

Sea Braggin'



October/November 2016

St George Scuba Club Newsletter



The Presidents Report

AGM — August 2016

By Natasha Naude

I'd like to start by thanking the committee for all their work over the past year – Dave Casburn as Vice President, Caroline Corcoran (now Stojanovic) as Treasurer, Nancy Scoleri as Secretary, Shelley Breuseker as Assist Secretary/Treasurer, Paul Pacey our webmaster, Ron Walsh the Newsletter Editor. Thanks also to Michael McFadyen for stepping in as webman in Paul's absence this year. Everyone's involvement is certainly appreciated and I have enjoyed being part of the committee – three years as newsletter editor and the last two as president, so I am looking forward to enjoying it again as a member reaping the benefits of this great club and participating in other ways. Full time work, part time study and a toddler are sufficient to keep me busy for the time being! I'd like to spend more "spare" time diving!

Thank you to the boat owners for their contributions to the club. My apologies again for taking a banana on Katz and ensuring her demise. But at least we got a helicopter ride out of it. I promise all boat owners that I will never take anything remotely banana related on board again.

Over the past year we have looked at different ways we can help club members get the most from their membership. More than 20 members attended VHF Marine Radio courses, with the Club subsidising 50% of course costs. There is now a CPR and O2 delivery for dive injuries course available at 50% subsidy, bringing the cost to members down to a mere \$50. 19 members have already indicated their interest, so it will be well subscribed and will be immensely beneficial to all who attend. We all hope never to use these skills, but it is so good to have them.

I have sent no less than 18 emails to POW hyperbaric unit in attempts to set up a hyperbaric visit, but all have failed to yield any dates which the staff are available and/or willing to arrange this for us. Happy to pass the baton to another person to chase up in the hope something can be arranged, as it is a fun and informative evening.

Membership is currently approximately 144 - stable with a small increase from last year's number at this time. A good number to ensure a lot of participation and variety of events throughout the year. Sadly a lot of local boat dives have been cancelled in recent month due to adverse weather or marine conditions. There have been fewer trips away planned this year, both locally and overseas, which is disappointing. And I cancelled the Jervis Bay trip for 18-20 August (my annual birthday seal diving weekend) for the first time after 6 years of great trips, due to insufficient numbers keen to attend for a variety of reasons (a number of the regulars being booked on other trips close to the date).

Fewer shore dives are being promoted on the facebook site or via the email than last year – Ken Ridley has joined the ranks of boat owners, and no one has stepped in to fill the very active space he filled formerly of promoting shore dives pretty much every weekend. Remember, if there's nothing on the calendar, there's nothing to stop impromptu or last minute shout-outs for shores dives on any given day of the week. Put it out there on facebook and you'll find a buddy more often than not. Feel free to nominate the dive and ask others to join rather than ask if anyone is diving, as you're more likely to find someone to come along! It would be great to have someone who shore dives regularly to take over where Ken left off and nominate dives sites and times.

I'd encourage everyone – especially new members – to actively participate in the club and to plan events. Come along to the planning evening in November and put your hand up. If you've never organised anything before – a boat dive, a weekend away, a shore dive and BBQ, a trip – then just ask for guidance and you'll get the help you need. Event organisers go into a special draw at the Club Xmas party to win a new scuba tank – so be in it to win it and get planning.

Thanks to all club members who have been involved in event planning over the year – people power is needed to make the club an ongoing success. Thanks again to my fellow committee members and to everyone in the club for making it what it is.



South West Rocks

30 September — 3 October 2016

By Jane Scarsbrook, Marcus Diercke, Michael Wright,

Photos by Peter Flockart & Jane Scarsbrook, Sketches by Marcus Diercke

Day 1 Saturday 1st October - Marcus Diercke (A.K.A – Beef)

The members of St George Dive Club (SGDC) all met at the South West Rocks Dive Centre (SWRDC) at 7am in the morning, there were smiles and cheer all round, we all eagerly preparing our equipment and packed the two vessels before heading down to the boat ramp to begin our three days of diving with the Grey Nurses and the cave at Fish Rock.



