

WET RAG

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

PO Box 823, BANKSTOWN NSW 2200
0411 343 200



March 1998

"12 WAYS TO RUIN OUR CLUB"

1. NEVER COME TO THE CLUB MEETINGS.
2. IF YOU DO COME, COME LATE.
3. NEVER ACCEPT A POSITION ON THE COMMITTEE.
It is heaps easier to sit back and pick them to pieces.
4. IF ASKED FOR YOUR OPINION ON SOME IMPORTANT MATTER BY THE COMMITTEE TELL THEM YOU HAVE NOTHING TO SAY!
5. AFTER THE MEETING TELL EVERYONE HOW THINGS SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE.
6. HOLD BACK YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, BETTER STILL.....DONT PAY
7. IF YOU AGREE WITH EVERYTHING AT THE MEETING MAKE SURE THAT YOU VOICE YOUR DISAGREEMENT OUTSIDE
8. WHEN EVERYTHING ELSE FAILS...ABUSE THE COMMITTEE.
9. DONT BOTHER TO GET NEW MEMBERS FOR THE CLUB, LET THE PRESIDENT DO IT.
10. WHEN ASKED FOR INFORMATION OR A DIVE REPORT, DONT GIVE IT
11. DO NOTHING MORE THAN IS NECESSARY.
BUT;
WHEN OTHER MEMBERS ROLL UP THEIR SLEEVES WILLINGLY & UNSELFISHLY,
USE THEIR ABILITY TO HELP MATTERS ALONG,
THEN COMPL AIN THAT THE CLUB IS RUN BY A CLIQUE.
12. FORM YOUR OWN CLIQUE, & NEVER INVITE OUTSIDES TO JOIN YOU FOR A DIVE. ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE NEW MEMBERS, YOU DONT WANT THEM ON YOUR BOAT.

POSITIVE COMMITMENT FROM ALL MEMBERS CAN ONLY PROMOTE A GREAT "CLUB"

(A WARNING FROM A 1984 NEWSLETTER STILL TRUE TODAY)

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 March 1998

President's Tidings

Last month saw the Scan's day and the Clean up Australia day come and go. The SPDC members that turned up at the Scan day all had a great time. My thanks go to Gordon MacDonald again for making sure the clubs future was in safe hands, the kids had a great time once again.

On march 1st SPDC members turned out to clean up Australia at Kurnell. We dived, played cricket, football and all sat down to a great BBQ. Again it was great to see the number of members children that turned up and had a great time. This club has great hope for the future as you only have to look at the number of junior divers to see, this club can now start looking forward to seeing entire family groups diving together. My thanks must go to both Barbara Sweetman and John Harlen for working hard to organise the clean up day. Thank you both very much guys.

We look forward to seeing Steve Purvis at our March meeting, thanks for your time Steve. The club phone has been getting a workout this month, general enquires about membership have been quite good. New members and existing members children are the future lifeblood of the club, so I ask any members who have not rejoined the club to think again about this matter. With your help this club can become the best dive club in Australia again. I look forward to seeing a few more members involve themselves in club events: March will see two dives take place one after the other, a night dive with Max Western on Friday the 13th and a club shore dive up at Terrigal on the 14th. Please ring John Harlen for details on these and all the future diving events for the members to enjoy. I like to think that the dives are what you the club member wants, if they are not please call John or myself with any ideas. Our next meeting will fall after Easter, the committee and myself wish all club members a safe and happy Easter holiday. Thank you for taking the time to read these tidings, enjoy your diving and see you next month.

Regards Peter Foster

Final Thought

When Planing a year – Sow corn

When Planing a decade – Plant a tree

When Planing a lifetime – Educate a child

Kwan-Tzu

Photographic Officer's Report

Since last month the photographic committee has been working very hard securing sponsors for the Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year. We now at last count have some 10 confirmed sponsors for his year's comp with more confirmations on the way. I think this is very good in the wake of the bad publicity that preceded the opening of this year's comp.

On a lighter note: on the 19th of February I was guest speaker at Ryde Underwater Club's monthly meeting. It was I think a very good evening as it gave me a chance to show some of my slides and explain to people how I began underwater photography and interest in marine biology.

