



Soundings

*Newsletter of the
South Shore Neptunes*

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACTIVITIES, & REMINDERS

Calendar 2022

Sept/Oct

30 - 2 Boston Sea Rovers
Annual Clinic Doubletree
Hilton Danvers. P.12

October

4 General Meeting 7PM
9 River Run Club Dive
11 Board Mtng 7PM
16 Club Dive
18 Program TBA

22 Whydah Pirate
Museum, club Outing, W.
Yarmouth, MA

23 Club Dive

November

1 General Meeting - 7PM
6 Club Dive
8 Board Meeting 7PM
13 Club Dive
15 Program Joy Marzolf

December

4. Club dive
6 General Meeting 7PM
11 Club dive
13 Board Meeting 7PM
20 Elections

2023

January

1 Sober Up Dive - Pleasure
Bay

- Whydah Pirate Museum Club Outing , Saturday ,Oct. 22. 11. AM See announcement and details on P. 10
- Women Club Members Only Night Out. Details TBA. Watch for a special email in the near future!
- Underwater Rugby hours: **Monday eves 8:30-10:00 PM; Wednesday nites 7:45-9:15 PM** at Westwood HS pool. Joe Gomes is working on a history of underwater rugby and needs photo credits and any sorts of media that could help him illustrate the sport across time. He can be reached at: <jsgomes@gmail.com>
- Club General, Board, and Program night meetings *are now* in person (attend only if you are feeling well) or by Zoom until further notice. The Annual Banquet has been postponed indefinitely. On the other hand, All Club Outdoor Activities listed on the Calendar *remain live with social distancing rules in effect, as per 2022.*
- Newsletter: To help add interesting content to the newsletter, please send me (robisonr25@yahoo.com; or newsletter@southshoreneptunes.org) any first-hand accounts, stories, photos, or both about your exploits as a Neptune for potential publication. Photos or clippings enhance stories, so please include them if you can.

EVENTS & DIVES

Little Pond Excitement. Saturday, September 24, 2022. *Story and photos by Rob Robison*
Given the 17 plus mph wind speed and gusts two days in a row, coupled with the increasingly large swells radiating from Hurricane Fiona off shore, Neptune Rob Foley and I found it prudent to change our Saturday morning

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dive location from Plymouth Long Beach to Little Pond at Morton Park. We arrived a little after 9 AM, found two dive classes, one from United Divers and one from Divers Market, offloading gear from their truck and vehicles. We suited up at a leisurely pace and sloshed into the water before either class was remotely ready to dive, tugged on our fins, deflated our BCs, and headed down in search of the US flag, Chilly Willy, other icons, and more.

We took a heading a bit too much to the SW and reached 21 feet without finding the sweet spot. So we adjusted by turning eastward at an angle slightly inclined toward the beach and found the icons between 17-19 feet of water



looking good. Vis was @20-30' in the 64°water, and everything was in plain sight. Once traditional photos had been taken, we headed westerly following the shoreline contour at about the 15-17' mark. Along the way, we picked up a broken bottle or two, a straw, the removable



insole from a sneaker, and a child's ZEBCO 33 closed-face spinning reel and rod, which was missing the tip. Shortly thereafter, we ran into a waterlogged log, serving as a hideout for a beauty of a 2- 3lb. largemouth bass, which Rob spotted first. It appeared startled by us and swam away at a relatively brisk pace. We slowly meandered along the log. and as I reached the end it, the outline of the bass's face appeared hiding underneath. Thrilled by the

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discovery, I began taking photos upside down, as I moved slowly into position for better head and full length shots. As Rob drew near from behind me, it attempted to move away and eventually took flight. But what a thrill to see such a beautiful elusive



creature on such a delightful sunny Saturday morning.

The return to the beach was uneventful. As we clambered out of the pond, some 45 minutes after our dive began, and up to the park picnic table closest to our cars, the two dive classes, full of aspiring future aquanauts, were just entering the water. In the midst of practicing and demonstrating skills learned to date, I hope they experienced some of the joy Rob and I enjoyed diving into it together in Little Pond, too. It's catching!

After the Storm or The Longest Dive in my Life. Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022. *Story and photos by Rob Robison.*



A week after pounding 10' waves drew South Shore surfers and gawkers to Ocean Bluffs (Marshfield) in droves, the water flattened and calmed, the vis returned to a respectable 10'-15', and Peter and I buddied on a 98-minute dive, my longest ever, off Plymouth Long Beach, in 63° water, at a max depth of 21.'

