

MAY 26, 1999

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
NORFOLK DIVISION

SEA HUNT, INC.,

Plaintiff,

v.

Civil No. 2:98cv281

THE UNIDENTIFIED, SHIPWRECKED VESSEL
OR VESSELS, their apparel, tackle, appurtenances,
And cargo located within coordinates 38 degrees
01'36" North Latitude, 75 degrees 14'33" West
Longitude; 37 degrees 57'21" North Latitude,
75 degrees 13'00" West Longitude; 38 degrees
01'36" North Latitude, 75 degrees 13'14" West
Longitude; 37 degrees 57'33" North Latitude,
75 degrees 17;44" West Longitude
and/or
37 degrees 55'00" North Latitude, 75 degrees
19'18" West Longitude; 37 degrees 54'09" North
Latitude 75 degrees 17'00" West Longitude;
37 degrees 51'21" North Latitude, 75 degrees
18'52" West Longitude, 37 degrees 52'20"
North Latitude, 75 degrees 21'05" West Longitude,

in rem,

Defendant(s).

Affidavit of David Beltran Catala

1. I, David Beltran Catala, am Counsel for Juridical Affairs in the Embassy of Spain in Washington, District of Columbia, U.S.A. I have previously provided an affidavit describing my official position and other information concerning myself. I am authorized to submit this Affidavit on behalf of the Kingdom of Spain with respect to consideration under this Court's Opinion and Order of April 27, 1999 of a salvage award to Sea Hunt, Inc. in relation to His Majesty's Frigate Juno.

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2. I have previously provided this Court with copies of the documents in the archives of the Navy which have been retained as official records of the Navy and which demonstrate that the Frigates Juno and La Galga were built to serve his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain as warships and were engaged at the time of their sinking in military service as vessels of the Navy of Spain under the command of Officers from the General Corps of the Spanish Navy, that the cession by Spain of certain territories in North America to Great Britain (Treaty of 1763) and the United States (Treaty of 1819) are not abandonments or cessions of Royal property such as the Frigates Juno and La Galga, which remain on the Navy List of Spain, and that it is the position and understanding of the Kingdom of Spain that these vessels have at all times remained the property of the Kingdom.
3. The Kingdom of Spain objects to any award of salvage in respect of the Juno and would consider any such award to be irreconcilable with Spain's sovereign rights with respect to its naval vessels under customary international law, fundamental principles of sovereign immunity, and under the 1910 Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules With Respect To Assistance and Salvage at Sea, 37 Stat. 1658, 11 Bevans 780. This treaty, to which Spain and the United States are parties, establishes uniform international rules with respect to salvage (See preamble) and expressly excludes awards for salvage "to ships of war or to Government ships appropriated exclusively to a public service." (1910 Convention, Article 14).
4. As has been correctly represented to this Court by Sea Hunt, Inc. in this case, "the Juno and La Galga were, at the time of their respective sinkings in 1802 and 1750, commissioned warships of the Kingdom of Spain," Sea Hunt Memorandum In Support of Motion for Partial Judgment On The Pleadings, p. 4. At no time since the 1802 sinking of the Juno has its status changed and, as reflected in my previous affidavit, Juno remains on the Navy List of Spain. It is therefore the position and understanding of the Kingdom of Spain that Article 14 of the 1910 Convention and the customary principle of international law it reflects, which was restated and reaffirmed in Article 4 of 1989 International Convention on Salvage ("... this Convention shall not apply to warships or other non-commercial vessels owned or operated by a State ...") precludes any salvage award in respect of Juno.
5. Since Spain learned of the intent of Sea Hunt to claim ownership and/or salvage rights, Spain has stated its position that it objects to any disturbance of these vessels, particularly in light of the fact that Juno is the resting place of 413 Spanish soldiers, sailors and military dependants who were returning to Spain from service in the Napoleonic Wars. The crew and passengers of the Juno were military personnel and their families who are military casualties of the Napoleonic Wars. Spain at no time has consented in any manner to any salvage activities or other disturbance of the site by Sea Hunt, Inc. and has made known its strong objections to any such activity.
6. Apart from the fact that Juno is exempted from salvage as a naval vessel of the Kingdom of Spain has also invoked its rights as owner of Juno to refuse and prohibit salvage under Article 3 of the 1910 Convention and the customary principle of international law it reflects. Article 3 states: "Persons who have taken part in salvage operations, notwithstanding the express and reasonable prohibition on the part of the vessel to which services were rendered, have no right any remuneration." This principle is also restated and reaffirmed in Article 19

1989 International Convention on Salvage ("Services rendered notwithstanding the express and reasonable prohibition of the owner or master of the vessel ... shall not give rise to payment...").

