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SAVE
ONTARIO
SHIPWRECKS

SOS NEWSLETTER

August - November 2011



SOS NEWSLETTER

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**Submission deadline
for the next issue is
Jan. 30, 2011.**

From the Editor:

There has been a lot happening in the world of marine heritage and nautical archaeology this summer. Especially encouraging are the stories telling how more and more students and young people are getting involved with the preservation of underwater cultural resources.

Enjoy the Newsletter, and think about sharing your passion for marine heritage with the young people in your life!

Krissy Nickle

The Mission of Save Ontario Shipwrecks is the preservation and promotion of marine heritage through research, conservation and education.

SOS DIRECTORS' AWARD 2011

The recipient of this year's Directors' Award has been an active member of SOS for 15 years. Throughout those years she has set a sterling example of tireless service and exemplary dedication to the goals of the Organization.

She has participated in several notable surveys, making significant progress along the path of NAS certification. Originally a member of the Ottawa Chapter, in more recent years she has served with the Thousand Islands Chapter.

Never reluctant to commit to practical action on behalf of SOS, she took on the Special Function of SOS Quartermaster some years ago and has set the highest standards in the execution of that position. She has also been one of the people most likely to volunteer first to represent our group at events and other functions.

Constantly positive and optimistic in outlook, but unafraid to bring forward views that should be heard, this year's recipient of the Directors Award is

MARGARET BARKER



SOS President Mike Hill (left) and Past President Brian Prince present the 2011 Directors' Award to Marg Barker.

NOAA and Navy to conduct archaeological survey of two Civil War shipwrecks in Hampton Roads, VA

June 27, 2011

NOAA and the U.S. Navy embarked today on a two-day research expedition to survey the condition of two sunken Civil War vessels that have rested on the seafloor of the James River in Hampton Roads, Va., for nearly 150 years.

Using state-of-the-art sonar technology to acquire data, researchers will create three-dimensional maps of the two shipwrecks, USS *Cumberland* and CSS *Florida*, to conduct analysis on their current conditions and better understand the technological innovations of the time.

“The remains of the USS *Cumberland* and CSS *Florida*, preserved in the waters of Hampton Roads, remind us of the sacrifices made during the Civil War and give us a unique and rare opportunity to explore a pivotal chapter in our nation’s history,” said David Alberg, superintendent of NOAA’s *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary. “NOAA is pleased to be part of a project that increases understanding of America’s maritime heritage.”

USS *Cumberland* was lost on March 8, 1862, during the Battle of Hampton Roads, where she served in the U.S. Navy’s North Atlantic Blockading Squadron. She sank after being rammed by the Confederate ironclad CSS *Virginia* (formerly USS *Merrimack*) and went down with more than 121 men.

CSS *Florida* was a Confederate commerce raider which had been captured by the U.S. Navy in Brazil. Towed to United States as a prize despite Brazil’s protests, it was lost on Nov. 19, 1864, following a collision with a U.S. Navy troop ferry.

Both vessels are protected by federal law under the Sunken Military Craft Act of 2005, the Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987, and the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution, which gives the U.S. government exclusive rights to its own property.

“We are extremely excited about this project,” said Alexis Catsambis, underwater archaeologist and cultural resource manager of the U.S. Navy’s Naval History & Heritage Command (NHHHC). “The information collected during this project will really increase our understanding of the condition of these wrecks.”

