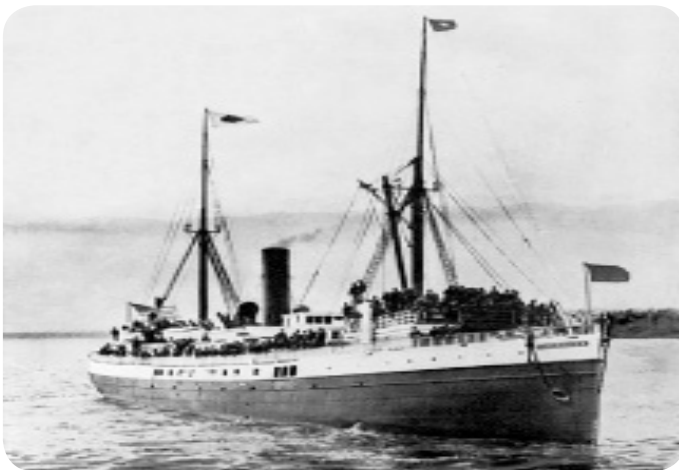


Commemorating the Valencia Wreck of 1906

by,
Jacques Marc



Valencia, circa 1905 (Complements from Wikiwand)



Unveiling Valencia Plaque

On January 22, 1906 the Pacific Coast steamship vessel SS Valencia was inbound from San Francisco for Victoria and Seattle with 108 passengers and a crew of 65. She overran her dead reckoning position off the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and went ashore on Vancouver Islands rugged west coast 5 miles east of Pachena Point, just before midnight. Despite high seas, attempts were made in the blackness of night to launch the life boats. Most never made it clear of the ship, overturning immediately and spilling their occupants into the sea, where they either drowned or were thrown on the rocks. The final lifeboat did get away successfully at day break and got word to authorities. Rescue vessels arrived on scene the next day but were unable to approach Valencia due to the rough sea conditions. A line was fired to shore but nobody was there to receive it. As a last desperate effort, the life rafts were launched with two making it though the breakers. By the end of the second day all the remaining people who had climbed the masts or huddled on the aft cabin were flung into the sea. In the end 136 men, women and children were lost. There were only 37 survivors, all men.

The loss of the Valencia resulted in inquiries on both sides of the border. The Canadian Commission of Inquiry into this tragedy generated numerous recommendations that were ultimately implemented. The Department of Marine and Fisheries built a new lighthouse at Pachena Point. Lifeboat stations were constructed at Bamfield, Clo-oose

Continued on page 2

Commemorating the Valencia Wreck of 1906(cont'd)

and Tofino and the telegraph line between Bamfield and Port Renfrew was upgraded to road and trail status.

January 22, 2006 marked the 100th anniversary of the Valencia sinking. To commemorate this milestone the community of Bamfield hosted a special Valencia weekend on January 21 & 22 2006. I attended the event and did a presentation on diving West Coast wrecks including Valencia.



Rix Centre Bamfield "The Rix Centre for Ocean Discoveries"

The weekend generated a lot of interest in west coast wrecks, and one of the ideas that gained momentum was getting Valencia designated as a National Historic Site.

Heather Cooper of the Bamfield Community School Association took the lead and began working on the nomination papers. The UASBC provided a strong letter of support and endorsement. The wording of the nomination had to be done carefully. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada do not recognize or designate disaster sites. Accordingly the nomination papers proposed Valencia as National Historic Event. I.e. it was her wrecking that led to new navigational aids and services that changed the course of history. The final proposal was submitted to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board in June 2006.

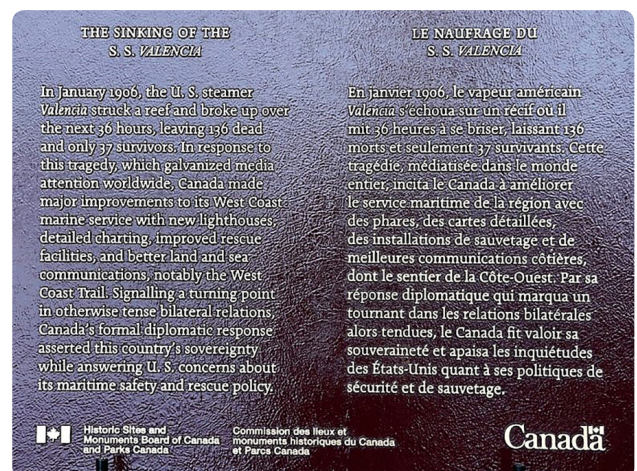
The years went by and I had completely forgotten about

the nomination. On March 2, 2017 the UASBC received an email from Mike Starr of Parks Canada asking for names of representatives who would be interested attending a ceremony in June to unveil a plaque to the Sinking of the Valencia. A day or two later I received a phone call from Heather Cooper saying that finally there would be recognition for Valencia and that the ceremony would be June 9th in Bamfield.

