



THE TILE WRECK HER TRUE STORY

PETER COLLINGS

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Photo Silvano Barboni



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THE TILE WRECK

HER TRUE STORY

(THE SILENCE OF THE BANTINITES)

**CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF
THE RED SEA WRECK
ACADEMY**

For Stephan



PREFACE

Back in 1993, when I first revealed the true identity of the “SARA H” at Shag Rock as the SS KINGSTON, the announcement was met with scepticism. 15 years on the name SARA H still appears in poorly researched documents, despite the overwhelming evidence. The same applies with the vessels at the centre of this publication, except that in the case of the MV MARCUS the evidence is undeniable, proven beyond any reasonable doubt and indeed has been accepted by most interested parties (see **H₂O** MAGAZINE, the journal of the RED SEA ASSOCIATION, “A Survivors Tale”)

In November 2005 a group of 20 leading experts joined me in the Red Sea for a seminar on the wrecks of the Northern Red Sea. Amongst them were marine engineers, maritime historians, researchers and members of our wreck hunting team with an average of 1000+ logged on these wrecks. Also on board was an all-knowing photo journalist (although he didn’t know the CV’s of his fellow passengers).

During one of the nightly presentations the facts contained in this publication were presented to the guests, some facts being revealed for the first time, and the guests were encouraged to dispute the evidence, conclusions and facts, and indeed to present counter arguments. *The presentation went totally unchallenged, even from the “all knowing” - silenced for the only time that week!*

That challenge has been a part of the escorted wreck tours since 1995-hundreds of guests have been invited to take up the challenge and “prove me wrong” The chance to become a wreck detective for a day! So much so that many went back home and delved deeper - revealing even more evidence -

some extremely technical and I am not only encouraged but indebted to those who provided some of the evidence herein.

One of the few arguments against these facts is that the name “MARCUS” does not appear in Lloyds Register (submitted by an amateur novelist), a common mistake - there are at least a further 12 organisations akin to Lloyds and there is no excuse for overlooking this fact-they are listed in Lloyds Register!!!!!!! The reason MARCUS does not appear in Lloyds is revealed in the following pages.

This publication was initially only one of 200+ entries in my current ongoing work “EGYPTIAN SHIPWRECKS” and was never intended to become a book in its own right. However there has been so much debate on internet forums, with so many voicing their *personal* opinions I began to consider the subject worthy of a small publication.

During the work on “SUNDERLAND to SUEZ, THE STORY OF THE THISTLEGORM”, two significant pieces of evidence came into my possession, one of which was a photograph taken in 1979 - by none other than HOWARD ROSENSTEIN (who had discovered the DUNRAVEN) – the photo clearly shows the MARCUS sinking and indeed her name can be made out quite clearly painted on the bow - Shadwan Island is discernible in the background, and I have no reason to doubt the authenticity of the photograph (Howard has also provided some other wonderful images from that era)

11 years on, and a world wide readership the facts have stood the test of time, but amazingly an attempt to once again discredit our work reared up, “The fifth wreck”. An amateurish attempt to locate the Chrisoula K failed,(the expert didn’t know how to use the sidescan) therefore it didn’t exist. Dive mag turned comic!

Even now (2019) one “expert” is selling trips to dive the “Chrisoula k” on nitrox! Some just can’t accept the facts THERE ARE 5 WRECKS which are diveable on this reef- although it has to be said that our last visit to the Chrisoula K in 2017 was a waste of helium-she is collapsing into a pile of plates, and we were unable to access her engine room due to this. Save the helium for the DOMIAT! An updated sketch of the Chrisoula K is in progress.

What should not be overlooked is that this is a fine wreck, and while not of the stature of others nearby it has proved to be a crowd pleaser. This publication therefore is not just about putting the records straight and silencing so called experts once and for all, it is intended to enhance the experience of those diving her in a safe and exciting way. The reader can of course examine many of the facts presented here, leaving no doubt as to the true story of the Tile Wreck.

I am indebted greatly to Mr Stephan Jablonski whom I came to know very well from my visits to his home, and for his fascinating insight into life aboard Greek merchant ships and indeed his adventures of being shipwrecked not once but four times.

FORWARD by JOHN WOMACK

I am John Womack Snr, BSAC First Class Diver, Advanced Instructor & owner of Otter Drysuits in Yorkshire, having dived the Britannic, Prince of Wales, Repulse and the Victoria plus many more over the last 40 years I would not go anywhere in the Red Sea without one of Peter's guide books. I have been on numerous successful trips of Peter's including wreck searching in Truk Lagoon.

Peter's new book is awesome, there are so many wrecks and to give detailed descriptions of all the wrecks themselves is great, it makes you feel like you have dived them already. I remember doing a night dive on the Thistlegorm which was just fantastic it was pitch black with pin points of light from fellow divers lights. In the south, Peter, Tom and myself went looking for the wreck of the Maidan on Rocky Island, we followed the debris trail down to 65mtrs and there before us was the huge shadow of the wreck hanging over the abyss starting at 80 mtrs. We could only look down in wonder, but we had found what we were looking for after 10 years.

Peter's trips are a must and very much like his trips his books are a must read, Peter is a walking encyclopaedia on all things diving and ship wrecks. A lot of great ships were made in the North East and it comes as no surprise to me that this is where Peter came from too, we have been friends/fellow wreck divers a lot of years and hope to be sharing experiences and books for many more years to come.



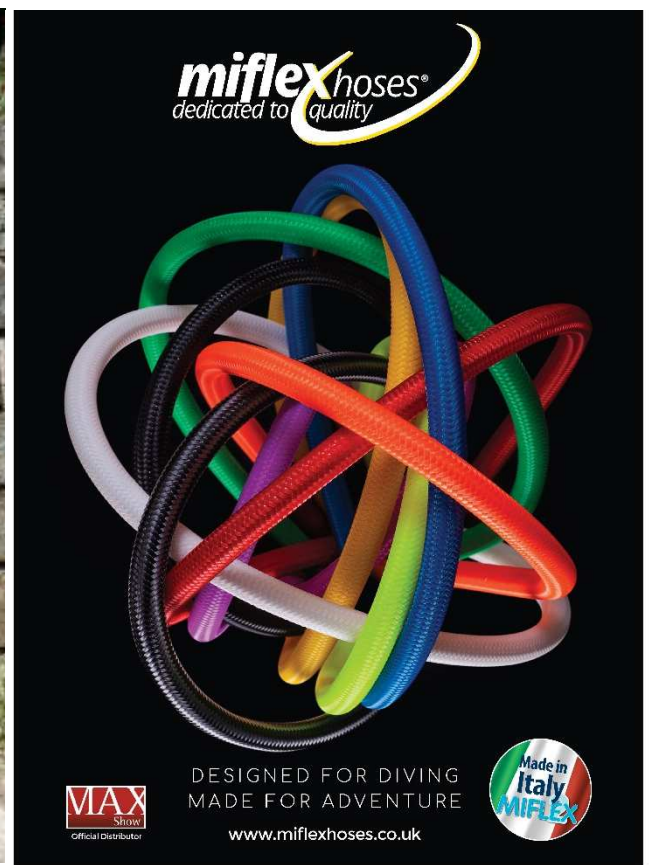
John Womack
MD Otter Watersports
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THE FIRST OF MANY

2020; Intended as a one of pilot, this E book has now led the way to 25 more titles, with many more to come, silenced so called experts and proved beyond a doubt the reason for its publication in the first place .The Bantinities Silenced! Well most of them, seems there are those so blind they cannot see ,or read this book!

SPECIAL THANKS TO;

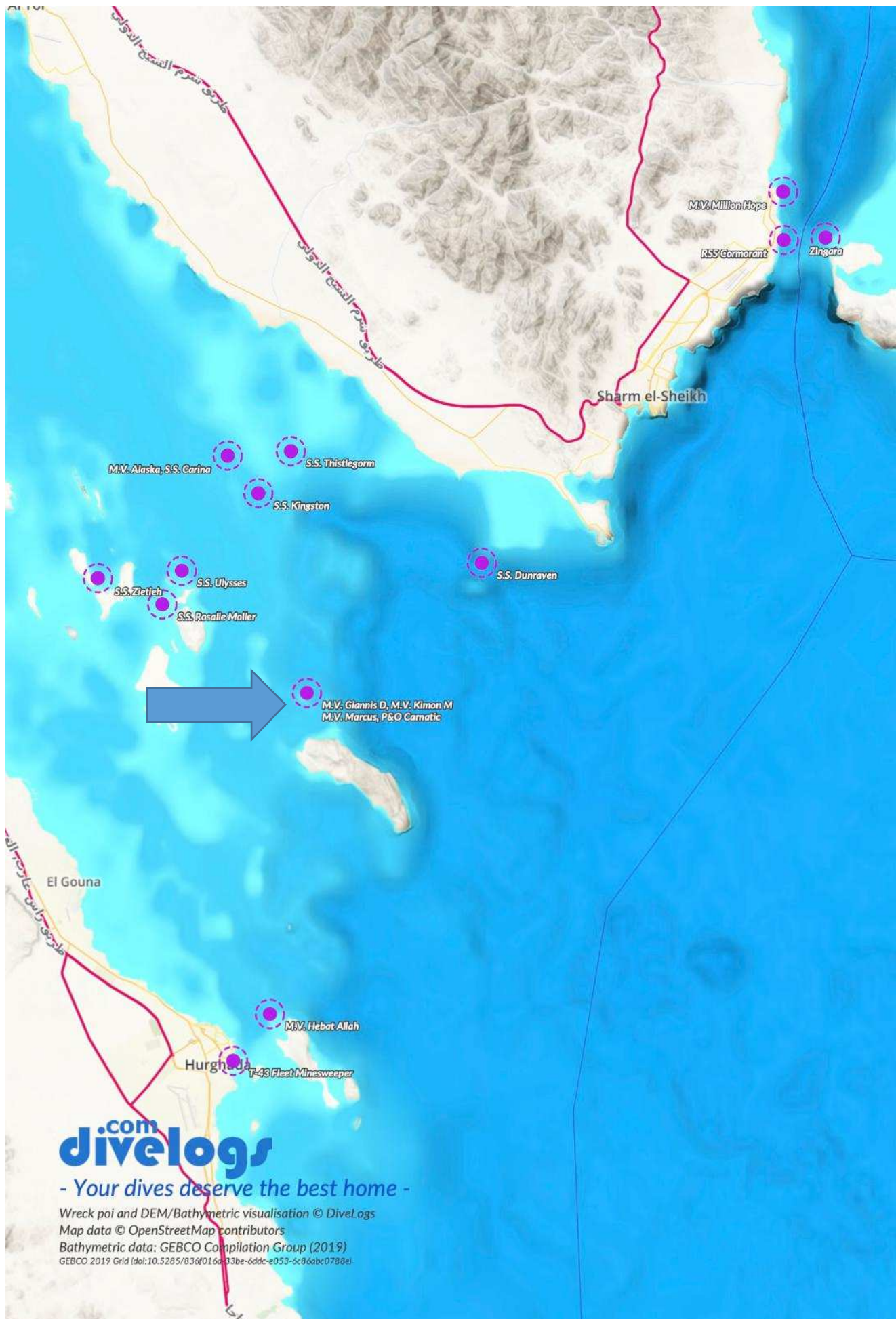
STEFAN JABLONSKI for sharing his experiences in the world of Greek Shipping.
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INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, as we discovered more and more wrecks, a pattern began to emerge with many of the modern freighters. Many were of Greek or Cypriot ownership, most were old and had had long careers, changing names numerous times, being sold from one company to another, each time being re insured for more value-companies all linked through holding and shadow companies. Most in poor condition and well passed their “sell by date”. In many cases the vessels were loaded with cargoes which would ensure the vessel became a “Total constructive loss” - cement being a favourite, ATTIKI (RAS DIB) , BACHIS (ASHRAFI) IOULLA (ZA’FARANA), MUIHAISA (RAS DIB) -TAMARA 11 (ASHRAFI) had we not identified them, all could have had the working title of ” CEMENT WRECK.”