7. It should also be noted with respect to the 1989 Convention that Spain has exercised its right under Article 30 to make a specific reservation that Spain does not consent to salvage of Spanish vessels of historic interest. Attached as Exhibit 1 is a translation of Spain's reservation. On behalf of Spain, I state that Juno is within this reservation.
8. Insofar as it is necessary for the Court to be informed of whether salvage of these vessels will be conducted by Spain, I state that it would be premature to make any assumption that salvage will be feasible or appropriate. Before any decision as to whether recovery of any remains of Juno may be undertaken, it would be necessary first to determine the location of the vessel. It would then be necessary to determine whether recovery of the vessel or its contents could be done in a manner that preserves the sanctity of the remains of the more than 400 soldiers and sailors and their families that died in the service of Spain. The first and foremost consideration that would apply is respect and veneration for the gravesite of the soldiers, sailors and military dependants who died in the wartime service of Spain.
9. I understand that, where a salvor applies to a Court for a salvage award, the criteria that are considered include the degree of skill exerted by the salvor, whether the salvor has succeeded in its efforts and the value to the owner of the services that have been provided. On behalf of the Kingdom of Spain, I state that Sea Hunt has not to our knowledge applied any particular degree of skill, has not achieved any success of which we are aware and has provided no service to Spain of any known value.
10. Based on the information contained in Sea Hunt's filings in this Court and the attached exhibits prepared by Sea Hunt as reports of its activities it is evident that Sea Hunt has provided no credible information identifying the actual site of the Juno.
11. I begin by noting that Sea Hunt has not provided information that was not well known to Spain before Sea Hunt sought to disturb these vessels. I note in particular that the documentation previously provided to the court concerning the location and history of Juno consists of documents from public archives in Spain. (See December 22, 1998 Affidavit of David Beltran). That documentation establishes that Juno disappeared at sea on October 27 or 28, 1802. The records show that the last position reported for Juno was latitude 36° 44 and longitude 76° 16 on October 24, 1802, three or four days before she sank, that she spent her last four days in severe storm conditions, and that on her final day there was a harsh wind blowing from the North West, which would have been driving her away the coast of America. December 22, 1998.
12. Attached as Exhibit 2 is a September 1997 document signed by the President of Sea Hunt in which it is stated as to the location of Juno only that Sea Hunt believes there is a "possibility that Juno may indeed lie along the southern shore of Assateagua Island."
13. Insofar as the location of Juno is concerned, I also state that the records of the Navy demonstrate that inquiries made by the Consul of Spain along the Eastern United States

immediately after the loss of the Juno produced no information as to where she sank. (See December 22, 1998 Beltran Affidavit, Exhibit 1). Spain has located no indication in the Archives that wreckage from the sinking or the bodies of victims of the disaster ever were sighted or located. If the Juno were in an identifiable location, reports of sighting of wreckage or victims would be expected.

14. Attached as Exhibit 3 is a copy of a December 15, 1998 report to the Commonwealth of Virginia on Sea Hunt's "target verification activities." It also confirms that Sea Hunt has not located the Juno. It states that Sea Hunt has not found "even significant definable concentrations of wreck material" (p. 2). Sea Hunt also reports that "The targets investigated by Sea Hunt cannot be considered to be shipwrecks or even specific shipwreck sites." (p. 3). In short, Sea Hunt has itself submitted official reports acknowledging that it has not been successful.
15. I am aware that Sea Hunt has made claims that Juno was a "Treasure Ship", as shown in Exhibit 3. Such claims are not correct.
16. I am also informed and aware that there have been claims by Sea Hunt and others that Juno was carrying a treasure when she sank. These claims appear to be based on a Boston newspaper report in which an American captain apparently was the source of a statement that the cargo the Juno "registered 700,000 pesos". This newspaper account of a statement by someone who was not an official of Spain or a member of the crew of Juno was and is not correct: the documentation in the Archives demonstrates that any such cargo had been offloaded in Puerto Rico. Attached as Exhibit 4 are copies of original documents from the Archives in Spain, previously submitted to the Court as attachments to my December 22, 1998 affidavit, together with translations into English. These documents consist of reports by the Captain of the Juno, the Captain General (equivalent to Governor) of Havana and the Captain General of Vera Cruz. These documents establish that Juno left Vera Cruz in January 1802 with government funds on board, but this "cargo" was transferred to another vessel, the Asia, when the Juno was required to remain in Puerto Rico for repairs. It can also be seen that the funds transferred to Asia were then transferred to another ship Nuestra Senora de la Soledad, when Asia was found to be taking on water.
17. As noted earlier, the Juno represents the gravesite of 413 soldiers, sailors and military dependants who were casualties of the Napoleonic War. As such, the Juno is fully entitled to the special sanctity accorded by international law to military gravesites, the remains of military casualties and their personal effects.
18. On behalf of the Kingdom of Spain, I state that subjecting the Juno and the remains and personal effects of the Spanish military personnel and their dependants who were on board to a salvage award would be fundamentally contrary and repugnant to the principles of international law and comity that Spain recognizes with respect to military casualties.
19. Spain considers the remains of Juno and the remains and personal effects of the personnel who died in the service of Spain to be subject to the international principle that military casualties are to be protected from unauthorized disturbance and not subjected to ransom or commercial exploitation. These principles are reflected in Geneva Convention (II) for the

