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15 December 2009

FOUNDED
DARTMOUTH N.S.
1982

FOUNDING MEMBERS

André Desrochers
Leo Goneau
Terry Havlik
Sam Semple
Michael Walsh
First President:
Stanley F. Watts

DIPPERS DIGEST #75/09

Petty Officer 2nd Class James Leith
Fleet Diving Unit(Atlantic)
P.O. Box 99000 Stn Forces
Halifax NS B3K 5X5

November 12, 2009

Dear James:

We are proud, as a fraternal organization of Canadian Naval Divers, to hear of your being awarded the Star of Courage for your act of personal bravery in 2006, whilst serving your country in the Pashmul Region of Afghanistan.

It is inherent in all Naval trained Divers to accomplish their task, at times under difficult conditions, however we always seek the best way to complete our objectives.

You are commended for your conspicuous courage, to personally continue, and succeed, in dismantling the second IED, thereby re-opening the route for the Coalition Forces. All this after the initial blast had destroyed the vehicle in which you were travelling.

We wish you continued success with your future endeavours in the Diving Branch of the Canadian Navy.

Cc: Commanding Officer FDU(A)

WISHING YOU A

Merry Christmas

AND A

Happy New Year

Norman Herd
Norm Herd, President
Canadian Naval Divers Association
2783 Alps Road, RR1
Ayr ON NOB 1E0
1-519-632-8783





The Divers in the accompanying 2009 Reunion official photograph, taken on the FDU(P) Jetty at the Friday, 11 September Meet & Greet were:

Rear row group from left to right - Ken Whitney, John 'Dinger' Bell, Bruce Robinson, Ken Brown, Gord Benjamin, Bob Ganner, Don Hope, George Cox, Glynn Munro, Darryl Skaalrud, Joe Paquin, Ray Smith, Milt Skaalrud, Ian Buckingham, Tom Essery, Norm Burt, Art Beaumont, George Robinson, Charles Greengrass & Doug Hinchliffe.

Front row group from left to right - Wayne Wright, Andy Oullette, Don Deane, Roy Busby, Tim Joys, Ernie Maddams, Chuck Rolfe, Andy Desrochers, Norm Herd, Mark Draibye, Al McRae, Robert 'Red' Larsen, Scott Schooner, Moe Coulombe, Pete Cahill, Jim Balmforth & Ron Stone.

2009 CNDA VICTORIA BC REUNION

Although the Reunion didn't officially start until Friday, 11 September, upon our arrival at Pauls Motor Inn on the afternoon of Thursday, Moe Coulombe already had the CNDA Western Chapter hospitality suite open and running - a great start to the festivities! Whomever had arrived early then gathered in the Courtyard to see their long time buddies, spin some yarns and partake of the refreshments until the early hours of the morning.

The Directors of the Association, Norm Herd – National Chairman, Moe Coulombe – Western, Chuck Rolfe – Ottawa & National Sec/Treas, and Andy Desrochers – Eastern Chapter convened at 0830 hrs in the Courtyard on 11 September to conduct the CNDA business on your behalf. Additionally, there were eight CNDA members sitting in to hear the weighty matters taking place. Some noteworthy discussions/decisions were:

- The 2012 Reunion will take place in September in the Halifax/Dartmouth area. Eastern Chapter wants to hold an informal gathering, open to all, for the 100th Anniversary of the Navy in 2010. Future Reunions will occur every three years, rotating between the West & East Coasts only.
- Membership authorization and certification will now be completed by each Chapter individually.
- The website navydiver.ca is now authorized, with Tim Flath as the webmaster. The DIPPERS DIGEST to be included therein.
- Consideration of a questionnaire concerning the rates of cancer/joint replacement in Navy Divers to be looked into.

As most of the people had arrived by Noon, everyone repaired to the Mess at FDU(P) to enjoy the convivial meeting of like (and some unlike) minds, enjoy a glass or two of bubbly, purchase a few articles for sale and to partake of the many delicious foods prepared for our consumption. Many people were heard complimenting the scrumptious clam chowder! Later in the afternoon, we all traipsed down to the Jetty to have our official Reunion photograph taken, one with only the Divers, followed by one with everyone who was present at the Meet & Greet. Of course there were many more photographs taken by various individuals, many of which subsequently can be seen on the navydiver.ca website. In the early evening, many people returned to the Motel Courtyard to continue reminiscing of their past deeds in the Branch, and to eventually get their heads down for the night.

