

**SOUTH PACIFIC
DIVERS
CLUB**



WET RAG

FEBRUARY

1992

**MINUTES OF SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB MEETING
HELD ON 20th January 1992
at BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB**

MEETING OPENED 8.20 pm by Peter Jermyn.

APOLOGIES: Ilona Kandilas, Rick Latimer

VISITORS: Peter and Margie Nicholas, Glen and Maria.

Minutes from Last Meeting:

Read.

Accepted by Mark Welsh

Seconded by Karen

Business arising from Minutes:

Previous problems causing the omission of the membership advertisement in "Dive Log" have now been rectified. The ad will definitely be appearing in the next issue for a 12 month period.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE:

UTS Dive Club "No Douts", UnderWater Research Group "URG Bulletin", Brisbane Water Aqualung Club "Demand Value Vibes" and Ryde Underwater Club "Surface Interval".

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

None

TREASURERS REPORT:

Read.

Accepted by Lyn Vincent .

Seconded by Ron Mines.

PHOTOGRAPHIC OFFICERS REPORT:

Entries for the George Roberts Memorial Photographic Competition will be taken at the February meeting. The rules define that a minimum of one slide must be marco, a total of five slides are required. The photographic content must be underwater but can be taken in any location. The subject can not contain dead animals. There are two categories - Novice (have not won any major competitions) and Opens.. Submit slides to Martin Kandilas, individually labelled with name and category. Winners will be announced at the April meeting, prizes are to be announced.

Proceedings for the AV are going well, everything in place, hoping to organise 5 judges to judge the entries. Entries open 30th March 1992, close 25th May 1992. Contact Martin for entry forms.

The international category of the AV has been postpone until next year due to due the lack of time to promote the competition overseas, and problems in organising prizes.

A new club projector will be purchased soon.

SOCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT:

The BBQ and fun day at Jamberoo Recreation Park was a success, a number of club members turned up for lunch and to participate in the rides along with lots of other people.

A Jervis Bay Weekend will be organised March.

A BBQ will be arranged at Rick Latimers place late March.

A clean up rubbish and bottle dive will organised for 1st March "Clean up Australia" Day.

A four-wheel drive weekend will be held on the 6-7th March. Two wheel drives are also suitable for certain parts. Accommodation can be either camping or hotel (for the faint hearted). Ron Mines has provided details and map, see later in this newsletter. Please let Ron or a committee member know if you are interested.

See the Social Calender for upcoming social events.

DIVE ORGANISER'S REPORT:

People interested in diving are to contact Peter Booth the Thursday night prior to weekend dive. A message on the answering machine will provide updates on the diving situation before the dive.

See Social Calender for more details.

DIVE REPORTS:

George dived the Birchgrove with clear water, plenty of fish, no currents. The wreck was located quickly with Martin and Rick help.

Neil Vincent was intending to dive the "Dee Why" with a north side shop, however, 1 hour and 10 minutes later found them still looking for it, the anchor hooked on to something promising, which turned out to be the "Meggol" or more aptly the "meg hole".

While the SW wind was destroying JB, Halsifax park was protected for Neil and Co's New Years dive. Due to a shortage of full tanks, Lyn stayed on the shore, watching a school of dolphins circling the divers, unfortunately they were out of sight of the divers underwater.

Brian dived Halifax in a howling NEaster, had a fantastic dive, observing a profusion of life, including a spotted moray and a hugh flathead.

Peter and Margie Nicholls dived in a spot near the pipeline line and breakwall at Nelson Bay. Sea Pens, decorator crabs are among the many things that can be seen. Dive on the high tide for best visibility. Rates as one of the 3 best shore dives in Aust.

Rick and Martin dived the "Kelo". 80ft visibility for the dive. Martin has some good marks for finding this wreck.

DIVE COURSES:

The dates for the next deep diver course are:

Thursday 19th March - Theory
Sat/Sun 21/22 nd March - Diving
Additional nights and/or weekends may be required.

The people in this course are:

Lyn Vincent
Neil Koos
Joan Ostergard
Martin Kandilas
Ross Hipwell
John Beddie
Sue O'Grady

There is one vacancy if someone from the May course would like to change or if anyone else is interested.

These people must pay at the next meeting \$73 (including certification) plus boat dives. Contact Pennie (ph: 759-4176) or Sue (ph: 528 4485).

