

G'day from Scuba Dive SA

Scuba Dive SA Bulletin - July 2018

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SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA

(Trading as Scuba Dive SA)

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Scuba Dive SA is the peak body in South Australia, representing all recreational scuba divers.
The SDF is also the 'Safe Diving' Federation. We promote Safe Diving.

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

CONTENTS:

4TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ANCHIALINE ECOSYSTEMS

JAMES CAMERON – CHALLENGING THE DEEP

THE *ULONGA*

SAN JOSE, THE GOLD-LADEN 'HOLY GRAIL OF SHIPWRECKS', FOUND OFF THE COAST OF COLOMBIA

4TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ANCHIALINE ECOSYSTEMS

The 4th International Symposium on Anchialine Ecosystems is being held Lanzarote, 1st to 7th October 2018. (An anchialine pool is an enclosed water body or pond with an underground connection to the ocean. Lanzarote is a Spanish island in the Canary Islands.) According to the web page found at <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/anchialine.html> , "Anchialine pools form some of the longest submerged caves structures on Earth. These typically small pools, which form in limestone or volcanic rock, are located throughout the world but are most common in the Hawaiian Islands and on Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. Anchialine pools have their own unique ecosystems populated by tiny and often rare species of crustaceans, fish, and eels." The Symposium "aims at gathering researchers from throughout the world who dedicate their research on all aspects "anchialine". The sessions of the symposiums cover various fields of Biology, Systematics and Evolution, Biogeography, Geomicrobiology, Ecology, Geology, Hydrology, Paleontology, and Archeology." Visit <http://www.4isae.es/> for more information. WoRCS (@CaveSpecies), the World Register of marine Cave Species aims to create a comprehensive taxonomic and ecological database of species from marine caves and anchialine systems. Visit <https://t.co/7WO9l8DmZx> for more details.

JAMES CAMERON – CHALLENGING THE DEEP

James Cameron – Challenging the Deep is an exhibition of film-maker James Cameron's achievements in deep ocean science, technology and exploration. It includes his record breaking 11,000m (36,000 ft) dive to the Mariana Trench in the submersible vessel *Deepsea Challenger* in 2012. The exhibition is currently being held at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney and it runs until 30th Jan 2019. Visit <http://www.anmm.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/coming/james-cameron> and <https://www.vividsydney.com/event/ideas/james-cameron-conversation-adam-spencer> for more details. The construction of the submersible used by Cameron was headed by Australian engineer Ron Allum. According to the web page found at <http://www.deepseachallenge.com/the-team/tribute-to-andrew-mike/>, Australian Andrew Wight was the producer and director for "Deepsea Challenge". He and underwater cinematographer Mike de Gruy both died in a helicopter crash in Australia in 2012. A "Deepsea Challenge" trailer can be found at <https://youtu.be/C8B4hCINWWc>.

According to Wikipedia, "Deepsea Challenger (DCV 1) is a 7.3-metre (24 ft) deep-diving submersible designed to reach the bottom of Challenger Deep, the deepest-known point on Earth. On 26 March 2012, Canadian film director James Cameron piloted the craft to accomplish this goal in the second manned dive reaching the Challenger Deep. Built in Sydney, Australia by the research and design company Acheron Project Pty Ltd, Deepsea Challenger includes scientific sampling equipment and high-definition 3-D cameras and reached the ocean's deepest point after two hours and 36 minutes of descent from the surface."

James Cameron is famous for wearing a Rolex watch on all of his expeditions. The *Deepsea Challenger* successfully carried an experimental divers' watch called the Rolex Deepsea Challenge, on its robotic manipulator arm when it reached the bottom of the Mariana Trench in 2012.

We have James Cameron's "Deepsea Challenge" DVD available for loan to members.

THE ULONGA

The *Ulonga* sank near Normanville in July 1976. She was sailing up Gulf St Vincent from American River on Kangaroo Island when she dipped her bow and sank about 6pm on 6th July 1976.

Peter Christopher's book "South Australian Shipwrecks – A Data Base 1802-1989" says that the sinking was reported in the next day's Advertiser (7/7/76). It also says that the *Ulonga* was a 119-ton composite power schooner with three masts. It gives her cargo as gypsum and possibly one car.

There were no casualties as the captain and all of her crew escaped in a raft. They were then picked up and taken safely to port. Some cattle are said to have drowned though.

"Ketches of South Australia – A record of small sailing ships on the coast of South Australia – 1836-1970" by Ronald Parsons says that the *Ulonga* was built as an iron-hulled paddle steamer in 1910. She was known as the PS *Ulonga* at the time, PS standing for Paddle Steamer.

She had been built by Permewan, Wright & Co. Ltd at Moama, New South Wales. Moama is on the Murray River near Echuca. Her tonnage at the time was 87 net tons and 127 gross tons.

