

Sub Sea Research

In search of the past....
Bringing it to the
present....
For a better future....



Monday May 20, 2002

"I got the call. We leave Monday morning at 2am." Greg Brooks co-partner in the company "Sub Sea Research" said with a smile, "Boys this is it."

2:00am Monday, May 20 2002 With the temperature a mere 33* we cast off the lines and began the adventure of a lifetime. The seas were calm and the wind was but a whisper as we rounded Portland Headlight. The vessel, [M/V Diamond](#), a retired Torpedo Weapons Recovery ship (TWR) was built in 1965 for the Navy. This ship was used to carry up to 18 torpedoes and a crew of 16. It was now carrying 13,000 pounds of food to donate to the citizens of Haiti and a crew of 7. After a 9 month overhaul it was transformed into a research / salvage vessel.



First order of business was "The Dave smith site" which was a survey **Sub Sea Research** was hired to do from a Maine insurance company. The objective was to try to locate and determine the cause of a vessel sinking. Where the site was over 1000ft and the position of the wreck site was over several square miles area, not to mention the jagged bottom all made the side scanning difficult. We spent half the day in search of the elusive shrimp boat with no luck. We logged and cataloged the raw data and proceeded to the south.

The journey south along the east coast was long and tedious. The work shifts differed from 3 hours to 6 hours from day to day. The knowledge of our destination kept us in high spirits. Soon we would be in Key West for a 2 weeks supply stop then off to Haiti.

On the way there Mr. Brooks received another phone call and request to survey another wreck about 40 miles south of the Florida Keys. One of the company's researchers also produced a partial manifest for the vessel. It sank in a storm in 1755. This detailed the cargo as including the following:

437kg of gold bullion carried in seventeen chests, 15,399 gold doubloons, 153 gold snuff boxes, a gold-hilted sword, a gold watch, 1,072,000 pieces of eight, 24kg of virgin silver, 14kg of silver ore, a large number of items made of silver, six pairs of diamond earrings, a diamond ring and several chests of precious stones as well as cocoa and indigo.

That was enough to put Haiti on hold. The weather took a turn for the worse as we reached Virginia and the captain decided to take a safer route, the inter-coastal, which was a waterway for vessels that seek calmer



waters while still traveling the coast. This was difficult at times, as the waterway got as narrow as 65 feet across in places with traffic going in both directions. To maneuver a vessel that's 104 feet long and 22 feet wide through these narrow sections takes precision. We managed to make it down to Miami via this route. .

We reached Key West with only a few minor problems on the way. It was May 30 at 6:55am with a temperature of 78* as we pulled into Stock Island, our new home base of operations. There we met with the owner of the marina, Greg and secured a space large enough to fit the 104ft Diamond.



First order of business was to remove one of the props and have it repaired. We slightly grazed a sandbar uncharted in the inter-coastal channel and managed to slightly bend the prop. After calling around and asking the local shrimp boat captains, [Mark](#) had someone lined up that would be down the following day to do the job. This guy, known as [Foots](#) by the locals was down early the next day ready for the job. After putting an explosive charge around the shaft and setting it off the prop was ready for removal. The process of reshaping the prop took less than a week and we were ready for the first trip out to the site.



One of the pieces of equipment also brought along was a "Flying Inflatable Boat" (FIB). This was to be used in the shallows of Haiti. The pilot, [Pete Wallace](#), with years of experience in ultra light aircrafts would be in charge of this. He was to fly around an area and drop markers on anything that looks out of the ordinary. He would also be able to have one other person with dive gear

aboard to bring to a non-accessible site, such as areas where it shoals up too much for the diamond or our tending skiff. On July 2 the waters were calm and the wind was nonexistent. It was time to try out the FIB. With divers in the water searching Rebecca Shoal, Pete did the pre-flight check and prepared the FIB for a test run. The first take off was loud but smooth. He rounded the ship several times before landing close to the stern for a couple words then off to the skies again. The second landing wasn't quite what he'd expected as the rudder stuck hard to the right, caught the water and rolled over. There were a few tense moments as the other divers and I climbed into the tending skiff and sped over to make sure he was ok.

Other than his pride being a little bruised and the FIB being upside down in the water all was well. The next couple hours were spent on raising the saltwater drenched inflatable back onto the boat. The FIB was a total loss now. The rudder had stuck hard to the starboard and the force of the crash twisted the plane such that the blades on the stern cut a large hole in the left pontoon. Our FIB was put on the stern, covered over and now being forgotten for now.



The weather was having an adverse affect on the future progress of the surveys. Between the water spouts, high seas, and strong moon tides there were only few opportunities to go to the site.



The **272-TD Side Scan Sonar Tow fish** gathers high-resolution data and if the seas exceed 3 feet the raw data becomes skewed therefore rendering the costly

trip to the site ineffectual.

The weather is one thing I've learned over the years that you cannot control and rarely predict. One day it will be mirror calm and within hours be riding the waves home. In the year and a half spent at the Key West site the longest stretch of calm weather we've been able to work in was 3 days. On the third day the wind did pick up enough to force and early retreat home. This makes it hard to accomplish a lot in a short period of time. What could have been accomplished in a matter of months was lengthened out over a year due to bad weather. Then again if it were easy everyone would be doing it, right.

