



## **Trick or Treat**

**Be adventurous and  
join us on Oct 18<sup>th</sup>  
at the General  
Meeting**



**Der Stammtisch**

By Pierre Hurter

One of the problems with writing a column is where to start? It seems simple enough, but think about it for a while. All sorts of things have happened since last month, some of them possibly even mildly interesting. So I'll start with a wee dram of Laphroig with a splash of branch in an old fashioned glass to put me into a nautical mood and start with the present, more particularly, with today. Later we'll bounce back to the past and possibly forward to the future, but for now, it's today.

Did you know that the Friends of the Library have an annual book sale? It's a veritable feast for bibliophiles and other junkies of the written word. It takes place at Fort Mason in one of the old Quartermaster buildings on the water and is a huge offering of books, along with some records and other items, but mostly books. To make it more interesting on Sunday every book is available for a buck. So they go from cheap to dam near free.

So what sorts of offerings can you find? I'll give you a taste, "Waugh on Wine", "Travels & Sex", "International Maritime Dictionary" (marked property of U.S. Naval Ships Library, on the inside cover), "Hen Frigates" (wives of merchant captains under sail), "Conquering the Deep Sea Frontier". There's "Of Whale and Men" a 50's account of the whaling industry. This was written in an era when the "whales were majestic" and the men who hunted them "extraordinary". And then there are the German titles, one of my favorites being *Was Koche ich heute?* A cookbook with daily menus for each month, showcasing what's fresh and available and further broken down into *Einfache und Feine Küche*, or roughly translated as everyday and fancy cooking. There were also several novels of the "bodice ripper" variety along with the usual highbrow stuff that people pile into their book bags to dazzle the unwary. OK, so maybe you would read *Die Gedichte von Bertolt Brecht in einem Band*.

I'll stick to Mox Nix a collection of GI humor and cartoons based on experiences of Americans based in Germany.

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**Payments for membership and activities  
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## REEFER'S RAP 2006

| JANUARY   | FEBRUARY   | MARCH  |
|---|--|--|
| 01 - New Year's Day - Point Lobos<br>04 - Officers Meeting<br>14 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>18 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b>  | 01 - Officers Meeting<br>11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>15 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b>  | 01 - Officers Meeting<br>11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>15 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b>  |
| APRIL   | MAY  | JUNE   |
| 01 - Abalone Opener<br>05 - Officers Meeting<br>08 - CANCELLED<br><b>19 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b>  | 03 - Officers Meeting<br>13 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>17 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b>  | 07 - Officers Meeting<br>10 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sun - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>21 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b><br>TBD - Abalone Closer  |
| JULY  | AUGUST   | SEPTEMBER  |
| 05 - Officers Meeting<br>08 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat. - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>19 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b>  | 04 -06 - Abalone Opener – Radkey's at (510) 527-5282<br>02 - Officers Meeting<br>13-15 - Channel Islands<br>16 - Peace Trip Extension: Oil Rig Dive - 1.866.984.2025<br><b>16 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b> | 06 - Officers Meeting<br>08 - 10 - Lake Tahoe Dive - Norm Knutson<br>16 - Monterey Beach Cleanup<br>17 - Ursula's Walk for ALS - Lake Merritt<br><b>20 - Meeting - Sinbad's</b><br>23 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre -415.285.6293<br>30 - Alcatraz swim/paddle - Tim - <a href="mailto:invitational@south-end.org">invitational@south-end.org</a> |
| OCTOBER   | NOVEMBER   | DECEMBER   |
| 04 - Officers Meeting<br>14 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat. - Pierre - 415.285.6293 *<br><b>18 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Nominations !!!</b><br><b>20 - 22 Van Damme State Park - Sacramento Sea Horses - Tom &amp; Kathy Moorse - 916-989-0555</b> | 01 - Officers Meeting<br><b>15 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Officer Elections !!!</b><br>11 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat. - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br>TBD - Abalone Closer                                 | 06 - Officers Meeting<br>09 - Cypress Sea - (3 Dives) - Sat - Pierre - 415.285.6293<br><b>20 - Meeting - Sinbad's - Christmas Party !!!</b>  |

**Stammtisch from page 2**

Enough about books, we've added to our pile and I'll be staying up reading about sharks, deep sea diving and whale hunting for the foreseeable future.

