



# Sea Braggin'

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

**December '18 / January '19**

### TRIPS AWAY

#### Bill & Jasmine's Christmas Road Trip

Story & Photos by Bill Rowland

Jasmine and I decided on a 2 stop diving road trip from Brisbane back to Sydney, after Christmas.

Choice #1 was Manta Lodge on North Stradbroke Island.



We took the vehicle ferry over on Boxing Day, with an attendant who'd either had too much Christmas Cheer the day before, or perhaps not enough. I'd considered just taking the cheaper passenger ferry but was pleased we had the car. There were some seriously loaded (and seriously well packed) 4WDs and trailers beside us on the ferry. 35 vehicles in all.

It was a popular time in the YHA accommodation but the place is well setup with separate fridge space per room etc. We went off exploring and loved the Frenchman's Bay area (No relation to the La Perouse one – I had to know) and capped the day off with a sunset drink on the balcony at the Point Lookout S.L.S.C. Whilst Jasmine is normally very good at navigating she felt the need to stop and ask directions from local lifesavers. It must be something recent in their training as she only asked the young bronzed blokes in speedos.



The buoys for all the shark drum lines could also be seen across the vista as well. For those who are curious, I learnt that they wrap the bait around the hooks in wire mesh, so it doesn't get nibbled away by all the fish.

The next morning, we geared up (including the mandatory QLD snorkel and whistle), loaded the boat, and hopped aboard on the beach next to the accommodation. A well rusted tractor reversed us into the sea and out we went. It was perhaps 15 minutes to the dive site Manta Bommie.

We dropped in and immediately there were Mantas. Woohoo. One came past then another three. Apparently, there were 7 in total. They came in quite close and were happy to hover and be cleaned. Visibility started at 15m but dropped to 10, max depth 12m, and max dive time allowed was 50 min. Nitrox (at \$20 per fill) was not needed.

We headed away from the cleaning station and saw a number of rather active occy's, some very inactive wobbie's and leopard sharks, and a variety of rays - most of whom were very well hidden under the sand. Shovelnose rays are funny looking critters...

Returning to the cleaning station it was fun to watch the energy with which the cleaner wrasse did their job. Perhaps the Mantas were ticklish but gosh there were some areas the cleaners were not wanted and the Mantas expressed displeasure, when they got cleaned near the tail.

It was a 30 minute surface interval and back we went at the same site. A similar report to dive 1, but with one addition: one Manta heading to the cleaning station had two full sized fish in tow - Dogtooth Tuna perhaps. I heard the big fish save energy by being pulled along in the wake.



It was a full boat with 10 customers, 2 DMs, and a Captain. Cozy, but ok. One shop regular surfaced after the 2nd dive, took his mask off in the water, and had a bluebottle sting him across the face and in his eye. I've never seen a grown man whimper like that before (for the entire trip home). Ouch. There was no hot water on the boat to treat the sting – all they had was half a thermos of hot pumpkin soup. He poured that all over his face and his beard caught all the

good bits. I dared not call him an oompa loompa, but he was a sight to behold!

Day 2 was slightly bumpier, but back we went to Manta Bommie. They asked if we wanted to go somewhere else, and I said we wouldn't object. The response was that others would object more at missing out on mantas during peak season, so that was a worthwhile question.

Jasmine and I did our own thing and really enjoyed pottering about and pausing to study one very active octopus in particular. Some very feisty damselfish? were quite protective of their tendered gardens and firmly told us to depart, and there were also rock lobsters, nudi's, and a number of moray eels. The 2nd dive we followed a guide again and had about 5 mantas (one had perhaps a dozen tuna / kingfish trailing behind them, all at a constant angle - it looked spectacular).

Closing thoughts on North Straddie - I'm pleased to have gone and enjoyed the plentiful Mantas (and octopus). It's hard to know if it's a one trick pony, or if other sites there have sufficient diversity to warrant a return visit (not in peak season). The dive operation was good, and it's a pretty place (but hot in summer!).

Thanks very much to Geoff Ward for taking the time to pass on advice from his earlier trip there, it made ours much more efficient.

Stop #2 was Wooli. It was good to be back diving North Solitary island after our last visit 2 years ago. The Captain remembered us (well - probably not me so much), and the full boat headed out to the Bubble Cave mooring. The water was 21 degrees compared to the nicer QLD 25 degrees, but there was stacks of fish life around in general, and the rear of the cave was chockers. In the 15m viz, we also came across wobbies, morays, cuttles, tang, fusiliers, and cornet fish.

The 2nd dive was at elbow cave, and we saw wobbies, morays, sweetlips, some never-seen-before lime green nudi's, and a Grey Nurse Shark went past us too.

In hindsight, 1 day at Straddie and 2 days at Wooli would have been better. Picking up a couple of dozen unshucked, Nambucca Heads



Oysters on the way home was worth the detour, too!

Buoyed by some fun diving, we accepted Ken's invitation for a New Year's Day dive. It's fair to say 2018 ended way better than 2019 diving started. 1m green viz on the cold descent, opened up to 3m on the bottom at Whalewatch. It can only get better from here (I hope). Happy New Year, everyone.