After suiting up, we scooted out across the shallow water to a point well beyond the swim area demarcation buoys and submerged to a depth of 18'. The submarine landscape we encountered was still showing the effects of the violent storm. There were a few rock crabs, some juvenile black sea bass, some Forbes starfish large and

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small, loads of schooling cunner minnows, a few tautogs, a lone longwrist hermit crab, a number of semi-hard, barely legal lobsters, and more.

Over the course of the dive, Peter snagged three keepers, while I snapped multiple photos of everything, including the comb jellies, which proliferated throughout the dive. Afterwards, we enjoyed some great cheeseburgers and Cokes at KKaties' Burger Bar in downtown Plymouth, a delightful way to end a fun dive with a great dive buddy.



Boat dive Friday, Sept 17. *Story by Tommy Lo. No photos.*
Joe Kilcommons and **Paul Greene** met me at QYC. We loaded up and off we went. Beyond Georges Island the seas seemed a bit rough. We took a pounding heading out. After we went through Hypocrite Channel, we decided we didn't want to go too much farther. We found a ledge that I never had dived before and anchored in about 25 ft of water.

First dive, I caught 1 lobster and Joe bagged 3. Paul got skunked. This seemed like a great lobstering spot so we'll have to try it again.

Second dive was at Tewksbury Rock. Paul sat this one out. We had an incoming tide. Water was cold and vis was about 10 ft. I bagged 3 and Joe bagged 3 lobsters.

We had a following sea for the ride in, which made for a smoother ride. Back at the yacht club, I made a third dive to check on the mooring for a fellow QYC member in the mooring field.

We ended the day with more beers at QYC.

RAGNAR Reach the Beach Team Relay Road Race, September 16 & 17, 2022. *Story and photos by Rob Robison*

Neptunes **Jeannine Willis**, her tenant **Patrick Tyrell**, **John Blackadar**, **Ken Hayes's** daughter **Jesse**, her friend **Mike Kairevich**, and I met at Attitash Mountain Ski Resort in Crawford Notch, NH, a rounds 8 AM to ready the site, which serves as Station 6 in the



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race. Station 6 marks the end of the longest leg—11 miles—of the relay road race. Racers who complete that leg are rewarded with a special Reach the Beach medal to commemorate their efforts.

We were prepped and ready for the racers when the first runner appeared at 10AM, and from that point until around 1:30 PM, the site grew busier by the minute. As usual, there were plenty of teams and team vans decked out in funny costumes and decorations passing out stickers and spreading lots of laughs and joy as they cheered each other on. New this year was a team from Italy that has been making it a goal to run every RAGNAR international road race that exists including those in the U.S. they brought up a whole lot of fun. As their runner

crossed the Station 6 line, we gave him a rousing International soccer cheer of “OLE OLE OLE.” We all had a good laugh from of it, and the Italians, safe to say, were most appreciative to sense a little bit of home from our enthusiastic cheering for them. Why don’t you join us next year and share the fun of supporting the racers and while savoring the incredible scenery of Crawford and Franconia Notches in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.



Saturday, September 3 Boat Dive. *Story and photos by Tommy Lo*

Paul Greene and Sokol Prifti met me at QYC for a boat dive. We met up with Bruce Lane and his brother in Joe Kilcommons’s boat at the Roaring Bulls for a couple of dives. For our first dive, we anchored in about 30ft of water ,got suited up, and rolled in. Visibility was about 10ft, water temp was warm. At first, I went east towards the Graves. Not

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finding much I went north towards the Bulls and found where the lobsters were hiding. I wound up swimming through the Bulls and towards Nahant. I turned around and went back to the Boat. We saw a lot of little fish with a few larger ones. We caught a bunch of lobsters.

Our second dive we tried the north side of the Bulls, and anchored again in about 25 ft of water. My plan was to head south and then east. I went too far south before making my turn east. It was a nice dive and my first time diving the north side of the Bulls. We went back to QYC for some beers afterwards.

Diving Lake Champlain, Burlington, VT, on the General Butler Shipwreck. August, 2022. Story & video clip by Jason Brown.

