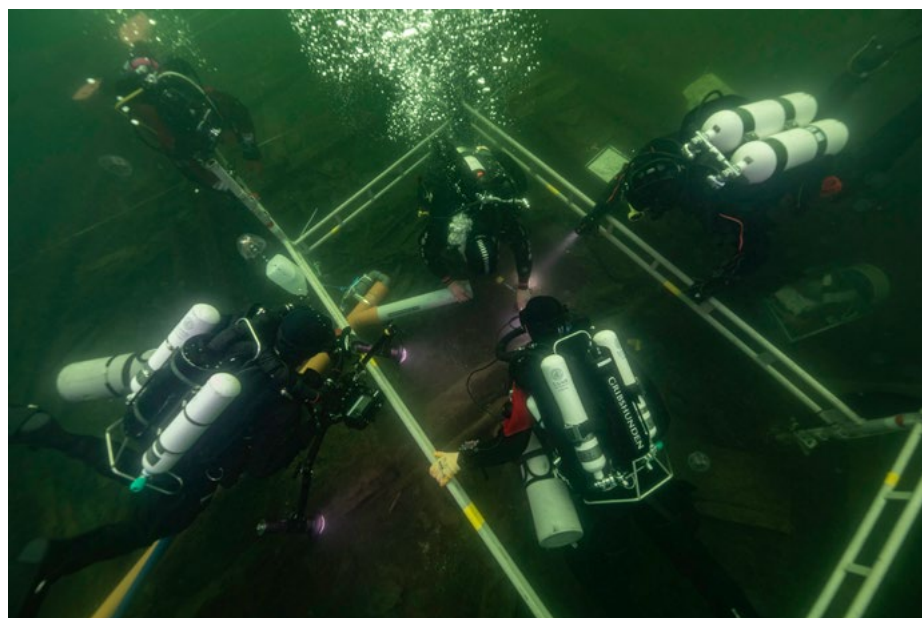


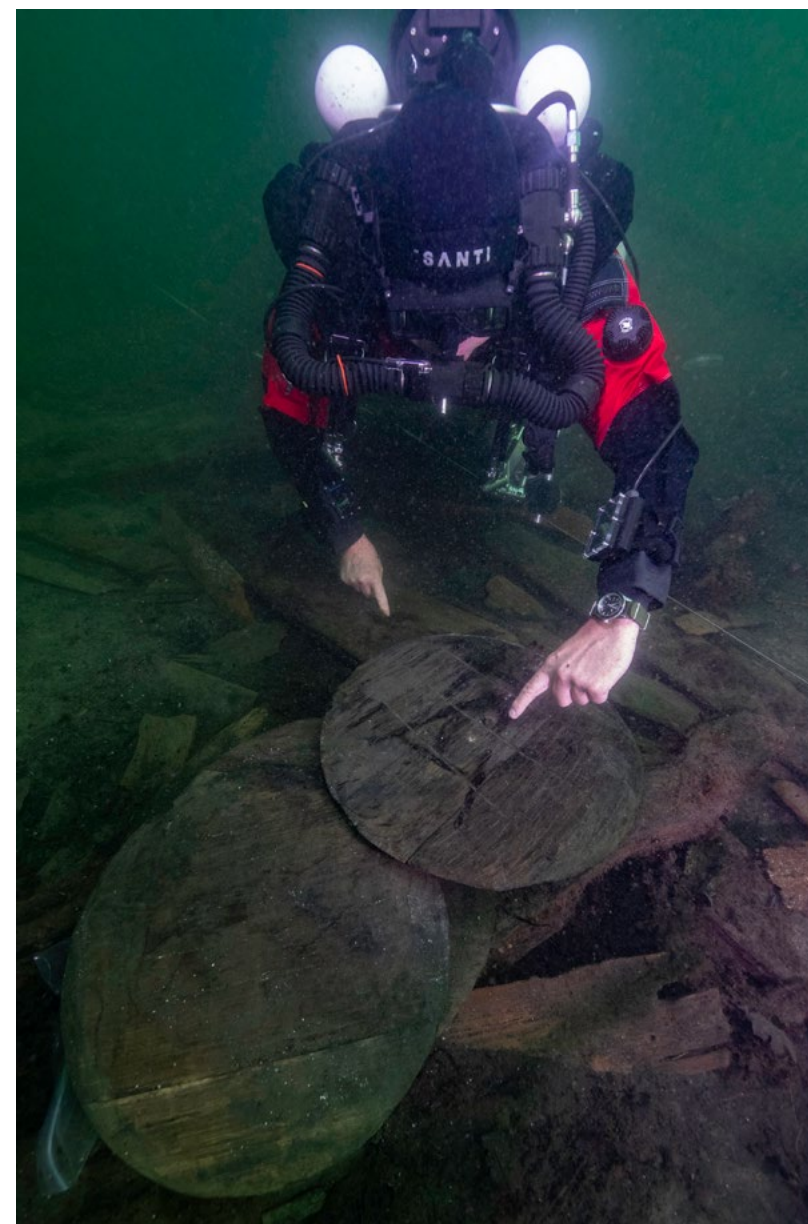


Brendan Foley & Brett Seymour

Gribshunden excavation



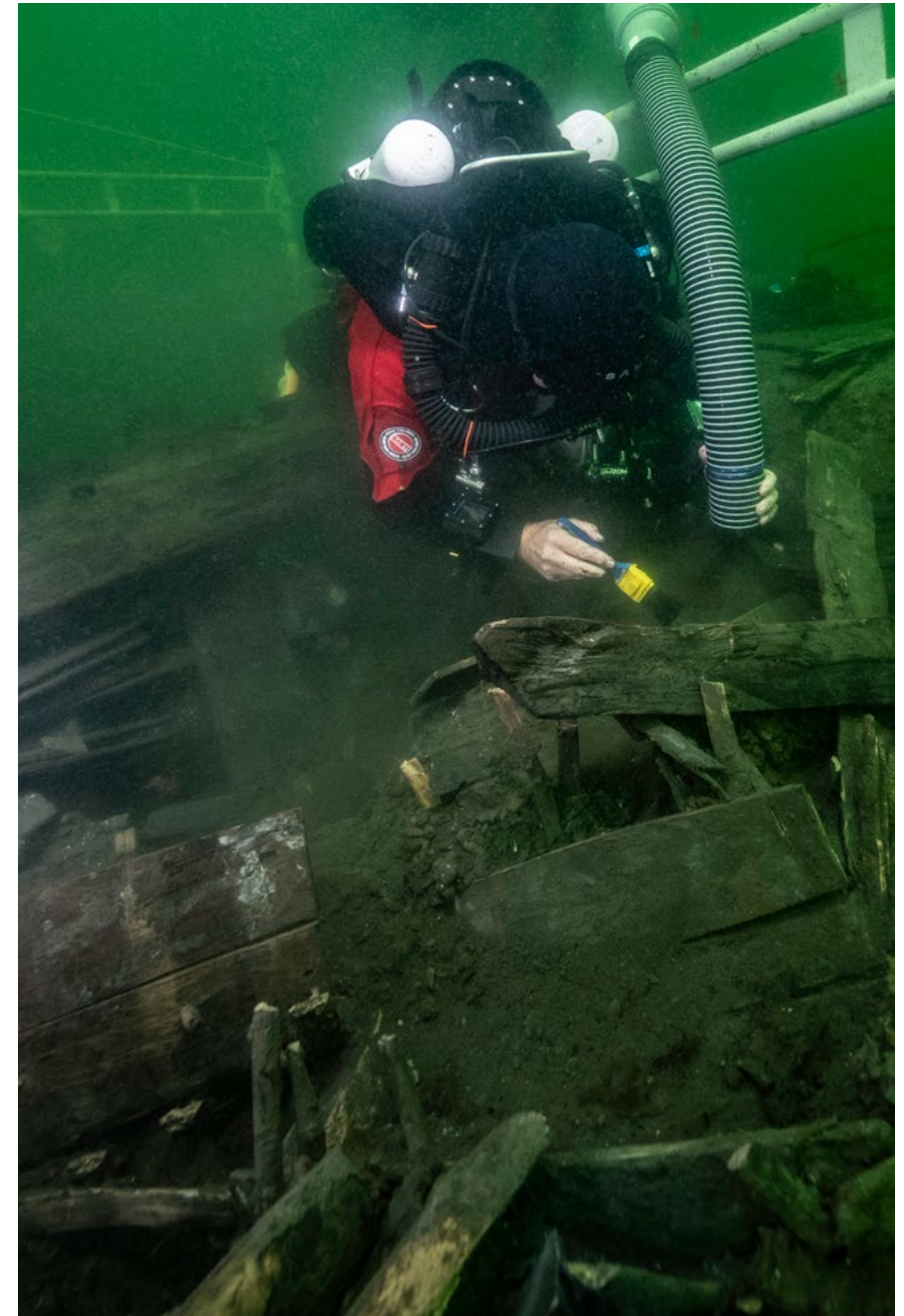
Archaeologists begin the excavation of *Gribshunden* within the grid established for the project. Professor Jonathan Adams (University of Southampton) handles the dredge, aided by Dr. Brendan Foley (Lund University). Archaeology graduate students Rolf Warming and Ellen Ingers observe the procedure, while professional underwater videographer Evan Kovacs records the entire operation.



