

## Introduction

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to preserve and to educate the public about the maritime heritage of Sitka, Alaska. Our primary project is renovating the Japonski Island Boathouse as a working maritime heritage center, with a boat haul out and workshop, hands-on exhibits, and an active program of education and heritage activities.

The Boathouse was built for the Navy in World War II and is part of the Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Coastal Defenses National Historic Landmark.

The Society has employed an Executive Director from 2011 to the present. Right now this is only a 20-hour/week position, funded by regular income from leases, fundraising, and generous donations. The job can grow with the organization as we grow funding through grants and earned income.

A major part of the job is to work with the board to develop a strategy for completion of the boathouse renovation. We have complete, bid-ready building plans, and the first phase, the roof replacement, is complete.

The second major piece is to develop programs and membership. The mission of the SMHS is to preserve our maritime heritage, and to share that heritage with the public, especially youth. The board is very interested in continuing and expanding our live oral history programs, and in holding boat-building classes and demonstrations, as well as other maritime-related subjects..

The main task for director and board, as with any nonprofit, is to build sustainable funding, which takes creativity and organization. In addition to the two major projects (renovating the building, and developing programs) there is the day-to-day business of communicating with the public and our members, and keeping up with paperwork and finances.

We want an individual who will use the opportunity to learn and grow. We can offer considerable scope for creativity as well as the opportunity for the director to build the position as he or she builds the SMHS. The SMHS has a great project and mission, a building, income, and lots of room to grow. The challenge with limited hours is to set priorities and to use board members and volunteers effectively.

## Current Activities

The SMHS is just wrapping up a \$25,000 Historic Preservation Fund grant-funded project to restore all the **doors on the building and to move a small outbuilding** away from the main building, in preparation for construction of an addition that will house a toilet, accessible entry, and utility service.

In late July, the SMHS **submitted an application for a \$65,000 50:50 matching grant** from the National Park Service, for actually building the addition.

We are in the process of **applying for another federal Historic Preservation Fund grant, a 60:40 matching grant for \$25,000** that would also be for building the addition, which is an essential part of the building's historic rehabilitation for its new use as a public maritime heritage center.

As matching for these grants, the SMHS is in the midst of a “4 for 44” **Fundraising Campaign**: last year the SMHS received a donation of \$44,000 from an anonymous donor. Our goal is to raise another \$44,000, all of which would be doubled again through the grants we have applied for.

We will soon be publishing a **newsletter**, with updates and a history article.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> the SMHS will hold an **open house with live music** to show the recent rehabilitation work and to celebrate historic preservation.

## **Sitka Maritime Heritage Society Executive Director Job Description**

The Executive Director reports to and works with SMHS board members, who guide policy and assist director with events, fund raising, strategic planning and communications.

The Executive Director is responsible for all day-to-day management and organization, working with the board, membership, and the public to fulfill SMHS organizational goals. The director will represent the face of the SMHS to the public.

The job is currently to work an average of 20 hours/week. The total annual salary averages \$25,000, depending on experience. We don't offer any benefits right now.

### **Duties:**

#### **The Executive Director will:**

(with the board) develop a strategic plan, and use it to achieve its mission and goals, including construction and operation of the Japonski Island Boat Shop  
be responsible for financial well-being of the SMHS: develop annual budgets, and develop funding, to include

- developing grant and other funding – for construction and for special projects
- developing earned income compatible with mission
- fundraising and other special events

Administer grants and other funding: account, report, track volunteer hours and in-kind contributions

Comply with all applicable law and regulation (with assistance of bookkeeper and tax preparer)

Develop and implement programming - exhibits, classes, programs - to fulfill mission

Collaborate with community groups, historical and maritime organizations, members, schools, businesses, government, and the community at large

Manage construction projects – contractor payments, communications with contractor, architects, engineers, city and government – if necessary with aid of Construction Inspector

Long term: Hire staff and manage (develop positions with aid of board)

Maintain transparent communications with Board, attend and (with Chair) develop agenda for meetings

Recruit and manage volunteers effectively, and thank/recognize (with board)

Present the face of the SMHS: reflect core values of authenticity and historical and cultural integrity

Maintain member/donor database including mailing and email list

Send thank yous/acknowledgments/receipts (with board)

Publicize SMHS activities and goals and maintain effective communication with the public through media such as:

- Brochure, other publications (with volunteer or contractor assistance if needed)

- Newsletter (with aid of volunteer editor)

- Website (with aid of website developer if necessary)

- Facebook, Wikipedia, Google Earth presence

- News media announcements and press releases

- Advertising and posters for events

#### **Essential qualities, experience, skills: the Director is:**

Enthusiastic about mission – values history, education and culture

willing to learn, and to seek out information, skills and education

Experienced managing large projects, and many things at once- has good management ability – pays attention to (critical) detail, organized

A leader – can effectively organize staff and volunteers (and the public) to achieve goals

Able to understand and present financial reports

Honest

Good with people (has good social skills)

an excellent communicator

Able to work independently

Fluent with or willing to learn basic office computer programs

## **The Board**

Current board members are Mike Litman, Joe D'Arienzo, Rebecca Poulson, Stan Barge, Brinnen Carter, and Anthony Vlahovich. John Dunlap is taking a leave of absence.

## **History, background of the SMHS:**

The SMHS was founded in 1999 to save the Merlin, a schooner built in the 1880s at Green Bay Wisconsin, that had been sunk by a whale. The SMHS was formed to raise and take ownership of the vessel, to be the centerpiece of a maritime educational program at the Japonski Island Boathouse. The Merlin was eventually donated to a maritime heritage organization in Washington State, which sold the Merlin to a private party, and the SMHS was revived with the purpose of focusing on the Japonski Island Boathouse.

