

AQUANEWS

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On The Road With Max-- North Carolina Diver Camp '05 Max Estroff

Late June found 5 of us diving with Olympus Divers out of Moorehead City, N.C. We were at the dive shop-dock by 6:15 AM and were back by 3:30 PM. Our 4 days of diving were all on wrecks, the U352, Papoose, Shurz, and the Indra. Sometimes we did 2 dives on the same site. Other days we moved to another site for the second dive.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, the seas were calm. Wednesday was another matter. 6 to 8 foot seas made the long boat ride a roller coaster ride with the bottom dropping out on us a few times. However, when we arrived at the site, the swells cooperated for jumping in and getting out (except for Paul).

The 50 foot visibility and mild water temperature combined with the wrecks and marine life makes this an ideal place. The professionalism shown on the boats by the captain and crew is first rate.

So, we are off the boat by 3:30 and we would all meet or not for dinner at 6:30 PM and would be back at our hotel rooms by 10:30 PM just so we could get up and do it again.

Rivka and I left our group on Friday to drive down to Miami for Rivka's cousins very beautiful wedding. It turns out, that, that Friday, the boat went someplace real special, a 3 hour ride special, but from what I understand,

worth it. Hopefully, my dive buddy, Paul who went with another of our buddies, Joe, will give a good description of it.

Since I had my dive gear with me, I also dove in Florida. One day I dove with Captain Leo on the "Deeper". Two very easy 60 foot drift dives. Another day on the old Spiegel Grove. Now, however, it's the new Spiegel Grove thanks to Mother Nature. Can you even imagine the force it took to move a 500+ foot ship? We saw Peter Bein briefly and since then he dove it in its new position.

Our next stop was Sarasota to visit with our friends who moved there from New York. I took a morning to go out on a small cattle boat with divers without any etiquette, with gear all over the place. Eight miles out, anyway, 40 feet deep, 15 feet of visibility, water 87 degrees, and 38% is in my tank:

First Dive Site-- concrete pipes.

Second Dive Site-- a small barge.

Some fish, a few sea cucumbers, and some large stars.

Next time in Sarasota, I will spend more time with my friends and see the top side views and stay on the beach, which by the way is as beautiful as it gets and with 87 degree water, it's amazing.

AQUANEWS

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ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER
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JERRY GHERARDI

Next Meeting: Tuesday October 11th, 2005

6:30-9:00 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 lane 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.

Special Speaker: Robert Cowin - Conserve Our Ocean Legacy

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.

Spiegel Grove,
By: Peter Bein

Another Friday presents another Spiegel Grove trip with Divers City in Tavernier.

Another hurricane, Ophelia, threatens an area from the northern coast of Florida up to Virginia. It almost seems normal by now.

Six-thirty AM brings a rain shower leaving me wondering if this is such a good idea.

By the time I finished my forty mile trip along Overseas Highway up to Divers City the sun was shining brilliantly and there was a light chop covering the seas.

After a speedy check-in we headed out on 'Diversity' with six divers. A fifty minute boat ride brought us out to the mooring balls at the wreck site. A stiff current was flowing from the port side bow in the general direction of the stern, quite the opposite of the norm.

We suited up and readied for our giant stride.

Captain Bob hooked the bow buoy to the rear starboard cleat of his boat enabling us to just leap in, grab the line and haul ourselves down to the Grove. I was teamed up with Mike, a tech diver equipped with twin 100s a thirteen cubic foot decompression pony bottle and a thirteen cubic foot oxygen pony bottle. He needed no weights.

The four other divers dived in and I waited for Mike to prepare himself. He finally jumped in, in front of me, and sank like the proverbial stone. He missed the line. I entered and followed the line down to the port side hawser on the bow.

I crabbed my way across the deck, propelled by the current, and tried to enter the portal into the interior of the superstructure.

It was strange. There was a counter current flowing through the ship causing me to have to use both hands on either side of the entrance to pull myself in.

