

S.O.S.



Save Ontario Shipwrecks
April 7/80

Hi there! This is your first newsletter from S.O.S. which brings us to our first problem.-We need a name! If you could take a moment to send us an inspired suggestion, we would be glad to hear from you. If your idea is successfully chosen, then you shall receive ABSOLUTELY NOTHING as a prize! We would hope that you will be happy with our most profound and heart felt thanks instead. (Times are tough all over.) Some of the suggested names for the newsletter are, "Seiche", "May Day", "Bowditch", and "New Wave".

S.O.S. - A New Era In Junk Mail?

On March 9/80 some divers from the George Brown Scuba Club, Hart House Underwater Club, and the Underwater Club of Canada got together to form an organization to deal with the problems of wreck-stripping. It was decided that the organization should be non-partisan but should expand instead to include everybody. It was felt that because all of us are affected by wreck-stripping, that all of us should work together to deal with it. We then decided to call the organization "Save Ontario Shipwrecks."

On March 16/80 a meeting was held with 24 people representing several scuba clubs and historical societies in attendance. It was unanimously decided that the first role of S.O.S. should be one of education,-especially that of the basic diver. The second role for S.O.S. is that of communication. There is a great need in Ontario for lines of communication to be opened between all those who are concerned with Ontario's shipwrecks. A design was chosen for our decals and it was agreed that we would man a booth at the up-coming Ontario Underwater Council convention.

On March 28,29,30/80 at the O.U.C. convention, S.O.S. took in about 250 divers and sold many more decals. There was however, a very surprising fact which emerged. MOST OF THE DIVERS THAT INDICATED A DESIRE TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN S.O.S., LIVE WELL AWAY FROM TORONTO! At present, we are a Toronto based group and although we plan to expand across Ontario, we must wait to see if we can become legally chartered as a non-profit organization. This may take a year or so but will eventually enable us to obtain and provide funding for other S.O.S. groups. In the meantime, stay in touch! Please send us any bits of news from your area and we will do our best to keep you posted through our newsletter. We will send decals and literature upon request.

S.O.S. vs. "TODAY" magazine

While I was working in the S.O.S. booth at the O.U.C. convention, out came the March 29/80 edition of "Today" magazine. This issue promoted the idea of wreck-stripping as if it were a national sport! As the acting director of S.O.S. I was annoyed. As we Canadians believe in freedom of the press, there is no organization that controls either the ethics or the accuracy of any publication in Canada. This meant that the only recourse open to me was to submit a letter to the editor of the offending magazine itself. This I did (see attached letter) as well as making my point of view well known to the staff. I am sorry that I could not do more but the damage is already done. It would seem that S.O.S. has a long way to go in the face of a very dangerously ignorant Canadian public.

Yours Truly

Rick Jackson

Acting Director S.O.S.

Upcoming Events

April 13/80 SOS Steering Committee Meeting _ Everyone Welcome!
7:00 PM George Brown College
Castle Loma Campus
Boardroom

April 18,19,20/80 N.A.U.I. Convention
Help us man our booth!
If you are coming to the N.A.U.I. convention
and can spare us a little of your time, then
there are many divers there that need to hear
your views on wreck-stripping.

S.O.S.
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April 3, 1980.

The Editor
Today Magazine
2180 Yonge St.
Suite 1702
Toronto, Ont.
M4S 3A2

Dear Madam:

Re: "Striking it Rich" article - March 29, 1980

Fred Broennle and Andrew Lockery have devoted a great part of their lives in serious and responsible archaeological work. This work involves very heavy expenditures with no hope of anything but the most negligible financial return. Indeed, few men have suffered more at the hands of irresponsible amateur treasure hunters as have these two. For a magazine to present these men in an article entitled "Striking it Rich" is quite beyond comprehension.

I find the overall tone of the article sympathetic towards that which you clearly show is a highly illegal activity. The quality of your research is appalling. You list four shipwrecks in the Great Lakes as containing varying amounts of treasure. In point of fact the Atlantic, Lexington and Kent were all stripped and salvaged during the last century and the Le Blanc Henri will never be salvaged as it is a purely fictitious vessel. Anyone having done the most meager amount of research will quickly realize that the real money made in treasure hunting is made in getting people to believe that there is treasure rather than finding the treasure itself. Your author is a good case in point.

By encouraging marauding hordes of amateur treasure hunters, your article has done incalculable damage to those of us who are earnestly working to preserve what is left of our heritage.

Yours truly,



Rick Jackson
Acting Director of S.O.S.
(Save Ontario Shipwrecks)

copy to: Gordon Pape
President & Publisher