

# WET RAG

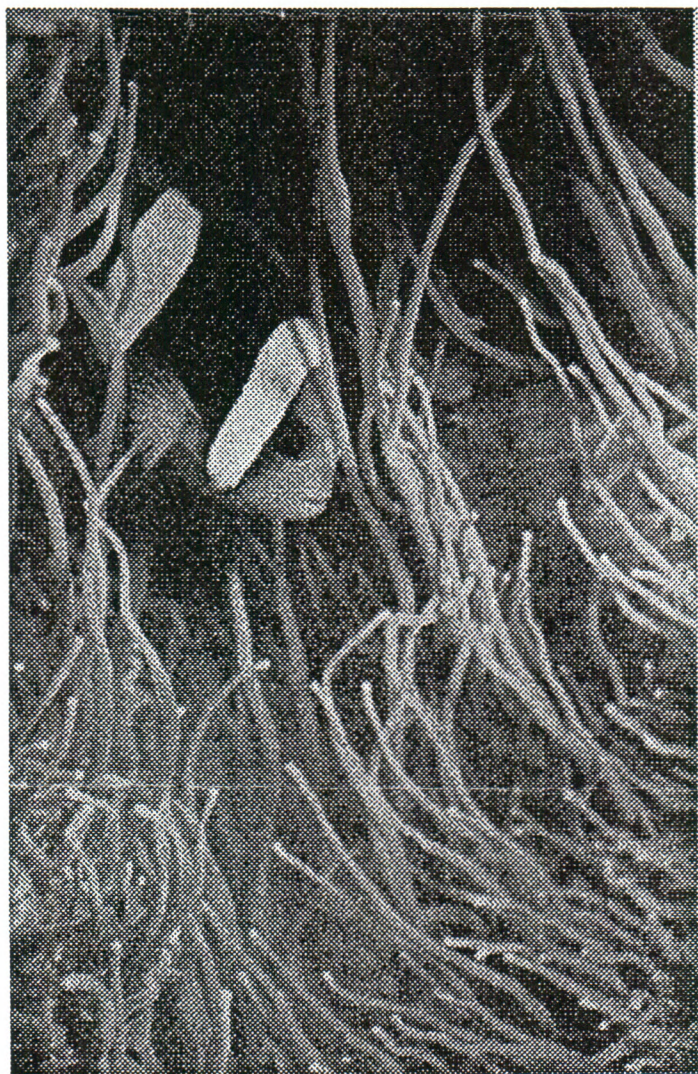
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS' CLUB (established 1962)



PO Box 823, BANKSTOWN NSW 2200  
TELEPHONE: 0411 343 200

NOVEMBER 1996

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Meetings of the Club are normally held at 8 pm on the 3rd Monday of each month in the Emile McDonald Room of the Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Street, Bankstown. This month's meeting will be held on Monday, 18th Nov. 1996.



## **A NIGHT TO REMEMBER**

**The next in this series of nights will be held on Friday the 15th of November and as usual will have a very interesting line up of speakers.**

**So if you want to go the club has obtained tickets.**

**Ring Leo as soon as possible on 0419 517 285.**

### **President's Message**

The "Galloping Greek" is certainly spreading the word around Europe about S.P.D. his latest effort was to organise a guest speaker for our next club meeting Jean Claude Le Pechon arrived in Sydney on Sunday night and we met him at the Airport. Over a few beers we found this man fascinating and extremely knowledgeable. An expert on working in compressed air he will talk to us about it's dangers. With all the fuss recently about nitrox and Trimix here is a man who has been using these mixtures for twenty years. We are hoping to take Jean Claude on a couple of dives next weekend on club boats so if you are available give Cookie or myself a call for the details.

Commiseration's to Roslyn Phillips who said yes last Sunday, and is now Mrs. Bilbow. The ceremony was set in Marine Park overlooking Watson's Bay and the reception was held at nearby Dunbar House. Sydney turned on a beautiful sunny afternoon and on behalf of all the members of S.P.D. I wish them lots of luck and happiness for the future.

