

AQUANEWS

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About the Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg

Ship Details

Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, a former military troop transport and former missile-tracking ship. Gross Tonnage (Volume): 17,120 tons. Length: 522 feet 10 inches • Beam: 71.5 feet • Draft: 24 feet. Height after sinking: 100 feet from keel to the highest point. Stacks, masts and antennas have been trimmed to allow 40 feet of clearance from the surface when the ship is sunk at 140 feet. Much of the superstructure should be 40 to 50 feet below the surface. [Click here to view schematic drawings of the ship.](#)

Location

At 24.27 N, 81.44 W. Approximately seven miles south of Key West International Airport in 140 feet of water in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The site was chosen 10 years ago, with input from interested parties. Permitting was required from 18 different agencies. More than 130 dives were conducted to survey the site. It is hard barren bottom with no coral and no submerged cultural resources (historic wrecks). [Click here for a location map of the site.](#)

Purpose

To relieve recreational dive and fishing pressure from surrounding natural coral reefs; create marine habitat and increase marine life population; boost the economy; provide a platform for education and research, and preserve the history and heritage of the vessel.

Sink Date

Scheduled for May 27, 2009, late morning.

Sink Plan

Before arriving in Key West April 22, 2009, the ship had undergone months of cleanup and inspections to remove contaminants that were deemed potential hazards to the marine environment. Pollutants removed included 81 bags of asbestos, 193 tons of materials that contained potentially carcinogenic substances, 46 tons of floatable refuse, 300 pounds of mercury-containing materials and 184 55-gallon drums of paint chips.

Explosive cutting charges are to open holes in the lower deck. Water pressure will push the cutout plates inward, water will flow in at the bottom and air will vent out the top. The ship has tons of ballast near the keel, placed to create a stable platform for the big tracking antennas. Marine engineers predict the ship will sink in less than three minutes.

Project Costs

Approximately \$8.6 million with funding coming from the Monroe County, Fla.; the Florida Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development; City of Key West; U.S. Maritime Administration; the Florida Legislature; Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; Florida Keys & Key West tourism council, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as well as industry and private donations. Banks providing loans include First State Bank of the Florida Keys, BB&T and Orion.

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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

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Lada Simek

I once dove Honduras (Guanaha) and came home with 48 insect bites. I swore I would never be back. A year or so ago. at Fantasy Island, they sprayed EVERY MORNING and that made it quite tolerable, but you can not guarantee they will do this at the next destination.

Here is a partial solution.

Buzz-Off insect shield- this is a substance that is used to treat fabrics. At the West Point academy, they found the incidence of lime disease increasing yearly.. One year after Buzz-Off treated uniforms were introduced in 2002, the lime disease rate dropped to zero.

This is not a spray or something you apply, but you can buy garments treated with Buzz-Off and they remain active for 70 washings. Now that malaria parasites are becoming resistant to the drugs of choice, better solution is not to get bitten at all. If you travel to the tropics, this should be something to consider.

Garments are available from:

ExOfficio
LL Bean
Ariat
Orvis
Rocky Outdoor Gear
R.E.I
Stearns Mad Dog Gear

insect shield[®]
repellent technology

www.insectshield.com

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.

Vandenberg

(continued from page 1)

Historical Highlights

May 8, 1944: Vessel commissioned U.S. Army Transport Gen. Harry Taylor.

June 13, 1946: Taylor decommissioned.

March 1, 1950: Taylor reacquired by the Navy for use by Military Sea Transportation Service.

July 15, 1961: Taylor transferred to the U.S. Air Force and named Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg.

1962-1983: Vandenberg employed tracking missiles and spacecraft launches in the Atlantic and Pacific. Tasked as Advanced Range Instrumentation Ship (ARIS) USNS Vandenberg was designated ARIS 2; sister ship USNS Arnold was ARIS 1.

Jan. 1976: Ship relocates to Port Canaveral, Fla., where it remains until 1983.

1983: Vandenberg retired and moved to James River, Fort Eustis, Va., for storage.

April 1993: Vandenberg title transferred to the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD).

Sept. 1996: Vandenberg leased to Universal Studios for the filming of the movie "Virus."

June 1996: From a list of about 400 ex-military ships at the time, Key Wester Joe Weatherby identifies Vandenberg as top candidate for an artificial reef off Key West.

