



Established 1962

# WET RAG

[www.southpacificdivers.com](http://www.southpacificdivers.com)

October | 07

## Special Feature Issue Diving Nelson Bay

### Also in this Issue:

- Learning to Dive
- Wreck Diving
- Catterthun - Macleay
- Central Coast Diving
- Oceanic Data Mask
- And much more....

[www.southpacificdivers.com](http://www.southpacificdivers.com)

WET RAG October | 07



# Club President's Report



Welcome to the October edition of the Wet Rag. Now that the festivities from our 45th Anniversary are over, the focus is on diving again. Speaking of diving, it's interesting how diving is in the process of change. We now have seven Rebreather divers in the club, with more than this many again likely to start within the next twelve months.

There does however seem to be a rush in trying to advance too quickly, as hinted by a number of new members rushing to move deeper than the best Advanced Open Water (AOW) sites in NSW. A few new divers have joined the club lately, with less than 18 months experience and need to discover places like The Solitary Islands, Fish Rock Cave, Nelson Bay, Jervis Bay etc. before progressing deeper. Hence the Nelson Bay feature, to provide inspiration regarding a region with a great variety of sites that most of our new divers have not visited.

We've also got a significant proportion of experienced divers (with more than 1000 dives each), interested in deep wrecks of the Catterthun and Macleay, in the same vicinity - a few hours drive of Sydney so more diving is expected up north.

The trick is going to be balancing the needs of experienced and newer divers. Being a non-profit club, members are expected to be self organising - meaning a change in culture where newer divers have to help out in organising night and shore dives, rather than relying on a paid member of the commercial dive industry to do this for them.

The other thing is that the committee is made up by volunteers, who also need to have fun. Joining the committee shouldn't be a chore, as the club needs to be made up of an extended group of people who help out. We haven't got room for high maintenance personalities, as our mantra is fun and adventure, not drama and headaches. Moving on, as each month passes, our bond with founding members continues to strengthen. It's great that some of the pioneers are regularly attending meetings again. Most of these people are living

legends and we have a lot to learn from them.

One of the main priorities at this point in time is grass roots activities such as diving and socialising. Since the rebirth of the club, members seem to be more active, which is important in the modern age of the internet, where some people spend too much time in front of computers talking about diving - instead of actually taking the plunge.

In the early days of the club, members were expected to be involved in activities at least twice a month, which is still a reasonable goal.

See you at the boat ramp,

John Fardoulis

President - South Pacific Divers Club

john (@) southpacificdivers.com

## Editors Report

Well what a great start to summer we have had. The weather had been excellent for diving with Westerly winds making the sea flat. Good weather has meant plenty of opportunities for diving and in this issue we have a number of dive reports from club members. It's great to see such a diverse range of dives being undertaken by our club.

Get online and get onto our new club forum (sorry members only) and you will really see the depth of diving within the club. From open water rock hops to deep trimix dives and all sorts in between. Trips away and local charters, you name it and our members are into it. Just get online and check the dive calendar to get

involved. If you're not a financial member you can still join us on a dive, simply contact one of the dive organisers listed at the back of the WetRag for more info.

Finally a big thank-you to Ange Jeffery for all her help as assistant editor over the past few months. Ange has decided to move on to greener pastures. Best wishes and see you in the water some time Ange. Her assistance will be sadly missed but...that means there is now a vacancy for an assistant editor. Please contact me if interested.

Keep your dive reports coming. Let's make this summer one of the biggest yet for diving the club has ever seen.

See you in the water sometime soon,  
Scott Leimroth

The WET RAG is published by South Pacific Divers Club Inc.  
Editorial content can be sent to scott (@) southpacificdivers.com  
Deadline for each edition is the 5th of the Month.

# September Club Meeting



The September club meeting was an informal social meeting with 21 people attending. It was a pleasure to see Peter and Joan Harper there and Dave Chillari brought his Revo rebreather along for us all to examine up close.

All 21 people in attendance gave a dive report which really shows how active the club has become. Geoff told us about his experiences on the first weekend of his Inspiration rebreather course and he's really looking forward to finishing the course and building up some hours on his new toy.

A number of people purchased club shirts on the night and renewed their membership. These shirts are almost sold out now so if you would like one please contact john(@)southpacificdivers.com to see what sizes are left. Everyone had a good look at Dave's Revo and Peter Harper was able to tell us about some of the early oxygen rebreathers that had been used in the past. The October meeting will feature Dave Harasti as our special guest speaker. Dave will be presenting on seahorses and diving around Nelson Bay. The October meeting will be in the Hume Room.



Above: L - R Nathan Trebus, Rob Doust, Wayne Phillips, Jason Farlow, Dave Chillari, Peter Harper, Geoff Cook and Andy Del all stayed long after the meeting had ended to talk rebreathers and diving.

Below: Joan Harper and Geoff Cook get online to look at the new club forum.



## CLUB NEWS



**LOUISE STEELE**  
*NEW Single Membership*

Welcome and congratulations to our newest member and diver Louise Steele for completing her OW certification over the October Long weekend.

Congratulations also to club member Mitchell Cook who also recently completed his OW certification.

We look forward to seeing both new divers in the water soon.

SPDC Discussion forum is up and running. Over half our SouthPac members have signed up and logged in. The forum is open to financial members only and provides information on club trips, shore and boat dives, discounts as well as being a place to drop in and chat about diving. If you haven't done so all ready, head to [www.southpacificdivers.com](http://www.southpacificdivers.com) and select Discussion Forum to sign up.

Congratulations to Ange for completing her Deep Diving certification.

## SPDC ROCKS!

Indoor Rock Climbing: A number of SPDC have started regular indoor rock climbing on Thursday nights at St Peters. All experience levels are welcomed to join the intrepid dare-devils. Contact Dave Chillari at [davidchillari \(@\) yahoo.com.au](mailto:davidchillari@yahoo.com.au) for further information.

# October Club Meeting

Featuring Special Guest Speaker Dave Harasti  
Presenting on Seahorses and Nelson Bay Diving

**When: 8pm Monday 15th October 2007**

**Where: Bankstown Sports Club,  
Greenfield Parade, Bankstown.**

**FREE ENTRY - Visitors Welcome**

**Important Note:**

**This Months Meeting is in the Hume Room.  
Members usually meet in the bistro for  
dinner around 7pm**

# CREATURE FEATURE

## Striped Catfish *Plotosus lineatus*

The Striped Catfish is easily identified by pale stripes on black colouration, eight barbells protruding from around the mouth and a body that tapers towards the tail. Growing to a length of 35cm, the juveniles are more distinctly darker than adults as the black markings turn to a reddish brown colour towards maturity.

Spines are located on the dorsal and pectoral fins that are capable of inflicting painful stings. Distribution of the Striped Catfish is primarily along northern east coast of Australia as far south as Sydney and the northern West Australian coast south to Esperance preferring estuaries and bay.

While adults prefer caves, crevices and generally leading a more nocturnal life in caves and crevices, juveniles can be seen active during the day schooling in dense protective balls feeding on algae and invertebrates. As an adult this catfish is also known to take small fish.

Distribution: North, west and east coast of Australia.

Habitat: Coastal waters, estuaries and rocky reefs.

Status: Common

Size: Up to 35 cm

Diver with ball of Catfish.



Striped catfish are bottom feeders.



Catfish get their name because of their whiskers.



Image © G. McNeil

Resources:

[www.amonline.net.au](http://www.amonline.net.au)

[www.harbourkeepers.org.au](http://www.harbourkeepers.org.au)

Striped catfish are seen in large schools.



Image © G. McNeil

# NOKIA



## Nokia 6110 Navigator

The new Nokia 6110 Navigator phone has in-built GPS. It also comes fully loaded with Australian maps and has voice-guided turn-by-turn navigation to get you to your destination with ease. Whether you're travelling on foot or by car<sup>\*</sup>, find your way there with the Nokia 6110 Navigator.

[nokia.com.au/6110](http://nokia.com.au/6110)

© 2007 Nokia. Simulated screen image.  
\*Always obey the law. You must not operate handset with hands while driving.



# ***ATTENTION BOAT OWNERS!!!***

## ***LOOKING FOR CREW?***

### ***WE CAN HELP!***



The club is now at a point where we have a large pool of active divers,  
ready to assist as crew on most weekends.  
Many hands make light work.

#### ***Fellow club members can help!***

- Launch and retrieve your boat
- Pull up the anchor
- Provide experience in diving new sites
- Mateship
- Compare notes with other boat owners
- Trips away



Above: Just some of our club boats.

Whether you haven't been taking your boat out due to lacking crew or need experienced boat handlers to help you get more out of your diving.

**WE CAN HELP!**

Contact [john@southpacificdivers.com](mailto:john@southpacificdivers.com) if you're a boat owner wanting to find out more!

## Feature Section

# Diving Nelson Bay

Nelson Bay is home to some of the best diving in all of Australia. The shore diving at the Halifax Park Aquatic Reserve contains some of the best sponge gardens on the east coast of Australia. Some of Australia's best wreck dives are within reach by boat and there is some spectacular diving around Broughton Island. Nelson Bay is an often overlooked divers paradise only a few hours drive from Sydney. If you're looking to extend your diving experiences or seeking some fantastic adventure diving destination that includes beautiful surrounding, amenities accommodation and activities, then you need look no further than Nelson Bay.