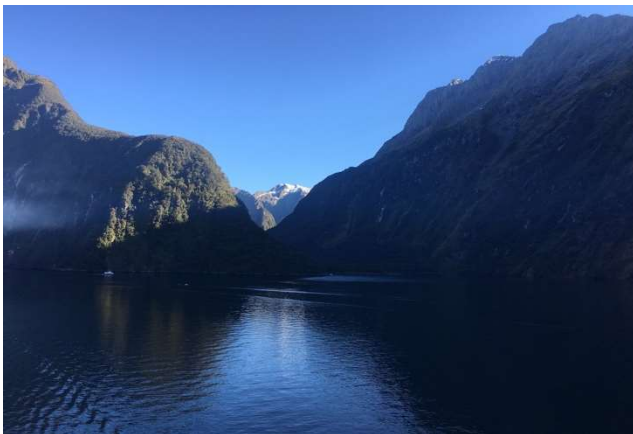
## Bay of Islands, New Zealand.

**New Year's Eve 2018**

**Article & photos by Mark Arrowsmith**

Over the Christmas break, my family & I went on a 12 night cruise to New Zealand and back. It was my first time on a cruise ship... We had 5 stops along the way, which were Dunedin, Picton, Tauranga, Auckland and Paihia (Bay of Islands) Plus a detour into Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound and Dusky Sound.

Milford Sound was absolutely spectacular! Being surrounded by peaks that were around 1.6 km high and cliffs that went straight down underwater a further 500m was breathtaking! And to think that the entire valley was carved out by a glacier thousands of years ago was incredible...



Whilst all the day-trips onshore were great, I found life onboard a little boring... I mean, I can only sit around a pool drinking, eating, sleeping for so long.

Which leads me to the subject of diving... I hadn't considered any diving on this trip at all. It was supposed to be a family trip away, not a dive trip.

But, there I was laying around one day and my thoughts turned to diving. (nothing new there!) And so, after a quick search on the net, I found that both the Rainbow Warrior and the ex HMNZS Canterbury wrecks were both accessible from Paihia in the Bay of Islands.

Paihia was our last stop on the trip... whoohoo! After looking at a few dive shops in the area, I found that Paihia Dive had a wreck dive on the Canterbury scheduled that day. The only problem was that they normally headed out at 8:00am and our ship wasn't due to arrive in Paihia until 8:00... So, I didn't think I'd be able to do it because I wouldn't have time to get to the shop first to arrange all the hire gear.

But I contacted them anyway & made an enquiry. After several messages back & forth between the shop manager, Craig, he informed me that they work in with cruise ships all the time & in fact, there were 3 other passengers on board our ship that were booked in for the same dive! Great! Book me in I said!

After making the booking, I decided to also book in my son, Will, to do the PADI 'Discover Scuba' course.



*Maunganui Bay with Putahataha Island in the foreground & Deep Water Cove in the background.*

Finally, the day arrived and Will & I were met at the pier by our divemaster, Luke, and given a ride back to the shop. After having previously given Craig our measurements, we picked up our pre-packed bag of dive gear, filled out the necessary paperwork & headed back to the pier to board their dive boat.

We headed out of the harbour & then on to the dive site at Deepwater Cove in Maunganui Bay

through some absolutely stunning scenery! So, many beautiful islands...

The trip out took about 40 minutes but, it could have taken all day for all we cared! It was a beautiful sunny day, flat seas and gorgeous landscapes all around!



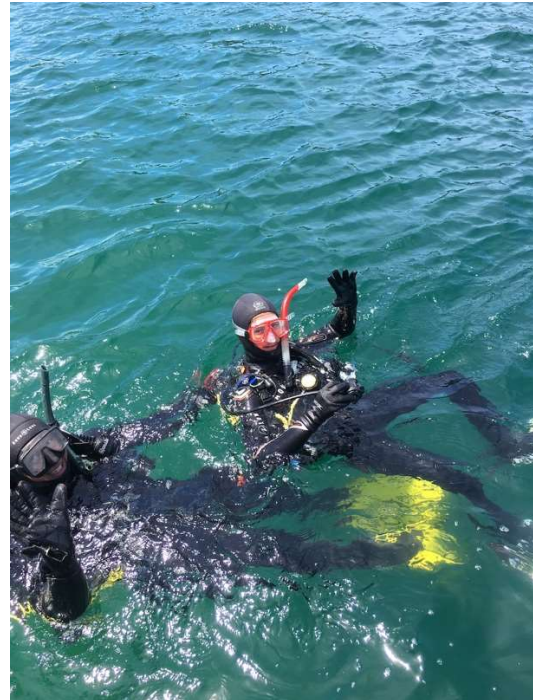
*Me & my son, William.*

Upon arrival, the 3 other passengers on our cruise (a father & his 2 daughters from Mexico) and myself were first to dive on the Canterbury. The vis was only 5 to 7 meters and the water temp was 19 degrees. It was an interesting dive although, we weren't allowed to penetrate inside the ship because none of us had proper 'Wreck Diving' certification or some other nonsense...

