



Sea Braggin'

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

- March 2011 - Edited by Ray Moulang -

Included in this issue are Dive Reports from ...

***Rox, Peter Flochart, Paul Pacey, Michael McFadyen, Ian Roffey,
Mike Scotland and Chris Barrand.***

Photograph Report from

Eddie Ivers, Ron Walsh and Mike Scotland.

A BIG THANK YOU GOES TO THEM.

It is very difficult time for all club members following the loss of our great friend and Club Member Carol Martin. It is made all the more difficult due to the fact it occurred during a club dive.



I would like to acknowledge those people who were at Bare Island on the night, particularly Carol's Buddy Ron Walsh. It is clear that Ron did everything for Carol that could be done and gave her the best possible chance and I'm sure I can speak for all club members in thanking him for that.

Carol had no family in Australia and in their absence Michael and Kelly took up responsibility for the funeral and other arrangements. I would like to thank them for that and also for opening up their home to club members so we could gather, share and grieve as well as meet Carol Family once they arrived from Scotland.

I would also like to thank Michael and Jo Edney for having the strength to speak at Carol's funeral and express the thoughts and emotions of many club members. After the funeral it is easy to think that the process over but Carol has left a big hole in our friendships and the club.

Bram Harris has kindly provided the names and contact details for ministers from the Salvation Army:

Robyn Black and Bob Seymour (Glebe) m0402-067-282

Steve and Tracey Briggs (Menai) m0409-173-518 or ph. 9543-0487

You can also access counselling through the Centre link Social Worker network on 13 1794. And of course you can talk to other members of the club many of whom are experiencing the same emotions and going through the same process.

Many people will have seen the statement Ron gave to the Police which reads like any one of 10,000s of dives club members have cumulatively done over many years. While there will be a Coroner's Report like many dive related incidents we will probably never know why it happened.

I have received a number of suggestions regarding how we might best remember Carol. I encourage members to send me ideas and will discuss them with the Committee and the people who were closest to Carol before coming back to a club meeting with a recommendation.

I have also received a number of safety related suggestions. Safety is something we always need to be mindful of but ultimately it is a personal responsibility. This starts before we go diving with our physical fitness, having appropriate and well maintained equipment and the skills and training for the dives we plan to undertake. It extends to safe diving practices including diving to the conditions and following the buddy system.

In terms of the club buying equipment to go the club member boats our boat owners take an additional level of responsibility for safety. Club members should ask about the safety equipment and procedures of any boat you plan to dive off whether they are club boats or charter operators. You should also ask how to use the radio and start the engines in the case of an emergency.

If you are not comfortable with answers my recommendation is not to dive off that boat.

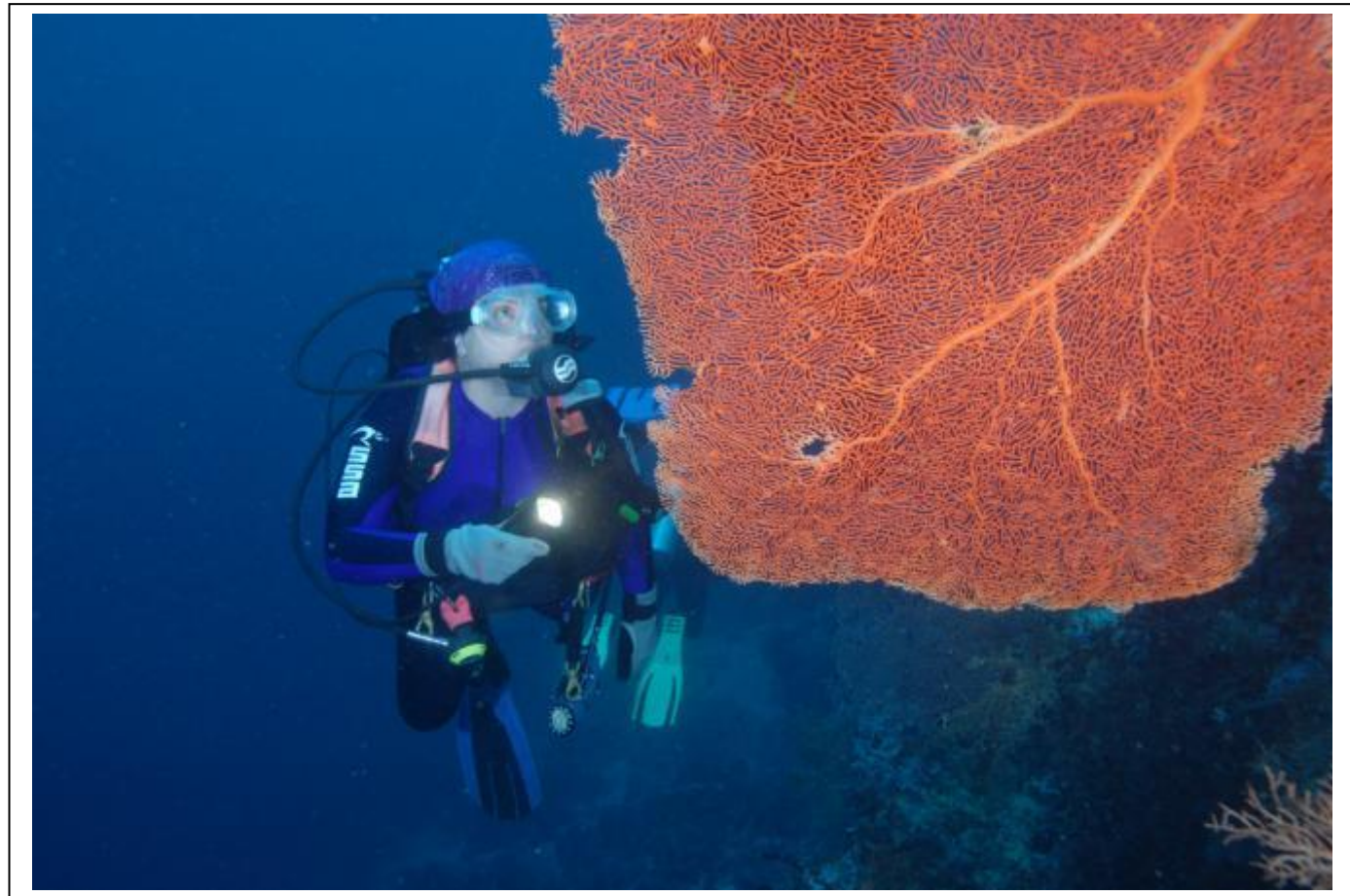


The club has a visit to the hyperbaric chamber at Prince of Wales hospital on the calendar this year. It includes a dry dive in the chamber and a presentation from the hyperbaric doctor and is very educational if you haven't done it before. I will be please to arrange a first aid course for club members if there is enough interest.

Carol has been a member of the Club for about 15 years, having served a number of years as Club Secretary. She also organised many dives, weekends away and trips to the GBR and other locations.

We will miss Carol a lot.

Jason Coombs
President



Carol Martin by Michael McFadyen

Carol first came into our life when she joined the St George Scuba Club. Like most things in life, it was a bit of luck that led to her joining the club. In mid February 1996, Carol went for a dive with John Nisbett, who is now from Coffs Harbour. They went out on Sea Tamer II and dived at The Balcony. On the boat that day was Robbie Mapstone, a member of our dive club. The dive was Carol's 100th dive. By all reports, it was not a great dive, with one metre visibility.

