



SS MINTO SEARCH 2018

By Bill Meekel

Southern BC Interior Chapter



SS Minto near Burton, Arrow Lakes

L.S. Morrison photo

On March 31, 2018 a group of five UASBC members (Breanne Gordulic, Richard Jack, John Pollack, Brian Nadwidny and Bill Meekel) made probably the first dives looking for the SS Minto. All searches start with targets. Two targets had been found as a result of many side scan hours looking for the vessel. The SS Minto was taken out of service in 1954 after 56 years of service. The plan had been to restore the vessel. However this did not happen due to the high cost. So the vessel was burned on Galena Bay (Upper Arrow Lake) in 1968 prior to the flooding of the Arrow Lake reservoir. The vessel had a steel hull which would not have burned.

The dive window is limited to March or April due to poor visibility during the rest of the year.

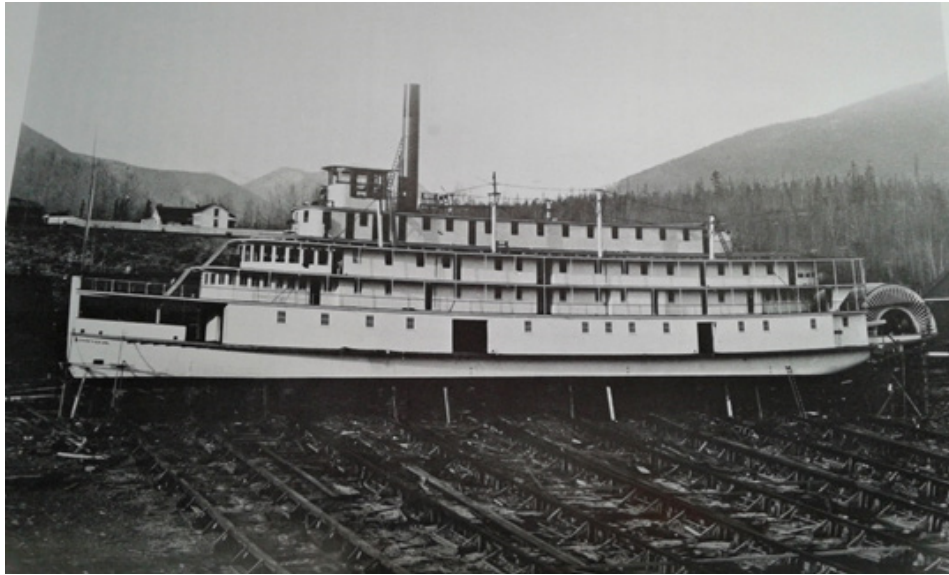
The visibility was in the 40 ft range and the bottom of Galena Bay was more solid than expected. So the conditions were good for our search. Two good targets had been found but when dove they turned out to be depressions in the lake bottom that looked like a ship's hull partly filled with silt.

The following day our group returned to the Upper Arrow Lake for a boat run up to Beaton and a dive on the SS Bonnington. This was a first time on the wreck for all the divers. The SS Bonnington was

SS MINTO Search 2018 *(cont'd)*

a big ship at 62 m long x 12 m wide and launched in 1911. It was taken out of service in 1932. Normally the visibility is poor due to silt from a creek to the east of the wreck. However this April the visibility was good at around 10 m. The vessel sits upright on the bottom in 10 m of water and consists of an all metal hull (still in good condition), most of the decking and the huge (12 m long) paddlewheel axle as shown in the photo below.

The upper passenger decks have been removed since there was a plan to convert the vessel to a barge. However the vessel sank at it's mooring before the work was completed. Definitely a more dignified end to a magnificent vessel!