The SMHS spearheaded the transfer of the Boathouse property from the state of Alaska Department of Natural Resources to the City and Borough of Sitka, for lease to the SMHS, accomplished in 2005. We have a lease from the City and Borough of Sitka for the property for the purpose of creating a public maritime heritage center. Also a few years ago we got the property rezoned to Waterfront Industrial.

The building is part of the Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Coastal Defenses National Historic Landmark. We've done quite a bit of work and research and outreach, educating the public about this Landmark and its significance. The building will also function as an interpretive center for the Landmark, with outdoor signs to tell about WWII in Sitka.

The SMHS was an entirely volunteer organization until 2011, but the project has a lot of local support, and we moved rapidly in over a dozen successful grant applications totaling nearly half a million dollars, which with a lot of volunteer work, resulted in a structural survey and haz mat survey (2004), clean up and stabilization (2005) - which included cleaning out the entire building, inventorying everything historic, and storing it in the sea van on the property - replacement of the foundation (2006), and a complete, bid ready design in 2010, and the grant for roof replacement.

In 2008 the SMHS negotiated a sublease, approved by the City and Borough of Sitka, to fuel distributor Delta Western to construct a retail fuel dock between the boathouse and the city work float. This sublease currently provides \$25,000 in income, and will bring in a minimum of \$50,000 a year when the fuel dock is constructed.

In the spring of 2011 the SMHS hired our first director, Andy Miller, to lead the group through a complex phase, using the grant for a major construction project (replacing the roof). He also negotiated an extension of the sublease with Delta Western; developed the contract and paperwork for the director position itself; developed and maintained a website, newsletters, and other communications and membership; and organized multiple public events. Andy is now a lawyer in Juneau.

So in summer 2012 we hired our second Executive Director, Ashia Lane. Then in late October 2013, Ashia got the opportunity to manage Old Harbor Books, a full-time job, and so had to step down from the SMHS.

Ashia had been continuing our great newsletter, FaceBook and website and membership, and made our 2013 Annual Meeting, on Women in the Fisheries, the most smashing one yet. She also organized regular work parties, where we've done a lot of cleaning, two fund raising cruises, and a Maritime Day BBQ, as well as submitting a Historic Preservation Fund grant application in October, and working on the heat pump project.

Carole Gibb came on in January 2014. She organized our digital and paper files, and managed (quite successfully) a Historic Preservation Fund grant in 2014 to restore the building's windows, and to clean and paint the interior, and added electrical wiring for the shop wing, which will allow us to legally hold events in the building.

This work seems to have been very beneficial to our reputation, judging by the response to our fall fundraising. Carole also led a fund raising cruise in July, a panel talking about the 1964 Alaska Earthquake (with the Sitka Historical Society), and our annual meeting, which was on gathering and sharing marine foods.

We also do Pick Click Give, again we're pretty popular! And Carole had been putting stuff up on our website, which looks great. Carole moved on to work for the State of Alaska in Ketchikan.

**Building Plans:** at this point the SMHS has complete, ready-to-bid plans, and professional cost estimate, for rehabilitation of the building. The roof was replaced in 2011.

The total for construction is \$1.4 million; \$350,000 of this is for the marine ways (railway, cradle, winch), which can wait until after the rest of the building is in use; we believe there could be economic development or education grants for the actual boat haul out portion.

Since this estimate assumes a professional contractor, the actual amount, with portions done by volunteers, will be lower.

The major project now is strategy for completing the building, with local fundraising, major private and public grants, possibly including loans. In 2014 we used a small (\$10,000) Historic Preservation Grant to rebuild the windows, clean and paint the walls, and wiring and lights in the shop wing of the building, so we can use it for events and activities.

We won a grant for 2015 that we are wrapping up for restoring all the doors, and moving a small building away from the back of the main building, to prepare the back of the building for the small addition. (The addition will have the mechanical space, toilet, and handicapped-accessible entry, and small office/bookstore/lobby area.)

The SMHS puts on annual meetings, in the form of a panel who share experiences on a given topic. These have been well-attended, incredibly informative, and often very funny. Topics have included Trolling for Salmon, Women in the Fisheries, and Stories of Lituya Bay. In 2016 we did it on the maritime history of Katlian Street, held in the ANB Hall, where we had many historical photos, as well.

We hope to grow this work, through individual oral history interviews, research, teaching and exhibits, including potentially applying for an Alaska Humanities Forum grant for recording archiving, and presenting the oral history of old fishermen. We would also like to hold a boat building class soon, with UAS.

When the boat house is finished, we intend for it to be the center of activity – for haul outs, tours, classes. We have both a strategic plan and a draft business plan for operation, with income to come from Delta Western sublease; boat haul-outs and use of the woodshop; sublease for a coffee stand; gift shop; tours (the building will be set up so that visitors can see work being done); classes and workshops; and project grants for exhibits, projects and activities.

We also want to do more collaborative projects even before the building is ready, working with Fine Arts Camp, the National Park Service (the building is part of a National Historic Landmark, and we plan to have the site be a “maritime trailhead” for the other portion, the Causeway; and, we will have interpretation for the Naval Air Station portion of the Landmark, which includes UAS, MEHS, and part of the SEARHC campus), Sitka Tribe of Alaska, TrailWorks, Sitka Sound Science Center, local schools, and the Sitka Historical Society.