In the Straits of Tiran there are four well know wrecks; LARA, LOULLIA, MILLION HOPE ZINGARA, each with unusual circumstances surround them - the LARA and LOULLIA both ran aground with barely enough fuel to reach their final destinations of Jackson and Gordon Reefs. In the case of the ZINGARA - she had just changed names - on paper and became a wreck still bearing the name KORMORAN-“Zingara” never appeared on the hull, although it was her final registered name. In the case of the MILLION HOPE, she had been purchased for £1m, renamed and re-insured for £M4 and officially “ran aground in thick fog” - we witnessed the grounding from four miles away!

Then of course we have the four, yes four wrecks at Abu Nuhas, two of which feature in this publication. The other two, the KIMON M and the GIANNIS D, follow the pattern of those previously mentioned, name changes, changes in ownership and doubtful incident reports -The Giannis D being cited as an error of navigation-240 degrees off course!

NAME	NATIONALITY	PREVIOUS NAMES
CHRISOULA K	GRK	<i>DORA OLDENDORF, ANNA B</i>
ELLIOT	GRK	<i>ASK, ZEPMARE, JUTLAND</i>
GIANNIS D	GRK	<i>SHOYO MARU, MARKOS</i>
HAMADA	GRK	<i>AVOCET</i>
KIMON M	PAN	<i>BRUNSBUTTEL, CIUAD DE CUCUTA, ANGELA</i>
LARA	CYP	<i>NOPAL, KROHN, TRADER, AGHIOS LEFTERIS, CREST LION</i>
LAURA SECURITY	GRK	<i>BALTICA, BALTIC, NIKI</i>
LOULLIA	CYP	<i>ANTONIA, ZSCHOAU,</i>
MARCUS	GRK	<i>NAGULIAN, NORDHAFF, ATLAS,</i>
MILLION HOPE	GRK	<i>RYUSAI MARU</i>
MUHAISNA	GRK	<i>MINERVA, DINA ELIZABETH, KITY T, AL KHALIJ</i>
ZINGARA	GRK	<i>KORMORAN, ADAMASTOS</i>

Table of coincidences, all old vessels, all carrying cargoes which could not be salvaged, all with recent changes in ownership and re insured for a greater value. All had run aground, with official causes which did not match the physical evidence, or eye witness accounts.



*TAMARA 11, MILLION HOPE,
LOULLIA, LARA, CEDAR STAR, SEA
LION 11, ELLIOT. The Red Sea reefs
are littered with Greek “tragedies” -
all of the grounding’s have
irregularities surrounding their “total
constructive loss”*

Over the years I have interviewed many merchant seamen. Indeed my father-in-law was a merchant seamen for many years, his stories and those of Stephan Jablonski have given us an insight into the shady world of merchant shipping-fuel scams, insurance fraud, false names on ships, dual registrations, illegal cargoes and

of course smuggling. Some vessels would leave port under one name, arrive at another port under a different name, different flag, discharge the cargo then “sink” later only to re emerge under another name. Other vessels would change hands through subsidiary companies, increasing in value and then becoming a “total constructive loss”.

Mr Dimitris P Kavadas owned several shipping companies one of which was the Vikki Shipping Company. 8 freighters had been purchased - all of a similar type and condition. In 1981 the VIKI K was reported to have sunk in the Red Sea, however the London based International Maritime Bureau reported her to be unloading her cargo by lighters at Suez. Another of Kavadas’ ships was reported sunk in the Mediterranean - The Elpiniki K, the cargo was later seen to be discharged in the Lebanon. Another vessel owned by a company of Kavadas, Clarion Marine, the Chrisoula k had been seen discharging in Syracuse (later verified by Stefan Jablonski) shortly before her grounding at Abu Nu Has. Kavadas disappeared, leaving huge debts and he was convicted in a Piraeus Court in his absence and sentenced to three years imprisonment and fined 1m drachmas for issuing a bogus cheque for \$76,000 and convictions of insurance fraud. All the remaining vessels were arrested and all the crew awaiting back pay, had to sell personal possessions to survive. It is estimated that Kavadas’ debts owed to insurers, Chandlers, oil companies, and other ship owners amounted to £4m.

Although I didn’t know it at the time, my first two visits to Egypt were to have a part to play in the unearthing of the facts and true identity of the Tile wrecks. In 1979, the first trip was a true adventure - no airport to fly into and a long journey by road from Cairo. Wrecks were not on the agenda-only the Dunraven was known and the Thistlegorm lay sleeping-visited only by a few fishermen - if only we had known then what we know now!

We befriended a local fisherman, Saleem. He told us about a new shipwreck - so new it hadn’t finished sinking - he wanted us to go with him to dive it and recover some of the cargo for him. The bow was indeed still sticking out of the water – our logbooks recorded her name, painted on the bow – MARCUS -.Strange though it may seem we were more interested in the corals reefs-we had plenty of rusty metal too dive on back home. We dived the surrounding reef- missing the yet to be discovered CARNATIC, while Saleem continued to collect his booty-floor tiles and small figurines. He also removed a bell, none of us having the presence of mind to make a note of the name - we assumed it would be “Marcus”- I was yet to take a serious interest in Maritime lore. If only I had known then what I know now.....That piece of vital information was eventually, 26-years later to help fill in the “missing years” of the ships’ life.*(Authors note - A ships bell never leaves the ship - even if the ship changes names - it is regarded as the soul of the vessel and is a vital clue to the identity and career of the vessel.*

In 2006 I finally caught up with Saleem again - he still had the bell-he had painted it white! He was persuaded to let me clean it up and photograph it - but it remains “in his care”.

In 1983 I went back to Egypt, this time on a livaboard - the LADY JENNY 111, with none other than my photographic mentor Lawson Wood. At Dawn on the 17th April we found the Giannis D sinking. We hardly noticed the other wrecks on the reef-but they were captured on film-all 3 sets of bows!(We were totally unaware of the existence of the CARNATIC, also lying sleeping only a few hundred yards away....if only we had known then what we know now!)Only recently did the significance of those images of the Giannis D sinking come to light - more undeniable evidence, which no one seems to be able to dispute!



APRIL 1983. The Giannis D sinking at Abu NuHas. Although this image is out of focus, three bows are clearly visible on the horizon they are L-R Chrisoula K. Marcus, Kimon M. At this point in time the Carnatic lay between the Giannis D and the Chrisoula K undiscovered

Despite the undisputable facts published back in 1996, there are still publications emerging with the incorrect identity of the tile wreck at ABU NUHAS- guide books, Video's, dive maps and magazine features Even in 2011 when the world knows the truth, one "expert" can't find the 2nd tile wreck.... .It is the purpose of this publication to put the records straight -once and for all.

1951



Reproduction of a postcard from Stefan Jablonski's collection. Many vessels carried a stock of postcards on board for the crews use. Printed on the back the notation "M.V ATLAS 1956 BREMEN, ATLAS LEVANTE. Inscribed in Stefan's hand in Polish, "Joined May 78 as Marcus V.S.L". Note the forward derrick arrangements.

THE SHIP

BUILT at Flensburg Bremen in 1956 by Flensburger SchiffGe for the Atlas Levante Line, as the MV ATLAS and registered at Bremen, (Lloyds list no less than 18 vessels called ATLAS at this time) she was described as a general cargo ship, fitted with MAN diesel engines, 381 ft long, 2699 tons. In 1959 she became the NAGUILAN, until in 1959 she was sold to Klauss E Oldendorff (who had owned the Dora Oldendorff, later to become the Chrisoula K). Under that ownership she became the NORDHAFF. In 1971 she was on a voyage from New Orleans to Bordeaux and Brest with a cargo of soya bean meal when fire broke out in her engine room. One man died and four were injured. She made port at Mobile. After making temporary repairs she finalised her journey, but was then declared a total constructive loss. At this point she would appear to have become declassified with Lloyds and the trail goes cold.

(The above information did not come to light until the postcard and indeed the ships' bell revealed the details of her beginnings. Although we had her name at the time of sinking - derived from our logbooks from the first visit. It didn't help with her history. There would at first seem to be no record of the ship being officially recorded. However her name was eventually found in the Hellenic Shipping register. There are many unregistered vessels still plying the seas, some under flags of convenience, some changing names during a voyage)

“CLONE-ING”

Another practice which was to confuse, hamper and mislead our research was the clone-ing process. We found several instances where vessels which were officially “scapped”, and yet were still being used. The cloning was quite simple a registered vessel would have “twin”-a similar if not identical type bearing the same name-so two vessels would operate under the same licence and insurance-in some cases vessels names would be changed during a voyage-and of course change hands through phantom companies all owned by one parent company. In some cases vessels carried the names of two other ships in the same company, so 6 vessels could be run under 3 sets of papers.

The conclusive evidence of course was the vessels “DNA”, while the paper trail was confusing and misleading, the true identity of the vessels was very hard to hide-we successfully tracked one vessel through the serial numbers on her fire extinguishers and there are many other manufacturing serial numbers which all help to prove the true identity of a vessel-its simply knowing where to look!

She was purchased by Dimitris P Kavadas via one of his shadow companies and was refitted and put back into service. For the next four years she underwent several name changes and indeed switched from one shadow company to another, all with connections back to Kavadas. In 1978 she was renamed the Marcus- and owned by the Vikki Shipping line (owned by Kavadas). It would not have been un-reasonable to suspect she correct was the Marcus **K** but there is no evidence either from the records, the name on her bow or from the recollections of Stephan Jablonski to confirm this.

.1978

FINAL VOYAGE

From a report from one of her crew, Stephan Jablonski, she made two uneventful journeys before picking up her final cargo - Italian floor tiles, statuettes and other items of stoneware.

After passing through the Suez Canal bound for Jeddah she ran aground during a storm in May 1978. The official report stated that the vessel had encountered difficulty in steering. Stephan Jablonski, an engineer on board had just finished his shift and gone to bed.

"I was awakened in the early hours by a tremendous noise of screeching metal, utter panic and crew running everywhere. We had run aground onto a reef. For the next six hours we tried to prevent the water from flooding the ship. The engine room was in 6ft of water and she was settling by the stern. We abandoned the ship and were taken on board a passing cargo ship bound for Suez."



LEFT: All the proof you need! The bow of the MARCUS taken in 1978 the name can be clearly discerned on the bow!!! RIGHT; NA'AMA BAY circa 1978. Note the very limited choice of dive boats available

This photograph was taken by HOWARD ROSENSTEIN (who discovered the DUNRAVEN) in 1978 - shortly after the wrecking - 3 years before the Chrisoula K ran aground on the same spot. The name MARCUS can be seen painted on the bow. Shadwan Island is also visible in the background. The reef is also void of any other wreckage.

HOWARD ROSENSTEIN was running a diving operation based in the village of Sharm El SHIEK and had discovered the DUNRAVEN some years earlier. He had visited the wreck shortly after it sank and news of the sinking was widespread in that small tight community.



