



Sea Braggin'

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

- FEBRUARY 2010 - Edited by Ray Moulang -

*Included in this issue are Dive Reports from :... Michael McFadyen x 3,
Mike Scotland, RayMoulang, Peter Flockart, Minnesota Mark
and Gary Perkins. A big thank you goes to them.*



Clown Fish from Fiji taken by Mike Scotland

WHATS HAPPENING IN YOUR CLUB?
WHATS COMING UP SOON?
- February 2010 -

<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHAT AND WHERE</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
Sunday 7 th	Club boat Dive from Yowie Bay To Barrens Hut	Peter Flockart 9371 0265
Saturday 13 th	Deep Dive To be advised	Peter Flockart 9371 0265
Sunday 14 th	Club Shore Dive at Shiprock	Paul Pacey 9527 2501
Wednesday 17 th	Club Meeting @ Rowers Club	Jason Coombs President
Saturday 20 th	Club Boat Dive at Osborne Shoals	Ian Gowan 9525 5942
Saturday 20 th	Club Anniversary Dinner	Carol Martin 0431 632 786
Friday 26 th to Sunday 28 th	Girls Weekend Nelson Bay	Kelly McFadyen 9545 5596
Saturday 27 th	Boat Dive to Hilda Wreck	Ron Walsh 9545 3979

Annual Ladies Week-end Away

The Ladies trip is on again this year for the week-end of Friday 26th February to Sunday 28th February.

High tide will be 7:52 am and 8:44 am for diving at Halifax Park, Fly Point or The Pipeline.



East's Holiday Park at Soldiers Point have come to the party again this year, with pool side Cabins and a late (3:30 pm) check-out.

Have a look at www.eastholidayparks.com.au for more information. Accommodation cost will be \$85 - \$100 for the week-end, depending on numbers.

The location of our Saturday night feast is yet to be determined; however there is some interest in going to the same Thai restaurant as last year.

All of our Ladies week-ends have been great trips away, with good diving and lots of laughs. So, to book your spot kindly deposit \$50 the St George Club account (BSB 062028 Acc 00800455) and contact Kelly on 0410 599 186 or kelly@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info

See what else is on this Year.

The 2010 Club Scuba Calendar is on the web site.

St George Scuba Club Anniversary Dinner

Saturday 20th February @ 7pm

Café Naked

28 Gymea Bay Road, Gymea



2 Course Dinner which includes Starter & Main

\$30 per person, BYO and no corkage or surcharge

“Great Food Is Like Great Company, It Requires Very Little Effort To Enjoy”

RSVP to Carol on cmartin@nsccahs.health.nsw.gov.au

by 15th February

Bass Point Dive and Camping Weekend

Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 March

This is a bit different to the normal dive weekend in a number of ways. On the Saturday we will travel to Bass Point and do a shore dive. After morning tea, we will head up into the escarpment behind Shellharbour to Budderoo National Park. Here we will camp at a location that Kelly and I found last year.

After setting up camp, we will do another dive. Yes, another dive! There is a deep pool here that looks like it may go deeper than a few metres. The water was very clear on our last trip here, so we can have a dive using the rest of the air in our tank and wash our gear at the same time).

After this, we can do some walks to the nearby lookouts and waterfalls. At night, a BBQ or roast around the campfire with a few drinks will round off a full day. On Sunday we will head home after a late breakfast.

You do not need a 4Wd to do this trip and even if you do not have camping gear, this can be arranged for you. If you are interested, contact Michael McFadyen by email.

Bare Island Shore Dive – Sunday 14 March

As most members know, this is my favourite dive site and it is starting to get over the damage caused by the dredging in Botany Bay. It is high tide just before we dive so we can do the Deep Wall. Meet at 8:30 am to beat the crowd. After the dive, a BBQ breakfast so bring some meat etc (BBQ supplied). If anyone is interested, we will do a second dive after eating. Let Michael McFadyen know by email if you are coming.

Michael McFadyen 0407 276 556

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The South West Rocks trip is now officially full as we have 16 divers. This trip is full (waiting list being taken). Paul Pacey.

Palau Trip Organised by Dave Casburn.

**15 Days /14 Nights Ex. Cairns \$2765 Ultimate Wreck & Reef
Diving Expedition 15 Days /14 Nights Ex. Cairns \$2765 Ultimate Wreck &
Reef - Diving Expedition - 21 October - 05 November 2010 –**

TOUR COST INCLUDES: .

Return flights Cairns to Palau - (flying with Continental Airlines) - Day Use of room at Ohana Bay View in Guam
. Return airport transfers in Guam
. 13 Nights Twin Share Acc. West Plaza Hotel - Palau
. 12 boat dives (6 days of 2 dives/ day) incl. tanks, weights, belts, dive guide services, lunch and refreshments on diving days - Nitrox for nitrox certified divers
. Snorkel Jellyfish Lake during diving surface interval
. Return Airport Transfers in Palau
. Day Use of room at Ohana Bay View in Guam
. Australian departure and applicable airline taxes (\$240.00 and subject to change)
Optional Upgrade - Extra 10 boat dives - \$685
See Dave for more info and to book.

