



LOADED FOR BEAR

Kenneth Gwin

Well, not exactly loaded for bear, but I did have to retool.

Last year on one of those Channel Islands lobster and foraging adventures I lost my ab iron. After a food frenzy loading up on scallops, in all the danger and excitement, I forgot to put my ab iron back in the game bag.

My nice little stainless ab iron is now alone on the sand somewhere off Santa Rosa Island. When it came to chasing down those scampering abalone and fending off those stubborn scallops I was now defenseless.

I had looked a long time for that little ab iron. It was nearly perfect. But, it could use some refinements, especially for liberating scallops.

I still have my origin leaf spring iron with its electrical tape handle and polypropylene lanyard, but



it no longer fits my ascetic. The commercially available ab irons don't inspire me much. It was time to make my own.

I used a nice heavy piece of stainless steel bar stock and set about putting the right curve in it for good attack and leverage. Then I ground away at it, putting just the right wedge and taper to the overall shape. I also wanted a good long butt-end at the handle to serve as a hammer as well as a good long blade as the weapon of choice for abalone.

I then set about drilling and grinding away an area for the grip and handle. How about a nice satin polish? I then used high grade 1/4 inch black nylon line for the grip and lanyard.

The results are very Samurai.

Good news! It works well for abalone and those deep water scallops at our secret spot.

GENERAL MEETING - NOVEMBER 18TH, 2009 - AT SINDBADS

Pier 2, Embarcadero Street, San Francisco

MEET at 7:00p.m. for socializing, DRINKS & FOOD and 7:30p.m. for CLUB BUSINESS

This month's Reef Divers' meeting will feature news and reviews of the exotic adventures of Curtis Degler exploring the ocean reefs off the sub-continent of India.

As most everyone knows, Curtis is currently living in India. He has outsourced himself and will now offer technical support and answer any questions you may have about diving the Andaman Islands. Providing this service, he responds to the name of C.J. or John.

Curtis will have many stories to share with you about his diving and instructing in South India as well as his offshore adventures in the tropical archipelago in the Bay of Bengal known as the Andaman Islands.

He will be showing topside and underwater photos of native fish and wildlife, mysterious native rituals, and many tasty native dishes that have sustained him during his exploits on the other side of the world.



Der Stammtisch

By Pierre Hurter

Following my write-up on the *Jeremiah O'Brian* and Liberty Ships it turns out that our very own Ray Will took a 28 day "cruise" to Vietnam in 1965 aboard the *S.S. Patrick* ... Will have to follow up and find out which one, turns out there where four ships named after a Patrick, starting with the first Liberty ship built, *the S.S. Patrick Henry*, followed by the *Patrick B. Whalen*, the *Patrick C. Boyle*, the *Patrick H. Morrissey* and the *Patrick S. Mahony*.

Halfway through my Sunday morning newspaper read I came across an article in the Outdoors Section that gave me pause. It seems as if our friends at the Monterey Bay Aquarium have released their latest great white shark, after she became too aggressive towards other sharks. Runs with scissors, bites the other kids, definitely antisocial behavior, just the sort of thing you might expect from an unruly teenager from Southern California. Just another thing to keep in the back of your mind the next time you slip into the murky green waters of Monterey.

If you've been following the posts on *ba_diving* then you probably know about the latest gadget designed to separate a diver from his hard earned cash. The Navimate promises to make the ubiquitous Global Navigation System (GPS) available to divers below the surface. Now don't get me wrong, GPS is wonderful. For those of you who remember using astronomic observation to fix your position, the arrival of satellite based systems was a welcome improvement. I still harbor a warm spot in my heart for the Magnavox MX 1502 Satellite Surveyor.

Part of the Navy's NAVigation SATellite System, (NAVSAT) or more commonly TRANSIT. Yes Virginia there was a world before GPS; TRANSIT started in the mid-60's and was operated until 1996. There was even a time when GPS receivers were big and you had to drag along car batteries and use obscure software to get results. The joys of trying to weed out suspect data sets and concatenate files in the bleary hours of the morning.

