

# FOGHORN

UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

VOL. 25 NO. 2 SECOND QUARTER



## Executives go diving after a day of meetings

by: Bronwen Young

On Saturday February 23, the members of the UASBC met in Nanaimo for a day of discussion and work. Having come from various parts of coastal B.C., it was decided to plan a couple of dives for the next day before returning home. The site of the Del Norte seemed close enough and was certainly deemed to be quite fascinating.

We met at 8:30 at the Maple Bay wharf, assembled our gear and loaded it into the Juan de Fuca Warrior, a dive boat from Ogden Point Dive Centre piloted by Lyle Berzins. In the mean time, the weather had shown that it was gearing up to produce a windy, rainy morning. This caused some concern because the Del Norte is just outside of Porlier Pass, at the foot of Canoe Islet. Wind, large waves and driving rain would not be good.

We headed out toward the pass hoping to sneak in the dive before things had a chance to deteriorate further. Fortunately our luck held. We quickly donned our gear and splashed into the water.

The Del Norte story has been told many times and is well known to UASBC.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 3**

## Déjà vu

by: Jacques Marc

The term Déjà vu, is French, meaning "already seen". It is the sensation that an event or experience currently being experienced has been experienced in the past.

That was the situation that we encountered on the April 7th San Pedro trip. On Saturday it rained a little in Victoria but the water was flat calm. On Sunday when we arrived at Ogden Point Dive Centre for our dive there was a slight breeze from the Northwest as was predicted. Everything was good.

The entire dive group arrived on time at 08:30, excited

about the day ahead. The group consisted of Jiri Kotler, Holger Heitland, Paul Spencer, Bob Simpson, Dean Driver, Alistair Purdon, Aurora Skala and Jacques Marc (Recorder).

We loaded our gear into the Juan de Fuca Warrior. As we were finishing Jiri announced that the wind had shifted. He was correct. Instead of coming from the Northwest, it had switched to Southwest. The forecast was for NW in the morning switching to SW around noon. Ok so maybe it was switching a bit early. We launched the boat and motored out to the Brochie Ledge marker,

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



## Editors Message *by: Matthew Bossons*

Summer's here, and with the warmer weather I offer an apology for the lateness of this edition. A group of high school friends and I just recently ventured south to the beautiful and tropical country of Panama, at the bottom of our continent and the cusp of South America. There we surfed, hiked and engaged sharks while diving just off the coast of Isla Coiba. This trip was a great time and resulted in much catching up to do at work and my twenty-third birthday last week also resulted in the Foghorn falling on the backburner temporarily.

One a positive note, it is now done and before you, in its largest incarnation yet – ten jam packed pages of photos and stories. This expansion is due to the fact that I received too much material to cram into eight pages, and never one to turn down stories (especially when in the past it's been a battle to fill the standard sized version) I added two pages instead. I trust everyone will enjoy all the insight into the UASBCs activities over the past few months and the great photos that grace the following pages.

I would also like to post a reminder about the photo contest that is going on now until December, below are some of the details:

**The contest will consist of three categories:**

**Best static wreck photo:**

Judges will be looking for a good quality image of a wreck explored in BC waters. Composition of this photo can include divers, flora or fauna although it is not required. This is the only photo category that does not need to be taken during a sanctioned UASBC dive.

**Best wreck surveying photo:**

For this photo divers are required to be in the image and they must be actively involved in surveying the wreck. The picture must be taken during a sanctioned UASBC dive.

**Best above water photo from a UASBC dive:**

This photo is an above water photograph. It can be from dive prep or clean up, or just a good looking group of divers hanging out and having fun! Be creative and remember these photos must be from a UASBC sanctioned dive.

