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The Flipper

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Official Newsletter of the Great Lakes Aquanauts

January 2009

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Happy New Year!!

Or should I say Happy Dive Year!!

Notes from Tim:
Happy New Year

I trust everyone had a good holiday season. I know we did. As we have no agenda for this year, Jan & I will host the Jan. 21st mtg. at our home. 7:00 PM. Our usual appetizer fare will be served. We will be finalizing our plans for the upcoming season. So bring your ideas.

No one submitted any dive times to me for diver of the year, so on a recommendation by Steve Mahr, I declare an executive order & name David Albright diver of the year. Anyone who shows the determination he has & the love of this sport deserves to be recognized. The banquet went well. I trust you all enjoyed it

Tim

Programs

Wednesday, January 21st, 7:00 PM-Dive planning and meeting schedule meeting. @ Tim & Jans Home. Contact Jan to see what dishes are needed to be brought.

Upcoming 2009 meeting schedule to be determined at next meeting. Be sure to be there with your input for this years schedule.

Call or Email Steve Kunder to place your ad:

FOR SALE

O'neil Dry Suit size XXL with weights.
\$250.00 Call Gary Morgan



Article submitted by John Cioma

200 Year Old “Dagger-Board” Schooner Discovered in Lake Ontario

Wednesday, December 10, 2008 by [Jim Kennard](#)

Rochester, New York - A rare dagger-board schooner has been discovered in very deep water off the southern shore of Lake Ontario near Oak Orchard, New York. Jim Kennard and Dan Scoville, shipwreck enthusiasts, located the schooner using deep towed side scan sonar equipment. Sailing vessels of this type were in use on the lakes for only a short period of time beginning in the very early 1800's. This ship is the only dagger-board schooner known to have been found in the Great Lakes.

The Dagger-Board Schooner

The dagger-board schooner was typically a shallow draft ship having one or more wood panels that could be extended through the keel to increase its effectiveness while under way in the open water. The sole purpose of dagger-boards was to prevent the schooner from being pushed sideways when sailing windward or with the wind coming from one side (abeam) of the vessel. A single dagger-board was a panel of wood perhaps 1 to 2 inches in thickness with a width of 4 to 5 feet surrounded by a narrow watertight enclosure. The dagger-board would be pushed squarely down through the bottom of the vessel to increase her draught while sailing and hauled up by separate tackles at either end. The ability to raise the dagger-boards when entering a shallow harbor was a great advantage. The boat could load and unload personnel and cargo in all sorts of locations that would not otherwise be accessible with a larger sailing craft. The term “dagger-board” was also referred to as drop-keel, slip-keel, sliding-keel, barn-door, or center-plate.

Development of the Dagger-Board Sailing Vessel

The invention of the dagger-board or drop keel is generally credited to British Captain John Schank in 1774, however, the early use of the dagger-board in sailing craft prior to the 1800's can actually be traced back to China and possibly South America. Captain Schank proposed and then adapted the dagger-board concept for use in the cutter *Trial* built in Portsmouth England for the British Admiralty in 1790. This ship turned out to be a great success as the *Trial* was able to out sail most of the smaller cutters even though she was a much larger vessel. In the next few years, the British followed up by building a ship-sloop, two classes of gun-brigs, and 16 brigs utilizing the dagger-board concept. Depending on the ship design, multiple dagger-boards were utilized to compensate for the shifting of the vessel's center of gravity as the sails moved fore-and-aft. Ten years after the British Admiralty built the *Trial* further interest in ships with dagger-boards was put on hold due to the problem of making the enclosure for the dagger-boards water tight.

Dagger-Board Sailing Vessels on the Great Lakes

As recounted by Captain James Van Cleve in his memoirs, the first vessel on the Great Lakes to utilize dagger-boards was a skiff brought to Oswego from Niagara around 1806. In September 1813, Major-General James Wilkinson wrote in a letter to the US Secretary of War “...Before I left Sackett's Harbor, I ordered a dozen slip keeled boats to carry 50 men and row 30 oars to be armed with a light cannon in their bow.” References can also be found in the 1813 transport dispatches of Buffalo army officers of the use of slip-keel (dagger-board) sailing vessels. From 1817 to 1820 sailing vessels on Lake Erie greatly increased in numbers, though not in size. These ships varied from 18 to 65 tons burden, and most of them utilized dagger-boards. Each creek, river and port along the coast from Buffalo to the Vermillion River had its representative vessel. It is thought that by 1819, one or more ship builders in York (Toronto) were producing ships that utilized dagger-boards. The pivoted center-board was patented in 1811 and during the next several years larger ships would employ this method of extending the functionality of the keel. By 1820 the dagger-board design gave way to that of the pivoted centerboard. It is reasonable to assume that many of the early dagger-board schooners, initially military vessels, were later used for the commercial transport of people and goods on both Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

