



# Annual Newsletter

# 2018

## **2017/2018 Office Bearers**

President and Membership Officer - Mike Buchanan

Vice President and Marina Liaison - Chris Cunnold

Treasurer - Steve Day

Secretary - Wendy Hutchison

Dive Coordinator - Mel Turner

Boat Officer - Mark Weber

Social and Fundraising Officer - Liz Davey

Communications Officer - Dylan Keys

Safety Officer - Peter Nothrop

Training Officer - Rex Burke



## President's Report by Mike Buchanan

Yet again we come to the end of another club year. I swear they go by faster and faster each year. This year was another very successful year for the club and a testament to all the hard work put in by both the committee and the crew.

Financially we had another solid year with the club in a healthy position and continuing to build on the reserves from last year after the huge boat expenses we incurred in 2015-16. A big thanks to Steve, who works tirelessly in the background keeping the books up to date. It's no mean feat keeping on top of everything and I'm sure takes a good deal of his time every month.

Boat operations have settled down nicely at Port Coogee and I think everyone would agree that overall it has been a success. We were moved by the Marina Management from the nice 20m pen at the front to a 15m pen down one of the jetties but we always knew that would happen when one became available. The one area that the SYC did provide was a venue for social events including a drink after a dive. However, I think the move of the General Meetings to the Esplanade has helped out on that score but we could still do with a venue for a post dive drink. To that end we did explore the possibility of an affiliation with Cockburn Power Boat Association at Woodman Point (literally 100m from the original UEC training base). While they offered an attractive proposition and access to a lovely clubhouse, the committee felt that the extra distance, issues with boat access for loading and unloading and the loss of a degree of club independence were a concern.

On the topics of meetings, we have now trialled the bi monthly general meetings for the best part of the year. I know not everyone is happy with this arrangement and to that end I would suggest that if there are those in the club that would like more frequent meetings then we would happily have someone volunteer to organise them. The committee already attend one meeting every month to run the club and most of us find it a big ask to do two meetings a month including all the organising. Volunteers please if you want a meeting every month.

To streamline the frequency of meetings and to overcome the issue every year of ensuring memberships are up to date in time for the AGM, the committee will move the 2019 AGM to June instead of July. General meetings will be held every two months so the AGM will be in June, and General Meetings in August, October, December (Xmas lunch), February and April.

On the social side Liz organised another great Xmas party back at the Type One Telethon Centre with thanks again to Bec for helping on this. This year given our new location we decided to see the Australia Day fireworks a bit closer to home down at Rockingham and this also was a great success. On fundraising we just couldn't get the enthusiasm for another Sheep Poo drive but instead held two very successful sausage sizzles at Bunning's raising over \$2,250 for the club coffers. We could have done more of these but like all these things we need volunteers to coordinate and organise. We had plenty of volunteers to man the stand but it is organisers we really need and it's always the same few that put up their hands to take it on. Please, if you would like to help organise one of these we really need you to step forward.

The boat thankfully has been running well. Again, a big thanks to Mark and Chris who put in so much time to keep it ship shape and running smoothly. We did have a bit of a scare with a large oil leak last month but Chris managed to track this down to a leaking filter and had everything fixed and cleaned up within a week.

Mel, as usual, has done a fantastic job on the dive bookings and apart from the weather seeming to pick the weekends to blow up we have had a solid year of diving. The Rotto week in particular was blessed this year with good weather pretty much every day, although the weekend was not so lucky and took the number of divers down to the hard core.

Boat trips for the year are steady at just under 50, the number of dives down slightly from last year at 754 but the number of divers has dropped significantly from around 150 to 115. This is primarily because of a large drop in nomination divers from 56 last year to 28 this year. This appears to be because of our new policy of only allowing Advanced Open Water nominations. What is interesting is that this year over 90% of those nomination divers went on to join the club compared to 50% last year.



## President's report cont'd.

Clearly having more experienced divers has resulted in more going on to join the club which must be a good result. The overall number of enquiries is slightly higher this year but many of those have been Open Water and unable to dive with us. This drop is reflected in a slight drop of 12 in overall membership, from 129 to 117 for the year. At least half this drop is also due to the ending of the Tec diving program as many of the Tec divers did not renew this year.

The decision to end the Tec diving program was primarily a result of the loss of the Tec diving officer with no replacement coming forward. Having said that it was a lot harder than we thought it would be. When we started the program, I don't think any of us appreciated the fact that to get water depths of 40m+ you need to get well away from the shore which means well away from sheltered water. That, along with a single trip a month, issues of anchoring in deep water and getting the numbers to make it economical made it difficult to run.

On the training side we have made great inroads into putting the Lottery West grant to good use. Most of the crew have now completed the St John's Advanced Resuscitation training, led by ex member John De Boer which had the advantage of making the course very specific to diving operations. In addition, almost all the skippers have now completed the VHF training course. We have until the end of the year to use up the rest of the grant and we are now planning the next application.