Howard's diving operation C 1970



.Artefacts from the Dunraven

In 1978 I was part of a group visiting the Red Sea for the first time. The skipper of our boat, Saleem Hussan, persuaded us to check out a wreck which had just ran aground-he wouldn't charge us any extra for the long journey! He took us to Abu Huhas-he wanted to recover some tiles from a recent wreck. The journey there and back is one I have now repeated many times, but in that small boat it seemed a very long way and those ships in the channel seemed much bigger and much, much closer..... During our two dives (no nitrox, no computers, no camera's) the ship's bell was recovered and retained by Saleem. As well as bearing her original name the date and port of registry were marked clearly - BREMEN 1951,- a fact lost for many years. The painted name on her hull and wooden boards reading Marcus. We were totally unaware that only 200 mtrs along the reef lay the Carnatic-it would be seven years before she was to be found. If only we had known then what we know now!!!! Our logbooks merely cited the wreck as a blot on the landscape a rusting hulk. The surrounding reefs were noted for the population of nudibranchs. We did not return to the wreck-the stunning marine life of Ras Umm Sid, Temple and Far Garden along with the sharks at Ras Muhammed seemed more appealing. It would in fact be 14 years before I dived the wreck again.

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1981.

The M.V Chrisoula K runs aground at Abu Nuhas Her final voyage, like the Marcus was from Italy to Saudi Arabia with a cargo of floor tiles. This was August 1981-3 years after the Marcus had run aground. Stephan Jablonski found himself reliving an old nightmare.

"We had to make an" emergency" stop. Syracuse I was later told. The bridge reported warning lights on the instrument panels and although we found no faults on the engines we were ordered to make a full overhaul of the engines. That was a hard 18hr shift. Then we were given the all clear and the engines restarted and we continued south through the Suez Canal, but we were much higher in the water. I was puzzled at this but now realise we had discharged the cargo. During my next shift I was working in the generator room when suddenly the ship ground to a halt and there was that now familiar sound of twisting screaming metal. I ran up onto deck and thought I was dreaming there was that island and again there was the same reef in front of us. We were still afloat but held fast by the bow and the swell was pushing the ship deeper into the reef". Stephan Jablonski

The ship was abandoned and reported as a total constructive loss.

It is clear from the photographic

evidence that she was on Abu Nuhas and her bow stood proud on the reef. Several photographs depict this stand alone bow - with the name CHRISOULA K clear to see. With the bow so proud on the reef vessels heading north thought it was a ship heading for them and took evasive action, almost causing more groundings - until the navy dispersed the bow as a navigation hazard. The dispersed bow anchor chains and stem can all be found on top of the reef *NEXT TO THE BOW OF THE MARCUS*. Further more her derricks have fallen ON TOP of those from the Marcus

An article in SPORT DIVER some years ago wrongly cited the tile wreck as the Chrisoula K and in it the following statement appeared

“Being severely damaged, however she broke into two separate parts, with the much larger rear section falling back and sinking into deep water”. “Curiously, with its port anchor deployed the bow remained on top of the reef”,

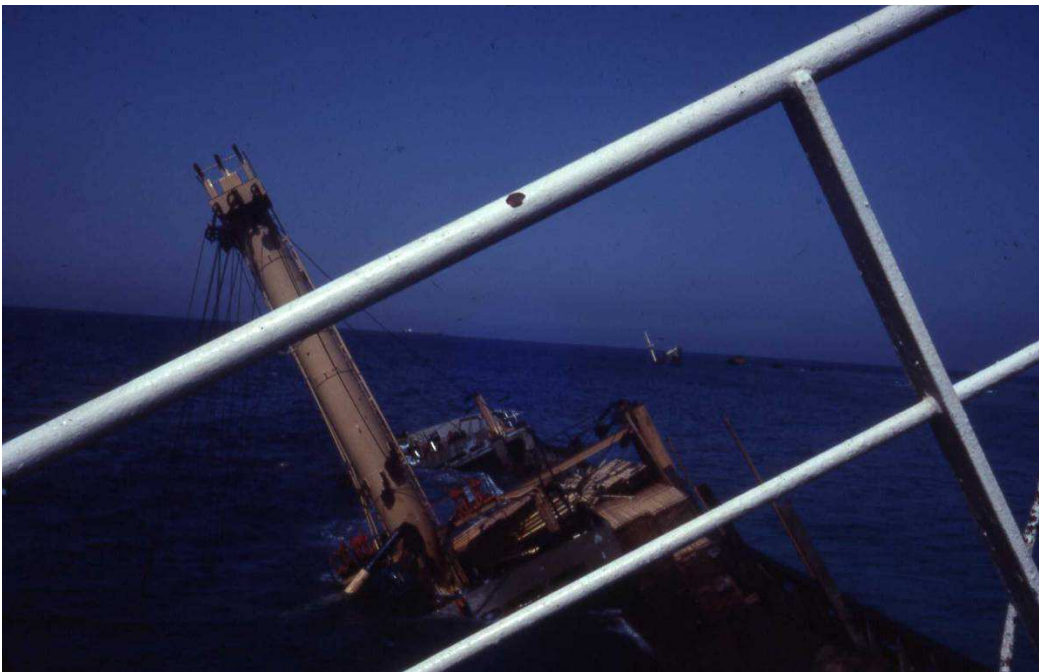
the author considering himself an authority on the matter (a Bantinite), surprisingly got it right! However, if he had dived the tile wreck he would have noticed the bow still attached.....TO THIS DAY



These two images show clearly the bow section of the Chrisoula K sitting high and dry on the reef and contain several vital facts; The port anchor is down, the starboard stowed; There are no masts showing and the rest of the vessel has indeed broken off and lies in deeper water. Note also how the shape of the bow differs from that of the tile wreck. See also an independent report at the end of the book.

1983

In April 1983 I found myself back at Abu Nuhas, drawn there by another grounding. This time it was the Giannis D. We hardly noticed those other three bows sticking up on the reef - but that fact was captured on images taken of the Giannis D sinking, both as we approached her and from her bridge as she settled into the reef. By now there were four sets of bows on the reef - from east to west KIMON M, MARCUS, CHRISOULA K GIANNIS D.



*April 17th 1983
08.30hrs; The Giannis D has been aground for four hours, the crew airlifted off. She lies abandoned, her cargo of soft woods left to the mercy of the sea. A "navigation error" put her here -240 degrees off course! Taking the opportunity to explore the wreck, Lawson Wood, myself and the crew of the Lady Jenny 111 climbed on board the aft section. This photo was one of*

several I took- not realising the evidence concerning the Tile wreck the images were capturing. Had we only realised it at the time, another wreck lay between the visible bows of the Giannis D and the tile wreck- The P&O Carnatic.

By 1995 we were diving the wrecks on a regular basis, having developed a "wreck safari", the brain child of Chris Scott(Discover Scuba).An early publication had misidentified the tile wreck, and had used images

of the Kimon M but listing only three wrecks on the reef (DANA, CHRISOULA K, CARNATIC). As we took more and more interest in their histories the discrepancies raised questions about the identities.

In 1996, when SHIPWRECKS OF THE EGYTIAN RED SEA was first released, there were still unanswered questions; Where was the rest of the Chrisoula K? What had happened to the bell from the Marcus? And why was the safe from the Chrisoula K found, unbolted from its secure place inside the ship, on the seabed some distance from the grounding?. Much of the enigma was to be answered – later.

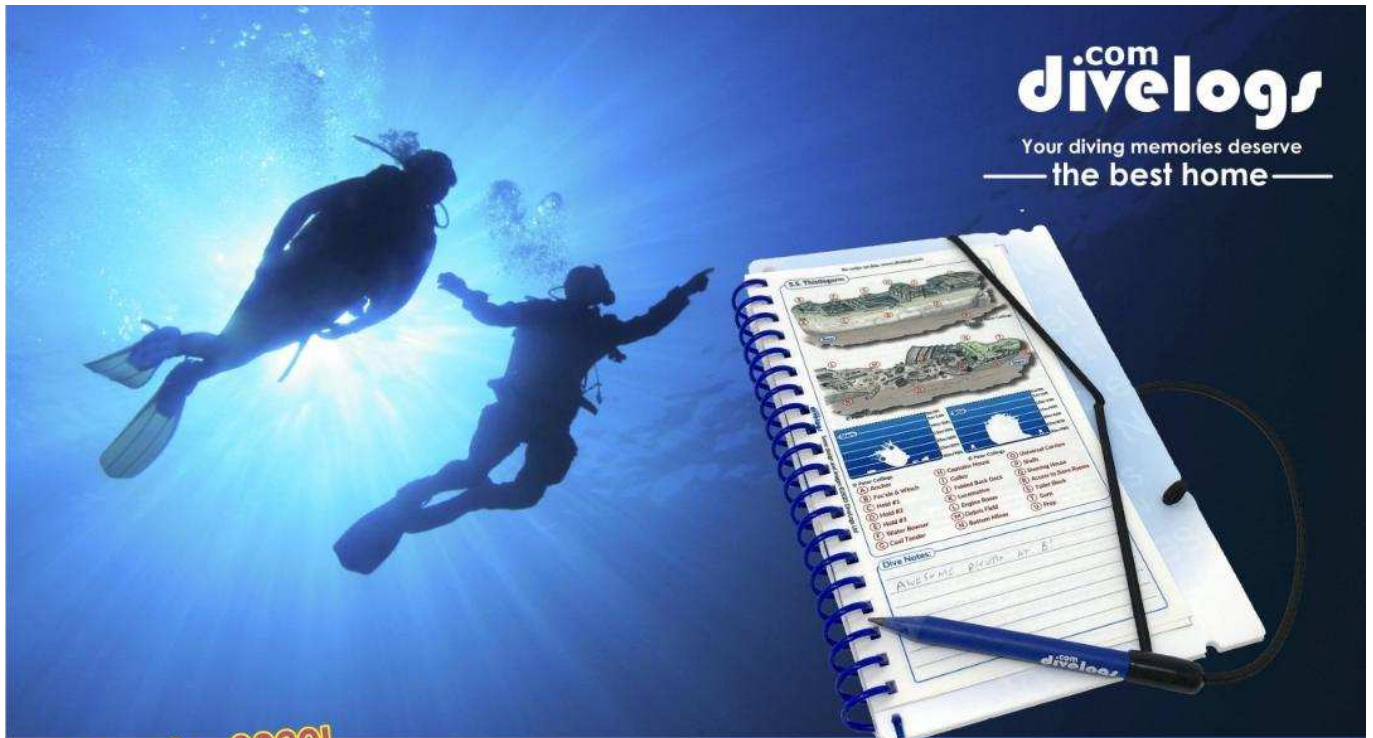
2006

After many years I tracked Saleem down and among the many treasures he had collected was several of the stone statues and indeed a ships bell - covered in white paint. He had obviously gone back to the wreck after our visit! After much persuasion and many shisha's, he allowed me to clean up the bell and take photos of it. So we both ended up with a piece of treasure from the tile wreck. I now had the ultimate proof of the vessels identity



The bell, inscribed ATLAS, BREMEN 1956 The identity of a wreck can be confirmed in several ways. Indeed vessels carry a vast amount of equipment with serial numbers - for instance a fire extinguisher. However as we found out with the Clark Chapman wreck second hand parts were often used during a refit- the winches on the Clark Chapman wreck were traced back to the “Umm Saber”, but were on the “ East Star” when it sank. So these can be misleading - The best form of ID then is the bell, engine plate or bridge plate. So until the bell turned up, we only had a painted name on the hull and a wooden name board to go off..





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THE WRECK TODAY



Until recently, the sheltered location of the wreck in the middle of the reef has protected the hull and main structure of the wreck. Recently a 10mtrs section of the port fore section of hull has fallen off exposing the piles of tile in number one hold.

