

# Divers find wreck of German WWII ship in Baltic Sea

POLISH TEAM SAYS MILITARY VEHICLES, CHINA, SEALED CHESTS IN GOOD CONDITION

BY MONIKA SCISLOWSKA  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WARSAW, Poland—A team of Polish divers say they have found almost intact the wreckage of German World War II steamer Karlsruhe, which was bombed by Soviet planes and sunk in the Baltic Sea

in April 1945, with the loss of hundreds of civilian and military lives. The 10-member Baltictech team say the wreckage rests 290 feet under the sea dozens of miles north of Poland’s coastal resort of Ustka. In the wreckage, they say they have found military vehicles, china and sealed chests in the ship’s hold, all in good condition. “It looks like, after months of searching, we

have finally found the wreckage of the Karlsruhe steamer,” the Baltictech group said on Facebook, posting an underwater photo of an apparently well-preserved military vehicle. The divers said they accessed Allied, German and Soviet documents detailing the fate of the steamer and spent more than a year looking for it, believing it was among the “most interesting, yet uncovered,

stories from the Baltic Sea bed.” The documents, which were shown to The Associated Press, say the Karlsruhe was built in 1905 at the Seebeck yard in Bremerhaven. Toward the end of World War II, it was included in the Hannibal Operation that evacuated Germans and Nazi troops from the East Prussia’s Koenigsberg area as the Soviet Red Army advanced and was

taking control of it. On April 11, 1945, the steamer left the port of Pillau—which is now the Russian port of Baltiysk—with 150 troops of the Hermann Goering regiment, 25 railway workers and 888 civilians, including children, and hundreds of tons of cargo. The next day, in the port of Hel, it was included in a convoy going to the German port of Swinemunde, which is now Swinoujscie

in Poland. On the morning of April 13, 1945, the ship was spotted by Soviet planes, bombed and sank within about three minutes. Some 113 of its passengers were rescued by the convoy, among the 1,083 on board, according to Nazi Navy documents, a German cable intercepted by the British and survivor accounts stored in German archives.

## STEINEM

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guide her performance. “We realized we had a champion, and that was Gloria herself,” Toussaint said in an interview. “She was very, very helpful for me in terms of her memories with Flo Kennedy and her appreciation of Flo. She speaks so candidly and openly of figures like Flo who did not get the credit she believed they deserved.” History, added Toussaint, has not heard much about Black women in either the suffrage movement or in second-wave feminism. “But Gloria tried to give these women credit,” Toussaint said. “The press wasn’t particularly interested in giving them credit, but Gloria certainly spoke out as often as she could.” In the film, based on the memoir “My Life on the Road,” there are poignant scenes with Steinem and longtime speaking partner Pitman Hughes (Janelle Monáe), the Black activist with whom she appeared in a famous 1971 photograph, fists raised. And with Mankiller (Kimberly Guerrero), another close Steinem friend and activist who became the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Then there was Abzug, played by Bette Midler in the film opposite Julianne Moore’s Steinem. (Moore is one of four actors play-

ing her at different stages of her life.) Outwardly, the two women could not have appeared more different. The New York congresswoman, nicknamed “Battling Bella,” was unapologetically brash and exuberant, recognizable immediately by the large hats she always wore. Gloria Steinem was known as a “quiet warrior,” in Taymor’s words, with a natural Midwestern reserve, long streaked hair and those iconic aviator glasses. But their friendship ran deep. “She was my teacher and my friend,” Steinem said in the interview. “She was enormously funny. Absolutely New York, you know. And I used to say things like, ‘Oh, you’re the person I should have had as my mother.’ And she would say, ‘I’m not old enough to be your mother.’” (Steinem told the same anecdote, through tears, at Abzug’s 1998 funeral.) Moore says she was unfamiliar, before making the film, with Steinem’s close relationship with Abzug. “We had so much research available to us, and one of the things I drew on was just how much Gloria loved Bella,” the actor said in an interview. “You could see it in the research, the way she looked at her. And so Bette and I hadn’t met before and I fell in love with her right away, and I thought it was wonderful to have our relationship

and base it on Gloria’s love for Bella at the same time.” Midler, too, was struck by the relationship between the two women. “There was so much respect there, so much respect and so much fun,” she said. “I think they had a great time together. I think they howled. And I wanted to make sure people knew that it wasn’t the kind of adversarial relationship that lots of people seem to have with Betty Friedan, although I worship Betty Friedan ... but that wasn’t the case with Gloria and Bella. That was real love.” Taymor says her favorite moment between the two women happens in the offices of Ms. Magazine, which Steinem co-founded. Abzug is explaining to the conflict-averse Steinem that she can’t shy away from conflict with Friedan, the feminist leader and author. “The difference between them is that moment in the Ms. office where she says ‘You can’t avoid conflict, and if you try to avoid conflict, conflict will seek you out,’ ” the director said. “And they were very different personalities. Gloria ... didn’t want to have women fighting women. “And Bella said sometimes we argue, sometimes we fight, sometimes we don’t get along. You know, she understood that women aren’t superwomen, but we’re after the same thing.”

