

Exploring THE USS MASSACHUSETTS

IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

The boat operator is legally responsible for the safety of those on board the boat, for any damage the boat or its wake causes to other boats or property, and for others injured by any such damage. An operator can be at fault for an accident which no action was taken to avoid, even when completely in the "right."

Vessels shall give way to other vessels ahead to pass on the starboard (right) side of the boat. Powerboats must yield to sailboats. Vessels less than 65.5 feet (20 meters) or sailing vessels shall not impede the passage of a vessel that can safely navigate only within a narrow channel.

Federal law prohibits throwing, discharging, or depositing refuse matter of any kind in U. S. navigable waters (including fishing line).

A Florida Saltwater Fishing License is required for anyone who takes, attempts to take or possesses marine fish and invertebrates for non-commercial purposes. Call the Florida Marine Patrol (444-8978) for details.

All persons diving or snorkeling in Florida waters must display the red with white diagonal divers-down flag. Vessels which are restricted in their ability to maneuver because of diving activity shall exhibit International Code Flag "A."

FISHING

The most exciting fishing on the *Massachusetts* is during the spring and summer when king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia can be caught at anchor, and while trolling. Bottom fishing for snapper and grouper is great any time of the year. The cooler months slow down mackerel and cobia action, but sheepshead and flounder move in and are commonly caught.

DIVING

Divers should use accepted safe diving practices, including the buddy system, the divers-down flag, and standard open water diving equipment (which includes a sharp dive knife because of monofilament line on the site), and gloves.

The best time to dive on this dynamic site is one hour before high or low tide in order to avoid the strong currents and also to coincide with the best visibility. Consult local dive shops for tide tables.

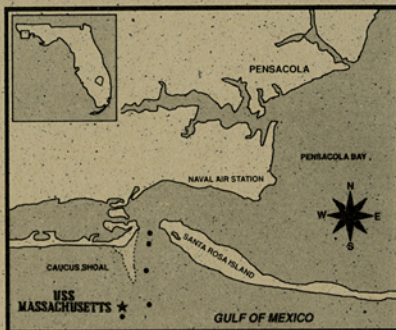
The *Massachusetts* Underwater Archaeological Preserve is within the Ft. Pickens Aquatic Preserve. While fishing and spear fishing are not limited the taking of artifacts is strictly prohibited. Please take only photographs and leave only bubbles.

A Window to the Past...

Make history come alive: experience the majesty of the oldest existing battleship in the United States. Originally she was equipped with two heavy 13-inch gun batteries as well as four 8-inch gun batteries and four torpedo tubes. The ship was propelled by steam engines at nearly 10,000 horsepower and was manned by 473 crewmen.

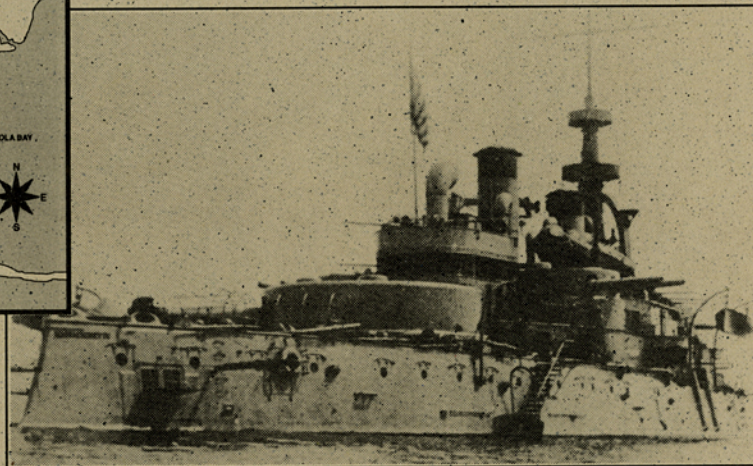
Scuttled near the entrance to Pensacola in January of 1921, the battleship has become the home to many species of fish and coral.

UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESERVE



MAP & LOCATION

The grave of the *MASSACHUSETTS* lies on the south end of Caucus Shoal, west of Pensacola Pass. The wreck is visible but is difficult to see in large waves or from a distance. It is marked by a red lighted bell buoy "WR2" 250 yards to the south. To find the *Massachusetts* proceed approximately 2 miles south of Pensacola Pass to the green channel marker buoy # 5, then approximately 1/2 mile southwest to the wreck. The site coordinates are 30°17' 45" N, 87°18' 45" W (13215.0 - 47108.9).



TIDE AND CURRENTS

When visiting the site, be aware of currents that can make navigating, anchoring and diving difficult. The current is weakest at high or low tide, and is strongest just after tidal change. The high tide in the entrance to Pensacola Bay occurs approximately 1 hour and 23 minutes before the predicted high for Pensacola, and the low tide occurs approximately 34 minutes before the predicted time.

ANCHORING

If you intend to anchor at the site you will need a suitable anchor and at least 150 feet of anchor line. The *Massachusetts* rests on a sandy bottom in approximately 25 feet of water. Approach the wreck slowly and select a spot well clear of other anchored boats and divers. Placing an anchor into the *Massachusetts* can easily cause it to foul and become impossible to retrieve. Anchor in the sand on the periphery of the wreck to avoid fouling or losing your anchor.