My photographic tips column this month is on Video and has been compiled and written by someone who is more versed in video than I - Glenn Townsend. I trust you will find this and further articles useful. Glenn has agreed to write a series of articles for me to promote a better understanding of video, provide some tips and remove some of the mystery associated with video. I'm sure this knowledge will benefit all club members.

Also remember if you have any photographic queries you can either bring them up at the meeting or write to me and I will answer them in my tip column.

Peter Flockart.

Newsletter Editor's Message

Welcome to the March Newsletter, which unfortunately for some of you will be the last one as the 1997 membership year is finished and a few of you haven't renewed for 1998. The year on your address label will indicate the year your membership is paid up to so if you want to continue receiving this newsletter and all the other advantages of being a South pacific dive club member send your renewal now.

Thanks go to all contributors and keep sending the articles in to help make the newsletter a great read.

Russell Stoker

SCAN DAY JUNIOR DIVERS.**HENRY'S HEAD.**

Judd Fearnley

On the SCAN Dive day at Frenchman's Bay The Junior Divers dived at the inside Henrys Head Reef down to 25 metres with Robyn Hewitt, Mark Spencer, Debbie and Craig Egginton, Geoff Cook and myself

The weather was fine and hot, no breeze and the viz average for Botany Bay about 8- 10 metres, I found Henry's Head to be an interesting dive in and around the boulders and down to the sand line. We all located things hiding on the reef. The famed Indian fish proved to be elusive to us (or maybe it is the figment of other divers creative imagination to up stage the 'submarine story'), anyhow we looked in the right places and none were seen. Debbie E found three old beer bottles for the collection. One, intact, dated 1927.

The trip out and back was much slower than usual as Barjumba had a major engine failure early in the day, (Big \$\$\$ this time) It's recovery will be slow but Geoff has already hinted, stone faced, that 'coffee and biscuits on board' are going to cost more from now on.

**SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB
CLEANS UP KURNELL**

By Paul Howlett

The weather was overcast but it did not dampen the enthusiasm for the members of South Pacific divers club to be out with their whiter bags and collecting every bit of rubbish in site. The divers too helped with the clean up. I took a white Clean Up Australia Day Bag and headed for the water. I found a couple of empty beer cans and to my pleasant surprise there was less rubbish on the ocean floor than one would think. The viz was very good. I met a cuttlefish that took an instant dislike to my white carry bag, changed colour and moved off backwards, as only cuttlefish can do. I saw a dead catfish and I wondered if it had been eating some rubbish.

Well back at the B-B-Q site the ground troops had collected heaps of rubbish awaiting collection, the white bags were piled high around the base of a tree. Lunchtime arrived all too soon and the Club's B-B-Q got a full workout. The hot plate was covered with delectable mouthwatering food and plenty of B-B-Q chefs were in evidence as meat sizzled and bangers popped. All members were into the food and refreshments.

After food had been consumed a social cricket

match began with plenty of local rules. You could not be out first bowl, a rather large set of stumps was in evidence, so much so that the wicket keeper had a little trouble in looking around the tree to see the action. Our Club President was seen taking some rolling catches, guess he wants to make the tour to the West Indies as an extra player.

Special thanks to all who came and helped make Australia that little bit cleaner. Everyone had a great day out and all for a good cause.

PETER FOSTER**A PRESIDENTIAL PROFILE**

by Samantha Oates

Peter John Foster was born at a very early age in London, England. His life has been going steadily downhill ever since. He gave an early indication of the direction his future was to take when, at the tender age of 9 months, he removed all the brass from his cot. This resulted in the cot falling apart and Peter landing on his head, which explains a lot really. As a boy he wanted to be a soccer player, until he realised that in the great tradition of English footballers he would have to grow his hair long at the back and perm it. At this point he gave up the idea of becoming a soccer player, but he did the hair anyway. He was nicknamed Fozzie Bear after everyone's favourite Muppet, and one can still see the resemblance when he smiles.

Peter the Boy grew up and his perm grew out, and he started to develop into the man we know today. (Unfortunately he didn't develop into the man he wanted to be, or SPDC would today be proud to have Arnold Schwarzenegger as president.) Peter did well at school, apart from the fact that he couldn't spel, and afterwards trained as a carpenter. At the age of 21 he went to get some careers advice and was told, "Go west, young man!" This he did, but alas his sense of direction was lousy and he ended up in Australia. He hasn't quite made it back home yet.

