



November 2008

WOW! Where did it go? 2008 came and is almost gone. When I look back on what has been our busiest year to date we managed to pack the year with several great expeditions and of course, a rigorous training schedule covering all levels of diver and instructor courses. Now that the snow has started to blow, it's once again time to look forward to 2009 and bring you up to date on what's coming your way.

Diving in the 1000 Islands

At the east end of Lake Ontario the waters continue to flow eastward into the St. Lawrence River which eventually winds its way out to the North Atlantic Ocean. There is a picturesque area bordered on the north by Rockport and Brockville, Ontario and on the south by Alexandria Bay, NY. As the name suggests there are numerous islands some of which are adorned with castles. I really don't know who was charged with doing the island count, but it wouldn't surprise me that there are at least 1000! Although these islands certainly add to the natural beauty of the area, they have presented major navigational obstacles over the years.

As the saying goes, some see misfortune while others see opportunity! The area is now littered with all kinds of shipwrecks ranging from wooden schooners to modern freighters. Depths range from a few feet to 240'. To complete the divers dream, the water commonly reaches mid 70's in July and August and 100' visibility is the norm. Is it any wonder the area is often referred to as the Caribbean North! How do you top that?

The answer is to add more shipwrecks of course! If things go as planned the *HMCS Terra Nova*, a retired 372' Canadian submarine destroyer will be scuttled within recreational depths in late summer or early fall 2009. Its final resting place will be on the Canadian side of the river between Brockville and Rockport.

As many of you know, this is our preferred area for technical training since the diverse conditions cater to all level of training and weather is very rarely an issue. We'll keep you posted on the developments of the next great dive site in the 1000 Island area!

Presque Isle – Lake Huron

Like most of the Great Lakes, Huron has claimed more than its share of ship wrecks. The Great Lakes are the final resting place of literally thousands of wrecks. The cold fresh water has preserved many of them to a level divers feel as though they have entered a time capsule when visiting them.



The waters near Presque Isle, Michigan are home to several particularly well preserved wrecks. The depth is in the 150 – 200 foot range and is ideally suited for the entry level Trimix diver.

Some of the more notable wrecks in this area are the John J. Audubon, Cornelia B. Windiate's, Florida, Typo and Norman. You may want to Google these names and see some of the locations we'll be visiting July 6-11, 2009. The trip is limited to just five divers so contact tyler@advancedexpeditions.com if you are interested.

Empress of Ireland 2009

There are few dives in the world that offer what the Empress of Ireland does. Where else can you find an ocean liner largely intact and so rich with history?

The Empress *can* be a challenging dive but it *will* be a very rewarding dive. Our trips offer 6 or 7 days of diving and the comment I often hear at the end of the week is "There's so much more I want to see." Perhaps this one of the reasons so many divers have returned with us year after year.



Over the years we have developed our trips to encompass much more than diving, although that still remains the primary focus. Safety is never compromised, corners are never cut and your enjoyment from the time you arrive until the time you leave is our goal. Take a look at our website, www.advancedexpeditions.com/testimonials and read what other divers who have experienced trips to the Empress with us have to say.



Empress Engine Room Telegraph. Photo by Tyler Bradford

This year we will again begin our expeditions to the Empress of Ireland in July, and will conclude our season in early September. We consistently run more trips to the Empress than any other operator. During the past several years these expeditions sell out early so if you are interested drop us a line and get ready for a fantastic experience!



Gunilda / Judge Hart Expedition

When we finished up in September on the Empress we once again made our way to Lake Superior to dive the Gunilda and Judge Hart in northern Lake Superior. Talk about a road trip! I've been on boats that were floating that aren't in as good a shape as these two wreck sites! Check out a few pictures of these dives on the gallery pages of our website, www.advancedexpeditions.com/gallery.



Gunilda – Clock on top of fireplace



Gunilda Bow

We enjoyed excellent visibility and it appears that we were the only divers to visit the Gunilda in the 2008 season.

Although this trip is logistically challenging, once the Gunilda comes into view there's no doubt it's worth the effort of getting here. At a depth between 250 and 270 feet Trimix is not an option. There is no ambient light but doing our first deco stop at 170 feet I could still see the other dive team on the deck of the Gunilda. Simply outstanding and what a rare opportunity!