## Shore Dives:

by Dave Harasti

### Halifax Park

**WARNING!** This dive must be done on a SLACK tide as the currents here are VERY STRONG! It is always recommended to dive here on the high slack tide as it produces the best visibility. It can also be dived on the low slack tide but the visibility is generally very poor. Another safety point, if you need to head for the surface for some reason, please make sure you swim in close to the shore as boats frequently cruise above this divesite. If you surface from deep water there is a very good chance you could become struck by a boat. If you must surface try and head into shore before hand!

Halifax is a great dive site and offers plenty for all levels of divers. It is also a site that produces an excellent night dive. The entry point is at the end of dirt carpark through a little channel that has been cleared of rocks by local

divers. It is recommended that you use this channel to enter and exit the site as it can get a little difficult if there is any swell slopping into the site. Once you have entered the water it is recommended that you snorkel out about 10 metres and descend into about 5-8 metres of water. If you swim due north you will come across a little pyramid of rocks - this was created by divers and is used as a reference point. It is also a popular spot for Open Water courses to conduct their skill sessions.

If you swim north from the pyramid you will come to a wall that slopes from 8 metres down to about 15 metres. This wall is an excellent spot to find nudibranchs as it contains extensive sponge growth. Harlequin ghost pipefish have also been spotted residing in the cracks of this wall. Masses of sponges and soft southern corals are everywhere here. There is prolific fishlife, morays in olive and the mosaic varieties, numb rays at night, nudibranchs, schools of bullseyes and just so much more!

Further down the wall you can find Eastern rock lobsters, blue wrasse, white spotted moray eels, wobbegong sharks, numb rays, eagle rays have all been found here. You need to keep an eye on your dive computer because its not too hard to head into deco if you spend too long looking around at the 25 metre mark. Also, the best fish life is also found down at the bottom with schools of bream, stripeys, bullseyes and drummer being very common.



Above: A Platypus Cowry

Below: Gunter's Butterflyfish



## Fly Point

**WARNING!** This dive must be done on a SLACK tide as the currents here are VERY STRONG! It is always recommended to dive here on the high slack tide as it produces the best visibility. It can also be dived on the low slack tide but the visibility is generally very poor. Fly Point is considered a very easy and safe dive site, hence it is a very popular training ground for Open Water courses and many dive shops come up from Sydney to teach here. It can get very crowded at times with dive courses, especially over summer and the Easter break.

There is good sponge life right along this area. After following these ledges for some time, you can head out into the deeper water where the larger sponge gardens are. Out in the deeper water (17-22 metres) there are prolific sponge gardens, and I mean prolific. Every part of the substrate is covered in sponges and the colours are amazing. There is a very large old deck winch that can be found out in this area in about 20 metres. There are plenty of things to see, nudibranchs in plenty of varieties, large flathead and if you look hard enough you can even find sea horses.

Fly Point is also an excellent night dive, at night the place just comes alive with critters that you didn't even know were present during your day time visits. I actually prefer conducting night dives at this site after a day dive as at night more nudibranchs can be found and the rose bubble shells can be found emerging from the sand.



Above: Fly Point is an excellent shore dive.



Left: A Black-Margined Glossodoris



Above: Nembrotha rutilans is very colourful.

Right: A White's Seahorse

Images by Dave Harasti

## The Pipeline

The pipeline is considered by many to be the best macro dive in NSW. You can find many weird and unusual critters. The pipeline is tide effected so it always best to dive it on the slack high tide. Visibility is not always the greatest here as its further up in the port, on average you would be looking at about 5 metres.

The easiest way to dive this site is to follow the pipeline out to sea in a northerly direction. If you ever lose the pipeline, it's always easy to find your way back to shore or the break wall if you swim on a bearing of 330 degrees.

Along the pipeline you'll find small concrete blocks and lumps of ballast. Each area has its own little ecosystem that is prolific with sponges and soft corals. It is very common to find decorator crabs along the pipeline, other critters you will find are morays eels, eastern rock lobsters, tropical fish during the summer period, many different (and rare) nudibranch species, cuttlefish, blue ring octopus, seahorses, sea pens, pipefish and on and on! There are so many different species to find at the pipeline, it will keep you busy for hours after the dive studying your marine books trying to identify all the critters you saw.

My favourite way to dive the pipeline is swim out about 100 metres and then turn to the right (east) when the pipe is buried in the sand. To the east there is a prolific sponge garden full of giant cauliflower sponges. These sponges are home to decorator crabs, sea horses, pipe fish and nudibranchs. Then slowly make your way back to shore keeping the pipeline on your right as you explore the extensive sponges that are found between the pipeline and the shore. At about 5-8 metres is where I find a lot of the nudibranch species, and sea pens can be found emerging from the sand.



The pipeline is the kind of dive that you can spend an hour or more crawling along the bottom looking for new critters - it is a macro photographer's dream! I always dive here with my 1:3 and 1:2 lenses and can easily shoot a roll of 36. It is also an excellent night dive - one of the best night dive locations that I have come across.



Above: A Red Indian Fish

## Broughton Island Dive Sites

Twenty kilometers north of Port Stephens is beautiful Broughton Island. Diving is diverse, ranging from 40 metre walls to the 15 metre swim through at the Looking Glass, spider cave, bubble cave and the resident grey nurse shark family on the north side of the island.

### Looking Glass 15-18 metres

A narrow channel through the middle of the island. Sheer walls covered with bait fish and small sponges, patrolled by large black rays and grey nurse sharks during the warmer months. A spectacular dive and even more exciting with a little surge.

### Looking Glass Wall 15-40 metres

Sheer walls to a boulder bottom which slopes way down to 40 metres. Several small caves and overhangs feature colourful sponges. Good fish life including the rare ( for the north coast ) blue devil fish. A good alternative when the surge through the Looking Glass is too strong.



Images by Dave Harasti



A fiddler ray, shrimp and colourful nudibranchs.



Just some of the diverse sealife that can be found at Nelson Bay and Broughton Island.



### Shark Gutters 12 Metres

Narrow gutters on North Broughton are home to as many as 25 grey nurse sharks during summer. Mainly females and juveniles they were at first apparently nervous with divers but now appear to be more relaxed with small groups of intruders.

### Spider Cave 12 metres

Small, low cave in shallow water with two narrow entrances. Home to wobbegong and port jackson sharks during breeding season and large wobbegongs later in spring when the travelling crayfish are also encountered.

### Bubble Cave 12 metres

A large entrance funnels up to an air space well below sea level. An interesting non challenging cave dive. Large cod are encountered at the entrance as well as schools of baitfish.

### North Rock 10-22 metres

Kelp covered bommies, sheer walls and extensive sponge gardens to the east. Plenty of fish during summer and the occasional grey nurse. A pleasant alternative when the southerley's are blowing.

### Cod Rock 12-18 metres

An interesting dive for the fossicker, with gutters, crevices and a small cave at the eastern corner. An easy swim except with a south east swell.

## Fingal Island

Only fifteen minutes from Nelson Bay, Fingal Island features pinnacles, drop offs and abundantly colourful sponge gardens. Fish and invertebrate life is extensive, ranging from tiny nudibranchs to schooling baitfish, morwong, friendly grouper and turtles. Fingal also has quiet rocky bays diveable in almost all conditions and haven for breeding Port Jackson sharks in late winter and spring.



Image by Dave Harasti

Grey Nurse can be found in the gutters off Broughton Island

## The Pinnacle

Plunging from five to 35 metres this is best in summer when yellow tail kingfish, cobia and mulloway move in to take advantage of schools of baitfish which come in with the warmer weather.

## Boondelbah Island

Boondelbah offers protected waters with sheer walls, tight swim throughs and caves which provide a haven for bream, drummer and the inevitable blue groper. During summer you will also encounter large schools of mulloway and big snapper.

A colourful sponge garden on the south west corner drops away into deep water. While offshore winds during winter encourage us to dive the sheer walls on the eastern side of the island, Safety Bay on the southern end of the island is a perfect summer training location with total protection from the prevailing northeasterly winds.

## Little Island

The most exposed dive sites in the area with sheer walls on all sides and attractive sponge gardens in the deep gutters to the north and east of the island. Our favourite site if you are into deeper diving. You can encounter anything out there, from cobia, snapper, small whalers and in summer schools of eagle rays. Port Jackson sharks breed close to the island and who knows what lurks out in the deep.



Schools of squid can be found around the islands.

## Cabbage Tree Island

A calm, and safe training location. Shallow rock walls drop off to sand in no more than twelve metres on the south western side making it a comfortable dive for the inexperienced and a safe location for diving when the strong northeasters blow during summer.

## Wrecks

Nelson Bay is a wreck divers paradise. With over half a dozen wrecks accessible in depths ranging from 6 to 60m there is something for everyone.

### Satara

The Steamship Satara sank in 1910 and now lies in 45 metres of water just south of Seal Rocks. The wreck is approximately 125 metres long, 9 metres high and has a beam of about 15 metres. The boilers and the stern are the most interesting parts of the wreck and has an abundance of fish life including species such as snapper and morwongs. It is a deep dive with limited bottom time and is for experienced divers only. It is a long boat trip from Nelson Bay (2 hours) and charters can be arranged through Pro Dive Nelson Bay.

### Oakland

A 154 feet long collier which sank with the loss of eleven lives in a terrible gale in May 1903. The wreck lies in 27 metres of water north of Cabbage Tree Island and is an interesting dive. The wreck offers protection for huge schools of baitfish, bream, leather jacket

### Macleay

A similar vessel, the Macleay sank with the loss of fifteen lives after crashing onto rocks at Little Island in 1911. The Macleay lies in 42 metres off the south east corner of the island. With often limited visibility, it is a more challenging dive than the Oakland. The engine and boiler are in good condition, while the partially collapsed bow offers protection for large mulloway while the rest of the wreck is



Diver on the bow of the Oakland  
Image by Max Gleeson

covered by a large school of morwong.

