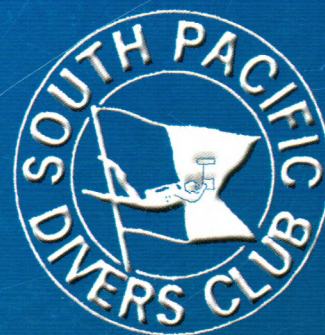


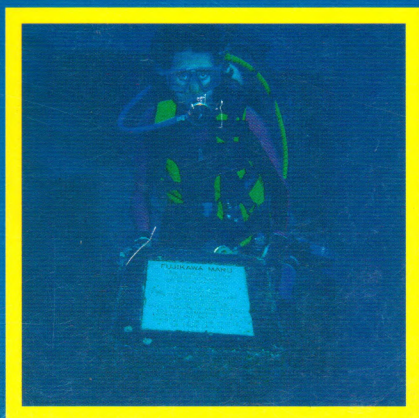
WET RAG

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

PO Box 823, BANKSTOWN NSW 2200
0411 343 200



JULY 1998



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, 20 July 1998.

Barbara on the deck of the San Francisco Maru
Above: Barbara on the Fujikawa.
Photography by Leo B.

President's Tidings

By the time you should be reading this the A.U.P.Y. awards night will only be days away. This committee has spent many long hours putting the show together, and Peter Flockart is still working away even now. This years show looks like being the best ever put on by the club so far, I hope it may set the standard for years to come. The small trade fair is our way of saying thank you to all our dive industry friends and great sponsors both new and old. We have what must be one of the best competitions of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. I hope you all enjoy the night.

Regards Peter Foster

Final Thought: its not too late to get your tickets!!!

Photographic Officer's

Well the presentation night is almost upon us yet again and everything is in readiness for a huge night. All the production work is finished and we have been able to have one rehearsal. This has enabled us to iron out a number of minor hassles and ensure a smoother run on the 18th.

Ticket sales at the time of writing are slow but in the last few days I have seen a steady increase in the request for tickets. As we have Rodney Fox speaking, great raffle & door prizes plus for the first time live entertainment I hope all members will come and join in what will be a great night.

My thanks to those members who have offered their time on the night it is and will be appreciated. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has assisted me with the competition up to this point in time, without their help the comp would not happen.

So buy your ticket(s) if you haven't already done so and come along to a great fun night, you never know you may just win a prize!!!!!!!!!!!!!!.

Peter Flockart.

Newsletter Editor's Message

This is the 20th newsletter I have produced for the club and for the time being the last as I have stepped down as the editor.

I have been in the club since 1992 and have seen it grow and develop as a group of people enjoying themselves and building club spirit. With this in mind this newsletter has a collection of photos and a couple of old articles showing some of the events that occurred over the years where the synergy of the members made the club better than just the individuals that are in it.

I hope the club can continue to head in this direction without too much more turmoil because to me South Pacific Divers Club is a very special part of my life.

Russell Stoker

DIVE REPORTS**SOUTHERN SOJOURN** by John Harlen

In mid June a small group of keen divers from Southpac headed down to Ulladulla for a bit of winter diving on the NSW south coast. Ulladulla is quite developed for a south coast town, possibly due to the number of ex- Sydney residents who have

retired to the nearby Mollymook. Despite this it hasn't entirely lost the charm of it's fishing port origins. So while it has a good selection of restaurants and a decent pub it also has some nice old buildings and a very scenic coastline. From a diving perspective one of the advantages of Ulladulla as a destination is the proximity of everything. The dive shop is located just off the main drag only a couple of doors up from the pub. Almost next door is the divers lodge, a big old fibro house furnished with quantities of bunk beds a full kitchen and a TV and video. The dive boats are only a short stroll down the hill at the fishing harbour. We took the cars but only to save the effort of lugging our dive tanks back up the hill. About the only thing that isn't easy is the wharf. There is only one set of steps in the entire harbour and transferring tanks across three boats was a pain in the proverbial. June is the start of the tuna season on the south coast and the harbour at Ulladulla was chock full of visiting fishing vessels down south for the bounty. Each morning we would see another boat offloading two-meter long yellow fin tuna at the co-op. The tuna are caught on long lines with radio transmitters to help the boats relocate them. The lines stay set for twelve hours and when the tuna are retrieved they are packed in plastic and foam so that they are not bruised by the ice. The bulk of the tuna go straight to Japan of course. The trawlers were bringing in crates of red nannygai as well. The nannygai fetch around \$3-4 a kilo at approximately 30 kilos a tub and around 150 tubs on one boat we saw. We didn't see any tuna on our dives but there were plenty of nannygai.

