



1962

# WET RAG



1998

## SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS' CLUB

PO Box 823, BANKSTOWN NSW 2200

(EST. 1962)

## January 1998 Monthly Newsletter

PO Box 201, Enmore NSW 2042 (Fast delivery)

Telephone: (0411 343 200)

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★ Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year ★

Club meetings are held at 8pm, on 3rd Monday of each month, in the Emile McDonald Room at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Street, Bankstown. The club's next meeting is scheduled on Monday 19th January, 1998. We look forward to seeing you there to give your Committee your input and feedback.

## *The Front Page*

Relating to the eight star groups, and committees, to properly fill these positions it would require 24 members, capable of working together through the main committee. This would distribute the work load evenly, this includes the President, Secretary and the Treasurer. This in turn would eliminate what is happening at the present time. (One hand not knowing what the other hand is doing.) The Club could utilise it's expertise throughout the total areas as required.

Gordon McDonald - President

## *The Open Club Debate*

At our December 15th meeting a impromptu debate was tabled by Geoff Cook regarding the viability of the existing structure of the Photo Competition in relation to financial risks to club assets. Return letters follow:

## *Letter to Members*

Neil Vincent  
Associates Pty Ltd

Photographer  
ACN 060 779 633  
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Expedition  
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The Committee & Members  
South Pacific Divers Club

13th December 1997

Dear Fellow Members,

After our meeting at the hotel in Sydney there was a general feeling that the Photographic competition should continue but that a serious investigation to it's economic viability would be the major determining factor. The majority of the people at that meeting were entrants to the competition so they had a vested interest in seeing it continue.

My reason for wanting the competition to continue and to expand to included the

whole world (something I have been advocating since I was the Photographic officer) was to allow Australian photographers and interested people to have a forum to display and view the best in underwater photography from around the world. The competition has been a forum that has done this locally in the past.

I do not believe that this forum should take place at any cost. So when I came away from the meeting at the hotel I had expected that there would not be a 1998 competition. From a company point of view I couldn't see that the time frame and the money guarantees required would allow it to happen. I hoped that the Following year the competition would reappear revamped with a solid footing. It was a surprise to hear that it was to go ahead in 1998, it was a shock to see that \$15,000 had been allocated to it's running.

I ask has this been realistically budgeted? Is the return there? "Night to Remember" numbers were down this year.

The dive industry is complaining of a down turn ( which isn't new). Please reconsider, the competition is important to many people, it's long term survival not running it at any cost.

It is not to late to stop the compassion now and rethink the whole event to ensure is long term survival.

I may not have the whole picture, there may be elements of financial input that I am unaware of. All I ask is that this undertaking is only made if the risk is not jeopardising the competition's or the club's future.

13th December 1997

(2nd Letter)

I would like to voice my offence at sections of the letter to the club by Geoff Cook published in the last WET RAG.

Being ill informed & not having researched his argument is not an excuse to the rudeness that Geoff Cook displayed to many people in his letter.

He talks of the elitist photographers that enter the SPD Photographic competition. 97.9% is a figure he uses as the number of

entrants that are not members of the club, from where was this figure obtained?

*"Apart from Max Gleeson, Becca Saunders and Mark Spencer, out of respect or appreciation for the club, have those past winners of the Open section, including Video, come to our club and put on another presentation or more importantly passed on training to the members. I can't recall any."*

These were Geoff Cooks words. I am a member of SPD and have been for about 15 years. Over the years I have won a number of places in the competition, I have entered almost every year except on the years that I was the Photographic Officer. Two years as photographic officer, one year as assistant Photographic Officer and many other years as a position holder on the committee and I certainly gave my share of slide presentations to the club. When I moved to the Central Coast my wife and I chose to remain members, even though I am geographically unable to attend meetings or take advantage of the clubs facilities. This was because we wished to keep contact with a memorable part of our lives and to watch it evolve.

Other winners whose names come to mind who have contributed are:

Pat Manly who was Photographic Officer, committee member and gave many slide presentations to the club. Pat was also willing to advise anyone on any aspect of photography.

Kim Kohen was the photographic officer who put most of the money into the kitty that you are now squabbling over. He achieved this by using his skills, time and companies facility to do all of the work you now pay to be done for free. Printing, artwork, duping, music track recording and slide editing and storyline layouts. The biggest profit the club ever made was the year Kim was Photographic Officer. Kim also held many positions on the committee. Brian Colwell was also a photographic officer and held numerous committee positions.

Martin Kandilas has held most positions on the committee and has continuously been one of the most active members of the club over the longest period of time. Giving of his time, his boat, his home for social events and actively debating within the club to set agendas and direction.

John Blaszcak (BJ) is another long time

active member who has held many positions on the committee and gave freely of his time and energy. I notice that he is still a member even though he now lives in Tweed Heads.

These people are a few winners who have given far more than they have taken from the club. I am sure there are many more. Remembering the winners is the difficult part as so many of the club members have entered the competition over the years and so many have given so much time on the committee and assisting the club as members.

Geoff Cook's made other comments about the level of cheating by entrants, the photographer's lack of caring if the club went "belly up" financially and lack of "thank yous" from winners. All I found to be very offensive because of their nature and Geoff Cook's emotional, "broad brush", unsubstantiated claims.

I do not have any concerns that Geoff Cook or any member has the right to comment on whether the competition continues or not, SPD is a club where debate has always existed and I hope always will. It has made the club strong and the leading club in Australia throughout its existence. However debate should be based on fact and not personal attacks and slander. It is these elements of Geoff Cook's letter that I now ask to be withdrawn. I believe that these elements warrant an apology to the club.