Coming soon to a Coastline near you



St. George Scuba Club weekend dive trip to
Merimbula and Eden.
Friday night May 14th to Sunday May 16th 2010.

The main attraction for divers at Merimbula is the easy access to dive the three tug wrecks – The Empire Gladstone, the Henry Bolte and the Tasman Hauler. Even if you are not a wreck diver I believe that these wrecks are covered in marine life and attract hoards of fish too. The Empire Gladstone and the Tasman Hauler were specially prepared as diving wrecks so it's safe to go inside them even if you're not a die-hard wreck freak.

This trip will be a two day trip including two nights accommodation (Friday and Saturday night) and 2 double boat dives on Saturday and Sunday (4 dives total).

Note that the club program shows that this trip is scheduled for 21st – 23rd May. We had to move the trip forward one week because somebody else grabbed our proposed weekend first.

We will be diving and staying with Merimbula Divers Lodge (MDL). Here is a link to their website...

<http://www.merimbuladiverslodge.com.au/index.html>

There are a few other dive sites in the area as well – check out the MDL website for more information.

The accommodation is at the dive shop and they have three apartments each of which can accommodate eight divers.

The cost is \$260 per diver for accommodation, all air fills and 4 boat dives. If we get 8 divers then we get a “free of charge” which then brings the cost down to \$227.50 per diver. This is almost cheaper than staying home and cutting the grass.

If you want Goofy Gas (up to 40% EAN available) then that will cost you an extra \$6 per fill. The tugs are in no more than 30 metres of water.

The water should still be warm-ish in May.

I have tentatively booked 8 spots – please get your deposits into Mark ASAP. Please email me when you decide that you are coming and also when you have paid your deposit..

I'll work out dining arrangements after I make a visit to MDL early next year to eyeball their cooking and dining facilities.

Please note that you need to bring your own linen AND pillows.

Paul Pacey (Home: 9527-2501)

(Mob: 0431 691173) **** NOTE MY NEW MOBILE NUMBER ****

(Email: Paul.Pacey@inet.net.au)



Philippines -- Manta Rays - Whale Sharks - and a Volcano



12 days leaving about mid March 2010.

17 Dives + 2 days of snorkelling with the whale sharks (this is high season with a 98% strike rate), all accommodation and breakfast and dinners for 6 nights whilst on Ticao Island, transfers from airports ----- \$1400.00!!!! - How cheap + wait for it -- yes a full day trek up an active volcano -- just to let off a little steam..

Airfares look to be around \$1200 return.

NEED to confirm numbers to lock in the deal.

Expect to pay say \$500.00 - \$700.00 deposit using frequent flyers for airfares or about \$1300.00 deposit for all inclusive.

Deposits etc will be payable in August - September.

Limited spots -- Cheers - Mark Ridsdale.



Melbourne Commonwealth Ships Graveyard Trip.

13 May 2010 to 17 May 2010

Anyone interested in a rusty trip to Victoria to explore a few wrecks in May 2010? "The Commonwealth Ships Graveyard #3 is located 7km east of Torquay through to Pt. Lonsdale. Many of these vessels were stripped down and scuttled by an explosive charge or an opened valve cock, and many remain fairly intact to this day. These vessels were decommissioned from the early 1900's through to 1999 and range in depth from 30m to 82m. However not all were scuttled, instead overtaken by the adverse conditions that Bass Strait is infamous for.

Penetration can be had on some wrecks, and there is little tidal current or shipping to be concerned with so wrecks can be dived at any time of the day.

The main constraints are wind strength and the size of the swell.

There are 39 Wrecks to choose from and consist of tugs, dredges, barges, lighters, coastal freighters, subs, a paddle steamer plus a patrol boat."

<http://www.scuttlebuttscuba.com.au/wrecksitetable.html>

Group – max 8 (for comfort).



Accommodation: Torquay Caravan Park. Two per cabin – standard (\$180) or deluxe cabin (\$240) each for four nights.

We will be diving with Scuttlebutt Scuba Charters who are based in Jan Juc and launch their boat from Fishermans Beach Torquay.

Max depth of dives. Certified depth. Twins or 63+ sling required beyond 42m.

They like you to carry a reel and surface marker for free floating deco.

Diving 14.05-16.05.2010. Two dives per day. \$60 per dive (includes one tank/fill and weights (usually \$55 reef – \$65 for wrecks depending on distance not including weights and tank).

Jeff & Bev can provide air, nitrox and heliox blends with O2 @ 3 cents a litre.

Gear available: <http://www.scuttlebuttscuba.com.au/hire.html>

I will be driving down earlier and with a little sweet-talking carry some gear (tanks) down.

Flights \$49-109 one way flying Jet Star to Avalon – depends on how early you want to get up. Should you choose to fly – I will pick up and drop off.

Total cost for 6 dives and accommodation ~ \$540 - 600.

Deposit of \$50 as per usual to secure your spot.

Jessica McInnes Ph: 0405730031 Email: jessemac@internode.on.net

Oh and do I need to dangle this carrot?

http://www.hmascanberra.com.au/assets/downloads/hmas_canberra_dive_site_map.pdf



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Hi ALL,

I am planning a **club** dive to **North Haven in early July 2010 for a week.**

Boats – We have 2 member boats going (both boats are filled at the present time) with the other 3 boat owners unavailable to go (no spare holidays time - pity !!)

