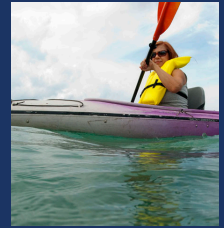


Michigan, United States

## Small craft in Old Mission Harbor

Nancy Jaroh

*Nancy is currently working on her NAS Part III Certificate. She plans to participate in field projects at the Grand Traverse Bay Underwater Preserve. In this issue she writes about her experiences on the Old Mission Harbor project.*



Old Mission Peninsula is located in Grand Traverse Bay, northwestern Michigan. My NAS Part I course inspired me to complete a local archaeology project for my NAS Part II certificate. My daughter and I decided to use total station to survey six unidentified small craft. This project was later expanded to include documentation of the geomorphological features of the current water-level and submerged ancient beach line of Old Mission Harbor.

The most prominent feature in Old Mission Harbor is the remains of a man-made island constructed by teenagers in the 1950s. Apparently the youths deposited a substantial quantity of assorted junk on the frozen harbour until a small island was formed. One canoe and two rowing boats that were surveyed are part of this structure. A local resident was able to verify that the metal canoe was deliberately scuttled to form a fish trap. Another craft that we surveyed is a 1957 Glastron runabout. Every boat in the project was covered with algae and encrusted with layers of the invasive zebra mussel. As part of our project we gathered information regarding the composition, location, length, beam and depth of each craft. Brian Abbott of Nautilus Marine

Group generously donated his time performing a few sector-scans of the site.

The project started by a reconnaissance dive, which helped us to verify the locations and sizes of the small craft and to create a preliminary sketch that formed the basis for a position-fixing survey. On the next day we set up the

total station on the beach and used it to position-fix each craft and to survey the shoreline of the harbour. Our instructor, Mark Holley, taught us to operate the total station, while archaeology students positioned a prism along the shoreline, 69 points were gathered in a six-hour session. The next day Dr. Holley and I returned to the site to survey the geomorphology profiles. While Dr. Holley snorkeled across the harbour with the prism, I operated the total station. We were able to plot 41 points in a four-hour session. This data was then entered into Auto-Cad software to create the site plan.

I am happy that I have made a contribution to my local community by documenting these interesting small craft. I was surprised by how much we accomplished and how much I learned. As strange as it may seem, I have developed a personal attachment to those small craft and I am looking forward to the next dive to check on them. Ice causes damage to these sites and zebra mussels produce toxic bacteria that are corrosive to metal, therefore, further surveys would be of use to monitor the rate of decomposition of the site.

If you are ever in this part of the world I would like to invite you to come and take a shallow dive in the relatively calm waters of Old Mission Harbor and discover the remains of the 1950s culture.

**The Nautical Archaeology Society Program at Northwestern Michigan College will host the 2011 NAS International Field School.**

Please find details at:  
[www.nasnmc.com](http://www.nasnmc.com) ♦

Dr Mark Holley and Project Team Leader Nancy Jaroh recording with total station. Photo: Chris Doyal