The attitude and position of the wreck in relation to the reef tells of how she was driven straight into the reef, her forepeak digging well into the reef. This was not a glancing blow. The dense heavy cargo ensured she settled right there and would never come off again, thus the stern lies in 30 mtrs at the base of the reef. The superstructure has, like all the derricks collapsed into and around the wreck along with the funnel.

The stern section lies with a heavy list over to port - huge cracks in both the port and starboard side allow for several alternative routes through the wreck, via the aft hold (#4) The stern castle is quite intact. Amidships on the starboard side, a large crack also allows for access into number three hold and more tiles. A swim along the starboard side from here reveals in intact hull-right up to the stem, so if this bow had broken off, who put it back in place and welded it back together?



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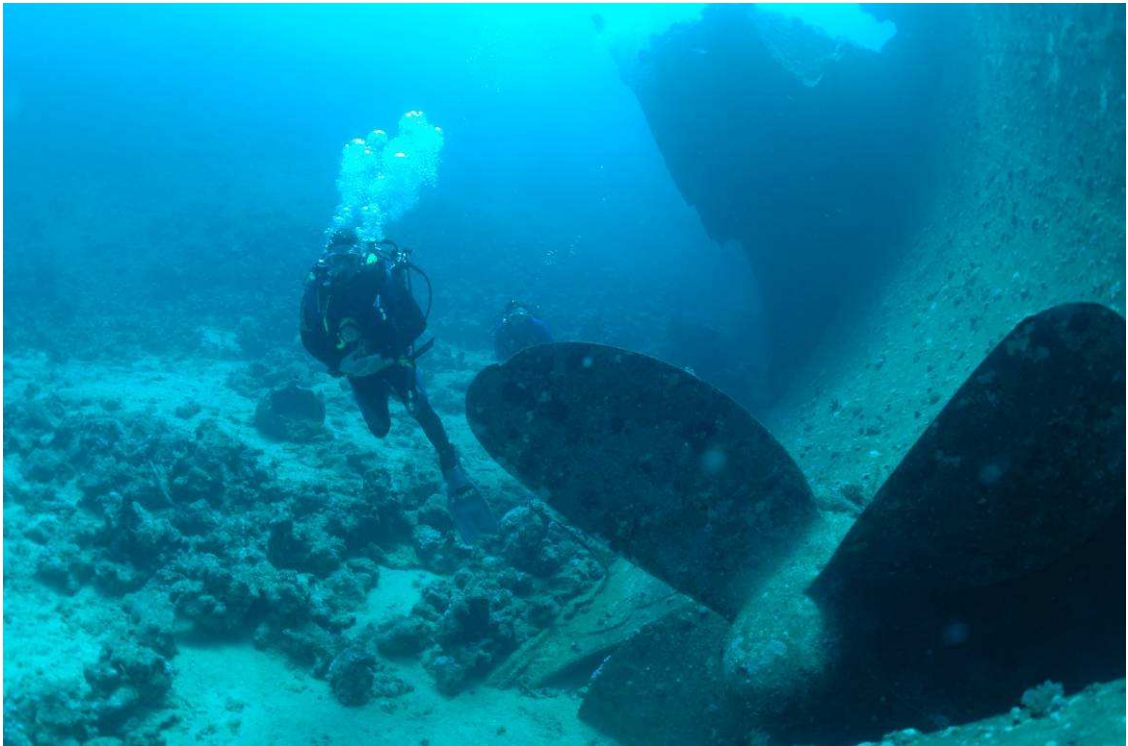
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With our guests in mind we have had Mike Fenney of DIVE-LOG.COM design and produce this amazing set of log book stickers, depicting all 40 of the wrecks featured in our escorted safaris. Packed with sketches and archive photos to make your log record unique. These are the only accurate and indeed universal fitting stickers system available, and cover 4 distinct regions from the Sudan border to the Suez Canal

DIVING THE WRECK



The stern of the MARCUS lies over to starboard in 30 mtrs of water, causing a huge gash in her hull just forward of the stern castle .The superb visibility is an added bonus.



The propeller - behind the huge gash can be seen

The stern, being the deepest is the best place to start. With the hull lying over to port, it hangs over the very impressive propeller and rudder. A break in the hull does allow access into the 4th hold, but a better route is to swim round the stern castle, here there are companionways running right around the stern and two access doors allow entry into three floors of store rooms and crew quarters. This section of the wreck is stable but the rooms are compact and should only be entered by the very experienced and properly equipped

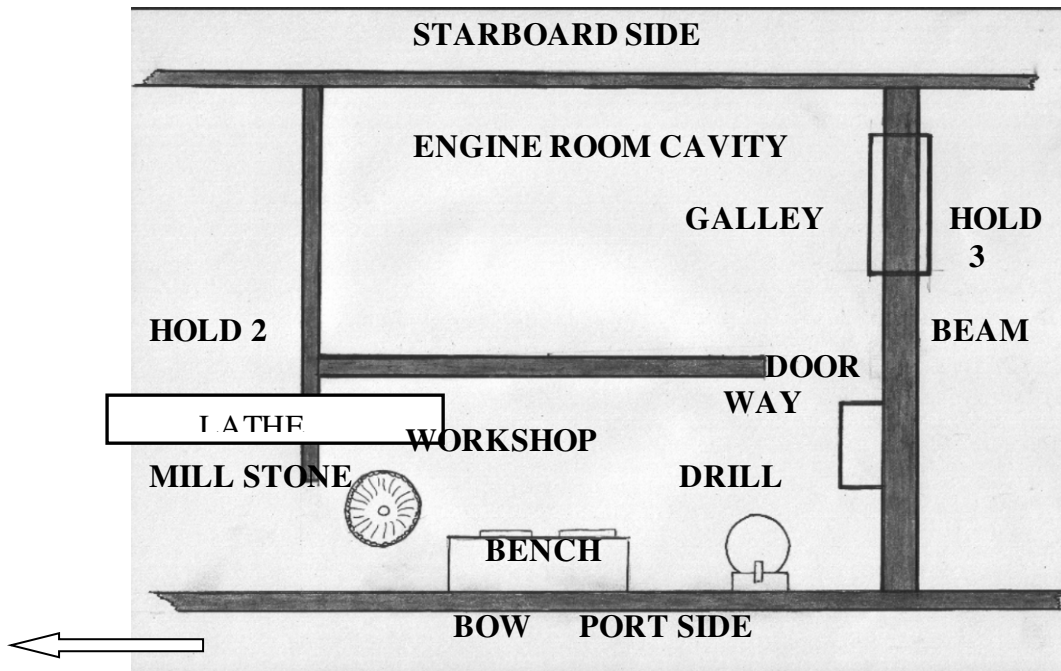
The two aft holds are easy to access and run forward towards the remains of the superstructure. They are of course still heavily loaded with tiles. Lying on the seabed off the starboard side is her funnel. Large groupers can often be found here, and next to it an eel garden.

Heading back into the main section of the wreck it is possible to explore the workshop, engine room and galley-depending on the divers' experience.

As the tiles guide the diver forward and indeed slightly shallower, a huge I-beam crosses the hold, supporting the superstructure - access to the workshop can be found on the port side. It is possible to swim through the entire work shop, noting a door off to the right - this is one of the entrances to the engine room. The work shop still contains a vertical drill stand, lathe and work benches.

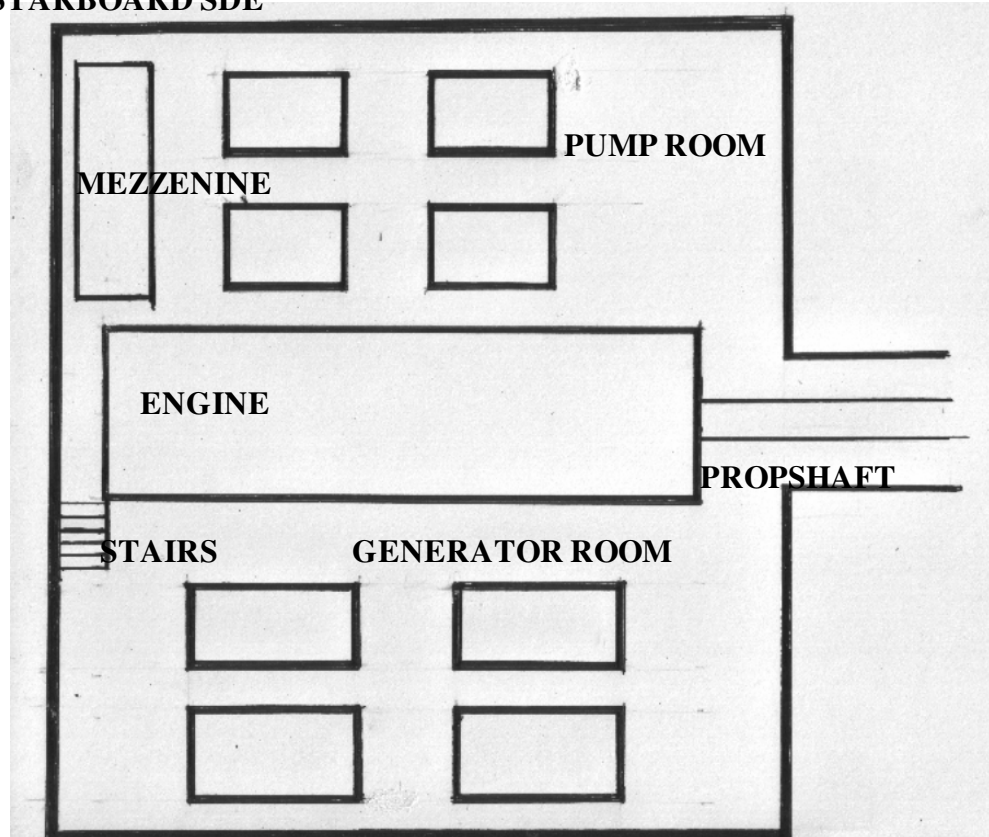


Situated on the port side of the superstructure is a fascinating workshop complete with drill stand, lathe and tool draws .To the left of the diver is the doorway leading into the engine room .This space is often filled with sweepers which often migrate here from the engine room. When we showed this image to Stephan Jablonski, he immediately recognised the scene and correctly placed it as the Marcus's workshop. The Chrisoula K's workshop was in the engine room.....



PLAN OF THE WORKSHOP, GALLEY AND ENGINE ROOM LAYOUT

STARBOARD SDE



Engine room layout not to scale

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Often the resident sweepers spill out from the engine room, catching the light and temporarily blocking the route forward - into the second hold and more tiles. Here the cargo has shifted away from the hull - forming a corridor which makes a great photo opportunity. Huge morays often are seen free swimming here. More groupers too hang under the supporting cross members. There are several resident porcupine pufferfish here too. Swimming back through the workshop, the aforementioned door will now be on the left. This allows for access into the engine room cavity - a large space above the engine room itself.

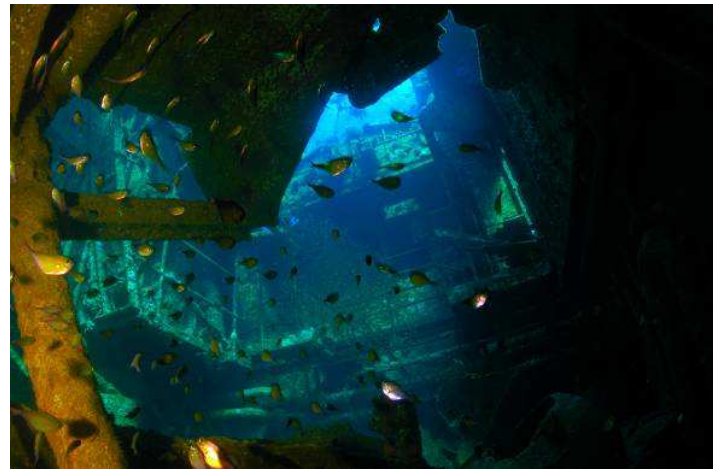


The engine room cavity, although some of the superstructure has collapsed this remains fairly intact and is usually full of glassfish.

