



Waterlines

Fall/Winter 2016

Thelma C Exhibit Construction on Schedule

The Thelma C Interpretive Exhibit is on schedule to begin construction in early 2017. KMM expects to receive construction documents from Barnes Architecture by the end of December.

With these in hand, the museum hopes to begin construction early next year.

The boat will be mounted on a concrete viewing platform between Trident Seafoods and Near Island Channel. An open sided pavilion will safeguard the boat from rain and snow.

Interpretive panels will tell the story of the 1964 Great Alaskan earthquake and the tsunamis, the importance of salmon to Kodiak's culture and economy, and what it was like to work on the Thelma C in the 1960s and 1970s. (See page 3 for details)

The exhibit was originally planned for a site on the harbor side of the spit, adjacent to the small boat harbor. A December 2015 geotechnical survey revealed however, that costs associated with building on the underlying fill there made the site prohibitively expensive.

The City of Kodiak issued a 25 year lease for the new channel side site in July. The museum plans to build the exhibit there in phases, as funding allows.

The Thelma C was donated to the museum in 2002 by the boat's last owner, fisherman Mark Thomas. KMM rebuilt the vessel in 2012 with funding from a State of Alaska Legislative grant.

Funding from that grant and other sources will allow the museum to construct the viewing platform and mount the boat on the site. Construction of a pavilion over the boat awaits further funding.

Harbor Lights December 17

This year's Harbor Lights Festival is set for Saturday, December 17, from 5-9 p.m. The festival, in its 4th year, is hosted by Kodiak Maritime Museum, and features Kodiak vessels decorated with holiday lights and a community holiday reception.

Kodiak's commercial, sport, and personal vessel owners and crew are encouraged to light up their boats for the festival, while the community walks the harbor floats to enjoy them.

A "Vote Your Boat," contest at the Convention Center on the night of the festival will tally ballots for Best Decorated Boat. Sutliff's Hardware Gift Certificates will be awarded to the top three vote getting boats.

The event is a family friendly affair, and volunteers at the Harbor Convention Center will serve hot chocolate, cider,



The crew of the Duespayer II basking in the glow of the vessel's holiday lights in 2015.

coffee, and Christmas cookies to the community that evening.

Live holiday music will also be provided by Isle Bells, St. Innocent's Academy Choir, and the Kodiak Marimba Band. The Snow Dancers ballet group and the a Filipino dance ensemble will also perform.



The Thelma C Interpretive Exhibit will be located on the harbor spit, across from Oscar's Dock, and adjacent to Trident Seafoods. Construction is slated to begin in early 2017.

From the Wheelhouse —

While the Thelma C Project has been the focus of much of KMM's attention for the past few years, the museum remains engaged in other efforts to "recognize, preserve, and interpret Kodiak's maritime history," as our mission statement says.

Much of that other work is what you'd expect in a maritime history museum- tracking boat histories, planning tours, maintaining our collections, and writing grants.

But sometimes things come up which are not your usual history museum work.

In 2011, while researching the history of gillnet fishing on Kodiak's west side, I had a conversation with two fishermen about something they'd seen in Uganik Bay in the early 2000's.

These men were hardworking, straightforward, and not prone to exaggeration. And yet, their story, of seeing an animal unlike any they'd ever seen before, strayed outside the bounds of what



Bottom sounder paper graph image from the F/V Mylark, April, 1969

one would ordinarily believe the world is all about.

While skiffing out to their gillnet net early one morning they came upon an animal sticking its head out of the water on the end of a long, dark, fur covered neck. The neck was thicker than they could get their arms around. It was not an animal they recognized. It was swimming, but it was not a whale, a shark, a fish, or a bear.

The animal seemed engaged in other things, and paid them no mind. The fishermen stopped for a better look, but the animal dove and disappeared. Not much of a story, but it has stayed with me.

There are other stories in Kodiak about strange sea animals, and some documentation, including photos from Uyak, and a bottom sounder recording taken in 1969 on the F/V Mylark.

History is defined as "the study of past events, usually in human affairs," so these stories are history, though perhaps of a different kind than we are used to. We'll keep you posted, should we learn more. And if you've seen an animal like this, call us.

Toby Sullivan, Executive Director

Recent Grants, Assistance, and Support

National Maritime Heritage Grant Program: \$50,000, Awarded July 2016

This grant will help fund the Thelma C Interpretive Project.

Museums Alaska, Collections Management Fund: \$3,916.53, Awarded April, 2016

This grant was used to build collection boxes and re-house the museum's Uganik Cannery Collection July, 2016.