The journey out to Fish Rock was fun filled aboard "Rocket", as we crossed the bar we all sat joking around on the alloy boat, being masterfully skippered by Steve, the conditions were moderate with a slight 15-20km/h Nor-West wind and a slight swell. After returning out life vests to the deck hand, someone pointed out Hump Back whales off the portside, they were

breaching and a large pectoral fin was easily seen for several long splashes as if the whale was waving a welcome to the members of SGDC to the area.

While we were mooring at the buoy near Fish Rock, Ricky, one of the dive guides and on-board comedian, gave us our site brief and dive plans for the morning. We were broken into our dive teams, I was with Keith, Jill and Geoff with Ricky as our guide, our first dive went well with ample to look at including the overly friendly Blue Groper's, we follow the South East gully in search of the Grey Nurses. After 10-15min Ricky realised that the sharks were not to be seen and we headed to the shallow end of the cave exit on the North face of Fish Rock.

We were greeted on the way by two splendid specimens of Grey nurse, more wobby gongs than one could care to count, a large manta ray and a very large logger head turtle, Fish Rock was starting to pull out all the stops for us. As we crossed over the ridge and dove down into the North West facing gully,

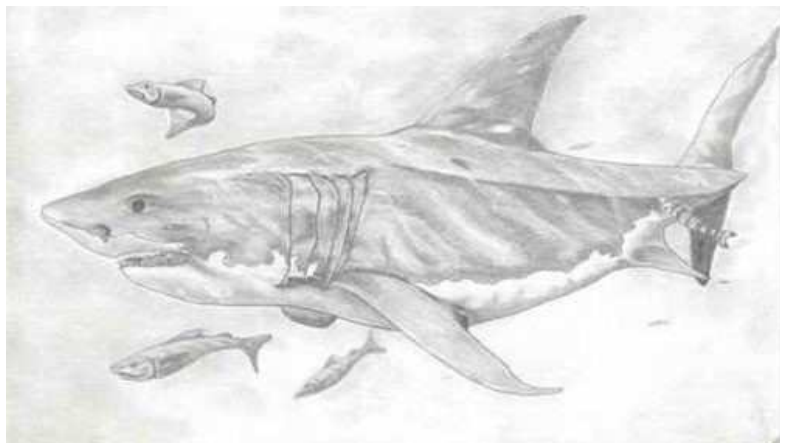


we were met by four more medium to large Grey Nurses, two of which Ricky informed us were most defiantly pregnant. As our air began to reach the lower limits we turned back to the "Rocket" for a short surface interval.

Once we were all full on hot soup, lollies and biscuits it was time for our second dive. This dive started with a short surface swim to the Southern side of Fish Rock. Once the team was together we slowly descended to 24.5m, checked our air and touches before entering the cave. Inside there were many different clouds of fish, Painted Crayfish hiding in all the cracks, large Gatherer Crabs covered in soft corals, a large Manta Ray and Wobby Gong and even brightly collared Nudies in complete darkness. As we exited into the North West facing gully we spotted several white eyed Moray Eels that Ricky fed with a nearby Long Spined Sea Urchin.

We slowly followed the gully down keeping pace with three more Grey Nurses, Ricky was in the lead with Keith and I closely behind and Geoff and Jill bringing up the rear. I was watching a nearby Wobby Gong when I noticed Ricky clutching the rocks at the turn of the gully, he was backing up very quickly with eyes as wide as bread plates, I looked towards a puzzled Keith as a Grey Nurse shot past us making good pace back to the cave, then I saw it.

A Great White Shark between 4-4.5m swam slowly around the rock face, chewing several times on what I can only guess was lunch. It appeared to be just as surprised to see us, as we were seeing it. The massive fish casually swam around us several times wondering what to make of us. We all sat in the small gully watching in complete awe at the magnificent creature and the way it was effortlessly circling us not more than 15 feet away, I gave Keith a high five as it silently slipped away to the North. A more composed Ricky directed us to stick to the ridge and climb over into the gully on the other side. We moved with a pace that is reserved for "special occasions" back to the "Rocket". We



were all wide eyed on the mooring line as we completed our 3min safety stop at 5m, and quietly wished we had more than 15m visibility at this depth.

