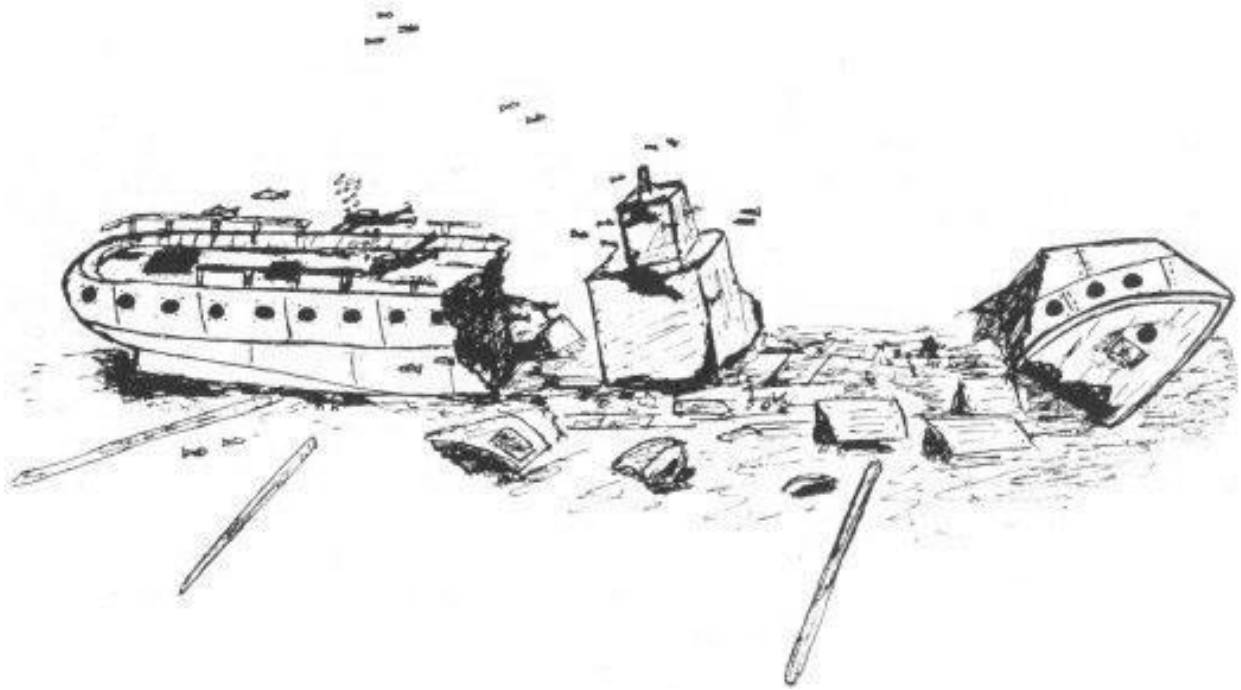


Anguilla Wreck Dive Site Baseline Assessment



Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources



Draft Report (2017)

Introduction

This report presents the most up-to-date information available for the wreck dive sites of Anguilla. This includes the seven established wreck sites (Commerce, Ida Maria, Catheley H, Oosterdiep, Meppel, Lady Vie & Sarah), and the recently relocated lost wreck of the Marva W. This latter wreck is not currently an established dive site due to its deeper depth, but it has the potential to be developed into a technical dive site should it be pursued by dive operators. Most of these wrecks were sunk purposefully to clean up hurricane damaged vessels while providing artificial reef habitat beneficial marine life and therefore the dive industry (although full details for the three older wrecks are still shrouded in some mystery). This report also acts as an introduction for proposed ongoing fish assessments to be conducted on these wrecks by the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources (DFMR). A rapid assessment was conducted in June 2017 to collect data that can be used a comparative baseline for this ongoing proposed work (see appendix A). This work is needed in order to assess the impact of new legislation that is set to protect these wrecks from fishing later this year. Although such protection has been proposed since the 1990 Road bay clean-up project (see appendix B), to date no protective legislation exists. Amendments to the Fisheries Protection Act and Marine Park Act have been proposed by DFMR since 2013, which were approved by Executive Council in May 2016 and are due for drafting in June 2017. Among these amendments is the call to create closed areas under Schedule 4 of the Fisheries Protection Regulations around the established wreck dive sites.