Our dive trip aboard the Cypress Sea for September turned out to be a good run. The weather report called for 8 foot swells, but that didn't seem to scare anyone off. There was only one casualty and the crew made him as comfortable as possible with a makeshift bed and a bit of privacy over the wheelhouse. The rest of us had a great time diving. The sun was high in the sky and the visibility pretty good. The first splash was at Outer Pinnacles followed up by a dive at Butterfly House and then Lingcod Reef. All three dives were great except for my canister light pooping out on dive three. I had just gotten it back from the shop and was excited to have the "Kelp Burner 2000" back in action along with my dry suit which had come back from having the zipper replaced. It seems there was a leak somewhere in the light. Those of you who have had the experience know that saltwater and electronics are never a good combination.

We had Captain Phil onboard along with Captain Dave and Mark as dive master. Looks like Captain Xcott has decided to hit the books and will be charting a new course. He's back at school and signed up for an insane number of units. I wish him all the best and hope we get to see him sometime in the future.

After docking we headed for Carmel Beach and a birthday party. It turns out that Captain Phil's daughter Rachael and I

share a birth date. It wasn't one of those milestone birthdays, at least not for me and I can't really remember turning seven. The party was full of kids, dogs, a woman painting the kids and some adult's faces, a Nemo Piñata, S'mores, a bonfire and 200 oysters. Did I miss anything? Oh yea, blackened chicken breasts and sausages. We ran into a lot of people that we hadn't seen in a while, some with new kids in tow, got to eat way too many oysters and finished it off with a couple of melted chocolate and marshmallow S'mores.

It's fun watching people enjoy life on the beach. There don't seem to be too many places left where you can build a fire, torch some marshmallows to a crisp and enjoy an unpretentious glass of screwtop pinot. What does that say about where we are heading? Never mind, all in all it was a great time, though the drive home was a bit longer than normal, glad we stayed in Monterey the night before, must be the onset of old age.

I had another interesting car encounter the other day. If you hadn't noticed, cars, particularly obscure seldom seen European models have always fascinated me. It's probably because of my dad's penchant for always having some strange car parked in the circular driveway or on blocks in the garage (never cinder blocks mind you, that's not too bright) with various "innards" scattered around or neatly lined up on the work bench as if awaiting a transplant.

So when I saw the little white Bianchina tucked away in the shop behind Arch Art Supplies, I had to take a closer look. For those who have never heard of the car, take heart, few have. They

where made by Autobianchi, a joint venture cobbled together between Bianchi, Pirelli and Fiat in the mid-fifties. Produced in an era when times were still tough in Europe, it looks like the perfect car for San Francisco, easy on the gas and how hard can it be to parallel park? Best of all on a sunny day like today, you can put the top down and enjoy a leisurely drive, zipping around town.



Its fleet week and young fresh scrubbed sailors and Marines are out to have a good time. They are young and most of them look so earnest, I suppose service is not as much fun as when I spent my time trying to taste every beer brewed in the part of Germany I was stationed in. Gerda and I headed for Coit Tower to watch the air show. Say what you will about the noise, the fuel, the militarism of it all, I love the show. The weather was brilliant, though there was a blanket of haze over the Marin Headlands which looked too brown to be fog.

This marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Angels. At the end of World War II, Chester W. Nimitz, then the Chief of Naval Operations, ordered the formation of a flight demonstration team to keep the public interested in naval aviation. The Blue Angels performed their first flight demonstration less than a year later in June 1946 at their home base, Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville, Florida. At the time

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they were flying the Grumman F6F Hellcat. By the end of the 1940's the Blue Angels were flying their first jet aircraft, the Grumman F9F-2 Panther.



In December 1974, the Navy Flight Demonstration Team began flying the McDonnell Douglas A-4F Skyhawk II and was reorganized into the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron. On November 8, 1986, the Blue Angels completed their 40th anniversary year during ceremonies unveiling their present aircraft, the new sleek

McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornet.



According to the Navy, since 1946, the Blue Angels have performed for more than 414 million fans. If the crowd at Coit Tower was any indication, they will be impressing at least that many in the years to come. The show started with a flyby by the Angels C-130T Hercules. This ought to keep Jim happy the C-130, nick named Fat Albert Airlines is flown by an all Marine crew of three officers and five enlisted personnel. Fat Albert joined the team in 1970 and flies more than 140,000 miles each season. It carries more than 40 maintenance and support

personnel, their gear and enough spare parts and communication equipment to support the air show.

It's time to fire up the BBQ and sear some meat, in this case buffalo burgers with frits, sautéed mushrooms and a crisp summer rose. Meanwhile did you read about the singer Katie Melua who set the world record for the deepest underwater concert? The event took place 303 meters (994 feet) under the sea inside of one of the four shafts of the Statoil Troll A Platform rig in the North Sea. The 22-year-old Irish-Georgian artist and her five-member band, performed for 35 minutes inside the Troll A platform.