*For further information refer to the last issue of the Foghorn.*

## Executives go diving after a day of meetings (continued)

Briefly, she was a 200 foot steam powered side wheeler. She was also rigged as a schooner. Built in San Francisco in 1866, she ran between the Bay Area and Alaska carrying cargo and sometimes also towing other steamers. In 1868, the captain headed into Porlier Pass, encountered fog and decided to back out and wait for better weather. Unfortunately the current grabbed the stern and shoved it onto the rocks of Canoe Islet. Now firmly on the rocks, and in spite of valiant efforts, nothing could be done to free the ship. The passengers were evacuated and the boat, lost to the sea.



The Del Norte rests on a sandy slope running from 30 to 90 feet in depth. As we started into the shallows we noticed a scattering of various small deck fittings and also some of the encrusted coal which made up her cargo. Continuing a bit deeper, in between 40 and 60 feet stood the 2 boilers. Sadly they have been heavily damaged by such things as dive boats attempting to secure their anchors. Looking into them, it is now possible to see the few large tubes in the interior. This is of particular interest as construction using many smaller tubes would have been much more common.

Probably the most fascinating artifact of the site, the drive wheel assemblage appeared a few feet deeper. The axle of the starboard paddlewheel is resting in an almost horizontal position (photo 4). In the foreground is the central hub of the wheel (also photo #3), the spokes are gone. Toward the middle of the axle is a bearing that would have been involved in supporting the shaft inside the vessel and above the engine. In the background is the crankshaft (also photo #2). Below all this, to the left, is the engine which is so demolished that its parts are difficult to identify with certainty. Continuing on down toward the 70 to 80 foot depth lie some deck planking and copper hull sheeting. This material has been silted in and appears in places depending upon the extent of its sandy

covering.

Having explored the Del Norte to some extent, we motored back towards Maple Bay. The weather was worsening however we all wanted to fit in one more dive. The sheltered wreck of the Chehalis seemed like a good idea at this point, so we dropped in for a quick look. There is not a lot left of this wooden steam tug built in Washington in 1890. The vintage vessel's engines burned coal and the crew still relied on the original gas lamps for lighting. In 1932, the Chehalis came into Sansum Narrows as far as Arbutus Point where she tied up, waiting for the tide change. A fire started. She burned and sank where she sits now, in about 20 feet of water. A rudder and post are the most notable pieces left. It was a very quick visit, we climbed into the boat and headed back to the dock.

Many thanks to Jacques Marc for organizing this trip out of Maple Bay. This was the first time in a long time that the executive has combined work with a bit of diving. Hopefully, it will become something that we do more often!



## Déjà vu (continued)



arriving at the wreck site at 09:30.

Slack was at 10:15 so we had a 45 minute wait until slack. As we bobbed up and down the wind freshened from the South. Lyle our boat captain checked his I phone and found that the wind had increased from 9 knots to 25 knots at Race Rocks. Ever the optimistic I suggested we wait a bit to see if slack water would settle things down.

By 09:45, the waves began to get flecks of white on them. It was time to make a decision. Not wanting to risk losing divers in high seas, we opted to do the pre-verbal back-up dive, which was the S.F. Tolmie on Harrison Island.

We hid in behind Harrison Island to suit up and then dropped everyone on the wreck site.

The vis was 20 feet and despite being overcast, it was reasonably bright on the wreck at 30 feet. The wreck is comprised of a large chunk (60 meters) of port hull lying on its side. Iron deck knees extend from remnants of the frames some 6-7 feet high off the bottom.

Much of the wreck is covered in leaf kelp. At the forward end are two massive hawse pipes that would have held the anchor chain. All four dive teams spent 45 minutes exploring the wreck.

A few people surface off shore making the pick up a little tenuous, the boat heaving in the waves.

It was clear that as a result of the inclement weather our second dive was going to have to be at the entrance

to or in the harbour. We opted for a pretty dive on the Ogden Point Breakwater.

I hadn't been on it in a few years. What amazed everyone was the size of some of the Ling Cod. Dean who is at least 6 feet tall claimed that he had evidence on video of a monster Ling Cod that dwarfed him. I cannot remember whether he had a beer or coffee when we went to the Swiftsure Lounge. It could have been the larger and longer after the beer.