Peter the Man is a complex entity encompassing many sub-Peters, not all of whom are evident at any given time. Different sub-Peters come to the fore in different situations (except when Helen is on the warpath, when they all instantaneously disappear). This is not, however, a case of multiple personality disorder: it is a deliberate ploy by Peter to flummox the opposition by keeping them in a constant state of bewilderment as to which

Peter they are talking to and how they should deal with him. While they are still trying to work it out, Peter metaphorically nips round the back and makes off with the goodies. He uses this approach when looking for a pen at dive club meetings, so watch out. Some of the sub-Peters are so scary that we do not want to get to know them, but others are more socially acceptable and may be recognised as follows:

Peter the Family Man

This Peter goes by various aliases, most notably Peeedeee and Oscar the Grouch. He is a useful man to have around the house and can be relied upon to improvise in an emergency. When the whipper-snipper broke and the grass in the back garden reached waist height, Peter sharpened up the garden trowel and cut the grass with this. The rabbit was nearly scalped and several earthworms now have split personalities, but at least the job got done.

Peter the Diver

Diving is Peter's all-time love and consuming passion. As well as consuming passion, it also consumes money, time and huge amounts of compressed air. Peter is not known for his conservative use of air and has been known to run out on occasion. He is, however, very well known for his predilection for attempting to dive without a weightbelt, and for his noshing of biscuits (presumably soggy) and lollies while on deco stops. On dive trips away he usually shares a room with Peter Flockart, who takes over the role of mothering him in Helen's absence. This might have disastrous consequences except that thankfully Peter Flockart is not nearly as pretty as Helen.

Peter the Medical Liability

Peter recently became intimately acquainted with the insides of a rescue helicopter and a deco chamber after a small diving incident at Jervis Bay. After several sessions in the chamber he is now more or less back to normal (it's all relative) apart from a couple of neurological side effects. One of these is that he has started to repeat himself. One of these is that he has started to repeat himself. One of these is that he has started to repeat himself. The other is a tendency to forget things. Sorry where was I?

Peter the Leader of Men

Peter showed his leadership potential even

before becoming president of SPDC. After an excess of happy water at the Truk pre-departure party, he executed a gradual but spectacular drunken slide under the table thus pre-empting the other Trukkers and setting the standard for the rest of the holiday. Peter has a lot in common with that other famous President of modern times, Mr Bill Clinton. Both have a bend which has been the topic of much recent discussion, and both deny that they were doing anything wrong at the time. There unfortunately the similarities end, as Mr Clinton has lots of hair and enough of whatever it takes to attract a bit on the side.

Peter the Teetotaller

Peter the Fashion Icon

Peter has made several fashion statements over the years with varying degrees of success. On a scale of 0 to 10, they generally range between 0 and 2½. It has to be said, Vogue has not rushed to snap him up. For a while he sported a rather natty ponytail, but thankfully he soon saw the light. When he cut off his fringe he saw even more light. Another periodic favourite is the really-slimy-second-hand-car-salesman moustache. This has been known to empty entire car auction halls, and the NSW Police tried for a while to sign him up on an on-call basis to disperse unruly crowds during demonstrations.

Peter the Careful Saver

While researching this article the author found several members of SPDC who claimed to know of alleged incidents far too hairy to print. These tales, they say, will go to the grave with them - unless, that is, they find themselves at some stage in financial woes, in which case they might resort to blackmail. So Peter - start saving!

Disclaimer:

This profile is largely based on the collective favourite anecdotes and fond memories of certain members of SPDC and Peter's family. The whole has then been so heavily embroidered by the author that it could stand up unaided in the court of Queen Elizabeth I. In

fact, so distorted has this profile become that any resemblance to any persons, living or dead (no wisecracks please), is now entirely coincidental. All complaints should be directed to the Treasurer, who will deal with the complainant accordingly.

MARCH MAGNETOMETER UPDATE.