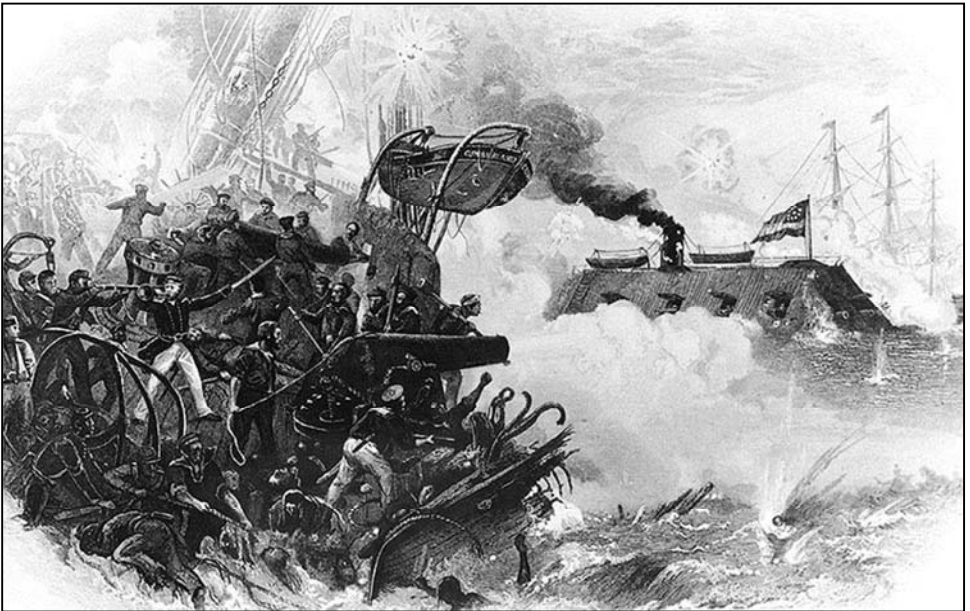
The last survey of the USS *Cumberland* took place in 2007. The survey also included documentation of the CSS *Florida*.

In addition to archaeological and historic significance, this project will also develop education and outreach materials to expand public awareness of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, with sesquicentennial commemoration events throughout 2011.

“The more we learn about our cultural resources, the more we discover about our nation’s history and the people who shaped it,” said Rear Admiral Jay DeLoach, NHHC director. “The survey work on the USS *Cumberland* and the CSS *Florida* will not only improve our understanding of the vessels themselves, but it will help us gather information on the Civil War and the technological innovations of the time and allow us to bring those stories to the public in a way we have not been able to in the past.”

The project will take place aboard a NOAA research vessel from the nearby USS *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary, which was designated to protect the cultural heritage of its namesake, another shipwreck lost in the Civil War.

Artifacts from the USS *Cumberland* and CSS *Florida*, including gun and cannon parts, glassware, and a belt buckle are on permanent exhibit at the Hampton Roads Naval Museum in Norfolk, Va.



Sinking of USS *Cumberland* by CSS *Virginia*, 8 March 1862

Line engraving published in "Leslie's Weekly", circa 1862, depicting the scene on board the *Cumberland* as she went down off Newport News, Virginia, with her crew still firing on the Confederate ironclad.

U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command Photograph # NH 65698

Ottawa chapter announce winner of the 2010 membership challenge!

The membership challenge was an attempt to stabilize and/or improve membership in the chapter. The challenge was open to all current members that referred a new member, and to all new members. The winner of the draw had the opportunity to select an item (book, DVD or dive slates) from the SOS Quartermaster Store. With the success of the challenge, the chapter has voted to renew the challenge for the 2011 and hope to improve the membership to 50 members in the chapter by the end of the year.

Mike Woods from Ottawa was the lucky winner of the 2010 membership challenge draw. He has selected the DVD, *H2O Secrets – J.B. King*, by Nathalie Lasselin.



SOS Ottawa Membership Challenge winner, Mike Woods (L), & Chapter Chair, Luc Lafontaine.
Photo: Murray Hollis (Event Photographer)

We encourage everybody to visit the Quartermaster Store on the SOS website to view our wide selection of books, DVD's, dive slates, t-shirts and much more!

Students in underwater archaeology major get hands-on experience under the sea

Reprinted with kind permission from the Indiana Daily Student

As a young child, senior Anna Rogers would watch shows like “Sea Hunt” and “National Geographic.” Now, almost four decades later, Rogers has molded her interest in underwater conservation of artifacts into her major, underwater archaeology.