Museums Alaska, Collections Management Fund: \$3,400, Awarded September, 2016

This grant will be used to transcribe oral histories from "When Crab Was King," oral histories and to create an Oral History Procedures and Policies Manual for the museum.

City of Kodiak: \$15,000 for Thelma C Interpretive Project

Kodiak Island Borough: \$3,351 for Thelma C Interpretive Project

Do you have an interest in local history? Interested in serving our community?

The KMM Board of Directors has been the guiding force of the museum for twenty four years. Ten volunteer citizens currently sit on the board, but we have room for several more.

KMM Board members do vital work and are rewarded with the satisfaction of being part of something important to Kodiak and larger then themselves.

We also have opportunities for volunteers on several of our maritime history and fundraising projects.

If you have an interest in maritime history and a desire to contribute to the Kodiak community, we encourage you to get in touch with us, and come on board!

Contact President Wallace Fields at 486-8370, or Executive Director Toby Sullivan at 486-0384. We'd love to hear from you!



KMM Board Member Eva Holm and volunteer Peggy Holm at last year's Harbor Lights Festival

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KODIAK MARITIME MUSEUM

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KMM Hosts Northwest Passage Tourists on “Fishermen’s Tour”



SS Crystal Serenity leaving Kodiak on August 19. The ship continued on to New York via the Northwest Passage.

KMM hosted almost 300 cruise ship passengers on tours of Kodiak’s harbor this past summer. KMM provides tours for Holland America Line and Crystal Cruises passengers in Kodiak. The tours give visitors a unique look at Kodiak’s fishing boats, fishermen, and gear used to catch fish and crabs in Alaska.

The museum guided about 220 Holland guests from the Vollandam and Maasdam through Kodiak’s waterfront over the course of the summer. The museum also guided 50 guests from two visits by the 820 foot Crystal Serenity.

The Crystal Serenity made two visits to Kodiak, April 25, and August 19. The August visit was a stop on a voyage from Vancouver to New York, via the Northwest Passage. The ship arrived in New York on September 16.

While the Crystal Serenity is the first large passenger ship to traverse the Northwest Passage, melting ice in the Arctic over the past decade has created an expanding window of open water along Alaska and Canada’s northern coasts in late summer, and industry observers believe more ships from other cruise ship companies will follow in years to come. Crystal Cruises plans another similar voyage through the high arctic in 2017.

This summer’s luxury cruise provided a stark contrast to the suffering endured by European and American explorers and whaling crews in the Arctic over the past several centuries, before the polar ice cap began melting.

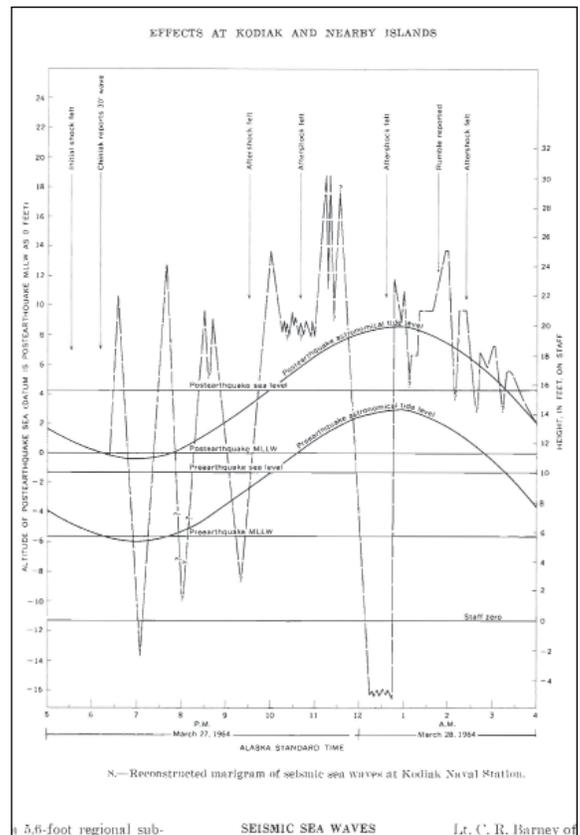
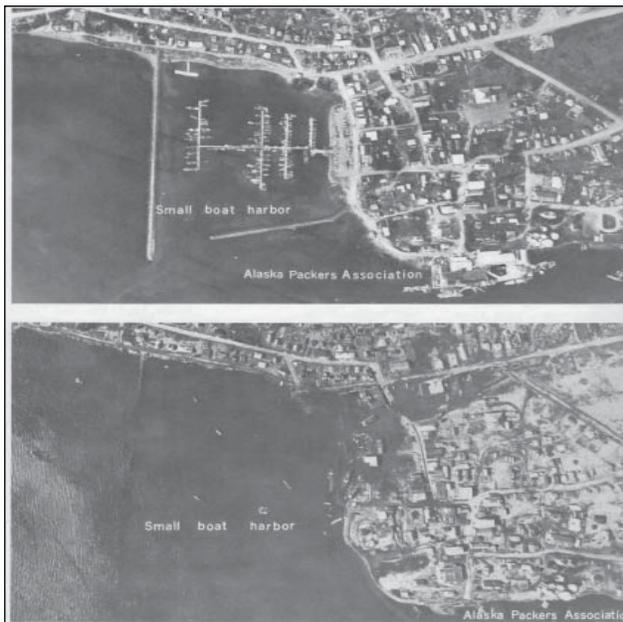


