



P.O. Box 453 Hurstville South 2221 NSW

Visit our web page at www.ozemail.com.au/~diving/stgeorge/stgeorge.htm

September 2003

COMMITTEE

The committee of the Club for the 2003-4 Year is:

PRESIDENT:	STEVE SHAW
VICE PRESIDENT:	PHIL ROSE
SECRETARY:	CAROL MAPSTONE
TREASURER:	LES CATERSON
ASSISTANT SECRETARY:	SHEILA BALDOCK
/TREASURER:	
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	RUSSELL STOKER

UPCOMING DIVES

19th October Barrons Hut. Michael McFadyen is running this dive so give him a call on 9558 8181 for more information and to book.

Barrens Hut

© Michael McFadyen - Devilfish Diving Services

To the immediate east of the anchor should be the rocky area between The Split and the Barrens Hut dive site. This consists of large boulders which provide a lot of small nooks and crannies in which eastern blue devils and cuttlefish can be found. Swim to the east till you hit the sand. Turn south and follow it for about 20 metres till you reach "The Cave". This is quite large, although the back of the cave is fairly shallow. You can swim through from either side.

From here there is a low wall for 10 metres and then a sheer wall runs to the south for approximately 40 metres. About 20 metres south of The Cave is "The Tunnel". This goes from the sand back under the reef and then climbs to the right in a chimney up to about the 19 metre level and exits back near The Cave. Before entering The Tunnel, if you have air and time, swim over the small boulders on the sand in front of the entrance. The boulders are about 10 metres off the wall at a depth of 27 or 28 metres and support a variety of sponges, ascidians, sea fans, soft corals and nudibranchs. A lot of small fish live here, including pygmy leatherjacket, snakeskin wrasse, old wife and Gunthers butterflyfish. In July to September you may also see Port Jackson sharks in this area. In August 2001 there were vertebrae bones from a whale (not sure what sort) in front of the Tunnel.

This is truly a great dive site, well worth doing over and over again.

AUSTRALASIAN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHER 2003

South Pacific Divers Club are holding the presentation night at the Greyhound Social Club 140 Rookwood Road Yagoona, for there Competition on Saturday 18th October at 7.00pm Les has purchased tickets for those who were interested and can be

picked up at the next meeting. A meal is also available from 5.00pm at \$20.00 a head For nibbles, roast beef or chicken and desert

PORT MORESBY DIVING.

By Mark Palmer

The water is pretty cold here at the moment, sometimes hitting 24 degrees. Yesterday I was diving with a 3mm wetsuit and was shivering for the last 15 minutes of the dive! I will be wearing an undersuit next weekend.

This weekend just gone was the first for many months that the south easterly winds have stopped so we should now be getting into some settled weather and comfortable diving.

I recently bought a new boat here on behalf of our dive club - POMSAC - Port Moresby Sub Aqua Club, of which I am president. The boat is called a "Good Go" built in South Korea, 24 foot fibreglass boat with centre console, power steering and is powered by a turbo charged 4 cylinder Volvo penta diesel engine. It is a 1996 model but has only got about 100 hours on the motor. It was owned by a church group who still have 3 other similar boats which were donated by their US and other members for a fishing project in PNG. The project never got off the ground and the boat was wasting away disused on a mooring a short distance outside of Port Moresby. After I heard about the boat and that the guy in charge of the group was thinking of selling it, it took me about 2 months to talk him into selling it to our Club. We got a really good deal and paid about a third of its market value. It took me about 2 months to completely go over it and get everything working properly but now we have a really good boat which is very economical to run, a very comfortable ride through even the worst weather (which here is wind and waves) and which can carry 8 to 10 divers in comfort. We had been having a bit of trouble getting diver numbers in our former banana boat because we have had wind and rough seas here for so long but the new boat is attracting divers back to the club again. So that is positive. The diving here is still spectacular and the water is relatively clear with viz normally averaging 15 to 20 metres at this time of year. With the improved weather I will soon be back into searching for WW2 plane wrecks and am confident of finding at least one this year.

