

The Scuba Scoop

VOLUME 60, Issue 8 (English Language Version)

Aug 2018

priceless

The Official Newsletter of the
Saginaw Underwater Explorers
-Serving the Tri-Cities since 1958!

<http://www.saginawunderwaterexplorers.org>

Club Meetings- Held at 7:00 pm on the second Tuesday of each month, at the Thomas Twp. Fire Station on the corner of Dice and Thomas.

2018 Meeting Dates

This- Aug 14

Sep 11 Oct 9 Nov 13 Dec 11(?)



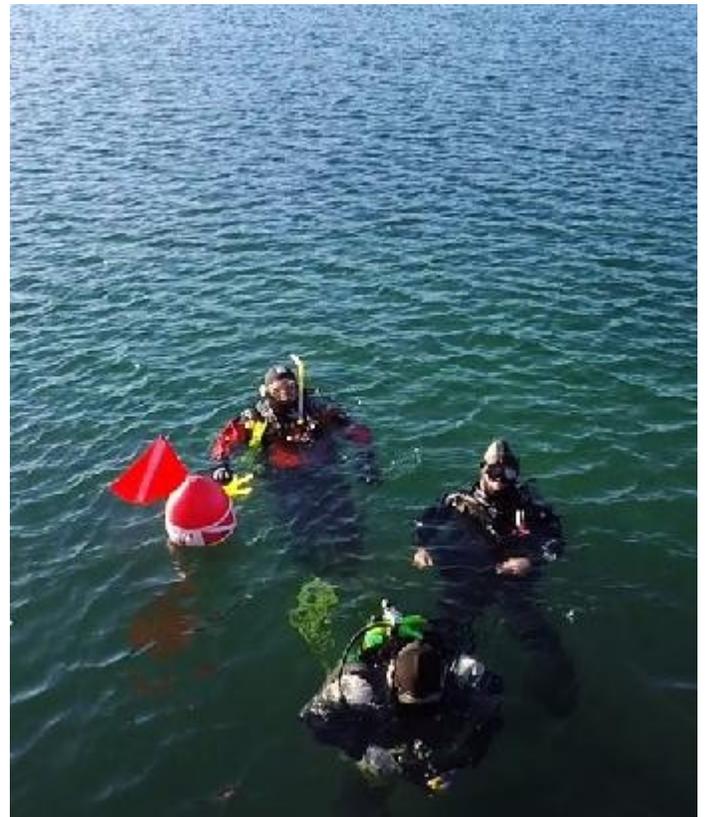
Inside.... (note- contains graphic material)

**Picnic Meeting
Just InTime
Michaels Adventure!**

also selected teasers



Imported meats, sizzling...



First in at 'Just In Time' (photo by Rob & drone)

Remember Our Troops!

Special July Picnic- er, Meeting!

Arrival-



Guys agreeing on politics



Sadie & Koni meet; first time!



The imported brats are a tradition,



and the rest of the food gets better every year!

Finally; Food Line





Eat!



Sadie learning...



Tim, get a coffee?....



Remember these guys were first in line!...



Second Fun Dive of '18; A First!

After dinner exercises



We were invited to try a new site, a gravel pit a little west of Saginaw near Ithaca. It has been developed into a campground, and the owners were kind enough to invite us to dive it. Named “Just In Time Campground”, it is on a huge lake which still has a working dredge on one end of it. (All aerial photos by Rob Q)



You're There!



Campground side of lake

The reader should note that in all the photos none had rain! This was some kind of record; the wx was perfect and the group had a non-stop good time!

August Fill Sched (call ahead!)

AUG - 02	Greg Prenzler	239-0625
AUG - 09	Don Cunningham	799-4385
AUG - 16	Mike Fabish	295-2627
AUG - 23	Mike Kowalski	892-2028
AUG - 30	Jusin Fabish	798-5306



First Time! Owner's son Jake tries out UrEd's gear. A natural!



Name that diver...



and, time to pack up...



Getting ready; S end of lake

This end of the lake has a loose stone ramp that we used for entry. Better than a soft bottom! Next time we'll try the sandy swim area.



Our gracious host Ryan; O & O. Thank you, Ryan!

“Mike” Michaels Shares-

**Wild & Wooly on Lake Huron ... The shipwreck
Steamer W.C. Franz**

Mike Michaels <MikeM24108@live.com>

Mon 7/23/2018 9:31 PM

Hi, all ...

