

Doors, doors, doors, clockwise from top left: A door with a new panel and patches ready to be trimmed; volunteer Greg Watchers repairing an under-engineered door header; a pair of doors repaired and ready to refinish; an action shot of Joe D'Arienzo working on one of the more needy doors; and a door being reglued.

Doors and More

Using a Historic Preservation Fund Grant, leveraged with many hours of volunteer labor, all of the doors in the Japonski Island Boathouse have been repaired.

Much of this work took place during three workshops, in which Anthony Vlahovich and other master craftsmen showed how to restore historic doors.

Some of the doors only required cleaning, but several needed replacement panels, stiles (the upright pieces) and rails (the horizontal pieces). When possible, patches were fabricated to replace just the damaged parts. The remaining work to replace missing hardware and final painting will take place during September.

Also in September is the other part of this grant-funded work, to move a small outbuilding away from the main building.

All of this work follows federal standards for historic

buildings, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. This document and associated guidelines are worth a read. They are available on line.

This grant funding was made possible through the City and Borough of Sitka as a Certified Local Government: having a Historic Preservation Commission means the City can act as a pass through for these federal historic preservation grants.

The project involved first assessing and photographing the doors, and developing a treatment plan, done by our own Dr. Brinnen Carter.

Next up, we will be working on building a small addition, that will have an accessible entry and toilet, and a permanent place for utilities (power, sewer, water, communications) to come into the building.

Season End Party

We'll have a Season's End Open House and Reception, 4-7 p.m. on October 1st, at the Japonski Island Boathouse.

The main purpose is to thank our donors and volunteers, and to show off the work we've done.

We'll have artifacts, photos and the design documents for the rehabilitation, plus wine, beer and cheese, salmon spread, crackers, and other delicacies.

Everyone is welcome. We'll also have live music!

An Interesting Donation

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society received an intriguing artifact as a gift from the Sitka Historical Society in August - a deadeye, along with a fragment of its connecting chain plate. The Historical Society found it in its collection, but had no information about it, or how it came into their possession.

A deadeye was part of the rigging that held up a sailing vessel's mast, used for centuries until it was replaced by the turnbuckle in the late 19th century. Deadeyes



were used in pairs, one connected to the lower end of a shroud (shrouds are the rigging that hold up the mast side-to-side), and its partner below it connected to the side of the boat by means of the chainplates. A lanyard (a length of rope) connected the two, threaded through the holes in the deadeyes from one to another. This created a crude but strong form of block and tackle, which allowed the shroud's tension to be adjusted.

There were typically three, four or more shrouds on each side of each mast, depending on the boat's size. Our deadeye is a lower one - you can tell because of the attached piece of chainplate. An upper deadeye would simply have been snugly fitted into the eye spliced or seized into the end of the shroud.

The maker of our deadeye carefully gouged a rounded contour into both ends of all three holes, so the lanyard

could run smoothly without fraying. If it were an upper deadeye the inboard end of the left-hand hole would have been left square-edged, in order to support the stopper knot at the end of the lanyard.

The loose end of the lanyard would have been pulled tight with a tackle and then secured to the shroud with a knot and a seizing. Sometimes it would be tied to an eyebolt alongside.

Our deadeye is about 10 inches in diameter and 3 inches thick- pretty husky, so it probably came from a good-sized vessel. The iron chainplates are doubled, and each one is 1-1/4" in diameter. The strapping that encircles the deadeye and forms the eyes which connect it to the chainplates is about 1 inch in diameter.

Deadeyes were traditionally made of Lignum Vitae, a hardwood found in the Caribbean and northern South America. It is the densest wood on Earth- beside dead-eyes, it is good for mallet heads.

It is interesting to speculate on the story of this bit of marine hardware- how did it end up in the Sitka Historical Society's possession? Did it come from a vessel which was significant in Sitka's history? Are there other pieces of the same boat hidden somewhere? And what about the boat? What was its story? Our deadeye is stored at the Japonski Boathouse, joining hundreds of other interesting objects - boat parts and woodworking tools, and relics of the past. Come by and see them some time!



Looking for a New Director

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society is seeking an Executive Director to develop maritime heritage programs including rehabilitation of the Japonski Island Boathouse.

Details are at www.sitkamaritime.org. Send letter of interest and resume to SMHS, P. O. Box 2153, Sitka AK 99835 or to sitkamaritime@gmail.com. Call (907) 747-3448 for more information.



WWII Cruise a Great Success

Our July 4th World War II History & Wildlife Cruise was a smashing success! We had beautiful weather, saw lots of wildlife, and enjoyed learning about Sitka's role in World War II.

We celebrated the holiday with our guest of honor, Mr. Walter Dangel, who came to Sitka in May of 1941 with the 250th Coast Artillery. He gave us the inside scoop on the Harbor Defenses during the war, showed us his WWI-era Brodie helmet, and told wonderful stories (including a funny one about a 30 year-old piece of Spam that had to go through the washing machine a few times to become palatable!).