On safety Pete has done a great job in maintaining our vigilance in safety with a number of incident reports reviewed and summaries provided to the crew to try to ensure any learnings have been captured. We also conducted a comprehensive review of the club's Risk and Liability exposure with a report submitted to the committee in February. We are currently reviewing club insurance policies as part of the review and this work will continue into the new club year.

Dylan has done great work this year in updating our website with a fresh and contemporary look and introducing the new booking system. This system makes the job of managing the boat dive bookings much easier and we have also been trialling payment options.

A big thanks to Wendy for her hard work in managing the day to day correspondence, meeting agendas and minutes and general club business. Her attention to detail and the high standard to which she does everything makes all our jobs so much easier.

Earlier in the year we put out a call for a club Archivist. This role was both to try and sort/catalogue our existing archives and to try to put some structure around the material we are currently generating such as records, photos and newsletters. Unfortunately, we had no takers but in the meantime, I have made a start on some of this. The archives were moved from Danny Messom's house (many thanks to Danny for storing them all these years) to my garage. I then went through all the boxes and cleared out material that was of no interest or relevance. What was left was condensed down into 22 boxes and a very high-level inventory made of what was in each box. Then all the boxes, with the exception of two with the club magazines, were delivered to Dylan Keys who has kindly volunteered a room for their storage. With regards to the club magazines, I have been gradually scanning these and uploading to our cloud. We now have years 1961-1969 scanned and 1980 to last year. Only 10 more years of the seventies to go!

Finally, a huge thanks to the crew, the Dive Officers and Skippers that make the club work. Without them the boat would go nowhere. It is a continual battle to maintain numbers, particularly of Dive Officers and we have seen a high turnover these last few years. Many of our divers seem to forget that they are all volunteers and always welcome a helping hand, particularly at the end of a long day when the boat is put to bed. If any club member would like to train up as a Dive Officer then please let us know. It only takes a commitment of about once every six weeks and does come with the benefit of free diving as long as you are on the roster.

*"This year was another very successful year for the club and a testament to all the hard work put in by both the committee and the crew"*

## Treasurers Report

At the time of penning this our year has been another smooth sailing one for the Club. Our reserves have been rebuilt and are now back to the June 2015 level and thus we are in a sound financial position

We have bedded down very nicely at our Coogee home and thanks to our Marina Liaison representative, Chris Cunnold , have now secured a lee pen meaning less stress to the skippers berthing in strong sea breezes

A big thanks to Liz Davey who, with the assistance of Clive Cass and helpers, ran another successful annual Rottneest trip

Thanks too to our hard working Dive Coordinator, Mel Turner, who through her and her helper's efforts have run several local dive trips throughout the year. These trips have contributed to our yearly surplus as will next year's Maldives trip that has also been organised by Mel

Another boost to the Club's coffers was the two Bunning's sausage sizzles held through the year that made \$2,250

Some interesting financial comparisons [ May 16 to May 17] are:

- Boat dive income down by 2%
- Membership fees down by 11%
- Affiliation Fees up by 30%
- Nomination dive income down 44%
- Boat maintenance down by 76%
- Boat & liability insurance up by 27%
- Fuel costs down by 16%
- ING Deposit account balance is up by 37%

Apart from the Committee persons acknowledged above I would also like to record my appreciation to our President, Mike Buchanan and Secretary, Wendy Hutchison

Also a big thanks to Paul Burns and Gurmit Singh for auditing the clubs books

I have renominated as your Treasurer

Steve Day - Treasurer

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## Training

This year we had three new Dive Officers endorsed to help crew Cape Cruiser and two more are not far off completing their training schedules.

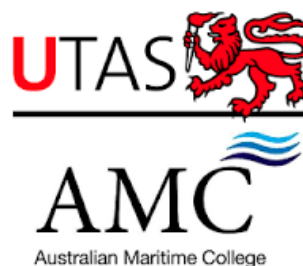
The UEC requires all their crew to have at least a Provide First Aid certificate. During the year all Skippers and Dive Officers either verified or updated their HLTAID 003 qualifications through St Johns.

We also organised the Advanced Resuscitation course HLTAID 007 with the St John Ambulance Association which twelve of our crew completed.

In May this year some crew attended Fremantle Sea Rescue to complete a VHF radio course to be compliant with using the new radios which were installed in Cape Cruiser during the year. As a result seven of our Skippers and Dive Officers completed the Long Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (LROCP) qualification which allows the holder to operate MF/HF and VHF marine radios.

