



UNDERWATER SPELEOLOGY

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Cow Springs - Photo by Bob Janowski

UNDERWATER SPELEOLOGY

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Magazine Submissions — We welcome all news items, articles, Letters to the Editor, photos, slides, cartoons, and other items of interest or importance to the cave-diving community from all members, subscribers, and other interested parties. They should be sent directly to the Editor (see address on left column). We can also use text processed in most IBM-compatible formats. (Please contact the Editor directly for details and arrangements.)

Advertising — The NSS-CDS Board of Directors has approved the reinstatement of paid commercial advertising for *Underwater Speleology*. Please contact the Editor for information and arrangements (see address on left column).

The NSS and Cave Diving — Founded in 1941, the National Speleological Society joins together thousands of individuals dedicated to the safe study, exploration, and conservation of caves. The first cave-diving information ever published in the United States was in a 1947 *NSS Bulletin*. In 1948, NSS divers were responsible for the first cave dives in the United States using scuba. Prior to 1973, cave diving within the NSS was on a purely local level. That year saw the creation off the NSS Cave Diving Section to provide a vehicle for information exchange. Today, with over 750 members, the Cave Diving Section promotes safe cave diving through semi-annual workshops; cavern- and cave-diving training programs; warning-sign installations; search, rescue, and recovery through the National Cave Rescue Commission; cave exploration and mapping; several texts and publications on cave diving; and the bimonthly magazine, *Underwater Speleology*.

NSS Membership — The National Speleological Society welcomes the interest of anyone who has a sincere concern about the safety, study, exploration, and conservation of caves, wet or dry. You may join the NSS either by writing directly to its main office (National Speleological Society, Inc., Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35810) or to the Cave Diving Section. Annual membership is \$25.00 and includes subscription to the NSS's monthly magazine, *NSS News*, as well as voting privileges and discounts on publications and conventions.

CDS Membership — As a sub-organization or "section" of the NSS, the Cave Diving Section is subject to the bylaws and ethics of the NSS. Membership in the Cave Diving Section is open to anyone who is a member in good standing of the NSS. Annual membership is \$5.00 per year and includes subscription to the CDS's bimonthly magazine, *Underwater Speleology*, as well as voting privileges and discounts on publications and workshops.

Subscription — If you do not wish to join the NSS and CDS, but would like to keep current on cave-diving events, exploration and technology, you are invited to subscribe to *Underwater Speleology* for \$15.00 per year.

NSS-CDS ELECTION PLATFORM STATEMENTS

Staped outside this issue are renewal forms for subscribers, and renewals and election ballots for members. Ballots must be received at the Section's permanent post-office box in Branford, FL by Dec. 15, 1991 in order to be counted in the election. You may mail your ballot separately as a post card (requires 19¢ postage) or, if you don't particularly care about secret ballot, you can enclose it with your renewal form and send them both back in the reply envelope we have provided.

We have had elections in the past where we considered ourselves lucky to have enough people running to fill the positions. Such is the case this year with the position of Training Chairman.

This is probably the most demanding and difficult position on the entire Board. We are extremely fortunate to have one our most experienced instructors and past Board members, Lamar Hires, step forward to take on this tremendous responsibility. Lamar has the full endorsement and confidence of retiring Training Chairman, Joe Prosser, and the process of transfer has already begun. A space for a write-in candidate for Training has been included on the ballot, but purely as a formality.

But with the election for the other three general Board positions, it's a whole different ball game. This year we have a very fine list of candidates—all of whom are well qualified and would

doubtless make very good Board members. It's too bad they can't all win because it's going to be difficult to choose from amongst them. Please take a few minutes before voting to read through their platform statements. This is probably going to be a very close election and your vote could easily make the difference in who is elected.

We wish to thank all of the candidates for agreeing to run for these time-consuming volunteer positions, and would like to encourage the two gentlemen—whoever they end up being—who are not elected this time not to give up, but to consider running in the next election.

TRAINING CHAIRMAN CANDIDATE

Lamar Hires

(NSS #23991) Lake City, FL

Candidate Statement: I am running for this position because the present Chairman, Joe Prosser, is retiring. I would bring to the office my ex-

perience of being a past BOD member familiar with the workings of the Board.

I have been an active cave instructor since 1984. During this time I have trained hundreds of divers from cavern to cave. I have been on the Training Committee, and active in the writing and compiling of training materials. I

will bring to the office the experience of an instructor in the field. I have piloted many projects in the North Florida area, from the maintenance of main lines in popular caves to the survey and exploration of cave sites.