Robbie invited Carol to the annual St George anniversary dinner which was being held that night. She came along to the dinner at an Indian restaurant in Caringbah. It was certainly an interesting night as far as I remember. As well as Carol, someone who spoke with such a thick Scottish accent we could hardly understand her, there was a drunk female friend of another member's wife who tried to seduce all the single males! Carol sat next to Elly Caterson and this was the start of their friendship. We also had to explain to Carol that our club dinners were not normally as strange as this one.

Soon Robbie and Carol were an item. I organised a club dive trip to Madang in Papua New Guinea in October 1996 and Robbie and Carol came along. We had some great diving and I know that Carol really enjoyed the trip.

Over the coming years Carol did lots of diving with the Club. She came diving regularly on Le Scat, the boat owned by Les and me. She organised many dive and social events, mostly restaurant nights. She also joined another dive club, DOUTS, and did trips with them, mostly to the Great Barrier Reef and Wooli.

Carol and Robbie got married in Fiji on 21 July 2001. In 2002 they came on another Club dive trip, this time to Vanuatu, where we dived the huge World War II shipwreck, SS President Coolidge. It was the 60th anniversary of its sinking and there were lots of special events held to commemorate the loss.

In mid 2003 Les and Elly Caterson organised a four wheel drive trip to Central Australia.

Robbie and Carol came as well. On that trip we spent four weeks driving via Birdsville and across the Simpson Desert to Alice Springs and Uluru.

Look out for a photo of Carol standing on top of the Land Cruiser in accompanying photos.

This is at the top of the largest sand dune in the Simpson Desert.

Later that year Carol and Robbie went on another Great Barrier Reef diving trip on the Undersea Explorer. Here she met John McPherson from Melbourne who became one of her closest friends. Many members know John from other dive trips on the Undersea Explorer and to Wooli.

About this time Carol became the Secretary of St George Scuba Club and held this position for a few years. In 2004 I met Kelly. Kelly joined the club and Carol and she became the closest of friends.

In late 2008 Carol came on another dive trip to PNG, this time to Rabaul and Kavieng. We had a brilliant time, diving wrecks, reefs and Japanese aircraft.



In 2009 Carol had a huge year. She travelled to Scotland via South America. Kelly was also in Europe at this time and she and Carol organised to meet up in London. From here they flew to Egypt. Carol and Kelly spent a week diving the Red Sea, having great adventures, including diving with oceanic white tip sharks. On each dive, they were inevitably the first ones in the water and the last ones out.

Carol also house and dog sat for Kelly and I. I am sure that Carol enjoyed looking after Veto as much as she enjoyed playing with Carol.

The past year had also been a busy one for Carol. On 11 December 2010, Carol did her 1000th dive.

Afterwards, we all celebrated with champagne back at our usual morning tea site, Dark Bay.

Carol has asked that her ashes be scattered in Dark Bay so that she can continue to have morning tea with us after our dives.

As most would know, Carol was not always the most organised or punctual person. Despite living the closest to the boat ramp, she was inevitably the last one there each Saturday when we dived. Sometimes she was the bane of my life, waiting for her to arrive, well after the scheduled departure time. Despite the fact that we had been out diving together many hundreds of times, I actually only ever dived with her as a buddy 23 times.

A few of these were in the past couple of weeks before she died.

Carol had so much planned for this year, trips to the Philippines, Scotland and Chuuk Lagoon. On behalf of the St George Scuba Club, including those who are in the Philippines on a diving trip, I would like to express our deepest sorrow to her mother Nancy, sister June as well as Bill, Kimberley and Allan at the loss of our dearest friend, Carol. She will be missed by us all.

By Michael McFadyen



Left - A Slug?

Below - A Sweet Ceratosoma

Some Pictures from Eddie Ivers

From a recent Shiprock Dive





Speckled
Moray
By Eddie Ivers

What's On - MARCH - 2011 -

WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT
<i>Saturday 5th</i>	<i>Deep Dive SS Tuggerah/ SS Undola from Yowie Bay</i>	<i>Michael McFadyen 9545 5596</i>	Sunday 13th	Boat Dive Whale Watch Platform Hole in Wall and Port Botany	Natasha Naude 97999785
<i>Saturday 5th</i>	<i>Anniversary Dinner Moksha Indian Restaurant</i>	<i>Trisha Henry 9525 8860</i>	Wednesday 16th	Club Meeting Rowers Club 8pm	Jason Coombs 9345 4599
<i>Friday 11th to Monday 21st</i>	<i>New Zealand Trip</i>	<i>Shelley Breueseker 9873 3522</i>	Sunday 20th	Boat Dive Rifle Range Hole in Wall and Port Botany	Natasha Naude 97999785
<i>Saturday 12th - Sunday 13th</i>	<i>Oz Tek – Dive Convention Redfern</i>	<i>Peter Flockart 9371 0265</i>	Saturday 26th - Sunday 27th	Boys Weekend Away Kiama	Ray Moulang 0403437974

What's On - APRIL - 2011 -

WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT
Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd	WEEKEND DIVE TRIP - MERIMBULA / EDEN	PAUL PACEY 9527 2501	Sunday 17th	Boat Dive Wollongong	Jo Edney 4268 5448
Sunday 3rd	Deep Dive SS Tuggerah/ SS Undola from Yowie Bay	Michael McFadyen 9545 5596	Wednesday 20th	Club Meeting Rowers Club 8pm	Jason Coombs 9345 4599
Saturday 9th	Shore Dive Bass point	Ron Walsh 0409 225 683	Thur 21st to Tue 26th	Easter / Anzac Day Weekend Jervis Bay	Ray Moulang 0403 437 974
Saturday 9th	Restauant Night	Ray Moulang 0403 437 974	Saturday 30th	Boat Dive Marley Point	Trisha Henry 9525 8860
Saturday 16th	Boat Deep Dive From Long Reef	Peter Flockart 9371 0265			

APRIL DATE FOR HMAS ADELAIDE SCUTTling

April 13 has been set as the proposed date for the scuttling of the former HMAS Adelaide off the Central Coast.

NSW Minister Lands, Tony Kelly, made the announcement during a visit to what's been its temporary home at Glebe Island Wharf, with Member for The Entrance, Grant McBride.

"The Land and Property Management Authority (LPMA) has been working closely with the contractor engaged to prepare the ship, to meet the conditions set by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal," the Minister said.

"That work is scheduled for completion next month.

"The Tribunal upheld the permit issued by the then Federal Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts, while adding some extra conditions as a precautionary measure.

"In addition to the extensive preparation already undertaken, the extra conditions involved removing canvas and insulation from the ship and then any loose or flaking paint found behind it.

"This requires an extensive amount of work on all decks of the ship which is almost finished.

"This has enabled detailed planning for the proposed **April 13** scuttling to commence.

"The scuttling is highly dependent on favourable weather conditions, so alternate dates will also be determined."

The vessel was gifted to NSW by the Australian Government to create an artificial reef and dive site in waters off the Central Coast.

Mr McBride said the NSW Government recognises the important contribution and support of local community members, including the Central Coast Artificial Reef Project, which has worked tirelessly for more than a decade on this project.

"The dive site will be the first attraction of its kind in NSW and a world class recreational facility, delivering environmental, economic and educational benefits to the region," Mr McBride said.

