

FLOTSAM



SEPTEMBER 1985

Well Hi Folks!

And no, this is not your president Leah, but Editor of this magazine - Lynnette Hudson. I thought it was about time I contributed something myself, as I usually just organise everyone else - best way to be believe me.

Firstly I would like to thank all those people who contributed to the Dive Magazine either in writing articles, or helping to type and send them out. A special thanks to Leah here, who was a great help, especially with the first magazine. I was totally new at this game then, having had this job sort of dumped on me. Grateful to say - no regrets!

Secondly an account of the Dive Clubs financial situation might be in order. We borrowed \$1300.00 from the Student Association and with that money we bought a 12ft boat and trailer for \$1800.00. Presently we have \$500.00 in the bank and intend to sell the old outboard and boat expecting to get \$600.00 for it. For further enquiries contact the treasurer Brian at 763-824

Overall its been an excellent year, I've made a lot of new friends and hopefully everyone else has managed to do the same. I wish everyone the best of luck with their exams and hope to see you all taking full advantage of the diving opportunities in the holidays.

Looking forward to seeing you all back next year - hopefully with a good number of new faces.

Until next year!

Lynnette Hudson
Editor

P.S. The Annual General Meeting, to nominate the new committee for next year, will be held in the Club Rooms, Rec. Centre, Tues the 1st of October (1985) at 1pm - come along - bring all your nominations, nominees, volunteers etc

PRESIDENT'S BLURB - PRESIDENT'S BLURB - PRESIDENTS BLURB - PRESIDENT'S BLURB

Well it's that time of the year again when Lynnette chases us around with big sticks and threatens us with death and even worse things so that we get our articles in on time. As usual I am preparing this literary masterpiece at the last minute and under stress so am not completely responsible for the end result. With exams closing in, activity on the Varsity Dive Club scene has become a little more subdued - it is definitely the lull before the storm - our little rest before we launch ourselves on Summer.

1985 has been a good year as far as Club assets are concerned; with the aid of the the AUSA and some crafty mathematics on the part of our Treasurer, Brian, we have become the proud owners of 4 new dive tanks, one new tent (and repaired our old tents to a usable state), a heap of camping type gear and a new boat and motor noless! Our underwater Hockey team, who made it into the A grade earlier this year, are getting stuck in and doing not too bad (see Ewan's article later in this mag) - it looks like there may be an opening for a C grade team though we would have to play throughout exam time until mid-December and start again in February if we're to keep our team in - you'd have to be keen! As far as trips go, the mammoth 3 Kings/Fjordland trip has everyone glancing hopefully at their bank balances and, though it is a lot of money for "us poor students" - it will truly be the dive experience of the year (and not that expensive for what you get - when you add it up). Meetings lately have been enhanced by talks and slideshows given by Club members and other interesting people from outside our Club. The next major event on the '85 Agenda is the AUUC Annual General Meeting at which you nominate the committee for next year. Those who wish to nominate people for offices can place nominations in our pigeonhole (next to the information office AUSA) OK!

Well that's about all I have to say - I asked Lynnette if I could write an essay on what I did in the holidays - but she didn't like that idea - I still have the bruises to prove it! Just remember that you don't have to be committee member to write articles for, or advertise in this mag - or to organise fun events and advertise them on our noticeboard - or anything like that really - so get stuck in you guys!!! Well there is not a lot more to say - keep bubbling all Summer long, until then good luck with exams and maybe I'll see you next year.

LEWAN

THE VARSITY UNDERWATER HOCKEY SAGA
OF,

Who goes down, must come up!

You folks, we still have a team going (most nights anyway). Things have been a little difficult at times, with one member going crook on us firstly with a broken jaw, and two weeks after that, with a broken hand (I must add here that the injuries were due to surface hockey, not the proper kind!!). Added to that, another one is in the process of having his teeth removed (or something like that!), while we also get the occasional loss due to people working outside Auckland on the night we have to play. In spite of the lack of continuity, we still manage to beat teams (sometimes!). On a good night, we would manage 4th to 5th (out of 7 teams) in the top grade in Auckland, and this in spite of no training, and no regular team (lately)! However, what is more important, we can get beaten by a double-figure score and still come away smiling, so come down to the Tepids any Mon. night and see us lose gracefully.