“I decided to come back to college,” she said. “I started taking scuba classes and took off from there. It is something I always wanted to do.”

Growing up in Melbourne Beach, Fla., Rogers saw shipwrecks by the Sebastian Inlet, and they sparked her interest.

“After a storm, people would take out metal detectors,” she said. “That really made an impression on me, seeing all that go on.”

Through research trips with IU Underwater Archaeology to the Dominican Republic, Rogers is able to study artifacts from shipwrecks.

“I like to study all the coins and artifacts and trace where they came from and trace the shipwreck,” she said. “There are so many that are out there right now that haven’t been discovered.”

Rogers plans to graduate in the fall but said she doesn’t feel finished.

Ideally, Rogers said she wants to eventually find work researching underwater.

“I’d rather research out in the field,” she said. “That would be my goal.”

However, senior Nathan Johnson, also a underwater archaeology major, said he is eyeing a university job.

“I do want to teach at some point, which is not an easy task,” Johnson said. “But long term, I would like a teaching job in a university and to do research in underwater archaeology.”

Johnson discovered scuba diving after his adviser freshman year told him to pick something random when one of his classes first semester freshman year was full.

“She chose scuba diving for me,” he said. “I really liked it, so the next semester I took a class on using shipwrecks as underwater parks and preserves, and that was just a lecture, no scuba diving or anything fun. It was just cultural resource management, and I really enjoyed it, so I was like maybe I want to continue in this. I just went off from there.”

Academic diving classes, which have lectures in a pool followed by a practice dive later on, are designed to prepare students to go out in the field, Johnson said.

“The class is going to teach you what you are going to need in the field,” he said. “Most of the classes do some underwater photography, they do a little bit of mapping and of recording and things like that.”

Charles Beeker, director of Academic Diving and Underwater Science Programs at the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, leads the expeditions to the Dominican Republic.

“We are working on the Captain Kidd shipwreck from 1699, and we will inaugurate that on May 23 of this year,” he said. “We are still doing excavation on the shipwreck, but we are also doing underwater biological assessments of the coral associated with the shipwrecks. We have a series of students that are working on the biology of the wreck site, underwater archaeology of the site and historical significance of the site. We put them all together for students to get a multidisciplinary view of underwater research.”

The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis received a \$1 million grant last month to support these expeditions to the Dominican Republic. The funding will help bring artifacts, active archaeology and artifact conservation to the museum visitors, Beeker said.

“It is a five-year grant to continue working on the significant underwater shipwreck site in the Dominican Republic,” he said.

Beeker said he is happy with the partnership between a research university and the largest children’s museum in the world.

“It is definitely a way to support active research and undergraduate education and public outreach with museum visitors in the state of Indiana,” he said.

Beeker, who developed the underwater archaeology program about 10 years ago, said the program specializes in underwater parks and preserves, which establish significant dive sites that protect the resources and provide opportunity for sustainable tourism.

“The goal is to create a system of living museums in the sea,” he said. “We do excavations to identify shipwrecks and to identify ship constructions, components and parts on the site to get a feel for 17th- and 18th-century shipwrecks. Excavations are normally undertaken for a scientific purpose.”

Beeker said he hopes his students will help preserve their dive sites.

“I am interested in the historic shipwrecks, but more importantly, I am interested in protecting these shipwrecks for future generations.”