So where does the Déjà Vu come in you ask? We planned the same trip on the same weekend in 2012 with the same results.



# Trip Report: Visit to Barkley Sound – May 4-5th

by: Jiri Kotler

The long anticipated return to Barkley Sound finally came about. The group of UASBC divers made their way over the gravel roads safely to Bamfield with only one punctured tire. The group consisted of Jacques Marc, Paul Spencer, Alistair Purdon, Eric and Bronwen Young, Holger Heitland and Jiri Kotler.

Everybody arrived at Erin Bradley's (of Ogden Point Diving Centre) cozy cottage by late afternoon, settled in and dined on pizza. The objective of the trip was to dive the wreck of the passenger steamer Valencia, explore an uncharted reef in Trevor Channel (as suggested by Erin), and revisit wrecks of the car freighter Vanlene and the sailing cargo vessel Orpheus.

## Saturday - 4 May 2013

After taking all the gear down a long, rough path to the dock we boarded 'Michelle & Diane' skippered by Brian Gisborne. The expedition departed by 0800. The weather was sunny and the seas were calm.

Nevertheless, the main topic of discussion among the crew



was whether to take a whole gravel or just a half. On the way to Valencia Bluff, (approximately seven-miles south of Pacheena Point lighthouse), we paused to take a few pictures at Seabird Rocks where a sailing vessel Soquel too came to her grief in January 22, 1909. Everybody was trying to superimpose old B&W photos of the disaster (from Brian's collection) onto the current rocky reef that has not changed with the passage

of time (save the more recent light beacon).

We arrived at Valencia Bluff, the site of the January 22, 1906 disaster, by about 0900. After Brian and Jacques sorted out the wreck's position a marker was dropped. The conditions were almost perfect with the sea swell less than four feet. Brian however cautioned that south-west wind was about to pick up and urged us to proceed with the dive. Everybody suited up and was in water by 0915. As it turned out the placement of the marker was very accurate. It landed between the two main anchors within sight of the bow at a depth of about forty five feet depth. The buddy teams scattered quickly around the wreckage. The visibility was poor and a subsequent collective estimate put it at about twenty feet.

The remnants appeared to have not changed much since Jacques' last visit some years ago. However, two 'new' anchors were spotted just south of the main wreckage (both are believed to have been a part of the cargo). In spite of its relative 'modesty' the swell could be felt down to thirty feet! Brian's prediction was correct. By the time everybody was back on board there was fresh south-west wind with cross waves on top of the swell. As we looked back at Valencia Bluff it became clear why many of the unfortunate passengers and crew elected to stay with the ship rather than face the crashing waves over the rocks.

On the way back to Barkley Sound and our next dive we stopped at Keeha Bay (Rumrunner's Cove). Brian anchored and put the stern close to the beach so some of us could wade on shore. There we rested, consumed our packed lunches and searched for 'tsunami debris'. Our next dive was on an uncharted pinnacle just off Execution Rock. Erin Bradley had reported finding coal and a few brass fasteners there while searching for lost fishing gear. After a short search for the pinnacle a marker was dropped and again it turned out to be placed quite accurately. Everybody was in water by 1400.

The 'toe' of the pinnacle was at about sixty feet. The buddy teams quickly dispersed around in search of any sign of wreckage. There were numerous crevices and gullies to crawl through and look into.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 6**

## Trip Report: Visit to Barkley Sound (continued)

However, at the end only more fishing gear was recovered. Those were mostly lead 'cannon balls' – a handy replenishment of Jacques' ever-diminishing supply of marker weights.

Back at the dock we unloaded all fourteen tanks and lugged them to the cottage sundeck. There we lined them up for refills. The portable and very noisy air compressor (with 3.5 CFM capacity) we brought along, ran non-stop for about six hours. We took turns operating the thing while dining on spaghetti and meat sauce. The compressor could be heard all across Grappler Inlet and must have been an absolute delight to all residents and visitors alike.