On Saturday morning, there were two trips available from FDU(P) Jetty for a tour of the Harbour and Dockyard, which proved to be a very nice sunny event for all who partook of same. In the afternoon, others took a walk around the harbour down by the Legislative Buildings to renew their memories of the good times spent in Victoria as young men & women. Those who conducted the Reunion are to be commended for arranging to make use of the Legion's facilities for the Dinner/Dance, as it provided just the right atmosphere for all of us, and together with the marvellous, tasty meal topped it all off just right in everyone's estimation. Tripping the light fantastic was on the menu for the rest of the evening, followed by another hospitality suite laid on by the Western Chapter in the Courtyard. One would think everyone would be partied out by now, but the good times rolled on again into the wee hours of the morning. Sunday was a day of reflection, and a brunch laid on in the Legion; once again, it was awesome. Then, farewells all around for those departing for their homes, or the Ferry over to the Lower Mainland. Moe, that was a good one!!!

There were 96 people attending the 2009 Reunion, whose names are as follows:

Balmforth, James & Margaret
 Bell, John 'Dinger'
 Benjamin, Gord & Pamela
 Brand, Ross & Kirsten
 Brown, Ken & Judy
 Buckingham, Ian & Carolina
 Burt, Norm & Judy
 Busby, Roy
 Cahill, Pete
 Clark, Mrs Greg
 Coulombe, Moe
 Cox, George & Linda
 Deane, Don & Marilyn
 Desrochers, Andy & Marie
 DeJong, John & Pat
 Draibye, Mark & Joan
 Essery, Tom & Linda
 Flath, Tim & Liz
 Fox, Roy & Janice
 Ganner, Bob & Terry
 Greengrass, Charles
 Herd, Norm & Sandra Derby
 Hinchliffe, Doug & Angie
 Hope, Don
 Joys, Tim, Robicheau & Ruth
 Larsen, Robert 'Red' & Emma Greco
 Lodge, Joe

Maddams, Ernie & Rona Weir
 McRae, Allan
 Munro, Glynn & Judy
 Neuman, Anne Marie & Onyett M.
 Neuman, Michael & Lesley
 Ouellette, Andy & Sharon
 Palmer, Ward
 Paquin, Joe & Joyce
 Pittman, Lorne & Carol
 Robinson, Bruce & Anne
 Robinson, George
 Rolfe, Chuck & Huguette Collins
 Salter, Fred & Jude
 Skaalrud, Darryl & Susan
 Skaalrud, Milton & Margit
 Smith, Ray & Mona
 Stone, Ron & Gay
 Van Ek, Dirk I Carol
 Watts, Fred & Rachel
 Whitney, Ken & Patrick
 Whitney, Kevin & Jane
 Whittle, Daniel
 Wright, Wayne & Joyce
 Plus 2 non-members
 (names not listed)



EDITOR

With this edition, I have decided that it is time to complete my career as the Editor, and have the Newsletter be included as a file on the internet website navydiver.ca to which all members can read at their leisure. During my time in the Regular Force Navy(1951 to 1975)and Naval Reserves(1976 to 1989), I have seen information journals proceed from Gestetner, to typewriter, to Xeroxing and now to computers – lord knows what is coming down the line in the future!

I wish to acknowledge all those who contributed to making the DIPPERS DIGEST what it is today, the best information document available to our members, which keeps them informed of their friends, what is happening within our Fraternal organization, and news of what is occurring in the Diving Units. Specifically, you should join with me in giving accolades to Alan Sagar, who initially started it all off with a few Issues of the DIPPERS DIGEST, followed by Stanley 'Freddy' Watts(the first CNDA President), who published a couple more, then myself as Editor from 1990 to 2000 and 2007 to 2009. George Cox prepared and published it from 2000 to 2007, after which Ross Brand took it on for an edition in 2007 – you all contributed enormously.