For the first dive on Saturday we headed out to a spot called 'the arch'. It is at a bend in a finger of reef that comes out from the coast a short distance south of Ulladulla. There was quite a strong current heading south on the surface but the water temperature was over 17 degrees. My diving companions assured me that the vis was only about 10 meters on this dive but I have my photographs in front of me as I write this and it looks a lot better than that. It was overcast on the day (as it was all weekend) which reduced underwater light levels making the horizontal visibility seem a little low. Whatever the vis was, the underwater terrain here was very interesting with a 6 meter high wall running up from the sand at about 30 meters and large boulders in front of this. The rock was heavily encrusted with a large variety of invertebrate life including; sea tulips, southern gorgonias, sponges and hydroids. In some of the photos the colour of the life and the blueness of the water makes the scene look tropical except for Sarah's dry suit

The arch itself is a rock swim through with fans and sea tulips hanging from the roof. While Peter Flockart, Sarah and myself hung around the arch enjoying the conditions and the prolific life, Jackie Owen and Mark Spencer headed off in search of the

arch. (Jackie was sure that the swim through we had located couldn't be the arch she had heard of. What in fact emerged over the weekend was that Jackie was incapable of matching a map or directions with the relevant actions underwater.) To our amusement a seal zoomed around their fins as they swam along the wall. The flat sea conditions made for a fast trip back to the harbour and while our tanks were refilled we relaxed at the lodge over a cup of tea and a fresh bun from the bakery.

The afternoon's dive was at Burrill rocks, to the south again. This area has many caves and swim throughs including one which continued for over 100 meters. This was a great divesite with clear water and lots of fish. The invertebrate growth was not as dense as the mornings dive but there were some beautiful southern gorgonias. Jackie distinguished herself once again by swimming in the opposite direction to the map. No one seemed too worried though. We checked out the scenery in that direction and then headed back to the caves. The boat operator was becoming a little concerned when we still hadn't surfaced after an hour.

The lack of heating in the dive lodge drove us to the pub early that evening. (that was our excuse anyway). After a few quiet ales we walked round the corner to what was reputed to be the best of the Chinese restaurants in the area. Helped by numerous bottles of red we demolished a banquet, finally leaving them long after the last of any other patrons had departed. Sundays arising was predictably slothful. Once on the dive boat we headed back down to the general area of the previous mornings' dive, on the seaward end of the same reef. It was a little deeper here, around 33 meters to the sand, but the invertebrate growth was just as dense and the fish life was more prolific. Interestingly the current had reversed from the previous day bringing in cooler (15 degrees) and even clearer water. Sarah and I found a particularly obliging giant cuttlefish who posed for several photos.

The giant cuttlefish become increasingly prevalent during their winter mating season. The afternoon dive on Sunday was at a reef called 'north bommie'. This site was very different to the other dives we did over the weekend. A near vertical wall dropped from 4 meters to a sand bottom in 18-20 meters. The rock was much more barren than the previous sites. Conversely however the fish life was prolific. A huge 1.5 meter wide stingray was on the bottom when we first dropped down and masses of sweep schooled in mid water. There were many large black drummer in various caves and Sarah and I must have seen more than 10 large giant cuttlefish. It was a weary but happy bunch of divers who headed north on Sunday afternoon.

If you haven't dived Ulladulla before then it is well worth considering. Water is generally clear during the winter months. The water temperature will continue to drop from now until September when it

gets as low as 10 degrees. The boat trips are only short however and if you stay at the divers lodge you can even take a hot shower between dives. Alternatively get a dry suit like me. The staff at Ulladulla Divers are very friendly and helpful and their prices, even without the club discount, are very reasonable. The only significant shipwreck in the vicinity is the Northern Firth down at brush island. This is an hours boat ride away however and is not economical for less than 8 divers. It would be possible to dive this using a private vessel and launching down the coast, say at Bawley Point. As they say "a change is as good as a holiday".

MAY 1996

CHICKEN AND CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST

Sunday 24th March 1996 saw the SPDC Chicken and Champagne Breakfast dive team swing into action. With the largest contingent yet of 30-40 divers and 6 boats we headed off from Dolan's Bay at 8am. 2 boats went to the Tuggerah while others went to Marley Point and 6 Fathom reef. With a slight current and blue water great diving was had by all - even Cookie who had trouble finding the wreck.

