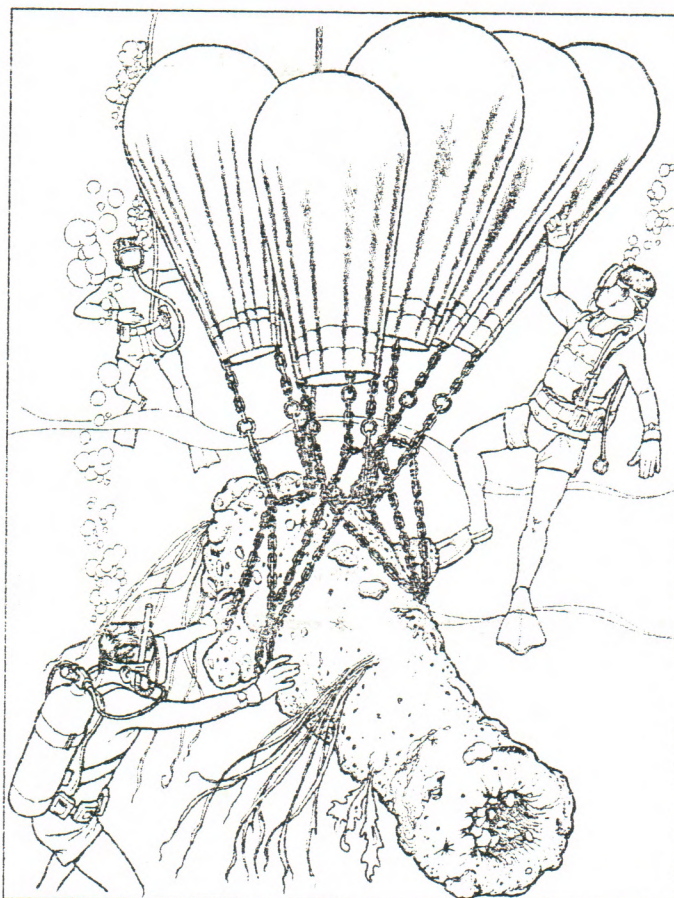


SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB

Established 1960

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2000



WET RAG

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EDITORIAL

A report in the Marine Park News (Summer 1999/ Autumn 2000) on page two suggested that the grey nurse shark (*Carcharias taurus*) population had not recovered. The report goes on to say that between 50 and 60 sites were surveyed in November/December 1998, March/April 1999 and May/June 1999. Sharks were observed by divers over a 15 minute period at the chosen sites. The total number of grey nurse sharks observed in the three consecutive surveys were 136, 129 and 215, respectively. The report goes on to say approximately 78 percent of sharks were sighted at only nine sites. Of the sites surveyed, about 60 percent had no grey nurse sharks present. This suggests that the grey nurse shark population in New South Wales waters has not recovered since it was made a protected species in 1984. Areas surveyed were from Tweed Head to Eden and into southern Queensland.

As divers we know sharks of all species are roamers of the sea and the oceans cover almost two thirds of the world, its area and depths almost defy imagination. There is so much expanse of sea and so little shoreline that has been explored by scuba divers and spearfishermen that a survey for 15 minutes at known grey nurse shark locations would be of little value. No doubt the survey is being carried out with good intentions of those divers and others involved. Nurse sharks do have particular areas they favour and at times seem to gather, some in large other in small numbers, however they are constantly on the move, they are free swimmers and because of this type of transit from one place to another how can even an assumption be made let alone a report based on findings at various nurse sites be taken seriously when a whole unseen population of nurse sharks are constantly on the move, along the coast of New South Wales.

Editor

Tom Byron

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

First of all I would like to say that I have received very good vibes about our club meetings of late. The fact that the club has rid itself of trouble makers is the reason. However we still have problems left over from the past.