Once on board, a dive guide from the second vessel had also seen the shark from the cave exit and confirmed our estimated size. After all of the teams were back on board we made our way back to the boat ramp where we unloaded our kit and returned to SWRDC shop to clean our gear before heading off to lunch. The whole time laughing about this once in a life time experience, and to have been in the water on my 16th dive really made it one to remember.

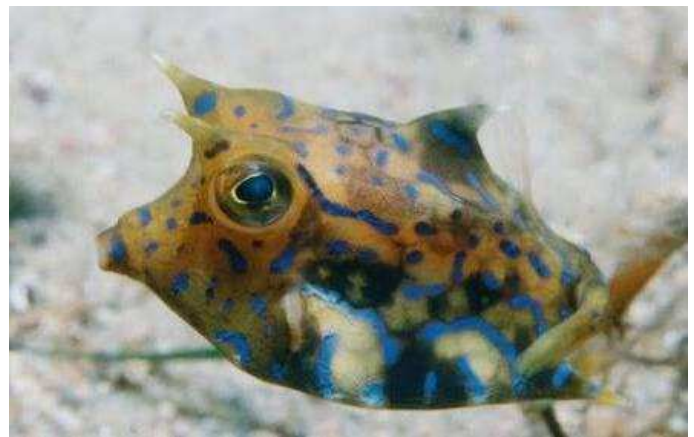
Day 2

Michael Wright – Sunday 2nd October

SWR had turned on the Sun for us and now we had our groove on, even daylight savings couldn't stop us getting ready early for the day's diving. After mooring, we split into groups with the cave group jumping in the water first. The cave is always special and didn't disappoint this time and with some massive crays guarding the entrance. On exiting at the shallow end, the water turned a little cloudy but thankfully also warmer. We turned to the west and went over into the deep gutter where the water was colder but much clearer and started heading back to the boat. This was where following Albert the dive master proved a good strategy. Rather than swimming straight back, he kept pausing, looking out into the water column about mid-water. Having already seen the great white the day before, I knew a sure sign to watch out for was a stream of bubbles coming out his mouth that looked like a free flow. Then I saw it: a shadowing figure in the distance out in blue water. It was really exciting and a bit chilling at the same time, I instinctively sunk a little lower in the water and had a glance behind me, relieved to see a wall.



before heading off to lunch. The whole time laughing





Then it was unmistakable, the flat, broad head of a hammerhead! He kept swimming toward us until he was about 10m away, then must have realised we were there. It was amazing watching him turn like a top, then dart off back out into the water like a startled cat. So fast, so beautiful and just far enough away for comfort. Sure enough, I turned to Albert and he was blowing bubbles like a volcano shoots out lava. I could hear him screaming and he was banging both his fists on the top of his head. Through the bubbles, I could just make out "phammmerhumpf."

This was a brilliant weekend and confirmed my belief that SWR is probably one of the best dive sites in Australia for access to the sites, the ability to dive in most weather and relaxed, easy stays in town. Thanks of course to Jane for organising and for everyone else for the camaraderie

Day 3

After the first two days with great weather and great diving (did we tell you about the Great White encounter!!) and then for the Cronulla Sharks to win the footy last night something had to give! It was the weather, with strong winds and rain coming our way it was with great delight that diving was still on but we were warned that it may be a rough trip there and back. As it was, it was quite a rough trip out but good shelter from the wind on Fishrock.



Also today we had a change in guides but we are a good bunch so it had no impact on the diving. Our group was myself, Beef, Jeff and Jill, Ken was coming in with us but got delayed due to kit issues, he did get in but stayed local to the shot.