We now pass the torch along to Tim Flath, who is all things to all people when it comes to being the webmaster of our Association's communication media. Tim is willing to prepare a file within the internet site to include the information which comes out in the DIPPERS DIGEST. Of course, the information being shown is only as good as the input which YOU pass along to him, therefore it behoves all of us to ensure he is presented with all those stories you hold in your head about your time in the RCN, CAF and the Diving Branch. They can be as long, or as short, as you wish, but you have to inform Tim(or continue sending it to me, and I will prepare them to present to

Tim)for inclusion in the Newsletter. I'm looking forward, as do all of you, to reading and hearing of the tales(escapades?) of our buddies in the Branch.

SOCIAL

Tom Sawyer in Oakville, Ontario writes that he had promised to send in his story for publication, and has finally got around to putting pen to paper. Although most of the published tales have been from Clearance Divers, his is that of a Ships Diver, even though many of his dives were with the old-timers, such as: Mel Melanson, Dave Pilot, Ike Eisner, Stan Stephenson, et al.

Tom started his Military Career in the RCAF on 27 June 1941 after he had altered his Birth Certificate by changing his date of Birth, thereby becoming 18 years of age overnight! He says that two weeks after signing on, I was manning a machine gun out in Gander, Newfoundland. I was subsequently posted to the RCAF STATION GREENWOOD in Nova Scotia(36 Operational Training Unit)as one of the first group of Airmen to go there in January of 1942(in later years, I was a guest of honour at a ceremony to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Base opening!). It was in Greenwood that I failed my Aircrew Medical, so I applied to the Navy for transfer to the RCNVR, and was accepted. In the transfer of my Service Documents, some sharp eyed administrator noticed that my Birth Certificate had been changed, and I was called up to explain the situation. Having admitted the change, and that I was in reality underage, I was patted on the head, booted in the arse, and told to come back when I was old enough. Not being very happy with that turn of events, I then joined the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps in Verdun, Quebec until I was able to rejoin the RCNVR, staying with them until 1947. Upon release in 1947, I joined the Naval Reserve Division at HMCS DONNACONA in Montreal and, upon commencement of the Korean War, I was asked if I would ship out as an Electrician, since I had successfully obtained my Journeyman's Ticket in that trade. I was drafted to HMCS SIOUX for its time in Korean waters, classified as an RCN(R) Rating, then turned Regular Force RCN. I stayed in until 1972 and, upon release, I joined the Active Reserve at HMCS DISCOVERY in Vancouver, British Columbia – for a total of 50 years Service Time.

The ships I served aboard were: HMCS NEW WATERFORD, HMCS LA HULLOISE, HMCS WARRIOR(Aircraft Carrier Commissioning Crew), HMCS PRESTONIAN, HMCS SIOUX, HMCS NOOTKA, and HMCS ASSINIBOINE. There were also periods of time I served with the Naval Overseer's(now called TSD's – Technical Service Detachments)at Contractor's Shipyards for new construction and/or refits for Government Quality Assurance.

My diving career, and some odd jobs, consisted of a Royal Navy Shallow Diving Course, taken in Hong Kong using Salvus and Clammy(ANS & Sladden Suit), and I was quite happy diving at the East Coast Unit when back in Canada. However, the Diving Officer, Mike Lafontaine finally said he had no record of my diving qualifications, so I took all my Hong Kong documents and presented them to him. "Not good enough" says he, and I had to do the CD(S) Course from the barge at NAD(Naval Armament Depot) in Dartmouth, NS; we had to break the ice before entering the water! Of the 14 Trainees who started the Course, only 4 successfully completed it(Editor: back then that was par for the course). Since that time I have completed many Requal's, plus a "Free Divers" Course(Royal Navy)in HMS SAFEGUARD while standing by for a Submarine in Rosyth, Scotland. My Submarine service was in HMS/M ANDREW in Singapore, HMS/M ALCIDE in Scotland, HMS/M ANEAS mainly England & South Africa, and Commissioning Canada's HMCS OJIBWA.

Some of the more interesting jobs were changing the Port screw on HMS PROQUAL, and patching a leak to the sea from a fuel tank on HMS ANDREW in Singapore. For the latter, I had no diving suit, so had to use a "Boiler suit" because the incoming tide was bringing in millions of stinging jellyfish! While serving on YMT 8 with Leo Goneau, Dave Pilot, Ike Eisner, Art Rowse, et al, we searched Louisbourg Harbour up in Cape Breton for French wrecks, finding the ship "La Prudent" there. Whilst aboard HMCS NOOTKA, a 21 Ft Mk VII torpedo was recovered by the Dive Team. On a cold December dive in Halifax Harbour, we also had to clear a large nylon hawser that had become wrapped around the propeller of HMCS ASSINIBOINE. My last dive was a couple of years ago(I was 80 years young)to search for an RCN Avenger aircraft that landed on the ice of Lake Erie just outside of Port Stanley when its engine stopped in the late 1950's. It eventually sank due to melting ice, lying undisturbed on the bottom

all these years, until a Discovery Channel TV film crew wanted to make a documentary program about it. Tom informs us that he holds 8 of his Diving Log Books, which he will donate to us if we wish them.