GENERAL BOARD CANDIDATES

Kelly Brady

(NSS #26061) Gainesville, FL

Candidate Information: Originally from Louisville, Kentucky. Resident of Gainesville, Florida. Certified open-water diver, 1980; NAUI Instructor, 1986; NAUI Instructor Trainer, 1989; CDS Instructor 1987. NSS-CDS Winter Workshop Coordinator, 1989. Authored approved CDS training programs/courses: "Introduction to Cavern Diving," "Cave Diver Refresher Program," and "Introduction to Cartography." Published CDS map: "Telford Spring - Lower Section." Current-

ly working on "Devil's Ear Cave System" and "Madison Blue" maps. Occupation: Management Information Systems Specialist for a construction firm.

Candidate Statement: I'm not really interested in politics. But I am interested in the Cave Diving Section. Exploration, safety, conservation, and landowner relations are the main reasons that the Cave Diving Section exists, and these are the areas where I have been devoting my energies since joining.

We've made giant strides in getting out our safety message to the open-water community; we need to increase

our contact with the open-water agencies and the members of the diving community for even greater impact. To do this requires a plan, and consistent action and energy to move things forward.

Cave-diving technology is increasing faster than our training and understanding. How many divers are doing advanced scooter dives, oxygen decompression, nitrox, deep dives on air, and mixed-gas diving without any additional training in these areas? The effectiveness of our training can be measured in one way: What is the accident rate, and is it increasing or decreasing? We need to address these

issues and do what is reasonable to make training for these activities available.

Over the last six years I've seen a lot of changes; many good, some bad. Cave diving is becoming a little too commercialized. I've been a dry caver since 1985, and I believe that promoting cave diving to the "mainstream" diving community is inconsistent with NSS policy.

Our dive sites are prone to closing. We've lost several dive sites in the recent past. What plan of action do we have for reopening sites? Retaining access to dive sites is not going to get easier. We have to continue to cultivate our landowner relations actively by protecting the landowner's interests, as well as our own.

Safety is our main priority. Conservation and landowner relations comes next. The Cave Diving Section is a great organization, and I want to help it achieve great things.

Your vote is important.

* * *

Terry M. Derouin

(NSS #29395) Macon, GA

Candidate Statement: I have a varied and diverse background to offer the Section. As a Full Cave Instructor, as well as an active open-water instructor, I keep in touch with the needs of students and new members to the Section. I am involved in exploration diving and science diving as well as recreational caving (both "dry" and underwater). This keeps me in touch with the other experienced and active cavers, giving me a perspective on new areas of development and weaknesses within our current training programs, areas to focus on for growth and progress.

I also bring to the Section a fifteen-year experience in business and marketing. A soundly run Section will help preserve our dive sites for the future, allow for safe and consistent training for new cavers, opportunities and advanced programs for trained cavers, and thorough education and public relations programs. As an elected member of the Board of Directors, I will strive to accomplish this agenda.

Mike Hanna

(NSS #34528) Alachua, FL

Candidate Statement: Recently, I was quite flattered to receive a phone call from Dan Lins asking me to consider running for a Board position for the NSS-CDS. During the course of our conversation I advised Dan that I was not a cave instructor and did not really want to be involved in dictating instructional policy to those who were. Dan assured me that the Training Committee was responsible for such policy-making decisions, not the general Board.

Understanding that instructors were going to be making instructional decisions, a position I feel very strongly about, I was very happy to accept Dan's nomination.

I have been diving since 1969, and have been involved in diving retail since 1972. I have been instructing open-water since 1974. Over the course of the years I have been involved in a variety of diving retail stores, as well as automotive sales (never again), retail sporting goods, and have owned my own retail business. I am presently the General Manager for Ginnie Springs.

I would like to bring to the NSS-CDS a strong understanding of general business practices, a desire to insure the continued operation of the CDS in supporting the cave-diving community, a strong commitment to promoting safe diving practices to the open-water community, and the desire to help increase awareness of the necessity for proper training and equipment.

* * *

Frank Howard

(NSS #27187) Chesterfield, MO

Candidate Statement: I have been a member of the Board of Directors for the past two years, one year as Vice Chairman, and I currently serve as the Chairman for the CDS. I have been diving since 1969 and started cave diving in 1983. I am a retired business executive from the high-tech electronics industry.

For the past several years I have served as the Section Cave Map Program Coordinator. I am a strong advo-

cate of the use of maps in dive planning and will continue to work for the expansion of the inventory available to the cave-diver community. In 1991 we will add four maps. I hope to do the same in 1992.

I believe that the NSS-CDS should play an active roll in the exploration and development of high-tech diving techniques and procedures. Safety and training programs that prepare CDS cave divers for participation in these activities must be developed.

As a Board Member I would continue to support Section sponsorship of exploration projects, the expansion of book titles available on high-tech diving and cave diving for self-study, the development of formal training courses in advanced diving techniques, and the continued professional training of divers who seek basic training in cave diving. I will discourage any program that solicits open-water divers to enter cave-diver training. I believe the initiative should come from the diver who has the desire to enter underwater caves.

