

# Basic Detail Report

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**ANMS0868**

**Title**

Photographs of Bob Lynch and Wally Gibbons diving

**Date**

c 1950

**Medium**

Paper

**Name**

Archive series

**History**

Bob Lynch (born in 1921) began recreational diving at Clovelly in Sydney in the early 1940s and actively dived until 1998. He made most of his diving equipment in the 1940s - 1960s, as there was not much available commercially. A friend of his, Wally Gibbons, got the Cousteau-Gagnan patent aqualung and adapted it for sale in Australia. Wally Gibson made the demand valve used by Bob Lynch. Lynch made the rest of his equipment using an Australian oxywelding high pressure reducing valve. He also adapted some of the equipment from World War II aircraft and gas masks. Bob Lynch lived in Auburn when he began his diving at Clovelly. He usually dived on his own and was more interested in fishing rather than group dives. When he dived he wore swimming trunks, three crew neck jumpers covered by a seal skin, a wrap on garment of rubberised fabric. The jumpers were altered to make one jumper that would cover the body to create a polo neck jumper with an extra long body. It sometimes took six jumpers to make a good diving jumper. Bob also used a Dick Charles safety belt. It was made of plastic laced at the back with straps that went over the shoulders. On the side was a container with a sparklit bulb which inflated the belt if activated. It was an early form of life belt. Bob experimented with the Danny Wells helmet, a diving helmet customised for each diver. A plaster model of the diver's head and face was made and covered in tube dough with uncured rubber strips. This was then boiled in a kerosene tin to cure the rubber. It was trimmed a glass added to form a customised mask. It never went into commercial production as face masks became available in the 1950s. Bob described early diving helmets at Clovelly being made of kerosene tins.