### Sunday – 5 May 2013

After a breakfast of French toast and coffee, our morning exercise consisted of schlepping the tanks and some gear back down to the dock. By 0800 we were all on board and headed across Imperial Eagle Channel to the final resting place of Vanlene, just south of Effingham Island. Jacques gave us a brief on the wreck's layout and things to watch for. The weather was sunny and the seas were calm with very little swell. The buddy teams were ready by 0845. The top fifty feet of water was quite 'soupy' with visibility of no more than three feet. Luckily everybody made it down the rocky wall and followed the propeller shaft towards to the ship's stern. There the visibility was much better – in excess of thirty feet – but understandably very dark. Most of us stayed in clear water and explored the stern at a depth of about eighty to ninety feet. As usual the main engine provided a good reference for a return swim and safety stops though the 'soup'. By 0930 Brian collected everybody and had us back on board. In general it was believed that in comparison with previous observations the broken off stern had tilted further astern – a possible evidence of further and ongoing wreck's disintegration. Paul ventured for a peak into the one remaining hold (number six) and reported seeing no intact cars. So the main attractions of this famous shipwreck appear to have vanished forever!

Our next dive was on the wreck of the sailing vessel *Orpheus* that met her end in November 1875 at the north end of Robber's Passage. Brian worked his way over slowly to give us lots of surface interval and a chance to rest. The Society had worked on this wreck earlier and had generated a very detailed plan of the remnants. Jacques gave us a briefing regarding the orientation of the wreckage and then he and Paul placed a marker at the ballast rock pile. By 1245 we were all in water working our way down through the 'soup'. As on the morning dive the visibility greatly improved at depth. The



distribution of the wreckage (e.g. wooden deadeyes, mast/spars iron hardware, ballast pile etc.) had not changed since the plan was generated, including the interpretive plaque placed near the capstan. The other remaining wooden part that still survived was the rudder though it appeared hollowed out and quite fragile. It was interesting to note that the wreckage distribution corresponded reasonably well with the ship's general layout – a sign of deep and relatively sheltered waters.

We were back at our dock by 1430. Luckily we did not have to carry our gear and tanks up to the cottage. Brian was kind enough to bring Michelle & Diane to the municipal dock a few hundred metres away where the access to a roadway was much easier. We cleaned the cottage, loaded the cars, said brief 'goodbyes' and off we went on gravel roads back our respective destinations. In retrospect it was a successful trip since we were able to accomplish what had been planned while adding some new information to the data bank!

## Foreshore and Underwater Archaeology Course - In Review

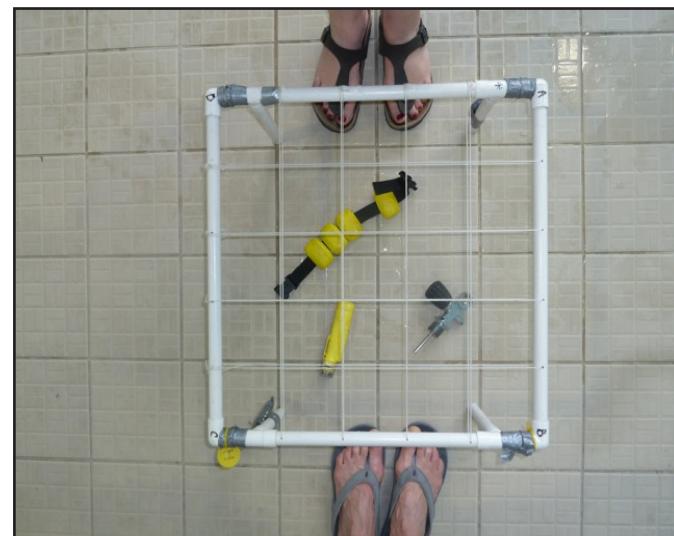
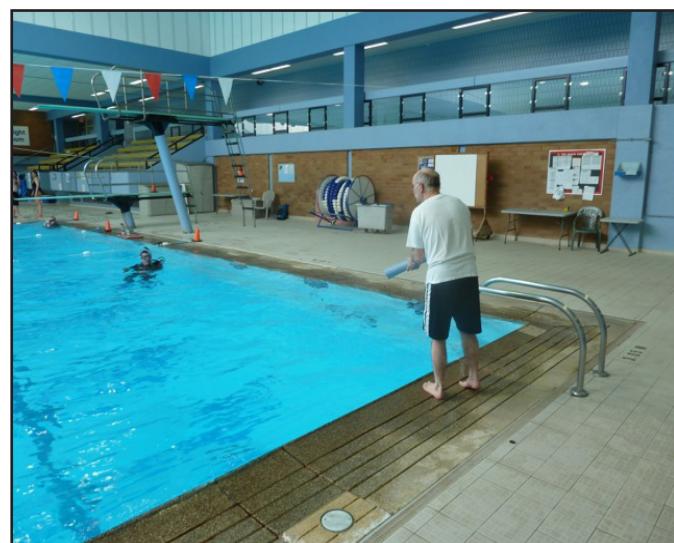
by: Bronwen Young

