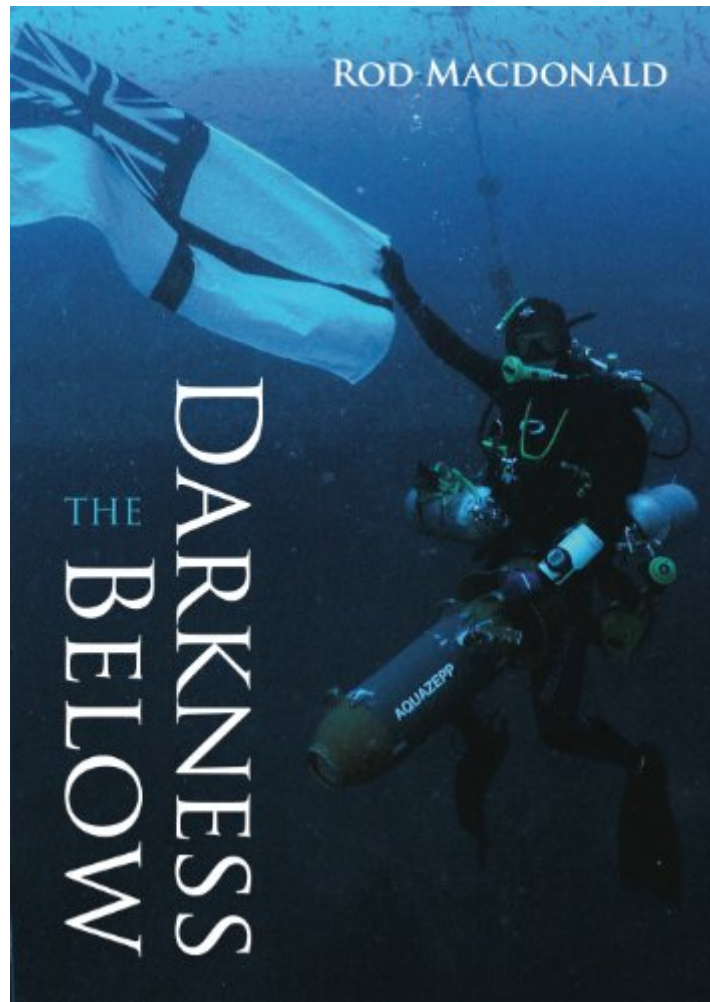


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The Darkness Below



Synopsis

From the best-selling author of four classic UK diving books comes *The Darkness Below* – a collection of absorbing adventures gained from a lifetime in diving. Rod takes the reader on a spellbinding and gripping journey from first beginnings as a novice scuba diver. Told in intimate detail with a beguiling sense of self-deprecating humour, he recounts epic dives on some of the most fabulous shipwrecks around the world. Terrifying first explorations of virgin shipwrecks far offshore, lost in time and enshrouded in darkness, cram the pages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you want to know what 'real' scuba diving is all about, look no further! Speaking as a diver of almost 40 years experience with an abiding interest in shipwrecks, there are many I have visited and a great deal more which are still on my 'Bucket List.' This diver has already visited several of both the former and the latter. Of all the books I review, I reserve my hardest comments for those about shipwrecks and diving. Being the two subjects I study in the greatest of detail, I frequently find too many would-be authors put pen to paper without understanding either subject. Thankfully, Rod Macdonald is one of that rare breed who knows these subjects most thoroughly and fully

understands how to put that knowledge into a readable and engaging style of writing. In short, this is one of the most intense and exciting books about Diving I have ever had the good fortune to read and when someone of my experience finds himself saying "Wow!" it must be really good. In this work, this author takes us through his personal experiences of visits to some of the world's greatest shipwrecks - a number of which are designated 'War Graves' (the formal term is a 'Protected Place' under the provisions of a British law called 'The Protection of Military Maritime Graves Act 1986.'). It is important, therefore, to point out that, whilst all vessels are designated are (by law!) with some being out-of-bounds, this author had all the necessary permissions for his own visits. Let me be quite clear, this is no collection of small albeit exciting shipwrecks. On the contrary, we begin with an account of the 32,000 ton White Star Liner 'Justicia' lost off Northern Ireland during WW1.

This has got to be the most enjoyable dive book I have read in a long time, for some reason I missed out on his first book, *Into the Abyss*, but Rod covers this period by starting the book with a précis of his early days of diving. This section certainly brought back memories of dives using home made wetsuits and very rudimentary dive equipment. Rod then effortlessly moves us through deep air dives, his introduction to technical diving and finally into his move to rebreather diving, where naming Ewan Rowell's rebreather "Kato" brought a smile to my face. Rod weaves a golden thread through his diving career, picking out wrecks, characters and events that are all interlinked in their own ways and all form part of this fantastic story, leaving you wanting him to write another volume so that you can continue to follow the tale. Rod shares the joy and elation of his diving as well as letting you feel the apprehension of some tense moments inside deep, dark wrecks. Rod never over dramatises but I certainly could remember a few similar experiences when diving in cold, dark conditions in the same Scottish waters. For wreck detectives, this is a fantastic tale of search and discovery, guesswork and deduction as Rod turns information from fishermen and marks on charts into dives on virgin wrecks and then the painstaking work of proving the name and history of the wreck. As always, the wreck drawings are detailed and give you all you need to prepare for a dive on the wrecks. I took the book on holiday, looking forward to dipping into it between sightseeing but opened it on the plane, was instantly gripped and read it cover to cover during the flight.

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