

UASC 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: www.uaschicago.org

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September-October, 2009

UASC's Fun Trip to Washington Island: Camaraderie & Shipwrecks!

Twenty members of the UASC spent several days (September 4-8, 2009) over the Labor Day Weekend at the 10-acre island forest summer home of members **Ruth Magnus** and **Mike Brutlag**. Their house, surrounded by tents and campers, looked like the site of a Boy Scout Jamboree! Four members brought their boats up with them, and Ruth found a couple more, with operators, when needed. The UASC members who took part are (alphabetically): **John & Kat Bell, Hank Fiene, Bob & Claire Gadbois, John & Marci Gerty, Eileen Gustafson, Gene Hasiak & Diane Gulczynski, Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg, Ruth Magnus & Mike Brutlag, Bill Messner, Dean & Karen Nolan, Scott Reimer, and Bob & Karen Rushman**. Here are some random highlights of those days and nights:

- We had the most perfect boating/diving weather: flat seas, sunny, no wind, and warm temperatures on each and every single day.
- We had the biggest campfires ever built at Camp Magnus.
- Who knew? Bob "Lightfoot" Rushman brought his guitar and we had a great campfire singalong!

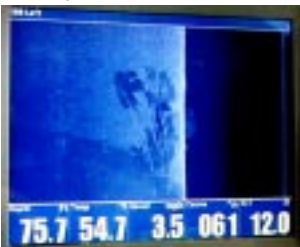
Continued on page 2...

*Right: On the Labor Day weekend trip up to Washington Island, UASC President Joan Forsberg videotaped the Poverty Island wreck of the 204-foot-long, schooner-barge named the **Erastus Corning**, which stranded and sank here with an iron ore cargo on May 21, 1889. Photo by Cris Kohl*



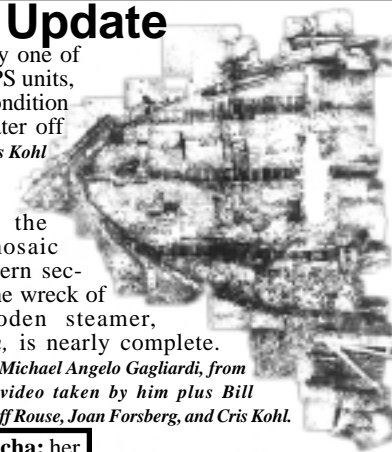
Rotarian Survey Update

Below, a sidescan sonar image, taken by one of those new \$3,000 Humminbird sonar/GPS units, clearly shows the *Rotarian's* split-open condition as it rests in about 76 to 80 feet of water off Chicago. *Courtesy of Jim Gentile; photo by Cris Kohl*



*Right, the photo mosaic of the stern section of the wreck of the wooden steamer, **Rotarian**, is nearly complete.*

Created by Michael Angelo Gagliardi, from photos & video taken by him plus Bill Messner, Jeff Rouse, Joan Forsberg, and Cris Kohl.



UASC's 20th Birthday Party!

The Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, so thirty UASC members and guests spent Saturday afternoon and evening, August 22, 2009, toasting the organization's existence at the home of **Joan Forsberg** and **Cris Kohl** in High Lake, IL. The food was unbelievably good, it being another one of UASC's famous pot luck events, and Cris enthusiastically barbecued hamburgers and brats. A few people also went for a dip in the pool, and everyone enjoyed the poolside campfire after dark. At right, **John Loftus** (left) and **John Gerty** (right) enjoy the camaraderie. *Photo by Joan Forsberg*



Congratulations to member **Nancy Boucha**: her article, cover shot, and underwater photos on "Diving In Illinois Backyards" appeared in the October, 2009 issue of *Midwest Dive News!*

Two UASC Meetings Left!

October 28 November 18

Our UASC meetings (dates for the rest of 2009 are given above) are held at the **Helix Building**, 310 S. Racine Ave., at Jackson Blvd., in Chicago, on the last Wednesday of every month (2nd last in November), beginning at 6:30 PM until about 9 PM. There is FREE parking available in the Helix parking lots, the main lot being on the west side of the building, and the other one located across the street to the north of the main lot. Meetings are held on the 8th floor -- an elevator is available and location signs are posted at the Helix entranceway. We discuss shipwrecks off Chicago and UASC projects in progress, plus we have exciting guest speakers.