## Thordis

The Thordis sank in 1906 after being swept onto reef on the southern side of Yaccaba Headland at the entrance to Nelsons Bay. The remains of this large 339ft ship now lie in shallow water with two boilers half buried in sand and a large spare propeller still visible.

Other wrecks in the area include the Pappinbarra, Florence Irving, Wauchope and Catterthun (see article this issue).

## Summary:

Nelsons Bay offers a huge variety of diving suitable for all levels from open water through to technical divers. The majority of dive sites are best suited to advanced open water divers. Diving these sites can help build your experience of different conditions so we'd recommend every diver visit

For more information:

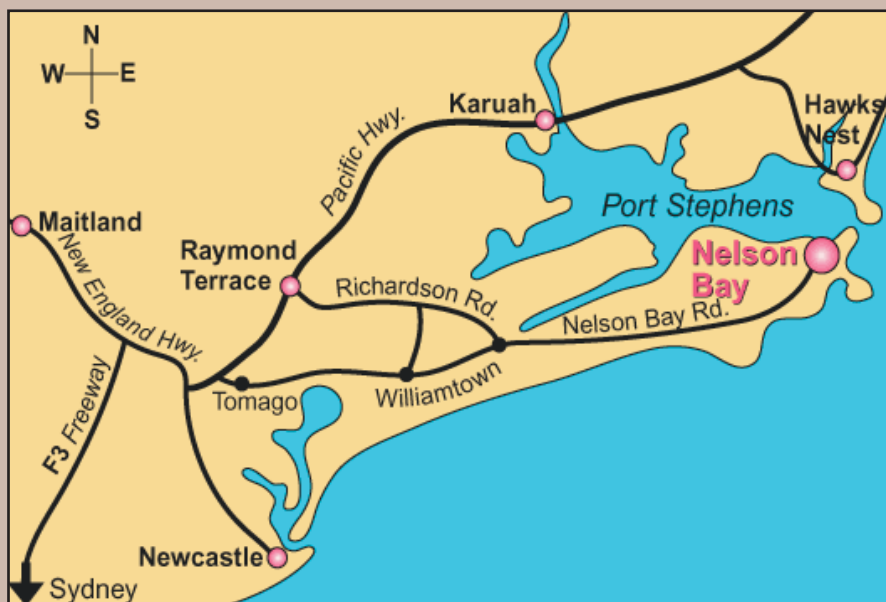
<http://www.portstephens.org.au>

<http://prodivenelsonbay.com>

<http://www.daveharasti.com>

Information in this feature provided by:

Dave Harasti and Pro Dive Nelson Bay.



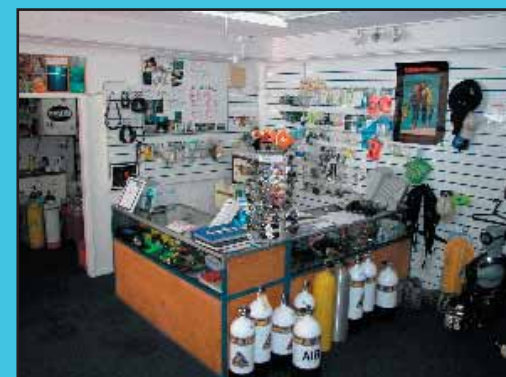
Pro Dive Nelson Bay is a PADI 5 star training facility with more than twenty seven years of diver training and escorted recreational diving both within the Port and the offshore islands to Broughton Island in the north and south to Birubi Point.

Celebrating 23 years of service to the divers of Port Stephens Pro Dive Nelson Bay was established and operated by Chris & Pam Norman in 1981.

Pro Dive Nelsons Bay run all PADI dive courses, from Discover Scuba and PADI Open Water right the way through to Professional PADI Courses.

## 5 star facility offers friendly professional service for the discerning diver including:

- \*7 Days per week Operation.
- \*Car Parking at our Doorstep.
- \*Hot Showers.
- \*Wash Down area at the Shop.
- \*One 11 metre fully surveyed Catermaran Dive Boat.
- \* fully surveyed 7.5 metre aluminium dive Boats.
- \*Dive Boats depart directly from our store.
- \*Full Equipment Service Facility.
- \*Aquanaut and Tusa Sales Centre.



Phone: (02) 4981 4331 | Fax: (02) 4981 4763 |  
[prodiver@hunterlink.net.au](mailto:prodiver@hunterlink.net.au)

# The Macleay

Excerpt taken from Pages 148 - 150 Shipwrecks Storms & Seamen of the New South Wales Coast by Max Gleeson

As the steamer passed abeam of the entrance to Port Stephens only the two men manning the bridge and spare man, William Swanney, were above decks. On the bridge helmsman Charles Petterson stared into the darkness over the Macleay's bow. Then, momentarily, Petterson caught sight of a white surf breaking upon a rugged foreshore. He turned to the chief officer and said: *"I fancy it's breakers ahead."* Goldsmith replied: *"No; it's a school of fish - mullet or something."* Petterson replied: *"Yes; I think you have a school of rocks ahead of you."* He swung the helm hard a port but it was too late, the vessel bumped and grinded its way onto a reef on the south east corner of Boondelbah Island.

Captain Donald immediately rushed up to the bridge and confronted the chief officer: *"What's this you have done? What course have you been steering?"* The chief officer replied: *"I've been steering north - north - east."* *"That's a lie"* came the response from helmsman Petterson, *"the ship has been going north - east for some time."* According to Petterson, the chief officer just stood there in silence. The captain turned on him again, declaring: *"Oh you murderer! What are you standing here for? Why don't you get the boats out?"*

Spare man William Swanney had prior warning to the disaster. Standing by at the forecandle door, he heard shouting coming from the bridge seconds before the vessel struck. There was no need to inform the rest of the crew the situation their vessel was in. Within seconds all members were on deck waiting orders from the captain. One fireman informed the captain the ship was taking water up forward. Donald shouted: *"Come aft all hands"*. Someone shouted back to him, *"We are all aft sir."* *"Get the starboard lifeboat ready and send three men forward to get*

*the trysail in."* shouted the captain. Swanney and able seaman James McKenzie raced forward and brought the sail back to the mast. The sail secured, the men made their way back aft to help with the launching of the lifeboat. Already the foredeck was awash and the ship listing to port.

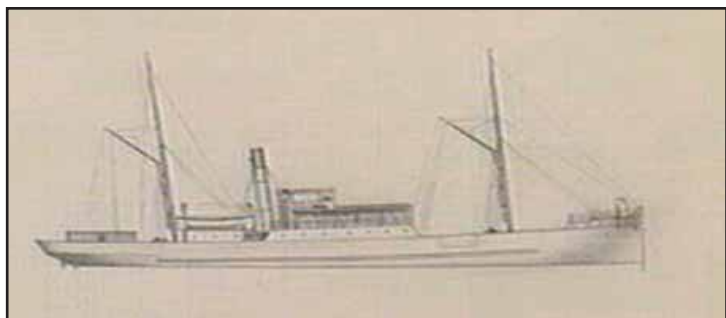
The ship had now slipped off the rocks and her bow swung to the open sea. Realising the vessel was going to founder, one seaman cut the ropes securing the three horses on the deck. All available hands turned their attention to the launching of the starboard lifeboat. The boat was pushed into the lowering position just as the Macleay took a substantial list further to port. The boat swung back to its original position in the davit and, owing to the list, the crew found they could not lower it. The chief engineer ran to the bridge and removed a rocket from the box. He was just preparing to light it when the ship rolled on its beams end spilling the crew and the three horses into the sea.



Left: Diver with the Macleay's Anchor. The wreck lies on reef and sand in 43m just off Little island at Nelson Bay.



Petterson described the next few minutes as absolute pandemonium as man and animal struggled for survival. The vessel went down head first with Petterson stating it looked like: *"if 50 whales were spouting water into the air. The suction drew me down, but when I came to the surface I grabbed a hatch cover and clung on. It kept twisting and turning in the water and every wave broke over me."* He heard the second mate John McLean crying out. Petterson asked him if he was alright, however the former officer of the steam collier Undola uttered a few words then disappeared beneath the surface and was never seen again. Nearby 20 year old steward William Jones had a hold on one of the horses tails. He let go of the drowning animal and swam over to a large piece of wreckage. Less than ten minutes had passed from the time the Macleay struck until she foundered.

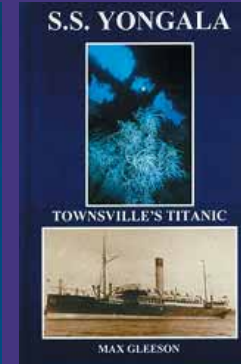
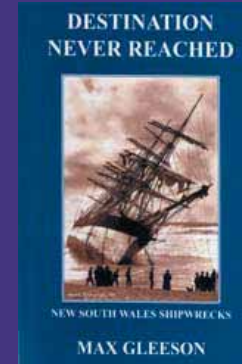
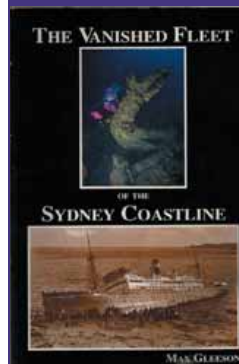


Left: Two drawings of the Macleay. The top drawing shows the ship under steam and below is an earlier pencil rendering.