There were large schools of Yellowtail Kingfish hanging around the wreck and we spotted a few huge Snappers patrolling around inside. The growth all over the wreck was an explosion of colour... We even found a Crested Weedfish perched amongst the kelp high up on the tower. Inside the helicopter hanger at the rear of the wreck, there was an enormous Bull Ray which caused a bit of a sand /silt storm when he decided to vacate when we turned up! The dive was cut short at 35 minutes because one of the young girls was down to 70 bar & it was one up, all up! (shop policy) I was a little unimpressed as I finished the dive with 110 bar...

Next up, Will and the other Discover Scuba people dived at White Reef which was nearby the Canterbury. Will did pretty good for his first ever dive... 45 minutes at 12m deep. His instructor told me that he had no problems and seemed to take to it like a natural. Seems like he had listened to his old man all those times I had went on & on about diving...

Next dive was at a small island at the Northern head of Maunganui bay called Putahataha. The vis here was much better at 10 to 15 m and 19 degrees in the water. We were anchored on the South / South-east side of the island and made our way around the Western side to reach a huge cave on the Northern side. A very nice dive with so many species of fish around... We saw heaps of Snapper, Wrasse, Tarakihi, Whiting, and lots more. Inside the cave there was a pair of Morays, a few Lobsters & a large school of Maomao. A truly excellent dive!



*William about to descend on his first dive.*

All up, I found Paihia Dive to be a very well run dive centre. Their hire gear was all new Aqualung stuff. Our skipper, Stu, was very knowledgeable of the area and all the dive sites and the crew / divemasters were awesome!

I am so happy that I was able to share this diving experience with my son and even happier that he really enjoyed it & is keen to continue on to the full Openwater certificate.

My only regret was not taking my underwater housing for my camera...



## LOCAL DIVING

### Wreck of The SS Tuggerah

Article by Ian Roffey Photos by Aga Rekas

"The Tug" is a favourite dive for the Club, being one of the few wrecks that are relatively easy to access from the South side. Occasionally we get almost perfect 20+ metre visibility and on those dives, it is awesome. We were lucky on the 20th to have one of those dives, perfect 20+ visibility, although cold on the bottom.



The dive was originally scheduled for Saturday 19th, however the weather was not looking good with a cold front due on Friday night to continue blowing up big swells on Saturday. Reluctantly the boat captains agreed that the dive was not going to go ahead, due to the seas, but Sunday was looking promising. The decision was made to re-schedule the dive for Sunday the 20th. Two of the three boats could make it and those divers that were available were still keen. So, we had two boats, Vic on Aquanaut, with Gary Perkins and Rob Chenery. Aidan on R2 with Aga and me.

The morning was overcast, and already at 7:15 parking was a challenge at Yowie bay. We were a bit late getting off. On the way out, we had to navigate between a flotilla of fishing boats which seemed to be having some sort of competition. As we headed south we were in what can only be described as a confused sea. Wind and waves seemed to be coming from all directions, but the swell was not too bad.

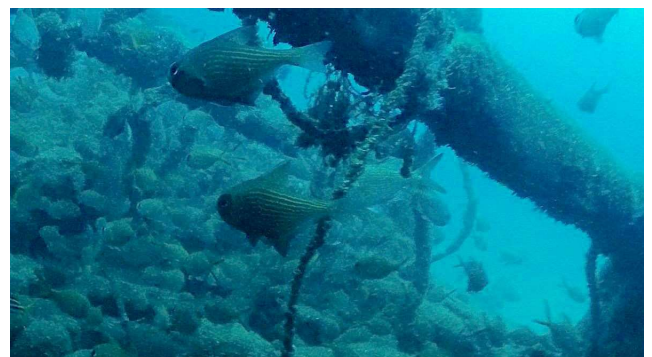
Eventually both boats anchored on the Tug and we headed down to the wreck. On the surface water temp was 20 degrees and the water was a nice clear blue, promising nice vis. However, at 23m we hit the cool water and the temp dropped to 15 degrees, and we could really feel it. The water was also a bit green. At around 30m I

stopped to add some air to my BCD to stop deflating so rapidly. As we came down to the wreck the green turned clear and we could almost see the whole wreck from above.



We were anchored on a piece of wreck just off the port side, I could clearly see the boiler and the aft structures. The visibility was so clear it was amazing to see so much more of the wreck. I swam around under the stern propeller and looked out over the sand and saw a nice clear view over the sand. Coming over the wreck back to the boiler I was amazed at seeing so many fish. The space between the boiler and the side was totally clear to swim through. Peering into the holes of the boiler I could see clearly right to the end. Most of my dive was spent in and around the stern as there was so much more to see than usual.

After a while I left the boiler and swam out to the rest of the wreck where the other divers were exploring. Once again, I could look under the various pieces of wreckage and it was totally clear. I found a small Moray eel and some more large shells. All over stacks of fish, however, we didn't see any wobbegongs, which was surprising.