Crystal Serenity passenger trying on a survival suit.

Thelma C Exhibit Will Feature 1964 Earthquake and Tsunami

KMM is currently working with Exhibit AK, a Juneau design firm, to finalize the graphics and text for the series on the interpretive panels which will accompany the Thelma C Interpretive Exhibit.

The exhibit will feature text, photos, and diagrams such as those shown here to help visitors better understand how the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake caused a series of tsunamis which destroyed downtown Kodiak and other towns around the Gulf of Alaska.



Above: Graph of seismic waves at Kodiak Naval Station March 27 and 28, 1964

Above left: Downtown Kodiak from 5,000 feet September 1962. Below left: Downtown Kodiak flooded at high tide, April 1964, due to subsidence caused by the March 27, 1964 earthquake.

Elemental and True: Remembering Glacier Bay Seafoods

by Susan Morgan

We were never supposed to live in Ouzinkie.

That revelation from my mom blew my mind. We had never been one of those families that had meetings to discuss things, but I always assumed at least my mom knew what was happening. As it turns out, not so much.

I'd wondered why we left our two wonderful dogs, Missy and Gazebo, at our home in Anchorage under the care of neighbors when we moved to Ouzinkie in 1972. Turns out, Mom thought we were just going for a visit, maybe a few weeks, maybe a month. Just to see my dad, who was over there — wherever “there” was — getting a shrimp processing plant running.

It took me 40-some years to learn that the same things that surprised me about Ouzinkie also surprised her.

Like me, Mom wasn't thrilled that my brother and I had to sleep in the cannery's office at the far end of the dock over the water that first summer. And she definitely wasn't happy to learn that the tiny trailer at the other end of the dock where she was supposed to stay with my dad was also occupied by the cannery's then-foreman.

But probably the biggest shock for Mom was that once we were there for our “visit,” my dad gave no indication he wanted us to go home to Anchorage. Unbeknownst to her, at least at first, “home” was now here, where my dad was, in this village of fewer than 200 people. When Mom finally figured that out, she made a fast trip to Anchorage to gather more clothes and give away our long-suffering dogs.

Over time, those three years in Ouzinkie proved to be life-changing for every one of us.

My folks built a business that, for a while at least, thrived. Mom says a “ton of money” went through that plant, as endless boatloads of raw shrimp were caught, processed and sold to our eager market in Great Britain.

They even walked away with a small profit at the end, enjoying a rare taste of financial comfort. Daddy told Mom to design her dream kitchen; she still loves those walnut cabinets.

Those years influenced my brother, too, now a professor and scientist specializing in water quality. He credits Ouzinkie, where everything including our cannery waste was dumped in the ocean, for sparking that interest.

And I've always referred back to that time for pretty much everything that makes me who I am. I'd grown up a quiet, middle child, and to be plunked into the middle of the wild and crazy world that was Kodiak and environs in the 1970s... well, it was a revelation.

My new friends in the cannery taught me about Kerouac, pot, hitchhiking and freedom. I fell in love for the first time and experienced the deaths of people I cared about for the first time. I saw people who watched out for others in ways that went far beyond words. If someone was missing in a storm, they went — without hesitation — into the storm themselves to rescue them.

Nothing was trite here, it seemed to me. Nothing was unimportant.

I loved that. It felt like all the artifice of the world had been stripped away. This was how life was meant to be, I thought: elemental and true. With a hell of a lot of fun thrown in.