Port Stephens's offers wreck divers some of the best diving in NSW. The Oakland lies off Cabbage Tree Island and the scattered remains of the Pappinbarra and Florence Irving are to be found near the lighthouse. Perhaps the unluckiest ship lost in the area was the 339ft Thordis which remains lie in shallow water on the northern headland to Port Stephens.

# Shipwrecks of the Australian East Coast

Max Gleeson



Max has combined his passion for Australian maritime history, his love of wreck diving and his award winning photography to produce a three book series on NSW Shipwrecks, and one on Australia's premier wreck dive, the Yongala. Each book provides a rich insight into Australian Maritime history through the use of original historical photos, colour underwater shots of the wrecks as they appear today, detailed accounts of wreck disasters, the events leading up to them and the subsequent courts of marine enquiry.

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only \$27.50 each with free postage.

# Day trip to Nelson Bay

## Diving the wreck of the Macleay

By John Fardoulis



Scott Willan and myself drove up to Nelson Bay on the morning of Sept 28th for a dive on the wreck of the SS Macleay. We put my RIB in at Shoal Bay boat ramp at about 10am, which is less than a kilometre from the heads. The sea was flat, with a bit of wind from the West.

It had been years since Scott had dived it, and I never had - so we spent about 15 minutes sounding the wreck. Land marks for the Macleay wreck are pretty distinct, making it pretty easy to find.

After checking out the site on the sounder we were confident that a buoy about 40m away from our GPS coordinates was secured to the wreck.

The water looked pretty clear from the surface, and good visibility continued all the way to the bottom. The mooring line was secured to the prop shaft, about half way between the boiler and stern.

Due to being my first dive on the wreck, I stayed pretty high above it initially, seeing forward as far as the bow and back past the stern, from about mid way along the wreck. With visibility of around 25-30m it was a great introduction to the wreck

As with most NSW wrecks, it is more like a skeleton, spread out on the bottom rather than something like the Titanic.

Conditions were close to perfect without any current and great visibility. I did get a bit cold though as it was the first dive with my new Trilam drysuit and I only wore pair of tracksuit pants and a thin shirt underneath.

Getting chilly after about 18 mins I headed up, with my trusty old Aladin Pro saying there was about 10 mins deco to do, with the new VR3 saying the same but with deeper stops along the way. The VR3 had stops of 2 minutes at 27 & 15 metres, then the rest at 6m and 3m. The Aladin Pro only prescribed shallow stops but the total deco ended up about the same.

After the dive we got fills at Pro Dive at Nelson Bay and they were really hospitable and helpful, unlike some Sydney dive shops who make you feel an air fill is an inconvenience for them.

It only takes about 2.5 hrs to drive to Nelson Bay, making it possible to dive up and back as a day trip. We'll be heading north on a regular basis over the next few months.



Above: Scott Willan in the RIB on the clear blue waters in Shoal Bay.

# CATTERTHUN

By Neil Vincent



## History

**The Catterthun left Sydney on the 7th August 1895 bound for Darwin and then Hong Kong. Unbeknown to many of the crew and passengers on board, hidden in a special hold below the chartroom floor was ten boxes containing 8915 gold coins. Many of the passengers were Chinese returning home from the gold fields, they were also rumored to be carrying large amounts of gold.**

A southerly gale developed off Nelson Bay, it was described as one of the worst of the season. At 2.30am on the 8th August the ship shuddered heavily, the captain initially dismissed it as the result of a large wave. It soon became apparent that it was not a wave, but one of the many pinnacle like reefs in the area of Seal Rocks, as the ship was taking water at a fast rate. When the ship began to list seriously, the captain ordered all crew and passengers on deck to abandon ship. With the decks awash

launching life boats proved to be almost impossible, only one life boat survived the launching taking with it 26 people, the remaining 55 perished.

Eleven days after the sinking the insurance company had a marine surveyor and divers on the site trying to locate the wreck. It took a few days but it was found in 31 fathoms. The diver Briggs using standard dress descended to the wreck and confirmed that he believed the gold could be salvaged. Higher quality diving gear was ordered from England and the first attempt took place beginning 4th May 1896, after two weeks of bad weather the attempt was called off, another attempt commenced on the 30th May with only one dive in eleven days again due to bad weather.

In July the divers made it to the special hold where they found a double locked door. The first attempt to blast it off with explosives failed, the second attempt was successful but debris from the explosion now had to be moved. Two more interruptions with bad weather and currents saw them finally see the gold for the first time on the 7th August. The access hole was too small for a person to enter so they made a seven foot long auger to screw into the wooden boxes to lift the boxes out. Diver May retrieved two boxes on his first attempt, Briggs one on his next dive. This continued throughout the day with one of the larger boxes breaking free from the auger on several occasions, all but two boxes were recovered.

Between 11am and 5pm the two divers made a total of nine descents to the wreck, the records show that on the unsuccessful dive that Briggs made to recover the large box of gold he spent 15 minutes and 19 seconds on the bottom with a further 13 minutes ascending. (before dive computers)

It is the history of these wrecks which add great interest to the dive. For a much more detailed and informed history of the Catterthun see Max Gleeson's Book "Shipwrecks, Storms & Seamen of the NSW Coast" Page 30.

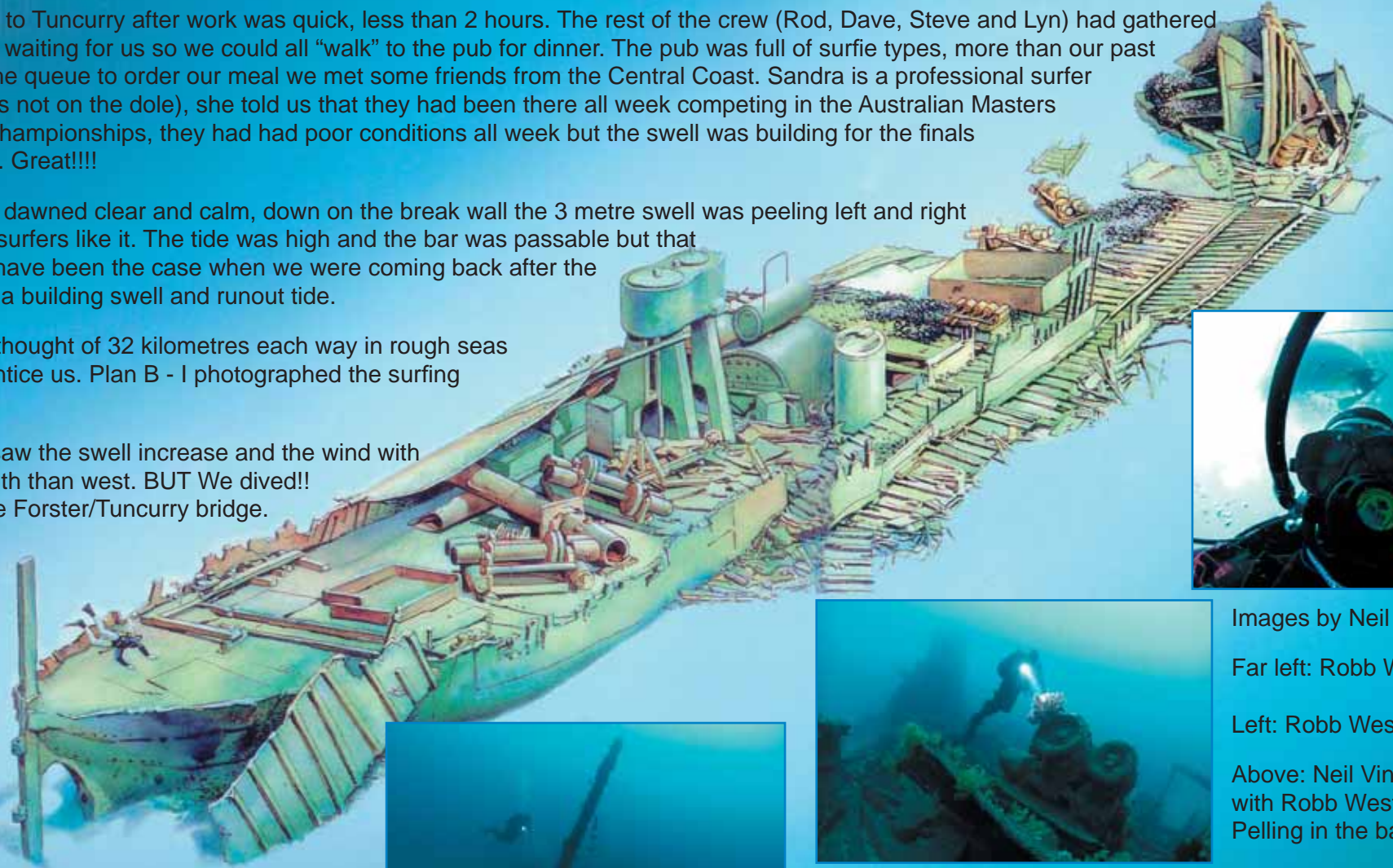
# Diving the Catterthun today - 8th,9th,15th & 16th September 2007

The drive to Tuncurry after work was quick, less than 2 hours. The rest of the crew (Rod, Dave, Steve and Lyn) had gathered and were waiting for us so we could all "walk" to the pub for dinner. The pub was full of surfer types, more than our past trips. In the queue to order our meal we met some friends from the Central Coast. Sandra is a professional surfer (no she is not on the dole), she told us that they had been there all week competing in the Australian Masters Surfing Championships, they had had poor conditions all week but the swell was building for the finals tomorrow. Great!!!!