Too soon it was time to head back up the anchor line. At the depth to change over to deco gas my weight belt slipped off my waste and I managed

to splay my legs wide and hold it around my thighs. It was a bit of struggle to maintain buoyancy as well and change gas mixes as my air was running out rapidly and I had to get onto my deco gas. Eventually Aga worked out what was going on and was able to give me a hand with my weight belt. (note for future, make sure weight belt is secure once on the bottom).

On the deco line the clear surface water seemed to have disappeared. We were really lucky to have such good vis on the bottom, I wonder if it will be there the next time I dive "The Tug".

## **Wreck of The SS Currajong Sydney Harbour**

**Article by Bill Rowland**

**Photos by Mark Arrowsmith**

### **Part One - Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018**

I had organised a Currajong dive a couple of years ago, but my buddy on that dive had his tank come loose at the start of the dive. After I fiddled with it to re-secure it, I turned and he'd disappeared. He was happily diving with what he thought was his buddy, and only noticed his mistake later in the dive that they had A YELLOW REBREATHING on their back instead of my white single tank... In very poor viz, in the middle of the night, in an area not rewarding of bravado, my first time on the wreck, I decided a solo dive was not the best choice and rapidly ascended back up the anchor line. Not keen on a mid-water pause on my own in that area, I'm pretty sure the safety stop didn't get much of a look in either.

I therefore felt the Currajong and I were unresolved, and decided to have another go this year. A club dive was booked using Abyss' boat for the Saturday night, and Abyss decided to run their own shop dive on the Friday night. A week or so out from the dive the numbers were poor, and I was offered to join them. Two late nights in a row? Nahhh. Talking it through with Jasmine I realised the inner diver in me needed to have a serious chat with the inner old man in me, and I changed my mind and agreed to the Friday night dive too. As it turned out the shop also got some extra divers and so the boat was nearly full.

It was such a different 'feel' to the club dives that I now know and love. I don't mean that as a

negative comment at all. The divers were a bunch of separate cliques – some just knew their buddy, some knew no one else, and some knew some others. The DM was detailed (and sales-focussed) in his briefing. I was paired with another orphan diver on nitrox, with unknown experience. We had a chat about staying close and staying comfortable. The boat got to the site to watch the Manly ferry pass and dropped anchor, then we geared up.

"Right everyone – now do your Buddy Checks" said the DM. Gulp... um... Some mnemonic about Bruce Willis Ruining a Film I think... I compromised with "mate – is your gas on and are you ok to go"?

I was part of the first group of 5 descending the anchor line with the DM, and we reached – sand... He tied a line to the anchor and started an expanding circle pattern hoping to hit the wreck. The viz was not good, and it got a damn sight worse with 5 divers swimming in circles near the bottom... We reached the wreck as the dive-clock struck 8 minutes. The plan, clearly communicated by the DM, was he'd tie off his line from the anchor to the wreck, put a strobe on the line, and put a glowstick on the wreck next to it. Anyone running their own reel could tie off next to the glowstick and head out. "I'll be the last to ascend" he said.

I tied a reel and myself and buddy headed to what turned out to be the bow. Once we took off and then slowed down, there was a lot to see. Given the environment, I was in less of a "wander through the garden and just smell the roses" mode, but we had a fun journey along the starboard side to the bow and back – there were lots of Morays in particular. Once back at the start, gas was checked and we crossed and went to the stern on the port side, looking at some very active Hermit crabs, and good fish life. My buddy was very good, and we stayed close. Time to return, so we got back to amidships and then crossed to the reel tie off point next to the glowstick. There was no line to the anchor, next to it.

I confess to thinking some less than polite thoughts about the DM.

I shot an SMB and the two of us ascended together, on our own. If I'd had to make a list of undesirable outcomes from that dive, a blue /

black water ascent away from the group, would have come in 2<sup>nd</sup> on my list.

We did our safety stop and surfaced 2m away from the boat. Thank goodness there was no current. It turned out his anchor line had come loose and so everyone had to ascend that way. The line, and his strobe, came up with the anchor.

Once back to Rose Bay, the group of folk fishing off the Ferry Terminal had increased even more, and as we were packing the cars we were approached by enthusiastic young fellow carrying a net, who'd just caught an Octopus. "Hectic". He offered it to us and was told he'd picked the wrong crowd – we're scuba divers: please put it back. I think / hope he did.

Abyss run a good operation. It's a spacious boat with a calm captain. My molly perhaps got a tad too coddled, but I think they understandably focus on their target market and service them very well.

## Part two – Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018



It was a dark and stormy night...

Trees had blown down, there had been golf balls the size of hailstones, the wind and rain had bombarded Sydney in waves all afternoon, and 8 nutters mostly from the St George Scuba Club, were preparing to dive the Currajong in the middle of Sydney Harbour on Saturday night / Sunday morning.