The only time that I encountered a similar situation was while entering the escaping water in a spring.

Once inside the flow subsided and I was able to cruise through the military transport with ease. Viz was about eighty feet and all silt seemed to have settled and did not stir as I worked my way through.

I entered some cabins along the corridor and discovered new areas that I have not previously explored. As I wondered through the wreck I met two juvenile Jewfish, only 75 to 100 pounds each, who did not run from me in fear. This comes from frequent encounters with divers without spear guns.

I exited in the stern, found the ascent line and then finding more than half-a-tank of gas left, I entered the hull through an open hold in the deck. I followed the countors forward and realized that I had been here before. I exited through a cylindrical hatch with a partially open hatch cover and squirmed my way out.

I made my way back to the starboard side stern hawser and spotted some giant Black Grouper and Barracuda snacking on a bait ball above the well deck

I ascended the line and found Diversity waiting for me. I was the last man up. Mile had been picked up and was already aboard.

We waited for over one hour surface interval time and I napped in the warm sunshine.

Our second dive mirrored the first. We went down on the bow buoy again. The current had picked up and was now howling. I went down the line like a flag really straining my arms as I hauled myself down. Once again I scudded across the deck and forced my way into the superstructure. Mike proceeded me. We followed a companionway into the interior of the wreck and explored a few new venues.

I spotted an accommodation ladder and ascended up to the next level. I always loved going up these ladders. It gives me a grand feeling. We entered a machine shop with a lathe, drill press and a cornice brake. We slowly continued aft finding many cabins containing shelves, draws and cabinets. There was even a roster list still secured to a bulkhead with names penciled in thereon.

We worked our way out of the superstructure and found ourselves on a level above the deck. Naturally since we went upstairs on the inside.

I found myself halfway between the deck and the helicopter pad. I went up onto the pad and saw Mike reentering the superstructure.

At this point all visibility failed. It was like diving Long Island Sound again. I could hardly read my gauges. I

(Continued on page 4)

Speigel Grove

(continued from page 3)

could not tell which way was up. It appears that an upheaval of sand, coming over the stern, engulfed the entire area. I knew where the ascent line was but could not descend back to the deck to locate it. I transversed the helicopter pad remembering that there was a buoy located somewhere on it. I could not find it. I was at 85 feet and down to 800 pounds of gas. I chose to do a free ascent into the screaming current. Again it was impossible to tell which way was up. My bubbles were drawn away in the flow.

I held my computer in front of my face and pumped some gas into my buoyancy compensator. As I rose I released the gas and at thirty-five feet was able to see the surface. I rose another twenty feet and began my five minute safety stop while drifting in the Gulf Stream.

I then surfaced to find Diversity waiting within fifty feet. Captain Bob followed my bubbles threw me a line and I scurried aboard.

When we were all aboard we skirted the wreck and were able to see the sand storm billowing up to the surface.

Although normally a a relaxed dive, adverse reactions, caused by the forces of the ocean currents and the weather may change a day of diving into a disaster.

All worked out well because the divers were seasoned, experienced, knowledgeable and well prepared for the whims of the sea.

Diving teacher lost during sunken ship exploration

By Onell R. Soto UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

A 50-year-old diving instructor was missing last night after he was lost inside a sunken ship off Mission Beach, San Diego lifeguards said.

The man, who was not identified, was diving inside the Yukon, a 366-foot decommissioned Canadian warship, with a student when the two were separated about 6 p.m. yesterday, said lifeguard Lt. John Greenhalgh.

"He was considered one of the most technical divers in the region," Greenhalgh said.

About half an hour later, the crew of the Mission Bay-based charter boat Ocean Express radioed for help.

San Diego lifeguards were above the Yukon within 10 minutes and searched for the man for 40 minutes before calling the search off for the night, Greenhalgh said.

The Coast Guard cutter Haddock and a helicopter searched the surface of the water as well. The Haddock was planning to continue searching with lights through the night, said Petty Officer Robert Lanier.