Ron Stone and his wonderful mate, Grace are now living in retirement in Victoria BC and lets us know that he is still hanging around – not yet ready to leave this world, as there is so much they still have to do. As an - E Rating, Ron pretty well stuck to the West Coast after joining up at HMCS NONSUCH in Edmonton, Alberta, thence being drafted to HMCS NADEN. He served aboard HMCS ONTARIO, HMCS ROCKCLIFFE, HMCS ANTIGONISH, HMCS CEDARWOOD and on Diving Tender 10 after qualifying as a Diver on 1 July 1952. Ron completed his 5 year hitch(that was how long a person signed up for at that time)from June 1948 to August 1953, and was then discharged honourably from the Royal Canadian Navy as an LSSM1.

Star of Courage:- As is often the case, people are called upon to do heroic deeds in cases of life threatening events, but do not think they have done anything out of the ordinary at the time. Such is what occurred when Petty Officer Clearance Diver Jim Leith experienced a bone-rattling explosion under the Bison Armoured Vehicle he was riding in, with his mates, on a dusty road of the Pashmul District in an Afghanistan mountain range. It was on September 26, 2006 when the IED blew them 9 metres in the air, and when he landed Jim was very worried about his number two operator, who was then Medevaced back to the Hospital at Kandahar airfield with a shattered leg. However, that worry was put aside since another double-stacked IED was located nearby which had to be dismantled. Jim said “Somebody’s got to do it”, and proceeded to do so, even though his sophisticated dismantling equipment had been destroyed, and after he had his bell rung just moments before. Being EOD qualified, he had been taught how to make do with whatever could be found at hand, so he approached the IED with only his bayonet as a tool, carefully removed the dirt and de-armed it. Jim returned to his home Base at FDU(A) in 2007 without second thought given to his actions of that day. In January of 2009 he was notified by the Admiral’s officials that he was to report to Ottawa in June 2009 to be awarded Canada’s Star of Courage by the Governor General for his actions of September 2006. Jim was quick to shrug off the accolades, pointing instead to all the life-threatening work carried out by his fellow Coalition Forces. A very modest fellow – with HERO painted all over him!!

George and Linda Cox currently living in that beautiful little town of Parksville, a short way up-island from Victoria BC, says that he found it quite enjoyable to produce the DIPPERS DIGEST over the 7 year term he had it for, albeit very limiting for their travel plans. George joined the Canadian Navy in March 1974, becoming a Clearance Diver in May 1977, thereafter spending 23 years in the Diving Branch. He served at CFB TORONTO at CEDD & EDU, and aboard HMCS SASKATCHEWAN, HMCS COWICHAN & HMCS THUNDER, as well as at FDU(A), FDU(P), YDT’S 9 & 11 and SOOKE, all of which he has many great memories. After his 26 years Navy time, George retired as a CPO1 Clearance Diver and went off to enjoy life on Civvie street. He volunteers in his community with Emergency Social Services, Search & Rescue, Critical Incident team and, most importantly, is his Church’s Custodian. Of course, we must mention their travels(which I bet Linda likes best of all – Editor), which includes enjoying the warm, dry air found down in California and Arizona.

OBITUARY

FARRELL, Colin — 79, Dartmouth.

