

The Hazardous Project Site Report - October 2002.

Introduction

This year it was decided to use one full weekend a month, starting in April and utilizing the best neap tides for work on site and running the diver trail.

In the event, after a first dive in early April to fit the new marker buoy and chain bad weather prevented diving on site until June and then zero visibility meant that no useful survey work could be carried out until late in the month, however considerable seabed movement was noted on the western side of the site adjacent to the hull timbers and under the cannon in that area during the April dive. The north and south ends of the site appeared fairly stable. The central area seabed levels fluctuate constantly.

Year 2002 Objectives.

Continued improvements and additions to museum displays.

Development of the site database from hard copy to computer, enabling efficient data analysis.

Continued operation of the diver trail.

Development of long-term management strategy based on results of fieldwork.

Dissemination of information by presentations and report/publication.

Field work

Thirteen days of diving have been conducted on site throughout the year, during this time a new site buoy was installed; the diver trail underwent running repairs after the winter and three trips for visiting divers were arranged. Filming for a television documentary also took place.

Results

Development of a digitised site database is continuing and will be added to over the winter months.

Some cleaning and repairs, plus replacement of numbered points around the diver trail were required before it was opened this season. The trail continues to be popular, with over twenty visitors this season, all making positive comments. This initiative will continue in future years.

In response to the continued erosion particularly in the centre of the site a programme of planning was undertaken. An area approx 65sq. metres were planned which included a number of mobile concretions, the subject of previous planning within this area.

The ADU have carried out a high-resolution bathymetric survey of the site using Reson's multibeam system.

In addition to the planning, which can be used to monitor the condition of the site, ten monitoring points were established. These are placed on the timber structure at the northern end of the site; from these, timber degradation is being monitored in addition to seabed levels. Research is ongoing into the artefacts and site formation of the Hazardous by a post-graduate student from the University of Southampton.

Charles Trollope, who was brought in as part of a TV documentary, has carried out identification of some of the cannon on the seabed.

After planning the relevant areas, a series of timber samples were taken for dendrochronological analysis, also as part of a TV documentary. A report on these samples is forthcoming, interpretation of which may reveal evidence of the vessels rebuild in 1704.

Artefacts

No loose artefacts were found on site this season.

However eight concretions have been raised from the site, these were x-rayed at Portsmouth Naval Dockyard non-destructive testing facility. Most of these concretions were opened as part of a NAS part III course, a full compliment of ten students attended. All artefacts recovered will now go into conservation.

Public Relations

The Hazardous has been the subject of a TV documentary for the forthcoming 'Wreck Detectives' series, produced by RDF Media to be shown early in the New Year on Channel Four. This involvement has enabled a number of initiatives to take place, namely: the dendro sampling, x-raying, cannon research, plus the donation to the project of a number of receptacles for the wet storage of concretions and artefacts prior to conservation.

Diving Schedule

Diving operations were carried out on thirteen separate days. This resulted in 4105 minutes spent underwater by nineteen divers.

Intentions for 2003

Continue monitoring variations in seabed levels and timber degradation, using points set up this year.

Carry out further planning of areas / artefacts exposed due to erosion.

Survey and recover artefacts exposed by erosion and under threat of loss or damage
Continue with conservation of artefacts in wet storage at present.

Continue operation of the diver trail.

Continue improvements and additions to museum display.