GENERAL BUSINESS :

- Cassie Welsh has resigned from "Scuba Diver". Mark and her will be moving to Bryon Bay to establish a new business venture. We thank them for their help and contributions to the club and AV, and wish them the best of luck.

- **FOUND**

A white "Jim Beam" sloppy joe, left at Karin Smith's place after Christmas Party.
Contact Karin (ph: 529 - 3818)

- Anyone with holiday slides or videos are very welcomed to bring them along to club meetings. They don't need to be competition standard, just normal everyday slides. Contact Martin before the meeting to make sure a projector is available.

- The date for the April meeting has been changed to 3rd May due to Easter and School holidays.

- As a matter of interest, tide time charts can be obtained from BP Service Stations.

- "Scuba Diver" has an article on "Immediate First Aid Care" in the Feb-Mar Edition.

MEETING CLOSED 10.30 p.m.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

In case you were besieged by unexplainable circumstances and haven't yet paid your club membership fees (or you forgot) please be sure to pay at the February meeting.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP FEES

\$10 Single

\$15 family.

FEBRUARY MEETING:

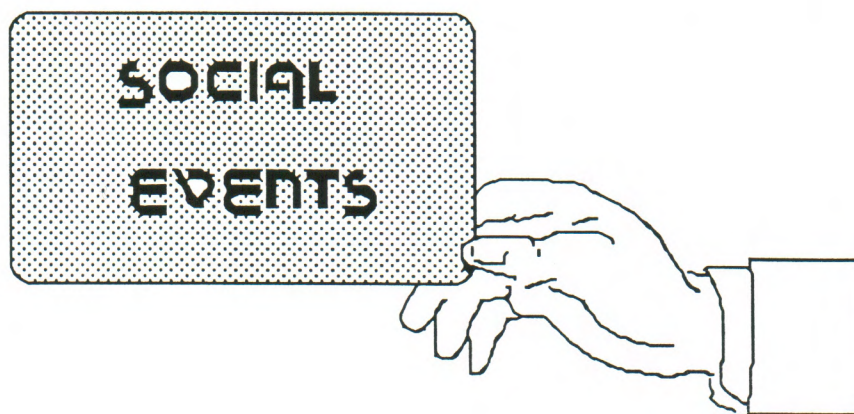
CAVE DIVING PRESENTATION

Ian Lewis will be presenting slides and a talk on the thrills of cave diving. Ian is the National Director of the Cave Diving Association of Australia (CDAA). Definitely not to be missed, interesting even if you don't fancy the idea of diving in caves, you could even be tempted after listening to this talk.

Andy Galloway has written a report on our recent trip to Mount Gambier, see later in this newsletter.

FOR SALE

- ◇ Seatite housing Nikon F 55 macro lens plus Subutee S100 strobe \$1200
 - ◇ Apollo Reg, ocy and gauges \$400
 - ◇ Apollo wetsuit size 5 Slim \$200
 - ◇ TUSA BCJ (Medium) \$100
 - ◇ Scubapro (XSmall) Blue \$250
 - ◇ TUSA BCJ halies blue/pink (XSmall) \$200 ONO
 - Contact Micheal Cufer (ph: 587 1429)
-
- * 4A Nickonas/Toshiba flash (Modified). 35 and 28mm lenses \$800
 - Contact



DIVES and SOCIAL

17th February - Club Meeting - Bankstown Sports Club

Cave Diving Presentation by Ian Lewis
Remember Deep Diver (March) money due
Club Membership fees due.
Enter Slides for George Roberts.

23rd February - Club Boat Dive - The Dee Why.

Meet Rosebay wharf, 9.00am. Interested divers and boat owners ring Peter Booth by the Thursday before.

1st March - Clean up Australia Dive

Contact George or Peter.

6/7th March - 4 (and 2) wheel drive weekend trip to Historic Wiseman's Ferry and the Upper McDonald River.

See Article this newsletter.

16th March - Club Meeting - Bankstown Sports Club

DIVE COURSES

Deep Diver Course, instruction by Steve Cross.

19th March Theory
21/22nd Diving

Details earlier in newsletter.
Contact Pennie Smith (Phone: 759 4176) or Sue.

Next Course May.

FUTURE EVENTS!!

FIRST AID COURSE FOR DIVERS

Instruction by Alan Stewart (Senior Training Officer - St John Ambulance).

A talk will be arranged (possibly for the March meeting).

Alan Stewart is an Officer in the Commando Regiment of the Australian Army. He has a Diploma in Education, Post Graduate in Disaster Management, he is also a registered nurse with certificates in psychiatric and retardation care, ICC and CCV and Causality. He is also involved in bushwalking, camping and AB sailing.

