



FOGHORN



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Jacques Marc

UASBC Northwest Vancouver Island Expedition by, David Hill-Turner

The west coast of Vancouver Island has been a fertile training ground for the UASBC. Sites such as the *Ericsson*, *Lord Western*, *Hera* and the *Pass of Melfort* have provided many of us with first hand experience documenting a shipwreck. And with the popular recognition as "Graveyard of the Pacific", there are an endless number of sites to explore. If you can get to them, that is.

The most recent expedition to Esperanza Inlet was a kickoff for the society's next regional report, Northwest Vancouver Island. Our experienced team of eight rendezvoused at the Tahtsa Dive shop in Tahsis, on an overcast Thursday afternoon. While the expedition was for five days, the mountain of gear gave the impression that it would be for much longer. Somehow, Scott Schooner, our

adventurous captain, stowed all of it into the converted bowpicker, *Notorious*.

It was an easy run to Nuchatlitz Island, our home base for the expedition. From here we would travel the next three days north to the Kyuquot area, south to Ferrier Point and to a fourth site near Nuchatlitz. We had a variety of sites to potentially survey, including a 1960's bulk carrier as well as smaller sailing craft dating to the 1890s.

Our first dive was to the Westport Straits, a steel log barge that struck rocks and sank in February 1968. To our relief, the seas were unusually calm and would be for the next three days. After locating the site using a combination of GPS coordinates and depth sounder, we prepared for the 120' dive to the deck of the upright

vessel. The recognizable upright steel barge is empty and is gradually deteriorating in its exposed location.

Speedway

Three teams were distributed along Rugged Point but no evidence of the wooden auxiliary schooner, that burned and sank off Rugged Point in January 1925, was found.

Treis Ierarachai

Arriving in ballast to load lumber, the three year old Greek registered freighter ran aground at Ferrier Point in December 1969. While the crew was rescued by towboats in the vicinity, the ship was lost before they could attempt to dislodge her. While I was always impressed by the power of the sea as I witnessed the collapse of the *Vanlene* (1972) over the decades, this site represents utter devastation. The identifiable parts of the vessel include the massive block of the Fiat diesel engine, the rudder, auxiliary boilers and, possibly, a condenser. To understand something of the ship's construction, we spent our surface interval at Louie Bay around the point. Massive sections of the ships forward section are spread along the sand beach. They were hauled there by tractor, in an attempt to salvage the ship for its scrap value.

Ensanada Island Mystery Wreck

The fragment of the wooden hull provided an ideal location for practicing measuring skills. Scott ferried us ashore to a small cove where the hull section has been stranded for many years. It was an opportunity to not only look at traditional wooden boat

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Metaphor? Compared to today's container ships the windjammers were birds that flew across the seas. The UASBC has the Panther as the mainstay of its logo. So, perhaps we can be likened to a bird of the sea.(?)

Incumbent in any cycle there is always birth, growth, decay, followed by re-birth, etc. It seems that the Society has been through a number of such cycles. Our entire British Columbian society seems to be in the middle of a renewal period. Hence, our Society, UASBC, is being swept along in a current that surrounds it. Or, perhaps it was just time for us to renew ourselves for internal reasons. We probably won't comprehend it until we emerge at the other end.

The only substantive things that I can relate to you are that the Executive is actively looking for new members. I hope to be able to share some names with you in the near future. The second thing is that the Executive has committed to a planning session on August 5th. In the past we have discussed very well what our issues are. The planning session is charged with laying out concrete action plans for moving us forward.

We are aware that we need activities that have some fire behind them. We need things that will re-ignite the enthusiasm that has dwindled. We know that everyone still has curiosity; we need to find targets to channel it. We need to go out and have FUN.

So, back to the metaphor. With fire and birds there is one obvious image; the Phoenix. But, it was a terrestrial bird, and, we have to be a seabird. We are also divers. Perhaps the cormorant? It is an ancient species. Please let me know what you think <uasbc@uasbc.com>.