Guests on the cruise received a map of Sitka's WWII installations (now available on our website), and Board member Rebecca Poulson shared the history of the boat-

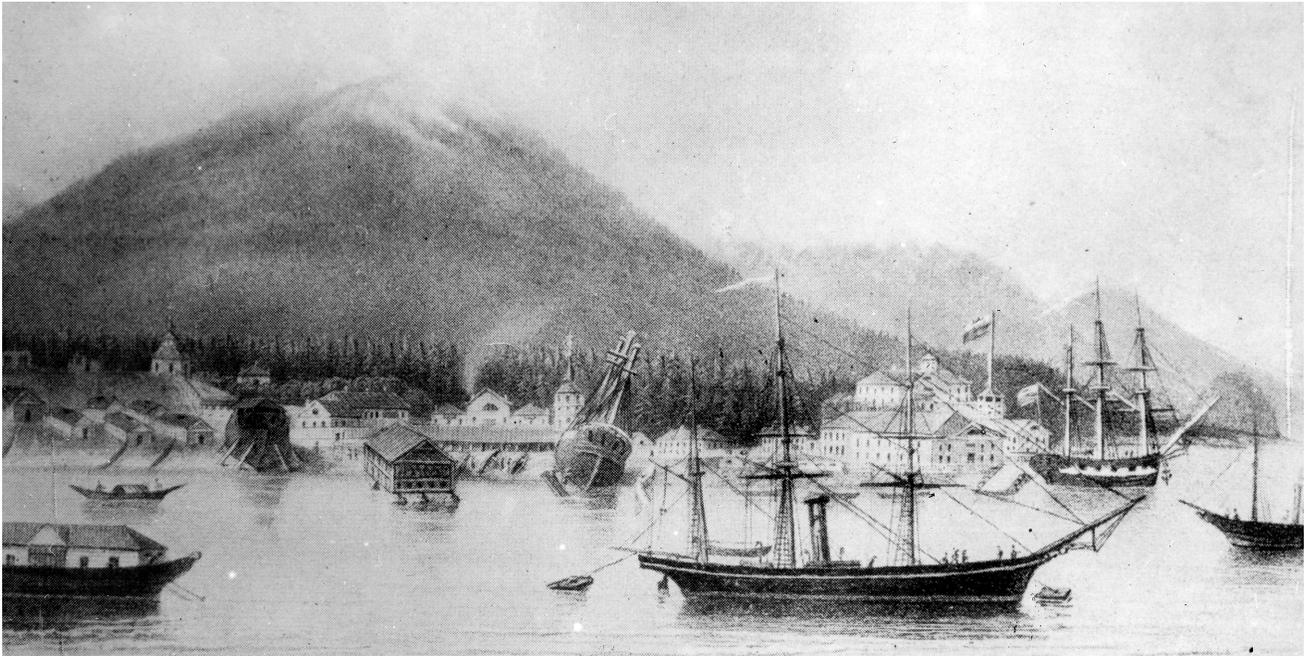
house and Sitka's broad role in WWII.

The wildlife came out in full force, whales, sea otters, and sea lions showing off all afternoon. We went all the way out to St. Lazaria, basking in the sun and watching flocks of birds overhead. We had a beautiful spread of food prepared by our wonderful members and volunteers, and enjoyed two kinds of salmon dip, cocoa, brownies, cookies, fruit, cheese, crudités, and more!

The cruise was a beautiful setting to launch our 4 for 44 Fundraising Campaign. Sailing past the Japonski Island Boathouse gave us the chance to see the work we have already done to preserve it, and the possibilities that are still in front of us. Thanks to all who contributed and helped us make the event so lovely.

Zenobia Rock and the California Gold Rush

By Rebecca Poulson



Sitka in the 1850s, from Petr Aleksandrovich Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*

In 1855, according to the *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, the American ship *Zenobia* struck the submerged rock that now bears her name. Captain Howard Bentley Lovejoy, the ancestor of Sitka resident Bill Lovejoy, was also in Sitka in 1855, with his ship, the *Calcedony*. Both vessels were here to load ice from Swan Lake, and both made two trips between San Francisco and Sitka that year.

In tracing the story of how these American vessels came to be in Sitka Sound, we glimpse how the waning days of the Russian colonies overlapped with the rush of Americans into the West.

Captain Lovejoy's wife Callista was on that trip to Sitka. She had married him just the day before they set out, that January of 1855, when she was just 16. In a reminiscence, she recalls coming into Sitka Sound, but finding no pilot, because the Russians mistook the ship for a man-of-war. The Crimean War, between England and Russia, was then under way.

Callista Kinney Lovejoy's father was a deep sea captain and shipowner. The family was in Boston when her mother died, and she and the other children still at home joined their father aboard his ship in California. She was with her father, on his ship, the *Burnham*, when she met her future husband, the young Captain Lovejoy.