## COLLECTIONS

▶ FROM B1

life cut short, photos of daily life in the age of coronavirus and artwork inspired by the current moment. It will also include transcripts of “COVID in Context,” the free, open course UMW offered to the community earlier this year. The UMW library’s “call to contribute” website contains suggestions for capturing the moment, including writing a poem or short story, recording a video or audio clip, starting a podcast or creating a piece of art. “Paint, sculpt, draw, photograph, bake, design, animate, or stitch your feelings and we can digitize the physical and preserve the digital,” the website states. Parsons said students who journaled over the summer for the project wrote about not only their reaction to the pandemic but also to the protests for racial justice that began after the Memorial Day death of George Floyd during an arrest by white police officers. “The summer has encompassed so many things and [we saw] the narrative intersection of racial justice and COVID,” she said. Parsons and her team have been transcribing the submissions and everything will be stored in the Simpson Library’s digital repository. Preservica, the company that provides the platform for the digital repository, donated an extra 250 GB of space for the COVID-19 collection. UMW’s COVID-19 collection aims to capture the current experiences of the UMW community, including alumni. The wider community can donate objects and documents related to the pandemic or the local protests against police violence to the Fredericksburg Area Museum. “We’re asking people to save anything—home-school lesson plans, pic-



MIKE MORONES / THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Theresa Cramer of the Fredericksburg Area Museum holds an expended tear gas canister used by police during a local protest this summer.

It’s a very exciting and interesting time. ... We can only hope it will build a better future.

—SARA POORE, FREDERICKSBURG AREA MUSEUM DIRECTOR

Boulevard. She said empty tear gas canisters and water bottles carried by the protesters are already part of a local Black Lives Matter collection. Posters advertising the regular protests and personal narratives of participants will also be welcomed, Poore said. “Collecting stories and pictures is so important to be able to tell the whole story,” she said. All donated items and documents will go before the museum’s collections committee to ensure that the submissions tell all parts of the local COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter stories and how they fit into the national stories of this time. “It’s a very exciting and interesting time,” Poore said. “You’ve got both of these huge movements. It’s just very interesting to watch it play out and talk to people and understand why they’re doing what they’re doing. It’s a very exciting time, and we can only hope it will build a better future.” To contribute to UMW’s COVID-19 collection, visit libguides.umw.edu/online/scua/contribute. To contribute to FAM’s collection, visit famva.org/documenting-covid-19-in-the-fredericksburg-area/. Adele Uphaus-Conner: 540/735-1973 auphaus@freelancestar.com @flsadele



LD ENTERTAINMENT

Julianne Moore (left) is one of four actors who play Gloria Steinem in the film. Bette Midler plays Bella Abzug, a congresswoman known as ‘Battling Bella.’

## JOHNSTON

▶ FROM B1

bleeding had been occurring since the day of the accident. His full recovery will take time. I bring this up because many people take to the woods with a chainsaw during the fall and winter. And every year there are those who get killed or maimed. Felling trees or just cutting off overhead limbs in your yard can be risky business, even if you are careful. Too often we are not careful. Two men I have known were killed by falling limbs and another is partially paralyzed. It is dangerous work. I know because I have cleared many acres with a chainsaw, and several times I have almost met my maker. Once, I was sawing down an old dead locust tree that I wanted to use to make fence posts when the vibration from my chainsaw caused a high limb to break off and fall from about 50 feet above.

That limb, about 4 inches in diameter, missed my head by about 2 feet. Using a handsaw or an ax, I might have heard the crack of the limb when it broke, but the roar of the chainsaw drowned out all other sounds. A few years ago, I was sawing up a downed tree for a neighbor when, with the saw running, I tripped over a piece of junk metal hidden in the leaves. Having worked in the woods for years, I had the presence of mind to extend the saw away from my body as I fell forward. I sprained my other wrist (with which I broke my fall), but the situation could have been much worse. We all tend to do stupid things at times, especially if we are used to handling power equipment. Forty years ago, I had a friend whose truck was hung up on a log and he decided to crawl under it with his chainsaw in order to clear the obstruction. The saw accidentally hit the metal of the truck, flew back and cut him pretty bad. Luckily there was someone with him,



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but had he been alone, he might have bled to death. I have seen people stand on the back of pickup trucks (I’ve done it myself) to cut overhanging limbs in their yards. Not a smart idea, but it happens all the time. During pioneer days, it was said that more men died of ax wounds than from any other accident. Those were the days when trees needed to be felled for firewood, fence rails, to build log homes and to clear land for farm plots. Axes needed to be honed to razor sharpness for these tasks and men who used these tools on a daily basis often became complacent. The slip of an ax could almost sever a foot or break a leg. Even if the gash wasn’t that deep, there was always the danger of infection or blood poisoning. These were the days before antibiotics and doctors were few and far between on the frontier. Complacency and carelessness are not limited to working with an ax or a chainsaw. It was

said that more pioneers traveling to California and Oregon shot themselves accidentally than were killed by marauding Indians. These people who hunted for food on a daily basis just got careless. That still happens today. Each year hunters accidentally kill themselves or other hunters. And I have a friend who almost bled to death when he accidentally cut his upper leg while skinning a deer. We go into the woods at this time of year to hunt and to saw firewood. Both are dangerous activities, so be careful and don’t take chances. And if you’re sawing off an overhead limb on a tree in your yard, make sure you know where the branch is going to fall. A lot of bad accidents happen during fall and winter. Don’t get hurt by being careless or taking unnecessary chances. Life is too short anyway. Why shorten it more? Donnie Johnston: djohn40330@aol.com