The matter of our magnetometre is one and the other is the mobile phone. The magnetometre is nothing than a sea going metal detector that if used correctly should detect shipwrecks. This piece of equipment has only been used once or twice over the last 12 months, and right now the insurance is due the sum being \$400.00. The other is the mobile phone which is costing \$20.00 per month. Both are currently gathering dust and I think the club should give serious consideration to selling the magnetometre and scrapping the phone. We as a club cannot and should not carry this financial burden when it is not necessary.

I would like to hear from our members at the next meeting as regards these two items.

Club President

Bernie Kraul

A SLICE OF HISTORY

1920

The first spearmen wore sandshoes painted green to avoid attracting sharks. This was well before the appearance of fins in 1938. Snorkels or fins were not available in those days.

1935

Moviemaker Noel Monkman began to make underwater movies films for the big screen in about 1935.

May Wells, wife of pioneer spearfisherman Denny Wells, was probably the first white woman in Australia to regularly spear fish for food about 1934, in the middle of the great depression.

PHOTOGRAPHIC OFFICERS REPORT

The first of our mini photo Competitions was run at the last meeting, congratulations to Matt Reeves on taking out the six pack for a nice slide from Jervis Bay. How about giving him a little more competition and submitting a shot of your own at the next meeting. Thanks to Grey McNeil for showing his slides on Sipidan Island. If you weren't there you missed some great underwater shots. I'll have a few slides from Palau and Truk to look at next meeting and maybe another guest photographer. Enquiries for our big photographic competition have started after the dive log articles. Closing date is 1st July so get those cameras clicking and entre your best slides.

Photographer Officer

Glen Percy

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Four new members joined South Pacific Divers Club in March - they were:

David Burns of Mascot.
Peter Turner of Warwick Farm.
Audrey Prusaczik of Epping.
Leslie (Chuck) Stewart of Guildford.

The club welcomes these new members and hopes to see them on many future dives outings.

APRIL 2000

CLUB DIVES

Date	Day	Location	Contact Person	Meet
1 2	Sat / Sun	Jervis Bay \$180	Tom Byron 97745965	Aqua Shack
22	Saturday	Bare Island / BBQ \$5.00	Peter Flockart 93710265	Bare Island 9.00am
24	Monday	Valiant Wreck \$35.00	Noel Taylor 0415658317	Barrenjoey Boatshed 9.00 am
30	Sunday	Shark Dive Magic Point Private Boats Only	Tom Byron 97745965	Kurnell Boat Ramp 7.30am

MAY 2000

3	Wednesday	Night Dive Camp Cove	Duane Langley 0414777778	Victoria Street Watsons Bay 6.30pm
6 7	Sat / Sun	Malua Bay via Batemans Bay Approximately \$180	Peter Foster 95642654	Friday night at the Boomerang Flats 391, George Bass Drive, Malua Bay, via Batemans Bay.
21	Sunday	Shiprock	Peter Flockart 93710265	Shiprock at 9.00am
28	Sunday	Kurnell and BBQ \$5.00	Duane Langley 0414777778	Kurnell at 10.00am

JUNE 2000

2	Friday Night	Shiprock	Peter Flockart 93710265	Shiprock at 7.00pm
4	Sunday	Wreck Bombo \$30.00	Noel Taylor 0415658317	Wollongong Wharf 9.00am
11	Saturday Sunday	Wreck Dee Why \$35.00	Peter Foster 95642654	Rose Bay Wharf 7.00am
25	Sunday	Oak Park	Noel Taylor 0415658317	Oak Park 9.30am

All monies for boat dives must be paid to the dive organiser on the day of the outing. A receipt for the money will be issued and no payments should be made to the boat skipper. All financial transactions will be handled by the club treasurer.

FACT PAGE ABOUT YOUR CLUB

What is South Pacific Divers Club?

The South Pacific Divers Club was formed in the early 1960s by a small group of underwater photographers. Early members of the club enjoyed many different facets of the sport, such as cave diving, setting deep diving records, underwater photography, wreck diving and exploring along the coast both north and south for different dive locations. Today at the beginning of the new century 2000, the club has changed from the early days, however it somehow remains the same. Major activities among its members are still underwater photography, wreck and reef diving. The club's major event is the running of the annual Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year.

