

**Jack Irion, Ph.D.**  
**Marine Archaeologist**



Dr. Irion retired in 2021 from the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) after nearly 50 years' experience in underwater archaeology. His work has resulted in the discovery and documentation of numerous historic sites and shipwrecks throughout the United States. He is particularly interested in the maritime history of the Gulf of Mexico and in deep-submergence archaeology using robotic technology. Since joining the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in 1995, Jack has directed the documentation of several historic shipwrecks on the Outer Continental Shelf. These have included the Civil War gunboat U.S.S. *Hatteras* and the 19<sup>th</sup> century coastal steamers *New York* and *Josephine*. Over the past 26 years Jack has overseen projects that investigated the deepest shipwrecks ever found in the Gulf, including the German submarine *U-166* in 5,000 feet of water, and some of its most historic, such as the "Mardi Gras Shipwreck," a likely War of 1812 privateer. He has served as Co-Chief Scientist on the team that discovered and documented an early 19<sup>th</sup> century armed sailing ship in the Gulf at a depth of over 4,000 feet. More recently he has worked with NOAA in locating and documenting the possible 19th century whaler *Industry*. His work has been featured on the History Channel and on National Geographic's *Drain the Ocean* series. As the former Chief of the Social Science Unit of BOEM, Jack oversaw a team of marine archaeologists reviewing reports of remote sensing data supplied by the oil and gas industry and in developing protocols for the protection of submerged cultural resources on the Outer Continental Shelf. He completed a Ph.D. from The University of Texas in 1990 in Latin American History with a concentration in archaeology.

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