

SEA DIVERS

MARCH 1989

MARCH 4 *** BOAT DIVE CORTES BANKS
MARCH 7 **** GENERAL MEETING PANCHO & WONGS 7 PM
MARCH 16 ***** EXECUTIVE MEETING BAXTER'S 7 PM
MARCH 16 ***** CPR COURSE
MARCH 19 ***** BEACH DIVE VETRANS PARK BOUILLABASSE

APRIL 1989

APRIL 1/2*** BEACH DIVE LA JOLLA DEEP DIVE, CAMPOUT
APRIL 4 **** GENERAL MEETING PANCHO & WONGS 7 PM
APRIL 13 ***** EXECUTIVE MEETING BAXTER'S 7 PM
APRIL 15 ***** BOAT DIVE AVALON AND VALIANT WRECKS/CATALINIA
FRONTSIDE

MAY 1989

MAY 2 ***** GENERAL MEETING PANCHO & WONGS 7 PM
MAY 2 ***** BEACH-DIVE POINT VICENTE, SURVEY
MAY 11 ***** EXECUTIVE MEETING BAXTER'S 7 PM
MAY 19/20***** BOAT DIVE WILSON'S ROCK/SAN MIGUEL, SANTA
ROSA

General Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month. A no host social happy hour precedes the meeting from 6 PM to 7 PM and a feature presentation follows the business meeting. The meeting is held at Pancho & Wong's at King Harbor. Executive Meetings are held the Thursday the week following the General Meeting, at Baxter's in the Manhattan Beach Mall.

MARCH 1989

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APRIL 1989

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MAY 1989

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DIVERS DIRECTORY



| <u>POSITION</u> | <u>NAME</u> | <u>DAY PHONE</u> | <u>EVE PHONE</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| PRESIDENT | Allen Parker | 813-5383 | 370-1657 |
| TREASURER | Kathi McNally | 812-2385 | 370-1657 |
| SEA REPRESENTATIVE | Frank Hamell | 813-3516 | (714) 886-4076 |
| SECRETARY | Cathy Gale | 305-8625 | 305-8625 |
| DIVING OFFICER | Ken Sizemore | 410-3932 | 371-2636 |
| BOAT DIVE CHAIRMAN | Allen Parker | 813-5383 | 370-1657 |
| BOAT DIVE RESERVATIONIST | Michael Borden | 813-5423 | 372-7764 |
| BEACH DIVE CHAIRMAN | Billy Garrett | 813-0189 | 324-8424 |
| PROGRAM CHAIRMAN | Dicie Sizemore | 932-2473 | 371-2636 |
| MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN | Kathi McNally | 812-2385 | 370-1657 |
| NEWSLETTER EDITOR | Patrick Minor | 813-1734 | 378-9350 |
| HOSPITALITY CHAIRMAN | Robin Grant | 823-2552 | 823-2552 |
| LONG RANGE PLANNING | Lani Garrett | 813-5541 | 324-8424 |
| GLACD REPERSENATIVE | Tim Waag | 813-6757 | 372-3414 |

GENERAL MEETING

FIJI DIVE VIDEO FEATURED IN MARCH

Leon Tighe traveled to the exotic Fiji Islands in the South Pacific during the Christmas holidays this past year. While there he shot several hours of underwater video. Since then he has edited this footage down and has added titles and background music. We are fortunate that he will be sharing his video production and some interesting stories with us at our next meeting.

While in Fiji he dove at two locations – Tavenui which is a northeastern island in the Fijian group and Beqa Lagoon, a southern point of the main island of Viti Levu

Leon has been a member of TRW Sea Divers for just over a year now. He is a world traveler and has dove in many exotic locations. He became certified in 1985 in Saipan while visiting his mother who lives there and is, incidentally, also a diver.

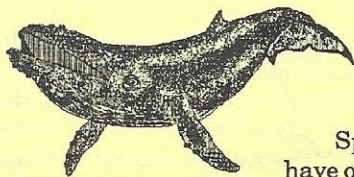
We look forward to Leon's program – See you March 7th at Pancho and Wong's.

Dicie Sizemore
Program Chairman

RESCHEDULED

CPR COURSE

TRW SEA DIVERS IS PLANNING A CPR CLASS ON 18 MARCH 1989. THE THREE HOUR CLASS (9:00AM-NOON) WILL BE HELD AT TRW AND WILL COST \$15.00 PER PERSON. SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION WILL PROVIDE CERTIFICATION FOR TWO YEARS. THE COURSE IS OPEN TO TRW, DOUGLAS AND HUGHES DIVE CLUBS. CALL SANDI ANDERSON AT (213) 373-5430 FOR INFORMATION AND SIGN-UP.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Spring diving is just around the corner and our diving programs begin to pick up accordingly! We have our beach dive and bouillabaisse 19 March, the La Jolla campout 1/2 April and our only wreck dive this year 15 April – so mark your calendars and get back into the swim of things. Winter diving was pretty good this year, with relatively good conditions for our dives, and now the water is beginning to warm a little!

