



PORTOLAN

THE LOG OF NORTHWEST SEAPORT

SPRING 2010

Partnering In Preservation

By Diana Hennick, Museum Specialist

The National Trust for Historic Preservation wants to give us \$120,000 to haul-out our 1889 tug *Arthur Foss*.

That's right – Northwest Seaport's venerable National Historic Landmark vessel has been chosen to participate in the 2010 Partners in Preservation program. As one of 25 historic properties from the Puget Sound area selected for funding from American Express, the *Arthur* represents our region's proud maritime and industrial heritage.

But we need your help! The Partners in Preservation program lets *you*, the community, decide which landmarks receive funding. From April 15 to May 12, the National Trust holds online voting to determine how to distribute \$1 million from American Express. Voting is easy – all you need is an email address and a few minutes every day (that's right – you can vote every day!).

Simply visit www.partnersinpreservation.com, follow the instructions there, and cast your vote to preserve history. Turn the page to see more ways to support the *Arthur Foss* during the voting period and beyond!

Want to see what you're voting for? Come to our Partners in Preservation Open House on May 1 and 2. We'll have the *Arthur Foss* open to the public from 11AM to 5PM both days to showcase her unique history and our ongoing restoration projects.



*We need your help to win \$120,000 from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to dry-dock our 1889 tugboat *Arthur Foss**

Funding from the Partners in Preservation is for **The Ironbark Project**, a major step in preserving the *Arthur Foss*'s 1889 Douglas fir hull. Like many older wooden tugs, *Arthur*'s hull is covered with a thin ironbark (a tropical hardwood) sheathing to protect it during the tug's hard working career. The Ironbark Project will dry-dock the *Arthur Foss* to remove this sheathing and allow shipwrights to inspect and repair the hull planking beneath.

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from the President

Please join me in welcoming three additions to the Northwest Seaport Board of Directors: Barbara Klee, Colleen Browne, and Andy Bennett, who bring a tremendous breadth of experience, skills, and energy to the board. To describe their background and experience would require a full article, but please do read about them further on our website and blog.

Our recent elections also made changes in officers, with Joe Shickich stepping down from his role as the President to be acting Co-Secretary/Treasurer with Pat Hartle, who has managed this position admirably these past years. Jim Flies is our new Vice-President, and finally, I am quite proud to have been elected the new President of the Board of Directors.

First, though, Joe deserves all the accolades we can possibly pile on, and more, for his long service to Northwest Seaport. He guided the organization through a low point, as many organizations experienced, and we emerged stronger than ever. With Joe's leadership, we met many challenges, reinvigorated the organization, developed new programming, created educational opportunities across age groups, and made the best of some unfortunate circumstances.

Perhaps the most important changes under Joe's leadership were renewing old partnerships, building

new ones, and creating a new environment of collaboration among maritime and related groups. Thanks for that must be spread far and wide, but Northwest Seaport was able to take an important role through Joe's leadership and participation in groups such as the Maritime Heritage Task Force.

So, here I am, trying to follow in his wake. I'm proud to have been part of these accomplishments but even more, I look forward to the future. Northwest Seaport is about the working ships that built the Pacific Northwest, those ships that served the community and in turn were *supported* by the community. In my term as President, I hope to build on this model for our historic fleet

This issue of the Portolan highlights our current preservation activities that involve a broad community. There just wasn't room to get everything in; for example, our Landmarks Challenge Grant from King County 4Culture funds our Stop the Leaks Project on the *Arthur Foss* to stop freshwater infiltration into the tug. In future issues, you'll read about programs, partnerships, education, and some of the many other public services of Northwest Seaport. Please join in the fun, and please support the Seaport with much-needed funds to keep doing the great things we do.

Hope to see you on the Wharf soon!

Shannon Fitzgerald

President, Northwest Seaport

port • o • lan

an archaic navigational map based on realistic descriptions of coasts, waterways, and bays; from the Italian word portolano, meaning "related to ports or harbors"

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2009 Board of Directors

Shannon Fitzgerald (*President*)

Jim Flies (*Vice President*)

Joe Shickich (*Co-Secretary/Treasurer*)

Patricia Hartle (*Co-Secretary/Treasurer*)

Bob Sittig (*Past President*)

Barbara Klee

Colleen Browne

Andy Bennett



Partnering in Preservation, continued from Page 1

The *Arthur Foss*'s bow during the 2007 haul-out. The ironbark sheathing shows from the turn of the bilge to the rubstrakes.

The Ironbark Project follows surveys and repairs made during the *Arthur Foss*'s last haul-out in 2007. The tug was out of the water at Northlake Shipyard for five days for a thorough bottom-scrubbing and paint job, plus service to the overboard discharges and propeller tube. Shipwrights also reefed several leaking butt joint between plank ends, pulling old caulking out and replacing it with new oakum and tar.