Directly opposite the door, on the starboard side across a walkway is another doorway adjacent to the galley and more store rooms. Just aft of this is perhaps the prettiest part of an otherwise barren wreck - a huge mast hangs out over the sand and has a healthy growth of soft corals , sponges and a school of glass fish .Needless to say this attracts several Lionfish and groupers

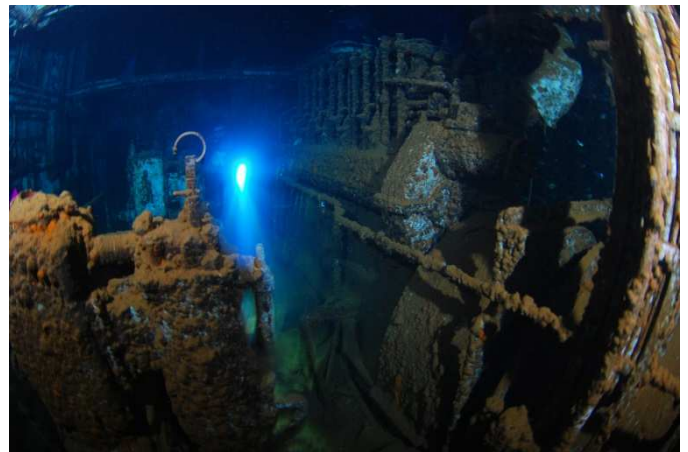


*LEFT; A diver examines the galley, situated behind the engine room house .RIGHT
A distinctive shape, one of the stern masts lies over to starboard and is covered in corals
and small reef fishes*

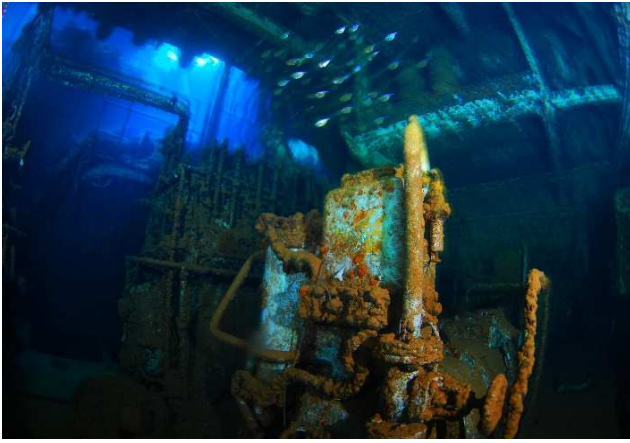


Two views of the engine room house from within. Most of the skylight assembly has now Collapsed,- permitting strong sunlight to penetrate

Never the less- THE TILE WRECK-THE MVMARCUS is a great dive, and despite the years the wreck remains in pretty good condition, the highlight still is her engine room.



Given the shallow depths of the engine room and its complete intact layout, it is an easy task to explore-but it should still be treated with respect and redundancy, good backup torches and finite buoyancy are a must. For the untrained it is easy to get lost, and then there are the resident guardians, the giant moray eels which seem to appear from nowhere.



For the very experienced the engine room makes this a very special wreck indeed. However it is not a place for the untrained, overconfident or large groups of students being lead by a thoughtless dive master. A safe and exciting experience can quickly become a tragedy. There have been several cases of divers getting lost, their lucky escapes a warning to others.

In the forward port corner of the cavity is a set of stairs which lead down into the generator room. Here four huge generators lie between the port side hull and the engine itself. There are valve wheels, switch boards, fire hoses and a host of paraphernalia to excite the ardent wreckie.

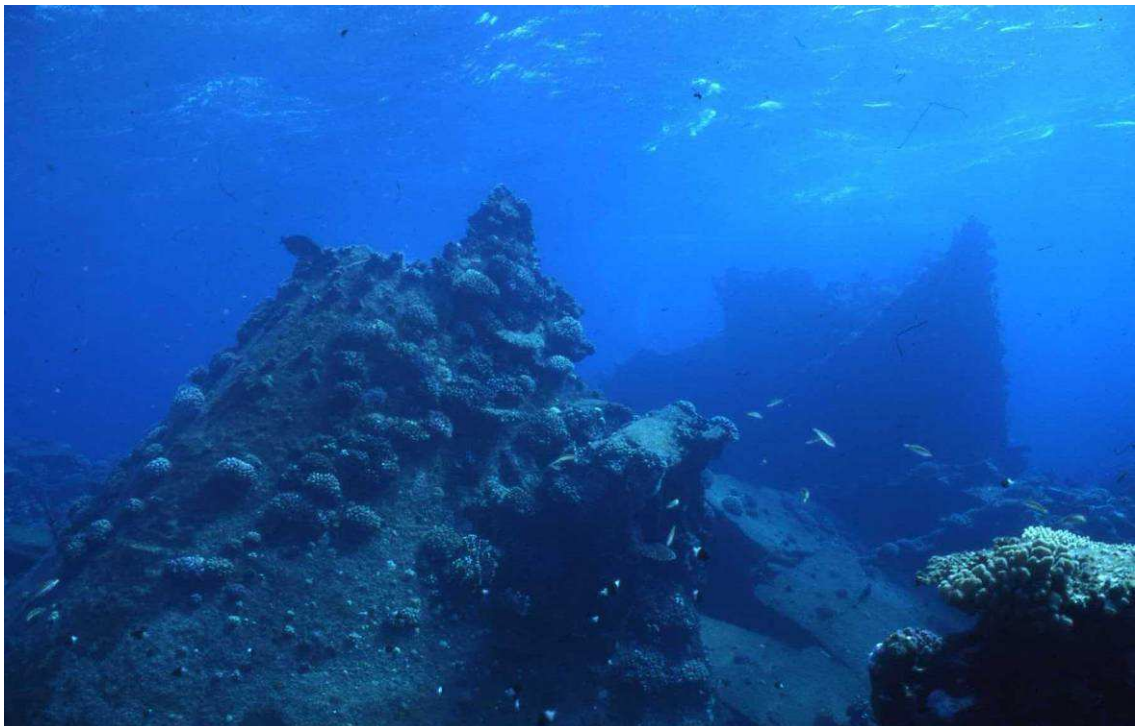
Swimming aft from here is the entrance to the prop shaft tunnel - and the home of a very, very large grouper - must have found its way here from Cod Hole! Directly ahead is the pump room containing four huge pumps and other machinery above and forward is a mezzanine deck. Again there are gauges, levers, stitch boxes and tools. By swimming around the head of the engine block the route returns to the set of steps which were the entry point. They will be directly overhead. Throughout light filters down and surprisingly the engine room is not too silty, but good fining action is still required.

For those who know what to look for there is much evidence here as to the true identity of the wreck, not least the engine itself-and the entire layout is different to that of the Chrisoula K. But armchair experts would never see this!



The forward section lies in shallow water and provides an interesting area for decompression and safety stops..

Back out in the sunlight the fore section is home to small numbers of reef fishes. The cross members afford some shelter for groupers and they can often be seen being cleaned. When the sea is calm and there is no swell the shallows can be explored and more clues as to the existence of both wrecks can be seen



A TALE OF TWO BOWS; in the foreground the dispersed bow section of the Chrisoula K and behind the STILL ATTACHED bows of the Marcus. There are two fo'c's'le lockers, two sets of anchors and two sets of anchor winches.



Lying off the starboard side of the hull are the forward masts of the Marcus running away from the hull down into deeper water. Lying on top of them, coming from the direction of the Chrisoula's bow are a different set, and style of derrick - these of course fell on top later. Careful examinations of the photographs of both vessels verify the two types of masts and derricks

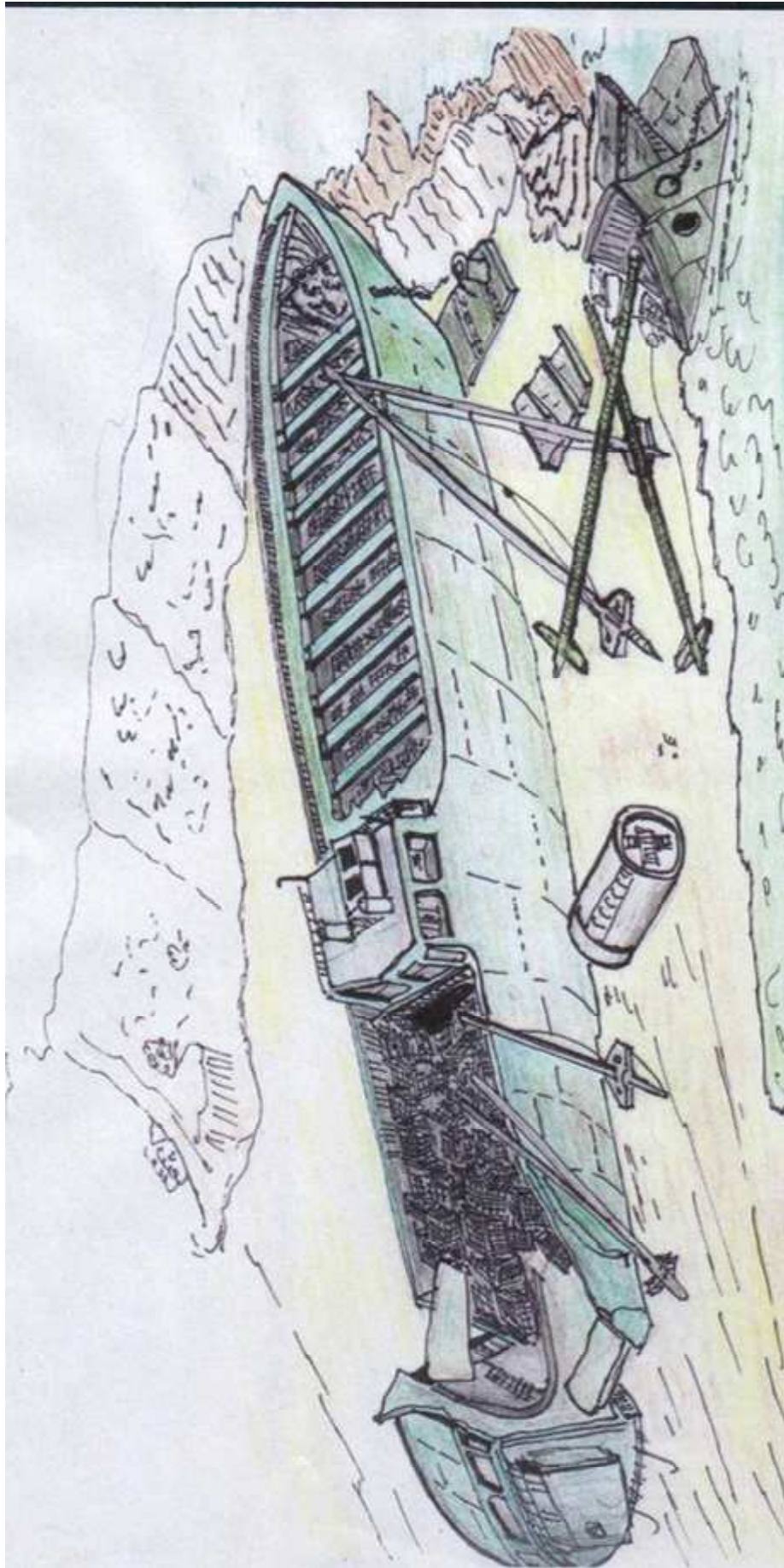
The impact on the reef can clearly be seen. By swimming along the starboard hull towards the shallows the point of impact can be seen. The foremasts lie pointing down the slope with those of the Chrisoula K lying on top and these in turn lead back up to the dispersed bows of the Chrisoula K. Yes there are *two* bows, *two* sets of anchor chains and the remains of *two* sets of anchor winches. This area is subject to swell, and is best experienced on a calm day. A large family of surgeon fish live here.