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Payments for membership and activities should be mailed to:

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Reefer's Rap 2009 – 2010

<p style="text-align: center;">NOVEMBER '09</p> <p>04 - Officers Meeting 14 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 18 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Elections !!! TBD - Abalone Closer</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DECEMBER '09</p> <p>02 - Officers Meeting 02 - CenCal Board Meeting 12 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 16 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Christmas Party ???</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JANUARY</p> <p>01 - New Year's Day - Point Lobos Dive ??? 06 - Officers Meeting 09 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 22 - Meeting - Sinbad's 23-31 - 41st International Boat Show - Dusseldorf - www.boot.de 30-31 - 3rd Annual Texas Dive Show - www.divechronicles.com</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY</p> <p>03 - Officers Meeting 13 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 17 - Meeting - Sinbad's 19 - 22 - Cypress Sea SF Ocean Film Festival 19-21 - Our World Underwater - www.ourworldunderwater.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MARCH</p> <p>03 - Officers Meeting 05-07 - The Boston Sea Rovers - www.bostonsearovers.com 13 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 17 - Meeting - Sinbad's 26-28 - Beneath the Sea - New Jersey - www.beneaththe.sea.org</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">APRIL</p> <p>01 - Abalone Opener - Fort Ross - CenCal 07 - Officers Meeting 10 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 10-11 - Bay Area Dive Show - San Jose - www.divechronicles.com 16-18 - Ocean Fest - Fort Lauderdale - www.oceanfest.com 21 - Meeting - Sinbad's</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MAY</p> <p>05 - Officers Meeting 08 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 15 - 16 - Scuba Show - Long Beach - www.scubashow.com 19 - Meeting - Sinbad's 21-23 - Dive & Travel Expo - Tacoma - www.diveandtravelexpo.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JUNE</p> <p>02 - Officers Meeting 12 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 16 - Meeting - Sinbad's TBD - Abalone Closer</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JULY</p> <p>07 - Officers Meeting 10 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 21 - Meeting - Sinbad's</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">AUGUST</p> <p>TBD - Abalone Opener 04 - Officers Meeting 09-11 - Channel Islands - Jim Vallario - 415.566.0784 18 - Meeting - Sinbad's</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SEPTEMBER</p> <p>01 - Officers Meeting 15 - Meeting - Sinbad's 11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">OCTOBER</p> <p>06 - Officers Meeting 09 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 20 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Nominations !!!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">NOVEMBER</p> <p>03 - Officers Meeting 13 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 17 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Elections !!! 17 - 21 - The Dema Show - Las Vegas - www.demashow.com TBD - Abalone Closer</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DECEMBER</p> <p>01 - Officers Meeting 11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.810.6851 * 15 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Christmas Party !!!</p>	

Stammtisch from page 2



I seem to recall that in the early days, satellite coverage was often spotty and we would set up at all hours of the day and night.

Fast forward to the 21st Century and everyone, with the possible exception of Ken, is surrounded by GPS receivers, they are built into cars, cell phones, laptops, you name it. Now it looks as if SHB Instruments is planning on coming out with a model for divers.

Details are still sketchy, but the promise of the unit is that you and your buddy if similarly equipped will be able to track your progress on a map worn on your wrist. Sounds interesting, but I wonder if, with all the technology we are surrounding ourselves with, we are not losing some elemental part of our being.

Not to sound like a Luddite, but there are times when I want to get away from it all. And then there are those who allow technology to lull them into a self confidence they don't really possess. Witness the phenomenon known as "Yuppie 911". That's when people use personal emergency beacons like SPOT, cell phones and avalanche beacons to get themselves out of uncomfortable situations.