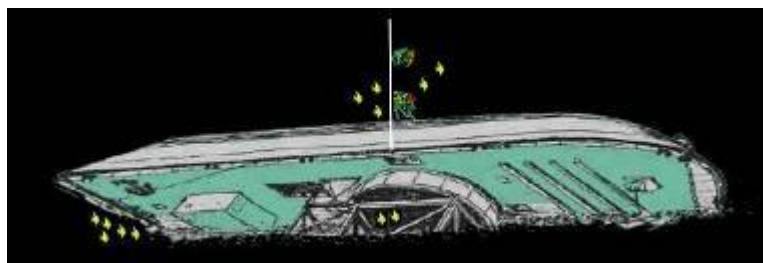
I have contacted Peter from “SCUBAHAVEN” divers and he has given me a good price of **\$65 per day, per person** for a double dive (this also includes 2 air fills in the price) this super price is for diveable days only.

We need a minimum of 4 divers with a maximum of 10 /11 divers (this number will be finally be decided by the sleeping arrangements in the 2 houses) to fully book his boat a 7.5M aluminium hull “Orca” with twin 140hp outboards - so you can dive anywhere without any local (divers).

Please see his **web site** for all information regards the local dive sites –



The main ones are the - **COD GROUNDS** – The largest site off the N.S.W. coast for big grey nurse sharks (100 sharks have been seen here in a single dive about 7 km's from the river entrance and only 18M deep) and the wreck of the “**TITAN**” crane in 40M.



Other sites include Perpendicular Point which is just south and the reefs north off Lake Cathie / Bonny Hills.

With 6 days of diving twice per day the final cost for Peter would be \$390.00 per diver - Subject to that you can dive all 6 days (weather wise)

Dates – Arrive Saturday the 3rd 2 pm to Saturday the 10th of July 2010



ACCOMMODATION WILL BE IN 2 HOUSES YET TO BE DECIDED ON - I WILL HAVE A LISTING FROM 2 AGENTS WITH PHOTOS – MOST HOUSES HAVE 3 BEDROOMS IN EACH THAT CAN TAKE UP TO 6/7 DIVERS IN TOTAL MAX. ---- SUBJECT TO FEMALE / MALE / COUPLES (MAKE UP ATTENDING) ----- THE ACCOMMODATION COST FOR 7 DAYS WILL ABOUT \$110.00 MAX. PER PERSON - LESS THAN \$16 PER NIGHT. (BASED ON 10 / 11 DIVERS?)

I need someone to be in charge of each house the club rents – as I must return home on the Friday afternoon (the 9th) so I can attend my mother's 85th birthday party on the 10th of July in Wollongong. -

Total Cost for a week 7 nights accommodation and 11 dives should be around \$500.00 / \$525.00

NOTE : 3 Members have already made an indication they wish to go – we need a few more quickly so we can book secures the boat and the house/houses. Deposits by February club meeting to Mark please.

Pay Mark \$115 deposit for (boat deposit \$65 and accommodation \$50)

Diving Deposit – is \$65 for the first day diving and then the remaining money to the operator per day.

House accommodation \$50 deposit towards the house with the final payment (\$60?) To be finalised once we have numbers) to the club (Mark) by the 1st May 2010. John B.

Tank Testing

Heinz will collect tanks for testing at the **February meeting.**

The cost of testing is \$15. To get such a cheap price, there are some conditions:

1. **Remove tank boots, mesh, valve caps, carrying handles, tank bands, sling rings and limpet mines.**

2. **Evacuate air from tank completely and close valve.**

3. **Write your name on the valve and on the tank** and indicate with a **YES** if you require an air fill.

Use of masking tape or tags is good.

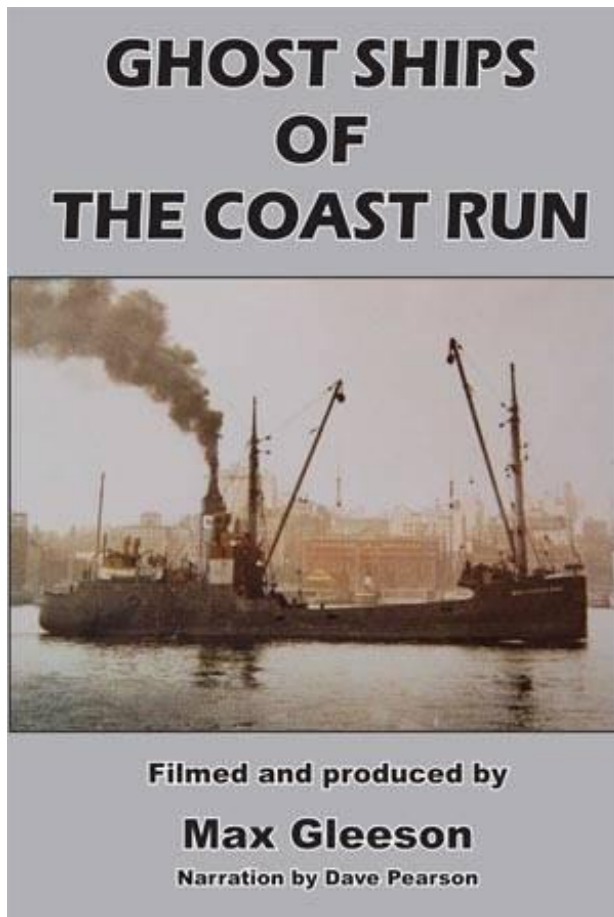
4. **Come to the February meeting** and bring your tank/s with you. If you can't make it to the meeting, find someone who will be attending to do it for you.