One of the most difficult problems we face is the currents, which surpass 4 knots on most days, making the dive an impossible task at 190+feet. Your bottom time (time spent on the ocean floor) less than 15 minutes at best, giving the diver little time to search the 372 targets found, in an 18 square mile grid, by our side scan sonar.

That is when the company decided to purchase the magnetometer. The G-881 is a high resolution marine Cesium magnetometer that is capable of very high sensitivity measurements of total field and gradient combined with rapid sampling to provide reliable detection of geological features and man made objects.



This will help define what is a man made object and which may look like man made but is in fact a coral outcrop, thus cutting the targets down by atleast half.

One of the things we did during those many days of weather exceeding the abilities of our equipment was go on various dives around the area. One day in particular I was feeling the need to "get wet". The captain and I got aboard one of the smaller boats and headed in the direction of the site. About half way there, in the vicinity of Satan Shoals we dropped anchor and jumped over.

With nothing there, after going through a whole tank, we decided to move over three coral heads to explore some more. While the captain was taking a break I geared back up and jumped over. With metal detector in hand and regulator in mouth I dove to the

bottom in hopes of making a new discovery. Alas I was not disappointed for two swipes of the metal detector and it was singing in my ear. Upon closer investigation I noticed that what looked like a round piece of coral turned out to be an old cannonball about 6 inches in diameter. I immediately went to the surface and called over to the captain my find.

He donned his gear and met me down there. Between the two of us we found 7 more cannonballs, an old compass housing, and four lead encased grapeshot rounds. It was an exciting day. Drawing a map of the items found we left them there. This will be a sight to come back to in the future when all else on our agenda has been fulfilled. With a great sense of triumph in mind we headed for Key West, back to the boat with news of our find.

After some further research on our find it was deemed bearings that we found being transported by ship to some unknown destination. Only it never made it there and found its new home 50 feet below the surface near a place called Satan's Shoal.



After several months of further research on, the now nicknamed “Deliverance” The company divers were able to recover a piece of lead sheathing measuring 5 ¾ inches, believed to have come from the deliverance or a ship of that time period. It was time to move to the next step, to get the next set of permits needed to further their research of the area in question.



Sub Sea was able to “arrest” an 18 square mile section of water in the area of the wreck site. This would assure the safety of the area in question from modern day pirates and others who might want to remove artifacts.



Being to some extent in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, there were special permits required in order to proceed. After Mr. Brooks and his lawyers met with the FKNMS the “Arrest” were given, it was now October.

It was now public and in newspapers through out the

world about the possible finding of the “Deliverance, one of the richest shipwrecks in history”. There were articles in languages I never knew existed, in countries I’d never even heard of. This was big, so big that when Spain got word of the possible finding they intervened. That is when the legal issues came about and the question of, “Who are the rightful owners of the wreck?” was put forth.

SUNKEN TREASURE SPAWNS DISPUTE

The Spanish government and a US sea salvage company, Sub Sea Research, are fighting over what could be the most valuable shipwreck ever, with a cargo of gold bullion, gems, coins and silver that is worth an estimated \$3 billion. The Spanish position refers to the terms of a 1902 treaty with the US based on the fact that the shipwreck could contain the remains of the Spanish soldiers. The claim is also likely to note that the cargo belonged to the Spanish Government. The US State Department said the company needed Spain’s permission to recover the treasure. About 250 Spanish ships which sunk in the 17th and 18th centuries are thought to have taken with them treasure worth billions of dollars. (Offshore News Digest for Week of January 6, 2003)



It is now December of 2003 and the battle continues. Not unlike the days of pirates’ verses the Spanish flotilla the battle resumes. Only now the setting isn’t the open sea but a courtroom and the battle isn’t with pirates and Spanish flotilla, it’s the lawyers and the judicial systems of two countries. The only thing that is the unchanged is what they are all fighting for, “The plunder.”

Mr. Brooks has plans to open a musarium “museum-aquarium” back in his home town of Portland Maine. He has the backing he needs and the approval from the state to begin building it. The problem he is facing, “when will the artifacts, which remain on the ocean floor under 190 feet of water, make their way to their new home.” Also “where will that new home be?” These questions are increasingly weighing in Mr. Brooks mind.



“The Haitian Expedition”

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines, Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream.”

Mark Twain [Samuel L. Clemens] (1835-1910)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 16, 2004.

“Haiti has just signed an agreement with Sub Sea Research L.L.C. a privately held Maine based company, in a promising joint venture arrangement that will span many years to promote awareness of Haiti's National Maritime Heritage and improve the country's maritime cultural recognition worldwide.”

(http://www.naufragium.blogspot.com/2004_01_01_naufragium_archive.html)

HAITI

7:30pm-Tuesday, January 20th: We cast off lines as the seas were once again calm and the weather was mild. However, this time our heading wasn't the usual 270 degree westerly route we would take to reach the Keys. The new route was 130 degrees due south east. This new heading would take us to the coastline of Haiti.

Haiti had been our original destination -almost forgotten so many months ago, and it was now again our top priority. We were moving ahead and eager to get back in action.

But I wasn't sure how to feel. The stories told about our destination were that of abject poverty and despair. The people of Haiti's daily living conditions are far worse than the way most people lived hundreds of years ago- or anywhere else today. In Nicaragua which is known as Central America's poorest country, they say "Thank God for Haiti!" They say this to express their relief that they are not the poorest country in the Caribbean region- only the second poorest. Haiti takes that dubious title by a mile. They are grateful for the small distinction.

