

AQUANEWS

Volume 29, No. 5

May 2005



SECRETARY

MARSHA FREEDMAN

TREASURER

PAUL GALEAZZI JR.

DIRECTORS

MARSHA FREEDMAN

PAUL GALEAZZI JR.

JERRY GHERARDI

STEVE IMPROTE

LES PARKER

DIVE COORDINATOR

MIKE HATALA

PUBLICITY

JEFFREY HOROWITZ

On the Road with Max

By Max Estroff

I was in S.E. Florida the beginning of April and stayed in the Fort Lauderdale area. I used for the first time the dive shop on Oakland Blvd. and A1A called "Scuba School". They are a full service shop who can customize your Nitrox mix. I used them 4 times to fill my two 120's at about \$21.00 with tax for both. This would take maybe 30 minutes. They set me up on the "Scubatyme" off of Atlantic Blvd. in Pompano Beach. The promise they gave was that we would do at least 1 wreck per day and then a drift dive.

On the first day we dove on the "Ancient Mariner". It sits upright at about 70 feet. I spent 30 minutes inside exploring from stern to bow. It was filled with Sweepers and Grunts. I even found a few "Banded Coral Shrimps" around some piping. The water was 72 degrees and I got cold so I headed to untie my flag line when I noticed a 3 foot Ray just resting in the sand, gills going and an occasional flapping of a wing. I settled down into the sand and watched for a few minutes more but as I said I was cold.

The second dive was a drift dive on some nameless concrete slab, no growth, no fish, cold and bored I surfaced with 2000 lbs in my tank.

The second day saw some new divers on the boat. We went out to do a wreck but the mate who went down to set a ball line came up and said the current was too strong. We then proceeded to do 2 drift dives on 2 nameless concrete slabs with little growth and few fish. What a waste of time. This time I wore my dry suit hood so I was not as cold. Good intentions but poor results.

The following weekend I was back at Boynton Beach diving with Captain Leo on the "Deeper".

Saturday, the boat leaves at 8:30 AM for a 3 tank dive. The first dive was on the outside ledge at 92 feet. A tongue and groove formation with sloping ledges into the sand. All of the reef

completely covered in Gargonian and Barrel Sponges with lots of Angel fish and other tropicals. Lots of lobsters in their motel rooms. I am talking about an apartment building with lobsters in every window. On this 45 minute dive I also saw 2 medium sized turtles.

The second dive was on the inside of the ledge. Here there was a 20 foot wall with lots of tropicals but no lobster to be seen.

The third dive was on the "Castor". Jump off the boat and glide down into the wreck, 3 of us including the mate did this dive. The mate carried the flag and set it. This artificial reef sits upright in 110 feet. The Goliath Groupers were there playing hide and seek. I explored the super structure and went down into the engine room. When I came out I stayed close to the flag line waiting for the other 2 divers but only the mate was around. He took off towards the bow but soon reappeared. With no sign of the third diver we surfaced after a 37 minute dive. Captain Leo then backtracked and found the third diver drifting in calm seas. He took too long to get down and missed the wreck completely.

Sunday we did two drift dives, both on the outside of the ledge, 84 feet for 42 and 47 minutes. The ledge had a finger and groove with a sloping topography covered in growth with lots of tropicals, one really big turtle in open water and another sleeping under a ledge.

Monday we went back to the "Castor". The boat including the mate had three divers. I went back inside and explored this old friend, again playing hide and seek with the "Goliaths". The second dive was a drift dive on the outside of the ledge at 93 feet. It was the same topography and I saw two turtles, lots of lobsters and the usual gang of tropicals.

Twelve days in Florida, 5 of them diving. This type of schedule is quite workable.

AQUANEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF THE ROCKLAND
AQUANAUTS ORGANIZATION.
WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS &
PHOTOGRAPHS ARE ALWAYS
WELCOMED & ENCOURAGED.
SUBMIT MATERIALS FOR
PUBLICATION BY THE 19TH OF
THE MONTH

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

PETER BEIN
ALLAN BLOCK
MELISSA BOGEN
MAX ESTROFF
PAUL GALEAZZI, JR
JERRY GHERARDI
STEVE IMPROTE
LES PARKER

NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR

PAUL A. GALEAZZI

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

TO CHANGE MAILING
ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER
OR E-MAIL, PLEASE NOTIFY:
JERRY GHERARDI

Next Meeting: Tuesday May 17th, 2005

7:00-9:00 pm at the West Nyack Free Library
65 Strawtown Road
West Nyack, NY 10994
Phone: 845-358-6081; www.westnyacklib.org

Directions:

Thruway from Tappan Zee Bridge

Get off at West Nyack Route 303 (Exit 12). Make a left hand turn; get into the far right land and turn onto Snake Hill Road. Follow Snake Hill Road until you come to the reservoir at the end of the road. Make a left hand turn onto Old Mill Road and follow it until you come to a 4- corner stop sign intersection. Make a left hand turn onto Strawtown Road. The library is located 3/10s of a mile on the right at the intersection of Strawtown and Demarest Avenue.

Thruway from Harriman

From the New York State Thruway, take Exit 13S (Palisades Parkway South) to Exit 8W (Rte 59W). Take Rte 59W to Rte 304N. Take 304N to West Nyack Road which is the first light. Make a right onto West Nyack Road. Proceed to the fork and bear left onto Demarest Avenue. The library is located at the intersection of Strawtown Road and Demarest Avenue. The entrance to the parking lot is on Demarest Avenue.

Peggy Howland speaks on Diving with Humpback Whales

The luxurious Turks and Caicos Aggressor II offers her pampered guests a unique and exciting aquatic adventure during February and March each winter. Guests have the rare opportunity to swim, not watch from a crowded tour boat, but actually enter the water and swim with majestic humpback whales. Humpback whales fulfill an instinctual migrating ritual before the inquisitive eyes of the visiting snorkelers. It's incredible! These week-long charters depart from Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic, heading 85 miles northeast to the Silver Banks, a marine sanctuary in the Atlantic Ocean. The Dominican Republic manages it as a marine park and protects the whales. But the whales themselves chose this place by migrating here every winter to give birth and to rear their young, preparing the newborn calves for the long migration back north. Oh yes, they also come to mate, so that there will be a new calf "in the oven" and a reason to come back to give birth next year. It's the competition over mating that makes for spectacular activity by the males!

Members of the Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.

We need articles for our newsletter! Any help is appreciated.
Contact our webmaster webmaster@rocklandaquanauts.org

Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.

Mission Statement:

To provide, promote, and advance environmental protection, care, and voluntary clean-up of waterways by any and all lawful means; to promote the importance and care in every manner possible by environmental awareness and otherwise; to purchase, print, publish, and circulate literature to promote the importance and care of the waterways and the work of the Corporation. To perform all acts the Corporation may deem appropriate or advisable in such operation; to establish, provide, and voluntary clean-up waterways, to encourage, support and subsidize the cleaning and protection from pollution.

Annual Dinner

Paul Galeazzi Jr.

For those of us that went to the Aquanauts Annual Dinner, we all know what a good time was had by all. This year we had a whole lot of giveaways for everyone who attended. Everyone was able to pick out the item that they wanted by a lottery of tickets drawn. Even guests were part of this giveaway.

All items were donated by Stingray Divers, of Brooklyn N.Y. There were books, fins, masks, vests, sandals, dry bags and a whole lot more. No one went home empty handed or hungry for that matter.

As usual Arthur's Steak House did a fine job of feeding us and the deserts were fantastic. You can see some of the photo's taken on our web site at www.RocklandAquanauts.org

To all who didn't come, there is always next year!

Scuba diver rescued after hours in cold water

By The Associated Press
from SFGATE.com

The U.S. Coast Guard rescued a scuba diver who drifted six miles from her diving party and spent more than five hours in the frigid waters of Monterey Bay.