Regards Rex

Training Officer

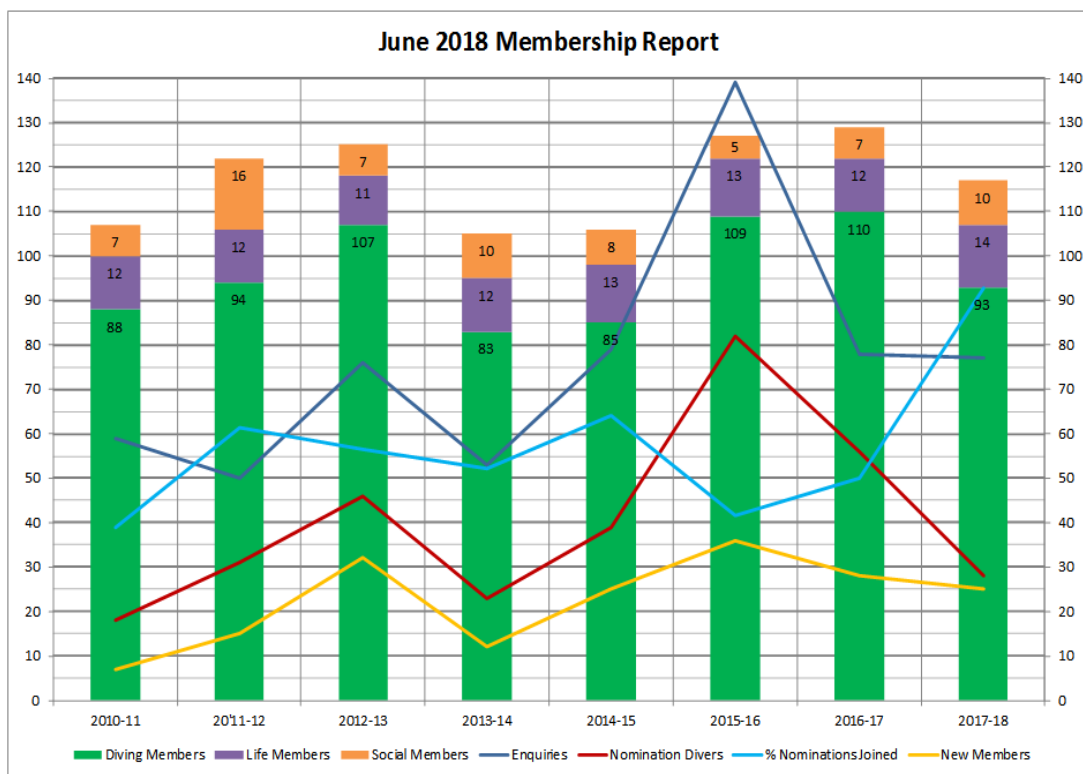


## Membership report by Mike Buchanan

As mentioned in the President's report, membership numbers for 2017-18 club year are down from last year. There are I believe two main reasons for the drop. Firstly, the number of Tec divers in the club dropped from fifteen last year to six this year. This drop was a direct result of ending the Tec diving program so no great surprise.

The other reason was the requirement to have an Advanced Open Water (AOW) ticket. We decided last year to up the requirement from an Open Water (OW) for nomination divers for two reasons. Firstly, we had a few incidents with inexperienced OW divers having problems during the dive. Apart from the potential for a safety incident it was impacting their buddies dive. The second reason was that from duty of care point there was a view that we should be ensuring divers stayed within the depth certification limits. An OW is only certified to 18m whereas an AOW is certified to 30m. This immediately removed the need to try to police the depth the divers were going to as almost all our sites are less than 30m.

An interesting trend on the chart below is the number of enquiries versus the number of nomination divers. Enquiries remained almost exactly the same as 2016-17 at about 77 but the number of nomination divers halved from 56 in 2016-17 to 28 in 2017-18. However new members only dropped slightly from 28 to 25. What does all this mean I hear you asking while suppressing a long yawn? Well over 90% of nomination divers joined the club this year compared to 50% last year. Why? Well I think because nomination divers are now more experienced and more dedicated divers compared to previously, more of them want to continued.



## Marina Liaison by Chris Cunnold

Coogee Marina had its share of challenges this year such as metal grindings from the near-by construction sites allegedly causing damage to many of the fibreglass boats in the marina. Cape Cruiser was not affected or at least we can't tell if it was so we were pleased not to be involved in this issue.

Otherwise a move from the 20 metre pen to a properly sized 15 metre pen occurred which was no surprise as this was the agreement we had when we moved to Coogee and although we only ever paid the 15 metre fee, we benefited from a rate review and the fees dropped a bit during the year.

The marina recently added some buffers to the loading jetty we use and continue to plan further improvements. They are also very close to resolving the issue with fuel supply so we all look forward to being able to fill up in the marina.

## Social and Fundraising report

Well as another club year hits the deck, I wonder again, where it went.

The idea of Social and Fundraising is to provide additional activities for members, some who no longer dive but remain loyal and supportive club members, to make the club a fun one to belong to and to raise funds for boring things like boat repair and maintenance.....gotta keep Cape Cruiser afloat so those who can get to dive.

The passing year was both busy, and successful. Here is a brief synopsis of what we as club provided and achieved in terms of fundraising and Social activities

If you haven't been to one **"The Amazing UEC Curry night"** is a must! Thanks again to Ilonka and Eddie Jarvis who offer not only their beautiful home, in addition to Ilonka's amazing culinary skills ensuring a feast beyond exception. While members enjoy the sumptuous food, Ilonka and Jasmine and myself work behind the scenes to create the best ever Indian Foods this side of the black stump, whilst raising money.