While the shipwrights and painters were working, professional marine surveyors went over the boat, preparing a detailed condition report on the hull to inform the next steps of preservation. The surveyors' top recommendation? Remove the ironbark sheathing, for two reasons. First, now that the *Arthur Foss* is moored in Lake Union, the ironbark is trapping fresh water against the Douglas fir hull planks, creating an environment for rot to set in. Second, the ironbark is blocking repairs to the planks beneath.

Northwest Seaport used these recommendations to design the Ironbark Project as a major first step in both preserving the *Arthur Foss*'s hull and returning the tug to cruising condition. The sheathing will be systematically documented, removed, cataloged, and stored, and surveyors will conduct a complete assessment of the exposed hull. Shipwrights will perform initial repairs while laborers clean and repaint the hull again. Following this dry-dock period, NWS will create a detailed preservation plan, determining any planks to be replaced and outlining a master schedule for haul-outs and other major maintenance and repairs.

Vote now to help us start the Ironbark Project soon!

How *YOU* Can Help the *Arthur Foss* Win!

Vote! Every day, from April 15 to May 12!

You can vote once a day, every day, at www.partnersinpreservation.com – all you need to make a difference is an email address and a few minutes.

Spread the Word!

Tell your friends and family to vote! Join our email list by emailing vote@nwseaport.org and forward the emails on to anyone who wants them. Spread the word via Facebook or Twitter and let everyone know that every vote counts! Check our website for more information – we'll be making updates often during the voting period and after.

Visit the *Arthur Foss*!

Our Partners in Preservation open house is May 1 and 2 come visit the *Arthur Foss* at the Historic Ships Wharf from 11AM to 5PM both days – we'll have demonstrations, live music, and more – for free!



**PARTNERS
IN
PRESERVATION**

On Tour with *Wawona*

By Nathaniel Howe, Vessel Documentation Specialist

In March of 2009 we watched *Wawona* make her last voyage, gliding off across Lake Union to meet her fate with unforgettable grace and dignity. Yet, in a sense, the venerable old schooner made another voyage last year, calling at professional conferences and lecture halls from California to Denmark. I had the honor of navigating her on this voyage, bringing "Seattle's Tall Ship" to the world and speaking on her behalf.

In May, I "took *Wawona*" to the North American Society for Oceanic History (NASOH) conference in Vallejo, California. Two weeks later was the Council of

American Maritime Museums Conference (CAMM) in Erie, Pennsylvania. Two more followed in June, one at the Center for Wooden Boats, and another at a debriefing for all the parties involved in *Wawona's* final months. Lastly, in October, I traveled to Denmark to deliver a presentation on the *Wawona* project at the International Congress of Maritime Museums conference (ICMM) in Esbjerg.

At each of the conferences, *Wawona* drew a great deal of attention. In part, the schooner's tale is simply a compelling story; a shipbuilder's masterpiece for the coastal lumber trade goes on to become an unrivalled success in the Bering Sea cod fishery, serves in World War II, and then continues to sail through the steamship era and into the diesel age. In its post-commercial life, *Wawona* is rescued from obscurity to become a popular museum ship and America's first vessel to be placed on the National Historic Register, followed finally by her sad but unavoidable end. It's a fascinating and engaging tale.

The *Wawona's* tale strikes a special chord for the maritime heritage professionals at these gatherings, as so many museums are faced with decaying ships approaching a similar fate. Globally, more historic ships are heading to the breaker's yard as advanced deterioration and the economic recession have created a hostile environment for preservation. Northwest Seaport's valiant efforts to save *Wawona* up until the last minute and its simultaneous determination to document the ship thoroughly have won the respect and admiration of museum professionals around the world.

During these many presentations since *Wawona* was towed away, I have not received even one negative comment about the manner in which Northwest Seaport handled the *Wawona's* final days. Instead, I have heard only praise for the organization's decision. Director of Mystic Seaport, Stephen White, spoke up saying that "Northwest Seaport has shown an impressive level of professionalism in making some very difficult, emotional, and brave decisions for *Wawona*." He recognized that "It had to be an agonizing process, but Northwest Seaport has... taken that important next step of taking their story public and passing the lessons they learned on to other maritime museums."



Northwest Seaport's Diana Hennick and Nathaniel Howe take in the *Wawona's* stern during her final haul-out

At the NASOH conference in May, I spoke with a number of experts specializing in ships of the coastal lumber trade, including the restoration and maintenance personnel for *Wawona's* sistership, the *C. A. Thayer*. Part of the San Francisco National Maritime Historical Park, the *Thayer* underwent an extensive restoration between 2003 and 2006, ultimately replacing 85% of the ship. In the process, heritage specialists learned a great deal about its construction and the efficacy of various preservation efforts. The similarities between the two sisterships gave us much to talk about and I ended up spending two full days aboard *Thayer* with Chris Jannini, Phil Erwin, Stephen Canright, and Steve Hyman. My overwhelming impressions from these visits were 1.) what great colleagues we have in the maritime museum field facing the same problems we are, and 2.) how remarkably identical *Wawona* and *C. A. Thayer* were in design and detailing. The two ships bore a similarity very rarely achievable in wooden ships.