[Yes, I am aware that we do not want to lay an egg. But, we do want to see what hatches. And, since it is we, who have brought ourselves to where ever we are; it is we, that will have to raise ourselves from that place.]



UASBC Technical Diving in Barkley Sound

by, Laurynn Evans



Over a lazy cup of post-dive coffee, I was asked if I might be interested in joining an exploration trip at the last minute... Little did I know that our informal chat that afternoon would lead to a weekend of adventure, new friends made, and a lot of learning.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to join a UASBC technical diving mission to search for a vessel named the Lamorna, which was believed to be

sunk in the early 1900s. Local reports and newspaper entries from the era showed eyewitness accounts that pointed to a specific location. Some preliminary examination of shoals and reefs in the area pointed to some likely places to begin

our search.

The day for departure arrived, and my travel partner Koos du Preez and I set out from Seattle. This was the beginning of a multi-step process to move us and our gear into position in Bamfield, for our exploration adventure. We spent our evening enjoying the gorgeous view from our cabin, getting to know the whole team over food and mapping out our primary plan for

our weekend's diving. Due to current, swell, and wind forecasts, we anticipated each dive team getting in only one shot at the exploration site early each morning.

Sunday morning dawned bright and cool, and we quickly got all of our equipment loaded onto our dive boat. As we set out, the sun came out to greet us. We approached the site for our exploration diving, to be greeted by some fairly solid current and substantive rolling waves. The plan was to cover a variety of depths down to the 150' range in a fairly precise pattern. The first two teams came back empty handed. My 3-person team of Guy Shockey, Koos, and myself hit the water. The current was strong enough that even our mighty scooters were having trouble making adequate headway, to allow us to descend to the deeper parts of the reef. We did a good amount of looking at the 100' level before thumbing the dive and

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Congratulations to NAS 2 Graduates!

This spring, Bill Meekel and Randy Ruygrok completed their NAS 2 project thus earning them an Intermediate Certificate in Underwater Archaeology. They chose to research and survey a site in Shuswap Lake. From their research, Bill and Randy reported that in the early days of development on the lake, a rudimentary ferry service was organized to transport people, livestock and goods to and from the public wharfs at Sorrento and Scotch Creek. The vessel was constructed of two pontoons and a platform; it began service in 1914. In 1920 the ferry was crushed by ice. One of the pontoons lies on the north side of Shuswap Lake, at the south end of Scotch Creek, near the site of the old ferry wharf. It forms the subject of the survey. It is interesting to note that Bill and Randy have now located the second pontoon and will be including additional information in the original document.



A NAS 2 project requires that the applicants demonstrate a good knowledge of NAS 1 content. Trilateration and baseline offset methods were used, as well as detailed attention to description, location, photography and mapping. This project was completed to a high standard. Congratulations to Randy and to Bill!

Boy Oh Buoyancy by, Bill Meekel

A Precision Buoyancy Workshop was put on May 6-8 in Victoria for UASBC members. The students were Holger Heitland, Steve McCulloch, Keith Bossons, Greg Bossons, Remi Chretien and yours truly. The course was put on by a group of UASBC members, Guy Shockey (GUE Instructor), assisted by Chris Fenton, Colten Platzner and Dave Healy (Dave runs the Beyond Deep Diving shop in Victoria, which was site of our class sessions). They are also members of Global Underwater Explorers (GUE). GUE is a non-profit organization of technical divers that was started by a group of cave divers. They have adopted a system of training and conducting dives in the technical (aka. extended range) environment. One important aspect of technical, and sport diving, is excellent buoyancy

skills. This is very important to all divers, particularly if trying to survey an object underwater, or doing a 15' safety stop. This became clear to me recently while doing a survey of a wreck in the Kamloops area. I found it very hard to stay in one location during the measurement process.