Our April General Meeting on Tuesday the fourth will feature a club sponsored “eat-in” in lieu of our normal entertainment – other “entertainment” will I’m sure result. This is a new idea to help people socialize more and for visitors, new members or potential members to have a better chance to meet us all. We hope that as result we will attract others to our club (which finished 1988 at 175 members) so be sure to spread the word. We will also be drawing for a free one day boat dive, and our T-shirts will be highly discounted! Remember too that happy hour drink prices and free hors d’oeuvres are available between 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM.

Note that our CPR course was re-scheduled to 18 March due to the instructor catching one of the nasty “cruds” floating around.

We hope to add a few new features to the Newsletter over the next several issues but please, one more time, we know you are out there with a lesson you learned – turn them into Pat (Minor), so others may well learn the easy way rather than the hard way.

Some of you have not yet paid your 1989 dues – just a reminder that this will be your last Newsletter if YOU DON’T PAY UP!!

One final note, if any member is interested in being a volunteer in support of any upcoming club event, let us know – we could use a little help on occasions.

WINTER IS OVER – CLEAN/SERVICE YOUR GEAR AND GET BACK IN THE WATER... SEE YOU THERE.

Allen P

ANOTHER RUN AT BEGG ROCK

Friday evening of the 27th of January was calm and cool, with a forecast for the 28th for unseasonably warm temperatures with sunny skies, and a relatively calm ocean. Hell why not?.... let’s make a run at Begg Rock, and thus we instructed skipper John Pittman before the Wild Wave left 22nd Street.

The potholes in the road to Begg Rock were relatively small, but a little larger than our anticipation, and as dawn broke and Begg Rock appeared, our hopes dimmed. A fair amount of wind (cold) chop, aided and abetted by some occasional 8–10 foot swells, a dull overcast sky, and white water over the pinnacles made for a few comments like “narly”; “forbidding”; “challenging”; “gross”; “noway”; “back to the bunks gang”; etc; etc! We headed back towards San Nicolas and eventually anchored over a reef well off the west end in about 80–100 feet of narly, forbidding, challenging, gross, water!! Ah, well.

About half the divers made this the first dive. Water temperature was somewhere between 49 (!) and 53 degrees, depending on whose gauge you believed in, but it was not uncomfortable once the first shock on hitting the water was over, and your private parts had adjusted. Visibility was in the 25–35 feet region. A small number of bugs were located, snagged and brought on board for the ride back. By the way getting back to the boat was quite sporty.

We moved east and south for the second dive, where most of the first dive veterans sat this one out due to bottom time limitations or just plain lack of interest! The sun was not yet out and it was cool on deck so most were in the galley munching on Cheryl’s made to order breakfasts. I had eggs, sausage, bacon, hash browns, toast and hot tea! Delaney ripped off one of my sausages and had heartburn all day – serves him right! The divers returned reporting similar conditions to the first dive

with similar results. Ken Sizemore, our intrepid divemaster was required to make a rescue – Paul Kaminski’s dive light which was sighted bobbing around on the surface about 50 yards from the starboard side of the boat!

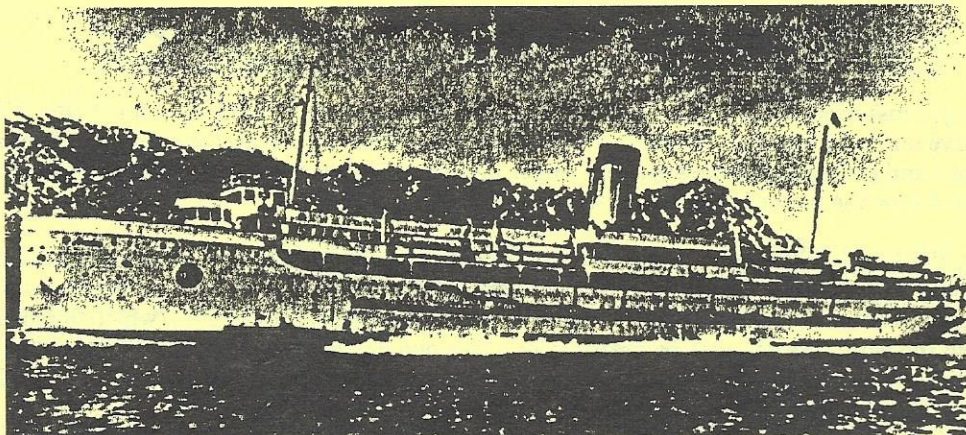
Again we moved South and East along the San Nicolas coast, this time into about 50–60 feet of significantly smoother water. The temperature was a degree or two warmer, visibility was less at about 20 feet and the sun was finally out. So was Dicie S. who finally surfaced from the depths of the bunk area at about high noon. I zigged and zagged back and forth across a line extending from the anchor into the current. Swam my ass off but didn’t see one lousy tentacle – others did better!

