

Wreck Checker

News and Views of the Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago

P.O. Box 11752, Chicago, IL 60611 Telephone: (708) 636-5819 Fax: (708) 636-5847

Website: <http://www.chicagosite.org/uasc.htm>

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Come Join Us for a Busy New Season

by Liz Jurkacek

All of us UASC regulars are very excited about the new year. We have several projects underway which will give all of us plenty to do in 2005. We need everyone's help both in and out of the water.

The project I've been managing is the David Wells wreck. This is a canal built schooner built in 1869 by Muir and Stewart in Port Huron, Michigan. The found wreck is fascinating for several reasons. First, most of the wreck is submerged beneath the sand. The vessel we

have begun work on still has to be positively identified. The transom has not been found.

The project is also interesting because we will attempt to uncover a portion of the wreck, with the state's permission. The wreck should be a time capsule dating to October 1880, when the wreck sank. There have only been a couple dives of the wreck in 2004. I am including a couple still images from the excellent work by Bob Gadbois and Dan Kasberger. Divers, photographers, and boat captains are all very, very needed.

What we do know is that the vessel is a wooden schooner approximately 125 feet long. Parts of the bow are visible and the wreck is located in the last place the David Wells was seen. The project gives us the opportunity to: verify the wreck; measure the wreck and match it with the information we have; and provide still and

video footage to the state to obtain their permission to uncover a portion of the wreck to do more archaeological work.

The project is only a couple miles off shore by Montrose Beach. The site is easily accessible by boat which will permit us to devote maximum time to our underwater work.

There are many other challenging projects for 2005. Feel free to email me or any other UASC member for further details, including our new President Jim Jarecki.

Images by Dan Kasberger and Bob Gadbois



Shedd Aquarium. Photo by Cris Kohl

UASC Meetings in 2005!

Our meetings are held at the **John G. Shedd Aquarium** just off Lakeshore Drive on the scenic Chicago waterfront on the last Wednesday of every month beginning at 7 PM until 9 PM in one of the instruction rooms at the northwest entrance (the Education side door facing Monroe Harbor). Metered street parking is available (quarters only, 50¢ an hour, maximum 10 hours). There is no meeting in December. We are currently surveying a new shipwreck discovery, plus finishing survey and artwork goals on other sites, as well as doing shipwreck research. **Join us! The public is welcome!**

2005 UASC Meeting Dates:

January 26	February 23	March 30
April 27	May 25	June 29
July 27	August 31	September 28
October 26	November 30	

Sunset over Chicago's skyline, view from Lake Michigan. Photo by Dan Kasberger



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A Potpourri of UASC Activities and Attendances



Dining & Diving Evening

Cris Kohl and **Jim Jarecki** (UASC President and Past President, respectively, although those roles will be reversed in 2005!) did an evening's worth of enthusiastic shipwreck presentations at the Shedd's "An Evening of Dining and Diving" on Nov. 4, 2004, for a very receptive audience. In gratitude, the Shedd Aquarium generously

waived UASC's meeting room rental fee (\$1000) for 2004. We thank the Shedd Aquarium, and Cris and Jim, for making this possible. (PHOTO BY JOAN FORSBERG)

Presidents Night and Zale Parry

The annual Presidents Night Banquet on Sat., Oct. 23, 2004, set up by the Illinois Skin and Scuba Diving Council for its members, drew numerous UASC members, but the guest of honor was West Coast resident and female star of the original *Sea Hunt* TV series which ran from 1957 until 1961, **Zale Parry**, who was in town to give a formal presentation at the Shedd's Phelps auditorium the next night. The classy and delightful Zale autographed UASC member **Pete Chval's** 1955 issue of *Sports Illustrated*, which featured Zale on the cover about her record-setting deep dive. (PHOTO BY CRIS KOHL)



The Christmas Party, Friday, December 10, 2004

An excellent evening of Yuletide socializing and merriment by members of UASC, LOUP (League of Underwater Photographers) and the Skyline Dive Club was held at the Burnham Harbor Yacht Club on Fri., Dec. 10th. UASC had a very good turnout with the following members attending: **Larry & Nancy Boucha, Chet Childs, Pete Chval, Dan Fiedler, Mike Fiedler, Bob & Claire Gadbois, Jim Jarecki, Jon Jedliskowski, Dan & Pam Kasberger, Tom & Chris Kastle, Tony Kiefer, Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg, John & Ruth Loftus, Howard & Gwen Openlander, Keith Pearson, Scott Reimer, and Peter Schneider.** The Kastes performed a song, and slides & videos were shown after the superb dinner, including the fascinating 12-minute presentation which Larry Boucha will be showing at the upcoming "Our World -- Underwater" Show.