Also the S.P.D. Christmas party is looming up. An RSVP is a must this year as our new club member is planning a surprise and only members who RSVP will be fed. No excuses accepted. Let Peta know at the next club meeting, or leave a message on the club's phone 0411 343 200

The club has received a letter from the Premiers office in response to our concerns over the recent spearfishing competition held recently in South West Rocks. We will keep you informed of any discussions.

Club member Rod Muir is in Caringbah hospital after Sundays SCAN dive day. Unfortunately he lost the top of his finger when it got caught between the boat and the wharf. Ouch! Hope

you feel better soon Rod. What a way to spoil a good day.

regards Leo B

### **Photographic Officer's Report**

. As the closing date for the Australian Underwater Photographer of the year comp draws closer - 22nd November - the entries are beginning to trickle in. Hopefully the number of entries will exceed last year's 116.

The judges for the comp have been finalised and this year will see the return of some old faces and one new person. The names as with last year are being kept secret in order to minimise any thoughts some entrants may have of bribery.

Our sponsors - without whom the comp wouldn't exist - are again being generous with their prizes!!! We have some old favorites such as Sea New Guinea, Pro Dive Travel and Aqua Sea as well as some new ones including Sea Optics (SA) and Aquatic Explorers from Cronulla.

All sponsors must be finalised by the end of November otherwise they will miss out on the 1996 competition. To this end all members of the Photographic Subcommittee are putting long hours to complete the task.

If you have any queries regarding the comp please phone me at home before midday on the 13th November. After this time I will be in Vanuatu for 10 days, so please direct your problems to Paul Howlett. I will ring Paul on several occasions while away to resolve any hassles that may arise while I'm absent. This trip was booked in advance before the dates of the competition were organised, just in case people think I don't want to be around at this time of the year.

Regards, Peter Flockart



## INTERNATIONAL GUEST AT NEXT MEETING.

While attending the UNDERWATER SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE in ISTANBUL recently "The Galloping Greek" was introduced to their guest speakers.

One of these speakers Jean Claude LE PECHON (with one of those ' on the top of the PE) is coming to Australia and will make a presentation on High Altitude diving at our next meeting. The particular dive was in 1993 in Chile at Lake Chungara at 4517m. This is technical diving in extreme conditions. The dive was carried out on Nitrox, with automatic semi-closed U.B.A., and was computer controlled.

Jean Claude has spent 13 years planning platform in various countries (mostly using Trimix) and now is a well known consultant for work requiring compressed air breathing. He has worked on space programs requiring compressed air and diver training is an expert on commercial saturation diving and now works mostly with tunneling operations.

Jean Claude is coming out here for 2 weeks to advise Transfield on the Airport Metro Project.

**REMEMBER OUR NEXT MEETING IS NEXT MONDAY DON'T MISS THIS ONE**

## DIVE REPORTS

### THE LADY DARLING Barjumpa

Reports that the Lady Darling had been located by Bert Elswyk on the 17th August, just off Mystery Bay were true and a trip was hastily organised by the club diving with the opposition charter operation, Kato Dive, operated by Peter Tinsen and staying in the luxury of the Mystery Bay Farm accommodation. We had a big turn out by the club with 15 divers and 9 children and 5 non diving wives. But in the week immediately prior to our proposed weekend trip on the 18-20 October, the Heritage Department still hadn't issued permits for anyone other than 'Bert Elswyk Inc.' and his charter operation to dive on the wrecksite... What's more perplexing is that in that week (Mid October) the Heritage Dept had only logged one dive on the wreck. Isn't it amazing that with all the red tape they create that when it gets down to the nitty gritty of someone finding a new wrecksite in reportedly pristine condition and within their diveable limits that in two and a half months they log one whole 20 minute dive. They continued to allow a charter operator to take commercial dive charters to the site but do not allow anyone else to dive the site. Well after much pushing and shoving and finally correspondence from aggressive solicitors the Heritage Dept backed off and issued permits to the three commercial charter operators at Narooma.