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY WEEKEND/LECTURE

A informative discussion on Underwater Photography by Micheal Cufer, will be organised sometime in the future.

DATES FOR FUTURE CLUB MEETINGS

(unless otherwise advised)

Next Meeting	17/2/92
	16/3/92
	3/5/92 (APRIL transferred)

Club Meetings are held the third Monday of each month at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Pde, Bankstown, at 8.00 pm in the Emile McDonald Function Room. Come early and enjoy a meal at the bistro.

SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT: Peter Jermyn Contact Number: 708 2309 (Home)

TREASURER: Karin Smith Contact Number: 529 3818 (Home)

PHOTOGRAPHIC OFFICER: Martin Kandilas
Contact Number: 726 3570 (Home)

SOCIAL SECRETARY: George Nichols
Contact Number: 502 1564 (Home)
286 4000 (Work)

DIVE ORGANISER: Peter Booth Contact Number: 522 6397 (Home)
Leave message on answering machine.

SECRETARY/PUBLICITY OFFICER: Sue O'Grady
Contact Number: 528 4482 (Home)
517 1966 (Work)
517 2990 (Fax)

A 4WD WEEKEND WHERE YOU CAN BRING YOUR 2WD.

DATE: 6-7th March

TO: Historic Wiseman's Ferry and the Upper McDonald River.

CONTACT: Ron Mines (ph: 602 9851)

We meet at the old Wiseman's Ferry inn at 9.00am on Saturday, have a quick look around Wiseman's Ferry, then across the ferry where we take a short walk along the original Northern Road.

Built around 1830 this amazing road is a testament to road builders of the convict variety. They don't build them like that today. Also they don't string them up by the Neck today. We will have a look at Hanging Rock where many a wayward convict met his end. (It was going up while he came down.)

Then we will do some 4WD driving on a track which borders the national park, towards 10 Mile Hollow. This road has some very deep water holes.

Next, on to the Settlers Arms Inn, built 1836, at St Albans.

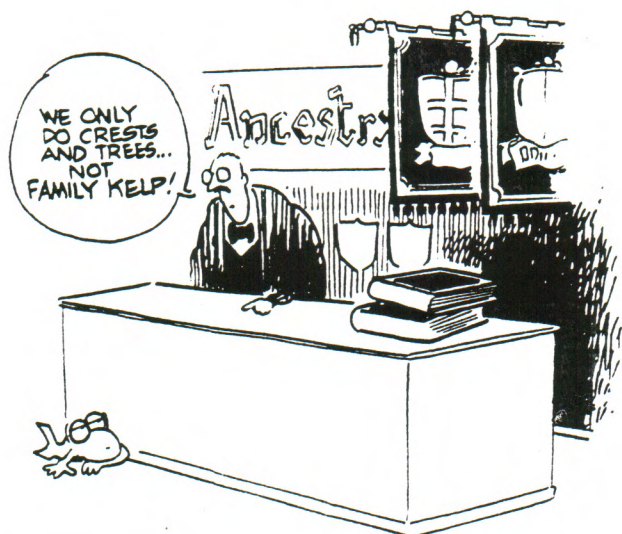
If John McDermont would like to come, accommodation could be arranged here.

The Town Common often has lots of wildlife. Then we go on to our camping spot beside the McDonald River. There are no facilities here.

Next morning we go on, to the end of the road, over three river crossings (easy 4WD) back through St Albans, then via Webbs Creek Road.

The 4WDs can then take a hill climb diversion. Nearby we will visit the old haunted church with convict stained door step. Interesting graveyard has the bones of several Baileys, all of whom are my antecedents.

Then we return by Wisemans Ferry to home.



- Leave your pets at home — they can disturb and kill native animals and are often a nuisance to the other visitors.
- Leave firearms at home.
- Do not disturb plants, animals and rocks. Rocks are important shelter for some animals and plants.

- Drive carefully and keep to roads and car parks provided.
- Please observe all signs. They are provided for your guidance and to assist you to enjoy the areas you visit



PRODUCED IN AUSTRALIA
BY WEST GOSFORD PRINTERS P.L.C.

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A Publication of the
New South Wales Government
NATIONAL PARKS AND
WILDLIFE SERVICE



MOUNT GAMBIER - A FRESHWATER EXPERIENCE

Contributed by Andy Galloway.

