

Waves 'n' caves

www.wavesncaves.com

Promoting the sport



What's been happening?

Welcome to the wavesncaves sixth newsletter.

Births and Weddings seem to be the flavor of the times.

Adelle and Aaron have had the safe arrival of their first first borne, Eddie Smith! Steve and Kelly Parkinson have also decided to tie the knot later this year. Congratulations go out to all!

Harvest and Christmas are finally behind us. As we reflect on the year gone by we see a number who have joined the class of Open Water certifications, cav/sink certifications and two that have achieved their Cave and Penetration ratings. We have invaded both NSW and SA as we dived at Batemans Bay and Whyalla, and the Southern Coastline has been raided with many photo's taken!

Welcome to our sixth newsletter!

In this edition:

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- Movie Review (into the blue)
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- Giant Cuttlefish in Whyalla
- Cairns Liveaboard
- Featured Divesite (middle isl)
- Past Events
- Upcoming Events

With a new year starting, hopefully for many this means that things will start to quieten off , and some weekends can be spent relaxing at a few good dive sites!

This newsletter includes a writeup of a Cairns liveaboard trip, as well as a trip to Whyalla earlier this year to see the cuttlefish. Also included is some information on Middle Ear Barotrauma and some 'interesting' ideas on how to pass the time on those longer decompression stops.

2007 has given us some interesting diving experiences, and many new friendships formed. Let's see what 2008 will bring us!✍



Fox hunting takes on a whole new meaning!



Middle Ear Barotrauma (Ear Equalizing)

Most of us have had problems at some part of our diving with ears not wanting to equalize. While these sort of problems mainly occur when learning to dive, it can also rear it's ugly head on other occasions depending on a variety of circumstances.

This column contains some commonly known as well as some not so commonly known information about Middle Ear Barotrauma Prevention. Just remember though, we are not medical professionals. All this information has been gleaned from personal experiences and other sources (such as the internet. If it's on the internet, it must be right... right?) Seriously though, one should of course always consult their doctor if they are experiencing any unusual symptoms or problems when diving, and not take this information as medical advise, but rather as information of what others have found helpful.

Firstly, as a refresher, middle ear barotrauma is caused when the diver is unable to 'clear' the space from the middle ear and through the eustachian tube. This diagnosis is usually made on the basis first of discomfort, and then pain in the ear.

There are many ways to clear this area, and we will explorer a few common ones, and then venture into some less commonly known techniques.

Amongst the easiest and simplest of the techniques is the valsalva maneuver. With the nose pinched closed, pressure is increased in the chest by attempting to exhale. Cheek muscles should be kept tight and retracted (not puffed out). This is the most commonly taught method, but does have some disadvantages.

Prolonged effort can cause venous engorgement of the tissues around the Eustachian tubes. It can also cause a decrease in venous return to the heart and can lower blood pressure if the effort is prolonged.

Dr Edmond Kay (an expert medical practitioner for the ear) who is also familiar with diving had the following to say about the valsalva maneuver:

Students can become confused about the actual pressure needed to achieve middle ear equalization when well meaning friends remind them not to blow too hard.

This advice is certainly prudent when a student is under water and experiencing middle ear squeeze. Unfortunately, for the squeamish individual, and especially if a marginally patent Eustachian tube is present, this limits the ability of some to pressurize adequately at anytime during the dive.

Pressurization of the middle ear can and should be vigorous on the surface, when no negative pressure gradient is present across the middle ear. This means that it is possible (and desirable) for an individual to pre-pressurize the middle ear and to inflate the Eustachian tube prior to descent.

Pressurization of the middle ear provides a pillow of air behind the tympanic membrane, protecting the "ear drum" (TM) from barotrauma." As descent occurs, more air can easily enter an inflated Eustachian tube and pass into the middle ear, if pressurization begins early in the dive.

If the Eustachian tube is allowed to collapse at any time during descent due to squeeze, the pressure to re-inflate it becomes greater. For this reason, I always recommend that individuals practice pressurization of their middle ears prior to diving in order to test their Eustachian tubes for patency, and to perform middle ear pressurization before beginning actual descent to cushion the ears against trauma..

For those interested in this, it can be watched online by visiting <http://www.uwv.org/programs/>

Did you know...

Early cave divers used to carry snorkels! It was believed that the snorkel could be used to breathe from air pockets in caves in the event that one ran out of air whilst still underwater in a cave!

[displayevent.asp?rid=789](#)

Additional information is available online also from <http://faculty.washington.edu/ekay/index.html>

Additionally, when performing the valsalva maneuver most people tend to tilt their head down. Instead, tilting your head right back when you perform it will cause the eustation tubes to stretch and equalize easier.

You can try this at home. With your head bowed forward, pinch your nose, and blow out gently—but not enough to 'pop' your ears. Now, as you're holding that pressure, start to raise your head until you tilt it right back. You may notice as you tilt back your ears will pop. This little example simply demonstrates that ears equalize easier with the head tilted back.

It is also handy to note that it is much easier to equalize in an upright position. (Diving head first into the water can make it harder to equalize than descending feet first).

Other simple techniques to equalize include swallowing, yawning and the head tilt.

However, one of the best methods that I have seen todate, that appears to work well, even when all the other methods have failed is the Lowry Technique.