* * *

Mark Leonard

(NSS #23292) Lake City, FL

Candidate Statement: I continue to stand for the principle that cave-diving safety is best achieved through a strong training program, and that the NSS-CDS is big enough—in all senses of the word—to accommodate both explorers and line followers. If reelected, I will continue to serve the cave-diving community in support of our mutual goals of the advancement of safe exploration, scientific study, and conservation. ■

WANTED

A pair of 104 cf tanks

without valves unless they are Sherwood DIN manifold.

Call Scott Landon
(901) 353-7761 days

NSS-CDS WINTER WORKSHOP

The NSS-CDS will be holding its Winter Cave Diving Workshop Friday - Sunday, December 27-29, 1991 in Branford, Florida. The Workshop Co-Chairmen were listed incorrectly in the last issue of *UIWS*. In fact, NSS-CDS Chairman Frank Howard is in charge of speakers, mini-workshops, and courses. NSS-CDS Treasurer Bill Foote and Eric Hutcheson are working together on the physical arrangements, which include some nice surprises and "firsts." (Terry DeRouin, who co-chaired the Spring Workshop, has volunteered to help with the 1992 Spring Workshop.)

The emphasis of this workshop is on exploration and training. We will be sending out a separate pre-registration flier in a couple of weeks, but in the meantime, here's a brief summary of what's in store.

The festivities will begin Friday evening with a couple of social gatherings which, at press time, Bill and Eric were still in the process of arranging. It looks like there may be a couple of parties, some free camping, and even a giant hot tub, à la NSS Old Timers Conventions. Exact details—times, places—will be included in the pre-registration flier, but plan on arriving early to join in the fun.

Registration will open Saturday morning at 8 at the Branford High School. Frank Howard has prepared an impressive list of speakers:

- **Jim Bowden on Big River Sump Diving - Belize:** Video and slides of sump-diving exploration in virgin dive areas in Belize.
- **Bill Wilson on the Red Snapper Sink Exploration - Offshore Florida:** A geologist's description and pictures of a mixed-gas dive into an open-ocean sinkhole to a depth of 445'.
- **Jim Coke and Tom Young on the Quintana Roo Speleological Survey - Yucatán:** Exploration report from Quintana Roo, Mexico, and information for dive trips to the area. *New underwater cave maps from the area will also be available!*
- **Dustin Clesi on DiePolder 2 Ex-**

ploration - North Florida: Presentation will include previously unreleased, explosive video that will "—knock your sox off!!"

- **John Burge on the Bonaire Speleological Survey - Bonaire:** Slides and a report on newly discovered underwater caves on Bonaire. Major penetrations at depths *less than 25'*. Vast speleothem discoveries.
- **Alan Riggs on Devil's Hole Exploration - Nevada:** A report and photographs of dives into an earth-surface fault-line crevice by a scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey. Major exploration below 440' into non-karst cave formations with speleothems.

For those of you who have ever had the opportunity to see any of these fine cave explorers and scientists lecture, you know you're in for some fascinating accounts of cave-diving discoveries, and spectacular slides and videos. To have so many first-rate, record-setting exploration presentations at one workshop will be an incredible treat.

The details of Saturday evening are still being finalized, but will most likely include more informal video and slide presentations, possibly more social gatherings (and Bill hints at the possibility of cranking up the hot tub again).

Sunday activities are scheduled to include a variety of NSS-CDS-instructor guided cave and cavern dives for qualified divers of varying levels, and mini-workshops and courses. Frank has arranged the following:

- **Oxygen First Aid in Diving Accidents** (the Divers Alert Network course): Designed to familiarize all divers with the benefits of administering emergency oxygen to divers suffering from a variety of maladies including decompression sickness and arterial gas embolism. This intensive 4-hour course combines theory on the usage and benefits of oxygen with practical experience using DAN oxygen equipment. Fees include all texts an

oxygen equipment for use during the course.

Prerequisite: CPR training in the last 2 years. Fee: Pre-registration - \$50 for DAN members and \$70 for nonmembers (includes DAN enrollment). At the door - \$60 for DAN members and \$80 for nonmembers. NOTE: It will be very important to preregister for this course, not only for the considerable discount, but because a place in one of the morning or afternoon classes can be guaranteed only to pre-registrants.

- **Nitrox Diving:** Fee: \$90 (includes materials and certification)
- **Side-Mount Diving:** Classroom session on preparations and techniques. Bring BC to be used in sidemount and bring harness, if you have one.
- **Stage Diving:** Review of equipment configurations, procedures and safety considerations.
- **Use of Oxygen for In-water Decompression:** Review of equipment requirements including regulators and oxygen dive tanks, filling options and techniques, utilization limits, and decompression options.
- **Mixed-Gas Use:** Review of training needs and sources of information. Discussion of options, applications and advantages/disadvantages, equipment needs and sources of supply.
- **DPV Cave Diving:** Review of techniques, safety considerations, and equipment options to include the new Dive Rite DPV, which will be on display.
- **Recovery Workshop:** This 8-hour program includes a field-recovery dive exercise. It is recommended training for all cave divers.
- **Instructor Guided Tours:** Oriented to introduce less experienced cave and cavern divers to new caves. ■

MERRITTS MILL POND WEEKEND

Lamar Hires sent some pictures from Merritts Mill Pond taken over Labor Day weekend. Bill Foote and Eric Hutcheson had come up with the idea of having the Section's compressor available at a popular, but relatively remote, diving area such as the Mill Pond on a holiday weekend. The idea was that Section members and other cave divers would be able to get their tanks refilled without having to drive inordinate distances to get to the nearest dive shop.

