

Artifacts from Unknown Vessels or Origins

There's no doubt that modern technology and GPS can make pinpointing locations of known shipwrecks along the Jersey coastline easier, but sometimes, it is nearly impossible to determine the origin of an artifact hauled in by fishing nets and dredges or recovered by divers. One of the reasons for the difficulty in identifying some relics is that stories failed to be passed down from generation to generation or owner to owner. Additionally, records may have been lost, inaccurate, or not kept at all, and sometimes, vessels sank without anyone realizing they had disappeared.

In addition, currents and storms will shift the ocean's unstable, silt bottom and move a wrecked vessels' remains. "In some cases, the identity or origin might never be found," Whitcraft said.



The anchor at The Shrimp Box restaurant in Point Pleasant Beach.

Jill Ocone



Crow's nest at The Shrimp Box.

Jill Ocone

Such is the case of the artifacts found at The Shrimp Box restaurant in Point Pleasant Beach, which boasts a large anchor and a tall crow's nest near its entrance, two smaller anchors at its parking lot opposite the building, and numerous ship air vents on its property.

Similarly, the origin of several artifacts in front of Laurelton Welding and Point Lobster Company along Point Pleasant Beach's Channel Drive could not be confirmed and remain a mystery. That mystery, however, allows

for the imagination to take over and can result in an even more thrilling narrative to take hold in one's mind.

The artifacts and monuments in the two counties serve as a reminder of the dauntless spirit of seamen and travelers and of the formidable challenges they faced in their journeys on the Atlantic. "New Jersey, with its 127-miles of coastline, has more

shipwrecks than any other state," Whitcraft said. "North Carolina calls itself the Graveyard of the Atlantic—they've got nothing on us." ♦

Special thanks to Deb Whitcraft and Dave Swope of the New Jersey Maritime Museum and Pat McCormick of the Belmar Historical Society for their generous assistance with writing this article.



Unknown anchor and bitts (used to secure a vessel with mooring lines) in front of Laurelton Welding on Channel Drive in Point Pleasant Beach.

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