



BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS - Capt Clark Caffall maneuvering a "log bronc" like a sports car, freeing log jam from the Steamer PORTLAND's bow. Thanks to Clark and his crew on the RAMONA III, and thanks to OMM crew!



## Upcoming Events at OMM

**Annual Membership Meeting** - Thursday, February 21, 2013, on the Steamer PORTLAND. Details on page 2.

**Board of Trustee Meetings** - Second Thursday of each month; 7:00 p.m. On board the Steamer PORTLAND. Members and guests always welcome.

**Clubhouse Hours (NEW!)** - 4th Thursday of the month from 5pm - 8pm. Members and volunteers are invited to drop by the Steamer PORTLAND and meet fellow history affectionados and water people.

**Museum Family Saturday** - 3rd Saturday of every month. Families are welcome aboard the Steamer PORTLAND for child-friendly tours and fun maritime arts and crafts.

**Monthly Steam-ups** - Beginning in the Spring, the Steamer PORTLAND will steam-up regularly.

**OSA and OMM Art Show** - April, 2013. Oregon Society of Artists and Oregon Maritime Museum artists will again produce a joint art show and sale.

**Wooden Boat Festival** - July 14. Interested in building a 12-foot rowboat with your family or friends during the Wooden Boat Festival weekend? Only 12 team-slots available and registration opens soon.

*For more info, to check on steam up dates, submit artwork, or register, contact Caitlin Shrigley, OMM Outreach Program Manager, at [programs@oregonmaritimemuseum.org](mailto:programs@oregonmaritimemuseum.org), 503.224.0054, or check OMM's Facebook page at [Facebook.com/OregonMaritimeMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/OregonMaritimeMuseum).*

THANK YOU to Spicers Paper of Portland for donating the paper for this issue of the Newsletter!

OREGON MARITIME MUSEUM  
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Portland OR 97204  
www.oregonmaritimemuseum.org  
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# OREGON MARITIME MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Portland Oregon

January 2013

## The STAR OF OREGON Construction to Demise - and a Memorial

Part 2 of 2

By Ed Wilson, CDR, USN (ret)  
Librarian, OMM

*Summary of Part 1, from Winter, 2012 OMM Newsletter: The sole purpose for building the STAR OF OREGON was to barter the boat away in exchange for cattle that would be driven back to the Oregon Territory. Part 1 described the characters involved with Joseph Gale, who completed the ship's construction, and their determination to break the cattle monopoly held in the territory by the Hudson's Bay Company.*

### The STAR OF OREGON'S Construction

As mentioned in Part 1, Joseph Gale described the STAR OF OREGON as "clinker built," a method which had fallen out of favor in the 16th century, except for construction of very small boats, such as dories or skiffs. Since that time, seagoing vessels had almost exclusively been carvel planked: hull planks abut each other, are secured to a heavy frame, and caulking fills the voids. Carvel construction began on the Iberian Peninsula in Portugal and Spain, allowing their ships to be built larger, and carry more sail, crew and cargo. Thus, these ambitious countries used their sturdy ships to dominate world exploration for the next two centuries.

Clinker, or lapstrake construction, is a planking method where planks overlap each other, and planks are "clined" together along the line of overlap. This is the type of construction used notably by the Vikings.

So, why use clinker construction in the 19th century? My supposition is simply that Gale lacked access to milled lumber. In 1840, John McLoughlin (aka "the Doctor") of Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), owned the only sawmill in the area, and he would hold fast to his cattle monopoly. HBC had denied Gale's men other shipbuilding necessities, and the Doctor would not have not looked favorably on providing finished planks to a potential rival.

In Part 1 of this story. Gale stated the boards were "dressed to a plump 1-1/4," but he says nothing about the width of these boards. For a vessel of this size (53' stem to stern) the planks would likely have been 10-14" wide. To get the equivalent of quarter-sawn boards from a log, the log would have to be 30-36" diameter at the smallest point. Imagine felling a tree, driving wedges in the end, splitting the log in half, then quarters, etc., and then "dressing" the resulting planks to reasonably rectangular dimensions with hand planes, draw knives, etc."

Clinker-constructed vessels are usually framed after planking, and use much thinner frames (referred to as timbers) to stabilize the hull, rather than form a complete back-

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2013 Annual Meeting Thursday, February 21 2013

On the Steamer PORTLAND Official notice on page 2

# President's Letter

By Arlen Cole

info@oregonmaritimemuseum.org; 503.224.7724

"Thank You" is a simple phrase that we teach our children early on. At the Oregon Maritime Museum, I have a chance every day to say thank you - to a volunteer, a member, a visitor, a donor. As a non-profit, we don't sell running shoes or microchips, but we thrive on the participation of the many individuals and groups who support us - and we thank you!