Come north this winter and Dive the HMAS Brisbane

Thursday 7 July – Sunday 10 July (Max 13 divers/Min 6 divers)

We have a number of options, depending on how many days you want to spend diving the HMAS Brisbane and also the Sunshine Coast Reefs (apparently it's not uncommon to see migrating Humpbacks in winter – how **awesome would that be!!!).**

Suggested itinerary

Fly into Maroochydore airport – Mooloolaba is only 6kms away. Other option is to fly to/from Brisbane and drive an hour north to Mooloolaba. I recommend Virgin because Qantas/Jetstar no longer gives 5kg sporting goods allowance ☹

Thursday 7 July (*Optional*) Thursday afternoon: If you can arrive Wednesday night or Thursday morning we can do a double dive on the HMAS Brisbane on Thursday afternoon – minimum of 6 divers required. If you can only arrive Thursday night, then we can start diving on Friday!

Friday 8 July Friday morning: Double dive Sunshine Coast Reefs
(<http://www.sunreef.com.au/local-trips.htm>)

Friday afternoon and night: Double dive HMAS Brisbane – the second being a night dive (min 6 people) (*Option*) Can opt for a single night dive Friday night rather than double afternoon/night (min 6 people)

Saturday 9 July Saturday morning: Double dive HMAS Brisbane (no minimum)

Saturday afternoon: relax and enjoy a Club dinner!

Sunday 10 July **Enjoy the day and fly home Sunday afternoon/evening**

Accommodation:

- **Alexandra on the Pacific, Mooloolaba has 2 bedroom/2 bathroom apartments with large balconies for \$165/night which sleep 4 people**
(<http://www.alexandraonthepacific.com/mooloolaba/holiday-accommodation.htm>)
 - **1 bedroom apartments are available for \$125/night**
 - **Next door, Mariner on the Pacific has 3 bedroom apartments with large balconies for \$250/night which sleep 6 people (<http://www.marineronthepacific.com.au/alexandra-headlands/accommodation.htm>)**
 - **Pool and spa, games room, etc. Walking distance to restaurants, bars. Looks great!**
- If we have 13 people the accommodation cost for 3 nights will be approximately \$143 per person**
- Sunreef Dive Centre will shuttle us for free to/from the accommodation, which is approx 1.7km from the dive shop/wharf. Nice!**

Diving: Sunreef Dive Centre can cater for 13 divers, which would give us the boat to ourselves

<http://www.sunreef.com.au/dive-vessels.htm>

- **Double dives on reef or HMAS Brisbane will cost \$140**
- **Double afternoon/night dive option on HMAS Brisbane is \$160 (or \$110 for single night dive)**
- **Marine park conservation fee of \$15 is included in these prices. (RRP for these dives is usually \$160/\$180 respectively.**
- **13th diver free of charge – as usual, this cost saving would be spread across all divers**
- **Tanks and weights (and divemaster!) included**
- **Free nitrox if we have more than 6 (certified) divers ☺**

Please note the following info from the Sunreef website:

- **All first time Divers on the Wreck, regardless of qualification or skill level must have a familiarization dive with a Sunreef guide for their first dive. No Penetration.**
- **Open Water Divers may penetrate with a Sunreef Dive guide to a Max Depth of 18m**
- **Advanced Open Water Divers have unlimited penetration With a Sunreef Guide to all depths of the wreck.**
- **Wreck/Cave Specialty Divers or divers with appropriate experience may independently penetrate. Divers in light locked areas must carry all appropriate specialist equipment.**
- **You need to supply a certification card**
- **Snorkel, Safety sausage, whistle, Occy and dive computer are required. Gloves highly recommended.**
- **Diver statement must be filled out in advance**
(<http://www.sunreef.com.au/images/stories/DiverStatement.pdf>)
- **Sunreef require deposits of \$120 per double dive per diver in advance to secure places**

In summary, we can have anywhere up to 8 dives on the HMAS Brisbane and Sunshine Coast Reefs – minimum 6 divers required to go out on the Thursday or the Friday afternoon/night options.

Contact **Natasha if you want to come along, and please remember to send Mark your deposit of \$50. **Email:** natasha@bluecucumber.com **Phone:** 0410 074 677**

Truk trip for 2011.

Some trip points to note:- The price does not include our Club discount (approx 10%) or our Free of Charge land base component for every 8th diver. The total discount cannot be determined until we finalized numbers.

- The prices are based on 95c US. The quoted price will not change unless there is a fluctuation of more than 2c either way. If the dollar goes through the roof, you can pay the balance in full to take advantage.
- The price does not include Sydney/Cairns/Sydney flights or accommodation in Cairns.

**ONLY TWO
SPOTS LEFT**

You need to organize this yourself (best to wait and watch for specials).

- We request that you take out a travel insurance policy that covers your diving activities.
- There is a 2 week option. • Truk is a third world country and as such you should adjust your expectations.
- The trip is not suitable for non divers.- The trip is suitable for experienced divers.

There is a maximum of 16 spots for this trip (8 are already pre-reserved), so please book on sooner rather than later to avoid disappointment. To book you must contact me to: 1. Check availability; and 2. To get a booking form which you will need to complete and send to Sharon at Dive Adventures with your deposit.

Please give me a call if you have any questions (particularly if you have not been to Truk before).

Many thanks, Kelly.



St George Scuba Club Anniversary Dinner

Put on your best sari (or closest equivalent) for a “Nirvana” Banquet at the St George Scuba Club Anniversary Dinner on Saturday 5th March at 7pm.

Moksha Indian Restaurant

“the path to salvation” www.moksha.com.au

1/523 Box Road, Jannali

(limited parking at the rear of building)

Banquet Menu

Total Cost \$35 pp

BYO wine & beer





OZTeK'11- Update 17 (16 February 2011)

Breath-taking Adventure

www.diveoztek.com.au

12 - 13 March 2011

Australian Technology Park,

Sydney, NSW, Australia

Find us on Facebook 

Nelson Bay Weekend, July 29 - 31

Two days spent with some of the best shore diving in NSW.
The three main dive sites here are spectacular.

Accommodation for the two nights, at the Soldiers' Point Holiday Park, will be about \$110 per person.

Arrive on Friday night, and then go for a shore dive in the morning on both Saturday and Sunday.

Take it easy for the rest of Saturday, and on Sunday have an easy drive home.





Contact Brian Byrnes if you are interested, and don't forget to give a \$50 deposit to Mark Ridsdale. brian.byrnes@pobox.com 04198 22243

Fiji trip plan June 18 to July 3

World's best Shark diving?.... Certainly in the top 3 after the Great Whites in South Africa, Tiger beach in the Caribbean. Last August I managed to see 5 different Tiger sharks including "Joyce" the 14 foot giant with the girth of a 44 gallon drum. I did not see "Scarface", the 18 foot giant who has been visiting over the last few years. Maybe next time.

World's best Soft coral diving. The photo opportunities for those "pretty diver shots" are limitless. Beqa became world famous for some of these stunning dives with more colour than you see on an LSD trip.

The plan for the trip is 15 nights including a week at the Pearl Pacific resort and a week at Lalati resort on Beqa Island and one night in transit. There is a backup plan! If there is a problem with booking Lalati (It is a very small boutique resort) we might go to Octopus resort up the Yasawas.