— 79, Dartmouth. It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Colin on December 12, 2009. Born in Port aux Basques, N.L., he was a son of the late William and Minnie (Skeard) Farrell. He was a proud member of the Royal Canadian Navy, beginning his career in 1949 as a diver with the H.M.C.S. Granby. He was a decorated veteran of the Korean Conflict. During his time in the navy, he was posted to various ships. He retired from his naval career in 1976 with 27 years of service. He continued working after his discharge on boats sailing up north with Dome Petroleum. He was a long-time member of Royal Canadian Legion Somme Branch 31. He was also a strong advocate for helping seniors and friends in need. He is survived by his wife, the former Lucille Desroches; daughters, Colleen (Allan), Michele, Judy (Yves), Joyce (Brian), Debbie (John); son, Colin Jr. (Lisa); 15 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He is also survived by brother, Calvin; sisters, Nina, Bernice and Ruby. He was predeceased by daughter, Joanne; brothers, Leonard, Lorne and sisters, Joyce and twin, Emma. He will also be sadly missed by his friends at the Legion. Visiting will be 2-4 and 7-9 p.m., Wednesday in Dartmouth Funeral Home, 29 Queen St. Memorial service will be 2 p.m., Thursday in the Royal Canadian Legion Somme Branch 31, King Street, Dartmouth. Burial will be at a later date. Family flowers only by request. In lieu, please consider a donation to The Salvation Army.

Another of our erstwhile Members of World War Two Divers, George A. Thompson passed away on 29 July 2009 at his home in Port Credit, Ontario. As well as being a Naval Diver, he was also a Naval Gunner in D.E.M.S.(Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships) aboard Merchant Ships sailing in Convoys as some of his WWII duties with the Royal Canadian Navy. George was very proud to be included as a member of those two important groups who contributed mightily to the War effort, was well known as "Diver" Thompson, and was a "TRUE SAILOR" as his wife Marjorie informed us. George was discharged on 29 November 1945, after the cessation of hostilities, and thereafter was a member of the Naval Reserves until retiring from them on 2 December 1972

Our Member, Stan Meddings passed away in April 2009 in Washago, Ontario. He was a Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Canadian Navy all during the conflict of World War Two, serving basically on the East Coast out of the Port of Halifax NS. Stan was one of those few who qualified as DV's using Standard Gear in July 1940, over his career on the East Coast, invariably with Lt. Baker and his Forty Thieves. He retired in November 1945 and returned to his home in Ontario. It is noteworthy that the late Mel Melanson, the 3rd National President of our Association, had accepted Stan as one of our Members way back when only the Eastern group of Divers constituted CNDA!

SOCIAL

Our Member, Norm Prowse joined the Royal Canadian Navy as an 18 year old in March 1948, becoming a Clearance Diving Officer in 1960. He served aboard ships HMCS MAGNIFICENT, HMCS HURON, HMCS NEW LISKEARD, HMCS OUTREMONT, HMCS LAUZON, HMCS SWANSEA, HMCS GRANBY, HMCS CAPE SCOTT and with the Royal Navy, HMS VOLAGE & HMS STARLING. Norm also served at various Bases during his 26 years in the RCN, and has the CD, UN and Korean Medals. While serving at CFS SHELBURNE, they were awarded the United States Presidential Citation for the joint US/Canada operations being conducted there. Upon retirement in September 1974, Norm spent 10 years with a position in Michelin, Canada, followed by 10 years as the Master of the ship MV WILLIAM E ERNST. He and his lovely wife, Josephine took up their retirement residence in Halifax NS when he figured it was time to cease working and enjoy life to its fullest, after 47 years of hard work.

Bob Ganner joined the Royal Canadian Navy in 1961 as an -E Rating on the West Coast. He was in the Weapons Underwater Trade thereafter, until qualifying as a Clearance Diver in 1968. After that, his time was spent at FDU(P), working on YMT 9 & YMT 10. Bob sailed aboard HMCS BEACON HILL & HMCS PROVIDER as well. Having served 16 years in the mob, Bob decided it was high time to search out other work opportunities, and went out to Civvie street in 1977. He and his good wife, Terry are having a lovely life out in the warm climate of Victoria on Vancouver Island.

Don "Bwana" & Anne Crawford, currently living in that outdoorsman paradise of Prince George BC, informs all their diving friends that they are retired, but still working their 80 acre farm. After serving 10 years(two 5 year terms)in the Royal Canadian Navy(six as a Clearance Dive - from 1960 to 1966), he retired for work on the outside. Commencing first with DIVCON INTERNATIONAL on a 2 year contract, then on to two stage bell diving starting in the North Sea. Upon being promoted to Diving Superintendent, Don had been moved to many other dive sites, ie: Lagos, Nigeria, next to Santa Isabell, Fernando Poo then on to Luanda, Angola, and finally returned to Canada. While in the RCN, he served at Colwood on YMT 2 & YMT 9. Additionally, he assisted with diving duties in the Arctic at the DEW Line sites(Distant Early Warning), retiring from the RCN in 1966 as an LSCD2. (Editor - I think you have earned your time to sit back and relax.)