Our staff and volunteers are remarkable - we are thankful that they find no task is too small or too big to keep the museum operating. It's a challenge to keep the restroom (head) fresh for the public - and it's dangerous - but necessary - to clear the logjam of winter debris from the Steamer PORTLAND's bow. Thanks, too, for the ideas that abound - to improve our marketing and communications, and to plan programs and events that celebrate the history we preserve and share with the public, both near and far.

Thanks to those who donate goods or services that range from ink cartridges to paint to TV monitors to tug assist for a special event. Every gift counts! Thanks to those who respond to special fundraising appeals - your trust in our stewardship is rewarded - we will carefully monitor how we spend your generous gifts.

Our member-only events like the Fourth of July party and Christmas Ships cookie exchange are each a chance to say THANK YOU to our members. We recognize your loyalty and enthusiasm for this museum, and we want to connect with you even more.

My term as the museum's President is winding down, and I plan to stay on in an active role. I look forward to many more chances to say Thank You!

## 2013 Annual Meeting Notice

**TO: Members, Oregon Maritime Museum**  
**FROM: Board of Trustees**

**This is your official notice that the Oregon Maritime Museum annual membership meeting will be held on:**

Thursday, February 21, 2013  
6:00 pm - Arrive, check in, socialize, refreshments  
7:00 - Business Begins  
On the Steamer PORTLAND

A formal agenda will be distributed at the meeting - including board elections\*, an amendment to the bylaws (below), and progress reports from all committees.

### BYLAW PROPOSAL:

A motion will be submitted to change Article XIII, Amendments, of the museum's bylaws, as follows:

FROM:

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of OMM present and voting at any meeting of OMM, provided that previous notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members not less than thirty (30) days before the meeting.

TO:

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the **members of the OMM Board of Trustees** present and voting at any meeting **of the OMM Board of Trustees**, and provided that previous notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed, **emailed, or hand delivered to all Board of Trustees** members not less than thirty (30) days before the meeting.

(\*Brief bios of the nominees are on page 6 of this newsletter.)

## The STAR OF OREGON, Part 2, continued

bone for the hull planking. Thus, Gale's description of the clinker method is accurate - planks spiked through timbers nine inches apart, and a spike between each timber; the hull planks were "clinched" (clinked) every four and one-half inches.

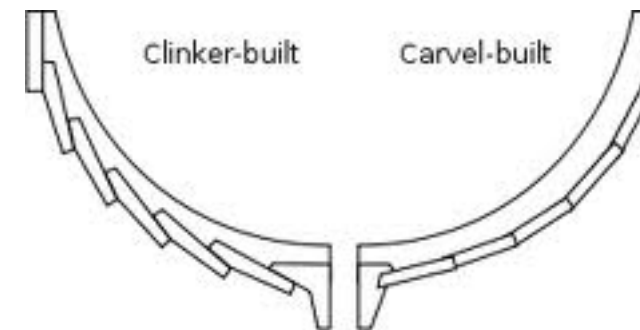


Diagram: Clinker vs Carvel construction

Source: Wikipedia

*"Her frame was of swamp white oak."*<sup>5,6</sup>

Gale is probably referring to Oregon white oak, as swamp white oak is not found west of Minnesota. Oak is a top choice for framing clinker constructed vessels.

*"... her knees were of seasoned red fir roots."*

This would have been a daunting task for the group, and you have to appreciate their tenacity in digging up a large fir tree root system to obtain the naturally bent lumber to make strong knees - the structural members used to reinforce the stem and transom post at the keel attachments.

*"Her deck was double, first a three-fourth board and over which, so to break joints, a plank of one and one-fourth inches"*

Now, a tight deck would come from milled lumber - especially in light of the fact that the construction crew had dwindled, and they did not really get back to the task until the spring of 1842. I strongly suspect that Gale used his income and influence at the Willamette Mission mill to eventually obtain finished lumber.