"We're still treating it as a search for a missing person. We're still holding out hope that he is alive," Lanier said.

Divers plan to resume the search this morning.

When the rescue divers first descended, they hoped to find the man alive, Greenhalgh said. Those hopes faded after the instructor had been missing for more than an hour.

Depending on a diver's size and level of activity while exploring the Yukon, a typical air tank can last for 15 to 30 minutes, said Steve Haynes, former president of the San Diego Council of Divers.

"The deeper you dive, the faster you use air," he said.

The Yukon was sunk 1.85 miles off Mission Beach five years ago near two other sunken vessels in an area divers call "Wreck Alley."

"It's very popular," Haynes said. "In terms of wrecks it has fewer problems than most do."

Nobody has died inside the sunken Yukon.

Monica Vila, a 41-year-old recreational diver, died Dec. 29, 2000, as she descended toward the ship with two relatives.

Mia Tegner, a 53-year-old marine biologist, died about a week later after diving on the Yukon and other sunken ships. She ran out of air as she was coming to the surface, missing a decompression stop.

Instead of heading to a hyperbaric chamber, she grabbed another tank and dove back in to decompress and was never seen alive again.

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/metro/20050626-9999-1m26dive.html>

A STATEMENT FROM CLEAN OCEAN ACTION
June 21, 2005
The Ocean Loses Big in the US Senate Energy Bill

Today, the ocean and its nationwide advocates lost one battle when the US Senate voted to keep provisions in the Senate energy bill that will threaten the ocean and coastal resources.

Despite efforts by New Jersey and New York's US Senators, especially US Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ), to remove a harmful amendment, the Senate energy bill includes provisions allowing offshore oil and gas exploration in ocean areas that have been under bi-partisan congressional moratorium for almost 25 years.

Under the amendment, an inventory of all Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) areas for oil and gas resources could easily become a reality, including off the NJ/NJ coast, which was under the moratorium. The inventory includes seismic testing that is equivalent in impact to underwater artillery, causing serious damage to fish, reefs, and other marine life. The moratorium protects many sensitive areas from the destruction associated with the inventory.

Documented impacts of seismic surveys include:

- Profound and fatal effects on fish from hearing loss
- Organ damage in squid, a species that is an important link in the marine food chain
- Significant interference with the critical survival activities of whales and other marine mammals, such as locating food, avoiding predators and other hazards, finding mates, caring for young, and navigating.

Clean Ocean Action commends the US Senators from New Jersey and New York for voting to remove this bad-for-the-ocean amendment.

While this most recent fight was lost, the fight to prohibit oil and gas drilling from our coasts will continue later in the year when joint House-Senate conference committee deliberations will be held on this bill. Conservation must be a priority in these deliberations to reduce the need to seek more non-renewable sources of energy.

Not Now, Not Ever

Ocean water quality off the NY/NJ coast has improved over the past 20 years and now is not the time to rollback this progress. We must continue to work to lock-in that progress by establishing the Clean Ocean Zone, a campaign led by Clean Ocean Action to permanently protect the waters of the NY/NJ Bight from polluting and harmful activities (visit www.cleanoceanzone.org). The establishment of the Clean Ocean Zone would prohibit offshore oil and gas activities.

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I-52 Found

Friday, April 15, 2005 Updated at 8:25 AM EST
Associated Press - Globeandmail.com

Tokyo - The I-52 is the stuff of shipwreck legend.

Possibly the most advanced submarine in the world at the time, the Japanese boat was sunk in the Atlantic on June 23, 1944, while en route to a rendezvous with a German U-boat. Just why remains a mystery. It was laden with two tons of gold and two tons of opium, probably for conversion into morphine painkillers. But was it also carrying a secret offer of peace?

Paul Tidwell, a U.S. shipwreck salvager, said Friday that he is planning an expedition within a year - most likely in November or in May, 2006 - to raise the I-52 from the seabed, and perhaps even return the submarine to Japan. He did not know how much the operation would cost.

