



All Loggers on deck

Tall Ships Tacoma is coming up fast, and a crew of UPS alumni had a part in making the event happen

by Chuck Fowler '60

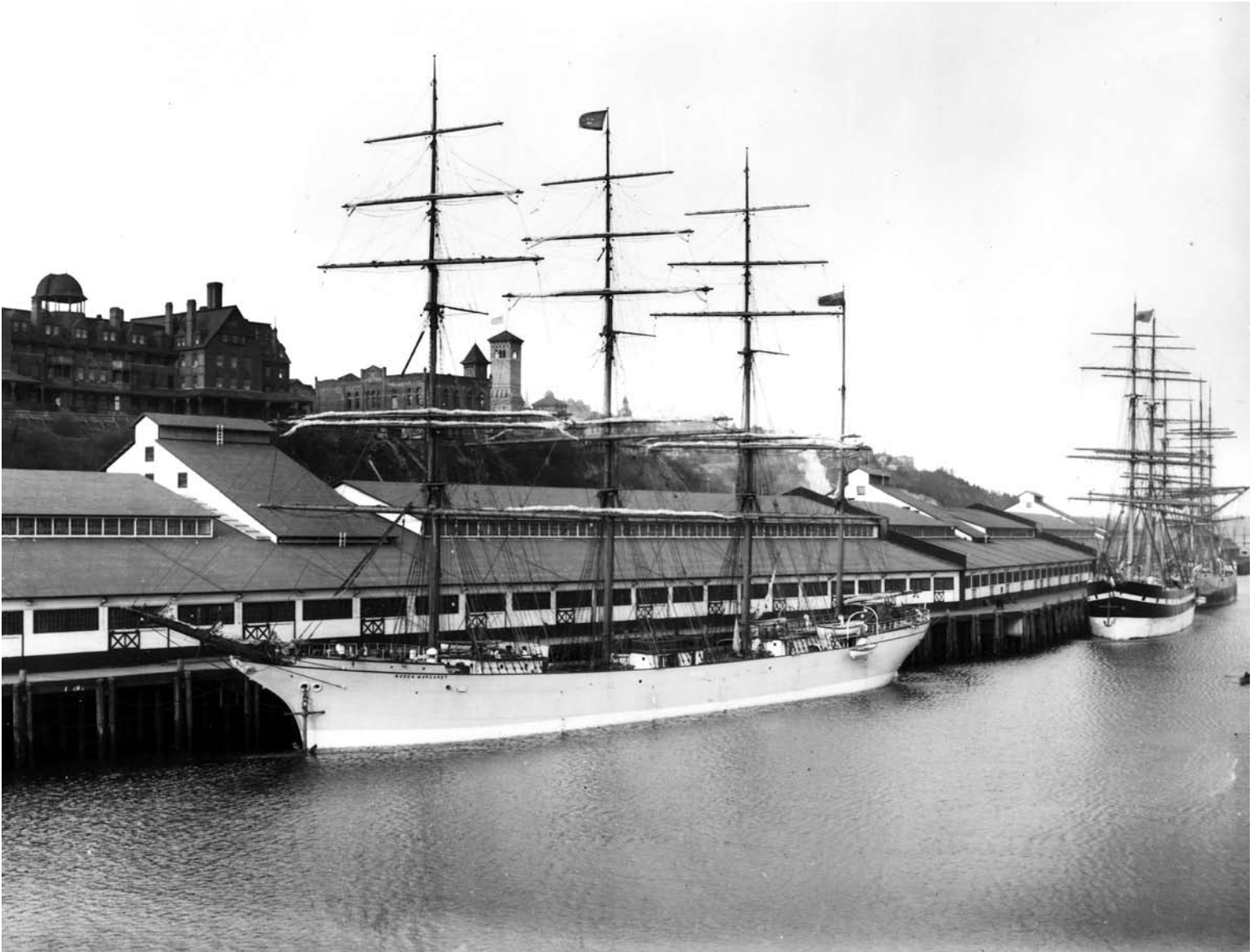
It began with a few magnificent historic photographs of Tacoma's downtown waterfront. The images showed towering sailing ships lined up in the early 1900s along the "mile-long" wheat warehouses on what was then City Waterway.

