

On Saturday, July 20, sixteen (16) divers met at Barcelona, NY, the home of Osprey Charters, to go diving on the boat "Southwind." The trip was an AquaMasters club trip, but there were a few LEWD members present, too. Many divers, in fact, were members of both clubs, making it truly a joint trip. The divers were Ted Green, Ron Hudy, George Balas, Jon Tepas, Dennis Troyan, Greg Ondus, Dave Pacanosky, Ann Stephenson, Jacque Gerouard, Marty Leonard, Annette and Dave Soule, Georgann and Mike Wachter, Cindy LaRosa, and Kevin Magee. Captaining the boat for Jim Herbert was Sam Genco with the able assistance of Kathy.

The weather was perfect for the long two hour run with warm 80 deg F air temperatures, a blue sky, and perfect flat lake conditions. The first wreck was the "Crystal Wreck," an unidentified two-masted schooner in 110'-120' of water off Long Point on the Canadian side. It is in excellent condition, and it got its name not from the dishes and cups at the site but the name of the beer drunk by the divers after this wreck was first dove. It was found because it was a known net snag hazard to commercial fishermen, and it used to be called the "Hook."

Upon suiting up and descending, it was discovered that the viz was decent at an estimated 50'. The lighting conditions were a little dim, but everything could be seen without a light. The mooring is tied to the bow, which points E or SE. The bow sprint is intact for about 10'-15' and is draped in netting that forms a 4th of July decorative bunting effect underneath. There is enough room to swim between the loops of net that hang down. There is also a significant amount of netting snagged on the port side of the bow, partially hiding a large anchor that is on the deck. The starboard anchor is missing. A large windlass is on the bow, and behind it is a hand pump and a cargo hatch.

The deck is at 105' and can be easily seen at 90'-100'. It is intact except for a few missing boards, and the railing is also intact around the ship's perimeter except for a small section near the bow on the port side, where it is collapsed. The hull is almost completely intact and shows no obvious signs of damage. Swimming aft one can see two additional cargo hatches, the short stubs of the two masts, a capstan, and a winch knocked askew. At the stern is the large cavity where the cabin used to be located before the ship sank. The planked floor of the cabin can be seen about 5' below the deck level.

At the SE corner of the cabin is the stove, and sitting on top was the shoe that was missing last year. Georgann had found it and placed it back on top to view. A cup was also seen on the stove along with what appears to be a caulking mallet. On the deck near the stove was seen a pair of eyeglass frames, a delicate metal ring that is too large to be a bracelet, and more dishes. At the rear of the cabin is an elevated box-like structure that holds the ship's wheel. The box is partially draped in netting. The netting hangs down 15'-20' to the bottom, forming a curtain that completely hides the stern.

Depths were measured on the bottom around the wreck, and 122' was obtained at the bow and 116' at the stern. The bottom temperature was 43-45 deg F, and the surface temperature was 75 deg F. Surprisingly, there was no distinct thermocline. Instead, there were a series of increasingly colder water layers encountered from 35'-55'.

After a brief surface interval, the next wreck dove was the "Tradewind," a three-masted barquentine that sank in the late 1800's after colliding with another ship during a late season snowstorm. It lies in 120' of water just a short ride away from the previous wreck. Unfortunately, at this time Ted's rebreather decided to become uncooperative and fail before the dive, turning it into an expensive piece of deck decoration for the remainder of the trip. Ted sat this dive out, but the other divers discovered dark bottom conditions that required a light to see details on the wreck. This was due to the late hour of the day, and it effectively made the viz about 35'.

The mooring is tied about 25' off the wreck to a fallen mast on the port side. The ship lies with its bow pointing S and has a noticeable tilt to the port side. The remains of all three masts can be seen lying on the bottom parallel to the hull, and there is a great amount of detail in them. Still present are multiple splices, multiple bracing platforms, a boom, and at least one cross member still attached to a mast. It is fascinating to see the whole assembly of masts laid out beside the wreck.

The bow sprint is missing, but the bow and basic hull are all intact. The windlass is at the bow along with both anchors. Along the deck can be seen what appears to be long, thin boards scattered like match sticks. These are, in fact, railroad tracks, which were part of its cargo. Peering down into the cargo hatches, the remains of stoves can be seen as another part of its cargo peaking up through the silt. At the stern the cabin is still in place with two companionways going down into it. On top of the cabin can be seen the ship's wheel inside a unique well, or cavity, penetrating the deck's roof with a floor about halfway down into the cabin's interior. The stern is squared and raked underneath to expose the rudder. The stern stands high off the bottom by about 10'-15', but the bow only stand about 5'-10' off the bottom.

After surfacing it was a long ride home, but we were treated to a beautiful sunset, and we arrived just in time to eat dinner at the Barcelona Harbor Restaurant and watch/listen to the fireworks which were being launched at the waterfront to mark the 200th anniversary of Westfield.