Yours Sincerely,

Neil Vincent

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## Photo Competition Debate

John Fardoulis

### AUPY Referendum - "Comments"

For those not present at the last club meeting, a motion to take a vote "for", "against" and "don't care" in relation to continuing the Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year Competition was carried. A "comments" section was to also be added.

The major financial risk in relation to the event is running the presentation night. The production cost for the show and auditorium is where most of the expense goes. Say \$7000 out of \$10 000 (for want of a better figure).

It's virtually too late to cancel the competition for 1998 as magazines have lead times of around three months and details are already committed. It's not too late to postpone the presentation night to summer (even though there will be some inconvenience).

Another option is to add a comment to vote "for" the competition but "cancel the presentation night" as the competition can still be run (on a smaller scale) without having the presentation night. The results can be published in a magazine without having the night. Sponsors would still get media exposure but not that on the night. Some sponsors may tone down their prizes based on toned down exposure.

The important factor is that SPDC is exposed to so much risk, especially, if the right people to run the event can't be found. The club must have it's own interests as the priority and the competition is one arm of the club, it doesn't run SPDC.

Running the presentation night in summer can also be a comment if you vote "for" the competition to continue.

### Make a comment to have your say.

### The AUPY Competition, a Personal and Professional View - by John Fardoulis

In my opinion, the question "to run or not to run" the AUPY competition hinges on ONE factor. Can professional experienced people be found to run the event? The last night was probably the worst organised one that I know of.

From a professional point of view, sending out a letter saying "Dear dive shop owner, WE NEED YOUR HELP" a week before

the competition is a joke. It's like saying, mummy, I've scratched my knee, help, help. A better solution would be to discontinue the event rather than relying almost totally upon good luck rather than good management. Major change is needed for the competition and presentation night to be viable.

Look at the dive industry for example. There is probably more insecurity now than ever. There are businesses looking at closing part of the year, Dive Australia folding and many other people feeling the pinch. In response to the comment "it's been run for x years"... Times change! How long did Dive Australia run? Where is it now? Could SPDC follow a similar fate if things don't go well?

What risk is SPDC willing to take? Bet ALL of the money in the bank on ONE event? How many members are photographers? Is this event for SPDC or for others? Are others taking any risks? It's easy for outsiders to be vocal when they don't have anything to lose.

Why was there a charge for the SPDC christmas party? Would this be a better way to spend funds rather than taking such a big gamble? Couldn't SPDC afford to have a free christmas party because all the money had to be channeled into an even that few members participate in? Would you trust \$10 000 plus of your own money to be gambled in the same way?

Let's look at a few mistakes from the last competition. What happened to promoting the competition and night through "Australian Photography" magazine? I arranged their support through a personal contact several years ago. Was this avenue followed up?

As for the public relations effort, how many newspapers, magazines, radio stations and TV shows were contacted? What did the proposal say? Dear magazine editor, WE NEED YOUR HELP?

What about a web site? About a week is probably the maximum time needed from concept to completion. Is there one yet?

The event could make money and gain more PR than anything else imaginable for the club. These are the things that the gamble is based on. If things run the same way as the last competition, it's a sure thing to lose part or all over the just over \$10 000 in the bank.

Once again, the key question is, can professional experienced people be found to run the event?

192  
58  
160

For those that don't know me, I have Marketing Degree and have worked for many years in a marketing position. I also have experience in high tech industries and extensive audio visual and computer skills. The reason for stating this is in response to a letter that the SPDC committee sent me before the last presentation night asking for a résumé and references (I assume before they would accept any advice). In hindsight, it seems the expression "beggars can't be choosers" springs to mind.

Without putting together a complete marketing plan, there are five points of key importance;

1. Have the presentation night in summer
2. A wider audience is needed
3. Professional expertise is a must
4. The event MUST be entertaining
5. Advertising and promotion must be a lot more professional

Let's look at these issues, point by point.

### 1. Diving is a seasonal industry

The majority of people are "summer divers only". Winter isn't the time that people learn to dive, summer is. There is a reasonable "drop out rate" after people complete their initial training so getting them when they are new is important. There is even talk of some dive shops closing over winter. Summer is the time to reach "new recruits" and a much bigger audience.

A large number of older divers simply don't think diving over winter. They don't buy diving magazines, don't visit dive shops and are not interested in diving. How do you reach them? Spend a million dollars advertising on TV? Not an option!

Having the presentation night in summer is the only possibility. SPDC, even the dive industry as a whole, simply doesn't have a big enough "voice" to make people dive in winter. The key point here is that you have to "reach" to inform the audience about the product (the comp and night) as well as then "motivating" them to attend.

### 2. The audience is more than just divers

Who watches Cousteau documentaries? Divers only? How does the AUPY night vary? What proportion of the Sydney population are divers? 0.5? 0.05%? 0.005%? 0.0025% is approximately 8750 people. Has anyone even thought to estimate the number active divers within the geographical area that the presentation night appeals to?

Customers (as the presentation night is a product) must come from more than just the diving industry. How many photographers (not underwater ones) are there in Sydney? How many environmental groups are there? What about fishermen or nautical groups? How do you reach them?

### 3. Use professional expertise within the club

What do club members do for a living? Are there members with marketing graphic arts, project management or other relevant experience? These fields are serious professions. Just because you think you know a little about these doesn't mean that you have the training or experience to effectively manage areas of the comp and night.

