

D/V TENACIOUS

ATLANTIC WRECK SALVAGE, L.L.C.

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DIVER MAKES ARCHEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY ON *TITANIC*'S SISTER SHIP, *HMHS BRITANNIC*, AS PART OF BRITISH-LED EXPEDITION

BOSTON – A British-led expedition to explore the sunken wreck of *Titanic*'s sister ship has made an important underwater archaeological discovery. *HMHS Britannic*'s ship's bell has been found by divers off the coast of Greece more than a century after it sank during the First World War. Expedition leader, Scott Roberts, described the find as "an exciting development in the ongoing quest to discover more about this iconic wreck."

The ship's bell is a prized archaeological artifact because it is often the only method of identification after the sinking of a vessel. Bells also have sentimental significance. They ring for religious ceremonies, serve as signals, and sound the alarm in emergencies. *Britannic*'s bell has remained undiscovered, despite several high-profile exploratory dive expeditions dating back to the wreck's discovery by Jacques Cousteau and Doc Edgerton in 1976.

The discovery was made by diver Joe Mazraani and announced on March 7, 2020 at the 66th Annual Boston Sea Rovers Clinic, an annual event held by the nation's oldest and most prestigious dive club. Both Cousteau and Edgerton are Sea Rovers members.

"Like so many children, I was mesmerized by Jacques Cousteau's discoveries and remember watching him explore *Britannic*," said Mazraani. "The feeling of making even a small contribution to the continuing story of this spectacular wreck is indescribable."

HMHS Britannic is thought to be the largest passenger ship currently lying on the seabed. She was the third and largest vessel in White Star's Olympic class, which included *Olympic* and, the most famous of the three sisters, *Titanic*. *Britannic* was converted into service as a hospital ship during WW1 and sank on November 20, 1916 when she struck a mine. The ship now rests in the Aegean Sea between mainland Greece and Kea Island at a depth of 400 feet.

Simon Mills, who owns *HMHS Britannic*, made the dives possible and was with the team for a portion of their expedition. The Greek Ministry of Marine Antiquities controls all underwater historic monuments in Greek territorial waters. Removal of any artifact from the wreck is strictly prohibited by Greek law. The bell remains undisturbed where it was found.

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About Britannic Expedition May 2019

The expedition was carried out between the 11th – 22nd of May 2019 with the full cooperation of the Greek maritime authorities and support from Kea Divers. The dive team included ten experienced technical divers from three countries: Americans Rick Simon (CT) and Joe Mazraani (NJ), Australian Scott Wyatt, and British divers Scott Roberts (expedition leader), Richard Ayrton, Luke Kierman, Jacob MacKenzie, George McClure, Duncan McCormick, and Steve Pryor.

About Atlantic Wreck Salvage and D/V Tenacious

Atlantic Wreck Salvage (AWS) is a New Jersey-based company that conducts operations in the North Atlantic. *D/V Tenacious* is the vessel from which AWS' crew locates, dives, and salvages shipwrecks. *D/V Tenacious* and her crew have discovered numerous wrecks in the waters off the coast of New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, the most celebrated of which is *U-550*, the last German U-boat known to rest in diveable North Atlantic waters. *D/V Tenacious* and her expeditions have been chronicled in the books "Where Divers Dare: The Hunt for the Last U- boat," "Dangerous Shallows, In Search of the Ghost Ships of Cape Cod," and in dive publications worldwide. The vessel is owned by Atlantic Wreck Salvage, L.L.C. and operated by Joe Mazraani and Jennifer Sellitti. When they are not at sea, Joe and Jennifer work as criminal defense attorneys in New Jersey.

Photographs/underwater footage is available upon request.