I intend to plan at least 24 boat dives (12 each week at 2 per day) and possibly some free shore dives at Lalati. The cost is about \$100 a day for dives. (\$1200 for diving)

This is an excellent trip. It is great value at slightly under \$3000 and very comfortable. I am taking my non diving but keen snorkelling wife.

I have been to Fiji twice in the last 14 months.
The magic Fiji that has always been famous is still there on the ground.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact me on

mikescotland@optusnet.com.au

scubamagic@hotmail.com

0415 158 168

02 9521 7720

I would encourage you to do some research. Here are some dub dubs for you to look over.

<http://www.lalatifiji.com/home/> <http://www.thepearlsouthpacific.com/>

<http://www.beqalagoonresort.com/> <http://www.octopusresort.com/>

I also use a site called www.Beautifulpacific.com and go to "fiji" link and then "Outer islands" and "Beqa Lagoon". It has plenty of pictures for each resort.

I can't wait. Mike Scotland.

A weekend in Jervis Bay in August!

Friday 12 – Sunday 14 August Double boat dives Saturday and Sunday (including one dive with the seals)

Note this is not *just* a seal diving trip – only one dive will be with the seals, conditions permitting! The remainder will be boat dives to local dive sites.

We did this trip last year and it was just great! House is perfect for our group and Ulladulla dive did a good job (despite being unable to locate the Labyrinth/Whorehouse!!) Same plan as last year – same dive rates and same accommodation costs. Hopefully same dive conditions too, which were amazing.

Diving:

Ulladulla Dive Centre can cater for 12 divers <http://www.ulladulladive.com.au/crew/duckunder.html>

- ✂ Retail rates for double dives is \$100 (\$85 for 10 divers or more, plus one free of charge)
- ✂ Airfills for \$7
- ✂ No tanks provided – if you take one tank and they provide one it will be an added charge of \$10.00, or you can hire both tanks (or take 2 of your own!)

Accommodation:

I have booked the house, “Seahaven” <http://www.stayz.com.au/11509>

House comfortably sleeps 15 people, with 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets (main bathroom with large spa bath). There is a LUG for dive gear and a BBQ we can make use of. BYO linen! Total cost for 15 people for 2 nights is \$580 (plus \$250 refundable deposit). Dinner at Vincentia Golf Club (5 mins walk up the road) on Fri night, Club Curry night at home on Sat night.

Contact **Natasha** if you want to come along, and please remember to send Mark your deposit of \$50.

Email: natasha@bluecucumber.com **Phone:** 0410 074 677

All Full

Reserves list now

Gear For Sale etc.

I'm looking for a small/medium size BCD.
I would prefer lower air dump valve and integrated weight.
If anyone has one extra to their needs they would like to sell
I would be interested in trying it out with a view to buying.
Please give Ian Stenning a yell on 9727-9910, 0409 727992 or
stenno_ian@hotmail.com

***The planned trips to Merimbula and Kavieng are now full .
Paul Pacey.***

- Recent Club Happenings -

Australia Day BBQ a.k.a. “The Fog 2”



This year's Australia Day BBQ and dive organised by Jason was held at Bare Island, largely due to the expected chaos of launching at boat ramps during one of Australia's busiest holidays. Around 35 divers and support crews attended (including a few new members).

Jase and I dived the west side, covering the Sponge Gardens, Deep Wall and the Isolated Reefs. We were joined by a group including Carol and Eda. Others took advantage of the flat seas and incoming tide including Michael and Kelly (diving with new members James and Fiona), Mark Risdale and John Prior.

The viz. wasn't spectacular, with a maximum of 5 – 6m, but was a

warm 20° (19 at depth). We saw a couple of dwarf Sydney Lionfish (*Dendrochirus brachypterus*), a beautiful polycera nudibranch (*Polycera capensis*), two schools of striped catfish (*Plotosus lineatus*) at the Sponge Gardens and Isolated Reefs, and an Estuary Catfish in the same spot (*Cnidogobius macrocephalus*). I spotted the resident Giant Boarfish, and a school of hunting kingfish at 18m. A number of people went back in for a second dive after lunch, as the day began to heat up.

For most of the day an eerie mist drifted over Bare Island and Botany Bay.



At times the Island - only 50m away - was completely invisible from our vantage point on the grassy knoll. Container ships entering the bay sounded their fog horns frequently, and loomed impressively out of the mist as they passed the Island.



With our vista obscured, we focussed on the more entertaining drama of watching optimists trying to park in spaces where there were none. (More than one car was damaged trying to park on a concrete storm-drain outlet right in front of us). Anyone who ventured near their car was immediately inundated by solicitations by desperate drivers (Michael reckoned serious money could be made auctioning off our parking spaces).

To add to the pressure of parking in Japanese-sized spaces after circling La Perouse for 20 minutes, St. George members provided drivers with a live commentary and good-natured encouragement as to who will succeed and who will get a ticket.



As usual Jase underestimated St. George members' ability to consume onions, with 2kg disappearing in no time at all, along with sausages, patties and salad. Our thanks to Ron Walsh, Digby and Natasha, and Michael and Kelly for bringing the BBQ's, and to the owners of the gazebos and tables for keeping us all fed in a civilised manner and in shade.

The upside of the fog blown in by a light southerly meant that the temperature stayed below 30° for most of the day, allowing us optimal conditions for diving, relaxing and watching the car-parking madness.

I couldn't have felt more Australian!



Picture by Mike Scotland
from a Yellow Rock Dive

February 2011 Dives other than club dives By - Peter Flockart -

Saturday 5th

We ran out of Port Botany with Ray & Andrew Moulang, myself & Ryan headed out on flattish seas that changed later to a NE swell to Magic Point.

Andrew & I dived first. Rolling into the water above the kelp we descended past the cave to the sand line at 23m. From here we swam in a south east direction along the wall. The sand was very clean with lots of fish seen, - bastard trumpeter, blue wrasse, wobbies, a small PJ & largish school of Kingfish. Also seen were heaps of nudibranchs – Bennetti, marginata, ianthania & Neodoris.

Andrew found an anchor but couldn't get it (Ray & Ryan located it & launched a SMB, we recovered it after the dive). This area has so much to offer than just the Grey Nurse sharks, of which we only briefly saw one.

Back in the boat the hot wind that was driving the NE swell was evident & it was a relief after the others came back to the boat that we could leave for the cool run back to Bare island for morning tea & a swim before going back to the sweltering heat at the ramp

Water was 24 degrees C & vis between 15 & 20 metres Air temp was between 30 & 40 degrees.

Saturday 12th

Today 3 club members (myself, Ian Roffey & John Connolly + two old mates of mine) headed out from Rose Bay at 6.45am enroute to the wreck of the barge Danny J at north end of the Long Reef artificial reef.

Built in 1952 by the NSW MSB Barge 651 as it was originally known was scuttled in 1987 & now lies in 50m of water, with an average depth of 46m to the deck.

We stepped off the back of Yves boat into clear warm "blue water" at 24 degrees with 25m. I thought if it was all the way down it was going to be great. No such luck! At 30m the warm water was replaced by a thermocline where the temp dropped to a cooler 16 degrees & vis around 10m.

Landing on the deck, midships at 46.5m we set off to explore. A max BT of 18 min isn't much time to explore a largish wreck.