By the time you read this, we will hopefully be fielding another team (if this comes as a surprise to you, it's because you haven't read the noticeboard, you horrid little toad!) which will play on Sunday nights. It is open to anyone, experienced or not, male or female, and is heaps of fun, so if interested, get your name down onto the 1st pronto. Note that the season continues until mid-December, starting up again in early February, so if you want to play, please be certain that you will be around then. (Will this do, Lynette?!)

Ewan

OUR EXPEDITION TO GREAT BARRIER (8/9 JUNE)

There was a sense of hesitation in the air as all seventeen of us mentally absorbed the announcement that "wind" warnings were in force tonight. Eric the captain, chuckled quietly to himself - a sadist at heart. We set off down the harbour about nine. At first, because we were in the shelter of the city, the rocking motion was rather pleasant. But once out at sea those smiling faces were quickly substituted for grim, sick ones. I was wise. I turned in for the night rather early and let myself be rocked to sleep by the motion of Pegasus II.

We motored continuously until 4am, then anchored in a quiet bay, south east of the Barrier. Most of us continued to snore till morning, but there were a few keen (more like mad) folks in for a downbreaker (or first in for the crays).

Saturday was sunny and relatively warm. We dived the Eastern side of the Barrier, firstly on the wreck of some ship (name unknown). Unfortunately my buddy and I missed seeing what the rest of them saw, because as always my sense of direction is non-existent underwater.

Later in the afternoon we motored North and stopped for a while to view the "Barrier's" equivalent to the "Waitomo Caves".

Dinner that night was cooked by my buddy and I. Now that we're back on land and because no-one suffered from food-poisoning we could reveal just what did make that chicken so tasty!! But we won't. We wouldn't get to go on any more dive trips.

About ten that night, some of us begged, borrowed or stole the few available torches on the boat in anticipation for a night dive. Despite that "yukky" feeling of a cold wetsuit (except for John) the dive (my first nightdive) was exhilarating - probably because visibility was 5 feet maximum.

Sunday was another lovely day and again enjoyable diving. We left Arid Island that morning and motored to our first spot. After lunch, we dived the wreck of the Wairarapa. Not much remains but the history is fascinating.

By 3pm we were on the way back to the Big Smoke. Trouble was, with Mike on the trip we had no food left to occupy the long trip back - no not even any weetbix. Eric, the sweetie, raided his secret provisions and voilà!! - hot buttered scones with lashings of butter and jam.

To top off a wonderful weekend Eric handed over command to his chief mate (me of course) and I primed up the throttle and sped us safely back to shore.

ALDERMANS JUNE 29/30

It has been estimated that over 95% of AUUC dive trips start off from the university clock tower on dark, cold and stormy Friday nights. Usually setting the scene for a rough as guts - "chunder city" or "helluva hoot" trip depending on which side of the bucket you look at all weekend.

Anyhow this Friday night proved to be no exception as all five of us started out on the road to Tairua with the wind and rain chasing us. For some strange reason the numbers on this trip had dwindled from 10 plus 3 or 4 reserves, to 7. Ah well all the more room and food for us especially considering Lynnette's vegetarian tendencies.

After a pitstop at the Tairua watering hole we sacked out aboard John Young's boat, - the Taranui, to await the predicted return of daylight. Finally after the hyperactive chatters up forward had exhausted all possible topics of gossip and our two late comers had finished announcing to the world that they had arrived and stopped yelling to each other to shut up cause people were sleeping - whew! - I drifted off into unconsciousness land.

Sure enough daylight came and we awoke to the sweet thundering cacophony of the diesel engine springing to life. After rescuing all our wayward gear we stopped inside the bar (sand!) to have breakfast. And what a sight eh, huge breakers pounding in on the outer bar. I felt uneasy as I realised there were two renowned stern heavers on board - no names - and I hate the sight of fresh vomit.

After a quick brekky of baked beans on porridge, we negotiated the treacherous bar and headed off to our first dive spot on surprisingly mild seas. Our first dive was at a submerged rock, near a cliff face on the southern end of the middle island - got it? The visibility was about 30-40 feet and there was about a 1 metre swell from the NW. Myself and buddy Scott scratched around in some small cracks and pulled up a few small (6 inch) crays. Which we later threw back for next year.