Ernie Maddams was an -E Rating who qualified as a Clearance Diver in 1959, serving at FDU(P) as an ABCD2. He served on HMCS SUSSEXVILLE, HMCS SKEENA & HMCS CAPE BRETON. Ernie was in the RCN from October 1954 to April 1964(2 terms)and was on diving duties in the Western Arctic in 1960. On Civvie street he worked as a carpenter and millworker, before retiring for good in 2001 at 64 years young.



GEORGE (DIVER) THOMPSON
(RCNR D.E.M.S.)

At the Trillium Health Centre on Wednesday July 29, 2009. Beloved husband of 63 years to Marjorie (Yowart). Loving father of Sandra (Michael), Michelle (Roger) and Steven (Susanne). Cherished Pop to Kevin (Lisa), Todd (Laura), Trevor (Erin), Joshua (Jen), Brandon (Nicole) and Dustin (Teia). Great grandpop to Braden, Kayla and Matthew. Life long resident of Port Credit. Friends may call at the Funeral Home of Skinner & Middlebrook Ltd. 128 Lakeshore Rd. E. (one block west of Hurontario St.) Mississauga on Friday from 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Funeral Service in the Chapel on Saturday August 1, 2009 at 2 p.m. Cremation. Memorial donations may be made to the Lung Association or the Canadian Cancer Society in memory of George.

Deepest Diver

When Senior Commissioned Boatswain George Wookey of the British navy went over the side of the experimental diving ship H.M.S. *Reclaim*, he knew he was headed for a trying experience. The *Reclaim* was anchored in a cold Norwegian fiord, and on the bottom, at 600 ft. below the surface, was a steel table. Boatswain Wookey's job was to descend to the table in an ordinary diving suit and stay there for a specified time. If he accomplished this and survived, he would break the diving record by a wide margin.

Men in the rigid, strong-walled cabin of a bathyscaphe (diving ship) have descended 13,300 ft. to the bottom of the ocean, and such diving is physically easy. The pressure they feel remains about the same throughout the dive. But when a man goes to the bottom in a flexible diving suit (as he must if he wants to do any work there), he is not sheltered from the pressure of the water, which increases about one pound per square inch for every two feet of descent. The air that he



BOATSWAIN WOOKEY IN DIVER'S SUIT
Going down is easy.

breathes, pumped into his helmet through a tube from the surface, must have pressure enough to keep the water out. Such pressure is not kind to frail human flesh.

Boatswain Wookey, a ruddy, biggish man, made his dive in standard diving equipment (a rubberized fabric suit with a round helmet), but behind him stood the calculations of many scientists who had scheduled every minute and foot of the dive. A crew of engineers and pathologists helped him into the water or watched instruments in the hold of the *Reclaim*.

Helium for Dizziness. The main trouble with deep diving is that when the diver breathes ordinary air under too much pressure, nitrogen dissolves in his blood and tissues, causing dizziness and other kinds of trouble. Below about 240 ft., the air pumped down to the diver is replaced by a mixture of oxygen and helium. The helium penetrates the tissues, but does not have the bad effects of nitrogen. When the diver comes to the surface, however, he must be decompressed slowly lest bubbles of helium give him painful, sometimes fatal "bends."

When Boatswain Wookey was lowered into the water, he was breathing ordinary air, but when he reached 40 ft., the pump began supplying a mixture of oxygen (8.5 parts) and helium (91.5 parts). Going down was comparatively easy. In spite of the 273 lbs. of pressure on every square inch of his body (39,312 lbs. per sq. ft.), he felt fine. "I felt no more effect from the helium," he says, "than I would from nitrogen at shallow depth. My mind was clear. I did the job I was sent down to do." His token job, to prove that he could do useful work, was to unbolt a wire.

Narrow Margin. The scientists on board the *Reclaim* had figured on his staying at 600 ft. for exactly three minutes. Wookey stayed two minutes longer to untangle his air tube. This threw the dive off schedule and threatened Wookey's narrow margin of safety. As his shipmates began to haul him up, a sudden chill struck through him. "It was the most intense cold," he said, "that I ever felt. That cold gets into your guts, and you feel you can't stand it."