Six tanks, four torches, ice cold water, zero viz, tiny claustrophobic cracks and tunnels, cave-ins, guideline tangles tightening around your throat, examiners who were thrown out of the S.A.S for being to cruel. Oh NO, which way do I go?? Please God, just let be see the sun again.....

This is something like I imagined my entry to the sport of cave diving to be. I was wrong. Well, they're not examiners - they're instructors, and the water wasn't that cold!

Jan 27 - Feb 2 was the time. Mt Gambier, South Australia, the place for the CDAA Cavern/Sinkhole course. A total of eight hopefuls (7 from Sydney, 1 from Adelaide) made their way by various ways and means to participate in a week of hard diving, relaxed theory, early starts, late finishes, missed meals but some of the most spectacular U/W sights that you could imagine.

The training involved the disciplines and use of all the necessary specialist techniques and equipment required, including all the expected "worse case scenario" exercises.

Sound difficult?. Not at all, its all just adapting and fine tuning skills we all use without thinking in the ocean. It equates to a very different, but fun experience. Blundering along a guideline, run through and under an old tree with a black-out mask, wondering what surprises the next five feet will bring, can be very interesting.

Needless to say all of us passed without too many problems - Thanks to our enthusiastic and helpful instructors, Ian Lewis and Chris Brown. What these guys don't know about caves and the sport of exploring them U/W is really not worth knowing.

A big thank you to Neil Vincent, who went to a lot of trouble to organise this course and without whom, the opportunity to do this would not have come along. More thanks to Chris Brown for his very informed suggestions on equipment and some short cuts around various problems. Ian Lewis pulled strings, moved Heaven and Earth and even called on friendships in order to organise the group two dives each in the awesome Piccaninnie Ponds and two mindblowing dives in the sinkholes of Barnoolut Station (Ten Eighty and Bullocks). To Ian, from the six of us who chose to take the advantage of the hugh effort you made, our combined and deepest gratitude.

All in all, a most enjoyable and challenging course. Which I highly recommend - Whens the next one Neil?

By the way I lied - the water was bloody freezing.

Congratulations to:

Gerald Brown
Andy Galloway
Peter O'Grady
Sue O'Grady
Neal Robinson
Roger Wright
and others

ABOUT 20 years ago, with many other ignorant imbeciles, I waged war on what we considered to be the deadliest denizen of the deep – the grey nurse shark.

And it wasn't just us fishos. Ron and Val Taylor and Benn Cropp convinced the skindiving fraternity that these vicious man-eaters must be wiped out at all costs.

They even set upon schools of them with powerhead spear guns, blasting them to death as they stuck their noggins out of their caves to see what all the fuss was about.

And we incredibly brave fishermen also kept up the carnage from the safety of our big boats.

Baits would be lowered to the bottom at places like The Peak, Long Reef and the 12-Mile Reef and these savage killers would be hooked, landed and tied by the tail to a bollard, where they would spend the next few hours wriggling around as they died a slow, agonising death.

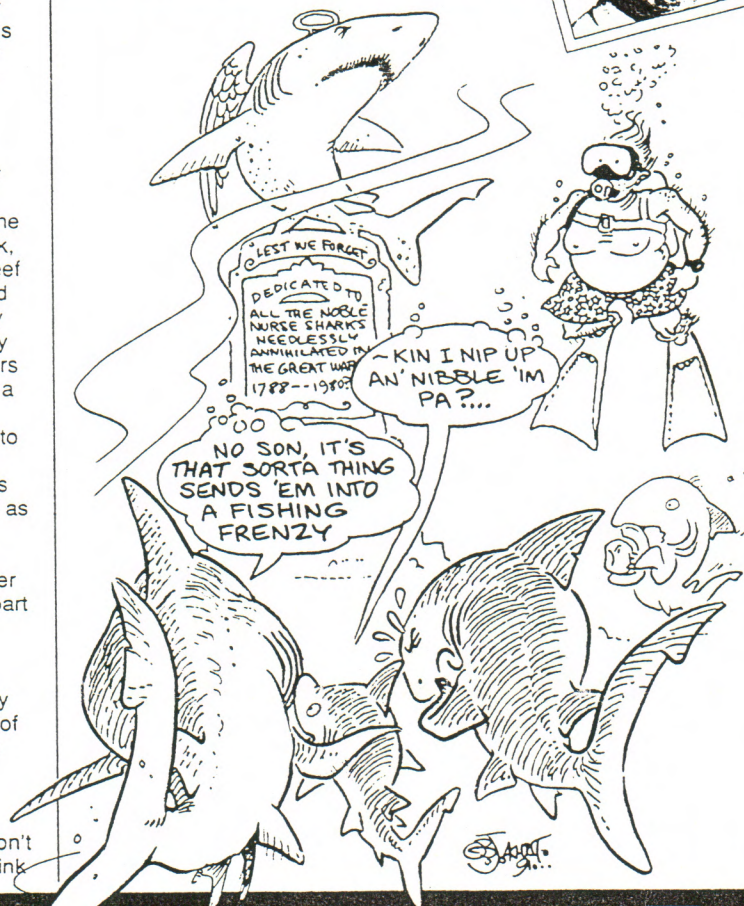
And then we towed them into the weigh station at Watsons Bay, where the Doyles patrons and adoring public applauded as another great white hunter returned from the dangerous depths and hung his man-eater up by the tail and played his part in ridding the world of this menace.

