

A nonprofit organization devoted to the maritime history of Sitka and Southeastern Alaska

P. O. Box 2153 Sitka, AK 99835

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Supporting the federal Save America's Treasures program on a sunny April day. For more information, and photos from around the country, visit the National Trust for Historic Preservation at [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org). Photo by James Poulson

## Design Complete; Grant Awarded Toward Roof Replacement

The SMHS is gearing up to start major work on the Japonski Island Boathouse.

This summer the SMHS was awarded a grant of \$25,000 from the Historic Preservation Fund toward replacement of the roof. In combination with a Save America's Treasures grant, the SMHS has in hand half of the estimated \$150,000 cost of the project. The remaining amount will be raised this winter, the first capital campaign in the history of the SMHS.

The team at Northwind Architects, working with the SMHS and in consultation with the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission, the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office, and the National Park Service, has developed complete, bid-ready construction documents for the rehabilitation of the building. These will be fully complete in January 2011.

Design work has been funded by a National Scenic Byways grant, the Rasmuson Foundation, and a Save America's Treasures grant, with additional matching by SMHS donors.

The rehabilitation plan keeps the building's vintage feel while bringing safety, comfort and efficiency up to modern standards. The building is part of a National Historic Landmark, and the design follows federal standards for work on historic buildings.

The marine railway and wood shop will be brought back into use, for boat repair, small boat building, and classes.

Visitors will have a handicapped-accessible ramp into the building and a "catwalk" bridge across the top of the marine ways, so they can view the work on boats. Signs and a brochure will help visitors understand what they see. The northwest wing, historically used for storage, will be set up with exhibits, retail area, and office. A small office structure now attached to the building will be relocated, and eventually rehabilitated for another use.

The design includes: replacing the roofing; needed structural upgrades; repairing the boat cradle, and replacing the winch and railway tracks; repairing or replacing doors and windows; adding infiltration barrier while replacing or repairing siding; and bringing utilities to the building and a new electrical system. There will be a sprinkler system and an ADA-compliant toilet.

## Ground Source Heat Pump

In September the SMHS, with the City and Borough of Sitka, applied for an Alaska Energy Authority Renewable Energy grant, for design and installation of a ground-source heat pump for the Japonski Island Boathouse.

In the short term, heat will be oil-fired heaters, but ultimately the SMHS would like to install a ground-source heat pump, that would take advantage of laying the new marine railway tracks in

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*Heat Pump, continued from page two*

the tidal zone. Placing the tubing for a ground-source heat pump, normally in wells deep underground, is usually the biggest cost in this type of system. At the boathouse the railway tracks need to be placed in the tidal zone anyway, and the tubing can be placed alongside at the same time.

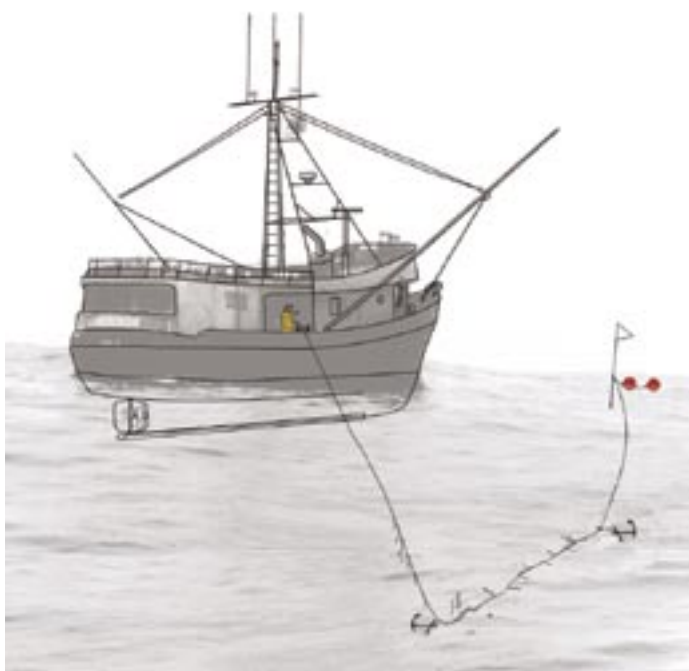
A ground-source heat pump captures heat from the ground (or in this case, the ocean), and is very cost efficient to run, needing only a fraction of the amount of electricity used for conventional heat. This type of system eliminates carbon emissions, and minimizes use of the city's hydroelectric generation, which is approaching capacity.

