



“DIVE LOG”

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED DIVERS
OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

March 2010

Volume IX Issue III

Page 1

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Pages 1-2
Diving the Coolidge

Page 3
The Lady
Dive Safety

Page 4
Buy Swap Sell

Pages 5
Secretary's Note



Dive Vanuatu, dive the Coolidge

Powered by CDNN NewsWire

September 2, 2008

I'm floating inside a sunken ocean liner. It's darker than the inside of a cow. My small dive light barely makes a dent in the darkness. The last time I could see my depth gauge, it read 48 meters, which is a bit troublesome since the waterproof case on my digital camera is only guaranteed to 37.5 meters. My dive computer is beeping, signaling that I've exceeded my depth time and I'm now into decompression mode and I've never done a decompression dive before.

Did I mention that ocean liner is lying on its side? So here's the burning question: Am I having fun yet???

I'm on Espiritu Santo, part of the island republic of Vanuatu. Vanuatu is in the South Pacific about 1,700 kilometers east of Northern Australia and west of Fiji. It was a French colony, but English is the main language, along with Bislama -- a type of Pidgin English spoken on several South Pacific Islands. If you're a Survivor fan, you might have heard of Vanuatu, as the show's ninth season was shot there in 2004.

Vanuatu was a key base during the Second World War, used by the allies to stop Japan's march towards Australia, and is indirectly the reason why I'm visiting the country.

So what am I doing in Vanuatu? Well, it is part of my "Bucket List." If you saw the movie you'll know a "bucket list" is a list of things you want to do before you kick the bucket.

As a scuba diver who relishes diving on Second World War wrecks, Vanuatu is high up on my personal bucket list. That's because Vanuatu sports the only intact ocean liner, the SS Coolidge, which is lying on its side only a few hundred meters off shore.

The Coolidge, built in 1931, was named after Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president of the United States. It measures 200 meters long and 25m wide and could accommodate 3,500 passengers. (By comparison, the Holland American



Veendam is 220m long and can accommodate 1,250 passengers.)

In 1941, the Coolidge was converted to a troop transport, painted gun metal grey and reconfigured to carry up to 5,000 troops.

It was on one of these troop carrying out missions to Vanuatu that the Coolidge hit a mine and began to sink. The captain ran the ship on to the shore of Espiritu Santo, and by some miracle, nearly all the 5,000 troops and crew scrambled off the ship and waded ashore. A few hours later, the Coolidge slid off the beach and sank into deeper water.

Diving the Coolidge

One of the unique things about diving the Coolidge is that you can do so right from the beach. You wade out about 30m where you find a rope, then follow the rope down to the bow of the ship, which is fairly shallow, about 18m. However the stern is quite deep -- 55m -- a deep dive by anyone's standard. Almost all dives on the Coolidge are decompression dives. What this means is that because you have been diving at depth, you must make planned rest stops on your way back to the surface to allow your body time to expel the excess nitrogen that accumulated in your body. If you don't, you could suffer a nasty and potentially fatal case of the bends. Depending on how deep you've been and how long you've been there, you can easily spend upwards of an hour "blowing" off nitrogen

Because of the lengthy waiting, you probably won't have enough air in your tank to complete the dive without some help. That's why the dive operators leave extra tanks for their divers at predetermined depths. You switch over to them and, when your dive computer tells you it's safe to continue, you switch back to your own tanks and proceed on to the next stop or the surface.

Decompression diving is not a skill that is taught to beginning divers. So if you're a new or a beginning diver, you might want to reconsider diving the Coolidge until you have more experience. My first dive on the Coolidge was to familiarize myself with the outside of the ship, and this went well. However, my next dive was a completely different story.

The "must do" dive of the Coolidge is to visit "The Lady." She is a large three dimensional fresco of a lady and a unicorn residing in the first class smoking room. Divers come from all over to "kiss the lady" for good luck.

I'm skeptical about this dive. First, it is at 38m -- much deeper than any of my previous dives. It's also deep inside the ship. In the past, several divers who have visited the lady have never returned. Allan convinces me to go by promising an experienced divemaster to accompany me. I reluctantly agree. David is my experienced dive master. I ask him how old he is.

"Twenty-one," he replies proudly. My kids are older than him.