The trip took 54 hours of steaming ahead at about 11 knots to cover the needed distance of 740 miles. As we rounded Platform Point, we marveled at the mountainous landscape. How could such a beautiful place be home to such poverty? We would soon learn of the complexities and contradictions of 'paradise'.

We had been briefed about the Haitian history of struggles and impoverished lifestyle and we thought we were well prepared for what we'd be encountering. We already knew there would be little or no power, very little food, and very unsanitary conditions prevalent where ever we were going to be there. We were well supplied and had no worries for ourselves while on board the Diamond.

Along the shores, people were living in patch worked shanty towns strewn with garbage. The more mountainous and rural areas were still green and overgrown however. It was a study in contradictions and contrasts.

The smell was the first thing you noticed -long before the faces of despair and desperation came into view. It was as if the steamy tropics were brewing a noxious stew -and one had to wonder what tasting it would do to your soul. It set a mood of foreboding.

We passed several local fishermen in their dugout canoes that had been day's offshore fishing and hauling traps. I recollected back to the days I dove in Port Clyde, Maine where I had watched lobstermen hauling single traps out of 35 to 45 foot well-equipped work boats. Here, the Haitian fishermen were in hand carved dugout canoes no longer than 16 feet, , some with sails, and they were hauling traps twice the size of that you'd find on the deck of an average



Maine lobster boat! They were full of pride for having their work. They seemed oblivious to the heavy labor. It was humbling to see their happiness over their small harvests.



5:25pm Friday January 23 When we tied up at South Pier in the city of [Port-A-Prince](#) the acrid smells burned your nostrils and brought tears to your eyes. The color of the near shore waters - which along the trip had changed from aqua-blue to a deep indigo purple, was now a muddy dark brown. All of the water in the harbor was layered with sewage and flotsam. Thankfully, we were only there for just over a day, but that was enough to never want to go back. Fortunately for us that night, Greg

Brooks got the crew a few hotel rooms and we were able to see the city from beyond the gates that protected the pier from 'unwelcome' guests.

The hotel was a mere 2 miles from where the Diamond was tied up but it seemed a world apart –and indeed it was. Our first day in Haiti spoke volumes of the chasm between those that have nothing and those who have wealth. Both exist in Haiti but nothing lies in between.

8:45pm Friday January 23 The streets were buzzing with many vehicles referred to as “tap-taps” –they are the cheap version of public transport and one way to get around town. These comprised of all shapes, sizes and condition of vehicles. The only common thread was their psychedelic paint jobs and their need for speed! There was everything from dump truck sized tap-taps to micro-sized cars, all hurtling wildly through any space available. It was guaranteed to strike fear in even the most courageous urban road warrior. Here, even the elderly thought nothing of driving like this.



The traffic lights didn't work, it seemed to be a first come first serve way of driving that had existed for awhile, with a prevailing attitude of “I'm coming through anyway!” Despite the rickety condition of vehicles, a dare-devil reckless aggressive demolition race car driving was the norm here.

The five of us crew rode in the back down the crowded streets while Greg took the shotgun passenger seat alongside the driver. This was to be our first 'tour' of Haiti on the ground. As we wildly darted in and out of cars and people I noticed we had gone virtually in a complete circle around the busy mid-town district of the city. Just then, Greg leaned out of his window and with his characteristic mischievous chuckle said, "Just thought you might want to see some of the city before we got to the hotel!" We hadn't noticed very much, we were too busy making sure we stayed inside the truck bed! The ride was memorable but it overpowered the scenery!

Breathing in the mixed stench and road dust, from the half- dirt, half-tarred road, we held on for dear life as the driver decided to take a side street that was partially blocked off by an overturned burnt out car. This was a typical scene we were to learn in future days here. No one was concerned or surprised and no efforts were ever made to remove these obstructions however disturbing they might be.

After being dropped off outside the hotel, Greg Brooks went in to pay for the rooms and we waited at the front door. I saw a man carrying an old metal bucket walk by and crouch down nearby in a gutter to scoop up his daily supply of water, cigarette butts and all, when it hit me just how poor these people were. There was a growing feeling of sorrow filling my heart.

9:20pm Friday January 23 Moments later, Greg returned and ushered us into the hotel. It was lavish and beautiful inside and within a few feet, an armed guard and a gate separated us from the hectic chaotic bustle of the downtown area and its overwhelming poverty. There were 2 crew members to each room and we gratefully settled in and had just enough time to take a shower and change before meeting in the hotel restaurant for dinner. We met Norm Houde and Father Ed, at dinnertime. They had been coming to Haiti for over 20 years on mission and humanitarian work.

They were happy to dine with us and filled us in on the local happenings since Mr. Brook's last visit. Greg had been traveling to Haiti for over ten years and it was during one of his many trips he discovered the remains of several intriguing shipwrecks in the waters off Haiti's coastline. It was eye opening conversation and much of it seemed distant and mysterious at the time. But we were thankful for some first hand current information and listened keenly to their insights.