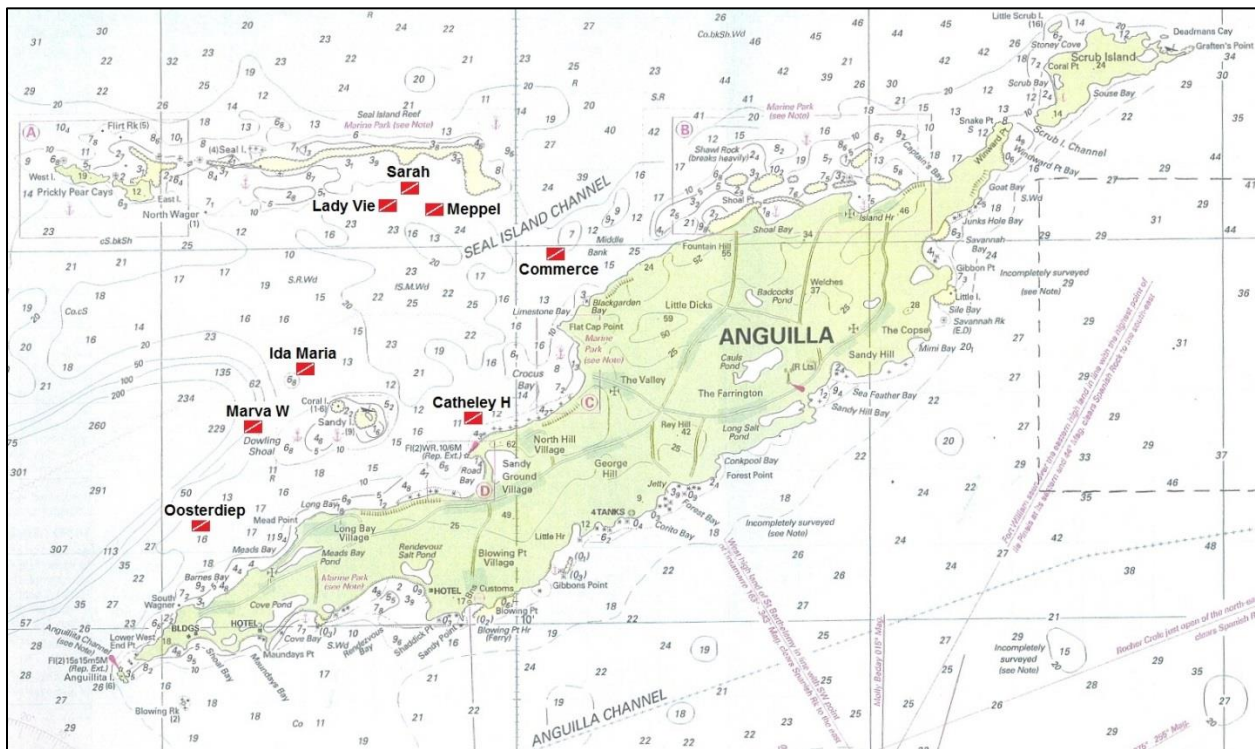


Figure 1: Locations of the seven established wreck dive sites, as well as that for the Marva W (proposed to be a technical dive site due to its deeper depths)

Wreck Name	Commerce
Location	North of Flat Cap Point - 18°14.470 N 63°04.631 W
Estimated Length	100 ft (30 m)
Depth	75 ft (22 m)
Condition	Poor

Details: Originally owned by Clement Daniels and sunk c.1985 as an artificial reef after being decommissioned (no further details known). Stern is tilted to the side and a bit twisted and broken up. Mid-section completely scattered aside from the crane. Lots of debris including very degraded car. Bow is on side but relatively intact. Fish abundance: low.