Our fourth and final dive was in about 45–55 feet – also calmer, slightly warmer and again less visibility. Results were mixed with some lobster and fish appearing on the deck.

Hot shower time – boy did that feel good – and then late lunch of bar-b-qued steak, corn, potato salad, etc. and wine. We really hauled back to 22nd Street passing several other boats on the way – how many other boats can make a trip a run to Begg Rock, fall back, regroup, make four dives at San Nicolas and beat the other boats back in?

It was interesting to note that most of our regulars are now diving with computers. I for one am the proud possessor of a U. S. Divers Datamaster II which integrates air consumption/pressure as well as depth/time – thing of beauty, technology marches on. Although the weatherman didn’t get it exactly right, it was a good day out with most of us enjoying just “being away from it all” stay tuned for Cortes Banks.

AP



THE WRECK OF THE AVALON

by: Rusty Geller
from: California Diving News

Less than a quarter mile off the Palos Verdes Peninsula, in seventy feet of water on the bottom of the sea, lies the "Great White Steamship" AVALON. Once host to hundreds of thousands of tourists bound for the beaches and dance floors of Catalina, she now rests amidst reefs under a blanket of cold sea. Fish and crustaceans now inhabit the rusted decks and collapsed hull, a reminder of the temporary nature of man, and the irrefutable power of the sea.

The S. S. Avalon was built in 1891 at the Glove Iron Works in Cleveland, Ohio, 265 feet long and displacing 1985 tons, she was propelled by oil-fired, triple-expansion steam engines driving twin screws. The classically-lined steamship could carry 1,500 passengers at 15 knots. Originally named the S. S. Virginia, she made regularly scheduled runs across Lake Michigan from Chicago to Milwaukee for over 25 years. Commandeered by the U. S. Navy during the First World War, she was cut in two and towed through the Canadian canals to the Atlantic, welded back together again, and renamed the U. S. S. Blue Ridge, just in time to miss the war.

In 1919, William Wrigley, chewing gum magnate, owner of the Chicago Cubs, and proprietor of the entire island of Catalina, found the ship in Boston Harbor, renamed her the Avalon after his island's only city, and brought her through the Panama Canal to Los Angeles. On April 15, 1920, she began an illustrious and often glamorous career transporting tourists from the Port of Los Angeles at San Pedro to the sunny Isle of Catalina, during those wild times between the wars.

Through prohibition, the roaring twenties, the great depression, the big band swing era, and into the Second World War, she steamed across the channel. On weekends and holidays she carried her own orchestra, so passengers could dance their way to the "Isle of Romance", continue their revelry to the sounds of Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey, and Benny Goodman in the famous Casino Ballroom, and Dance their way home across the channel.

In World War Two, she ferried troops to the Maritime Training Station (this wartime nation's largest) at Avalon. After the war, she resumed her career on her old route.

Then, in 1951, with Southern California booming into the postwar future, after 32 years of service across the channel, sixty years after being launched, the Avalon was retired and parked in San Pedro Harbor. It took too many people to run her, she was no longer economically feasible. Her younger, larger, faster, sister, the Catalina (launched in 1924) continued to run for a few years, but she too was replaced by a fleet of smaller, faster, cheaper, ferryboats. It was as if they'd replaced a Packard and a Dusenbergs with a half dozen Ford station wagons: they got you there, but it wasn't quite

the same. It was, as they say, the end of an era.

Old, but to stately to be immediately dismantled, the Avalon languished for nine years in the harbor. In 1960, she was finally sold for salvage. A stubborn old girl, she caught fire several times while being scrapped, almost but never quite sinking. But then she was rescued only to be cut down into a salvage barge. They took off her top decks and parked a huge, self-propelled construction crane on her aft deck.