SS Bonnington on the ways at Nakusp in 1911

Courtesy of the Kelowna Museum

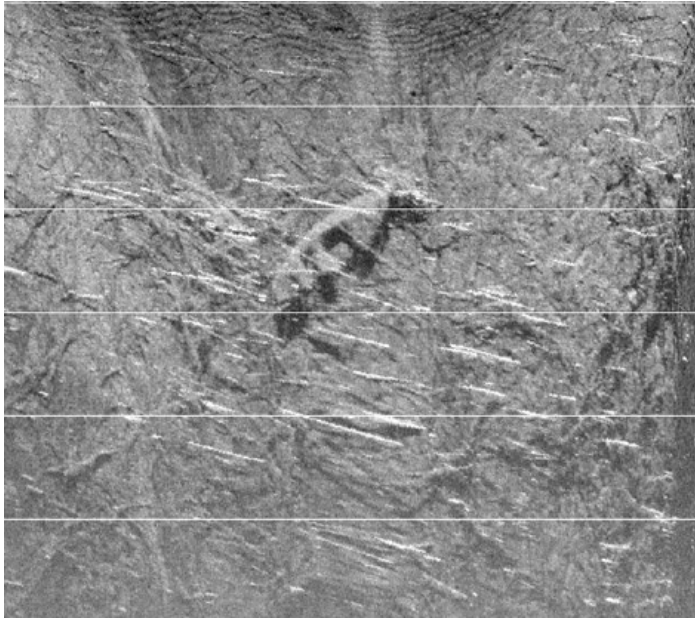


Bonnington starboard side view (looking forward) showing the paddlewheel axle and pitman arm

Brian Nadwidny Photo

The next day, Brian Nadwidny and Richard Jack made a dive to nearly 60 m in Slocan Lake near Roseberry on a site found by John Pollack's side scan that indicated a shipwreck, probably the tug SS Sandon. The image is shown below amongst many logs at the site. This was a technical dive re-

quiring decompression stops with both divers using rebreathers and a helium gas blend to extend their gas supplies and reduce nitrogen narcosis. The vessel was not located this time.



Sidescan image of the tug SS Sandon located in Slocan lake
John Pollack image



Large crane used for log recovery at Roseberry
Brian Nadwidny photo

Explorations

June Dive Schedule 2018

Sunday - June 10

Search for Rosalia wreck

Southern Vancouver Island – Trip to search for the wreck of the sailing barque Rosalia, lost off the southern tip of Discovery Island in March 1868.

Our second dive will be on the wreck of the Fanny also lost off Discovery Island in 1868.

There may be some current during the second dive but we will be using a live boat for pickup.

Cost: \$90.00 per person. Limit 8 divers.

Contact Jacques (250) 474-5797 or email: jmarc@shaw.ca.

SS MINTO Search 2018 *(cont'd)*



Railway transfer barge with Ingersoll Rand compressor

Brian Nadwidny photo

On April 3rd Brian and Bill dove on a 60 m long x 10 m wide railway transfer barge in Slocan Lake which still has a large 1920 era Ingersoll Rand Type 40 air compressor on it's deck. This large capacity compressor was probably used in hard rock drilling

related to mining. The barge is in good shape and there are many parts of the hog post support lying on the barge deck.

**FOR THE LATEST UPDATES! PLEASE REFER TO
www.UASBC.COM**

May 2018

USABC President's Message

Keith Bosson

This will be my last message before we wind down UASBC activities for the summer. We have had a busy winter and spring.



Keith with Dean Drivers Volunteer of the Year Award



Keith with Sharon and her award

We had the wine and cheese party in Victoria on February 3 where we celebrated the 2016 and 2017 volunteers of year. Dean Driver, past communications director was recognized for his contributions for 2016 and Sharon Bossons was recognized for doing the book keeping and administrative activities in 2017.

Our interior chapter conducted a survey of a submerged wagon at Kaslo and a search for the SS Minto in upper Arrow Lake in the month of April.

We ran a very successful Shipwreck's Conference in Victoria on April 7. The theme of this year's conference was Exploring the Ocean Depths. We had an excellent line-up of speakers for this well attended event.

Unfortunately we had to cancel our April Southern Gulf Islands Expedition in April due to lack of participants. The was disappointing as it puts us further behind in completing this project, however, we will regroup and get back at it in the fall.

We also had our Annual General Meeting in Victoria on April 22 where we passed a special resolution to update our Constitution and Bylaws to comply with recent changes to the Societies Act. We also welcomed Ewan Anderson as a new director of the Society. Ewan will be helping out with Communications.

In terms of upcoming events, there will be a presentation sponsored by the Vancouver Maritime Museum on the excavation of Japanese-Canadian fishing boat, the Sunny Island, which the UASBC participated in with the VMM last summer. The talk will be given by underwater archaeologist Charles Moore and VMM curator Duncan McLeod on May 24. If you are interested you can find the details on the VMM website.

Well that pretty much covers everything.

I wish everyone a safe and pleasant summer.

*Keith Bossons
UASBC President*

In search of the Elusive Enterprise

In search of the Elusive Enterprise

*By
Jacques Marc*



Jacques & Mellisa ready to go

On Saturday February 17th there were gale force winds in the vicinity of Victoria. Trees were toppling and the afternoon ferry sailings were canceled. Late in the afternoon I received a couple of emails asking if the Enterprise dive was still a go for Sunday. I had been keeping my eye on the marine forecast all day wrestling with that very question. The weather forecast was questionable, but I rationalized that if the wind was coming from the Northeast as predicted we should be ok, as Cadboro Bay would be protected.