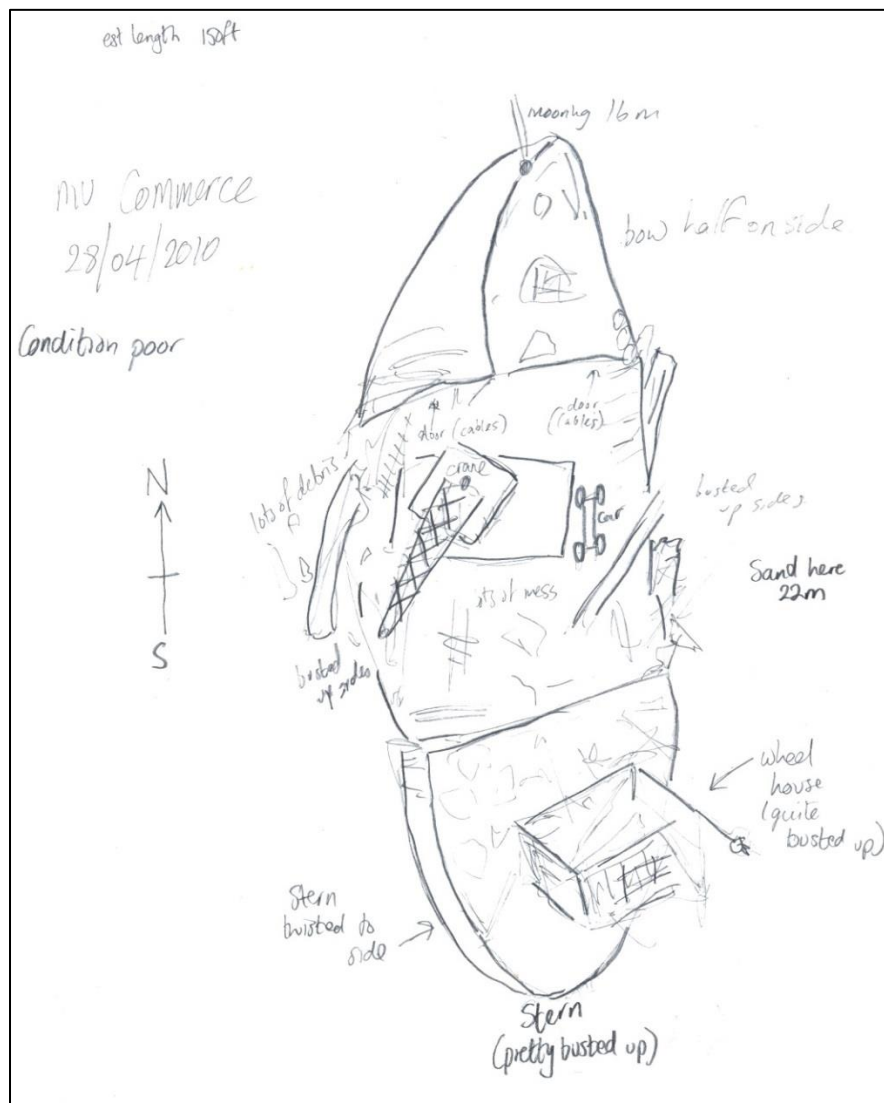


Figure 2: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Commerce from April 2010

Wreck Name	Ida Maria
Location	Near Sandy Island - 18°13.015 N 63°08.193 W
Estimated Length	80 ft (25 m)
Depth	60 ft (18 m)
Condition	Poor

Details: Originally owned by Freddy Hughes and sunk c.1985 as an artificial reef after being decommissioned (no further details known). Reportedly sunk in 1985 (no further details known). Bow is fully detached and laying on its side, and mid-section is completely broken up. Not much debris. Stern is relatively complete. Moderate fish density considering the poor condition of the wreck. Some Barracuda swimming around and schools of chromis (etc), but in general fish abundance: low.

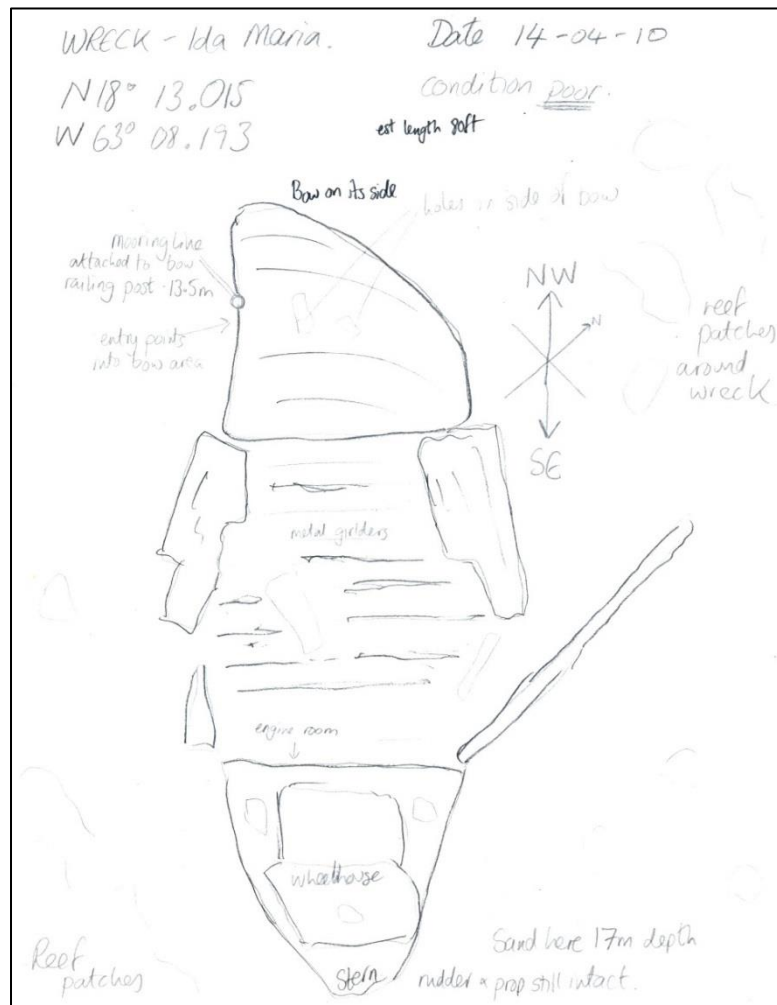


Figure 3: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Ida Maria from April 2010

Wreck Name	Catheley H
Location	NE of Road Point - 18°12.824 N 63°05.598 W
Estimated Length	80 ft (25 m)
Depth	60 ft (18 m)
Condition	Moderate to Poor

Details: Rumored to have been built in 1918 by the British. Originally owned by Carl Gumbs and was being prepared for intentional sinking in 1995 when a fire broke out below deck and sunk it on its anchorage prematurely. Apparently garbage and debris was being burned when a crew member sustained a leg injury and everyone left the vessel to tend the wound. The next morning the vessel had sunk. This is why the wreck looks older when compared to those sank in 1990. Sometimes alternative spellings are used such as Katheley H, Kathly H or Cathely H. Stern is intact, but mid-section twisted and broken up. No debris, but filled with sand and many discarded conch shells, with mid-deck upright still intact (7m). Bow is complete and upright, with twisted hull sections reminiscent of a Humpback Whale. Fish abundance: moderate.

