



Sunshine Coast Scuba Diving Club QLD Incorporated

Clubs first Overseas Trip!!

Club Trip - Vanuatu



Doug with the 'Coolidge' legend Allan Power

Sunday 28th October, eight lucky members (me included) will be flying out of Brisbane International Airport bound for Port Vila.

Our first official overseas club trip, eight nights and twelve exciting dives on the wrecks and reefs of Vanuatu

Four nights and six spectacular reef dives at *Hideaway Island - Port Vila*. A Marine Sanctuary surrounded by blue water, coral reefs and marine life. 15 dive sites within 15mins of the beach. A real getaway, there are no phones or TV's in the rooms, bliss.

It is then an island hop to Espiritu Santo where we stay at *Deco stop lodge* for four nights. Six awesome wreck dives on the *SS President Coolidge*. The worlds largest and most accessible wreck (See Doug's story page 5). What more needs to be said!

We will be returning, reluctantly, to Brisbane on the 5th November.

Jo Baker



Hideaway Island



This could be you???



One entrance to the 'Coolidge'



Deco Stop Lodge



Club Boat Grant

HUGE HUGE thanks to Chas and Andrew MacKenzie, for their endless hours spent working on the submission for the 'EnviroFund, Round 10, Coastal and Marine Grant' the aim being, funds for a dive boat.

After downloading the millions of pages required for the grant, the daunting task that lay ahead in completing them was revealed. Kris Boody from Noosa Council / Reef Check Australia, with his expert knowledge, patience and time, came to the rescue and assisted Chas and Andrew in this mammoth task, a big thanks to Kris.

After various meeting and visits to shops for new ink cartridges, the sea of forms, letters, requests and information that was needed was finally sent off to Canberra, just before the deadline of the 20th July.

Thanks again guys, let's hope all the stress and hard work has paid off, the grant is approved, and you've got the club a dive boat!

Pinnacles - Noosa

Just 4 kms off Noosa is a 50 acre patch of reef called Jew Shoal. A favourite dive site on the shoal, is a patch called the Pinnacles. A beautiful craggy patch of reef, rising from 18m to 6m under the surface. The 'Pin' is a spectacular dive



and, even though it's dived regularly there is always something special to see. On the 'Pin' you can find everything from

Manta Rays, Sharks, Wobbegongs, Lion fish, tiny Nudibranchs, and all manner of corals. The 'Pin' is a photographers paradise and a must see for all divers new to the area.

Social Events



Jill, Andrew, Jo, Joy, Mark and Chas

Brekkie Barbie – Chas's

In April Jill and Chas organized a club social, and laid on an excellent breakfast bbq, (that stretched over lunch time too). It was good to catch up and have a yarn about dives and put the world to rights, must do it again. Who's organising the next one?

A good time was had by those who attended the tank day!

First up were a few guided tours followed by kids (large and small) free for all playtime.

The tank had sprung a water leak so unfortunately the rides were limited to a few metres in and out of the shed. Food was next and then drinks and chats around the campfire.

Many thanks to those who stayed up into the night huddled under the tarp during the brief rain showers, but hey, we're divers and used to getting wet.

Happy Diving
Brad



Playtime!



Maree, Jill & Centurion



Mark at the start

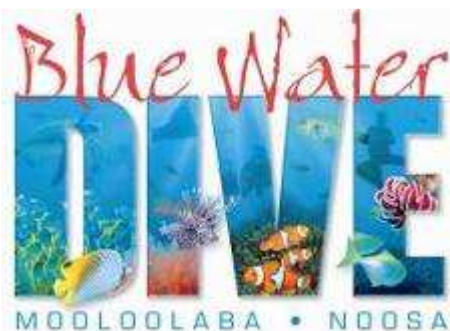
I just recently completed the Gold Coast Marathon – my first and possibly last - along with 5000 or 6000 other athletic (or mad) runners. It took a gruelling 5 hours but I MADE IT. A dream and challenge accomplished.

It only took another week for me to walk without limping and dive using arms only!