Ground source heat pumps are becoming more popular. An obstacle in southeast Alaska is the cost of drilling the deep wells; this project will be the first to lay the tubing in the tidelands. The SMHS will be tracking all costs and efficiency of the system, and if it is more cost effective than uplands-based systems, could make a huge difference in southeast Alaska's energy use.

## Sitka One of Dozen Distinctive Destinations

The National Trust for Historic Preservation selected Sitka as one of its Dozen Distinctive Destinations for 2010. This award recognizes Sitka's many National Historic Landmarks (including the Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Coast Defenses NHL, which includes the Boathouse, Mt. Edgumbe High School, and the Causeway) and local efforts to preserve and interpret these sites for future generations. Other National Historic Landmarks include the Sheldon Jackson College campus, the ANB Hall, and the Russian Bishop's House.

Visit the National Trust at [www.preservationnation](http://www.preservationnation), and go to "Travel and Sites" for pictures of Sitka and other destinations.



An illustration by Vern Culp of hauling in a longline. The gear is set with the baited fishhooks on the bottom, with anchors, and buoys and a flag, on either end. In this picture the boat has just brought the first flag and buoy aboard.

## We need you!

The Historic Preservation Fund and Save America's Treasures grants for the roof are matching grants, covering just over half of the project's cost. The rest comes from private donors - like you!

This is an ideal time to **renew your membership**, and to make additional donations toward this exciting project.

The SMHS has a board committed to making each dollar go as far as it can, and has in place "best practices" financial controls. You can be confident every part of your donation will be used efficiently toward preserving our maritime heritage, and opening a maritime heritage center at the Japonski Island Boathouse.

## Is This You?

Are you interested in boats, or maritime history, or both? Do you feel that kids today could benefit from learning how to make a boat, and a connection to place through stories from the old timers? Do you want tourists to know the real story of Sitka's boating culture? Do you want to see the Japonski Boathouse open and functional, and would you like to help guide its development?

If so, you just might want to apply for a position on the board of the SMHS. Work is involved, but meetings are short and involve food. Email [heritage@sitkamaritime.org](mailto:heritage@sitkamaritime.org) with a short statement of your interest, and what you feel you could bring to the board.

## Longliners Speak

The 2010 Annual Meeting of the Sitka Maritime Heritage Society on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 featured skippers and crew sharing their experiences in the longline fishery.

Panel host Eric Jordan, and panelists Herman Davis, Sr., Dennis Hicks, Sherie Mayo, Steve Fish, Bert Bergman, and Linda Behnken offered stories, joined by Pedr Turner, Harald -----, and Mike Mayo from the audience. Linda Behnken started off the program with an explanation of the methods and lingo of longlining, and Vern Culp provided the illustration of how the process works.

There just wasn't enough time to do more than scratch the surface of all the personalities, history and drama. But there were some great stories, of boat windows being blown out, the cook lashing himself to the mast, working while seasick (not pretty), and the call to "cut the gear!!" as it is realized the boat is sinking. There were also gems of deckhand insight, like how there are skippers who'll make you money, and then there are nice guys. This concept might be related to the tale of having the entire crew walk off the boat at Sand Point.

Longlining, which is laying a fishing line on the ocean bottom, is the method by which fishermen target black cod (sablefish), halibut, and other bottom-dwelling fish.

In the 1960s longliners had to fish long and hard to make a living. In the 1980s black cod and halibut became the major fisheries they are today, but with open participation, which led to seasons measured in hours, with losses of vessels and lives. The limits of IFQs (individual Fishing Quotas) were implemented in 1994.

This was an interesting conversation with this unique subculture of Sitka - the individualistic, competitive, skillful, adventurous and self-reliant men and women of the longline fishery.

## The Wreck of the Kad'yak

Adapted from *Alaska's Submerged History: The Wreck of the Kad'yak*, by Evguenia Anichtchenko and Jason Rogers. Published by State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Office of History and Archaeology.

The Kad'yak was built in 1851 in Lubeck, Germany, for the Russian American Company's colonial Alaskan fleet. She was about 130 feet long, and strongly built for her journey around the world from Germany to Sitka.