Alf Vockler used to report schools of heavily-fanged grey nurses surfing down the face of huge waves rolling in through Sydney Heads at the start of each summer.

"Beware of the aquatic killers," he would warn us. "Don't swim in the harbor or even think

WELL, I'LL BE HOOKED

WITH AUSTRALIA'S MOST FAMOUS AND FURIOUS FISHERMAN PAUL B. KIDD



blue shark – all notorious surface workers?"

Or "Are they really a threat to society or is it merely sensationalism because of the hapless creature's handle of grey nurse?"

And soon we started finding out extraordinary things. Their name was a fallacy – they should have been called a "grey boot" or "grey slug" or "grey pussycat".

No-one had even seen one swimming around on the surface and no-one had ever been eaten by one. Why? Because they lived in the caves on reefy ocean floors and hardly ever left there all their lives.

So much for them cruising around in the breakers – what a load of shit. And as for eating anyone? More crap. If we had ever bothered to take time to look at their "horrendous" teeth, we would have realised that they all point back into the mouth and are classified as "ripping" or "ragged" teeth, rather than biting teeth like the treacherous white pointers, tigers and whalers.

And if we had stopped bullshitting the public that they were aggressive fighters, we would have confessed that they were a bag of shit to catch and offered little or no resistance on the long haul up from the bottom.

And so after a few years the grey nurse was banned from all record charts. Now skindivers have discovered this incredible pod of them living in a huge mass of caves at Seal Rocks on the NSW north coast.

There are hundreds cruising around grazing casually on the huge schools of baitfish that congregate in the area.

Nursie dear

about letting your kids go near the water. You'll all be eaten."

Needless to say, the poor gullible public flocked to the fenced-off safety of Alf's huge swimming baths at Watsons Bay.

It was all grey nurses back in those confused early '70s. People had them turning up in their bathtubs and biting them on the khyber as they sat on the Gene Tunney parting with a grogan.

While John Lennon was having sleep-ins for peace and the world was wearing flowers in its hair and condemning the atrocities of the Vietnam war, we were committing genocide on grey nurse sharks.

The first fishing article I ever wrote back in May 1970 had me quoting to a spellbound audience: "He had played the fish for over an hour only to find that in the last few yards of battle a seven foot grey nurse was making a smorgasbord of it".

What a poor, simple misguided idiot I was. The story was about a day's rock fishing and it was probably the first shark I had ever seen at close range in my life.

It had to be a grey nurse. That's all that existed in those days. I'm surprised they didn't name a car after one or get one to be a tonight show host.

I'm sure that if someone had

invented a dance called "Doin' the grey nurse" with people biting each other on the neck, arms and legs as they gyrated across the floor, it would have been an instant success.

And so grey nurse fever reached its peak.

Thousands of them had been put to death. But then someone who wasn't caught up in the blood-letting started asking questions.

Like, "How many people have they actually eaten?" and "How many times have you actually seen them swimming around the boat or attacking the berley pot like an angry mako, white, hammerhead or Mediterranean

And divers come from all over the world to swim with them, these beautiful, harmless sea creatures that once were treated so badly.

I don't dive, but I imagine swimming with these docile creatures in those pristine conditions would be better than porking Madonna while Elle Macpherson served the drinks.

If they aren't a fully-protected species, they should be. The old saying "The more I see of people the more I like my dog" is so apt.

Slowly the world is waking up to the fact that some of the most beautiful creatures aren't always the prettiest. The grey nurse shark is a classic example.