



Letter From the Board

Greetings MSRA supporters,

MSRA has a lot to be thankful for. Thanks to all of you and the hundreds of others who attended this year's "Evening Beneath the Inland Seas", the fundraising event was a great success, and we believe that everyone enjoyed the program.

The success of the event will allow MSRA to conduct another search season with expert sonar operator David Trotter. Read about the plans for Shipwreck Quest 2006 on the second page.

While we did not locate the remains of Flight 2501 this year, Clive Cussler has given his support for yet a fourth season of searching next year and plans are already underway for that effort.

The Skoug and the Kaufmann families, who each lost a parent in the tragedy of Flight 2501 have asked us to forward their thanks to all of you who we supportive of their sharing memories of their lost loved ones at the May 6th event. They would also like to join MSRA in expressing heartfelt thanks to Chuck and Shirley Cooper for the use of their beautiful yacht the "Seven C's" for the memorial service.

Without members like the Coopers and the rest of you, MSRA could not continue with our mission to "Preserve Michigan's Submerged History."

Thank you all!

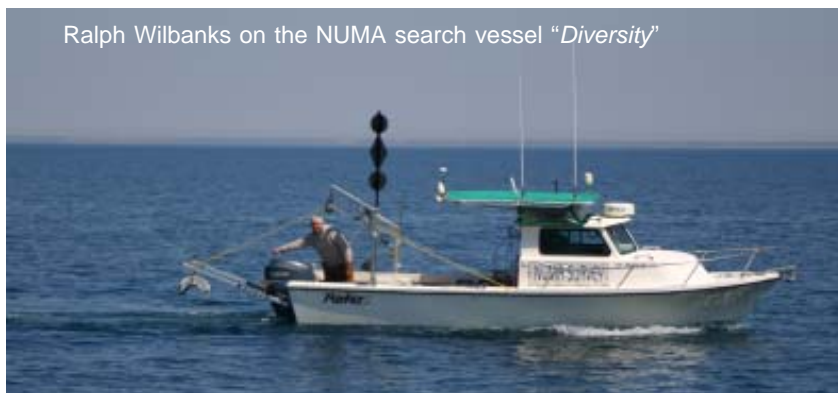
Valerie Olson VanHeest

The Flight 2501 Search Continues...

May 2006 marked the third season that Clive Cussler has sent his team headed by archaeologist and side scan expert Ralph Wilbanks, to South Haven to work with MSRA to search for the remains of the lost Flight 2501.

The DC-4 disappeared off South Haven on June 23, 1950. Soon thereafter

the South Haven life saving station sent out surf boats in an attempt to find survivors, but the small bits of debris confirmed the horrible truth that 58 persons were lost with the plane. In the days that followed, the Navy and the Coast Guard picked up debris and searched the bottom for any indication of wreckage. Nothing was ever found. The Korean War which began on May 25th, and combined with South Haven's need to open beaches for the Fourth of July tourist season, the tragedy was soon forgotten. Officials declared there was insufficient evidence to determine a cause for the accident.



Ralph Wilbanks on the NUMA search vessel "Diversity"

This year Wilbanks was joined veteran "2501" searcher Steve Howard who served as boat pilot, and archaeologist Harry Pecorelli joined the team for the first time. Harry served as Project Archaeologist for the excavation and documentation of the Civil War submarine *Hunley*, located by Cussler, Wilbanks, Pecorelli and the NUMA team.

The team got off to a good start, but encountered bad weather for several days in early May. Despite that, the team, with MSRA personnel joining as schedules allowed, was able to search 17 days out of the entire month. The image to the left diagrams the area covered so far in 2004, 2005 and 2006. The darkened area represents a photo mosaic that Wilbanks was able to create for this year's coverage with new software he has obtained. All together more than 45 square miles have been covered. It is unfathomable that with the extensive records and research MSRA has gathered and the expertise of Wilbanks and his team that the plane has not yet been found. But

MSRA and Cussler have faced this disappointment many times. In the spirit of never giving up, Cussler's team will return next May to pursue the search for Flight 2501.

One unusual target was uncovered this year by Wilbanks, but it is not likely the airplane. Instead it appears to be the rib cage of a 30' long prehistoric lake monster, (or perhaps more likely a small vessel of some sort). The ribs suggest wooden construction. MSRA is planning future dives on this target to determine what it represents.



Another Successful Event!!



The Saturday night of May 6, 2006 MSRA presented our 8th annual installment of "Mysteries & Histories - Evening Beneath the Inland Seas" at the Knickerbocker Theatre in Holland, Michigan. With nearly 400 people in attendance, it was our most successful program yet.

