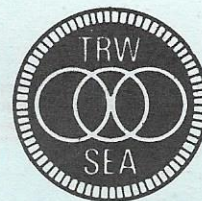


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KATHLEEN MCNALLY
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SEA DIVERS

MARCH 1988

MAR 1 ***** General Meeting Baxter's 7 PM.
MAR 5 ***** Boat Dive, San Nicholas Island
MAR 9 ***** Executive Meeting Baxter's 7 PM.

APRIL 1988

APR 5 ***** General Meeting
APR 12 ***** Executive Meeting
APR 16 ***** Boat Dive, Olympic / Valiant Wrecks

MAY 1988

MAY 3 ***** General Meeting
MAY 10 ***** Executive Meeting
MAY 16 ***** Boat Dive, Santa Cruz/Santa Rosa/
San Miguel

General Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month. A no host social hour precedes the meeting from 6 PM to 7 PM and a feature presentation follows the business meeting. The meeting is held at **Baxter's** in the Manhattan Beach Mall. Executive Meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month also at Baxter's

MARCH 1988						
SUN	MON	TUS	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
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27	28	29	30	31		

APRIL 1988						
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MAY 1988						
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29	30					

DIVERS DIRECTORY



<u>POSITION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DAY PHONE</u>	<u>EVE PHONE</u>
PRESIDENT	Allen Parker	536-2614	370-1657
TREASURER	Kathi McNally	812-2385	370-1657
SEA REPERSENATIVE	Paul Kaminski	297-7846	540-4142
SECRETARY	Sandi Anderson	373-5430	373-5430
DIVING OFFICER	Ken Sizemore	410-3932	371-2636
BOAT DIVE CHAIRMAN	Allen Parker	536-2614	370-1657
BOAT DIVE RESERVATIONIST	Mike McLaughlin	535-0031	374-4698
BEACH DIVE CHAIRMAN	VACANT		
PROGRAM CHAIRMAN	Dicie Sizemore	371-2636	371-2636
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN	Kathi McNally	812-2385	370-1657
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Patrick Minor	536-3005	378-9350
HOSPITALITY CHAIRMAN	Robin Grant	823-2552	823-2552
LONG RANGE PLANNING	Billy Garret	536-2566	TTTTTT

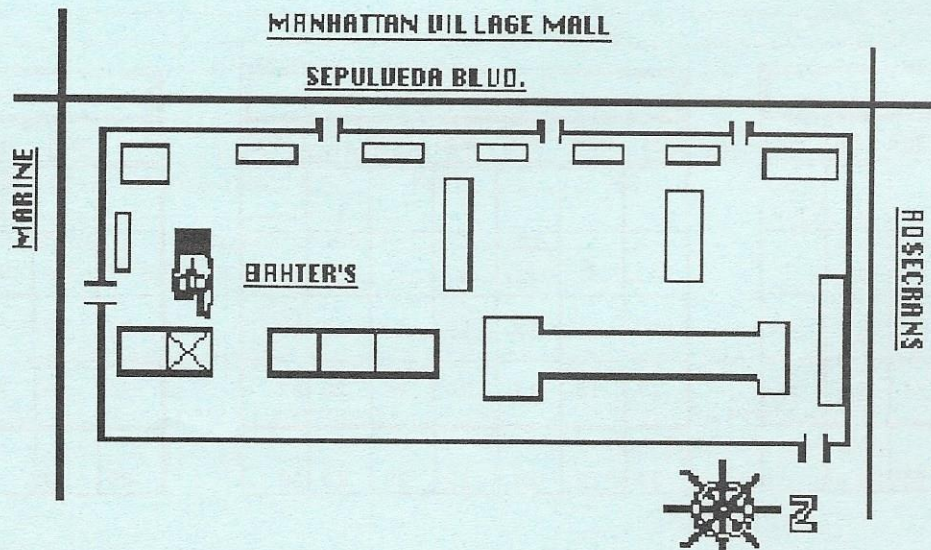
MARCH PROGRAM: TRUCK!!! - PALAU!!! - PONAPE!!!

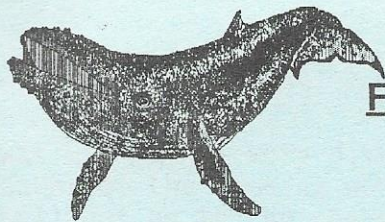
Mr. Bob French from Sea Safaris in Manhattan Beach will be our guest speaker for the March 1st meeting. He will give a slide presentation and talk on the diving opportunities on the beautiful islands of Truk, Palau, and Ponape in the South Pacific. Those who have visited the area say that it is the best diving in the world.