By Barjumba

After several minutes of healthy debate at the February Club Meeting I was elected, unopposed, as the Magnetometer Officer. Now let us all see the potential of this instrument. Members of the wreck finding team each have specific target wrecks which have been researched and strongest possible locations established from that research. I used the device off Sydney with Scott Willan in late February (For the 20 buck fee) with very promising results. Although there are plenty of wrecks to be located off our coast lets not fool ourselves, the ratio of water to metal is stacked against us and it is only with dogged persistence, good research and a touch of luck that we will achieve results. It is hoped that at least one, possibly two, may be located in time for presentation at the AUPY night to give it some interest value.

During this week a 40-foot cruiser sank at a 'knownish' GPS position off Sydney's North Head and through the chain of friends and club connections, (owner mate-mate Adrian Nute, Leo B and then to me) that we had a request to hire the mag to assist in it's location. These guys were down and desperate with an under insured vessel and \$15,000.00 worth of fishing rods reels and gear aboard, I hated to be the bearer of bad news that the mag does not find fibreglass cruisers in 160-220 ft water. It is only a device that detects magnetic anomalies caused by large masses of iron and steel. But we offered our services, boats and divers just the same. To date the weather has been against him to perform an effective depthsounder and grapple hook search and I'm waiting for the phone to ring.

See Ya

FASTFORWARD.

By Glenn Townsend

Do you want to record the action under water? Do you want to show what the rest are missing out on like the colour of the corals, varied underwater life and fabulous shipwrecks from another time? Then read on.

OK you want to buy a video camera, and you want to take it diving. There are a few decisions you will need to make when you are making an investment of this type. You want to make sure

that you are making the right decision before handing over your hard-earned dollars. Over the next months I will cover subjects like: Video format, Camcorders, Waterproof Housings, Lighting systems, and what do you want to do with the video.

VIDEO FORMAT

Choosing the right format is one of the first considerations when purchasing a new or upgrading an existing camcorder. The format you choose will determine the camcorder you end up with from physical size to the quality of the recording. Remember what camcorder you choose it will have to have an underwater housing. Physical size is a real consideration for both using the video underwater and travel, especially overseas travel

What formats are on the market:

Low Band- Not to get carried away with the technicalities, the quality of a video signal can be measured by what is called horizontal resolution (definition: the more horizontal lines the better the resolution). The lower band signal is called 'composite'. The two separate components in the video signal, chroma and luminance are combined in the low band signal.

VHS (VHS and VHS-C are identical 1/2 inch tape size) The VHS format is the one that you will be most familiar with. Full size VHS cassette will house videotape offering a recording time up to five hours. For durability it is recommended that you use the shorter tapes in your camcorder e.g. E120 (2 hour).

What is a plus for the format, you can take the tape from the camcorder and put it straight into the home VCR. What the drawback is especially for under water application, is the large size of the cameras and the underwater housing that would be needed for the video camera.

VHS-C: The cassette is about one third of the size of a VHS cassette. This means that the camcorder is also much smaller. (That's better). Tape lengths are EC30 and EC4S (30 and 45 mins). To play the VHS-C cassette in your VCR you will need an adapter cassette this will allow the VHS-C tape to be played. You can also use the VHS-C camcorder as the VCR and connect straight to the TV.

8 mm: Where as the VHS format has been around for about 25 years the 8mm tape format is about 10 years old the cassette sizes are the

size of an audio cassette and the tape is about 1/4 inch in width. Tape lengths are from P30, P60, P90, P120 minutes (P stands for PAL, our TV system in Australia). The smaller cassette size means that the 8mm camcorder tends to be smaller than VHS-C camcorder

8mm tapes use a special formulation called "metal particle" (MP) that tends to give better image quality and colour rendition and definition.

Audio quality (mono) tends to be of a higher quality than VHS-C. HiFi stereo recording is offered on some VHS & C camcorders this feature is also available on certain 8mm camcorders.

VHS and 8mm formats are incompatible and you need to use the 8mm camcorder as the playback machine with cables between the 8mm camcorder, VCR or TV and the signal is transferred via the RF or AV connections.

Want better quality? Then we will look at High-Band formats

Better picture quality can be provided by enhanced or high-band versions of the three standard formats - Super VHS, Super VHS-C and Hi8. The image quality is far superior and usually incorporates other features like HiFi sound coupled with the enhanced picture. We mentioned earlier about quantifying the quality of a video picture by its horizontal resolution.

