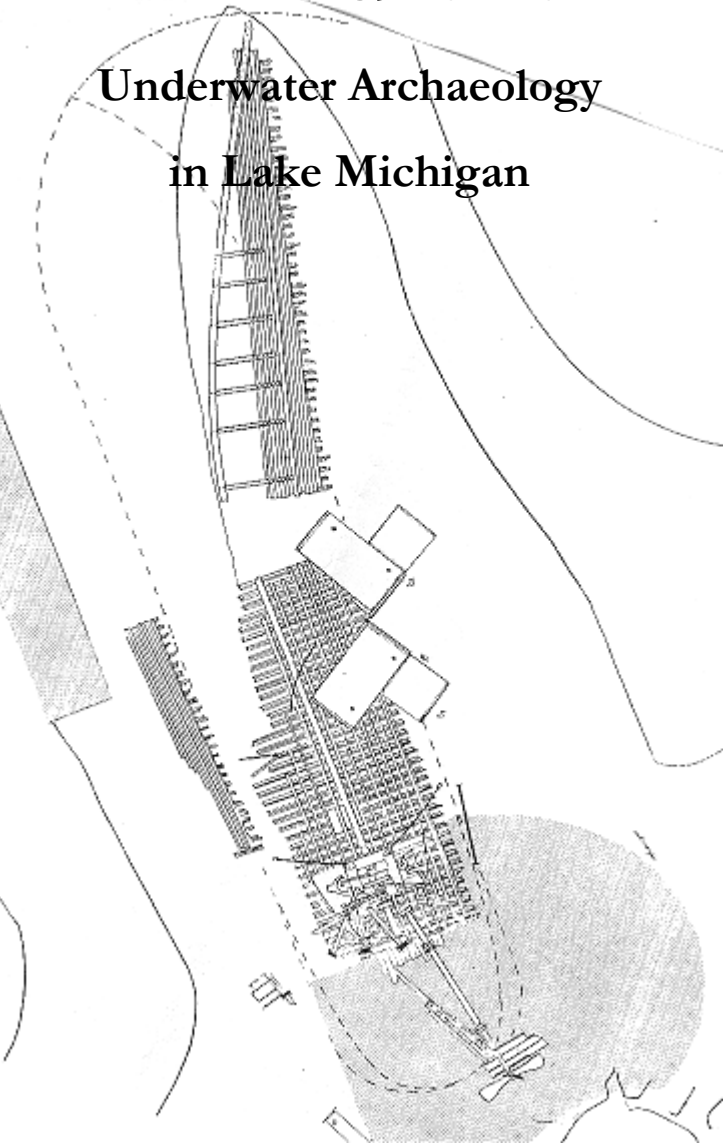


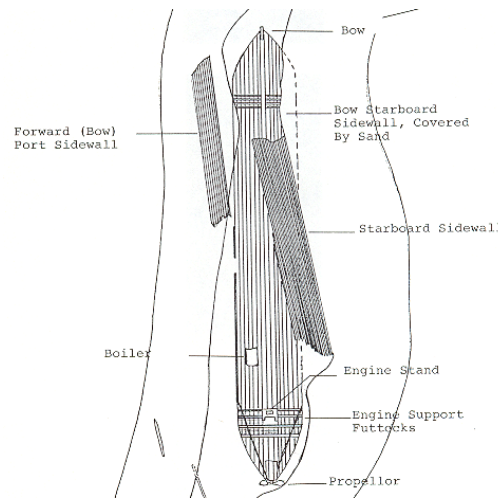
Shipwrecks in Indiana

Underwater Archaeology in Lake Michigan



Map of the Muskegon shipwreck site.

Although Indiana is a landlocked state, the northwestern counties bordering Lake Michigan have served as popular ports of trade and travel for centuries. The busy lake traffic, combined with the region's occasionally harsh weather, has resulted in the presence of many historic shipwrecks within the Indiana territorial waters of Lake Michigan.



Map of Unknown Shipwreck #2 site.

In the 1980's, Gary D. Ellis, the first Indiana State Archaeologist at the Department of Natural Resources ("DNR"), and avid scuba diver, began researching and documenting the shipwrecks of Indiana. In 1983, Ellis began the Submerged Artifact and Vessel Evaluation Program ("SAVE") to survey the Indiana portion of Lake Michigan for cultural resources. SAVE was initiated as a direct response to an attempt to salvage the shipwreck of the J.D. Marshall, which sank in 1911. The rescue of the Marshall by the DNR served as a catalyst for the state to protect Indiana's submerged cultural resources. To date the SAVE program has evaluated 14 shipwreck sites ranging in age from the early to late 19th century.

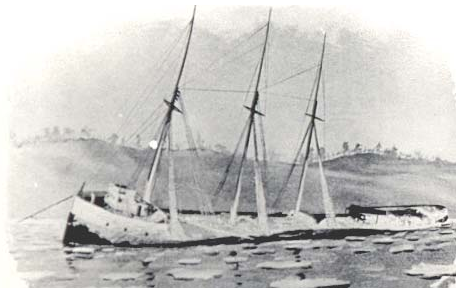
Ellis trained DNR Conservation Officers in underwater archaeological techniques to help conduct the surveys. The methodologies employed during the SAVE surveys included archival research, sonar and other remote sensing methods, systematic survey on grids or transects, photographic and graphic documentation, and subsurface topographic mapping. The shipwrecks SAVE team documented included passenger boats, freighters, "sand-suckers," and car ferries.

