

SDFSFA Bulletin August 2007

This bulletin is provided as a service to members of the  
SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA

Working to develop the sport of Scuba diving in SA  
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We are publishing this electronic bulletin as a separate publication to our normal monthly SDF News Sheet. Future issues of this "SDFSFA Bulletin" will include lengthy articles about matters of interest to recreational divers. We welcome contributions from our readers.

If you don't have the time to read through everything in this bulletin, take advantage of the following table of contents. Click on any item of interest to proceed straight to that section.

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**DIVERS WARN ON ABALONE DISEASE THREAT**

"Divers in the Victorian abalone industry say the Victorian Government has failed to address a multi-million dollar threat to the industry. Disease is killing abalone off along almost 200 kilometres of Victoria's south-west coastline, including a marine sanctuary near Warrnambool. Victorian Abalone Divers Association secretary Vin Gannon says authorities stopped monitoring the disease four months ago. He says the state's \$75 million abalone export industry faces collapse, and hundreds of jobs could be lost unless the government acts. "Australia-wide everyone is worried about this disease," he said. "Not only is it a Victoria issue, this is going to potentially turn into a national issue, especially if it jumps into somewhere like Tasmania, which is the largest producer of abalone in the world."

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/07/29/1991059.htm>

Meanwhile, a recent report in The Advertiser said that the deadly virus has seriously affected Victorian abalone farms. The infection on two farms in the Portland region also has affected wild fisheries in the area. The SA abalone industry, however, does not believe that the virus will affect it. In the meantime, abalone farming is continuing to expand on KI and the Eyre Peninsula. Countries such as Chile and South Africa are also increasing production.

**JAPANESE MIDGET SUBMARINE M24**

As mentioned in our August news sheet, the March issue of the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology newsletter, Volume 26, Number 1 March 2007, includes the following article about the Japanese M24 midget submarine: -

“M24 midget submarine: discovery and site management strategies

In November 2007, a Channel 9 “Sixty Minutes” report was aired advising that a group of club divers from ‘No Frills Divers’ had found the wreck of the WWII Japanese Midget submarine that escaped from Sydney Harbour following the raid in 1942 on 12 Nov 2006. Subsequently, the Heritage Office and the (then) Department of the Environment and Heritage (now Department of Environment and Water Resources) have been working together, in association with representatives of the Japanese Government, to provide a prompt and effective response to protect the site. This has included enacting statutory protection under both State and Commonwealth legislation and the installation of surveillance systems commissioned from Sonacom Ltd. Long term options for the site are currently being developed. Since M24’s discovery in over 50 metres of water just three miles offshore from Sydney’s Newport Beach, the Heritage Office has been actively involved in the protection and management of the site. The initial task was to apply heritage legislation to the site as the wreck was ‘younger’ than the automatic 75-year inclusion under the Commonwealth *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*. The site is now a Protected Historic Shipwreck under that legislation with a 500-metre radius No Entry Protected Zone gazetted around the site. The NSW (State) *Heritage Act 1977* also applies to the wreck which was gazetted with an Interim Heritage Order (IHO) on 1 December 2006. Penalties up to \$AUS1.1 million apply for disturbance to the remains. The Heritage Office assisted the Royal Australian Navy in confirming the site on 27 November 2006 with an ROV inspection from a Royal Australian Navy minehunter, HMAS *Yarra*. Tim Smith presented a briefing to the Chief of the Japan Maritime Self Defence Force and staff and the Chief of Navy, VADM Shalders AO CSC RAN during Heritage Office support to a formal wreath laying ceremony over the site, aboard HMAS *Newcastle* on 7 February. Since January the Heritage Office has coordinated sidescan sonar surveys of the wreck and additional ROV inspections which have met with some variable sea conditions and equipment issues. Additional ROV inspections were completed using a visiting US Navy deep sea ROV in mid-February 2007. As mentioned, a sophisticated sonar detection system *Monitors* vessel traffic around the site installed by Sonacom Ltd and jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments. Wreck condition: The *M24* wreck site sits upright on sand, almost half buried and largely intact. Fishing nets have removed the propeller guards and rudders, all fairings of the conning tower, including the access tube, hatch and net cutters (the latter elements remain in the debris field). At the bow, a remaining net has removed the bow guards and cutter, which is lying in a debris field extending away from the bow. The upper torpedo tube has been torn off to the bulkhead. A large split in the hull is evident aft of the conning tower near the bulkhead that separates the conning tower and aft battery compartment. Research at present is concentrating on any evidence of battle damage, the nature of the two unexploded scuttling charges (increased after the pearl Harbour raid), and the possibility that human remains (Sub Lieutenant Ban and Petty Officer Ashibe) may still be retained within the structure. The conning tower compartment is almost totally filled with sand, while the aft battery room is largely clear. The discovery of this midget adds significantly to those sites presently located underwater, including a Type A in 20 metres of water in Papua New Guinea, the 400-metre deep Pearl midget, the fragmentary remains of one of the Madagascar boats, and a semi-submerged wreck at Kiska Harbour in the Aleutians.”