Our second dive of the day at a bay on the Western side of the middle island was a little disappointing. I had promised Larenne I knew where to find crayfish so it was the only dive of the trip where I saw not one. However it was during this dive that I rescued Larenne from the grips of a giant clam while struggling with a giant squid and simultaneously fighting off 3 giant great white sharks each eager to audition for a part in Jaws IV and being stung by a swarm of yes, giant man - sorry people of war jellyfish. As I bravely beat the icky shit out of this bunch of nasties I thought - how disappointing that we hadn't seen any crays, oh well maybe next dive will hold more excitement.

During lunch we listened to the All Blacks struggling to thrash the tar out of a bunch of Australians and then... three of us - one tough, two not so tough guys, went on a mission to determine the edibility of a bunch of crayfish lurking in a little spot somewhere below and to the stern of us. I might add that there were crays everywhere you might care to look, some large, some very large, some tasty, some very tasty etc.

It was during this dive that John - who's not so tough - demonstrated his inability to extract oxygen from pure seawater. In his frenzy to snatch helpless little crustaceans from the little crevices and cracks they call home, he managed to wedge himself into one such crevice and become - stuck. The water around me became decidedly chilly as John proceeded to lose all his cool and when he finally did get loose - minus his gear, I was amazed at the way his eyes bulged like ping pong balls, his face the colour of freshly boiled beetroot and his mouth drawn back in a grimace of absolute terror. But then he was past me and heading for the surface clutching his beleaguered friend. I retrieved his gear for him but wasn't prepared to stick my head into that hole in case he'd come face to face with a moonfish - a suspicious brown stain lingered in the area. The rest of the dive passed fairly uneventfully, I managed to grab a couple of 8 inch crays among others, messed around with a couple of killer whales for a while before deciding I'd had enough of the mysterious creatures of the deep for the day, surfaced and walked back to the boat. I never did like swimming much and dad refused to part the waters for me.

Later on, after a yummy dinner including steak cooked by John Young, we settled down to yarn about old diving tales where everyone risks life and limb with dangerous, unpredictable and incredibly ugly marine creatures with cavernous mouths and huge teeth and an appetite for divers with fluorescent weight belts. After about 2 minutes we tired of this and listened to the radio instead.

Next morning after laying waste to a sumptuous breakfast of baked beans on cornflakes, we set off for what I consider was the best dive of the trip. About half a mile NW of the Aldermans lies a pinnacle which comes to within 30 feet of the surface from way down deep. The visibility was about 50km and the sea was flat calm, below the surface the vis was cut down to about 60feet however there was still plenty to see. Unsurprisingly there were lots of little fish swimming aimlessly about. One or two friendly mako's came up and started ^{at 100ft} on one of my fins but I pushed them off and headed into deeper water - little beggars will bite you clean in a half if you give them the chance.

At about 150 feet my tunnel vision pinpointed something sparkling in the moonlight, I saw that it was only my depth gauge and decided I'd better ascend to the bottom. A dark shape flitted around me so I shone my torch at it and realised with a start that it was a mermaid. I was really surprised because I'd never been so deep with a mermaid before!

On my way back to the boat I wondered how it could possibly snow underwater (there are no clouds) and why all the fish were swimming upside down. I also thanked my lucky stars that I never got something called nitrogen narcosis while diving. Back on the boat and everyone was chatting about what a great dive it had been. Lynnette and Larenne raved about their technique of ripping all the legs off young crayfish so they couldn't get away, John said he'd seen "two or three" fish and Scott had been fascinated by a long slimy thing. Leah and Geoff had locked themselves away in the skippers cabin yet again where someone said they were having a deep meaningful relationship. I felt rather silly cause everyones seen a mermaid.

As I gazed out to sea trying to think of a word containing the letter Q X and Z, I noticed something in the water close to the boat. To my horror I recognised it as that most dreaded of undersea nightmares - the brown spotty moonfish. I had no option but to automatically adopt the famous concrete mixer's defensive stance. For the uninitiated, you merely set your stomach spinning around and around, then lean over and empty its contents into the sea, if you can't find cement any edible scraps will do, this generally scares moonfish away. Caution should be used as at high pressure diced carrots can become lodged in your nostrils. While obtaining some first hand experience with this technique I discovered the added benefit of a tremendous sense of self worth and achievement. People who can't express themselves easily in this manner often become extremely jealous but they too can have fun by giving marks out of ten, and applauding good efforts.