UASBC tutors Jacques Marc and Eric Young have just graduated a group of 8 NAS Intro students, the course was held in Victoria at the Crystal Pool.

The program was attended by Richard Blache, Dean Driver, Carrie Fleming, Alexis Forsyth, Jan Hill, George Silvestrini, Aurora Skala, and Robert Rose.

Scheduled in the 8 hours of instruction were lectures and a 2 hour survey session in the pool. The classroom work included topics such as the scope of underwater archaeology, a sampling of sites from around the world, law and ethics, underwater surveying techniques and plotting.

Most people looked forward quite eagerly to putting the measuring techniques into practice either in the pool or on the deck (aka foreshore). Afterward in the classroom, plotting of the results of this activity produced maps of the 'artifacts' that were measured 'in the field'!



It is through the teaching of NAS courses that UASBC continues to have a group of field volunteers capable of working on wrecks. The information gathered is used for mapping which is then integrated into a site report.

At the end of the day, the students all seemed keen to attend Level 1. Congratulations and a big *thank you* for participating.

# Search for the Gambier Mystery Wreck by: Keith Bossons

On April 6 a team of nine UASBC divers headed out for Gambier on the Topline in search of a new mystery wreck located in West Bay on Gambier Island.

We were trying to locate a new wreck based on a multi beam sonar image that Jacques Marc had provided.

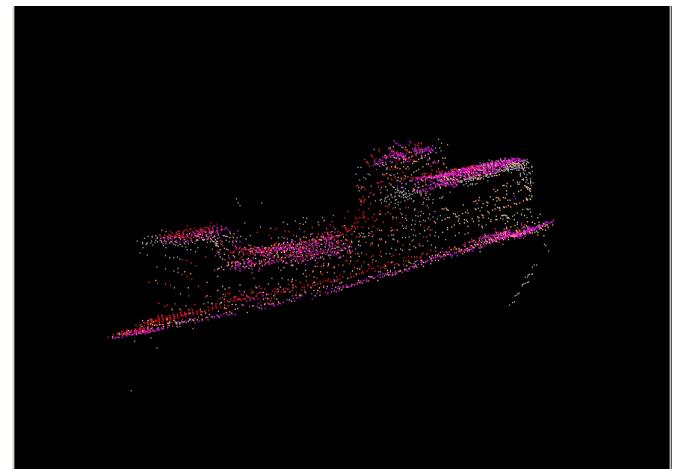
Our team was made up of Keith and Greg Bossons, Glenn Farquhar, Philip Bosley, Tim, Shelly and Brian Novak, John Campbell and Randy Parke. UASBC member Mike Juren is the Dive Master on Topline and also joined us on the dive.