In early August, I did a nice midweek dive (#30 overall) on the wreck of the General Butler, just outside of Burlington VT. I had a great experience booking with Waterfront Diving (<https://waterfrontdiving.com>), which was steps away from the boat dock. The dive site was at about 35-40 feet to a very silty bottom. During the pre-dive briefing, the divemaster wrote only a few words on the whiteboard, and the largest one was "SILT", written in huge letters. The water was a surprising 70 deg F! My 7mm wetsuit from home was overkill, but it didn't really matter for a single short dive. I made a 2 minute video of footage I captured with my GoPro, before the battery died on me, again. (I have since bought a new battery.)

The General Butler was a canal boat built for the trip through the canal between Lake Champlain and the Hudson River. Its last voyage in 1876 brought it into Burlington harbor during a winter gale. The boat's steering failed, and it crashed onto the harbor's breakwater, ripping a hole in the bow that is still visible! The boat and its cargo of marble blocks slid to the bottom, where it is today. Today, the wreck is part of the Vermont Underwater Historic Preserve, and a plaque marks the historic park at the bow and stern of the wreck.

Overall, Burlington in the Summer is very nice - warm land, and warm water! The General Butler is just outside the harbor, so it is easy-in and easy-out for a quick after-work dive. I'm proud to say that I kept my buoyancy under control and my fins out of the silt, and everyone had nice visibility for such a shallow site. One more note about Lake Champlain: the lake is filled with zebra mussels, so be sure to disinfect your gear before going into another freshwater site.

For more Information on the wreck, go to: <https://www.lcmm.org/archaeology/vermont-underwater-historic-preserves/sailing-canal-boat-general-butler/>

Jason Brown

and the Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpWuP0cMK3k>



Attack of the Aggressive Seals. Friday, July 1, 2022. *Story by Todd Alger*

Tommy Lo, Paul Greene, Doug Eaton, and I decided to go diving off Tommy's boat, Lo Man. Tommy drove the boat out to Graves Light, where we anchored and geared up for a lobster dive. I jumped in and began my dive, hunting for lobster. Shortly into the dive, I was doing well with 3 bugs in the bag and looking for more. I began swimming up a ledge and at around 20 feet deep, I saw a large form above me swim down. I was able to see that it was a large seal. It swam down the ledge and around me and it was very close and I got a great look at it. For me, this was very unusual but it had happened to me before. I looked around for a few seconds but the seal had disappeared and I believed that would be the last I would see of him, as that had been my previous experience.

So I began lobstering again and was looking in the cracks. Suddenly, I felt a tremendous tug on my fins, which was very startling. I looked down and saw the seal biting one of my fins and tugging on it. I did not like this at all and shook him off my fins. At that point the seal swam up to me and put his head near mine and looked at me right in the eyes. His expression was just like my dog when he wants to be petted. To describe the seal, he was very large, probably 8 feet long, and his head was very large like a big dog. His coloring was spotted and seemed white with spots on belly side and darker on his back side.

After we stared at each other for a little while, the seal swam off. However, his disappearance was very short lived, as he almost immediately came back and attempted to bite my fins again. This time I was paying attention and saw him coming and kicked my fins so that he could not bite them. At that instant, he flipped over on his back, opened his mouth, and gave me a great look at his open mouth and all his teeth (Photo by Zach Whalen, 2018). He then swam away but never really out of site. It kept coming back to try to bite my fins.



Once again, I saw him swim away, drop into a canyon, and just lay there for a minute in what seemed like a hiding place, but I could see him at the very edge of visibility. While all this was going on, I attempted to swim back in the direction of the boat and maybe get away from him. Getting away from him

did not work and I decided to surface. The seal did not follow me to the surface and did not bother once I was on the surface. I swam back to the boat and Tommy was getting ready to jump in. He asked why I was back so early and I told him. Once I was back on the boat, Tommy jumped in. He went the opposite way from where the seal was.

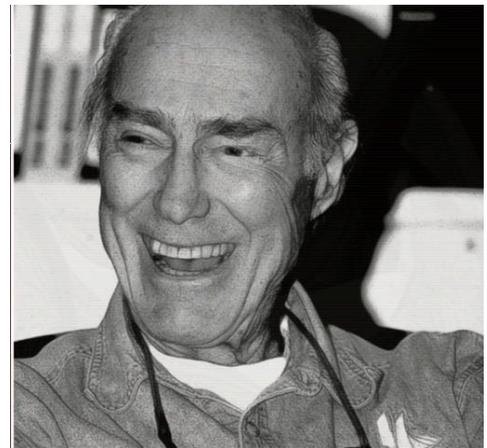
On the boat, I could see bubbles in the vicinity of where I thought the seal was. Sure enough, the person creating those bubbles surfaced shortly and swam back to the boat. It was Paul Greene, and as soon as he got to the boat he asked, "Did you see the seals?"

