

On Monday, September 19, 2005, five divers met in Barcelona, NY, to go diving on Osprey Charters. The divers were Dave Stoebe, Jeff Thompson, Rick Landsman, Dean Ziegler, and Kevin Magee. The originally intended wreck was the "Swallow," but since there were only a few divers, Jim Herbert decided instead to give a sneak preview of a new wreck called the "Admiralty Wreck," or "Schooner G." This is an unidentified two-masted schooner of an early design in 170' of water. It is currently under admiralty arrest by a group that is convinced it is a very early 1600-1700's ship and may be carrying "treasure." The weather was quite pleasant with 70-75 deg F air temperatures, a clear and sunny sky, and 1'-2' seas. However, there was considerable difficulty in getting the wreck hooked, and after many valiant but fruitless attempts, it was decided to simply dive a shot line to the wreck.

Visibility was 8'-10' on the surface, the surface water was 73 deg F, there was a sharp thermocline at 80', and below it was relatively warm 43 deg F water. Visibility below the thermocline was very good at 50'-100', but it was dark and required a good light. The shot line came down between the two standing masts, which were first seen at 100' with crosstrees on both of them and topmasts that have been snapped off. No wire rigging was evident. Upon reaching the deck, the ship can be seen to have a list to starboard by about 30 degrees with the starboard railing exposed about 3' above the silt. The bow points west and is dominated by an ornate scrolled figurehead. It is an older style that is oversized and does not cleanly blend with the shearwater on the stem. Instead, it curves downwards and then back to blend with the sides of the ship. It appears much like the old "chin" style seen on 1700-1800's European warships. The bowsprit is not attached and lies on the bottom perpendicular to the ship on the starboard side. The knightheads show it did not attach immediately above the figurehead but instead aft by a significant distance.

The port anchor lies with its metal stock flat on the foredeck. Its cathead has been ripped free of the railing and lies attached to the anchor on the deck. The anchor's chain runs across the railing and hangs towards the stem. The starboard cathead is intact, but the starboard anchor was not seen. A windlass is mounted on the foredeck with a samson post immediately in front of it. The top of the post is not flat but instead has a unique pyramid-like shape. Behind the windlass is the foremast with a set of four deadeyes on the railing. Lying against the starboard railing adjacent to the foremast are a boom and gaff, indicating this vessel was schooner rigged. Aft of the foremast is a rather small cargo opening in the middle of the deck filled nearly up to the top with silt. The type of cargo was not immediately obvious without digging into the silt. Aft of the cargo opening is the mainmast with a set of three deadeyes on the railing. Curiously, no capstan was sighted. Each mast has an integral fife rail, but it is only on the back half of each mast, which is quite unusual. Aft of the mainmast is another cargo opening nearly identical to the first, and behind this is the intact ship's cabin.

The cabin is a small, low profile design. There is only one companionway, and it is centered on the forward wall. The companionway still has the front door in place, but the sliding overhead door is missing with only the rails remaining. There appears to have been windows on the sides of the cabin, but they would have been only a couple of feet high due to the low height of the cabin. There are missing boards on the roof along both sides, and peering inside reveals vertical stairs leading down from the companionway. The cabin is about a third filled with silt, and a shelf can be seen along the back wall of the cabin. There are significant dwelling spaces underneath the deck on both the sides and aft. There is a circular hole in the port side of the cabin roof that may have been the stovepipe exit. However, the ship's stove is lying on its side on the deck against the starboard railing next to the aft hatch. This suggests the stove was mounted on the deck amidships rather than inside the cabin, a common practice with early sailing vessels. Another unusual feature is two individual single-cylinder hand pumps, one each on the forward corners of the cabin. The handles are missing, but the piston rods remain.

Behind the cabin is a tiller on the steering deck, the sign of an early schooner. There is a yawl boat davit on the port corner of the transom, but the starboard davit is missing. The transom is unique in that it has two large square windows that open into the cabin. The cabin is filled with silt up to the level of the windows, and wooden debris can be seen inside. The rudder is fully exposed below and is turned slightly to starboard. Because the ship lies with a starboard list, the entire port side is exposed, and the underside lines of the entire ship can be seen on this side. The ship has a large amount of relief with the port railing about 10'-15' above the bottom, and the entire length of the ship was estimated to be roughly 100'.

Overall, the ship is very intact, not too buried, and contains many unique and interesting features not seen on other wrecks. It is obviously of an early construction style, but it was definitely a schooner-rigged vessel. Therefore, it probably dates from roughly the 1850's in construction. Maximum depth was 166', 20/35 trimix was used with 50% nitrox and 100% O₂, bottom time was 20 minutes, and total run time was 54 minutes. Another trip was made to this site on Saturday, September 24, and pictures of the wreck taken by Jack Papes are posted on the following web site.

http://www.n2junkie.com/schooner_g.htm