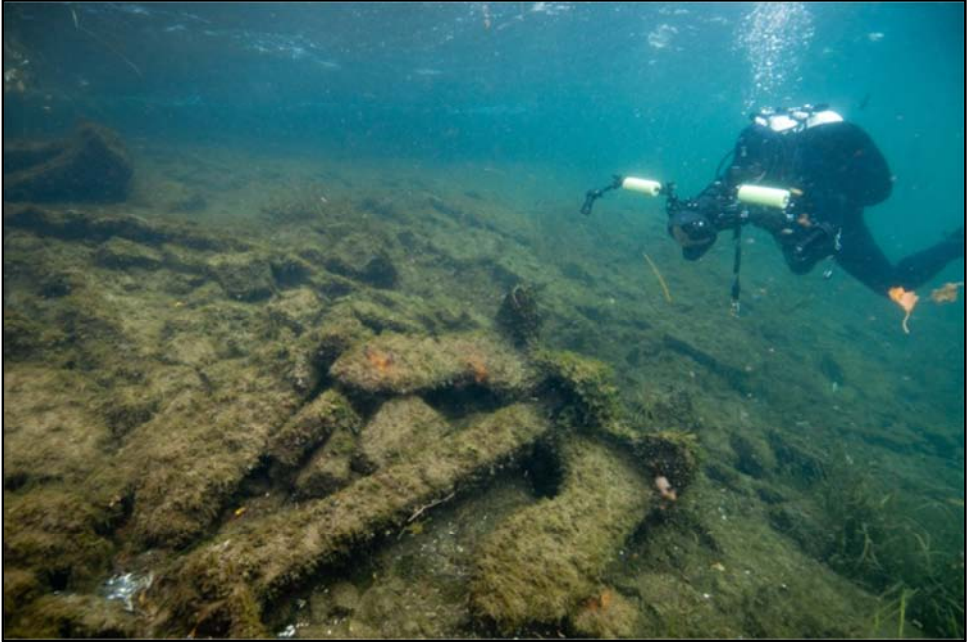
Anchors Away...

Written by Hayley Jones and Laura Kelly

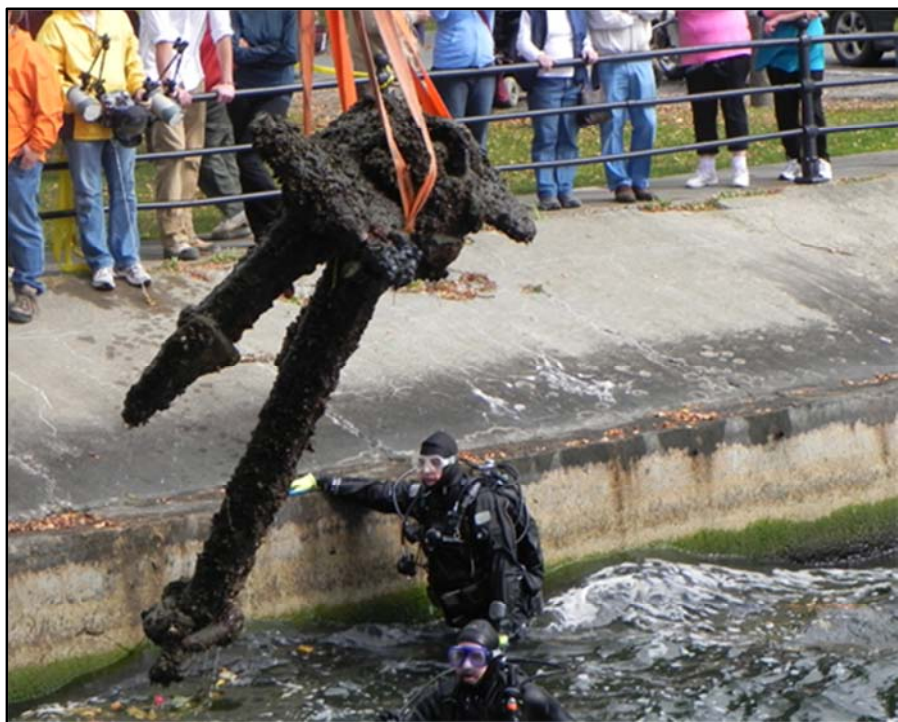
Reprinted from Thousand Islands life.com

From the moment the anchor emerged dripping from the waters of the St. Lawrence River, the twelfth grade students of Thousand Islands Secondary School (TISS) knew this project would be one of those rare experiences which they would cherish well beyond graduation. As the heavy iron anchor was gently placed on the pavement of Blockhouse Island, the students snapped photographs – only vaguely aware that they were capturing a moment of historic importance. The swift motion of the pressure washer removed glistening zebra mussels from the artefact, and onlookers braved the fresh-water mist for a closer glimpse. Slowly, it dawned upon all involved that this overcast October day was one that would be immortalized in the history of Brockville.

