



SEA BRAGGIN'

St George Scuba Club Newsletter

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2013 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In February 2013 the club celebrated its 40th Anniversary at the Georges River 16 ft Sailing Club at Dolls Point. More than 120 members, former members and friends attended for a 3 course dinner, great prizes, gifts, music and a couple of drinks!

An event of this scale needed a lot of effort and organisation and we were very fortunate to have many volunteers on the night. The committee who organised the evening was led by Kelly McFadyen and included Michael McFadyen, Nancy Scoleri, Daryl Brett, Bram Harris, Roxanne Fea and Ida Di Camillo. Many other contributed to the night.

We should also acknowledge the prize sponsors; Barry and Belinda from Sport Diving and Dive Log, Dive Adventures, South West Rocks Dive Centre, Wooli Dive Centre, Terrigal Dive Centre, Scuba Warehouse and Dive Imports. They were very generous!

It was a privilege to be the President on the night and have the opportunity to recognise those people who have and continue to make our club the great success it is; namely our life members and boat owners.

The general consensus is that we set a new record of 197 members in 2013 - up by more than 20 on last year which was the previous record. This year we have a couple of big milestones amongst our longest-serving – and Life Members – of the Club. Phil Rose who is our second longest member clocks up 35 years this year and Michael McFadyen has been a member for 20 years.

In addition to being long term members of the club Phil and Michael have each made significant contributions over many years, including both serving in different positions on the club committee. What great contributions.

Our calendar over last 12 months was full again with many trips, including 20 members going to Komodo in Indonesia and a trip to East Timor. We also had 35 people, including 20 divers, travel to Seal Rocks for some excellent diving over the Anzac Day long weekend.

The blue on tour film night was held again this year and the club kept its winning record intact with Paul Watkinson and Sarah Brett both winning dive trips to PNG.



I would like to thank the committee members - our Vice-President Peter Flockart, our treasurer Kelly McFadyen, our secretary Digby Naude, our assistant secretary / treasurer David Casburn and our webmaster Michael McFadyen.

Also a special mention for Natasha as the new newsletter editor. Her desktop publishing skills have taken our newsletter to a whole other level.

Our diving activities continue to be supported by the generosity of the boat owners. A special thank you to Michael McFadyen, Dave Casburn, John Beddie, Ray Moulang, Wayne Heming, Peter Beaumont and Phil Short.

As we look forward to the next 40 years the club has never been in better shape in terms of its membership or the numbers of activities being undertaken.

Remember to keep safe and enjoy your diving.

Jason Coombs, President

2014 Calendar Planning Evening

The 2014 Calendar Planning evening has been set for Tuesday 22nd October 2013, 7:30pm at St George Rowers Club.

The club only exists because of the voluntary efforts of its members and this is your opportunity to contribute to the club by organising an event - anything from an overseas trip, local boat dive, local shore dive and BBQ, to a social dinner.

If you are unable to attend please contact a member of the committee and provide the details of the event you would like to organise, including the date and location.

If you've never organised anything for the club before, don't let that deter you – there's plenty of people to offer some tips on how best to go about it. The more activities on the calendar, the merrier!!



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JERVIS BAY TRIP

August 2013

Saturday's dives

Port Jackson sharks alive and well in Jervis Bay!

The fine, clear conditions belied the previous night's blustery winds as we climbed into the RIB at Woollamia dock to make our way out to the big blue.

We considered going out past the heads but there was still some swell about so Steve, the skipper, decided it prudent to keep us in the bay for the day and we put down the anchor at Bowen Wall.

All the divers made their way into the clear water and found the Port Jackson sharks (plus the odd Crested Horn shark) were out in force. Ray stopped counting at somewhere over forty. Along with the many PJ's were seen schools of various pelagics, along with weedies for the photographers and the occasional wobbie sighting for a lucky few.

A leisurely surface interval on a nearby beach attracted the attention of small wallaby as it came down from the cliff to enjoy the sun. After soup and snakes we were back on board for our second dive.

This time it was another at Bowen Wall but as a drift past Aztec Wall. Once again PJ's, weedies and wobbies were easy to spot in the good vis.

Back to the 'Seahaven' house later for a lunch of burgers and later some of the divers cooked up a selection of delicious warming curries for dinner. The food along with the odd drink for the 'thirsty' crowd soon had everyone in a fine mood (Bledisloe Cup result aside). [Editor's note – the Bledisloe Cup result was just fine, thanks!]