The archaeological survey of the Muskegon (originally named the Peerless) shipwreck was conducted over a three-year period and consisted of 25 project dives. As a result of this research, the Muskegon is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Photograph of the Muskegon shipwreck.

The Muskegon was a medium sized steam powered passenger-freighter vessel that was brought down by fire in 1910. However, at the time of its sinking the vessel had been converted to a "sand-sucker." The sand and gravel company that owned the Muskegon sent the J.D. Marshall, a 154-foot wooden "lumber hooker," to salvage the Muskegon's deck and sand-sucking equipment in 1911. Ironically, outfitted with the Muskegon's complement of equipment the Marshall itself sank the following day, over laden and in heavy seas, and killing four men.



Abandoned wreck of the F.W. Wheeler.

The Marshall's massive cast-iron three-bladed propeller is now housed at Indiana Dunes State Park.

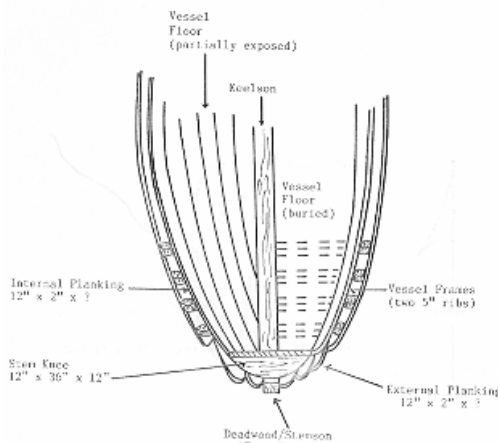
Other historic shipwrecks documented by the DNR include: the David Dows, the only five-masted schooner to have navigated the Great Lakes that sank in 1889; the Wheeler, a 200 foot steam freighter that broke in half and went down in 1893; a railroad car ferry that sank in 1906; and various unknown wrecks.

The SAVE program has surveyed inland lakes as well. In 1986, the DNR partially surveyed Lake Maxinkuckee, in Marshall County, and documented the traces of fifteen small to medium sized steam passenger boats dating to the late nineteenth century.

In 2000 - 2004, scientists from the Indiana University Underwater Science Program investigated the Muskegon shipwreck site. The investigators surveyed the site with a Global Positioning System and photographed the wreck, noting several modern disturbances.

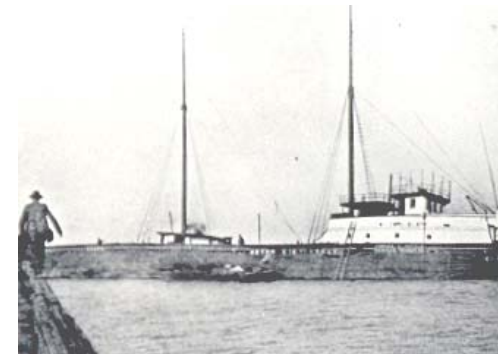
Historic shipwrecks have considerable value as cultural resources and contribute to an understanding of Indiana's history. These sites can tell us about past nautical technology, vessel designs, materials and construction, regional shipbuilding patterns, commerce, trade, and tourism.

Historic shipwrecks can also give us clues to past social issues, such as information relating to the organization of crews, social status, diet, health, migration of populations, and ethnic and class distinctions. Additionally, because shipwreck sites represent disaster events, they also provide valuable data relating to the safety and stability of past and modern vessels.



Map of Unknown Shipwreck #4 site.

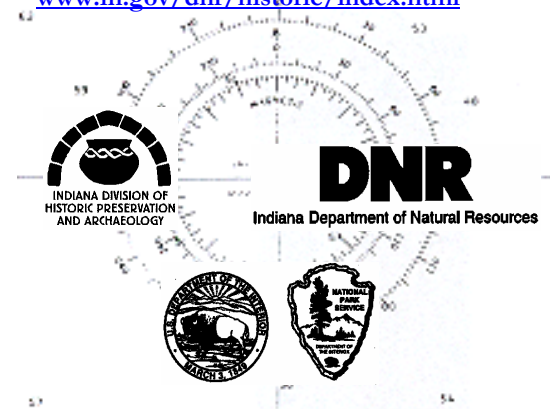
Due to the fragility and rarity of these unique cultural resources, these sites need protection, not only from natural forces, but also from development and looting. Divers may wrongly assume there is no harm in taking an artifact from a historic shipwreck site as a memento, but the accumulated effect of artifact looting eventually destroys the remains of the ship as well as the archaeological site as a whole. Looting not only impacts the ship itself, but also obliterates the valuable contextual information the site has to offer. Historic shipwrecks are protected by both Federal (Abandoned Shipwreck Act, 1988) and State (312 IAC 6-3) laws, which impose fines and even imprisonment for looting and vandalism.



Foundering of the Horace A. Tutbill.

Each act of looting lessens the enjoyment of future divers who wish to observe and enjoy protected shipwrecks. Although many divers enjoy sightseeing historic shipwrecks, it should be noted that structural remains, such as timbers, exposed nails, rigging, and other debris - along with extremely poor visibility - create a very hazardous environment for curious swimmers.

For more information contact: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, 402 W. Washington St., Rm. 274, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739; 317/232-1646; www.in.gov/dnr/historic/index.html



Sources: Manuscripts and National Register of Historic Places Registration Form by Gary D. Ellis, on file at the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.