Join us! The public is welcome!

UASC DVD: Explore Chicago Shipwrecks!



The brand new DVD about Chicago shipwrecks, produced by the Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago, is an ideal gift for anyone, including yourself, who enjoys maritime history and wants to know what lies in Lake Michigan waters off the largest city on the Great Lakes!

The seven shipwrecks detailed in this DVD are:

- the schooner **St. Mary** (lost with all hands in September, 1860),
- the **Wings of the Wind** (an 1866 collision victim),
- the large schooner **Wells Burt** (lost with all hands in May, 1883),
- the tug **Tacoma** (foundered in 1929),
- the speakeasy ship **Rotarian** (scuttled in 1931),
- the barge **Material Service** (sunk with 15 lives lost in 1936),
- and **The Straits of Mackinac** (a 1929 ferry purposely sunk in 2003).

This 40-minute DVD retails for \$15. Current UASC members pay \$12, and copies are available at UASC meetings every month. If ordering, please add \$2.00 for shipping, making the price a total of \$17.00 (or \$14.00 for members). Mail check, payable to "UASC," to: UASC, P.O. Box 11752, Chicago, IL 60611. **Chicago area scuba dive shops can place wholesale discount orders by calling (630) 293-8996.**

More About That UASC Fun Weekend at Washington Island

...continued from page 1.

--Because Ruth's boat was the slowest due to being so loaded with divers and gear, Cris regaled the slow-boaters with detailed histories of St. Martin Island and Poverty Island, including the story of its legendary treasure.

--The Treasures of Poverty Island! While we were diving off that island, lots of items fell into the water: Bob G. lost his tank boot but it was recovered, Claire lost her Rock boot but it was recovered by Gene, Cris lost his dive knife but he found it, and Gene lost his underwater light but Ruth found it.

--"Ruth Ruth Ruth Ruth..." was chanted by 19 UASC members at Karly's All-American Barbecue one evening. All islanders now know her. Karly's has awesome ribs, and the island's American Legion has a great fish boil!

--Bill placed his wet suit, gloves, etc. on top of his truck to dry. Later, he jumped into his vehicle to make a beer run, forgetting about the items on the roof, which fell onto the public roadway. When he returned, he saw debris on the road and swerved his vehicle around it. The next morning, one of the island neighbors brought all the items over to Ruth's place (word travels fast on the island when a large group of divers visits! In fact, a reporter from the *Washington Island Observer*, the weekly newspaper, wanted to do an article about our group, but we were out diving/socializing so often that we were never able to connect!)

--Hank had some boat problems. John B. towed his boat back from Poverty Island after it died there, and later, Hank traded his boat and trailer to Ruth in exchange for a wet suit (he could have just picked one up off the road!)

--John B. went for a dip at Poverty Island. He could have used a wet suit.

--On the huge deck attached to the house, John G. did a "slide show" for us one eve which included Bonaire and video clips he shot that day of the *Erastus Corning* shipwreck off Poverty Island. Ruth put up a bed sheet as a screen. Hank provided a funny image of a diver's shortcomings.

--Joan, thinking she was stepping onto sand, sank knee deep into zebra mussel shells on the shoreline at Poverty Island.

--Three blonde, Swedish babes (Ruth, Eileen, & Joan) zoomed between Washington Island and Pilot Island on Ruth's Waverunner, greatly distracting all the males on the docks and boats. Bill wants to recruit the gals for his Pony Pak marketing video, and call them "Billy's Mermaids."

--Dean dubbed Ruth "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" for her ability to solve problems fast (as well as for her boating skills!)

--The non-divers in the group went siteseeing and shopping on Washington Island, and took the ferry boat over to nearby Rock Island. Marci G. went kayaking!

--Karen N. brought and cooked real food; Karen R. brought brownies and guarded jewels; Kat experienced her longest boat ride ever; Diane whipped the kitchen into shape. Hank brought fine beverages and Scott brought enough plates, cutlery, etc. for the next three years at Camp Magnus.

--We learned that: you can't have too many coffee pots or dive boats; trying to coordinate 13 divers and 5 boats is like herding cats; stereo snoring echoes through the woods; after age 40, skinny-dipping is called chunky-dunking; there's much maritime history up there!