Schuenemann Festival, Dec. 5th

UASC was invited to set up a display at St. Paul's Church when it commemorated the Christmas Tree Ship family. **Jim Jarecki, Bob Gadbois** and **Chet Childs** helped at the booth which featured underwater *Rouse Simmons* stills and video. (PHOTO BY CRIS KOHL)



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The Modern Christmas Tree Ship, Mackinaw, Returns to Chicago!

For the fifth year in a row, the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker, *Mackinaw*, docked at Chicago's Navy Pier with a load of over 1000 Christmas trees to be given away to needy families. An official ceremony on Sat., Dec. 4, 2004, saw



Lee Murdock

UASC's **Dave Truitt** help lay the commemorative wreath at the base of the helmsman statue (left center of top photo). UASC member **Lee Murdock** performed his newest song for the first time -- a tune about the *Mackinaw*. UASC President **Cris Kohl** was there with **Joyce Hayward** from Ohio and **Dave Mekker** from Ontario (who were staying at his place), all shooting photos and video footage and interviewing people like the *Mackinaw's* captain for upcoming "Christmas Tree Ship" presentations. (PHOTOS BY CRIS KOHL, © SEAWOLF COMMUNICATIONS, INC.)

UASC Officers Elected for 2005

At our November 17, 2004 meeting, the 2005 Officers and Chairmen were determined: **Jim Jarecki** (President), **John Loftus** (Vice President) and **Bob Gadbois** (Treasurer) were among the members of the radically changed (in terms of numbers of Officers) 2005 Executive Board which Jim will explain and introduce at the January 26th UASC meeting. **THANK YOU** to the 2004 Executive Board for a job well done, and **CONGRATULATIONS** to the 2005 team.

Ending a Great Year of Guest Speakers!



Henry Barkhausen enhanced his talk about centerboards with on-screen visuals. At right, he is with his wife Alice. (PHOTOS BY CRIS KOHL)



The October 27th, 2004 UASC meeting attracted many members and guests to hear Great Lakes maritime historian, **Henry Barkhausen**, give a highly interesting talk on the topic of centerboards. His wife, **Alice**, accompanied him, and colleague (and past guest speaker) **Fred Neuschel** attended the meeting, which was held in the Education area cafeteria because of renovation to the instruction rooms where we normally have our meetings. *THANK YOU*, Henry Barkhausen!



Robert Kurson spoke from the podium in the Shedd's Phelps auditorium (PHOTOS BY CRIS KOHL). Left: Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg chatted with the author of *Shadow Divers* after his talk (PHOTO BY JIM JARECKI).



Attendance at the September 29, 2004, UASC meeting was so extraordinarily high that the meeting room was switched to the Shedd Aquarium's Phelps Auditorium. The draw?: bestselling author **Robert Kurson**, whose book, *Shadow Divers*, told in exquisite writing the overpowering quest by two east coast divers (John Chatterton and Richie Kohler) to identify a mystery World War II U-boat discovered off the shores of New Jersey. Many in the audience brought books which the author happily autographed. *THANK YOU*, Robert Kurson!

The Historic Christmas Tree Ship

by Rochelle Pennington

Reviewed by **Thomas Pakenas**

Especially appropriate for the holiday season is Rochelle Pennington's *The Historic Christmas Tree Ship, A True Story of Faith Hope and Love*. In her book, Ms. Pennington relates the story of the *Rouse Simmons*, Chicago's most prominent Christmas Tree Ship, which was lost with all hands on November 23, 1912. A feel for the era is set with memories of Chicago's Christmas past via descriptions

of the erection of the city's first municipal Christmas Tree in 1913. The tree, standing 35 feet high, festooned with hundreds of multi-colored electric lights, was the centerpiece of a program which included the Chicago Band performing spiritual classics, trumpeters from the First Illinois Cavalry, and the chorus section of the Grand Opera Company from a perch on the north portion of the Art Institute.