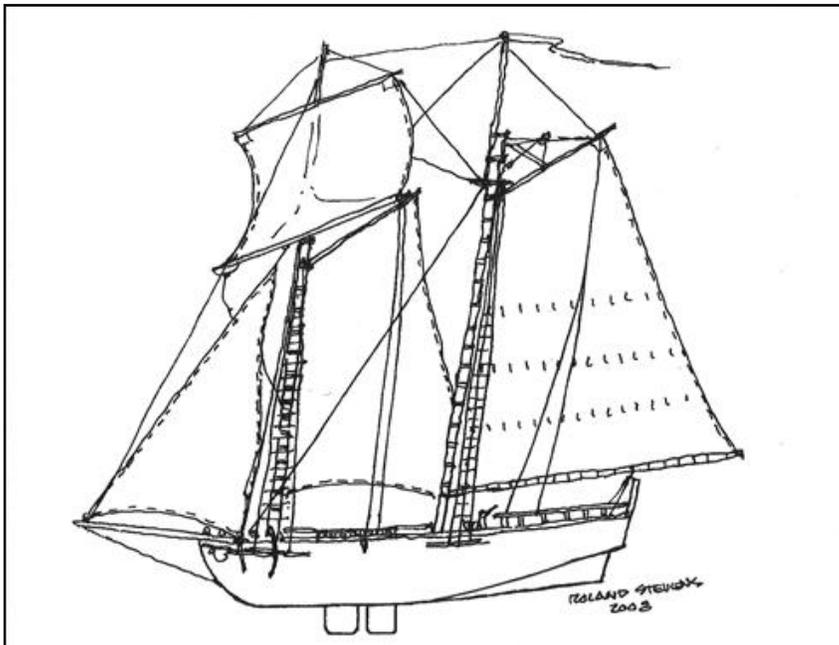
Discovery of the Shipwreck

The dagger-board schooner was unexpectedly discovered in the fall of 2008 while Kennard and Scoville were conducting a deep water survey in Lake Ontario off Oak Orchard, New York. On the very last survey run of the season, the faint image of something protruding from the bottom showed up at the very edge of the display screen.

Another run was made to obtain a better image and position of the object. Two weeks later, when the lake was calm and the winds were light, they returned and deployed a remote operated vehicle (designed and built by Scoville) with lights and multiple cameras to explore the shipwreck.

Exploring the Shipwrecked Schooner

The shipwreck was found upright and in remarkable condition considering that it had plunged over 500 feet to its final resting place on the bottom. The remote operated vehicle (ROV) landed in the area on the ship where the cabin would have been located. Only a few posts could be seen that would have held up the cabin structure. This area was devoid of any items such as a stove, furniture, or other materials. A rail wraps around the starboard and port side of this area where the cabin roof would have extended to either side of the ship and would have also served as an upper deck. At the stern are the remains of the tiller box between two small windows about 20 inches square. The stern rail (taff-rail) has a scroll work feature that is very artistically pleasing in its design. Moving ahead toward the bow, the ship's pump came into view on the port side of the deck just forward of the area where the cabin would have been located. A few feet in front of the former entrance to the cabin is the stub of the main mast that can be seen protruding above the deck. Just forward of this mast stub is the opening for one of the two ship holds, measuring approximately 5 feet in length by 3 ½ feet wide. Between this hold and the forward hold appear to be two partitions that are in line with each other. Each partition was 1 to 2 inches wide by about 4 ½ feet in length, and rises up from the deck 3 ½ feet. Not until further research was conducted did we come to understand that we were looking at dagger-boards that had been forced up into that position by the ship resting on the bottom of the lake. Next to and on the starboard side of the dagger-boards and a few inches away can be seen a long round object covered with quagga mussels that stretches just beyond the length of the two dagger-boards. Further viewing of the underwater video showed a rounded notch in the lip of both holds nearest to each dagger-board. We believe that this object may have been placed over the top of the dagger-boards and secured within the notches of each hold to prevent them from riding up above the deck when in use in open water. Just beyond the forward hold was the stub of the foremast. Both the stubs of the main and foremast look as if they had been cut off approximately 1 foot above the deck. The bowsprit can be seen exiting the deck only a few feet from the foremast and extends for 12 feet past the tip of the bow. Next to the port side of the shipwreck and adjacent to the forward hold there appears to be a cover like object about the same length as the hold. It has not yet been clearly determined if this is a cover for a hold or something else. There were no anchors, winch, block and tackles, or dead-eyes to be found on the shipwreck. The schooner was built without side rails or enclosures (bulwarks) on either side of the main deck, a characteristic of vessels built during the very early 1800's. The length of the dagger-board schooner measured 55 feet and has a width (beam) of 15 feet. These measurements were made by high resolution scanning sonar that was mounted on the ROV. Shipwreck team artist, Chip Stevens has created a sketch to show what the dagger-board schooner may have looked like based on the video imagery obtained by the remote operated vehicle.



Annual GLA Dues

Payable now through January 31, 2009.

\$30 per year per individual or per family with all members residing at the same address. *

Family Name

First Name

First Name

First Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone Number

Mail your dues to: Steve Mahr, 23730 Ravineview Ct., Bingham Farms, MI 48025

*Each family member must have a membership app on file.

Editors Notes:

As we start this New Year, lets look forward to a great upcoming year with a lot of fun events and great social time spent with members and friends. Lets look to a greater involvement by all to make the events successful. Also I would like to take this opportunity to especially Thank the following people who made our annual Christmas banquet a success. Steve Mahr for his effort to get us access to his club house, and Tim and Jan for all of their efforts in getting prizes, programs, and the main dishes for us, and also to all of those who attended and brought food and gifts to make this a great evening!!

A special Thanks goes out to the 2008 supporters who helped with donations to our prizes:

Robert McGreevy

Sea The World Scuba Center

Lets Make this a Great Dive Year.

Steve