

SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS CLUB

Established 1960

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JULY
JUNE 2000

CLUB DIVES

WEEKENDS
AWAY

SOCIAL
OUTINGS

WRECK
DIVING

REEF DIVING

BOAT DIVING

SHORE
DIVING
AND BBQ

NIGHT DIVING



WET RAG

CONTENT:

Editorial..... 2
Presidents Message..... 2
Photographic Officer Report..... 2
Club Dives..... 3
Minutes of Last Meeting..... 5
Club Sponsors..... 6
Committee Members.....6
Shipwreck Stories.....5
Dive News.....5
A Slice of History.....2
Club Dive Gear..... 6
About South Pacific Divers Club.....4



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EDITORIAL

Well winter is here with a vengeance and not much diving is being done by club members, I suppose I cannot blame them for this. Although believe it or not winter is the best time for scuba diving. There are not so many people and boats around a launching ramp. The water is clear and most times the

surface is flat when westerly winds are blowing. There are less people on a dive charter boat. And if you have a dry suit its nice and warm, I cannot say the same for a wet suit!

For forty years I have dived winter and summer in a wet suit but recently I purchased a dry suit after the first dive I burnt my old wet suit, no more cold winter days between dives or freezing to death when changing out of a dripping wet suit. I am now warm, and dry whilst underwater, and, between dives. So the way to go is buy yourself a dry suit and enjoy diving all year round.

The club is now planning activities through the winter months other than scuba diving, more along the lines of social outings that are family orientated.

The first of these activities is a Skirmish Day to be held on the second Sunday in August.

At the next committee meeting more of these activities will be planned, This I think it is a step in the right Direction!

This month South Pacific Divers will hold its Annual General Meeting for election of a new committee to run the club for the next twelve months.

This meeting is important for all members to attend, because the club needs the right people to guide it through 2000-2001. The entire committee will stand down and new elections will take place so you can vote for the person or persons you think will be best suited for the positions vacant.

Editor

Tom Byron

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As the committee is to conclude its term in office at the end of this month it would be appreciated if all club members attend the July AGM to elect a new committee for the next twelve months (2000-2001).

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to all members for their support over the last twelve months. At times it has been a little difficult, but at other times it's been a real joy to be part of the South Pacific Divers Club. Committee.

I should also like to thank you all for being tolerant of my spoken English, although I have been in this country for a number of years it is still difficult at times to pronounce some words and to fully express my ideas to members. Next month we have a Skirmish Day coming up and more than twenty members attending, so I would like to see more members participate. Please contact me if you wish to take part in this event. There is also a family day diving and BBQ at Kurnell on the 23 of this month, "so please be there".

Bernie Kraul

A SLICE OF HISTORY OFFICIAL BEGINNING OF SPEARFISHING IN AUSTRALIA.

1948

Dick Charles and a committee of pioneer divers founded the Underwater Spear Fishermen's Association of New South Wales on Sunday, April 4, 1948. The first meeting was held at Long Reef Beach on a cold and wet Sunday.

It's considered that April, 4 is the official beginning of amateur underwater activities in Australia. First spear fishing and then scuba diving and other related sports followed in later years.

1949

A few girls started to emerge as skindivers and later as scuba equipment became available they started scuba diving. In those days it was a rare and unusual sight to see women scuba diving.

PHOTOGRAPHIC OFFICERS REPORT

At the time of writing we have 32 entries for the competition, with a couple of days to go. A Number of people I have spoken to are still to get their entries in, so the number should top the 40 mark. A number of previous winners have entered the masters section and I will have a better idea of the final number by the next meeting. The judging will be in early July and we will then be looking at starting the advance ticket sales by the end of the month. As seating numbers are reduced this year and you are looking at getting a group Together, book early!
See you at the next meeting.