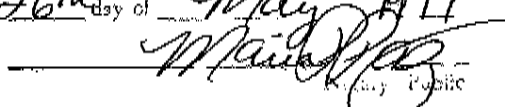
Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (1949); 6 UST 3217; TIAS 3363; 75 UNTS 85, Article 18 (requiring parties to prevent military casualties from being despoiled; see also, Article 19, requiring parties to repatriate "all articles of an intrinsic or sentimental value which are found on the dead"); Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick of Armies in the Field (1929), Article 4, 2 Bevans 965 (requiring parties to repatriate "all objects of personal use" belonging to dead soldiers and requiring states to see that the graves are treated "with respect"). Spain recognizes these principles with respect to foreign military casualties on Spanish territory and expects the United States to apply them to Spanish casualties in United States territory, such as is presented by the case of the Juno.

20. In summary, I state that Spain objects to any salvage award concerning Juno on grounds that:

- a) Spain and its naval vessel Juno are subject to sovereign immunity;
- b) Spain as owner exercises its right to prohibit salvage or other disturbance of this military gravesite and the remains of the soldiers; sailors and military dependants who died in the service of Spain;
- c) It would be a violation of fundamental principles of international law, international relations and public policy to subject the remains of military casualties and, their personnel effects and their gravesite to a salvage award. Such an award would in effect place a ransom upon any repatriation of these soldiers, sailors, and military dependants who died in the service of Spain;
- d) Sea Hunt has not located the Juno or otherwise achieved success that could merit a salvage award, if Spain had consented to salvage.


David Beltran Catala

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 26th day of May, 1999.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
26th day of May 1999

Notary Public

My Commission Expires 11-30-99

Exhib: + 2

Spanish Treasure Ship "Juno" Lost in 1802

Few shipwrecks were more tragic than the loss of the "Juno" in late October 1802 taking all 413 souls on board to a watery grave off the coast of Virginia. Spanish shipwreck historian Fernandez Duro wrote a compelling account of the loss in his book "Nafragios de la Armada Espanola" published in 1867. Here is a translation of his account:

The frigates Anfitrite with 40 cannons and Juno with 34, having been inspected at the port of Veracruz, left together with treasure for the port of Cadiz (Spain) on January 15, 1802. From the moment they set sail, they encountered bad weather which delayed their departure from Mexico and forced the two ships to dismast and take refuge in Puerto Rico for repairs.

They set sail again on October 1, having taken on the Third Battalion of the African regiment. The ships reached the meridian of Bermuda and it seemed as though their luck had changed. The weather was settled and they were able to sail together without difficulty. Once reaching Bermuda however, the wind became strong, the sea heavy, the skies threatened and the squalls continuous. This was most common in this place and the ships were separated from each other.

The Juno weathered the storm and changing winds for a few days and she headed north in search of changing weather. The sea was making the ship work very hard and to her disadvantage for now she was beginning to leak.

On the night of the 22nd, there were big waves and a stiff wind from the northeast so that the ship rode out her topsail on all reef-points. The result of this was that the sail split and the ship remained unable to continue sailing for half an hour until the mizzen mast was cut. The wind was so furious that it wrenched both the main mast and the fore top sail, throwing the mainmast against the handrail and thereby open a (water) course into the ship.