If you've been to a recent TRW SEA Diver meetings you know that we would like to get together a group from our club to visit these exotic and exciting locations (perhaps in 1989). This will be our chance to see and hear what's there and ask some questions.

Sea Safaris has been in business for ten years and some of our members have arranged very successful diving vacations through them. Bob French is anxious to come and meet us.....So I know you'll want to be present on March 1st!

Dicie Sizemore
Program Chairman





FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

We are moving again! The March General Meeting (Tuesday 1 March) and the Executive Meeting (Wednesday 9 March) will be held at Baxter's at the South end of the Manhattan Mall complex. As before the 7:00 - 9:00 PM meeting will be preceded by a no-host social hour. We are making the move due to the somewhat cramped, noisy, conditions at Tequilla Willie's, and also the lack of projection and video equipment. The management at Tequilla Willies worked very hard with us to make us comfortable and we wish to thank them for their efforts; but it just didn't quite work.

A significant number of our members have not yet paid their annual dues. One more round of reminders will be mailed out in the near future - after that, non-payment will result in being dropped from club membership. Unfortunately we have recently also received several checks that were written against accounts with insufficient funds - i.e., the beauties bounced! This costs the club a significant amount of time, effort and dollars to solve the problem. As of 1 March 1988 any club member submitting a check with insufficient funds will be liable for a \$10 surcharge payable to the club treasurer.

We now have in place a dive buddy list which will be available at club meetings. The list will also be published on a quarterly basis in the Newsletter.

As I mentioned in the February Newsletter we are planning a Swap Meet at the April General Meeting, so plan to bring any gear you wish to trade or sell.

Our next two single day boat dives are now both priced as all inclusive of food, beverages and air - this format has proved very popular with club members. The price increase was \$13 for the 5 March dive and \$12 for the 16 April dive. Boat dives continue to fill early!

We are still searching for a Beach Dive chairperson, and are going to contact a few folks within the next week or so in the hope that we can announce a "volunteer" by the next General Meeting. The club continues to be very upbeat - with our first boat dive to San Clemente and our first beach dive at the Avalon Clean-up behind us, the club is off to a great start to 1988. Both activities were well supported by club members, and both were a real success.

We are trying to improve the Newsletter with better graphics and hopefully more variations in the articles and the writers, I think Pat made a good start on his first production!

Please feel free to call any of the "Executives" at any time to make suggestions for improvements, dive spots (beach or boat), club meeting programs, Newsletter articles, etc.

See you at Baxter's or on the Wild Wave!...

Allen P.

1988 AVALON CLEAN-UP
(REMAKE OF "THE LOST WEEKEND")

With extensive storm warnings in the air, 25 TRW SEA dive club members boarded the 7:30 PM Catalina Cruise boat to Avalon at Long Beach, in anticipation of another great weekend on the Island. The ride was rough! However, a typical group of hardened TRW socializers gathered in the upper salon to swap tales, look at photos and to drink -- just a little! Around us was mayhem -- of 80 or so Camp Fox bound kiddies, it seemed like all but 3 or 4 relieved themselves of their last meal -- even the dog threw up! But not the hard core -- more scotch, wine, beer, etc., managed to keep the porcelain pony (or the rail) at bay. Finally, Avalon -- and calm and peace -- almost!

We unloaded our gear, AP's fully loaded dolly (not KLM) rolling over him in the process, and on to the Bay View Hotel with appropriate room assignments -- you know, boy/girl, boy/girl, etc. Spirits were high and after buffalo burgers at the Busy Bee, we repaired back to the Bay View where vicious attacks were launched on the unwary. KWS and DAS received a visitor through an open window (an adult doll) and an unplanned shower courtesy of the garden hose and the revelers (AP and BSB).

Saturday AM came all too soon with the loading of gear onto the truck, sign-up, and preparations to dive the west side of the harbor from the pier, out two rows of moorings and generally towards the Casino. Suiting up was crazy -- few people seemed fully organized (BAG in particular!); photo sessions; buddy pairing; missing equipment; too early; too late; too tight!! -- took BHG and a few others to zip up his suit -- but finally our crew began to enter the water, in dribs and drabs (old suits). The water was calm and clear -- wimp diving at its best --- fortunately!