This is a combination of a pressurization technique (similar to

the valsalva maneuver) while swallowing simultaneously.

However—with this method it is important not to blow hard! Unlike the valsalva maneuver that requires a reasonable amount of pressure, this technique requires far less. One starts by pinching their nose shut, and keeping their mouth closed while attempting to blow out gently, **and then at the same time while blowing—swallow.**

As crazy as it sounds, this can be done with a little practice, and

Normally the best approach to descending is not to equalize, but to pressurize. ...

this maneuver moves a fair amount of air through the eustachian tube into the middle ear, normally pressurizing the inner ear, rather than just equalizing.

And this brings us to another note regarding equalization. Normally the best approach to descending is not to equalize, but to pressurize.

The difference is that when equalizing, you're always 'Catching Up' to the pressure.

The opposite approach is to pressurize and keep ahead, so the first pressurization (or equalization) should occur on the surface before the head is placed under the water.

Keeping ahead of the equalization helps reduce pain and damage that can be caused by equalizing after pain is felt, and also can make it easier to equalize when one may not be able to equalize 'normally' (or when playing "catch up").

There are many different methods that one can use to help

them descend, but it is important not to let this put you off diving when you first start out!

When I did my open water course, the only way I could equalize was to swallow sea water everytime I descended a couple of feet.

This was very uncomfortable for me, but I was determined to get certified. I thought that I would never be able to descend fast with the problems I was having, but a few open water dives later, and I found it started to get easier and easier, to the point where I now hardly have to consciously equalize at all. If there was hope for me, there is sure to be hope for you.

At last, if you're one of these people where nothing seems to work, and you've been diving—as a last resort, it may be beneficial to check out special ear plugs.

Note—normal ear plugs and diving **do not mix!** The outside pressure can force them into your ear and cause severe damage, however there are some ear plugs specifically designed for diving.

One such type are called 'Doc's Pro Plugs'. These ear plugs allow water into your ear, but do so in a way that your inner ear is normally pressurized 'ahead' of the water in your ear—just enough to assist your equalizing and making it a little easier.

While it is certainly better to use the other techniques (and remember—equalizing normally gets easier the more you dive), if you're one of the rare people who continue to have problems, and would like to look at some other alternative solutions that are less commonly known, it may be worth checking out those ear plugs. A search through google for 'doc's pro plugs' will get you more information. 

Have you visited our website lately?

Our ever changing website contains a number of video clips of different dive sites, as well as an ever increasing number of diving photographs.

Please feel free to post some diving photographs up on the site yourself!

Our Waves n Caves newsletters as well as the Warrnambool Sub Aqua newsletters can also be found on our website.

Our buoyweather account is still online. If you do not know the password to access the 7 day forecast, please sign up to the mailing list and request it there. (If you require assistance, please feel free to email adam@wavesncaves.com for assistance.

The latest information on upcoming dives, including the interactive dive calendar can also be accessed via our website.

If you've got an idea or suggestion for the website, would like to submit a newsletter article, or would like to advertise on our website, or newsletter, please feel free to let us know!



Movie Review - Into The Blue (2005)

Set in the beautiful tropical waters of the Bahama's, four young divers discover a legendary shipwreck rumored to contain millions in gold at the bottom of the sea, they believe their dream of buried treasure has come true. But nearby on the ocean floor, a sunken plane full of illegal cargo threatens their find.

The friends make a pact to keep quiet about both discoveries so they can excavate the shipwreck before a rival treasure hunter uncovers their secret and beats them to the gold. But their plan goes awry when they realize dangerous smugglers are already closing in on the missing plane, and one of the friends makes a fatal decision that quickly turns the treasure hunters into the hunted.

Starring Paul Walker and Jessica Alba, this is no B grade movie. It contains plenty of underwater footage, including scuba and free diving in the storyline.

This movie contains a descent story line, a couple of twists, some action and a romantic twist which makes it good for both the girls and the guys to watch.

Unlike some other diving movies, this keep relatively close to real-

istic from a diving point of view, although some of the free diving / breath holding scenes may be slightly longer than the average freedive.

It's the best diving flick that's been released recently, and gives a breath of fresh air since that terrible movies like "Open Water" and "Adrift"!✍

Warrnambool Sub Aqua Club



The Warrnambool sub aqua club plan dives for every weekend, which range widely in the skill levels involved, so there's something for everyone!

The Warrnambool sub aqua newsletters are on our website, and dates are listed on our main page, as well as our calendar. Why not check them out, and join them for a few dives?

If going, make sure you let the mailing list know your plans, as there may be other interested people who would come with you. ✍



Melbourne's new ship!

If you're like me, you've probably been wondering what's been happening with the Canberra—when are we going to be able to dive on this new site.

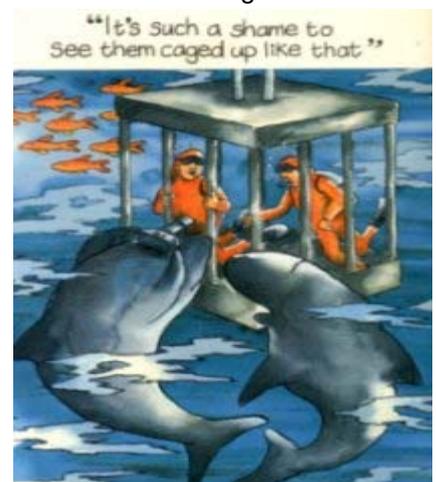
It has been confirmed that Melbourne will get this new ship as an artificial reef, but the dates of the sinking are yet to be set.