Now put this task in perspective. Given the beam was 10'9", and the hold was over four feet deep, the curved sides of the hull would be nearly 20 linear feet. Assuming each plank measured 12" or so, the curved sides would have thus required nearly 20 planks. Set

a clinker every 4 1/2 inches - on each and every plank - and 133 clinkers were needed for every board (assuming a rough 50' length for the planking), or nearly 2,700 clinkers to assemble the hull! That is a lot of iron work! The blacksmithing was done by renowned gunsmith Thomas Hubbard and J.L. Parrish. Setting the clinkers required one man working on the inside, and one working on the outside, both swinging heavy sledges simultaneously - a lot of sweat was expended. Decking was finished soon after, and yet there was a lot more work to complete.

### U.S. Navy Lieutenant Charles Wilkes - "The Knight in Shining Armor"

Lt. Charles Wilkes, U.S. Navy, arrived in the Oregon Territory in July 1841, with the United States Exploring Expedition, and just in the nick of time to save the day for Gale and company. Wilkes used his influence to essentially strong arm McLoughlin into providing everything Gale needed to complete the STAR: sail cloth, cordage, paint, etc.

Gale did not have a commercial captain's license, so the chances were great that while sailing into Mexican territory the vessel could be confiscated as a 'vessel of opportunity' (i.e., a pirated vessel). Wilkes saved the day: he administered a captain's examination to Gale (which he passed handily) and quickly issued Gale a Master's Certificate.<sup>6</sup>

Wilkes finished the job. He found "...an anchor, a hawser (anchor rode), a log line and two long glasses - a 20-second and a 14-second glass..."<sup>6</sup> for use on the STAR. Even more significant, Wilkes presented Gale with an American flag, which Gale treasured throughout his life. After his death, Gale was interred with the very same flag.

### STAR OF OREGON Goes to Sea

Gale then manned his crew, consisting of himself, John Canan, Pleasant Armstrong, Ralph Kilbourn, Jacob Green, and a little Indian boy, ten years old" (unnamed), "not one of whom knew the compass,"<sup>6</sup> and a passenger, a Mr. Pfeffenhauser, who claimed to be a relative of Captain Sutter, who owned the mill where gold would be discovered in a few years hence.

The STAR OF OREGON first set sail down the Willa-

Continued on Page 4

## The STAR OF OREGON, Part 2, continued

mette on August 27, 1842, and turned up the Columbia for a pass past Fort Vancouver, unfurling Wilke's flag just as they tacked in front of the fort. They then headed down the Columbia, stopping for several days at Astoria for final provisioning and crew training. There, they were taken under the tutelage of Captain Couch, who happened to be at anchor with his brig, the CHENAMUS.

Finally, on September 12, 1842, the STAR made for the open sea. A storm moved in and kicked up the seas so badly that the green crew became literally green – seasick to the point of incapacity - and Gale ended up manning the helm for 36 hours straight.

On the approach to San Francisco, fog was so thick that the ship nearly hit a rock when they cruised too close to shore, but Gale was able to maneuver away just in time.

### A Deal is Struck

On September 17, 1842, they anchored at Yerba Buena, as San Francisco was then called. Gale came to the acquaintance of Joseph Limantour, who had recently lost his ship on the rocky California coast, but had salvaged most of his cargo. Limantour needed a ship, and Gale needed cattle. A three-way agreement was struck between Limantour, Gale, and none other than General Mariano G. Vallejo, Commander General of California. In exchange for some of Limantour's cargo, Vallejo would supply 350 head of cattle to Gale, and Limantour would get the STAR OF OREGON.

Gale's crew wintered over in California, agreeing to rendezvous in the spring at Cache Creek, while he advertised for more settlers with livestock to accompany them back to Oregon Territory, where land was plentiful and productive. A few days before leaving their rendezvous that spring, Gale stripped a tall cottonwood tree for a flagpole, and flew Wilkes' flag aloft. They set north as a company now totaling 42 men, with 1,250 head of cattle, 6,000 sheep, and 600 mules and horses,

arriving in the Willamette Valley 75 days later, with "very few losses." The "cattle monopoly" was broken!

Timing is everything! Had Wilkes not intervened, had the Willamette Mission not built a sawmill, had gold been found in California 10 years earlier (by 1850 thousands of ships lay abandoned in San Francisco Bay), this enterprise would never have come about.

*Note: Gale was at the "Champoeg meeting" on May 2 for the formation of the provisional government. He had to ride hard to reach the settler's camp at Cache Creek (501 miles south) and arrive in time to commence the journey northward on the 14th of May. Ouch! My aching saddle sores!*

### What Happened to the STAR OF OREGON?

The STAR was renamed JOVEN FANITA by Limantour in honor of General Vallejo's seven-year-old daughter, Epifania. Limantour made several trips between California and Mexico, and there is evidence that the Mexican government was slow to pay him for his services and he filed suit to collect. FANITA was probably involved in gun running activities, as she was 'overhauled' by the U.S. sloop-of-war WARREN in 1847, but Limantour had dumped his cargo of munitions.