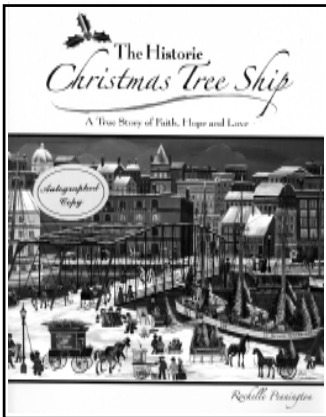
Integral to the story is the Schuenemann family. Captain Herman Schuenemann went down with the *Rouse Simmons* 14 years after his older brother, August Schuenemann, was lost aboard the *S. Thal* while bringing Christmas trees to Chicago in 1898. After

the death of Herman, his wife Barbara continued the family tradition of selling trees near the Clark Street bridge until her death in 1933. Barbara was assisted in her labor of love by her daughters who took over the family business upon her passing.

Of particular interest to divers is a chapter devoted to the discovery of the sunken *Rouse Simmons* in 170 feet of water by Kent Bellrichard in 1971. This section contains photographs of many artifacts recovered from the wreck including the ship's wheel, sailor's glasses, and electric light bulbs which still worked upon recovery.

Evidence of Ms. Pennington's depth of research is provided from reproductions of numerous newspaper clippings as well as quotes from previous researchers and surviving Schuenemann family members. Her book also provides a brief history and origin of the Christmas tree and answers the question: "Who was Rouse Simmons." At the core of this lovingly written story is Rochelle Pennington's belief that the Schuenemann family did their best to make the world a better place by bringing Christmas trees and smiles to the people of Chicago.

NOTE: For underwater photographs of the *Rouse Simmons* and her cargo of Christmas trees taken as recently as the summer of 2004, one should see the Winter, 2004 issue of *Wreck Diving Magazine*. In his article about the *Rouse Simmons*, Cris Kohl includes photographs taken in 70-80 feet of visibility which afford a perspective of the shipwreck never before seen by this writer in other underwater photos taken under harsher conditions.



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Calendar of Events



Compiled in December, 2004.

Dates for several 2005 and 2006 Events and Shows have already been established and are listed below.

January 12-16, 2005 (Wed.-Sun.) -- The **Extra-Special 35th annual "Our World--Underwater;"** the annual Chicago Scuba Show, is experimentally combining with the Chicagoland Outdoor Show. Anticipated total attendance: over 60,000. Everything will be under one roof -- no more I-o-n-g "gerbil trail" hikes from the exhibit area to the seminars then back again for the evening film festivals! Seminars on Saturday and Sunday (as usual), with an expanded Friday Evening Film Festival (1.5 hours long) with presentations by Bob Marx, Joyce Hayward, David Trotter, Jim & Pat Stayer, and **UASC member Larry Boucha**, and a gala Saturday Evening Film Festival featuring Stan Waterman, Adam Ravetch, Larry & Denise Tackett, Michel Gilbert & Danielle Alary, Donald Tipton, and Al Hornsby. Daytime seminar presenters will include **UASC members Cris Kohl and Joan Forsberg** ("Shipwreck Alley: Thunder Bay Disasters"), and Chicago's **Lynn Funkhouser** ("Philippine Potpourri"). Donald E. Stephens Convention Center. Check out www.ourworldunderwater.com. **If you live anywhere at all near Chicago, DON'T MISS THIS SHOW!**

Feb. 4-6, 2005 (Fri.-Sun.) -- **"Strictly Sail"** Show at Navy Pier, Chicago. Concert lecture by **UASC members Tom & Chris Kastle**, plus maritime presentations by Ted Karamanski, Bill Rossberger & Jerry Thomas.