My plan for exploring these years when my family's cannery operated in Ouzinkie was to discover why I loved it so much, why I remembered it so fondly. I wanted to find my old friends and learn if that place, that time, affected them as much as it did me.

I did, and it did.

But the biggest surprise was how much I learned about my parents.

As a teenager, it used to bug me when they'd stroll through the cannery, arm in arm, while my friends and I worked on the fish pick line. It seemed so ... parental! *Continued on page 5*



Glacier Bay Seafoods in Ouzinkie, 1970s. Photo: Tim Smith



Susan Morgan, Glacier Bay Seafoods office, 1973. Photo: Susan Morgan

Boats We Remember: F/V Madre Dolorosa

While most boats have a story, few can match the story of the Madre Dolorosa, a 58 foot crab boat which fished out of Kodiak from 1963 until the mid 1980s. The boat was built in 1963 by the Martinolich Ship Building Corporation in Seattle, and was brought to Kodiak shortly thereafter by owner/operator Don Vinson to fish for crab.

On August 13, 1966 Vinson, 36, his two sons Boyd, 17 and William, 12, and two crewmembers, Ron Winberg, 24, and James White, age unknown, left Kodiak with deckload of pots to fish king crab near Cape Ikolik on the west side of the island.

The boat was found the next day floating upside down off Cape Karluk and sank in



Madre Dolorosa, with a Grumman Goose on deck, 1960s. Photo: Tim Smith, Tanignak.com

15 fathoms off Harvester Island while being towed to Larsen Bay. Divers found the bodies of all five people in the hull of the sunken boat.

Vinson's non-fishing partner in the boat, an electronics repair man named Murray Gellis, had the boat raised and refurbished. With no previous fishing experience, he took command of the Madre and became a fisherman. He crab fished the boat around Kodiak and in the Bering Sea until 1980, when he retired to a farm in Oregon.

Even by the wild standards of 1970s Kodiak, Murray was a legendary character, with an outsized personality and a love for socializing. He died of cancer in Oregon in 1981.



Murray Gellis fishing tanner crabs on the Madre Dolorosa, 1970s. Photo: Dave Gellis

Glacier Bay, continued

But now I can see how those strolls must have felt to them. They had created this bustling plant. Villagers, college students, boat crews and more made a good living because of their creation

And the shrimp was fantastic. I don't eat it anymore — being drenched in the stuff for three years will do that to a person — but even I know it was extraordinary: cooked just right in sea water; shelled perfectly by the giant peelers; cunningly frozen in mid-air so every shrimp stayed fresh and separate.

It was a thing of which they were rightly proud. I wish I'd realized that at the time.

Mom always said the drawback to my dad building a plant only he could run... was that only he could run it. And he was tired. They both were.

We left Ouzinkie for good in November 1974. Less than a year later, the empty cannery burned.

I've never been able to go back since then. Even photos of the dock right after the fire — looking like the skeleton of a giant whale — break my heart.

But in a way, that violent and final ending to our cannery is in keeping with the lessons I learned there.

We had no buffers in Ouzinkie. We and everyone else lived and died, truly, with nature.

When I interviewed Tim Southworth for this project, he said his time working in Ouzinkie taught him where "the edge" was. While he learned he wasn't constitutionally equipped to live on the edge forever, he said it informed his life to know where it was.

I think that's been true for all of us.

Like many others in Ouzinkie at that time, I was fortunate to live — and survive — a few years very close to the edge. It was heady, exhilarating, terrifying and unforgettable.

At 22, I made a conscious, deliberate choice to step back from that edge. It was the right decision and I don't regret it. But part of me still longs for the way I felt there, the others I knew there. And to be honest, part of me still misses the view.

A version of this article appeared originally on the Alaska Historical Society blog, <http://alaskahistoricalsociety.org/elemental-and-true-glacier-bay-seafoods-1972-1974/>



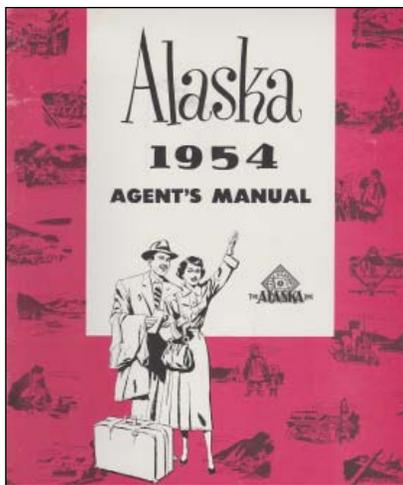
Donna and George Grant, Photo: Susan Morgan

From the Archives: Alaska Steamship Company

Kodiak Maritime Museum recently acquired a number of artifacts related to the Alaska Steamship Company, which operated between the Lower 48 and Alaska from 1894 to 1971.