Much junk was raised by our divers on the first foray, but nothing really spectacular -- some old bottles, a 1934 penny, a battery, small parts of boats, etc., etc. PAK and KMD decided at this point that this was hard work and retreated to town to purchase large quantities of cinnamon schnapps, which they proceeded to consume (with help from others later). The next chore was getting an air fill (it always is at the cleanup), lunch (close to the worst hamburgers in the world), and then on to the second dive -- in most cases closer to the Casino, picking up where we left off earlier. Now we hit pay-dirt. One group of 6 divers (BHG, AP, SLA, MM, BSB and KE) pulled out one 180 lb. battery, two 60 lb. batteries, one complete dingy, and over half of two other small boats, many bottles, an unbroken wine glass, several boat CN numbers, a bilge pump (fairly new), a really old dive mask, a "ghetto blaster," a pair of shorts, plus other items too numerous to mention -- or unmentionable!! Other TRW pairs also did well. The beer was welcome -- clean up -- and into the jacuzzi at the hotel which we instantly overfilled. Umbrellas were required to keep the rain out of our drinks, and to keep the Ocean Pacific hair styles from being spoiled for the evening. Diving over, the party really began and by the time the awards dinner dance came around at 7:00 PM, a significant percentage of our interpid group was "in the bag," or "toasted," or "ripped," or whatever. One of our group (KWS) does remember being at the Casino, but does not remember dancing, or the band, or making speeches, or kissing all the guys. Prizes were awarded -- unfortunately for just coming through the door in most cases -- the discussion of who did what in the harbor

was minimal -- very disappointing (letter to follow). However, not to be daunted, the evening went on, and on -- eating, dancing, drinking, floating balloons up to the chandeliers, running around half naked (KLM and DB), and the usual run of the mill stuff. Back to town -- most of us found it -- and into the sack (or was it the bag?), after a pit stop on the way.

Sunday dawned bright, clear (not the TRW-ites), and bloody windy. Up went the first red flag and then for the second year in a row the second red flag. No boats -- like none! Fortunately (or unfortunately) it was NFL championship playoff day -- you know back to back games starting with Bloody Mary's at 9:15 AM, and continuing through every imaginable concoction until the end of the second game late in the PM. Back to the hotel, where BAG and GKG put on one of the best hallway floor shows in history prior to hitting the jacuzzi, where things really developed -- to wit, one of our non-divers (GKG again!!) does not remember much about the activities; however, she was later reminded as to how her T-shirt substitute for a bathing suit (left on the mainland) was about 3" short of proper -- to wit, only about half of our group (BSB, EEM, BAG, GKG, MM, DAS, KB, AP, KWS and DB) succeeded in making it to the Casino theatre for the screening of "Fatal Attraction" -- what an appropriate selection!!!

Monday dawned much like Sunday -- but no NFL games -- what does one do?? -- no boats, no tours, no money (banks on holiday), no diving, headaches (several) -- the same movie -- but wait, we have a fun group, why should we be bored?? SLA and three friends decided not to wait for the plans to develop, and bailed out on the first available flight from Avalon International to the mainland. Plan: don't hit the bars until noon -- we made 11:55 AM -- and off into story telling of all kinds of experiences -- lots of laughs -- took us all the way to 2:15 PM! Now what? -- oh oh -- a wine and cheese party on the patio and in the jacuzzi. All are invited; wine, beer, scotch, tequilla, soft drinks, chips, crackers, cheeses, fresh vegetables, etc., are hauled to the hotel from the local Safeway. Great fun, but no jacuzzi -- we apparently broke it the night before -- or at least tired it out. The wine and cheese affair sputters out in the early evening and off we go to the various eating and watering "holes" in town with a fair batch of us finishing off the evening at Chi Chi's playing (or stumbling), around the pool tables. The pool sharks turned out to be BHG, KLG and EEM (junior shark).

Others (CAH and RS) were 86'd from one of the nicer lounges in town; others (or was it the same) were found face down in their underwear in the bushes at the hotel. The same evening (or was it morning) AP bet KLM on a card trick performed by MM and lost!!! KB got claustrophobic at a table for 6 set for 9, and as a result pursued the Guinness wine drinking record in an attempt to offset the claustrophobia -- with minimal success! Peace finally comes, and the next morning so do the boats -- thank God! Some (ES, LAL, WAL and DB) made the early 7:00 AM boat; most of us straggled home on the noon boat finishing off the beer, wine and goodies from the Monday wine and cheese party -- or was it the Sunday bash, or . . . ? PAK and KMD brought their own -- tequilla shooters!!

Gear ashore, pay the ransom for the cars and off we go back into reality. A tough weekend -- lots of fun -- some fond memories -- some not so fond memories -- some blank memories (KWS, KB, GKG, KN, etc.) -- and strong thoughts about the rest and relaxation at work the next day! See you next year!?