South Pacific Divers were the first (Non Bert Elswyk) charter group on the wreck. But alas the reports that the wreck was pristine were grossly exaggerated. There were no brass or copper objects to be seen anywhere on the wreck..... Looks like the mice have been there some 15 or more years ago.... All things aside this is an exciting wreck to dive on and very pretty with it's marine growth. Camera buffs with go mad with the growth and size of the wrecksite. Wreck divers will still be impressed although not frothing at the regulator as was

originally indicated. The PADI divers down there still consider it to be a deep dive and don't believe in decompression diving profiles (yet) so 33 metres and 20 min bottom time are the limits.

The weather in the area is so often not kind to divers as was the case on the second day so we had a fun dive with the seals from the colony on Montague Island and on route back encountered a pod of three whales that were putting quite a show breaching and slapping their tails. The one more surfaced on the other side of our boat some 25 metres away and passed right under our boat.

A great weekend away with the club and family was had by all and another with be planned early next year in the calendar so be there.

### HI-TECH? NO FRILLS! By Scott Leimroth

I was recently invited by the 'No Frills' dive club from Long Reef to join them for a weekends diving at Seal Rocks. As usual I jumped at any chance to dive the Catterthun and my buddy Ian and I set off late Friday night for the camp site. And what a campsite it was. Great accommodation in luxury huts with ocean views and only mins from the beach. This was a great find and will be a must for the next SPDC weekend up there. We set out from the beach after much fun launching the boats with the 4wds and were soon over the Catterthun. A large turtle was seen on the surface and when he descended we could see him disappearing for ages the water was so clear. We also spotted 3 humpbacks playing on the surface and watched them before anchoring. This was a great dive with virtually no current and 30m viz. No frills were impressed as it was their first dive on the wreck being unable to find it on previous trips. We dived at Big Seal that afternoon and although the viz wasn't as good as on the wreck we saw the large resident turtle sleeping under his ledge, numerous lion fish, one grey nurse and a heap of large crayfish .



The next day we dived the wreck again and the viz had even improved slightly. We explored the stern and the areas around the engine and boiler finding large swimthroughs on the port side where the hull has collapsed and a large anchor from the Briggs and May salvage in 1896 lying between the engine and boiler. We had a magical view of the wreck as the anchor drifted off the port side near the engine and in the clear water could see and appreciate the true size of the vessel that lay on the ocean floor before us. Ian and I had some apprehensive moments on deco as we were engulfed by large schools of bait fish which suddenly disappeared but we didn't see what had frightened them. We had spent 20 - 25mins on the bottom and were in the water decoing for ages longer than the other divers. No wonder these guys call themselves 'No Frills'. They don't dive with BCDs and only ever wear single tanks. On top of that they did 15 mins on the bottom and only 15 - 20 mins deco. They do, however, have many years experience between them and were very competent divers. And I thought the Catterthun was a 'technical' dive. *Doh!*

### **Helmet Fetish Dive Day.** Barjumpa

On the 2nd November, South Pacific Divers went back into the diving past. Peta Williamson, Peter Flockart, Bob May, Mark Deitz, Gordon MacDonald and I went and learnt to dive in hard helmet dress at the Helmet Fetish at Manly wharf. Bob May considered that there would be parking problems at Manly and came by boat although we all walked the 23 metres from the car park to the wharf with little or no difficulty. Don't ever let it be said that Bob May doesn't do things with style.

The course included a history tour of helmet diving and its evolution onto scuba. Then down to the technical side and all indications were that this was not going to be as comfortable as the recreational sport diving that we do today. Formalities over it was time to suit up in these one size fits all diving dress. We had two different types of helmet for the course. The U.S. Navy Mk 5 helmet circa 1917, and a Japanese pearling helmet circa 1950. Each type of helmet having their own advantages and similarities except the Jap Helmet had an extra 25lbs of lead weight over and above the 60lb waist belt and 30lb lead shoes that you already had to wear.....I was first so the decision was easy. I chose the lighter Mk 5 helmet. Getting suited up would have appealed to several absent committee members who are regular 'Whipme Beatme Niteclub' patrons. Being manhandled while climbing into a rubberised 'full body condom' suit, lubricated hands....and more... What have I got myself into..? Insults and innuendo from my colleagues followed by the

customary photo session complete with the true divers beanie. Well I was already exhausted and I was still 15 feet from the bloody water! So this is what Briggs and May felt like prior to salvaging the Catterthun.