5. **Tanks will be taken AFTER the meeting in the car park.**

6. **No deviation** from the above will be entertained. If this does not suit your itinerary feel free to do it in your own time at greater expense.

**Coming to the Club Feb Meeting and presenting his latest
DVD**

Max Gleeson



Ghost Ships of the Coast Run recreates the loss of two “sixty miler” colliers, the Woniara and the Birchgrove Park and the passenger cargo steamer Bega.

The stories of their loss are brought to life using historical photos and movie footage of the time.

Spectacular underwater footage lets you join the divers as they venture up to 80 metres beneath the sea to film the wrecks as they are today, their artifacts and the surrounding marine life.

Following the highly acclaimed DVD “The Tragic Trio”, *Ghost Ships of the Coast Run* is the second documentary in the series on NSW shipwrecks by author, maritime historian and award winning underwater photographer, Max Gleeson. Runtime: Approx 1 hour.

LATEST DVD ON SALE NOW!
GHOST SHIPS OF THE COAST RUN
\$30 + \$5 POSTAGE AND HANDLING.
TO ORDER JUST CALL MAX ON (02) 9524 8077
OR EMAIL TO MAXGLEE@OPTUSNET.COM.AU

-Recent Club Happenings-

SS Undola – Saturday 9 January by Michael McFadyen

On this day we only had Le Scat available so only a small crew for the deep dive. On board were Les, Kelly Jo Edney, Jessica McInnes and myself. This is Jessica's first deep dive in Sydney and Jo's first deep dive for a while.

The original plan was to do the SS *Tuggerah* but as the conditions are so good as we head south from Port Hacking, we decide to go all the way to Garie Beach to do the *Undola*.



The stern of the Undola in 30 metre visibility

The rudder in the photo below is on the left and the winch in middle.

Just before arriving, we see a huge seal sunning itself. We anchor first go and Les and Jessica head down. Kelly, Jo and I follow 15 minutes later. As I drop down, I am surprised to see that the cross over line is attached to the bottom of my oxygen regulator and not the deco line.

I still have no idea how this happened, so I spend a few minutes putting it back the way it should be as it will cause problems later if I do not. I catch up to Kelly and Jo on the bottom.

The visibility is very good, about 20 metres. We head towards the bow and I show Jo the toilet. Before Jessica went in, I had set her a task, find out the name of the toilet maker.



The rudder post of the *Undola*

There were a lot of fish up here, including yellowtail and seapike.

We head back along the other side of the wreck and I notice that a lot of the sand in the middle section is missing.

A storm must have washed it out. There are lots of moray eels all over the wreck.

They are a real dark yellow colour. We pass back by the boiler and engine. I take Jo to see the prop and rudder and we then come back around to the port side.

We have decided to do a longer bottom time if the conditions permit so we decide to stay a bit longer. Soon it is time to leave, so we grab the anchor and carry it south across the wreck to the sand.

We ascend after 20 minutes and do our decompression of about 21 minutes in nice warm water (it was 16C on the bottom). I get out first and when back on the boat the seal we saw earlier comes floating past.

I attract its attention and it comes over. I am hoping that Kelly and Jo will see it or that it will go down and look at them. However, it swims off and they do not see it.

Kelly and Jo finish their deco and get back on the boat. We have had a great dive. Did Jessica find the name of the toilet manufacturer? Yes, and she even remembered it! What is it? Well, you will have to do the dive to see for yourself.



- Fiji by Mike Scotland -

In Nov 09, Katie and I went for a 19 nights and 23 day trip to Fiji.

We stayed at 3 islands Manta ray Island and Nanuya Island in the Yasawas and Mana Island in the Manamuca's.

All in all I managed 30 dives, some excellent and a couple not so good. Most were pretty good dives but I met some people who had dived Sipidan. They said Fiji just does not have it, by comparison. Then again, they said Sipidan was one of the world's best dives.

At Manta ray resort I choose to do scuba instead of the \$20 two hour manta ray snorkel which Katie did.



She swam with five manta rays in the channel.

I got to photograph a sea slug! Such is life!

Manta ray island had a home reef which was the stuff of dreams, just like the big aquarium we all imagine tropical diving should be. I freaked out the dive shop by having a two hour dive in 4 1/2 metres chasing tropical fish. They even came out to see if I was still blowing bubbles.



Nanuya Island was near where Blue lagoon was filmed. It was by far the nicest island and the diving was very good.

I did 2 shark feed dives with four types of sharks. All of the dives here were very good. The food was the cheapest in Fiji and the best by miles.