WARNING

- Pensacola Pass can become very rough when the current is moving opposite the wind.
- Take care to monitor changing water conditions, visibility, and tides.
- Divers beware of becoming entangled in monofilament line.
- Divers should not penetrate the hull due to structural instability and the presence of entanglements.
- Boaters beware of shifting winds or currents which can ground your vessel on the wreck.
- Do not leave your boat unattended.



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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Division of Historical Resources
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
Division of State Lands
THE FRIENDS OF THE USS MASSACHUSETTS (BB-2), Inc.

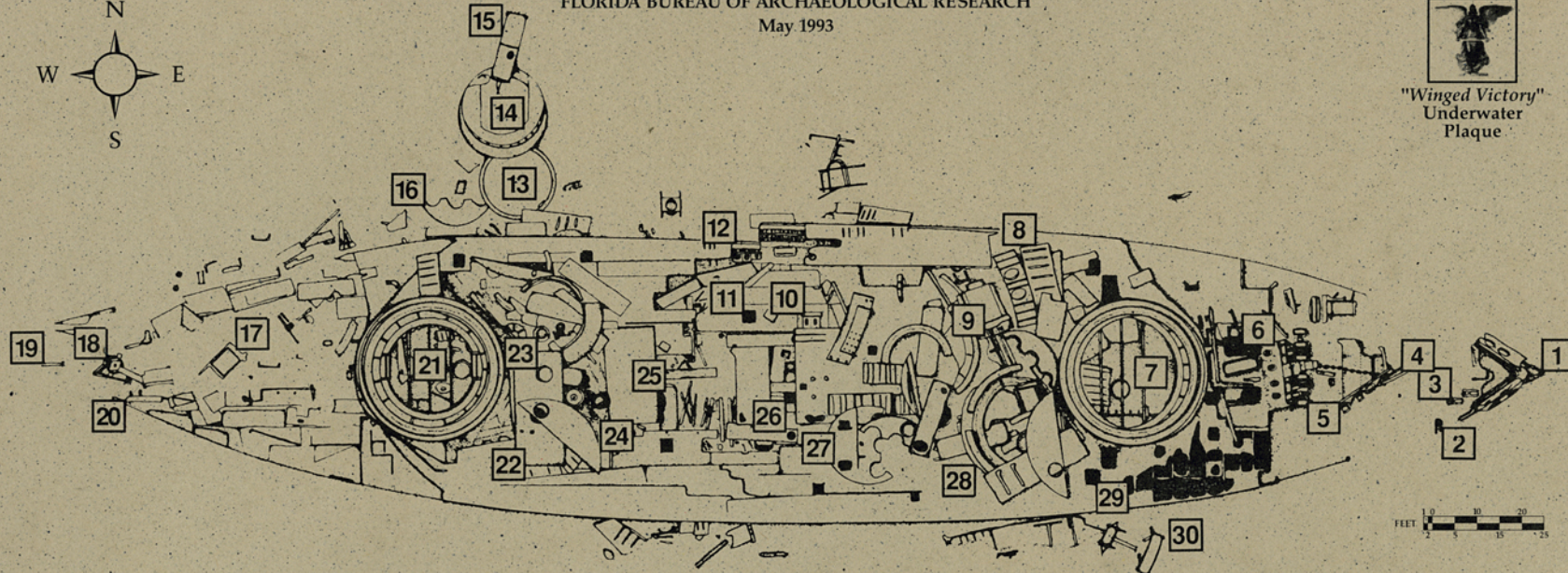
USS MASSACHUSETTS (BB-2)

FLORIDA BUREAU OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

May 1993



"Winged Victory"
Underwater
Plaque



AQUATIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRESERVE

WARNING - This site can become a congested with divers and fishermen. All parties should respect the rights of others. Anchors and fish hooks can be dangerous to divers.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Torpedo Tube | 9. Conning Tower | 17. Hatch Coaming | 25. Boiler |
| 2. Boat Crane | 10. Dynamo | 18. Rudder Head | 26. Grating |
| 3. Chain Nipper | 11. Hatch | 19. Rudder | 27. Dynamo |
| 4. Anchor | 12. Armor Belt | 20. Trimming Tank | 28. 8-inch Barbette |
| 5. Windlass | 13. 8-inch Turret | 21. Turret # 2 | 29. Coal Trunk |
| 6. Chain Locker | 14. Barbette | 22. Turret Lid | 30. Fighting Top |
| 7. Turret # 1 | 15. Ammo Tube | 23. Sighting Cupola | |
| 8. 8-inch Gun Turret | 16. Turret Lid | 24. 8-inch Turret Gears | |

THE VIEW FROM DOWN UNDER

The USS *Massachusetts* rests on an even keel in 25 feet of emerald green water on a white sand bottom, with her bow pointing almost due east. Although the superstructure has been removed, the massive 13-inch gun turrets still protrude slightly above water. A diver can completely circumnavigate the hull, observing such interesting features as the displaced windlass house, chain lockers still containing chain, and the enormous rudder-turning gear. Almost every type of Gulf marine life inhabits the wreck. Look closely and you may observe sea turtles, large rays, octopus, tropical fish, invertebrates, and eels. Game fish such as mackerel, ling, flounder, snapper and grouper attract fishermen and divers alike.



Amberjack



Barracuda



Cobia



Grouper



Mackerel



Snapper