Glen Percy

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 17-7-2000

**Third Monday in July.
Starting at 8 pm sharp.
Elections for new club
committee.**

NEW OCEAN PARKS

A haven in the ocean thick with sea snakes and a well-known tourist destination are among two new marine national parks to be announced by Environment Minister Robert Hill.

The first is off Western Australia's Kimberley coast and contains a reef writhing with sea snakes. The Cartier Island marine reserve also contains crucial habitats for turtle, dugong and a number of seabirds. The second park surrounds the tourist destination of Lord Howe Island. Adjoining the New South Wales Marine Park, the Lord Howe Island Marine Park gives extended protection to the World Heritage and National Estate values of the Lord Howe Island marine environment", senator Hill said.

JULY 2000

	Day	Location	Contact Person	Meet
8/9	Sat /Sun	Foster (Limit 8 divers)	Tom Byron 97745965	Foster
6	Sunday	Wrecks of <i>Valiant</i> and <i>Birchgrove Park</i> /2 separate	Noel Taylor 0414592410	Barrenjoey 9.00am
23	Sunday	Kurnell Family Day/BBQ	Duane Langley 0414777778	Kurnell 9.30am
30	Sunday	Coolooli Wreck	Peter Foster 95642654	Rose Bay Wharf

AUGUST 2000

13	Sunday	Skirmish Day	Bernie or Glen	Bernie 96069731 Glen 97082826

SEPTEMBER 2000

To be decided by the new Dive Organiser

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 0414592410
Duane Langley at 0414777778

DIVE NEWS

Whale Slaughter Continues

The Japanese who want to re-open whale sanctuaries in the Southern and Indian oceans, are seeking Australian support by paying a Melbourne public relations firm to put a "nice spin" on the killing of these magical and mysterious creatures.

The acceptance of this contract by Shandwick International surly gives new meaning to the phrase "blood money".

Shiprock And All Those Divers. "For Heaven Sake"

Some years ago during a diving course, one task was to provide a detailed map of an underwater terrain of our own choosing. I chose Shiprock, hence after this mapping exercise had been completed I was completely "Shiprocked out".

Well our scheduled club dive for this spot came up on a Sunday sometime after the mapping exercise. Peter Flockart was obliged to pull out due to having a cold and Peter Foster I believe went out in sympathy. Nevertheless I had Sue on my butt and was unable to find an acceptable excuse that would appease her desire to go diving so, Shiprock was the venue. Upon arrival we found Loi and Hau waiting for all the keen SPD divers to turn up and had been there since 9 o'clock, we didn't get there until ten. Suddenly there became an urgency to get in the water as there were some thirty odd divers all gathering for the big splash at high tide. There were oldies, way older than myself, an advanced school. There were people in dry suits, wet suits and birthday suits.

When I slid into the water and went over the wall, I realized why. This dive has gone spectacular. I remembered this as a good dive for Sydney waters, but what I saw this Sunday was far and away superior to anything I remembered. The growth is like a well kept garden in bloom and the fish life is varied and prolific. From scorpion fish to hermit crabs to a whole wall of spectacular growth of every species both fixed and free swimming. I am not actually one for this stuff, give me a hunk of man made junk (shipwreck) any day, but this was really a great dive.

Text by Duane Langley

The Story of Neville G Nome

Don't Blame Me For The Following. I sometimes wonder about some people in South Pacific Divers Club. ED

While diving at Fly Point Nelson Bay recently I heard a mournful cry from a lost soul that had obviously been abducted from some poor old ladies garden and condemned to live his life in the dark depths of Port Stephens. Upon closer inspection I found a little sign attached to him which said:

"Hi, my name is Neville,
you can see my brother Nigel in the
Double Decker caves
at the Docks, Jervis Bay."

