



# The ANU SCUBA Club Newsletter August 2001

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ANU SCUBA Club WWW site:  
[http://student.anu.edu.au/Clubs/ANU\\_Scuba\\_Club/](http://student.anu.edu.au/Clubs/ANU_Scuba_Club/)

Wow. It's been a very very busy time for the club since the last newsletter came out a few months ago: there have been huge trips every second weekend, we've had a successful stall during o-week, run a BBQ, looked at some slides, climbed a mountain, towed schoolchildren around Lake Burley-Griffin, taken half a dozen non-divers to the bottom of Civic pool for their first SCUBA experience, and played with whales and mantas on the Great Barrier Reef. A lot of cans of air have been emptied, as have a lot of bottles of red, and a lot of people have had a lot of fun.

Thanks to everyone who's run a trip or organised an event recently: Peter, Scott, Uli, Jeremy, Ole, Sonia, and Bill. These people make the club the success it is; if you haven't run a trip before, or haven't for a while, put your hand up and volunteer! It's not hard, and it's only with your help that we can keep the club doing things.

Thanks also to Gail, Peter, Scott, Ole, and Frank for their contributions in words and pictures. Besides the reports below, trips also went to Jervis bay, Montague Island, and the Snowy Mountains in March, South West

Rocks and the Soltaries in April, Jervis Bay in June, and the Barrier Reef in June/July, but noone submitted any trip reports so you'll have to use your imagination.

-- paul

## **Tathra III: February '01**

*Words from Gail Vest and photos from Peter Christen*



The bio-luminescence on the beach Saturday night after some great diving, a few beers, a sighting of "Winky the Whale" at the Tathra pub and a short bush walk sent everyone crazy, they all dived in, this time no tanks, no regs, in fact no clothes that I could tell... it was dark!

## **Pretty Beach: March '01**

*Scott Collis*

Monday is not a good day to write a trip report. You sit at your computer saying "I should be doing work" but all you can think is:

18 metre visibility and 24 degree water!

Yes folks, you heard right, those new to the club had a champagne introduction to South Coast diving! The warmer water

carried down with it a few tropical to sub tropical species of fish. Bawley was alive with colour (and a giant cuttlefish **this big**). The seas were flat so seasickness free boat rides were enjoyed by all! In the good vis we were able to dive the boiler and find it at the same time! This great site still lives up to its reputation, being so thick with fish life that you cannot see from one end to the other (and another giant cuttlefish **this big**).

I really enjoyed meeting all the new members and do hope that they do not become an artifact of club history: "Do you remember so-and-so?", "Yeah, they came on Rusties' and were never seen again...".

See you all down the coast some time.

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## Solar boat race: April '01

Late in April, and while some lucky punters were still enjoying the warm waters of the Solitaries, a group of hardy ANUSC divers spent a day helping out at the Science Festival's solar boat race. After a start which was way too early for a Saturday morning, we had the dubious privilege of squeezing into wetsuits and wading in the lake for an hour or so as the thirty-five competitors launched their boats. ("It won't be below ten degrees in there," the water police told me with grins on their faces...)

The Pufferfish got a chance to swap grotty salt water for grotty "fresh" lake water, and halfway through the day we got some practise towing when the "Solar Mermaid" ran out of juice halfway across the lake. Bands played, school children cheered, food was scoffed, the caterers gave us some brown liquid which alleged to be coffee, and a fun time was had by all.

A big thank-you to Amy, Thomas, Ole, Adam, and Peter for coming along and lending a hand, and to those who came down to keep us company.

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## Lake Burley-Griffin: April '01

*Ole, Peter, and Paul*

Of course it happened again, this time at the park during the boat race: "oh, the ANU SCUBA club. Do you dive in the lake?". Only this time, in a spirit of enquiry fuelled by the example of Science Week, we decided we should find out just how bad it would be...



Diving in the lake (artist's impression)

Very. With visibility measured in centimetres it was certainly a bit spooky, and with only one fish seen by the three of us it wasn't exactly brimming with wildlife. Some amusement was had when the water police came to see what we were doing, though, and we've got some entertaining logbook entries.

The verdict? Horrible to do, but nice to have done. And now the south coast looks superb!