By this time Lynnette, our editor, had decided that the trip was becoming a little too long for the subsequent article so we should hurry up. Taking heed of the sting in her voice we sped back to dive spot three, leapt in the ocean, picked up a few more crays and set a course for Tairua at warp factor five. With consummate ease and skill we loaded up the vehicular transport back at Tairua, slammed down a few french fries at the "Stray Animal Takeaways" and burned rubber back to Auckland.

So ended another epic chapter in man's (and woman's) struggle to survive against insurmountable odds, raging elements, a tremendous voyage of self determination and discovery where once again we thrashed the wild and untamed ocean into submission. Till next we meet in Davy Jones Locker.

Cast: Geoff	Larenne	
John	Leah	Nigel
John (Skipper)	Lynnette	Scott

Script: Hugh Jorgan
 Editor: Ivar Big-One
 Director: Iman R Sole
 Producer: U R Anne Aid-Carrier

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The Mokohinans Trip that was a Gt Barrier Trip
July 7 and 8

The weather wasn't looking too shithot this particular wet and windy Friday night and had a few of us worried about the prospective diving at the Moks - which can be pretty rough in the best of weather because of the large open sea angle apparently. The delayed start to this trip however, because of a couple of hours wait for the skipper, provided the opportunity to catch a few ales up at De Bretts and so put these fears out of mind.

The charter vessel was the trusty *Pegasus*, a regular for many Dive Club trips. The usual skipper however couldn't make it so we had a couple of replacements. The trip out through the Gulf wasn't particularly smooth, but certainly better for the stabilizers which hung out either side of the boat, effectively doubling its beam (so we're told). Apart from flicking through the many photo-albums on board and spying the green faces, the trip was relatively uneventful. A bonus though was some porpoises seen riding the bow waves late in the evening by those of us still awake. They were a little reluctant to have their photos taken however - half dissappeared once Bruce got his camera.

We arrived at Gt Barrier in the early hours of Saturday morning - the skippers having decided to flag away the Mokohinans because of the high seas. "Never mind, there's some great diving around Gt Barrier and some good wreck dives," claimed the enthusiastic 1st mate (one of the skippers was in fact a 1st mate). This guy was quite a hard case and actually went diving with us, donning only a pair of jocks (in the middle of bloody winter!!!) and scuba gear - mind you he had a few natural layers of insulation. Any way he turned out to be right about the diving - it was choice despite only average visibility (best we got was about 50'). Gt Barrier Is is the next biggest island in NZ after Stewart Is, so had a fair bit of coastline to explore. We however did most of the 'touristy' spots I guess; diving the Wairwraps and Wiltshire wrecks, which although comparatively broken up are well worth exploring. These wrecks are in comparatively shallow water mostly, (it does vary), but there is no real need to dive below about 50'. The fish life is almost as good as the Knights with plenty of game fish viz John Dory, Porae, etc for the spear-fisherman. Crayfish are about, relatively plentiful around the coasts.

A night dive on Saturday proved to be a new and exciting experience for many and certainly a different way to rage on a Saturday night. The phosphorescence was a bit of a blast too (substitute for a strobe!).

Perhaps the best dive of the trip was at 'Sunken Rock' off Arid Is which provided the best visibility and the deepest diving (and the strongest currents).

The *Pegasus* had on board a couple of battery powered Tekma underwater scooters. Those of us who took them for a spin found them easy to use and a very efficient way to explore. The speed settings were 1-9 which gave a more than adequate range for \$10 each per dive. They are really a once-only but well worth a fast run.

The catering in the trip was well organised and the food simply spiffing - thanks Bruce and Leah. A good bunch of people, had a good dive trip basically.