His story was similar but not the same as mine. He, too, was lobstering, when out of nowhere, he felt a big collision. The big seal had rammed him. Paul tried to continue with his dive but the seal also continued to ram him. Then, a second seal joined in and two were ramming him. After discussion, we thought that after I left, the one that was harassing me joined his seal friend and harassed Paul. Some of the hits were painful. The last straw for Paul was when he felt a squeeze on the calf of his leg. He is not sure if the seal put his mouth on his calf or used some other part of his body to put the pressure there but at that point Paul decided enough was enough and surfaced. He had the same surface experience as me in that there was no more harassment on the surface. That is our story of the aggressive seals at Graves Light.

PARTING THOUGHT

The Boston Sea Rovers 68th Annual Clinic begins this Friday September 30 and ends on Sunday October 2. George Buckley, A server and probably one of the best cheerleaders marine science has ever had, shared this brief conversation he held with legendary underwater filmmaker, Stan Waterman (*Blue Water, White Death*). George recounted his recent conversation with Stan this way:

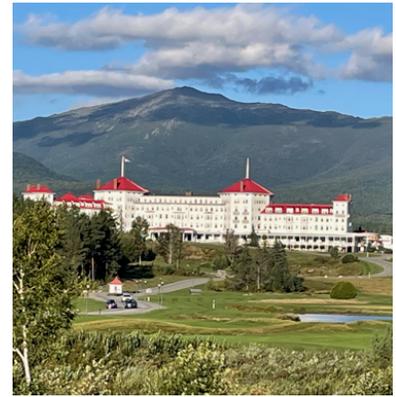
" I just had a wonderful chat with our beloved Stan Waterman, who at 99 years does not get out very much but is hale of spirit if not of eyesight and hearing! We chatted about Sea Rovers of old, the adventures and misadventures at John Hancock Hall, the Castle, the Barge and the Fairmont and how BSR was the ONLY dive club that he joined. He fondly remembered how honored he was to get 'dunked', the wonderful SeaRover audiences, ..."

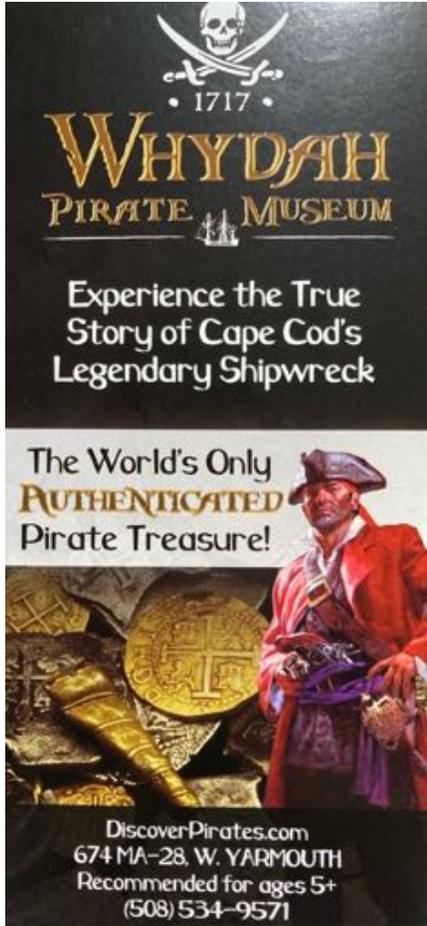


Stan still has "it" after all these years! Check out this wonderful biographical story about Stan: <https://www.tdisdi.com/diving-pioneers-and-innovators/stan-waterman/>

PARTING SHOTS

RAGNAR Photo Snippets





**SSN Whydah Pirate
Museum
Club Outing**

Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022

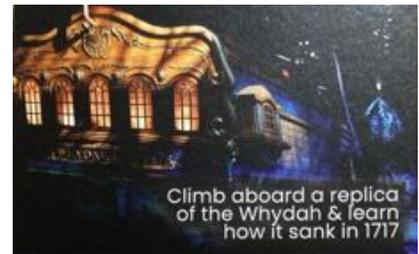
Join us as we see the **world's only authenticated Pirate Treasure!**

*Experience the true story of Cape Cod's shipwreck! We are returning to the museum by popular demand **Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022.** We will meet in the museum parking lot at **11AM.***

Cost: Adults 16 yrs. + up \$17.00 each; Children 5 - 15 yrs. \$13.00 each.