June 9th arrived and I attended the presentation. It was held in the beautiful Clam shaped Rix Center at the Bamfield Marine Station. It was well done. There were talks from Historic and Sites Monument Board reps, Parks Canada reps, First Nation Reps and finally from Heather Cooper who outlined the Valencia story in brief. After the talks the Valencia plaque was unveiled.

Three additional plaques recognizing the west Coast lighthouses (Carmanah, Pachena, and Cape Beale). Refreshments followed and Silva Johansson a Parks Canada interpreter did her re enactment story of the Valencia Tragedy.

The Valencia plaque will ultimately be mounted at the West Coast Trail trail trailhead for all to see and read. Someday, I would also like to see a small plaque along the trail at Valencia Bluffs.



Close up Of Valencia Plaque

UASBC Diver Explorations

Fall Diver Schedule 2017

Saturday & Sunday - September 22-25

Gulf Islands Continued

This Expedition will be to continue our survey work in the Gulf Islands; we have chartered the MV Cape Able for four days to act as our base of diving operations. We will base our operations out of Conover Cove on Wallace Island. Accommodation will be on board society member boats while diving will occur off the Cape Able. The goal of the expedition is to continue survey work on the Robert Kerr and Del Norte and continue our search for the Mary Hare off Reid Island.

This will be a good opportunity to practice your NAS skills.

More details on the expedition will be released closer to the trip date.

These are moderately easy dives so everyone is welcome

Cost \$300-350 per person. Limit 8 divers.

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

Saturday & Sunday October 14 & 15 or Monday & Tuesday October 16 & 17

West Kootenay Wreck Trek

The UASBC will do two dive trips back to back in the West Kootenays

We will dive known sites, tug Ymir, the rail barge and tug Proctor on Nelson waterfront on day one, essentially site seeing. Day two will be documenting one of two new targets found recently in the Kootenay Landing or Troupe area. Divers must have NAS Introduction to participate.

Divers must also be advanced level divers and able to handle cold water (dry suits), low vis, high current, boat diving.

All other daily expenses (hotel, food, air, etc.) and gear will be the responsibility of the individual diver.

Cost \$40 per person. pre trip - There will be a \$40 charge per diver to cover expenses for fuel, etc. Limit 4 divers pre trip.

Contact Bill Meekel(250) 372-1813 or email: bmeekel@shaw.ca.

Saturday & Sunday October 14 & 15 Sunshine Coast

We hope to visit Powell River to dive three new wreck sites discovered by the Canadian Hydrographic Service. We will do a charter dive on Saturday and will do a shore dive on the Malahat on Sunday.

Islanders to catch the 3:15 or 7:15 ferry from Comox on Friday evening and return on 5:15 ferry Sunday afternoon.

Mainlanders will have to catch the 5:50 ferry out of Horseshoe Bay to connect with the 9:35 PM Earls Cove ferry.

The Charter Cost \$80-100 per person. Limit 10 divers.

We will also have ferry, food and accommodation costs.

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

Sunday November 12th

Walker Hook Salt Spring Island

Gulf Islands – We have booked the 50 foot Cape Able to conduct a search for the steamer Emily Harris in the vicinity of Walker Hook on Salt Spring Island. Built in 1861 the Emily Harris was one of the first propeller steamers built in BC. She blew up under mysterious circumstances in Trincomali Channel in August 1871.

This is an easy dive so everyone is welcome.

Cost \$90 per person. Limit 10 divers.