Northwest Coast Natives had been trading with Europeans and Americans in the maritime fur trade since the 1780s, but by 1855 they were feeling increasing pressure from settlers, traders, and gold miners, and the accompanying military. Natives in Washington Territory had all been forced onto reservations, and the bloody Indian Wars were in full swing. In British Columbia things were not much better, with the British Navy practicing "gun-boat diplomacy," while settlers and traders seized Native resources.

In Alaska the situation was much different. When Tlingit attacked Sitka in March of 1855, leaving six Russian defenders dead and another fourteen wounded, the Russians could not afford British or American-style retaliation. Although the manager requested troops from his government, he put them to work on the endless construction and repair projects in the colonies. He knew that he had to depend on diplomacy, not force, to stay in Alaska.

The 1849 California Gold Rush dramatically increased the flow of settlers and miners into the West, including New England merchant captains looking for opportunity. Captain Lovejoy met Callista Kenney when he and her father, Simeon Kinney, were both loading logs at Whidbey Island for piers for San Francisco.

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The surge of Americans into the west probably made the Russian-American Company administrators nervous, but it also represented an opportunity. The Russian-American Company had been chartered in 1799 by the Russian Tsar as a monopoly that would manage Russian claims in North America. Within a decade or so the valuable sea otter, which had brought the Russians to Alaska, were all but gone, and the company struggled to make a profit selling other furs.

The Company tried one thing and another to supplement what they made in the fur trade. Efforts at self-sufficiency also ended in disappointment, and the RAC had to purchase essential supplies from other nations. They had been buying hides and grain in California, which became part of the United States in 1848, the same year gold was discovered, triggering a stampede of would-be miners.

At first, ice for booming San Francisco was shipped around Cape Horn from the East Coast. Then, in 1852, a ship from the Bostonian Ice Company purchased ice in Sitka. A San Francisco businessman then created the American-Russian Commercial Company, and made a three-year agreement with the Russian American Company to purchase ice. The new company paid for an ice house and a railway to get the ice from Swan Lake to the shore for loading. In 1854 they negotiated a 20-year agreement for ice, as well as coal, timber, and fish.

In the first few winters ice was harvested from Swan Lake in Sitka, but mild winters led to an alternative site being developed at Kodiak. Quite a bit of infrastructure was necessary at Kodiak, including ice houses, barracks, a thousand-foot railway with paths next to it, and a dock.

When Alaska became part of the United States, in 1867, the American-Russian Commercial Company assets were sold to a forerunner of the Alaska Commercial Company. They continued to deal in Alaskan ice until 1879, when the process of making ice replaced natural ice.

The *Zenobia*, under Captain Tilden, sank in 1858, loaded with Alaskan ice, after he attempted to enter San Francisco Bay without a pilot. Lovejoy later became a pilot himself on Puget Sound. He died in 1872, in his early 40s. After his death his wife married another of the New England sea captains who had settled on Whidbey Island. Their son also became a captain, boatbuilder and businessman, and a descendant now calls Sitka home, a

place where the chart, and the name on the grocery store, still recall the intersection of Russian America and San Francisco over a hundred and sixty years ago.



4 for 44 Campaign and Thank You So Far!

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society recently received a generous, anonymous donation of \$44,000. We are going to try to double that original donation, to raise another \$44,000, which would in turn be doubled through matching grants: the 4 for 44 Fundraising Campaign.

We would like to thank our donors so far, who have donated a thousand dollars or more: Thad and Sandy Poulson, the estate of Ward Eldridge, and Venneberg Insurance.

Your gift, at any level, will allow us to put the boatshop back into service. This next phase will include building a new accessible entry to the building, an accessible toilet, and space for mechanical systems. This will allow us to put the building back in use.

The Board of the SMHS

The board of the Sitka Maritime Heritage Society is comprised of: Mike Litman (President), Rebecca Poulson (Vice President), Joe D'Arienzo (Treasurer), Brinnen Carter (Secretary), Stan Barge, and Anthony Vlahovich.

Japonski Island Boathouse Rehabilitation

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society is working to restore the historic Japonski Island boat shop as a working boat repair facility and museum. Your support also leverages grant funding.

As a member, you will receive the newsletter and a 20% discount on t-shirts and other goods, and you will be a part of preserving Alaska's maritime heritage.

The SMHS is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit so your donation is tax deductible.

If you would like to join or renew, please fill out the form below and return it, along with your check, to:

Sitka Maritime Heritage Society

P. O. Box 2153

Sitka, Alaska 99835

**or, use your credit card using this form,
or online at www.sitkamaritime.org**

Credit card information: Name on Card _____

Credit card number _____ Expires _____ Billing Zip Code _____

I would like to get my newsletter by email regular mail

Name _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

\$15 Students and Elders

\$30 Crew member

\$40 Entire Crew (family)

\$50 Mate

\$44 for Four Memberships (please write down information for all four)

\$100 Navigator

\$250 Captain

\$500 Pilot

\$1000 Old Salt

Other _____

In addition to my membership I would like to make a donation of \$_____ to the building fund.

Thank You!

Sitka Maritime Heritage Society

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Sitka, Alaska 99835