We swam to the stern & dropped over the to a forest of black coral trees adorned by red serpent stars before swimming along the starboard side for a short distance before swimming over the hold - but not into it - to the port side. Allowing a little time to clear the anchor, I checked Left & Right then cleared it from the wreck before commencing the ascent to deco. While here we were surrounded by large 1 – 1.5m salps, venus's girdles & sea butterflies. It was really good to see these intact as normally you only see segments of these creatures.

Deco was bumpy due to the fact that the southerly had picked up. Once back on board we collected the 2 GUE divers who had elected to free ascend, before punching back to Sydney Harbour thru an increasingly nasty swell.

By - Peter Flockart.

Kurnell Night Dive – Saturday 19th February 2011. - By Paul Pacey -

We are indeed privileged to be able to do night dives in the Kurnell National Park. Once again Gary Dunnett has been able organise this real treat for us.

My first introduction to night diving at Kurnell was many years ago now. We used to park our cars outside the park (in front of Don Knutsen's dive shop), load our rigs into a wheelbarrow (stop laughing, I'm serious!) and "barrow" our gear to commemoration flat. We would fit three SCUBA rigs into a wheelbarrow and we took turns at "wheeling" to the dive site. Gary's system is somewhat more convenient! The diving is just as excellent!

Mike Scotland said he'd pick me up, so we were late arriving and the pre-dive inspections and planning were already underway when we arrived. Actually, Mike was on time (I'm serious – he really was!) but everyone else was there early!

Some people opted to do the “Steps to Steps via the sponge gardens” jolly but Mike, Gary Dunnett, the Moulang Gang (Ray, Andrew and Ryan) and myself decided to do Monument to The Beach.

Whilst our entry was a bit tricky, due to the wave action, we knew that our exit on the beach would be a doddle whilst the other dudes would have to exit at The Steps with a swell running and it was gonna be dark as well – heh, heh, heh, good luck you guys!

Off we go...Hey, our entry was actually pretty easy and we soon descended and headed west. Viz was fairly good (8 metres?) and the water was warm – it doesn't get any better here.



We had only gone 10 metres when Gary spotted a pygmy Scorpionfish – nice work Gary. The Scorpionfish was then fried with camera strobes for a while. A Frogfish was the next thing spotted. These guys are normally hunkered down under rock crevices but this one was actually lying out on the sand in the open waiting for a tasty meal to swim by. I saw three Frogfish lying out in the open on this dive – this is unusual for these critters.



There were also a few Flathead lying around the dive site. I saw three pan-sized specimens but the Moulang Gang reckon that they saw a Flathead a metre long! However, the Moulang Gang are fisher people, so who knows? I didn't see it and they don't have a photograph!

There were a few Mosaic Leatherjackets and some and some Eastern Boxfish grazing among the greenery. Gary got a really nice photo of a Mosaic Leatherjacket



I flipped slightly ahead of “the pack” hoping to find some seahorses as I’ve been able to easily find them here on previous night dives.

Meanwhile, The Pack managed to find a Pineapple fish which I missed – Dang!

To add insult to my injury, Gary managed to get a photo of a Reaper Cuttlefish that had captured a Fortescue and was in the process of processing it. I’m beginning to despise Gary!

My seahorse search was still seahorseless when I realised that I could no longer see the lights of “The Pack” behind. After waiting for them for a while I wandered back and realised that I could now see their lights on top of the reef. They were exiting across the rock shelf. I decided to continue on to the beach exit (it’s a bit tedious to go around to the beach exit but I like to avoid the “blood and guts” stuff). After a short time, I realised that Gary was also following me to the beach exit. Gary and I exited at the beach about the same time that “The Pack” were getting out, after their foray across the rock shelf.



We were out of the water quite a while after “The Steps” people had returned to the BBQ area which was pretty convenient because, after we had changed into our non-rubber stuff, the banquet was ready to devour. What a tidy feast it was too. Michael cooked me a rare steak which was perfect, the sausages were excellent, the Cabbage salad was the best in the world (even if I do say so myself) and the conviviality was up to the usual high standard we have come to expect.

Many thanks Gary – I’m looking forward to the next night dive at Kurnell and I’ll be following you like a shadow next time!

The best part is that I won’t have to struggle to get the wheelbarrow into the car.

Paul Pacey

The pictures on the next couple of pages are from Ron Walsh, also taken on the above night dive from “The Steps” following is Michaels story on the night dive.



© Ron Walsh

Kurnell Night Dive – Saturday 19 March 2011 by Michael McFadyen

As the dive sites at Kurnell are inside Botany Bay National Park and the gates are closed at night, you cannot normally do a night dive at this great spot.

Over the years we have done at least two dives at Inscription Point, one in 1992 and another last year. We have done a few Thursday night dives at The Monument, but it is a long walk there and back.

Gary Dunnett organised access to the park last year and suggested that we do another few dives there this year.

On Saturday 19 March 2011, about 20 members and some family rolled up for a dive and barbecue.

We split into two groups, one to dive Inscription Point and the other to do a drift dive at The Monuments.

In our group that did Inscription Point we had Kelly and myself, Gary P, Adam, Ian G, Marc, Debbie, Ron, Maxine and a couple of others (cannot remember who was also there).

It was easy getting in and the water was relatively warm and clean.

The incoming tide was very strong, the difference between the low and high tide a whopping 1.65 metres.

We slowly swam to the east. The temperature dropped a little as we got deeper; it was about 20°C for most of the dive.

Soon a few pygmy pipehorses were found. As well we saw squid, some eels and a few fish. There were lots of nudibranchs and the sponges were very colourful. We went east for 30 minutes, but did not go as far as normal. Kelly got quite cold, and on the drift back she was shaking so much her torch was quivering! On the way back we had the best part of the dive. Another six pygmy pipehorses, giving a total of eight all up. This is more than any of us have ever seen on a single dive anywhere. There were white, red and brown ones, both small and large.



© Ron Walsh





© Ron Walsh

After the dive we went back to the main picnic area and started the barbecue.

Gary D provided a great spread, some nibblies, sausages, minute steaks, bread and salad. I brought along some onions and a few people supplied some nibblies as well.

We started off using the national park BBQs but they were so useless,

I could put my hand on the hot plate 10 minutes after we started. Out came Ron and Heinz's barbies and we were soon cooking on gas.

We had a drink or two and discussed the dive while Kelly and Ron cooked the food. The catering was perfect, a steak sandwich and at least one sausage sandwich each.

Thanks to Gary Dunnett for organising the dive. We have another dive here on Saturday 4 June 2011. Come along for a great dive and a fun night.

Michael McFadyen

0407 276 556 m

02 9545 5596 h

02 9585 6433 w

Club dive at “The Leap” Kurnell on Sat 19th was attended by 11 members, including one of our new members Fiona. High tide was at 9:30 am so we all met at 8:30 and got our gear together for the walk down. The sea was calm and the ocean blue, so we were looking forward to a nice dive. The first group down was Ron, Debbie, minus camera, Bob, Angus & Josiua.

The second group was probably only about 10 mins behind and included Ray & Andrew, Peter F, Ray, Fiona and myself.

It was a hot climb down in full wet suits and Fiona to her credit didn't hesitate for the first “leap” out from the rocks into the water. The vis was about 10 m on the surface as we swam out over the kelp.

On the way down the vis reduced to about 6 m, however there was plenty of life around. The other divers went on ahead and as I had Fiona as a buddy I was taking my time to try and show her around. We found lots of old wives, none that I recognised a large cuttlefish under a ledge and a full camping tent. The tent didn't look worth trying to recover, but I wonder how it got there.