The objects and documents were donated by Alan Austerman, who was the assistant company agent in Kodiak for Alaska Steamship Co. in the early 1970s. Items include ledgers, photographs and an agent's manual from the 1950s.

Alaska Steamship was formed by three businessmen in 1895 to take advantage of the growing volume of freight and passengers between Seattle and Alaska. The salmon canning industry was expanding rapidly in Alaska at the time, and religious denominations were also founding missions around the territory. Both needed regular ship service from the Lower 48 to succeed.



Alaska Steamship Agent's Manual, 1954

But then the 1898 the Yukon gold rush hit, and the company instantly began hauling thousands of miners and their gear north, and gold south. For decades, the mining industry would be a mainstay of the company's business.

When the Japanese bombed Pearly Harbor in December 1941 however, the U.S. Navy took over Alaska Steamship's vessels. Deck guns were installed on the ships as a defense against Japanese submarines, and the Navy decided when and where the ships would sail.

When the war ended in 1945, the company resumed its pre-war shipping service, but the new Alaska Canada Highway and increasing air travel stripped freight and passengers from Alaska Steamship vessels.

The company tried to remain profitable by acquiring barges, tugs, and container vessels for its freight business, and building a tourist market by upgrading their steamships. The shipping side of the company survived until 1971, but their passenger business continued to decline, and ended in 1954.

The company operated three steamships between Seattle and Kodiak that year- the Alaska, the Aleutian, and the Denali. The summer schedule, from June 7 to September 30, called for visits to Kodiak every two weeks, after stops in Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, Juneau, Sitka, and Cordova. Getting from Seattle to Kodiak took five days.

All the passengers ate the same food in the same dining room — these ships were not luxury Cunard liners carrying the elites of New York across the Atlantic. The agent's manual does however mention that "Cocktail Lounges aboard Alaska Line ships are open when ships are at sea."

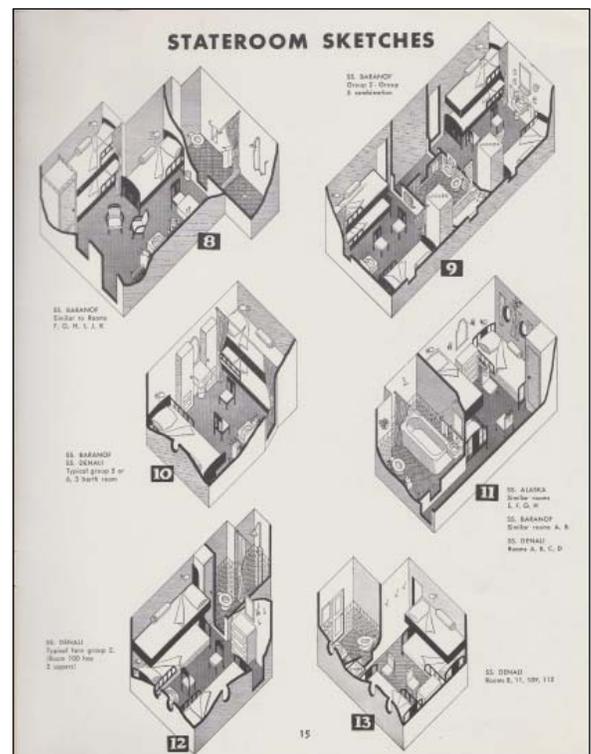
The post-war ships featured accommodations ranging from steerage to luxury staterooms, and the manual shown here was used by the company's agents to help passengers make ticket buying decisions.

According to the manual, "Every agent knows that the more information he can give his client, the better his chances of pleasing the client- of avoiding misunderstandings and embarrassments."

In 1954, the nicest accommodation from Seattle to Kodiak was a deluxe stateroom with two single beds and its own bathroom with a bathtub, and cost \$195.00, or \$1,800 in today's dollars. The least expensive berth, a bunk bed in a windowless inner room on a lower deck, with the bathroom down the passageway, cost \$99.00 — \$870.00 in 2016 dollars.



Alaska Steamship Lines, SS Alaska The ship was 366 feet long, had radar, and could carry 212 passengers.



Stateroom layouts on the SS Alaska, 1954

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The KMM Board extends a sincere thanks to all of our 2016 members and new and renewing members for 2017.

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