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

SUNNY ISLAND

Survey of a long lost Japanese packer on Westham Island

by
Greg Bossons

During the last weekend of July, members of the UASBC participated in a survey and excavation conducted by the Vancouver Maritime Museum (VMM). The expedition was led by archaeologist Charles Moore of Golder and Associates, along with Duncan MacLeod, curator of the Vancouver Maritime Museum. The vessel in question was the Sunny Island; a wooden packer built in 1929 by Jirokichi Arimoto on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Unlike most other Japanese Canadian built fishing vessels of the time – which tended to adopt a more European style – this vessel was a hybrid between the typical West Coast style of the time and a traditional Japanese style. The bow of the vessel was similar to most other wooden vessels plying the waters of the BC coast at the time; with fair lines, a sharp entry, and a fairly plumb stem.

The stern, however, was of a relatively flat bottom design, with hard chines, no distinct keel, and an external rudder. This melding of styles made the Sunny Island a wholly unique vessel.

The Sunny Island now lies in a slough on Westham Island south of Steveston, where she was abandoned at some point between 1936 and 1947. At low tide the vessel is accessible on foot, however at high tide the vessel is submerged to its sheer strakes. This placed a strict time limit on our archaeological activities. Upon arrival, the first order of business was to gain access to the vessel. This involved a scramble down a heavily overgrown slope followed by a trek through tidal marsh to reach the site. Once we reached the vessel, we were greeted with what resembled a massive wooded



"Stern View of fish packer Sunny Island."



planter box. So our team set about clearing the veritable forest of shrubbery which had taken root on the vessel in the roughly three-quarters of a century since its abandonment. It took the better part of the first morning to clear the aft compartment and starboard side of the vessel. It was a dirty and difficult task, however, as we progressed the Sunny Island began to reveal her former self and we could start to imagine what she may have looked like in her prime.

After an extensive pruning, the Sunny Island ready for her close-up; or, to be more precise, close-ups. With the assistance of Chris Dodd an associate of Charles, also from Golder and Associates – several thousand photographs were taken of the vessel. These are to be fed into a state-of-the-art photogrammetry program, and used to generate a digital 3D model of the vessel. This model will not only act as a compelling visual representation of the vessel, but also provide accurate measurements of all the portions of the vessel still visible above the mud.

Work on this project is still ongoing, with many more



Excavation Crew

exciting discoveries to come. Findings from this archaeological work will tie in to the Lost Fleet exhibit, currently on display at the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

Photos by Greg Bossons

Thrasher Dive Trip

THRASHER DIVE TRIP

By
Eric Young

In our more than forty year history, it is undoubted that the one thing we in the UASBC have learned is that we have to be good at rolling with whatever the ocean sends our way. Led by Jacques Marc; divers Ewan Anderson, Dean Driver, Jiri Kotler, Paul Spencer, Bronwen Young, and Eric Young met the *Juan de Fuca Warrior*, skippered by Erin Bradley, at Chemainus early on Saturday, June 17th. The weather was high overcast, medium temperature, and a slight breeze coming from the south east. It seemed like a good day to attempt a dive or two on the *Thrasher* wreck.

We proceeded up and out Gabriola Passage, into the Strait of Georgia and approached the marker that sits atop Thrasher Rock. We were interested to see a fair number of sport fishers in the area. High tide was slated to be shortly after 10 AM. We were a fair bit early and the current was still quite strong. We decided to hang out behind the marker and wait for the current to slow down. After forty-five minutes the current had not abated (it actually seemed to be stronger) and the breeze had picked up quite a bit giving the water a fair chop. Everyones opinion was that conditions would only worsen. The *Thrasher* clearly did not wish to be visited that day.

Ewan had brought his very high tech camera with him. Its digital images can be downloaded into a program that will cross identify shapes and produce a three dimensional image of the subject. As long as the water is moderately clear the camera can get an image. The more images Ewan takes the better the resolution produced by the computer.

Since we are in the process of re-surveying the *Del*



Waiting for slack which never happened.