Thanks to Bec Johnson, we were able to hold our carbon copy best **Christmas meeting** at the Family Type 1 Diabetes Centre at the Osborne Park Hospital. The centre is an amazing place, sufficiently well equipped to allow all those who attended the ability to sit down together and enjoy a fabulous Christmas feast, followed by a brief club meeting and the presentation of the club's annual awards.

Boat Person of the year went to Chris Cunnold.

Club Person of the year went to Ilonka Jarvis

Well done and well deserved to those members on their awards.



The **Sky Show Cruise and Dinner** (26 th Jan) is always well attended and often wait listed as we are limited to the number of folk we can carry onboard. This year's event, although a little different, did not disappoint. As we are now penned at the Coogee Marina, and travelling up the river into Perth waters from the marina has added another layer, not only in time but in crew responsibilities, the committee thought, "Well why not try the Fireworks at Rockingham, so much closer to home" .....and we did...

The cruise to the Rockingham Foreshore was a little rougher than I had anticipated, fortunately Erin Roberts was at hand with what seemed an endless supply of Kwells, to quell the rocking and rolling tummies of many on board. I must admit, I was the only person who tried to hang over the side on the downward journey, such was my plight (I hoped no one had noticed or heard me, as it was not pretty) Thankfully Erin's pills settled me, and by the time we arrived at Rockingham, I was back to my best self, and was able to ensure the flow of food and drinks. Chris Cunnold and Wendy Hutchison did an amazing job, both as skipper and crew, and many additional thanks have to go to Chris for the precision with which he placed Cape Cruiser directly below the fall out of the fireworks.



The Annual Pilgrimage to **Rotto in March** is always a well patronised exodus. Is it a Social and Fundraising event? You bet your sweet life it is. Spread across 10 days (a 7 day week and 3 day long weekend) the getaway to Rotto aboard Cape Cruiser is for me and many repeat (offenders) attendees, the highlight of our diving year. We park Cape Cruiser on our mooring in Geordie Bay while we avail the accommodation of the adjacent chalets.

This year we managed 20 dives from Cape Cruiser and enjoyed very social times, après dive, sharing food, drinks, joining in the Rotto settlement activities such as quiz and movies night, all sooo much fun.



## More Social & Fundraising

This year we launched in to the **Bunnings Sausage sizzle** thing, as a fundraising activity.

We held 2 very successful , sizzles, each making in excess of \$1000.00 (\$2250 in total according to our Treasurer, Ed.). They are fun to run, but do take a little effort, ask Wendy, Chris or me, we will tell you.

But... they are Sooo much fun. We now have the procedures written up, so provided we attract sufficient volunteers, it becomes easy..

Fancy organising one, speak to Wendy ( secretary [secretary@uecwa.com.au](mailto:secretary@uecwa.com.au) ) or me, ([socialbookings@uecwa.com.au](mailto:socialbookings@uecwa.com.au) ) we will support you, or if organising isn't your thing , how about volunteering at the next one.

Volunteers are asked to give but 2 hours from their day to, help man the stall, cook the sausages, take orders or money, or like club member Steve G, spruik....he was amazing !

Honestly it is an easy and fun way to make money for the club.....”



### Club Clothing

With the recent update of the club Logo, many members have taken the opportunity to order and replace their club clothing. Its always great while on a UEC trip or at a UEC function, to see so many people wearing their club apparel.

If your stuff is a bit sad and needs replacing, or if you are feeling a little bit chilly as winter descends and the water temps drop and the wind chill factor increases, why not order a hoodie, fleece or a beanie from me at [social@uecwa.com.au](mailto:social@uecwa.com.au) the more I order the cheaper they become. If a bucket hat or a cap is more your go, there are supplies on the boat, Caps @ \$15.00 Hats \$20.00. Just ask the skipper or DO, of the day...



### Entertainment Book and App.

If you purchased from the club last year, then its time to renew your membership. The book or the app sell themselves really. If you purchase either from UEC you not only provide UEC with \$14.00 from each sale, but you also open the door to an amazing opportunity for yourself.

The book costs \$70.00. It's packed with special offers and discounts too numerous to mention. However, if you use only 3, buy one get one free vouchers, I can guarantee you will have financially reimbursed yourself, it's a win, win situation... again keep an eye on the weekly newsletter, where you will find the link, or alternatively contact me.



With the introduction of bimonthly meetings now set in stone, has your need or want for additional social activities increased? It has? Why not contact me and tell me about your ideas, I'm always willing to listen and if I can promote new and exciting experiences.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Keep blowing bubbles, and Happy Diving.

