

OREGON MARITIME MUSEUM

Oregon Maritime Museum

115 SW Ash Street, Suite 400C

Portland, OR 97204

www.oregonmaritimemuseum.org

WINTER 2012 NEWSLETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS



These events will be posted on our Facebook page; facebook.com/oregonmaritimemuseum.org; or call 503.224.7724 for more information.

OMM is at Booth #113 for the 52nd Annual Portland Boat Show, Portland Expo Center ~ January 11 – 15. Stop by and see us! See separate story in this newsletter (volunteers needed)!

OMM Annual Membership Meeting ~ Thursday, February 9, 6:00pm check in; business meeting at 7:00pm. On Steamer PORTLAND. Official meeting notice and agenda inserted into this newsletter.

Museum Family Saturdays ~ Third Saturday of each month; next dates are: January 21, February 18, and March 17, aboard the Steamer PORTLAND, 11:00am to 4:00pm. The main exhibit space is open free to families. Maritime crafts engage young visitors and families in the rich nautical history of the Pacific Northwest.

Maritime Lecture Series Continues ~ January 8, 3pm. Come and learn about Liberty Ships and the Kaiser Shipyards. The lecture takes place aboard the PORTLAND. \$5.00 suggested donation. We hope to have other lectures in February and March that will cover Pacific Northwest maritime history and the Port of Portland. Speakers and ideas welcome!

Artists aboard the Steamer ~ throughout the spring. In preparation for the May gallery show (see related story in this issue of the newsletter), artists from the Oregon Society of Artists (OSA) and members of OMM will come aboard the steamer to set up easels, and do paintings of the boat and our artifacts.

Volunteer information session ~ January 22 and February 11 – see story in this issue.

OREGON MARITIME MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2012 · PORTLAND, OREGON

Joseph Gale

Joseph Gale: Captain, Governor, Builder of the STAR OF OREGON

Part 1 of 2

by Ed Wilson,
CDR, USN (ret),
Volunteer, OMM Library

Joseph Gale, circa 1845
Provided by Aaron Densley

Joseph Gale (1807-1881) was one of the rugged “mountain men” who formed the backbone of Oregon’s government in the early 1840’s. He grew up on Chesapeake Bay, the son of a sea captain, and learned the ways of a sailor at a young age. In 1828, he went west to work for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, joining a group of 34 other men, including Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, Joe Meek and Robert Newell. In 1836, he married Bear Claws, the daughter of old Chief Joseph (Tuekakas), in a traditional Native American ceremony. She then took the Anglo name Eliza.¹ A natural leader, Gale was elected in 1843 as one of the three-member Executive Committee which formed the executive branch of the Oregon Provisional Government. As its Commander-in-Chief, he formed the first Oregon Militia. Henceforth, he was frequently referred to by friends and the media as “Governor” Gale. A man always seeking opportunity, one of his most amazing feats was organizing and leading a company to build the first keel vessel on the Willamette River – the STAR OF OREGON.

In 1840, livestock in the “Oregon Country” (it was not yet a territory) was closely held

by three entities: Hudson’s Bay Company, managed by chief factor John McLoughlin; the Willamette Mission led by Reverend Jason Lee; and the Oregon Cattle Company, owned by Ewing Young. These three maintained tight control of the livestock, selling the meat only to perpetuate the monopoly. Joseph Gale planned to build a ship and sail it to California, where it would be sold or traded for cattle, and then return to Oregon with the livestock and ranchers to break the “cattle monopoly.”

Until this time, the only ship construction that had taken place in Oregon Country was the assembly of the schooner DOLLY in 1811 (she was a “kit” brought around Cape Horn on John Jacob Astor’s ship TONQUIN and assembled in Astoria), and the schooner VANCOUVER, built completely in Astoria in 1826.²

The building of STAR OF OREGON was described some years later by Gale in a letter to Senator James Nesmith:

“She was forty-eight feet and eight inches on the keel, and fifty-three feet and eight inches overall; that is, from night heads to taffrail, with ten feet and nine inches beam in the widest part, and drew, when in good ballast trim, four feet six inches of water. Her frame was of swamp white oak, her knees were of seasoned red fir roots, her beams and



ILLUS 1. The artist's conception from Lewis & Dryden (1895). Note that the vessel is an "1890's" style rendering, with port lights (these would not have been available in Oregon country in 1840, and would have compromised the strength of a clinker-built hull) and the rig is wrong. Gale states: "... she had no topsails, but simply foresail, mainsail, gib and flying gib. Her spars were made of the straight fir sticks and consisted of... bowsprit and flying jibboom." The rig in this illustration has topsails, and neither flying jib nor jibboom. The U.S. Flag would have been properly carried on peak of the main gaff, not at the truck of the mainmast (Gale was a proper sailor!).