Tenders for the sinking of the ship have been closed, and the Victorian Artificial Reef Society (VARS) is now calling for volunteers to help with the project.

We will be sure to keep you posted as to the status of this new wreck dive, and new information will be added to our website as more information becomes forthcoming.



Into the Blue (2005) movie



Dealing With Deco (Keeping yourself entertained)

Most of us, during our time of recreational diving don't have to worry much about Decompression dives, and when we do, they're normally short enough to just wait it out for a few minutes.

But when heading overseas to places like Vanuatu and diving on the President Coolage we can run into much longer decompression requirements.

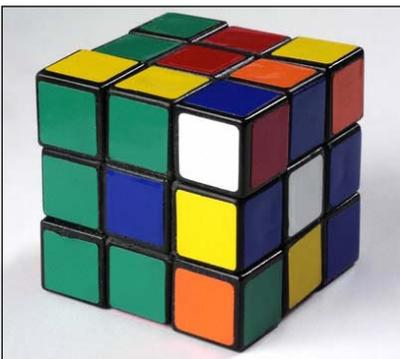
So, the question is—what can one do to stop getting bored on those long decompression stops that can take over 1/2 an hour each.

Here we have collated a few ideas you may want to consider during your next overseas trip, where you may be spending a number of hours in total waiting for your excess nitrogen buildup to unload.

In the past, taking down bread or some sort of fish food has provided some entertainment, and provide some opportunities for some good photographs.

Others have also decided to pass their time by trying to blow bubble rings, or taking a snooze while waiting for their deco time to lapse, (although sleeping on deco is not really advisable as there are the obvious associated risks involved.)

A safer option would be to consider some games which can be used whilst underwater. If you



enjoy a brain tease, you can try out a Rubik's cube. (Although be warned—if other divers don't have any entertainment of their own, you may find you have more divers wanting to “help you” than you desire.) Rinsing in fresh water, and applying some silicon spray will go a long way to keep the cube in good condition after a salt water dive.

If you don't like the idea of being alone, or have been traumatized by childhood memories of not being able to solve the tormenting puzzle, there are other plastic games available to play with a buddy that you could consider.

For instance you could try rivaling one of your buddies at a game of Chess, Backgammon or Checkers. (It would be a good idea to have magnetised pieces to make sure water movement doesn't ruin your game though!)

For more than 2 people, you could go to Chinese Checkers, or consider card games. Special underwater cards are now made for the usual Deck of cards (2's to Aces), and also the popular kids game 'Uno'. Originally designed for pools, bath's and Spa's a lot has to be said for the practical use of diving to. (Although it is a good idea to figure out how you are going to communicate before you get down there).

The gadget guys and gals amongst us, who have a bit more cash to spend may want to consider an underwater mp3 player to listen to their favorite music. (Although this can be used during the dive too).

If you fancy a bit of reading, there are even some waterproof novels that have been made for pool or the bath that can be used underwater.

If you're after a bit more action than just sitting around, some of the underwater kids toys that are

available may tickle your fancy, such as the Toypedo, which is thrown underwater like a spear, and can glide in the water as far as 40 feet. Also available are 'Aquadisks' which can be thrown like a Frisbee.



If you're after a bit more of a challenge, you can take up this chance to play a bit of underwater tennis.

A couple of older rackets and a golf ball tied to a deco line is all that you need for this, although it's definitely recommend to take a few spare golf balls, since they are negatively buoyant and it can take some practice to get a rally going.

Although, if you do decide to go with the more active entertainment idea's you'll need to keep an eye on your buoyancy as if you're not careful, you could easily lose control with your attention on your game.

Whatever your budget, the good news is that you don't have to get bored on your next long decompression stint! 

Did you know...

Home made rebreathers were used by cave divers in the UK just after the end of World War II, and well before cavers took up Open Circuit methods like the common SCUBA regs we're familiar with today!

Giant Cuttlefish in Whyalla (By Adam)

During July '07 Kasey and I were fortunate enough to team up with the rowdy bunch from Warrnambool and trek across to Whyalla in South Australia.

Entering Whyalla for the first time was an experience for us. The red dust from the nearby mining processing plant seemed to be on everything. The roads, road signs, buildings, everywhere, although this was more localized to the North end of the town.

We made our way to the caravan park, where we checked in and unloaded. While we didn't plan to dive until the following morning, it wasn't long before a few of us got itchy feet and wanted to go for a dip.

We found out by asking some locals that the best place to dive for Cuttlefish was around 20 minutes away, at a place called Point Lowly.

Shortly afterwards we were unloading our gear at a carpark near the Santos plant. The water looked choppy, but the waves didn't seem too bad. A few of us boys geared up and made our way down from the carpark to the waters edge.

Those waves looked smaller from the carpark, didn't they guys!

None of us were game to question our decision as we started to make our way into the water. All this male testosterone around, well—no one was going to be the first to give up.

However, at about knee deep in water, someone questioned the dive, and within moments, everyone was agreeing it was time to get out. This seemed like a good way to spend the after

noon.