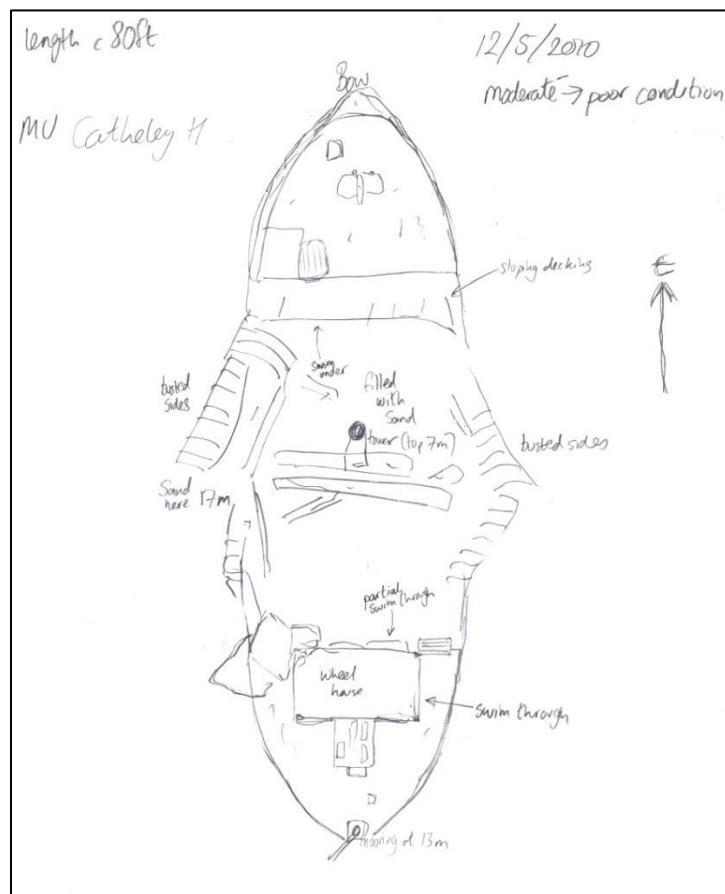


Figure 4: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Catheley H from May 2010

Wreck Name	Oosterdiep
Location	West of Meads Point - 18°11.521 N 63°09.473 W
Estimated Length	130 ft (40 m)
Depth	75 ft (22 m)
Condition	Good

Details: Sunk during the 1990 Road Bay clean-up operation (see newspaper clipping in appendix). Wreck is almost intact, although mid-section gunwale of starboard side is broken off and hull edge is degrading. A rogue car is located off the starboard side of the stern. Often a lot of Barracuda swimming around over this wreck, and has a tendency to have better water visibility than most of the others. Fish abundance: high.

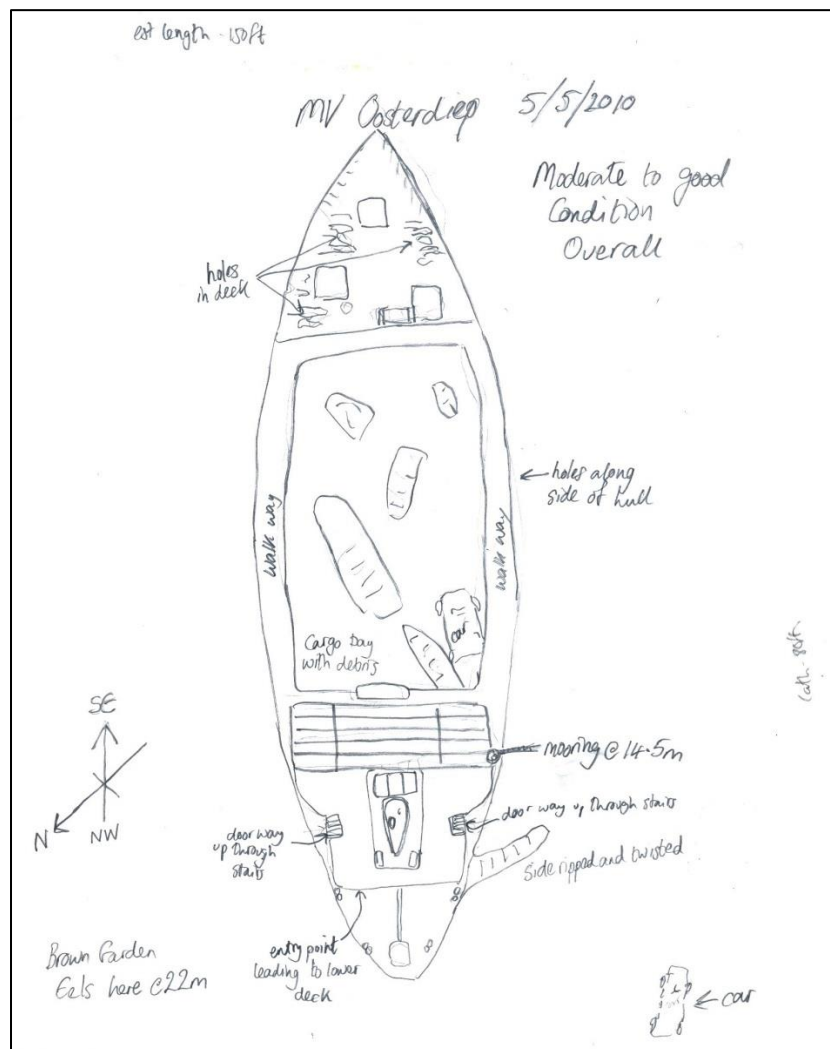


Figure 5: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Oosterdiep from May 2010

Wreck Name **Meppel**

Location Long Reef - 18°15.458 N 63°05.956 W

Estimated Length 130 ft (40 m)

Sea Floor Depth 80 ft (25 m)

Condition Good

Details: Sunk during the 1990 Road Bay clean-up operation (see newspaper clipping in appendix). Fully intact with amazing swim through hull cargo area under crane assembly. Very little debris. Fish abundance: high – mainly due to schooling grunts.