I thought to myself this warrants a bit more investigation so I turned back to talk to Neville (as you do when your narked) but to my horror a giant octopus was trying to rip his pet duck Doris out of his arms! I managed to get the octopus off Nev by enticing it away with a chocolate fish, which I was saving for after dive mints, but Neville's safety was far more important at this time. The smile and colour soon returned to his happy little face and he told me that Nigel was his twin brother and they were originally cobblestones in the 1890's but had since been recycled. As Neville related his life story to me a large menacing shadow passed over us. I turned to look and saw a set of teeth that Colgate would be proud to put in a toothpaste add. Yes it was him, that terror of the deep, **Mr. Death, Big Bitey, Jerry Jaws Himself a Great White!!** The bloody thing headed straight for Nev's beanie! There was sand and teeth and nudibranchs flying everywhere, Nev was going crazy crying out "Not my beanie, not my beanie." I was fair wetting my self when out of the sponges shot the ugliest fish I had ever seen! It was Nev's best mate Angelo Angler Fish riding Sammy Seahorse and Eddy Eel! Jerry Jaws took one look at the two ugly's and took off like a startled squid. "You big girls blouse, you wimp!" I bravely yelled as he disappeared quicker than Christopher Skase on his way to Majorca.

When things settled down a bit Neville told me that the beanie had been a present from the old lady before she had given him and Nigel to a diver to find them a new home as she couldn't afford to feed them any longer because of the "Recession we had to have." So I bade farewell to Nev, Angelo, Sammy and Eddy, promising to call in and see Nigel at Jervis Bay as they were separated 3 years ago when Nigel thought he would head north for a holiday but like most Dive Masters he was useless at navigation!

The moral for S.A.F.E. diving is:
SHARKS SURE SCARE SCUBA DIVERS.
AVOID DIVING WITH ANYONE CALLED NEVILLE OR NIGEL,
ESPECIALLY IF THEY HAVE A PET DUCK.
FEED CHOCOLATE FISH TO GIANT OCTOPUS IN TIMES OF DANGER!
ENCOURAGE VERY VERY UGLY PEOPLE TO BE YOUR DIVE BUDDYS.

Text by Narco Gray McNeil

Well what can I say after reading the exciting true adventures of Neville. G. Nome. Are there any others riveting stories out there like this one, ED.

MINUTES OF LAST

MEETING: 19th June 2000
SOUTH PACIFIC DIVERS - MEETING MINUTES

Apologies: Glen, Mitch, Lin, Peter Foster.
Commenced: 8 o'clock.

Incoming Correspondence: Bank statement and letter, -GST start up letters, -URG member contact list, -One Tell bills, -Membership fee, -UTS Union newsletter, -Simply Promotion letter re advertising key rings.

Dive Organiser : Members were asked to commit to at least one club dive per month.

SPD's AGM Meeting: is next meeting 17th July.

No Photographic Report: A few entries for the AV night have come in via mail.

Presidents Message: SPD are once again in possession of the Secretary's Records. Thank you to those concerned.

Social Day: Skirmish Day 13th August if interested call Glen at Aqua Sports 9708 2826 or Bernie on 96069731. BBQ Day 8th May, Bernie was there almost by himself, Where was everyone???

Dive Reports: Nick, Magic Point. 12.00pm dive, viz bad, lots of boats and divers everywhere.