JOVEN FANITA was later wrecked or lost at sea, probably in the Santa Barbara Channel. Limantour, always a bit of a scalawag, is best known as the "man who almost owned San Francisco" when he was awarded a land claim to the city by the U.S. District Court (later overturned when the claim was found to be bogus).

*The STAR OF OREGON was the first keel vessel on the Willamette River, and holds a special place in the region's maritime history.*

References and photo sources, Part 2:

<sup>5</sup>.S.S. Niemiec, G.R. Ahrens, S. Willits, and D.E. Hibbs. 1995: Hardwoods of the Pacific Northwest <http://owic.oregonstate.edu/pubs/hardwoods-pnw.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>.United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, n.d.: [http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=QUGA4&photoID=quga4\\_002\\_ahp.jpg](http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=QUGA4&photoID=quga4_002_ahp.jpg) <http://plants.usda.gov/java/nameSearch?keywordquery=swamp+white+oak&mode=command&submit.x=8&submit.y=7>

## Memorial to the STAR OF OREGON

On Swan Island, there is a memorial to the STAR OF OREGON (photo to right) .

It was first installed near the build site of the STAR on the 100th anniversary of her launching, May 19, 1942.

It was moved to this location at the west end of N Channel Avenue in 1943, which at the time was the front of the Kaiser Shipyard administration building. (Map to right will get you there today.)

(There was probably some political intervention in this move, as Kaiser was then building SS STAR OF OREGON, [a WWII Liberty Ship]) to a great deal of corporate fanfare. - EW)



## Joseph Gale Memorial in Richland WA

I recently learned that the Eagle Valley Cemetery, Richland, WA, where Joseph Gale is buried, has recently posted a significant historic sign to honor Mr. Gale, and explain his role in the building of the 'Star of Oregon' in 1840-1842.

The cemetery director has invited me to attend a ceremony later this year (spring) to honor Mr. Gale. - Ed Wilson



# Board of Trustee Nominees - Brief Bios

The Nominating Committee members, Dave Larson (chair), Bill Bach, Chuck Kellogg, Jim Spitzer and Jim Townley, present the following excellent candidates for both elected and appointed positions. Elected positions will be voted on by the membership at the annual meeting held on the Steamer on February 21. The President of the Board will fill appointed positions shortly thereafter. Fuller biographical summaries of nominees will be available at the meeting. Here is a brief summary.

**Katin Imes**  
*President, Expedition 21 Media, Inc.;*  
*Software Engineer;*  
*Web Systems Developer*

Technology development and bringing technology to people are two main themes in Katin's 30-plus years of experience in computer systems analysis and software development. Katin will bring interests that range widely, from leading ghost tours in downtown Portland, to community theater, storytelling, philosophy and hypnosis. At a meeting on steamer, Katin was introduced to OMM and he quickly joined and became a regular docent on Saturdays. He looks forward to improving the technologies that support museum operations and the library, and allowing volunteers and staff to fully employ those technologies.

**Douglas Parks**  
*President,*  
*First Cabin Insurance Services, Inc.;*  
*Producer for Elliott Powell Baden & Baker*

Doug has over 30 years of insurance sales, brokerage, consulting, and claims adjustment experience with a strong emphasis on ocean cargo, tug and barge, marine construction, and other marine related industries. In addition to his insurance expertise, Doug brings a long history of association with and leadership in regional maritime and shipping communities.

**Gil MacGregor**  
*Special Operations Team Leader,*  
*Washington County Sheriff's Dept*  
Gil will soon be retiring as a Lieutenant

from the Washington County Sheriff's Office. A former U.S. Marine (Once a Marine, always a Marine!), Gil's career in law enforcement has included many specialty areas including marine patrol. With a lifelong association with boating, yacht club membership, and a Coast Guard Masters License, Gil wants to be on the water, and looks forward to joining OMM's Board of Trustees.

**Marc Schwartz**  
*Port Engineer,*  
*Tidewater Marine Transportation,*  
*Vancouver WA*

With over 25 years of experience in ship repair and operations, Marc came to the region a year ago to lead the engineering and maintenance of Tidewater Marine Transportation's fleet of 16 tugs, 8 tank barges, 62 grain barges, and other barges used to move wood chips, containers, solid waste, and other products on the Columbia River System and coastal ocean routes. Marc looks forward to lending OMM his expertise on infrastructure and broadening his relationships in the region.