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## Port Hacking: May '01

*Gail Vest*

On this occasion the weekend was a "scuba wash out". While some members did dive while the sun was shining other members of the ANUSC were on the beach simulating veterinary practices similiar to calf birthing in an attempt to re-inflate the Daff's flat pontoon (thanks to Horst for his long distance advice on what to do next) ... then the rain started.

Day turned to night drinking beers & eating hamburgers waiting for the rain to ease, an excellent fire was built and maintained in wetwetwet conditions while the die-hard ANUSC partied on, thanks to D. for



Port Hacking in a dry moment (Frank Richter)

passing round his homegrown snowballs, which made it kinda fun. Another thanks goes to Sonia for organising the weekend.

## Pretty Beach again: May '01

*Frank Richter*

The Pretty Beach campsite really deserves to be called like that. With a really nice view over Pretty Beach and lots of Kangaroos sitting around (Note sitting! Not jumping!) They seemed a bit lazy. I guess this has something to do with Australia itself. ☺ And the weather compensated the last trips. It was just great!

Many thanks have to go to Pam who organized the Beldivers underwater orienteering at Bawley Point. After figuring out how to use a compass and copying a complicated looking map the search for underwater milk bottles began. Even without hurrying from bottle to bottle it has been a great place for diving. Many thanks also have to go to the crew for the nice little BBQ afterwards. The hard work was rewarded with a prize for everybody.



Pretty Beach locals (Frank Richter)

Some had a second dive on this day at Gannet Beach and came out with very varying opinions ranging from tropical diving (Peter) to absolutely boring (Scott). The day ended in the local CaféBistroRestaurant with a three course menu. At this point I have to mention the really really good Capuccino there. It is really worth to be tried!

The Sunday Boat trip lead to the not yet mapped drop off in front of Brush Island. Good visibility, really big schools of fish and a water temperature of 18 degree made this a good dive. Me, Thorsten and Scott have even seen a whale at the surface, while waiting for

Jeremy who was somehow occupied in the other direction.

All in all one more great weekend...

## Fiji, June-July '01

*Peter Christen*

Bula from Fiji!

So what do you do if it's winter in Canberra and you can't join the Lady Musgrave trip? Go somewhere else, where the climate is warmer than Musgrave and the diving seems to be promising.

Four ANUSC members came



up with the idea to go to Fiji, mainly because one of us (Ole) had some friends staying there in a big house in a small village far off the beaten track, Raki Raki on the north tip of the main island Viti Levu.

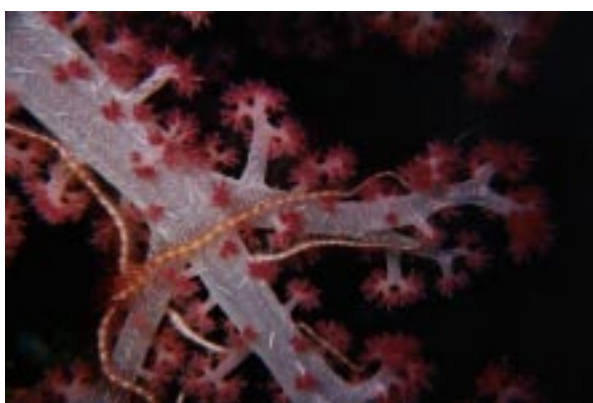
Ole and myself left by the end of June for three weeks, and Robyn and Gail followed one week later. After getting into Fiji mode (which wasn't very hard) the main project in the first week was to organise the diving. Our main point was that we didn't want to dive with a commercial operator (following a dive master, with limited dive times and depth etc). So through a local Australian tour operator we were able to hire a small yellow boat with a local boat driver, as well as tanks and weights. We therefore had total control over the boat and could dive wherever we wanted, and how deep and long we wanted. The only restrictions we had was the usual limits imposed by air in our tanks and nitrogen load.

Exploratory diving was on the program, and as we all know it might be that you don't find the top dive spots. But thanks to Ole's new GPS we were able to mark locations from a map and follow tracks back with an

amazing accuracy. Additionally we had Steve's hand-held depth sounder to map out the sea floor. We even used it as a back-up depth gauge after my dive computer died by pointing it towards the (calm) surface.