Also saw one juvenile Blue Wrasse which was happy to stay out on top of the rock in my torch beam. We were followed around by a very friendly large blue grouper and got to tickle it under its chin. Maybe it wanted another sea urchin....

Fiona and I were the last to surface and we were well short of the exit by the steps. Initially we decided to swim towards the steps, but it quickly became obvious that the tide had turned (10:15) and the current was slowly taking us out. Others were already on the shore so we decided to head straight in and walk the shore line. The shore line to the steps was almost non-existent in parts, were we had to walk chest deep in water whilst the surf kept on us. In hind sight I think we would've been better off swimming in close and then swimming just off shore to the exit. It would've certainly been a lot cooler. By the time I'd walked up the steps at the end I was completely buggered, more so from the walk out, than the dive. However, all in all it was a good dive and everyone enjoyed it.

By Ian Roffey

DEATH OF A TITAN

Maintaining Sydney Harbour's status of working port was the cherished dream of many, even Premier Carr offering a glint of hope when making his famous promise. But politicians' promises are mere trickles into oceans of developmental pressure and anyone



A common site on Sydney Harbour for 70 years, the 2,000-ton crane-barge *Titan* was protected under heritage listing, despite which she was allowed to be towed to sea, destination Singapore.

with the
least



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by Alan Lucas

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Take monthly with water

sceptical mind could see that Botany Bay wasn't being over-developed for the fun of it. But perhaps the true awakening in this period of deceit came when the floating crane *Titan* was allowed to be towed away to a foreign country by a foreign owner: an owner who would lose her forever within a few days.

Many concerned citizens presumed heritage listing was her guarantee of protection, but what they didn't know was that *Titan* was only covered by the Protection of *Moveable* Cultural Heritage Act of 1986, a multi-faceted bit of codswallop that didn't know whether it was Arthur or Martha.

Incredibly, the relevant authority, the Department of Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories, gave foreign owners permission to export our crane despite her being in good enough condition to continue working (with a little touch-up here and there) and the strong waterfront rumble that she was going to Singapore - not to work, but to be scrapped (the fact that she carried 66 tons of old electric motors, rich in copper, seemed to substantiate the rumour).

Whilst granting permission to export, the relevant departments shed a few crocodile tears by expressing concern about a piece of moveable heritage being towed beyond the jurisdiction of Australian Courts by a foreign owner: nevertheless a permit for *Titan's* temporary export was issued in 1992 conditional on her return before July 1995.

From here on, things went from bad to worse as one bureaucracy after another failed to notice a few small details, as follows:

The tow ship, the 3085-ton ex-oceanographic research vessel *Rapuhia*, then owned by the Singapore Company, Wirana, had a lapsed class registration with Germanischer Lloyd, and although she was in excellent condition to carry out a tow, her Honduras registration proved to be false, the Honduras authorities stating that no such ship was registered in their country. They referred to her as a 'flagless ship'.



England's most famous express locomotive, the Pacific Class *Flying Scotsman*, takes on water at Gosford, 1988. She spent the Bicentennial Year in Australia and her unloading is believed to have been *Titan's* last lift.

Furthermore, *Rapuhia*'s Cargo and Ship Safety Equipment Certificate and International Radio Certificate had expired on 20 September 1992 – three months before the tow. A separate New Zealand Certificate of Survey was valid to September 1995, but it was subject to annual endorsement and this, before the tow, had not been done.

As if all of the above were not enough to ring alarm bells, no insurance was carried for any eventuality – certainly not for salvage costs - and although the Master's certificate of competency as a Foreign Going Master was issued by the Indian Government in 1974 and the Radio Officer's certificate was issued in Madras in 1991, the Mate's and the Engineer's certificates later proved to be obtained under false pretences.

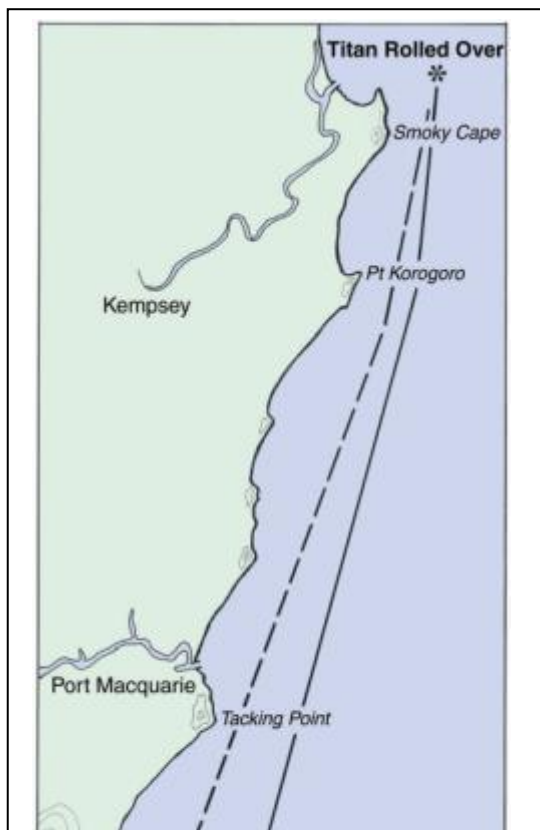
It would seem that these details went unnoticed or were ignored when an inspector from the Australian Marine Safety Authority (AMSA) found "the ship to be of a high order (which in fact, she was) and all safety certificates and certificates of competency were in order, and were accepted at face value, in accordance with the provisions of Port State Control". If that last bit – 'accepted at face value etcetera' – is legal, then that means we, the general public, could show the police a false licence and expect to get away with it.

Despite the many legal reasons for detaining her, *Titan* left Pyrmont at noon, 22 December 1992 towed down-harbour by two tugs that passed the tow to *Rapuhia* at 1500 hours just inside Sydney Heads. The towing equipment, including a towing frame fabricated on *Titan's* bow (actually her stern because she was towed stern first) and the 48mm steel cable with 60mm nylon stretcher (shock absorber) were in excellent shape and everything seemed set for a successful operation. The only weakness – from this scribe's point of view anyway - seems to be lack of awareness of *Titan's* history as being a difficult object to tow in a seaway.



This is a picture from our club trip away last year to dive the Titan from North Haven.

Classified as a 'crane-barge', *Titan* was prefabricated in the United Kingdom during and immediately after World War One and was assembled in Sydney to enter service in the Royal Australian Navy, December 1919. The hull was of riveted steel construction 53.899 metres long by 24.282 metres wide with a depth of 3.962 metres. Her displacement in working trim was around 2000 tons making her the largest floating crane in the southern hemisphere.



After reaching Smoky Cape (solid line), *Titan* rolled over whilst under tow and drifted back to Camden Head (dotted line). She was professionally scuttled over a gravel bed approximately where indicated.

Her crane had a cantilevered jib, which at maximum elevation stood 57.9 metres above the deck and could lift 150 tons through two 75-ton blocks working in tandem at which time she heeled to 5 degrees off the horizontal plane. The actual crane tower, at the top of which was the jib with its counter weights, hoisting winches and control cabin, sat over a central latticed mast on a system of 48 rollers that rode on a slewing ring. There was another, smaller slewing ring – or ‘roller path’, near the top of the mast. The only real connection between the crane tower and the barge were the drive shafts from the two slewing motors.