We made our way around to the Northern part of the point. We were told that you don't see too many cuttlefish on that side, and need to be on the south side, but considering the water was nice and calm on the north side (and a few of us had just started to wet our gear) we decided to check it out.

Then, it all started—barely off the shore, and in a meter of water we started spotting the cuttlefish.

Camouflaged very well, they appeared to come out of no where. If this was the sparse side for cuttlefish who knows what the other side must be like!

We made our way out to some deeper water (approx 3 meters) but that appeared to be a mistake. There were some cuttlefish out there amongst the seaweed, but the best advantage was in the shallows amongst the rocks.

The camera's came out as photo opportunities abound. These creatures weren't quite what I had expected. They were much more..... well gracious I guess is the best way to describe them.

Most allowed us to get well within reaching distance from them, and a few even allowed us to pet their undersides.

The camera's came out as photo opportunities abound. These creatures weren't quite what I had expected

By far, one of the most fascinating things about these creates was their ability to change colors and create patterns instantly along their skin, as well as to manipulate their skin into various shapes to blend into their sur-



roundings. The best way that I could think to describe them is as living LCD TV's!

We decided to exit the water after some time (most likely because we were hungry, as we had plenty of air spare diving in an average of 1 to 2 meters of water!), and made our way back to town. The next important decision on the agenda was what to eat.

The decision was made to invade the BBQ are of the camping ground (which was a great setup by the way), where we could compare photo's.

While the caravan park wasn't within walking distance from any good dive spots, it was very well setup. There was a good play area for the kids, a great BBQ area, and it was right on the beach.

The proximity to the beach got Jeff interested, as he kept pondering whether the tide would be right when the wind was right for him to take off and land in his trike from there.

After a good night sleep, we were going back to Point Lowly for our second dive. We checked out a few locations, but the wind was still pretty stong, coming in from the south, so we decided on the same sheltered dive spot as the previous day.

None of the girls had been for a dive yet, and us guys were interested in trying to beat each oth-

ers photographs, so it wasn't long before we were geared up and back in the water.

These creatures really were magnificent. Normally when diving, you may get to see a cuttlefish or two, but these were much larger, and also much more comfortable with us divers. (Maybe they had something else on their minds, after all this was the breeding season)!

Different cuttlefish behaved differently to us. Some ignored us, others were a little wary of us. Then there were some that



Some cuttlefish eggs at Whyalla

would swim away from us, that we'd follow with the camera to get some motion footage. However, as soon as they came across a female, they completely forgot about us, and immediately started to court the female.

We also found if you looked carefully under rocks and ledges, you could find the cuttlefish eggs, which looked a little like lightbulbs stuck to the roof of the rock or ledge.

Once again, we swam out deeper, where we saw what appeared to be older cuttlefish. However, it wasn't really age.



Because we were swimming amongst the weeds, the cuttlefish changed their skin texture adding more wrinkles and 'leafy bits' to blend into the environment more. As they came across more smoother environments such as rock, they would smooth out their skin.

Now there's an ability that women would kill for! To be able to remove wrinkles from their skin!

After some more photographs and video footage, I decided to exit, finding out that I had just missed a pack of dolphins that came swimming within meters from where I was!

Nevermind—if I had have seen them, I probably would have mistaken them for sharks and ruined the inside of my drysuit!

So, next it was back to town to check out some of the other local attractions. We had a charter boat booked for tomorrow, so firstly, we decided to find the local dive shop and fill up our tanks (although most of us still had over 1/2 a tank left, but best to be topped up when we go a bit deeper.

We were able to hold and pat a number of these creates, without them getting concerned about us!

We then made our way to the local shopping center (which is no where near the CBD), and found some lunch.

The afternoon was quite entertaining as we trusted Gary with the directions. While normally good—Whyalla is a town with a difference, and we kept on getting lead on the 'alternate' and 'scenic' routes.

That evening we went out for tea

where we had a good time telling all sorts of stories and tales.

The following morning greeted us with quite windy conditions, and after an early trip down to the local boat ramp, we found that we would not be doing a boat dive that day.

Gary, Linda and myself decided to go for another dive back at the cuttlefish, where we practiced our cuttlefish handling techniques. We were able to hold and pat a number of these creates, without them getting concerned about us.

Spending this amount of time in the water with them gave me quite a new respect and awe for these creatures that I didn't have previously. They really are wonderful and graceful creatures.

Later on that morning, we made a split decision to leave a day early, and go for Rapid Bay instead, where we were hoping to get a good dive in on the jetty the following Morning.

However, whilst making our way through Adelaide, some of the girls decided that they wanted to go shopping instead, which pulled Parko and Doug out of the equation.

Gary, Linda, Layland, Kasey and myself pushed on where we came into the local township that evening. However, we completely forgot about the start of the SA school holidays, and getting accommodation ended up being a bit of a problem, but were able to get sorted out later on.

The following morning greeted us with a beautiful day. Traveling to the jetty was magnificent as we drove through the picturesque hills.

We geared up and made our way to the water, but it wasn't long into our dive that we real-

ized this wasn't going to be the best of dives. The recent king tide had stirred up the water, and visibility was limited to less than 2 meters—but we did get to rescue an abalone from a crown-of-thorns, and boy did it move when it was free!