For example, does a photographic officer need to be a photographer? I don't think so. This person's role is as a project manager. This person is not an entrant OR a judge. A project manager's role is in keeping to deadlines, managing resources and liaising and co-ordinating. In a way, a caretaker of the project. Why must they be a photographer?

### 4. The presentation night must be entertaining

Why is the format the way it is? What are people getting for their money? The "product" is the night. How good a product has it really been?

Many people have complained. About twenty people from a dive shop invited me to go for to the cocktail bar for drinks about mid presentation on the last night. Twenty people leaving the room out of boredom. A funny thing was, that a major sponsor stayed the rest of the night after the comp socialising with this group. The format needs a complete overhaul.

### 5. Professional advertising and promotion

This ties in with the second point. Reaching and motivating the target audience. Free publicity is easy to gain from many different areas as long as what you have to say is interesting, and you know how to put together a good proposal and get to the right people.

Publicity can be gained from many major media sources. Dive Log and Sportdiving are fine as diving publications but what about comparing to the Sydney Morning Herald, radio, TV or other media with large audiences?

## Photo Competition Debate Continued

Peter Flockart

### OPEN LETTER TO ALL SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB MEMBERS

By now all club members would have read Geoff Cook's letter published in the December Wet Rag.

Here is a letter from the photographic officer (and photographic committee) detailing many of the inaccuracies of Geoff's letter and at the same time having a look at the AUPY and the direction that the Club is going in.

This letter rebuts many of Geoff's inaccurate statements.

1. The figure that Geoff's refers to, is the overall budget estimate for the AUPY and the competition has always been a success with the current committee!
2. Fellow club members do you want to see, club history of 18 years destroyed by a small minority at the expense of all the other club activities and what the club stands for? Don't forget that it has taken this time to establish very good sponsorship contacts with a lot of these companies. If the comp is cancelled for 1998 all this will have been for nothing. It will leave a bad taste in many peoples mouths. If the club ever wants to use these people for sponsorship later what do you think their reaction will be?? Think carefully dont be turned by those who only want the money in the club coffers!!
3. The AUPY is the showcase for the Asia Pacific Area and as Australia moves into this area the competition must also move with it.
4. The slanderous remarks made by Geoff - over entrants cheating is unwarranted, unfounded and based on rumour and innuendo. The remark relates to the winner of the novice section in 1995. As the criticism was never proved I think these remarks cause offence to every entrant since the inception of the Competition. Had he had taken the time to read the current 1998 AUPY Competition rules he would have seen that there is now a creative section for computer enhanced slides to be entered. The aim is show other how well they can use their slide enhancing talents.

5. Anyone who has prior knowledge of running a large function will be aware that attendance is slow initially and picks up towards the due date. Obviously G Cook has never been involved in any such function.

6. Surplus figures for the AUPY night run as follows:

1992 - \$2000 surplus

1994 - \$8000 surplus

1995 - \$2000 surplus

1996 - Broke even

1998 - Expect a surplus!!

These figures show that a good proportion of the clubs financial reserves has come from the surpluses accrued as a result of the AUPY. Other money has come from raffles, membership etc. However the bulk comes from the AUPY presentation night and membership money barely covers the cost of production and postage of the Wet Rag. It is income that has enabled the club to finance the purchase of a magnetometer, oxygen equipment, and phone and to pay for memorials to respected club members.

7. It is not only myself and Leo who have helped with the rabbits of hats, there are a LOT of other people who help and it is a TEAM (club) effort that ensures the AUPY night succeeds every year....THERE WILL BE NO RABBITS IF THERE IS NO SUPPORT!!!!!!!!!!
8. Geoff needs to look at a list of previous winners (this is available to all members) to see that a lot of the elite photographers that he is so scathing about, are past or current club members. As the club has changed over the past 15 years I have been involved, some people have drifted away. The fact remains that they were club members at the time. Some of them are past SPDC Photographic Officers, who have done presentations etc. at various times to enhance photography within the club, not just take the prize and run as Geoff sees it.

I feel that the AUPY cannot be compared with a Night to Remember, as it is a totally different format and has it's own corporate sponsorship which in turn means cheap tickets.

The AUPY and its sponsors on the other hand present a totally different night: speakers, slides, presentations and prizes to the value of \$70000+ all on a budget less than the Night to Remember.

These nights present different aspects of diving in Australia and shouldn't be compared with each other. Rather they should be seen to complement each other. We (the club) should be seen as working together not against each other as is implied by Geoff Cook.

In reply to the remark about Asian entrants; the competition was taken to the Asian market in the late 1980's. All I have done in the past 3 yrs is to increase exposure for the comp through several magazines. This year I don't know how many entrants we will get from this region (we have had 20 enquires to date). However can Geoff honestly tell me how many entrants we will get this year for the region or how many if it's restricted to Australia only? The answer is NO - no one can - unless their crystal ball is seeing well into the future.

At the Night To remember, Mr Reg Lipson remarked that Melbourne now does not have any Night's to Remember, they are a thing of the past, and if the AUPY competition folds it will be another contraction of the show case venues for the dive industry as a whole. Are we, as a club going to show the world that Australian divers cannot see further than their navels. What a xenophobic bunch we have become.

As Leo remarked in his concluding speech at the end of the 1997 AUPY presentation night, the presence of this Competition keeps SPDC head and shoulders above the rest of the Sydney dive clubs.

DEAR CLUB MEMBERS WE NEED TO KEEP IT THAT WAY!!

Peter Flockart SPDC Photographic Officer in conjunction with the Photographic Committee

(From the Editor - Shirley Wolfenden:

The above article was received via email, and as requested by the author, has had no literary changes. It has been downloaded into the Wet Rag format.)

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## Photo Competition Debate Continued

### Leo Bergagin's Email

The December 97 issue of the "Wet Rag" carried an article under the title "The Chicken or the Egg" written by Geoff Cook. It is my view the article should never have been printed, not because Geoff wants the Photographic Competition & Presentation Night to come to an end but more because the article was totally inaccurate, the timing was atrocious and is heavily reliant on emotional blackmail. If these two events should come to an end then let it be for the right reasons. My purpose in writing this response is certainly not to be critical of Geoff or his beliefs, but to correct his perceptions of what happened the last four years. As members you should have the right information if you are to vote correctly. To achieve this I will go through the article's points in order of importance and not necessarily their original order.

On opening his article he makes the claims that on asking people to consider the future of the competition the tired old arguments rolled out to defend it, however, since becoming president in 1993 there has been no discussion to end the competition on the club floor. These comments may have been made at the local dive shop, at the pub over a couple of quiet drinks or even on a dive boat after an outing whilst eating peanut butter sandwiches and drinking cups of soup, but never on the club floor. So really these comments "butter no parsnips". I make no apologies for the fact I have always looked at this night as a fundraiser for the club; therefore his financial statements need to be investigated.

\* The committee of 92/93 ran the 93 A.U.P.Y. That year the club purchased a slide projector and a quantity of bumper stickers. The club account ended up with approximately \$1500 more in it at the end of the year thanks to the A.U.P.Y. In August 93 I became president and whilst I am running on my memory, I am sure club treasurer Graham Oates can check all my figures. We had approx. \$6000 in the investment account and approx. \$4500 in our check account.

\* The 1994 presentation night Geoff claims we "made a quid". In fact it was in excess of \$8000 hardly just "a quid". The investment account was topped up to \$11000 in 1995; this

account which I have always referred to as the "old peoples fund" has sat there untouched ever since.


\* The 1995 presentation night and competition Geoff claims we only made a profit after withholding \$4000 from the producer of the show. The night actually made approx. \$1700 without the \$4000, which was to compensate any shortfall in the following competition.

\* The 1997 presentation night was always going to be difficult to sell. "Dive Log" was not as available in the dive shops. In 1994 we sold many tickets through "Dive Log" as the coupon in it was returned to the club with the cheques requesting tickets. In 1997 we had one inquiry through dive log and that was from Coffs Harbour. That combined with the Production of the previous Presentation Night being a fizzer it was hard to garner interest in ticket sales. The number of tickets sold 3 weeks prior to the night was hardly relevant, between St George Scuba club, Ryde Underwater club and John Beddie's 40 tickets were requested and paid for within days of going on sale. Dive stores such as Frog Dive, Wilderness and Aquatic explorers were always going to be good for another 100 tickets between them and lets not forget the Central Coast connection Carlo Fillipetti, Lyn and Neil Vincent, Rob Westerdyk and Christian Gerzner who sold between 80 to 100 tickets to people on the Central Coast alone. So where Geoff got his 80 tickets sold from I have no idea, he claims in discussion with me that I made the statement in a phone conversation but I may have been referring to paid for tickets or members tickets only and was it 3 weeks or 3 months before, who knows? Who cares? In the end the night made a loss of about \$100 which was well covered by the \$4000 compensation.

\* The reality of the situation is that the club has earned somewhere in the vicinity of \$16,000.00 over the last four Presentation Nights.

Now lets look at the elite photographers, gee didn't they cop a bucketing. The winners of the open comp in the last five years in reverse order are Becca Saunders (first time winner), Andy Belcher (first time major winner), Mike Cuffer back to back wins and Gary Bell, so in five running years only one person won twice. Club members won the novice section the last three years and of course they were all different people. Before that I have no idea. In the video section Les Gentle has won it the last two years and before that I have no

idea. I am sure that over the years some of the winners have picked up minor prizes, that's how you get to the top of any thing isn't it. Where does the 97.9% come from, Geoff admits he just plucked it out of thin air. A post card would have been nice, but that's the way it goes.



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Of course to justify the attack a few more Red Herrings were thrown in:

- 1) Computer Enhancement has raised its ugly face many times? In the last 3 competitions there has only been one photographer accused. It was brought to my attention some 10 months after the presentation night. It has not been proved. The jury is still out on that one.
- 2) The entrants have been and are cheating in the last 3 years. Name One?
- 3) "Magic luck" and "pulling rabbits out of hats". No such thing as luck Cookie. Just members who roll up there sleeves and get on with the job!
- 4) Letters of appreciation from photographers. In recent years "Dive Log" and "Sportdiving" have printed some correspondences and the club files also have correspondences including, from off the top of my head, letters from Rhonda Kay, Ivan Millington and Rob Westerdyk. To me once the night is over the letters of appreciation are looked at once and filed away. I will agree that Mark, Becca and Max are supporters of our club and have in the past helped out on many occasions when asked. Have any of the others been asked?
- 5) There has been 16 or 17 comps so therefore certainly not 29 trips to Wallindi
- 6) We preserve the investment account to prop up the competition. I have always referred to it as "the old peoples fund" raised before I became a member of the

2698  
2619

club let alone president of it and did not use it simply because the club ran well without needing to dip into it. In this time the wreck divers put a proposal forward to purchase a magnetometer, the motion was put through the "Wet Rag" and was voted on at a meeting and passed with a majority vote and latter added to with a power pack. A nearly \$4000 investment that has been ignored because they don't want to pay \$20 a day to use it and the same people are now attacking the source of the funding as well. The profits also contributed to the club purchasing 2 sets of oxygen gear, 2 stationary cabinets for club files, 1 set of filling draws to store the slides that have been accumulated over the years, 1 small Bar-b-que, approx. \$1500 worth of t shirts, club shirts and jackets in stock, Ricks Memorial and not to mention the club phone, not PHONES, phone!

- 7) Sponsors renege, apparently it has happened before. When? In the last 4 presentation nights we have advertised on one occasion the wrong prize and Peter sorted that out, and it was only a very minor prize, the only other time a prize was not forthcoming was due to personal matter involving a death and was a small prize and I would prefer to leave it alone.
- 8) Peter did not take the comp to Asian market, it was already there when he took over as photographic officer however he has successfully promoted it in the region to the point where our club and its competition is more well Known.
- 9) Our average entrant rate is between 60 to 80 not 115ish
- 10) The problems with the print media should and will be worked out in the appropriate place at the appropriate time, the "Wet Rag" is not the place and time.

of his desire to see the competition scrapped I privately told him in my opinion it was to late. Since November 1996 we have sought expression of interest in this matter. The club advertised in "Dive Log" and also "Wet Rag", announced at the Presentation Night that a meeting was being arranged to discuss the competition. Not one mention was made at that time to scrap the competition. To scrap it now some six months later would not only embarrass everyone on the sub-committee, but also the club.

"Sport Diving", "Scuba Diving", "Asian Diver", "Sportdivers Journal" and "Dive Log" are all carrying double page spreads advertising the competition and have up to 16 weeks of lead time.

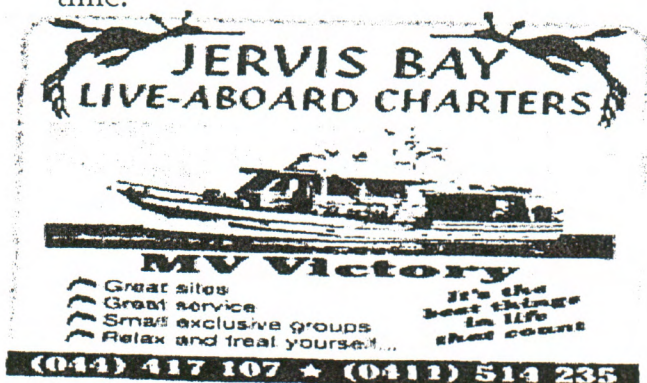
My final comments are that as a club we are a group of people who raise funds to the benefit of the organisation as a whole. I feel if members want to purchase equipment then that's fine, raise the proposal in the correct manner, suggest how it will be funded, and discuss its worthiness and vote on the matter. That's why we raise funds and have \$11500 (or did have) in the investment account. It is not there in my opinion to fund lavish Christmas parties, people's drinking habits or diving practices, lets not forget where the \$11500 came from. Cookie, forget your chicken and eggs, your heading should have read I want to kill the goose that laid the golden egg.

Leo Bergagnin

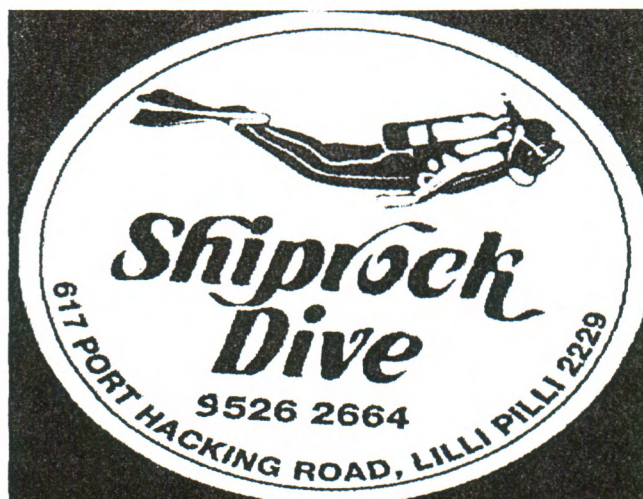
(PS I am not involved in actual photography. Leo)

(Note from the Editor - Shirley Wolfenden:

The above article has been printed as received via email. It has been downloaded into the Wet Rag format.)



In my introduction I made mention of the timing of this article. In October when Cookie first mentioned at the club meeting



## Photo Competition Debate Continued

Scott Leimroth

### To Run or Not to Run? That is the question.

"The Biggest event on the diving calendar", "The most prestigious Underwater Photographic event in the Southern Hemisphere", with a \$70,000 prize pool up for grabs! Wow! Who could miss it?

Well... quite a few people really. But maybe not many ...judging by the response from the 'Industry' at the last one and the current opinion of some analysts.

If the decision of club members at the coming vote is 'To Run' the night then there will be many people pleased by this, not least those photographers who are showcased on the night and who receive all manner of prizes, trophies, publicity, and respect from their peers. Along with this the club will receive the usual kudos associated with running such an event and, contrary to popular opinion, at least has the 'potential' to make some money.

This last fact appears to be an area of contention with many. It must be realised that the 'potential' to make money also infers the 'potential' to lose money and considering that the current budget is close to 100% of the club's cash assets then it is easy to see why people might have misgivings.

I think that we should all keep in mind that the motion being voted on is To Run or Not to Run 'the competition'. It is important to remember that 'the competition' presently INCLUDES the presentation night as well, although the two are run as separate entities essentially.

A vote 'To Run' does Not necessarily mean that the competition will, or should, run in its present format. I think that for those people like myself, who can see enormous benefits for the club in the competition but don't feel these are worth exposing such a large proportion of club Moines for, the 'Not to Run' option is quite tempting but dangerous.

A vote 'Not to Run' the competition leaves No option to run it in any alternate format and is essentially burning one's bridges.

Of course it WILL be much easier to 'Not Run' the competition. No risk of club funds at all, no more sleepless nights for photographic officers, and lots of spare time for everyone to go diving...and?...and?...and?

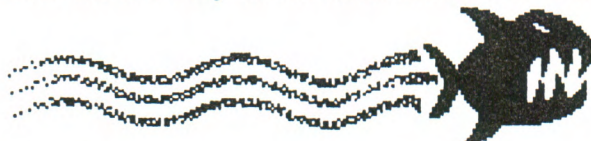
I think you get the picture. We'll be just like every other boring dive club in Sydney. Hey...Maybe we can buy a boat with the club funds like those other clubs have?

Addendum.

In a perfect world...

- 1) The A.V. night is run to a full house making thousands of dollars and many happy motivated divers and photographers. Ticket sales are finished months ahead due to the marketing and publicity undertaken by various experienced members who put their hand up to help out instead of running away. A budget and formalised plan are instigated by various club members with the relevant project management experience (and yes we do have members with such experience) instead of them putting their head in the sand.
- 2) The AGM sets a precedent with everyone present nominating for every position providing a wealth of talent and opportunity as every member gets behind the various aspects of the club taking it to new heights. The magnetometer finds a wreck, we have dives running every weekend for all divers, we have regular well attended social nights. Members actively pursue their various diving interests with the club and we attract huge numbers of new members because of our versatility, talent, and camaraderie.
- 3) I become rich and famous;) and we all live happily ever after.

It can happen. Regardless of the outcome of the vote the SPDC will still be around in some form, after all it's hard to keep a good dive club down...we gotta come up for air sometime. So my advice to every one is to Run with it...the Club, the AV night, and anything else you can get involved with. After all it's easy to sit back and do nothing.



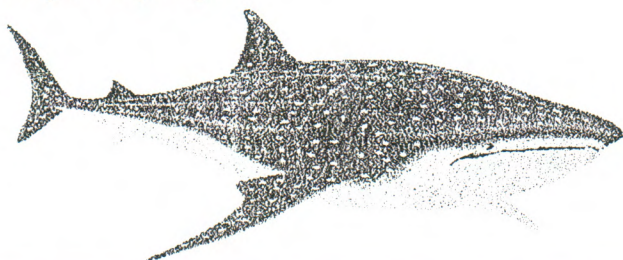
## Dive Report

### Geoff Cook

The Club Dive Sunday 21st December was something special because we encountered a large pod of Pilot Whales heading north just off Marley Point. It was definitely not a case of keeping the required 100 metres away because they came to us. At one stage before we could get ready one whale actually swam right under Barjumpa..... It's mates were all around so Samantha Oates slipped into the water with ladylike enthusiasm, camera at the ready on a collision course but at the last moment the two whales sounded into the depths. Well it was exciting while it lasted. Sam later reported that she could clearly hear the whales "squealing" in the water. Looking around there were many more further seaward which definitely put the sparkle in our day's diving.

That excitement over we dived at Marley Point in smooth conditions. Viz was down after Friday's torrential rain storm but was very interesting diving just the same. Mark Spencer had arranged to meet Santa earlier in the week and because he had been so good to Debbie all year Santa gave him a shiny new yellow 20cu ft pony bottle and regulator..... It left me wondering if Santa got my letter asking for a brass US Navy Mk V divers helmet. That letter seems to go astray in the post every year.

See ya Barjumpa



### Club Organised Charter Boat Dives and Dive Trips Away.

1. Deposit to be paid as normal, as soon as possible, to ensure your spot, at a rate of 50% of the cost of the day trip and \$50 for trips away per person.
2. The full amount becomes due seven working days before trip date. If no payment is forthcoming there will be no place booked for you.
3. If any person pulls out of the trip before final payment is due refunds will only be made if spot is filled or at the discretion of the full committee.
4. If any person pulls out after paying, the full amount may be refunded dependent on the trip cost breakdown or at the discretion of the full committee.

## Dive Organiser's Schedule

### Rod Muir

(H) (046)571 827  
(W) (041)840 7106

### Geoff Cook

(H) 9543 5817  
(H)(0418)294 897  
(W)(018)29 4891

### Sunday 4th January 1998

Inaugural 1998 SPDC Chicken & Champagne Breakfast Dive.

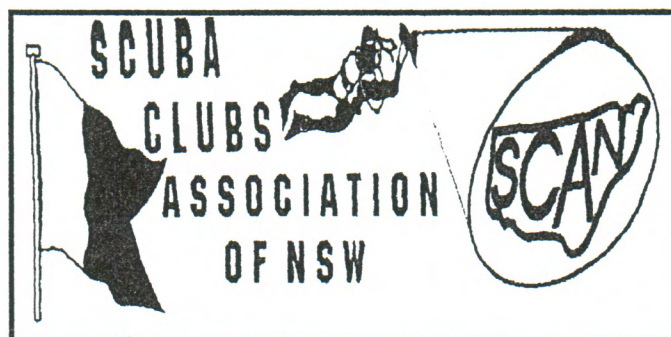
Jibbon Beach. Diving 8am. Dolans Bay Ramp. "Dive Widows and Kids" pickup at wharf at 10.20am. Cost \$10/adult. Bookings essential. Junior divers welcome.