Jennifer Thomas, 32, of San Jose, was suffering from mild hypothermia when she was rescued at roughly 7:30 p.m. Sunday two miles south of Moss Landing, the U.S. Coast Guard said in a statement. Rescuers fought driving rain, wind and rough swells.

Thomas, who went out earlier in the day with four other divers, was taken to Community Hospital of Monterey Peninsula, Coast Guard officials said. On Monday, a hospital spokeswoman said Thomas had been released.

Thomas and four others were scuba diving off Lovers Point at about 2 p.m. Sunday when the weather turned rough and the group began to drift, Coast Guard officials said.

A witness on shore spotted four divers stranded about a half mile off the point at 4 p.m. The witness called a nearby kayak shop and was told to call 911.

Frank Knight and Brian Glaseur, who operate the Adventures by the Sea kayak shop, already were looking for a kayaker who rented a boat that afternoon when they spotted divers through their binoculars.

They pulled two divers into their motor boat and another two shortly after.

"We couldn't believe there was someone out there floating in the water," Knight said. "They were in pure panic mode. They were yelling and screaming, but they were so happy to see us. I was just at the right place at the right time."

The four divers were transferred to the Coast Guard in good condition.

Hours later, a Coast Guard crew found Thomas flashing a handheld beacon and plucked her out of the water.

The divers told rescuers they thought they had gone down at least 60 feet. But the sea was murky and the water deeper than they anticipated, so they came back up.

When they surfaced, their dive boat and its pilot had apparently drifted away in the high winds. None of the divers could be reached for comment on Monday.

The kayaker who got caught in the choppy seas later paddled ashore.

URL: <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/n/a/2005/03/28/state/n152720S85.DTL>

**Ancient shipwreck determined to be source of Lewes artifacts
Expect the beach to be open to the public next week.**

By Henry J. Evans Jr

State archaeologists now say the source of artifacts deposited on Lewes Beach near the Roosevelt Inlet this winter are from the earliest shipwreck ever found in Delaware waters.

"It could be as much as 50 years earlier than the DeBraak," said Dan Griffith, director of the newly formed Lewes Maritime Archaeological Project overseeing research into the artifacts.

Griffith said the DeBraak, a British warship, sank in 1798 and archaeologists are dating the Lewes Beach wreck to between 1750 and 1760.

The hull of the DeBraak was found in Delaware waters in 1984. Griffith said artifacts recovered from it provided a look at life aboard a military vessel of the period.

He said the Lewes Beach wreck could likely provide a look at another aspect of local history. "This vessel was a commercial vessel well within the English and Colonial period in Delaware and Lewes. It should give us a totally different look at Colonial life in Delaware," Griffith said.

He said what's still unclear is the size of the ship. Next week, weather permitting, divers are scheduled to take a closer look at the area. Griffith said water depth in the vicinity of the wreck varies depending on tide but is generally about 15 feet. However, visibility in the bay is typically very poor.

He said the dive mission would focus on further assessment of the nature of the site as opposed to recovery of artifacts. "Our theory is that this was a commercial delivery, probably headed to Lewes or some point south. It might have been trying to get around Cape Henlopen to protect itself from a storm and it didn't work," Griffith said.

He said a theory, still developing, is that the ship departed from Philadelphia or New Castle and was making local deliveries before it would have set out on a trans-Atlantic crossing. "The kinds of artifacts, the range being found, makes it look very much like a commercial vessel," Griffith said.

Tim Slavin, Director of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, said an underwater survey conducted in February helped researchers conclude they're dealing with a shipwreck. "This is really an exciting moment for all of us. Anytime you find a historic site like this, it brings about a sense of awe and wonder," Slavin said.

Slavin said what was initially described as an "underwater mound" would now be more accurately described as a "protuberance" that might turn out to be a ship.

The protuberance was detected through the use of side-scanning sonar, bottom-profiling sonar and a metal detector's survey of the bay floor. Divers also did two brief inspections of the area.

