

Association News Fall conference to be held Oct. 8 in Madison

The fourth annual Fall Meeting of the Wisconsin Underwater Archeological Association will be held Saturday, October 8, in Madison.

The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. at the State Historical Society building at 816 State Street. Following a business meeting, there will be two speaker presentations.

Harry Alden of the U.S. Forest Service Lab will give a slide presentation on a preservation project involving the remains of an 18th century sailing ship. Dave Cooper, state underwater archeologist, will discuss his recent field projects and work at the U.S. Navy's Historical Center.

New association logo

Thanks to the work of WUAA member Betsy True, the Association has a new logo that will be incorporated into the design of our newsletter and membership materials.



Remains of schooner Alvin Clark demolished this summer

By Bob O'Donnell

A sad chapter in the Great Lakes' maritime history came to end last May when the remains of the schooner ALVIN CLARK were trucked to a landfill.

The CLARK was a two masted, 218-ton sailing vessel that sank in a freak storm in Lake Michigan's Green Bay in 1864. Because of how quickly the schooner sank and the fact that much of it was covered by silt over the years, it was practically intact when first discovered by diver Frank Hoffman in 1967.

Hoffman, who operated a tavern in Egg Harbor, Wis., found the CLARK in 110 feet of water near Chambers Island while trying to recover some commercial fishing nets that had become entangled on the wreck. That winter, Hoffman and several diving companions began to search for the identity of the schooner.

In June 1968, when they first went public with their discovery, the Hoffman team referred to the vessel as the "Mystery Ship at 19 Fathoms", a nickname that stuck with the ship in the years that followed. The national press coverage that followed the announcement led Hoffman's team to develop a plan to raise the CLARK.

With the support of a wide variety of local people and businesses, volunteer divers and support personnel started the process of removing the accumulated silt within and around the CLARK during the remainder of 1968 and into the first half of 1969. With sufficient silt removed, the team placed six cables around the ship's hull and removed its masts.

Using hand winches mounted on the deck of a World War II-era LST, the Hoffman team then raised the hull to within a few feet of the surface in July of 1969. National press and

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State Historical Society Update

WUAA assisted in fieldwork season

By Dave Cooper

Editor's Note: Dave returned to Wisconsin earlier this year after an assignment with the U.S. Navy's Historical Center in Washington, DC.

SUMMER FIELDWORK

In May, WUAA members Tom Villand and Dave Neudek assisted state archeologists in investigating the remains of an 1890s sawmill site and logging boom at Roys Point north of Bayfield in Lake Superior.

The survey was conducted to determine the possible impact of a private marina development in the area. The team also assisted Cindi Stiles, State Region 2 archeologist, in a brief investigation of a possible inundated prehistoric site in Vilas County.

Nine WUAA members assisted the state underwater archeology program conduct a

month of field investigations on Lakes Superior and Michigan from July 6 thru August 5. Those members were Dan Aerts, Al Brown, Craig Fink, Paul Lewandoski, Charlie and Robert Tom, Betsy True, Dave Neudek and Tom Villand.

Following several days of mapping work on the 1856 wreck of the steamer NIAGARA north of Port Washington, the team conducted a two-week survey of the 1909 wreck of the steamer FRANCIS HINTON north of Manitowoc. Robert and Charlie Tom also succeeded in locating the wreck of a large tug in the vicinity, thought by local divers to be the wreck of the ARTIC.

The field season concluded with work in the Apostle Islands of Lake Superior. Additional survey work was completed at the Roys Point sawmill site, as well as investigations of

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The Alvin Clark

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public interest peaked on July 29, when the ship, which had still not been identified, was lifted to its waterline by cranes at the Marinette Marine Corp.'s shipyard in Marinette, Wis.

During the following 12 months, the ship's masts and rigging were restored and Hoffman convinced city officials in Menominee, Mich., to spend \$10,000 to create a mooring for the CLARK along the shores of the Menominee River. In June 1970, the schooner opened as a tourist attraction.

Pictures of the CLARK at the time show a remarkable example of a perfectly preserved 19th century merchant vessel. That and the large number of personal artifacts that were recovered from inside the hull made the results of Hoffman's efforts a unique archaeological find.

However, without sufficient funding to begin a professional conservation, the ship and its artifacts quickly began to deteriorate. Although the CLARK and a small museum built nearby remained a popular tourist destination, they were an economic failure.

Legal problems aggravated the situation, and it was not until 1979 that Hoffman was awarded clear title to the CLARK by a federal district court. In 1980, the U.S. Coast



Following a checkered history as a tourist attraction, the 19th century schooner ALVIN CLARK was demolished and trucked to a local landfill earlier this summer.

Guard recognized the ship as the oldest, documented floating vessel, and talk resurfaced about restoring the schooner and sailing her around the Great Lakes.

But by that time, it was too late. After years of financial problems, Hoffman sold the CLARK and surrounding Mystery Ship Seaport property in 1987 to the Diversified Investors Group (DIG), the developer of a nearby marina. DIG raised the vessel and placed it on a bed of pea gravel shortly after buying it.

As the ship continued to deteriorate, it became both a physical and emotional eyesore. The final chapter of the CLARK began in late 1993 when DIG officials decided to remove the vessel to create room for a new marina parking lot.

However, it was not until late spring of 1994 that a DIG representative began contacting maritime museums and historical societies around the Great Lakes about ac-

quiring artifacts from the ship. By then, however, DIG officials had run out of patience.

In mid-May of this year, a local contractor began demolishing the CLARK and hauling its remains to a landfill. Today, according to recent visitors to the site, all that remains on the site are some timbers, an anchor, windlass and those items in the now-defunct museum.