When the helmet was on we had diver to surface communication which could be just heard over the constant flow of air. Standing up with the full dress with the extra 120lbs I felt and looked like Robbie the Robot (Hollywood circa 1960) shuffle, shuffle, giant stride and into the water. Once in the water it took on a whole new aspect and apart from my hands I was totally dry which was not so bad, and overall it was almost comfortable. Vision out of the four windows was not bad either. After one or two minutes regulating your buoyancy everyone is an old time expert and off I went shuffling around the bottom. I suppose as far as the divesite was concerned this area was pretty shitty but not without it's own little gems like pygmy leather jackets, a blue ringed octopus and the wharf piles to rat around. 45 minutes passed in seemingly short time and it was time to return.

In summing up our nostalgic Helmet Fetish dive experience, although very cumbersome in and out of the water, it was something that I have always wanted to try and may even try again in the future and would recommend doing the course. After the course we considered the feats of Briggs and May working at the then record salvage depth of the Catterthun at 60 metres, obviously they were motivated by money and gold but having worn this type of outfit we know that they must have been absolutely crackers!!!!

### **PS KOPUTAI - DOES IT REALLY EXIST?**

By the Bubblebrained Diver.

This is a question that four out of the five divers aboard the boat asked themselves as we returned from yet another failed attempt to dive the wreck last Monday. We calculated that between the four of us we had attempted to dive the wreck no less than 10 times without success. Today had been no different and we began to wonder if this wreck really existed or was it just a lure to get divers to do a tri-mix course. Sure we had seen the video, but parts of the footage had looked suspiciously like the Royal Shepard, and was that a PADI open water class practicing fin pivots we'd seen in the background of one shot??

We all agreed that it had been fun trying to dive the wreck, after all on what other dive can you; spend huge \$\$ on gas, carry four tanks in raging current, descend 80m to pristine white sands and then have your drysuit flood and lose all the lines from the boat while doing over an



hours deco in shark infested waters miles out to sea. We vowed to try one more time as we just had to find out if it was possible to do fin pivots at that depth carrying four tanks. And besides the sponges did look lovely on the reef down there, particularly if you changed back to air for a few breaths.

### THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Will be held on Monday the 16th of January and sees the end of the current committee, and as is customary and in accordance with our rules of incorporation all the committee positions are declared vacant. Many of the current committee have now served 2 years or more and will not be seeking reelection. For varied reasons members are often reluctant to volunteer themselves making it difficult to fill these positions. The purpose of this article is to bring out those members who may have thoughts of being on the committee but they maybe a little shy to put up their hand. Here is a brief summary of our current committee in order of their membership years.

Peter our photographic officer. Peter joined the club when "Adam was a boy". A keen photographer but has never served on a committee before. He took on the job last year, and with the help of last years secretary Suzanne, has put in a great effort in establishing a system which will take a lot of the pain out of this position. He was instrumental in setting up the current sub-committee which now is working on the current photographic competition.

Russell a computer wiz joined the club in October '92 and after a lot of persuasion and a few schooners agreed to take on the roll of Editor at the last A.G.M. Russell has surprised many (including himself) with his work on the newsletter.

Leo joined in October 1992 became president (more by accident than choice) in August '93 and except for a short period has been there ever since. Time for Leo to be put out to pasture.

Barbara joined in August '93 and almost immediately became head gopher. Barb, was elected to the committee in October '94 as social secretary, but assumed the roll of treasurer from "The Galloping Greek" early in '95, and was reelected last year. Book Keeping is an essential job, and Barb's neatness and attention to detail is second to none.

