SEPTEMBER 2010 Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society P.O. Box 9731 Seattle WA 98109-0731

SEPTEMBER DINNER PROGRAM: THE NEW PANAMA CANAL

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Membership Survey Results [continued from page 3] and services. The survey reinforced the popularity of The Sea Chest as our major product. We heard the vast majority of you loud and clear: keep the publication a printed piece! The survey also confirmed the importance of our monthly programs to those who are able to attend. We were very surprised to discover that the choice between Wednesday night and Sunday afternoon programs was nearly evenly split! The membership also values this newsletter and gave us suggestions to guide future content. You’ll be hearing more about the survey in future issues of the newsletter. Thank you again for your participation!

Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival, Sept. 10, 11 & 12

This year’s Wooden Boat Festival in Port Townsend on September 10, 11 and 12 has over 70 different presentations and demonstrations. Highlights include our very own Chuck Fowler talking about Puget Sound’s historic tugboats, Mark Schrader (who has completed two solo circumnavigations and is the first American to circle the globe via the five Capes of the Southern Ocean) describing “Around the America’s”—a sailing project that circles both American continents, Kirsten Thomsen and Kim Bork Mathiesen who are perhaps the world’s most accomplished “high latitude” sailors, and other speakers covering schooners, Alaska, French Canals, night sailing and much much more.

SEPTEMBER DINNER PROGRAM: THE NEW PANAMA CANAL

Our September program will be given by Captain Norm Werner. He will show a DVD about the history of the Panama Canal and a trip through the Canal from April 20th to May 4th this year. He was among a group of former Panama Canal Pilots who traveled through the Canal on the Holland America ship MV ZIUDERDAM to see and remember their years as Panama Canal Pilots. During the years when the Panama Canal was managed by the United States the ship pilots were all American hires. When the Canal was transferred back to the government of Panama some American ship pilots continued working as Canal Pilots but all new hires were Panamanian citizens. The US Pilots came home on a gradual basis.

The Canal is now being widened greatly to accommodate the larger container ships now plying the oceans and needing to travel from Asia to the Eastern US via the canal. New ships built after about 1987 are too wide to go through the current canal.

After 17 Years, Our Chandler’s Cove Museum Has Closed

After discussing and analyzing our longtime museum at Chandler’s Cove, the board made the decision to close the facility as of the end of April. Over the years we’ve had difficulty in recruiting volunteers to staff the museum on a five day a week basis and we’ve also seen a steady decline in visitors and contributions. We removed our name from the windows on June 30th and turned over the keys. Interim Executive Director Karen Marshall began planning for the move out once we made an agreement with our landlord to turn the space over by June 30th. Arrangements were made for storage since our MOHAI area is full. We thank member John Goodfellow for his assistance in our storage need. Professional art movers were brought in to handle the large models and a great group of volunteers worked over a number of days to relocate the other items. Tom Kane and Hans Brouwer brought their trucks and Roger Ottenbach added his Suburban. Lisle Rose along with Hans’ brother, Mike and friend Bill Johnson helped with lots of heavy lifting.

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Dinner Meeting: The New Panama Canal

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Captain Werner is a 1963 graduate of the California Maritime Academy and sailed for five years with Military Sea Transportation Service. He received his Master’s License in 1967 and went to work as a Canal Pilot in 1968. He worked for 22 years as a Canal Pilot and served as President of the Pilots in 1978 when they put together the Panama Canal Treaty which turned the Canal operation over to Panama. In 1989 he returned home to Washington State and first worked as a Bar Pilot in Grays Harbor before coming to work as a Puget Sound Pilot in 1995 retiring in 2008 after 40 years as a Ship Pilot.

The transition of the Canal from American management to Panamanian is interesting and has gone far better than was ever anticipated. This program will be very interesting to all.

Chandler’s Cove Museum Has Closed

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Karen Marshall
deserves great credit for organizing the project and for doing much of the work. And thanks to all who helped. Through the years many members invested countless hours in arranging exhibits and staffing the museum. We thank each of you for your time and devotion to PSMHS. Now our attention is turned to the huge task of inventorying, organizing, rehousing and preparing to move our collections (along with MOHAI) to the new facility at South Lake Union and assisting in the design of the Maritime Gallery. You’ll be hearing more about these projects in future newsletters.

Report from “Behind the Scenes”

By Karen Marshall, Interim Executive Director

Amidst the sunny summer days I am frequently asked about the relocation of our collections and library/archives with MOHAI as well as the future gallery space with MOHAI at South Lake Union. While we are busy inventorying, reorganizing and reviewing our collections in preparation for the future, there is honestly not much to report. The process to finalize agreements and secure funds between MOHAI and the multiple levels of government and various governmental agencies has been moving slowly.

The current focus for the MOHAI staff and the team of exhibit designers is on the main exhibits and preparations to take over the Armory building in January of 2011 for the start of construction. As for our joint collection storage, offices and research site, the search for the right location continues with a comprehensive with list and must have list in the hands of the site search team to find the right location. No date is set for moving out of the Montlake site and we all feel very strongly that we must move only once. As we enter into the winter months I am certain we will have more to report—stay tuned!

Lunch Before Launch Event Recap

A big thank you to Holland America Line and to Leon Gessula for arranging the lovely Saturday afternoon aboard MS ROTTERDAM. Those in attendance enjoyed a delicious lunch and impeccable service from the gracious staff. Thanks to Paul Grigsby who gave a brief history of Holland America Line: Thanks to all of our members and guests who participated in our summer fund raising event that gave us several thousand dollars to support the preservation of our collections.

It’s Back! PSMHS Books & More Sale!

Save the date: Saturday, November 20, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. at MOHAI. Great opportunity to pick up gently used maritime books, framed photographs and more for holiday gift giving.

If you have gently used maritime books to donate for the sale, please phone Jack Carver at 206-524-5013 or email to schedule a pick up or other arrangements. Because of space limitations, we cannot have books dropped off at MOHAI unless prior arrangements are made. Thanks for your support!

Volunteers Needed Saturday, September 25

Be a part of the opening of the Seattle Park Foundation’s South Lake Union Park Grand Opening! PSMHS will have a hands-on activity booth with flag making and coloring sheets at this big event around the Armory. Volunteers are needed for three hour shifts: 10 to 1 and 2 to 4, outside under a canopy. If you enjoy talking to the public and working with kids, please email or phone Karen at admin@pugetmaritime.org or 206-324.1126 x 41 to help with this event. Thank you!

Membership Survey Results

Thanks to the 159 members who returned the membership survey. We were pleased with the results. If you haven’t yet returned the survey, it’s not too late! Send us your thoughts and opinions. Over the next few months, the board will be reviewing the responses. Many comments were submitted regarding the value of our products [continued on back page]