A great Saturday of diving that promised a fine Sunday of blowing bubbles.

A big thanks to Natasha for organising the trip and to all those involved in the cooking and into making this such an enjoyable weekend.

Ron Bryant



Sunday's dives

Well following Saturday's loss of not being able to dive outside due to rough conditions, on Sunday we were following the weather predictions that the swell would drop and the wind would be ok.

It turned out pretty good as we met with Steve from Ulladulla Dive and his rubber ducky at the ramp up the river, loaded and took off towards the heads.

We had the wind behind us so it made for an easy ride to Point Perp. We continued out and around and headed north with our capable spot finder, Ian Roffey. Once again we hit the spot called The Crossroads which is as its name suggests – tracks and trenches running north, south, east and west. We anchored up on the high ground and Ian told all the divers about the site. We were all in together and should set off easterly down towards the step, which looked extremely good as the viz was probably about 15 to 20m. Like being on a cliff's edge is the best way to describe this site. We went down a bit and followed the wall to the south. Some went deep and almost to the bottom at 40m-ish, most stayed along the wall looking for anything in the cracks and crevices. A couple of us had Pony Tanks as backup if required and all too soon and just into deco we had to return back to the anchor and up to the



boat. A great site and worth getting the marks off Ian if you're heading down that way.

When all back on board and gear strapped up, we headed up to The Drum and Drumsticks for our cuppa break. We passed the seals on the rocks but there were only a few around as it was also reported to us about a whale being washed up nearby and the Great Whites around and eating to their hearts' content.

The rest of the seals were in a better place away from all the fuss but we did see one not so lucky seal with a big chunk out of its rear end from a bite. It was obvious it was not to be living much longer. We tried to get out of the westerly wind but it was hard, even up against the small cliffs there. All rested and with the usual soup going down nicely we headed back out and around to try to find the Smugglers Cave. Not really sure if we found this one or Amphitheatre Cave but when we at the back of the cave looking out, it was a great sight. Not much fish life but a unique situation of being able to enter the cave and go in about 50m and at the middle it would be



about 70 or more m wide. Every time we get in there it feels so good, as you need next to no swell to do these safely (as we did). All was good and so we went back to the boat and back across the flat bay and up the river back to the ramp with another good day's diving at JB under the belt.

Thanks to Natasha and Digby for again hosting another great weekend diving and looking forward to it again next year.

Ray Moulang

Photos by Peter Flockart





Rox and the Monster Bull Ray

Great conditions with 20 – 25m vis and even though we couldn't get outside the heads on Saturday, with this vis the north end of Bowen Island presented some excellent diving.

On our second dive of the day we found a monster bull ray. Paul Watkinson volunteered to get up close to it so I could get a photo showing how big the ray was. Of course once he got close he couldn't help himself and touched the ray.

At this point it rose up and swam over the edge of the reef down to the sand below, where Rox happened to be. All she saw was this dark shape coming down over the top of her... and it did keep coming!

At the last minute Rox breathed out to let it know she was there. The bubbles startled the monster bull ray and it shot off into the distance.

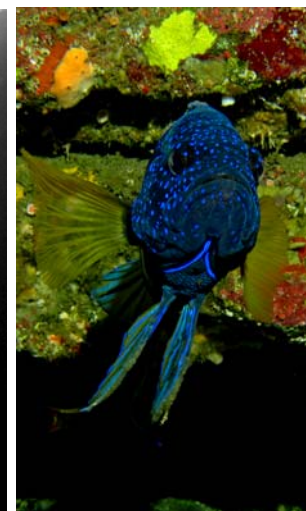
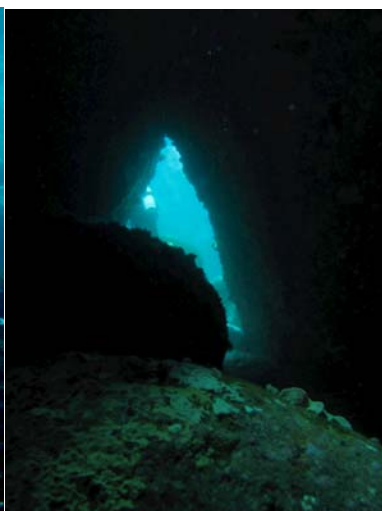
I managed to get a shot of Rox with the monster bull ray right over the top of her. Her feet are in line with the front of it (excluding her fins) and the rest of her disappears underneath the ray with no sign of her coming out the other end. Rox is 1.71m long so the body of the monster bull ray had to be well in excess of 2m!