Lamar reports that the compressor ran Saturday afternoon until 10 p.m. (the quiet time at the campground), and then again on Sunday afternoon. About 30 sets of doubles were filled. Eric transported, operated and maintained the compressor for the weekend.

This weekend was just an experiment and wasn't planned in time to get an announcement into the newsletter. But Lamar says that they will plan to do it again. ■



Eric Hutcheson manning the compressor

NACD WORKSHOP: SPELEO '91

The National Association for Cave Diving (NACD)—in cooperation with the Jerome Johns Hyperbaric Facility at Shands Hospital—will be hosting its annual cave-diving workshop, "Speleo '91," in Gainesville, Florida, Fri. through Sun., Nov. 1-3, 1991. Friday evening at 8 p.m. there will be a Welcome Reception at the University Center Hotel in Gainesville.

Registration begins Saturday morning at 8 a.m. at the Medical Science Building's Main Theater at Shands Hospital on the campus of the University of Florida. The lecture program, featuring some of the cave-diving community's finest explorers and technologists, begins at 9 a.m. Saturday

evening there will be a film festival with some of the best new videos and slides on recent cave-diving activity.

Sunday will offer a series of mini-workshops including the DAN oxygen course, a nitrox-certification course, a survey/cartography workshop, a barotrauma rescue and emergency oxygen workshop, CPR, DAN oxygen instructor certification, and several repair clinics from various dive-industry manufacturers.

Registration at the door is \$25, with additional fees for some of the Sunday courses and workshops. For more information, contact the NACD at P.O. Box 14492, Gainesville, FL 32604 or Steve Gerrard at 904-877-8196. ■

The Sea's Gentle Hand

I'm told we all have come from the sea. That much I believe, for I spend much time gazing into her beauty. That is certainly the place for me; as I endeavor to dive deep into the serenity of her embrace. As I leave the world above farther behind with each kick of my fin. I descend, I feel no danger, only peace and utter bliss. To forbear this kind of consummation would be a sin. As I break the surface, leaving the comforting touch of our eternal mother's hand, I reluctantly re-enter my native world. However, she gives us a gift, each time we dive. The memory of a special place, which holds images, treasures, and adventures different for every man. Yet, common to all, is the certainty of knowing we will return, another day, perhaps another place, to share another splendid moment in time. A transient joining with our very essence, one that can never be denied.

Philip S. Ciulla, Jr. (NSS #32636)

SISTEMA NARANJAL NOW LONGEST UNDERWATER CAVE

Jim Coke wrote on Sept. 6 from Akumal, Mexico that "Exploration has been superb in the past few weeks. We are rockin' and rollin' in Maya Blue. Finding some really good leads and exquisite cave—right now there is 50,374' in the Naharon/Maya Blue System (Sistema Naranjal) and the cave just

won't quit. You bet we are having fun!"

Parker Turner, Director of the Woodville Karst Plain Project, wrote to say that he had just heard from Jim and that Sistema Naranjal now surpasses the 48,754' surveyed length of the Leon Sinks Cave System. Parker wanted "to extend congratulations on behalf of the

Woodville Karst Plain Project to Jim Coke and all members of the Quintana Roo Speleological Survey for having explored and documented what is now the longest underwater cave in the world." ■

NEW NSS-CDS TRAINING PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

by Kelly Brady (NSS #26061)

Two new training programs and a new certification course have been formally approved and are now available.

INTRODUCTION TO CAVERN DIVING

This is a non-certification program that allows a certified open-water diver the opportunity to dive a cavern and "see what it is like" while under the direct supervision and direction of an NSS-CDS instructor. Divers who attend this 4-hour program will learn to distinguish between open-water and cavern zones, will be introduced to the hazards involved, and will learn to improve their profile underwater to eliminate "danglies." Accident analysis will be introduced, and the diver will be lead on a demonstration cavern dive. Participation in this program does not qualify the diver for diving in caverns or caves on his own, even if his dive partner is a certified cavern or cave diver.

CAVERN REFRESHER PROGRAM

This is a non-certification "update" program for certified Cavern Divers who have not been cavern diving

recently and wish to maintain their skill level through review with a certified cavern instructor. This one-day program contains a review of background information for safe cavern diving, limits for this level of certification, accident analysis, stress, and problem solving. At least one cavern dive will be conducted with the instructor.