6 Grey nurse sharks in one cave. Big grey nurses come and check him out. Was a good dive really.

Lake Jindabyne Dive: Dry suit imperative, viz extremely bad. 4 dives total. 2 dive didn't see anything. Saw 2 different houses. Fences, swam into a tree and got stuck, 18-20 metres deep. At 20 metres it was quite dark, the water being a different colour. Good experience. Peter and Loi found a new dive site by accident whilst looking for Magic point. They were further to the east and had a better dive, more fish life. Next time we waited 1 hour for Loi to turn up with his boat to dive Magic Point. 10 to 15 sharks good dive. John Beddie dived the *Myola*. At 30 metres you could see the surface. Bernie, *Ocean Trek* long weekend 14 degree water temp. One bay dive for 1 hour froze Bernie with blue toes thawed in the hot shower onboard. Viz better than expected 15 metres. Small nudi's, juvenile fish, octopus, rays, southern fiddlers, shovelnose ray, port jackson sharks all young. Neil Vincent: End of May in the Solomon Islands. Got out before the trouble started. Dived a number of sites that he had dived 20 years ago. Has not changed too much. Dives Gizo and Mundo. Local living in huts charges 10 Solomon dollars. Cave in a lagoon long sloping entrance into a huge cave, wound its way to the left. Dived using a line. Did 4 more dives and mapped it the cave. Formations 140 feet to bottom at 200 feet the cave was full of straws stalactites. Unlimited viz as far as your light would show, Great diving holiday very different. Wreck of *Kussie Maru* very silted still a great dive, 90 minutes on each dive. *Galava* Terrigal 165 feet deep, no sharks sighted. Peter Flockart dived the *Tuggerah* max 6-8 metres visibility. Big wobbly in hull. Strong current. Not a bad dive. Passed Nitrox Course congratulations. Heinz dived the tugs at Eden. 18 metres visibility 16 degree water temperature. 5 degree wind chill factor. Brian Coldwell visited the USA on a family holiday incorporated diving at Jenny's Springs, felt like he'd been there before from all the photographs that he'd seen of the place. Hawaii not impressed interesting but ordinary. Expensive \$160.00 for 2 dives. Glen went to Nelson Bay. Sue dived Shiprock, cold and merky lost Tony in the merk.

General Business

Tony spoke out re dives being organised and not much attendance said one reason was that it's getting too cold suggested other things we could do possibly other activities outside diving to encourage other members to participate. Martin said historically the club used to do 4WD driving, caving, bizarre things like wine bottling nights (more was drunk than bottled), wine tasting activities that wives, friends and family could join in. Don't have to be huge events could also carry on into summer. Good point Tom said we will look into it. Skirmish day 13th August 20 people booked so far. Book in through Glen Percy 9708 2826. Next - BBQ Dive Day 23d July, please attend. John Beddie asked regarding the Magnetometer insurance asked what is happening with it? One quote was \$1,050.00, another was \$800.00 GIO all risks policy was the best (existing premium) Problem reinsuring is that it's not being used, therefore not generating an income. John last used possibly 12 months ago, weather has been the biggest problem. If the club decides to sell it Martin might have a buyer a professional salvage diver. John will probably be using it in July, weather permitting. Duane suggested user pays bond general response was no. Suggested the video be shown of how it works at a meeting. Low risk at the moment will bring it up again at a later meeting. Neil Vincent is in the market for a Nikonos 20mm. lens. Membership fee's need to be raised. Newsletter is costing \$96.50 per month. \$65.00 for printing and \$31.50 for postage. Costing \$16.62 per member, annually. Newsletter costs more than membership fee's. Martin suggested that it should have been put up years ago. Suggested raising fees to \$30.00 single and \$40.00 family (one newsletter). Terrigal Dive's membership is \$100.00 per year. Suggested members joining after 1st July the new fee's apply. Motion by Martin, seconded by Duane. Voted and carried unanimously. Only other suggestion was to find a sponsor for the newsletter suggested a printing firm be approached. Martin will see someone he knows at Torch Publishing. Nick queried using private boats for dives with a fee going to the

club for revenue raising. Moneys to be paid at the end of the dive, not beginning?? \$62.25 raised with thanks.

SUGGESTIONS RE CLUB OUTINGS OTHER THAN DIVING

prefer Sundays. Rifle range, movies, ice skating, roller skating, Jenolan Caves, go karting, bush dance Gledswood Winery/ Woolshed, Country Pub overnight stay, Bowling moonlight disco/ wonderbowl/ glow in the dark bowling, golf day, putt putt, white water rafting, indoor rock climbing, caving, helicopter joy flight Bankstown airport \$20.00, 4wheel driving, camping, roller blading, motor cycle riding, archery day, boxing, jelly wrestling, lawn bowls, croquet, bingo, boys night out and girls night out. Just to name a few!