We found some great sites, had some very very good dives with 50+ meters visibility and some other dives with only 10 meters visibility and bleached and dead corals. The water temperature was around 25 degrees which allowed us to dive for a very long time. Most dives were more than one hour, and the longest dive was 96 minutes. The fish life was quite different to the Great Barrier Reef. Due to a local fishing village almost no big fish could be seen. However there was an abundance of smaller colorful tropical reef fish, gorgonian fans, fantastic soft corals and the usual whitetip reef sharks.

But Fiji was more than just diving. We spent a couple of days in a nice simple resort on a lovely small island with white unspoilt beaches and coral reefs good for snorkelling. The contacts with local people gave us some interesting, funny, complicated and disturbing memories. Cultural differences made communication difficult but we learnt how to scrape coconuts to make the 'lolo' (fresh



coconut cream) and how to cook fish in traditional Fijian way.

All in all it was a fantastic trip, we learnt a lot about coral reefs, Fijian history, local culture and Kava drinking.

*(Ed's note: there are more of Peter's underwater photos from Fiji on his web page at <http://cs.anu.edu.au/~Peter.Christen/scuba>.)*

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## General meeting, July '01

Here are the minutes from our last general meeting, held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July in the Manning Clark Centre on campus (thanks Ole!):

- Meeting opened at 6:15 with about 20 members in attendance.
- Ole Nielsen, our esteemed treasurer, presented a quick summary of our ten-year plan and the club's economic status. Conclusion: there is now a plan which allows us to maintain the current level of gear in the future. We have done well this year exceeding our budgeted income by about \$500.
- A new dive calendar was decided on, with trips to the Snowies, Brush Island, Jervis Bay, Malua Bay, and Bawley

Point. See below for details.

- The club secretary stepped down to do some globe-trotting. Darran Edmunson was nominated for secretary by Ole,

seconded by Jeremy Weinman, and accepted his fate.

- History of the ANUSC was not addressed, since Scott was absent, except through comments from long-time members during Ole's presentation.
- Eight die-hard members retired to Paul's place to watch *Deep Blue Sea*, a movie which is remarkable for its lack of plot and incredibly bad special effects.

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## **Scott's SCUBA ramblings**

*Scott Collis*

Greetings fellow consumers of canned air! All I can say is wow! What a summer it has been! Each trip this year has been massive with a great variety of keen new divers and old salt "go down the anchor line wave to the groper on the right..." divers. The most important thing for any club is to guarantee continuity of active members, and I think with this year's intake of new (and active) members we are looking at a bright future indeed. On the same note I would like to encourage all new members to be active not only with diving but

also with the organisation of the club! Take time to find out how things work, grab the wheel of the boat and say "let me drive!", ask someone how to anchor properly, find out how to use the GPS... The more people we have with these skills the more enjoyable our diving will be!

On a totally different note, the club has just been involved in two activities that can be best described as public outreach. The club took a very active role in the SolACT solar boat race, with the yellow Pufferfish looking quite sexy in Lake Burley Griffin. Thank you Paul for organising. We also ran a try dive at Canberra Olympic pool, which gave those who have remained above water a glimpse of what life under pressure really is like. These events gave us a chance to participate in local community activities and increase awareness of the club (not an easy task for a SCUBA club in an inland city!).

So thank you to all the helpers in all our activities. I wish you all long, relaxing, DCI free diving!

## Dive and events calendar: August — November 2001

If you want to go on a trip, please contact the coordinator around one week beforehand.

The last General Meeting saw a number of trips pencilled in on the calendar, so now you can get your nitrogen fix even in the off-season. Of course, ad hoc dives can be arranged by any member at any time. If you haven't been on a club dive, or want to organise an ad-hoc dive, see the club's web pages for details.

### **25-26 August: Brush Island**

**Contact: Paul Thomas**

Paul.Thomas@cmis.csiro.au

6216-7158 (w)          6257-0574 (h)

One last time (for me anyway); come and tickle the gropers at Brush Island and the kangaroos at Pretty Beach. There's even lovely camping and walking (and hot showers!) if the water's too cool.

### **? October: Malua Bay**

**Contact: Darran Edmunson**

Darran.Edmunson@anu.edu.au

6125x0165 (w)          6248-8179 (h)

### **23—24 November: Treasure Hunt**

**Contact: The SCUBA store**

### **30 September—1 October: Jervis Bay**

**Contact: Ole Nielsen**

Ole.Nielsen@anu.edu.au

6125x8627 (w)          6231-8970 (h)

Newcastle University's dive club will be joining us for some inter-varsity diving (and socialising) in the lovely waters of Jervis Bay. Come along and meet some new divers and find out about life north of the big smoke.