INTRODUCTION TO CARTOGRAPHY

This is a management-oriented certification course which is designed to develop an ability to draw maps of underwater caves. While underwater activities and techniques are discussed, no underwater skill training or evaluation is provided. Participants who would like actual training in diving techniques and procedures should seek specialized training. Additional training beyond this course is necessary for anyone wishing to participate in actual, underwater scenarios.

Anyone with an interest in underwater cave mapping may participate and receive certification; however, an assumption is made that participants will have some knowledge of cave diving and underwater surveying.

The course includes a brief review of surveying techniques, manual and

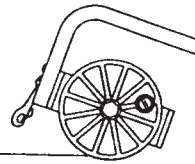
computer-aided data reduction, verifying data and correcting for errors, materials and supplies needed, and transforming data into a finished map. A goal of this course is to develop in the student an ability to complete and surveying and map-making process, and actually produce a map. It is recommended that participants attend the NSS-CDS "Basic Surveyor" course prior to attending "Introduction to Cartography." ■

Upcoming Certification Courses

Cavern Diver	Nov. 23-24, 1991
Introduction to Cave Diving	Dec. 7-8
Basic Surveyor and Introduction to Cartography	Dec. 14-15
Cavern Refresher (FREE)	Jan. 4, 1992

Contact: Kelly Brady
P. O. Box 42278
Gainesville, FL-32613
(904) 372-3819

THE SAFETY LINE



by Wendy Short (NSS #30802), Safety Coordinator South

Many cave divers who are careful and conservative during the dive have a casual attitude toward decompression. You are more likely to get bent than to get lost in a cave. Decompression may be the most hazardous part of your dive if it is not done correctly. Decompression Sickness (DCS) can happen to anyone. Your diving skills or experience will not prevent you from getting bent.

We are the first generation (if you're over 40) of recreational divers that has been involved in long-term decompression diving. In a way, we are guinea pigs in a living experiment. No one is quite sure what the long-term effects of decompression diving are. At best, an accident is painful, inconvenient, and expensive, and will keep you out of the water for awhile. At worst, it can be crippling or fatal.

There is a lot of good literature about decompression diving. Here are some considerations from that literature:

- Plan for decompression requirements just as carefully as you would plan for any aspect of the dive.
- The dive is not over until decompression is completed. All buddies should stay together until the end of the last stop.
- Always add a safety margin of time. Go to the next deeper depth or time on the tables, or add time to your computer.
- Make a safety stop if no decompression is required. Research has shown that a 3-5-minute safety stop at 20' and 10' is more beneficial than a single 10' stop.
- Try to plan dives that will not require any decompression. (This is impossible to do in some caves.) Remember that decompression diving is beyond the level of a basic of intro cave diver. If you're not full-cave trained, sticking to your thirds rule of a single tank should prevent you

from decompression diving. If not, turn on time instead of air.

- If the decompression stop will be longer than 15 minutes, post a decompression stage bottle one stop deeper than your deepest planned stop.
- Don't dive if you're sick, hung over, dehydrated, or really out of shape, or if you have other propensities that could cause DCS. Use common sense!
- Know how much air you require do 15-, 30-, 60-minute (etc.) stops at different depths. The next time you're "hanging out" with nothing to do, write down how much air you used for decompression. Have you ever decompressed on your "emergency" thirds? (If thirds turn-around pressure was 1000psi, you should have 1000psi in your tanks *AFTER* completing decompression.)
- *NEVER* make two decompression dives in one day (in a 24-hour period). The Divers Alert Network has published a lot of statistics on the hazards of multi-level, multi-day diving.
- Always decompress a little deeper than what your stop is (your gauge could be off). If your stop is at 20', decompress at 25'.
- If you use a computer, always compare your decompression requirements with the tables and use whichever is more conservative. (You should always carry tables for redundancy in case your computer malfunctions.) Reading the tables during decompression on each dive will keep you refreshed on how to use them.
- If your stop is very long, prepare for it. Use gloves, heat packs, or anything to conserve heat. Bring something to read, or a game, and glucose-enriched liquids, like Gatorade, to drink.
- Always be *prepared* to make long

decompressions even if you do not anticipate it. Sometimes unexpected delays happen in a cave that keep you in the system longer than you had intended.

- Use oxygen for your 15' stop whenever possible. Be on it at least 20 minutes and have your buddy monitor you for oxygen toxicity (highly unlikely at 15'). Go off for 5 minutes and then back on. Remember the fire hazard involved with pure oxygen. You must use special regulators and O-rings. Know what you're doing when setting your system up.
- Always have oxygen available for emergencies, even if you don't use it for decompression.
- If using Nitrox, don't dive the Nitrox tables, use the mix only as a safety margin.
- Remember that actual bottom time is from the time you submerge until you reach your first decompression stop. The open-water standard of using the beginning of your ascent does not apply in cave diving.
- Always take a surface decompression stop of 1/2 the time of the 10' stop before exiting the water. This is a good time to critique the dive or share highlights of the cave while resting at the surface. Strenuous activity after diving increases your chances of getting bent.