Source: <http://www.aima.iinet.net.au/publications/newsletters/docs/NLv26n1y07.pdf>

## **SCUTTLED & ABANDONED SHIPS IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS**

We recently discovered a webpage at

<http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/pollution/dumping/history/pubs/sea-dumping-scuttled.pdf> titled "Scuttled and Abandoned Ships in Australian Waters" (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

1998) by Ronald Parsons and Geoff Plunkett. On that page we found the following details of interest: -

(STANVAC BARGES)

SAURIAN

(Dredger No.16) Iron, B.1871, 164.0 x 30.2 x 11.8. Owners SA. Marine & Harbors Dept. Scuttled Nov. 24, 1954 N.W. of Pt.Noarlunga Jetty, about 5kms from Oil Refinery jetty, to form an artificial reef.

TELFOR BARGES

Metal hull, unnamed, but marked I & II. 70.5 x 49.2 x 11.5, scuttled with the dredge SAURIAN Nov.24, 1954 off oil refinery jetty, Gulf of St.Vincent.

H.A.LUMB

S mv, tug, later mfb 153 g, 64 n, ON61775 78.05 x 23.8x 8.8, B.1943 Decatur Iron & Steel Co, Decatur, Alabama,USA. Diesel 700bhp GMH, Cleveland OH as YTM470 for US Navy. 1956 acq. Geelong Harbour Trust Commissioners, reg. Geelong. when sold converted for deep-sea trawling. Acquired by S.A.Dive Industry Association and scuttled for form artificial reef Dec.9, 1994 2km off O'Sullivan's Beach St.Vincent Gulf, Sth. Australia.

(GLENELG BARGES - Barge & Dredge)

HOPPER BARGE

Marine & Harbours, scuttled Apr. 11, 1984.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

S ss suction dredge 395 g, 142 n, 137.5 x 31.1 x 10.7, B.1911 A.F.Smulders, Schiedamn, for South Australian Harbors Board. Scuttled off Adelaide to provide an artificial reef Jan. 16, 1985.

(VICTORIA'S SUBS)

SUBMARINES - J class

S mv 1210 t disp.surfaced: 1820t submerged. Built 1916/17 R.N.Dockyards 274' x 23' No.s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7 transferred to RAN in Mar. 1919

**J1** - scuttled off Barwon Heads May 26, 1926.

**J2** - scuttled off Pt.Phillip June 1 or 4, 1926.

**J3** - used to form a breakwater at Swan Is. Pt. Phillip in January 1926.

**J4** - sank at moorings at Williamstown July 10, 1924, raised and scuttled off Pt. Phillip May 28, 1927.

**J5** - scuttled off Queenscliff, Pt. Phillip June 1,1926.

**J7** - scuttled 1930 to form a breakwater at Hampton, Pt. Phillip and now rests in shallow water below a pier at the Sandringham Yacht Club, Hampton, sunk Aug.6, 1930.

