MAST Field School

- Offered by the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Marine Option Program in collaboration with NOAA Office of Marine Sanctuaries.

- Involves student hands-on learning
  - Teamwork
  - SCUBA Diving
  - Underwater Archaeological Techniques

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Finding Our Wreck

- AWOIS Buoy was all that previously marked the site.
  - (Automated Wrecks and Obstructions Information System)

- Discovered by divers Blade Shepherd-Jones and Steve Price.

- Provided a location to Dr. Hans Van Tilburg.
Underwater Mapping Techniques

- Techniques used:
  - Baseline Trilateration
  - Baseline Offsets
  - Photography
UH MOP MAST course
NOAA ONMS Heritage Survey
O'ahu, June 23-July 3, 2014
Landing Ship Medium (LSM) stern

Divers:
Sean Dinoff
Kristen Tovar
Brooke Basse
George Huss
Gwen Larrow
Elizabeth Kain
Julie Rose

Final Map
Identifying the Wreck

- Evidence found in the wreckage:
  - Skeg structure

Jeff Kuwabara

Navsource
Identifying the Wreck

- Evidence found in the wreckage:
  - Skeg structure
  - Evidence of prepared sinking
Ship Specifications

Wreckage Specifications
- Beam: 33’ to 38’
- Overall width: Roughly 39’
- Overall wreck length: Roughly 114’

Landing Ship, Medium Specifications
- Beam: 34’ 6’’
- Length: 203’ 6’’

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Landing Ship, Medium (LSM)

- Played its major role in World War II amphibious operations.
- A total of 558 were constructed.
- Technologically behind at peak production.
Features of Landing Ship, Medium
Narrowing the Search

LSM’s sunk near O‘ahu:

LSM 299  
LSM 265
History of LSM 265

- Built in Newark, New Jersey and launched June 1944.
- Trained in Virginia and California.
- Operations in Okinawa Shima, Ie Shima, Southern Philippines, and Wakayama, Japan.
- In 1945, sustained damage in the Far East Pacific. Underwent repairs in Guam.
- After the war, recommended for decommissioning and disposal.
Disposal of LSM 265

- Disposed March 6, 1946 outside of Pearl Harbor, Hawai‘i.

- Target practice for US Navy Submarines.

- Footage of the sinking used in the movies *Operation Pacific* and *The Fighting Coast Guard*. 
Supporting Evidence LSM-265

- Disposal recorded outside of Pearl Harbor in 1946.
- Hawai‘i’s high energy environment.
- Torpedo damage.
Evidence Lacking for LSM-265

- Reported sinking was 20 years before AWOIS report.
- The US Navy sinks its ships in deep water.
- Missing indicators on the wreck:
  - freeboard
  - superstructure
  - engines
History of LSM 299

- Built at Charleston Navy Yard, 1944.
- Served in the Asia-Pacific Theater.
- Performed occupation duty after WWII.
- In 1946 was decommissioned and added to the Pacific Reserve Fleet.
- In 1960 registered as a barge by Oahu Railway & Land in Honolulu.
History of LSM 299

- Changed hands several times.
- The final company was Hawaiian Tug & Barge Co, Ltd.
- Name was changed to HTB 8 in 1963.
- In 1966 HTB 8 was declared a loss and abandoned by the company.
Supporting Evidence LSM-299

- No record of final location.

- Abandoned the same year as the AWOIS report (1966).
Evidence for Other Barge

- We cannot confirm the wreck’s identity.
- One other major possibility:
  - Another converted barge.
Where do we go from here?

• Use as a recreational diving site
  • Increase public recognition.
  • Preservation of the wreck site (no touch, no impact)
  • Another expedition to the wreck.
MAST Field School Staff

Instructor: Hans Van Tilburg Ph.D.
Assistant Instructor: Don Froning
Boating Operations: Scott Godwin, Jason Leonard, Brian Hauk, LT Jonathan Taylor, ENS Hadley Owen
Consultants: Alexis Catsambis Ph.D., Blair Atcheson
MOP Director: Cindy Hunter Ph.D.

Student Crew: Brooke Basse, Sean Dimoff, George Huss, Gwedolyn Larrow, Elizabeth Kain, Julia Rose, Kristen Tovar

Teaching Assistants: Taylor Shedd, Tate Wester
Logistical Support/Photographer: Jeffrey Kuwabara
QUESTIONS?