

Diving on HMS Manchester

Contributed by Dougal Matthews

An article on diving by a club member on HMS Manchester was published recently in the November issue of DIVER magazine.

HMS Manchester was scuttled in 1942 after she had been hit twice by Italian torpedo boats off the Tunisian coast while part of Operation Pedestal - the support convey bound for Malta. However, the decision of Captain Drew to scuttle the ship remains controversial to this day. Although three of her four engines were out of action and she has list to starboard, her guns were still working. Captain Drew was court-martialled for his actions although it could be argued that many of the crew survived because of his decision. A further consequence of Captain Drew's actions is that the wreck of HMS Manchester is largely intact on a seabed of 85 meters off Kelibia, Cap Bon, Tunisia. Manchester was discovered in 2002 and is generally held to be one of the most intact wrecks of a WW2 Royal Naval warship in the world. In July 2009, we were part of only the fourth expedition to dive her, and in 30 meter visibility, dived much of the forward section of the ship. Both forward turrets were intact each with their three 6" guns pointing skyward. The bridge where Captain Drew gave his fateful orders is still intact with all glass still present as on the day she was scuttled. A real privilege to explore, Manchester is the dive of a lifetime.

you can read the full article from Diver magazine [Here](#)