We met at Sewell's Marina at Horseshoe Bay first thing in the morning and loaded our gear onto the boat in the pouring rain. We were on a tight schedule as we only had the boat for the morning as they had another charter in the afternoon. Jan and Kevin Breckman from Sea Dragon charters, who run the Topline, did a great job of getting us organized and underway in short order.

Plan A was pretty straightforward, we had a good set of GPS coordinates so we would run to the location and locate the wreck on the depth sounder. Unfortunately things seldom go to plan. We arrived at the coordinates but could find nothing on the depth sounder. The only good news was that the rain had let up. We ran a search grid of the area and only found a couple of small targets. John and Randy had brought their scooters, so we sent them down to have a look. The visibility was very poor and it took them some time searching to locate the target which turned out to be a large rock.

By now we are running short of time and had a deck full of anxious divers wanting to get into the water. We expanded our search area to a spot where Kevin recalled finding something a few years earlier. We quickly got a strong signal on the depth sounder and splashed John and Randy again on their scooters to have a look. After only a short time a marker buoy popped to the surface indicating they had found something. As we prepared to get the rest of the divers into the water a second marker popped up a couple hundred feet from the first, shortly followed by John and Randy to announce they had found two wrecks.

When we dropped down on the first wreck poor visibility made it difficult to figure out what we were looking at, but I quickly concluded it was not what we were looking for. It did not match the profile of the sonar image and it was most likely an old wooden barge that was discovered several years ago. Taking a compass heading we swam in the direction of the second wreck. We quickly located the second wreck which was a bit surprising given the limited visibility. This



wreck appeared to be a newer steel barge and also did not match the sonar image. We continued exploring and soon discovered the hull of a small fiberglass boat resting on the bottom. Three wrecks in one dive with less than 10 feet of visibility was not a bad result. Unfortunately it was not what we were looking for.

We later determined that it was most likely a simple error in converting the GPS coordinates from decimal to minutes and seconds that put us off target. We were the last team back on the boat and when we arrived everyone was excited about what they had seen. Time was running too short to look any further so we decided to head back to port with a short stop on route for a short but spectacular wall dive which capped off an excellent day.

We did not locate the mystery wreck but we still have a pretty convincing sonar image, so it is down there somewhere. I plan to try to locate the wreck over the summer using my own boat and if successful I will set up another trip in the fall.

# 2013 Shipwrecks Conference

by: Keith Bossons



The 2013 Shipwrecks conference was held at SFU on April 27. The event was well attended and had an excellent line up of speakers on some very exciting topics. The theme for this year's conference was early maritime archeology of the Pacific Northwest. The conference topics include first nation's maritime traditions and interesting shipwrecks from early European exploration of the Pacific Northwest.

The conference was kicked off with a brief overview of the UASBC's exploration activities over the past year.

The was followed by Scott Williams who gave an intriguing presentation on the Oregon Bees Wax Wreck, which was likely Manila Galleon that wrecked on the Oregon Coast in the period prior to European settlement of the area. The Manila Galleon's were large Spanish vessels that ran between Mexico and the Philippines. On the westerly voyage the ships carried silver mined in Mexico that was ultimately destined for China. On the Easterly voyage, the galleons carried trade goods from China including silk, china and apparently bees wax. The wreck is so named because of the large amount of bees wax that was washed ashore.

Dr. Della Scott-Ireton from the Florida Public Archeology Network spoke about Florida Shipwreck Reserves that have been established around the state to conserve historically significant shipwrecks and promote public access.

Charles Moore then did a presentation on his work mapping first nation's reef net fishing sites.

After a brief lunch, Dr. Dana Lepofsky, Associate Professor at the SFU School of Archeology, shared her research of

first nations techniques for managing the marine environment, where she presented some of her research findings on ancient clam gardens and traditional techniques used by first nations to manage the herring fishery.