A spectacular sight and a hilarious shot of Rox having a very close encounter of the monster variety!

Thank you to Tash and Digs for organising another great weekend at Jervis Bay.

Jason Coombs

Photos from Rox Fea and Jason Coombs



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XANADU AND OSBORNE SHOALS

14 September 2013

Four Boats entered and only one boat dived the site.

Sounds familiar these days, as the weather is totally unpredictable.

Us die hard divers, Rudy and Wayne, with Joe and Glenn, newbies to the club, went out. Those 25 knot



winds that everyone thought was around on that morning turned out to be maybe 5 knots. The swell was around 1m albeit in very short intervals, but with the mediocre wind blowing in the opposite direction to the swell, on board the boat could have been classed as quite pleasant (at least to those of us who don't suffer from seasickness)!

We anchored at Xanadu, Rudy and myself descended first into 10-15m visibility, set the anchor and lift bag, and as this site was not very familiar we started running out a reel. Joe and Glenn turned up about 10mins later.

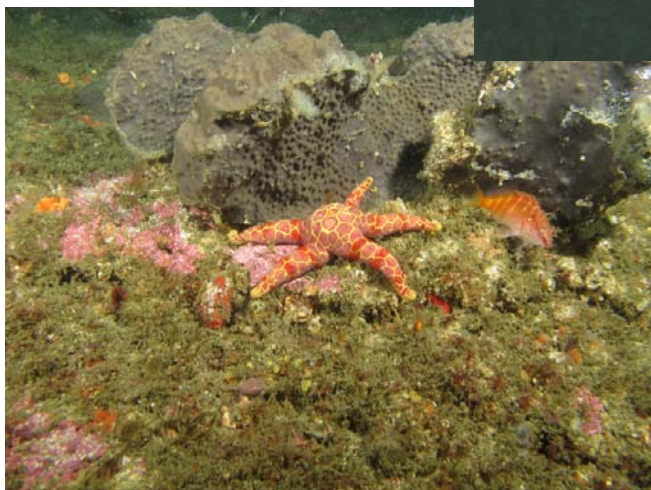
Rudy and myself had left the reel

near a rock ledge, under which was a very bright blue juvenile Devil Fish. We pointed it out to Joe and Glenn and headed north west around a small wall.

We came to a small clearing and found a very pregnant PJ eating what looked like a large conical shell.

During the dive I had a small, what looked a bit like a Leatherjacket, chomping at my mask a number of times, it just would not leave me alone.

With no deco limit at close to zero minutes Joe and Glenn had to ascend early, but Rudy and myself on 36% Nitrox had



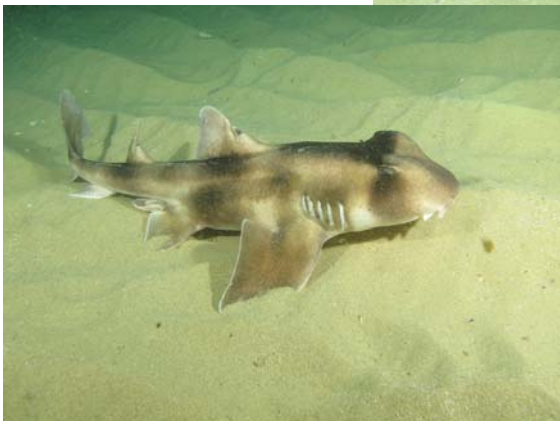
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8 mins left. I put some air in the lift bag and headed up.

We headed over to Jibbon beach for a surface interval, and Joe pulled out some absolutely disgusting chocolate slices. After taking a bite, I had to make sure the whole piece was just as disgusting.

Our second dive for the day took us to Osborne Shoals. Visibility wasn't as good at around 5-8m but a nice dive with a Cuttlefish, a few PJ's and a Weedy Sea Dragon. After ascending the wind had picked up a bit, about 15 knots, just in time for us to head back to the boat ramp.

Wayne Heming





Marine Biology Course

Learn how to identify marine life. This course covers most of what you see underwater, from marine plants, corals, crustaceans and nudibranchs.