LESSONS LEARNED

After reading several of the club's articles on Lessons Learned and getting a number of good suggestions from them I thought one of my experiences may be of interest. Hopefully recounting my mistakes will prevent any of you making similar diving errors. To begin with, I started diving late 1963. I figure I have over 1500 hours diving time and at one time I free dove almost exclusively and could go to 80 feet without a tank. Now my story:

About seven years ago I was free diving for lobster at Redondo breakwater with a relatively inexperienced night diver. I dropped down about 15 feet and saw the entrance to a cave. Venturing inside it expanded into several chambers each going deeper. I must have been 20 feet into it when I saw a good nine pounder in a narrow crack. I left the cave and went to the surface. Calling my buddy over I told him to stay on the surface and shine his light at the opening below.

For the next several minutes I pumped up hoping the bug would still be there. Dropping down and entering the cave again, I made my first mistake. In my excitement I went too far - I went one chamber too many. After about half a minute I realized what I had done. Going back toward the entrance I saw the lobster still in the recessed rock. I knew my air supply felt low, but mistake number two. I was afraid this time I would lose the nine pounder. So greed overcame good diver sense and I went for him. The rock formation got narrower and narrower. So much so, when I was within reaching distance both my shoulders were jammed to the rocks. Working my right arm free I was able to pin the bug. It was so tight there was no way I could get my left arm free. Holding the lobster with one hand and forcing him against the rock I pulled him toward me. By now I was starting to feel light headed, as I had been down well over a minute and a half. Up to now I felt like "bad diver Dan" "invincible", a "thousand hour diver" "nothing could happen to me". Wrong!

Backing out of the crack, my right hip became jammed against a rock out crop I had not seen nor could I now. From this point on my thoughts began to literally flash through my brain, and believe me folks, this is why I am writing this. I suddenly realized - I am going to drown and my inexperienced my buddy could do nothing to help. He did not know I was in trouble. Hopefully none of you will ever find yourselves in this predicament. If you ever do here is why I am here today. My first impulse was panic. I really told myself "I'm going to die". For a second or two I let panic take charge, then it occurred to me - "wait a minute, if you panic you know you're dead. If you don't, maybe you stand a chance". So first things first, with reluctance, I let the lobster go. Next I tried to assess how I was stuck. By now my thoughts were getting fuzzy, but I finally figured out what the problem was.

Interesting enough, I do not remember any sense of panic at this point, my mind was one hundred percent on survival. Everything in my body said to go up, but in order to release the grip the rocks had on me I had to go down and forward. Deeper into the cave it worked! Turning toward the entrance I debated dropping my weight belt. I elected not to. I was about 15 feet back in the cave and 10 to 15 feet deep. I was afraid I would become too light and get stuck against the cave's ceiling. The last thing I remember was seeing my buddy's light beam through the cave's entrance. The light had an eerie glow and my sensations, as I went toward the surface, was like entering heaven. That is the last thing I remember. I blacked out. Apparently my buddy pulled me the rest of the way to the surface. I woke up with him holding my head above the water. I had been down close to 3 minutes.

Here's my lessons learned: 1) Dive with experienced buddies 2) remember you are only human 3) don't be greedy 4) don't overstep your diving abilities 5) have a game plan and stick to it

Terry Barkley

SAN CLEMENTE AFTERMATH

by Mike McLaughlin

Saturday night January 23rd:

Divers started arriving at 22nd street landing only to find a swill pit in place of the normally well groomed 4WD area for a parking lot. One unfortunate TRW SEA DIVER decided to test the central swill pit area in his 4WD Blazer, and blazed in all the way up to his hubs. After at least one attempt by a fellow diver to assist in pulling out this unlucky sole, the automobile club was called to the rescue. Most everyone else managed to slip-slide their way down to the Wild Wave without another mishap. The boat was slated to leave around 2 am and everyone was onboard and most were tucked away by 12:30 am.

Sunday January 24th:

Divers headed topside at the first change in engine speed around 6:15 am. These early-bird hunters were suited up and ready to go within minutes only to wait the better part of an hour till the anchor was dropped and the gate opened. At 9 fathom reef we intruded upon an early morning sport fishing boat anchored in OUR spot, so we moved slightly off the reef and dove. The 30 - 40 foot visibility was graced by the presence of many sea lions who were more than happy to pose or play without much hesitation. The game take was light. Back topside we headed for the backside, but at the suggestion of the John , our skipper, we turned around to search for calmer, clearer water on the frontside. Three dives were made on the frontside, all calm, clear, and frustrating. The undersized bugs learned many lessons on how to be caught, and the legend of the San Clemente Short lives on.