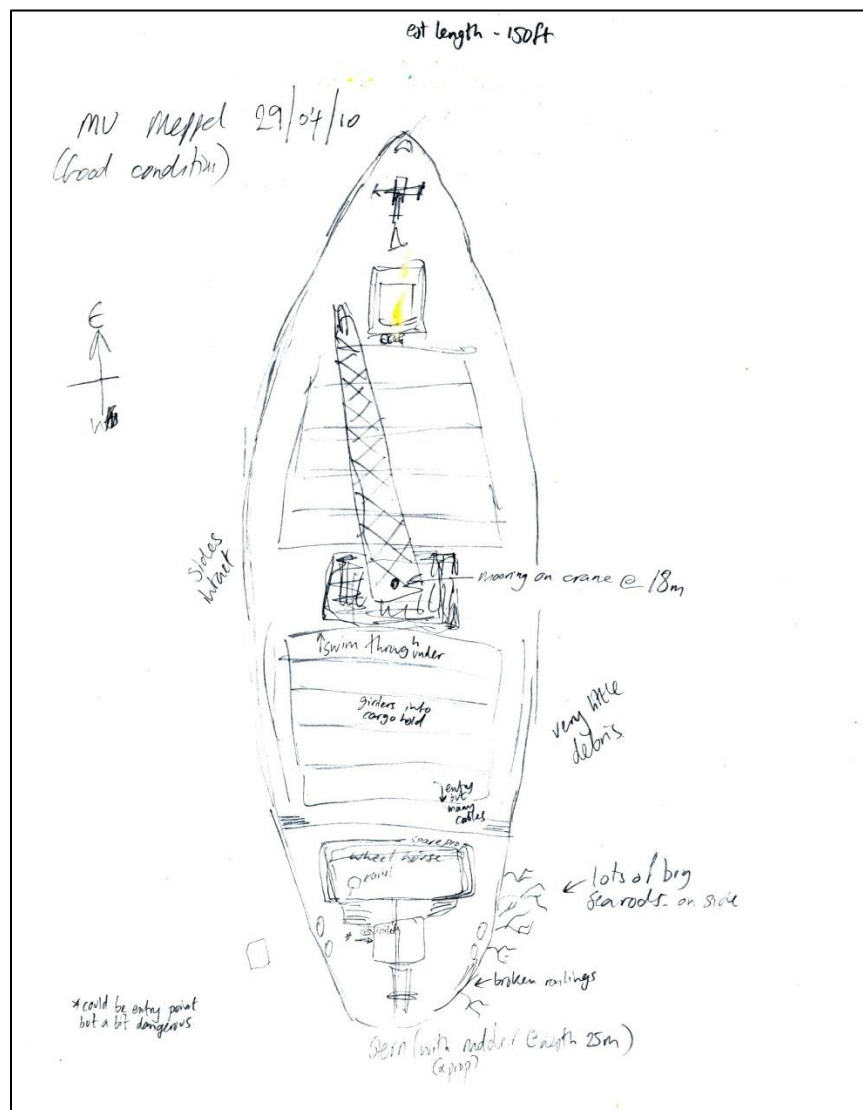


Figure 6: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Meppel from April 2010

Wreck Name **Sarah**

Location Long Reef - 18°15.822 N 63°06.313 W

Estimated Length 200 ft (60 m)

Sea Floor Depth 80 ft (25 m)

Condition Good

Details: Sunk during the 1990 Road Bay clean-up operation (see newspaper clipping in appendix). Almost intact, aside from parts of hull broken and a little twisted near the bow. Being the largest of wrecks, with amazing swim through options and lots to explore, this is often rated as the best dive to be done in Anguilla. Fish abundance: very high.