After a great dive we all met back at Gibbon Beach for chicken, champagne and conversation.

The weather was perfect with flat seas and the company was great with many good stories being told. We toasted our good friend and dive buddy Rick Latimer who would have been 53 yrs old on the day and we all agreed he was probably looking down in approval at the great time we were r having. As he used to say "It's all good fun" and it was. I'm sure he would have been there if he could, as he never missed a club dive day or event. He was a real clubman and this day was what club diving is all about - lots of camaraderie and great relaxed diving. As usual it wouldn't have been possible without Geoff and Mandy organising the diving and food and without the boat owners. If it wasn't for the boat owners we'd all be shore diving, so we owe them a big thanks for turning out and hope they'll be there next dive for us. After we drank the champagne and keg we all headed home to rest up for the next big SPDC breakfast dive day.

JULY 1995

WE CAME, WE SAW, WE CONQUERED

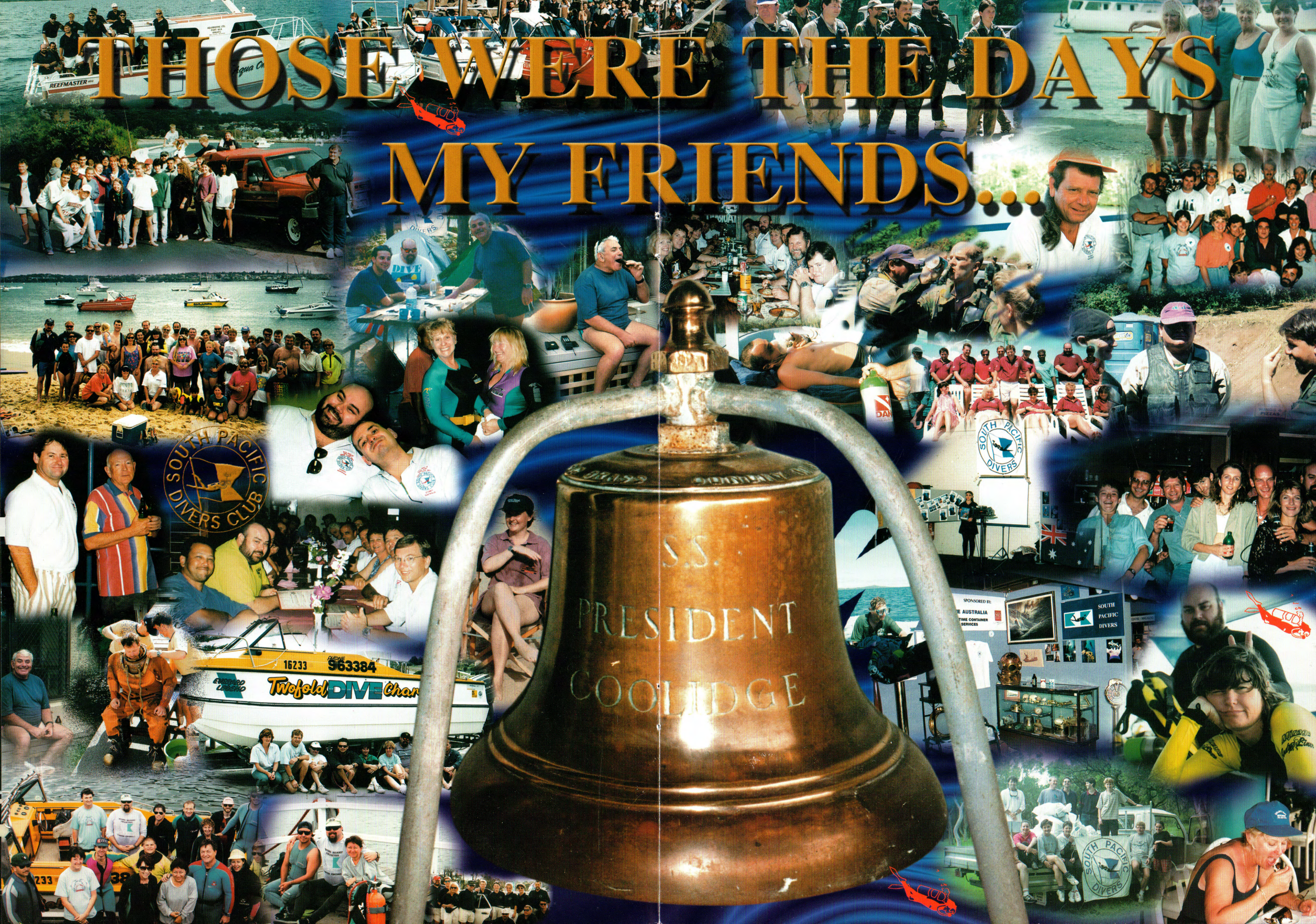
(or the paintball rematch that wasn't)

