



The WESTERNERS Los Angeles Corral Presents a Taped Virtual Presentation by

Our Virtual Speaker and Corral Member: **Robert Schwemmer**

His Subject: A Recent Discovery of the USCG Cutter *McCulloch* off Point Conception, North of Santa Barbara, California

https://sbmm.org/santa-barbara-lectures/?_gallery=gg-2-50

One hundred years after the USCG Cutter *McCulloch* sank and disappeared off Point Conception, the U.S. Coast Guard and NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries announced the discovery. During a joint NOAA and USCG remotely operated vehicle (ROV) shipwreck training mission in 2016, the shipwreck site was confirmed to be the *McCulloch*. **Robert V. Schwemmer** served as NOAA's chief scientist for the mission. Bob will present the history of the ship, which served both as a U.S. Revenue cutter and later USCG cutter, and the process by which it was eventually found. He will also share images from the shipwreck site.

U.S. Revenue Cutter *McCulloch* was in Singapore just before the start of the Spanish American War and was ordered to join Commodore George Dewey's Asiatic Squadron in the Battle of Manila Bay. On June 13, 1917, the passenger steamship *SS Governor* collided with the *McCulloch* and it sank 3 miles northwest of Point Conception. *SS Governor* was found at fault for not obeying the "rules of the road." These waters have long been known for dangerous currents and rough sailing conditions, earning it the nickname "Cape Horn of the Pacific."

Robert Schwemmer has been a member of the Westerners Los Angeles Corral since 1990, with interests in U.S. coast maritime history, marine archaeology and shipwreck exploration. For over 20 years, he has been the West Coast Regional Maritime Heritage Coordinator for NOAA-Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. He coordinates and conducts archaeological surveys and research for the five National Marine Sanctuaries located along the Pacific West Coast. This work includes recording and mapping submerged sites utilizing SCUBA equipment, submersibles and remotely operated vehicles (ROV). As a diver and archaeologist, Robert has explored and mapped many lost vessels. Because of his research, we know more about the resting place of previously lost shipwrecks, including the *USS Conestoga*, *USS Monitor*, *SS Montebello*, *SS City of Rio de Janeiro* *SS City of Chester* and *George E Billings*.