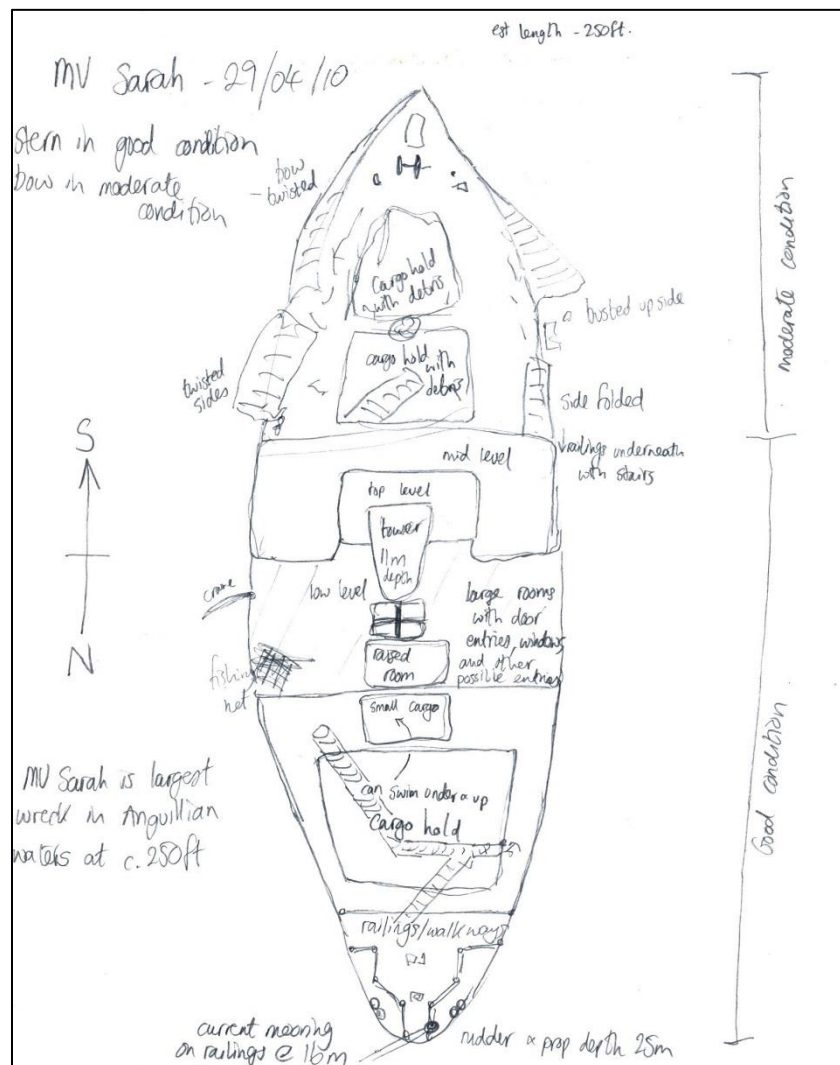


Figure 8: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Sarah from April 2010

Wreck Name	Lady Vie
Location	Long Reef 18°15.592 N 63°06.697 W
Estimated Length	130 ft (40 m)
Depth	75 ft (23 m)
Condition	Good

Details: Sunk during the 1990 Road Bay clean-up operation (see newspaper clipping in appendix). Fully intact although crane is snapped and bent at right angle. Good swim through under crane and into debris field of 3-4 degraded cars and other bits. Schooling fish, including frequent schools of large jacks. Fish abundance: moderate.

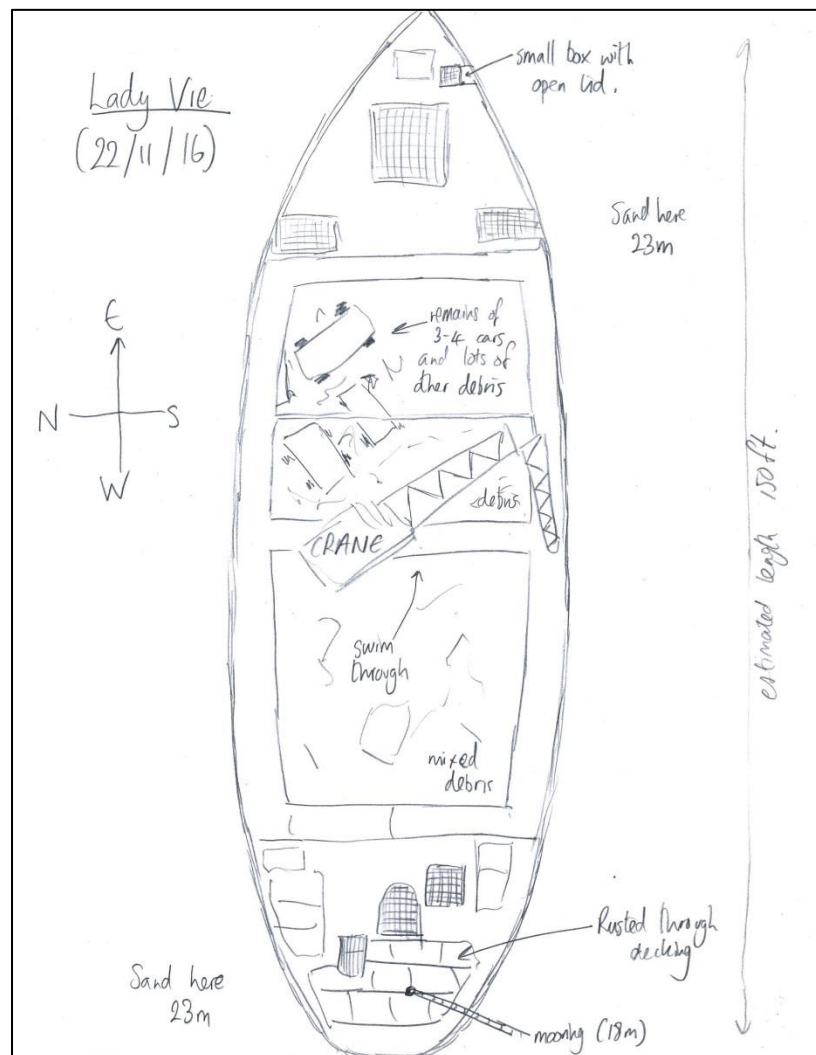


Figure 7: Hand-drawn sketch of MV Lady Vie from November 2016 (location was lost at the time the last sketches for the other wrecks were made).