The day was not wasted however, as we made the most of our time driving through the beautiful countryside of this peninsula, and checking out some of the local towns.

The weekend was over. We didn't get to do as many dives as we had hoped, but the trip was well worth it. Seeing the giant cuttlefish in so greater numbers, and in a relaxed mood (well, one where they weren't worried by us anyway) was great.

Getting away for this weekend was a great decision. Yes—we may have put a few extra km's on the clock of the ol' car, but it was well worth it.

It was the first time that Kasey and I had gotten to meet the Warrnambool mob, and we really enjoyed staying in Whyalla with them. ✍

Past Events

Nov 30th—Dec 1st

A quick 'sneak' trip to Mt Gambier allowed Freddy and Adam to fit in a night dive Friday at 'The Pines' followed by an early dive the following morning at Englebrechts East where they met up with Andrew. A lesson about 'not following the light' was learned by the newest rated diver at this site.

December 14th-15th

Two keen divers from Horsham went down to Warrnambool Friday evening to catch up with the Warrnambool gang, and took the club boat to Hopkins Reef.

Many 'Port Jackson' sharks were found at the North end of the reef. A few sweep were caught by a couple with spear guns, and a great dive was had by all, although a warmer dive would have been made by one if they didn't leave their drysuit undergarment back in Koroit. A morning dive followed a night out at 'Fasta Pasta' behind the old Aquarium, where another lesson was learnt about the benefits of following your BWRAF checks before entering the water.



December 28th—29th

Warrnambool was invaded by 2 from Horsham and 1 from Melbourne. Friday evening consisted of a great dive behind Middle Island, where an impressive cave was found.

Saturday followed with the local club boat being taken out for two dives. One on the La Bella reef to (attempt) to catch crays, and the second trip out to see the La Bella Wreck.

November and December have been a quieter months, with many kept busy with work, harvest and Christmas. However, January has started with a splurge on diving, many taking advantage of some superb conditions on the weekends and heading to the coast. We'll have more in the next newsletter! ✍

Looking for Accomodation?

Whether you're chasing it for a night, a weekend or a week, this spacious 3 bedroom house with good size living areas and fully furnished, located in Wimmera Street Mt Gambier may be what you're looking for.

It includes and outdoor entertainment area at the back with facilities for diving gear to be hung up on. Perfect for scuba divers visiting the Mt Gambier region, whether to dive in caves or the nearby sea.

It also makes an excellent place to stay while doing your CDAA course! Prices start at \$20 / head / night.

For bookings, contact Kelvyn or Paula Ball

Ph: (03) 5384 2259

Mob: 0428 842 259 / 0427 842 259

Email: freddy145690@bigpond.com



Upcomming Events

Jan 12—Bakers Cave

Bakers cave is open this weekend at Mt Gambier. Contact Freddy for more info.

Jan 26-27—The Shaft

Freddy is guiding 'The Shaft' in Mt Gambier. This would be a great opportunity to take advantage of this long weekend and visit the Mount. Contact Freddy for more information.

Jan 26-27 Feb 2-3—OW Course

Open Water Course. Theory and Pool Training in Horsham will be held the first weekend. Open water diving 2nd weekend at the Coast (location TBA). Any interested students should contact Adam ASAP.

Jan 27th—Cray Comp

A cray competition is being held at Port Mac. Entry \$10. Register between 8:00—9:00am at John's Shop.

March 23rd—Easter Weekend

Talk about spending part of the Easter break at Mt Gambier is in the air. More information will follow as the date gets closer, either in the next newsletter, or online on the website.

April 12th—Emily Portland

Some have plans to dive the Emily Wreck in Portland this weekend. The Emily is a tugboat that was scuttled 1st Sep, 1999 in 24m of water, and is in great condition for diving. Depending on time, we may attempt a dive at Minerva reef to see the marine life and hopefully find some fossilized sharks teeth.

May 10th—Queenscliffe

Queenscliffe has a lot to offer, including the Lonsdale wall and the J-Class submarines. This weekend we hope to visit the area, weather permitting.

April 19th—Treasure Hunt

A treasure hunt will be held at Port Mac this weekend. Great fun for all levels of experience! Entry \$10. Register between 8:00 & 9:00 at John's shop in Port Mac.

June 7th—Loch Ard

Weather dependant, some hope to dive the Loch Ard wreck down near Port Campbell this weekend. More details will follow on our website and mailinglist as the time draws closer.

July 5th—Mt Gambier

Kilsbys and possibly the shaft will be open this weekend. Other dive possibilities include Pics, One-Tree, Little Blue, Pines, Englebrechts, Allendale and Ewens, depending on numbers, experience and interest.

August 8th—HMAS Canberra

Hoping that all goes to plan, the HMAS Canberra should have been scuttled by now. This brand new wreck for the Queenscliffe area is sure to be a great attraction. See website for more details as dates or site may change depending on whether the wreck is available to dive by this date (or earlier!)

Sep 27—Oct 11th Nullabor Trip

A trip will be taking to the middle of nowhere to dive some of the great world renoun cave sites

over on the Nullabor plains. Cave rating is required for this trip. (Those not yet cave rated and interested in this sort of diving should consider getting endorsed early to make sure they don't miss this fantastic life experience!)