Saturday dawned clear and calm, down on the break wall the 3 metre swell was peeling left and right just how surfers like it. The tide was high and the bar was passable but that may not have been the case when we were coming back after the dive with a building swell and runout tide.

Also the thought of 32 kilometres each way in rough seas did not entice us. Plan B - I photographed the surfing contest.

Sunday saw the swell increase and the wind with more south than west. BUT We dived!! Under the Forster/Tuncurry bridge.



Images by Neil Vincent

Far left: Robb Westerdyk stern.

Left: Robb Westerdyk winch..

Above: Neil Vincent on deco with Robb Westerdyk & Rod Pelling in the back ground.



**CATTERTHUN**  
SEAL ROCKS, NSW

Drawing courtesy of National Geographic

The water is really clean and there are lots of fish and fishermen. Watching the fish with the baits was funny, they knew there was a hook in there somewhere and would not touch it. I opened a mussel and they were even timid of that until enough small fish had torn it apart, then they attacked. There were lots of old bottles, milk, medicine, beer and of course new bottles and cans. Don't buy lead for weight belts again just dive under the bridge, the EPA would have a ball.

Despite a fun weekend we did not achieve what we had set out to, dive the Catterthun. Rod and the boat stayed for the week, his task was to organise some better weather for the following weekend.

Attempt # 2 saw the return of Lyn & I, Lyn & Roy, Dave again and Robb Westerdyke. Dave is the best person to have on a trip, he knows more jokes and tells them better than anyone I know and despite two days of Chemo during the week he was still in great form. Rod had done a great job during the week, no wind and a low swell.

Saturday saw us on the water at 8.30 heading south, as we rounded Cape Hawke, I noticed the water was "peaking" in the swells, current, I thought. The trip down was slow and muscle shaking in funny chop that had built on the water. The new sounder made the Catterthun light up on the screen like a shipwreck should. It took some time to anchor because of the current from the north and the breeze from the south. Rod and Lyn B dived first, Robb and I dived second, Lyn V was boat keeper.

The water was very clear 100ft plus but the current was ripping. It took 7 minutes to pull down the anchor line to the bottom at just over 190ft. At 100ft we could see the wreck. I tried to take photos but there current was on the bottom. We had to move the anchor across the wreck to ensure it would come free when we wanted to haul it up. Robb attempted this but the current and I were making it really hard, me because I was too busy trying to take photos and not paying attention until he had almost completed the task. I tried to swim to the stern but even tucking in close to the side did not moderate the current. We gave up and called the dive. We put the anchor in the sand and as we started up the line I noticed that it was digging in!!! Normally for deco in current we let the boat drift, dragging the anchor through the sand with the current. This new fangled anchor was not going to let us drift anywhere. First stop was 120ft and from there up we were flags in the breeze.

Sunday dawned with no wind or swell or chop, just perfect, glassed off in



Above: Rod Pelling



L- R Robb Westerdyk, Lyn Baxter and Neil Vincent.

some areas on the fast drive south to Seal Rocks. We anchored fairly easily and despite my first thoughts that there was current, it turn out to be almost none existent, the viz had dropped a small amount but it was worth it to have no current. We swam to the stern, to look at the high stern post which indicates the previous height of the decks of this ship. Then back over the winches to the giant engine which towers thirty feet high over the wreck. The engine truly indicates the size of this ship. Red Morwong lay about the wreckage, soft corals yellow, red and brown grew on many of the structures. Wreckage was everywhere, hiding to two remaining boxes of gold which supposedly have never been recovered. All too soon it was time to head back to the surface. Deco was long, but less strenuous than yesterday and we were blessed with two days without the sharks which are very common on this wreck especially in September/October.

After the dive we headed into Seal Rocks for some soup and buns before heading home. It is a great dive and to get the conditions we did on Sunday made it really special.



Right: Neil Vincent geared up and ready to descend to the Catterthun.



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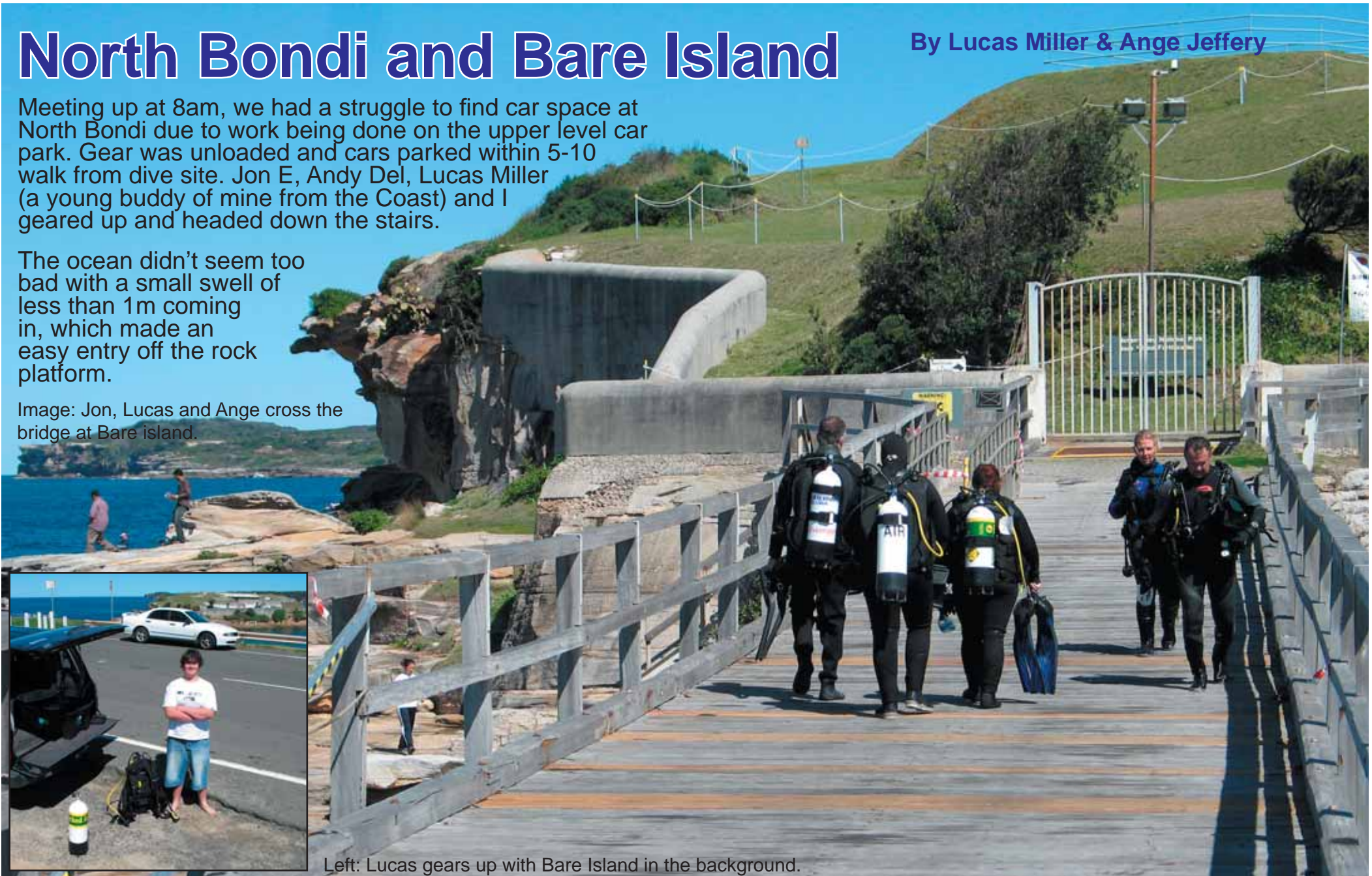
# North Bondi and Bare Island

By Lucas Miller & Ange Jeffery

Meeting up at 8am, we had a struggle to find car space at North Bondi due to work being done on the upper level car park. Gear was unloaded and cars parked within 5-10 walk from dive site. Jon E, Andy Del, Lucas Miller (a young buddy of mine from the Coast) and I geared up and headed down the stairs.

The ocean didn't seem too bad with a small swell of less than 1m coming in, which made an easy entry off the rock platform.

Image: Jon, Lucas and Ange cross the bridge at Bare island.



Left: Lucas gears up with Bare Island in the background.

Following the boulders southwards and eventually coming across the reef system we followed the lower walls and overhangs at a leisurely pace.

Vis was ok at around 10 -15m which allowed us to stretch out a bit and during some points of the dive; while the temp hovered just above 15 deg C. Eels, a ray and a healthy looking blue groper were easily spotted, with some schooling yellowtail to bring in the 'island diving feeling'.

The return dive was made at a shallower level taking in the tops of the wall and overhangs, returning to the boat ramp after 63 minutes of wonderful diving.

Andy deserted us after Bondi leaving Lucas, Jon and I to grab a refill at Sydney Dive Academy and head out to Bare Island for a second dip.

Arriving - we sat down over looking Bare Island and enjoying a quick lunch and some very funny conversation with Lorraine and Greg Miller, Lucas's parents who had driven down for the day – I'm sure Lucas will be forever scarred.

Our Bare Island plan was a circumnavigation of the island; the plan though changed somewhat and we followed the east wall and reef out to the back bommie. Such a beautiful reef system, some sections as lively and healthy as NB, schooling silver fish (have no idea of their name, but 100's of them) darting around us. PJ's lining the sandy floor, some sharing small gulley's and crevices – I counted 14 PJ's in one area with the largest being the darkest grey colour and an easy 3m in length.