Wreck Name	Marva W
Location	West of Sandy Island - 18°12.514 N 63°08.727 W
Estimated Length	130 ft (40 m)
Sea Floor Depth	200 ft (60 m)
Condition	Good

Details: It is thought that this vessel was sunk during the 1990 Road Bay clean-up operation. However, this is not mentioned in the newspaper clipping (appendix), but this may be as when it was sunk it reportedly drifted down off course and disappeared into the deep channel near Authors Deep dive site. This depth was confirmed when the wreck was relocated during 2016 through new bathymetry work and dived by Stuart Wynne and Rob Willsher. It sits in 60 m of water, but it can be seen from 30 m when good visibility and has an upright at 45m. Thus it does have potential as a technical dive site. The vessel looked completely intact, and almost pristine with little damage or marine growth and few fish. Lies orientated almost exactly east to west (bow to stern). This will all need confirming on a later when dive site potential is fully assessed.

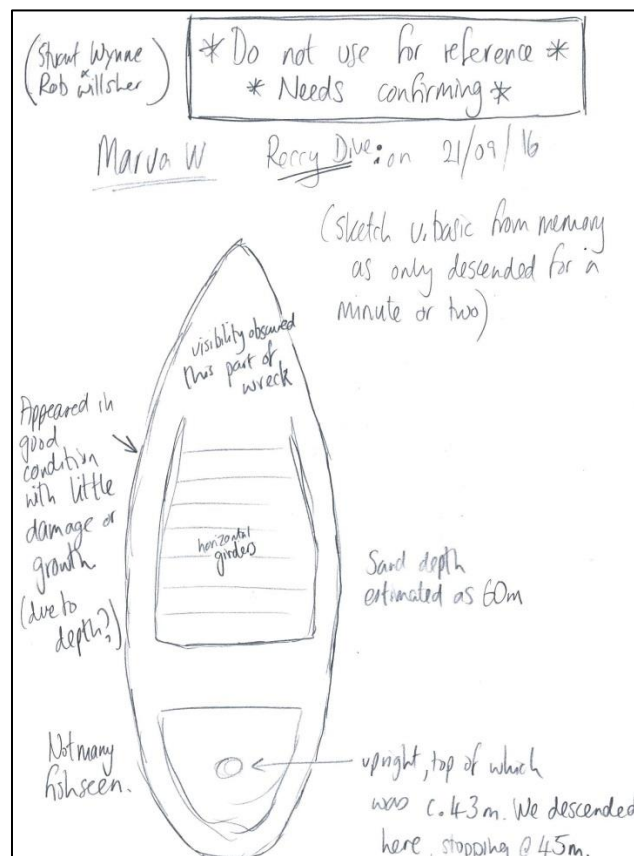
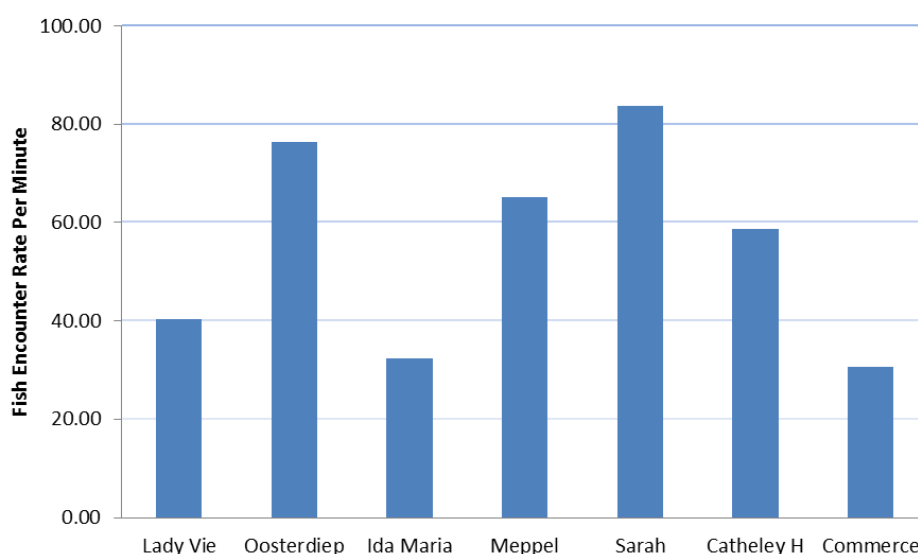


Figure 9: Hand-drawn 'memory sketch' of MV Marva W from September 2016

Appendix A – Result summary from 2017 fish abundance surveys

Preliminary results from fish abundance surveys conducted during June 2017 are illustrated below. These results will be presented in more detail in a later report, and also used as a baseline figures for future comparisons following legal protection of these wrecks as artificial reef dive sites. In the table and figure below wrecks were placed into fish abundance categories based on fish encounter rate per minute. Categories were: very low (0 – 20.0), low (20.1 – 40.0), moderate (40.1 – 60.0), high (60.1 – 80.0), and very high (over 80.1). Categories may be misleading without looking at results in more detail, where, for example ‘Sarah’ ranked as ‘very high’ and ‘Lady Vie’ ranked as ‘moderate’ although they only just passed the category threshold. Also, seasonal differences may occur, where, for example, some sites ranked highly due to the presence of mixed schools of juvenile grunts.