DIVE BOAT NEWS

Below are articles on the history and details of the OLYMPIC and VALIANT Wrecks we will dive in April from the BOLD CONTENDER. Both articles are reproduced from previous issues of Skin Diver Magazine.

The Japanese freighter that rammed the OLYMPIC in 1940 was the SAKITO MARU. A binnacle recovered from the wreck along with one or two photographs are on display in the L.A. Maritime Museum. The STAR OF INDIA in San Diego is the sister ship to the STAR OF FRANCE which was renamed OLYMPIC.

The VALIANT is about nineteen miles from the OLYMPIC and sank in late 1930 after catching fire. The VALIANT was also renamed from its original name of ARAS. Old sailors do not like renamed ships as they believe they are doomed!?... Read on ...

THE WRECK OF THE OLYMPIC

Only three miles out from the main entrance to Los Angeles Harbor, lies the wreck of the *Olympic*.

The *Olympic*, originally named the *Star of France*, was launched in 1877. She was 258 feet long and measured 1,776 tons. During her career, she sailed to India on the jute route and raced Australian wool clippers on the Pacific. Later, she sailed to Alaska with the *Star of India* and the *Star of Alaska* to fish for salmon. In 1936 the sailing bark was converted to a fishing barge. In 1940, while anchored in the channel, she was rammed by a Japanese freighter and sank.

Today she lies on her starboard side in 90 to 100 feet of water and has something for every diver. For the photographer there is a thick covering of strawberry anemones and the occasional net from a luckless trawler. Game hunters will find many large sheephead and bass swimming through her nooks and crannies. For the serious wreck diver, however, a dig through the scattered debris is often rewarded with an artifact.

Over the years, the *Olympic* has yielded many wonderful finds. During the early '70s many portholes were found. Cast in relief on the stormcovers of most was the decorative house flag of Alaska Packers, making them a rare collector's item. They are among the most sought after and prized of those from any California wreck.

Pieces of rare wood such as teak and lignum vitae have been removed and transformed into wonderful displays. As a fishing barge, the *Olympic* served meals on china plates and sold soft drinks in glass bottles. Many of these are still found and are highly prized treasures. Steve Lawson, a new wreck diver, was rewarded on his first dive with an intact oil lamp, complete with glass chimney.

A project undertaken by the California Wreck Divers and still underway is the removal and restoration of the capstan, weighing more than 2,200 pounds. The salvage took the better part of a day and utilized a score of highly experienced divers. Once fully restored, this capstan will be on display at the Los Angeles Maritime Museum.

WRECK OF THE VALIANT

BY STEVE GILES

Saturday night, December 13, 1930, found the 163 foot, palatial yacht, *Valiant*, peacefully riding at anchor in Descanso Bay, adjacent to Avalon Bay, Catalina Island. Her owner, millionaire Charles S. Howard, was entertaining four prominent Los Angeles guests in the main dining saloon, awaiting the extravagant meal being prepared in the galley. The *Valiant*'s 20 member crew of sailors, waiters, maids and valets busied themselves with caring for Howard and his floating palace.

The serenity of the evening was shattered at 7:50 pm as a tremendous explosion heard as far as three miles away, rocked the *Valiant* and started a rapidly spreading fire in the engine room and galley. Darkness enveloped the ship and screams were heard coming from the galley. T.J. Valland, the *Valiant*'s captain, lay unconscious on the bridge where he had been struck by a flying door blasted from its hinges by the explosion.

Both crew and guests struggled to reach the upper deck where they discovered a wall of flames blocking their escape to the gangway amidship. Howard quickly led them forward where two small boats hung swinging in their davits and lowered them all safely to a motor launch waiting alongside the stricken vessel.

All Avalon was awake. Small boats converged on the fiercely burning ship and picked up several members of the *Valiant*'s crew, some of whom had dived into the bay with their clothing on fire. One by one they were pulled from the icy waters, shivering and exhausted.

A second explosion lit the sky and sent debris from the wheelhouse flying through the night air, along with a flaming dinghy from the boat deck. The surface of the dark water was peppered for 100 feet in all directions with burning pieces of the once beautiful yacht.

With his guests safely away, Howard returned to the smoke-filled galley where he was shocked to find Hugo Pebulay, the ship's Filipino baker, trapped in the wreckage, his clothing on fire. Howard managed to drag the screaming baker from the galley to safety, burning his hands severely in the process. As soon as Pebulay was lowered to a waiting boat, Howard himself abandoned the doomed vessel, the last man to leave. With his departure, all passengers and crew were safe, the only injuries being mainly shock and burns.