"We want to return all the human remains to the Japanese families," he said. "We have the full support of the Japanese government." Mr. Tidwell uncovered the story of the submarine, which carried 112 passengers and crew, in a search of declassified documents in Washington, D.C., in 1990.

"I knew I-52 was special, I knew there was gold on it," he said. "I was driven to find out everything possible about the submarine and what her mission was." Because of the dangers to surface ships, Mr. Tidwell said, submarines were used to carry high-priority officials, messages and cargo between Germany and Japan. At 108 meters long, I-52 was the biggest submarine ever built at that time.

"It was a marvel of technology," he said. Mr. Tidwell said he believes the submarine was on a mission of such extreme importance that the Allied powers took exceptional pains to make sure it was sunk before it reached the coast of France. They succeeded: It was sunk by a combination of depth bombs and acoustic torpedoes off Cape Verde and Barbados.

"It's (1,600 kilometers) from the nearest land," he said. He initially thought the sub might have been carrying information on atomic-bomb research. Some historians now believe officials aboard the sub may have had an offer of peace that they were hoping to co-ordinate with the Germans. Japan surrendered in August, 1945. The salvage effort may clear up such speculation.

"Because of the depth, paper is preserved," he said. It is resting on the ocean bed about 5,500 meters down, he said. Mr. Tidwell has conducted two expeditions to the site - the first discovered its location in 1995, and he led a return trip to film it in 1999.

"Our budget had been cut back, so we didn't have the equipment to cut into the sub to get the gold," he said. The mission did recover some shoes and clothes, containers of opium and ingots of tin. Mr. Tidwell said he expects the salvage operation to take about 30 days, and then another two weeks would be needed to transport the sub to the United States before it is eventually returned to Japan.

He said the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency wants to put two agents on the salvage ship because of the opium stash.



There are old divers. . . there are bold divers. . .

By, Jerry Gherardi

Sometimes I wonder? I mean, I really do? Just what possesses people? In many ways I am the most opinionated person I know? And ya know what; I honestly think I'm proud of that?

Yep your right, you're thinking maybe, just what's in all those drugs he's currently taking? And are you sure they said "You can go home now"? But I come to these conclusions and revelations by way of "*personal experience,*" and my agenda is information dissemination.

Simply put, information is Power. And What you may not know, can hurt you?

The most recent examples of my current bout of "personal experiences" are my own general health. Let's face it; no one we know, or care about is getting any younger? The vast majority of people I know and care about are either recreational divers or people that operate high horsepower motorcycles, two publicly held pursuits, that are considered extreme? As with many of my personal accomplices they participate in both worlds, and love it. The last thing they would ever do is enter the water without analyzing a bottle of Nitrox, or ride off, helmet less? Why then when it comes to their own bodies are some of us so reckless? I include myself in this example.

Like it or not, I'm on the "other side of fifty" and heading towards my "Golden Years," whatever that means? Like everyone else I am in close contact with, we all have too much to loose, to be struck down, and written off, in this the proported sunshine of our lives? We all really do have too much to live for, and way too much to loose, to simply give it, or toss it all away?

I would think you know where this is going, or think you do? Unless your a caveman, or had the good fortune to be away from the media, then there isn't a person nearing fifty that has not heard about Cancer. Just the mere utterance of the word in mixed company is cause for alarm. It needn't be. Caught early, many cancer deaths, can be avoided entirely, or even survivable, some curable. The key is early intervention. This intervention is generally done thru routine cancer screenings. One almost totally avoidable disease involves one's colon?

What?

Yes, everyone has one; most times almost all of us are unaware of where it is, or how it functions? I'm no doctor, and I will not play one, but if it goes "bad" you may not know? When you learn it's "going," it can be too late? Diseased, it loves to share the malady, with gusto. It's also nearly totally avoidable, and in it's pre/cancerous (early) stage nearly always, curable.