1851 was a half century into the Russian American Company's tenure in Alaska – rough outposts had evolved into permanent settlements, stretching from the largest at Sitka and Kodiak, to Unalaska, and St. Michael on the Yukon River.

The Kad'yak arrived at Sitka in 1852 after stops at Valparaiso, where five workers bound for Alaska escaped and could not be found, and Hawaii. The Kad'yak joined a fleet of just ten vessels in Russian America.

The year 1851 marked the beginning of the ice trade with California. An American entrepreneur formed the American-Russian Company to supply the mining boomtowns of California with Alaskan ice. The trade continued well after the American purchase of Alaska, until a method for making ice was invented.

In 1853 and 1854 the Kad'yak voyaged from Sitka, to Unalaska, to St. Michaels, and back, over the course of July, August and September. Colonial vessels were used mainly for carrying workers, priests, supplies and furs within Alaska. The Kad'yak had a crew of about 25-30, including 6-8 Alaska Native deckhands.

After 1857 the Kad'yak's main purpose was in the ice trade, and between 1857-59 made six visits to San Francisco, and was the only ship used for this purpose in 1858 and 1859. A typical voyage would go from Sitka to Kodiak, which took about 20 days, then to San Francisco, which took about five weeks.

Initially the ice was cut from Swan Lake here in Sitka, but the rainy climate led to the Russian American Company developing a second plant at Kodiak, on Woody or Lesnoi Island.

This facility had a wooden dock for loading, ice houses for storing the ice, a set of rails for rolling the ice with walkways for the workers, and a sawmill whose main purpose was creating sawdust for insulation.

The ice was cut from December to February. The Russian American Company also sent furs, timber, dried and salted fish, and tallow candles for trade in California. In return they bought flour, corned beef, and other provisions unavailable in Alaska.



The shipyard in Lubeck, Germany where the Kad'yak was built. Picture from the Museum for Art and Cultural History of the Hans-estadt Lübeck, reprinted in *Alaska's Submerged History: The Wreck of the Kad'yak*.

### The Last Voyage

Over her career in Alaska the Kad'yak had four captains. Her last was Illarion Arkhimandritov, who was born in Alaska, on St. George Island. Arkhimandritov's mother was Aleut, his father a Russian employee of the RAC. He was sent to St. Petersburg to train as a navigator, reflecting company policy of educating the youth of mixed Alaskan and Russian parentage for work, and possible social advancement, in the colonies.

In 1842 he was recognized for heroism when he saved the ship *Naslednik Aleksander* when the vessel hit heavy weather and both captain and first mate died. He worked charting the

Alaskan coast, and he was well-regarded by the RAC management.

This favor changed for him in the 1850s. In 1852 a widow in Sitka confessed to her priest that she was pregnant with Arkhimandritov's child. Arkhimandritov confessed to having had a relationship with the woman, but said that it had ended in 1847, and so the child was not his.

Although he did not have to support the child, he did have a penance to pay for his relationship. For a period of seven years he could not take Holy Communion, he had to fast, and he had to attend all holy services – standing outside the door of the church.

The requirement that he attend all services meant he could not leave Sitka. His final voyage with the Kad'yak may have been one of the first voyages after his punishment ended.

In the winter of 1860 it rained at Sitka, and the ice on Swan Lake melted, so the Kad'yak went to Kodiak for ice. A flu epidemic, leaving as many as 300 sick at one time, delayed the trip as well. But the Kad'yak left Sitka on February 27, 1860, arrived at Kodiak and loaded a cargo of ice, and cast off, all without incident. And then the Kad'yak hit an uncharted rock a few feet under the surface – now known as Kodiak Rock – and as she scraped along, tore a large hole in the hull. Everyone got off the ship safely, the captain last, looking in vain for a way to save his ship.

Unfortunately the port of Kodiak had no means to tow the ship in. The ice in her hold kept the ship afloat for days, until she ran aground on a rock off of Spruce or Elovoi Island. Finally the ice melted, and the ship was torn apart, and sank, with the top of the mast showing above the water.

### The Legend of the Kad'yak

The Russian American Company officials were upset at losing the ship, but did not formally censure Arkhimandritov for the loss. The RAC report suggests the rock may have grown there, as no one remembered having seen the water break there before.

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The legend says that Arkhimandritov had broken his promise to the wife of RAC governor Voevodski to hold a memorial service at the chapel of St. Herman on Spruce Island on his first visit to Kodiak each season.