All the men worked quickly at clearing the deck and checking all the cables. The caulker on duty came up from the hold to announce there was 74 inches of water there and it looked as though it would increase. Thereafter followed moments of great fatigue for, observing that two pumps were not sufficient, all four pumps were put into action and the sailors and soldiers were distributed around the ship in such a way as to work and take turns at rest for a while.

On the 25th of October the weather cleared and the Captain took advantage of this situation to investigate the origin of the leak and impede the rate of its alarming increase. The scrupulous investigation of the lower part of the ship showed that the problem was in the boatswain's storeroom/quarters. Once discovering this the hardships of the previous night were immediately forgotten and the Captain's orders were followed efficiently and quickly. From the mainmast to the bow, all artillery and

third and fourth anchors were thrown overboard. The storerooms were cleared and supplies moved back to the stern. All methods were tried to stop the leak in the boatswain's area and none proved to be successful: neither oakum nor plaster, sealing off the area from the inside or applying sails from the outside. It was to no avail and in fact the amount of water was increasing to serious proportions.

On the 24th, a ship was seen and the Juno gave chase. It was an American schooner which, with good intentions, approached to observe the frigate's signals. The Captain of the schooner agreed to the Captain's proposals and decided to sail with the Juno and follow her orders.

Once the conditions were formalized, the second in command of the Juno, D. Francisco Clemente boarded the schooner Favorita. As well, the Lieutenant of the African regiment, D. Jose Maria Zorilla, the cadet D. Antonio Malagon and four grenadiers also boarded the schooner with provision that might be needed in an emergency. A plan of signals was decided upon for day and night to indicate if the water in the ship was rising or diminishing. Also, if the leaks became such, that it was necessary to unload the men, the method by which the schooner would approach the Juno in all haste.

Having taken these sensible precautions, the Captain truly believed he could save his ship and make it to a port in the United States which was the closest coast. He encouraged his men and sailed on a course with a fresh southwesterly wind, without stopping working the pumps.

On the 27th the schooner was informed that the Juno had lost her tiller during the night with the raising water in the ship and the pumps were no longer to sustain the leaks. The men bailed out water by hand now in the bow and the stern, and a stern oar was set up to replace the tiller. So they continued and at midday the ship was at 38 degrees latitude north, 69.56 degrees longitude west which was recognized as being quite close to the coast.

This she did.....until ten that evening. At that time, the wind changed to the northwest and there was such a violent squall that the gaff/spanker, driver broke and the ship was defenseless though she managed to avoid the sea's blows for a distance of 10 to 11 miles. The frigate lost her mainmast, the fore topsail mast and the yard which had been used to replace the tiller. The ship sent signals to the schooner for help as she was no longer able to hold out but the schooner was only able to come to leeward as close as a third of a cable's distance. This was close enough to hear the anguished cries for help and watch the ship disappearing below. Overcome by the wind and convinced that she would capsize if she attempted to come around, the schooner remained incapable of maneuvering for the rest of the night.

At dawn on the 28th.....the crew of the Favorita expected to see the frigate but discovered that she had vanished forever in the course of that horrible night. Convinced of this misfortune, which was later confirmed, the Favorita continued her

route inland and dropped anchor in the port of Boston on November 1.

According to the testimony of the ship's lieutenant Clemente and the other six men from the Juno who were saved on the schooner, order, composure, and obeying command onboard the "Juno" prevailed at all times. The troops under the command of their officials worked the pumps until they were no longer able to, the sailor's efforts to cut off the leaks, replace the tiller and attending to other repairs were without limits and the Captain was worthy of the confidence placed in him. Everyone carried out their duty".

A November 8, 1802, edition of the New York Morning Chronicle told of the story and in its report added the fact that there were women and children onboard the ship. *"The unfortunate Spaniards waved their handkerchiefs, and seemed almost in despair - and the ship rolled as if nearly full of water" and "In a half an hour it cleared away, but the ship was no more to be seen. Four hundred and thirteen persons, including several women and children, were on board."*

The "Favorita" spent very little time (if any) actually searching for the "Juno" and just assumed that she had sunk. The story ended there and many treasure books have since recounted the story of the "Juno" and theorized where her treasure might lay.

Then in 1987, an offshore scallop fishing boat named "Lady Cheryl" while fishing a little more than thirty miles off Assateague, snagged in its nets a 2,500 pound bronze bell encased in a huge clump of mud. Once the bell was onboard the boat dragged the area again and this time came up with an object later identified as a wooden stern post with two worn bronze gudgeons (a type of rudder hinge not used before 1780).

