

## **Thriller Author A.C. Frieden Scuba Dives in Old Missouri Mine**

**BONNE TERRE, Missouri, USA (Feb. 18, 2012)** – International thriller author A.C. Frieden arrived in eastern Missouri to enjoy a full day of scuba diving in Bonne Terre Mine, a former lead mine. The mine has become a national historic site and is now one of the world's largest fresh water dive destinations, with over 100 foot visibility underwater and a stable water temperature allowing year-round diving. "This place is unique," said Frieden. "Being an avid diver, I've begun to weave into my upcoming novels a number scenes relating to scuba diving, and this dive site offers an exceptional experience that I will certainly add to a plot somehow."

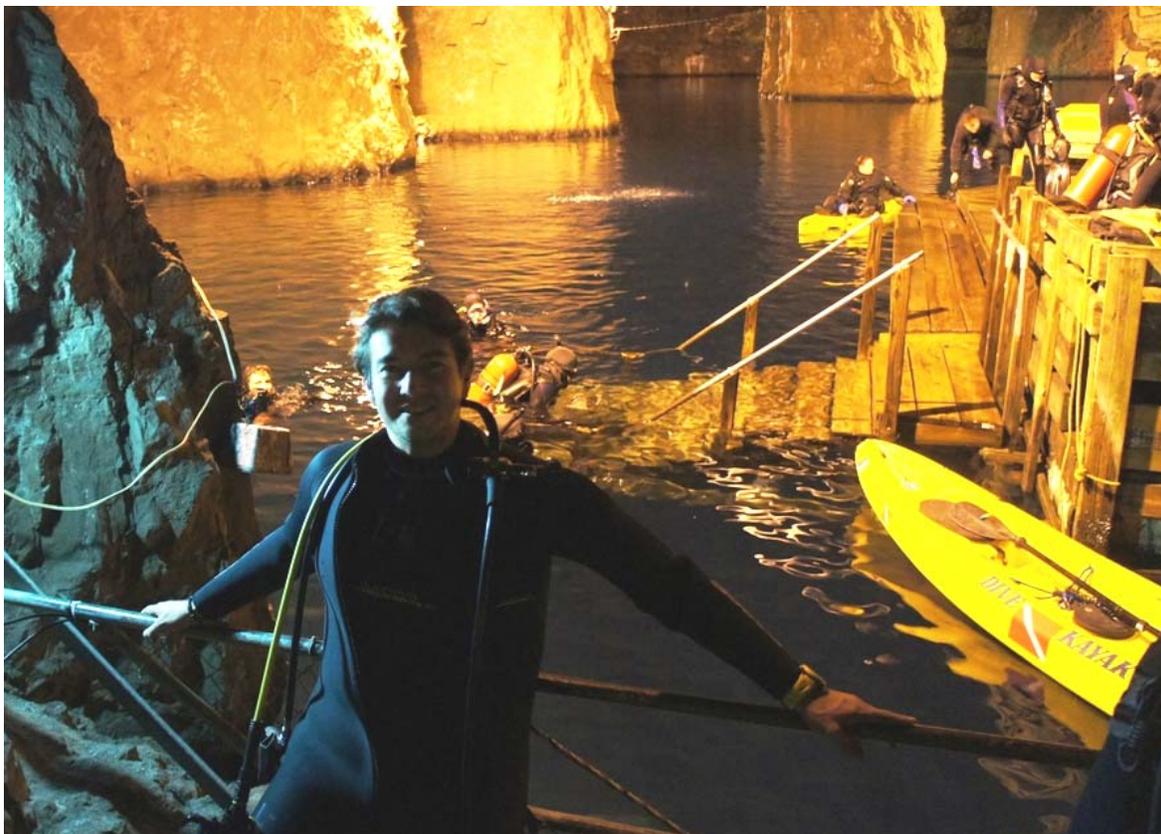


**Photo above:** Author A.C. Frieden preparing to descend into the "mule entrance" to the mine.

Bonne Terre, a town of about 7,000 inhabitants, is located in St. Francois County, Missouri, a forty-minute drive south of St. Louis. The area was originally settled by the French in 1720 after the discovery of lead ore--the French gave the place the name *La Bonne Terre*, meaning "the good earth." At the time these first miners discovered the vast belt of lead, the land was part of the Louisiana Territory, which was later transferred to the U.S. in the Louisiana Purchase.

By the late 1800s, labor problems, weather conditions and other impediments made it difficult for the handful of mining companies in the area to stay in business, despite the vast amounts of lead in the area. The St. Joseph Lead Company emerged as the sole remaining operator in the area. At the time, the mines were surface mines. Production improved over the next few decades but eventually demand for lead diminished and the mine was closed in 1962.

Today, Bonne Terre Mine is illuminated with over 500,000 watts of lighting, and features 24 dive trails of varying complexity, taking the diver through huge archways, past calcium falls, and around colossal rock pillars at depths ranging from 40 to 60 feet. There are also plenty of abandoned artifacts to see underwater, including an old locomotive, a diamond drill, ore carts, tools, dynamite boxes, mine lighting and plumbing systems, and miners' personal equipment.



*Photo above: Author A.C. Frieden at the diving dock 150 feet below ground prior to the first of his three dives.*

**About the author:** A.C. Frieden is international novelist and lawyer based in Chicago. He is the author of several political/espionage thrillers and suspense novels, including the Jonathan Brooks series, as well as other fiction and non-fiction literary works. For more information, visit his website at [www.acfrieden.com](http://www.acfrieden.com) and his blogs.

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