ILLUS 2. A much better rendering of the STAR OF OREGON, from reference 1, courtesy of Aaron Densley. Note that the sails, jibboom, are correct per the Nesmith letter, and she is "of the Baltimore clipper model." Even the placement of the ensign (U.S. flag) is correct.

Joseph Gale, cont.

*carlins were of seasoned red fir timber. She was clinker built and was of the Baltimore clipper model. She was planked with clear cedar planks dressed to a plump one and one-fourth inches, which was spiked to every rib with a wrought-iron spike one-half inch square, driven through a three-eighth hole and clinched on the inner side; her timbers standing nine inches apart, a nail one-fourth inch was driven between each timber. Her deck was double, first a three-fourth board and over which, so to break joints, a plank of one and one-fourth inches, which obviated the necessity of pitch and rendered her deck perfectly watertight. She was what is generally called fore and after; that is, she had no topsails, but simply foresail, mainsail, gib and flying gib. Her spars were made of the straight fir sticks and consisted of foremast, fore topmast, mainmast and main topmast, bowsprit and flying jibboom; thus equipped and painted black, with a small white ribbon running from stem to stern, she was one of the handsomest little crafts that ever sat upon the water."*³

Gale formed a company in the spring of 1840 which consisted of John Canan, Ralph Kilbourne, Pleasant Armstrong, Henry Woods, George Davis and Jacob Green, to build the ship, which they named STAR OF OREGON. Felix Hathaway, a capable ship's carpenter, was employed by their company to lay down the lines and supervise construction. Thomas J. Hubbard, the blacksmith at the Willamette Mission, did the ironwork. This task would likely have included production of the nails and roves to clinch the hull planks, manufacture of bolts for the keel, knees and other fittings.

Construction began in earnest on the eastern end of Swan Island in the autumn of 1840. Gale describes obtaining and roughing the timber for the keel "on Sauvie's Island, i.e., Wapato Island." The work progressed rapidly "notwithstanding

the opposition of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been anticipated – in fact, no piece of work ever met with more discouraging prospects."⁴

There was an animated discussion among the Canadians in the court at Fort Vancouver.

"What is it, Baptiste?" inquired Dr. McLoughlin.

"Begosh! Dat w'at we not know, Dogtor. Dey say hit be for ferry-boat, but Antoine, 'ere sir, 'e tink hit for be keel of a schooner."

"What looks like the keel of a schooner?" inquired the doctor.

"Dat boat, w'at de Hamericans buil' hon de islan'. Dey 'ave borrow w'ip-saw an' tools on de mission. Dey buy hall hour hol' Dutch 'arness-rope an' want more."

"Who are they?" persisted the doctor, with sudden interest.

"Josef Gal, 'e ees de boss. Felix 'At'way, 'e ees de 'ead builiter. Dere be five hall togedder."

*"Joseph Gale! Hathaway! Joseph Gale! Hathaway!" exclaimed the doctor, excitedly turning toward the office where the head clerk sat. "The very men! The very men! They were mad because we had a monopoly on cattle. They tried to get passage on the CADBORO to buy cattle in California. I refused to let them go, but offered to help them settle. They appeared to agree and got supplies. Let me see, McTavish, let me see what Gale and Hathaway have bought."*⁵

Although this account by Eva Emery Dye is historical fiction, it paints an accurate picture of the situation with the cattle monopoly, and the conflict that would continue between Hudson's Bay Company and the STAR OF OREGON project.

This story will continue in the next OMM newsletter. Learn what became of the STAR OF OREGON, and where to find a Portland-area memorial to the ship.

1. Densley, L.C. & Densley, A. G. (2010) *Governor Joseph Gale and His Indian First Lady*. Baker City, OR: Snake River Secrets
2. Wright, E.W., ed., (1895), *Lewis and Dryden's Marine History of the Northwest*. Portland, OR: Lewis and Dryden
3. Letter from Joseph Gale to Senator J.W. Nesmith, chronicled later in *The Oregonian*, December 13, 1891.
4. Gale/Nesmith Letter, continued.
5. Dye, E. E. (1900), *McLoughlin and Old Oregon*. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.



DID YOU SEE US AT THESE EVENTS?

Our calendar fills up! Here are some fun things we've been up to, and hope to do again in 2012. Note the private party rental on Dec 8; you could do the same – see Rent the Steamer, in this newsletter.