Mark Wood



Advertisement - Blue Water Dive



Blue Water Dive is the Sunshine Coast's longest established PADI 5 Star Instructor Development Centre. With facilities in both Noosa and Mooloolaba we offer the most extensive range of PADI courses as well as dive charters on both the beautiful Noosa Reefs and on the wreck of the ex-HMAS Brisbane! We have the largest range of dive retail on the Coast, stocking all the major brands, as well as a unique clothing range. Our hire equipment is

state of the art and we offer equipment servicing, hydro testing, air and nitrox fills, local, interstate and international dive travel and fun club activities.

Sunshine Coast DIVE CLUB members are entitled to a 10% discount on all charter activities AND special deals on gear purchases. Just call us anytime on 54471300 or pop in and see us in our new shop at Noosa Harbour Marine Village. SEE YOU THERE! Or visit us on our website www.bluewaterdive.com.au

Cook Island - Tweed Heads



Clubbies on 'Charlies' boat



Nudibranch - Cook Island

A trip was organised to dive Cook Island at Tweed Heads, Coolangatta for 23rd June. We had good turn out with nine clubbies and four divers from Reef Check, including Kris Boody. This was great opportunity for us to meet and dive together. Some of us car pooled and arrived on Friday 22nd on the Gold Coast. We met up at Coolangatta YHA, which turned out to be amongst the best and cheapest dive accommodation we have used so far. (Breakfast included \$25 a night).

We met up with all the others who had driven down that morning at the Kirra dive shop 8am Saturday. Kirra Dive proved to be very well run operation with a very well stocked shop and only 200m from boat berth.

Tim and the staff were very friendly and efficient, all paperwork was completed at the shop, and then we kitted up and transferred the tanks to the boat by car.

We had chartered 'Charlies' boat for the day. An excellent dive/fishing boat capable of taking twenty divers, so there was heaps of room for the sixteen of us including Tim from Kirra Dive.

A fresh south easterly was blowing so we could only dive the north wall of the island as the southern side was getting a bashing, however viz was ok at about 10m and calm in the lee of the island.

On the first dive we headed west along the wall spotting Coral trout, Green, Loggerhead and Hawksbill turtles, beautiful corals, lion fish and wobbegongs. If the site had not been a protected area we would not have seen the Coral trout! After 45mins we made out way back to the surface as some were cold even though the water temp was 19 deg. However air temp was only 18 deg with a wind chill.

We had a fabulous surface interval as the boat had a full barbeque on board and hot drinks and snag rolls were passed around and gratefully received! Then they put on the toasted fruit bread!!

In for the second dive and headed east to the outer end of the island. Again wonderful sea life, but once on eastern end of island a big surge made going any further uncomfortable.

So we made a slow swim back to boat together with Johnno and Brad.

This dive offers great photo opportunities. We were hurried up at the surface as those on board were freezing, back to the shop for hot showers.

After saying cheerio at the shop, some who had to be back to the Sunny Coast drove home while Brad, Maree, Calen, Kiara, Christian and myself went walkabout in Tweed to get a feed.

After getting changed back at the YHA we headed to Coolangatta airport hotel where we had a few under the gas heaters. We then finished a perfect day in the perfect way. A slab from the bottle shop and back to YHA, while Brad and myself showed remarkable fortitude by only having one stubby each, Maree made an absolute disgrace of herself (See photo)

Up early the next morning (NOT!), Maree had to get back to the coast.

While Brad and I hit up the Coolangatta hotel for a slap up breakfast looking out over the beach on a beautiful sunny morning, how good does it get? The Kirra dive mob are a very well run outfit and the area definitely has a huge amount to offer diving wise.

We will definitely go back to check out other dive sites in this region as their rates are VERY affordable (\$43 for a double dive!!)

An awesome weekend.



Cook Island



It's been a very tiring day!!