WOW ... what a weekend!! The wind & wave Gods dictate everything that you do anywhere at anytime on the Great Lakes. Nothing could have been truer than this weekend.

Starting Friday we were monitoring the forecasts. For Saturday mild weather ... 5-8 foot waves with minor winds 25+ mph gusting to 45+. Hummm ... don't think that is going to cut it for diving. But, the forecast for Sunday started out 2-4 foot waves in the morning with winds 15+ mph ... and then “calming” in the afternoon to 1-2 foot waves with wind at ~10-12 mph. Now that IS doable. So the plan was to meet at the Harrisville site at 10:30am Sunday morning. Initially I had thought about going up Saturday night and car camping at a nice little National Forest Campground on a lake with just 4-6 sites on a small lake. But, after checking the weather around Harrisville it had 85%+ probability of rain all Saturday & Saturday night into the morning. Hummmm ... that is doable ... but NOT FUN. So I opted for plan B getting up at zero too early and driving the 2 ½ hours to the meeting site. Gosh ... what fun ... RAIN, RAIN, RAIN driving all the way up. But, it did let up and actually stop just as I go to the site.

We loaded all the diving gear up on the boat and heading off to the marina around 11 am ... and heading out to the dive site saw a lot of 4 footers. So it was a LONG SLOW motoring out to the site. The dive today was on the steamer W.C. Franz. She was built in 1901 and is 346 foot long, 48 foot wide cargo steamer which was Canadian registered.



W C Franz

On November 21st 1934 ... steaming north (up the lake towards Mackinaw) there was a meeting of three ships ... The Franz, the Edward E. Loomis, (approaching from the north) and steamer Soreldoc which was steaming parallel to the Franz. At about 3am in the morning the Loomis collided into the port side of the Franz forward not far from the bridge. Both ships sank ... the Franz quickly and the Loomis quite a bit later.

I'll include some “history” on the Franz and its sinking below. It is a fascinating and fun read. But, coming forward in time and history the Dave Trotter team “discovered” the wreck of the W.C. Franz in 2002. Funny story about how in the subsequent year while diving the “virgin” shipwreck a USCG helicopter hovered above the divers and boat. They called the Michigan State Police reporting the “activity” out in the middle of the lake ... who subsequently called the NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Park in Alpena. So, the “location” of the sunken ship Franz was “out of the bag” and NOAA “released” the coordinates of the Franz publicly.

None the less, when the Franz sunk she settled completely upright ... and she today sits in 230+ feet of water in Lake Huron with her bridge and decks at about 200 feet. Not a dive for the amateur or even the moderate trained diver. She requires very highly skilled “technical divers” to reach her. To give you an example our divers planned the dive for 30-35 minutes at MOD (Max Operating Depth) ... and a whopping 60-80 minutes of decompression (deco). Each diver had four tanks (all with various mix of gases to breath) and were heavily laden in dry suits with heated

underwear and clothing. They all came up COLD and TIRED.

There is no buoy marking the location of the W.C Franz ... so it was necessary to “grapple” the wreck with a grappling hook, 10 feet of chain, and 250 feet of 3/4” rope. Bouncing around the wreck with winds coming from one direction and waves running in another direction it is an exercise in geometry, calculus, and one hell of a lot of luck to place the boat and drift across it and “fish” with the hook to grab on to it firmly. It took us an hour and five passes to snag her. (And we are really good at this and do it frequently!!) Then it took another hour for the divers to prep gear, dress up, don equipment and get into the water. It was 3pm in the afternoon when they descended (recall we left the dock at 11am). By the time the divers completed the dive it was 4:45pm and 5:30pm before we got them and all the gear on board and stowed. I can’t tell you how hard it was to do this ... as when the divers descended the weather gods kicked our butt. Winds pickup to 20+ mph and the swells built to 4+ feet and were 5+ feet before we got back to the marina!! Dealing with 140 pound double tanks and regulators and frames in a bouncing boat rolling from side to side is akin to being a ping pong ball inside a dryer spinning!!!

Reaching down to pull up their DPV’s (Diver Propulsion Vehicles) was an exercise of waiting for the right wave to drop the boat and lift the diver and make a grab for gear like fins and tanks. There is an old sailors adage: “One hand for yourself, and one hand for the ship” Sure was true Sunday!!