	Mean Fish Count	Encounter Rate min-1	Number of Species	Density m2	Density h-1	Fish Abundance
Lady Vie	605.00	40.33	31	1.61	16132.93	Moderate
Oosterdiep	1145.67	76.38	38	3.06	30550.35	High
Ida Maria	485.00	32.33	40	1.29	12933.01	Low
Meppel	976.00	65.07	48	2.60	26026.02	High
Sarah	1255.33	83.69	38	3.35	33474.72	Very High
Catheley H	880.00	58.67	32	2.35	23466.08	Moderate
Commerce	461.00	30.73	37	1.23	12293.03	Low



Appendix B: Road Bay Clean-Up Newspaper Article. The Chronicle July 19th 1990

THE CHRONICLE
THE DAILY NEWSPAPER FOR THE NORTHEASTERN CARIBBEAN
THURSDAY, JULY 19, 1990 9

Ambitious Salvage Project Ends Successfully

By BRENDA CARTY

THE VALLEY, Anguilla - One of the most ambitious salvage operations in the region was completed last week successfully as the last of the Road Bay wrecks, the m.v. Sarah, was towed away and sunk in her final resting place.

Many boatloads of people were on hand last Tuesday to watch the sinking of the Sarah off the north coast of Anguilla, bringing to an end the salvage and artificial reef programme carried out by Resolve Salvage and Towing Company of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The aim of the project was twofold - to remove five wrecked vessels which were navigational hazards in Road Bay, and at the same time to create artificial reefs, which will be major scuba diving attractions, by re-sinking these same wrecks in more appropriate locations.

The project, which began in early June, involved a lot of hard work and complex planning and preparation, and the salvage company's owner/manager, Joe Farrell, paid tribute to the stamina and hard work of his crew.

The most difficult part of the operation was the removal of the 800-ton Sarah, which has been both a navigational hazard and an eyesore since it ran aground in Road Bay in 1984.

The Sarah was pulled into an almost upright position by a parbuckling system, several weeks ago, but before she could be moved the salvage operators had to remove tons of sand from inside, a job that continued 24 hours a day for 8 days.

Much of the sand had to be removed by hand from the engine room and other inaccessible areas.

Despite removing 150 tons of sand, she was still listing between 15-19 degrees, so the tripods welded on her side were left on while she was carefully towed to a position four miles north of Catouche Bay and half a mile from Seal Island Reef.

Once safely in position, two of the tripods were removed and the steel-hulled freighter was sunk in 75 feet of water.

One of the Resolve divers who inspected Sarah's position said she is sitting straight up on a sandy bottom, near which he also reported sighting several very large starfish, up to two feet in diameter.

Two of the other Road Bay wrecks removed in the operation, the m.v. Meppel and m.v. Lady Vie, were sunk near the Sarah, about 1,000 yards apart.

The fourth wreck, the m.v. Oosterdiep, was sunk one mile off Barnes Bay, while the m.v. Christel, which was salvaged from the Yellow Cliff, has been sold.

The four wrecks were sunk as part of an artificial reef programme organised by the government-appointed Marine Task Force.

David Carty, the permanent secretary for Environment and Education, played an instrumental role in the wreck removal programme. He told *The Chronicle*: "I am extremely pleased with the project and believe it will be of enormous environmental benefit to Anguilla."

He added that he was particularly pleased that the project was a joint public/private sector effort, with the government giving the private sector a major say in it through the Marine Task Force. He also expressed appreciation to the banks and hotels which helped financially.

Other members of the Task Force include Albert Stephenson, Roland Hodge, Harris Richardson, Mike Emmanuel and Evan Owen, all of whom worked hard to ensure the success of the operation.

Carty said the areas where the wrecks have been sunk will be designated protected areas, serving as havens for marine life as well as a major tourist attraction for scuba divers.

Carty said the sites will be promoted internationally through the Marine Heritage Society, Medhurst Associates and the government itself, through the Tourism Board.

Additional publicity will be gained through television coverage of the salvage and reef-creation operation. Third Coast Productions filmed the project and will be producing two programmes about Anguilla for Scuba World, which reaches 25 million homes worldwide.

Owner/Producer Perry Tong and Jim Aden, the director of sales and marketing, together with actress Tracey Millhollan, were in Anguilla for two weeks filming the salvage and sinking.

Resolve's Joe Farrell, in a relaxed interview last week, said he was very pleased with the results of the project, adding that the co-operation of the government, the Marine Task Force and all those involved, could not have been better.



... and up she rises! The 'Sarah' being raised in Road Bay.



One of the four other vessels salvaged from Road Bay, 'The Oosterdiep' being towed ashore to be stripped and cleaned.



Oosterdiep being sunk. The wrecks will form a habitat for marine life and an attraction for divers.



Tripods welded onto the hull were used to pull the Sarah upright.



With a gentle splash, the Sarah sinks majestically to her watery grave.