She was anchored off Palos Verdes in 1961, perhaps to salvage the nearby wreck of the Dominator. During a storm she broke anchor, foundered and sank, disappearing beneath the waves into a fitting grave: when anchored over the wreck on a clear day you can see Catalina. She probably hit bottom, bow first, because that end is broken off and lying out of line with the rest of the ship. The crane rode her to the bottom and then slid off her deck. Divers were on her within a few days, taking anything left, of worth,

She isn't easy to find without proper line-ups. She's close to where the chart guide says she is, but it's a big ocean out there. The bottom is broken reef lines parallel to shore, and the wreck lies parallel with the reefs, so it tends to blend in on the bottom finder.

Whenever I was diving the area, I would spend an hour searching for her, making passes with the underpowered depth sounder in my inflatable. I dived many reefs in my search, but found no wreck. Finally, last summer, I happened on a small motorboat flying a dive flag anchored in the right area. They said they were on the wreck and showed me where to drop my anchor.

After over a year of searching, I was sitting just 70 feet above the Avalon. Suited-up and in the water, my buddy discovered an ear-squeeze. After all this time, bugging old timers for half remembered line-ups, and exhausting the patience of a half dozen buddies as I repeated my futile search patterns, it seemed fitting that I would make my first jump on this wreck alone.

It is a long trip to the bottom, and I've made the trip over a dozen times now. There is always a layer of cloudy water which you enter at twenty feet and break out of at fifty, revealing dark, but reasonably clear water, thirty feet of visibility on average.

The pointed bow is broken off from the rest of the ship, but it is intact and lying on its side. The classic 90-degree bow angle is typical of late nineteenth-century steel steamships. Kneeling on the sand, looking up at the bow, it seems like a giant broken toy. A friendly garibaldi lives in the hawspipe, where the anchor chain once rode.

Fifty feet behind the bow is the rest of the ship. The deck lies in the collapsed hull. The steel plates, sprouting rivets and bolts, are a mess, but create a system of caves and crevices

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 amidships. 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

THE AVALON

where bottom fish and crustaceans can hide. Off to the port side is a square cabin still intact, but tossed aside like a child's toy.

You start to notice the fish swarming on the wreck. The Avalon is a rich reef now. Schools of sargo perch go 'round and 'round. Big calico bass duck under deck plates. Along steel hull ribs huge cabezon and sculpin lurk, eyeballs swiveling with you as you pass by.

It takes almost five minutes to swim the 265 feet over the jumble of broken deck and hull to the stern, which is still intact, sitting upright in a hole. It is the largest feature in one piece on the wreck, but with the rudder gone, it is a shapeless hulk. Next to it is a most interesting feature. Leaning against the port side of the hull, caterpillar treads pointed straight up as if trying to climb back to the surface, lies the great self-propelled crane, which rode the Avalon to the bottom that stormy night in 1961.

The wheels and pulleys that worked the crane seem out of place, encrusted with growth. The immense counter-weight looks dangerously heavy, the graceful derrick lies parallel to the ship, it's regularly-shaped, triangular structure is host to starfish and strawberry anemones.

After diving tourist wrecks in the Caribbean, and on organized charters to local wrecks like the Sujac, Valient, and Peacock, being alone that first time on the Avalon was a high point in this diver's underwater career. Yet everyone of the trips has a similar thrill, especially bringing new divers onto it with me, watching their eyes grow wide as they see it for the first time.

Be careful diving it. There is a lot of boat traffic out there over the site. Ascend your anchor line to avoid getting hit: you can't hear a sailboat. The wreck is deep. Watch your times if you do a second dive.

The Avalon was a gracious hostess in her day, and she continues this role to the sea creatures who live on her and to the divers that visit. There is photography, spearfishing, and sightseeing, and yes there is still a little brass left on this fine old lady of the sea. Great old ships don't have to die, they can become new reefs.

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 ships 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.

Francias McGrath, Avalon's harbor master, realized the the immense danger to the other craft moored near the Valiant and turned the wheel of his launch over to one of the rescued seaman. 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 falling 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 the shore, the fire illuminated the bay.

On December the 17 the fire had died away, leaving the burned and blackened hull of the Valiant riding low in the water. As her riveted steel 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 Winston-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 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 reentering 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 Howard's had sailed for Catalina Island with four important guests from Los Angeles for a relaxing stay

1989 TRW SEA DIVERS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

All current TRW SEA DIVER memberships are renewable as of January 1989. To continue your membership through 1989, please complete the form below and return it with your check to the address listed at the bottom of the page. All current members should have their dues paid no later than 31 January 1989. New Members will be prorated on a quarterly basis beginning 1 January 1989.