Slowly, with many stops, he rose toward a submerged decompression chamber that hung 220 ft. below the surface. It was open at the bottom, with compressed air keeping the water out. Inside waited Able Seaman George Clucas, an expert diver, to give Wookey aid and comfort while he finished the long decompression process.

When Wookey reached the chamber, he waited ten minutes while the pressure in his helmet was reduced to the pressure in the chamber (about 110 lbs. per sq. in.). Then he climbed into the chamber itself, and Clucas took the front glass off his helmet. "He was so cold," said Clucas. "So very cold. He could hardly stand up when he reached me." The two men sat down for a long, dull, eight-hour wait, supplied with candy, hot coffee, reading matter and rum.

Foot by foot the decompression chamber was hoisted toward the surface. Pound by pound its air pressure fell. As it neared the surface, Clucas closed the bottom door to hold the remaining pressure, and the chamber with the two men inside was taken on board the *Reclaim*. For an hour they breathed pure oxygen to flush residual helium and nitrogen out of their systems. Then the door was opened, and they stepped out. At once they felt the dreaded pains of the bends, Wookey in his shoulders, Clucas in his legs and chest. They ran into a larger decompression chamber, where they were kept under oxygen for four more hours. When they came out, they felt fine, but tired and very hungry.

Wookey had beaten the diving record by 65 ft. and he had done potentially useful work at 600 ft. He could have attached a cable to a sunken submarine at that depth. Some day he expects to go deeper; the limit, he feels, is imposed by cold and the long time needed for proper decompression. Asked why a man will do such a thing, Wookey says, "I think diving is intensely interesting, especially in shallow water. I go deeper because it's my job."

TIME, OCTOBER 29, 1956

TREASURES LURE DIVERS

Refloating Of Lusitania Still Believed Possible

New York, Nov. 18, (NANA)—U.S. Navy diving experts have devised a salvage system which they believe could be used to refloat the *Lusitania*, whose vast wealth has long lured undersea fortune-hunters to frustration.

Navy diving experts at the salvage school here recently pronounced this judgment after assessing results of the first application of a simple method for refloating wrecks. The sunken gunboat *Erie* recently was raised from the bottom off Curacao in the Dutch West Indies by a giant air bubble, which works so effectively that there is danger a raised vessel will "porpoise" out of the water and break its back.

The *Lusitania*, more than any other wreck, has brought a gleam to the eyes of deep sea treasure hunters ever since the giant Cunarder, was torpedoed off Kinsale, Ireland, on May 7, 1915, with a loss of 1,198 lives.

The tragedy hastened America's entry into the European war but it was the attraction of treasure rather than ghosts of history that brought salvage expeditions to the scene after the armistice.

Has Valuable Cargo

Eleven miles offshore, in only 300 feet of water, she carries more than \$700,000 in cash and jewelry in the purser's safe and cargo worth about that same amount again.

Never proven but the subject of persistent speculation is an additional \$3,000,000 or

more in gold bullion. The scrap value of the vessel, with its copper and bronze fittings, is estimated to be at least equal the \$8,500,000 it cost to build the luxury liner in 1907. Thus her treasure potential exceeds \$15,000,000.

Some divers were almost driven to distraction by the 32,000-ton prize lying in the warm Irish coastal waters. It wasn't in hopelessly deep water, like the *Titanic*, nor was it rotted away like Spanish galleons and English Indianmen. It was so near the surface that Irish fishermen swore they could see her mast tips at low tide.

Walked On Deck

One of the first expeditions actually fabricated a corrugated metal shaft, encasing a stairway on which they hoped salvagers could walk "downstairs" to the wreck. One English diver, Jim Jarrat, believed he actually walked on the *Lusitania's* deck plates in 1935 before his lines fouled.

A few years ago, an underwater sound wave camera traced a remarkably clear silhouette of the *Lusitania*. She seemed to be on even keel on the sandy bottom, looking as though she were still headed for Liverpool. Approximately 800 feet long, she was revealed to be acting as an ocean-floor breakwater.

This picture has convinced salvage experts here that it would be far easier to raise the *Lusitania* and beach her than to work under water.