Within the barge itself was a steam-driven dynamo and electric motors that were replaced with a diesel-driven alternator and rectifier in the mid 1970s, by which time her owner was Cockatoo Island Dockyard Pty Ltd after the Navy decided it no longer needed her.

On a number of occasions, *Titan* had to cross Sydney Heads to work on such projects as the Spit Bridge and armaments loading at Manly Quarantine Station, her jib being stabilised for the crossings with her 75-ton crane hoists acting as shrouds bowsed down to deck-eyes on each side.

Yet, despite what seemed to be more than adequate precautions, her exposure to swell action so worried the authorities that she was eventually banned from working north of

Bradleys Head without special dispensation. It appeared that the jib, even at its lowest elevation, wanted to live a life of its own despite the shrouds and inherent stability of the barge itself.

And so *Rapuhia*, with *Titan* in tow, dropped her Sydney pilot at 1620 hours on 22 December 1992 and set off for Singapore over a slight sea. The wind was 14 knots from the north and the crew set up responsible sea going routines of regular inspections of all towing paraphernalia. It would seem that false papers or not, the crew of 12 knew what they were doing. The average speed was a little over 3 knots.

The following day the northerly increased to 20 knots and would later top-out at 28 knots, reducing *Rapuhia*'s speed to around one knot as she approached Smoky Cape, an area where the East Australian Current is always at its strongest. *Titan* was pitching and shipping seas on deck but generally appeared to be towing well. Then, at 2300 hours on Christmas Eve, an unusual movement aboard *Rapuhia* directed all eyes aft to find *Titan*'s towing lights missing - she had turned upside down! And here I must digress to point out the following:

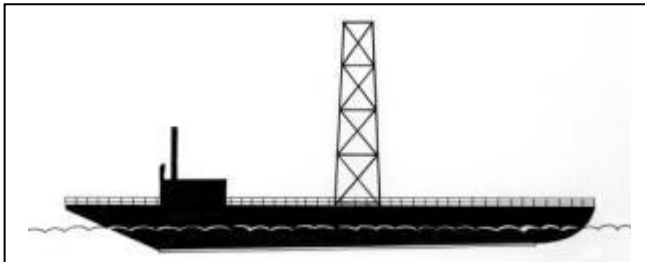
The official report claims that the crane barge had rolled over, obliging *Rapuhia* to tow it south out of the current to a proclaimed area for controlled sinking. This is true enough in essence, but insider information tells me that *Rapuhia* got the towing cable around her



An ignominious end to a much-loved and still useful icon: *Titan* lies upside down waiting to be scuttled after rolling over on Xmas Eve, 1992.

propellers and, thus connected to *Titan*, she impotently drifted south on the current. Evidence of this lies in the fact that the first job for a team of divers was to free her propellers of steel cable with gas-axes.

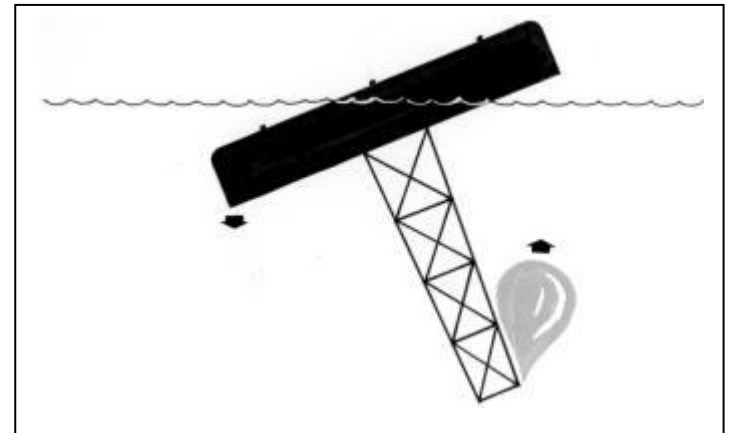
The tow drifted back to the Camden Haven area by the morning of Christmas Day where a dive team led by local divers Paul Doney and his son Scott met the ship and started work. Paul is a



When *Titan* rolled over off Smoky Cape, her crane tower and jib dropped off leaving no sign of it by the time she was scuttled the next day. Only the stub-mast, over which the crane's tower fitted, remained in place.

can-do person who has faced much bigger jobs all over the world, but to have a job come to him was a brand new experience. His first obligation was to video the barge's submerged areas then make a full report to AMSA and decide on the best method of salvage. His video

showed that the crane's jib and tower had fallen off and that the remaining 20-odd metre mast was twisted and lodged on a reef from which the ship – with her propellers now functioning, needed to free her. Paul then advised that *Titan* could not be economically righted but nor could she be sunk in an uncontrolled way because if her mast turned upright on the way down it would become a shipping hazard.



To insure against her sinking mast up, and thus becoming a potential shipping hazard, *Titan* had to be rolled on her side before scuttling. This was done using a floatation balloon on her mast in unison with controlled puncturing of one bilge. When ready to sink, the opposite bilge was breached and flooded.

AMSA agreed to Paul sinking her over what is locally called ‘the gravel patch’ two miles east of Camden Head. Having seen the underwater video, I can vouch for the fact that this is no ordinary gravel patch, some of the stones being large boulders with old steel wreckage scattered around. Trawler men have known about it for yonks, never going near it with their nets shot. It was the perfect gravesite for yet another steel wreck.



Seen here bearing southwest, Smoky Cape is an area where the south-flowing Australian East Coast Current is at its strongest. Under-tow late Xmas Eve 1992, a piece of Australian heritage turned upside down off this cape and later had to be scuttled.

Remembering that *Titan* was now upside down, the divers attached a 30-ton-lift balloon to the top of her mast then inflated it slowly while gas-axing holes along one side of her bilges, the idea being to release trapped air and admit seawater at a slow but steady rate. Between the balloon's lift and the flooding of one side of the barge, *Titan* slowly turned on her side at which time her exposed bilge was cut open, the balloon was removed and she went to the bottom, her hull landing on its side with the mast propping it at an angle so that now, 18 years later, it has almost collapsed to let the hull adopt a flatter upside-down plane.

How did *Titan* capsize? The inquiry found that it was a conglomerate of causes based on the probability that rivets had started leaking as the enormous reverse-pendulum motion of her crane strained the barge every which way. With the possibility of her having taken in a few hundred tons of water and the resultant reduction in stability - plus the increased movement and top weight of the crane - turning upside down became a fait accompli.

If we suppress our outrage of a heritage listed item being allowed to be treated in this way and then overlook all the other inconsistencies to view the episode as a straight forward maritime incident, a very big question remains unanswered: Who in the authorities' chains of command signed off on allowing *Titan* to go to sea with her crane tower and jib still in place? Hadn't her history of crossing Sydney Heads taught anybody anything?



In 1934, *Titan* lifted the 30-ton HMS *Sydney* Memorial Mast into place on Bradleys Head. In later years Bradleys Head became the northern limit of *Titan*'s working area owing to her instability when crossing Sydney Heads. Why, then, was this not considered when permission was given for her tow to Singapore by foreign owners? Pic reproduced courtesy of the Local Studies Librarians Mosman Library

- Big Cat Reality trip 03 to 08 Jan 2011 by Mike Scotland -

After dodging floods at Bundaberg, the Reality left the threatening deluge of the tropics behind at the marina. At dawn, we woke to calm seas and a great sunrise followed by blue skies and blue water. The visibility was 40m and on some dives in excess of 50m.