High Band formats deliver 400 lines plus. A broadcast picture contains 300 lines plus and low band formats are between 240 to 260 lines, (remember the more lines the better the picture). S-video is often called Y/C, which refers to the individual video signal components. "Y" for luminance and "C" for Chroma. An S-Video socket allows the signal components to be received separately, retaining picture quality.

Now let's look at compatibility between these formats.

S-video (VHS) recorded tape cannot be played in a normal VHS VCR. An S-video tape recorded as VHS (low band) can be played in a normal VHS VCR

To get the full potential of S-VHS you will need to play the tape in S-VHS VCR and a TV with S-video inputs. Playing the high band on a TV with only composite input (low band) will show some improvement of picture quality.

Remember to play 8mm formats you will need to use your camcorder or a specialised 8mm VCR connected to your TV. We will cover later the different options of VCRs on the market.

Now if you want even better quality and really blow your audience away, (and I mean that in the nicest possible way)

Lets go DIGITAL format.

A new format all together. The new format was released in December 1995 and exceeds S-VHS and Hi8 formats by some: 25 to 30% in terms of resolution. The new DV tapes are much smaller than 8mm and represent a new format all together. That word compatibility. These tapes are not compatible with any other format.

Tapes for the new camcorder (now there are cameras called Palmcorders, even smaller) and digital VCRs are DVM30ME, DVM60ME (30 & 60 minutes recording) and DV270ME for use in the digital VCR. Signal from the tape is in the order of 500 lines plus of horizontal resolution. ('ME' is the formulation used on the digital and well as Hi8 tapes - Metal Evaporated) The digital tapes employ high picture output levels with low video and audio noise and excellent tape durability. The output of the camera is in digital format and is connected via what is called FireWire or IEEE-1394 socket which is the digital standard for the transfer of video images to a computer or other digital equipment like digital VCRs. The digital cameras and VCRs will also output in S-video or composite formats so they can be connected to VHS or S-VHS or 8mm VCRs or TVs.

Whatever format is chosen the thing to remember always use the best quality tape in your camcorder. The quality of tape will directly affect the image and audio results. You see the difference when you edit and dub your videos. {Another story}

What Decision ??????

Choosing the right format for "YOU". This article may not have solved the problem, but I hope that you can make an informed decision, or at least generate more questions. The following articles will build the information that you use to get the whole picture and to make your choice.

Good diving and videoing

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

Position	Name	Home No:	Work No:
President:	Peter Foster	9564 2654 Mobile: 0418 435 774	
Treasurer:	Graham Oates	9722 4813	97224813
	Email: oatesg@cegelec.com.au		
Secretary:	Debbie Davis	9821 3740	Mobile: 014 904 849
Photographic Officer:	Peter Flockart	9371 0265	9374 2382
	Email: Nelson01@bigpond.com		Fax: 9374 2688
Publicity Officer:	Paul Howlett	97466720	9377 3019
	Email: paulsd@hartingdale.com.au		Mobile: 0411 179 489
Dive Organisers:	John Harlen	9521 7210	
	Email: John.Harlen@dealer.bmw.com.au		
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 Jervis Bay area)	044 43 4631	042 74 0210
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 9521 7210

March

Friday the 13th night dive on Max Western's Sea Tamer 2 contact John to check for spots

Saturday the 14th Terrigal shore dive at 11am. Meet at the base of the Skillion (look for the flag)
Contact John or the club phone to get more details

Weekend 20th/21st diving the lady Darling at Narooma \$60 2 tank dives and \$15 a night accommodation
Contact John for info or to book a spot.

April

Sunday the 26th Bass Point Shore dive. Meet at the car park near the Gutter at 11am. Contact John for information

May

Friday the 1st Night dive & sausage sizzle harbour cruise on Sydney Harbour 6.30pm pick up at Rose Bay wharf

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES Contact Numbers: Barbara 0412 588 213

May

Saturday the 16th. Club B.B.Q. at Peter Fosters to celebrate his birthday

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 16th March, 1998**, starting at 8 pm in the Emile McDonald Room of the Bankstown Sports Club.

FUTURE CLUB MEETINGS

Monday 20th April, 18th May and 15th June 1998

Wet Rag, the South Pacific Divers' Club
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Deadline for articles is the last day of the month.