Even doing decompression conservatively and properly, you could still get DCS. There are no guarantees, and you need to accept that risk. This is very basic here, but each diver needs a good foundation for decompression diving. Know and recognize the signs of DCS in yourself and others. There are many good articles written on this subject, from very basic to very advanced. Educate yourself about decompression and keep up with the changes. ■

CAVE DIVERS EXPLORE THE ANDREA DORIA

by Bernie Chowdhury (NSS #30691)

On the evening of June 27, 1991, a group of Full-Cave-certified divers and veteran wreck divers from the Northeast boarded the R.V. *Wahoo* on Long Island's South Shore. Destination: the wreck of the Italian luxury liner, *Andrea Doria*.

This expedition was organized by cave-diving instructor Steve Berman, Captain Steve Bielenda (owner of the *Wahoo*), and the author. Also instrumental in the planning and logistics was Captain Billy Deans, owner of Key West Diver. After one year of planning, 28 people, 64 sets of doubles, 48 stage bottles, 6 large oxygen-supply cylinders, and one mini-Zepp were on their way for the 156-mile round-trip journey.

THE PEOPLE

The dive unit comprised fourteen divers who had dubbed themselves "Team Doria '91." Alphabetically (and with their state or country of residence in parenthesis), they are Jim Baden (CA), Steve Berman (FL), Randy Bohrer (NH), Steve Forman (FL), John Griffiths (NY), Miki Keller (Switzerland), Warren Mackey (NY), Roy Matthews (NJ), John Reekie (Canada), Chris Rouse, Jr. (PA), Chris Rouse, Sr. (PA), Chuck Schmidt (CA), Wings Stocks (CA), and the author (NY). Also, Michael Menduno, publisher of *The AquaCorps Journal*, was aboard to cover the event for posterity. Michael was originally part of the dive team but, unfortunately, had broken his elbow shortly before the trip. The crew members were Capt. Steve Bielenda, Capt. Janet Bieser, Capt. Billy Deans, Hank Garvin, Gary Gentile, Gary Gilligan, Jon Hulbert, Dennis Kessler, Capt. John Moyers, Capt. Don Schnell, and Sally Wahrman. Two other people were also aboard to conduct doppler testing and observe such things as the group's planning, procedures, motivations and stress.

MOUNT EVEREST

The wreck, commonly referred to as "the *Doria*" by hardcore divers, has long ago been dubbed "the Mount Everest of scuba diving." Mention of the name, *Andrea Doria*, brings to most people's mind the images of Peter Gimbel's salvage efforts of the Bank of Rome Safe from the *Doria's* debris-laden interior. Years ago, a TV special titled "*Andrea Doria: the Final Chapter*" about Gimbel's salvage project was aired on prime time. Millions of viewers waited eagerly as George Plimpton and Peter Gimbel opened the safe.

Armed guards had replaced the New York Aquarium sharks as custodians of the treasures within the thick steel box. Instead of priceless jewelry, the Safe yielded clumps of blackened paper money. The *Doria* can be like that: she leads one on an enticing emotional roller coaster that can either leave one at the peak of ecstatic titillation or in the trough of depression. Or dead.

The Mount Everest title is well earned: the *Doria* rests in 240' of cold, dark water off the coast of Nantucket, Rhode Island. She rests on her starboard (right) side, intact, with the shallowest depth found at 165'. In addition to depth and cold, the storms, currents and fog banks for which the North Atlantic is famed make this a challenging and unpredictable dive.

THE DIVES

After a roller-coaster ride, the *Doria* greeted us with long, rolling waves in the 6-8' range. We anchored in the First Class area, on the Promenade deck, near "Gimbel's Hole." This was the area that had been cut during the Gimbel expedition, thus the name. Visibility was an excellent 40'. The wreck's outline could be discerned from 120' and presented an impressive

sight. After their dives, many divers were heard to exclaim, "Wow! Did you see the size of that wreck? And the white growth all over it. Impressive!" Everywhere one looked and swam one saw wreckage.

Divers used a variety of gear configurations. For example, Roy Matthews used trimix doubles with two decompression stage bottles in order to be totally self-sufficient. Captain Billy Deans used a mini-Zepp. Jim Baden and Chuck Schmidt used diver-to-diver/surface-communications units, complete with full face mask. Air was the gas of choice for most divers. Oxygen for decompression was supplied from the surface, but many divers carried their own deco gases. The rough seas made for interesting and exhausting decompression.

One of the stark contrasts between the Team Doria '91 members and the crew was seen in penetration techniques. All Team members used guidelines during their penetrations, while the crew preferred to rely on their experience with this wreck and employed "progressive penetration"—which is to say, they didn't use guidelines.