After dinner we decided to visit a local bar to get a sense of the 'night life' in Port-au-Prince. Frankly, I had no idea what to expect. We managed to make it to a bar about 3 blocks away and it was well and truly a genuine "hole in the wall". Only one table sat inside the bar -which was surrounded by the neighborhood local regular 'denizens'. They quickly vacated however, upon seeing us to make room for the "Americans". We all sat down and enjoyed 2 rounds of Barceló rum before moving to a table out on the street. There, we found the night life as we had imagined it would be. There was music with a constant drumbeat, mixed with laughter, singing and dancing in the streets. It was a testament to the Haitian spirit that they could be so joyous in spite of their troubles. It was

clearly how they coped with their problems and good medicine –or at least a temporary escape from it.

There were also the poverty stricken children hovering silently nearby and hungrily watching our every move. Gary, having two children at home and the most tender hearted of the bunch, decided to buy some chicken breasts from a street vender who had conveniently set up only 3 feet away from our table. The vendor freshly grilled the chicken and Gary waved the kids over for their free meal.

The smiles on their faces and the quickness in which the breasts vanished, made everyone realize how long it must have been since the last time they had a decent meal -much less with freshly grilled meat like that. It made us appreciate our own good fortunes –and well fed diets -even more.

Soon afterwards, we headed back to the hotel. Tomorrow was going to be a long day preparing for our trip to Jeremie where we planned to begin our busy schedule of initial surveys.

10:25am Saturday January 24 The next day before leaving, we first had to tackle a few problems. One problem in particular being how to get 3,000 feet of armored cable tested to find out where the bad spot was and re-splice it. The captain managed to get 6 Haitians out of about 25 that were just standing around looking for work. The plan was to let the cable out along the dock until it was totally off the reel, to be able to test the beginning.



Finding Haitians to work with us at the dock wasn't too hard as there were always a minimum of 25 Haitians standing next to the boat just watching everything we did. Some were there to try to sell us stuff but most were there to work if we needed extra help. After choosing the six workers they grabbed the armored cable and started dragging it down the pier. It took most of the afternoon, much into the evening and all 6 workers to haul the cable of about 500 lbs (3,000 feet) onto the pier.

The end splice didn't fix the problem so we cut the cable into two pieces. One was 1,000 feet the other being 2,000 feet. After testing both and finding that the 2,000 foot cable was the problem we put that cable on the bow and proceeded to splice the good cable back on the reel.

By the time all was done it took about 6, maybe closer to 7. The Haitians were paid between \$5 and \$10 depending on how hard they worked. Not a bad day's work for them,

considering their daily wage was roughly \$1 a day if you work hard enough. The exchange rate for American dollars verses Haitian dollars is about \$1 to their \$49. So to them it's around \$50 for the 7 hours of work.

That evening we played a traditional Haitian game of "You buy this \$80 dollar". This game 'Is what I call it'. From the moment we woke until close around 10pm we had Haitian canoes rafted up alongside the ship trying to sell us things. Even though most of the day we were busy with ship business they waited patiently until one of us would walk by, "You like? I make you good deal."



"Good deal" means he'll offer it to you for \$80 American dollars and you're suppose to counter with, "I'll give you \$9 America dollars" they laugh and they say, "no, no, no this is very expensive for me I offer you it for \$25 dollars can't go lower." Then you break out the big guns and say, "I will give you \$15 American dollars and a T-shirt and a bar of soap." Their eyes usually light up at the thought of American items such as soap and T-shirts. They counter with \$20 American dollars 2 bars of soap and 2 T-shirts." Back to you, You say "No, no, no, \$15 dollars 1 T-shirt and 2 bars of soap (they really need the soap so I have no problem giving more soap) They usually say sorry "not enough." You say "Tre Expensive" (Too much) and start to walk away. That is the game. But it's not over yet, they don't want to loose you so they yell out to you just as you are about to go out of site, "yo, yo, hey noooo problem we have deal."

That was how I bought my first hand carved wood vase. To me it was like a game to them it was their livelihood. They seemed to have fun doing it this way as well. The only problem is once you buy from one, the rest start to yell out deals as well and within 10 minutes theirs more canoes rafted up to the ship. After all was said and done I had spent less then \$50, 5 bars of soap and 3 T-shirts. This bought a large vase, a small wood box, a wooden tea set complete with tiny wooden saucers, a wooden platter, and a large wooden chest. All of which were hand carved and beautiful.



4am Sunday January 25 came quickly and we cast off lines once more. Julio, our new pilot was hired to maneuver us around the waters of Haiti and was also on the ship as a translator. The 30 or so miles it took us to reach outside water had to be carefully run. With Julio at the helm and myself on the spotlight we made our way along the northern coast of the southern peninsula. This was filled with fishermen some of which stayed out all night working to get their daily quota of fish. Some even slept on their boats with only a small flashlight to let on coming vessels know they were there. I

was also told by Julio that “Here,” he pointed to a spot on the chart, “Is an island of canoes. This is where a lot sleep for the night. We must stay far clear of them.”

Having Julio also turned out a good thing because before we were even half way to the town of Jeremy he was on the radio talking to someone local who had a lead on an anchor sited on one of the outside reefs. This proved good news for us because it was on our way. We were there at the reef by around 10am. As Julio, Mr. Brooks and the captain were talking to a couple locals in their canoes; I and two others got our gear ready for our dive.