by Scott Leimroth

The challenge was sent months ago but rumour was that Ryde Underwater Club had cold feet and would not be coming to the paintball rematch.

Were they still recovering from last year's battle or were they just scared to lose the trophy they had robbed us of last time? Whatever their reasons, they did not turn up - piked it chickened out - call it what you will. but South Pacific Divers' Club won this one without firing a shot, at least at RUC members. A win by default is still a win. The trophy will look great in the Clubroom. Despite this, the day was still

THOSE WERE THE DAYS MY FRIENDS...



a great success with 20 South Pacific members arriving at Yarramundi at the base of the Blue Mountains at 8am on Sunday 16 July ready to do battle. Notwithstanding the absence of RUC, we hoisted the battle flag (South Pacific banner) in the compound and then split into two opposing teams and entered the Game Zone. Safety is imperative with these guns that shoot gelatine balls at 250 ft per second and the one hapless soul who picked up his gun before being told to do so by the referee was subjected to The Firing Squad as punishment. Both teams line up and each person is permitted one shot from about 20 ft at the perpetrator [has Scott been watching too many police shows on TV]. After this, everyone was more safety conscious for their own sake.

We played a number of different game scenarios throughout the morning. With Carina "Rambette", Rick "The Terminator" Johann "The Ninja", Nila "The Enforcer" and "Kamikaze" Scott living up to their reputations as fierce competitors. Numerous heroic charges and other deeds abounded, but perhaps the most sly and cunning tactic used was when Craig casually strolled through the battle field convincing all that he had been shot and was heading for the safe zone. This was not the case and he managed to get deep behind enemy lines and shoot the General, much to the annoyance of Russell "The Protector" who managed to shoot Craig but not before the fatal shot.

This won that game for Craig's team. We all complained at his devious behaviour but the ref said that he was within the rules as at no time had he called "hit" or raised his gun above his head signaling out. After this, unless you called hit, hit constantly and raised your gun above your head, you were sure to cop a hammering as everyone was in fear of another deception. The teams were tied as we broke for lunch.

During the break we were approached by a few people who had seen our banner and overheard us talking "dive" talk. It was not long before Joe had a number of die hard paintballers ready to switch sports and take up scuba diving.

In the very first game after lunch, Joe and the others got to use some first aid skills learnt during divemaster, instructor and other courses. The yellow team had taken the flag and the bearer, Steven Martin, was racing back with it towards friendly lines when he fell straight into one of the trenches, badly injuring his knee and leg. The referees were not quite sure what to do so various South Pacific members, such as Dr Joe and Nurse Suzie along with Peter "The Anaesthetist" stepped in and administered first aid until the ambulance arrived. There was no first aid kit at the field, however, being divers, we were prepared and first aid kits and blankets were fetched from our cars. In the true military spirit of the day, Nurse Suzie offered the patient, who was in extreme pain, a cigarette. We

were not too sure of the medical benefits, but it seemed to relax him, although not as much as the nitrous oxide the paramedics gave him when they arrived (perhaps a nitrous oxide course instead of a nitrox course is in order). The poor guy was one of a group who had earlier inquired about diving and said that he would definitely take it up now, it had to be safer than paintball.

After the patient was medi-vaced out, we had one final game with unlimited lives - you kept playing until you ran out of ammo. The "Ninja" made a final race for the flag but in the attempt ran out of ammo and was chased about the field by Joe, Craig and others until he was bailed up and surrendered. During this final battle "Kamikaze" who had run out of ammo in the previous game roamed the field with his camera risking life and limb and taking many hits in the process to preserve the various heroic actions of film.

At the end of the day, we were totally worn out. A great day had been had by all, although it would have been much more pleasing if members of RUC had been there to be on the receiving end of a South Pacific paintball. Perhaps next year we will have to open up the contest to any dive club willing to challenge us.