Chas Simpson
Dive Coordinator

SS PRESIDENT COOLIDGE - SANTO, VANUATU



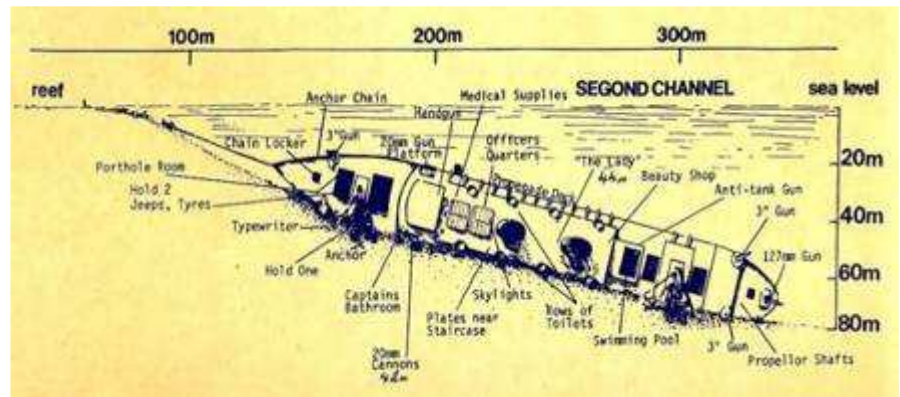
How tough is this?



Touch the Lady

What can I say, if you are a wreck freak (like me) then this is the best experience you can have with a lycra suit on. I have had two trips to the Coolidge; the first in Nov 1990 where we stayed on Bokissa Island, the second in Feb 06 when we stayed at the Deco-stop on Santo.

SS President Coolidge was a 22,000 tonne luxury liner that had been refitted during WW2 as a troop carrier by the US. It sank on 26th October 1942 after hitting two "friendly" American mines and sinking in 85 minutes. Fortunately, only two lives were lost out of the 5,000+ troops aboard at the time.



Both trips were awesome with the diving being some of the best wreck diving in the world. Some highlights include the following:

- Warm waters - 28/29 degrees. I used a lycra suit only for protection from cuts.
- Easy access – gear up on a concrete pad on the beach, followed by a very short walk to the water then its all down, down, down to wreck diver's paradise.
- Virtually no current. So all your energy is expended on diving enjoyment and no stress.
- All dives are led by locals (who never breathe) so you miss nothing and do not have to worry about navigation, dive planning etc – just enjoy.
- Lots and lots of artifacts to view and photograph. No souvenirs??
- All dives are deep and decompression dives (sorry PADI). You spend a lot of time decompressing in the beautiful coral gardens that have been built to keep you amused. The deepest I went was to 55m and I was in the water for over an hour. Others went deeper and spent 2+ hours in the water decompressing (good luck to them – no place for bravado). A good dive computer is essential.

Overall, it was a fantastic experience and not to be missed for any wreck diving fanatic.

Doug Alford

PS Remember the club is going to Santo to dive the Coolidge in Oct 07, the cost is \$1,975 (non diver \$1,500) plus insurance

It is not too late, there are still places available, ring me for more details or suffer the bragging when they return in Nov 07.



if you are a wreck freak (like me) then this is the best experience you can have with a lycra suit on



Four happy divers at the 'Coolidge'



Warm water, no current & easy access

Results of Questionnaire



A club questionnaire (see website) was handed out to people who attended a meeting recently, and emailed to those unable to attend.

The answers were positive and helpful.

Most were satisfied with how the club was going,

All agreed that they had achieved what they wanted from the club, enabling them to do more diving than before, with people they knew, and also made it much cheaper.

Most said they were confident that they could handle an emergency underwater, hope they're right!

It was felt that pool training to practice skills was a good idea; Sunday afternoons seemed to be the best time for most people. A member from Blue Water Dive would come along to run through the skills training with us.

When asked what other subject's people wanted to learn more about, top of the list was photography and equipment, followed by fish identification, also mentioned were nitrox diving.

The website was useful to most club members, and one said it would be, if they had a computer...

Jo Baker

Pool Training

The club has organized monthly 'skill refresher' sessions at the local pool. This will enable members to become familiar with both their own and other members equipment in a safe environment, every one should be confident that they would know what to do should an 'incident' occur, either to themselves or their dive buddy.