Most dives fell into the 20-30 minute range, at depths of 210'. Some divers made forays to the wreck's debris field at depths of 238-242'. As Steve Berman aptly stated, "Bottom times in excess of 30 minutes on this wreck almost aren't worth it when you start figuring the decompressions involved. It gets insane hanging in the ocean for hours."

The sea was unrelenting and the forecast indicated worse to come. After only 24 hours on the wreck, we decided to seek the shelter of Block Island. Most divers were able to make two dives on the *Doria*, and were obviously teased by the immense structure. As we pulled anchor to leave, the weather seemed to be turning for the better, causing some remarks about staying longer. After the 8 hour ride to Block Island, a storm kicked up and I, for one, was happy to be in harbor.

Some consolation was offered the next day as we dove the *U-853*, a German WWII submarine, referred to as a U-boat. Inside the tight confines of the intact hulk, Randy Bohrer discovered firsthand one of the hazards of wreck diving: one of his low-pressure hoses was sliced on a sharp protrusion, forcing him to retreat into open water.

ARTIFACTS

One of the nice things about wreck diving is the possibility of bringing home souvenirs. A number of interesting artifacts were retrieved from the *Doria*. Gary Gentile, author of *Andrea Doria: Dive to an Era*, came up with an intact dish, hand painted with an oriental design.

John Griffiths found a similar treasure: a rare demitasse saucer with oriental design. The breathtaking beauty of his prize caused John to remark, "I'd rather have one or two of these than all the dishes I brought up before." That's a big statement considering the John Griffiths/Warren Mackey team had retrieved approximately 120 dishes, saucers and cups from Second Class only one week before.

Hank Garvin retrieved a small Buddha statue. One would think Buddha a rarity on Italian shipwrecks. Randy Bohrer recovered a small broken dish and an earring. Wings Stocks produced a 2"-tall brass letter opener whose handle had a relief of a male figure on one side and a female figure on the other. He also came up with an intact, foot-long, white, wall-mounted vase with brass holder. Unfortunately, this piece was shattered as Wings was getting back onto the diveboat. Fortunately, he kept all the pieces and restored it.

John Reekie made a deep penetration into the dining area and came up with a large, intact crystal bowl. Steve Berman brought up a number of perfume and wine bottles. Roy Matthews retrieved a beautiful crystal water pitcher, which was engraved with the "Italia" crest. Warren Mackey brought up a number of silver cream holders to add to his burgeoning *Doria* artifact collection. Some of the cream holders came with lids and all were engraved with the Italia crest.

WE SHALL RETURN

Although we had less than ideal conditions, the dives we made were enough to convince most Team members to return. We hope to have better weather next time.

The final chapter of the *Andrea Doria* has not yet been written. I suspect it will be a long time before it is.

POSTSCRIPT: Five members of Team *Doria* '91 (Jim Baden, Randy Bohrer, John Griffiths, Warren Mackey and the author) went back to the wreck together, aboard the *Seeker*, as part of an unscheduled trip put together by Captain Bill Nagel. Although the weather was initially so foul the dive boat could not leave harbor, the Team did not give up and was rewarded with fine weather after a day's wait and a rough ride to the site.

The boat anchored into the Cabin (Second Class) area of the Promenade Deck. Plenty of artifacts were retrieved. The crew recovered crystal glasses, silver plates and silver trays. Jim Baden

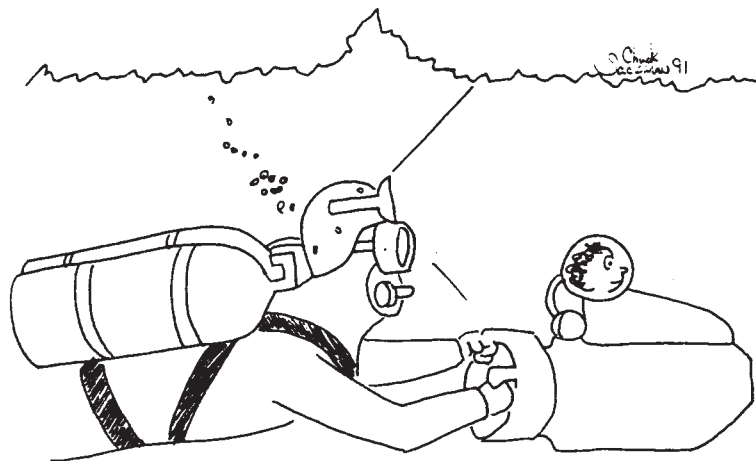
and Randy Bohrer recovered hand-painted vases, dishes, a light fixture and a full bottle of champagne. Warren Mackey recovered silver bowls and a beautiful silver cream holder. The author and John Griffiths recovered many dishes, saucers and cups in mint condition, in addition to hand-painted vases and an ashtray. Also, during a deep solo penetration, the author recovered a small, elegantly shaped porcelain cream holder. This artifact did not have the "Italia" crest on it; closer inspection revealed a Bavarian maker's insignia.