On 4th of July weekend in 2005, more than a century later, those awe-inspiring photos became a retro-reality during the first Tall Ships Tacoma festival.

Led by two square-rigged ships, the *Cuauhtemoc* from Mexico and the *Pallada* from Russia, a tall-ship fleet of more than 25 vessels attracted an estimated 800,000 shore-side spectators and tens of thousands who toured the ships at their berths on the now renamed Thea Foss Waterway. Vicariously, these visitors from near and far transported themselves back in Tacoma's history as they boarded the tall ships. Many may have imagined themselves beginning their voyages to the four corners of the world during the great age of sail from the late 1880s to the early 1900s.

The festival's success was recognized when the American Sail Training Association, the event's coordinator, chose Tacoma as Port of the Year from among the seven Pacific Coast cities that hosted the Tall Ships Challenge Series in 2005.

Tacoma's mayor and former UPS professor Bill Baarsma '64 called the 2005 tall ships the greatest civic event in the city's history. >>



This photo of the white-hulled British square-rigger *Queen Margaret* inspired Chuck Fowler '60 to first propose hosting tall ships in Tacoma. Fowler's uncle sailed on the *Queen Margaret* from Tacoma in 1901 around Cape Horn to Belgium.

Many were the visionaries, volunteers, planners, and promoters behind that initial maritime extravaganza. Now an organizing committee board, hundreds of dedicated volunteers, and a small staff have been working for three years to stage an encore performance on Independence Day weekend 2008. Among them are a number of UPS alumni.

Loggers on board

Stan Selden '53 answered an ad for volunteers and was recruited quickly as a key member of the board for the 2005 festival. He's back again this year as co-chair.

"As a successful Tacoma businessman Stan brought tremendous credibility to the whole tall ships event idea," says Don Meyer, executive director of the Foss Waterway Development Authority. Meyer noted that as board chairman of Selden's Home Furnishings, a 68-year-old Tacoma business, as well as a boater and tall ships enthusiast, Selden was the right

person for the job. He and other 2005 event board members visited and studied successful past host ports on the East Coast.

Several other Loggers were lured by the siren song of the big, classic-design sailing vessels. Evette McCabe Mason, who attended UPS in 1977-78 and is community relations manager for the Port of Tacoma, participated in the original planning discussions for the 2005 event and continues as an active member for the 2008 organization board. Combining her port work with college studies, Mason is currently completing her college degree at UW-Tacoma.

Another Logger leader serving on the Tall Ships Tacoma (TST) executive board is Sam Wagner '95, an economic development specialist with the office of the Pierce County executive. He and his family were fascinated spectators during the 2005 event, so when Wagner got the chance to be the county's representative for the 2008 planning committee he jumped at the opportunity.

"I was such a fan of the city's first tall ships festival; it had a great community feel," he says. "It was the single best event to happen to

Tacoma in a long, long time and showed off what Tacoma could do.”

Wagner had been bitten by the tall ships bug when he was a student at Hoquiam High School in Grays Harbor County, Wash. In the late 1980s his class took a field trip to the shipyard where the Grays Harbor Historical Seaport was recreating the late-18th-century square-rigger *Lady Washington*. The original *Lady* had been one of two ships commanded by Captain Robert Gray, a New England native who was the first American to explore the Northwest coast in the late 1700s.

“As both a Hoquiam native and now a Tacoma resident helping plan the event,” he said, “I’ll be doubly proud when I see the *Lady Washington* leading the tall ships into Tacoma this 4th of July weekend.”

Several other Loggers are also proud to be involved with the 2008 festival. Don Patterson serves as Tacoma Yacht Club representative and liaison on the TST Organizing Committee board. He attended UPS in 1986 and 1987 to earn credits in English so he could teach secondary school. In 1991 Patterson returned for his education administrative credential. He is currently the Tacoma Yacht Club vice commodore and will be commodore during this year’s festival.