This summer there was a group of hikers in the Grand Canyon who pushed the panic button on their locator beacon three times, because they thought they were lost, thought they would run out of water and because the water they had just filtered "tasted salty". After the last call out of rescue teams including a helicopter the hikers were unceremoniously loaded up and flown out. The leader of the group stated to the Rangers, without the SPOT device they never would have attempted the hike.

Technology can be a beautiful thing; I've used GPS to accomplish all sorts of tasks, from providing control for aerial photogrammetry to using the predicted crustal movement to try and locate monuments set at the State's beginnings. I still look up once in awhile to see where the hell I am and try to keep from wandering down the middle of the road. That said, I'll wait for the GPS to be incorporated with Bühlmann decompression algorithms, a heart rate monitor and a calorie counter all neatly wrapped in a sleek titanium case the size of a good dive watch.



You can't help but notice, or you couldn't if you were there, that attendance at the monthly meetings is sparser than I recall in the past and the trend seems to be increasing. I've heard many reasons, from the venue to the economy and they probably all play apart. On the other hand, I note that when we get together for the officer's meetings we always have a great time and a good turnout. The idea at those meetings is to pick a different place every month to meet, eat

and generally have a good time. So we, the Officers were wondering if the same format might not work for the general meetings. As always there will be glitches along the way, but if the past several meetings are any indication, it can't be any worse.

So weigh in and let the officers and editor know, what are your ideas for bending the curve? Is it time for a new venue, how do you feel about giving up a static location for the monthly meetings and going to something more dynamic, from a locations perspective?

In the meantime, I'm getting my gear together for this Saturday's dive. We managed to fill all of our slots on the boat plus one. The same for December's dive, there we have eight Reefers onboard. We stopped taking half the boat at the beginning of the year as we were no longer getting enough paying divers onboard. On the plus side we aren't losing any money, on the negative side; we no longer have enough people to get the boat out with the Reef Divers alone.

That's pretty much it for this month. Today is Veterans Day and I'm enjoying the day off while Gerda toils away at work. I'm reminded of two quotes, what George Orwell may or may not have said ... "Good people sleep peacefully in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf." and "I have neither the time nor the inclination to explain myself to a man who rises and sleeps under the blanket of the very freedom that I provide, then questions the manner in which I

provide it.” Jack Nicholson (A Few Good Men).

IN FLANDERS FIELDS the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD (1872-1918) Canadian Army



Spindrift

Palau announces ban against commercial shark fishing

The Pacific island nation of Palau is creating the first shark sanctuary, banning commercial fishing of all sharks in its waters. In recent years the taking of sharks for their fins, a delicacy in parts of Asia has had a dramatic impact on the number of sharks left in the ocean.

Johnson Toribiong, president of the island republic, announced the commercial shark-fishing ban at a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, saying “the strength and beauty of sharks are a natural barometer for the health of our oceans.”

Palau, with 20,000 inhabitants spread over about 200 islands, today formally established an area the size of Texas (or France if you prefer) -where shark hunting will be banned, setting up a protective zone to help preserve the apex predators and support local tourism.

“Palau will become the world’s first national shark sanctuary,” Toribiong said, “ending all commercial shark fishing in our waters and giving a sanctuary

for sharks to live and reproduce unmolested in our 237,000 square miles of ocean.”

The Ghost Fleet is on the Move

Anyone who’s driven the stretch of 680 along Suisun Bay has seen them, the “Ghost Fleet”, veterans of wars and voyages long gone, neatly tied stem to stern, waiting to be called into service once again.

Well it looks as if two of them, the *Pan American Victory* and the *Earlham Victory*, both World War II veterans built by Permanente Metals in 1945 in nearby Richmond are going to be towed out of Suisun Bay next month, but not to be put back into service, but rather to be sent to Texas to be broken up and sold for scrap.

There has been an ongoing tug of war between the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, the U.S.



Maritime Administration and the U.S. Coast Guard.