The weather was absolutely beautiful, and the theater was almost at full capacity as the show began. The MSRA unveiled it's new intro, entitled, "A Piece of a Ship", which was recently created by Jack and Valerie van Heest. With the mood being set, "Icebound Found!" was shown publicly for the first time in Michigan. The spectacular underwater footage really brought the ship to life. The *S.S. Michigan* is the closest known wreck to the Knickerbocker.

Up next was Dave Trotter, who year after year, continues to amaze us with his discoveries and presentations, and this year was no exception. We were treated to underwater footage of a rare biplane, and the long lost steamer, *A. Everett*.

After the intermission, a heartfelt tribute was paid to Flight 2501 victims Jean Kaufmann, and Kenneth Skoug I, by their children and grandchildren. It was an emotional time viewing pictures of the deceased on the large movie screen, as their children, now approaching retirement age, spoke of the lives of their parents, sharing with us the passions and accomplishments of their long lost loved ones. They expressed appreciation to all of you for allowing them to reminisce.

The *Ann Arbor No. 5* was next on the agenda. MSRA was proud to present "Planes, Trains, and Ships", which gave an in depth view of the history, loss, and eventual discovery of the AA5, one of only four known carferrys which still lie on the lake bottom. MSRA wishes to thank the Bultema family for helping us complete the story of that once grand ship.

Rounding out the evening was crowd favorite, and world renowned explorer, Ralph Wilbanks. The man who discovered the Confederate submarine *Hunley* regaled the audience with the story of John Paul Jones' ship, the *Bonhomme Richard*. Ralph is an excellent presenter, and adds humor and excitement to everything he does.

Continuing our search activities, and historical documentary production, totally depends funding from this show, documentary sales, and of course private donations. MSRA would like to thank everyone who has supported us in the past, present, and future. Without you, we can't do what we do.

Submitted by Ross Richardson



"Icebound Found" selected for Waterfront Film Festival



At the encouragement of Todd White, MSRA Sustaining Member, technical diver, and owner of the Butler Restaurant in Saugatuck, MSRA submitted one of our most recently completed documentaries to the prestigious Waterfront Film Festival in Saugatuck. The film was selected for inclusion in the newly developed category of Michigan Produced films and will be the second film shown Sunday morning at 9:00 AM the Michigan Film Lodge venue at the corner of Mason and Butler.

Icebound Found chronicles the history of, search for and discovery of the historic *S.S. Michigan*.

Please Come show your support for MSRA that morning. You can view the schedule at www.waterfrontfilm.org

Shipwreck Quest 2006

Mid June marks the arrival of David Trotter for MSRA's 8th annual "Shipwreck Quest". Hopes for a discovery are particularly high this year. Over the past seven search seasons we have covered nearly 150 square miles and with the inclusion of the coverage made by MSRA and the NUMA team in search of Flight 2501 that brings the total to almost 200 square miles! We are closing in on all those unsuspecting vessels that have been trying to keep themselves hidden.

Plans for this year include side scan of a target far off shore, identified by a Michigan State employee with a simple bottom. He thought the lump was unusual and asked MSRA to check it out. Hopes are high that this target represents a shipwreck... but, which one remains a question. Of course in the shipwreck hunting game we always have to prepare for the unexpected, and an underwater hill or clay mound is not above suspicion.

Then we move on to covering some overlooked territory off Saugatuck. When shipwreck hunting, it is critical to keep an accurate record of bottom coverage so that once scanned, there is no need to ever return again. We do that through a process called "mowing the lawn". Between coverage made in 2001 when we discovered the Akeley and the 2003 search, a small strip about 1/8 mile wide by three miles long was overlooked due to an equipment malfunction. Thanks to accurate record keeping, we have been

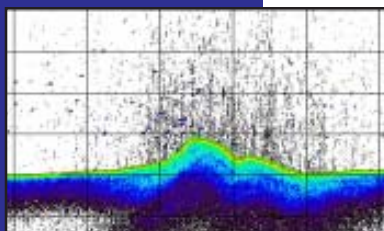
able to realize the oversight and will plan to cover the missed area this year. In all likelihood, there will be nothing there, but MSRA likes to be thorough. We all recall though how Bob Ballard found the *Titanic* just one mile from the outer boundary of the area covered by the French just one year earlier.

After that we will proceed down to South Haven to search for the 200' *Hennepin* lost in 1929. Historic records indicate the approximate location of the sinking. Coincidentally, much of the Flight 2501 search area has covered the probable area for the *Hennepin*, but it still remains illusive. We will carry forth and complete the coverage of that high-probability area.

We are also working with MSRA member Jack Cote on a probable location for the 32' *SeaMar III*, a Trojan brand vessel lost in 1980 with the lives of four local men. Cote was the lawyer who successfully tried this case which found Trojan liable for the sinking. The discovery of this vessel would be important because the bodies of the four men have never been found, and are likely trapped in the boat. We would like to help bring them home to their families for proper burial.