Carina fresh out of open water school was dragged out of the gutters of Heron Island in November '93. Carina was elected as social secretary in October '94 and took on the demanding roll of secretary last year. This is another position where computer skills are

handy.

David joined the club early in '94. He accepted the role as social secretary' but of late has been has been extremely busy with work subsequently we have not seen a lot of him. David along with Roslyn are heavily involved on the photographic committee.

Cookie also joined the club early in '94, was elected to the position of dive organiser later that year and again last year. This position requires a degree of patience especially when your cohort is Scott. Keeping an eye on the weather and coming up with interesting dives each month is essential for this position.

Scott is another who joined the club early in '94. Mr Reliable's committee career is a mirror image to Cookie's, minus the workload. Dive organising is frustrating and the reason for 2 positions is purely to spread the load.

Paul joined the club in October '95 and 2 months later nominated himself as Publicity Officer. Completely unknown to anyone in the club at that time, Paul is a perfect example of the potential within the club that needs to be brought out. Over the last twelve months articles written by Paul have appeared in nearly every issue of Dive Log.

Peta, the new kid on the block joined our club in July this year and has been helping David and the committee with organising the social events, proving once again that all members, new or long serving, are more than welcome to be on the S.P.D.C. committee. There many positions to be filled, many hands make light work, so put up your hands and lets make sure S.P.D. thrives next year.

### BSAC UPDATE by Adrienne Hill

BSAC activity with the club has been a little silent lately, however, things have been quietly bubbling along.

A BSAC Branch committee has been formed with the following office bearers. A couple of the names will be familiar and no doubt as further BSAC interest and activity spreads you'll get to know the others. They are: Robert Usher - as the chair, Adrienne Hill as the Secretary, Ian Underhill as the Dive Officer and Training Officer, Jonathon Clark-Jones as the Membership Secretary and Leo Bergagnin as the Treasurer. Robert and Jonathon as BSACers from way back in the old country. Ian is also an instructor and Jonathon is on his way there.

This crew, as a subcommittee, will report to the South Pac movers and shakers, The Committee. Following the first BSAC meeting, two more have been held. As well as general administrative work, the committee has



discussed where we see this Sydney BSAC branch heading and ways to make it happen. Club cross pollination is important and we encourage current SouthPac members to consider BSAC. Benefits are considerable including:

- Top quality Diver magazine monthly
- Individual third party type insurance (like what divemasters etc pay up for)
- Third party type of boat insurance (depends if your boat is insured for certain things)
- Training - BSAC divers are renowned for their competency and safe diving .

You can cross over to BSAC and build on what you have done already. Perhaps you have been thinking about dive master training, well Dive leader is very similar. Perhaps you have friends who want to learn to dive. You might want to do specialties like boat handling, O2 admin, possibly nitrox, or more. You may think you are a hot diver - you might want to see if you are - attempt to become a First Class diver, an extremely difficult qualification to obtain. Or you might want to consider Instructor training. All things are possible. Ian can answer all your questions.

We are also going to encourage old and current BSAC divers out there. Should they wish to join this branch, then they will also need to join our club which means the strength and profile of South Pac will become even greater.

We have also discussed particular BSAC weekends away diving.

Branch Committee meetings are held in quaint English pubs in places like the Rocks. You are welcome to come if you want to discuss BSAC in more depth over a pint of beer. Please contact any of the committee members or BSAC committee members for more information

#### **Report From Scan Meeting** Peter Flockart

On Wednesday 6 November several members from S.P.D. attended the SCAN meeting at the St George Rowing club. Also present were representatives from : Lo Tech Divers, DOUBTS, Ryde Underwater Group, St George and Underwater Research Group.

The nights agenda opened with the reading of the previous meeting's minutes. When queried as to why no meetings had been held since July it was because there was no quorum. The only business arising from these minutes was the discussion on Scans letter re Fish Rock Cave that was still be sent off. It is hoped that the letter will be sent to both the Fisheries Department as well as the minister for the Environment, Gabrielle Harrison, suggesting the area be designated as a Marine National Park.

