanted to help Tony entertain the guests. Terry organised a few crabs on the island. Two of our guys organised a few more. But of course Terry organised races with the crabs and for the other two it was a race for the crabs. Do crabs like bourbon? They also tried to organise a wet T-shirt competition and a wheelbarrow race, but Sue vetoed the idea (probably because there wasn't any wheelbarrows on the island).

Our group took a day off diving to be tourists and armed with cameras and plenty of film descended on the mainland. We visited Acropora Coral Museum, saw some native handicraft, and went out to a beautiful beach for lunch. The highlight of the day was a visit to the Cascades where we took a half hour walk up the side of a mountain through tropical jungle and rainforests to a magnificent waterfall and swimming hole where the fellows joined some native children for a swim and thoroughly enjoyed making fools of themselves. Of course, I gently disrobed and slipped quietly into the pool to cool off. It was well worth the trek.

Lorna and I took a trip right around the island on another day and found it most enlightening and interesting. The natives have a basically happy and simple commune type lifestyle seeming to care very much for their children. Very interesting to talk to and quite helpful and eager to please. Take Eric, our native driver, for instance. He offered to take Lorna and I to drink Kava, the native equivalent of liquid LSD, and also for a swim in the nuddy. Now wasn't that nice of him. I hope we didn't hurt his feelings when we said we didn't have time for the Kava.

Our last night on the island was a real rage. I think a few people were in a rage by the end of the evening, but we weren't. We were the gayest most charming bunch you would ever wish to meet. Everyone dressed island style. I had to talk Terry into wearing something under his lava lava (native sarong) and Jimmy had to wear an extra long one (lava lava lava). We got all the guests up dancing. Terry and Jimmy did an excellent job making everyone feel welcome. They must of as they couldn't get rid of the old dears who chased them all over the island all night trying to see what they were wearing under their sarongs. Terry's famous words to Lorna and I were "Save me, there's after my body." We assured him that it must have been his money. We finished up the night with a singalong Island style with the guys teaching the band some good Aussie songs like "I put my finger in the woodpecker's hole" and "She came from the mountain."

But that's not quite the end. We put on the tape recorder to disco and Keith and Terry performed a ballet under the stars to a rock band. Very graceful they were too, dancing around posts trying to grab each other, Keith swinging from the rafters and landing on Terry with such fluid movements. So beautiful, that every time I think of it it brings tears to my eyes. (I didn't think Terry was like that). Sue summed it up with something like "OBSCENE", I think she said. No telling some people's tastes. "Artful or "Arseful", they were very entertaining. Culture in an uninhibited form.

Well it finally came time for us to leave the island and fly back home to Sydney.

Were they tears of sadness or happiness in the native staff's eyes as they waved us goodbye? Whichever it was, it certainly left us with a pretty picture of the island to keep as a memory of a very enjoyable diving holiday. We will definitely return that is if Tony and Sue let us back on the island.

Twinkle toes (that's another story) was caught red handed by a stewardess trying to peek up another stewardess's skirt (or was it bite her on the bum) on the plane trip home. They mustn't have minded too much as they constantly plied him with straight bourbons. Maybe they were trying to make him pass out. Still he managed to disembark and get through customs without falling on his face. Thank goodness. We would never have been able to pick him up again.

You will note that anything I did wrong is not written in this story and that's because I was perfectly well behaved during the whole trip. Or, as the guy's put it, "I know and I'm not telling".



In October of this year 5 South Pacific Divers members namely Pat & Lyn Manly, Kim Kohen, Peter Stratford and myself. Teamed up with Tom Byron, Gabriel and John Stosic and Peter Harvey and we headed for the sun and sea off Townsville.

We set off aboard the TAKAROA a 56 ft steel trawler / motor sailer owned and skippered by Allan "Harry" Johnson. The boat was built by Harry and is a real credit to his abilities as a Master boatbuilder. The vessel has satellite navigation, VHF & SSB radio, radar autopilot, a 2 tonne freezer, air-conditioned cabins and most important - plenty of AIR.

The food was great, the hospitality terrific and the skipper really knew what he was about. Navigating in and around the reefs at night was no bother at all. We travelled in a wide semi-circle, firstly S.E. to the "YONGOLA" wreck, then E.N.E. to Broadhurst Reef then North to Flinders Reef. Finally back to Townsville via the Gorgonian Garden Bommie, Dart and Bowl Reefs, Yankee Reef and Grub Reef.

Along the way we stopped overnight at a beautiful sand cay where we were able to photograph nesting birds and turtles. Peter saw a large nurse shark in the shallows but alas NO CAMERA. Generally we all agreed that Broadhurst Reef and a delightful spot we named the Gorgonian Garden Bommie were top spots, with Bowl Reef a real mind-blower. Flinders Reef way out in the Coral Sea was a little disappointing. The part we dived was fairly barren. The only redeeming features were plenty of sharks and a 6,000 ft drop off. Staring down into that blue-black darkness gives one a feeling of being very small in a very, very large ocean.

As a wreck diver the real highlights of the trip were my 3 dives on the "YONGALA". Two were day dives with Kim Kohen and the third was a night dive with Lyn Manly and Peter Stratford. Lynn and I penetrated deep into the wreck, down to the engine room and into "shaft alley" where the propeller shaft runs along the bottom of the hull. Lyn wasn't too keen about it either! Peter got quite flushed about the dive (private joke) and we all enjoyed ourselves immensely. The two daytime dives I had with Kim were the best dives I have ever had. For sheer size and initial impact the "PRESIDENT COOLIDGE" in Vanuatu is hard to beat, but for beauty, staggering fish life and prolific growth the "YONGALA" must be the best wreck dive in the world. The other great thing is the depth maximum 90 feet. Giant Groper, batfish, trevally, turrum, barracuda, dog tooth tuna sweetlip, coral trout, wrasse, parrotfish and hundreds of tiny coral fish can be seen everywhere in and around the wreck. Who could forget "HUMPHREY" the huge and over-friendly estuary cod which tried very hard to be in just about every photograph.

The marine growth must be enough to send a marine biologist into orgasms. Soft coral grows everywhere, with crinoids, hydroids and black coral covering every square inch of the wreck. It is a macro photographers delight. The whole ship seems to move and sway with the current, such is the profusion of growth. I felt sorry for Kim whose flash packed it in after his 3rd shot.

Over the 9 days we were aboard the "TAKAROA" the skipper showed us as many varied locations as possible and we were treated to some real spectacular diving. Lyn Peter and I had some great night dives and Lyn and I had a real spooky dive on the outer wall of Flinders Reef. The viz was excellent (that is, where the torch light was) and pitch black everywhere else. I had a close encounter of the 8 ft whaler kind, and still managed to get a couple of nice macro shots in between figuring out where the shark was. Peter saw the shark the next day at the same spot and agreed that it was a big MOTHER.

The Gorgonia Garden was well named, beautiful and huge fans 15 ft across gave us some great subjects to photograph. Pat and Kim got some lovely shots at this spot.

In between diving some of the braver? members of our group had a go at spinaker sailing --- great fun, and the men were not as good as the women.

Peter and I tried our hands at shark fishing with hand lines and had a real workout (my arms are still sore). Overall I managed 25 dives in the 9 days available, each one was a new and exciting experience. We saw plenty of sharks, the viz averaged 100 - 120 feet every day and got up to the magical 200 feet a couple of times.

We all took heaps of piccys and all I can say is that my bags are already packed for next year

MARTIN

THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE OF SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS WISHES MEMBERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR