

# WET RAG

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

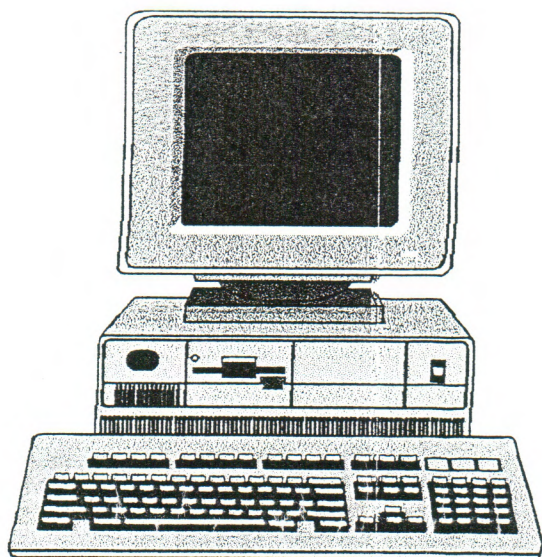
PO Box 823, BANKSTOWN NSW 2200  
0411 343 200



February 1998

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**Club B-B-Q Saturday 21st  
February 5.00pm at Russell Stoker's 36 Hanks St Ashbury. BYO meat.  
Beer for sale.**



**SURF THE NET**



**R.S.V.P. TO THE CLUB  
PHONE: 0411 343 200**

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, 16 February 1996.



### President's Tidings

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the previous committee for doing a very good job during what must have been a very trying year, thank you one and all. As the new president I must say that having a few old faces return from last year will only serve to make the job less difficult than it could be.

It is no big secret that this past year has been full of problems, both real and perceived ones. I make an earnest request to all members to leave any personal clashes outside our club meetings. Please let's all work towards making our club meetings appealing once again and not a place for personal point scoring. If this is too much to ask for, then please stay away.

Your new committee will be making some small changes and one major one during its term. The committee will be endeavouring to make this a far better year for you "THE MEMBER". As after all without you "THE MEMBER" this club will cease to exist.

By now all club members will be aware that the photo comp is up and running. This is the area that will see a major change taking place. For the first time a major prize will be set aside for club members only. It is my strong personal belief that club members should have a chance to win a prize. This year will see the start of the "Rick Latimer Award" for members of South Pacific Divers Club only. The rules and fine details are still being worked out for this section.

Once a month will see a club shore dive taking place, no booking will be needed for this event just turn up if you wish. This will be a BYO as far as food goes, the club will supply bar-b-q and gas only, details of times, dates etc will be in the wet rag and on the club phone (which is now working by the way). Feb will see the scans day roll around once more, thinking back to last year I can recall South Pacific Divers Club was well represented. How will we look this year?

Many times during the past few weeks I have heard about the depth of marketing talent within the club members. I am asking any member in this field to act upon their expertise and help guide South Pacific Divers Club to even greater Heights. If you the member can help please call myself on 9564 2654 after 5.30pm any day.

We are hoping to start guest speakers once again, I am hoping to have Steve Purvis at the March meeting. Steve will be showing some shark and wreck footage. Please come and support the speakers for giving us their time at the club meetings.

Thank you for taking the time to read my tidings, I will leave you with this single thought. What is worse than being talked about? Not being talked about!

Regards Peter Foster

### Photographic Officer's Report

Hello again, everyone, looks like I'm in the hot seat for yet another term as photographic officer. I'm beginning to think that I'm just a glutton for punishment as this is my fourth term.

We have big changes in the wind for the George Roberts this year, which will hopefully raise the level of interest within the club. Stay tuned for further details.

The Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year for 1998 is shaping up well despite all the indecision earlier this year. I am looking for people willing to work with me on the photographic committee as well as help with the organisation of the evening later in the year. This will ensure the night runs as flawlessly as possible. If you feel that you have something to offer let me know.

One change that will be introduced into the big comp will be a major prize for the highest placed non-finalist SPDC member. That is a member who does not obtain a place in the top three or win an encouragement award. This will be known as the Rick Latimer Memorial Encouragement Award. I hope this will induce more club members to enter the competition.

I will be continuing my photographic tips column and will also try to answer any queries that members may have.

Peter Flockart.

P.S.

### Photographic Tips

I will be running this Tips section again this year. In the next couple of months I will be taking a closer look at video.

So stay tuned for informative and interesting articles.

### Newsletter Editor's Message

I'm back for another year of Newsletter editing which means you the reader can contribute to make the newsletter an interesting read. Any reports, stories, tips or other information you want to supply will be gratefully accepted in any form so get writing.

You can give me material on disk, printed out or even handwritten, you can post it, hand deliver it, fax it or Email it. Sorry, carrier pigeons are not included.

All 1997 single year memberships are up. If you haven't renewed your membership for 1998 then you will want to do it soon or your membership will lapse and you will miss out on all the benefits of the club including the monthly newsletter.

Russell Stoker



## The Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year 1998

by Paul Howlett

The 1998 Underwater Photographic Competition is now on! This is a New Year and new competition, an expanding competition, full of new challengers and new goals. The competition this year has been widened from the Open, Novice, Individual and Video sections to include a new section, the Creative Section. This is a section that has moved the competition right up into the cutting edge of computer graphics. This is a section that allows those people with a slightly different creative urge to 'let it all hang out'! and produce something really different, as long as it has an underwater theme.

This year we will have a greater range of sponsors, giving an expanded range of prizes for all the entrants to compete for. Many prizes means that this year the South Pacific Divers Club's Underwater Photographer of the Year will be again the best underwater photographic competition in the Southern Hemisphere.

All club members, who have an underwater camera, have that beaut slide stashed away, or videos of exotic underwater subjects, maybe taken on your last dive holiday trip, are urged to enter. See DIVELOG or Sportdiving for conditions of entry and entry form or See Peter Flockart, SPDC Photographic Officer for details. Peter can be contacted on (02) 9371 0265 (AH) or leave a message on club phone 0411 343 400.

**REMEMBER... ENTRIES CLOSE 3 APRIL 1998**

### DIVE REPORTS

#### SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB does TRUK (CHUUK) ISLAND

By Peter Flockart.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1997, 18 intrepid divers set out for Truk Lagoon from Sydney airport.

All the equipment/gear was checked from Sydney to Ponape. An uneventful trip to Brisbane hid the problems that would occur in some of the next leg of their trip. At Brisbane we collected the last member of our party, before boarding our flight by Air Naru via Naru to Ponape.

After a long flight from Brisbane to Naru two of our party decided to have a smoke on the tarmac at Naru. Not a good idea with all that AW gas and an over zealous security guard who hated Aussies. It was a nasty experience that I recommend no one should go through.

On arrival in Ponape, a pleasant place, we went to the resort "The Village". Unfortunately due to time we were unable to do any dives here. If the club ever goes here again some diving is supposed to be excellent.

The next day many sore heads piled onto the plane for the 2 hr hop to Chuuk, certainly flying Continental airlines opens your eyes to how other airlines are run. The plane was "full, overloaded etc", didn't deter our valiant band. It was a case of form a flying wedge and barge your way onto the plane. This task was made easier by using Russell and some of the bigger party members to form the leading edge and

make sure no one got past us in the dash to the plane from the terminal. As we flew over Chuuk we realised that the rigours of the past three days were worth it as we flew over a lagoon surrounded by reefs, blue and containing the best wreck diving in the world.

The Truk Continental - our accom - for the next 10 days, was an interesting place. The toilets often didn't work properly due to a lack of maintenance and there was no fresh water for showers or rinsing of gear as the reverse osmosis plant had broken down. By the end of two weeks everybody smelt and gear began to play up for some.

The diving proved to be every bit as good as we had been told. The service provided by the staff of Blue Lagoon dive shop was fantastic and their dive briefings reflected a detailed knowledge of the wrecks.

Most people completed between 12 & 16 dives on almost as many wrecks. Some were lucky to do several dives on some sites.

Examples of some of the wrecks dived are:

Shinkoku Maru

Fujikawa Maru

Nippo Maru

Rio de Janeiro Maru

Kiyozumi Maru

Kasnscho Maru

San Francisco Maru

Aikoku Maru

Hoki Maru





Many of these dives lay between 10 & 30 m while some lay in 45 plus metres. The latter required careful planning of air consumption in order to minimise the possibility of the bends. This is due to the fact that there are limited facilities on Truk, with the nearest recompression chamber being located on Guam.

The diving was carried out in ideal conditions with the water temp being a pleasant 28 degrees C and air temp around 32 degrees. On the island the heat & humidity was stifling, but out on the water where a cool breeze blew it was very pleasant. Water vis varied from 0 to 40 plus metres depending on tides within the lagoon.

Food was good if you liked American fare, however the steaks they served was good grain fed beef, which just melted in your mouth. Beer's were dear at \$US5 each and spirits \$US 4 - 8 a bit hard if you were on some kind of budget. We ate mostly at the restaurant at the hotel but occasionally ventured into town to eat at the Truk Stop motel.

Between dives there isn't a great deal to do outside the hotel, one or two trips into town meant you had seen it all unless you went food shopping as you could take your own lunch each day rather than pay \$US9 for lunch from the hotel.

However after a relaxing trip it was time to begin the long trip home. On a sultry day the group flew from Chuuk via Ponape to Naru, where after so many days without fresh water I think we used just about all of it at the Hotel at Naru before descending on the bar like a plague of locusts to try and drink the bar dry. Some people almost did I think, as there were some fairly sore heads the next morning when we left on the second last leg of our trip home. Yet by the time we were half way between Naru & Brisbane many people were again giving the bar a good nudge, you just keep a South Pacific Diver down, especially when there grog involved.

Many people welcomed the arrival at Sydney, as it was the end of a good holiday that had been interesting in more ways than one.

### 180 ft 'Night Dive' Crocodile Head Gorge.

At Jervis Bay.

By Barjumpa

Over the Christmas break I stayed and dived at Jervis Bay, catching up and diving with many old friends and Club Members. The water though was uncharacteristically dirty with a layer of filthy sediment laden water on the surface and having a clear but very cold layer underneath. On one dive I teamed up with Martin Atkins and John Earl and dived Crocodile Head Gorge. This is a site just North

from the Bay which Martin raves about on most given opportunities. The weather was not in our favour with very sloppy S.E. 1.5m seas and backwash from the cliffs. Windy and overcast conditions were thrown in for that excitement value.

**Gearing up in that slop with twins was an 'interesting exercise'** however I am told that most people when fully geared up have fallen face first onto the floor. I hadn't up until this dive and assure you that I'm not keen to see the floor and fuel tanks from that perspective again....

**In the water... Yuk... Hand over hand down the anchor line** that was appearing just in front of me. At this point a saner person would have canned the dive, a 100ft passes, daylight is almost gone and I feel it was going to be a Braille night dive. At 120ft we drop through the 'murk' my torch pierces off through the water and it was clear cold water, 13 C and about 40 feet of viz. At 143 ft 'touchdown!' We are at the top of Martin's famous Croc Head Gorge. As I settled in it was clear that this place has potential. Growth in prolific, Seawhips, anemone and soft coral were on every exposed surface open for feeding filling the 100watt torch beam. It was so dark that everything including me was convinced that it was night time. John Earl pulled the pin on the dive as his regulator wasn't supplying enough air and he returned to the surface ready to dive another day. (Hearing several minutes before this dive that Peter Foster was hit with a severe central nervous system bend at this same divesite, for no apparent reason, probably didn't help either.) **Martin and I reeled off down into the gorge and out onto the sand to 175 -180 feet.** At one stage I thought that narcosis was getting the better of me noticing that my vision was quite blurred in my right eye. Removal and scrub of the mask removed a thick layer of spit. Low and behold vision was fine. **An explosion of marine life** was in front of our beams, lazy wobbies, sea dragons carrying eggs, eels eels and more eels out on the prowl and brilliant red gorgoneia fans. In the bottom of the gorge was a large fish trap which **hadn't caught anything (so fish was off the menu that evening).** After 18 minutes bottom time we reeled in ascending to 25 minutes of deco in the surge.

Croc Head Gorge is a dive for experienced divers to be kept in mind for your next trip. In clear water this place must really be a blast.





## South Pacific Junior Divers Search The Wrecksite Of The S.S. Goolgwai

By Barjumba

On Sunday the 1 February 1998 an impromptu dive was organised on Barjumba for the South Pacific Divers Club Junior Divers looking for the wrecksite of the S. S. Goolgwai in Long Bay. This former 125 ft long steam-powered trawler was built in Collingwood, Ontario, in 1919 and was wrecked at Long Bay on the 29 May 1955. Conditions were quite good with just a slight sea slapping up against the rocks. Water temperature was a lukewarm 22C and clearish on the bottom. This dive we only found a few small rusting pieces of the vessel, failing to locate the main wreckage, but had a good rat around the rocks and it turned out to be a very interesting dive just the same. It is amazing the things that you can see in these shallow locations which makes them ideal for the juniors. In one small overhang I located a baby weedy sea dragon only 2 inches long. It took Judd three of four glances to realise that I wasn't showing him a piece of weed. Also 4 or 5 different types of pipe fish were feeding off the swarm of brine near the base of the rocks.

Golf balls. Golf balls are everywhere in the gutters. The novelty soon wore off collecting the balls and dropping them onto unsuspecting divers that were rattling deep into holes but it was fun for a while.

I believe that the triple expansion steam motor and boiler is still on the site somewhere, but it is obvious from the photos taken five days after the wreck and from this dive that it is very broken up, but we'll be back. It may be deeper or it may be in shallower.

Judd and I scrounged two brand new anchors and chains (We needed the chain for Rick's Memorial) out in the rocks for the collection. When we got the anchors up one contained a very aggressive blue ringed octopus! These creatures look great when they are pissed off but it is somewhat unsettling to have them drop out of the anchor onto my uncovered forearm and momentarily refuse to drop off:

Dive time 35min Max depth 55feet

**MV Victory Weekend - Jervis Bay 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 1998**

By Samantha Oates



### The Cast:

#### Adrian Nute:

Co-owner/operator of the MV Victory. Has never been out-snored and is about to be disappointed.

#### Annie Nute:

Adrian's wife. A lovely lady who must by now be clinically deaf.

#### Chris-the-French-chef:

Another snorer. Produces exquisite meals under difficult circumstances, but only if the doors and windows are shut.

#### Peter Foster:

Erstwhile diver and collector of bits of brass. Organiser of the trip who is only a spectator due to a recent encounter with a deco chamber.

#### Peter Flockart:

Diver and underwater photographer. In the absence of exposed flesh, he is reduced to taking pictures of fish.

#### Suzanne Evans:

Diver. A blonde with attitude and a penchant for cable TV.

#### Sir Les Bailer:

(aka Les Stewart) Diver. Suffering from severe sleep deficit disorder. Tells Irish jokes with a very bad accent.

#### Russell "Chainsaw" Stoker:

Part-time diver and Snorer-in-Chief. A man who likes to watch.

#### Sam and Graham Oates:

Two really nice divers, neither of whom snore.

### Arrival Day - Friday

Sam and Graham both take the afternoon off work to ensure they arrive at the boat by 7.30pm. They then proceed to wait .... and wait .... and wait .... until the others arrive. Russell and Peter Foster appear in due course, and all wait until Peter Flockart and Suzanne Evans arrive shortly after 11 o'clock. Sam and Graham are really glad they got there early. Peter Foster will not be diving, but thinks he is going to drive the boat (Adrian thinks otherwise). Sir Les Bailer is held up at a wedding (not his own, he is quick to tell) and will not be able to join the boat until Sunday evening. The Victory remains moored at the wharf overnight and sets off across the Bay early in the morning. Annie wisely decides to stay at home in case Peter Foster is accidentally allowed to drive.

### Day 1 - Saturday

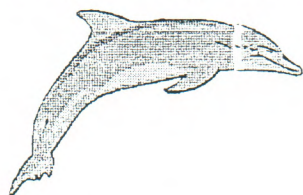
Sam and Graham are pleasantly awakened by the charming sound of Peter Foster relieving himself directly outside their porthole very early in the morning. Sam doesn't tell a joke at breakfast. All become acquainted with the amazing cooking of Chris-the-French-chef and with Adrian's dive master technique ("There's



the back of the boat: p\*\*\* off, swim round a bit, and come back"). Dives for the day are The Docks (seahorse, aeolid nudibranchs and a big bull ray), Dart Point (giant cuttlefish, red indian fish and another bull ray) and the fairy firefly (a plane). Russell doesn't do the first dive. When asked if he is going diving, he says, "No thank you". (Author's note - Russell's reply has been paraphrased.) On emerging from the water after the first dive, all are told by Russell and Peter Foster that a 6 foot tiger shark had passed between the boat and the rubber ducky. They are (foolishly) believed. Nobody takes anything they say seriously after this. Russell dives the second and third dives (remember this ....). In the evening, Sam is accused of telling a joke at breakfast that she didn't tell. Adrian decides to share Russell's cabin and Chris moves in with the two Peters.

### Day 2 - Sunday

Adrian looks rather rough. He reports that for the first time in his life he has been out-snored and had to evacuate in the middle of the night. He swears revenge. The two Peters have also had a bad night with Chris (doing his worst. Russell and Chris have slept soundly throughout. Chris makes blueberry muffins and Sam proposes to him. Chris turns her down. When asked if he is going diving, Russell says, "No thank you". (Author's note - Russell's reply has been paraphrased.) All except Russell have two dives on the mussel ropes off Vincentia (pot-bellied sea horses, nudibranchs, fiddler rays, Port Jacksons, angel sharks and a large octopus) followed by a crepuscular dive off Hyam's Beach (seedy wee dragons, fiddler rays and another bull ray). "Crepuscular" is Graham's word, and everybody is very impressed with it. In the evening the rubber ducky sets off to pick up Sir Les Bailer from the beach at Vincentia. Despite warnings, he elects to share Russell's cabin which has now been vacated by Adrian. Suzanne remarks on the range of television channels and Adrian tells her the boat has cable TV. A school of 10-12 dolphins, including a baby, accompanies the boat across the Bay in the evening. Everyone says,



"Aaaaaaahhhhhhhhh!!!!!"

### Day 3 - Monday

Bacon and eggs for breakfast. Sir Les has not slept a wink and is suffering. The two Peters

report another interrupted night. Russell and Chris have slept soundly throughout. When asked if he is going diving, Russell says, "No thank you". (Author's note - Russell's reply has been paraphrased.) All except Russell dive The Cottonfields off Bowen Island followed by Greenfields Point. High spots include a shovel-nose shark, loads of colourful sponges and weeds and some morays. Sir Les spends much of the second dive with his nose 2cm from the sandy bottom watching little red beetles and is re-christened Sir Les Bailer-Beetle. It is a name he comes to love and cherish. Sam and Graham take the scooter for a spin and try to attract the attention of Peter Flockart and Suzanne, who have their noses buried in some weed. In an effort to get Suzanne's attention, Sam and Graham almost give her hair a new parting. In the evening the boat drops Suzanne (complete with new hairdo) and Peter Foster off in Huskisson as they have to return to work the following day. Everyone else (including Sam this time) tells jokes. Sir Les is particularly active in his participation, probably in an effort to delay bedtime with Russell.

### Day 4 - Tuesday

Sir Les is looking even worse and Peter Flockart is starting to wilt. Russell and Chris have slept soundly again. Russell proposes to Chris so Chris can get permanent residency. Let's face it - who else will sleep will either of them? Surprisingly, Chris turns him down. In the morning all except Russell dive The Nursery at Bowen Island. When asked if he is going diving, Russell says, "No thank you". (Author's note - Russell's reply has been paraphrased.) Sam and Graham have an incredible 92-minute dive during which they watch 50 to 60 large squid doing strange and colourful things in the near vicinity of large piles of squid eggs. They are completely mesmerised. Sam gets a reverse squeeze in a temporary filling and later on is carted off to Vincentia in the rubber ducky to see a sadist thinly disguised as a qualified dentist. **RUSSELL DOES THE SECOND DIVE!!!!** He takes the scooter and amazes Graham with his balletic prowess, performing a complicated sequence of pirouettes. He manages not to get bent in doing so. All make use of the Victory's very well appointed logbook stamp collection while the boat returns to the wharf at Huskisson. At 6pm, all reluctantly disembark (Sir Les is not at all reluctant as he can't wait to get back to his own bed).