An Army Corps of Engineers dredge, working on a beachfill project that ended last October, apparently hit the wreck containing artifacts and pumped fragments ashore along with 165,000 cubic yards of sand. The Army Corps, in cooperation with the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, closed the beach in December after beachcombers found shards of dishes, bowls, bottles, clay pipes and metal toy figurines on the beach and at the water's edge.

Griffith said a recent survey of the beach surf line indicates there are still numerous shards in the water. He said it is not clear at this point whether a cleanup of the area would be conducted or whether Mother Nature would be left to handle the job.

He said such a cleanup would be a very expensive task.

Griffith said the waters off Lewes Beach in the vicinity of the Roosevelt Inlet remain closed to the public under authority of the state's Antiquities Act, which protects "ships embedded in the bottom of state-controlled submerged lands."

He said anyone anchoring, dredging, diving, removing objects from the bay floor or in any way disturbing or altering any archaeological resource would be subject to severe penalties including confiscation of boats, vehicles and other equipment.

Griffith said he expects the beach to open to unrestricted public access next week.

Terrorists train for seaborne attacks
Jim Gomez
Friday, March 18, 2005 (AP)

MANILA, Philippines -- Two of the most dangerous al-Qaida-linked groups in Southeast Asia are working together to train militants in scuba diving for seaborne terror attacks, according to the interrogation of a recently captured guerrilla.

The ominous development is outlined in a Philippine military report obtained Thursday by The Associated Press that also notes increasing collaboration among the Muslim militants in other areas, including financing and explosives, as extremists plot new ways to strike.

In the past year, the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah has given Abu Sayyaf militants in the Philippines at least \$18,500 for explosives training alone, the report said.

The report comes a month after the U.S. Coast Guard announced it is seeking to better protect the nation's ports from terrorist attacks by scuba divers by developing a sonar system that can distinguish human swimmers from dolphins.

Concerns about terrorist strikes by scuba divers were raised three years ago after the FBI announced it was investigating whether al-Qaida operatives took scuba training to help blow up ships at anchor, power plants, bridges, depots or other waterfront targets.

Authorities fear scuba divers could target ships with more accuracy than a small explosive-laden boat like the one used in the USS Cole blast that killed 17 sailors in 2000 in Yemen.

According to the Philippine report, an Abu Sayyaf suspect in a deadly bus bombing in Manila on Feb. 14 - Gamal Baharan - described how he and other seasoned guerrillas took scuba diving lessons as part of a plot for an attack at sea.

Abu Sayyaf leaders Khaddafy Janjalani and Abu Sulaiman initiated the training, Baharan said, adding that Janjalani claimed to speak directly with al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden via satellite phone. Authorities couldn't verify any such conversations and said Janjalani may have been boasting, according to Philippine military officials, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Baharan, 35, said he was told in October to undergo the scuba training in southwestern Palawan province, where he periodically received cell phone messages from Janjalani and Sulaiman "asking him how many fathoms he would be able to dive," the report said.

The training was in preparation for a Jemaah Islamiyah bombing plot on unspecified targets outside the Philippines that require "underwater operation," Baharan is quoted as saying.

Jemaah Islamiyah has been blamed for a string of attacks in Southeast Asia starting in 1999. Major strikes include the Aug. 5, 2003, bombing of the J.W. Marriott hotel in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, which killed 12 people, and the Oct. 12, 2002, bombings on Bali island that killed 202, mostly foreign tourists. Three dozen alleged members were convicted in the Bali bombings and more than a dozen in the Marriott bombing.

Abu Sayyaf is known more for its kidnap-for-ransom schemes - including many involving Americans and Western tourists - and conducting deadly raids against Christian towns.

More recently, Abu Sayyaf has been accused of more spectacular explosive attacks, including the almost

Terrorists train for seaborne attacks

(Continued from page 5)

simultaneous bombings in Manila and two southern cities Feb. 14 that killed eight people and wounded more than 100. Those attacks came a year after a bomb blew up on a ferry in Manila Bay, killing 116 people in the Philippine's worst terrorist strike.

Although the Abu Sayyaf's ranks have been largely depleted by U.S.-backed military assaults, the government still considers the group a major threat.