### Sunday 11th to Friday 16th January 1998

Boat diving at Jervis Bay. Contact Geoff Cook. Staying at Vincentia for a week. Dive options/locations open.

### Sunday 25th January 1998

Boat diving at Botany Bay. Meet at 8.30am Botany Bay/Frenchmans Beach. Choose to deep dive only for experience divers or Malabar/Goolgwai or reef diving. BBQ lunch and family day. Junior divers catered for with a dive a Henry's Head.



### Sunday 15th February 1998

This is SCAN's main dive event of the year. La Perouse - Frenchmans Bay, another giant combined Clubs dive and BBQ lunch day. Enjoy the entertainment. Meet other divers you may not have seen for sometime. Discuss news about diving. Exchange stories. This alone could take all day. Boat diving and shore diving or just turn up for the social activities.

Ring Gordon on 9519 7850 or (017)811 422

### Friday 13th February 1998

Black Friday night dive

Sea Tamer night dive Marley Point. Max Western Sea Tamer \$30.00 (Max 10 divers). 7pm Dolans Bay Wharf. Junior divers welcome.

## Magnetometer & Mapping Group

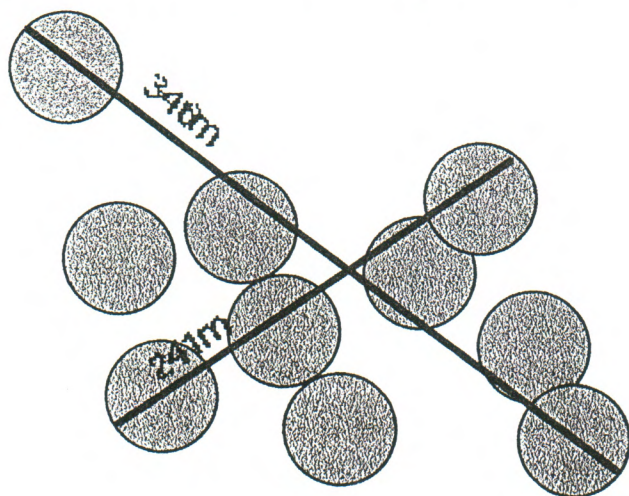
John Beddie - Co-ordinator

The magnetometer has been undergoing tests and trials over various wrecks, up and down the coast. At present there are small problems and these are being sorted out with the help of Scott Leimroth and John Fardoulis. Details follow.

John Fardoulis  
Magnetometer Testing  
By John Fardoulis

Three club members were present for the magnetometer testing on the Valient on two separate occasions. This wreck was selected for testing for four reasons. A good amount of metal is present, it is sitting on sand (some reefs have ferrous content), is in mid-range depth of water and, most importantly, the original magnetometer was extensively tested in this area, allowing a performance comparison between the two units.

Many runs were made, from different directions. Some gave a greater range than others with North-South seeming better than East-West. When a reasonable signal was indicated on a run towards the wreck, a GPS waypoint was added. The diagram below shows the results. It also shows how large an area that the magnetometer picks up from a wreck of that size in that depth of water.



One point of concern was that after the magnetometer "went off", some background

noise continued, even a long way off the wreck and outside it's range. It had to be "centered" on each run.

To summarise, the magnetometer seems to be working and on this particular wreck it performed as expected. Before it is used to search for a "new wreck" I suggest that it be tested in deep water and on a wreck that is broken up. This will allow enough faith in its performance to undertake the tedious, time consuming search for a new wreck.

### Technical Details

The tow speed was around 4 knots.

The unit was centred after each run at least 800m away from the wreck.

The unit was tuned to the 42 range.

A signal strength from 7-9 was shown after the unit was centred each time.

The battery was at close to full strength.

## Photographic Officer's Report

Peter Flockart

Sub-Committee:

Paul Howlett

Lee Harvey

Leo Bergagnin

Gordon McDonald

See Photo Comp Debate.

## Photographic Tips

None received.

## Junior Dive Reports

None received.



## President's Report.

Gordon McDonald

Where to start this month? The front page was designed to show the various areas of the Club in which members can participate and be entertained whilst developing their skills.

At the December meeting we had an open debate relating to the Photographic Competition and it's functioning. This debate continued for around 2 hours. I found it to be very enlightening and constructive and the best part was, I enjoyed it. For a change, everyone had their say at their own pace. It was agreed, we put the details of the meeting in this edition of the Wet Rag. The Editor requested a cut-off date for letters/articles and 25th December was agreed upon. This would allow us to get the Wet Rag out early giving every member time to read the pros/cons and then return their vote in time for the referendum. (Your copy is enclosed.) A copy of the minutes was not received making it difficult to explain to members the two sides of the debate, we tried.

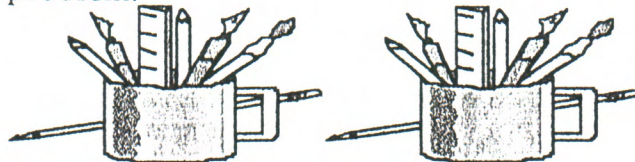
A letter was received from Neil Vincent answering Geoff Cook's article (December Wet Rag). We then received letters from John Fardoulis, Leo Bergagnin, Peter Flockart, & Scott Leimroth. After checking the Club records it would seem events and calculated figures stated in the abovementioned letters do not match Club Accounts.

Geoff Cook does it again, the only dive report received this month (wish we could have been there).