Francis McGrath, Avalon's harbor master, realized the immense danger to the other craft moored near the *Valiant* and turned the wheel of his launch over to one of the rescued seamen. Pulling in close under the *Valiant*'s steaming bow,

McGrath caught up her mooring line and attached a heavy manila line from his launch. Cutting the other end off the mooring line, he rammed the launch's throttle all out and slowly began towing the *Valiant*'s 444 tons of red hot steel out to sea. McGrath's attempt was brave, but futile: Only a few minutes after beginning the tow, the *Valiant*'s port anchor lashing burned through and one and one-half tons of chain started rattling through the hawse. A third explosion shook the hull as the *Valiant* swung around by the head. McGrath realized the *Valiant* would not be moved and parted the tow line. As he headed for the safety of shore, the fire behind him illuminated the bay.

On December 17 the fire had died away, leaving the burned and blackened hull of the *Valiant* riding low in the water. As her riveted steel hull plates cooled, they shrank and separated, leaving hundreds of openings. The hull filled rapidly with sea water and the gracefully curved stern dipped closer to the surface. At 8:10 am she quietly gave up the fight and slipped, stern first, to the white sand bottom of Descanso Bay nearly 110 feet below. McGrath and two helpers barely escaped the suction of her sinking when she went down as they attempted a second tow.

The *Valiant* was part of a record launching at the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company on March 20, 1926. Owned by millionaire Hugh J. Chisholm, she was christened *Aras*, his wife's name spelled backward. Powered by two 950 hp Winton-Diesel engines, the *Aras* had a cruising range of 5,500 miles and a top speed of 18 knots. Her length of 163 feet made her one of the largest and most luxurious privately owned yachts under American registry. One unique feature of the *Aras* was her double bottom. It was the first installed in a luxury yacht for storage of fuel, water and for giving her better stability and safety at sea.

Charles S. Howard purchased the *Aras* in 1926 from Chisholm and changed the name to the *Valiant*. Mr. and Mrs. Howard had the *Valiant* brought through the Panama Canal to the West Coast. Just prior to December 1930, they had spent four festive months cruising Mexico, Central America and the South Pacific before re-entering the United States at Los Angeles to restock their fuel and food stores in preparation for returning to their home in San Francisco.

On December 12 the Howards had sailed for Catalina Island with four important guests from Los Angeles for a relaxing stay at the popular bay of Avalon. Their guests, Mr. and Mrs. Earnest Wilkes

and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Franklin, were wine and dined aboard the *Valiant* with uniformed waiters catering to their every need. Popular melodies of the '20s drifted from the dance floor at the stern on the main deck and Howard passed out personalized brass tokens to his guests inscribed "Good For One Drink" on one side and "Yacht *Valiant*" on the other... that could be used for free drinks in Avalon's many clubs and bars and would be redeemed later as pre-arranged by Howard. In the dining saloon that evening solid silver flatware, each piece graced with a silver H on the stem, was carefully set out. The entire vessel was furnished with only the best materials available, from the deep, rich carpets to the brass and crystal lamps that lit the luxurious rooms. Paintings of mountain ranges hung on the teak and butternut paneling and the ship's heart, the commissioning plaque, was solid gold! The *Valiant* was truly a floating palace, a symbol of a bygone era.

Many theories as to what caused the explosion were given at the time of the disaster in various newspapers, but according to later research and interviews with surviving crew members the fault seems to lie with human error.

After purchasing the *Valiant* from Chisholm, Howard was annoyed with the constant throbbing of her diesel-driven generators while at anchor. Howard, owner of the Howard Motor Company, Buick distributors for the West Coast, found himself in a unique position and ordered a Buick gas engine and an additional generator to be installed aboard the *Valiant*. It turned out to be much quieter and Howard was so pleased that it was used almost exclusively whenever the ship was at anchor.

On the night of December 13 no one was on duty in the engine room when unexpectedly the Buick engine ran out of gas, shutting off power to the vessel and throwing her into darkness. The crew members had been in the midst of a spirited card game in their quarters forward when the lights went out and one of them immediately grabbed a flashlight and ran cursing through the black passageways back to the engine room to rectify the embarrassing problem. Upon arriving he opened a valve that started gas flowing by gravity into a smaller tank and restarted the Buick engine, thereby restoring lights and power. As it required awhile to fill the tank, he decided he had enough time to return to what must have been a hot hand and went back to the card game forward—leaving the engine room once again unattended. A short time later the small tank overflowed and the volatile gas spilled on the engine room floor. It was eventually ignited by a spark, possibly from the commutator on the generator. The explosion cracked not only the forward engine room bulkhead, but the galley floor above and started the intense fire that doomed the beautiful ship.