9:15am Sunday January 25 This local knew of the anchor we asked about because of all the fish that sot shelter around. This just happened to be one of his “hot spots”. The captain, Mr. Brooks and Julio all got aboard the smaller boat and tied the fisherman’s canoe off the stern. They proceeded to go about a mile along the reef with the fisherman in tow until he yelled out to stop.. This was amazing to me that although the anchor was under about 40 feet of water and the closest land was miles away he was able to stop the captain exactly over the top of the anchor.



Our dive was superb. The water was crystal clear and the sight of the anchor magnificent. This anchor was about 10 feet long and was positioned on the bottom in a way that we were even able to swim under it. Due to our schedule we were not able to do the measurements as of yet. We would have to do them on the return trip. This was just a stop for some video and way points back. It did in fact raise the spirits of the crew even higher then before if that was possible. The though of this [anchor](#) being down there for hundreds of years and, besides the local fishermen, we were probably the first to see this site.

12:40pm Sunday January 25 In order to make it to our first nights anchorage we had to leave after only one dive. It would take us the other half of daylight to reach this small coastal village. Only when we got there we weren’t expecting everyone in the village to row out to us. It was a small community with very little possessions and when Ryan started throwing out candy



to the kids they all started yelling and begging for food clothes and money. That was when Julio decided we needed to find a different place to anchor.

Before we left we were visited by four kids in an old dug out canoe with a sail that was made of torn up pieces of plastic that looked as if it would fall apart before they got back to shore. They looked quite content with the way they were and were the only ones not asking for anything. They looked like they just wanted to show off their triumphant attempt at bringing an old canoe back to life. It was a very impressive site indeed. We smiled, they smiled then off we went.



5:45pm Sunday January 25 This new area was a cove just big enough to fit Diamond in for the night. Our welcome there was quite different. It was about 5 minutes before the first canoe rounded the corner and was followed by 6 others. These people were coming from the small village of “Pastel” less than ¼ mile away. They did not ask for anything, only wished to find out what we were there for. They were all smiles and lots of talk between these people and Julio, later to find out that it was his home town. His family lived just outside of here and he knew all that came to visit.



First order of business was ordering take-out, which was left to Chris. After his order he donned his gear in hopes to find something from the cove's bottom. Preferably conch to add to our dinner fiesta, of which we had no idea what, was in store. Gary talked to a couple locals and managed to get them to give him a ride in their canoe around the cove to do some site seeing. Which, when they dropped him off later he gave them a pair of fins and a mask. They were so excited that they made him jump in the canoe for another round the cove.

The captain was busy trying to work a deal to buy one of their local canoes and managed to get one for the low price of \$130.



This made one of the local women a very happy woman. That was enough money to feed her family for about a year. These canoes were hand carved and took about 3 months to make.



6:10pm Sunday January 25

I was watching one of the local kids in what must have been his families' canoe, come out to see what all the commotion was all about. The shirt he wore was filled with holes and looked almost transparent. I made up my mind to give him one of my new shirts and a Portland Pirates hockey cap. I didn't want him to feel like I was just giving it to him because he was poor so I asked Julio to ask this boy if I could trade with him. He was

surprised that he had anything an American would want. After a few words and a nod Julio said the boy would be happy to trade. He quickly hauled off his ratty T-shirt, to my surprise without ripping it, and handed it up to me. This boy was only about maybe 9 or 10 and the shirt looked even older. I then handed him a brand new "Hard Rock Café" T-shirt and the cap. He put it on and the smile he had on his face will warm my heart for the rest of my life. Until this point he was on the outside of the pack of canoes but



now he was the center of attention and they all clapped and were happy with his trade. Soon after that most of them headed back to Pestel. It would soon be dark and the village



had no power. My only regret was I did not get the boys name. I will though, remember his face forever. I watched as he paddled the canoe towards the cove entrance in the direction of home. Surely his quickness in pace was his desire to show off his new clothes to his family and friends. I would make it a point now to try to find him on our next visit and learn his name.

7:40pm Sunday January 25 The captain let Ryan, Gary and I take I his canoe to the shore near by to do some hiking before it got dark but the moment we pushed off the



stern of the boat we were overturned. Who knew how hard it was to keep a canoe upright with three people in it. The second time around we switched places, Gary being the tallest, in the middle and that did it. With only a few close calls we made it to shore. As we hiked up the mountain we came across a fire pit and large stack of wood. This we thought might be a site of one of those Voodoo ceremonies. This was a

little disturbing thinking what might have gone on in this little notch in the mountain. I have heard many stories including the one about 80% of all Haitians are believers in voodoo. Soon we were in stride again on our way to check out a cave we'd seen on the way in to anchor. "Don't go up the mountain!" We stopped and figured 'oh well' went back down to the canoe and made our way back to the ship just as it was getting dark.

What we figured was Mr. Brooks over the loud speaker telling us not to go up the mountain, turned out not to be. Actually we asked everyone on the boat all said, "Nope why would I tell you that" We were all getting chills. We all heard a voice telling us not to go up the mountain. Yet it wasn't anyone on the boat. We all dismissed it as someone

must have been playing a joke and doesn't want to admit it but deep down I wondered, "Could it have been the spirit of someone who may have been sacrificed so many years ago?"



8:20pm Sunday January 25 Later that evening after Chris's failed attempt to locate even 1 conch, the locals came back with supper. As the canoe pulled up to the stern of the boat in the dark we all heard a, "BAAAAAA."