The Motion Re: The A.U.P.Y.

By Leo Bergagnin

At the last club meeting I raised the matter of whether the club should continue with the Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year Competition. There are many members who are of the volition that this competition should come to an end. I feel it is time the matter be taken out of the public arena and be debated on the club floor. I have been a member for only 6 years and in that time there has never been a legitimate debate on this matter. **Please let me get this straight I am not condemning the A.U.P.Y. nor am I condoning it.**

Some weeks prior to the 1997 Presentation night a few disgruntle members started criticising various committee members with regards to this night and even though Peter Flockart and myself opened up the opportunity for all concerned to discuss the matter. Particularly at the open forum held in May of that year, no detractors of the competition were forthcoming, and as a result the 1998 competition went ahead.

At the December meeting the matter was raised and a "referendum" was held at the January meeting. Well what a bloody joke that was, even though the agenda for the night stated there would be discussion on the issue, no discussion was allowed and furthermore, the voting procedure left a lot to be desired. A secret vote on this matter is essential, to allow members to vote the way they feel, not to be intimidated to vote for one faction or the other. There are instances of members abstaining from voting because of this intimidation. Please fellow members consider the motion carefully and all

the pros and cons of this issue and then cast the appropriate vote not be guided like sheep and vote for and/or against the various personalities involved.

On Saturday night our club will be hosting the 1998 presentation night and regardless of whether your in favour of the night or not consider supporting the club and come along and witness what happens and make an informed judgement don't just be an armchair critic.

The need for this motion to be settled is important for the future direction of South Pacific Divers Club the committee needs a

mandate to either continue on with A.U.P.Y. or work towards new goals the next wet rag should have further input relevant to this subject. It is now time for the cynic to either put up or shut up.

Thought for the month

by Confucius Bergagnin

Allways trust you enemies. Never trust your friends

Your enemies of today will be your enemies of tomorrow.

Your friends of today could well be your enemies of tomorrow.

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 Email: oatesg@cegelec.com.au	9769 0098	9722 4813
Secretary:	Debbie Davis	9821 3740	Mobile: 014 904 849
Photographic Officer:	Peter Flockart Email: Nelson01@bigpond.com	9371 0265	9374 2382 Fax: 9374 2688
Publicity Officer:	Paul Howlett Email: paulsd@hartingdale.com.au	97466720	9377 3019 Mobile: 0411 179 489
Dive Organisers:	John Harlen Email: John.Harlen@dealer.bmw.com.au	9521 7210	
Social Secretaries:	and Newsletter Editor:	and Equipment Officer	VACANT

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	02 6496 3384

**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

Shore dives: Peter Foster 9564 2654

August

Saturday 15th Port Stephens, Halifax Point dive (morning high tide) contact John for details

September

Friday 18th Shiprock night dive contact john for details

Weekend 18th to 20th Jervis Bay liveaboard weekend on the MV Indulgence \$275 contact Peter Foster

Easter 1999

Proposed trip to Truk Lagoon contact Leo B for details

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

July

THE AUSTRALASIAN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 1998
AWARDS NIGHT SATURDAY 18 JULY 1998 AT 7 pm

At the Bankstown Sports and Recreation Club

Master of Ceremonies: Peter Fields

Special guest speaker: Rodney Fox

Recognised as one of the worlds greatest authorities on the Great White Shark

YOUR TICKET COULD WIN ONE OF THESE LUCKY DOOR PRIZES

* TRIP FOR TWO TO WESTERN SAMOA

SPONSORED BY PADI DIVE NETWORK AND POLYNESIAN AIRLINES

* TRIP FOR ONE TO THE CORAL SEA

SPONSORED BY MIKE BALL

TICKETS \$25 EACH

Ticket inquires: phone Peter Foster on 0411 343 200

SEND CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER TO SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB:

PO BOX 823 BANKSTOWN NSW 2200

September

Sunday 27th Skirmish match has been proposed so get your camouflage ready, contact Peter

NEXT CLUB MEETING

Remember that this month's meeting will be held on **MONDAY 20th July 1998**, starting at 8 pm in the Emile McDonald Room of the Bankstown Sports Club.

FUTURE CLUB MEETINGS

Monday 17th August, 21st September and 19th October 1998

Wet Rag, the South Pacific Divers' Club
Newsletter, is published by South Pacific Divers'
Club.
Edited by Russell Stoker.



Send material to the PO box

Deadline for articles is the last day of the month.