

ACTIVITY: Diving

CASE: GSAF 1956.08.15.b

DATE: Wednesday August 15, 1956

LOCATION: The accident took place on the wreck of the *Scottish Prince* which lies near Southport Spit, Queensland, Australia.

NAME: Lyle Davis

DESCRIPTION: He was president of the Underwater Research Group.

BACKGROUND

ENVIRONMENT: The *Scottish Prince*, a three-masted barque, bound from Glasgow, Scotland, for Brisbane with a cargo of whiskey, mousetraps, linen and other assorted cargo, was lost in 1887. Only her hull remains and is encrusted with soft corals and sponges, and is a haven for crayfish, shovelnose rays, leopard and wobbegong sharks, and other tropical fish. The wreck is protected under the Commonwealth Historic Shipwreck Act.

DEPTH OF WATER: The wreck lies in 10 to 14 metres of water.

NARRATIVE: Davis was diving with John Goldsmith. When Goldsmith grabbed the shark by its tail, it swung around and grabbed Davis' arm.

INJURY: Unknown, but the Davis' arm required stitches.

SPECIES: The incident involved a wobbegong shark four feet in length.

SOURCE: The Central Queensland Herald, August 16, 1956, page 6

NOTE: This was a provoked incident. The shark bit Davis only after it had been grabbed by its tail.

SHARK GRABS UNDERWATER DIVER

B R I S B A N E, August 15.—(The president of the Underwater Research Group (Mr Lyle Davis) had to have stitches inserted in a gash in his arm after being attacked by a 4 ft wobbegong shark today.

He was investigating the wreck of the *Scottish Prince*, which foundered off Southport in 1887.

He said the shark attacked him in the wreckage when he was accompanied by another diver, John Goldsmith.

"The shark was in part of the wreck where we wanted to go and John grabbed its tail to make it move," he said. "It swung around and fastened on to my arm. John kept pulling at its tail until it let go.

"Luckily I had the rubber suit on and it didn't get its teeth right around my arm."

Members of the group recovered from the wreck today a fork and spoon with the ship's name engraved on them.