Raffle:

1st prize

Max Weston: Sea Tamer II Boat dive
Tom Byron.

2nd prize.

Aqua Sports: Dive Slate Kit
Bernie Kraul.

3rd prize

Shiprock Dive: 2 air fills of T Shirt
Peter Lord.

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
tombyron@telstra.easymail.com.au

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.



For the benefit of club members, a series of article about shipwrecks in Australian waters will appear on this page over the next six months.

DISCOVERY OF THE DUTCH SHIP *BATAVIA*

Reproduced from the book
HISTORY OF SPEARFISHING AND SCUBA DIVING IN AUSTRALIA

First 80 years 1917 to 1997

SHIPWRECKS IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS

Continued from last month

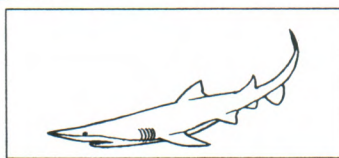
The day progressed with some excitement. They dug up the rest of the skeleton to find it still had a leather purse and in the hip pocket were two copper coins. They were fascinated that the person had been murdered but money had not been taken.

The man who owned the cloths line came home and asked what they were doing. Max explained to him that it was possible that this area was *Batavia's* Grave Yard. He also mentioned that the next morning they were going to the outer edge of the reef looking for any signs of wreckage.

This reef was attached to the island where they camped and was another requirement in finding the *Batavia*. The ship's log said that the villain Jeronimus Cornelisz fell off the boat and was able to walk ashore, so they needed an area of coral reef that adjoined the island.

Another fisherman living nearby, unbeknownst to Max Cramer, had found anchors and bronze cannons in a hole at the back of Morning Reef three years ago.

This man came to their camp site and asked them what they would do if they discovered the *Batavia*. Max told him they were looking for it on the reef next morning. The fisherman then knew very well that they would not need a lot of luck to find the wreck. He would then not be in the position to



say he had found it first, and would not gain much by saying he knew it was there all the time.

They told him they were keen to build a museum in Geraldton because that other expeditions shipped all findings back to Perth and placed them in a warehouse where they were lost to the public.

It was well-known that whoever found the *Batavia* would probably find the treasure.

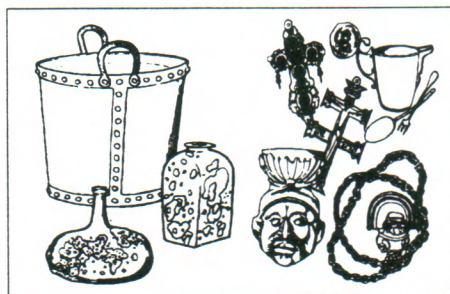
The crayfisherman came back to their campsite after tea and said:

"What would you say if I told you that I have already found the *Batavia*."

Max Cramer had heard whispers that there was a person on the island who found some cannons which were huge and had handles and were green with bronze erosion. Max, Graham and Greg could hardly believe what they were hearing. The fisherman said the cannons were in a trough or hole outside Morning Reef, and he had found them years ago.

After some discussion about the wreck, Max suggested it should remain in Geraldton. The fisherman then said, he would transport them to the site in the morning.

The next day they were taken to one of two small coral inlets on the reef. The fisherman told them he was not sure which inlet the wreck was



situated in and as the boat swirled around to head off to the second inlet Max caught a glimpse of a large square block that appeared to be man made.

Slipping on his flippers and mask he slid over the side and there in clear water right before his very eyes lay the shipwreck of *Batavia*.

Six or more beautiful bronze cannons with ornate handles lay on the side of the reef where they had tumbled off the deck of *Batavia* as she sank beneath the sea over three hundred years ago. The square stones Max had first seen were no ordinary stones; they were the facades of a building being taken to Jakarta for the Dutch East India Company.