Paul Healey

This one seemed doomed from the outset! - certain people even had difficulty getting to Tutukaka. We (Lisa and I) got lost four times in Whangarei (but thanks to the friendly petrol station staff, managed to extricate ourselves from the maze of Whangarei suburbs). On our late arrival, (at a rendezvous in keeping with Dive Club tradition - the Tutukaka Pub), we discovered part of our group still hadn't made it. At 11.00pm we were BLASTED out of the pub by a siren (no sense of subtlety there - we could have taken the hint with a quiet bell ringing or a yell from the barman - but NO!) Our depleted ranks (only 4 of us) went and inspected the quarters - very nice. At midnight we were joined by the rest, with their tale of woe. In the pouring rain Phil's car had landed in a ditch going around a corner - on later inspection we all agreed it was indeed a very nasty bend! So they stood in the rain trying to look helpless - not difficult! - waiting for someone to rescue them which luckily they soon did. So surrounded by a weekend supply of food and literary material (100 Woman's Weekly's) we prepared for entrenchment - little did we know as we cosily settled down to get some sleep for our big diving trip.

In the morning we viewed the scene with horror and a sinking feeling, as huge waves smashed over the headlands and the winds howled (real adventure boy stuff). The boat owners decided it was too rough and told us it probably would be, the next day too. But we refused to give in and stayed. We even did a couple of sun dances which worked long enough for us to enjoy a picnic lunch at Whale Bay. The brave (and Mad) ones amongst us had a swim and stayed in for over 30 seconds! Then squelched in bare feet back up the hill through mud and puddles - delightful or kinky!

Next stop was Matapouri and a walk along the beach or run for the fit. Climbed through the tunnel and were treated to a display of the power of nature, with waves pounding in. Definitely too rough for even snorkelling.

Home sweet home and the big decision how to cook the food. There was plenty as the last car load of people never turned up due to weather reports on Saturday. Four cooks (who said too many spoiled the broth?) and a few hours later we had chicken roasted (no crays - saved again!).

It was getting a bit boring (no one was game to eat a slater which we found!), so in desperation we drove in convoy to check out the big smoke. Saturday night at the movies - wow!! We saw 'Teachers' (there wasn't alot of choice) which we bore - just.

Nothing was open (ie. establishments serving alcohol) so we drove in convoy home and whilst playing 'chicken' with the lights (ie. who can handle driving in darkness for the longest second) our trip officer (nameless) made closer acquaintance with the gravel to the laughter of all. Then a marathon of Black Bitch till the small hours and some sleep in case the wind miraculously died - too much to hope. Sunday conditions were still a bit rough and to our disappointment the boat owner wouldn't take us out. So we cleaned up and mid-morning left. A stop off at Waiwera Pools on the way home cheered us up and soothed all the aching muscles (not from diving sadly). A doomed dive trip - but a great weekend in all!

Claire Taylor

MAYOR ISLAND 3-4 AUGUST

or

Eat, drink (and drink some more) and be very Merry
for tomorrow we dive

At 6.00pm we assembled at the clock tower in the drizzle. After much too-ing and fro-ing (Much of it to the downstairs bar of the uni-club) we managed to shove in over 20 divers, about 35 tanks, weightbelts, spearguns, pots, pans, food and 4 odd gear bags into two rapidly shrinking mini buses. After consulting various yoga (or was it S & M) manuals, and deciding on the most contorted of seating positions we rallied together and set forth at about 7.30 on our journey to Tauranga.

After a frenzied session of popping various decongestant capsules (tried hard to save you some Lynette!!) we settled back with a few cold ones (Steinlager, DB draught speargun up trouser leg...) and cruuuuuised southward.

We arrived at Bruce's parent's place at around 10.30 and eagerly devoured the large helpings of hot soup that were prepared for us. (Thanks Mr and Mrs Cameron). However before we could organise the first party of the trip, everybody crashed in the poolroom!! (Could this be, I thought, the first real Dive of the trip!?!). Not to be put off, a group of social souls adjourned to one of the mini buses. to rip into the cannapiss in a big way.

At about 2.00am, thinking of starting a game of pool, we returned to the house and turned on the lights (Heh, Heh!!!). There we encountered the most eloquent and, dare I say, erudite conversation of the whole trip! After the dust had settled and state of decorum had been restored, Lisa asked if we had just come!!! (Well Miss M, I realise the 4 of us in the van had emerged with silly grins, and flushed expressions (faceless, Man!!) but that's still a very personal question for 2.00am in the morning...)

After a dawn breakfast we made our way down to the jetty where the launch was berthed. Neville, our skipper had just had the boat half painted yellow - the paint wasn't even dry!! The weather was brilliantly fine, in fact the best day for ages, according to the skipper.