We had chartered Abyss' boat, and loaded at Rose Bay. Ian Roffey, Maxine Hayden, Craig Spillane, Philip Mire (with wife Laura also on board as a non-diving 2<sup>nd</sup> mate and evening photographer), Mark Arrowsmith, Mike Fountandez and buddy Dana, and myself,

climbed aboard and waited for the clock to count down...

Einstein said *"When a man sits with a pretty girl for an hour, it seems like a minute. But let him sit on a hot stove for a minute — and it's longer than any hour. That's relativity."* Clearly, he wasn't a scuba diver and never had to wait for the 1am Manly ferry to make it to Circular Quay, as we couldn't anchor in the shipping lane off Bradley's Head until the Harbour Master declared it was clear. Our skipper phoned and confirmed the plans for the evening, and was told there was a second vessel heading through the harbour – a fuel barge (to refill the cruise ships), but it was going to be neck and neck as to whether it or the Manly ferry would clear the site first. Good – not too long to wait, then.

We approached Bradley's Head, saw the ferry pass, called the Harbour Master to check on the fuel barge position, and was told it was "just coming through The Heads now". Oh bother. We headed to Clifton Gardens and waited for an hour for it to pass. On the bright side, the wind had dropped considerably in that time. We returned to the spot and called Harbour Master again... "Yes, all ok now... Goodness me, oh yes we'll definitely be out of the way before the 1<sup>st</sup> ship of the new day comes past at 4am..."

The boat circled the site multiple times, and dropped anchor. Nope... missed... Up came the anchor, more circling, and another drop. What time did we need to vacate by?



This time it held, and at 2:38am, down went Pat, Abyss' DM. We followed in 4 buddy pairs, attacked on the hands and face by little cleaner-wrasse sized fish who had decided the anchor rope was their new home. We got to the wreck and it was murky. Brandishing reels, backup torches, chemical glowsticks, off everyone went to the 4 corners of the wreck. Water temp was nice, no current, but



once there was any distance between you and your buddy – they quickly turned into a nebulous green glow.

I must say that having dived the wreck the previous night as well (refer to my other article) it was quite a benefit, once I got to an area I recognised. This included recovering last night's 'glowstick of angst'.

There were many leatherjackets, including one pregnant one, some gorgeous decorator crabs, nudis, morays, hermit crabs, and good growth all over the wreck.

Mark and I covered most of the perimeter of the wreck, in several stages, and a dropping NDL saw us return to the line and up the anchor line to a crowded safety stop, of which I was happy to be a part.



Back on the boat I took advantage of the on-board hot water shower, and we returned to Rose Bay and unloaded, to go home to bed. Maxine, went around the corner to start her shift at work, at 4:30 am. They bred 'em tough in Bundeena...!

It was a good experience, and the City does look beautiful all lit up at night, too. Blessed with the great company of the esteemed members of the SGSC and a good time spent on the wreck (albeit needing a white cane at times), I had a fun evening. I hope others felt the same. Thanks to all for attending.

## **SGSC CHRISTMAS BBQ**

**Inscription Point, Kurnell.**  
**2 December 2018**

**Article & photos by Ron Walsh.**

The St George Scuba Club Christmas Party was held at Kurnell on 2 December 2018. As usual a

number of club members took advantage of the location to enjoy a dive prior to the Christmas lunch.

Donna & I arrived at around 8:15am to find a number of members already there and marquees being set up.

The tidal conditions were not ideal with a run out tide but with only a small change it was decided to dive from Inscription Point to The Monument. Some other divers decided to dive The Steps. Conditions were nice and sunny, and the site inspection at Inscription Point revealed flat conditions with only a very small swell.



There were at least 7 divers for Inscription dive – Donna C, Michael M, Kelly M, Gary D, Kim D, Mark A and me. Water temp was around 19C and visibility in the 5m range.

After entry we swam out across the kelp and dropped down to the reef to the sand line. Donna and I soon lost contact with the other divers as with the average visibility we spent quite some time looking for tiny critters on the reef.



We found a number of the usual nudibranchs species - *Pteraeolidia ianthina* (blue dragon),



Glossodoris angasi (angas's), Goniobranchus splendida (splendid), Ceratosoma amoena (sweet), Chromodoris woodwardi (Woodwards), Aphelodoris varia (variable), Doriprismatica astromarginata (black margined), Hpyselodoris bennetti (Bennetts) – octopus hiding in there holes, two colourful pygmy pipehorses, mosaic leatherjackets, a colourful red lined bubble, and half banded sea perch and red scorpionfish mounted on top of the sponges watching every move we made.

Since we were swimming very slowly we decided to return to Inscription Point for our exit rather than push on to The Monument. I am glad we did this as the highlight of the dive came near the exit where we were surrounded by a large school (at least 50) kingfish who made lazy circles around us for several minutes simply checking us out.



© Ron Walsh

## UPCOMING DIVE TRIPS

**Puerto Galera, Phillipines.**

**11<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**Organiser: Carole Harris**

[Carole.uw@gmail.com](mailto:Carole.uw@gmail.com)

Just a few hours drive south of Manila and an hour boat ride to reach Puerto Galera, which boasts almost 50 dive sites between 1-12 minutes away from the resort which schedules 4 day dives and options for night dives.