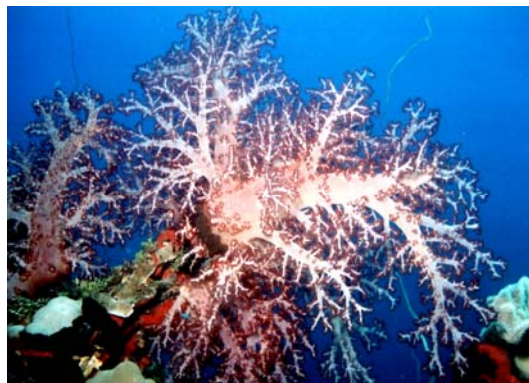
We will be running two trips to these sites in the 2009 season. September 13-17 and September 19-23. Due to the depth of these sites divers must be advanced trimix certified and have recent deep cold water experience. These trips are limited to five divers so if you plan on diving it with a couple dive buddies contact us early. If you're a serious wreck diver, the Gunilda should be on the top of your "to do" list.

Truk Lagoon / Palau 2010 – Sold Out

It seems like 2010 is a long way off but when you're planning to dive the wreck diving capital of the world aboard the vessel that has been voted the most luxurious liveaboard in the world, you need to be looking ahead. If you like diving on wrecks in 86-90 degree water with a couple hundred feet of visibility surrounded by more marine life than you can dream about, this trip may be just what you've been looking for. This trip can be enjoyed by both recreational and technical divers.



Deck Gun Shell Casings – Truk Lagoon



Soft Coral – Palau

Our 2010 trip is now sold out but we will be adding a 2011 date in the near future. This is a three week expedition and can be broken into segments allowing those who can't get away for the whole trip, the opportunity to enjoy either Truk Lagoon or Palau. As in the past this trip begins and finishes in Los Angeles.

Those who joined our previous Truk Lagoon / Palau trip can attest to the fact that this really is a trip of a lifetime. If you are interested in seeing the “wreck diving capital of the world” and diving some of the best walls in the world contact us. There is already a waiting list for 2011 so don't put off making this decision too long or you'll miss the boat... literally! You can contact me at tyler@advancedexpeditions.com to reserve a spot.

How Do I Get Started?

This was probably one of the most commonly asked questions at Beneath the Sea from divers who wanted to get involved with technical diving. The other question was “What is technical diving and why would I want to get involved with it?” Let me take a shot at trying to answer both of these questions.

Technical diving certainly means different things to different people and there are several definitions floating around about what it should or should not include. Generally speaking technical diving falls outside the recreational diving limits in one or more areas. It may include one or more of the following, overhead environments such as wrecks or caves, extended bottom times, depths beyond 130', multiple gas mixtures and mandatory decompression obligations. See, that wasn't so hard. The really tough question is why anyone would want to do it?

For many divers entering into technical diving, their primary goal is to learn additional theory and techniques that will help them increase their own safety. Others may want to visit wrecks within recreational depth limits but stay longer so they can finally see what they've been missing. Other groups want the adventure of visiting dive sites that they



simply were not trained to visit previously. Most divers have lots of questions and are often left confused or worse, misguided after looking to the internet for guidance.

Perhaps the easiest way to get started is do a little soul searching and ask yourself why you want to embark on this discipline. Once you know “why” the “how” always gets easier.

The most important step actually takes places before you ever get to the waters edge. You need to find a good instructor that you can connect well with. The time you spend doing your homework in this area will pay dividends in the future. Ask around and talk to divers who have been trained by the instructor you are considering and find out what they liked and didn't like. Was the course thorough and well laid out? Did the instructor communicate with the student on a level that maximized the learning curve but didn't overwhelm the student? At the end of the course did the student earn the certification or did they leave feeling it was gifted to them? This shouldn't happen at any level but it can have grave consequences at the technical level.

A good way to get your feet wet is to sign up for an “Intro to Tech Course”. The focus of this course is to show you the advantages of technical diving, introduce you to basic techniques and lay out the possibilities in front of you. Through this course you are able to test the waters without making a significant financial commitment. If you feel like this is something you would like to discuss drop me a line and I would be pleased to go over this with you.

Well I think my computer is about to run out of ink so I better sign off for now.

Safe Diving!

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