Club Meetings

The South Pacific Divers Club meets every third Monday of the month at the Bankstown Sports Club. Meetings begin at 8.00pm. Enquirer at the entrance desk for the room number. All visitors are welcome to our meetings. Generally there are slide shows and drinks after general business.

Who are the members?

South Pacific Divers Club has members from various parts of Sydney and country areas of New South Wales as well as New Zealand. Its members come from all walks of life and enjoy one thing in common, scuba diving. Total membership is almost 100.

Who are the people that run South Pacific Divers Club?

A committee of five is elected once a year. The committee meets once a month generally one or two weeks before the main club meeting. It is the committee responsibility to run dive outings, produce a monthly newsletter, organise the yearly Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year Competition and the George Roberts Trophy as well as fund raising and other activities.

Benefits of Membership

Meeting people who like yourself enjoy the sport of scuba diving.
Weekends away scuba diving along the coast of New South Wales.
Club dives almost every weekend.
Social outings.
Instance dive buddies.
10% discount to members at Aqua Sport Scuba Centre.

Internet Address

Soon you will be able to surf the web to South Pacific Divers Club Home Page.

Dive Coordinators for 2000

Peter Foster at 905642654
Peter Flockart at 93710265
Noel Taylor at 0417658608
Duane Langley at 0414777778

DIVE NEWS

Sea Dragon Search Web Site

Recently launched was the new Dragon Search web sight. Those interested in sea dragons can visit the site at <http://www.dragonsearch.asn.au> Sighting forms can be downloaded and information passed on to Dragon Search.

Grey Nurse Sharks Caves at Magic Point

Recently during mid week I dived the grey nurse shark caves at Magic Point and there were more than 15 to 20 sharks cruising around in and outside the cave. They measured less than a metre to well over two in length. After spending more than an hour at the cave on our last dive I noticed that some had left the group. Returning to our boat and passing the second cave I noticed that the ones that were absent were in that cave.

The URG are conducting a research program at the site and I strongly suggest to our members that if the URG boat is anchored over the location show them some courtesy by staying well clear and do not dive until all their divers have returned.

At Last We Have a New Secretary. Susan Tate.

The club would like to welcome our new secretary Susan Tate. I am sure that Sue will prove herself a capable person in her new position. Lots of luck Sue.

New Shipwreck Atlas of New South Wales

A new Shipwreck Atlas of New South Wales (4th edition) is underway, release date to be announced.

For those unfamiliar with this first class publication it covers a mound of information about shipwrecks along the New South Wales coastline.

The third edition is still selling with a price of \$65.00, however at some bookshops the price has dropped to about \$30.00.

Any member that thought the price was a bit steep can now, if they wish, purchase the book for half price, however remember the new edition will be available soon.

DIVE NEWS

More Members at Club Meetings

With a membership of close to 100 why is it that about twenty to thirty people at the best of times turn up at club meetings.

The meetings are friendly, there are no more infighting we have slide shows for entertainment, there are drinks and sometimes goodies to nibble, so get with it you lot and attend your club meetings, also we would like to see more faces behind masks at club dives. Surly this is not too much to ask, you are all divers you know, although sometimes I doubt this.

Members Input

The newsletter needs articles from members, surely among you lot out there is an inspiring young writer that would like to have his or her name in print, about a dive experience with a huge shark with big teeth or weekend away at some location along the New South Wales coast, perhaps the Great Barrier Reef, maybe an overseas dive trips.

You don't all stay at home on the weekends watching TV do you? Although I sometimes wonder about that.

Now let me see, all it takes is a little bit of imagination, you can even make it up if you want, no one would know. Like myself perhaps you can only afford a broken pencil and a scrap piece of paper. Now there you have it, no more excuses, so exercise that piece of grey matter that sits on your shoulder and get to work.