J. Marc Photo

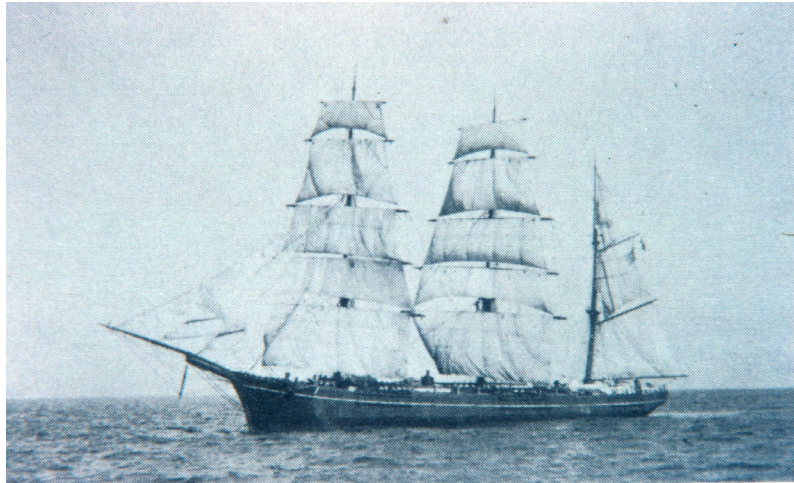
Norte it was a natural decision to run down Valdez Island and let Ewan try out his equipment on it. The environment would not effect a dive too much; at lower water the rocks protect the site from a SE chop and a flood current, which comes more from the NE into Porlier Pass. The *Warrior* is a quick boat and we were there before the conditions had changed.

The *Del Norte* site is still quite grand after almost 150 years underwater. The boilers and engine stand proud of the bottom with the side paddlewheel arms on each side. There are numerous other iron based pieces on the site.

On that morning the visibility was moderate. Since most of the divers had been members of the survey team in 2016, it was nice for us to be able to visit the site without a specific task to perform. When one is

(cont'd)

Thrasher Dive Trip



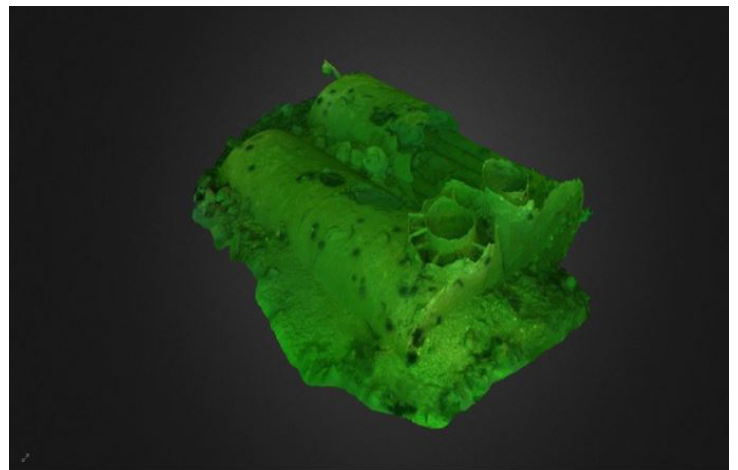
Sailing Barque Thrasher

surveying the focus is tight, right on the object to be measured. To be able to just swim around and view the wreck more as a whole was a treat. It also kept us out of Ewan's way while his shutter went click, click.

Everyone had enough air for two dives, so we decided to do our second dive on the *Robert Kerr*, which is inside Porlier Pass, off the northern tip of Thetis Island. This wreck has also been re-surveyed as part of the Gulf Islands project. Jacques felt that a couple of the GPS positions for the overall extent of the wreck needed to be checked. Once again it was serendipitous that the survey divers were able to wander around and view the site as a whole.

When a wooden wreck has been under water for over 100 years there is generally none of the wood left. Marine organisms seem to treat it like candy. The *Kerr* is notable in that much of her wooden timbers have been preserved. The ship was sheeted in copper below the waterline. This seems to have protected the outside for long enough that as she 'pancaked' her coal cargo could protect the inside. Only vestiges of the copper are left, but the hull timbers are now sandwiched between the coal and the sand, which maintains much of the wood. Of course, as any of it gets exposed the marine organisms are there for dinner. All of her iron based bits are still on display, including the bottom portions of her masts.

When we returned to the dock everyone had other projects on the go, so the dive team dispersed. Ewan went home and got very busy. He downloaded his images of the *Del Norte* boilers and produced a very cool 3D image. He shared this with all the divers and we all "Oh'ed and Ah'ed" over it once it came in the mail. Ewan has said that he would love to continue the project with more images of the rest of the site.



3D model of Del Norte Boilers.

Ewan Anderson Photo

Jacques is in the process of setting up the Fall Dive Schedule, with an eye to getting back to the site. We will see how this evolves and how we might be able to share the results with the membership.