I had never eaten goat before and didn't care for any, especially after witnessing its demise there on the stern of the boat. I happily settled for leftovers from the night before. Good old macaroni and cheese. At least this Mac n cheese didn't squirm for 10 minutes after having a run in with a machete.

After a filling meal we were introduced to one of the local drinks. There were two ingredients one being barban court rum and the other is a fresh cut open coconut. These were brought at the same time as the goat as an added bonus. Its taste was unlike any other drink I've had. The only thing wrong with this drink was it made you want another the minute it was gone.

1:35pm Monday January 26

Jeremy was one of the larger cities in Haiti but still smaller than Port-A-Prince. Jeremy



was a beautiful site from a distance; it was only when we got close enough to the shores that we discovered the filth was not only found in the city we had just left. The banks were covered in trash that seemed to be their dumping

grounds. It wasn't long before word got around the city that our ship was just off shore. Within 10 minutes there were at least 60 or more people standing on the shores.



This site was one we were stopping at to check out what bottom type it was and follow up on a tip we got about a stack of bronze cannons that lay near by on bottom. As we were gearing up and donning our tanks there were children ranging from 10 to 20 years old started jumping off the cliffs. They were swimming out to the ship. It wasn't long before these curious Haitian children spanned the stern of our vessel. All wide eyed and amazed at the gear we had on our backs. Some of the younger children carried empty jugs which at first I thought it was for water, only later realized that they were using these to keep afloat on the swim of over 2000 feet from shore.

The dive proved to be of little help. We were able to determine at least in that one small spot that there was nothing but mud and steep cliffs. Even if we were right on top of these cannons we would not be able to find them without doing a magnetometer survey of the area. Any cannons here were under several feet at best, of mud.



As we were resting from the first dive one of the Haitian children got brave enough to sit next to Doug, our project coordinator, on the bench and try to communicate with him. Even though they were from totally different cultures they seemed to understand each other. If hope could be seen in this country it was definitely in the eyes of their children. They sat there for over 30 minutes trying to teach each other words. At times just staring at one another reading each others eyes.

This feeling of connection between their countries children and our company didn't last as one of the older boys got aboard the smaller boat and stole the key. He then jumped overboard and swam for shore. By the time the captain had realized what had happened the boy was out of site. Julio then ordered all the kids off the boat and back to shore. It's funny how it only takes one bad seed to spoil a great learning experience. Julio then got on the radio to the local authorities and explained the situation. After hotwiring the smaller boat another child swam out to the boat to tell us that to get the key back we had to give them \$2 and he would get it back for us. We let him know that we don't deal with thieves and that the police have been notified and would help in the matter. The boy swam back to shore with the bad news. Within moments he too was gone.

After leaving with Julio and Chris, the small boat returned with armed police officers. They wanted to board our ship and check out what we were doing in the area. After satisfying their curiosity they were ready to go, one was more ready then the others. This officer became seasick when below deck and had to come up for air. I gave him some cold bottled water that seemed to help but the look in his face told me he was not happy with his choice to join his fellow officers on this check. The officers told us that they were sure to catch the boy but the chances of getting the key back were next to zero. We thanked them and sent them on their way, all with fresh cold bottles of water. It was an odd and uneasy feeling as they boarded the ship with shotguns in hand and pistols strapped to their sides. As they left, this feeling dissipated and it was back to business. Due to the time it took to satisfy everyone's curiosity and bid them goodbye the sun would be setting soon. It was time to move on to a new safer place to stay for the night.

Less then 20 miles from Jeremy we spotted something along a deserted beach surrounded by cliffs. There was something set above the waterline by about 6 inches. We decided it was something worth looking at. The closer we got to it the more we knew it was man made. By the looks of it I first thought it was a sunken submarine. We anchored the ship just over 50 yards from it and everyone got



their snorkeling gear on. It was just before dark so it was only a quick swim to check the area and see if it would be worth further attention in the morning. It wasn't long before the first person got back to the ship and started planning on our approach to the situation in the morning.

6:40am Tuesday January 27

We were all up fairly early the next morning ready for a days work. After breakfast we got prepared for the dive. The captain was going to bring the underwater camera and get actual footage of the wreck. After the video was taken Gary and Mark took quick measurements including length width thickness in hull any many other details about this particular wreck.

I took this time to dive around the coral outcrop to the port of the ship. A lot of fish but nothing man made. The bottom in the area consisted mostly sand with a few coral outcrops and scattered boulders through out. To the starboard of the ship there were high cliffs that also gave home to a cave. This cave, local legend had it that years ago three divers entered it to explore but never returned. That sounded interesting to me, so I decided to see where it ended up, only the first 30 seconds after entering, the legend proved false. I could almost instantly see the other side. Less then 20 feet away was the other end.

Gary and Ryan geared up with the Excalibur under water metal detectors, to do a perimeter search of the site. They were checking out a small rock pile that resembles ballast stones. Their search brought forth nothing new.

The next step in the process was to get a side scan image of the wreck. This was to be a difficult task due to the depth of the water being less then 10 feet. This side scan can image the bottom at 1,000s of feet, yet to do it at less then 10 feet proves difficult. The ship remained anchored off at both ends and the side scan was manually by a diver swimming through the water until covering the length of the ship. On top of the shallowness of the wreck we also had to battle the seas. Each wave skewed the data just a bit. After 4 passes we felt that we've done all we could with it the side scan.



