

## BROOKLYN DIVING: YOU'LL NEVAH FUGGETABOUTIT!

By Janice Raber

In a tone that commands your attention, Captain Bill Reddan's briefing begins. When he is through, you will know what to expect of him and his crew, and you will know what they expect of you. At 6 a.m. sharp both 300-horsepower diesel engines turn over.

Preparations are under way to leave the dock at Pier 5 in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, N.Y. Dr. Al has checked your C-card and made sure the necessary forms have been completed. Captain Marcin makes the rounds doing a head count while everyone gulps that last drop of coffee. This 47-foot crew boat has plenty of room. The cabin offers two large tables with seating for six at each table and additional seating for 12 more.

Today's dive could be on the *Stolt Dagali*, a Norwegian steel-hulled tanker that sunk in 1964. This easy-to-navigate wreck accommodates any diver's ability level. It's the remains of the stern section that broke apart during a collision, and can be reached at 65 feet. More adventurous divers can penetrate easily or explore the outside perimeter to a depth of 120. Visibility can be 30 feet. Marine life is abundant; it's a photographer's dream.

If the *Stolt* is already taken by fishing boats, perhaps we'll try the *Algol*, a neighbor close by. This 470-foot U.S. Navy Attack Transport vessel was deliberately sunk in 1991 as an artificial reef with a diving depth range from 80 to 130 feet.

Or maybe we are going inshore to the *Iberia*. The broken-up steamer sank to the 60-foot bottom in 1888 with a cargo of dates. Surprisingly, the shriveled up dates – hard as marbles now – and parts of the wood crates that held them, can still be found.



▲ Group on *Jeanne II*.

Photo by Janice Raber



▲ John Chominsky & Peter Polischuck and their lobsters.

Photo by Janice Raber

Then there is always the Mystery Wreck at 90 feet, a favorite of the crew for consistently producing good-sized lobsters. It all depends on what the schedule calls for and of course, weather conditions. Captain Bill has earned the title "Prince of the Shallows," because

most of the wrecks The *Jeanne II* visits are within the 60- to 120-foot range, and none exceed the recognized sport diving limit of 130 feet. "You leave early and get back early with time to clean your gear and go out to dinner," says Captain Bill.



# East Coast Diving Supply

- ▣ Local Wreck Diving
- ▣ Worldwide Dive Travel
- ▣ Largest Selection of Equipment in S. Jersey



## Call Today for Our 2008 Dive Schedule!

Phone: 609-646-5090 1002 New Road  
[www.EastCoastDiving.com](http://www.EastCoastDiving.com) [eastcoastdiving@aol.com](mailto:eastcoastdiving@aol.com)  
Northfield, NJ 08225

**Long Islands Most Complete Dive Shop**



**LONG ISLAND**

**SCUBA TRIMIX**

(631) 225-8450

Onsite Heated Pool, Classroom,  
Training Facility & Expert Repair Center.

**895 WELLWOOD AVE. LINDENHURST, N.Y.**  
[www.longislandscuba.com](http://www.longislandscuba.com)

Captain Bill has been running dive boats for almost 40 years and nobody knows these waters better than he does. Born and bred in Brooklyn, as a kid he dove for coins off the piers to the amusement of tourists. He worked the fishing boats as a mate and then became a Coney Island/Jones Beach lifeguard. When he joined the Marines, he advanced to Master Gunnery Sergeant and taught water survival to naval aviators. His swimming and free-diving skills earned him a trophy when he speared a 65-pound striped bass. Afterward with the New York PD, he was lead diver of their Scuba Team. He has been a PADI instructor for 35 years, operates Professional Diving Services, a commercial diving outfit, and runs the *Jeanne II* charter boat.

Brooklyn does not bring scuba diving to mind for most people, but don't take their slogan "Fuggetaboutit" too literally. It is actually a very centralized location for the New York City/Long Island/Tri-state area diver to visit some great shipwrecks in a reasonable amount of time. Some take the train and carry their gear in a duffle bag. Heavy stuff like tanks and weights can be rented from Captain Bill.

No matter your mode of transportation, once you pull up to Pier 5, you can relax. The *Jeanne II* crew meets you at curbside, transfers the gear from your car to a gurney, and loads it on the boat while you find a parking spot and get coffee at the deli across the street.

Surface intervals on the *Jeanne II* are much more than just the passing of time. Besides getting to share dive legends and

lies with other divers, the crews bantering starts early in the morning and will have you laughing. Lunch is complimentary and not to be missed. Marcin serves up specially seasoned hamburgers or hot dogs cooked to order. If you bring something, they will happily barbeque that for you. In addition, the boat has a full galley, with fridge and microwave. Soup, chips, snacks and soft drinks are for sale. Beer is available after diving is over for the day.

By the end of the day you will know everybody and feel like a "regular." To top it all off, since you left early, you will

arrive back at a decent time, and, while you go and fetch your car, the crew will unload the boat and bring all your gear back to curbside. Now, where else can you get valet diving but in Brooklyn? Brooklyn is the gateway for New York wreck diving. Don't "Fuggetaboutit!" ■

*Janice Raber is a Long Island Divers Association officer and a member of the Womens Scuba Diving Hall of Fame as well as several local clubs. She is the former editor of Northeast Dive Journal and can be contacted at SeaShel@aol.com.*



## A whale of a tale!

“ Not many people can say they've been whacked by a whale, but I can. And when I was, DAN was there for me.”

Janet Blackwelder  
DAN Member

”

DAN is here for you.

[www.DiversAlertNetwork.org](http://www.DiversAlertNetwork.org)

For more information, contact  
Divers Alert Network  
6 West Colony Place  
Durham, NC 27705  
Toll Free 1-800-446-2671



\* Testimonial given July 2007

\*Insurance not included with Membership. Membership and insurance information applies only to DAN America. Additional fees apply to add insurance plans. DAN insurance programs administered by DAN Services, Inc. DAN is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

AG-5683

### Blue Fathoms



New Jersey's Finest Scuba Diving



Captain Tony Donetz  
(908) 623-0824

Clarks Landing Marina & Restaurant  
Arnold Avenue  
Point Pleasant, NJ