Our goal was to continue the search for the SS Enterprise. The Society has been searching for this wreck since the early 1990s without success. The Enterprise was in a collision with the sternwheeler R.P. Rithet off 10 Mile point on July 28, 1885. The heavily damaged

Enterprise was towed into Cadboro Bay and beached. Photographs of Enterprise taken a day or two later show her to have water midway up the paddle box. The paddles were 20 feet in diameter. Allowing for 4-5 feet of hull beneath the paddles suggests she was resting in at least 15 feet of water when the photo was taken. Assuming the photo was taken at low or mid-tide given the exposed beach visible in background, she could lie in 20 feet of water at high tide. These depth parameters would influence our search design.

On Sunday morning I woke up and found that there wasn't a lot of wind. I crossed my fingers loaded my gear and headed to Cadboro Bay. Arriving at 08:30, I found Jiri Kotler already on site.

The wind had picked up some since I left home, but it



Ewan & Warren walking down Carboro Bay Beach

was coming from the Northeast as predicted.

There were no significant waves on Cadboro Bay as it is protected from a Northeaster. I enlisted Jiri's help to set up the start locations for each search group. By 09:00 we had 10 people on site ready to go. Participants included George Silvestrini, Jiri Kotler, Warren Bush, Joshua Smith, Ewan Anderson and I from the UASBC. Melissa Corfield, Chris Locker, Joakim Hjelm and Ian Stephen represented GUE.

Buddy teams were set and each team were assigned a transect to swim. The Scooter divers were assigned transects across the bay. The swim teams were assigned transects from beach positions.

The instructions to the beach swim teams were to swim out at a compass bearing of 147 degrees to a depth of 25 feet. Once in 25 feet of water, they were instructed to move 60 meters west and return to the beach on a reciprocal bearing. The scooter divers were to go to pre-assigned locations on the east and west sides of the bay and do scooter runs east and west across the bay.

While putting on his wetsuit Warren discovered he had a problem with his zipper. It was missing in its entirety. This meant we now had two teams. George volunteered to do the dive log and track the divers as a threesome is always awkward. After doing their transects each team reported in. Jiri and Joshua reported a couple of tires, Jacques and Melissa reported three tires, one crab trap, one length of chain and a frying pan flipper. The scooter divers Chris and Joakim (doing the purple route) reported one sunken clinker built row boat in the vicinity of the anchored sailboats. Ewan and Ian (doing the red route) spotted some solid metal bits quite near the east shore and also came across a few logs in the centre of the bay. They reported that the underwater viz in the vicinity of the anchored sailboats on the west side of the bay was zilch because the anchor chains were stirring up the bottom.

Once everyone had returned to the Gyro park parking lot we packed our gear and moved into the warm confines of the Smuggler Cove pub where we re-hashed the dives.

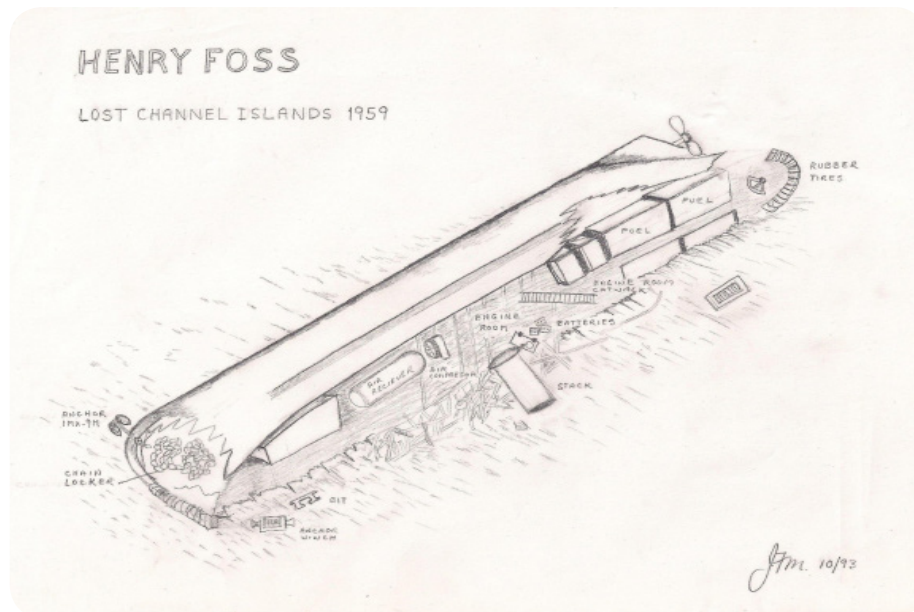
The Historic & Tragic “Henry Foss”