Liz

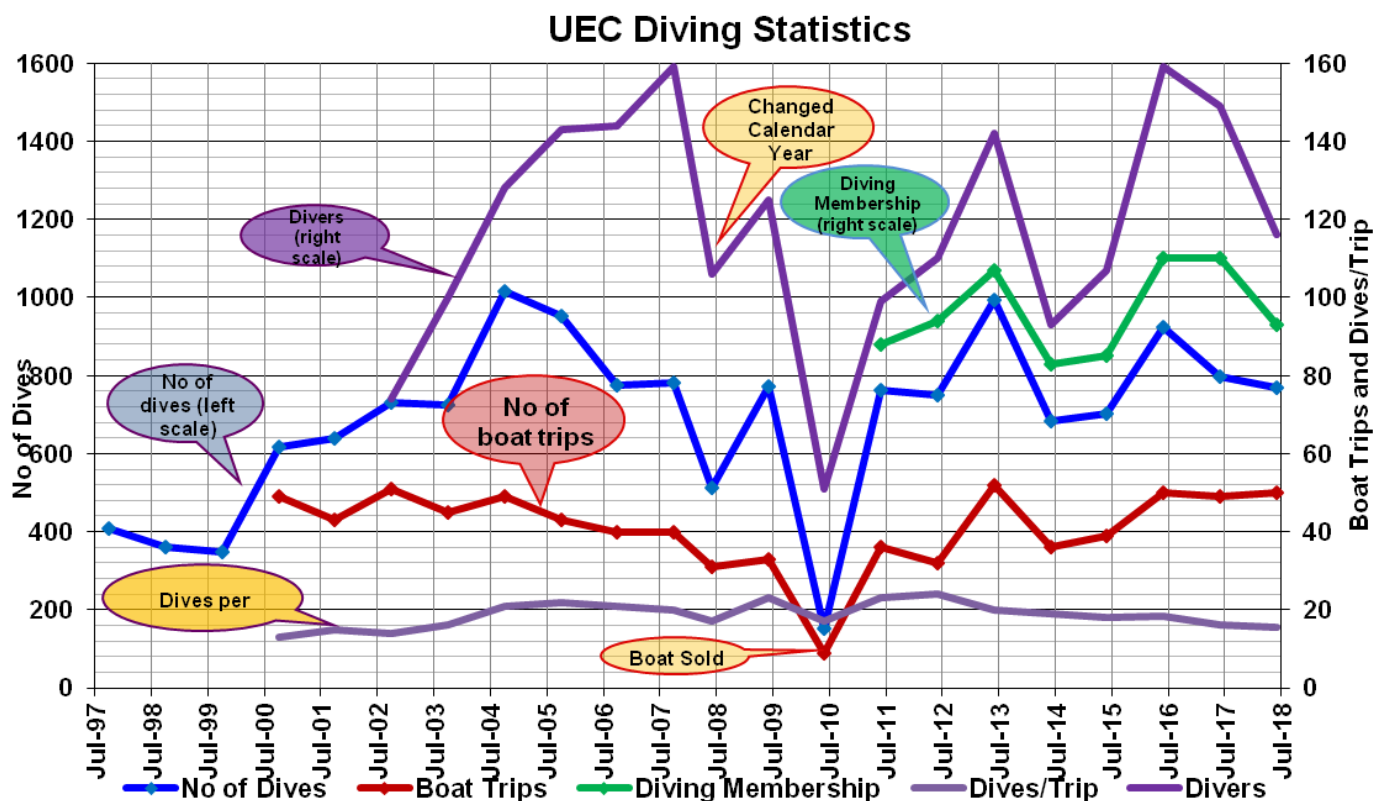
[social@uecwa.com.au](mailto:social@uecwa.com.au)



## Diving report

After the poor weather conditions we had last year, we made the most of the opportunities we had in the 2017/18 season, resulting in some great diving.

We saw some new initiatives implemented such as two-dive day weekends, more single dives and the running of a winter roster – plus we had a greater variety of dive sites visited in the 2017/18 season.



It's been a fabulous year of diving!

### Where did we go?

We visited a total of 36 different sites (some grouped into areas) over the course of the year. This included a few new and other rediscovered sites including City of York Break and Seaward Reef (beyond Carnac Island).

Stragglers Reef (encompassing SARCA South, Carl's Secret Spot, Carl's Half Tank, Stragglers Cave, Crazy Wobby, Mini Swirl and Secret Spot 1) was dived most often, mostly due to proximity, and the popularity of Carl's Cray days. The Roe Reef area (Arch Rock, Elder Point, The Maze & Victoria Station) and Kerry's Cavern were also dived often – mainly due to weather conditions.

Dive Sites	No dives
Stragglers Reef Area	11
Roe Reef Area	8
Kerry's Cavems	7
Seaward Reef (incl. "Steve's Spot")	5
Crystal Palace Area	4
Flat Top	4
Nurse's Quarters	4
South Mole Lygnern	4
Angela's Cave	3
City of York Break	3
Swirl Reef	3
Carpet Emporium	2
Flat Cave	2
Jackson Arches	2
Marjorie's Hole/Marjorie's Main Hole	2
Barry's Caves	1
Blue Groper South East	1
Carlisle Castle Coventry Reef	1

Dive Sites	No dives
Cathedral Rocks Outer Reef	1
Catherine's Grotto	1
City of York	1
Cray Canyon	1
D9 Dredge	1
Duck Rock	1
Easter Lump	1
Five Fathom Exploratory	1
Greenup Wreck	1
Geordie Bay Channel Marker	1
Jumbo Cave	1
Murray Chambers	1
Opera House	1
Parker Point	1
Robbs Jetty	1
Roger's Rock	1
Seal Island Reef	1
Stables	1

It was great to see some new or "less-often" dive sites visited during the Single Dive days which grew in popularity this year. Sites like South Mole Lygnern, Greenup (North Mole), The D9, Robbs Jetty and Seaward Reef provided great single dive options... no doubt we will visit these again over the coming 12 months.