Such concerns were highlighted by a botched jailbreak Monday in which Abu Sayyaf suspects seized guards' weapons in a melee that left five people dead. A 29-hour standoff ended when police stormed the prison in a hail of gunfire Tuesday and killed 22 inmates, including 19 Abu Sayyaf members - three of them prominent commanders - who faced charges for kidnappings and bombings.

The inmates were buried Wednesday in a mass grave in a large Muslim community in Manila's Taguig suburb. Their bloody remains were not cleaned and were wrapped in white cloth - a local practice that indicated they were regarded as martyrs.

Many relatives of the dead have criticized the government, believing the inmates were killed in cold blood and falsely made to appear to have put up a fight with smuggled weapons.

Abu Sayyaf leader Sulaiman has warned of revenge, leading police to tighten security.

Baharan claimed Janjalani is alive - contrary to speculation that he was killed in a military airstrike - and he said bin Laden would only speak to the Abu Sayyaf chieftain.

The interrogation report said: "Subject averred that Janjalani has a direct contact to Osama bin Laden and Mohammed Jamal Khalifa," bin Laden's brother-in-law and a Saudi businessman accused of helping establish al-Qaida's terror cell in the Philippines in the late 1980s and early 1990s. "Janjalani is using a satellite phone in contacting both leaders. Subject further averred that bin Laden would ... talk to no one except Janjalani. They conversed in Arabic."

Baharan is one of three suspects captured and charged last month in connection with the Feb. 14 bombings. Abu Sayyaf said it launched the bombings to retaliate for military assaults on Muslim rebels in the southern Philippines.

He told interrogators he and another militant, Khalil Trinidad, were ordered by Sulaiman to bomb a bus in Manila to divert the military's attention from an offensive against rebels.

During a court hearing, a bus conductor identified Baharan and Trinidad as passengers who left the bus shortly before the blast. Both suspects pleaded innocent in court Monday.

North Carolina-- Summer 05

Max Estroff

So I'm trying to plan a trip to Moorehead City, North Carolina. So far no one has responded to last month's request. Our club has a dive at Hessian Lake on Saturday, June 25th. Sunday, June 26th, could be our 10-12 hour drive down. Olympus Divers is booked every weekend. The only option we have for diving is Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday optional. This is subject to sell out unless we get back to them real soon. Rooms are still available at the Ramada on the Beach and the Amerisuites (for pet owners) across the road. This is also subject to selling out real soon. So, let us know if you are interested. Telephone # 845-268-5272

Scheduled Dive Dates

Sunday May 22nd 9:00 AM Hessian Lake
Annual Picnic

Saturday June 25th 9:00 AM Hessian Lake

Saturday July 16th 9:00 AM Lake TBA

Sunday August 21st 9:00 AM Hessian Lake
NYSDA Dive

Sunday September 18th 9:00 AM Lake Welch

Saturday October 15th 10:00 AM Hessian lake
Oktoberfest

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

How good are you about achieving your goals? Are you ready for a new set for New Year's resolutions, because you abandoned the old ones? Did you lose those last five pounds in time for the holidays the way you planned? Have you kept up with your fitness regime? Have you paid your Rockland Aquanaut Annual Membership fees?

Collecting fees is one of the unpleasant necessities of organizational life. Until we find a rich member to support the Aquanauts exclusively, we depend on your annual fees to keep the organization going. A full year will only run you \$42.

Kindly remit your check to:

Paul Galeazzi Jr.



Rockland Aquanauts
Post Office Box 387
New City, NY
10956

May 2005

On the Road with Max, Annual Dinner 05, Scuba Terrorists

****Next Meeting Tuesday, May 17th, 2005****

7:00 pm at

West Nyack Free Library

65 Strawtown Road

West Nyack, NY 10994

(845) 358-6081

Directions inside

Special Presentation

Peggy Howland speaks on Diving with Humpback Whales

Annual Picnic– Sunday May 22nd Hessian

Don't Forget!