The *Doria* lives on.

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Captain Steve Bielenda and the crew of *R.V. Wahoo*, Captain Billy Deans, Dive Rite Manufacturing, Diving Unlimited International, Samy Elashmawy, Captain Bill Nagel and the crew of *Seeker*, Kevin O'Brien, Pan-Aqua Diving, Inc.

For more information about diving the "*Andrea Doria*," contact the author at (212) 865-0373. ■

TALES FROM THE CAVERN ZONE



NEW DADDY, LAMAR HIRES, TAKES HIS
SON FOR A STROLL IN THE DEVIL'S EYE SYSTEM



DIEPOLDERS ARTICLE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES

Tom Halliwell wrote that he very much enjoyed the "Team DiePolder '91: Our Story" article by Dustin Clesi and Jim King in the last issue of *UWS*, and that it brought back some good memories of diving and exploring and finding new caves.

Tom enclosed some pictures of Will Walters, one of the divers who discovered DiePolders III, taken back in 1976. Tom says hello to everybody. ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

July 24, 1991

This letter is in response to Wendy Short's "The Safety Line," *UWS*, Vol. 18, No. 3. (May/June).

I also agree that many cave divers are pushing themselves beyond their training and experience (i.e., making complex jumps and gaps, staging, scootering, side-mounting, etc.). This is probably where most of our trained-cave-diver fatalities are going to continue to occur.

The NACD has considered dropping the Intro Cave Course in order to induce divers to complete their Full Cave training. If this decision is passed, will the NSS-CDS also follow through?

Many cave divers are satisfied with being Intro-Cave trained and cave diving within those training limitations. That is fine, as long as they are mature enough and have enough restraint to cave dive within those limitations.

When the desire to make more complex and advanced cave dives is reached, then hopefully they will go on to become Full-Cave trained before making those dives.



DiePolders III fifteen years ago

If anybody tells you, as an Intro Cave diver with plenty of cave dives under your belt, that taking a Full Cave course is a waste of time and money, that is a bunch of bull!

I ignored that advice from a diving buddy a couple of years ago and went on to complete my Full-Cave training, after almost two years as an Intro Cave diver. Believe me, you will be surprised as to how much you though you knew about cave diving, but really didn't.

If you are Intro-Cave trained and are becoming unsatisfied with your cave diving and want to get into more advanced dives, do get Full-Cave trained first!

If you later decide to go to even more advanced cave diving, such as staging, scootering, side-mounting, etc., then get the proper training and cave dive with someone who is trained and proficient in those areas.

Some experienced cave divers tend

Some experienced cave divers tend to snub or ignore the less-experienced cave divers who respect them for their knowledge of cave diving and who are only attempting seek advice or have some question answered.

I would find it difficult and downright unfriendly to ignore a beginning or less-experienced cave diver who wanted to know something about a cave system I was much more familiar with or about a piece of cave-diving equipment, or who maybe just wanted to chat with a more experienced cave diver.

If you are serious about and committed to cave diving, then there should be no hesitation on your part in investing in the proper cave-diving gear and cave diving on a regular basis.

Even if you can't cave dive often, for some reason, but do manage to do a lot of open-water diving, consider practicing your cave-diving skills in open water, such as S-drills, buoyancy control, trim, silt avoidance, running a reel, etc. You won't be cave diving, but you will be keeping your proficiency and skills up to par.

Don't be one of those divers who go cave diving only once or twice a year—commonly referred to as "seasonal" or "vacation" divers. Besides having a

higher probability of gear malfunction, due to it sitting idle for so long, you will have become rusty in your cave-diving skills and your knowledge of cave diving. You are only asking for trouble.

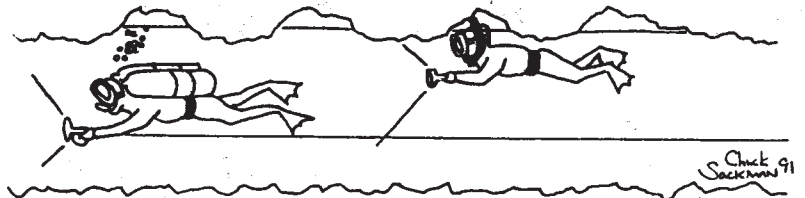
Safe cave diving means making a solid commitment to the sport. It is a continual learning process. There are always new cave systems to dive and master, new cave-diving procedures to

know and learn about, new and more advanced equipment to use, new technological and scientific data, etc. Your training and experience never really stops.

Happy and safe cave diving!

Frank R. Lavallee (NSS #27829)
Plant City, Florida

TALES FROM THE CAVERN ZONE



Chuck
Sackman '91

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