The preservation of organic material on Baltic Sea wrecks is amazing due to the water's low salinity and cold temperatures. *Gribshunden's* provisions and supplies were carried in wooden barrels, which are still intact. Brendan Foley points to the fire-branded symbol on the cover of this barrel, a letter 'A'. Historical research into maker's marks may reveal the producer of this barrel or its contents. This study will be aided by dendrochronological analysis of the wood, which can determine when the tree was felled and where the tree grew.



Excavation reveals an intact barrel within the hull of *Gribshunden*. The barrel staves are held in place with withies instead of iron hoops. The square bung plug is sealed with a cloth liner. When empty, the barrels could be disassembled into a “flatpack” to save space.



With a paintbrush in one hand gently whisking away sediment from a feature in the wreck, Brendan Foley holds the dredge in the other hand to remove the suspended material and keep visibility clear.



Among the barrels in the hold of *Gribshunden*, a wooden tankard fell during the wrecking event. Still intact after 524 years, the finely-crafted drinking vessel evokes thoughts of the feasting that King Hans must have enjoyed aboard his flagship.



The wooden tankard is marked with a symbol reminiscent of a crown. The tankard is completely intact, and was still airtight when recovered. Chemical analysis may reveal what the owner might have been drinking in 1495.



Timbers of the ship, now covered in marine growth, emerge from the sea floor. *Gribshunden* was built as a Ship of Discovery, the first generation of vessel capable of carrying heavy guns. *Gribshunden* is the best-preserved example ever discovered of this ship type, which included *Santa Maria*. Study of this shipwreck provides information about the key enabling technology for the European conquest of the globe after 1492.



Technical diver Jan Petersen hovers over the hawsepipe of *Gribshunden*. The ship's anchor cables would have run through this timber. The hawsepipe was located far above the waterline, so the survival of this element is proof that substantial portions of the ship are intact on the sea floor. With careful documentation of each feature, the entire ship may be reconstructed by archaeologists.



Archaeologist Johan Rönby (Södertörns högskola) excavates the hull of the ship. The 2019 project revealed that far more of the hull exists than previously imagined. Here, a large section of hull has fallen away, and is buried by 1 m of sediment. The excavation in this locus showed that the hull structure transitions from carvel-built to clinker-built above the waterline, new information for ship construction specialists.



Gribshunden is a site of global importance, and the media response to the excavation has been tremendous. In addition to an international documentary film that will be broadcast in 2020, national media outlets in Sweden followed the project. Here, team members from Blekinge Museum join the archaeologists for Media Day, sharing preliminary results and findings on the final day of the 2019 field campaign.

Text by Brendan Foley, researcher at the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History,
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Photographs by Brett Seymour, Deputy Chief and photographer at the Submerged
Resources Center (SRC) at the National Park Service (NPS)

ILLUSTRATIONS

Photograph on page 28 detail from photograph on page 34, photo: Brett Seymour