Finally Mana Island was pretty expensive and the food was average but I negotiated an unlimited dive package for \$500.



I managed to do 15 boat dives. The coxswain and dive master were fantastic and really helpful. Many of the dives were just me and the boat and my personal crew. This just does not happen in Australia.

I am going back later this year, probably in August to do the shark dive at Beqa. It is rated as the world's best shark dive.



The specialty are the massive Bull sharks and a huge female tiger along with six other species.

If you are interested in joining me, give me an email. mikescotland@optusnet.com.au or scubamagic@hotmail.com

Cheers Mike.

*Dive Report for Double Boat Dive
from Port Botany. By Ray Moulang.*

It turned out to be nice weather, clear skies and no clouds on this Saturday the 12th of December.

We actually used the newly opened ramp facility at Foreshore Drive which was great. It has three maybe four lanes for use and large long floating pontoons for embarking and disembarking.

Sea John and Scram2 launched from here and Down Under and Le Scat launched from "Hole in the Wall". Timing was quite good as we headed out Dave was seen diving Minmi Trench and the rest of us went up to close to Pistol Crack for a lovely dive. It's called this because it's really close to the Malabar Firing Range and you can hear the guns going off almost constantly. We dived in 18 degree water with 20 metre viz as the blue water had come in.

On Scram2 we had Andrew M, Bram and I.

On SeaJohn there was John B, Heinz, Mark R, Peter F and Jessica.

Aboard DownUnder were Dave C, John P, Gary and Nancy and Debbie.

Aboard LeScat were Les, Michael, Kelly and Clara.

We had 45 minutes to 25mt and the scenery underwater was great with quite a few overhangs and large cracks to be investigated. Not much fish life around but. Quite a shame for the clear water we had.

John had anchored in closer than us to the cliff edge and we later found out he was re-supplying his small size sinkers when they brought back half a bucket full of them.

Following this we headed into Long Bay for a cupper.

We rafted up and enjoyed the chit chat, company and the food before going out after an interval of 1h46min. and diving off Little Bay Southern Headland.

Here there is a wall that is very apparent and I have not had a chance to dive it till now. When Bram and I dropped in we found the viz had improved to over 30mts. Still not many fish about but once again the overhangs and underwater scenery were great. We had 49mins to 16mts with a notable big kingie swimming by while on deco. Thanks to those who attended and also to the boat owners for making this day a success.



COUPLE NAMES

In the fashion of Brangelina (Brad and Angelina), who are the following couples in the Club?

Gancy	Chray
Mikelly	Ronna
ShaSha	Renric
Lelly	Jox

Answers near the back of the newsletter.



Middle Ground – 10th January 2010 by Peter F.

One of the first dives for the year & people had been falling over themselves to come & enjoy the great water conditions that have been being experienced along the coast.

The dive had been fully booked for some weeks & unusually there were only a few withdrawals.

The morning started with many people arriving at the Yowie Bay boat ramp parking area early in the hope of securing a spot but it's not an easy task finding car & boat parking for 26 divers & five boats, amongst all the other boat trailers & cars already present.

As the boats arrived divers transferred their equipment to them & found parking places before motoring away to the dive site.

The first to leave was Sea John. We cleared Port Hacking & were the first to arrive at the site. As John Beddie wasn't diving, the crew – Heinz, Carol, John Prior & Peter F piled into the water as one. The sea was flat & vis good.

We had only just reached the bottom & were moving away from our anchor when another anchor descended from above almost hitting Peter F in the head. Once this was placed in a secure (??) hole we moved on.

The dive was interesting due to the fact that site is not dived as regularly as some & the 33m depth means limited bottom time.

We swam east over the reef which is dissected by a series of deep gullies & covered in a variety of ascidians, sponges & seafans. Amongst these were a plethora of nudibranchs, some of which were engaged in risky business.

Visibility was excellent between 20 & 25 metres & water temp was 19 on the surface but a chilly 16 degrees on the bottom. As we ascended to deco we swam thru a large variety of fish: one spot pullers, sweep, sea pike, yellow tail & bonito.

Due to the great conditions we did 26 min on the bottom & some extra deco.

After surfacing it was back to Jibbon Beach for the customary after dive feast.

While the other boats then proceeded back to the ramp at Yowie Bay, Sea John's crew headed out to do a second dive at Six Fathom Reef.

Vis was again good with us being able to see the bottom 15 m away. We again all rolled in as one & set off to explore. Heinz ran his reel from the anchor & when he came to the end Peter F clipped his off & we continued. The topography here can be difficult & it's easy to become unsure of your location relative to your anchor. The reef top starts in 15 & steps down to 21m.

In the weeds we found lots of nudibranchs including a small (30mm long) blue & olive leaf shaped sea slug from the little known Order Sacoglossa, fans of many types / colours & a long nosed boar fish. Carol found a red pipe horse in a red finger sponge – a type I hadn't seen before & not a camera in sight. We also saw a medium size ray eating a shell that had a hermit crab living inside. When I saw it the ray raised himself off the bottom on his wings & the crab was dangling from its mouth - not a good look. He dropped the crab & swam off.

This site is always a good dive & didn't disappoint this time.

As always I would like to thank all the boat owners for their time & making their vessels available for yet another successful day.