We proceed down the rope to the Coolidge. I have a small diving light and my underwater camera with me. Things go well until we enter into the ship. I grab on to David's arm like a blind man crossing a busy highway. My other hand has a death grip on my flashlight. I worry that if I lose my flashlight, I'll be lost in the inky darkness forever. I begin chugging through my air like a steam engine.

David gamely keeps pushing me deeper and deeper into the ship. We arrive at the smoking room. David pries the camera from my hand and motions for me to take the regulator out of my mouth and kiss the lady.

David shakes his head and motions for me to do it again. I do it three times while he takes pictures. As we leave the ship, I notice that I have hyperventilated through most of my air. I show David my air gauge and he motions for me to share some of his air -- he has lots. We proceed along like a pair of Siamese twins to the first decompression stop where I switch to the tanks left at the site. After 20 minutes, it is time to swim back.

Back at the dive shop, David is showing other dive masters the pictures he took. They are laughing uproariously.

The pictures show me not kissing the lady. I am, in fact, kissing the unicorn! I confess that I would have kissed the unicorn's back end if it would have got me out of the ship quicker!

by *JEFFREY GROBERMAN*



The lady inside the Coolidge. If you hold the page sideways so that the right side is down, you can look at it as if you are really there!

Dive safety!

As with the recent recalls of Toyota, and various other car manufacturers, there are recalls of scuba equipment. Always be sure to check your equipment before and after every dive. Make sure that you check for equipment recalls every couple of months to make sure that your equipment is not at risk for a catastrophic failure. We prefer divers of the live variety. A list of all recent recalls can be found at this website:

<http://www.cdnn.info/recall/recall.html>

It only takes a minute to check the list and be sure that you don't have defective equipment.

BUY!! SWAP!! SELL!!!

Ikelite Equipment Sale

The following items are all used, but in very good condition:

Ikelite dSLR Underwater Housing # 6808.1 for Nikon D-80 with dual tray and handle

Ikelite Flat Port #5502.41 for Nikon 60mm Macro f/2.8G (or D) ED AF-S lens

Ikelite Dome Port #5503.51 for Nikon 20-80 mm Zoom 1:3.5-5.6 G AF lens

Ikelite gear and clamp for the above zoom lens

Bower 58 mm diopter set +1, +2 and +4 for the above zoom lens

O-rings and port covers for the above

Price for all of the above.....\$ 950.00



Sold Separately

Nikon 60mm Macro f/2.8D ED AF-S lens.....\$300.00

Contact: Jim McKnight (978) 516-0474, mcknight41@verizon.net

From the desk of the Secretary

Hello again everyone! Its been an interesting month this time around with computer failures and half the board on trips. Because I will not be at this month's meetings, here are some announcements:

We do not have a guest speaker this month because of so many of our members going on various trips, we expect Dive Talk to take up the vast majority of the meeting.

We voted at the last meeting to "Put an end to concerns and all discussion over IRS red flags by moving the money into a non-interest account and never bring it up again." This measure was approved by near unanimous vote, some abstained from voting all together.

For the next couple of months our speaker schedule will involve both club members and outsiders. I ask of the Club members planning to speak, that they could send me a short bio and rundown of their presentation that I can put into the Log as a teaser.

I know I have already mentioned it at various meetings, I need to know if you aren't receiving a copy of the Log, that way I can get you on the mailing list. Again, my e-mail address is troufos@student.fsc.edu.

Email me if you want a copy of meeting minutes.

Thank you everyone for your patience and understanding, I am first and foremost a college student and my priorities are shaped by my curriculum. If I do not receive submissions I am forced to do twice the amount of work in the same amount of time resulting in a rush job, and it does not come out to the standards that we would like. I apologize for the seeming lack of content in this month's newsletter, but without submissions, there's no personal touch to the newsletter. I must have submissions by the second weekend of the month, otherwise there is not enough time to fit them in. Please help out, it is your newsletter too!

Safe diving, and an especially safe St. Paddy's

-Tom



Birthdays!!!