4:30pm Tuesday January 27 It was time to move on to the next area of interest. We got everything back in order and were off again. The wind had picked up considerably and was bouncing the boat; everything was in order though nothing was falling. The south coast was home to more of the great beauty of Haiti. The sun was to set soon, which meant we had to find a safe harbor to anchor the boat.

6:50pm Tuesday January 27 The place we found

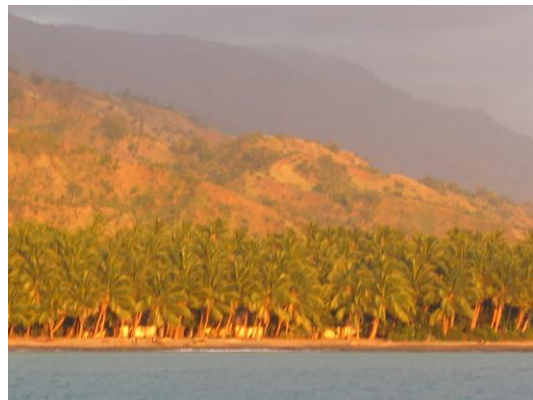


was perfect. The way this large mountains surrounded it made it a safe haven for us all. The locals turned out as in all the rest of the villages did. Some of them directed us to deeper water in closer to the beach. The beach filled up with many people, mostly curious children in awe of the giant ship that just pulled into their parents fishing ground. This village was bigger then Pestel but still pretty small. We stored all the gear into the hanger as we've done every night since we got to Haiti, and told the local fishermen

that we would be going ashore the next day..

8:00am Wednesday January 28 This day was filled with side scan and magnetometer surveying. Within the first hour of surveying we lost image on the side scan. This caused us to bring the side scan aboard for repair. After several hours it was a lost cause. We needed it professionally looked at. No professionals in Haiti. We spent the better part of the rest of the day running lines with the magnetometer only.

9:00am Thursday January 29 Today many jobs needed to be done, all of which were in different places. The captain, Julio and Gary left in the small boat, headed for a site known to have several bronze cannons on it. Greg Brooks and Chris went to shore to set up a few things and contact people in Port-A-Prince. As for Ryan, Doug and I, we started to survey the area with the Magnetometer only, due to the side scan malfunctioning. The way the bottom



was out here, it goes from 1500 feet to 50 feet without blinking an eye, and this made our survey difficult. We decided it would be best to first make our own depth chart. This chart would help us know when the tow fish had to be raised or lowered with more warning. The NOAA charts lacked details we need to do a proper survey without hitting a sudden incline and destroying our magnetometer.

Our evening had been planned by Chris as a night out on the town of Les Angles. He had found the local restaurant and basically made reservations for the crew to dine there. The ride to shore was by Jet Ski. Another thing most of the villagers had never seen before. They stood on the shore and watched as the Captain brought in the first to go ashore, Chris. He jumped off just a little too soon and ended up chest deep in water. I was next for the ride and managed to wait until I was ankle deep before getting off but that didn't matter, because due to an incoming wave the captain spun the Jet Ski around and hit the back of my legs sending me face first into the water. I was now covered head to toe with water and surrounded on all sides with the villagers. The kids were all wide-eyed and hanging on my every move. Chris managed to make his way over to me and we watched the captain, he was almost back to the boat.

After digging out a few large rocks that went up the jet drive intake. The captain brought Ryan, Julio and Doug, who managed to get off the Jet Ski without getting a drop on them. Ryan was nice enough to bring a change of shirts for myself and Chris. We were there to go to the local restaurant for our evening meal, and get to know the locals. After a quick stop at the missionary, to drop off a soccer ball for the kids, we headed down the street. The road was mostly dirt with large stones and only wide enough for 1 car to fit down at a time.



On the way to dinner we met Jax, a peace corp. volunteer, who later joined us after dinner for the local band. The locals decided to give us entertainment for the evening. The dinner was marvelous and plenty of it. The setting was outside under a giant tree. Our table was set up beside the dance floor. We were the only ones there besides the 4 waiters taking care of our every need. Slowly people came and stood on the dance floor in wait for the music. The local band was setting up and getting ready to play.

I asked where the bathroom was and the girl pointed in the direction of a run down shed but what could you expect it was Haiti, right. When I got to the shed I noticed the big pad locks on the door and no key in site. After looking around a bit the girl tapped me on the shoulder and pointed to a small ally beside the shed. The alley was filled with brush and no way to get in that way either. Again seeing the confused look on my face she pointed down." You pee there." She said with a smile as she went back to the table.

I felt like I was camping and had to sneak off behind a tree to relieve myself, only this wasn't camping, there was no tree, and in view behind me less than 15 feet away. There was a weird feeling about using their yard as a bathroom. The rest of the night was tremendous. The music was hypnotic and you just couldn't help but sway to the beat. Everyone that came to join the party knew all the words and sang along with the band. Even the children sang along until they were sent home to bed. My only regret was that I didn't bring my camera ashore.

That evening we gathered for dinner on the ship and went over our days undertakings. It turned out that the French came last year and salvaged the cannons. Greg and Chris got their meetings and calls taken care of. Ryan, Doug and I showed the depth chart of the area we made up.