Aug. 9, 1999: Weatherby organizes Artificial Reefs of the Keys with the objective of acquiring the Vandenberg.

Jan. 2007: Vandenberg's title transferred to the State of Florida for reefing.

March 31, 2007: Vandenberg withdrawn from the James River Naval Reserve Fleet and towed to Colonna's Shipyard in Norfolk, Va., for cleanup and preparation.

April 22, 2009: Vandenberg arrives at Key West for final preparations to be sunk as an artificial reef about six miles south of the island.



2,350-Year-Old Wine Vases Recovered

By MENELAOS HADJICOSTIS,
AP

NICOSIA, Cyprus (June 7) - Marine archaeologists have salvaged ancient wine vases piled on the hull of a 2,350-year-old cargo ship lying on the seabed off Cyprus' southern shore, the Mediterranean island's Antiquities Department said Saturday.

Shipwreck Discoveries

Department of Antiquities / AP

Cyprus officials said Saturday that archaeologists recovered wine vases, above, from a 2,350-year-old cargo ship that sank off the island's southern coast. The discovery could help scientists learn more about sea trade in the region.

The vessel is one of only a few such commercial ships dating from the late Classical period - the mid-fourth century B.C. - to have been discovered so well-preserved.

The ship rests under 150 feet of water some 1 1/2 miles from shore.

Divers last month brought to the surface only a few of the more than 500 amphorae - terra-cotta vases used in antiquity to ferry liquid and other foodstuffs - for more study.

They are of the type that carried red wine from the Aegean island of Chios, reputed to be the most expensive of classical antiquity, said a department statement released Friday.

"Apart from the Chian amphorae, which form the overwhelming majority, there are also other types from islands of the north Aegean," it said.

Many more amphorae are believed to lie underneath the sand-buried hull of the ship.

The department said the find is of "great importance" in helping scientists learn more about sea trade and commerce in the Aegean and east Mediterranean during the Classical period.

"The results of this study will shed light on the many problems of nautical and economic history," including commercial relations between the north Aegean and southeastern Mediterranean and how sea trade was organized, the statement said.

The department said this is the first marine archaeology research project conducted exclusively by Cypriot institutions.

Divers will start the next surveying phase in October. The project is being undertaken by the University of Cyprus' Archaeology Research Unit and is funded by the Thetis Foundation, a private institution that protects underwater cultural heritage.

The ship appears to be a contemporary of the famed Kyrenia, a 50-foot merchant vessel that another Greek Cypriot diver accidentally discovered off the island's northern coast more than four decades ago.



Saving a sunken sub from salvage **By CATHERINE KOZAK, The Virginian-Pilot**

HATTERAS - Under the churning seas off Diamond Shoals, a recently rediscovered German submarine lies on the edge of the continental shelf.

It's an underwater tomb, war artifact and historic gold mine that has been virtually untouched for 62 years.

In an innovative effort, the diving community is working with the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum and the German government to create a diving preserve that will ensure that the U-701 is protected from salvage and looting.

"It's rare that you find an intact wreck like this," said Craig Cook, a Richmond physician who frequently dives off Hatteras. "It's a piece of history. We really don't want to see it disturbed."

Although there are other diving preserves in American coastal waters, none so far have been created outside of U.S. territorial waters, said Joseph Schwarzer, the executive director of the museum in Hatteras Village.

"This whole thing was started by the diving community," he said. "This is an enormous step. It'll be, really, the first of its kind in terms of a collaborative effort."

The U-701 sank July 7, 1942, in 110 feet of water about 22 miles off Cape Hatteras.

It was first discovered in 1989 by diver Uwe Lovas, but the coordinates of its location were kept secret. The wreck was recently rediscovered by a local diver.

With the secret out, some feared it was only a matter of time before divers started taking artifacts.

Two other U-Boats, the U-85 off Oregon Inlet and the U-352 off Morehead City, have been essentially stripped of artifacts, most of which have never been seen again, Schwarzer said.

Some divers have been known to take a dredge down to a wreck to suck out its contents. Local lore tells about one diver who tried to use dynamite to remove the propellers from an Outer Banks shipwreck.