WA SUB

SUBMARINE K.II

Former Netherlands vessel, S mv 611 t disp. 218'oa x 19' B.1924 Fijenoord, Rotterdam. Reported scuttled in Rottneest Is 'graveyard' in 1952.

Source: Scuttled and Abandoned Ships in Australian Waters, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1998), by Ronald Parsons and Geoff Plunkett,

<http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/pollution/dumping/history/pubs/sea-dumping-scuttled.pdf>.

The following details come from our very own website, courtesy of Paul Macdonald: -  
GLENELG BARGES

#### THE BARGE

The Glenelg Barge is a hopper barge used by the South Australian (Glenelg Dredge) to take the silt dredged up from the Port River and dump it further out to sea. She was sunk in 1984 as an artificial reef and lies in 20m of water. Access is by boat from the West Beach boat ramp. A star dropper trail has been set up to enable divers to travel from the barge to the South Australian and vice versa in times of low current. The barge is a very interesting wreck with a wide variety of fish. Divers can swim its 30m length with ease. At either end there is a small opening where divers can penetrate into the work rooms. In these rooms on each side of the hoppers is the entrance to the flotation chambers and divers may peer into them. Divers may be tempted to attempt a penetration and it can be done as long as the divers are properly prepared with lines, torches etc. The entrance to each chamber is very restricted. This penetration is not recommended. The main hazards are rusting metal, silting and restricted entrances to the penetrations. GPS 34:58:729 S 138:26:462 E

#### THE DREDGE - *South Australian*

The 133-foot *South Australian*, commonly known as the dredge, was built in Holland in 1911 and sailed to Adelaide arriving in 1912. The vessel was a self-propelled cutter suction dredge that was used to dredge the Port River. The *South Australian* ceased its working life in 1982 and (was) scuttled in January 1985 as a recreational resource for divers and anglers. Access is by boat from the West Beach boat ramp. The wreck is laying upright in 20m of water, with the deck area in about 15m. The site has prolific fish life and is arguably the best fish dive off the metropolitan coast. GPS 34:58:667 S 138:26:441 E

#### STANVAC BARGES

There are 3 barges at this site that were sunk in 1954, one is 163m x 29m and the two measure 71m x 49m. At 28m, this is an advanced dive and bottom time is restricted. The barges form an artificial reef with plenty of fish life and lie approximately 5kms west of Port Stanvac and rest on an otherwise sandy bottom. Access is by boat from O'Sullivan's Beach boat ramp. GPS 5:06:908 S 138:24:656 E

Then there is the following information about a lesser-known wreck called the *Claris*: -  
CLARIS

28m shipwreck about 4km west of the Dredge around 12m in length. GPS 35:00:250 S 138:21:089 E

Source: [http://www.sdfsa.net/adelaide\\_metro.htm](http://www.sdfsa.net/adelaide_metro.htm)

(We asked Paul Macdonald for further information about this wreck. He recalled from memory that the *Claris* was some sort of small fishing boat. Alongside her is some kind of superstructure about the same size. Dives on the *Claris* may vary from really good to really bad.)

## **HMAS CANBERRA UPDATE**

“Howard Government To Fund And Sink ex-HMAS Canberra

(The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, Minister for Defence

Canberra: Monday, 23rd July 2007)