My trip began with a school of Pick handle Barracuda hovering above a rich coral reef with abundant small fish life of all sorts of colours and types. Butterflyfish, angelfish, parrotfish.... Blooming marvellous! Because the conditions were so good we dived the south, east north and west sides of Lady Musgrave island reef in one day. That does not happen very often! The sea was like a lake.

Next day we wandered off to Lady Fairfax and dived Josh's Joy, a coral citadel about 2000 years old with probably millions of inhabitants including many schools of baby cardinal fish and lots of big coral trout. It has schools of red emperor, Hussars, yellow lined snapper and sweetlip.

We did 4 night dives on this trip. I love night diving on the reef. We saw a 100 year old painted cray, massive coral crab, heaps of stunning parrotfish sleeping and about 25 baby turtles doing the "mad run" that they do in the first 3 days after hatching. I caught two in my hand. They feel like soft silicon rubber and are 8 cm long.



On day 4 we did get a squall of 20 knots for one hour then it settled down.

The sky blackened and the vis dropped off to 12 m but we found a very cooperative mantis shrimp which captivated me for half an hour. (My poor buddy)

The last day and a half were spent at Lady Elliot.
We had a little bit of weather but nothing too serious.

They have plenty of big Green and Loggerhead turtles as well as many mantas.

We saw more than a dozen during the trip.



The last day was a treat. We got to Herald shoals and dived the sea snake reefs.

This dive was special with schools of trevally, barracuda, batfish, surgeonfish and some of the other divers saw some big Queensland groper.

I saw some egg eating sea snakes and some Olive sea snakes.

All in all, it was another great trip on the reef. Five days of diving with 22 dives.

The trip home was interesting. We just made it past Gympie before the big floods closed the highway. A few days later I just beat the flooding of the highway at Grafton by just a few hours. That sort of weather comes along every 35 years or so.

Therefore....

Next January, I will be doing it all again. Stick it in your calendar.



Recently, on two separate solo dives, came across an octopus out in the open.

Octopus 1 was smaller than Octopus 2. Difficult to judge size because of different shapes but Octopus 2 much bigger and easier to film.

Octopus 1 was in the middle sandy area of Shelly Beach, Manly, about 4 metres depth. 24 Jan 15:28

Did some amazing colour and texture changes and then as if to say had enough posing for me, went and did a good impersonation of a flat fish.



As in attached photo 1.

Octopus 2 was about 5 metres off the rocky seaward side of Shelly and again about 4 metres depth. 27 Jan 15:26

This was already being watched by another unknown solo diver.

This also went through several different colour and texture changes and then like Octopus 1 got fed up with me and did a good impersonation of seaweed close by. See photo 2.

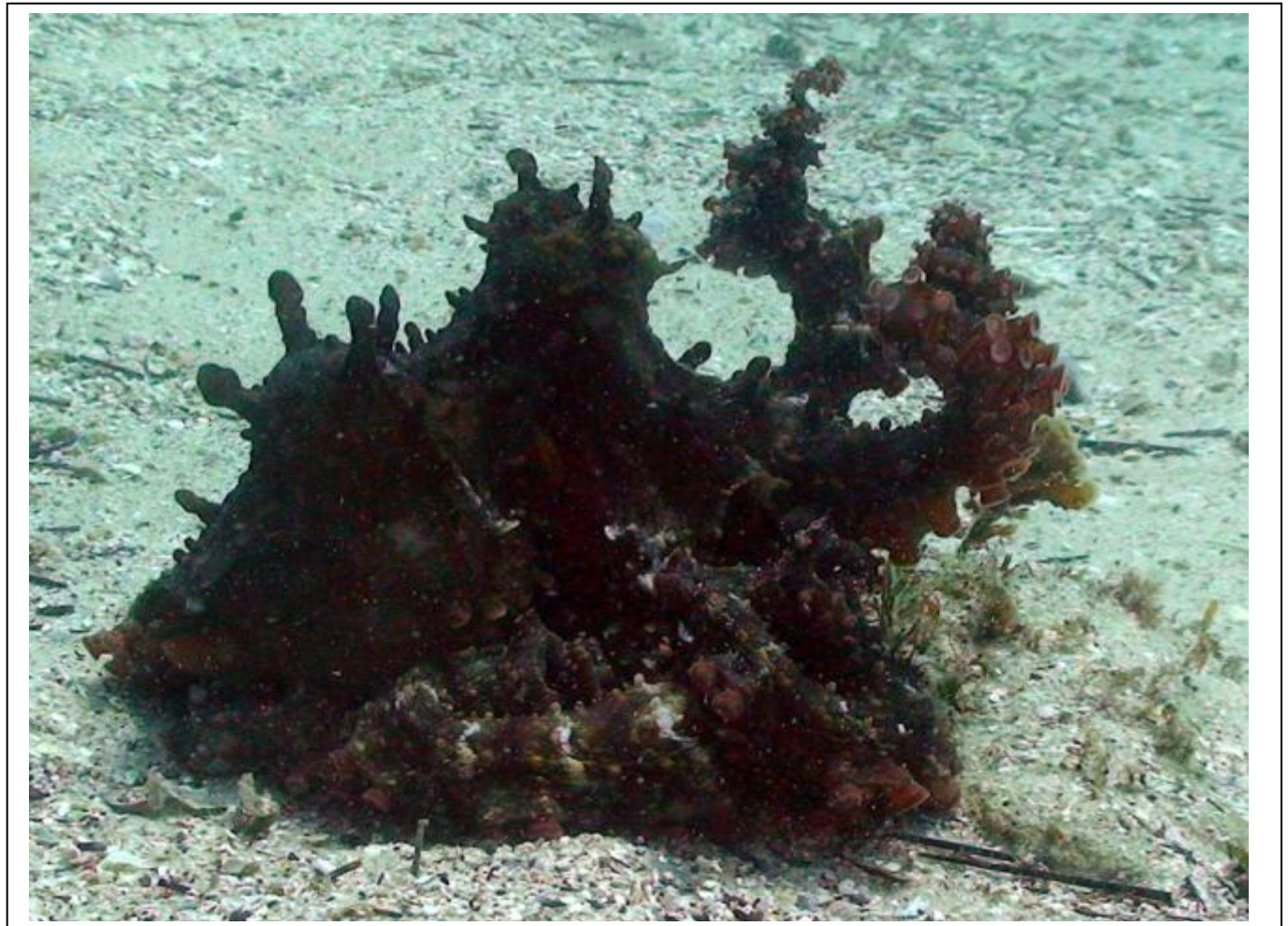
Although rare, I have seen Octopus out in the open in other places during the day ie. Seychelles and Maldives doing great colour and texture changes and also one of the rare Mimic Octopus in Philippines (which did not mimic anything) but never anything like this.

Have spoken to Richard - prolific local diver and owner of Dive Centre Manly and he has never seen or heard anything like this in Shelly before.

Would like to share this with others if you think it worthwhile and if anyone else has had a similar experience can they please let me know.

For the technical - I was using an L&M Bluefin Housing for the Sony HC7 hd video camera. This camera, because the medium is tape, allows shooting video and taking high quality stills at the same time - because the video goes to tape and the stills go to memory chip.

Chris Barrand



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