Rob of Blue Water Diving has kindly offered his time so this will be a great opportunity to practice your skills. Day - (probably last Sunday in the month at the NAC), time & cost to be advised later.

'Clean up Australia' Day - Noosa River



Clubbies - Andrew, Adrian, Brad, Craig, Chas, Maree & Simmo joined Lynne Wilbrahams, Project Aware (PADI) group along with visiting diver Jeff, and took to the Noosa river for their part in 'Clean up Australia' day.

During the 4hrs in the water, 13 bags of rubbish were collected. At the BBQ after, Brad Baker was the lucky winner of a double dive with Blue Water Dive.

A great day and good effort by all, thanks



Advertisement - SCUBA WORLD



SCUBA WORLD offer a range of benefits to club members

'Let your club members know that our retail manager (Brett) will do anything he can to get the best deal for them'.
Phone 07 5444 8595.

As a WINTER special we are happy to offer your members a group discount of 20% for each group of five full paying divers off our normal prices which are listed on our website www.scubaworld.com.au

Ian McKinnon (Managing Director - SCUBA WORLD)

PROSTATE CANCER – A LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY

You may ask "what has prostate cancer got to do with a SCUBA diving club" - the answer is absolutely nothing. However, I believe that any person who is touched by cancer has an obligation to tell all who will listen that the dreaded "c" word does not mean a death sentence.

On 17 Jan 06, after a simply "prostate specific antigen (PSA)" blood test my life was to change forever. The next twelve months were a maze of tests/Doctor visits culminating in an operation on 2 Oct 06 and a long and confronting recovery period of over three months.

The good news is the operation and recovery went well and the future looks exceptionally bright with a more intense focus on the important things in life - family, friends and pursuing my passions of diving, surfing, travel, SLSC etc.

Testing and monitoring will be ongoing; after five years the risk of the cancer returning is small. However, as with any cancer, there are no guarantees.

As with any major event in your life there is a time of reflection, lessons to learn and much to be thankful for. Early detection and professional intervention are critical. We have all heard it before, but males are slow learners and need to be dragged to the doctor (with compassion naturally) by caring females.

Listed below are the lessons I have learnt from this experience in order of importance. Most of the lessons I already knew, however this has allowed me to reflect and refocus:

1. Family and friends are the most important things in your life – treasure them.
2. If you are healthy you are wealthy – do not take your health for granted, look after your health as you would your most prized asset.
3. Males, if you are over 40 and have a family history of prostate cancer, or if you are over fifty then have the test. It saved me from a premature and painful death. Females, nag him constantly, confiscate his dive gear if necessary, but get him to have regular checks.
4. If you are over 40 then have an annual medical examination including a full blood test. This can include a review of your diving medical – how proactive!!!!
5. Whilst we hear a lot of bad publicity about the medical profession, my experience was that the staff are competent and caring people who are dedicated to giving you the best possible outcome.
6. If you have a life threatening disease, confront the diagnosis in a positive and proactive manner and focus all your energy on a full cure. Hope is optimum.
7. Join the relevant support group. Whilst you may not need the support, the advice from those who have been through the process is gold.
8. Research and **fully understand your condition**, side effects, chances of recovery and reoccurrence etc.
9. Obtain a second opinion (or more) and find the most experienced and competent specialist you can. Talk to other patients who have been treated by the specialist.
10. Get fit before the operation; it is critical for a speedy recovery.

Doug Alford

Sanctuaries and shark nets



If you read the minutes of the last AGM, you would have seen an item on marine sanctuary zones in local waters. The upshot of that is a letter from the club sent to Council (& to be copied to other organisations), seeking to start discussions about creating some local sanctuary zones. The letter also asked Council to look at the safety issue posed by speed boats and PWCs to swimmers, snorkelers and surfers in the area from Main Beach to Picnic Cove (includes Flat Rock).