We took a new bearing and headed back to the Island covering sea grasses and rock platforms. The current had picked up by now and some effort was needed for the return. Staying close to the bottom and taking it bit by bit we hit the south wall and surfaced to take stock of our position. We made a rock exit along the west wall with a bit of effort as the swell had picked up a bit. Temp at Bare was a bit warmer at 16 deg C.

Another great day of diving with some great peeps; very happy that Lucas came along to do some Sydney diving with club. Thanks to Andy Del for organising the dive and Jon E for being a great buddy and always giving me fantastic dive stories to recount when we are out diving together.

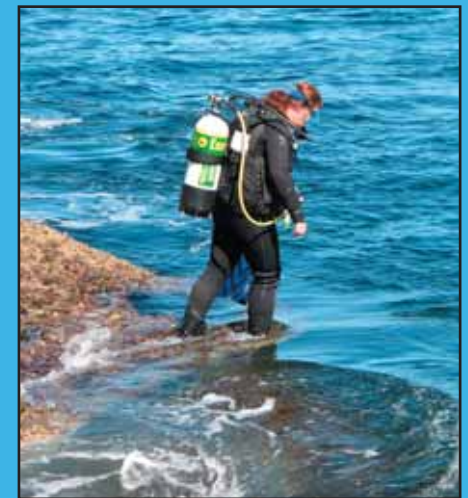
Photo credits: Greg Miller (Lucas's dad)



Left: Ange Jon and Lucas prepare to enter the water at Bare Island in perfect conditions.

Below: Ange about to step in off the rocks.

Below left: Ange, Lucas and Jon make their way to the entry point.





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Image by Noel Taylor



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# HISTORY FILE



Page 11 of the April/May 1962 issue of Australian Skindivers magazine starts with Ivy Louis' Mermaid Murmurs and mentions an outing at Belambi with our very own Joan Riley (Harper) diving in 50ft or water with other early women divers Jenny Louis and Edith Scott.

Further down the page: "We see Peter Harper is sporting a brand new rig – 72 cft bottle and latest 'Mistral Lung', a very nice outfit and he is doing very well."

Mention is made of a new club in the Wollongong area and a move to start a council for Scuba groups in order to regulate and govern scuba diving before the government steps in and does it. Similar sentiments are expressed nowadays with concerns about government regulation of rebreathers and technical diving.

The magazine also features the second in a series of regular articles by our very own Denis Robinson titled "Diver Below" reprinted here:

~~~~~  
Before setting out for a dive test inspect all gear and check the air pressure in the cylinder.

Do not dive if suffering from a cold in the head.

A swimming pool or sheltered bay with gently sloping bottom is ideal for the first lesson.

Remain relaxed and calm, do not exert yourself in the water – this is very important. The weight belt should be adjusted for buoyancy. With your diving mate close by descend gradually equalizing the pressure on the ear drums.

Ascent a few feet if difficulty is felt and then continue descent. Do not dive deeper than 25 ft.

When ascending do not overtake the smallest bubbles, continue to breathe normally.

"Never hold your breath as you rise, because your lungs must equalize."