On the way out past the mount, we passed a Japanese ship which had a paint-job which seemed to indicate that it carried certain herbal cigarettes. (if the ship had been Australian, would they have been Great Barrier Reefers?). About a quarter of the way out to Mayor Island is Kare wa Island. This was the site of the first day of the trip. We moored about 200 feet from a wreck, which lay in 60-100 feet of water. The wreck was very broken up, with only a few buckled plates and beams being visible. The visibility was poor, owing to recent bad weather, at about 15-20 feet. Despite this Ross and Anthony managed to retrieve an encrusted souvenir from a rocky crevice.

Yours truly managed to incur a bout of vertigo at about 30 feet on this dive and I can recommend this experience as cheap alternative to those of you who can't afford mind-altering drugs. I managed to break the surface seconds before being able to test the theory about the "chunky bits" passing through the non-return valve on your reg. (and I was looking forward to it!!) A few crays were taken, with Mark's 3 inch specimen providing comic relief (and the size of his crays were laughable as well!!)

As we were about to leave, Mark and Chris were able to offer some assistance to one of our number who had neglected (!?!) to don his B.C.D. before entering the water. After finning about for some time he discovered that he floated exactly the same way that a diver wearing a B.C.D. doesn't (think about it!). We could see he was in difficulty because of the frantically waving arms, the strangled gurgles, and, most obvious of all, the brown colouration of the water! We were able to continue our trip to Mayor Island after a while, with one diver minus a weight belt, a catch bag and some pride.

For the next few hours we relaxed in the sun. The sea was near perfect except for a slow regular swell which upset one stomach in particular. We trolled with John's Rod on the way to Mayor but only succeeded in tangling a few low flying gulls, despite my unselfish act of luring the fish closer with my breakfast.

First stop at Mayor was cathedral bay, with its enormous sheer (like vertical) cliffs and amazing overhangs. Huge veins of obsidian were clearly visible running through the volcanic cone. A further 10 minutes brought us to the second dive of the day at Two Fathom reef. Here, at the edge of the continental shelf, the viz was much better than inshore, at over 80 feet. This reef which was about 20 feet underwater, had sheer dropoffs down to well over 150 feet on both sides. On this dive, the maxim "Think deep(ish)" seemed to be observed more often than not, with many cruising down to well below 100 feet. Some of the deeper divers were seen to be refining their "I'm a little airplane yeah, yeah, swimming style (Hmmm - perhaps it was just Nige chasing mermaids again!) Quite a few fish and morays about, but not too many crays. While we were anchored, several Petrels arrived and started diving for food. (What else?) These birds actually 'fly' underwater to hunt fish. It's quite freaky to see a bird fly past your mask when you're 6 feet underwater!! After tracking down Brian who had wandered off towards the island (and witnessing what could only be described as a "Polaris missile" type ascent from about 30'), we cruised on to a further bay where some paua were taken by snorkel. Then it was off to the Southeast bay where the cabins and pub were located.

After emptying the boat by ladder (No jetty!) of gear, tanks, and compressor we claimed bunks and then headed off to the fishing club for a session of sinking "divers oil". Mike C and some other twisted sorts even set off on a chilly night dive at about 8.00pm (weird guys!) After a night of ethanol, playing darts and pool, and swapping awful jokes - interspersed with another of Brian's culinary delights some of us headed off to John O and Co's room to continue where we left off the previous night. After consuming a bottle of scotch and various other intoxicating substances including the last of Anthony's Castlemain we were all very merry indeed. In fact it would probably be fair to say that all of those in that room became qualified "Wreck(ed) divers."

The next morning dawned (after a sound sleep) a lot windier, with quite a chop and some of the seedier members of our party were a bit wary of eating too much breakfast. After reloading the launch, Neville pointed us towards Motiti Island, where it was much calmer. After a reasonably rough trip of about 3 hours, we arrived at the first dive of the day - Astro Lab Reef.