February 4, 2005 (Fri.) -- Jeff Gray, Director of the NOAA Thunder Bay Sanctuary off Alpena, MI, will return to this alma mater, Beloit College, Beloit, WI, to give a talk called "Submerged in History: Shipwrecks and Archaeology of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary." Call William Green, Director, at 608-363-2119 for more information, or see www.beloit.edu/museums/logan/index.html

February 18-20, 2005 (Fri.-Sun.) -- The sixth annual **"Ghost Ships Festival"** at the Four Points Hotel, Milwaukee, WI. Presenters include Russ Green ("Great Expectations: The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve"), Brendon Baillod ("Lost Leviathans: Lake Michigan's Largest Undiscovered Wrecks"), Jerry Eliason, Kraig Smith and Ken Merryman ("The Newly Discovered Deep, Intact Wreck of the *Thomas Friant*"), Jerry Guyer ("Shipwreck Hunting 101" and "Three New Barges - Finding Shipwrecks with High Definition Sonar"), Michigan Shipwreck Research Associates ("Mystery Wreck at 40 Fathoms"), Dave Trotter ("Two Frozen in Time"), Mike & Georgann Wachter ("Armored Warriors of the Deep, Commercial Diving in the Inland Seas"), Greg Such ("Schooner *Home* off Manitowoc, WI"), Jim & Pat Stayer ("*Dunderberg*"), Frederick Stonehouse ("The Enemy That Never Came Home"), Sean Jones ("Introduction to Great Lakes Diving"), Ric Mixer ("Isle Royale: Within Limits"), Jim Robinson (topic TBA), Ron Benson ("The Power of Rebreathers"), and **UASC member Kimm Stabelfeldt** ("The Wreck of the *Ocean Wave*"). See www.ghost-ships.org for more information.

February 25, 2005 (Fri.) -- 4:30 PM at Eaton Chapel, Beloit College, 700 College St., Beloit, WI. Dr. Robert Ballard, best known as the man who found the wreck of the *Titanic* in 1985, will become the third recipient of the Roy Chapman Andrews Society's Distinguished Explorer Award. Ballard will present an illustrated acceptance lecture about his exploring career. Open to the public at no charge. For more information, call 608-365-4838.

February 26, 2005 (Sat.) -- The third annual **"Chicago Maritime Festival"** at the Chicago Historical Society, Clark Street at North Avenue, Chicago, IL. Presentations & exhibits, 10 AM - 5 PM. Evening maritime music concert, various performers. **If you live anywhere at all near Chicago, DON'T MISS THIS SHOW!** Participants/organizers include **UASC members Tom & Chris Kastle**. **UASC members Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg** will present "Shipwreck Tales of the Great Lakes." Added participants in the show this year will include singer (and **UASC member**) **Lee Murdock**, the **Shedd Aquarium** (home of the UASC), **Dennis Sullivan** Schooner and others.

February 26, 2005 (Sat.) -- The **"Dive Into the Past 2005"** Show, 10 AM to 6 PM, Four Point Sheraton, St. Paul, MN. Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society. Presenters: Rick Sass ("Shipwrecks of Bikini Atoll"), Jerry Eliason & Ken Merryman ("Shipwreck Hunters' Hat Trick"), Rich Dreher ("Midwest Cave Diving"); also Jay Hanson, Bill & Todd Matthies, Randy

Beebe & Steve Daniel. www.glsps.org/dive-past/Show

March 5-6, 2005 (Sat.-Sun.) -- The 51st annual **"Boston Sea Rovers Underwater Clinic,"** Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston, MA. The longest continuously running Dive Show in the world. Visit www.bostonsearovers.com

March 18-20, 2005 (Fri.-Sun.) -- The 29th annual **"Beneath The Sea"** New York City Show, Secaucus, NJ. Exhibits, workshops, presentations, film festival. Film Festival presenters are Dr. Ernie Brooks III, Stan Waterman, Emory Kristoff, Michel Gilbert & Danielle Alary, Richard Gagne and Jack & Sue Drafa. See www.beneaththesea.org

April 2, 2005 (Sat.) -- The 11th annual **"Shipwrecks/2005"** at Centennial High School, Welland, Ontario, Canada. Tentative keynote speaker: Dr. James P. Delgado, author, Executive Director of the Vancouver Maritime Museum, and the co-host (along with Clive Cussler) of the documentary TV series called *The Sea Hunters*. See www.vaxxine.com/nda/ for more information.