The top of the mast, the shape of a cross, ended up within sight of St. Herman's chapel, as if performing the duty her skipper had neglected.

Arkhimandritov's bad luck continued: later that year he was captaining the *Tsarita*, and hit a rock in Sitka Sound – now named Tsarita Rock. That ship did not sink but did need extensive repairs. Furujelm, the RAC governor and a practicing Lutheran, resolved to give an icon to the Spruce Island chapel.

Arkhimandritov himself did so, in 1869.

The RAC took practical measures as well. They published the location of the rock, and had a baidarka stand near it when ships left the port. Later they marked it with buoys, the first aids to navigation after the lighthouse on the top of the Castle.

They also had Arkhimandritov do a survey of the coast of Spruce Island in 1860, when he marked the bearings to the tip of the mast of the Kad'yak.

### **The Discovery and Investigation of the Wreck**

Alaskan archaeologist Michael Yarborough started looking for the Kad'yak after reading about her in Tikhmenev's *History of the Russian American Company*, published in English in 1978. Crab biologist Brad Stevens, of the National Marine Fisheries Service in Kodiak, with the help of historians Lydia Black and Katherine Arndt, homed in on the location by deciphering Arkhimandritov's system of bearings on the 1860 chart, and identifying place names that had been changed over the years.

In 2003, the wreck was located, and in 2004 an archaeological survey conducted, funded by NOAA and the National Science Foundation, but with the assistance of scores of organizations, profes-



Archaeologist documenting the ship's wheel hub. The bronze hub is engraved with the name of the ship, Kad'yak, in Cyrillic letters. Photo from *Alaska's Submerged History: The Wreck of the Kad'yak*

sionals, graduate students and volunteers.

The remains are 80 feet under water. Divers found a ballast pile, a bilge pump box, copper sheathing, two anchors, the windlass, two cannons, a davit, and the ship's wheel hub – with the name of the ship engraved into it, confirming beyond all doubt that this was the Kad'yak. There were also frames from the hull, and at a distance the remains of the rudder hardware. The way the wreckage lays shows the ship grounded, broke apart, the rudder was torn off, and the parts drifted down.

The ship is on state land, and eventually there will a display on the wreck. In addition to this report, a Kodiak teacher developed curriculum for using the wreck in science, history and culture lessons.

The authors note that Alaska is still very much a maritime state for most of our imports, exports, and industry. Shipwrecks are fascinating because mariners today face the same forces that those long ago encountered and suffered from (perhaps even including rocks that grow where no rock was before).

This wreck and the story of the Kad'yak is revealing of the history of the RAC: what they were doing, the ethnicity, social policies, the influence of the Orthodox religion in their lives.

The authors close the report with how underwater archaeology probably holds much more information. Many ships sank in the RAC era within sight of port, some of them in relatively calm water, and these could probably be located, in Russian and in American waters. They are hard to find but full of information, and of course fascinating to the public. Alaska does not have a comprehensive underwater cultural resources management program, which is a real need, so that future wrecks can be scientifically investigated and protected.

The book *Alaska's Submerged History: The Wreck of the Kad'yak*, and the curriculum (in PDF format) can be acquired from Dave McMahan,

Office of History and Archaeology  
550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
(907) 269-8723  
dave.mcmahan@alaska.gov

### **Upcoming Events: Alaska Day, Whalefest**

The SMHS will once again sell grilled fish and rice lunches at the Crescent Harbor shelter on Alaska Day, October 18th, from 11 a.m. to 2 or until sold out. Dvds, hats and t-shirts will also be for sale.

The SMHS will have a booth at WhaleFest at Harrigan Centennial Hall November 5-7, with t-shirts, dvds, a fine art print of a watercolor of the boathouse by Nancy Taylor Stonington, and historical displays.

### **Sheldon Jackson DVD**

Charles Yaw has generously allowed reproduction of a 27-minute film, made by his father Les Yaw in the 1930s, and narrated by him decades later. The dvd is available at the Sitka Historical Society Museum (which also has Les Yaw's book *60 Years in Sitka*, an ideal complement) or through the Sitka Maritime Heritage Society by calling 747-3448 or emailing heritage@sitkamaritime.org. Copies of the dvd are \$10 unless you are in it. One dollar of each sale goes to a fund for reprinting Les Yaw's books.