5 x 2 ½ hour theory lectures filled with knowledge.

5 scuba dives, including one night dive.

Note: This course is suitable for any level of diver, from beginner to Instructor. In fact, it is perfect for dive instructors who feel the need to pass on some added value to their dive students.

My course has 56 pages of detailed notes based on my B.Sc , my research and 37 years as an active diver and underwater photographer.

The course notes make up a full manual of marine biology and could easily be made into a book. There are thousands of hours of research distilled into concise lectures. These notes are very comprehensive yet easy to follow.

The course lectures are visual with lots of photos similar to the ones on my website and plenty of information. Visit www.mikescotlandscuba.com and see the marine biology section or dive Sydney section.

Cost \$245.

Course will begin 20 November 2013. (Still being finalised.)

Contact Mike Scotland on 95217720 or 0415158168
mikescotland@bigpond.com or scubamagic@hotmail.com



EX-HMAS ADELAIDE

15 September 2013

With a very respectable 9:30 departure time, the team of Nancy, Gary, Bill, Caroline, Daniel, Scott, and Ahmad, arrived at Terrigal Dive ready for a fun Sunday diving on the ex HMAS Adelaide. It was our first time on Les's new boat, which was a bit cosy but well set up. The procedure now is to gear up at the shop, get on board and stay geared up sitting on the nice bench seats.

Getting on board proved the first challenge, as the previous group had left the ladder down when disembarking and it promptly folded in two. A spare



ladder was procured and Les's statement of "I should be able to work something out in 45 minutes to get you back on board" was best not thought about when we jumped into the water.

In the short trip out to the wreck, with the addition of two non-St George divers on the boat too, some new friendships were made and older ones became more intimate with the squeeze of bodies and gear. In the water there was a decent swell, but no real current. Once tied up, fins and mask were on and in we went. Descending to the wreck there was a lot of whale snot in the water (Viz probably 5 metres) and a substantial surge. Unfortunately at the bottom, a blown o-ring on the valve of a non St George diver saw their dive prematurely ended.

Dive Terrigal's buoy position is tied to the Bridge, which makes a good starting point for the dive. Penetration was attempted further down on the starboard side of the hull, but a surge hit and a diver being blown backwards surrounded by an explosion of bubbles suggested we should try elsewhere.

Eventually inside, it became a human pinball machine in some places, with divers being either sucked in or blown out. Only deep inside, away from any openings, was it comfortable. The Adelaide is certainly a lot more "wrecky" than when I last dived it in May – a lot more loose and collapsed items inside.

After a quick, and sensible, exit we went to the main tower, and then the deck, observing plenty of Kingfish in the vicinity. One cuttlefish was on the main deck, posing for photographs. Even the cuttlefish had to engage full reverse thrusters to avoid getting sucked into the deck opening.

A bit shaken (but not stirred), we made our way back to the bridge. The mooring line eluded us for a while until Nancy and Gary and his helpful yellow rebreather were spotted ascending and away we went. The safety stop was done hanging onto an excitable mooring line and then back onto the boat via Les's jury-rigged but functional ladder. The swell seemed to have increased since we entered the water.



The 11:00 dive did proceed, with a large group, but our 2nd dive scheduled for 12:30 was cancelled. Terrigal Dive put on a BBQ for us instead, which was nice, and sausage Sandwiches were enjoyed by Gary, Nancy, Daniel, and Caroline.



Thanks Nancy for organising an adventurous day out, and for a fun group of St George divers attending.

Bill Rowland

Ed's note: in response to a request for accompanying photos, Caroline stated, "None from me. I was too busy trying not to get killed".



WEIRD TALES

21/01/96, Dive No. 60, M.V. Victory

Dive site: Hyams Beach, Jervis Bay.

Max depth 3.5 metres

Adrian Nute's dive brief: "If you get into trouble, stand up and walk back to the boat."

The bottom was sand, sea grass, a bit of kelp and the occasional rock. I'd been lying on the bottom, playing with an octopus for about 10 minutes, having it wrap its tentacles around my fingers and playing tug of war with it, trying to pull it out of its hole. It had 2 tentacles around my fingers and the other 6 holding on to the rock inside its hole. He nearly pulled my glove off. Then something touched my leg. I looked around but there was nothing there, then I see a tail under me. It looked like a wobbly's tail. Yikes! I tried to levitate off it by flapping my arms and legs. It also started flapping and rising up off the bottom. Apparently this was hilarious to watch. It turned out to be a shovel nose shark that was hiding under the sand and part of it was under some kelp. It quietly swam off to find a less crowded spot.

