

[Page 78 - Alex Storm: Treasure Ship Chameau](#)ISSUE : [Issue 57](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1991/6/1

confirmed that the hull had passed this way. Nothing else was found and, as before, we were left wondering where the trail of wreckage would eventually lead us. The clues had steadily brought us into deeper water, and toward the end of July we realized that a different method of searching was called for. We were losing too much time, and the summer was fast slipping away. We decided to design a towing device enabling a diver to be pulled underwater, scanning bottom features, while the boat on the surface recorded location and direction. Taking turns, we soared about 20 feet above the bottom to avoid the occasional rocky pinnacle. Our first attempt was an unqualified success. Cannons not previously sighted were spotted on the barren bedrock, and by mid-August we had found 31 cannons, three large and one small anchor. All these artifacts were carefully plotted on our master site plan, and as each dive produced more evidence, we began to enter much deeper water. At length, we reached an area where the sea floor levelled off and our (Trj)BELL BUOYI Seafood & Steak RESTAURANT M Baddeck, N.S. 295-2581 "Y Blue Heron Gift Shop V' Books • Glassware • Figurines • Woodenware • Crystai " Gifts for All Occasions ..ljL baddeck, N.S. 295-3424 h' ROSE COTTAGE GALLERY' FOLK ARTS FINE CRAFTS "L Water St., BADDECK, N.S. BOE 1 BO "F Tei. (902) 295-3211 or 295-3405 SV-'r C June - October 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM 3 " ' ' Hours may vary in June, September & October. "L If closed, call for appointment. The HIGH WHEELER Cafe * Deli Bakery 295-3006 ' Excellent Eating ENJOY THE DECK IN THE HEART OF BADDECK! depth gauges indicated a constant depth of approximately 90 feet. This area was dif? ferent from the reef since the bottom consisted of hard-packed gravel and sand. Our confidence began to wane. If the hull had settled here, the recovery of the coins at this depth, and with this type of bottom, could mean a lot of dangerous work. We ex? plored this section for several days, staying within the time limits recommended by the diving tables. The search continued. We covered section after section of our pre-set course following the trail of the wreck but no further clues were found. This development meant one of three things: either the Chameau had lost all of the metal objects she could lose and had washed ashore 4,000 feet from where she had capsized, or the vessel had settled beneath the sand and gravel, or had changed course. We spent the following weeks checking out the first two possibil? ities, influenced by the stories of lobster fishermen sighting coin-filled cre? vices near the beach in the cove.... The bottom in the cove consisted mostly of gravel-covered bedrock, overgrown here and there with beds of waving kelp. Again nothing was found. That left us with few options. The lower deck had either settled near the last-found ironwork, or had changed course, veering off to one side of the carefully-plotted path of debris. With sinking hearts, we returned to the last- found wreckage and branched off in a new direction. It was the turning point of our venture. Almost at once we found a few more cannons, and not far from these the Chameau's fourth large bow anchor! As each find was subjected to close scrutiny before a new sweep, I went down to check this find. Sliding down, equalizing the air pressure in my ears as I went, I



reached the anchor and found a much smaller kedge anchor alongside it. Both were resting in about 60 feet of water at the edge of the reef where the bedrock shelved down into a featureless plain of dark sand and gravel. I made a small circular search

* Close to Cape Breton's major attractions
* Private beach/waterfront area
* One of the finest properties in Nova Scotia
* Reasonable rates
Box 399, Baddeck, Nova Scotia Telephone (902) 295-2340 /
Telex: 019-35234 Baddeck: on Highway 105 and the Cabot Trail