It was decided to draft a letter and table it at the next meeting for evaluation by club representatives.

In general business, discussion was given over the eight page document tabled by John Chad. This paper was from a Rod Waski who is a community representative from the Port Hacking River Catchment Management Committee (PHRCMC for short). This organisation is proposing a management plan for Ship Rock and Port Hacking and is looking for comments from Scans in the hope of gaining further support for their plan. The plan makes interesting reading in that looks at the increasing pressures being placed on the Port Hacking area by both residents and visitors alike. Its major goal is to maintain and enhance the ecosystem and natural recreational attributes of the area. If you want to read further Leo B has copies of the paper available.

Lastly was a short discussion on the up coming scans dive day to be held at Jibbon beach on Sunday 10 November, leaving from Dolans Bay at 8.30 am with lunch to commence at around 11.30 am. S.P.D. mentioned that it had 4 boats, 15 divers and 14 non-divers attending. It was hoped that the weather would be fine all day.

#### **MAG UPDATE :-Scott Liemroth**

Magnetometer success! Well maybe.

The magnetometer has been used twice in the last few weeks in an area south of the Undola and we believe we may have found something. The first day it registered something and a GPS position was plotted however no diving could be done due to the rough seas. A few weeks later we took it to the same vicinity and it registered something again and a GPS position was plotted, again the seas prevented us from diving. Upon returning to shore to plot the area we had searched it was found, to our amazement, that the two GPS positions we had detected something on the two different days were only 30m apart. We are almost sure this is a wreck and have planned to meet on the Undola at 10am on Sun 24th Nov to dive this spot and see what it is. Anyone interested please contact Leo before this date to confirm.

**FOR SALE** Nikonos V with 35mm lens excellent cond. Never flooded, serviced by Poraday & not used since \$700 & 15mm Nikonos lens & viewfinder new in box and never used \$2400 call John McDermont-98683222 (b.h)97552435 (a.h.)

Fibreglass Boat 5.4M "Kingfisher" deep V, 90 Johnson Motor, Brooker Roller trailer, ladder, canvas cover, compass, sounder, radio, lights, EPIRB, spacious deck area set up for diving good cond, 12 month rego. \$Reasonable Offer. Ring Anne on 9645 4405 also Family tent 3.3m excellent condition \$420 o.n.o.



**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The following members are on the committee for the 1996 year.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Home No:</b>	<b>Work No:</b>
President:	Leo Bergagnin	9558 2592 Mobile: (041) 951 7285	9517 2853
Treasurer:	Barbara Sweetman	9550 1712	
Secretary:	Carina Gregory	(046) 25 8630	(046)20 1423
Photographic Officer:	Peter Flockart	9371 0265 Fax: 9374 2688	9374 2382
Publicity Officer:	Paul Howlett	9746 6720	9377 3030
Dive Organizers:	Scott Leimroth Geoff Cook	9759 6501 9543 5817 Mobile (018) 29 4897	(019) 99 0864 [m] (018) 29 4891
(Nightdives Only)	Michael McFadyen	9558 8181 Mobile (015) 27 6556	9585 6434
Social Secretaries:	David Bilbow	9564 1119	9566 4333
Newsletter Editor:	Russell Stoker	9799 2663 Mobile (018) 963 527	9217 1739 Fax 9217 1484

**BOAT OWNERS CONTACT LIST**

The following members of the Club are boat owners. They generally go out diving most weekends and often need extra divers to make up numbers. Why not give them a call one day. If you are a boat owner, why not give a non-owner a call (see the membership list distributed regularly) and invite them along with you.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Home No:</b>	<b>Work No:</b>
Sue Armstrong	042 94 2769	9697 2248
Martin Atkins (lives in Jervis Bay area)	044 43 4631	042 74 0210
John Beddie	9820 4272	046 20 1746
BJ	9709 5535	
Peter Booth	9529 3818	
Geoff Cook	9543 5817	018 29 4891
Bruce Cremonesi	9668 8126	9645 0286
Martin Kandilas	9725 7808	9725 7808
Bob May	045 79 1053	