At issue are the ships sitting in the harbor slowly

returning from whence they came, one rusty chip of paint at a time. Environmental groups and the Water Quality Board have sued, claiming that as much as 19 tons of mercury, asbestos, lead and copper have ended up in the bay.

In the past Maritime officials have claimed that couldn't proceed as the: U.S. Coast Guard codes required the ships be stripped of invasive species before being moved, and the regional water board said moving the rotting ships would release more noxious chemicals into the water.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation John Porcari, announced an initiative aimed at kick starting the process and improving relations between federal officials and state water quality regulators. Under the plan, the federal government will contract to remove fuel from the ships, scour invasive species from hulls, and blast away peeling paint; the work will be performed in dry dock, initially in San Francisco.

The process will be complicated by the lack of dry dock and ship scrapers located in the United States and the current low steel prices. In the era of high steel prices, recycling companies would pay to cut the ships apart for the steel scrap. Under the current economy, the government will be paying more than \$2 million to recycle the first two ships.

The mothball fleet dates to the late 1940s. World War II, the U.S. Maritime Commission anchored thousands of cargo ships, tankers and battleships at sites around the United States until needed for further military or civilian operations. At its peak around 1960, the Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet held more than 350 ships.

Titanic Expedition in 2010?



world's most famous shipwreck.

The company that has the salvage rights to the Titanic, RMS Titanic Inc, wants to mount another expedition to what may be the

The wreck was discovered in 1985 by the oceanographer, Robert Ballard. Since that time there have been a number of law suits by claimants

ranging from insurance companies to relatives of passengers and crew.

The courts have ruled that RMS Titanic is the salvor-in-possession, giving them exclusive rights to salvage the Titanic, but not explicitly the right to the 5,900 artifacts removed so far or the wreck itself.

Under admiralty law, the owner of a ship retains rights to its wreck, unless the owner abandons it or an unusually long period of time has passed since the vessel sank. In those an admiralty court can name another party salvor in possession of the wreck if that party lays claim to it by recovering objects from the site. To maintain its exclusive rights to the wreck, the salvor-in-possession must continue to actively work the wreck site.

Meanwhile back in court. District Judge Rebecca Beach Smith, a maritime jurist, will be considering whether the wreck is and "International treasure" and how it should be treated going forward. The U.S. State Department and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are seeking to limit ownership rights. The United States and Britain have already signed an agreement designating the Titanic as an international memorial.



Honolulu - First U.S. tuna farm gains approval

A Honolulu startup has gained approval from the state

Board of Land and Resources in Hawaii to build the nation's first tuna farm off the Big Island.

The company, Hawaii Oceanic Technology plans to create an open ocean farm for bigeye tuna *Thunnus obesus*, also known, along with yellowtail, as ahi for the sushi and sashimi markets.

Unlike other ventures that capture wild tuna and fatten them for market, Hawaii Oceanic plans to hatch bigeye at the University of Hawaii and move them to offshore pens to raise.

The goal is to produce 6,000 tons of tuna a year once fully operational. In 2007, approximately 225,000 tons of wild bigeye tuna was taken in the Pacific.



We encourage you to also support the other organizations listed below when you pay your annual dues. (Please indicate your membership options with the checkboxes below.)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | San Francisco Reef Divers (SFRD) | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Central California Council of Diving Clubs (CenCal) | 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sonoma County Abalone Network (SCAN) | <u>10</u> |

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SINCE JANUARY 1ST 1973

ABOUT SAN FRANCISCO REEF DIVERS (SFRD):

The *Reef Diver Times* is the official newsletter of the San Francisco Reef Divers, a not for profit community organization dedicated to safe sport diving and the preservation of our ocean resources. Membership is \$25 annually, dues payable to "SFRD". The General Meeting is held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at Sinbad's, located at Pier 2, Embarcadero Street, SF, CA 94111. Meet at 7:00pm for socializing, drinks and food and 7:30 pm for club business and entertainment. For more information, visit <http://www.sfreefdivers.org/>.

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