## Goods

**Pigment-dyed T-shirts with woodcut image of shore boat Donna on the boatshop ways.** \$25 for long sleeve and \$20 for short sleeve shirts, or \$20 and \$16 for members.

*Pyramid Cannery label T-shirts are also still available.*

**SITKA MARITIME**



**HERITAGE SOCIETY**

**Large, heavy-duty natural cotton tote** with boathouse image \$20, or \$16 for members.

**Hats** with embroidered shore boat Arrowhead. Oilskin caps, black or brown are \$25, and cotton caps, in electric blue, denim blue, or red, are \$20, or \$20 and \$16 for members.

**Limited edition print of Nancy Taylor Stonington painting** of the boathouse is \$95.



27-minute **DVD of Sheldon Jackson School in the 1930s**, filmed and narrated by Les Yaw, is \$10. A dollar goes back to a fund to republish Les Yaw's books.

See details online at [www.sitkamaritime.org](http://www.sitkamaritime.org).

**Members receive 20% discount on shirts and hats.** To buy goods call 747-3448, or send a check (include \$2 postage per item) to the SMHS, P. O. Box 2153, Sitka, Alaska 99835.

## Activities Over the Summer

Over the summer of 2010 the SMHS had a **clean-up and inventory session** at the boathouse - if you would like to lead another session, contact [heritage@sitkamaritime.org](mailto:heritage@sitkamaritime.org).

The SMHS also held the reception for the third annual **Sitka Sound Ocean Adventure Race**, which won kudos for organization and safety. The race this year raised \$300 for the SMHS. Thanks to the Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association for donating king salmon, and to Sea Mart for donating supplies.

Architectural plans for the rehabilitation were on view at that reception, as well as at an **open house** June 10th, and at an open house for **Paths Across the Pacific** on July 31.

The SMHS also had a display on Sitka boatbuilders at the first **Sitka Seafood Festival**, the August 6th-8th. This was a fabulous event, and the SMHS plans to be even more involved next year.

Also in August was the **Russian American Conference**. The conference featured new information and research on the people and society of Russian America, and relationships among Russians, Native people, and "Creoles," people of mixed Russian-Native heritage. Boats and ships were of primary importance throughout the era, from the sewn-together boats of the 18th century Siberian hunting parties, to the European-built ships that brought scientists and cartographers around the world.

This summer Southeast Earthmovers, under contract with Alaska DOT, **rebuilt the road** to UAS in front of the boathouse, with all new utilities. The SMHS worked with the state to align the workfloat access road for most efficient use of the boathouse property. The project also brought new utilities close to the building.

Dividend program. It is fast, easy, and safe. Your donation to the SMHS will be used to create a working maritime heritage center, preserving maritime heritage and perpetuating maritime skills for the next generation.

Your contribution will give you the same membership benefits as the old fashioned methods, although there is a time lag before the SMHS knows about your gift. Also consider using this convenient opportunity to make an additional gift to the SMHS.

When you sign up on line for your PFD in January, choose "The Gift of Giving," then go to our region, and Sitka Maritime Heritage Society. Don't forget to add your contact information so the SMHS can acknowledge your gift.



The Japonski Island Boathouse, watercolor by Nancy Taylor Stonington. Limited edition prints of this painting are available for \$95 from the SMHS with all profits benefiting the heritage center.

**Pick.Click.Give.**

### Donate On Line

The Sitka Maritime Heritage Society is pleased to be a participant in the 2011 Pick.Click.Give. program, which allows Alaskans to contribute directly to nonprofits through the Permanent Fund

The board of the Sitka Maritime Heritage Society is comprised of: Matt Hunter, Tristan Guevin, Linda Blankenship (Secretary), Mike Litman (Treasurer), Rebecca Poulson (President), Mark Gorman and Joe D'Arienzo (Vice President).

### 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, with boat repair, boat building, activities and exhibits. The SMHS has raised over half a million dollars, and is actively seeking private foundation and government grants for the remaining 2/3 of the funding left. Local support, your membership and donation, is the key-stone of the project, leveraging further funding and showing that we value maritime heritage.

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, or donate to the building fund, 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**

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

- \$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!

*If you received this newsletter by mail, your most recent membership expiration date is above your address. If there is no date, your membership expired more than one year ago.*

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