Two weeks later, Diana Hennick, Pat Hartle, and I set out from Northwest Seaport for the CAMM conference in Erie to interact with other maritime museum professionals from across North America. The central theme of the year's conference was "weathering the recession." While many museums spoke about cutting back and postponing major projects, Diana and I presented the projects that have put Northwest Seaport on the rise: in 2008 and 2009, the Seaport continued to expand its entire scope of operations while also undertaking the massive project of settling the fate of *Wawona*. Those feats made Northwest Seaport and its partner organizations on Lake Union a focal point of conference discussions.

In June, I came home to give a presentation for the general public at the Center For Wooden Boats' monthly Third Friday Speaker Program, explaining the final years of *Wawona*, the process we went through to salvage what material and information we could, and the ship's final fate. Many people who have put in years of volunteer work on *Wawona* came that evening and it was not easy for them to see the pictures of *Wawona's* final days again, but their presence attested to their dedication to the dream of a restored *Wawona*. I'm happy to share that we heard a number of good stories about the projects and special friendships developed over those years.

A week later, we convened the debriefing in the Former Naval Reserve Armory at Lake Union Park, inviting all the contracted parties and government representatives involved in the *Wawona* project. Representatives from the City of Seattle, Lake Union Dry Dock Co., the National Park Service, 4Culture, and many other organizations gathered to review the difficulties and achievements of the past five years and discuss the furtherance of *Wawona's* legacy. Together with four other documentation teams, I presented some of the data that has been collected and the ease with which it is being merged to make *Wawona* one of the most extensively documented historic ships in the United States. The depth of information we have literally makes it possible to build an exact replica of the schooner down to the tool marks on its timbers, either in digital or physical form. Most recently, I returned from the ICMM conference in Denmark where "*Wawona*" and

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Nathaniel Howe grew up in Seattle and started volunteering on the *Wawona* in his early teens. A decade later, he became Northwest Seaport's Vessel Documentation and Preservation Specialist and designed, directed, and carried out much of the archaeological recording of *Wawona's* hull and cabins in 2008 and 2009.

He's currently in Greenville, North Carolina, pursuing his master's degree in maritime history and nautical archaeology at East Carolina University. He remains involved in NWS's historic fleet, especially in planning how to document the *Lightship No. 83* prior to and during its upcoming rehabilitation.



Updates from the Wharf

Kat Eggleston in concert April 24

Northwest Seaport kicks off its 2010 Maritime Concert Series with Kat Eggleston, one of the most accomplished guitarists and singer-songwriters in the traditional music genres. Her original songs have won worldwide acclaim for their lyrical and emotional truth, while her powerful yet gently beautiful voice showcases material ranging from contemporary songs to the traditions of Great Britain and America with equal grace. Kat's incomparable music has dazzled audiences around the world but on April 24 you can hear her at the Center for Wooden Boats. The concert starts at 8:00 PM – visit the *Maritime Concerts* section of our website for more information.



On Tour with Wawona, continued from Page 5

"Northwest Seaport" became household names. More than eighty directors and senior administrators from maritime museums around the world attended the conference to discuss current projects, the direction of the field, and how to overcome the challenges of dwindling visitorship and massive budget cuts. Macro-artifact preservation (*ships*) was a central topic and Northwest Seaport stole the show with the "brave decision" (Stephen White, Director of Mystic Seaport) not to continue trying to preserve a vessel that, structurally, was beyond salvation. As Stephen Riley, former director of the British National Maritime Museum in Greenwich said, "this was an example of making the reluctant, but pragmatic, decision not to preserve. This would be a useful lesson to all those 'preserve at all costs' enthusiasts of which there are many scattered around the world.

Sharing the *Wawona* Regionally

As Nat wrote in *On Tour With Wawona*, our Pacific Schooner lives on – not only in an extraordinary wealth of data and documentation, but also in a variety of physical remains. Artifacts range from deadeyes and brass nails to tin plates and signal flags, while about 30 tons of wood and iron – hull sections, keel sections, and hanging knees – were salvaged from the hull itself. Then there is her hardware, the capstans, winches, anchor chain, and beautiful forged iron anchor.