We've been diving in Puerto Galera regularly for about 20 years, why? Because it has the richest marine life being in the middle of the Indo-Pacific Coral Triangle region, there are numerous direct flights from major hubs into Manila (one flight/one check-in, etc) and the ease of being shore based and still being able to do up to 5 dives a day.



© Ron Walsh

Our exit was made harder by the lower tide and the shallow water but was achieved without incident and we then did the long walk back to the cars.

After hot water rinse and packing away the dive gear we indulged in bacon and egg rolls that Ray E had prepared for all the divers.

It was then time to sit back in the chairs, enjoy a nice cup of coffee, chat with the other divers and wait for the magnificent Christmas lunch and all the prize draws.

Many thanks to Eda D and Paul P for organising such an excellent day, and to all the helpers who assisted with food, marquees, raffles, prizes etc. A really great day was had by all.



The local diving is mixed with beautiful coral reefs, a few wrecks, drift dives and muck diving, and a 2-tank dive trip over to Verde Island usually has gin clear waters with amazing drop

offs and lots of pretty fish life. There is something for everyone, there have been rare sightings of Mantas, Threshers and Whalesharks, and don't expect the squadrons of hammerheads/sharks, etc. The deepest dive site for "fun divers" is about 30m and most dive sites have sloping reefs so you can do multi-level diving.



Some of the things you can expect to see; Various kind/colours and sizes of Frogfish/anglerfish and nudibranchs, mimic octopus, wonderpus, flamboyant cuttlefish, blue ring octopus, flatworms, seahorses, sea kraits, crabs, shrimps, turtles, hard corals, soft corals, and over 2,800 fish species have been recorded in Philippines.



I had written this up in mid December and a dive on Christmas day included, wonderpus, mimic octopus, blue ring octopus, robust ghost pipefish, nudis with hitchhiker shrimps, flamboyant cuttlefish, yes it was an amazing

dive to see all this on one dive. No promises for every dive though!

A special package has been put together for St George Scuba Club, details were sent in an email recently; reminders are a 7 night package with accommodation and brekkie, unlimited day dives (Nitrox if qualified), 2 dives to Verde Island, tanks, weights, boat and guide approx. A\$1,106. Extras are flights, hotels, park fees, lunch, dinner alcohol and transfers. Any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me: [carole\\_underwater@yahoo.com.au](mailto:carole_underwater@yahoo.com.au) or contact the resort directly on: [admin@asiadivers.com](mailto:admin@asiadivers.com)

## MEMBER PROFILES

The next 2 Member Profiles to feature are Paul Pacey and Steve Shaw.

### Paul Pacey



- How long have you been a member of SGSC?

I joined the Club in August 2006

- What inspired you to get into scuba Diving?

When my daughter was in her final year of High School she got to choose our holiday destination that year and she chose The Whitsunday Islands (she still scams me). Whilst there, we went on board a day-sail yacht and the owner was doing resort dives when we stopped at Stonehaven Beach. He convinced me that it would be a really good idea for me to try diving as I would love it. I stuck my head under the water, did love it, and it's cost me a bloody fortune ever since!!!

- When did you first get certified?



I received my Open Water ticket from Aquatic Explorers in February 1998

- How many dives have you logged?  
I'm way too lazy to log dives but I'm guessing 1,500.

- Level of certification?

Rescue diver (only so I can rescue myself).

- Favourite type of diving?

Reef and Muck (but I've been to Chuuk Lagoon twice, so I'm flexible)

- Favourite dive sites?

Locally: Shiprock, anywhere on the Kurnell Peninsular and Bare Island. Anywhere around Sydney from a boat.

Overseas: Lembah Strait and Bunaken Island. Lord Howe Island is really special too.

- Favourite critters to see?

Seahorses and pipefish make any dive special! I could easily float around all day watching a Grey Nurse shark gracefully cruising along.

- Have you been on any dive holidays? (Australia or overseas)

You bet! Overseas I've organised or been a guest on trips to Indonesia (7 trips, I think), Vanuatu, Lord Howe Island, PNG, Chuuk and Guam.

In 2004 and 2005 my wife Julie and I took 9 months off work and travelled around Australia. I managed to find just enough room in the car to take my dive gear along! So, in Australia I've dived a lot of the NSW coastline, Queensland, Western Australia (Ningaloo, Around Perth, Rotto, Albany, Bremer Bay).

- Oh shit!! Moments?

Once I got caught in the Hat Head Express (a really strong current heading south from Fish Rock at South West Rocks). I am now very wary of expecting a current to take me back to the boat – because they usually don't!

- Things you've learnt?

Listen to and watch the really experienced club members and learn. I'm still learning

- Has diving changed your life?

How so?

Absolutely diving has changed my life!

Luckily it has changed my life for the better.

I'm retired so diving gives me a physical activity that I find both stimulating and relaxing. I just love the 3-dimensional nature of it and the stunning beauty of the underwater world that very few people ever

get to see with their own eyes. Every dive is a special occasion as it's always a treasure hunt (for critters).