But, like many things in life the best things often come with difficulty and a lot of hard work. The divers emerged beaming and talking about what a fantastic dive they had. Things like “everywhere you turn there was something to see that you wanted to spend five minutes with” were the norm. They saw the original bell on the mast, they found crates full of dishware, and “telegraphs” all over the wreck. (Telegraphs were devices to communicate to the engine room as to speed and direction of the ship e.g. full ahead, slow, reverse, etc.) They penetrated the wheelhouse and some of the holds. There were few Zebra mussels on the wreck and very little silt inside the vessel (so nothing to stir up and disturb visibility).

Speaking of visibility they said it was about ninety feet!!!! They agreed this dive was one of, if not the, best of their long experience!! They got fantastic video which I should have in hand in a couple of weeks. Video of the “miracle” grapple snag, the bridge house, the holds, the china crates, etc. I can’t wait to see it!!! Just a spectacular dive!!!

We did have one scare that took several years off of Dave and myself dive mastering on the boat while the guys were down. We all agreed ahead of time that they would “unhook” the grapple and hold on to it when they left the boat and would “hang” on the line as we drifted the boat throughout the 60-80 minute deco. They said when one of them unhooked it from the wreck it took off like a formula one car speeding away. The other two divers, filming the removal of the grapple, immediately had to hit high gear to catch up with the diver on the grapple and tie off before it disappeared drifting away.

Meanwhile, Dave and I had no idea if all three of them got on the line safely and while they were in deco we drifted over a mile and a half from the wreck. The boat was rolling and pitching, the wave were now four plus feet and the wind was kicking up white caps. There was no way we could see their bubbles. As we strained our eyes looking for any indication of them a huge frigging freighter snuck up from behind us and pass the bow of our boat by about one hundred yards. They scared us because we done bad and were myopically focused looking for our divers who were at the very end of their deco and should have been surfacing any time. The freighter was running parallel to the dragging grapple line ... and while we were pretty sure our divers were safe we had no way of knowing positively.

What happened next really scared the you know what out of us. The freighter just after passing our bow let out 4-6 short blasts of his fog horn. OK ... he was saying “hi” maybe. But, then he let out a really long continuous blast leaving Dave and I think perhaps they suddenly saw our divers in front of them!!!!!! Dave scrambled to the bow of the boat ... soaking wet in spray and rain ... and slippery as all you know what. He pulled on the line several times and said he thought they were on the line. About five minutes later one of divers shouted out and was off the stern of

the boat. I quickly turned and asked if all three divers were OK ... using fingers as it was too hard to hear over the wind and water. Yup ... all three were OK and a minute later I saw the second diver and a minute again later the last diver. So began their extraction ... much to the relief of Dave and myself I might add. Again, as neat a wreck as this one to dive and see it is a very dangerous dive and should only be done by the most experienced technical divers.

Time to get our butts into gear and the weather gods were angry and the lake was getting really gnarly. It was a long and slower trip back to harbor as we had to drive very slowly. I shot some video off the back of the boat and at times it would roll 20+ degrees to port or starboard and then quickly roll back the other direction past the horizon 20+ degrees. Impossible to really stand and we hit several squalls with heavy rain and high winds ... so everyone laid or sat down on the return trip. Yup ... EVERYONE but the old sailor Dave Trotter upchucked and lost breakfast. No one seemed interested in eating lunch on the boat all day long ... so all were starving for food by the time we got back to the harbor around 7pm. Another hour to load the boat and get it to storage and unload all the diving gear into cars. It was just after 8pm when I left for home. Yes ... it rained for the 2 ½ hours driving home!! I got home at 11pm ... tired ... but satisfied for having one heck of a great adventure!!!! Now, I admit ... I'm not anxious to go out on the lakes anytime soon in the same conditions. Guess I'll have to find a way to appease the wind and wave gods!!!!

Here is the link to my surface video. Not much as I was pretty busy when the divers were gearing up and coming out. But, listen to them tell you about the dive and what they saw. REALLY ... I CAN'T WAIT to get the video and share this dive with the guys!!!!!!

<https://1drv.ms/f/s!AtGIXq0Cf3kigvVAqpCFe3Z9rNKHow>

OK ... here is an eye treat for you. Link below are just some of the still images from this Sunday's dive on the W.C. Franz that I described to you in earlier e-mail.