In October 2006 I announced that the Howard Government would provide the former Royal Australian Navy Guided Missile Frigate HMAS Canberra to the Victorian Government for sinking as a dive wreck. At the time, I also announced that the Howard Government would provide \$2.8 million towards the cost of the sinking. I have become concerned at the delay of the Victorian Government towards implementing this important project for the people of the Surf Coast and the associated recreational dive industry. Accordingly I have directed my Department, through the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO), to assume Project Management responsibility for this project. I have also made \$7 million in funding available to ensure the quickest possible schedule for the sinking of the ship. I have written to the (now former) Victorian Premier, The Hon Steve Bracks MLA, and the Victorian Minister for Tourism, the Hon Tim Holding MLA informing them of my generous offer. Should additional funding be required beyond to \$7 million, I have requested the Victorian Government make that funding available. This is more than reasonable. The Howard Government has now provided the vast bulk of any funding needed, the project management team to sink the ship and the ship itself. The Victorian community now expects all levels of government to cooperate and get this job done as soon as possible. I encourage the Victorian Government to welcome this announcement and commit to a cooperative effort to now quickly sink this ship.”

Source: <http://www.hmascanberra.com.au/itn-20070723.htm>

## **FLORIDA RAISES ILL-FATED ARTIFICIAL REEFS**

Meanwhile, according to the Environmental News Network,

“FLORIDA RAISES ILL-FATED ARTIFICIAL REEFS

(July 09, 2007 — By Jim Loney, Reuters)

Miami - When people began dumping used tires in the ocean 40 years ago to create artificial reefs, they gave little thought to the potential environmental cost, or to how difficult it would be to pick them up. "It was one of those ideas that seemed good at the time," said Jack Sobel, a senior scientist at The Ocean Conservancy, a Washington-based environmental group. "Now I think it's pretty clear it was a bad idea." Now, local authorities are going after some 700,000 tires dumped off the coast of Fort Lauderdale, up the coast from Miami. A team of 40 divers from the U.S. Army, Navy and Coast Guard spent three weeks in June pulling up 10,373 sand-filled and slime-coated tires from the ocean floor. Using the tire project as a salvage exercise, the military divers learned they could strap together 50 to 70 tires with wire cables and lift them to the surface with inflatable air bags, where a crane hauled the bundle from the water. Millions of tires, usually bundled with nylon straps or steel cables, were cast into the sea off Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and off the U.S. states of New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, California and Florida. The idea was to provide habitat for fish while disposing of trash from the land, but in the rugged and corrosive environment of the ocean, nylon straps wore out and snapped, cables rusted, and tires broke free. Thousands have been tossed up on U.S. shores, particularly during hurricanes. Tires dotted the sand

as far as the eye could see along North Carolina's Topsail Island after Hurricane Fran crashed the coast in 1996. The tires dumped off Fort Lauderdale posed a particular threat. When they broke free they migrated shoreward and ran into a living reef tract, climbing up its slope and killing everything in their path. "If we can keep the project going we think they can get all the tires and then the reef can recover," said Ken Banks of Broward County's Environmental Protection Department. "But the reef recovery will probably take decades."

#### **AIRCRAFT CARRIER**

Officials said the Fort Lauderdale project drew together a host of government and military agencies to salvage the tires cheaply. "If you have to pay to make them go away, it would have cost about \$17 per tire. We got that down to about \$2 per tire, in part because they are making other products out of them," said William Nuckols, a project coordinator for Coastal America, a U.S. government agency. The tires were trucked to a disposal plant in Georgia, where they were chipped into fuel for a waste recycling plant. U.S. states no longer permit tire reefs. But Sobel said the entire concept of artificial reefs needs to be re-examined. They have been created around the globe using all manner of material, from tires and concrete sewer pipes to discarded airplanes and ships. One of the largest, the rusting 880-foot U.S. aircraft carrier Oriskany, was sent to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico last year. They are promoted by local officials as tourist attractions and by fishing captains and scuba operators who say they create new habitats and nurseries for fish and other sea creatures. But Sobel said there are big questions that need to be answered. Do they damage natural habitats, as the tires did off Fort Lauderdale? Do they concentrate marine creatures and make it easier for fishers and divers to catch them, exacerbating an overfishing problem and causing lasting damage to fisheries? Do they draw eggs and larvae that would otherwise settle in natural habitats? "There's little evidence that artificial reefs have a net benefit," Sobel said."