---

On Sunday, July 21, pretty much the same divers as the previous day's trip gathered at the dock in Barcelona, NY, to go diving on Osprey Charters aboard

the "Southwind." This time the trip was a LEWD trip, but there were also some AquaMasters on board to again make it a joint venture. There was a total of nineteen (19) divers. Gone was George Balas, but gained were divers Tom Borman, Ken Marshall, B.K., and Pete Deegan. Ted Green was again diving, but this time with an old-fashioned - yet reliable - open circuit system that had been rigged together for the day's dives. Captaining again was Sam Genco along with Kathy's help.

The first wreck was just a short trip from Barcelona's harbor. It was the "Boland," a large steel freighter that sank in 135' of water in the early 1900's after a storm caught it without its hatch covers secured. Afterwards, all ships would be required to have their hatches dogged down regardless of the weather. Upon entering the water, it was discovered that once again there was no distinct thermocline. Instead, there were just progressively colder water layers between 35'-65' going from the surface temperature of 75 deg F to the bottom temperature of 43-45 deg F. Good 60'-80' viz was found on the bottom. The wreck is almost upside down with the bow pointing S, but it is partially lying on its starboard side, exposing the deck and gunwale on the W side of the wreck. The mooring is tied at the stern to the large propeller and imposing rudder. Because of the large size of the ship and its depth, almost the entire dive is spent swimming along its length with just a little time left to examine the bow and stern. Most of the wreck can be seen by swimming along the gunwale at a depth of 110'.

Near the mooring line the stern deckhouse can be examined. Its doorways and portholes can be looked into to see the partially silted interior of the rooms, but it would be unsafe to enter without the proper gear and training. The interior is easily silted, and the tilted landscape would make disorientation easy. Because of the extreme depth and limited bottom time, penetration would be a dangerous proposition. On the deck around this area can be seen various pieces of equipment like a large winch, railings, and piping. Swimming aft, many large cargo holds are passed. It's a long swim, but eventually the bow's deckhouse is reached. Inside its doorways can be seen the officers' quarters and bridge. Nice wood paneling is on the walls of these rooms, and various pieces of furniture like bed frames, radiators, and cabinets can be seen by peeking inside the doorways. Then it's a long swim back to the stern and the mooring line.

During the surface interval everyone kept themselves entertained by trading back and forth accusations of who screwed up the viz during the dive. It was established Kevin screwed up Mike's viz at the bow, Mike and Georg screwed up the viz along the gunwale, and the stern's viz was pretty much screwed up by everyone. After reaching the second dive site, the topic was forgotten, and everyone went in for another dive. The site was the "Betty Hedger," a.k.a the "Sulfur Barge," named after its large pile of sulfur cargo. It is a wooden barge that sank in 120' of water in the early 1900's. The mooring is tied to the bow, which points W.

Upon descending it was discovered that the viz was good at 50'. The hull's sides are fallen outwards. What remains are the large cargo hatch frames suspended 15' off the bottom by a series of posts running down the center of the ship. Some decking and the sidewalls of the stern cabin are all still standing attached to this hatch framing structure. The whole thing is precariously perched on top of the center supports. Unfortunately, this structure is now beginning to tilt to the port side. Last year it was standing in a perfect "T" shape, but it now appears to be getting ready to fall over to this side. Furthermore, the bow's deck is also beginning to fall forward.

On the bow's deck at the center can be seen a capstan and two large bollards for towing the barge. Off to the port side can be seen a small winch and a small navy-styled anchor lying flat on the deck near it. At the extreme port side can be seen the remains of a navigation light fixture. There is a small hole where it was mounted last year, and it has rolled forward along the gunwale to come to rest at the extreme SW corner of the bow's deck. The post that fits in the deck's hole can be seen projecting out from underneath the fixture. On the inside of the cargo hatch frame at the extreme bow can be seen the tonnage marks etched into the wood. These were used to positively identify this wreck last year.

Swimming aft, cleats and bollards can be seen on the small amount of deck that runs parallel to the hatches' sides. At the extreme stern can be seen the sides of the cabin attached to the main structure. Missing are the roof, floor, front, and back walls of the cabin. The sidewalls each have two portholes installed, and on the outside of the portholes can be seen metal screening still intact after all these years. The stern's deck has fallen to the bottom, and there is a capstan mounted in the middle. A winch was seen attached to some decking partially fallen to the starboard side at the stern, and a large pipe was seen lying on the bottom on the port side with a "T" flange in the middle of it pointing up.

Overall, it was a great day and a great weekend. The weather was calm, the sky was sunny, and the lake was flat. After everyone was aboard we reluctantly headed back to Barcelona to end the weekend's trips. It was a great time, and if you haven't signed up for the Osprey trips on August 17-18, there are still a few spots left. If you've made reservations and need to cancel them, please call Jim Herbert ASAP and let him know in advance so that other people can sign up instead. We had a full boat for both days and had to turn people away, but a few last minute no shows made several spots available that could have otherwise been filled by someone who wanted to go.