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Minnesota Mark's Cancun Trip – A review of the area, resort, dives and an INCIDENT.

It was -13F (or -25C) when we left Minnesota. Needless to say, we were pleased to arrive in the tropical temperatures of Cancun, Mexico. It was 77F (or +25C.) The resort town of Cancun was a 'designed' city where a strip of islands was transformed into a strip of hotels with the specific purpose of tourism in mind. (see http://www.cancun.bz/cancun_info/cancun_history.php for more information.) Cancun reminded me of a toned down version of the Las Vegas strip but without gambling. The hotel we stayed at was a timeshare exchange. It was called the Royal Sands. It was built ten years ago, and it was still in great shape. There were multiple swimming pools and a swim up bar. I was disappointed that the only hot tub available required a fee for gym

membership. Up until December 18th, the beach had been completely washed away by Hurricane Wilma and only the rock remained.

They had a dredge collecting sand from 600 feet offshore to replace the beaches.

Luckily ours had been replaced before we arrived.

My daughter, Katherine, and I went diving together. The resort booked dives through Thomas More Travel. The dive master's name was Xavier. He suggested I call him, "Have a beer". He was with Solo Buceo (Only Diving). Their web site is <http://www.solobuceo.com/>. The boat we used was the Silver Fox. Since they provided BCD and regulators as part of the fee, I travelled lighter and left my gear (Dacor HUB) at home.



For the most part, this was an ok decision, but the mouthpieces could have been in better shape.

Both my daughter and I found ones that had been partially bitten through. Ick!

We were only able to make four dives during the week.

The dive sites visited on Monday were called Black tip (Punta Negra) and Grampin. On Friday, we visited Aristos and Grampin (for a second time.)

The depth of all dives was about 55 feet or 18 meters. The estimated water temperature was close to or warmer than the air temperature. All the dives were drift dives with Xavier inflating a noodle to signal the boat while we were making our safety stops.



We saw Hawksbill turtles, lobsters, a nurse (carpet) shark, moray (spotted, snowflake and green) eels, painted frogfish, a pair of huge box fish, schools of barracuda and grunts (porkfish), trigger (black surgeon) butterfly, parrotfish squirrelfish, surgeonfish, saucereye porgy, blue-headed wrasse and groupers. The coral was in good shape considering the recent hurricane.

On Monday, it was mildly rough with 1 meter swells. More a factor was the swift current that was present on all the dives. I am not sure how to measure the speed of the current, but in open areas it was strong enough to require you to kick full speed to maintain your position.

On Friday, the sea was calm, but the current remained. Originally the dive was supposed to be a deeper wreck dive. As a result, my daughter Katherine did not join us. Xavier and I joined another two groups of divers on the Silver Fox. One of the groups was from

people from Brazil. Since they spoke Portuguese we didn't interact much. The other group was a dive instructor in training (from Arizona) named Jack and his trainee, Brad.



The first dive went well. Jack and Brad joined us and we explored the reef as we drifted along. Jack and Brad surfaced early when Brad's air was down to 520 psi (36 bar) while mine was near 2000 psi (138 bar).

During the surface interval, I was drinking 'bottled' water and chatting with Jack when I noticed that novice, Brad was reaching over the side of the boat to splash water in his face. I thought this was odd as it wasn't hot and salt water isn't the best thing to rinse your face with! A couple minutes later, Brad seemed to go stiff and started to vomit. As he fell back from the bench towards the edge of the boat, I grabbed him and yelled for help. Jack helped me get him down on his side. He was still vomiting and he wasn't breathing. I opened an airway and held it and he gasped for air. In about a minute, he came to and was totally disoriented. While the captain started back to the marina, I interviewed Brad and Jack called to have a paramedic waiting on the dock.

I found that Brad didn't realize he had passed out. He did not have any previous medical conditions or allergies, and he was not taking any medications. However he had taken Dramamine a few minutes before he passed out. He had never taken Dramamine

before. I didn't think to ask him at the time, but I hope he didn't take it by drinking saltwater!

I continued to hold and monitor Brad until we reached the dock. Brad was able to climb off the boat and I reported what I knew to the paramedic that greeted us.

I thought it odd that the dive masters never came to the bow of the boat to assist Jack and I with Brad. But when we got to the dock, even before the paramedics met us, Xavier raced onto the dock and up to the shore. Later I found that he almost instantly got sick when he smelled vomit. You'd think he'd have come across seasick guests before.

I would recommend Cancun as one of the potential dive locations to visit if you ever get to the Americas. The whale sharks are supposed to be fun to see when the season is right (May – September.) No one got Montezuma's revenge and we didn't see any drug/gang wars.



Cave Diving SA Style

Having secured the Christmas New Year break off, I decided to head south to Mount Gambier. You may ask why I would travel over 1250km to an area called the limestone coast but for those of us for whom the darkness beckons, this area is one of the best cave diving locations in Australia.



With the rich limestone ground and the historic volcanic activity that has occur in the region, it has left the surface of this area dotted with entrances to the underground water ways.