As I am Vice President of SCANS I feel I should promote the day again at Frenchman's Bay this should be great day judging on last year's event. Again I will be running the main events (children's events). Diving has been arranged but to ensure a place ring Rod Muir or Geoff Cook.

The Magnetometer Group - John Beddie tested it on a wreck with not much luck. Scott Leimroth and John Fardoulis along with other Club members have also tested during the Christmas break. They tried it on several wrecks, at different depths, with a mixture of sea beds, sand, rock & mixed. I am at last happy to see it being set up to fulfil it's purpose (another Club asset working).

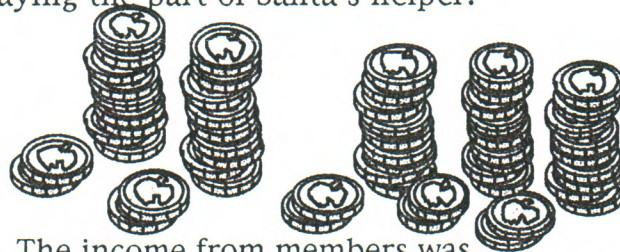
Again the Club phone just sits and we pay for the rental. It has now been four months since I requested it's transfer to the Club. I feel now we should end cycle on this problem.



CHRISTMAS PARTY.

All you young members who missed the Christmas Party, we had 18 entrants in the 4 categories of the Colouring Competition. A large team of judges was formed for the judging. Great prizes were won. The main event was Santa's helpers giving Santa bags of goodies (Shirley & Gordon). Also the Ladies received bundles of sweets from Santa. We enjoyed ball games, swimming, plus late colouring entries were completed. Lunch was served on time at 12.30pm. Thanks to Debbie Davis for helping to organising the spit roast and salads. Geoff Cook and Russell Stoker supplied on tap liquid amber. All blame for water pistols must lay with Mr Geoff Cook, as he insisted I hand out the water pistols I had in a separate bag. The only childish displays during the day were from a small group of adults, the children were perfect. Most of the children told us as they were leaving that, (laden down with Santa's presents) they had had a great day.

The attendance figures were 31 adults and 23 children - including babies. Attendance was down from last years but who cares, I had a better time this year playing the part of Santa's helper.



The income from members was	\$310.00	with two refunds leaving	\$290.00
(1) Cost of spit & service for 50 people	\$350.00		
(2) Children's presents, prizes colouring comp sweet & packaging	\$285.38		
(3) Water melons, Ice & Cask wine, soft drinks cordial, milk	\$102.40		
	\$737.78		\$737.78
Club's expenditure			\$447.78
Allocated amount approved at meeting:			

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\$10.00 per adult, children over 10	\$80.00
Wine & watermelon	\$60.00
Children's Christmas Presents	<u>\$200.00</u>
	\$340.00

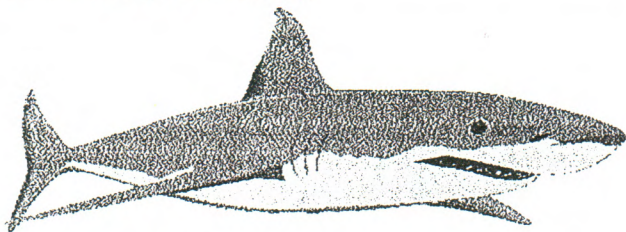
The event over spent by \$107.78 due to additional allowance for extra children, Colouring Competition prizes, ice and milk. This in turn allowed Shirley and I to budget this year's Christmas party at approximately half the cost of last years.

The Wet Rag costs for this month follow:

Postage, stamps x 200	\$90.00
Envelopes	\$14.00
Photocopying @ 10c per double sided sheet 8x140	\$112.00
L.Distance phone <u>calls</u>	<u>\$60.61</u>
Total	\$276.61

This month Shirley & I sorted, stapled the Wet Rag ourselves.

As the Committee has had problems transferring funds from the Investment Account to the Cheque Account. A form was to be signed by the Secretary this failed to arrive prior to the New Year. This in turn left myself out of pocket for \$1,237.87 during Christmas (who cares).



Over the past six months I have endeavoured to solve problems created by others within the Club. I have succeeded with most with the exception of the phone. It was pointed out to me at a Club Meeting, by our previous President, "it's only a small amount to be done", after approximately 30 hours work on them to date I have left just a "small amount to be done". So my advice on all these matters is to attend the next meeting and vote in a Competent working committee to ensure the forward development of Your Club.

The last part of the Presidents report is relating to the committee, at the A.G.M. it will be necessary to bring to the meeting all books correspondence, paper works, and accounting items relating to your position on the committee, completed ready to, if necessary, to transfer to new committee members.

Our secretary will be drafting up a form relating to all the obligations and responsibilities of each office holder on the

new committee this will be required before voting for each office position at the A.G.M.

Proxy votes can be allocated to any financial member that you feel can best place your vote and must be present at the A.G.M. meeting.

The Membership year starts January 1st of each year, membership fees and forms can be completed prior to the A.G.M. section of the meeting starting.

Under the Rules of incorporation SECTION 22 (a) An Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held each year within three months of the end of the financial year, of the Association (30th June) this in turn means the A.G.M. Meetings in the future will have to be held on the third Monday of JULY, AUGUST or at the latest SEPTEMBER, of the Membership year.



Hope Shirley & I have served you in our capacity as Editor & President of your club over the last six months.

Yours in Diving.

*Gordon E McDonald*  
(Gordon E McDonald.)



HAPPY NEW YEAR from the Committee  
great Diving over the Holidays