While moving the anchor onto a padded flatbed trailer, spectators acknowledged the positive impact this piece of history would have on their beloved city of Brockville. However, the students did not yet realize the effort they would be putting forth in the days ahead, nor did they yet understand the opportunities which it would provide them.



Submerged anchor off Blockhouse Island. (Roy Letts)



Divers from Save Ontario Shipwrecks watch as the anchor is lifted out of the St. Lawrence River at Blockhouse Island. (UCDSB)

Education

Students have been the largest provider of physical labour on the anchor, working vigorously toward its completion on a daily basis. They have been guided by the teachers involved.

"This is an experience that everyone can benefit from witnessing," Thousand Islands Secondary School teacher Dave Sheridan shared. "I'm excited that the students get to see this historical artefact being uncovered first hand."

Sheridan, alongside the students, has been a major contributor and driving force behind the anchor restoration project, putting forth time and effort to recover the piece.

Once years of zebra mussels and rust were scraped from the anchor, the complicated process of applying electro analysis came into play – a process headed up by chemistry teacher Tom Stretton. Stretton's senior chemistry students participated in the stages which will prevent the accumulation of further rust. Magnesium ribbon was the first step of cathodic protection which was successful in staving off further corrosion. Following this, a 3% solution of tannic acid was applied to

the anchor by the students, followed by phosphoric acid with a pH of approximately 2.2-2.5 which is no stronger than lemon juice.

Throughout all procedures in which the students participated, safety always came first.

"Anything that could have gone wrong, we thought about, and covered," Stretton said. Eyewear, gloves, and aprons were worn throughout. There was no margin for error when it came to the safety of the students and others involved. With a mass of solid metal, it was crucial to be constantly aware of all surroundings.



Students removing the corrosion layer with hand tools. From left: Theo Schaefer Scovil, Chris Lautsch, Ken Wardle, Troy Sargent, and Natasha Carr. (TISS)

Perhaps one of the greatest milestones of the student journey was when grade nine student Damien Popkie accidentally unveiled identification on the anchor while cleaning it. The inscription read BALDT -- a word that was unfamiliar to all. With piqued curiosity, other students in the class performed quick Google searches to find that BALDT was the name of the Pennsylvanian company which manufactured the anchor.



Tom Stretton's senior chemistry class applying tannic acid to the anchor. This process was directed by the Canadian Conservation Institute as the best way to preserve an iron artefact. (TISS)

Maritime Discovery Center

Upon the completion of its restoration, the anchor will find a new home in the Maritime Discovery Centre - a soon-to-be neighbour of the Blockhouse Island site from where the anchor was recovered. Even as water poured off the relic, spectators could see the construction of the enormous Fuller building taking place simultaneously behind it.

The concept underlying the construction of the massive MDC is to bring attention to the condition of the St. Lawrence Seaway and the waters in and around Brockville. The Maritime Discovery Centre is a large part of Simon Fuller's condominium project, a \$60 million expense. This centre is meant to perform the duty of educating and entertaining tourists and residents alike about the

ecosystem flowing past us each day -- and what lies beneath it: stories of pirates and maritime battles long forgotten. Shipwrecks. And life, both prospering and floundering, will be featured in the Discovery Centre.

The MDC will be a learning facility built in Brockville with the theme of marine heritage most applicable to the Thousand Islands region. Besides having maritime heritage items – such as the anchor -- this facility will use state of the art technology to enhance the learning experience for the visitor.