### Diver of the year

Congratulations go to Mike Buchanan for taking out the win for the fourth year in a row with an impressive total of 57 dives this year (up from his 53 dives last year!) Also worth noting is that he was only 2 dives short of his record... so, SO close!

Special mentions go to Malcolm Roberts in second place with 34 dives and Craydrian Taylor with 31 dives.

Both Mike and Craydrian regularly crew Cape Cruiser making these dive numbers even more impressive.

Other honorable mentions go to new Members Georgina Cardaci, Bernie Riegler, Mark Itzstein and Damien Mcateer .Congratulations for making the leaders table in your first year with the Club!

Place	Name	Dives
1	Mike Buchanan	57
2	Malcolm Roberts	34
3	Adrian Taylor	31
=4	Wendy Hutchison	22
=4	David Freemantle	22
=6	Gino Ferreri	21
=6	Liz Davey	21
=8	Trevor (Higgsy) Higgs	19
=8	Pete Northrop	19
=8	Georgina Cardaci	19
11	Geoff Geard	17

Place	Name	Dives
=12	Bernie Riegler	14
=12	Dave Carter	14
=12	Donna Gratton	14
=15	Mark Itzstein	13
=15	James Savill	13
=15	Damien Mcateer	13
=18	Maree Casley	12
=18	Jeff Weston	12
=18	Andrea Carter	12
=18	Elise Brigden	12
=18	Mel Turner	12

### How much diving did we do?

A total of 116 divers, including Affiliate Members, had a total of 770 dives off Cape Cruiser this year, slightly down from last year (149 divers completed 797 dives last year). Of these trips 13 were single dives.

It was exciting to see two dive trips (i.e. Sat & Sun trips) taking place on a number of weekends this year during the summer months. We also saw the introduction of a "Winter Dive Roster", which I believe was a success thanks to those crew who put their hands up for at the last-minute, as well as a hardy group of brave winter divers supporting these trips.

In terms of non-diving days, the weather was (as always) responsible for a few cancelled trips (16 in total). But the good news is we only came up short on numbers 4 times this year and Cape Cruiser held up beautifully, with no trips cancelled due to mechanical issues.



© Leanne Thompson

Year	Boat Trips	No of Dives	Dives per Trip	Divers	Diving Membership
2009/10	9	153	17	51	
2010/11	36	764	23	99	88
2011/12	32	750	24	110	94
2012/13	52	993	20	142	107
2013/14	36	685	19	93	83
2014/15	39	703	18	107	85
2015/16	50	924	18	159	108
2016/17	49	797	16	149	110
2017/18	50	770	15	116	93

## Diving report cont'

### What type of diving did we do?

We continued to offer a variety of dives this year, including:

Single Diving Days, Wreck Diving Days, Exploratory Diving Days ,Deep(er) Diving Days, Shark Days,  
Carl the Cray Whisperer's Secret Spot, Hunting for Crays Days and Monthly (Shore) Night Dives

### Our wonderful Crew

I know I say it every year but without these fantastic people giving up their time we wouldn't be able to go diving... you can't dive if there's no one to take out the boat! A **big thank you** to our wonderful volunteers!

Special mention and congratulations goes to Dylan Keys, Peter Northrop and Bec Johnson for earning their Dive Officer "wings" this year.

Crew Member	No times = DO	No times = Skipper	Total Trips
Chris Cunnold	4	18	22
Mel Turner	16		16
Mike Buchanan	4.3	9	13.3
Wendy Hutchison	4.3	6	10.3
Pete Northrop	9		9
Adrian Taylor	8.3		8.3
Steve Day		8	8
Carl Anders		6	6
Rex Burke		6	6
Dylan Keys	4		4
Geoff Geard		3	3
Dave Carter	3		3
Bec Johnson	2		2
Clive Cass	2		2
Dennis Stubberfield		1	1

Unfortunately, we were still severely short on Dive Officers (again) this year, with a few departures from the Roster...

We will definitely need to ramp up the DO Training and numbers this coming year if we are to continue with our weekly diving trips and certainly if we are going to try for two-dive weekends again over the next 12 months.

Skipper	No of Trips
Chris Cunnold	18
Mike Buchanan	9
Steve Day	8
Carl Anders	6
Rex Burke	6
Wendy Hutchison	6
Geoff Geard	3
Dennis Stubberfield	1

Dive Officer	No of Trips
Mel Turner	16
Pete Northrop	9
Adrian Taylor	8.3
Mike Buchanan	4.3
Wendy Hutchison	4.3
Dylan Keys	4
Chris Cunnold	4
Dave Carter	3
Bec Johnson	2
Clive Cass	2

*N.B. we included the Reef Life Survey trips in this year's stats unlike previous years, however we don't count the number of dives undertaken during these trips so I've omitted the number of dives figures from my statistics this year. We had one instance whereby 3 people shared DO duties and this is rounded to "0.3" for each individual*

Thanks (as always) to all of our wonderful Members for another great year with the best Dive Club on the entire planet!