Ben Bratko: March 8th

Robbie Michealson: March 17th

Mark Bowers: March 20th

Steve Berube: March 22th

Jason Brailsford: March 25th

Dick Rexford: March 25th

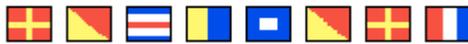
MARCH 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 BOD	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 GM	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

APRIL 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1BOD	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15GM	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

ROCKPORT



Rockport 42°40'N 070°37'W

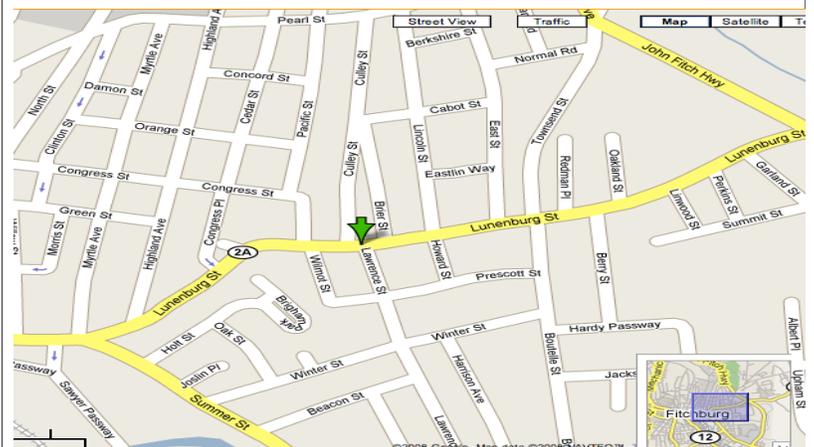
DAY	DATE	HIGH				LOW				Sun		Moon
		AM	hgt	PM	hgt	AM	hgt	PM	hgt	rise	set	moon
Wednesday	10	7:17	8.37 ft	8:01	7.63 ft	12:51	1.73 ft	1:39	0.98 ft	6:03	5:43	
Thursday	11	8:14	8.49 ft	8:51	7.89 ft	1:50	1.57 ft	2:31	0.84 ft	6:01	5:44	
Friday	12	9:03	8.68 ft	9:34	8.20 ft	2:41	1.28 ft	3:15	0.67 ft	6:00	5:45	
Saturday	13	9:46	8.87 ft	10:12	8.30 ft	3:26	0.96 ft	3:54	0.51 ft	5:58	5:46	
Sunday	14	11:25	9.00 ft	11:46	8.78 ft	5:05	0.66 ft	5:28	0.40 ft	6:56	6:47	
Monday	15	12:00 PM	9.05 ft			5:41	0.42 ft	5:59	0.35 ft	6:54	6:49	☉
Tuesday	16	12:17	9.00 ft	12:34	9.02 ft	6:15	0.23 ft	6:29	0.36 ft	6:53	6:50	
Wednesday	17	12:47	9.18 ft	1:08	8.93 ft	6:49	0.11 ft	7:00	0.40 ft	6:51	6:51	
Thursday	18	1:19	9.30 ft	1:43	8.78 ft	7:24	0.04 ft	7:33	0.50 ft	6:49	6:52	
Friday	19	1:52	9.38 ft	2:20	8.60 ft	8:01	0.04 ft	8:10	0.63 ft	6:47	6:53	
Saturday	20	2:30	9.40 ft	3:02	8.38 ft	8:42	0.09 ft	8:51	0.80 ft	6:46	6:55	
Sunday	21	3:12	9.37 ft	3:49	8.16 ft	9:29	0.20 ft	9:38	0.98 ft	6:44	6:56	
Monday	22	4:01	9.29 ft	4:44	7.97 ft	10:21	0.33 ft	10:33	1.15 ft	6:42	6:57	
Tuesday	23	4:57	9.20 ft	5:46	7.90 ft	11:21	0.42 ft	11:35	1.20 ft	6:40	6:58	
Wednesday	24	6:02	9.18 ft	6:53	8.04 ft	12:27 PM	0.38 ft			6:39	6:59	
Thursday	25	7:11	9.30 ft	8:01	8.45 ft	12:44	1.06 ft	1:34	0.16 ft	6:37	7:00	
Friday	26	8:20	9.39 ft	9:03	9.05 ft	1:54	0.66 ft	2:38	-0.21 ft	6:35	7:02	
Saturday	27	9:24	9.96 ft	9:59	9.72 ft	2:59	0.06 ft	3:35	-0.62 ft	6:33	7:03	
Sunday	28	10:22	10.30 ft	10:51	10.33 ft	3:59	-0.59 ft	4:28	-0.96 ft	6:32	7:04	
Monday	29	11:17	10.50 ft	11:40	10.77 ft	4:54	-1.15 ft	5:18	-1.13 ft	6:30	7:05	☉
Tuesday	30	12:08 PM	10.50 ft			5:46	-1.51 ft	6:05	-1.09 ft	6:28	7:06	
Wednesday	31	12:27	10.97 ft	12:58	10.30 ft	6:36	-1.61 ft	6:52	-0.85 ft	6:26	7:07	
Thursday	01	1:13	10.91 ft	1:48	9.91 ft	7:25	-1.45 ft	7:39	-0.42 ft	6:25	7:08	
Friday	02	2:00	10.62 ft	2:37	9.40 ft	8:14	-1.07 ft	8:26	0.11 ft	6:23	7:10	
Saturday	03	2:47	10.15 ft	3:29	8.85 ft	9:05	-0.54 ft	9:16	0.69 ft	6:21	7:11	
Sunday	04	3:38	9.59 ft	4:23	8.32 ft	9:59	0.05 ft	10:09	1.24 ft	6:19	7:12	
Monday	05	4:32	9.03 ft	5:21	7.90 ft	10:55	0.60 ft	11:07	1.67 ft	6:18	7:13	
Tuesday	06	5:31	8.57 ft	6:22	7.65 ft	11:55	1.02 ft			6:16	7:14	
Wednesday	07	6:33	8.27 ft	7:22	7.61 ft	12:10	1.91 ft	12:57	1.25 ft	6:14	7:15	
Thursday	08	7:36	8.17 ft	8:19	7.76 ft	1:14	1.93 ft	1:55	1.30 ft	6:13	7:16	
Friday	09	8:33	8.23 ft	9:08	8.04 ft	2:13	1.75 ft	2:47	1.23 ft	6:11	7:17	
Saturday	10	9:25	8.37 ft	9:52	8.39 ft	3:05	1.44 ft	3:31	1.09 ft	6:09	7:18	
Sunday	11	10:11	8.34 ft	10:31	8.74 ft	3:52	1.08 ft	4:11	0.94 ft	6:08	7:20	
Monday	12	10:52	8.68 ft	11:06	9.07 ft	4:33	0.72 ft	4:47	0.82 ft	6:06	7:21	
Tuesday	13	11:30	8.78 ft	11:39	9.36 ft	5:11	0.40 ft	5:20	0.73 ft	6:04	7:22	
Wednesday	14	12:06 PM	8.82 ft			5:47	0.13 ft	5:54	0.67 ft	6:03	7:23	☉
Thursday	15	12:13	9.58 ft	12:43	8.82 ft	6:23	-0.07 ft	6:28	0.66 ft	6:01	7:24	
Friday	16	12:47	9.75 ft	1:21	8.77 ft	7:00	-0.20 ft	7:06	0.68 ft	5:59	7:25	
Saturday	17	1:24	9.85 ft	2:02	8.68 ft	7:40	-0.25 ft	7:46	0.75 ft	5:58	7:27	
Sunday	18	2:06	9.87 ft	2:47	8.57 ft	8:24	-0.23 ft	8:32	0.85 ft	5:56	7:28	