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## **The committee**

President	Scott Collis	6125x8987 (w)	smc112@rsphysse.anu.edu.au
Gear Officer (Vice-President)	Jeremy Weinman	6125-5071 (w) 6254-7502 (h)	weinman@rsbs.anu.edu.au
Treasurer	Ole Nielsen	6125x8627 (w) 6231-8970 (h)	ole.nielsen@anu.edu.au
Publicity Officer (Secretary)	Darran Edmunson	6125x0165 (w) 6248-8179 (h)	Darran.Edmunson@anu.edu.au
Boat Officer	Horst Punzmann	6249x0397 (w) 6255-6260 (h)	Horst.Punzmann@anu.edu.au

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## Equipment rules — tanks/vests/regulators

The ANU SCUBA Diving Club has several (about 10) complete sets of SCUBA equipment (tank, reg, BC), together with a number of additional tanks and some older style BC's, purchased and maintained with a combination of Sports Union grants and Club generated funds. This equipment, stored locked in a cage in the ANUSC gear store (a green double garage) on North Oval, is subject to constant and demanding use so the following hire charges and rules have been formulated in the interests of all club members, of the Sports Union, and of the issuing and maintenance officers.

### **Gear hire charges: Deposits are \$30**

**Full set for a student Club member on a Club trip weekend      \$0**  
**Full set for a non-student Club member on a Club trip weekend \$10**  
**Full set for any Club member on a non-Club trip weekend      \$20 or**  
**Regulator \$10    BCD \$10    Tank \$5**

### **The rules:**

- 1) One set of gear is provided only to qualified divers who are **current members** of **both** the ANU SCUBA Diving Club and the Sports Union. Persons not known to the issuing officer may be asked to show their ANUSC and/or their Sports Union/Student card and may be checked against the list of current members. You cannot borrow a 2<sup>nd</sup> set for a non-member. ANU student members can use this set of gear for free on Club outings, non-ANU student members are required to pay a \$10 usage fee.
- 2) Gear is available for use on Club dives as described above - subject to a \$30 deposit, refundable when the equipment is returned **the next week**, complete and unabused, **washed** and with the **tanks full**. Borrowers are not guaranteed exclusive use and may be required to share with other Club members on a dive.
- 3) When not required for Club purposes, equipment may be hired for private use at a fee of \$20 per set, plus the usual deposit. *Equipment is for the support of diving as a club, and is not available for private use when a Club outing is scheduled, regardless of however many sets appear to be spare.* The Club does not accept advance bookings for the use of equipment.
- 4) Equipment may be borrowed and returned around 5:30 pm on Thursdays, via the rostered issuing officer, **who attends only on request**. In order to allow everybody fair access, gear **must** be returned by the Thursday following the week of issue. **If you don't ring a gear officer, or a Club official if you can't contact one, to arrange return of your gear you must expect to lose your deposit.**
- 5) The member signing for gear remains fully responsible for it until it is signed back in. Negligent loss or damage will be treated in accordance with current policy of the Club and the Sports Union, which retains ownership of all Club equipment. Borrowers are expected to keep track of all gear issued to them, particularly on dives where it is shared.
- 6) **To avoid damage, always remove jacket vests from tanks before transport.**
- 7) After use wash ALL gear in fresh water, rinse out vests internally, and return them half- inflated. Hose down your tanks and tank boot. **Ensure that the dust cap is tightly fitted to the reg before soaking. Water in the reg will damage it and can result in total failure of your reg or gauges. Apart from the danger to you or other users, this costs us lots of money to replace.**
- 8) **NEVER EVER leave tanks or hoses or vests in your car in the hot sun.**
- 9) **In the interests of safety and to avoid inadvertent re-issue, all faulty gear must be labeled as such on return, AND reported personally to the gear maintenance officer by the borrower.**

**Gear issue and return:** Thursdays only unless you arrange otherwise

\*\*\* Remember, people will only attend if you contact them beforehand \*\*\*

See [http://student.anu.edu.au/Clubs/ANU\\_Scuba\\_Club](http://student.anu.edu.au/Clubs/ANU_Scuba_Club) for the latest roster.