*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.) _____

*CERTIFICATION NUMBER _____

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? _____

Comments: _____

1989/Dues:

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------|-----------------------------|---------|
| TRW Employee | \$10.00 | **TRW Family Membership | \$20.00 |
| Non-TRW Membership | \$20.00 | **Non-TRW Family Membership | \$30.00 |

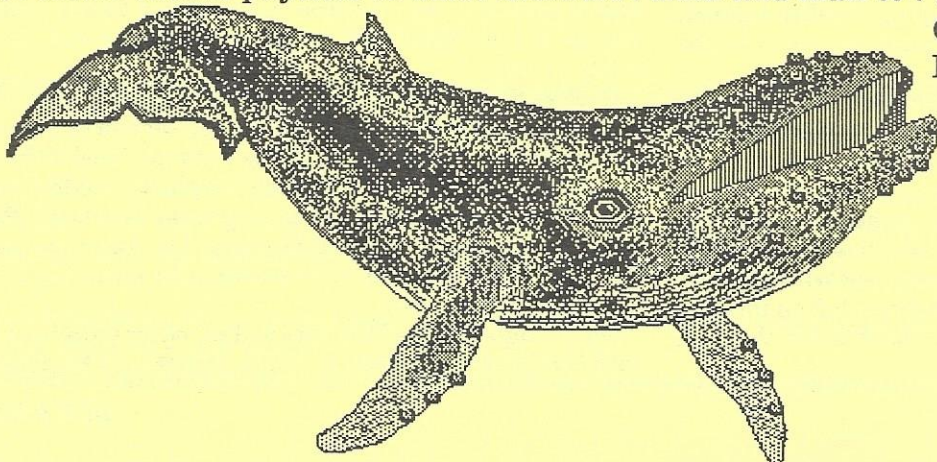
* Only items required if other data is the same as 1988.

** Please list names of Family members in comments section.

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

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

90278



BEACH DIVES 1989

| DAY | DATE | WHERE | FEATURE | KEY CONTACT |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| SUN | 19 MAR | VETERANS PARK | BOUILLABAISE & POT LUCK | BILL GARRET |
| SAT/SUN | 1/2 APR | LA JOLLA | DEEP DIVE, CAMPOUT | BILL GARRET |
| SUN | 7 MAY | POINT VICENTE | SURVEY | ALLEN PARKER |
| SAT/SUN | 10/11 JUN | LA BUFADORA, MEXICO | POTLUCK, CAMPOUT | (TBD) |
| SAT-TUES | 1-4 JUL | JADE COVE | JADE, CAMPOUT | PATRICK MINOR |
| SAT | 5 AUG | ZUMA/WEST BEACH | CLAMS | (TBD) |
| FRI/SAT/SUN | 1/2/3 SEP | CATALINA | BOAT, CAMPOUT | BILL GARRETT |
| SAT | 14 OCT | WHITE POINT | HALLOWEEN | KEN SIZEMORE |
| SAT | 18 NOV | REEF POINT (SCOTSMANS) | THANKSGIVING | (TBD) |

On the second Sunday of each month Ken Sizemore will be diving White Point in support of the Paul Meister OOPS* program. TRW Sea Divers are encouraged to be an integral part of this program.

*OOPS – Ocean Observations Project Survey.

VALIANT

at the popular bay of Avalon. Their guests, Mr. and Mrs. Earnest Wilkes and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Franklin, were wined 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 Free 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 on 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 the 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 light 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 in 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 \$67,000 in diamonds owned by Mrs. Howard, along with the personal possessions of the Howard's, 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 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

FIRST BEACH DIVE OF 89 DIVERS COVE, LAGUNA BEACH

Woke up to a beautiful sunshiny day with the visions of a dive in one of my favorite beach dive sites and it would be a dive without students (which I hadn't done there in a couple of years), so that I would be able to enjoy all the neat things about Divers Cove reefs, in particular, Splash Rock with all its crevices and caves. I was also looking forward to using my new Mark 10 regulator with new console and my new Scubair 2 that Santa brought me for Christmas. I can't remember how long it's been since I had a regulator that didn't leak at least a little bit in the second stage. I had checked out all my gear the night before and loaded the truck. As I headed down the San Diego freeway the anticipation of past dives brought back some good memories.

I arrived at Divers Cove about 8:30, in time to check out the conditions before the Divemaster and TRW Sea Divers arrived eager to get in the water. I found the conditions to be a very typical winter beach dive with about a half foot surf and what looked to be very good visibility. There was a basic class already in the water and they were going thru their paces which brought back a lot of very good memories with some classes there.

