

# UASC Wreck Checker

**News and Views of the Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago**

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May-June, 2009

## UASC Survey Work on *Rotarian* Shipwreck Leaps Forward!

With nearly everything ready to complete the formal UASC "Report on the Wreck of the *Material Service*," we have decided to try to finish work on the wreck of the *Rotarian* (left), which lies in 80 feet of water eight miles off Chicago. Launched in 1889 at Sandusky, Ohio, as the *A. Wehrle, Jr.*, and renamed *Rotarian* in 1919, the 147-foot-long wooden paddlewheel steamer ended her colorful years docked in the Chicago River, serving as, among other things, a speakeasy. Old age caused her to sink at the dock, so she was raised and scuttled in Lake Michigan in 1931. UASC Dive Coordinator **Michael Angelo Gagliardi** had a natural reaction (below, left) when heavily armed Coast Guard boats accompanied us out of the harbor because President Obama was flying to Chicago that day -- and we could not re-enter the harbor until five hours later! Other divers on June 15th: **Joan Forsberg, Cris Kohl, Dean Nolan, and Jeff Rouse**. Video freeze-frames by **Joan Forsberg and Cris Kohl**



A diver's first view of the *Rotarian*.



Dean Nolan studies a porcelain Prohibition "cooler" found on the *Rotarian*.



Cris Kohl and Dean Nolan set up a 180-foot-long base line running down the middle of the shipwreck.



Michael Angelo follows the base line.

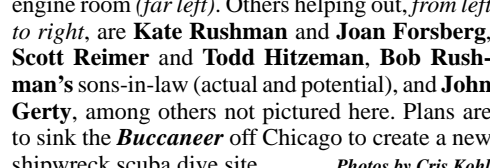
## Buccaneer Clean-Up by UASC Nears Completion!

The UASC clean-up of the former US Coast Guard ship, *Dexter*, built in Bay City, MI, in 1925 and given its last name, *Buccaneer*, in 1994, continues, with the removal of 1,000+ gallons of diesel fuel (far right) and the steam-cleaning of the engine room (far left). Others helping out, from left to right, are **Kate Rushman and Joan Forsberg, Scott Reimer and Todd Hitzeman, Bob Rushman's sons-in-law** (actual and potential), and **John Gerty**, among others not pictured here. Plans are to sink the *Buccaneer* off Chicago to create a new shipwreck scuba dive site.

Photos by Cris Kohl



Scott Mummary steam cleans the engine room



## UASC's Meeting Dates!

June 24 July 29 August 26

September 30

October 28

November 18

Dean Nolan, UASC VP, views Chicago's magnificent shoreline.  
Photo by Cris Kohl

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 Morley Dive/Picnic/Tour



To help celebrate the UASC's 20th anniversary this year, we set up a Picnic-Wreck Dive-Museum Tour for Sat., June 20, 2009, in Evanston, IL. Above, several UASC members and guests pose with the *George W. Morley's* propeller (yes, there is a propeller in there someplace!)

The picnic part was delightful. However, the actual scuba dive from shore to the wreck of the *George W. Morley* (this 193-foot-long wooden steamer caught fire and stranded in the shallows on Dec. 5, 1897, with no lives lost) was cancelled because the massive rainfall the day before forced officials to ban swimming. But the **Dawes Mansion** tour later proved excellent!

Photo by Cris Kohl. More photos on p. 2...

## Explore Chicago Shipwrecks DVD!

A brand new DVD about Chicago shipwrecks, produced by the Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago, is available!

The 7 shipwrecks detailed in this DVD are the schooner *St. Mary* (lost in Sept., 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* (founded 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, available at UASC meetings. Add \$2.00 for shipping. Mail check, payable to "UASC," to: UASC, P.O. Box 11752, Chicago, IL 60611. Commercial/wholesale orders please call (630) 293-8996.



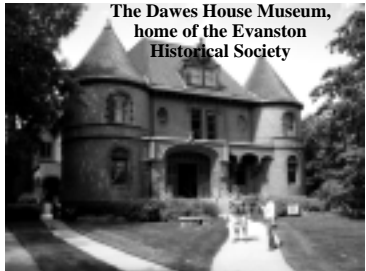
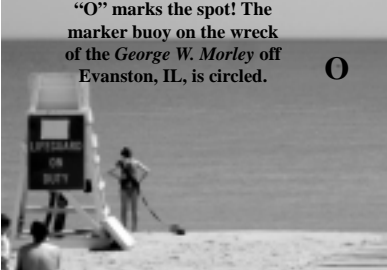
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The following members attended the UASC Picnic on Saturday, June 20, 2009: John, Kat, & Locklin Bell, Mike Brutlag & Ruth Magnus, Chet Childs, Bob & Claire Gadbois, Diane Gulczynski & Gene Hasiak, Tony Kiefer, Cris Kohl & Joan Forsberg, John & Ruth Loftus, Dean Nolan,

Beth Plotner & Family, Scott Reimer, and Cheryl Wickstrom, plus several guests. We THANK Cheryl Wickstrom & her assistants for organizing this fine picnic/museum tour. Somehow they got the weather to cooperate fully (a rare thing these past 2 months), so a good time was had by all!