When the *Valiant* plunged to the bottom in 1930 she took with her more than \$67,000 in diamonds owned by Mrs. Howard, along with the personal possessions of the Howards, their guests and crew—not to mention the boat's luxurious accommodations and fittings.

Only two salvage attempts were ever made. One was around 1932 and the divers, encumbered by their heavy hardhat diving gear, described the search as hopeless because of the twisted wreckage and debris filling the hull.

The second and last attempt at salvage was in 1957 and was only slightly more successful. A colorful diver by the name

of Bob Bell spent four months removing the superstructure in a search for the missing diamonds, as well as 30 tons of lead ballast. More than seven tons of brass and bronze were recovered, some of it melted into exotic shapes, but no diamonds or lead were found. A few of Howard's tokens were found, still boasting a "Free Drink," but divers could not penetrate the 14 feet of debris and shells lying within her hull in time to make the venture profitable. One of the massive propellers was salvaged around this time. While the event itself is not that unique, the person who salvaged the prop is. It was none other than Mel Fisher, now a millionaire treasure salvor in Florida. At the time the prop was salvaged he ran Mel's Aqua Shop in Redondo Beach. The *Valiant*'s gold commissioning plaque was recovered in 1967 by a diver named Bill Slach, who had been on Bob Bell's salvage attempt in 1957—when nothing of "value" was found!

Since those days many sport divers have visited the *Valiant* in her final resting place in the clear waters of Catalina Island. Visits are limited to less than 25 minutes owing to the 80 to 90 foot depth inside her open hull. While the *Valiant* is generally considered a "picked-over" wreck because her ports and other obvious prizes have long since been recovered, digging about inside her hull can often produce interesting souvenirs. Many times the *Valiant*'s history is brought back to life through them.

For instance, some artifacts found in the last ten years include more brass tokens, delicate silverware with Howard's initial on the stem and a collection of 1920 coins, found in the crew's quarters from Mexico, Central America and Panama. Also found in the crew's quarters were several pocket and wrist watches, brass cap and uniform buttons, a high school belt buckle, a gold wedding ring, silverware from Chisholm's days marked "Aras" and a copper key tag inscribed "Aras garage, St. Francis Yacht Club."

Other artifacts speak for themselves of the ship's opulent accommodations: egg shaped brass door knobs, solid nickel cooking pots, elegant coat hooks, several Chelsea ship's clocks (one, from the bridge area, is melted) and pieces from the many beautiful lamps on board.

Some of the most interesting artifacts, however, have come from Howard's staterooms near the stern. Found there was a personal brass shaving kit made by Auto-Strop Safety Razor Co. of NY, a silver belt buckle with the ever present H, gimble mounted brass thermos bottles, .32 and .38 caliber pistols, an inscription tag that once graced a painting called Mountain Tops and best of all, a silver case that was thought to be a cigarette case. After careful cleaning many glass tubes and needles were found inside—and on the outside was inscribed Mulford Hypo Unit. It was a diabetic's silver insulin kit. Whether used for insulin or not, it will forever remain a mystery of the lost and roaring '20s!

For the nostalgic minded, the Buick engine that indirectly caused the sinking of this time capsule still rests near the now silent diesels.

No one has ever reported finding the \$67,000 (plus inflation since 1930) in diamonds, but there are still many feet of debris and shells left in the huge hull of the rusting vessel.

A visit to the *Valiant* is like a step back in time, to a different era that will never be again. If you are lucky you just might find a small piece of that history as well—you might even get a free drink!



BOAT DIVES

16 APRIL 1988

OLYMPIC AND VALIANT WRECKS/
CATALINA FRONTSIDE

BOLD CONTENDER

MEMBERS \$53

(INCLUDES FOOD AND AIR)

NON-MEMBERS \$60

Our first BOLD CONTENDER dive for 1988 will be to the wrecks of the OLYMPIC and VALIANT, and then on to the frontside of CATALINA island to complete what should be a great trip. This dive now features an all inclusive price for food, beverage and air (3000 psi).

We will dive the OLYMPIC first and then cruise over to the Avalon area to dive the VALIANT. Both dives are in the 90-100 feet depth region, so surface time while cruising over will be important. Depending on our time at Avalon over the VALIANT it may be possible for bubble watchers (and others) to take the shore boat into town. Elsewhere in this Newsletter are articles with detailed descriptions and history of both wrecks. After the VALIANT dive we will probably make two shallow dives on the frontside of CATALINA before returning to Ports 'O Call in the evening.

The BOLD CONTENDER is at Berth 76 in Ports 'O Call and we will depart prompt at 7:00 AM on the 16th. Boarding after 9:00 PM on Friday the 15th will be available.