UASBC Revisits the Historic & Tragic “Henry Foss”

By
George Silvestrini

As we were returning to port after another (disappointing) search off Saltspring Island for the Emily Harris we decided to see if we could relocate the Henry Foss wreck using the on board side-looking sonar. After several passes we were sure we had it. Clouds of fish marked the spot. Jiri said we have to dive this! All I could think of was the horror stories from divers on the last UASBC trip to this wreck in 1994 saying it was the deepest, darkest, murkiest and scariest dive they have ever been on! But that was over 20 years ago. I’m sure conditions have improved and we were curious to see what was down there.

Meeting at the Van Isle Marina we were greeted by the ever cheerful and entertaining Erin Bradley. We quickly loaded our gear onto the Cape Able and were on our way. Conditions were perfect. Cloudy with light winds and smooth seas. UASBC members on this trip were: Jacques Marc, Jiri Kotler, George Silvestrini, Paul Spencer, Ewan Anderson, Damien Harabalja, Jeff Cholak and Tyler Armeneau.



Henry Foss as it appeared in 1994

Rounding Beaver Point on Saltspring Island the Channel Islands were in sight. We got ready to search with sonar and Jacques file notes. We found it and marked the spot with a float... twice. The second time we used a longer line so the float would reach the surface in the strong current! Our tech divers went down first and confirmed that our markings were in the right place. This made it a lot easier for the rest of us. It was straight down the line into the blackness. It was dark (black below 80'), murky (5' vis) but not scary (as long as we held onto that line). With a no decompression time of 15 minutes at 115' it was a short dive. We had enough time to swim the entire wreck but no surveys or measurements. It is lying on its port side with the bow pointed toward Gan- ges. The captain tried for a safe harbour after having run aground but that was not the case as it sunk on this spot on February 13, 1959.

The Henry Foss was a wooden tug, built in Seattle in 1900, with a length of 90', and powered by a 1000 hp diesel engine.

The Historic & Tragic “Henry Foss” (cont’d)

The Foss was heading to Ladysmith to pick up a log tow for Port Angeles when it ran hard aground at 04:00 on a stormy night with 50 knot winds, rough seas and driving rain. The captain backed the vessel off the rock to disaster. Once off the rock the vessel quickly filled with water and sank. The seven man crew had to quickly abandon ship launching the lifeboat and work boat. While trying to climb into the lifeboat the tug took a sudden list causing the deck gear and mast to come crashing down alongside the two boats swamping them. A minute later, the tug rolled completely over and sank throwing all seven men into the cold rough water. Although they all reached the overturned lifeboat and hung on, slowly they succumbed to hypothermia and one by one they slipped below the surface.



Preparing to Dive the Foss



George Silvestrini recovering Marker from wreck

Two held on until rescued, but only one survived and continued to work for the company for forty years. The loss of six men was a tragic event for the Foss towing company.

This dive was a success! We now have accurate coordinates for this wreck’s location and were able to check on its condition. This site is definitely worth another visit to add to our knowledge base of this important wreck. Hopefully we can do it sooner than 24 years!

Shipwrecks Conference 2018

Shipwrecks 2108: Exploring the Ocean Depths

by
By: John Middleton

The UASBC held its annual Shipwrecks Conference on Saturday April 7th at the Cedar Hill Golf Course in Victoria. This event which has been held since 1987, alternates between Victoria and Vancouver and is much anticipated by divers, maritime historians and undersea techies alike. The last three Victoria conferences had been held at the CFB Esquimalt Pacific Fleet Club, but with the closing of that venue earlier this year it proved necessary to find a new one and the golf course clubhouse proved to be ideal in many ways: free parking, pastoral setting and spacious venue.

Fifty five people attended the day session which consisted of six speakers talking on varied topics. Below is a brief overview of the day's talks.

The morning started with well known underwater videographer Neil McDaniel recounting his diving adventure to the Bowie Seamount, located 180 km off the west coast of Haida Gwaii. Thanks to Gary Grant who has provided the UASBC with a live aboard dive platform for many a trip over the years, Neil, Donny Reid and Randy Haight were able to get out to the Seamount between storms and dive and document the unique flora and fauna of that remote dive site. We learned about acid kelp and mola mola and prow fish to name just a few of the many species they recorded. Neil's account of organizing the expedition and his underwater footage provided a firsthand account of a real life adventure off our west coast.