"O" marks the spot! The marker buoy on the wreck of the *George W. Morley* off Evanston, IL, is circled.



The Dawes House Museum, home of the Evanston Historical Society



UASC members enjoy the museum tour.

Photos by Cris Kohl



**Affordable Sidescan from Humminbird**

In the 1980's and 1990's, a sidescan sonar unit could cost anywhere from \$15,000 to \$80,000, sums of money that only fanatical shipwreck hunters with deep pockets were willing and able to spend. As with all electronics, the price has come down -- dramatically! The long-established fishing electronics company named Humminbird offers three models priced at \$1,200, \$2,200, and \$3,000. At left, the image of the badly broken up *Rotarian* was made using the high end model, but equally good images are produced by the less expensive ones. This is something the UASC should investigate and consider.

Image courtesy of Jim Gentile. Photo by Cris Kohl

**UASC Washington Island Shipwreck Dive Trip!**

Ruth Magnus and Mike Brutlag have generously invited UASC members to join them at their "home away from home" 300 miles north at Washington Island, WI, between Lake Michigan and Green Bay at the tip of the Door County Peninsula this Labor Day weekend (Sept. 5-9, 2009) for shipwreck diving & fun!

Their getaway home at 340 Timber Trail, Washington Island, sits on ten acres of woods -- bring your campers, tents, and boats! Especially boats!!

Shipwreck dives could include the wooden steamer, *Louisiana* (the first victim of the Great Storm of 1913) and the scenic *C. C. Hand* at Summer Island.

Contact Ruth at 630-294-3657 (cell) or ruthmagnus@sbcglobal.net. SEE YOU THERE!



**Wreck Report: Material Service**

Cris Kohl recently requested and received quotes from two quality book printers, with one of them giving a very reasonable quote to print our nearly-completed report of the *Material Service*, sunk in 1936 with 15 lives lost. If any members have photos (archival or underwater) or video or research material on the *Material Service*, or would like to work on this publication in the very near future, please contact UASC President Joan Forsberg asap.

**National Archives Visit**

The Great Lakes branch of the National Archives is in Chicago. Recently, UASC President Joan Forsberg and Newsletter Editor Cris Kohl attended a very worthwhile Saturday workshop there called "Using Court Records to Find Local and Family History." Joan will set up a UASC research day at the Archives.



**We Hear You Like Shipwrecks!**

Wayne Lusardi (who may be able to teach UASC members the Intro and NAS I courses in underwater archaeology) and Jeff Gray (the man responsible for the Maritime Trails signs in Wisconsin) are maritime archaeologists at the NOAA Sanctuary at Alpena, MI. UASC could learn much from these experts. Stay tuned! Photo by Cris Kohl



**You Mean Chicago Had Ships?!!**

Maritime Trail markers, like the one above in Bayfield, WI, teach that area's maritime history -- in a very public way! UASC President Joan Forsberg continues to seek ideas, support and funding for such maritime markers for Chicago.

Photos by Cris Kohl

**SCUBA EMPORIUM**



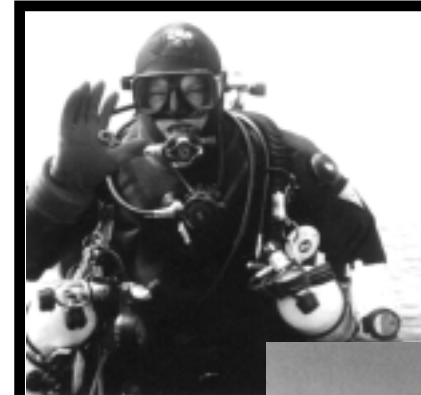
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## Calendar of Events

Compiled in June, 2009



June 24, 2009 (Wed.) -- **UASC meeting**, 6:30 PM, Helix Building, Chicago. Guest Speakers: **Harvey Moshman and Chuck Coppola** --TV Producers -- presenting their PBS documentary called "Lost and Found, Legacy of the **USS Lagarto**" (about a submarine built at Manitowoc, WI, and sunk in the Pacific during World War II, includes interviews and deep diving with **John Chatterton and Richie Kohler**).

June 27, 2009 (Sat.) -- **Buccaneer** clean-up. Contact **Bob Rushman** at telephone (815) 954-7878 or email: rushil6@daily-journal.com

June 29, 2009 (Mon.) -- More **DIVING** to photograph, videotape, and possibly to take more measurements of the wreck of the **Rotarian**, lying in 80 feet of Lake Michigan water about 8 miles off Chicago. After a long, illustrious career (which included operating as a speakeasy boat while docked in the Chicago River during Prohibition near the end of its life, with celebrity guests such as **Al Capone** reputedly visiting), the aging, leaking, wooden steamship was towed out into the lake and scuttled in 1931. UASC is working on a photo mosaic of this shipwreck, plus videotaping every part of this wreck.