October 17th—Catch N Cook

Cray season will be back into the swing, and we're sure that their's more than just a couple that will be ready for the great hunting and the feeding experienced found with these unique creatures. There has been talk of holding a catch n cook this weekend over at Port MacDonald.

Unplanned Events

Unplanned diving events happen almost on a fortnightly basis, with trips all over the coast! This trips, normally decided within a week of the dive are communicated between divers on the waves n caves mailing list.

If you are not on the mailing list, then you are most likely not in the know of the majority of the dives that take place.

If you would like to be on the mailing list, send an email to adam@wavesncaves.com requesting to be added. The mailing list allows all involved to be able to send emails to the list members about any indended dives.



Cairns Live-Aboard (By Adam)

Shortly after getting our Open Water certification, we decided that it would be good to go away on a holiday where we could exercise our new freedom. After doing various searches on the internet, we found that one of the best financially beneficial ways to do this was to go on a Live Aboard at Cairns. (We did the calculations on how much it would cost to do day trips, and pay for accommodation, meals, etc back at Cairns vs a liveboard, and the liveboard came up best).

Being our first diving trip away (and second decent holiday since we were married nearly 7 years ago!), we were concerned about a number of things. Weather turning bad, getting the cold or flu, liveboard cancelled, etc. So many extra things can go wrong on a dive trip, and let's face it—we were known to bring bad weather with us wherever we went.

However, none of these 'bad things' were to be. We were to have a great time!

We arrived at Cairns one afternoon, where the weather was mild. A little cooler than we were expecting it, but shorts and t-shirt weather none the less. We found our nights accommodation, and then made our way to the Pro-Dive shop, where we sorted out the gear we would be needing for the upcoming days. Walking down the street in Sandals and shorts was quite differ-



ent to the rugged up clothes we were wearing only hours previously when in Melbourne. The mild early evening sea breeze blew down the street, and the whole place had a 'holiday' feel to it, as many youngsters were out and about that afternoon. We were on holidays! But then again, we needed an early night, as an early start the next day was required to make the liveboard.

Waking up a bit dazed to the bedside clock alarm going off didn't give the real feeling of 'being on holidays', but that was to soon be all behind us. We quickly packed up our gear, and made our way to the front, for the courtesy bus to pick us up. After 10 minutes, we started getting worried that we may have been missed, but the bus eventually came. (We were the last ones on the pick up, and as it was—it would have been quicker to walk there).

An hour later, we were on the boat in the galley, getting our first briefing as to the next days, safety on the boat, etc as we made our way to the reef. After rounding the point, the wind picked up, and the sea became a bit choppy, causing the boat to rock a bit more than some would

like.

One of the things mentioned in our briefing was "If you feel crook, the best place for you to be is outside". Then—they kept us trapped in the galley for an additional 45 minutes as they gave us the rest of the briefs. Much to the disgust of some of the guests who voiced their opinion some time later (after they had exited from spending a large amount of time in the toilets).

We arrived at our first dive spot, where things started to happen fast. Dive briefing, and then get into the water...quick quick quick. Having never been on a liveboard before, we weren't sure what to expect, but (on this one anyway), there was a timeline to stick to. Only so long in the water here, before we had to be out for lunch.

Upon surfacing we found we had the first casualty. One of the divers had perphered his ear drum, and the diving was over for him. Luckily (for us), there was another boat nearby going back to land that afternoon, so he could hitch a ride with them.

We found out later that if it wasn't for that, we would have had to journey back in (as the doc

wanted to see him ASAP) and then journey back out again, missing out on good dive time (and most likely losing a few others through sea sickness).

Our next dive happened soon after lunch. Only so long back in the water, as the boat needs to move to our next dive location.

The next dive was our first time that we had the opportunity to dive with sharks. (Well, the first time we have seen any of the sharks in our water anyway!)



The first time I saw the shark, I was off—after it with the camera. Click, click, clicking away, I had tunnel vision on the shark, and ended up colliding with a school of (well... Some other sort of fish anyway). Later on, I was to find that the camera gave an interesting shot with fish right up near the lens.

Kasey and I decided to finish our Advanced Open Water on this trip this day, as they could include it with the trip, and it was convenient to 'get it out of the way'. It also led to us learning

about which animals we could and couldn't handle



It felt a bit go go go at times, but it was our choice as to whether we went on every dive, or missed one or two on the trip, and relaxed a bit more. Kasey decided to sit some out, and have a bit more of a relaxing trip, whereas for me—being as keen as mustard, I was going on every dive.

... and I couldn't believe my eyes. There was the pro-dive boat, a long way off in the distance!

Go diving, get back out again... Afternoon tea!. Go diving.... Dinner. Go diving again on the night dive.... Evening supper—and then Bed.

Yes—I was quite enjoying this life of dive, eat, dive, eat, dive, eat, sleep. And then repeat. I could get used to this! All my favourite things bundled together!

The next day started with an early morning dive before breakfast, (Kasey decided to sleep in on this, so I buddied up with another couple we were getting to know). We found that batfish loved living just underneath the boat. (Guess they were trying to grab whatever fell overboard). This day we were greeted with a number of different experiences, including our first turtle sighting.

We saw a couple of turtles, shark's, "nemo's" (as they were fondly named), and cod, amongst a whole number of other fish of which I could go on for ages about, but won't.

The dive after breakfast was in the same spot, but we were advised to dive in a different direction this time.