From here the dive concludes with a swim back over the chain locker, fo'c's'le and forward holds to the mooring line which is usually situated amidships

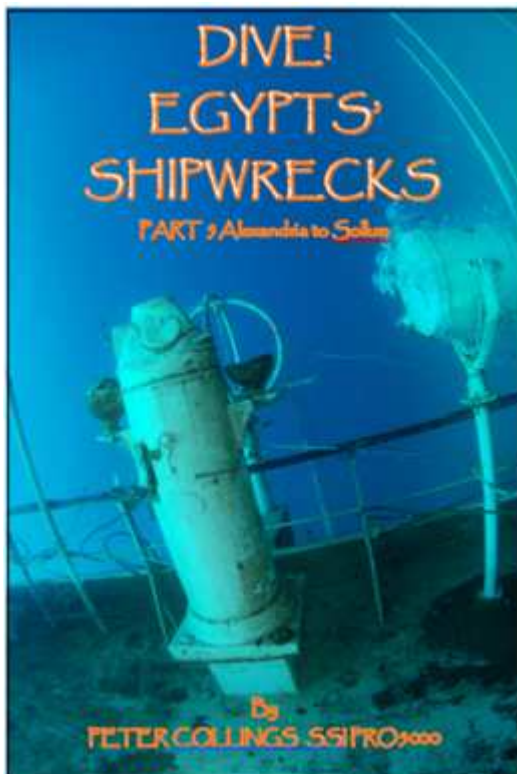
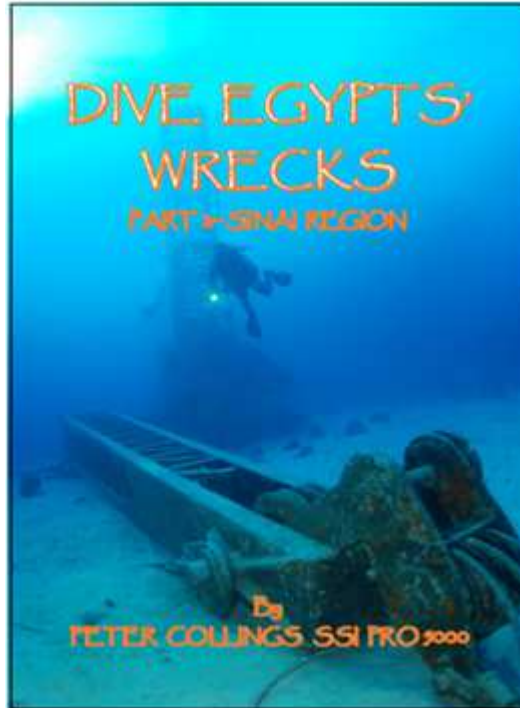


LEFT Divers swimming along the starboard side, with the anchor chain above.

RIGHT; To this day the attached bow sits proud in shallow water - note the anchor chain, picture left - starboard, not port as in the images of the Chrisoula's grounding.



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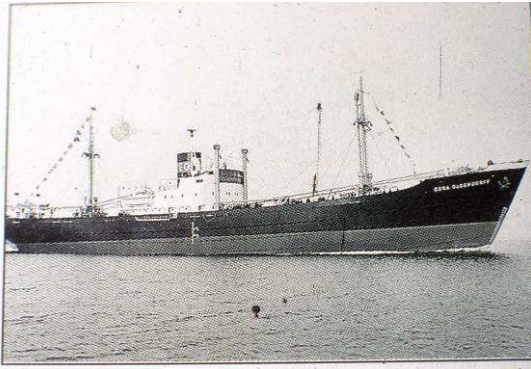
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THE CHRISOULA K

She was built in 1954 as the DORA OLDENDORFF by Orenstien Koppel & Lubecker 320ft long, 3720 tons and fitted with MAN engines (40 ft shorter than the Marcus-another vital clue) for E.L OLDENDORFF & CO (another co incidence?). In 1970 she changed her name and ownership and became the ANNA B. Then in 1979 she was purchased by Dimitris P Kavadas via Clarion Marine and was renamed the CHRISOULA K



DORA OLDENDORFF



CHRISOULA K

FINAL VOYAGE

In August 1981 the ship, loaded with a cargo of Italian floor tiles, departed for Jeddah.

On board was Stephan Jablonski since his survival of the sinking of the Marcus in 1978 he had survived the ELPHINKI K and the VIKI K all interconnected through a web of holding companies in the shadowy world of Greek shipping. Stephan reported that an unscheduled stop was made at Syracuse where cargo was unloaded, before continuing the journey through the Suez canal. He was shortly to experience his 4th and final premature departure from a Greek vessel.

"During my next shift I was working in the generator room when suddenly the ship ground to a halt and there was that now familiar sound of twisting screaming metal. I ran up onto deck and thought I was dreaming there was that island and again and there was the same reef in front of us. We were still afloat but held fast by the bow and the swell was pushing the ship deeper into the reef. Although it didn't seem as though we were sinking we were ordered into the boats. again we were rescued by a passing ship with the Egyptian navy in attendance"

STEPHAN JABLONSKI



It was images like this that first lead us to question the identity of the tile wreck - Clearly it is only a bow section, and a different shape and style to that of the Marcus. Note also the position of the anchors. Of course anyone visiting this reef in the early days would see the name, then dive on the remains below, assuming they were connected, thus the fallacy that the tile wreck is the Chrisoula K began.

From our interviews with merchant seamen including both Stephan C and Stephan J, it was common practice for a ship to have her destination changed after leaving port. The owners of the cargo would renege on a deal and sell to another client for a better price - especially if it meant a shorter journey.

Several photographs taken at the time clearly show the bow section of the Chrisoula K high and dry, her *port anchor down*, (*the Marcus sank with her starboard anchor down*) with the stern section broken off and nowhere in sight. A second puzzle is that the safe of the Chrisoula was found lying on the seabed next to the tile wreck, not inside it! On careful examination of my photos from the Bridge of the Giannis D as she sank 3 bows are clearly visible!

As I had dived the “tile wreck” “two years before the Chrisoula sank, there had to be another explanation.

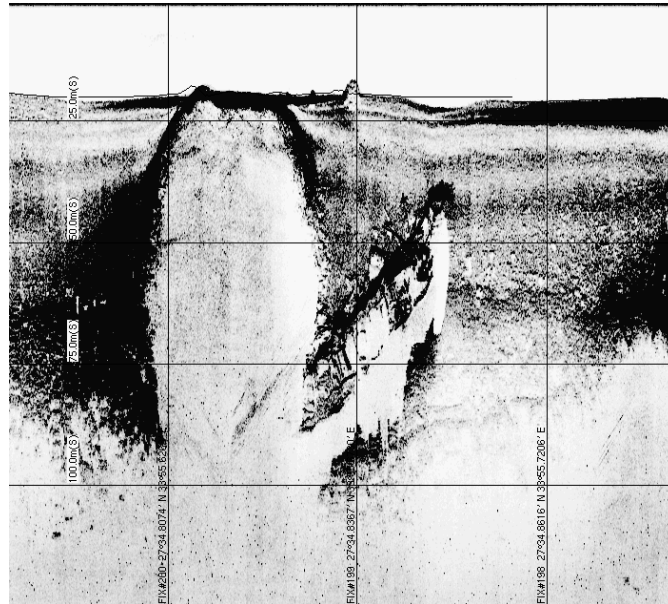
So what happened to the rest of the CHRISOULA K?

The final piece of the puzzle was solved by a skipper onboard one of the safari boats I had worked on. As he watched my presentation of the wrecks at Abu Nu has he recalled seeing two tugs attempting to pull the Chrisoula K off the reef. The main section of the ship broke off, leaving the bow behind, and as the tugs surged forward the ship began to sink almost taking the tugs with it.

(there are reports of a tug lying in deep water off the north east corner of Abu Nuhas, but as yet we have no confirmation of it, or if indeed it is one of the tugs involved in the attempted salvage.)

At the time (2000) I was working with Ali Baba, and Mohammed El Faruek, two of the best and most experienced dive masters around. We decided to go and look for the evidence. We had

previously found a huge anchor and chain in 40 mtrs, but this was from a much bigger ship. Ali baba had already dived the wreck previously. So at the next opportunity the three of us, Ali leading, twinned up and carried out a deep air dive to locate the main body of the wreck. If our theory was right the wrecked would be minus a bow. Just on the point of no return we found what we were looking for- a large section of wreckage, lying on its side, with the holds totally collapsed - and no bow.



During the trail runs with the SSS SIdescan, we used the wrecks at Abu Nuhas as “target practice”, before heading north to Ras Shukier .Our Sidescan expert Dr Fionna Stewart produced a remarkable t of images including this capture of the main section of the Chrisoula K. The stern, holds and easily be identified.

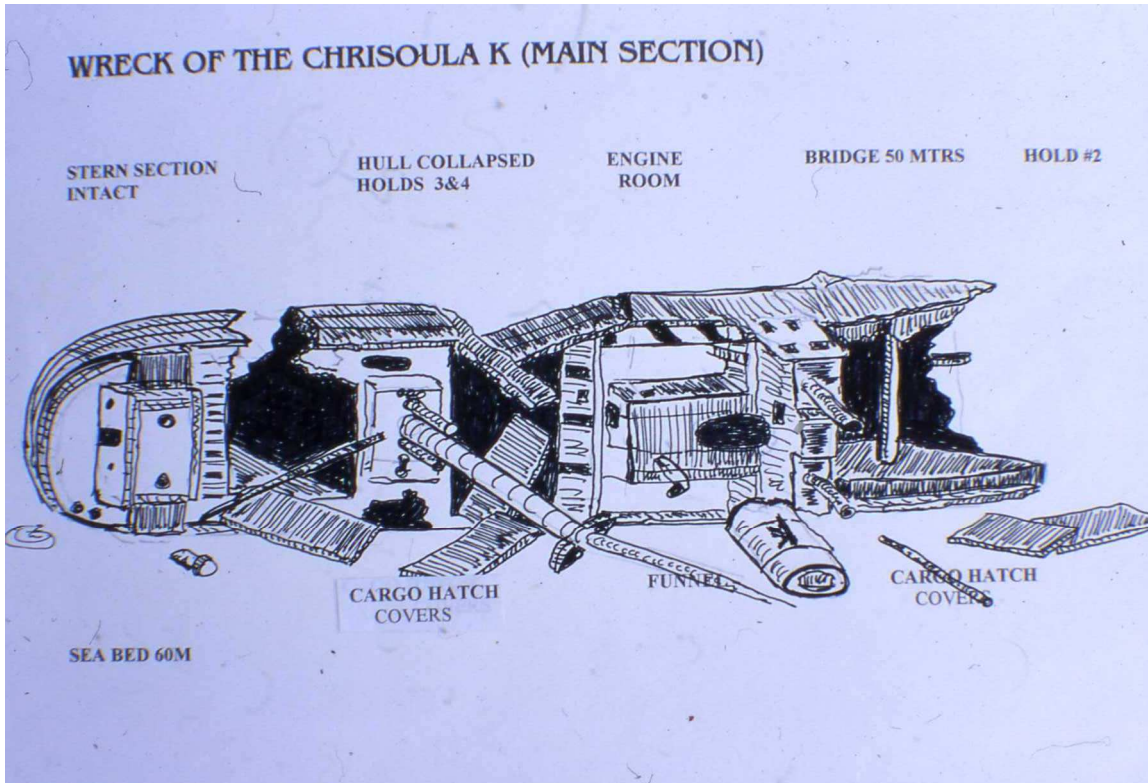
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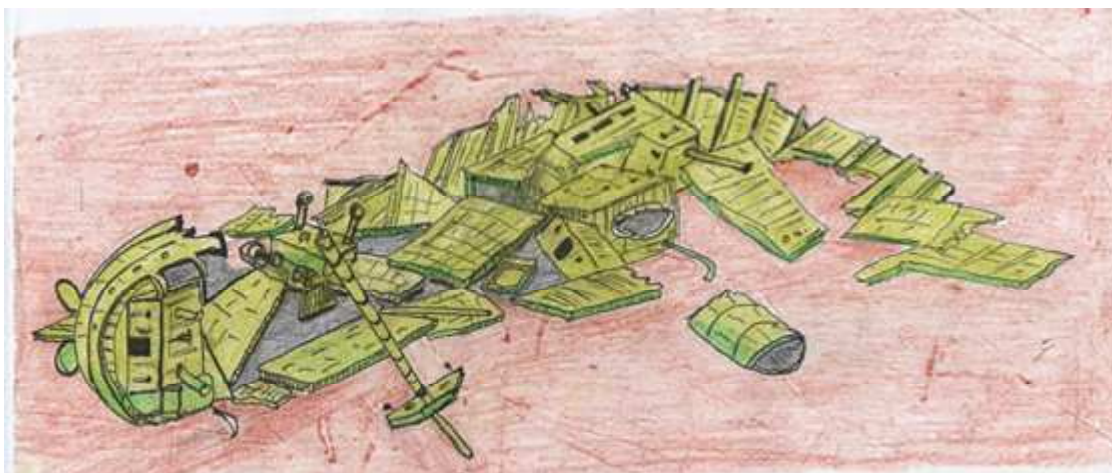


