

# Public invited to visit Buffalo Re-examination project



The HMS Buffalo Re-examination Project is crossing fingers for fine weather and smooth seas this coming weekend (Saturday 27 and Sunday, 28 February). A team of 10 volunteer divers led by maritime archaeologists, Matthew Gainsford and Kurt Bennett, will be surveying the Buffalo wreck over the two days. The surveying work entails measuring, photographing, recording details and taking samples that will paint a picture of the wreck as it sits on the ocean floor 50m from Buffalo Beach in Whitianga. The last archaeological survey was done in 1986 by another maritime archaeologist, Bill Jeffery, and five divers from Adelaide, Australia.

With the advancement in technology over the last 35 years, it is hoped that the survey will produce sufficient photographs and data to create a 3D model of the wreck. Scientific testing of the samples taken will provide a reference for establishing the earliest origins of the artefacts held in the Mercury Bay Museum collection.

The public are invited to visit the project on Saturday and Sunday. Saturday morning will start with a karakia by Joe Davis of Ngāti Hei at 7:00am. Following a divers' briefing, teams of divers will enter the water on a rotating basis over the day. They will start again on Sunday morning through to the afternoon.

The Mercury Bay Museum holds a wealth of information about the HMS Buffalo archaeological site which has gained recognition both locally, nationally and internationally. The re-survey project team and museum staff will be on site at the HMS Buffalo Memorial on Buffalo Beach Road in Whitianga from Thursday to Sunday with informative displays and artefacts. Approximately 200 children from local schools will visit the Buffalo Memorial on Thursday and Friday to gain a greater understanding of the role the Buffalo played in the history of Mercury Bay.

"It's going to be an exciting weekend and we really hope that the locals come down and join us. Dress up smart as a national television station will be on site to record this fantastic project," says Rebecca Cox, Mercury Bay Museum Manager and project leader.

Pictured is a painting of the grounding of HMS Buffalo by maritime artist, Paul Deacon. The painting is part of the Mercury Bay Museum's Buffalo collection.

# The Fire Siren

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Another steady month for the Whitianga Volunteer Fire Brigade, with 13 calls for assistance. We investigated a call to smoke seen, assisted Ambulance twice and investigated two private fire alarms. We were called to a grass fire, a brazier fire, a fire on the beach and two rubbish fires. We cut a person out of a car at a motor vehicle accident and also had to cut the ring off a person's finger when the finger started swelling. We also attended to a car that was leaking petrol.

The Whitianga Volunteer Fire Brigade is still looking for new members, so if you are interested in doing something for your community and being part of a great group of people, come along on a Wednesday night at 7:30pm and meet the crew or you are welcome to drop into Whitianga Sports and have a chat with me about what ss involved in being a part of our brigade. After 34 years, joining up is still the best thing I ever did.

**Deputy Chief Fire Officer**  
**Derek Collier**



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