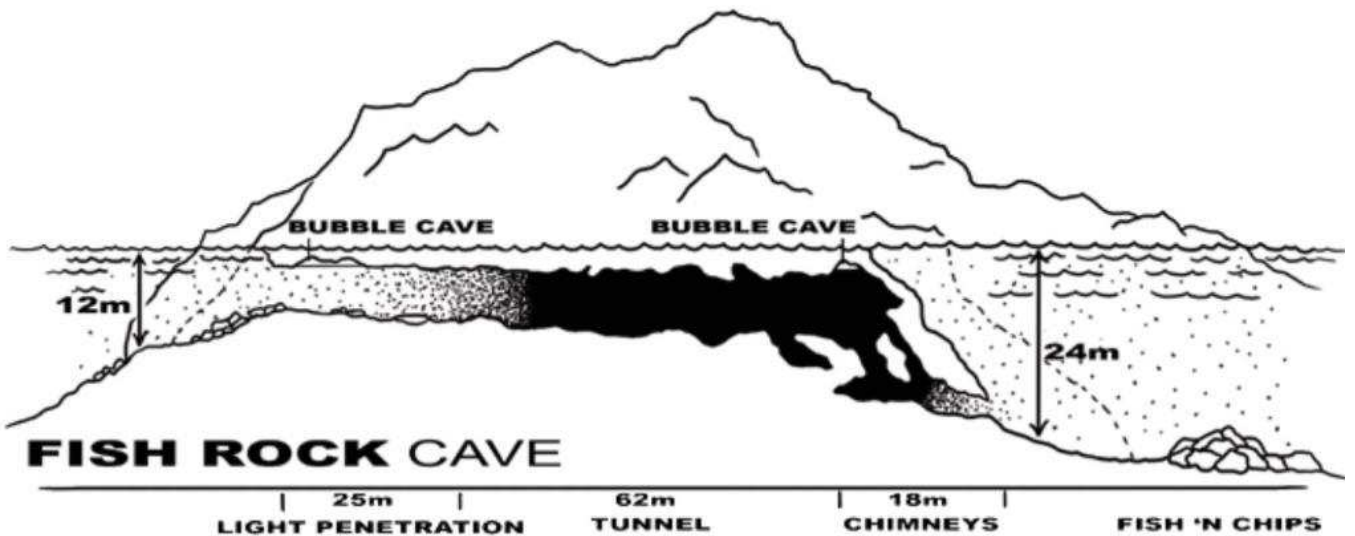
Dive one, We went for the gullies and the ridges coming away from the rock, this was more for the smaller stuff, we saw there where GNS in the gullies but headed out on the ridge, seeing all the normal suspects but some specials were a Cow Fish and a Wobbie only 25cm long.

The temp was also all over the place, we had different currents in each of the gullies and all with different temps ranging from 13 to 17. Viz was between 8m and 12m

Pete (he was with the other group) was let loose for today to do macro photos, again he just stayed local, Blue Devil Diver.

As myself and Beef where at 6m just fizzing out another diver come up our shot, gave us the ok sign and went over the top of us to the surface, I don't know his dive profile but still ascending far too quick for safety!! He was off the other boat.

Dive two; we went for the cave again, this is a great dive and you never know what to expect as you come out. As from the picture below a good dive profile would be always from deep to shallow, this time as we come to the tunnel area we met another group coming from the shallow to deep, as we passed we noticed one with a selfy stick, plus it looked like one was walking through! Marine life in the cave was the Bull Ray, one down in the false chimney and one swimming over the top of myself and Jill. Then we have the resident decorator Crab, these look prehistoric to be honest, day one they where at the exit to the cave, then day two and today there where up on the wall at the limit of the light penetration. Then we can't forget the Lobster and Crayfish in all the cracks around you as you ascend the chimney.



Trip Organising

By Jane Scarsbrook

Its a joy to see a bunch of divers with beaming smiles, boasting about how good their dives were! Its amazing to socialise with great people, eat and witness iconic Sharkies wins together - its the privilege felt by an organiser when a trip goes to plan!