Source: Reuters and the Environmental News Network (<http://www.enn.com>)

#### **USS MONITOR**

A diver called Diveley was recently named the "2007 Volunteer of the Year" by the US's National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Here are the details: -

"ARCHEOLOGIST FROM GREAT FALLS FINDS TREASURE IN SUNKEN SHIP

By Katie Michel, Tribune Staff Writer

Deep in the murky waters of the Atlantic Ocean off of Cape Hatteras, N.C., rests the USS *Monitor*, an ironclad warship that sank in 1862. To most it's just a shipwreck. To archeologist Brian Diveley it's a sunken treasure. A 1990 Great Falls High School graduate, Diveley helped bring the *Monitor* back to life. The ship sank during a heavy December storm 145 years ago. Because of his work during two months of tedious excavation, which included sifting through mud for artifacts from the ship, Diveley was named 2007 Volunteer of the Year by the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. "I was pretty shocked," Diveley said. "It represents over 5,000 different volunteers involved with sanctuaries across the countries. I really didn't think I would win." Diveley was a lead member on an excavation team responsible for screening barrels of mud and debris from the turret. The *Monitor* was the first-ever ironclad ship commissioned by the United States Navy. David Alberg, superintendent for the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, said it was anticipated that Diveley and four other volunteers would help get the tasks

done in half a year. "Brian was able to knock that out in a month," Alberg said. The *Monitor* is one of 13 historical aquatic sites being preserved by the National Marine Sanctuary. "You can kind of think of them as underwater national parks," Alberg said. It was also one of two ships involved in the first ironclad battle, fought during the American Civil War. "Vessels like this are really important for our cultural maritime heritage," Diveley said. "People are fascinated with our archeology because it's something they can touch in some ways." Part of Diveley's responsibilities involved putting together a photo-mosaic of the inner and exterior walls of the ship by taking a complicated series of high-resolution images and piecing them together. This allows the archeological team to analyze the amount of erosion that the sunken ship and the excavated turret undergo. "We were marking the conservation of the iron," Diveley said. "We're trying to track how much corrosion has gone on outside of the turret." The several thousand photographs measure the three-year difference, paving the way for future conservation of the ship. "Conservation is this ongoing thing. Right now, the long-term approach is to conserve the rest of the vessel, and make sure the rest of it is excavated," Diveley said. The majority of Diveley's 12-hour days were spent discovering artifacts from the sailors who spent time fighting the CSS Virginia, the Confederate ironclad ship they faced in the famous Battle of Hampton Roads. Through the muck and mud, Diveley discovered buttons and cloth from the uniforms of sailors who went down with the ship. "When I was there I was kind of like a kid in a playground," Diveley said. "It was quite a lot of work that went into it. It's being able to go through fine things and have the patience to go through things that look alike." Diveley was awarded the volunteer of the year in Washington, D.C., at the annual Leadership Awards Dinner for the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation in June. "You have to have a real love and respect for history. You really see that with Brian," Alberg said. "The work that these guys are doing is critical to continuing the conservation process." Alberg said it's also important for people who aren't exposed to the ocean and other marine sites to understand their historical influence. "Everybody plays a role in conservation. We've all got a dog in the fight," Alberg said. Diveley plans on finishing his graduate work at East Carolina University in August and will return to Bellevue, Wash., with his wife. "I'd love to go back. Down the road I'd love to go back and continue work," Diveley said. "There's always another ship." (To learn more about the USS *Monitor* or other marine sanctuaries, visit [www.nmsfocean.org](http://www.nmsfocean.org).)

Source:

<http://www.greatfallstribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070725/LIFESTYLE/70725001>

Captain Black Eagle (Captblackeagle). A regular contributor to the site's forum said "Awesome job Brian. Diving off Hatteras is a dangerous thing indeed. Thanks for your work in preserving real history."