Kasey decided to gear up and come with me this time, so after a short time at the new destination, I decided to cut back to where we were at the first dive, so Kasey could see the sharks and turtles that were there.

After a little while, I decided to surface, and check out where the boat was. I surfaced, and couldn't believe my eyes. There was the pro-dive boat, a long way off in the distance. I was expecting to be in front of it, but we were in totally the wrong direction, and around 400 yards away!

Realising that Kasey would



probably get quite anxious if she knew, (after all the stories about other divers getting 'left behind') I decided to get a compass bearing—descend, and head to the boat before Kasey surfaced too see where we were.

After some considerable time of swimming, I surfaced again to recheck my navigation. We were getting closer, but had only made it maybe 1/2 of the way. Once again, I quickly reset my compass, and descended before Kasey could rise.

After another period of focussed swimming, Kasey had 50bar left, and wanted to surface. I was hoping we were close enough to the boat not to concern her.

We made our ascent, and the boat was still a little distance off, but we had covered 2/3rds of the ground. I thought all was OK, until I heard Kasey ask "Which boat is ours?"

I couldn't believe it! Upon my initial surface, I couldn't believe my eyes, but didn't think that their would be 2 identical Pro-Dive boats in the same spot! This other boat must have come while we were having breakfast.

Anyway—I knew which one was ours. When I surfaced the first time, I must have been not more than 50m from our boat (which is what I would have expected). We decided to surface swim back. We knew that we were well past our dive timelimit, and could see a divemaster on the top of the boat looking out for us—but in the wrong direction.



After quite some time on the surface, they spotted us, and sent the dingy of shame out to pick us up.

Although—after we were aboard, I don't know who was more embarrassed. Us, or our instructor that just passed us for our AOW (which included a navigation course dive less than 18hrs previous!)

It made for some good laughs round though. In hindsight, we should have continued to the other boat, to see what they were having for breakfast!

The weather was a bit choppy, but was nice and calm underneath. Apparently the vis wasn't very good (or so the dive masters were saying), but compared to what we are used to in the south—it was fantastic.

After dinner that night we got our second (and last) night dive in, where I saw an octopus underwater moving about for the first time. It was interesting to observe how it moved.

We also had some fun 'feeding' the fish underwater during this dive. We found that by keeping our light focused on a fish underwater would cause another 'bigger' fish to come out of the works and have a feed.

Talking about feed, it's about time for us to get out of the water, and have our evening supper before a bit of lounging around and then sleep.

The boat was on the move early the following morning to get to our next dive spot by 6:00am. This was probably the worst dive of our whole trip, with not much to see at all. The second dive had us heading in a different direction which was much different.

We were swimming through a maze of coral, with a sandy bot-



tom rising from 18m to about 3m in depth, with many all sorts of marine life to look at. At one spot we ran into what looked like the whole rest of the group. Divers in the water everywhere. Seeing over divers in a small area all together was kind of funny. Most didn't even know where they were supposed to be going, and were wanting to follow everyone else.

We observed from a distance, and I had a bit of a chuckle to myself, before seeing a ray out of the corner of my eye, and going for some video footage.

We had lunch, and then headed the journey back to the mainland where we spent most of our time on the upper deck enjoying the breeze and sunrays.

... a loud crunch, and the boat sharply jolted sideways followed by scraping sounds.

Only a couple of miles out from cairns and our nice relaxful trip was interrupted with a loud crunch, and the boat sharply jolting sideways, followed by scraping sounds. We had ran straight into a channel marker, and it was making it's way down the star-board side of our boat!

Being on that side of the boat, and seeing the top part coming straight for us was discombobulating at the least. We scrambled to the other side of the boat to see it scrape by where we were, and then move on behind us.

The solar panel hanging precariously down from the top of the marker by an electrical cable.

The engines stopped, and the crew were racing around leaning over the sides of the boat trying to evaluate the damage.

My first thought was if we're going to sink—my camera isn't in the underwater housing, and I'll lose all my photo's!

Thankfully, the hull was not ruptured, just badly damaged.

After a little while, the boat started back up again, and we made our way to the pier at Cairns, where the mood of the crew had changed dramatically. Hardly any of them were talking, and there were certainly no smiles that afternoon.

That evening Kasey and I enjoyed catching up with many of the other's on the liveaboard for dinner back in the city. We then had a beautiful stroll back to our accommodation where we looked out to the sea, and noticed one of the channel markers missing it's light.

We were certainly feeling sorry for the next liveaboard patrons, as it was looking like they were not going to have their boat available to them. ✍️

Let's get personal!

Are there any dives that you would like to do that aren't listed, or any other special requests or achievements you'd like to make? Let it be known.

Send your thought into the mailing list, and let everyone else know what you'd like to do to see if we can organise additional dives with others who are interested.

Featured Divesite Middle Island Warrnambool

Middle island is located at the Stingray Bay swimming beach, just off to the east. This is a shore dive, where the entrance begins between two islands.

Diving here should only be done on good days, as a strong current can be present between the islands. The best diving conditions are present when the swell is coming in from the south east.

The dive site itself is an easy dive (on good days), and starts in a couple of meters of water, and extends to around 10m a bit further out.

The bottom is mainly rock / reef, and includes a number of large walls (some extending from 10m almost to the surface), and plenty of swim-throughs to keep one entertained., including a descent cave around to the left (south).