Ken Sizemore soon showed up and by then I had already got ready and I buddied up with Daniel. Daniel had some new equipment also and was ready to try them out. We decided to make our entries off of the rocks instead of out thru the surf. Daniel had a few problems with his new equipment but Ken came to the rescue. While Ken was helping Daniel I snorkeled around the shallows and to my delight found a number of small lobsters plus a couple that were in the 2-3 pound size range. Daniel finally got in the water and we headed off to the reef.

The visibility was very nice at about 30 feet, the water was a tad cool, ha, but we got used to it very quick. Splash Rock was as interesting as I had remembered it. We explored all the crevices and I found a cave that I remembered from years past and it was just like I remembered with the old tire still in it and about a hundred bugs, boy did I get itchy fingers, ha, it's a good thing they were in a reserve. We saw lots of marine life and all in all it was a super "beach" dive. On the way back I tried out my new compass and ended up the couple hundred yard swim underwater back to the beach right on the dot. Also, what a pleasure to make a whole dive without gurgling water thru my second stage. I am now looking forward to the next months beach dive, come join us for a good dive and good time with the TRW Sea Divers.

Bill Garrett

VALIANT

Valiant's gold commissioning plaque was recovered in 1967 by a diver named Bill Stach, 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 80-90 foot depth inside her open hull. While the Valiant is generally considered to 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 crews quarters from Mexico, Central America and Panama. Also found in the crews 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 Francias 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 interesting artifacts however, have come from Howard's staterooms near the stern. Found there was a personal brass shaving kit made by Auto-Strap Safety Razor Co. of NY, a silver belt buckle with the ever present H, gimble mounted brass thermos bottles, .32 and .38 caliber pistols, and 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 Mullord Hypo Unit. It was a diabetics 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!



JUST FIVE YEARS AGO

John Mowrey was President; we met at Beach Bum Burt's*; March dive was to San Nicolas on the Wild Wave; we had a shark cage dive at Marineland!!; Gabby Gastropod missed the March 1984 issue; we were reforming the beach dive committee and there was an eat-in at the Mueller's!

*We must be leaving a trail of destruction from our general meeting places – Lococo's is gone; Beach Bum Burt's is gone; the Pizza Hut is gone; look out Baxter's!

15 APRIL 1989

MEMBERS \$52

**SINGLE DAY WRECK DIVE
"AVALON" AND "VALIANT" WRECKS/
CATALINA FRONTSIDE
(INCLUDES FOOD AND AIR)**

BOLD CONTENDER

NON-MEMBERS \$59

This dive features a variety of activities and is also our lowest priced all inclusive charter for 1989. We will be taking the BOLD CONTENDER from Ports O' Call, departing at 06:30 AM, and running up the Palos Verdes coast to the site of the "AVALON" wreck to make our first dive. (The events leading up to the wreck in 1961 are described elsewhere in the Newsletter). The "AVALON" lies in about 70 feet of water and usually has good visibility. Quite large FISH inhabit both the bow and stern sections, and PHOTOGRAPHERS or just looky-loos will not be disappointed. Made to order breakfasts will be served before and after this first dive.

We will then cruise over to the Avalon area of CATALINA where we will dive the wreck of the "VALIANT". (Again the events leading up to the wreck in 1930 are described elsewhere in the Newsletter). The "VALIANT" lies a little deeper with the stern at about 80 feet and the bow at 90 + feet. The wreck is visually and PHOTOGRAPHICALLY beautiful and one can still make out the large diesel engines, pumps and with a little searching the infamous gasoline generator, apparent cause of the fire.

Following our "VALIANT" dive, we will make one or two shallow dives on the frontside of CATALINA on some of the spectacular reefs North of Avalon. We will then cruise back to Ports O' Call and partake of a heavy duty late lunch, typical BOLD CONTENDER style, including club provided wine.

Other activities on this charter will include a shore boat into Avalon for those non-divers or divers who wish to spend an hour or two on shore. On boat and diving activities are going to be video-taped(!) and snorkelers/skin divers will have an opportunity to do their thing on the shallow dives. We are also going to allow a small number of additional bubble watchers on board (a kind of Sea Divers "take me along with you"). For those divers needing help or confidence building on deep diving there will be a short discussion on the particular dive/conditions/wreck facts and if necessary an advanced diver, divemaster, or instructor will be assigned to one or more less experienced divers for their dive.

Weather conditions excepted, these wreck dives are suitable for all levels of experience – however, know your limits.