July 12, 2009 (Sun.) -- **Buccaneer** clean-up. Contact **Bob Rushman** at telephone (815) 954-7878 or email: rushil6@daily-journal.com

July 18, 2009 (Sat.) -- **Buccaneer** clean-up. Contact **Bob Rushman**.

July 25, 2009 (Sat.) -- **Buccaneer** clean-up. Contact **Bob Rushman**.

July 26, 2009 (Sun.) -- **Jim Haigh Memorial Dive**, Haigh Quarry, Kankakee

July 29, 2009 (Wed.) -- **UASC meeting**, 6:30 PM, Helix Building, Chicago.

Guest Speaker: **Lee Murdock**, Great Lakes folk singer & maritime historian. Summer, 2009: **The Sinking of the *Buccaneer!*** After the *Buccaneer* has been sunk in its designated location, **Hank Fiene** will throw a party for the volunteers (mostly UASC members) who helped clean up the ship and sink it!

August 9, 2009 (Sun.) -- **UASC Presentation** at Beverly Historical Society -- "Underwater Forest."

August 26, 2009 (Wed.) -- **UASC meeting**, 6:30 PM, Helix Bldg, Chicago.

September 4-7, 2009 (Fri.-Mon.) -- Labor Day weekend. **UASC's Washington Island, WI, trip**, using members' accommodations & boats! See write-up at the top of page 2 in this newsletter; more details to follow.

September 19, 2009 (Sat.) -- **International Beach Clean-Up** --Project AWARE Day. **Ruth Magnus** is coordinating efforts with UPS, which is a supporter.

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

October 4, 2009 (Sunday) -- **Underwater Pumpkin Carving Dive** (Illinois Council of Skin and Scuba Diving), Haigh Quarry, Kankakee, IL

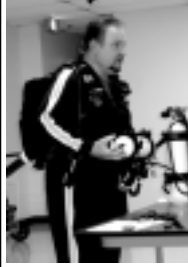
October 10, 2009 (Sat.) -- **ICSSD Presidents Night Banquet and Raffle**, Burnham Yacht Club, Chicago, IL.

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

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

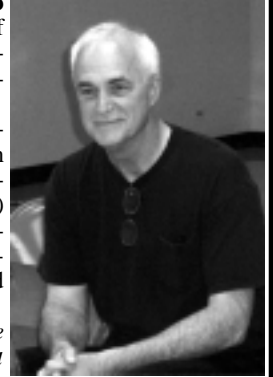
## Don Doherty At Our April, 2009 Meeting

UASC Past President **Don Doherty** (at right), a UASC member since 1990, showed us the highly acclaimed presentation put together by UASC Past President **Tony Kiefer** called "**From the Crib to the Grave**," about the disastrous crib fire off Chicago in 1909. Tony recently gave this presentation to the Ridge Historical Society to commemorate this tragedy's centennial.



**Bill Messner** (left) presented his new invention called the **Pony Pak**, a front-mounted (for easy access) pony bottle with its own regulator, easy to use in an emergency, and easy to unclip and pass on to a diver in need.

We thank both of these presenters! Photos by Cris Kohl



## May, 2009 Meeting: Jim Elliot (DiveHeart)



**Jim Elliot**, a scuba diver since 1976, works with people who have a number of disabilities. His own daughter, blind since birth, took up skiing with Jim's help. In 1996, he started **DiveHeart**, an organization which teaches disabled veterans and individuals how to scuba dive. UASC will be working with Jim and his instructors this summer to take some divers with disabilities on a shipwreck survey dive! **Gene Hasiak** volunteered to be UASC's DiveHeart liaison person.

**Ed Thiel** (right) told us about his grandfather's work raising the propeller of the **George W. Morley** in 1960.

We **THANK** Jim and Ed for joining us!

Photos by Cris Kohl



December 5, 2009 (Sat.) -- tentative date: annual **LOUP/UASC Christmas Party**.

Location to be announced, but probably Burnham Harbor Yacht Club, Chicago February 19-21, 2010 (Fri.-Sun.) -- The **SPECIAL 40th "Our World -- Underwater" Scuba Show**, Chicago, IL

February 27, 2010 (Sat.) -- 8th annual "**Chicago Maritime Festival**," Chicago

February 27, 2010 (Sat.) -- "**Great Lakes Shipwreck Festival**," Detroit area

February 27, 2010 (Sat.) -- "**Dive Into The Past**" annual show, Minneapolis

March 5-6, 2010 (Fri.-Sat.) -- 11th annual "**Ghost Ships Festival**," Milwaukee

March 6-7, 2010 (Sat.-Sun.) -- 56th annual **Boston Sea Rovers Clinic and Show**

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### 2009 MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CHICAGO

#### UASC MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:

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

#### ENCLOSED ARE MY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:

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

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: home \_\_\_\_\_ work \_\_\_\_\_

Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

### UASC Wreck Checker

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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

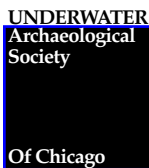
to preserve sites by studying the effects of natural and biological forces as well as the impact of human activity on shipwrecks. It advocates responsible use of submerged cultural resources.

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.



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