My Buddy's Still Down There

By Ellen Connolly

An inquest into the death of diver Ms Nicky Sheen, whose body was recovered off Bondi, will centre on why the British tourist was allowed to dive when her certification card had expired, why she ran out of air only 33 minutes into the dive, and why she was allowed to dive when her experience had been confined to still water. Sheen 24, drowned when she ran out of air while diving

with an organised commercial group. Her diving experience was limited to still water, in a pool and lagoon in Thailand. She had apparently not dived in the

ocean. Police said Ms Sheen shared air from the tank of her "buddy", when she ran out of air. The pair then removed their weight belts and attempted a rapid ascent. "They were trying to reach the surface but both had trouble. They couldn't get up," a police report said.

WorkCover is investigating whether there has been a breach of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. In December, a Japanese tourist, diving with the same dive company, drowned. A separate inquest is to be held into that death.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: 20th March 2000

Meeting opened 8.15pm

Apologies: Neil Vincent, Mitch Radomir

Incoming Correspondence:

U RG Bulletin

Outgoing Correspondence:

Letter to a prospective member

Photographic Officer:

Glen advises he is still working on the AV night which is running to schedule at this point. During his stay at Truk Lagoon Glen has secured for the AV night some great prizes-yet to be confirmed in writing.

It was suggested that the AV competition be closed off at the 30-6-2000.

Equipment Officer:

Equipment is all present and accounted for. Please someone use it.

Previous Meeting Minutes:

Accepted by Phil and seconded by Peter Foster.

Treasurers Report: Lin La

Revenue:

Membership \$245.00 13 members.

Raffle: \$77.00

Social BBQ/Dive: \$85.00

Bank Interest: \$1.78

Total: \$408.78

Expenses:

Social BBQ/ Dive: \$99.50

Stationary: \$2.45

Postage: \$99.00

Printing: \$108.00

Mobile Phone: \$65.30

Bank Charges: \$4.05

Membership SCAN: \$20.00

Dive Log Renewal: \$120.00

BOC Gases: \$55.80

Total: \$574.10

Financial Statement

Cheque Account: \$611.53
Investment Account: \$6,254.76
Petty Cash: \$668.65
Total: \$7,734.94

Treasurers Report accepted by Peter Flockart seconded by Noel Taylor

Newsletter Editor:

Tom has printed Gift Certificates for the raffle prizes. He has supplied 12 months supply. Tom's new format newsletter was appreciated, especially since it arrived well in advance of the meeting.

Club Boat and Shore Dives:

Lack of attendance, some proposed boat dives have to be postponed if numbers aren't met. Attendance at shore dives has been very good. Sunday 26th March, Kurnell BBQ day. If the weather looks bad, please phone to confirm that it is still on. Suggested that on bad weather days divers phone to confirm that the dive is still on. Sunday 16th April dive has been cancelled as no boat available for transport. Saturday 22 April Shore Dives/BBQ day meet at Bare Island at 9.00am.

Volunteers required to lead dives as Tom is not always available, Peter Flockart- Peter Forster, Noel Taylor and Duane will help out.

Dive Reports:

Tom Byron over the last six months has had a number of dives at Magic Point shark caves where many grey nurse sharks can be encountered last count was about 25 in the two caves. Depths of these caves are about 47 feet deep and the sharks migrate between the two, length of the sharks are between 3 feet to well over 6 feet. They are used to scuba divers and swim very close at times. Peter Flockart shore dived Shiprock and found it to be absolutely filthy. Some members went out to Fish Reef where visibility was about 12 metres and lots of fish. Bernie left his twin cylinders in his car during one hot day and a burst disk blew on one of the tanks, unbeknownst to him, until he went for a dive and his buddy tried to buddy breath of the empty cylinder. Paul Reyntjes dived Shiprock very ordinary dive. Glen Percy went to Guam, Palau and Truk what a lucky fellow particularly when the trip was free. John Beddie dived the *Undola* and had 30 metres visibility, he also dived the *Myola* wreck. Ben Rudd had a couple of rotten dives in Botany Bay.