Sanctuary zones have many benefits, including:

- Enhanced passive recreational opportunities for scuba divers and snorkelers (that's us);
- Educational and scientific study opportunities (that's also us, through our planned involvement in Reefcheck);
- Complement extensive land national park areas and 'clean green' image for Noosa, which is a big drawcard for visitors;
- Spillover of adult fish and larval migration from sanctuary zones enhances fishing opportunities in nearby (unprotected) areas;
- Addresses protection of marine communities (existing fisheries protection measures such as bag limits and minimum sizes are aimed at individual species).

Club members collectively have extensive knowledge of marine habitats in the Noosa region (and many other places) and are therefore in a position to suggest areas which have high recreational and/or conservation values, which would be suitable for inclusion in marine sanctuaries. Obvious candidates include Flat Rock, the Pin & Caves at Jew Shoal, and Old Woman Island at Mudjimba. Currently, the nearest sanctuaries are small zones around Wolf Rock to the north and *HMAS Brisbane* to the south.

Although not mentioned in the minutes, there was also some discussion at the AGM about club support for removal of shark netting. Although we had a consensus of support for having some local marine sanctuaries, there were some opposing views on the shark nets, so the club hasn't done anything on this.



In the meantime, a little bit of info on the nets:

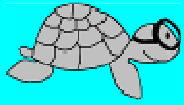
- from a bit of a look at the ones off Main Beach, they are a couple of hundred metres long and a few metres deep, hanging vertically off a buoyed line;
- they are not physical barriers, so sharks can and do swim around them;
- they work by entangling and killing sharks that swim into them;
- while they permanently reduce the local shark population, they also trap and kill other animals such as turtles, dugongs and even the occasional dolphin and whale.

The pictures were taken in July from a kayak off Main Beach, Noosa. The water was clear and there appeared to be nothing in the nets at the time. We are hoping to find some data on local catches of sharks and other species, so members can be more informed.

Andrew Green



Vice Presidents Update – Jul 2007



**Sunshine Coast Scuba
Diving Club QLD
Incorporated**

Phone:

Doug 07 54506452

Chas 0416 058605

Meetings:

**1st & 3rd Tuesday
Sunshine Beach SLSC**

Half the year has gone already, time flies when you are having fun – diving fun, naturally. The club continues to grow with membership steadily rising and the activities of the club becoming more diverse and interesting.

Some highlights since the last news letter include:

- A very pleasing turn up for the GM on 5 June 07 with 17 members attending. The audit report of the financial records was approved by the members and strong interest shown in future club activities.
- The partnership with the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) is steadily progressing. This was always going to be a long and drawn out process; however there are very positive signs and much has already been achieved.
- Five club members attended a club specific **Advanced Diver** course as part of the prerequisites for the Reef Check program. The next step will be the **Rescue** course with strong interest from potential Reef Check divers – please let me know if you are interested.
- Andrew Green has put on his environmental cap and passionately put forward his views on “sanctuary zones” (no fishing, spear-fishing, anchoring) and the shark control program at swimming beaches. Club members have discussed the issue and will write to the Noosa council putting forward our ideas. Want to become involved – contact Andrew for details.
- The official club logo has been approved and a range of T-Shirts and other items are now available – contact Jo Baker for details.
- The application for funds to purchase a club boat has been completed thanks to the hard work of Chas and his merry band of helpers – an exciting time for the club.

Remember, active members are the heart and soul of any club – become involved.

Safe diving.

**Doug Alford
Vice President**

Editors Note:

Again, I'd like to say a big 'thank you' those members who have contributed to this issue, with articles, photo's and of course 'time.'
The club would like WELCOME the new members that have recently joined.

To let you know how your club is going, here are a few facts:

- 34+ members
- 390 dives up to July 07
- 3 newsletters
- Club website

...amazingly all in 18mths!! And with plenty of exciting things happening in the future.

To those lucky members off to Vanuatu, have fun, take lots of photo's and make the rest of us (*not me, cos I'm going too!*) envious when you return.

See you in the water

Pete Baker



Regan visiting Christof's plaque at Clowns reef

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.geocities.com/luvin2dive