After morning coffee, Doug Bancroft CEO of the Canadian Scientific Submersible Facility (CSSF) gave

us a slide show and talk about the work they have been involved in using the ROPOS submersible which ranged from dives on the hydro thermal vents and cold water corals to search and rescue operations to find a lost RCAF CF-18 and dives on the BC Ferry Queen of the North which sank off Gil Island in 2006. Particularly interesting was his account of the rescue of PISCES 3 and her 2 crew by Pisces 4 in over 1500 feet of water off the coast of Ireland.

Next up was UASBC member and Senior Archaeologist at Terra Archaeology, Ewan Anderson. Ewan has done some 3D wreck imaging for the UASBC recently and showcased just how powerful a tool Photogrammetry is for underwater surveying. He talked about its development history and showed how it is being used today in underwater surveying to create 3 dimensional models. What would have taken many days of survey dives and drafting in the past can now be accom-



*Doug Bancroft speaking at Shipwrecks Conference
2018 Jacques Marc photo*

Shipwrecks Conference 2018(cont'd)



Ewan Anderson speaking at Shipwrecks Conference 2018
Jacques Marc photo



Dr. Kim Juniper speaking at Shipwrecks Conference 2018

plished with a series of overlapping photos and software, in a matter of hours. This is a real game changer for underwater archaeology.

After lunch, UASBC Explorations Director, Jacques Marc talked about the little known torpedoing by a Japanese Sub in 1942 of the 3200 ton SS Coast Trader and its recent discovery off Cape Flattery. Jacques showed us some great footage taken in June 2015 by Robert Ballard's research vessel Nautilus using the Hercules and Argus submersibles. The state of preservation of this wreck sitting upright on the bottom at 140 meters was quite remarkable, as was seeing the deck mounted gun and ship's brass bell still lying on the deck where it fell.

Dave Jackson a recently retired manager at the Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS) has provided the UASBC with many actual shipwreck targets over the years. At the conference, he gave us a very comprehensive overview of the work that the CHS has done and continues to do. While much of the west coast has now been surveyed, it was interesting to learn that there is still much work to be done. With the advent of GPS computer guided berthing of large vessels the CHS is using the latest multi beam sonar to create berthing charts of major docking facilities. It was also surprising to learn that the CHS has located plane wrecks off Pat Bay, many wrecked as a result of Second World

War training accidents.

The last but not least speaker for the day session was Ocean Network Canada (ONC) Chief Scientist Dr Kim Juniper. Kim talked about the work ONC has been involved in related to hydro thermal vents and the undersea cabled observatories off the west coast and the Arctic. What was particularly interesting was his overview of what is happening globally with regards to deep undersea mining. The images of massive remotely operated mining machines plowing up the ocean bottom in search of sulfide minerals and manganese nodules while creating massive "plumes" of silt were eye opening and disturbing. It was a wakeup call to what the future may hold for the world's oceans if this type of mining proceeds.

The busy and informative day concluded with a no host bar and a great dinner before turning the floor over to the Woodward sponsored keynote speaker, Robert Schwemmer the Regional Maritime Heritage Coordinator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) west coast region. Robert gave us an informative presentation about the recent survey work that NOAA has been conducting in the National Marine Sanctuaries off the west coast. It has estimated that there are over 300 shipwrecks in this area covering about 1200 square miles. Many wrecks have already been located with more to find.



Shipwrecks Conference 2018 (cont'd)

All in it was a great day. A chance to be entertained, learn a lot, make new friends and re-connect with old ones. Stay tuned for next year's Shipwrecks which will be in Vancouver.



*Evening Banquet Shipwrecks Conference 2018
Jacques Marc photo*

Foghorn (ISSN 1198-7081) is published quarterly by the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia (UASBC), c/o the Vancouver Maritime Museum, 1905 Ogden Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6J 1A3 www.UASBC.com. The UASBC is a group of volunteer avocational and professional underwater archaeologists who conserve, preserve, and protect the maritime heritage lying beneath BC's coastal and inland waters.

UASBC Executive

President Keith Bossons
Past President Bronwen Young
Treasurer Erik C Young
Communications Dir. Ewan Anderson
Membership Secretary Holger Heitland
Lower Mainland Dir. Tom Beasley
Van. Island Dir. John Middleton
Southern Interior Dir. Bill Meekel
Education Dir. Bronwen Young
Exploration Dir. Jacques Marc

Layout

Anji Smith
Gary Lambeth

Editorial Material

Opinions expressed in Foghorn are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the UASBC. Copyright © 2015, the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted without the publisher's written permission