It is detected by a painless, patient sedated, thirty five minute test.

I had my test this morning, and thankfully I am disease free. I also foolishly put this simple exam off for more than five years? During those wasted sixty months I heard it all? At times I even asked about the procedure? And cringed at the details? I guess some people like to "embellish" or simply love to self-promote their own perceived bravery?

This was not my experience.

From the time I left my house, drove the fourteen miles, checked in, did the procedure, ate at the diner, and came home, it was a mere four hours flat. The total time from, "Please come this way," to, "See ya in five years" was just one hour? Honestly, it was the easiest hour I have ever spent. That's right, it took longer to eat breakfast after the exam, then the exam did.

It was totally pain free, the anesthetic was quick and easy, and the staff did all the work. One minute I was sitting up just before the procedure, and the next minute, I was in the recovery room wide awake. It was that easy, and nearly that quick. I asked for and received an unsigned, suitable for framing, colon test photos!

Way cool! No doubt then, my experience was most favorable by all accounts.

So by way of this note I am spreading the word then. Don't wait, there's absolutely no reason to be the least bit concerned about the procedure, or it results? Undetected or unscreened, you may have everything to loose? Screened then would be the "logical decision." And if you hear something otherwise? It may just be bravado, or misinformation, or an early test performed many years ago?

Take care of yourself, no one does that better!

Schedule the test, it's the least, you can do for yourself!

Thai Divers Seek Access to WWII Submarine
By DANIEL LOVERING
Associated Press Writer

Divers in Thailand have sought U.S. approval to explore the purported wreck of an American World War II submarine, but a U.S. official said Saturday that the vessel is a war grave that must remain undisturbed.

The wreck, thought to be of the USS Lagarto, was discovered in May by divers now trying to obtain Pentagon permission to film and conduct research on the Balao class submarine, Jamie MacLeod, a 43 year-old professional shipwreck diver from Chichester, England, told The Associated Press on Saturday.

Eighty-six sailors perished when the Lagarto sank in May 1945 - reportedly after being hit by mines laid by an enemy Japanese ship about 115 miles off the eastern coast of Songkhla province in the Gulf of Thailand.

MacLeod, who is based on the Thai resort island of Tao, says he is virtually certain the wreck is that of the Lagarto, but that he was waiting for U.S. military permission before further exploring the 311 foot, 9-inch boat.

"It's a war grave. It belongs to the military," said MacLeod, who wants to film the vessel for a documentary. "We've known this was in the Gulf since the end of World War II."

But a U.S. Embassy spokeswoman said the divers would never get permission to study the sub because it belongs to the U.S. Navy and "is a final resting place for the people who went down with it, and it is not to be disturbed."

She spoke on condition of anonymity, a routine request for U.S. officials at the Embassy in Bangkok. The spokeswoman said she had discussed the submarine with Defense Department officials in recent days.

Divers spent weeks earlier this year scouring Thai waters for the boat, which sits upright on the ocean floor at a depth of about 197 feet, according to MacLeod. "You can see the whole wreck - it's complete," he said.

There are many World War II-era wrecks in the Gulf of Thailand and Indian Ocean, including two British battle cruisers off Malaysia and numerous Japanese vessels that went down in Thai waters. Songkhla province is about 590 miles south of the Thai capital, Bangkok.

<http://www.the-dispatch.com>

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 Hessian Lake

Saturday August 13th 9:00AM Lake Sebago

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

Sunday September 25th 10:00 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**

October 2005

Speigel Grove, On The Road With Max, I-52 Found , There are old divers. . . there are bold divers. . .

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6:30 pm at**

**West Nyack Free Library
65 Strawtown Road
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(845) 358-6081
Directions inside**

***Special Speaker: Robert Cowin*
Conserve Our Ocean Legacy
Don't Forget!**

The Last Hessian Lake Dive is October 15th– Oktoberfest