Call Micheal (Borden) at (213) 372-7764 for sign-up or Allen (Parker) at (213) 813-5383 for information/additional details of the dive. The BOLD CONTENDER is at berth 76 in Ports O' Call and boarding the evening before, Friday 14 April, will be available. Everyone should be on board by 6:20 AM on the 15th, for a prompt 6:30 AM departure. SEE YOU THERE!

APRIL BEACH DIVE LA JOLLA

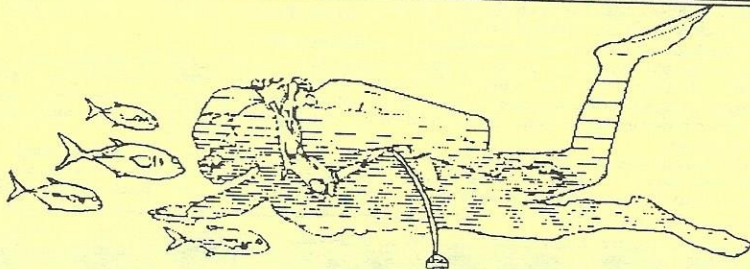
WHEN: APRIL 1ST AND 2ND, (SAT. AND SUN.)
TIME: SOME WILL ARRIVE FRI EVENING BUT THE DIVES WILL START 10:00 SAT. MORNING.
PLACE: CAMPLAND ON THE BAY.

INFO: We have 4 campsite reserved at present and will add or delete number of campsites based on the sign-ups. Each campsite costs \$23.50 per night based on no more than four people and no pets. Each additional person per campsite will cost an additional \$3.00 and there is a reservation fee for each campsite of \$2.50. We will try and have a organized pot luck dinner on Saturday evening. We will have organized dives at Childrens Cove, La Jolla caves and at least one dive in the south end of Scripts Canyon.

Facilities at Campland: All the amenities, store, pool, jacuzzi, sauna, nice beach, boat dock and ramp, power and water at the campsites plus a lot more. Also many things of interest in the area for all including the non-divers and kiddies. We will also probably take a tour thru the Scripts museum and aquarium.

More to come later with more details and a map with directions.

Who to contact for information about this campout and dive, Bill Garrett, **work phone:** 813-0189, **home phone:** 324-8424.



THE LAST LOBSTER DIVE

04 MARCH 1989

CORTES BANKS

WILD WAVE

MEMBERS \$72

(ALL INCLUSIVE)

NON-MEMBERS \$79

CORTES BANKS . . . we have not been there as a club since a two -day 5 and 6 of October 1984, also on the Wild Wave and it's your last chance for LOBSTER this season..This is the only boat from 22nd street that can make the trip comfortably in one day,as of writing there is a short wait list. If you are not signed up call anyway, as there are always a few last minute cancellations.

CORTES BANKS is located about 80 miles S.S.W. of 22nd Street, about 40 miles S.W. of China Point on San Clemente Island and is almost directly West of San Diego. As a relatively distant and exposed dive spot the BANKS have not been dived as much as some of the closer in areas. Diving depths range from 20 to 80 feet providing generally excellent game taking possibilities. LOBSTER in particular have been abundant and the various reefs making up the BANKS are home to many species of good sized FISH. PHOTO buffs will not be disappointed.

Under good ocean conditions this dive is suitable for all skill levels. However, relative beginners should be aware that both wave action, surge and/or current can significantly increase the difficulty of the diving as this is a fully exposed area. Check with the divemaster before entering the water. Boarding begins at 9:00 PM on Friday the 3rd for a prompt midnight departure. This being a fairly long trip, we will have some additional "entertainment" on the run back to 22nd Street.

Call Micheal Borden at (213) 372-7764 for sign-up or Allen Parker (213) 813-5383 (new number!) for information. **LAST CHANCE FOR LOBSTER!?**

BEACH DIVE

19 MARCH VETERANS PARK, REDONDO BEACH

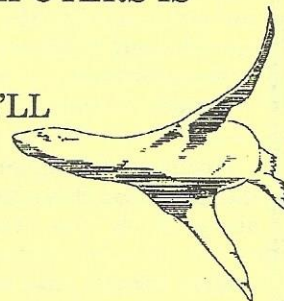
Mark your calendars for the Sunday 19 March dive just South of the pier at Redondo. We will dive the old pier pilings and the canyon in the AM and then plan to have a bouillabaisse cook-out after diving. This has been great fun in the past, and we anticipate a good turn-out.