She was rebuilt in 1948 as a three-masted schooner with auxiliary twin screws. That is why she is now known as the AV *Ulonga*, AV standing for Auxiliary Vessel. Her new tonnage became 99 net tons and 119 gross tons. At that time, she measured 110.7 feet in length, 22 feet in breadth and 6 1/2 feet in depth.

She was then registered at Port Adelaide in January 1949. Her owners were *Ulonga Shipping Ltd*

and R.Fricker were the managers of her.

According to Parsons, when the *Ulonga* sank she was under offer to a buyer who intended returning her to the Murray River. Her Captain on her final voyage was an Albert Cutler.

“Redgum & Paddlewheels – Australia’s inland river trade” by Peter J Phillips says that in 1976 plans were made to take the *Ulonga* back into the Murray River and convert her back to a passenger steamer. The full plans had already been drawn up by a naval architect when she sank near Normanville.

“Redgum & Paddlewheels” also says that the *Ulonga* was a sister ship to both the *Pevensey* and the *Wanera*. Both of these other ships were owned by the same company as the *Ulonga* (Permewan, Wright & Co.). The *Pevensey* herself was built on the Moama slipway in 1909. She was first a barge called the *Mascot*. She was then converted into a paddle steamer and was powered by a Marshall 20-horsepower two-cylinder engine. She was very similar in appearance to the *Ulonga* and the *Wanera*, although she apparently had a bluff bow. She also was a similar size to that of the *Ulonga*. Her length is given as 111 feet and her beam (breadth) 23 feet. She was 30 feet across the ‘sponsons’ (platforms projecting from the ship’s sides). Her paddlewheels were 14 feet in diameter and her paddlebox carried the large red circle (spot?) of the Permewan, Wright & Co. with her bluff bow, the *Pevensey* was more difficult to control, and it was hard work keeping her on course. A derrick crane was fitted on to her foredeck a few years after her construction.

“Redgum & Paddlewheels” gives a detailed account of the history of the *Pevensey*. It seems that she was named after a shearing shed. She was able to carry either 120 tons in her holds or 90 passengers.

Both “Redgum & Paddlewheels” and “Paddlesteamers and Riverboats of the Murray River” say that the *Pevensey* is now kept at the Echuca wharf. She featured in the film “All The Rivers Run” (based on the book by Nancy Cato) as the *Philadelphia*. There is a picture of her on page 63. The book gives her dimensions as 34m X 7m X 1.4m. She is described as having a composite hull, paddle wheels on the sides and a wood burning steam engine.

“Redgum & Paddlewheels” has a picture of the *Ulonga* on page 75 and the *Pevensey* on page 76. On page 82 is a picture of the *Ulonga*’s barge, the *Echuca*. Two pictures of the *Ulonga* (One with the *Echuca*) are featured on page 84. Another two pictures of the *Ulonga* are featured on page 132 (including one of the Moama slipway). There are another two pictures of the *Pevensey* on page 164.

The *Ulonga*’s sister ship, the *Wanera* was apparently at Mildura for many years, taking passengers to Wentworth and up the Darling River.

In 1932 the *Pevensey* caught fire and burned near Morgan. Only the hull, the boiler and engines remained of her. She had to be rebuilt at the Morgan wharf. The PS *Decoy* was being dismantled at the time and her cabins were transferred to the top deck of the *Pevensey*. According to “Redgum & Paddlewheels”, the words ‘Decoy – Fremantle’ can still be seen on the rear-cabin front wall. This probably means that the *Pevensey* (that is now said to be kept at the Echuca wharf) doesn’t resemble the original PS *Ulonga* too closely.

A good history of the *Ulonga* is given on pages 132-3. She is described as one of the finest steamers in the wool trade. At the height of the trade she could carry (with her barge) 2230 bales of wool. That was 850 bales in the steamer’s holds and 1650 bales on the *Echuca* (five tiers high).

The *Ulonga* kept going long after the wool trade passed. She was then sold in 1948 and steamed towards Port Adelaide. She damaged her bow in a collision with a larger steel steamer. Her bow was later sheathed in metal. It was then that she was converted to a twin-screw auxiliary ketch with three masts. She then traded between the ports of Spencer Gulf.

“Redgums” says that it is possible that part of her gypsum cargo may have become moist, expanded and sprung her seams.

The *Ulonga*’s wheelhouse and hull were said to be still very much intact in 2003. Numerous fishing lines and anchor ropes were streaming off of the wreck though.

In the July 2003 issue of Dive Log Australasia, Christopher Deane said in his “South Aussie Snippets” column that you can still see the plank that sprung loose in her bow, causing her demise. According to the article titled “Update on the wreck of the AV *Ulonga*” at

<http://mlssa.org.au/2017/04/13/update-on-the-wreck-of-the-av-Ulonga/> :

Ron Bellchambers said that he had a friend called John McLaughlin who had been a deckhand on this ketch and was rescued. Details further on in this article suggest that the *Ulonga*’s crew of five were rescued by the SS *Star Lily*, then transferred to the prawn vessel *Speedewell*. Unfortunately, John has since passed away.