And of course- the ever mysterious *Chicora*. There is a good possibility that the *Hennepin*, Flight 2501, *SeaMar III* and *Chicora* are all within a few miles of each other, so South Haven territory will be HOT! As usual, we will keep members updated regularly during the 10-day search this June.

The "lump" far off shore



Jan Miller
 Valerie Olson Van Heest
 Craig Rich
 Ross Richardson
 Jack VanHeest
 Geoffrey Reynolds

Flight 2501 Memorial Cruise

The June 23, 1950 crash of a DC-4 commercial airliner over Lake Michigan was a tragedy for West Michigan but even more so for several children who lost their parents and siblings in the crash.

As the search for Northwest Airlines Flight 2501 continued into 2006, members of MSRA began to formulate a plan. The sons and daughters of several victims of the airline disaster – all of them now much older than their parents were at the time of the loss – would be invited to attend a special memorial service.

On Sunday, May 7, 2006, MSRA held a commemorative service for the 58 victims of Flight 2501 out on the lake near the site of the crash. Reverend Mark Mast from Trinity Reformed Church in Holland conducted the service, joining several family members, MSRA board members, and special guests. The service took place aboard MSRA member Chuck and Shirley Cooper's, 53 foot vessel, the *Seven C's*. The group traveled from Anchorage Marina in Holland to the site of the crash some 20 miles off South Haven.

Pastor Mast conducted a nondenominational service honoring Jean Kaufmann, originally from Seattle, WA, and Kenneth Skoug of Minneapolis, MN — both of whom perished in the crash along with 56 other individuals. The names of all 58 victims of the crash were read followed by a moment of silence, and the tolling of a ship's bell. Family members then tossed a memorial wreath into the lake, in honor of all the victims.

Jean Kaufmann's children, 62 year old William Kaufmann and 58 year old Brandi Holstein traveled to Holland memorial service from California. Their mother Jean had taken a trip to Europe with family friends, and was returning home on June 22, 1950. She missed her plane and was rescheduled on Northwest Airlines Flight 2501 the following day. Six and two years old at the time, William and Brandi could not really understand the reason their mother never returned home from that trip. Years later, the crash still haunts them.

Crash victim Kenneth Skoug's son, Ken Skoug II, now 74, came all the way from Virginia for the program. He was 18 years old at the time of the



Bill Kaufmann, Brandi Holstein, Ken Skoug II & Ken Skoug III

loss. He was accompanied by his son, Ken Skoug III from the Detroit area. The elder Skoug was returning home to Minnesota from New York City where he was an executive at Remington Rand Corporation. His second wife and his son had driven to St. Paul from New York earlier. They waited at the airport until nearly midnight but returned home after being given no information by Northwest Airlines about the status of the flight. The following morning a clergyman brought the news that the flight was missing and "presumed lost."

Michigan Shipwreck Research Associates was pleased to be able to bring some small amount of closure to these individuals who, 56 years later, still wrestle with questions about the crash. The ultimate goal is to discover the final resting place of Northwest Airlines Flight 2501 and, just maybe, help to solve the mystery of its loss.

Submitted by Craig Rich



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Michigan Shipwreck Research Associates, is a Michigan nonprofit corporation, whose mission is to Preserve Michigan's submerged maritime history. To that end, the organization's work includes research, exploration, documentation and education regarding historic shipwrecks within Michigan waters, with an initial emphasis on the area off West Michigan. MSRA works in cooperation with State Agencies. As a Holland-based volunteer-driven organization, MSRA relies on memberships, fundraising events and grants to continue its work.



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Pastor Mark Mast leads the service

Join MSRA

\$25 Annual Individual Membership

Includes two free admission to *Mysteries and Histories* event, daily search emails and MSRA newsletters.

\$50 Annual Family Membership

Includes two free admissions to *Mysteries and Histories* event, daily search emails and MSRA newsletters.

\$100 Supporting Membership

Includes two free admissions to *Mysteries and Histories* event, daily search emails and MSRA newsletters, plus a complimentary documentary in video or DVD.

\$250 Supporting Membership

Includes two free admissions to *Mysteries and Histories* event each year, daily search emails and MSRA newsletters, plus two complimentary documentaries in video or DVD.

\$500 Sustaining Membership

Includes the above plus the opportunity for you to join the MSRA search crew on a side scan expedition for one day during the June 2006 "Wreck Quest".

\$1,000 Lifetime Membership

Includes the above plus opportunity for you and a friend to join the MSRA search crew on a side scan expedition for one day during the June 2006 "Wreck Quest".

To join, please send your check, made out to MSRA, to the address at the left. You may also join on-line through the use of PayPal at:
www.michiganshipwrecks.org