The owner of the "Lady Cheryl" ultimately sold the bell, stern post and the location that these items were recovered from to a Virginia Beach company named Quicksilver. Quicksilver confirmed the area doing magnetometer searches and filed a federal maritime claim on the area. Later, to raise additional money, Quicksilver began to sell stock on the New York market, it being the first treasure hunting company to go public.

Up until this time Quicksilver did not know what vessel the bell might have come from. Then, an archaeological researcher, Alan Reibe, saw the artifacts and told Quicksilver about the "Juno". Quicksilver then hired a researcher in Spain to research all of the known facts. The bell was stamped "Trinidad Cuba" and had a large crack in it and Quicksilver's theory was that the "Juno" was taking this churchbell to Spain to be repaired as there were no foundries in the Cuba to do such a job.

Over the last nine years Quicksilver has done extensive searches of the area where the bell was found. It has found more possible artifacts from the ship but no actual ship. In a Daily Press article about the venture on May 28, 1989 and based on his research, Glynn Rogers, the Quicksilver Chairman estimated the value of the treasure on the "Juno" could reach 500 million dollars. He quoted an account from the 1800's that says the two ships earlier carried 2 million silver pesos and other valuables worth 1

million pesos in addition to the wealth that each crew member was returning home with (the treasure ship "Atocha" was carrying a registered treasure of 1 million pesos and was said to have yielded treasure worth 400 million). In the fall of 1996, Sea Hunt was operating out of Ocean City, Maryland searching for the Spanish Frigate "La Galga" which was part of a 1750 treasure fleet. During those operations we observed Quicksilver's survey ship "Atlantic Surveyor", operating out of Ocean City, Maryland searching offshore. Sea Hunt was not familiar with the story of the "Juno" and the find of the bell offshore in 1987.

One of the people volunteering to help in the search for the "La Galga" was Barry, a shipwreck hunter from Cape Cod. On a stormy day in November, too rough to go out searching the Galga site, Barry decided to drive to Chincoteague Island, Virginia. He had heard a story of a small store that had an old anchor in front and decided to go see it for something to do. Upon seeing it he immediately recognized it as an 18th century anchor and asked how the store's owner Bob Payne or "Captain Bob" how he came to have it. Captain Bob told him that it had sat down by the docks for years and that he bought it from the fisherman, Leon Rose, who found it.

Captain Rose told how in 1989 he was fishing just off the beach near the lighthouse on Assateague. There had just been a terrible storm which caused a lot of damage and erosion as far north as Atlantic City, NJ. He was dragging his nets over the same spot he routinely fished and this time he caught something big. He struggled to bring the object up and it turned out to be a giant old anchor and a portion of the bow of a ship came with it. Undoubtedly, the storm had partially uncovered the wreck which was normally buried in the sand.

Bringing the anchor and wooden bow timbers to shore he discovered that a pewter plate was stuck to the top of the anchor. He left the items at the dock and someone broke the plate loose from the anchor and stole it. The wooded parts of the bow of the ship, which were in remarkably good condition after being buried in the mud and sand, quickly fell apart within a few months after being exposed to the air and sunlight.

The plate had been missing all those years and by sheer coincidence had just been returned to Captain Rose a few days before Barry spoke to him. It was left on the seat of his car with an anonymous note that said that the person who stole it had found religion and the theft had been bothering him. Barry asked to see the plate and there it was. A pewter plate with oyster shells and mud still attached with very faint writing on the back. Barry explained to Captain Bob that the plate should be treated and conserved or it would fall apart over time. Captain Bob gave Barry the plate and we sent it to a conservation lab for treatment.

The treatment of the plate better revealed the writing on the back which now appeared to say either "Jane", "Juno" or "Jolle". The first letter was thought to be a definite Spanish letter J. Going through research on shipwrecks in the area no ship named Jane or Jolle was ever reported lost in the area and Jane definitely was not a sailor's name in 1802. The name "Juno" looked like the most likely possibility. I researched

the name and found the Spanish shipwreck historian Fernandez Duro's story as well as newspaper accounts of the recent searches offshore by Quicksilver.