In 2006, David Cowan said that he had plotted the location of the *Ulonga* on to a chart, using Christopher Deane’s GPS readings (S 35 25.433, E 138 03.760 (wgs 84 datum)). David said that, by plotting the location from the GPS readings given, he found that the wreck is approximately 26.5 km due west of Haycock Point (give or take 1 or 2 degrees), or approximately 16.5 km from Rapid Head (on a bearing of approximately 310 degrees or approximately 21 km from Wirrina Cove (on a bearing of 295 degrees).

David suggested that this meant that it would be more correct to state that the *Ulonga* sank off of Rapid Head.

David went on to tell me about a web page that claimed that Richard Harris (along with Andrew Bowie and David Teubner?) had discovered the *Ulonga* wreck. That website is not accessible any more, but my printout of it reads: –

“After many years of research and searching particularly by my faithful companions Andrew Bowie and David Teubner, we finally located and dived this elusive wreck which sank (in 1976).” The web page described the wreck as sitting “with a roughly north-east-southwest lie with the bow pointing back to KI (Kangaroo Island)”. Richard Harris and his team say that they saw “numerous crates of soft drink bottles, deck fittings, portholes and the Chrysler Valiant which has slipped off the deck” and “A number of anchor ropes and original lines on the ship wave in the current, as well as a fair bit of monofilament”.

It went on to say “Clearly a few fishos have been giving the wreck a fair nudge! Still plenty of snapper and trevally in and around the wreck. An enormous Wobbegong stands guard in the main companionway of the wheelhouse, daring anyone to enter, although the tight fit pushed that thought from my mind. The current out there is nothing short of ferocious! Diving can only be safely enjoyed around slack water. An hour later we found the deco bar just about surfing behind the boat.”

The web page also stated, “Judging by the dent in the forward starboard rail, and the missing plates below the water line, one wonders if the ship struck something prior to sinking” and that the *Ulonga*’s crew of five were rescued by the SS *Star Lily*, then transferred to the prawn vessel *Speedewell*. The crew of five rescued from the *Ulonga* included the skipper, Albert ‘Skug’ Cutler and John McLaughlin, who had been a deckhand on her.

Richard Harris’ two dives on the *Ulonga* must have been made prior to January 2005 because he

stated that the ship sank “nearly 30 years ago” and, although David Cowan said that Harris “claims to be one of the discoverers of this wreck”, David himself dived on it in January 2005.

Richard Harris’ two dives were made using “EANx28% doing accelerated deco on 60% O2”. David Cowan said “The *Ulonga* was effectively still in one piece” and that it was sitting “upright on the bottom”, and all of his “instruments recorded a depth of 37 metres” for his dive there in January 2005.

Certainly, many of the above details are now from more than 13 years ago, and many things may have changed during those years.

“SAN JOSE, THE GOLD-LADEN 'HOLY GRAIL OF SHIPWRECKS', FOUND OFF THE COAST OF COLOMBIA

A Spanish galleon laden with gold that sank off the coast of Colombia more than 300 years ago was found three years ago by an underwater autonomous vehicle operated by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), the agency has disclosed.

New details about the discovery of the San Jose were released with permission from the agencies involved in the search, including the Colombian government.

"We've been holding this under wraps out of respect for the Colombian government," said WHOI's vice president for marine facilities and operations, Rob Munier.

The exact location of the wreck of the San Jose, often called the "holy grail of shipwrecks", was long considered one of history's enduring maritime mysteries.

The 62-gun, three-masted galleon, went down on June 8, 1708, with 600 people on board as well as a treasure of gold, silver and emeralds during a battle with British ships in the War of Spanish Succession.

The treasure would be worth as much as \$US17 billion (\$22.5 billion) by modern standards.

The Massachusetts-based WHOI was invited to join the search because of its expertise in deep water exploration.

The institute's autonomous underwater vehicle, REMUS 6000, helped find the wreckage of Air France 447 in 2011, which crashed in 2009 several hundred miles off the coast of Brazil.

It was REMUS 6000 that in November 2015 took some side sonar images that found the San Jose in more than 600 metres of water.

The vehicle descended to nine metres above the wreck to take several photographs, including some of the distinctive dolphin engravings on the San Jose's cannons, a key piece of visual evidence.

"The wreck was partially sediment-covered, but with the camera images from the lower altitude missions, we were able to see new details in the wreckage and the resolution was good enough to make out the decorative carving on the cannons," said WHOI engineer and expedition leader Mike Purcell.

"It was a pretty strong feeling of gratification to finally find it," said Mr Munier, who was not at the site but learned in a phone call from Purcell. "It was a great moment."

The treasure has been the subject of legal battles between several nations as well as private companies.

Several weeks ago, UNESCO, the United Nations cultural agency, called on Colombia not to commercially exploit the wreck, whose exact location remains a state secret.

As for the treasure, that remains on the sea bed — for now.

(Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-23/experts-disclose-new-details-about-300-year-old-shipwreck/9791128>)

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