Northwest Seaport does not have a campus or gallery spaces; instead, our programs exist aboard vessels moored at the Historic Ships Wharf and in partnership with other organizations. To keep *Wawona's* story alive, we're now working with regional museums and historical institutions to distribute artifacts for display and interpretation. Some original material will likely go to artists and craftsman to be repurposed into furniture or art, as well. If you or your organization is interested in helping to tell the story of the *Wawona* by interpreting artifacts or original material from the ship, please contact us – and stay tuned!

– Emmett Smith

Emmett Smith is a craftsman and student of ships and boats, currently managing artifact distribution from the *Wawona*. You can email him at emmettvsmith@gmail.com

Yet, even though *Wawona* was not preserved in its physical form, it *was* preserved. The grand old schooner persists in spirit and in record, that detailed documentation of the ship granting *Wawona* a sort of immortality such that, as Michael Harrison of HABS/HAER in Washington, D. C. commented "by documenting the ship in such detail, Northwest Seaport still fulfilled its mission to preserve." *Wawona* is simply now preserved on paper and in digital media rather than in wood.

After a brutal year of resolving *Wawona's* fate, Northwest Seaport is now known and respected around the world by even the largest of our maritime museum colleagues for undertaking what they agree was a necessary, "reluctant, but pragmatic, decision not to preserve." This is no exaggeration. Their directors personally told me so. So we have certainly done well and I would say we have done *Wawona* justice.

Great thanks to all those who helped make it happen.

News from the *Lightship No. 83*

Those of us who've worked on the *Lightship No. 83* for the past few years have planned and plotted and envisioned every step of the project to the point that we sometimes believe that the new deck has already been laid. That's still more than a year away, but we've been steadily knocking out all the behind-the-scenes work of getting paperwork and contracts in place to start the real shipyard work.

Our milestone this month is releasing the Request for Bids to local contractors. Since the *Lightship No. 83* Rehabilitation Project is funded by state and federal grants, we need to follow an open bid process – and there's a lot of people who need to review each piece of paper before we can put it out to bid and select a contractor. That's almost wrapped up and when it is, we plan to start up volunteer work parties and get some "real" work done prior to the Phase I construction. We'll need help cleaning up the boat and moving some of the big heavy things to off-site storage. Keep in touch if you want in on that – and wear your getting-dirty pants.

Before we release the ship to the yard, we'll also be documenting *everything* – photos, videos, drawings, you name it. More importantly, we'll develop a *system* suited to the *Lightship's* unique documentation needs, with help from our nautical archaeology friends at East Carolina University.

We're all chomping at the bit to begin this much-anticipated work that will get *Lightship #83* open to the public and ready as a platform for more programs.

– Adrian Lipp



Adrian Lipp, project manager for the *Lightship No. 83* Rehabilitation, has previously worked with Northwest Seaport on projects such as the 2007 *Arthur Foss* Haul-out (pictured above). You can email him at oldtacomamarine@yahoo.com

Support Northwest Seaport Today!

Contribute Project Funds

The Ironbark Project on the *Arthur Foss*, the *Lightship No 83* Rehabilitation, the *Wawona* Project – we need your help to raise money to keep maritime heritage alive through our historic stories. Your donation hires craftspeople, purchases material, and creates opportunities for hands-on learning.

Become a Member

Membership in Northwest Seaport means that **you** are helping sustain maritime heritage, educational and vocational training, traditional music and sea chanteys, programs for the entire family, and *more*. Becoming a member is easy – simply fill out the form enclosed in this issue or visit our website for more information.

www.nwseaport.org



Arthur's stern makes a great place for families!



NWSeaport

at Lake Union Park
PO Box 9744
Seattle, WA 98109

Inside this PORTOLAN

Partnering in Preservation Help NWS win money to haul-out the *Arthur Foss*!

On Tour With Wawona Nathaniel Howe reports on a whirlwind conference circuit

Rehabilitation Begins on the *Lightship 83* – meet the project manager

Updates from the Wharf and beyond!

PORTOLAN

the Log of Northwest Seaport

Mark Your Calendar!

April 15 – Partners in Preservation Voting Begins!

April 24 – Maritime Concert feat. Kat Eggleston at the CWB

May 1 & 2 – PiP Open House on the tugboat *Arthur Foss*

May 8 – Chantey Sing at Immanuel Lutheran Church

May 12 – Partners in Preservation Voting Ends!

June 11 – Chantey Sing location to be announced

July 2 – Chantey Sing aboard the schooner *Adventuress*

July 3 & 4 – Lake Union Wooden Boat Festival

Volunteer Orientations are held every second Friday at 7:00 PM and every fourth Saturday at 11:00 AM

Tugboat Story Time is held every second and fourth Thursday at 11:00 AM

Visit www.nwseaport.org for exact times and more information about these and other events



Help the *Arthur Foss* win \$120,000 for the Ironbark Project, a big step to cruising again! Details Inside.