This site also includes some nice color, and a variety of fish and invertebrates, as well as kelp forests, and has some exceptional photo opportunities.

Middle island itself is home to a small colony of fairy penguins.

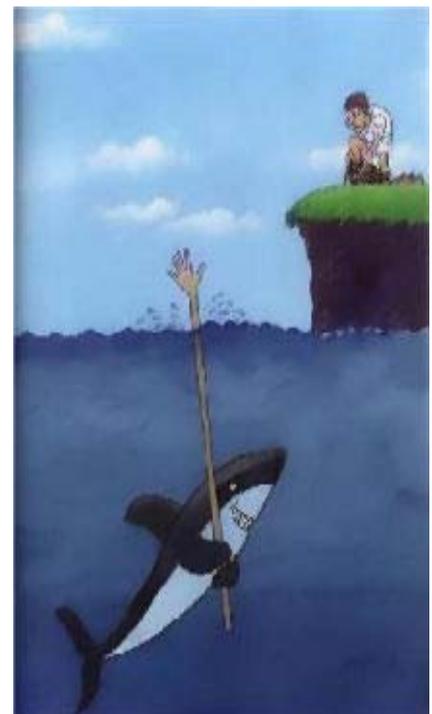
Stingray bay is located at the same area, but extends to the south (on the east side of the island) and is a sheltered bay from 6 to 12m in depth. On days where it could be too rough to dive behind middle island, the bay is normally sheltered enough to go for a look..

Middle island is a great site to take new divers (if the condition is right) as entry is not overly difficult, 10m can be achieved without going out too far, and there is plenty to see. Even non scuba divers can enjoy this site by choosing to snorkel the area between and near the islands.



There is plenty of car parking on the nearby road (although getting a park near the stairs is recommended if you're carrying your dive gear), and the carparks can fill up during summer school holidays as this site is also a popular site for swimmers to swim in the protected stingray bay area.

A public toilet block equipped with cold showers and changing rooms are also located within walking distance, approximately 100 meters along the road towards town from the stairways. ✍️



Dive Quiz

So, you've been diving for a while now, but just how much of your course do you remember?



- 1) The deeper you go the ___ air/gas you use
 - a) same amount
 - b) less
 - c) more
- 2) Most surface waves and swell are caused
 - a) By Underwater Earthquakes
 - b) By Wind
 - c) By Boats
 - d) By Large Birds
- 3) The refraction in the water causes objects
 - a) To appear Smaller
 - b) To appear Larger
 - c) To appear The same as above water
 - d) To appear More scary
- 4) At 20 meters depth you are experiencing
 - a) Three times the surface pressure (3ATA)
 - b) Double the surface pressure (2 ATA)
 - c) Four times the surface pressure (4ATA)
 - d) The same as surface pressure
 - e) What it takes to be a man.
- 5) Air is mainly comprised of:
 - a) 79% oxygen and 21% nitrogen
 - b) 50% oxygen and 50% nitrogen
 - c) 21% oxygen and 71% nitrogen
 - d) 21% oxygen and 79% nitrogen
 - e) Pollution
- 6) A dive team caught in a rip should
 - a) Swim down to the bottom
 - b) Swim across the rip parallel to the shore
 - c) Swim towards the shore
 - d) Swim away from the shore
 - e) Panic
- 7) A safe descent rate is:
 - a) 18 meters / 60 feet a minute
 - b) 9 meters / 30 feet a minute
 - c) 1 meter / 3 feet a minute
 - d) It doesn't matter
- 8) The correct equation for Boyle's law is:
 - a) $P_1V_1=P_2V_2$
 - b) $Y=MX+B$
 - c) $E=MC^2$
 - d) $P/V \div P/V$
- 9) An object is buoyed up by a pressure ___ than that of the water it displaces
 - a) greater
 - b) equal
 - c) less than
 - d) Water has no bearing to it
- 10) Compressed air in a scuba tank filled to capacity when compared to normal air has:
 - a) The same proportion
 - b) A greater percentage of oxygen
 - c) A greater percentage of nitrogen
 - d) A greater percentage of both oxygen and nitrogen
 - e) Varying amounts depending on the pressure
 - f) Is highly explosive.
- 11) Which one of the following factors is the same for air embolism and for decompression sickness?
 - a) Composition of gas bubbles
 - b) Principal location of gas bubbles in the body
 - c) Cause of the bubbles
 - d) time of onset of symptoms in relation to the end of the dive
 - e) Method of first aid treatment
 - f) Unstoppable flatulation
- 12) What does SCUBA stand for?
- 13) What does a 'Thumbs up' sign mean?
 - a) Everything's good
 - b) Call the Dive / Return to surface
 - c) Up your nose
 - d) Where's your buddy?
- 14) Which of the following is not a symptom of DCS
 - a) Nausea
 - b) Dizziness
 - c) Pain in muscle joints
 - d) Itchy skin
 - e) Fatigue
 - f) Headache
 - g) Vertigo
 - h) Shock
 - i) Twitching of the lips

1) c 2) b 3) b 4) a 5) d 6) b 7) d (it's the ascent not descent that matters) 8) a 9) b 10) a 11) e 12) Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus 13) b 14) i

Answers

The Year That Was 2007