As anticipated this is providing to be a very popular trip, so call Mike (Mc Laughlin) at (213) 374-4698 for sign-up to make sure you get a spot before the wait list forms.

20/21 MAY 1988

SAN MIGUEL/SANTA ROSA/
SANTA CRUZ

PEACE

MEMBERS \$148

(INCLUDES FOOD AND AIR)

NON-MEMBERS \$163

Mark your calendars - our May two-day on the PEACE out of Ventura is just around the corner. The trip is planned for SAN MIGUEL, SANTA ROSA and SANTA CRUZ islands. Weather permitting we could make a run at WILSON'S ROCK. Large FISH, red ABALONE and SCALLOPS abound especially on the outermost islands. PHOTOGRAPHY buffs will also enjoy the pinnacles, especially LITTLE WILSON'S in the channel between SAN MIGUEL and SANTA ROSA. Those who just like to cruise part or all of the trip cannot pick a better boat!

This boat dive will be full of other goodies - following in the footsteps of our 1987 two-day dives, with prizes, fun, socializing in the jacuzzi and (hopefully) lots of sun.

More details will be provided in the April Newsletter - call Mike (McLaughlin) at (213) 374-4698 for sign-up. Don't miss this one!



1988 BOAT DIVES

Sunday	24 January 88	Nine Fathom Reef/San Clemente Island (Backside)	Wild Wave/22ND Street
Saturday	05 March 88	San Nicholas Island	Wild Wave/22ND Street
Saturday	16 April 88	"Olympic & Valiant" Wrecks/Catalina (Frontside)	Bold Contender/Ports'O Call
Fri/Sat	20/21 May	San Miguel/Santa Rosa/Santa Cruz	Peace/Ventura
Sun/Mon	19/20 June	Begg Rock/San Nicholas/Santa Barbara Island	Wild Wave/22ND Street
Saturday	30 July 88	"Palawan & Avalon" Wrecks/Palos Verdes	Bold Contender/Ports'O Call
Sunday	21 August 88	Gull Island/Santa Cruz/Anacapa	Wild Wave/Ventura
Fri/Sat	16/17 September	Richardson's & Wilson's Rocks/San Miguel	Peace/Ventura
Sunday	30 October	San Nicholas	Wild Wave/22ND Street
Saturday	03 December 88	Santa Barbara	Bold Contender/Ports'O Call

Wild Wave - 22ND Street Landing:—South on Harbor freeway, left on Gaffey, left on 22nd street, down the hill and park in designated areas.

Bold Contender - Ports'O Call:—South on the Harbor freeway, left at Gaffey, left on 6th Street, cross Harbor Blvd. and turn right into the Ports'O Call complex. Follow the road into the Ports'O Call parking lot and park on aisle 3 or 5. The boat is at Berth 76

Peace - Ventura Marina:—North on Ventura freeway to Victoria Ave. in Ventura. Turn left onto Victoria and continue to Olivas Park Drive. Turn right and continue all the way down toward the beach and on to Spinnaker Drive. Park adjacent to the berth which is behind Bedford's Restaurant at Slip # 20

BOAT DIVE RESERVATION FORM

DIVE DATE: _____ DESTINATION: _____

NAME OF DIVER(S): _____

TELEPHONE (DAY) _____ (EVE): _____

MEMBER: (YES) _____ (NO) _____ COST OF DIVE: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to TRW SEA DIVERS and mail to:

Mike Mc Laughlin
1121 Stanford Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA. 90278
(213) 374-4698

**TRW**

SYSTEMS GROUP

One Space Park Redondo Beach, California 90278

FIRST CLASS MAIL

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



TRW SEA DIVERS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____ HOME PHONE _____
Address _____
CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____
WORK PHONE: _____ EMERGENCY PHONE _____
EMPLOYER _____
IF TRW EMPLOYEE: M/S _____ BADGE _____ EXT _____
CERTIFICATION DATE _____ TYPE (NAUI, PADI, ETC.) _____ ADP _____ NIGHT DIVER _____
Do You want your name on a dive buddy list? Yes _____ NO _____
Date of last dive _____
Type of diving preferred: beach/boat/skin _____
Type of diving you are interested in: _____

1988 Dues:	TRW Employee	\$10.00 _____	TRW Family Membership	\$20.00 _____
	Non-TRW Membership	\$20.00 _____	Non-TRW Family Membership	\$30.00 _____

Please make checks payable to **TRW SEA DIVERS** and mail to :

TRW SEA DIVERS
One Space Park, S/1420
Redondo Beach, CA. 90278