Shelley Brueseker

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SCAPA FLOW



For over two years Kelly and I had planned a trip to the UK with the primary aim of diving the World War I German warships in Scapa Flow. For those who do not know, at the end of the war Germany had to surrender 75 warships into the custody of the UK. They were taken to Scapa Flow, which was the main Royal Navy base during both wars. This is located in the Orkney Islands, which are off the top of Scotland. On 21 June 1919, the Germans scuttled all the ships (too hard to explain why - Google it) and most sank, while some were towed into shallow water.

In the 1920s and 30s, most of the ships were raised, mostly by a bloke called Cox. This was an amazing feat at the time. Only seven ships were left, but these are all battleships or cruisers. In the 1960s and 70s there was salvage work on these ships, removing props and metals from engine rooms etc.

We had to book the diving 18 months in advance and even then, we were lucky to get on a trip organised by the Aberdeen University Sub Aqua Club. We used the boat Radiant Queen, which had been recommended to us. Like all the boats that operate there, it is an old converted timber trawler. It is extremely well set up and run by a rebreather diver called Emily. It had brilliant lunches and fantastic dive briefs, by far the best I have ever seen.

Getting to Scapa was a holiday in itself. We left Sydney on 30 July and flew Emirates to Glasgow (one stop and 30 kg luggage), where we hired a car. Over the next few days we did some sightseeing (Loch Ness and some walks) and





then caught the train from Inverness to Thurso at the top of mainland Scotland. From here we travelled by a large ferry to Stromness, which is the base for Scapa diving.

After setting up our gear on the boat on the Saturday afternoon, we moved into our great accommodation about 50 metres from the boat. The morning of Sunday 4 August saw us heading out for the first dive. Each day it was about one hour out to the wrecks, then a dive, then a long surface interval of at least three hours, another dive and then an hour back to Stromness. Even getting back on board was easy, they had a diver lift that took you back up to the deck. Luxury! It was a very relaxing day, leaving the port about 8:30 am. Of course it was light from about 4 am till 10:30 pm, so we did not really see much darkness while up there.

The wrecks range in depth to the sand from 25 to 43 metres, with most about 34 metres. There are three battleships in Scapa. All are upside down, but still make magnificent dives. The four cruisers are mostly on their sides, making them easier to understand.

Of the wrecks, we thought that the battleship SMS Markgraf was the best. This is at 43 metres, but the top of the hull is only at 28 metres. This wreck is huge and we did two dives on it. There are seven 5.9 inch guns visible. The stern is also very nice and the bow is enormous. All the wrecks were enjoyable, but the SMS Brummer and another battleship, SMS Kronprinz Willem, which has three 12 inch guns visible under the wreck, were also excellent dives. We did a total of 12 dives over the six days of diving. While these ships do not have the intactness or artefacts like the ones in Chuuk, they are still amazing in their own right.

We also dived on a WWII ship and a blockship, the SS Tabarka (blockships were used to block the channels between islands to stop submarines getting into Scapa). The Tabarka was also a brilliant dive.

Dives are done with the boat being live, that is, it does not anchor. All the wrecks are buoyed, so you descend down the shotline. Kelly and I tended to also come back up the shotline, but most of the divers sent up SMBs and ascended them. We also did this a couple of times.

Visibility on the warships ranged from 5 to 10 metres, averaging 7 metres. Water temperature on the bottom was 11.5° to 12.5° and over 13° on deco. We did most dives on Nitrox (25% to 32%) and used a 50% mix for deco. All but one of the warships was a deco dive. We dived very conservatively, only



doing a maximum of about 10 minutes and doing our shallow stop at 6 metres rather than 3 metres. There was little current affecting the wrecks (except the Tabarka). All in all, the diving was a lot easier than I thought it may have been, considering Scapa has a reputation for been cold and dark (a couple of Dutch



divers had disappeared a few months before we left and were only found just before we got there).

In summary, Scapa Flow was an amazing experience that was well worth all the effort.