During Greg's visit to the local village he met up with Jax and she gave him a tour of the hospital. This place is the kind of place that makes you not want to get sick, and if you do get sick, not tell anyone. The cleanliness of the



place was like the rest of the town, not there. He took a picture of the operating table. It looks as if the table hasn't been cleaned off in months, if ever. The end of the table was covered in what looked like mud but in fact was dried blood from previous visitors.



He also talked of the school children in the streets on the way to school. All their uniforms were matching pink. Their ages ranged from 5 years old to 17.



After dinner that evening we decided to light off some fireworks I'd brought along just for this type of occasion. It was pitch black out but after the second firework went off we heard what sounded like some cheers coming from shore. The more we lit off the louder the cheers sounded. Greg decided to light off one of his out of date parachute flares off. The crowd on the beach roared, and as the flare slowly came down in the water near the beach we noticed that the whole beach was filled with what seemed to be every villager. This went on for about 45 minutes until we ran out of fireworks. Our finally was the last old flare. The crowd screamed at it's loudest. This was to be our new tradition the night before we leave.

7:40am Friday January 30 We hauled anchor and headed west. Our goal now was to return to the anchor site and take measurements and do more filming. Then return to Port-A-Prince for supplies and head back to Key West.



4:00pm Friday January 30 There was a call over the VHF that there was a boat broke down and in need of assistance. The coast guard was un able to reach them for several hours so they were stranded. We decided to help them out. When we got to the site they were on anchor and had been there for a while . They were having problems with their engine and needed Oil to get going again. We took 5 gallons we had as our back up oil and gave it to them. They rowed out in a small boat to get it as to make it easier.

4:45pm Friday January 30 We made it back to the cove just outside of Pestel and dropped anchor. Gary, Doug, Chris, Julio, one of the locals and I decided this night we would visit the small town. We all jumped in the tending skiff and buzzed over to a small house on the edge of the water to tie up. It turned out to be one of Julio's relatives house. We walked around this town which was only about 500 yards from one end to the other. All the houses were made up of bits and pieces of plywood, old signs and metal sheathing. The people here were very friendly. A woman, equal to a mayor figure, of the town also owned a restaurant. There we were going to dine this evening. It took them about an hour just to get the ingredients for our feast, then another hour to prepare it. While we waited we sampled the local beverage and talked to some of the town's people.



7:20pm Friday January 30 The evening came with an awakening to us that this town had no power. The whole town was dark. The woman ushered up to the second story of her home, where we would soon be eating and prepared a table. One of the locals that joined us that evening turned out to be one of the local teachers. This gave me an idea. I took the skiff back to the ship and ruffled through my bunk. I pulled out a box with 50 giant sidewalk chalk sticks. Since this town had plenty of cement in the town square and this boy of 27 was a school teacher I figured it would be a perfect home for the chalk. He was very happy upon my return and promised the kids would use these while learning.

The meal was the best one we'd had since we left Key West. It had everything, lobster, conch, fish, and pasta, with a sauce that melted in your mouth. I think we all over ate that evening.

6:40am Saturday January 31 We decided to get an earlier start this morning and get to the anchor when the lighting was at its best. The sun was still hiding behind the mountains which made navigating out of the cove complicated. The sun was not high enough to show the outlines of the coral in the surrounding area. This proved to be problematic when the morning went from, watching the sunrise over a relaxing cup of coffee to a screeching halt as the ship grounded out on a large coral bank. After 15 minutes in reverse the ship slowly backed off the coral. By this time the sun had come up enough to show us the way clearly.

7:10am Saturday January 31 After checking the berthing bilge we came to the conclusion that we were taking on water. This was not good. The boat was brought to a stop and the crew scrambled to hook up the emergence pumps. Soon the pumps were hooked up Gary and Chris put on their dive gear to survey the damage from under the ship. Their find was 3 holes, 2 the size of quarters and one was the size of an eraser head. We came up with a solution of 2 pieces of plywood and a rubber gasket. We pre-drilled the wood and gasket in a way that it aligned with the holes in the ship. Gary and Chris took one piece and the gasket down with them under the ship and put in the bolts while the Captain was in the berthing bilge ready with the second piece of plywood. Tightening down on the bolts sandwiched the two together and brought the gush to a slight trickle.



9:05am Saturday January 31 The trip to the anchor for measurements was put on hold. Our new order of business was to get to Port-A-Prince without further mishap.

2:15pm Sunday February 1 We are on our way home after spending Saturday evening and all of Sunday morning trying to find solutions to the hull problem. The patch had



held up enough to get us here but Key West was 740 miles away, for this trip we were hoping to get more of a secure solution. In the end we would have to rely on the patch job of the previous day. Greg had taken a flight home from Port-A-Prince and Chris had gone back to his house on the outskirts of town. This left us with a crew of 5 to limp the boat 740 miles home. The shifts were shorter and we had a 24 hour watch on the

patch job. We hooked up an automatic float switch to the pump so when the water level got up about 10 inches the pump came on.

3:20am Tuesday February 3 With only a few engine problems and more pump outs then I'd like to count we were pulling back into Stock Island channel, shortly tying up after. We'd made it home.

10:25am Tuesday February 2 The boat was hauled out of the water at Robbie's Marina for a look and repair of the hull. This was going to take several weeks and a large sum of money to get this old girl ready for the next trip. Even though we had just got home I had an urge to head back to Haiti. The place has a way of calling out to you, enticing you to come back.