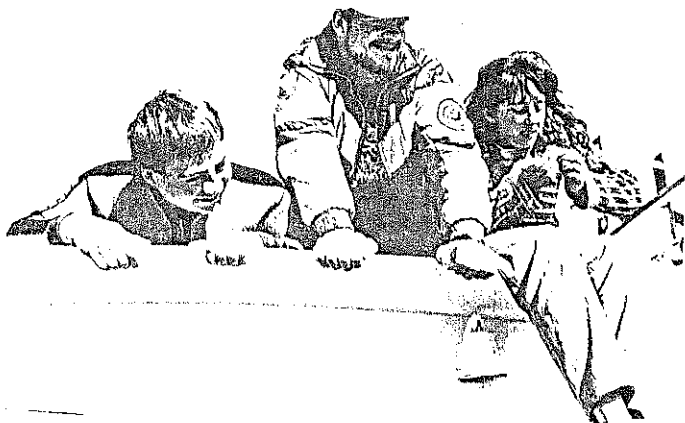
This reef is soon to become a marine reserve and as one of the last groups to dive on it before this happened, we took the opportunity to relieve it of a few crays. This dive also enjoyed good visibility and with an abundance of sealife (Ross saw an unusual variety of pufferfish) and some undersea caves it was probably the most popular dive of the trip. Some deepish dives were also made here, with Tony judging his air supply to a perfect degree (i.e. he had breathed his tank dry as he reached the surface). Bruce looked pretty crook after trouble clearing his sinuses, while Nige stayed on board with his head over the side, studying the feeding techniques of various marine species.

After this dive we continued onto Motiti where we had lunch amongst many other dive boats. A few of us took the opportunity to grab a quick dive to check out if there were any crays about. After lunch we headed off to a scallop bed for a final rape, pillage and plunder. At 60-70 feet we managed to find a stack of huge scallops, and practically the whole boat managed to fill their quota. By this time the sea was dead calm and we relaxed on the roof of the launch, with the last of the beers and enjoyed the trip back towards the mount. Many of us decided to clean our scallops on board, during the trip back, which we did - followed by a very inconspicuous (?) flock of seagulls.

Eventually in the late afternoon we arrived back on shore, loaded up the minibuses, had a feed and with sacks of scallops and crays headed for home. All in all, a very enjoyable time was had by all and several new friendships made (most notably that, between Karen and my warmest jacket - this couple being inseparable over the weekend).

This trip should become a regular event in future, with some great diving it must be recommended.

Alan Wright



THE THREE STOOGES



THE ALDERMANS TRIP (ALIAS THE WHITE ISLAND TRIP)

By Ross Sneddon

Fate was against us from the start as John told us bitterly that the White Island trip was off due to lack of numbers. Then when this was changed to a two day trip to the Aldermans, only 5 turned up anyway. Now I ask you!! Feeling some responsibility to the skipper of the boat and thinking of the glorious weather of the past few days, we decided to go anyway.

Waiting for my two passengers, Greg and Marjolein outside the clock tower on Sunday night, I finished wiring up my new car stereo and we were off, blasting down the motorway towards the Bombay hills with 89FM at nose-bleed level (well maybe not). We made Tairua by around nine and boarded the good ship M.V. Taranui.

The next day dawned with the weather looking like it had taken a turn for the worse. We cast off and steamed out at 8:30 into a freshening Nor-Nor-Wester which had become a howling gale by the time we reached the shelter of the Aldermans. After a short breather, it was straight into a dive in the leigh of the main island. Not a lot to be seen, especially in the cray department, but we were thankful the visibility was still reasonable. A large school of Terakihi were sighted just before ascent but nobody had a gun. Lunch and a rest in the sheltered bay of Main Island preceded another dive in the shelter of the neighbouring island. This dive was to 110 feet and was much more interesting with big pinnacles and caves with lots of fish. A lot of ground was covered from the anchor right up into the shallows but still no crays.

Back on the surface, the weather was still abysmal and it was time to head back to Tairua. I spent the worst part of the trip attempting to take photos of the 3 meter waves breaking behind the boat to fight off sea sickness. Back at the wharf at Tairua, John (the skipper) left us to a dinner of steak and chips, after which we felt much better despite the weather report still being gloomy.

Later, drying out towels over the Taranui's engine and listening to the pouring rain, a horrific discovery was made. A small quarter-inch copper pipe in the bilges was found to have snapped off and a small fountain of salt-water was quietly attempting to sink us. True, it would have taken a week but we were still sinking. A phone call to the skipper had him tearing down to the wharf with visions of his livelihood sitting on the bottom by the time he got there. Needless to say, the leak was stopped (don't know how, I didn't ask) and everybody eventually got a peaceful nights sleep.