Next up was Richard Ingles who gave a talk on the Yukuot Whalers' Shrine. Also known as the Whalers' Washing House, the shrine included 88 carved human figures, 4 carved whales and 16 human skulls. It is believed that the shrine was created by successive generations of the Muchalaht people who occupied the site.

In 1903 the contents of the shrine were collected from Yukuot on Nootka Island and shipped to the American Museum of Natural History in New York. While the human remains were later returned to the Muchalaht people, the carvings and rest of the Shrine is still held by the museum. Yukuot is an important place in BC history. Also known as Friendly Cove, the village was visited by Captain James Cook in 1778.

Richard was accompanied by Margarita James from the Muchalaht nation who spoke about what the Shrine means to her people. We were honored by her presence and moved by her words.

We wrapped the day up with interesting talks by Eb Geisecke on the Tonquin and Bruce Watson on the Atahualpa. Both ships were attacked by first nations with significant loss of life.

Last up was Tom Beasley who spoke about the Spanish Olive Jar found at Langara Island.

The evening dinner and Woodward lecture featured Dr. Della Scott-Ireton giving a talk on the Emanuel Point Ships. They are Florida's earliest shipwrecks associated with the 1559 colonization attempt by Tristan de Luna, at Pensacola.

Overall the conference was a great success with many thought provoking presentations and unique insights into our local history.

On behalf of the UASBC, I would like to thank Robyn Woodward for her generous support of the conference. Also a special thanks to Jennifer Ingram for handling the conference registration table and Greg Bossoms for setting up the audio visual equipment working.

# Search for the Enterprise *by: Jacques Marc*

The Enterprise has been an elusive wreck. The UASBC has been searching for this site off and on since the early 1990's. Our early efforts focussed on the area around the breakwater and off shore of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club.

In the fall of 2012 Cam Kruger (a retired log salvor) who lives in Cadboro Bay contacted me to report that he had found a brass condenser like object in the bay about 100 yards off shore from the end of Killarny Road in the early 1980s. He had been diving for crabs when he came across it. The Colonist paper of 1885 placed the wreck about 150 yards off shore of Cadboro Bay. With such a promising report, clearly we had to go look.

On February 17 continue the hunt. Some new people Jan Hill, Aurora Skala and Ian MacCauley showed up. We were joined by Al Delisle and Richard Parker two rebreather divers. Jacques, Ewan Anderson, Paul Spencer, Dan St. Laurent and Jiri Kotler rounded out the crew.

To ensure we covered the bottom in a coordinated and consistent manner, Jacques established survey stakes at 50-meter intervals down the beach heading west from Gyro Park. The GPS position for each stake was recorded. Each dive team was assigned a starting location with instructions to swim off shore for 200 meters on a 140-degree (true) bearing. Upon completion of their transect, each dive team was asked to release a float. They were to then move to the west 25 meters and begin the swim back to shore. To know exactly what line each team followed their start and finish locations were fixed using a GPS. Terra Archaeology graciously provided a Zodiac for us to use. Divers were also asked to mark any potential targets with a float during their swim.

All four teams were successful at performing their swim. The plotted coordinates show good coverage. Team 1 located a grating of some sort and a few other bits and pieces. Team 2 found a few pieces of coal and a small brass object. Team 3 did not find anything except sand and crabs. Team four (the rebreather crew with scooters) completed several search legs. They confirmed the presence of a coal scatter 300 meters off offshore along the most westerly transect in 23 feet of water. Unfortunately, they did not find any additional material that would suggest a shipwreck. It may be that the coal was associated with the old Cattle wharf or may be associated with the many steam tugs that used to seek protection from the weather in Cadboro Bay.

The presence of the coal does suggest that we may want to investigate the Northwest corner of the bay a little more thoroughly.

Once everyone had returned to shore and we cleaned up our markers and floats we retired to the Smugglers Cove Pub in Cadboro Bay Village for a hot coffee and lunch. While we did not find the wreck, it was a pleasant day in the sun.

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