All the divers wish to thank Adrian, Annie and Chris for running the show so well and so entertainingly, and Peter Foster for organising it.



**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The following members are on the committee for the 1998 year.

Position	Name	Home No:	Work No:
President:	Peter Foster	9584 2654 Mobile: 0418 435 774	
Treasurer:	Graham Oates	9722 4813 Email: oatesg@cegelec.com.au	97224813
Secretary:	Debbie Davis	9821 3740	Mobile: 014 904 849
Photographic Officer:	Peter Flockart	9371 0265 Fax: 9374 2688 Email: Nelson01@bigpond.com	9374 2382
Publicity Officer:	Paul Howlett	97466720 Email: paulsd@hartingdale.com.au	9377 3019
Dive Organisers:	John Harlen Les Stewart (Shore Dives)	9521 7210 9637 1023 Fax: 9645 6970	9645 8476
Social Secretaries:	Barbara Sweetman	9517 9176	Mobile: 0412 588 213
Newsletter Editor:	Russell Stoker	9799 2663	9217 1539
& Equipment Officer:	Email: rstoker@one.net.au	Fax: 9217 1484	Mobile: 0412 963 527

**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.

Name	Home No:	Work No:
Sue Armstrong	02 44 437 606	9385 2248
Martin Atkins (lives in Jerviss Bay area)	044 43 4631	042 74 0210
John Beddie	9820 4272	046 20 1746
John Cassidy	9564 3538	041 139 675
Peter Cassimatis (Bris)	07 3847 8082	
Geoff Cook	9543 5817 / 0418 294 897	018 29 4891
Mark Dietz	046 482 511	046 482 254
John Fardoulis	043 422 939	0419 230 244
Martin Kandilas	9725 7808	9725 7808
Bob May	045 79 1053	018649249 / 015469028

**Remember to support the Club Sponsors:**

Name	Contact:	Phone No:
Aquatic Explorers	Steve or Lee at 3/82-84 Captain Cook Drive, Caringbah	9531 1518
Beverley's Restaurant	Peter or Bev at 1 - 9 Meagher St Chippendale	9310 4878
Dive Quest	Chris or Gary at Mullaway	066 54 1930
Sea Tamer II Charter	Max Western	9524 1818 or 018 280 791
Shiprock Dive	Leo or Lesley at Lilli Pilli	9526 2664
Southern Cross Divers	Barry at The Spit Marina	9969 5072-
South West Rocks Dive	Noel or Belinda	065 666 474
Twofold Dive Charters	Peter or Lorna at Eden	064 961 778



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

## UPCOMING DIVING ACTIVITIES

Contact Numbers: John Harlen 95211 7210

Shore dives: Les Stewart 9637 1023

### February

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> SCAN's dive day at La Perouse - Frenchmans Bay also B-B-Q lunch from midday

Contact John or the club phone.

### March

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

Come and join in the effort to clean up Australia on Sunday March the 1<sup>st</sup> at Inscription Point at Kurnell from 10am with the South Pacific Divers Club. We will be cleaning up both underwater and on the land so all the family can pitch in to make this day worthwhile and enjoy a B-b-q after (byo food). If you would like to help contact John for the dives or Barbara for the rest.

**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES** Contact Numbers: Barbara 0412 588 213

### February

There will be a BBQ at Russell Stoker's on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February.

### Upcoming Events

A skirmish match has been proposed so get your camouflage ready, more details soon

### NEXT CLUB MEETING

Remember, this month's meeting will be held on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1998**, starting at 8 pm in the Emile McDonald Room of the Bankstown Sports Club.

### FUTURE CLUB MEETINGS

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 20<sup>th</sup> April and 18<sup>th</sup> May 1998.

### INTERNET LINKS

N.S.W. National Parks & Wildlife Service web page contains a list of books on marine creatures.

The web site is [www.npws.nsw.gov.au](http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au)

Scott Leimroth has a rebreather web page on [www.chilli.net.au/~diver/](http://www.chilli.net.au/~diver/)

And Michael MacFadyen has a site at [www.ozemail.com.au/~diving/](http://www.ozemail.com.au/~diving/)

If you have any pages you want to list let me know

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