~~~~~  
Clearing the water from a flooded mask is essential to diving safety. To practice this, stand in shallow water, sit down and remove mask. Tilt head to one side and hold upper part of mask against face. Exhale through nose and air will force the water out.

~~~~~  
Makes you wonder why we need to do an open water course when pretty much everything is covered there by Denis. In fact there were no open water courses at the time and that article was probably the best and only instruction many new divers would have had access to in 1962.



Diver holding mask clearing water.



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# This month's Celebrity Diver

## Lauren Hutton

Birth Place: Charleston, South Carolina, USA

Date of Birth: 17 November 1943

Lauren Hutton is one of the most photographed women in the world. She was the world's first supermodel and at 64 is a super role model for women entering menopause. Having appeared in more than 30 films and graced the covers of even more magazines, Lauren's career is still going strong at age 64. In her leisure time, she enjoys scuba diving, mountain climbing, and dog-sled racing.

Following her success as a top fashion model for the Ford Modeling Agency and Revlon cosmetics, Hutton was selected to play the only major female character in *Paper Lion* (1968). After a semi-successful starring role in *American Gigolo* (1980),

Appeared on cover of *Vogue* 25 times.

Was the first model to negotiate a major cosmetics deal.

Was a *Playboy* bunny.

"We have to be able to grow up. Our wrinkles are our medals of the passage of life. They are what we have been through and who we want to be. I don't think I will ever cut my face, because once I cut it, I'll never know where I've been."

source: [www.laurenhutton.com](http://www.laurenhutton.com)



Lauren diving with Whale Sharks



Lauren helps promote reef balls at DEMA



# Mobile Deco

Decompression programs are useful tools however they usually require the use of a computer or laptop. A boat on the open ocean is just no place for a laptop so tables are usually cut in the planning stages and a hard copy brought out on the boat. The only problem with this scenario is that you can't cut new tables once out on the boat. That is until Henning Schmidt developed JDeco.

JDeco is the first and only dive decompression program that is available for JAVA enabled mobile phones and PDAs. It utilizes the Varying Permeability Model (VPM-B) and Bühlmann's decompression algorithm with Erik Baker's Gradient Factors for mixed gas decompression in open-circuit (OC) and closed-circuit (CCR) diving mode. Most people carry a mobile and now you can use it to plan your dives! Additionally you can use it to calculate your gas mixes.

## Mix it up

Mixing is easy with the Van der Waals gas mixing and gas topping tools. You simply enter the cylinder size, gas content, pressure and a few other parameters and it tells you exactly what you need to add to make the desired mix. You can also enter the parameters of a dive and jdeco will tell you the best mix to use. Topping up a leftover tank of mix is as simple as telling JDeco what is left in the tank and what you want to top off with. It will then tell you the final resulting gas mix.

## Dive Planning

JDeco allows you to set up a number of different gas mixes before you calculate your dive. Once these are set you can configure a number of parameters such as depth, ascent and descent rates, max po2's etc and then finally you can select from either the Buhlmann ZHL16 algorithm or VPM B algorithm to calculate your deco. The final table is detailed telling you not only deco times and depths but also gas switches, ppo2, cns exposure and gas volumes needed.

## Summary

JDeco is a really useful program. Personally I find I never have a laptop or computer when I need to work out deco or gas mixing but with JDeco it's right there in my phone and takes seconds to get what I need. All they need to do now is design a mobile phone that is waterproof to 100m and that I can strap to my wrist.



Here I'm planning a dive on a 63m deep wreck off Botany Bay. After entering a couple of parameters, JDeco tells me the best breathing mix for on the bottom is 20% Oxygen and 32% Helium. How good's that? Transforming a phone into a gas mixing tool!

Above: Planning Spending 20 minutes at 63m is the initial thought. The 20 % Oxygen and 32% Helium (20/32) mix is the one to select. Then see what the decompression profile will look like.

Above: Here's the dive. It will take approx 3 minutes to sink to that depth at the bottom. Breathing the right gas is important - with 20/32 shown as planned. Then start 1 minute decompression stops at 36m and 33m.

By Scott Leimroth and John Fardoulis

For more info and a trial version see [www.jdeco.de](http://www.jdeco.de)

## Features

Intuitive user interface

Bühlmann ZHL16B algorithm with Erik Baker's gradient factors

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One click bailout calculations (CCR)

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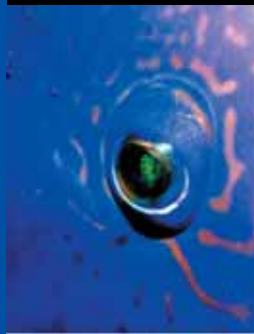
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# First Point – Central Coast NSW

By Ange Jeffery

First Point is a Central Coast dive site on the headland between Copacabana and Avoca Beaches. The site features various layered rock platforms that offer swim-throughs, walls, rock terraces and a reef system. This site is a relatively easy site to navigate and explore for OW and AOW divers offering a range of dive options. Depth ranges between 19m - 28 m with the deepest area located on the south-east end of the wall and shallowing towards the north-west.

I dived First Point recently with number well dived women of the Central Coast. We headed out of Terrigal Haven at 8am and turned south towards the site. A storm cloud bank was clearly visible from the south as we left The Haven boating past Terrigal Skillion - we got a very good look at what we'd be surfacing to after our dive.

We picked in without much effort and soon after our group headed down the anchor line. A couple of divers headed south-east along the wall and 5 remaining, including myself headed northerly along the wall.

First Point wall and reef is a very pretty site some great swim-throughs and big rocky terraced terrain. The macro and schooling fish life is abundant in the area (typical of many Central Coast sites) and we were fortunate enough to see juvenile PJ's, smaller cuttlefish, and a number of gorgeous feather purple nudi's.

A large number of schooling blackfish darted past us at such a rate most of us were startled at their speed of movement. I actually started looking around for what might have been trying to make a meal of them.

Fourty something minutes bottom time and we were returning to the boat; a couple needed to make for the surface due to lack of remaining air, while the rest of us followed underneath at 14m cruising up slowly as we returned to stay out of any deco obligations and taking a nice slow safety stop back to the boat.

Swell picked up quickly during our dive as the weather moved north and we surfaced to an even larger rolling ocean with added wind and rain.

Heading back to The Haven, the wind and rain continued and our gear was literally rinsed out with rain water.

The water is starting to warm up around the Coast with nice 17+ degree thermoclines being found around our sites. We enjoyed a great little dive, with all divers being Central Coast women out for a good time under the water and getting just that.



Above Janette Marsh points out one of the many sea creatures seen at First Point.



Above: The divers enjoyed an easy boat ride to the site.



Left: Clair shows the boys how a lady recovers the anchor. Below: Launch and recovery at Terrigal.



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# Learning to Dive

By Louise Steele

I've always been a water baby, from swimming to surfing and in recent years being a competitor with Cronulla surf club, but I'd never considered diving until a bit of luck at the Cronulla Spring Fair. I visited the Shiprock Dive stand there and entered a competition to win a free dive course. While I didn't win I did manage a runners up prize of an open water course for \$150. Why not, I thought, this might be fun.

The next weekend I found myself with 2 other people in the water at Caringbah pool. We practiced our skills such as buoyancy control, taking our gear off and putting it back on underwater, sharing air and clearing the mask. The highlight of the pool session was nearly getting knocked out by one of the other students who hadn't quite mastered their buoyancy and landed on top of me. Throughout the week I watched the videos and studied the book for my test.

The following weekend we spent Saturday doing two dives at Oak Park. Here we practiced more skills but also went for a dive and enjoyed some of the underwater scenery. I saw a large stingray, a numb ray, lots of fish and we were followed for the whole dive by a large blue groupa who didn't mind being patted. I found a small starfish and carried it round for the whole dive but put it back before we left the water. It was great fun seeing all the fish.

Sunday we dived at Kurnell and Voodoo. The water was a bit cold at Kurnell but we saw a weedy sea dragon and lots of other fish. Voodoo was nice with boulders and a rocky landscape but the surge was quite strong making exit a little difficult.

We got back from the dives and I did my test. To my relief I passed! I was a bit worried before the test but it ended up being much easier than I thought. I was now a certified open water diver and really looking forward to diving with my boyfriend who is already a diver.

On Monday I dived with Shiprock again, this time from the boat Sea Tamer II. We dived a reef off Cronulla called the Middle Ground. I was excited because this was my first boat dive but I wasn't worried because my boyfriend was my buddy and told me what to do on the boat making the whole thing very easy and lots of fun.

I had a little bit of trouble with my ears but once we got to the bottom the anchor was just sitting on the sand. We swam off towards the reef some distance away. The reef was really beautiful. It was 33m deep and covered in sponges and fish. We saw some large Port Jackson sharks as well as a blue groupa and some large starfish. We stayed for 30 minutes then had to go up and do some decompression stops. It was easy using the dive computer I had. Once we were near the surface we put up the safety sausage on a line and we hung onto that. When we finally came up the boat was only a short swim away.

I had a fantastic weekend diving and I'm really looking forward to doing a lot more diving and joining in the dives with South Pacific Divers Club. I didn't know what to expect but diving is great fun. I'm really glad I learnt to dive and would like to thank my instructor, Evan, and Ship Rock Dive for teaching me.



Above: L - R Danny, James - Divemaster, Evan - Instructor and Louise gearing up for a dive at Kurnell.



Above: L - R Evan, Danny, James and Louise after a great dive at Kurnell.

Below: Getting ready at the boat ramp.



Below: Waiting on the wharf before boarding SeaTamer II.



# New Diver?



**Need some equipment for your next club dive?**

**The Club has two sets of dive gear for you to use.**

**Equipment consists of regs/gauges, BCD,  
Weight Belt, Tank.**

**You need to provide Mask, Snorkel, Fins and  
Wetsuit.**

**Equipment is only for use by club members on  
club dives. It must be washed before return  
and the tank refilled.**

**Contact john (@) southpacificdivers.com  
or phone 0400 888 888**

# WANT TO COME DIVING? FIND OUT WHAT'S ON AND WHERE!

Join our google group to keep up with the latest information.

<http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving>



# EQUIPMENT REVIEW

## Oceanic Data Mask

By DJ Nicke

Recently I was fortunate enough to enjoy a dive with Oceanic's new "Data Mask Heads Up Display Dive Computer" in Sydney. I must say that I was extremely impressed with this mask.

The first thing that I noticed is that it has a very comfortable fit. It sits very soft on your face and I didn't have a problem with the seal at all. That being said it is a very high volume mask, limiting your peripheral vision slightly. That is the only downside to this mask, and it really is a small compromise considering all the many benefits it gives you.

Just like a wrist computer, the transmitter plugs straight into your first stage and gives you wireless air integration in your mask. The information is located in the perfect place, the lower right-hand side of your mask and was really comfortable to look at. The numbers appeared large and very easy to read. It wasn't obtrusive on my field of vision at all, when I wasn't looking at it I wasn't even aware the display was there.



Above: The Datamask Heads Up display is easy to read.



Wireless technology means no hose or gauge. The information is right there in front of you.

Navigating the menu and modes on the mask is very easy as well. Basically if you know how to snap a photo, then you can operate this mask since that's exactly what it feels like you're doing. With only two buttons, it's not at all confusing either, just grip your mask like you would a camera, and press the "shutter" button to switch between modes. You can easily use your thumb to turn it on and off if for some reason you want to.

What I really liked about this mask is how much freedom it gave me on the dives. There was no gauge or extra hoses to worry about which left both of my hands free to operate my camera and hold my light. You can even set audible alarms for various warnings, so I never really needed to look at the readouts, as it sounded an alarm when I reached my set turnaround air pressure. You can set audible alarms for maximum depth, Nitrogen tissue loading, max PO<sub>2</sub>, dive time remaining and others. All you really need to look at the mask for is to check the temperature. And since the computer is right on your face there is no issue hearing the alarms either. It also sounds an alarm if you're surfacing too quickly so this mask really makes diving all about enjoying yourself and not worrying about your dive technique.

The mask does have a higher profile than what I'm used to, which causes slight tunnel vision. This is my only complaint with this mask. It does have a side window on the left which made me feel like I was seeing into the future, noticing my buddy swimming by several seconds before they swam into my field of view. Again, this one down side is more than made up for by the comfort and convenience of this well designed mask.

The price tag put me off at first, but now that I've used one I can't stand diving without it! This is definitely the next piece of dive equipment I will be investing in.



# Piccola Trattoria

Sydney's Best Authentic Italian Food

*"You haven't eaten Italian until you've tried Piccola Trattoria"*

9 Norton St  
Leichardt NSW 2040  
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Fax: 95729634  
Lic/BYO Wine Only

## TAKE THE PLUNGE

It may seem scary at first but you're not the first to do it. Why not give it a go? The more people that do it the better. Who knows, you might even like it. Writing an article or dive report is easy!

Do your bit for the club. Write a dive report or article today and get it published in the next Wet Rag.





# MOTOKRZR

*Crazy reflective, crazy loaded.*

*A 2 mega-pixel camera with video capture, a fully integrated music player, and expandable memory.*