Swanage

After Scapa Flow, we travelled through Scotland, Wales and England. On 27 August we arrived at Swanage. This is a small coastal town south of Bath. There are a couple of dozen shipwrecks within 10 kilometres of the town, so diving is very popular here. The dive operator had three of the best dive boats I have ever seen – huge diesel-powered catamarans (bigger than Wooli's one). We booked four dives here, but one of the wrecks that we were looking forward to doing, a 10,000 ton cargo ship that sank in 1979, the Aeolian Sky was not done as they could not get enough divers interested in doing it.

We ended up doing three wrecks and one reef dive. The reef dive was very ordinary and not worth it. The wrecks were quite good, with one, the HMAT Kyarra, one of the better wrecks I have ever dived. This Australian war transport was torpedoed in WWI and sank just off the town. It was 7,000 tons and even though it is almost 100 years since it was sunk, it is in remarkably good condition. We covered the whole wreck in the one dive (it is at 28 metres), but you could spend a whole week diving it. The huge boilers and engines were very interesting and you could even still see the timber decking and some tiles inside a bathroom. It is said that it is the most popular wreck in England, and I can believe this.

The dive operation was very well run and we were lucky to have a very good briefing by a local diver about the Kyarra. Again, if you are in England, Swanage is a place that I would



recommend a few dives. The water was a lot warmer than Scapa Flow, at 18°. Visibility was generally worse, about five metres, but the Kyarra had 15 metres. Even the five metres was considered good by the local divers!

For more information about the wrecks, see my website.

Michael McFadyen





For Sale

- **Olympus Underwater Housing model PT-043 used in box to suit Olympus uTough-8000 \$25**
- **Free to good home Olympus uTough-8000 accessories including 4 x LI-50B batteries, battery charger, AC adapter, 2 x camera to USB cables, 2 x camera to AV cables, camera strap and Olympus Master 2 PC software. (Camera not included as it flooded!)**
- **Weight belts \$6 each**
- **3lb and 6lb weights \$1 per lb**
- **Various masks \$5 each**

Phone Maxine 9527 4207 or 0418 630 146

For Sale

Women's Semi-Dry Suit – XS (fit size 8 – 10)

Brand: Moray 175

7mm with 10mm back for added warmth

Thigh pocket

\$50

Contact Janine Gregson

67nene@gmail.com or

0418 976 795





NEW GUINEA

I went for a dive trip to Walindi and Rabaul in July.

I did 17 dives at Walindi. The diving here is excellent. We saw many wonderful things, including Pygmy Sea Horses, Boxer crabs and lots of sharks, Barracuda and Big Eye Trevally. After a week, I did an 8 night trip on the Febrina to Rabaul. We dived the Father's reefs, which are untouched and pristine. Febrina is the liveaboard that is based at Febrina.

We had a number of shark feeds and night dives. The typical day began with a 6 a.m. wake up call followed by a 6:30 dive. On most days five dives were on offer, using Nitrox.

We did some muck diving in Rabaul Harbour. There is an incredible array of critters that live there. We found a school of 600 Razor Fish, Demon Stingers and Mimic Octopus. In addition, there were Snake Eels, Sea Horses and Robust Ghost pipe fish.

I decided to do a second trip on Febrina on the way back to Walindi.

All in all, I managed 77 dives. My favourite dives were the night dives and the shark dives. Then again, the reef dives were pretty good as well. I am hoping to do a return trip up there next year.

There are 40 photos on my website. Click on the New Guinea tab.

www.mikescotlandscuba.com

Mike Scotland





WHAT'S COMING UP?

WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT
Wed 16 Oct	Club Meeting Rowers on Cook Club	Gary Perkins perkinsdive@gmail.com	Sun 20 Oct	Frenchmans Bay Boat Dive/BBQ	Kelly McFadyen kelly@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info
Tues 22 Oct	2014 Calendar Planning Rowers on Cook Club	Gary Perkins perkinsdive@gmail.com	Sat 26 Oct	Boat Dive Osborne Shoals	Shelley Brueseker shellsb@bigpond.net.au
Sat 2 Nov	Deep Dive SS Tuggerah/SS Undola	Michael McFadyen michael@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info	Sat 2 - Sun 3 Nov	Stockton Beach 4WD and Dive	Ray Moulang rayscases@aol.com
Sun 9 Nov	Boat Dive Pizza Reef	Tricia Henry thenry456@bigpond.com	Sun 10 - Sat 16 Nov	SS Yongala	Ian Roffey ianroffey@gmail.com

NEW CLUB COMMITTEE 2014

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