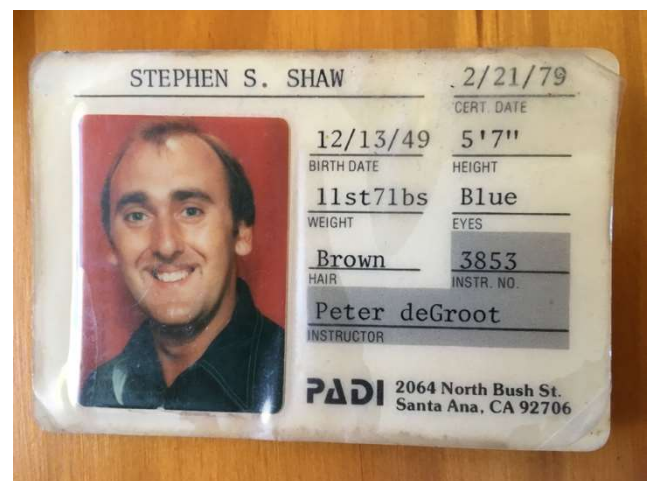
- Does anyone else in your family dive?  
My son is a keen spearo (but don't tell anyone).

- Anything else you'd like to add?

I love diving with the Club due to the variety of diving available, the safety of diving with experienced divers and the social camaraderie that comes with the club.

I'd also like to apologise to Eddie for losing him on nearly every dive we've ever done...

## Steve Shaw



- How long have you been a member of SGSC? **38 years, Joined in 1980**
- What inspired you to get into scuba Diving? **I'm a bit of a natural history nut and have always been fascinated by anything that runs, flies, crawls or swims. I figured there would be plenty from the last two categories underwater and I have not been disappointed.**
- When did you first get certified? **1979**
- How many dives have you logged? **Not quite 600**
- Level of certification? **Advanced, Deep, Nitrox**
- Favourite type of diving? **No particular preference really. I'm happy doing boat and shore dives. Water at 16 degrees is about my limit though!**
- Favourite dive sites? **Jervis Bay is where I did my Open Water and Deep Diver Certification and I've always had**

an attachment to it. Coffs Harbour and the Solitary Islands is also high on the list.

- Favourite critters to see? **Something unusual like a Red Indian fish or angler fish is always good to see.**
- Have you been on any dive holidays? (Australia or overseas)
- **Overseas holidays; Vanuatu, Tonga, Palau; casual dives in Fiji, Mexico (ocean and cenote), Easter Island and Hawaii.**
- **Local Holidays; Lady Musgrave Island, Coral Sea and Ribbon Reefs; casual dives in Lord Howe Island, Norfolk Island, Ningaloo Reef and Tasmania.**
- Oh shit!! Moments? **Diving off Lord Howe Island and surfacing to see no boat anywhere on the ocean.**
- Things you've learnt? **Don't keep upgrading your gear to the latest everything. Wear it until it drops off you or people are just too embarrassed to buddy you!**
- Has diving changed your life? **Sure it has ... just look at the photo!**
- Does anyone else in your family dive? **My wife Sue dives even more occasionally than I do.**
- Anything else you'd like to add? **I'd describe myself as an 'Occasional Diver'. I have always enjoyed the company of the club members and I'm grateful to be still diving with people that I was diving with twenty or thirty years ago. Some very enduring friendships have been forged in the environment of this club.**

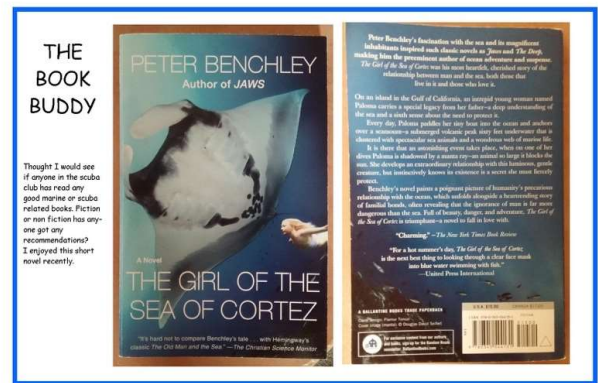
## BOOK BUDDY

Another new edition to 'Sea Braggin' is a section called 'BOOK BUDDY'.

This is a place where members can send in reviews about any great dive related books they've read or even simply a suggestion of a good book you've read.

It could be a good novel or a book about sea animals... anything dive related!

This was suggested by Lynne Tuck and I think it will be a great addition to 'Sea Braggin'!



So, without further ado, here is the first book – “The Girl of the Sea of Cortez” by Peter Benchley. Thanks for sending in this suggestion Lynn!

## MEMBERS BOATS

**There isn't a featured boat for this edition because no boat owner has sent me any details of their boat?**

If any other boat owners would like to have their boat featured in the next newsletter, please let me know via email.