When the facility's 3rd floor is completed, the anchor will be hoisted by crane and set in its final resting place. Only then will the roof be installed.

Future

For an item estimated to be a relic from the mid 1950s, this anchor has brought new knowledge, new exploration, and new education to many people today. While this piece of history has been removed from the St. Lawrence, its cable still remains at the 80 foot depth. This depth is approximately 100 feet shallower than the deepest section of the Brockville narrows, provoking the thought that there may be much more to discover, right here in our own back yard. The pitch black of the river bottom is lonely, but the wreckage is plentiful. At such a depth, the current is very strong, corroding the historically enriched elements of the past which lie there, waiting to be discovered and explored.

Laws protect marine heritage from being touched, but nothing protects them from the strong waters which will eventually wear them down to nothing, before the general public has the privilege of seeing them recovered.

This anchor will be presented at the MDC for all to see, along with footage of the students in their journey of uncovering the story behind the anchor.

Future generations to come will be able to witness the anchor's process of restoration through the display and experiences of kids much like themselves throughout the process. The Save Ontario Shipwrecks organization dedicates themselves to the study and preservation of marine artefacts. Much of this opportunity is a result of this provincial heritage organization. It was through the long application process of the S.O.S. that students at Thousand Islands High School were allowed to complete this project.

However, The Marine Heritage Program will terminate soon, the futures of projects like the anchor restoration look very dim. Without the help of the experts in this group it would not have been possible for the anchor project to flourish the way it did. We can only hope that any possibilities of future recovery restorations have not been thrown overboard.

In the meantime, learning opportunities surrounding the current project continue to expand. History classes will need to research the anchor's origins and creative writing classes will tell the story. This is only the beginning.



PROJECT SHIPHUNT YOUNG EXPLORERS DISCOVER TWO LAKE HURON SHIPWRECKS AND DOCUMENT THE JOURNEY IN 3D



A computer generated image of the schooner *M.F. Merrick* at the bottom of Lake Huron (NOAA/Project Shiphunt)

ALPENA, MICH. – (July 13, 2011) – Sony and Intel’s Project Shiphunt team of young explorers, scientists and historians has returned to shore with news of its underwater discovery: shipwrecks of the schooner *M.F. Merrick* and the steel freighter *Etruria*, in deep water off of Presque Isle in Lake Huron. The project was completed with “much thanks to pings, processing and 3D,” according to one of the world’s leading marine archaeologists. Current Media, the Peabody-and Emmy Award-winning independent television and online network founded in 2005, will air their adventure as the hour-long special “Project Shiphunt” on August 30th at 10 p.m. ET.

“Ship hunting was once a long, arduous process – more of a hobby than a science,” explained expedition leader Dr. James Delgado of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. “With today’s compact, powerful technology, we have the ability to collect data by pinging the ocean floor, processing the data set, and creating a three dimensional image. Watching that, I was excited to see how the students, like

the technology, are up to the task of being the next generation of explorers, oceanographers and maritime archaeologists.”

“All of us involved from Sony and Intel are inspired by the efforts of the crew on this discovery,” said Steven Nickel, vice president of Networked Technology and Services Division at Sony Electronics. “It is exciting to see Sony VAIO’s remarkable computing power and innovative technologies applied to this shipwreck hunting expedition and ultimately contribute to a poignant story of personal discovery for the talented student crew.”

“Even just a few years ago mapping the sea floor in real time with this level of detail would have been impossible,” said Jonathan Falker from Intel. “The 2nd gen Intel Core processors enable some very exciting applications.”

Project Shiphunt, developed by Sony and Intel Corp., began in May when five ambitious high school students from Arthur Hill High School in Saginaw, Mich. embarked on the adventure of a lifetime in the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary*. Their mission: hunt for a historically meaningful sunken ship, investigate its identity, and document the journey in 3D video for future generations. Sony and Intel outfitted these students with the latest Sony VAIO computers powered by 2nd gen Intel® Core™ processors.