### **"60 MINUTES" TREASURE HUNTERS FEATURE**

On Sunday 5th August 2007, the Channel 9 "Sixty Minutes" program ran a feature about sunken treasure hunters. Peter Overton was the reporter. The feature began off of Cape Cod, North America, "one of the most beautiful, yet dangerous, coastlines in the world". Peter was with treasure hunter Barry Clifford. "It can be really treacherous here," said Barry. "There's 3000 shipwrecks scattered along this coast. That's why they call it the graveyard." Peter and Barry were both onboard the *Vast Explorer*, bound for the wreck of

a pirate ship called the *Whydah* which sank in these waters 300 years ago (1717). Barry said that the *Whydah* was the only fully authenticated pirate ship that's ever been discovered. Peter Overton said that Barry had been a schoolteacher before he turned professional explorer. Barry first discovered the *Whydah* in the early '80s and, over the past 25 years, he's raised hundreds of thousands of artefacts, pieces of gold and centuries-old silver coins. But he believes that the real treasure is yet to come. Complete details about the feature can be found at

<http://sixtyminutes.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=283251> . There is a link on this webpage for <http://www.whydah.com/> . This webpage tells how Barry Clifford and his Project Team discovered the site of the shipwreck of the *Whydah* off Cape Cod in 1984. The *Whydah* is said to be the only verified pirate shipwreck ever discovered. Barry and his team have recovered and researched treasures from the *Whydah* for the past two decades, as well as from other sites connected to the history of piracy. The webpage at [http://www.whydah.com/pages/pirate\\_hunters\\_pages/pirate\\_hunters.html](http://www.whydah.com/pages/pirate_hunters_pages/pirate_hunters.html) tells how Barry Clifford continues to direct the ongoing excavation of the wreck of the *Whydah* in a project that has been described by state and federal regulatory agencies as "a model for private archaeology." Another link on the webpage at <http://sixtyminutes.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=283251> is <http://www.shipwreck.net/> which gives details about Odyssey Marine Exploration Inc.

### **STONE AGE SITE SURFACES AFTER 8000 YEARS**

“Excavations of an underwater Stone Age archaeological settlement dating back 8000 years took place at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton between 30<sup>th</sup> July and 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2007. Maritime archaeologists from the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology (HWTMA) have been working at the site just off the Isle of Wight coast. Divers working at depths of 11 metres have raised sections of the seabed, which have been brought to the NOCS laboratories for excavation. Garry Momber, Director of HWTMA said “This is a site of international importance as it reveals a time before the English Channel existed when Europe and Britain were linked. Earlier excavations have produced flint tools, pristine 8,000-year-old organic material such as acorns, charcoal and worked pieces of wood showing evidence of extensive human activity. This is the only site of its kind in Britain and is extremely important to our understanding of our Stone Age ancestors from the lesser-known Mesolithic period. At first we had no idea of the size of this site, but now we are finding evidence of hearths and ovens so it appears to be an extensive settlement. We are hoping that this excavation will reveal more artefacts and clues to life in the Stone Age.” The team of archaeologists will take the sections to the NOCS laboratories where they will painstakingly excavate through the layers of sediment revealing materials that have lain unseen beneath the seabed for over 8000 years. Garry Momber has recruited University of Southampton students to help with the work.”

Source: University of Southampton

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/08/070805133952.htm>

The Scuba Divers Federation of SA is a member of the following: -  
Rapid Bay Jetty Design Group



SARFAC (SA Recreational Fishing Advisory Council)  
Fleurieu Reef Management Committee (Ex-HMAS *Hobart*)  
TRAIL COMMITTEES - SA Trails Coordinating Committee (Office of Recreation &  
Sport) and Port Noarlunga Reef Underwater Trail South Australian Trails

Contact the Federation's Secretary on [sdfs@adam.com.au](mailto:sdfs@adam.com.au) to be included on the mailing list for this electronic bulletin.

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