**CLUB SPONSORS**

The South Pacific Divers' Club is honoured to be sponsored by the following

**Aquatic Explorers**, see Steve or Lee at 7 Beach Arcade Cronulla, 9527 1518  
**Beverly's Restaurant** at Chippendale, contact Bev on 9310 4878  
**Dive Quest, Mullaway**, contact Chris or Gary on (066) 54 1930  
**Max Western's *Sea-tamer II*** charter boat, contact Max on 9567 8658 or (018) 28 0791  
**Selera Restaurant**, Level 1, 264 King Street Newtown, 9557 5186  
**Shiprock Dive** at Lilli Pilli, contact Leo or Leslie on 9526 2664  
**Southern Cross Divers** at The Spit Marina, contact Barry on 9969 5072  
**South West Rocks Dive Centre**, contact Noel or Belinda on (065) 66 6474  
**Twofold Dive Charters**, Eden, contact Peter or Lorna on (064) 96 1778



**Please ring the dive and social organisers or the club phone 0411 343 200  
on the Tuesday or Wednesday before the event to confirm details etc.**

### **UPCOMING DIVING ACTIVITIES**

**Contact Numbers:** Scott Leimroth 9759 6501 [h] (019) 99 0864 [m] and Geoff Cook 9543 5817 [h] or (018) 29 4897 [w]  
**Night dives:** Michael McFadyen 9585 6434 [w] 9558 8181 [h] (015) 27 6556 [m]

### **NOVEMBER**

**22-24 Nov** Norah Head Dive Trip with Seabreeze dive (Dep \$30.) (Geoff)

**29 Nov-1 Dec** Combined Club W/end with St George D.C. Ulladulla Club Boats (Scott)

#### **1997**

Back to Narooma for the Lady Darling, to Eden for the Tugs, to South West Rocks for the cave, to J.B. for the Diving (and maybe the Husky pub) and many more exciting dive sites.

**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES Contact Numbers:** Peta Williamson (h) 9580 1474 (w) 9952 1935

The Night To Remember on the 15th of November the club has tickets available

The club Christmas party on the 8th of December at Clovelly Bay

### **ON DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Interclub trivia night

Interclub Skirmish match (See Joe)

### **LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

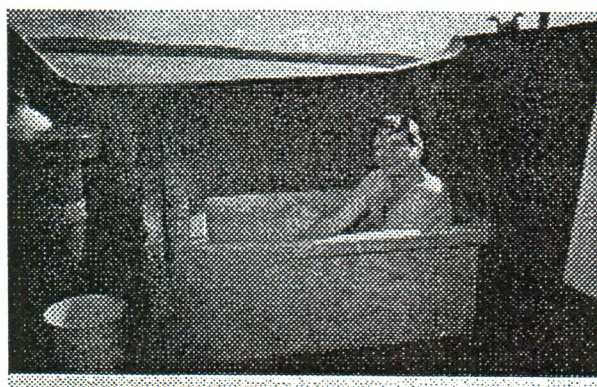
Reg Lipson is running Marine Naturlist 1(Introduction) and 2(further Study) courses in Sydney next year for details contact Reg on (03) 9802 5694

### **NEXT CLUB MEETING**

Remember, this month's meeting will be held on **MONDAY 18th NOVEMBER 1996** starting at **8 pm sharp** in the Emile McDonald Room of the Bankstown Sports Club.

### **FUTURE CLUB MEETINGS**

Monday 16th December 1996, the **A.G.M.** on the **20th of January** and the 17th of February,



The Solomon Island's trip this year  
coincided with the President's annual bath!

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Send material to 36 Hanks Street, Ashbury.  
Phone: (02) 9799 2663[h] or (018) 963 527 [m].  
Deadline for articles is the last day of the month.