THANKS to: Ruth & Mike for inviting us, Hank for bringing his boat and compressor, John B. and Cris for bringing their boats, and islanders Paul Swanson, Joel Lukens, and the retired airline pilot for the use of their boats.

Photos by Cris Kohl



Great place!



Great music!



Great socializing!



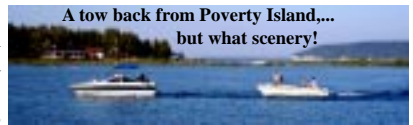
Great camp fires!



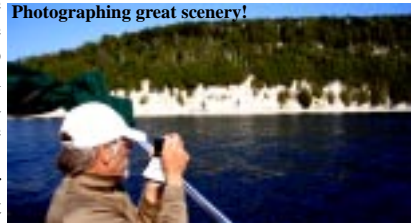
Great slide shows!



Dive boats at Poverty Island



A tow back from Poverty Island, ... but what scenery!



Photographing great scenery!



More great scenery!



Ruth! Ruth! Ruth! Ruth! Ruth! Ruth!



Relaxing at St. Martin Island

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At Our August, 2009 Meeting

Dr. Ted Karamanski

Ted Karamanski, a History professor at Chicago's Loyola University and the author of *Schooner Passage* and co-author of *Maritime Chicago*, gave a very interesting talk on the Lake Michigan topic of "The Manitou Islands National Landscape Designation" (a "National Landscape" is a collection of cultural and natural resources that have been shaped by a mutual relationship with maritime and landscape features.) He related the maritime significance of the Manitou Islands area, and how the natural geographic features influenced its maritime history. Included was considerable focus on shipwrecks.

We thank Professor Karamanski for his presentation! Photo by Cris Kohl



At Our September, 2009 Meeting:

Members' Presentations!

On Wednesday, September 30, 2009, we had a special monthly meeting with several of **Our UASC Members** serving as Guest Speakers, offering a series of short (5-to-10-minute) presentations about how they spent their summer vacations.

John Bell presented Lake Michigan shipwrecks and Florida diving.

Bob & Claire Gadbois entertained us with their recent dive trip to Tobermory, Ontario, the site of the Great Lakes' very first underwater park.

John Gerty did presentations on the *Erastus Corning* wreck and Bonaire.

Bill Messner presented the *Rotarian* shipwreck project.

Tony Kiefer thrilled us with the Red Sea and the shipwreck named *The Straits of Mackinac*, sunk off Chicago in 2003 as the largest shipwreck scuttled in the Great Lakes to date for the purpose of creating a new scuba dive site.

Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg presented the recent Washington Island fun trip, and their new video of wrecks off Lake Superior's Whitefish Point.

We **THANK** them all for entertaining us!

Calendar of Events

Compiled in early October, 2009



October 10, 2009 (Sat.) -- UASC Presentation by **Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg**, US Coast Guard Auxiliary Annual Conference, Schaumburg, IL.

October 28, 2009 (Wed.) -- **UASC meeting**, 6:30 PM, Helix Building, Chicago.

November 7-8 (Sat.-Sun.) -- Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) Intro and Part I courses offered together at Traverse City, MI. Full two days, 8:30 to 6 PM each day. Cost: \$225/person. Text included. Several UASC members will be taking these important and rarely-offered courses. Info? call 630-293-4020.

November 14, 2009 (Sat.) **CHANGE OF DATE** from October 10th! **ICSSD Presidents Night Banquet and Raffle**, Burnham Yacht Club, Chicago, IL. All individuals from all member dive clubs are encouraged to attend this fun event! Contact Claire Gadbois at 773-883-1601, bobclarg@worldnet.att.net

November 18, 2009 (Wed.) -- **UASC meeting**, 6:30 PM, Helix Building, Chicago. Election night to decide the 2010 UASC Executive Board.

November 21, 2009 (Sat.) -- The 26th annual "**Shipwrecks & Scuba**" Show, Sawmill Creek Resort, Huron, Ohio. Morning workshop, afternoon presentations, evening banquet speakers, and exhibits throughout the day. UASC mem-

bers **Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg** will do a new presentation, "Searching for Shipwrecks: The Technology," and Cris will be emceeing the afternoon presentations. For more information, go to www.bayareadivers.net

December 5, 2009 (Sat.) -- Annual **LOUP/UASC Christmas Party**. Burnham Harbor Yacht Club, Chicago. Details to follow.