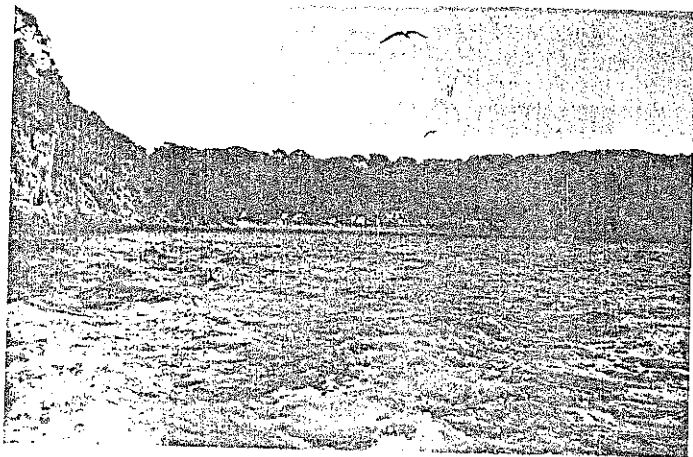
The next day looked decidedly more promising though we learned that another group which was supposed to be going out with us had rung and cancelled due to the bad weather (the wind had been gusting 60 knots on the Monday. However, the breeze never rose above 15 knots and we headed out again into a lumpy swell left over from the night before.

First up was a scallop dive off the Northern end of the group. The skippers "80 to 90 feet" turned out to be 110 feet but visibility was a good 50 feet and once on the sandy bottom we set about gathering our quota before our "no decompression" limits were reached. Scallops were big and plentiful though swimming against the current was tiring (who's idea was that anyway?) and the swell was big enough to wash us around even on the bottom. It turned out that in 15 minutes we had virtually doubled the quota so that it was scallops for lunch (lots of 'em) and I think exhaustion took its toll on the accuracy of the counting afterwards.

After lunch we went for our last dive off one of the pinnacles at the southern end of the group. It was an interesting dive with drop-offs to around 100 feet (though our limit was 80). Greg, Marjolein and myself (we dived as a trio for the whole trip due to the odd number) swam a long way and when we surfaced, the boat was nowhere in sight. It turned out we'd swum half way round a small inlet and it was a long snorkel back.

The sea had now moderated and we had our first relatively calm trip back though with the tide low and a swell running the Taranui had to do a bit of surfing over the Tairua bar and some bottom-scraping up to the wharf. At least with only five of us on the trip, organising things was easy and we were soon unloaded, thank-yous were said and our fleet of two cars found their own ways home scalloped to the eye-balls but cray-less.

Even though the weather could've been better, the diving was good and credit should go to John Oliver for organising a successful trip (though not financially) in the face of overwhelming apathy.



LAKE PUPUKE DEEP DIVE

Well where the *@!:# was everybody?!

Turned up at the noticeboard expecting to see at least a few keen bods and besides Chris and our dive leader Nige, there was just one. (Good on ya Lisa!)

Good torch essential for each diver (not to illuminate any pretty underwater sights, but to see ya gauges and each other), and after running through a few basic torch signals we entered the lake and it was cold!!

On our first descent we reached the bottom at, wait for it...40ft, ~~40ft~~..... something's wrong here Nige. The bottom was just soft mud. Visibility poor, nothing exhilarating. Lisa and I lost Nige at one stage. Thought maybe he might have been caught by the Loch Pupuke Monster or something. No Chance.

We surfaced and headed for deeper water. This time we did it right. Descending through the thermocline complete darkness quickly engulfed us. Say..... Nige and Lisa, wouldn't be up to anything would they??? A quick shine of the torch ensures me they aren't.

Didn't reach the bottom, but levelled off at 115ft. I begin to lose all sense of direction as it felt as if we were spinning around (no I wasn't stoned).

Now there was nothing to see as viz was poor even with a torch, so as to remain in good contact we stuck close together (not that close).

Didn't spend much time at this depth as I was using my air faster than Nige or Lisa. We ascended for the decomp and headed back.

Nice not to have to rinse out our gear. (Freshwater Lake).

All in all it wasn't terribly exciting but a new experience to chalk up, and remember.....

DIVERS DO IT DEEPER

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Cost of getting other dive gear home : approx \$20.