Teaming up with my sister Elizabeth, another keen cave diver, we headed out into the pine plantations to experience some of these refreshing sites. There are many sites that one can dive while in the area from the famous “Piccaninnie” Ponds to one of the most extensive cave in Australia “Tank cave”.



Unfortunately with only six days of diving and the promise to catch some crayfish, we were not able to do all the sites.

For cave divers at our level the best place to go is “Pines cave”.



This cave has plenty of places that one can crawl around in and every dive is different as you learn new passages and places to go. Having been over a year since I had been there last we managed to get six dives in Pines and then did two dives in “Fossils cave”, which is renowned for its fossilised animal remains that are still present in the cave.



Cave diving is certainly not for everyone. People often ask what there is to look at in a cave to which I reply “wet rock”. Animal life in the caves can be very limited due to its isolation but that is not what draws me to cave diving.

The most enjoyable part of cave diving and diving in general is going somewhere new and different.

I love the adventure that comes with crawling through passages where you can feel the rock on your belly and back all at the same time!

The strange sensation that comes with swimming through a thick haze as the silt comes in around you turning the visibility down from 25m plus to just a few centimetres.

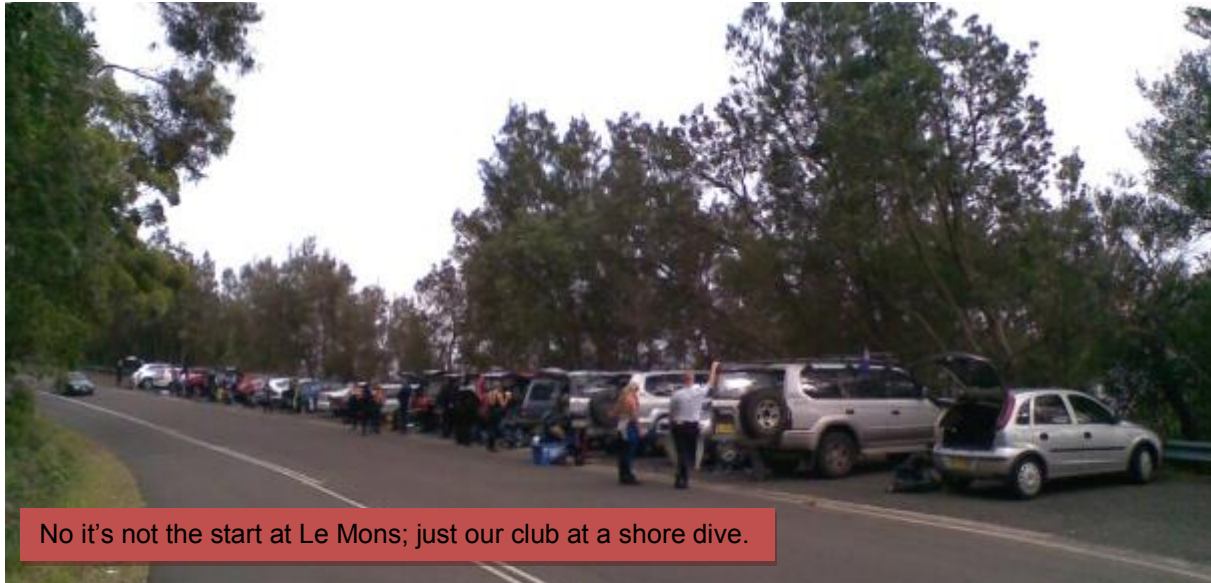
Most of all though it gives me an excuse to try another type of diving and you can just never get enough of that!

Gary Perkins



Australia Day Dive and BBQ by Michael McFadyen

The day started very overcast with a threat of rain. However, as the day progressed, the weather improved. Kelly and I arrived at Kurnell to find quite a few members already present at inscription Point (The Steps). Over the next 15 minutes more members arrived till we had monopolised the car park. Everyone was soon gearing up and setting off down the track to the water's edge. As far as I could count, there were about 29 members present.



Diving with us were Ian Gowan, Gary Dunnett and Clara Kellaheer. We entered the water and headed down to the sand. The visibility was not too bad, perhaps five to seven metres. It was an outgoing tide but as I usually do, we headed right with the tide. For the most part, there was very little current and only the 10 minutes around the middle of the dive had any real current.

After a while, Andrew and Ray came back past us, with Andrew carrying an anchor and chain that he was intent on salvaging. We saw a few sea dragons and I found a pygmy pipehorse. Kelly found a few strange creatures in a Gabo Island soft coral (they were colourful slater-like thingos).

We turned around at 30 minutes and headed back a bit shallower. As mentioned, we then had to swim into the current but apart from a very slight current for the five minutes after the turn, we made our way easily back to the exit site.

As we got out of the water, most other members were also just getting out.

A lot had gone left into the current and only a few others had gone the way we went.

After the dive, Kelly and I quickly headed home to get the final things in place for the BBQ.



Soon, everyone started turning up. By now, the heavy overcast was almost gone and it was getting hot. Lots of nibblies were brought along by members and the Club provided the funding for the food. I estimate that there were almost 45 members at the BBQ.



We had home-made sausage rolls (my recipe) as a first entrée, chicken winglets as a second entrée. Following this there were chicken kebabs and sausages with lots of different salads. Ron Walsh and Peter Flockart helped out with the barbecuing of meats.