Here's hoping we see some new crew coming on board in the 2018/19 year... I look forward to blowing bubbles with you all in the coming months!

Mel Turner



## 2018 Reef Life Survey and 10 years of Rottne surveys

It was an anxious week leading up to this year's event with a contingent of people booked to fly in from Tasmania and Victoria and the first big cold front of the season bearing down on Perth. Added pressure was that it was the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Reef Life Survey and there were celebrations planned. By Thursday the east-coasters had arrived and made it onto the last ferry to Rotto before they stopped running for two days due to the weather. Sunday was still too rough for *Cape Cruiser* but having been through this a few times now and having added an extra day added to the trip this year, the backup plan was beginning to be rolled out.

The Reef Life Survey Foundation (RLS) is based at the University of Tasmania and for the last ten years one of its main activities has been to conduct nationwide underwater surveys using the same techniques, the same dates, the same dive sites and do it year after year to build robust sets of data encompassing diversity and numbers of fish life and invertebrates (slugs, shells etc.).

The work is funded by government and charities and is nearly entirely carried out by volunteers - citizen scientists. After 10 years they have expanded internationally with teams in Spain and most recently Canada and close to 11,000 surveys completed in 53 countries. UEC has been involved in WA since 2011 when RLS became an affiliate of the UEC. They have used *Cape Cruiser* and a UEC crew for the last 7 Rottne surveys and the enthusiasm is still building.

We finally left Coogee at 7am on Monday; it was cold and wet but there was a strong determination to get some key sites surveyed. For the maximum site coverage a couple of divers decided to give the boat dives a miss and do some sites from shore. The boat headed to Parakeet Bay where three RLS survey sites are in close proximity and could all be done at the same time. The second dive at Crystal Palace was a challenge but everyone was in the water before there was time to ask "do you think this is a bit .... ?" They are a hardy lot of divers; only focussed on the job.

The job involves rolling out a 50 metre tape measure underwater, trying to get it as close to the same GPS point as possible each year. Two divers swim down each side of the tape counting fish, then returning to count invertebrates and a final sweep to photograph each quadrat (a couple of square metres) on both sides of the tape. The fish and "inverts" are counted and identified, with the names being recorded on a slate underwater using their scientific names. It must be interesting writing *Coris auricularis* or *Glaucosoma hebraicum* on an underwater slate while being rolled back and forth by 2 metre swell and then trying to decipher what you have written back in the research station after a few drinks.

The final dive on Monday was nice and gentle one at The Count, the real Count and not the dodgy spot in the UEC GPS as we discovered. Monday ended up with a pub meal and an early night for those of us not inputting data and downloading endless photos.

Still determined to get as many sites done as possible, Tuesday was an early start. The 7am departure challenged some of the team. A nice protected dive at Green Island followed by a not so protected one on Roe Reef saw the working part of the weekend over. Nine sites out of RLS's twenty three at Rotto were ticked off for the year. Some keen members had done 2 sites the weekend before so 11 sites in total was a good outcome when it had looked like none at all would be possible a week earlier.

Not enough to spend two days being pounded around on a boat and rolled around underwater, the activity kicked on with a celebration of 10 years of RLS and 10 years of Rottne surveys on Tuesday night at *Little Creatures* in Freo. There was recognition of some amazing individual volunteer efforts from across the country, some great gifts to recognise volunteer commitments and some very funny awards. A slide show of the achievements of the 10 years was very interesting and included the story of the unexpected and out of control media frenzy when RLS discovered a new population of Red Hand Fish in Tasmania, doubling the known population in the world to 70 specimens – and the 51 million Twitter hits this created.



## Dive Travel etc.

The squidding trips undertaken in Cape Cruiser during the year were a hoot

I discovered the joys of fishing for these cephalopods about twenty years ago. I have never tired of witnessing the squeals of delight from young Children to Grandparents when they first experience catching these fascinating creatures

Being squirted with squid ink is an added bonus...not so funny when it happens to you but hilarious to those around you!

Our Club held two trips this year and whilst no catch records were broken everyone who wanted to got to take home a feed

The trips are always undertaken on a Sunday and have been now been fine tuned to go for no more than six hours We start at a lazy 9:00am and always fit in an 11:00am stop at Fishing Boat Harbour for a coffee or ice cream break This break can work for those with young guns as it gives an opportunity to leave the trip if concentration levels are waning

Do keep a squid eye out in our newsletters for next trip

Steve Day

Your Squid enamoured Skipper!

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## Busselton Weekend – HMAS Swan & Tangaroa Blue Clean-up on Busselton Jetty

In October 2017a group of 9 headed down to Busselton for a weekend, and were treated to some beautiful diving conditions.