My regards to the St George Club and happy diving,

SIMPSON DESERT TRIP

By Michael McFadyen

Saturday 12 July 2003 started early for me as I left my home at Tempe. This was the start of our Simpson

Desert Trip. With me in my car (Toyota Prado V6 Petrol) was my friend Frank Cahill. For the first leg of the trip we were alone. The others traveling on the trip were Les and Elly Catterson (Toyota 80 series petrol), Robby and Carol Mapstone (Toyota Troopy Diesel) and non-members David and Irmgard Handcock (Toyota 80 series petrol). The others were traveling via Narrabri and Bourke and the plan was that we would meet up in Tibooburra on Monday 14 July.



Frank and I overnighted at Louth and then went on to Tibooburra via the Bourke/Wanaaring Road which has changed a lot since I last traveled it in 1981. Over the next day and a bit we explore Sturt NP to the east and north of Tibooburra. Things we saw were the Mount Wood Pastoral Museum and Shearing Shed, the Gorge Loop Road, Olive Downs Homestead and the spectacular Jump Ups.

We were to meet up with the others at Milparinka so on Monday we drove down there. After a quick beer in the Milparinka Hotel, we went to Depot Glen to see where Charles Sturt's party camped for over three months back in the mid-1840s, James Poole's Grave and Mount Poole to see Sturt's Cairn. We did not see the others so we went back to Tibooburra and set up camp at Dead Horse Gully. Time for bed and the others still were not here.

The next morning I headed into town and rang Les's mobile. It rang, so I knew that they were nowhere near Tibooburra. Turns out they were still in Bourke as his front diff had failed near Wanaaring and he had to be towed back to Bourke. This change in plans meant that we did some more exploring of the park. We decided to move to Innamincka the next day. Les's diff will take until Thursday afternoon to be repaired so David, Irmgard, Robby and Carol are leaving Bourke and will meet up with us the next evening at Innamincka. Les and Elly will drive direct to Birdsville and meet us there, hopefully on Saturday evening.

We drove out to Cameron Corner and then on to Innamincka via the Old Strezlecki Track. When we got to the Moomba Road, we stayed on the old road. It was very rough for first 20 km, only 30 to 40 km/h with many large pools of water but it got better. We set up camp at the Cullyamurra Waterhole, a huge waterhole on Cooper Creek about 8 km long. The birdlife was amazing, lots of corellas, galahs, kites, pelicans and other birds.

The next day we did a guided walk to some Aboriginal engravings and then explored the area to the west of the town. There are many more waterholes here, as well as the grave of William Wills (of Burke and Wills) who died here in June 1861. Late in the afternoon we spoke to Robby on the radio and arranged to meet at the pub. After a couple of

middies of Coopers Pale Ale, we all headed back to the Cullyamurra Waterhole.



The next morning we went to Robert O'Hara Burke's grave and then on to the Burke and Wills Dig Tree which is on another part of the Cooper Creek. Despite a rumour that the tree had been burnt by vandals, it was intact. You can only see part of the camp designation "B LXV" carving on the waterhole side. The carving on the other side is now covered by bark. We are informed by the caretaker that a university is soon to use ultrasound to check the carvings to clarify the distance from the tree that Burke and Wills were told to dig (as different distances were later stated). We travel back to Innamincka via the Flood Bypass Road, a very spectacular route, passing south of the St Ann Ranges and past Table Hill with lots of mesas and jump ups.

Robby's battery was dead the next morning so have to jump start him each morning till we get to Alice Springs. We head for Birdsville along the Cordello Downs. It is good for about 50 km then gets quite poor, with many washouts and large pools of water. It appears that there are some oil fields around here and that is why the road was good at first.

To be continued

NEWSLETTER

Please send items to me by Email

rstoker@optusnet.com.au

The more you send the better the newsletter will be.

RAFFLE

1st prize Book: David Vandervelden.

A new member, who has now won two Raffles in a row. Good luck next month!

CALENDAR PLANNING MEETING

A special meeting to plan the years dive calendar will be held on Wednesday the 22nd October at the St George Rowers club. Everybody is most welcome to attend and contribute. The meeting will start at 7.30pm

LAST MEETING

At the end of the last meeting Glenn Townsend Showed a video on Norfolk Island. He placed 3rd in the Video section of a competition ran in conjunction with the dive expo. Congratulations Glenn

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the St George Scuba Club will be held on **19th October, 2003** at the St. George Rowing Club, Levy Street Arncliffe at 8.00pm.