That pretty much wraps up my weekend and this column. Remember what Virginia Wolf had to say, "one cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."

# Flotsam & Jetsam

**Researchers to explore site of the *USS Macon***



Wiley Collection, Monterey Maritime and History Museum

Awhile back we ran a tidbit about the *USS Macon* a navy dirigible lying in 1,000 feet of water practically in our backyard. The 785-foot *Macon* was the nations largest and the last U.S. built rigid lighter-than-air craft, it was nearly twice as long as the more famous *Graf Zeppelin*. To

give you a reference, the *Macon* was about four times longer than the "blimps" seen today hovering above SBC Park (or whatever it's called this week). In fact, the 785-foot ship was only 97 feet shorter than the Titanic.

A crew of maritime historians and archaeologists along with researchers from NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute are set to sail to the site of the crash a few miles southwest of Point Sur, where two of the 83 crew members lost their lives.

They will be taking underwater images of the ruins with the latest deep-sea including a remote-

controlled robotic submarine called the Tiburon. The plan is to map the area via a mosaic of digital images.

The dirigible aircraft carrier, *USS Macon*, went down in stormy weather on a routine flight between the Channel Islands and Moffett Field on Feb. 12, 1935. In the 1980's researchers became interested in locating the wreck. Records from the crash showed exactly where the ship hit the sea, but it drifted some ways before reaching the bottom.

This is where Dave Canepa, a local fisherman who had snagged pieces of the ship while fishing came into play. Dave had "the



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute

numbers”, like any fisherman he kept track of likely sites and his coordinates allowed researchers’ to find the ship within 10 minutes of beginning their search.

There are no plans to retrieve any of the debris from the depths of the sea during the five-day expedition; the results of the visit are scheduled to be released at the end of September. As two of the crew were never found the site is treated as a grave site and should be treated with some respect.

### Revenge of the Grouper? Florida Free diver’s Last Catch



Gary Cagle was an avid free diver who apparently made two mistakes on a Key West fishing trip. First he speared a goliath grouper, a fish that is illegal to

kill in the Florida Keys. Second he also forgot to bring along his knife.

While spearfishing a half-mile off Smathers Beach, Gagle speared a 40-inch goliath grouper. The fish headed under a coral head, wrapping Gagle in the spear’s line and held him under water until he drowned.

Key West police divers found Cagle's body pinned to the coral 17 feet down, the spear line was wrapped three times around his wrist, with the spear shaft still in the carcass of the dead fish.

Goliath groupers can grow up to eight feet and weigh more than 600 pounds. Fishing goliath grouper in the Keys has been illegal since 1990.

### The Landlord returns to the aquarium

It’s been awhile since the Monterey Bay Aquarium has exhibited a white shark. Nearly two years ago, the museum kept a female white shark for a record 198 days before she ate two soupfin sharks in the exhibit.

So this time they’re trying it with a male shark, a 5-foot-8-inch-long, 104-pound baby boy. He is the new kid in town and the only white shark in captivity in the world. You can almost hear the soundtrack in the background, duh-duhn, duh-duhn.

No one knows how long this shark will be on exhibit. He didn't feed for the first week, but lately he’s been eating the skate that was dangled in front of. He still hasn't touched the salmon fillets on the bottom of the tank, maybe he’s on diet.

So far, the shark seems to be adapting to his surroundings, though he is apparently camera shy at least around flash

### Military Divers from France and Canada

We sometimes seem to forget that we are not alone in the world. Shortly after the Katrina disaster, both France and Canada offered to send military divers to aid with the aftermath of Katrina. The Canadian team was a composite of 35 navy and army divers based in the New Orleans area. The divers worked with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amphibious Group of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fleet, U.S. Navy. The divers' task was to conduct underwater inspections and surveys. The divers were initially working in Bayou La Batre, Ala., where they were involved in harbor clearance and removing hazards to navigation such as overturned/sunken boats.

Meanwhile, on September 11, 2005, a C-135 from Istres AFB ferried to Pensacola a 17 EOD team (explosive ordnance divers) in order to contribute to the rehabilitation of port facilities, dock clearance and obstacle removals. Their mission lasted until September 26, 2005.





*We highly 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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Please make checks payable to “**San Francisco Reef Divers**” and mail to: Pierre Hurter, SFRD Treasurer, 515 Diamond Street, San Francisco, CA 94114



**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 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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