Ten days after the discovery of *Batavia* the first cannon was winched out of the water. A knob at the rear of the gun was then detached. A wire was inserted and withdrew some material that looked like powder. Dried in the sun and set alight, it burned with the smell of sulphur after three hundred and thirty four years to the day. Max Cramer said at the time he was reluctant to tell the story, but he spoke to the ABC, and in a short time, it was world headlines.

DISCOVERY OF AN UNKNOWN AEROPLANE WRECK

First report

By Duane Langley and Tom Byron

Recently there had been rumors floating around of a wreck as yet unknown in origin, found in the local waters off Sydney's Bondi Beach. The discoverer of the wreck, (a well known fishing and diving identity) was almost silent about his discovery.

It was of course just a matter of time before two other keen divers decided to spend a little of their spare time searching for this so called wreck.

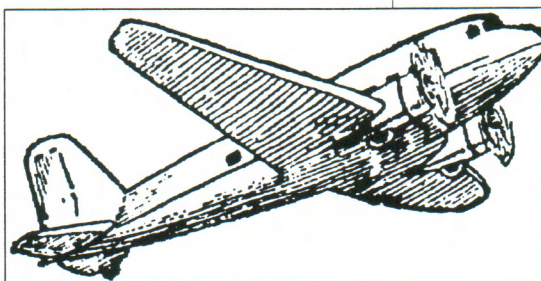
After the discovery was known to a few it was important to keep it a secret as long as possible as to the wrecks' identification and the appropriate authorities notified.

At that time the wreck was believed to be in waters not far from the mainland. If a dive boat was spotted a number of times in the one location then it was feared that other dive boats before long would converge on the location. So the discoverers worked out a plan not to anchor over this new wreck site, but to dropped anchor no less than in three other locations prior to actually anchoring over the wreck and it is only the keen desire to check out this story that kept us from giving up the chase as a bad joke.

The only reason that we were able to follow the vessel is that one of the divers has a relative living in premises that actually over looks the new wreck site and we were able to watch the boat. He would ring one of us and advise us the divers were leaving, or had left, then we would proceed to the site. For a number of weeks we looked for the wreck but could not find it, until we built out of timber a type of cross bow that at a particular angle would

line up with a sight built at the rear of the cross bow, something like a cross between a rifle and a bow and arrow mounted on a table in his lounge room.

The next time the boat appeared at the wreck site a fix was taken and noted for future reference. One of



us would stay in the flat and line up the two sights whilst guiding the other via two way radio to the then unknown wreck site. As we ran over the site with a depth sounder faint markings rose over the wreckage and large schools of fish. The wreck is in 34 metres of water.

Whilst anchored above the site three prominent land marks obtained along with GPS bearings. It actually took three weeks of searching before we located the wreck using our land marks Bingo! There she was right under us. No wonder this site had been kept a secret from not only the general diving community, but also the authorities. The wreck was not as we both expected it to be, like a collier, but was a sizeable aircraft and from the state of it "old" in aircraft terms. It is, or should I say was, a cargo plane and of course is no longer in a shape that enabled us to readily identify its make. Hence the fuzzy reading on the sounder. We have at this time not approached the finder about

our knowledge of the planes' wreckage and decided to let the story run via our Wet Rag, without giving away specifics concerning its position, other than to say, it is south east off Bondi Beach. The

reason for not pin pointing the wreck at this stage was a decision taken until we have further explored and positively identified the

aircraft.

What we need to know on further dives is:

- (A) History surrounding the wreck.
- (B) We have to speak to the wrecks finder.
- (C) We are unaware that anything has been found of value, or if in fact there is such things to be found at all.
- (C) We feel that due to the depth, when its position is known, the wreck will perhaps be destroyed in a short time by the many divers that will descend upon it.
- (D) We intend to photograph it both with still and video cameras for the news media.
- (D) We believe that it is the finders right, because he is a friend of ours, to divulge the wrecks position, but that it was our duty to apply a little pressure.