Judi McLean Bilderback B.A.’64, M.Ed.’76 enjoyed attending the event three years ago and was encouraged by a friend to volunteer for this year’s festival. Now retired from teaching and administrative duties for the University Place School District and later principal for a private Episcopal school, Bilderback and her husband are enjoying sailing adventures in the Caribbean and the South Pacific. “We really enjoy boats and sailing and now that we have more time we are happy to help out as Tall Ships Tacoma volunteers,” she said.

Laura ’87 and Lawrence Bradley ’89 volunteered for the Tall Ships Tacoma 2008 festival because Lawrence loves sailing. The couple rode on the historic square topsail schooner and privateer *Lynx* during the 2005 event. The Bradleys had such a good time at the event they decided to get more involved this year.

Lillian Amrine M.Ed.’94 and her husband volunteered for this year’s Tacoma event because they “just love tall ships.” A Gig Harbor resident, Amrine is currently a guidance counselor at South Kitsap High School and has summers off. “We saw the ad for volunteers in the newspaper,” she said. The couple agreed it would be fun to see the ships and crews up close and be part of the festive atmosphere.

Impressive flagship

Through my contacts with ASTA-affiliated former ship commanders, I, along with Selden, Port of Tacoma commissioner and TST co-chair Clare Petrich, and other volunteers, invited and helped lobby to have “America’s Tall Ship,” the U.S. Coast Guard square-rigged barque *Eagle*, visit during Tall Ships Tacoma. The *Eagle* has not visited Puget Sound for 30 years. Based at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn., the ship is used to educate cadets in seamanship and leadership skills. The majestic vessel is almost 300 feet long, carries more than 22,000 square feet of canvas, and has six miles of standing and running rigging. Its main- and foremasts tower 147 feet above the water. The *Eagle* has a permanent crew of six officers and 55 enlisted staff, and trains up to 150 future Coast Guard officers during its annual summer cruises.

Government representatives, business people, hundreds of volunteers, and a small staff worked hard to win the coveted American Sail Training Association’s Port of the Year award in 2005, and the Tall Ships Tacoma 2008 crew has their eyes on a second consecutive host-port prize. But whatever the outcome, Puget Sound alumni have provided both leadership and people-power to help the university’s hometown become a leading, nationally known tall ships city. 

TALL SHIPS TACOMA a field guide



Adventuress



Amazing Grace



HMS Bounty

Here, with thanks to Lorraine Ralston at Tall Ships Tacoma, a few of the vessels that will be visiting:

Adventuress, launched in 1913, is a 135-foot schooner that came to Puget Sound in the 1960s. Owned by Sound Experience, it is one of the few working historic vessels in existence.

Amazing Grace, a traditional American sailing craft, is owned by Steve and Janis Denton and operated by the nonprofit Maritime Leadership Foundation.

HMS Bounty was built as an ocean-faring vessel in 1960 for the movie *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

Eagle is a seagoing classroom for Coast Guard cadets. The 295-foot *Eagle* is the only active-duty commissioned sailing vessel in the U.S. military. Home port is New London, Conn.

Hawaiian Chieftain is a 65-foot-long ketch of classic proportions. She was originally designed as a trading packet for use between the Hawaiian Islands.

Kaisei—the name means “Ocean Planet”—is a steel-hulled brigantine built in Poland and later the flagship of the Sail Training Association of Japan. She is now owned by the Ocean Voyages Foundation in California.

Lynx is a square-topsail schooner. She is a replica of an American privateer vessel from around 1812. The original *Lynx* ran the British blockade, assisted American naval forces, and defended American coastal waters and merchant ships against the Royal Navy.

Merrie Ellen was originally built as a Canadian steam tug in 1922 and was transformed into a gaff schooner in 1987.

HMCS Oriole, the oldest commissioned ship in the Canadian Navy, is a regular participant in the annual Swiftsure International Yacht Race from Victoria to the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back.

Mycia is a wooden, Grand Banks-style, gaff-rigged schooner of approximately 73 feet. Built entirely by hand in the Pacific Northwest, she was originally started and designed by the Northwest School of Wooden Boatbuilding in Port Townsend, Wash.



Eagle



Kaisei



Merrie Ellen