April 23, 2005 (Sat.) -- The **"Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival,"** Detroit area.

November 5, 2005 (Sat.) -- 18th annual **"Gales of November"** in Duluth, MN
November 5, 2005 (Sat.) (tentative date) -- The 10th annual **"Shipwrecks Remembered"** Show in Port Huron, Michigan.

November 12, 2005 (Sat.) -- The 22nd annual **"Shipwrecks and Scuba"** Show in Sandusky, Ohio.

March 24-26, 2006 (Fri.-Sun.) -- 7th **"Ghost Ships Festival,"** Milwaukee, WI.

For Great Lakes Singers/Songwriters (and UASC members) **Tom & Chris Kastle's** concert schedule, go to <http://www.kastles.net/>

For Great Lakes Singer/Songwriter (and UASC member) **Lee Murdock's** concert schedule, go to <http://www.leemurdock.com>

Information on upcoming shipwreck/maritime/scuba events should be sent as much in advance as possible to: Cris Kohl, UASC Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 11752, Chicago, IL 60611, U.S.A., telephone 630-293-4020, or email: criskohl@aol.com

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Last Eastland Survivor Dies

Libby Hruby, the last known survivor of Chicago's *Eastland* disaster on July 24, 1915 (the worst tragedy in Great Lakes maritime history), died on Nov. 6, 2004, at MacNeal Hospital in the Chicago suburb of Berwyn. She was 99. Only ten years old when she accompanied her older sister and future brother-in-law on board the crowded *Eastland* for a day excursion, Libby was saved by her sister when the ship capsized at its dock with over 2,500 people on board. Over 800 of them perished within a few feet of shore. Libby often marked the anniversary of the tragedy by laying flowers at the river site. The mind of this fine lady remained spry while her body gave out, and the many UASC members who met her will never forget her.



(PHOTOS BY CRIS KOHL, © SEAWOLF COMMUNICATIONS, INC.)

Farewell to Canada's Most Popular Historian

Born and raised in the Yukon Territory, he lived the last 50+ years of his life near Lake Ontario. **Pierre Berton**, 84, died on Nov. 30, 2004. Of his 50 history books, the most famous are those about the Yukon, but his 1996 *The Great Lakes* hit home for many. Besides his provocative chapter comparing the Toronto and Chicago waterfronts (Toronto does not fare that well), Berton observed that "Those of us who live beside the Great Lakes accept their magnitude with scarcely a passing thought. We have long grown used to them..." A proponent of atheism and legalized marijuana, his observations and strong opinions will be missed.



New St. Clair River Book

One of the important bottlenecks to maritime traffic on the Great Lakes is the St. Clair River, connecting Lake Huron with Lake St. Clair and, eventually, Lake Erie. Its maritime history is lively, and a new book called *Looking Back, St. Clair River; Canadian Shoreline*, by **Alan Mann**, a prolific member of the maritime-conscious Mann family of Wallaceburg, Ontario, expands wonderfully on our knowledge and enjoyment of that history. This 128-page softcover book with 224 photos is published by Vanwell Publishing, St. Catharines, ON, tel. 1-800-661-6136.



The 132-foot schooner, *Thomas Hume*, launched as the *H. C. Albrecht* at Manitowoc, WI, in 1870 and renamed in 1883, foundered light with all seven hands in a storm on May 21, 1891, somewhere between Chicago and Muskegon, Michigan. Several unsubstantiated claims have been made since 1905. News of a 1995 discovery off Chicago, quoting **Taras Lyssenko** of *A&T Recovery* which found the wreck, now has divers searching for definite proof of identification.

UASC President Scores a Cover

The third issue of the new scuba publication called *Wreck Diving Magazine* features a ten-page article by **UASC President Cris Kohl** about the deep (in 185 feet) schooner wreck in Lake Huron named the *Cornelia B. Windiate*. Many of Cris' underwater photos, both available light and strobe images, were used, including the cover photo. Numerous UASC members and others took advantage of the \$2.00 two-issue "mini-subscription" special offered by the magazine's publisher, **Joe Porter**, and sold by **Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg**.