Raffle:

1st Prize: Aqua Sports - 10 Air Fills
 Won by Matthew Reeves
2nd Prize: Max Western - Boat Dive
 Won by Vivien McNeil
3rd Prize: Shiprock Dive - T shirt or air fills
 Won by Ben Rudd

General Business:

As no one has heard of our former secretary who disappeared with numerous club records, a new election was held and Susan Tate was

elected. The previous problem re raffle, now with the gift certificates is over, any unclaimed prizes since November will be honoured. Discussion re investment account, Tom Byron suggested we change to an investment with a higher return for our money. Currently 0.1%. Still only needs to be invested on a short term period as a majority will be used for the A.V night, then returned later. Tom will bring more details to the next meeting. Alan Stewart St John Ambulance is out of action for 10 weeks. Club members wishing to attend Divers First Aid Courses when available please contact Noel Taylor. Tom requires more input for newsletter from members, anything will do! Newsletter is costing \$110.00 per month, re postage, paper, envelopes and printing. Subscription do not cover the cost. Suggestions to raise subscription cost or cut down on postage costs by handing the newsletters out at meetings then mail the rest. Duane suggested e-mail but Tom feels it needs to be hands on—i.e. Paper copy. Main problem with not getting the newsletter in advance is that guest speakers will not be known until the meeting night. Suggestion to increase the membership fee after June this year. Question raised re Whitey and the South Pacific Divers Club Web Site. Apparently Whitey did not find an appropriate carrier. Grey advised Neil Milier. Dive Oz Dive Site is happy to do South Pacific Divers Web Site. The e-mail address would be through his, but he has many links. Noel Taylor suggested he attend our next meeting to discuss same and get him to tell us. "What he can do for the club". A committee member suggested, "it was not needed". But others said the web is a good source of information, a modern way to go, use it as it is there and cheap. **Samantha thanked everyone as it was the first meeting she had been too that didn't end in a massive row. (Samantha there has been no rows since the disruptive group left the club.) (Editor).** Meeting closed at 9.50pm. Mini Club photo comp was won by Matthew Reeves. Grey McNeil put on a great slide show, Thank you Grey.

NITROX AT JERVIS BAY

Pro Dive at Jervis Bay has now become a Nitrox Facility. The dive shop has tanks for hire at a cost of \$20.00 per day filled with nitrox, \$15.00 a day for tanks (your own) filled whilst you wait or \$12.00 per day if you leave your tank overnight to be filled with nitrox.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Bernie Kraul
 96069731 H 97924333 W
 Mobile: 0413500715

Treasurer: Lin La
 93180142 H
 Mobile: 0418648265

Secretary: Susan Tate
 96813287

Photographic Officer: Glen Percy
Equipment Officer: Glen Percy
 97082826 W
 Mobile: 0414275179
aquasports@compuserve.com

Dive Organiser: Tom Byron
Newsletter Editor: Tom Byron
 97745965 H
 Mobile: 0410596501
byronscubaguide@telstra.easymail.com.au

CLUB SPONSORS

Please support our sponsors.

Max Western (Sea Tamer 1)
 Dive Charter Boat. Port Hacking.
 Phone: Max 95241818 or 0418280791

Southern Comfort Dive Charters.
 Sydney Harbour.
 Phone: Bill 0413360600 or Julie 0411540885.

Aqua Sports Dive Services
 Glen Percy 97082826

Shiprock Dive
 Leo or Lesley 95262664

CLUB GEAR

All club diving equipment is permanently held by the Equipment Officer Glen Percy, you can contact him at 97082826.

All dive gear is present and accounted for.

Members wishing to avail themselves of any piece of equipment should give one week's notice before hiring is required.

Club meetings are held at 8 pm on the third Monday of each month at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Parade, Bankstown. Please ask attendant at entrance door for room number and location.