The Nakusp Mystery Wreck

THE NAKUSP MYSTERY

By
Bill Meekel

John Pollack a UASBC and INA member has been conducting ongoing side scan survey operations in the Kootenays looking for new shipwreck sites. It is his premise that the new higher resolution side scan equipment now available will find things where the older technology could not. Recently he found two new wrecks off the Nakusp waterfront.



Photo 1 shows Target D (the larger of the two wrecks) right of center.

Photo 1 by John Pollack image

Target D appears to be a hull with a pointed bow and a flat stern. The image shows interior detail with four longitudinal frames. This image was very exciting when first viewed. Could it be a new paddle wheeler find? To the right of the vessel in Photo 1 there are also two other long and narrow items sitting on the bottom. These will be investigated in the future.

A plan was made to dive the 25 m deep site in April 2017 to see what is there and to document the wreck. The Upper Arrow Lake is a reservoir for hydro electric generation and a mountain lake. Water depth and visibility vary during the year depending on the spring melt in the nearby mountains. There is a narrow spring dive window on the lake.

However, Nakusp is a good site to look for ship

wrecks. This is due to the importance of Nakusp in the CPR's Lake and River Service transportation network (rail and boats) on the Arrow Lakes from 1897 to around 1954. Nakusp became the CPR centre for ship-building and maintenance on the Arrow Lakes. Paddle-wheelers such as the SS Minto (1898) and the SS Bonnington (1911) were built and maintained at Nakusp. These and other vessels operated from Arrowhead at the north end of the lake to Castlegar and Robson in the south, a distance of about 200 km. More powerful vessels could also operate further down the Columbia river to service the smelter at Trail and into the USA. Besides the paddlewheelers, there were numerous tugs and barges that were built and maintained to support the towns, mining, farming and lumber activities in and around the Arrow Lakes. Arrowhead was also a terminal where the boats from the south met the CPR trains heading north to the CPR mainline at Revelstoke. From there people and goods could travel to points east and west across BC. With all this previous activity, Nakusp is a good spot to search for shipwrecks. You never know what you might find?

John's was assisted by Kathleen McGuinness and Sean Adams in 2016 when they found the vessel in Photo 1. It was decided to have divers visit this new wreck in 2017 to do some documentation. The objectives were to locate the wreck, video the vessel and measure and record data about the wreck. It would be reported to the UASBC board and the membership via the Foghorn and a Basic Shipwreck report would be completed for the vessel. A group of UASBC divers visited the wreck on April 15, 2017. The first divers on the site were the video team consisting of Breanne Grodolic, Connie Campbell and assisted by Brian Nadwidny. After about 20 minutes, the survey team of Trina Hancock and Bill Meekel jumped in to visit the wreck. They were all assisted by the surface support of Darryl Jensen and John Pollack.

(cont'd)

The Nakusp Mystery Wreck

So, was the wreck a paddlewheeler? No, it was not. It was a unique and interesting wreck. A type of vessel we had not seen before even in historic photos! We are still trying to determine exactly what the vessel was and what role it played on the Arrow Lake.

The vessel is an open deck barge 23 m long by 12 m wide by 1.5 m deep. There was a small area of decking at the back of the barge. However most of the barge was open except for two catwalks. The bow and stern ends were quite rounded as compared to the raked ends of a typical transfer barge. Photo 2 shows one of four mooring bollards located on the sides of the barge. The vessel was not powered so it would have been moved by another vessel. Hence the four (two per side) big mooring bollards located on the wreck.



Photo 2 - Diver and bollard on the side on the barge

Photo by Breanne Gordulic

There was no sign of any other poles mounted on the barge that would have formed part of a crane. However, any items of value to the shipyard would have been removed before disposing of the vessel.

Photo 3 shows a 10 m high heavy mast rising from the middle of the barge. The mast is well supported at the top by 6 heavy tie rods. The barge is probably about 100 years old. The wood and steel on the barge is in very good shape due to the heavy duty construc-

tion (see Photo 4) of the barge and the cold fresh water environment in which it rests. Even the accumulation of sediment on the vessel is minor.



Photo 3 - The heavy mast with 5 of the 6 supports

Photo by Breanne Gordulic



Photo 4 - Showing the heavy internal construction of the barge and a scarf joint in the beamshelf longitudinal stringer

Photo by Breanne Gordulic

Photo 5 below shows a model of a barge mounted crane which may give a hint about the purpose and operational layout of the Nakusp barge.