February 19-21, 2010 (Fri.-Sun.) -- The **SPECIAL 40th annual "Our World --Underwater" Scuba Show**, Chicago, IL. See www.ourworldunderwater.com

February 27, 2010 (Sat.) -- 8th annual "**Chicago Maritime Festival**," Chicago History Museum, Clark St. at North Ave., Chicago. Seminar presentations, 10 AM-4:30 PM. Concert 7-10:30 PM. Go to www.chicagomaritimefestival.org

February 27, 2010 (Sat.) -- "**Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival**," Morris Lawrence Bldg., 4800 E. River Dr., Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, MI. Go to www.shipwreckfestival.org for more information.

February 27, 2010 (Sat.) -- 11th annual "**Dive Into The Past**" show, Minneapolis, MN. Visit www.glsps.org for information.

March 5-6, 2010 (Fri.-Sat.) -- 11th annual "**Ghost Ships Festival**," Milwaukee, WI. See www.ghost-ships.org for more information.

March 6-7, 2010 (Sat.-Sun.) -- 56th annual **Boston Sea Rovers Clinic and Show**. Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston, MA. Seminars, Workshops, Exhibits, Evening Film Festival. Go to www.bostonsearovers.com for info.

March 26-28, 2010 (Fri.-Sun.) -- The 34th annual "**Beneath The Sea**" show, Secaucus, NJ. Exhibits, seminars, workshops, filmshow. www.beneaththesea.org

Zebra Mussel Clean-Up, Haigh Quarry, Sept. 19, 2009

UASC members participated in the ICSSD (Illinois Council of Skin & Scuba Diving) Zebra Mussel Clean-Up at Haigh Quarry, one event of many at various Chicago-area waterfronts. This was a competition, and UASC took 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th places! Participants: **Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg, Chuck & Margo Miller** (who did a great job barbecuing the hamburgers and hot dogs!) **Dean Nolan, Beth Plotner, & Bob & Karen Rushman. GREAT JOB!**



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UASC MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:

- Opportunities for volunteer participation
- Six UASC newsletters (bimonthly in 2009)
- Participation at regular meetings
- Invitations to special events

YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE UASC! **PLEASE RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP!**

Name: _____

Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: home _____ work _____

Fax No. _____ E-Mail Address _____

ENCLOSED ARE MY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:

- Individual Membership \$45.00
- Family Membership \$60.00
- Affiliate Membership \$15.00
(receive UASC mailings)

MAIL TO: The Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago, P.O. Box 11752, Chicago, IL 60611

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

Please circle your areas of interest: learning u/w Archaeological techniques Boating Exhibits Membership recruiting u/w still Photography
Public Relations Researching maritime history Shows Shipwreck Drawing Shipwreck Surveying u/w Videography Wreck diving Other: _____

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2009 UASC Officers:

President **Joan Forsberg**, (630) 293-4020. jaforsberg@aol.com
 Vice-President ... **Dean Nolan**, (773) 550-2737. deannolan@sbcglobal.net
 Treasurer **Bob Gadbois**, (773) 883-1601. bobclarg@worldnet.att.net
 Secretary **John Bell**, (708) 366-0273. JBell@uic.edu

2009 UASC Chairpersons:

Membership Data Base **Scott Reimer**, (847) 788-0417. streimer1@comcast.net
 Newsletter Editor **Cris Kohl**, (630) 293-4020. criskohl@aol.com
 Dive Coordinator **Michael Angelo Gagliardi**, (773) 282-7114. MA9001@aol.com
 Refreshments Coordinator **Dan Kasberger**, (773) 267-6634. sarduck@gmail.com
 ICSSD Rep. **Claire Gadbois**, (773) 883-1601. bobclarg@worldnet.att.net
 Archivist **Jim Jarecki**, (219) 923-7420. jimjarecki@aol.com
 Capital Development **Tony Kiefer**, (847) 296-3218. tkiefer@wowway.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

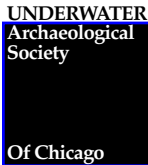
to preserve sites by studying the effects of natural and biological forces as well as the impact of human activity on shipwrecks. It advocates responsible use of submerged cultural resources.

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.



**Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago,
 P.O. Box 11752
 Chicago, IL 60611**