## NOTICE BOARD

**This space is for any news or notifications or gear for sale. So feel free to send in anything along those lines!**

Notice from Tammalee Butcher –

Hi Guys

Just want to let you know my partner, Thorne Watson, is an independent PADI instructor. If anyone is looking to have friends or family certified with PADI please consider Thorne to teach. He has been diving since he was 8yrs old and grew up in the industry. We have no affiliation with stores and you can book directly by contacting him on 0414309367 or [thorne\\_watson@yahoo.com.au](mailto:thorne_watson@yahoo.com.au)

Fees are similar if not less than most stores.

He is happy to do discover scuba, open water to the specialty courses.

Cheers, Tammalee



## MEMBERS PHOTOS & VIDEOS

I know that there are quite a few keen photographers in the club so, get on board and send me some of your photos or links to video clips to be featured here!



*Flamboyant Cuttlefish – Peurto Galera. By Carole Harris*



*Mimic Octopus - Peurto Galera. By Carole Harris*



*Nudi with Shrimps - Peurto Galera. By Carole Harris*



*Red Lined Bubble – Kurnell. By Ron Walsh*



*Octopus – Kurnell. By Ron Walsh.*



*Southern Sea Fan – Kurnell. By Ron Walsh.*

## REGULAR EVENTS

### Monthly Meetings

The next 2 meetings of the St George Scuba Club will be held on Wednesday 20th February 2019 and Wednesday 20th March 2019 at St. George 16ft Sailing Club, Sanoni Ave, Dolls Point at 8.00 pm. Come along about 7 pm and enjoy a meal at the bistro.

### 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 need time to appear as it needs to be authorised by a web site administrator).

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

### SGSC Anniversary Dinner.

**Saturday 23rd February 2019**

Venue: Royal Motor Yacht Club, Burraneer.

Contact: Michael McFadyen

[michael@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info](mailto:michael@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info)

### Oztek 2019

**March 16 & 17 2019**

**Sydney International Convention Centre**

[https://www.diveoztek.com.au/Default.aspx?active\\_page\\_id=1](https://www.diveoztek.com.au/Default.aspx?active_page_id=1)

### Boys Weekend Away.

**5th to 8th April 2019**

**Port Stephens**

Contact: Ray Moulang

[rayscases2@gmail.com](mailto:rayscases2@gmail.com)

### Girls Weekend Away.

**1st to 3rd March 2019**

**Jervis Bay.**

Contact: Tordis Bulger.

[t-bulger@bigpond.com](mailto:t-bulger@bigpond.com)

### Overseas Trip

**11th to 18th May**

**Puerto Galera, Phillipines.**

Contact: Carole Harris.

[carole.uw@gmail.com](mailto:carole.uw@gmail.com)

## CALENDAR DIVES

**Saturday 16th February 2019**

Boat Dive

Barrens Hut / The Split

Contact: Ron Walsh –

[rondwalsh@gmail.com](mailto:rondwalsh@gmail.com)

**Saturday 23rd February 2019**

Shore Dive

The Steps / Inscription Point

Contact: Eddie Ivers

[eddieivers@iprimus.com.au](mailto:eddieivers@iprimus.com.au)

**Saturday 2nd March 2019**

Boat Dive

Xanadu

Contact: Phill Short –

[phsasso@optusnet.com.au](mailto:phsasso@optusnet.com.au)

**Saturday 9th March 2019**

Shore Dive

Bare Island

Contact: Paul Pacey

[paul.pacey888@gmail.com](mailto:paul.pacey888@gmail.com)

**Sunday 10th March 2019**

Boat Dive

Minmi Trench

Contact: Bram Harris

[bram.harris@eml.cc](mailto:bram.harris@eml.cc)

**Saturday 23rd March 2019**

Shore Dive

The Leap

Contact: Eddie Ivers.

[eddieivers@iprimus.com.au](mailto:eddieivers@iprimus.com.au)

**Saturday 23 March 2019**

Deep Boat Dive.

The Wanderers.

Contact: Peter Flockart.

[pjflockart@speednet.com.au](mailto:pjflockart@speednet.com.au)



**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Shore Dive & BBQ  
 Bass Point, Shellharbour.  
 Contact: Jason Coombs.  
[jblackmanta@gmail.com](mailto:jblackmanta@gmail.com)

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Boat Dive.  
 Osborne Shoals.  
 Contact: Bob Hill.  
[rrahill1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:rrahill1@optusnet.com.au)

**The Committee for 2018/19 is:**

<b>PRESIDENT:</b>	Michael McFadyen	0407 276 556	<a href="mailto:President@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">President@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
<b>VICE-PRESIDENT:</b>	Phil Rose		
<b>SECRETARY:</b>	Ian Roffey		<a href="mailto:Secretary@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">Secretary@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
<b>TREASURER:</b>	Aidan Slevin		<a href="mailto:Treasurer@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">Treasurer@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
<b>ASST SEC / TRES:</b>	Ray Moulang		
<b>WEBMASTER:</b>	Paul Pacey		<a href="mailto:Webmaster@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">Webmaster@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>
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**Please send items for the Newsletter to me**