Sign up or call John Blackadar at 781-826-2505-No obligation - We need a head count.

*We were fortunate to have **Barry Clifford**, the wreck discoverer, join us last time and give us his personal insights on its discovery. With luck he may join us again this time.*



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Commanded by the pirate Sam Bellamy, the Whydah wrecked off the coast of Wellfleet in 1717 in one of the worst storms to strike the eastern seaboard, taking with her the treasure of fifty plundered ships. Bellamy's loss was history's gain, however, as the contents of his flagship represent a unique look into the lives of pirates, and an unprecedented sampling of treasures from the world of the 18th century. Experience the Whydah Pirate Museum, Cape Cod's must-see museum, featuring real pistols, cannons, artifacts, treasures, and more from the shipwreck Whydah!



📍 Visit us on Facebook @DiscoverPirates
📷 Follow the Dive on Instagram @ExpeditionWhydah

Special Presentation by Eric Takakjian

Hosted by Northshore Frogmen's Dive Club

October 12th 2022

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for an informal evening with one of the premier divers and shipwreck historians.

All are welcome to this event.

Where: Onion Town Grill function room
175 Water St, Danvers, Massachusetts

When: 7pm (after 6pm social hour)

What: Presentation, Raffle, Book Signing
(Bring book; [available from Amazon](#))

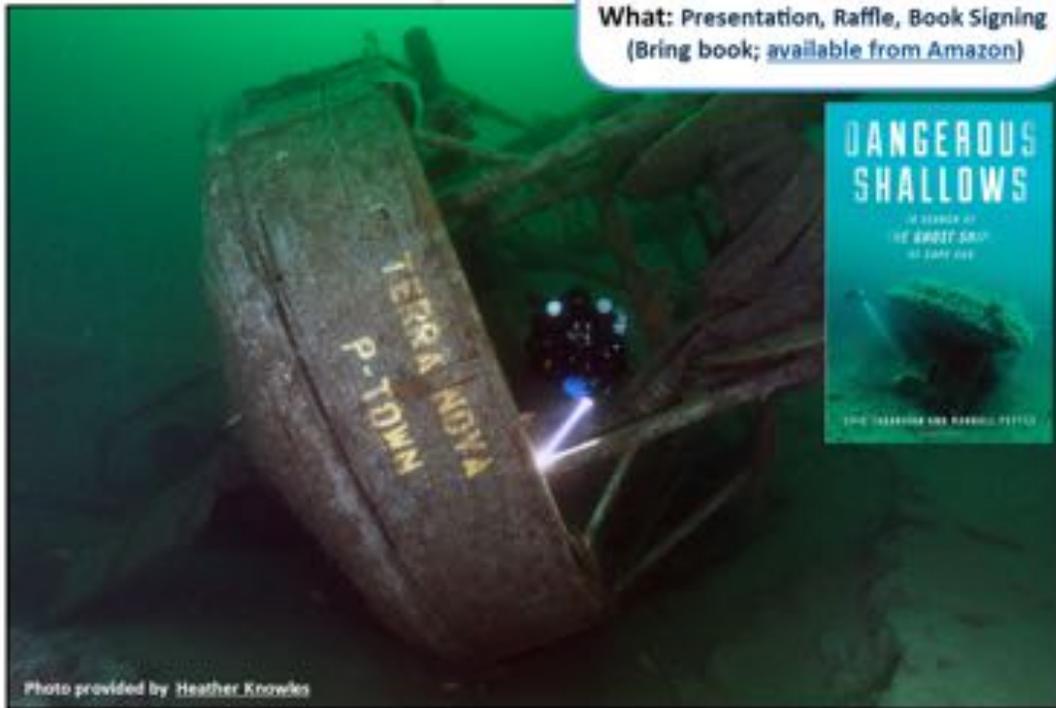


Photo provided by Heather Knowles

Captain Eric has conducted extensive historical research on New England shipwrecks. Since 1985 captain Eric and his team have conducted expeditions resulting in the location and exploration over 70 previously undiscovered shipwrecks in the waters around New England and outer continental shelf waters. A diver since 1972 and an avid shipwreck diver since 1975. Captain Eric has been a fellow of the Explorers Club since 1997, a member of the Steamship Historical Society, and is an associate member of the Boston Sea Rovers.



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