On Saturday morning after some quiet but spirited drinks on the Friday night, we headed to Dunsborough (early) to dive the HMAS Swan with Cape Dive. We were blessed with relatively flat conditions and even saw some sunshine through the rain clouds. The water was 15/16 degrees water and it was far warmer in the water than out of it! We had great vis (around 10m), and were spoilt not only with the awesomeness of the wreck, but also a big school of kingfish swimming through - all to the tune of whales that were so loud they sounded like they were on top of us... it was a splendid couple of dives.



Sunday morning we headed to Busselton Jetty for two dives - one a fun dive, the other a clean-up dive as part of the annual Tangaroa Blue beach clean-up. We loaded up our trolleys and headed off for the 1.8km walk to the end of the jetty. Again – underwater conditions were stunning... we enjoyed 10-15m vis, and had a friendly seal playing with us for both dives!

The clean-up was a huge success: we hauled out an array of rubbish, with Liz meticulously sorting and documenting every little bit that was brought up. Our little seal friend spent the entire time going from diver-to-diver, observing the action. I think the little fella was sorry to see us go.

A big thank you to everyone involved in the haul, and for a hilarious weekend - looking forward to doing it all again next year!



## Dive travel - Augusta

We had another splendid weekend of Southern Ocean diving in Augusta this year. The weekend kicked off with a small group meeting at Hamlin Bay for a lunch-time shore dive on the old Hamlin Bay jetty and Mushroom Rock. The report was this was "an ok dive – but far better than a day at work!" Friday afternoon saw the rest of us rock up for the weekend ahead...

Saturday's forecast was the better of the two days, and after a cooked bacon and egg brekkie on the boat we headed off to our first site – a new one, and tip-off from an (Augusta local) friend of UEC. The vis wasn't too bad (around 10-15m) and the water temperature was a very mild 20 degrees. We all enjoyed exploring a big archway and cave, and surrounding ledges. There were a few crays brought up on this dive – including two monsters caught by Craydrian.

A few elected to sit out the second dive, however those who persisted were rewarded with an even better dive than the first. This time we enjoyed exploring a maze of reef, filled with swim-throughs, ledges and little caves to explore. It was a bit surgy, but still highly enjoyable – with loads of fish life, critters and colours.

On our way back, Damian and Mel hopped in for a quick dive at a shallow site called "Thousand Pound Patch" to quickly grab our abalone quota for the day – 15min was all it took (thanks to Damo's hunting skills – not Mel's!), and we were back on board and heading back to dry land.

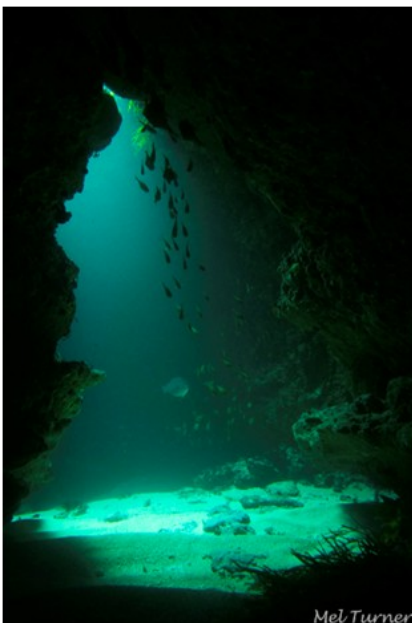
That night we headed to the pub for a hearty meal, followed by a few bevies beside a fire pit that was packed (possibly next to the kitchen sink and laundry basin) in Mark's camper trailer.

We woke up to a windy, swelly day on Sunday – but this didn't deter a hardened few, who again headed out after a cooked brekkie on the boat. We set out for the shelter of St Alourarn Island, a favourite from previous trips. Due to the conditions we had to shelter on a different side of the island to what we had previously explored – but holy moly, we were not disappointed, it was STUNNING! The main part of the dive consisted of a long, wide canyon with an awesome swim through filled with schooling fish and four large Port Jackson sharks... Southern Ocean diving at its finest!

We elected to stay at the same spot for our second dive of the day – it was too good not to, and we were enjoying the shelter from the island. Dylan and Yvette hopped in first, and were rewarded with a big (2m-ish) Bronzie checking them out before moving on – lucky ducks. We all (then) enjoyed another stunning dive, again exploring the canyon and "Port Jackson Cave" – as well as the surrounding ground, which was just as visually dramatic as the canyon. Kudos to Dave Freemantle on this dive, who – despite forgetting his catch bag – still managed to surface swim 500m back to the boat, into the swell and wind – with a massive jumbo cray, camera and loop in hand (I don't know how he managed to carry that cray – the thing was a monster).



Another quick dive on Thousand Pound Patch by Damo and Mel and then it was back to shore to pack up and head for home.



A massive thank you to Geoff for organising, and to Mike, Mark, Damian, Chris, Dave, Dylan, Yvette, Carlo, Leanne, Craydrian, Colin and Sid the dog for a fantastic weekend!



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## Underwater Explorers Club of Western Australia

**Postal Address**

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**Meetings**

Esplanade Hotel  
The Esplanade, Fremantle, WA

**Boat**

Port Coogee Marina  
Chieftain Esplanade, North Coogee, WA