Being relatively new to the club and having organised a few failed trips in the past my confidence was at a low until my recent trip went ahead and SGSC showed no remorse in EOI from divers wanting to come along. The purpose of this script is to encourage new club members to take the leap and go organise a trip. There are a heap of supportive people in the club who are willing to offer advice and help where needed - we all had to start somewhere! We are all good at supporting other peoples trips, however, when I talk about being in SGSC within the SCUBA industry people automatically say: 'Its the most active SCUBA club in Sydney' - having worked in the industry for a number of years myself I support this statement too!

Organising trips is what keeps this club active, people willing to input their own time and effort by creating memorable experiences for its members but also feeling the same joy I felt as pay-off. Which brings me onto my next point - October 2017!

Seems far away....

When I mentioned SGSC's EOI for October long-weekend 2017, believe it or not, SWR Dive Centre already had bookings! I took it upon myself to book the rest of the dive centre out because we had such an amazing time this year.

So we are going to do it all over again!!

I will begin scheduling the trip after Christmas 😊



Correction to August/September Newsletter

In the story by Shelley there is a great photo of a Great White Shark which was watermarked for Peter Flockart Photographics.

This photo was actually taken by Ray Moulang who deserves the credit for the shot.

Well Done Ray.

Peter had some great shots in the article too.

Upcoming Events

St George Scuba Club 2016 - Xmas Dive and Lunch

SUNDAY DECEMBER 4TH - 10.00 am at Kurnell, The Monument Picnic Grounds

Organiser: Dave Burns

Names are now being taken for the Clubs Xmas Party at Kurnell on Sunday 4th of December at the monument picnic grounds

Meet time is @ 1000 for a dive

High tide is @ 1300

Lunch at 1230 -1300

There is a Triathlon event there on this day but it should be done and dusted by 10.00am
They will have the road out to the Whale Watching as part of their bike ride leg

All financial club members are invited and close relatives (two degrees)

Please reply to Dave Burns and advise if you are diving and/or lunching.

email - sanfranciscomaruru @[yahoo.com.au](mailto:sanfranciscomaruru@yahoo.com.au)

Mobile 0412 728 736

Final numbers are required by Nov 27th

Philippines Dive Trip

March 2017

Organiser: Mark Ridsdale

A dive expedition has been planned to the Philippines in March 2017. It consists of 3 parts which can be done singularly or joined for 2 or all 3 parts

All 3 trips are approx 10 days duration and cost \$1300 each excluding International and domestic airfares

The first trip is for 10 days duration. Two sessions snorkelling with the **Whale Sharks at Donsol and 15 dives staying at Ticao Island**

The second trip is to **Coron for land based wreck diving and APO Reef diving liveaboard**

The third trip is to **Sabang listed in the top ten dive locations in the world.**

Details for the trip have been emailed out to club members

The first trip will close shortly and a 30% deposit of \$400 will be required.

Dive Club Calendar

November 2016

Date	Description	Location	Organiser
5 November	Boat Dive	Whale Watch Platform	Bill Rowland
6 to 17 November	Dive Trip – Queensland	Cape York Area	Mick Scotland
8 November	Calendar Planning Night	Rowers on Cok	Greg Blackburne
12 November	Boat Dive	Bypass Reef	Ron Walsh
16 November	Club Meeting	Rowers on Cook	Greg Blackburne
19 November	Boat Dive	Barrens Hut/The Split	Ian Roffey
20 November	Frenchman's Bay Boat Dive & BBQ	Frenchman's Bay	Bill Rowland/Paul Pacey
26 November	Boat Dive	Xanadu	Nancy Scoleri

December 2016

Date	Description	Location	Organiser
3 December	Boat Dive	Mary Reef	Shelley Breuseker
4 December	Christmas Party	Botany Bay National Park	Dave Burns
10 December	Deep Wreck Dive	TBA	Peter Flockart
17 December	Boat Dive	Henry Head	Eda di Camillo
21 December	Club Meeting	Rowers on Cook	Greg Blackburne

Thursday Night Dives – every week – email sent out early in the week advising location and time

Regular Shore Dives – advice is via email or facebook

Your Committee

President	Greg Blackburne	president@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au	
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