Photo 5 - Sea Port Model Works Derrick / Spud Barge with Stiff Leg Derrick

UASBC President's Message - Keith Bossons

It has been a while since I have been able to find the time to write a message for the Foghorn.

I hope all of our members are enjoying our sunny summer. Your society has been very busy over the past months on a number of initiatives.

In April we hosted a very successful Shipwrecks conference at the Scandinavian Community Centre in Burnaby. The subject of this year's conference was Vikings and we were very fortunate to have some of the worlds leading scholars on the Viking era as speakers at the conference.

We continue to progress on our Southern Gulf Islands project and have completed a significant number of dives to collect data. This will continue to be our focus for the fall of this year and the spring of 2018. Jacques Marc, the UASBC Exploration Director will be publishing the fall dive schedule in the near future so keep an eye on the website for updates. Anyone who would like to get involved in this project please contact Jacques.

Bill Meekel, our Interior Director, has been collaborating with UASBC member John Pollack on some exciting work in the Kootney Region. John has been conducting side scan surveys in the Kootenays looking for new shipwreck sites. This work resulted in two new shipwrecks being discovered near Nakusp.

The UASBC has also been working with the Vancouver Maritime Museum (VMM) on the Sunny Island project. The Sunny Island is a wooden fish packer built in 1929 by Jirokichi Arimoto on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The wreck sits in the intertidal zone of Westham Island where it sank sometime between 1936 and 1947. The vessel is a unique blend of both Japanese and west coast construction techniques which makes it a wreck of significant interest. This project is being lead by Charles Moore, an Archaeologist at Golder Associates and a UASBC member, supported by Duncan MacLeod, Curator from the VMM and a number of UASBC volunteers. The

team spent a weekend in July photographing the vessel and excavating two trenches through three feet of mud to gather additional information on how the vessel was constructed.

The UASBC was recently awarded a contract by the BC Heritage Branch to write a number of Statements of Significance for specific shipwreck sites in BC. These are a one or two page document that describes the historical significance of a site. The revenue earned from this work helps us to fund the various UASBC initiatives.

If anyone is interested in volunteering to help write these documents please let me know. We would be happy to get some extra help with this.

We currently have a very active program and are doing some exciting work. I encourage all society members to get involved in any initiatives that are of interest to you.

(cont'd) The Nakusp Mystery Wreck

In the afternoon, we visited Wreck 2 on the Nakusp waterfront. It was a typical goods transfer barge of the same era as the Mystery Barge described above. It measured 18.6 m long x 6.3 m wide x 1.6 m high. These dimensions match the CPR icebreaking barges used during the winter on the Arrow Lakes. It was also in pretty good shape.

There is a 10 minute video of the dive trip showing the two vessels that can be viewed at the following site <https://vimeo.com/217349557>. At the 5:44 minute point in the video, the video switches to the second dive of the day Wreck 2.

It is great to know that there are still historic wrecks to be found in the waterways of British Columbia.

Victoria Underwater Explorer Speaker Schedule 2017/18

Wednesday, September 13, Ross Bay Cemetery Shipwreck Tales

Tom Pound – Victoria Historian,
Old Cemeteries Society of Victoria

Join us for a walking tour of Shipwreck Tales at the Ross Bay Cemetery. Victoria is a maritime city and the memorials found at Ross Bay tell the stories of many shipwrecks and lives lost including the 1915 loss of the Lusitania (17 Victorians were lost including the heir to the Dunsmuir fortune), the disappearance of HMCS Galiano with all hands in 1917 and many more.

We will meet at the Stannard Street entrance to Ross Bay Cemetery (west of Fairfield Plaza - there is a crosswalk) at 6 PM sharp.

Wednesday, October 11, Wrecks of Conception Bay NL.

Jiri Kotler, Diver & Historian

Jiri will provide us with a slide show and talk providing a brief review of history of U-boat attacks on Canadian shipping in Conception Bay, NFL including a few personal reflections on diving the sunken ships."

Wednesday, November 8, Canadian Navy Frigate Tour

Lt. (N) Warren Bush, Canadian Navy

Warren will give us a tour of one of the Canadian Navy Frigates at Dockyard in Esquimalt.
Meeting time and place TBD.

**The UASBC Victoria Chapter meets
at Swan's Hotel and Brewpub,
506 Pandora Street in Victoria
at 07:00 PM**

PLEASE REFER TO WWW.UASBC.COM FOR THE LATEST UPDATES!



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