DETERIORATION OF THE WRECK; Sketch above produced shortly after locating the wreck back in the early 2000's

SKETCH BELOW

Generated in 2019 after the teams visit to the wreck. Much of the port side of the hull has collapsed in and lies scattered on the seabed. The stern castle is the only substantial section remaining. The aft mast house between holds 3 and 4 has fallen back and is now upright. The aft mast has snapped and lies flat. Access into the engine room proved impossible due to the hull sections covering the access points.

Much of the damaged appeared recent with exposed metal lacking marine concretion.





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INDEPENDENT MARINE ENGINEERS REPORT

Looking at the images that we have and having manipulated them a little there are some conclusions that may be arrived at.

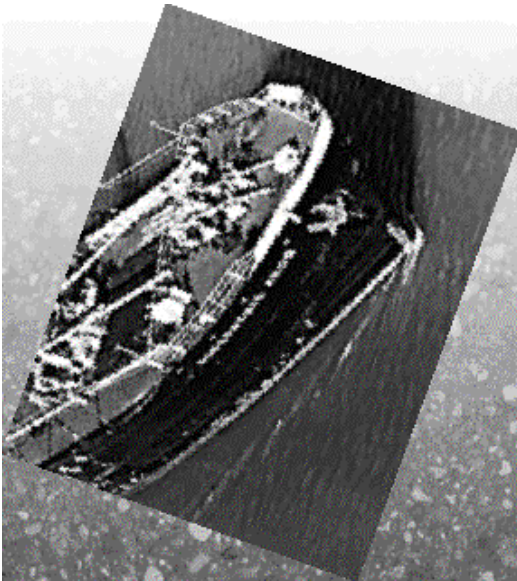


Photo 1 (mirror image!)



Photo 2

These two shots appear to be the bows of the same vessel.

1. Although difficult to see on Photo 1 there is a distinctive jack staff (although because of its U bend it could be a ventilation pipe)
2. The combing from the prow extends back the same distance.
3. Railings extending from the combing termination extend to the end of the fo'c's'le and then return 90 degrees to meet .
4. The number of railing stanchions is the same.
5. Between the 2nd and 3rd stanchions on the port side there is a distinctive ventilation cowl.
6. The step down from the fo'c's'le to the well deck (?) is the same on both.
7. Another photo (not reproduced) of the bows stranded above the reef shown in photo 2 clearly shows the name Chrisoula K



Photo 3

From photo 3 it is just possible to observe two figures standing in the shelter of the port side fo'c's'le and from this we can make a broad judgement on the height difference between the fo'c's'le and the well deck and calculate it at 2.75M.

Returning to photo 2 and paying particular attention to the port side and bearing in mind the height of 2.75M between the fo'c's'le and well deck it can be seen that the vessel has damage extending at least another 2.75M below that of the well deck. Further evidence of this damage can also be noted when looking at the jagged edge of the well deck plates extending from the port to starboard.

From memory and photos (not reproduced) of the wreck we know that the level of the well deck is unbroken.

So M'lud I submit that: From the above I believe it is reasonable to conclude that photo 2 has been identified as the Chrisoula K and it is separated from the rest of the ship. So, unless the wreck has a clear tear on the port side at a point where the fo'c's'le would have ended and such damage extends a minimum of 2.75M towards the keel then the wreck cannot be the Chrisoula K



Because of the logistical problems and depth, the wreck is rarely dived. Despite breaking up there I still much to explore, but bottom time is very limited even on trimix. One "technical guru" asked for her co-ordinates, which I duly supplied. He couldn't find the wreck, there for it doesn't exist! so these images are for him. Sitting in 65-80 mtrs the wreck is offshore, and is usually subject to swell, making it difficult for safari boats to anchor .Attempts to dive the wreck from the north face of Anbu Nuhas have resulted in several incidents of divers running out of air. This should be strongly discouraged.

2018 UPDATE On our last visit the wreck had collapsed in making access to the engine room not only impossible but unsafe, many loose plates were "wafting in the breeze" even at 65 mtrs. A waste of 20/20. The reduced profile of the wreck also made it much more difficult to locate even with the side scan.

A SURVIVORS STORY

"My name is Stephan Jablonski and I understand that some of my experiences as a ships engineer are of interest to sports divers and shipwreck historians such as Peter Collings. I understand that there has been much debate over the identity of some ships which I had worked on between 1971 and 1981. I hope that my story will help solve some of the mysteries.

I am retired now and have been for some 20 years but still recall the events of those years. It is difficult to forget being shipwrecked four times! Indeed in one year I had to abandon ship three times. It was then I decided to retire.

I had worked on many ships from the early 50's, moving from one to another as ship owners sold vessels and shipping companies came and went. Sometimes it would be the same employer but trading under a different name and in some cases ships names would change during a working period. I worked on all kinds of vessels mainly very old steamships, usually general cargo vessels, which sometimes carried passengers. Most were Polish and Greek and many of my fellow Poles worked on these ships too, as there was much poverty back home in Poland. We were very much at the mercy of the employers and wages were not good but the sea was a better option than some of the jobs available back home.

In 1978 I was employed by the Vikki Shipping Line. They were a Greek merchant fleet, made up of very old ships. Most ships had a supply of photos of the vessel which could be used as postcards, and these were used by the crew to keep families back home informed of our travels. I have collected and kept one whenever I could.

Quite often the ship would have a different name on the postcard. (I have previously sent one of these to Peter because of his interest in the ships). It was on my third voyage for this company that I had my first experience of being shipwrecked, although I had been on board ships during many groundings and collisions. Hardly a voyage went by without seeing or being involved in an incident. In May of '78 I had been moved to a newly purchased vessel - a four hold freighter with four big offset diesel generators to port to the starboard side of her engine was the pump house She was a real rust bucket (as my English crew mates would say) but the engines were well maintained. Peter's underwater shots of the engine room brought back memories. It was the only ship I ever worked on with this kind of layout. It would be very eerie to go back - if I were fit and brave enough!

She was called the Marcus, I remember arriving and seeing her old name being painted out - I don't recall the K being fitted to her funnel, but they certainly were on the next three ships I worked on. There seemed to be some urgency in leaving. We were in ballast and heading for Italy - a regular run - to pick up floor tiles - stacked on pallets - bound for Saudi Arabia, some Sheikh's palace no doubt! I always looked forward to this run because it took two days to load the cargo and there were some nice Italian ladies we had become friendly with!

We headed south through the Canal and with my shift over I went to bed. I was awakened in the early hours by a tremendous noise of screeching metal, utter panic and crew running everywhere. We had run aground on a reef. For the next six hours we tried to stop the water flooding into the ship. The engine room was in six ft of water and it was rising. The ship was settling by the stern and the accommodation block was soon underwater. By now several ships had stopped and had sent their boats to help. We abandoned the ship - I could not get back to retrieve my personal things and lost all my tools, but I had always carried my passport and important papers everywhere - vital for a Pole outside his country in those days. The Egyptians and Israelis were always suspicious and I didn't fancy being shot as a spy. There was a big swell running and one of the life boats was washed onto the reef, although no one was badly hurt the coral was very sharp and the men had lots of cuts.

I didn't know exactly where we were but it was near a big island to the west of the shipping lane. We were taken on board one of the vessels heading back for Suez. I was told that the ship had run out of control - a steering problem and caught in the swell had ran onto the reef.

After a month or so I got a new berth, and then in 1981 while working on the Elphinki I was again shipwrecked this time in the Mediterranean. Then in August I was on another cargo ship the Chrisoula and found myself reliving the journey of my first shipwreck. Off to Italy, although after taking on the cargo of tiles, we had to make an "emergency" stop. Syracuse I was later told.

The bridge reported warning lights on the instrument panels and although we found no faults on the engines we were ordered to make a full overhaul of the engines. That was a hard 18hr shift. Then we were given the all clear and the engines re started and we continued south through the Suez Canal, but we were much higher in the water. I was puzzled at this but now realize we had discharged the cargo. During my next shift I was working in the generator room when suddenly the ship ground to a halt and there was that now familiar sound of twisting screaming metal. I ran up onto deck and thought I was dreaming there was that island and again there was the same reef in front of us. We were still afloat but held fast by the bow and the swell was pushing the ship deeper into the reef.

Although it didn't seem as though we were sinking we were ordered into the boats. As we left I noticed the bow of my old ship the Marcus, sticking out of the water close by. I was later told that we had ran aground on Abu Nuhas. I decided at this point that I should retire and after being landed at Alexandria I returned home to Poland"

SECOND INTERVIEW-----

During my second visit to see Stephan. I had gathered some additional questions , posed by other team members Here are some of the more interesting ones.

PC Can you remember the layouts of the Marcus and Chrisoula, for instance where the workshops were.

SJ “ The sketch you showed me is correct - the workshop was on the portside at deck level while on the Chrisoula it was in the engine room. There were two generators in the Chrisoula and four in the Marcus”

PC was there a K on the funnel of the Marcus?

SJ- “No when I arrived it was being painted and the previous emblem had been removed”

PC How different were the cargoes – take a look at these pictures (taken on the tile wreck)

SJ. “From what I remember, there were various sizes on the Chrisoula - these look like smaller ones, also the Marcus was carrying some figurines, like angels”

PC could they have been Cheribs?, like you would see in a church?

SJ “Could have been we were told the entire cargo was for one Sheik- He must have been very rich.”

PC Like this (producing a photo of small figures from the home of an ex English skipper working in Egypt at the time)

SJ “ Yes I remember seeing a lot of them in crates”.