# October 2007 **ANDYS' WET SPOT**

| October 2007 |           |    |    |    |           |           |
|--------------|-----------|----|----|----|-----------|-----------|
| M            | T         | W  | T  | F  | S         | S         |
| <b>1</b>     | <b>2</b>  | 3  | 4  | 5  | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| 8            | <b>9</b>  | 10 | 11 | 12 | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b> |
| 15           | <b>16</b> | 17 | 18 | 19 | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b> |
| 22           | <b>23</b> | 24 | 25 | 26 | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b> |
| 29           | <b>30</b> | 31 |    |    |           |           |

| November 2007 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S  |
|               |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5             | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12            | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19            | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26            | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |

| Monday                                           | Tuesday                                  | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Sat/Sun                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 October                                        | 2                                        | 3         | 4        | 5      | 6                                                         |
| 10:00am 10.00am shore dive - Oak Park (Oak Park) | 7:30pm Night Dive - Shark Point (7.30pm) |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - The Leap                             |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 7                                                         |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - Bare Island                          |
| 8                                                | 9                                        | 10        | 11       | 12     | 13                                                        |
|                                                  | 10:00am Night Dive - Bondi               |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - Oak Park                             |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 14                                                        |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - The Steps                            |
| 15                                               | 16                                       | 17        | 18       | 19     | 20                                                        |
|                                                  | 7:30pm Night Dive - Bare Island          |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - The Leap                             |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 21                                                        |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - Gordon's Bay (Shark Point alternate) |
| 22                                               | 23                                       | 24        | 25       | 26     | 27                                                        |
|                                                  | 7:30pm Night Dive - Oak Park             |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - Oak Park                             |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 28                                                        |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        | 10:00am Shore dive - Monument to The Steps                |
| 29                                               | 30                                       | 31        |          |        |                                                           |
|                                                  | 7:30pm Night dive - Shelly Beach         |           |          |        |                                                           |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        |                                                           |
|                                                  |                                          |           |          |        |                                                           |

Andys' Wet Spot is a list of suggested dive spots for the month. Please log into the club forum to see which dives are running and to stay up to date with the latest dives and events.



**Southern Cross Divers**  
Leaders in Technical Diving

- \* **Equipment**
- \* **Boat Dives**
- \* **Dive Trips**
- \* **Training**
- \* **Rebreathers**

Want to learn more about technical diving?  
Drop in for a chat with Barry, Australia's leading technical diving instructor at Australia's most experienced technical dive centre and leading rebreather friendly store.

Location:  
Unit 3 Catalina Anchorage  
235 Spit Rd  
Mosman, Sydney, NSW 2088  
Tel/Fax: +61 2 99695072  
barry@southerncrossdivers.com.au

Opening Hours:  
Mon 9am-1pm / Tue 9am-4pm  
Wed 9am-4pm / Thu 9am-4pm  
Fri 9am-4pm  
Sat 5.30am-4pm  
Sun 5.30am-4pm

Filmed by Paul Boler



**Southern Cross Divers**  
Leaders in Technical Diving

# No Sticky Beaks!

## Members Only!

### Come and have some fun with us on the **NEW CLUB FORUM**

If you haven't logged in already then contact;  
jason (@) southpacificdivers.com to get access and a username and password. You don't know what you're missing!

With regular club diving being organised, shore, boat, and night dives, trips away and much more.

Special members only deals on equipment.

Secret squirrel information on where to find cheap gear, cheap gas, etc.

Help and advice from experts in the club on rebreathers, wrecks, photography, technical diving and more.

**DON'T MISS THE FUN - GET ONLINE NOW!**

Simply follow the link on our home page  
[www.southpacificdivers.com](http://www.southpacificdivers.com)

# SPDC MEMBER PROFILE

## David Coulthard



### ***What's your nickname?***

No nickname, well not that I am aware of to my face, I am sure there are many I am not aware of.

### ***How long have you been a club member?***

Autumn 2007

### ***What sort of diving do you enjoy most?***

Wrecks

### ***What is the most common misconception that people have about you?***

People think I am a bit rude and stand off-ish, I take a long time to get to know people and until I am uncomfortable, I tend to over compensate for certain insecurities and this tends to come across in the wrong way a lot of the time.

### ***What kind of music are you into?***

Very varied, it depends on my mood.

### ***Any phobias?***

None really

### ***What temptations are you powerless to resist?***

The only thing I cannot resist is temptation itself.

### ***Are There Other Divers In Your Family?***

Yes, there are other divers in my family, my wife Jo, who is also a member.

### ***What do you like to do in your spare time when you're not diving?***

What spare time?, when I get some I am out on my Bike, 4wding, or anything with Jo.

### ***Whats your favorite dive site and why?***

There are so many for so many different reasons, I think Scapa Flow has to be up there, although I also love the caves in Malta, the Southern Red Sea and a few other places as well.

### ***What's your most treasured piece of dive equipment?***

Custom Divers reel and Halcyon SMB, their ease of use just makes everything so much more pleasant and needed, Well, My other treasured possession are the memories of those occasional great [outstanding] dives that come along every so often and really stick in your mind (Narcosis aside of course)

### ***What's the most annoying thing someone could do to you on a dive?***

Bad buoyancy; the times I have seen people bouncing along the coral, wrecking the reef with bad buoyancy and an air of I don't care really annoys me.

### ***If you could go anywhere on the planet to dive where would you go and why?***

Antarctica

### ***If you could have a 'celebrity' dive buddy who would you choose?***

Don't get all the celebrity thing personally, so if I had to choose it would be Pamela Ander[\*censored\*] or Jordan to be used as Surface Marker Buoys.



# Boat Owners & Dive Organisers



## BOAT OWNERS

### John Fardoulis

Email: john (@) southpacificdivers.com

Phone: 0400 888 888

Location: Lilyfield

Boat Type: RIB, 5 shallow, 4 deep + 7.5m half cabin,  
6 shallow, 6 deep

Favourite type of diving: Helping novices



### Bob May

Email: bobmay (@) hotkey.net.au

Phone: 0428 295 516 or 02 4579 1053

Location: Windsor

Boat Type: 6.5m Marlin Broadbill, 8 shallow, 7 deep

Favourite type of diving: Reef & Photography



### Scott Willan

Email: swillan (@) thomascoffey.com.au

Phone: 95437095

Location: Bangor

Boat Type: Runabout, 4 shallow, 3 deep + Yacht

Favourite type of diving: Fun Dives



### Peter Iwaszkiewicz

Email: pf\_plate (@) tpg.com.au

Phone: 0424 812 483

Boat Type: 4.3m inflatable - 3 divers

Favourite type of diving: Various



### Martin Kandilas

Email: mdk (@) speednet.com.au

Phone: 0415 400 403

Boat Type: 5.5m, 5 shallow, 4 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks



### Max Gleeson

Email: maxglee (@) optusnet.com.au

Phone: 0416 041 021

Location: Caringbah

Boat Type: Marlin Broadbill, 4 deep

Favourite type of diving: Wrecks



# Boat Owners & Dive Organisers



Contact a dive organiser if you would like help organising a dive or subscribe to our diving and events email list at:

<http://groups.google.com/group/spdcdiving>

Upcoming club dives are posted on our online calendar on our forum at:

<http://southpacificdivers.com/forum/index.php>

To sign up to the forum you must be a financial club member then email [jason\(@\)southpacificdivers.com](mailto:jason(@)southpacificdivers.com) to get your login and password.

Visitors and guests are always welcome to come along for a dive. Contact [john\(@\)southpacificdivers.com](mailto:john(@)southpacificdivers.com) to find out more about joining us for one of our club dives. Diving is FREE!

We currently have around fifty active members on that list and one or two dives a week are organised via the email list.

Please remember that our club boats are not charter boats and therefore you may be required to pitch in and help during launching and retrieval of the boat.

Introduce yourself to a boat owner at the next club meeting and see what you can do to help. Respect the requests of the boat owner/captain at all times and treat the boat with care.

## DIVE ORGANISERS

### Andy Del - Dive Conveynor

Email: [diverandy\(@\)optusnet.com.au](mailto:diverandy(@)optusnet.com.au)

Phone: 0411437323

Favourite type of diving: No Bubbles



### Peter Iwaszkiewicz - Boat Dives

Email: [pf\\_plate\(@\)tpg.com.au](mailto:pf_plate(@)tpg.com.au)

Phone: 0424 812 483

Boat Type: 4.3m inflatable - 3 divers

Favourite type of diving: Various



### Jason Farlow - All Dives

Email: [jason\(@\)southpacificdivers.com](mailto:jason(@)southpacificdivers.com)

Phone: 0417040285

Favourite type of diving: All types.



### Jon Evans - Midweek Dives

Email: [fishdiver\(@\)gmail.com](mailto:fishdiver(@)gmail.com)

Phone: 0411346215

Favourite type of diving: Boat, Shore, All types.

Available for midweek dives anytime.



### Dave Chillari - Night Dives

Email: [davidchillari\(@\)yahoo.com.au](mailto:davidchillari(@)yahoo.com.au)

Phone: 0425 209576

Favourite type of diving: Night dives, shore dives





## BUNYIP ON THE PROWL

*Who are the two club members that are making it a habit of getting lost? This time at one of Sydney's famous dive sites, getting stuck in current and heading out to NZ!! Do they understand the concept 'circumnavigate'?*

*Which club member was looking a little lost before a shore dive? When asked what was wrong he said "I've lost my mask." Lost is about right....his mask was on his head!*

*Which two Central Coast dive operators have jumped into bed together (figuratively speaking) to expand diving options on the Central Coast?*

## TIPS FROM THE GURU

The first in a regular series giving you tips and advice on equipment and gear from our top secret industry insider with more experience and knowledge than just about anyone else we can think of.



DIN regs are very popular but you need to use the correct dust cover. You'd be surprised at the damage I've seen done to regs that have a poor fitting dust cover that doesn't seal correctly. When they are rinsed after a dive a poor fitting dust cover can let water in and this can cause all sorts of problems. Always use a dustcover that will seal at the end of your DIN regs and be careful when you rinse them after a dive.

## Join Us



Like to join the South Pacific Divers Club? Membership has many benefits including:

- **Like minded people** to dive with.
- **Mentoring** - Learn more about diving. Increase your diving skills by diving with others. Experienced members are keen to help you learn more. Group organised education such as first aid and boat handling courses.
- **Adventure** - New places to dive. New things to see.
- **Boat Dives** - Charter boats at discount rates and a number of members boats are available to dive from. Not for profit diving with new friends.
- **Develop Special Interests** - Rebreather, Photography, Ecology, Wrecks, Exploration.
- **Free Independent Advice** - Equipment, sites to dive, trips away, etc.
- **Social Activities** - BBQs, Barefoot Bowls, Wine Tasting, Movies, Charity events, Paintball, and much more.
- **Life long friendships** and contacts in the diving industry - Not just a club, it's a way of life.

To **join** simply fill in the form on the last page and post to P.O. Box 823, Bankstown, NSW, 2200.

Better yet, come along to one of our **club meetings** held every **3rd Monday of the month at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Parade, Bankstown**. Email [john@southpacificdivers.com](mailto:john@southpacificdivers.com) for more information.



ESTABLISHED  
1962

# Join the Club.

## Membership Application Form

Complete this form and post to: **South Pacific Divers Club, P.O. Box 823 Bankstown NSW 2200**

### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

☐ I wish to apply for 1 year's membership.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Diving Certification: \_\_\_\_\_

Certification Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Are You a Boat Owner: ☐ yes ☐ No

If yes, type of boat: \_\_\_\_\_

Join now and membership lasts until end financial year 2008

#### CURRENT MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Single \$50.00      Family \$75.00

*Please Note that Membership for 2006-07 has been increased to cover Insurance*

### DIVING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ hereby apply to join South Pacific Divers Club Inc. I/We understand the Club is non-profit, non-affiliated with any training organisation and is for certified divers. South Pacific Divers Club Inc does not offer instruction, advice or supervise its members' divers. It is a condition of Club membership that members exercise their own judgement in accordance with their training in deciding whether and/or how to participate in any particular dive, the technique used, or choice of equipment and that any clarification in regard to these matters should be referred to a qualified instructor or my/our certifying agency.

**I/We have read the above conditions and accept same as a condition of membership.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_