The Newest Great Lakes Shipwreck Discoveries

Two unidentified shipwrecks have been located in deep water off Point Traverse, Ontario, in Lake Ontario, recently. Diver/Historian **Doug Pettingill**, who has explored them, suspects that the deeper one in 170' of water could be the old, two-masted, 100-foot-long schooner, *Persia*, built in 1867 in Hamilton, Ontario, and which reportedly foundered in 200 feet of water six miles off Point Petre Light with a cargo of stone and no lives lost (even the ship's mascot, a raccoon, was saved) on September 9, 1891. Both masts are standing and rise to a depth of about 110', and the upright bowsprit and ship's wheel are intact. A second wrecked schooner, seemingly of an older design and in 160' of water, has broken masts, bowsprit and wheel, but many other intact items.

Chuck Larsen of Green Bay Scuba has provided an update on the newest shipwreck discovery up in that area. The small schooner, *May Queen*, only 45' long and lost on December 2, 1882, was found off Cedar River, Michigan, in 80' of water. "The wreck has lots of small, interesting artifacts on it, but divers are worried that they'll start disappearing, like some china did from the nearby schooner, *E. R. Williams*, when it was first located in 1996. There's a possibility that the state will allow some of the artifacts to be raised, conserved and placed in the proposed fishermen's museum between Cedar River and Menominee."

Its time has come...



The long-awaited tenth book by Great Lakes Maritime Historian **CRIS KOHL** is now available. Two years in the research, one year in the writing, "*Shipwreck Tales of the Great Lakes*" offers 13 exciting chapters about mystery, murder and mayhem on our inland seas, including:

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Members cannot participate in dive activities if membership is not current.

Please circle your areas of interest: boating wreck diving shipwreck surveying researching maritime history learning u/w archaeological techniques u/w still photography u/w videography UASC exhibits shipwreck show membership recruiting public relations Other:

UASC Wreck Checker

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2004 UASC Officers

- President: Cris Kohl, (630) 293-4020. E-mail: criskohl@aol.com
Vice-President: John Loftus, (708) 922-3735. E-mail: rloftus@ameritech.net
Treasurer: Bob Gadbois, (773) 883-1601. E-mail: bobclarg@att.net
Secretary: Erick Matuzak, (630) 850-2810. E-mail: ematuzak@aol.com

2004 UASC Chairpersons

- Membership Data Base: Roger Brown, (847) 612-4639. E-mail: 4Rbrown@compuserve.com
Dive Coordinators: Scott Reimer, (847) 788-0417. E-mail: streimer@interaccess.com
Dan Kasberger, (773) 267-6634. E-mail: sarduck@aol.com
third Dive Co-Ordinator TBA
Newsletter Editor: Cris Kohl, (630) 293-4020. E-mail: criskohl@aol.com
Archivist: Jim Jarecki, (219) 923-7420. E-mail: jimjarecki@aol.com
ICSSD Council Representative: Claire Gadbois, (773) 883-1601. E-mail: bobclarg@att.net
Capital Development: Tony Kiefer, (847) 296-3218. E-mail: kiefer@stsltd.com

MISSION STATEMENT — The Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago (UASC) is a volunteer, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of Illinois' shipwrecks and other underwater cultural resources.

The UASC conducts shipwreck site surveys which employ field drawings, underwater photography and videotape. Field survey work is augmented by academic historical research. The Society attempts to preserve sites by

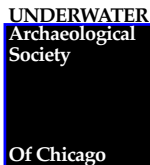
studying the effects of natural and biological forces as well as the impact of human activity on shipwrecks. It advocates responsible use of submerged cultural resources.

Membership is open to everyone. The Society presents the opportunity to meet, work together, and socialize with others who share similar avocational interests. It allows members to apply their diving or other skills to group projects that produce site maps, published surveys, technical drawings, and

educational programs.

The UASC shares the results of its work with the community through publications, museum exhibits, and presentations to all interested public and private groups.

Through its work, the Society hopes to add to the body of archaeological data available to local historians and maritime enthusiasts of future generations. It also seeks to enhance the enjoyment and value of local sport diving.



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