Taking the last known position of the "Juno" taken at noon on October 27, 1802 it was located 302 miles directly east of Assateague. The wind had changed and was from the northwest. The ship could not sail directly into the wind and could only sail at an angle to it. Given this fact two areas were its closest possible landfall. The Virginia Coast by sailing West or Cape Cod or Boston sailing North. Sea Hunt's theory is that after being separated from the "Favorita" in the night, "Juno's" Captain decided to sail for the Virginia Coast rather than risk the colder waters of New England and the treacherous area of Cape Cod.

Sea Hunt believes that the church bell and other items found by the scallop dragger were not the final resting place of the "Juno" but rather more items that they were throwing overboard to try to keep from sinking. We think they were heading for the protected anchorage provided by the south end of Assateague and they were within site of its shore when they hit a treacherous shoal less than a mile from shore. If one draws a line from the last known position of the "Juno" 302 miles offshore to where the bell was found 30 miles offshore and then continues that line toward shore it will lead you directly to the anchorage at the southern end of Assateague and exactly where Leon Rose found the anchor and plate in 1989.

In late November 1996 Captain Rose showed us the approximate area where he dragged up the anchor. A detailed electronic search of the area showed a possible wreck site not far from the location he showed us. Upon diving this area the wreck was found to be buried too deeply in the sand to reach without excavation equipment. Later an old timber was found nearby and recovered. Archaeologists dated this timber as pre-1820 because of the shape of the wooden pegs.

At first the location of the possible wreck site did not make sense because it was a mile north of the inlet. Then we came across an old detailed chart from 1852 which showed that in the 1800's they would have been sailing directly in line with the inlet and sheltered anchorage area. The area they hit was the first shoal they would have encountered had they been heading due west as we speculated. The southern tip of Assateague has since extended down over one mile since the map was prepared.

Pictures of the plate and anchor were given to archaeologist and researcher John de Bry. He studied the pictures and measurements and met with pewter plate experts in London. From these consultations both the plate and the anchor were dated in the late 1700's from 1770 to 1790 which is the correct time frame for the "Juno".

In the summer of 1997 other facts concerning this shipwreck have come to light:

1. Earl Novak, Captain of a 150 foot clam boat working offshore on August 4, 1989 found a wooden musket stock while dredging for clams. A week later he dredged up a cannon ball. Both items were found about 5 miles from where the "Lady Cheryl"

discovered the bell in 1987. He loaned the stock to Quicksilver for two years for identification and study. Quicksilver's expert found it to be a stock from a French musket and confirmed that Spanish soldiers in 1802 did use this type of French made musket. These locations are roughly in line with the Juno's last known location 300 miles offshore and where the anchor and plate were recovered just off the beach in Assateague.

2. Bob Payne, the owner of the anchor and plate found by Captain Rose, has a Spanish coin a 2 reales dated 1796. This coin was found after a storm on the beach directly inshore of where the anchor and plate were recovered. It can be viewed along with the anchor and plate at Paynes Sea Treasures store on Chincoteague, Virginia.

3. Another Chincoteague resident, who wishes to remain anonymous, reports that years ago he found a Carlos III Mexican minted Spanish coin on the Assateague beach, again directly inshore of where the anchor and plate was located. Once again this minting of this coin was in the right time frame to possibly be from the Juno.

4. Over the past year Sea Hunt has heard rumors of another individual who over the years has picked up "a mason jar" full of old coins along this section of the beach. We have contacted the person who is believed to have these coins. This individual wishes to remain anonymous. We have asked to view and photograph the coins and thus far have not been permitted to.

5. A further extremely detailed electronic survey of the area done in August and September 1997, has revealed that there may be shipwreck debris from other later shipwrecks in the same area. Careful excavation will have to occur to determine which ship the anchor and plate came from and which are more modern wrecks.

Is the ship located off the southern end of Assateague (which Sea Hunt now has a permit to salvage) the "Juno"? None of the clues discovered so far are individually conclusive but viewed together certainly raise the possibility that the Juno may indeed lie along the southern shore of Assateague Island. Only time will tell whether it is either the "Juno" or some other ship from that time period.

Regardless of which ship is located off of Assateague the electronic survey and the fact that the plate was concreted to the anchor leads us to believe that the ship is largely intact. The anchor was likely a spare kept on deck and as the wooden deck of the ship weakened over time it fell through into the galley area and came to rest on the plate and became stuck to it. Truly a one in one million chance!

The huge anchor, plate and 1796 Spanish coin can all be seen today in front of Captain Bob's store, "Payne's Sea Treasures" which is located on Ridge Road in Chincoteague, Virginia.

Ben Benson
Sea Hunt, Inc.
September 1997