PC On the last voyage on the Chrisoula why do you think you put into Syracuse, last time we spoke you were doubtful of the engine trouble/

SJ. “There was some talk of taking the cargo to a different buyer for a higher price. That happened a lot. I’ve even heard of ships changing owners during a voyage leaving port under one name and arriving under another”.

PC Where did your wages come from?

SJ “Always from the VSL office, but I never got my last wages I was told that Kavados had gone missing, he was wanted by the authorities. You learned not to ask too many questions”

PC Can you think of any other differences with the ships - were was the galley for instance

SJ “They were all similar-even the Viki K general four hold ships usually diesels. I think Marcus was the biggest of those four - Only the Marcus had a galley behind the engine house. They were all quite old and the hulls in need of attention”

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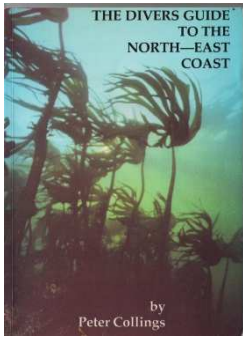
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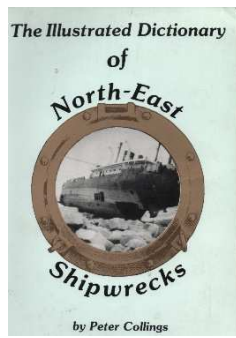


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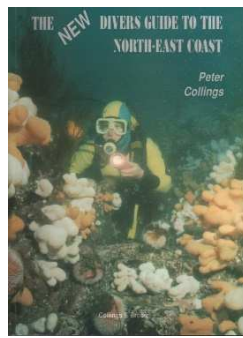
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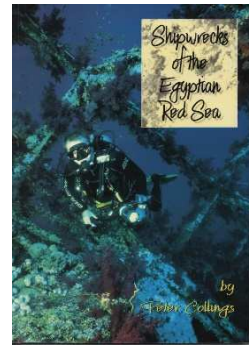
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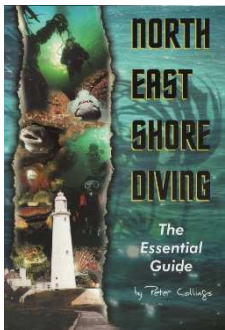
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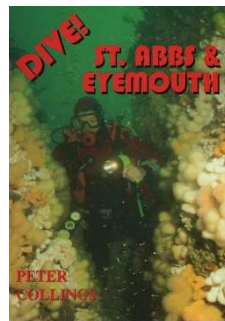
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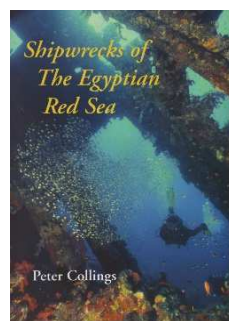
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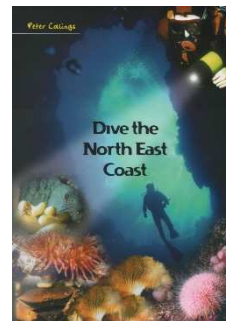
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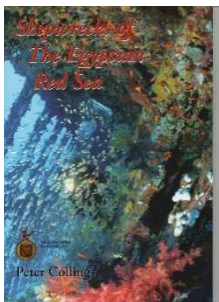
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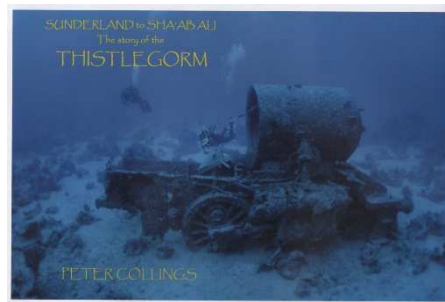
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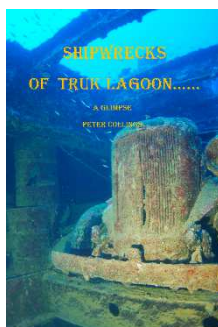
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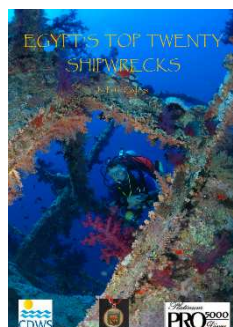
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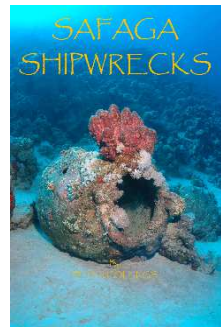
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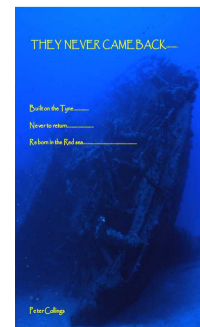
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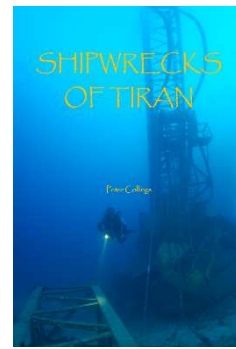
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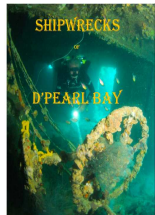


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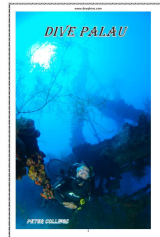
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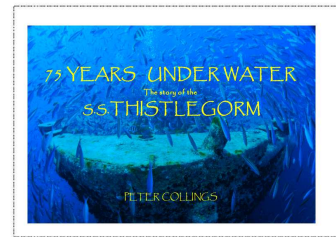
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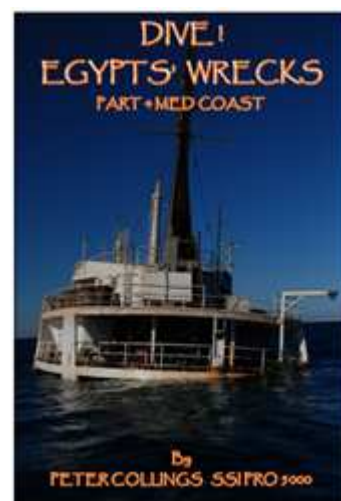
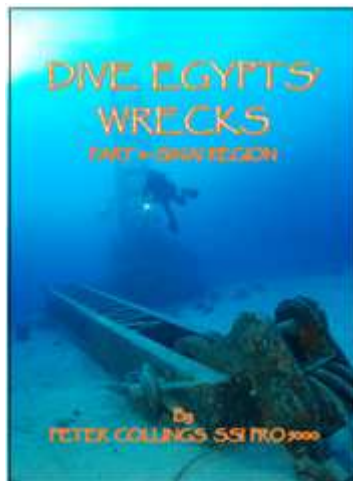


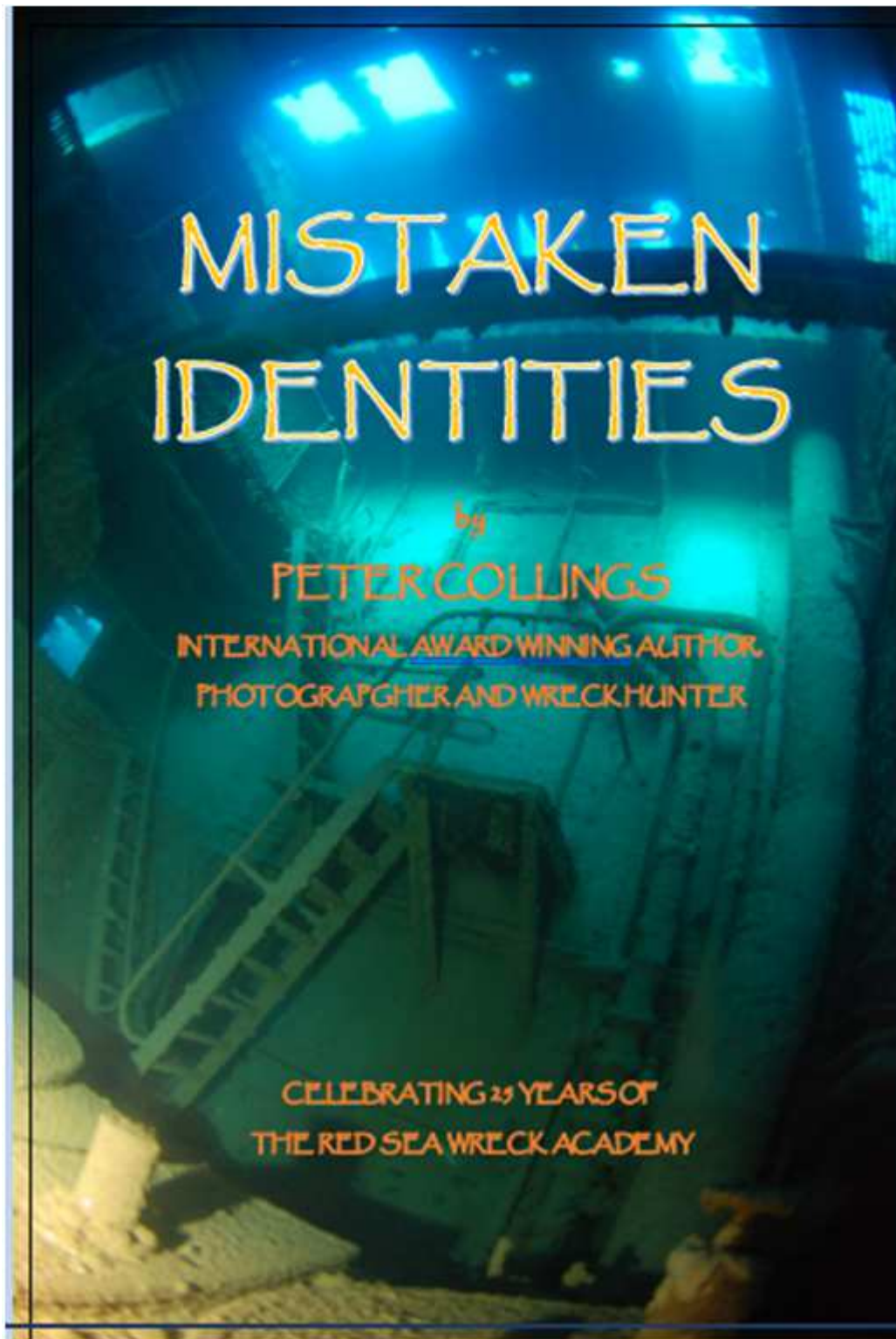
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PETER COLLINGS

Peter began diving in 1970. In 1985 he wrote the first of 35 diving related books, and has won several international awards for his publications and underwater photography. His articles and photographs have appeared consistently throughout the international diving press since 1983,

A BSAC Advanced instructor, (Red Sea Wreck Academy) SSI PRO 5000 DIVER and TDI Advance Trimix diver, Peter has lead over 500 wreck and photo safaris around the world, logging over 7500 dives, and along with his regular team of experts has located and identified many of the shipwrecks in Egyptian waters.

Peter has worked closely with several tourist Authorities such as ESTA, Istria, Chuuk and most recently Leros Active writing and publishing a 25 title series of E-guide books. Several more locations are earmarked in this series of guides which promote tourism through shipwrecks.





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Its success lead to more titles being produced and published .Initially with an Egyptian theme, the Thistlegom, Rosalie Moller and the Russian warranted a volume to themselves. Tourist authorities have noticed the importance of their assets. Wrecks are living underwater museums, and commissions have flooded in from Leros, Egypt, Truk, Palau,Sri Lanka Subic Bay, and Busuanga, to name but a few.

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PETER COLLINGS SSI PRO 5000

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