In addition to Dr. Delgado, the student team worked side by side with scientists and historians from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute* and NOAA’s Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory*.

“The technology used in ship hunting is akin to using your eyes,” said Dr. Delgado, Maritime Heritage Program director for NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. “How much of what you see is dependent on your field of view. Historically, ship hunting was like looking through a microscope. Your perspective was limited to what you could physically see. However, today’s technology, advances in computing and SONAR allow us to step away from the microscope, widening our field of view while also preserving the detail.”

The schooner *M.F. Merrick* was lost when a passing steamer struck her in a dense fog off Presque Isle in May 1889. Laden with a heavy cargo of iron ore, the 230-foot *Rufus P. Ranney* hit the *M.F. Merrick* on her starboard (right) side and opened a hole 12-feet wide in the old schooner, causing her to sink immediately. Five crewmen went down with her.

The *M.F. Merrick* was built in 1863 in Clayton, N.Y., by well-known shipbuilder John Oades. At 139 x 26 feet, she was a typical “canaller,” designed to pass through the locks of the Welland Ship Canal, bypassing Niagara Falls and connecting Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River with the Upper Great Lakes.

On February 8, 1902, the *Etruria* was launched at West Bay City, Mich., by West Bay City Ship Building Co. She was built for the Hawgood Transit Company of Cleveland, but only lasted three years. She sank in 1905, after colliding with a steamer in the fog off Presque Isle Light, in Lake Huron.

Project to be Offered as Online Science Curriculum

Now that the mission of Project Shiphunt is complete, Sony and Intel Corp. will partner with NOAA on a comprehensive educational curriculum for high school science and history teachers. Students will be able to experience Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary through the Project Shiphunt adventure directly from their classrooms.

Sanctuary Home to Historically Significant Shipwrecks

The search took place in the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, located in the waters off Alpena, Mich. The sanctuary protects one of the nation’s most significant collections of shipwrecks, dating back to the late 1800s when the Great Lakes were an engine driving America’s early economy. Hundreds of ships used those waterways and, unfortunately, a number of them never made it across to deliver their cargo.

“Project Shiphunt was an extraordinary opportunity to bring the excitement and science of shipwreck exploration to students and classrooms across the nation,” said Jeff Gray, sanctuary superintendent. “We look forward to continuing our work with Sony to enrich the lives of young people so they will understand and appreciate the value in protecting our nation’s underwater treasures.”

Project Shiphunt videos are available on YouTube, and more information about the project can be found on the following websites:

NOAA/Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary

<http://thunderbay.noaa.gov/shiphunt.html>

SONY

<http://discover.store.sony.com//shiphunt/index.html>

Upcoming Events



Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show

February 24-26

The International Centre

6900 Airport Rd, Mississauga

Volunteers are needed to staff the SOS booth on Saturday, Feb. 25! Contact your Chapter Chair to volunteer.

<http://www.outdooradventureshow.ca/toronto/visitor/index.html>



(Ottawa-Gatineau)

March 17-18

CE Centre

4899 Uplands Drive

Ottawa, ON

Come visit the SOS booth at this year's show!



Niagara Divers' Association

Shipwrecks/2012

Saturday March 31

Centennial High School

240 Thorold Rd.

Welland, ON

For information, contact:

Ian Marshall

(905) 382-2389

info@shipwrecks@niagaradivers.com

<http://www.niagaradivers.com/shipwrecks/sw2012/sw2012index.html>

Upcoming Events



SOS AGM

Saturday, April 14

Location and Speakers to be announced...



PORT OF GODERICH
MUNICIPAL AND MARINE
HERITAGE COMMITTEE
IDENTIFY PROTECT PROMOTE

Goderich Marine Heritage Festival

July 28-29

Enjoy events at various locations as Goderich celebrates its marine heritage in conjunction with Huron County's **Lakeshore Festival**

To have your event listed here,
please send details to

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