Subsequent attempts to work with DIG officials to protect the remaining artifacts have yielded little results to-date.

In looking back at the ship's history, the *Menominee Herald-Leader* recently interviewed James Quinn a member of the original Hoffman team and former director of the Neville Public Museum.

"The effort and camaraderie were unbelievable," Quinn said of the salvage effort, adding though that the end result "was tragic. I'm sorry we ever raised her."

Wisconsin's

Underwater Heritage

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Upcoming Events and Conferences

- October 8 **WUAA Fall Meeting**— A business meeting and speaker program, including the long-awaited presentation by Harry Alden on a brigantine restoration project, will be held at the State Historical Society Building beginning at 9:30 a.m.
- Nov. 19 **The Gales of November Shipwreck and Diving Program.** Site: Duluth, Minn. For more info., contact: Innerspace, P.O. Box 16694, Duluth, MN 55816.

Historical society

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the schooners LUCERNE and NOQUEBAY, and steamers R.G. STEWART and OT-TAWA.

The survey work was jointly sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. In addition to gathering new archeological data on nine sites, the survey provided an opportunity to monitor the condition of the wrecks and examine rates of deterioration.

Survey work also checked for zebra mussel colonization, evidence of illegal artifact removal, and other management concerns. The summer projects also collected video on the sites for public information and interpretive purposes.

PRESERVE PROGRESS

As reported in the spring issue of the WUAA's newsletter, Governor Thompson authorized a position and funding in 1994 for an underwater preserves program in Wisconsin.

The good news is that some of the funding is already available and is being put to work providing additional monitoring and protection of wrecks by the Wisconsin Department

of Natural Resources as well as the production of public information materials.

The bad news is that a personnel hiring freeze placed on state agencies, as a cost-cutting measure by the Department of Administration, has "frozen" recruitment for the underwater preserves coordinator. Without the staff to run the program, very little progress can be made in designating and developing preserves.

State underwater archeology program staff hope that the freeze will "thaw" after the November elections and that a preserves coordinator will be on board by late winter. However, rumblings about impending drastic budget cuts for all state agencies may put this new program in real peril.

Underwater preserve backers will want to keep "a weather eye" on the state budget situation to ensure that their hard-fought gains are not lost to a thoughtlessly-wielded state budget axe. The state Submerged Cultural Resources Council will soon be setting a meeting date (probably November or December) to review and discuss the budget situation and future of the underwater preserves program.

The Council, made up of divers, archeologists, state legislators and government agency representatives, provides an important forum for divers to be heard on underwater archeology and preserves issues. For details

of the next SCRC meeting, contact David J. Cooper, state underwater archeologist, at 608-264-6493.

JENSEN BACK TO SCHOOL

In a farewell ceremony on August 19, underwater archeologist John Jensen was feted at a smoky lounge off the Capital Square in Madison. John said his good-byes to his friends at WUAA and the State Historical Society.

Surprise visitors to the gala event included H. Nichols Muller, State Historical Society director, and Senator Brian Rude, president of the State Senate. John is returning to school this fall after three years of work with the state underwater archeology program.

He is heading to Carnegie-Mellen University in Pittsburgh, where he will be working on his doctoral research in Great Lakes maritime technology, economics, and social history. Like McArthur, he shall return.

OTHER NEWS

WUAA's work on the NIAGARA site in 1993 was featured on Wisconsin Public TV's *Outdoor Wisconsin* program in a two-part feature which aired this past June. Also in June, the State of Florida announced the opening of its fifth underwater archeologi-

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WUAA Membership Application



As a private, non-profit organization, the Wisconsin Underwater Archeological Association presents an opportunity for both individuals and organizations to participate in and contribute to state efforts in u/w archeological research and preservation. Dues are \$15 per year.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone: Day _____ Evenings _____

We would like your input on the types of goals the association should have:

- Documentation of state underwater archeological sites
- Training individuals in u/w archeological methods
- Exchange of information between members
- Preservation of state underwater archeological sites
- Public education on underwater heritage
- Creation of state underwater preserves
- Others: _____

I would like to be involved in the following activities:

- Archival research
- Training in archeological methods
- On-site work - shoreside
- On-site work - underwater
- Association Committees:
 - Newsletter
 - Training
 - Other: _____
- Organization
- Membership

**Make \$15 check payable to "WUAA" and mail with this form to:
Wis. Underwater Archeological Association - P.O. Box 6081 - Madison, WI 53716**

Other news

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cal preserve, the 1900 wreck of the Scottish steamer S.S. COPENHAGEN.

East Carolina University's program in maritime history and nautical archeology continued its excavations at the wreck of the Civil War transport MAPLELEAF this summer. During June and July, teams worked on a site in the St. Johns River near Jacksonville, Fla. The project is featured in the September/October issue of *Archeology*.

In September, ECU resumed its excavations of the wreck of an 1830s trading schooner near Naubinway, Mich., in the Upper Peninsula. The excavation is being partially funded by the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History which held its annual meeting in Traverse City in September.

In August, Bateaux Below, Inc., a non-profit group dedicated to the nautical archeology of Lake George in upper New York, announced the opening of a new state underwater archeological preserve. The preserve seeks to protect the wreck of the LAND TORTOISE, a French and Indian War radeau gunboat lost in Lake George in 1758.

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WUAA 1994 Fall Conference

When: Saturday, October 8, 1994
 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Where: State Historical Society
 816 State Street, Madison

During the business portion of the meeting, we will be reviewing the results of this summer's training events and projects, and working on plans for next season's projects and programs. There will also be several speakers (see page 1 for details).

For more information, call
Tom Villand at 1-608-221-1996 or
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July-Sept 1994

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For those interested in studying and
 preserving Wisconsin's underwater historical sites