216 Daniels Street,
Fitchburg, MA 01420-4042
(978) 343-6330

Meeting Time and Location

The United Divers meet once a month on the third Thursday of the month at Slattery's located at 106 Lunenburg Street, Fitchburg, MA. There is ample parking provided in the rear of the building. The meeting will be taking place in the event room near the back right of the restaurant. The meeting will begin at 7:00p.m. with a social hour beginning at 6:30p.m. If you should have any questions please feel free to contact any of the board members.



Dive Log

United Divers of Central Massachusetts
P.O. Box 57
Fitchburg, Ma 01420
www.uniteddivers.org

Email: For newsletter correspondence
please contact Tom at:
troufos@student.fsc.edu



The Purpose of the United Divers of Central Massachusetts

The purpose of the United Divers of Central Massachusetts is to promote the sportsmanship and sport of SCUBA diving by stimulating our members to achieve the highest standards of safety and proficiency in SCUBA diving. To promote friendship and wholesome social activity among its membership. To promote educational programs that will provide fundamental knowledge supported by actual hands-on experience in a variety of areas including: safe diving practices, conservation of marine ecosystems, first aid and handling diving related emergencies, to organize group SCUBA diving trips, educational and social events that will allow our membership to accomplish all of the above.



United Divers of Central Massachusetts
P.O. Box 57
Fitchburg, Ma 01420