**Michael Titone**  
*Executive Director,*  
*Columbia River Steamship*  
*Operator's Association*

As of January 2013, Michael took over leadership of this association of operators and agents of vessels that call on facilities on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. He moved from Louisiana where he worked for a large firm that supported ship operations. Most recently he formed and led a trade asso-

ciation of some 50 vessel operators and agents using Mississippi River ports.

**Liz Wainwright**  
*Executive Director,*  
*Merchants Exchange of Portland OR*

Liz has over 30 years of experience in the marine transportation industry. The Merchants Exchange provides vessel logistics, vessel and cargo statistics, and answering and association management services to its members and the regional maritime community. As the first woman and only fifth Director of the 133-year-old organization, Liz oversees the day-to-day operations with the support of 18 staff. Liz knows all of the principles that comprise the broad and complex maritime community and its legacy that the museum seeks to preserve and share.

**Lester Walker**  
*Budget and Finance Manager,*  
*Multnomah County Health Dept*

Les is responsible for the preparation and submission of a \$160 million annual budget for an organization of ~1,000 FTE (full time equivalent) employees. With over 30 years of experience in accounting and financial management, Les has an abiding interest in history that predates his undergraduate days as a history major, Les has a personal interest in the museum's mission and is eminently qualified to serve as OMM's Treasurer.

# Got Tools? Willing to Donate?

By Jim Spitzer, Wednesday crew volunteer  
Contact: spitzerjames2@gmail.com or 503.381.8972

Led by Ron Youngman, Chair of Vessel Operations, our hardy and handy crew members routinely work on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, and on other days for special projects. From scraping, painting, leak repair, floor installation, clearing floating debris, carpentry, rewiring, pipefitting, to repairing sophisticated mechanical systems, they keep things looking good. Many of our tools and storage/shelving systems are of poor quality and were already well worn when donated 20 years ago. Please consider a tax deductible contribution of good quality used or new tools and storage

systems. Most needed are:

- Lithium battery powered cordless tools, especially a driver/drill set. (Every handyman and pro has these great labor saving systems... the museum desperately needs one!)
- Shop vacuum with attachments
- Fien Multimaster tool or equivalent
- Tool sharpening systems
- Cabinet/shelving systems to secure/store tools
- Adjustable aluminum scaffolding

plank

- Power miter saw and mobile stand
- Label maker
- Garden cart (for moving materials from parking to boat)
- Quick clamps

Please contact me (info above) to ensure that we can use what you can offer.

And, of course, a gift card to Office Depot, Staples, Home Depot, Lowes, or a designated donation will be accepted without question and provide us maximum flexibility.

# The Buzz in OMM Artifacts & Exhibits

Bob Woolsey, OMM Curator  
Ed Wilson, OMM Librarian

Contact: library@oregonmaritimemuseum.org; 503.224.7724

Museum archives are quiet and somewhat dusty, right? Not at OMM, where we have the constant buzz of excitement as we:

*Welcome and train new interns* - They assist with scanning (on a new high quality scanner) and skillfully input negatives from the vast Larry Barber collection. Thanks to the Randall Trust for supporting this work!

*Update equipment on the Steamer PORTLAND* - We finally replaced the old TV with a new HD TV. In addition, two new video display units noticeably improve the visitor experience.

*Support research requests* - We supply information to an author writing a book on the history of the museum; we've shown our resources (even in the vault!) to artists, sculptors, and a local citizen working on public art projects; and we receive regular calls from families inquiring about "stuff" in their attics that just might be a treasure.

*Connect with other archivists* - We participate in local peer group meetings and tours, and the Archives Crawl.

*Improve technical skills* - We upgraded archival software, PastPerfect, and attended a webinar that improves our skills and gives us the basis for improved training plans and criteria for future users. We expect future improvements in Virtual Exhibit to create an interactive museum on the internet.

*Plan future exhibits* - We plan to honor river pilots, commission a special model, and re-engage with local colleges and universities, so that the exhibits are fresh and relevant.

*Manage the collection* - We moved a trailer full of long-unseen items from Ridgefield WA to the Port of Portland, and we are establishing criteria for determining what is museum quality, what are duplicates, and how to properly care for what we own.

Library and archive volunteers are a lively bunch, and their enthusiasm and talents keep the museum moving ahead as we explore and celebrate the past!

New volunteers are always welcome - see contact info above.