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But after the U-701 was rediscovered, Cook said, Hatteras divers agreed that it would be much better to dive on the wreck if it was preserved intact. With as many as 10 German sailors entombed in the submarine, it is also a matter of respect, he said.

At a meeting Cook and Schwarzer attended held last week at the German Embassy in Washington, the German representatives reaffirmed that any unauthorized salvage of the U-701 would be regarded as a violation of the laws of the Federal Republic of Germany, of international law and of U.S. policy.

Representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Justice Department and the Coast Guard also attended.

The wreck sits in an area that starts 12 miles and ends 24 miles offshore, where international and some territorial laws apply, said Ole Varmer, an attorney at the NOAA office of general counsel for international law.

"This is one of those wrecks that falls in between the cracks of maritime law," Varmer said.

Varmer said that NOAA is not directly involved in the creation of the dive preserve, but instead has acted as a technical advisor about the options that are available to protect the U-701.

With the cooperation of the involved parties, the diving preserve could be created by Congress and would be the most realistic way to both encourage diving and prevent looting of the boat, Varmer said.

Divers love getting souvenirs off the ships they explore, Cook said. But they also recognize the value of diving an undisturbed wreck. It's like the difference, he said, between visiting a historic battlefield that has been preserved and one that has been trampled, dug up and has a shopping mall built on top of it.

"It's not that it has to be a U-boat," he said. "It just has to be a virgin wreck that no one has salvaged."

The U-701 has a dramatic history, said Kevin Duffus, president of Board of Directors for the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum.

The mission of the U-701 was to lay mines in the channel leading into the Chesapeake Bay in Hampton Roads and to then operate off the coast of North Carolina until its torpedoes were gone.

Sub commander Horst Degen surfaced frequently to launch attacks, Duffus said. During its one year in service, the submarine was responsible for the sinking of 14 ships.

On July 7, 1942, the U-701 was hovering off Hatteras when it was spotted by U.S. Army pilot Harry Kane from his A-29 bomber. After dropping three depth charges, he watched the U-boat sink and saw its surviving sailors bob to the surface.

When he circled back around, rather than spraying them with machine gun bullets, Kane dropped life preservers and a raft for the men.

Of the 33 men who survived the sinking, only six sailors and Degen were rescued three days later from the shark-infested waters of the Gulf Stream.

Kane and Degen were later introduced, and Degen reportedly saluted his enemy's skill. The two men eventually became friends.

"If you had to take the story of one German U-boat to best describe the general experience encountered by U-boat sailors, I guess the U-701 is the best example," Duffus said. "This one U-boat represents all the successes and calamities experienced by U-boat mariners."

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
2009 Dues

I guess it is that time of the year again, Membership Dues are due. Last year all our members received much more than they gave out to the Organization. As usual you will be receiving a tax donation for the first \$25.00. All members who attended the Annual Dinner not only received money off their own dinner but they also received money off their guests dinner. Everyone whom attended also received prizes, some worth many times the cost of their Dues. Don't forget the Annual Picnic as well as all the BBQ lunch's after the Lake Dives.

So please send in your \$42 dues early to;

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
c/o
Paul Galeazzi Jr.
4 Greensward Drive.
Valley Cottage New York 10989

BBQ Help Needed

We have BBQs after every Hessian Lake dive, but next year, we don't want the chef tasks to fall on the same people all the time, so we are asking for your help. If you plan on coming to the Hessian Lake dives, please consider offering to set up, cook, or break down the BBQ gear.

Setting up might mean you set up before diving, get out of the water first, or forego diving that day. **Cooking** means you cook for everyone who shows up, not just yourself & your friends. **Breaking down the BBQ gear** means you stay until everyone has eaten and the grill is cool enough to put into your car to store until the next dive.

You don't have to be a Board Member to help. Everyone can pitch in. Any expenses, like buying food, are reimbursable. So please look at the dive dates and let us know when you can help out.

Thank you

Don't Forget to Visit EmbroidMe for your Rockland Aquanauts Apparel

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June 2009

2500 Year Old Vases Found, Sinking The Vandenberg, EmbroidMe, Dues

****There Will be NO June Meeting ****

Can Anyone Help Us Set Up Meetings?

Please contact info@rocklandaquanauts.org