At the start of the course we were told that excellent buoyancy is a skill that takes time to develop. We were told good buoyancy is a matter of proper weighting, a horizontal body position in the water, the right gear (back plate & wing style BCs are best), finning techniques, and proper breathing. The students did three open water dives and feedback was provided. A video was made of each student diver to provide feedback in the classroom. My buoyancy has improved, but I still have a ways to go. At least now I have a better understanding of what it takes

Jean-Claude Schweizer



The Southern Interior Chapter of UASBC has lost one of its most treasured members. Jean Claude Schweizer, known to his friends as JC, passed away of injuries sustained while on vacation in the Caribbean. JC was a charter member of our chapter and was instrumental in its development and success. He always showed a keen interest in historic diving and preserving the past. JC completed NAS Intro and level 1, and was also a very proficient diver/instructor. He used these skills to help us complete many of the projects in the Thompson Okanagan, and the West Kootenays. since our inception. He will be sorely missed.

to have great buoyancy. Now it's practice, practice, practice.

Another aspect of GUE training I found very good was their attention to safety. This is important for technical divers. However, I think sport divers tend to put less emphasis on safety after they have been diving for a while. We were also introduced to the GUE approach to diving as a team (usually 2-3 divers), detailed gear checks before the dive, careful dive planning, following the plan, and situational awareness. The later involves not only the underwater environment but also knowing where your team members are at all times. GUE divers even do a skills practice at the start of each dive!

I would like to thank Guy and the SET team for putting on the course for UASBC members.



(Left-to-Right) David Hill-Turner, Kim Anderson, Bronwen Young, Jennifer Ingram, Eric Young, Holger Heitland, Chris Fenton

Northwest Vancouver Island (continued)

building, but also to study hull repairs. These included new sections of wood butt jointed, rather than scarfed, into the rubbing strake and seams sealed with concrete, a cheaper alternative to pitch. From the measurements and

UASBC Technical Diving (continued)

heading up. It appeared that for today, we were skunked on finding our intended target. That afternoon all three teams logged a fun-filled dive on the freighter Vanlene in perfect conditions.

The next morning again dawned sunny and calm, with the water looking even better than the day before. We set out on the boat, back to the same general area we were in the day prior, to find the rock we were going to dive around was covered in Stellar Sea Lions; there were hundreds of them! While the first two teams were in the water, the surface conditions continued to get rougher. As the two teams surfaced, we discovered that they had completely encircled the rock formation. No wreck. Since surface conditions were growing more and more unfavourable, we decided to head back to the Vanlene to allow the opportunity to shoot more film, as well as giving

economy repairs, Jacques narrowed it down to one of two possible vessels.

Northern Light

A schooner rigged sailing barge that was driven ashore at Nuchatlitz in January 1892. My ears are still ringing from this site. I hit the deepest point of the reported site at 30

feet. Unfortunately, no evidence of the wreck was found.

Expedition Life

Our base was Sea Watch Cabin located on an unnamed island in Nuchatlitz Park. Our host, Brain Witt, explained the operation of the showers, pointed out the location of the outhouse and

folks a chance to spend more time exploring.

While we did not find our intended target over the weekend, we crossed off a large potential target area from the list, thereby honing our search on future dates. I look forward to once again participating with the UASBC!

welcomed us to the home that he built and shares with Shannon Bailey. The home is well "off the grid" and electricity comes from solar cells and a generator. We had no problems with keeping our mountain of batteries charged. Jacques kept divers recharged with his tradition of interesting and tasty meals. The team easily settled into a routine of helping with meal preparation, cleaning dishes, filling air cylinders and exploring Brian and Shannon's extensive library. Tanks and gear were ferried daily between the cabin and the Notorious which was secured to an offshore float.

The expedition provided an opportunity to explore some potentially interesting wrecks. We were very fortunate to experience almost perfect west coast diving conditions, and we can only hope the same for future expeditions.

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