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

"THERE I WAS CRUISING ALONG AT 84 FEET, AND ONE OF MY COMPUTERS IS STILL LOGGING SURFACE INTERVAL"

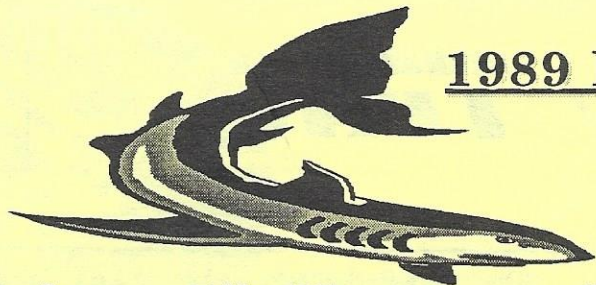
"THROW THE SPILLED COFFEE GROUNDS IN THE OMELETTE - HE'LL NEVER KNOW"

"I NEVER REALIZED UNTIL TODAY THAT PEEING IN MY WETSUIT COULD BE SUCH A RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE"



DIVE BOAT POLICY

- 1) A club member may, but is not required to, have a boat deposit on file with the club.
- 2) A club member will have a confirmed reservation on an upcoming dive only if:
 - a) A check in the full amount for the dive has been received by the dive boat reservationist, or
 - b) The club member has a deposit on file with the club and makes a telephone request for a reservation with the dive boat reservationist.
- 3) Any reservation may be cancelled two weeks prior to a dive with a full refund. Cancellations will not be accepted within two weeks prior to the dive unless a diver holding a reservation can sell or transfer their reservation to another qualified diver. The dive reservationist will assist in this process, but is not responsible to provide paying alternates. When confirmation is received by the dive boat reservationist that a cancelling diver is being replaced by another qualified diver, the replacement diver is then fully responsible for the cost of the dive.
- 4) If a diver has a deposit on file with the club and uses that deposit to secure a reservation on a boat dive, he may not use that deposit to secure any additional dives until he has paid the club for the first dive. Two years after a diver has ceased to be a member of the club, his unclaimed dive boat deposit will be forfeited to the club.
- 5) Only TRW club members and members of other selected clubs may make boat dive reservations prior to one month before a scheduled boat dive.
- 6) Partial refunds from boats which do not make the advertised dive location will be passed on to members who request them within two weeks of the dive.



1989 BOAT DIVES

| | | | | |
|----|---------|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 2 | SAT | 04 MAR 1989 | CORTES BANKS | WILD WAVE 22ND STREET |
| 3 | SAT | 15 APR 1989 | "AVALON" AND "VALIANT" WRECKS/ CATALINA (FRONTSIDE) | BOLD CONTENDER PORTS O' CALL |
| 4 | FRI/SAT | 19/20 MAY 1989 | WILSON'S ROCK/ SAN MIGUEL/SANTA ROSA | PEACE VENTURA |
| 5 | SAT | 24 JUN 1989 | FARNSWORTH BANKS/ CATALINA | BOLD CONTENDER PORTS O' CALL |
| 6 | FRI/SAT | 28/29 JUL 1989 | BEGG ROCK/SAN NICOLAS/ SANTA BARBARA | BOLD CONTENDER PORTS O' CALL |
| 7 | SAT | 19 AUG 1989 | TALCOTT SHOALS | WILD WAVE VENTURA |
| 8 | FRI/SAT | 15/16 SEPT 1989 | RICHARDSON'S ROCK SAN MIGUEL/SANTA ROSA | PEACE VENTURA |
| 9 | SAT | 21 OCT 1989 | SAN NICOLAS | WILD WAVE 22ND STREET |
| 10 | SAT | 11 NOV 1989 | SANTA BARBARA | WILD WAVE 22ND STREET |
| 11 | SAT | 02 DEC 1989 | SAN CLEMENTE | 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 HornBlowers Restaurant at Slip #20

.....
BOAT DIVE RESERVATION FORM

DIVE DATE: _____ DESTINATION: _____

NAME OF DIVER(S): _____

PHONE (DAY): _____ (EVE): _____ COST OF DIVE: \$ _____

MEMBER: YES ☐ NO ☐

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

Michael Borden
1534 Manhattan Beach Blvd.
Manhattan Beach, CA. 90266
(213) 372-7764



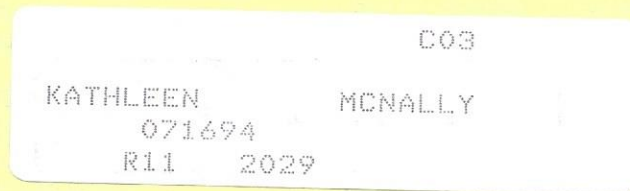
TRW

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

One Space Park S/1420 Redondo Beach, California 90278

FIRST CLASS MAIL

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



GENERAL MEETING LOCATION