Dessert was Kelly's pavlova and chocolate cake (with Aussie flag icing).

We went through a bit of my home brew (Pale Ale and Honey Real Ale) as it was now very hot. Over the course of the afternoon, there was a lot of mixing and the newer members were treated to some tall tales of diving.

The day ended about 6:30 pm when the last people drifted away. Thanks to Kelly for her desserts which took her a few hours to create. Michael McFadyen

Clifton Gardens Night Dive – Thursday 14 January

By Michael McFadyen

A near record 16 divers turned up for this dive. There was Gary P, Nancy, Dave C, Digby, Natasha, Edward, Jan, John P, Bram and a mate, Gary D, Ian, Eddie, Paul P, Kelly and I. we split up into a number of groups. Kelly, Ian, Gary D and I headed over from the wharf towards the Chowder Bay complex to find the huge mooring buoy chain. There were also a couple of others I think. We easily found it and within a few seconds I found a small black anglerfish, exactly why we had come over here.

We then followed the chain (the links are about a metre long) to the buoy. Here there are two other legs of the chain, so we followed the one to the north-west till we came to the huge anchor. We found a few moray eels and octopus, as well as some small cuttlefish. There were also some nice nudibranchs. We back tracked to the buoy and followed the other leg to the east before coming back again. We then went back the way we came, looking at the anglerfish again.

Once back at the wharf, we ran into the other divers. It was a bit crowded and dirty here as it is quite shallow and cramped and hard to not stir up the bottom. Kelly found another larger black anglerfish on the corner of the pool. We also saw quite a few sea horses. I found a small blue-ringed octopus and there were a few flutemouths. On the way back to the beach, Kelly saw one more blue-ring swimming in mid water! Two other anglerfish were also seen by divers, both yellow ones. After the dive, we set up the BBQs in the car park and had a nice dinner and drink. All in all, a very nice dive.



One for the Dive Calendar Planner

2 DSMBs for sale completely new still in packaging.

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Much copied but never bettered – The BUDDY SMBC (SMB closed) was developed by the same UK design team at A.P.Valves that produced the world beating Commando bcd.

A real gem of a product, the 1.4m x 20cm wide orange sausage shaped SMBC was developed in the early 1990s and quickly became a standard part of most divers' kit.

The SMBC is simply inflated by purging a regulator or air gun in the open end. The really clever bit is in the mouth, where a unique self-sealing baffle – or duckbill valve – is forced shut forming an airtight seal on inflation and preventing the buoy from accidentally deflating on the surface.

The SMBC also features a stream-lining flap which closes over the mouth when used in a current to prevent any sea-anchor effect. It also has an over-pressure/dump valve which prevents the buoy from bursting and allows deflation after use. Because the SMBC stays inflated it is easy for the surface crew to track or for the diver to hold aloft and wave if separated from the boat.

Simply attach a line or reel and you have a superb delayed action decompression marker buoy or alternatively it can be inflated at the start of a dive and towed as a standard surface marker.

The SMBC is pulled upright by tension on the line and clearly marks the diver's position.

All BUDDY SMBs now come in high visibility contrasting Red and Yellow or all-Yellow versions – which are ideal for use as Signal Buoys – for example as an emergency signal to warn the surface support of an impending “out-of-gas” situation (or any other pre-arranged communication). A message slate, strobe or identification marker can also be attached to a top eyelet.

<http://www.apvalves.com/uk/products/smb/smbc/>

More can be obtained if there is a demand. This is a Great Price for a great product. If you buy one you will never need another. Unless you lose it of course.

These are Yellow and Red for High Visibility contrasting colours.

Let me know by email if your interested first in best dressed. Paul W.

Gear for Sale

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- X Moray hood. Size 4 - Colour - Dark blue / black - Price \$10
- 1 BC (Dacor Outback) - Setup for twins (will take up to 12L tanks) Bands included, Softpack design with integrated weights. Size XL. Price \$275

If interested in any of these items please contact Peter Flockart either ph (0409 304 959) or email (pjflockart@speednet.com.au)

#####

COUPLE NAMES ANSWERS:

Gancy – Gary and Nancy

Mikelly – Michael and Kelly

Ronna – Ron and Donna

Lelly – Les and Elly

Chray – Cherie and Ray

ShaSha – Shaun and Sharon

Renric – Renee and Eric

Jox – Jason and Rox

I am sure we can get some more out of the couples in the club. M.McF.

~~~~~

Thought for the Week: *A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty. Bram*

## **Now Available at a ramp near you**



## **Regular Events**

### **THURSDAY NIGHT DIVES**

We have had some record turnouts for the night dives.  
Most of the dives have been very good, with nice visibility and good fish life.  
Contact Michael if interested.

### ***Other Dives***

Many other dives are advised in the news section of the Club's web site.  
If you are interested in a dive, have a look at the news section a few days before a weekend and you may find others already planning a dive.  
You can also place your own news item there (but remember it may take time to appear as it needs to be authorised by a web site administrator).

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### **The Committee is:**

|                         |                  |              |                                                                                              |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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**Please send items for the Newsletter to me *as you do them during the month.***