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AtGIXq0Cf3kigvZZI1VsFQZpTbT0gw>

Things to note:

The "miracle hook" of the grapple onto the wreck. The way she sits perfectly upright on the bottom of Lake Huron ... almost like a ghost sailing the bottom of the lake instead of the surface of the lake

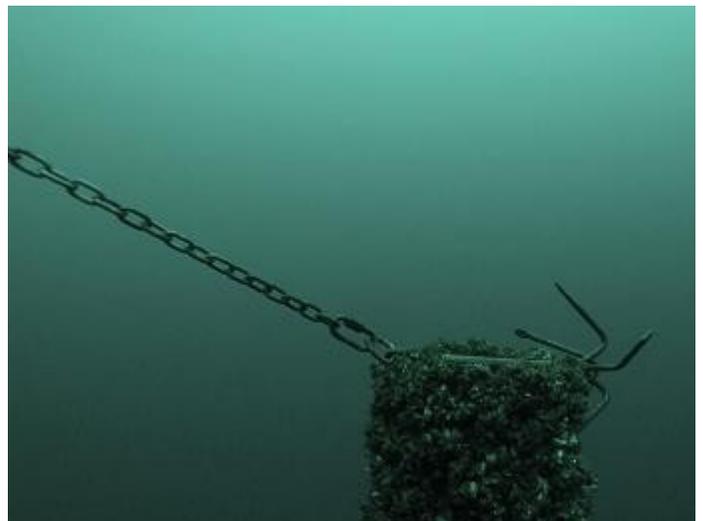
The china scattered about

The zebra encrusted "bell" on the mast of the Franz

The visibility

Check out how quickly Andy gets pulled away from the wreck by the surface wind/waves and leaves the other two divers quickly behind to catch up on their DPV's

As fantastic as these images are Keith & Chad both said they were disappointed ... and want to go back and do a better job with better lighting. Now that they know what is there they can plan to work together better with backlighting, side lighting, etc. None the less, what a beautiful wreck & what a cool dive.



Hey Joe; Did you hear about the janitor that became a SCUBA diver?

! Jacques Custodian

HA!

Thank you, Jill!



**CORA'S
CORNER**

<https://www.thescubanews.com/2018/06/30/niagara-divers-association-presents-annual-canada-day-dive>
<http://www.divephotoguide.com/underwater-photography-scuba-ocean-news/>
<http://www2.padi.com/blog>
<https://www.facebook.com/JustInTimeCampground/>

Don Storck Publisher (Take a bribe?)
3273 N. Raucholz Contact Mike Fabish ASAP
Hemlock, MI 48626



For a free SCOOP e-subscription; e-mail to
dstorck@hotmail.com Also see
www.facebook.com/saginawunderwaterexplorers

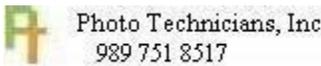
DIVEANDGLIDE 989 892 5771 www.diveandglideinc.com

Compressed Air Supplies & Equipt. –Dick Batchelder
800 Old Griffin Rd # 3, Dania, FL 33004 954-929-4462
www.CompressedAirSupplies.com
orders@compressedairsupplies.com

Piazza Appraisals <http://piazzaappraisal.com>

Insurance – Ind. Agent Mark Russell 989 280-3194

Lisk Title Service <http://www.lisktitle.com/>

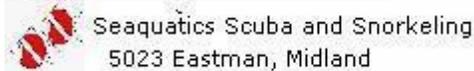


<http://www.phototechnicians.com>

MAGMA GEMS
<http://www.magmagems.com>



<http://www.deepbluefantasea.com>



<http://www.seaquatics.com>



639 W. Isabella Rd, Midland, 989-832-4149
<http://www.uwantics.com>



<https://www.facebook.com/MackinacStraitsCharters/?fref=ts>

Tank Service- Gale Fire Protection
10248 Pierce Rd, Freeland, MI 48623 (989) 695-9800
<http://galefireprotection>



TO: Preferred Customer

-----Space For Rent-----

2018 BOARD

President:	Mike Fabish	295 2627
Vice President:	Mark Russell	280 3194
Secretary:	Justin Fabish	495 9756
Treasurer:	Dave Sommers	751 8517
Compressor Chair:	Don Cunningham	799 4385
Bd Member-at-Large:	Tim Hastings	798 815 7
Editor: (wide open!)	Don Storck	642 8436

Policy and Disclaimer:

Items listed in For Sale/Wanted will continue to be listed for one year unless the "Scoop" is notified otherwise. Saginaw Underwater Explorers and "The Scuba Scoop" are not responsible for anything posted here.