- Museum Family Saturday – Signal flag making, Sept 17
- Steamer travelled to Swan Island, Industry & Art Show, Sept 24 and 25
- Museum Family Saturday – Sound powered telephones, Oct 15
- Paddleboats on the River; Lecture Series #1, Steamer PORTLAND, Nov 6
- Docking training for new PORTLAND captains – Nov 12
- Museum Family Saturday – Making charts of Portland, Nov 26
- River Stories; Lecture Series #2, Steamer PORTLAND, Dec 4
- Riverside Yacht Club private party to view Christmas Ships, Dec 8
- Museum Family Saturday – Sailboat ornament making, Dec 17
- Member Thank You Party/Christmas Ships viewing and cookie swap, Dec 18

Tour OMM on the Web!

www.oregonmaritimemuseum.org

As of Friday, December 30, the OMM web site was refreshed. Every page has been given a thorough going-over, and links have been double- and triple-checked. You may need to refresh your bookmarks to see the 2012 version. New features: a "Donate" button (not for membership payments – yet!); the addition of a Links page; and the truly amazing panoramic photos which allow you to tour the inside of the steamer from your office chair. (Hint: it's on the Visit page). The panos, as we call them, were a gift to OMM from the

photographer, Bruce Ecker. This feature gives OMM a chance to show just why we love volunteering for the museum – we are so very proud of all the work done to make the Steamer PORTLAND shine!

Thanks to Bob Woolsey, now OMM Librarian, and soon to be our Curator, for dogging this project to fruition. Bob worked closely with other board members and staff, and our web designer, James Turner. We already have a punch list for further improvements, but let's enjoy these significant upgrades, with thanks to all!

Oregon Maritime Museum mission:

To provide, operate and maintain facilities dedicated to the collection, preservation and public display of marine objects; to collect and preserve maritime records for scholarly public use; to provide public meeting opportunities for maritime interpretation and education; and to encourage interest in the past, present and future maritime heritage of Oregon and the Columbia River Basin.

Officers of the Board:

- Arlen Cole, President
- Susan Spitzer, Vice President
- Dan Butler, Secretary
- Jim Thornburg, Treasurer

Trustees of the Board

- Dave Dorsey
- Bill Fishback
- Chris Finks
- Chuck Kellogg
- J.D. Kiggins
- Dave Larson
- John Murdock
- Rob Rich
- Art Riedel
- Dean Runyan, Fund Development
- Jack Taylor, Honorary Trustee
- Jim Townley, Jr.
- Tucker Wachsmuth, Artifacts & Exhibits
- Bob Woolsey, Library
- Dan Yates
- Ron Youngman, Vessels Ops & Maintenance

Staff

- Gloria Holman, Volunteer Coordinator
- Caitlin Shrigley, Outreach Program Manager
- Eric Spitzer, Bookkeeper



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Featured Volunteer: Kyle Nasman, Steam Fan

By John Murdoch, OMM Volunteer

OMM is very fortunate to have several young and talented volunteers aboard. Some are home schooled high schoolers, and their flexible class schedules allow them to volunteer midweek; others specialize in a weekend schedule. When a young person confidently leads a tour of the Steamer PORTLAND, visitors seem to pay extra attention. It's a great way for OMM to connect with families. We are proud of all of them, and thank them for their service.

Kyle Nasman, now age 16, is one of our most seasoned young volunteers. He began helping out in the steamer's engine room when he was just 13. Kyle lives with his parents and a younger sister in south Portland, where he attends high school. His hobbies are metal working and bicycling, which he has neatly combined by making a copper fender for his bicycle.

Kyle became acquainted with the Steamer PORTLAND when he and his dad were passengers on the ill-fated June 2008 trip to Cascade Locks. He lends a willing hand where needed, sometimes on deck with Don Chalmers, or in the engine room with Bill Fishback. During

steam ups, he can usually be spotted with an oil can in hand, keeping a careful eye on oversized moving parts that might need a bit of extra lubrication. Kyle is also a docent and helps out with visitor tours. A dedicated steam buff, Kyle also volunteers with the Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (Locomotive #4449). This year, Kyle organized a mini fundraising effort to upgrade the holiday lights for the Steamer PORTLAND. He thought we needed to really shine, and wanted to upgrade to LED lights; and others who agreed donated some extra strands and cash to help him along. He doubled the number of lights strung on the rails and pilot house, and the steamer looked especially welcoming during recent Christmas Ships parties.

Kyle's long range plans include a career in mechanical engineering. More immediately, he hopes to see the Steamer PORTLAND back in action soon.

Kyle is aboard most Saturdays. Watch for a copper-fendered bike hitched to a railing on the main deck of the steamer. Then keep an eye out for a nimble young man with an oil can in his hand! Thank you, Kyle!

Volunteers – Come on Down for Networking

Here is an opportunity for OMM volunteers to swap stories and ideas, get acquainted with fellow volunteers, and to hear from the museum's officers and committee chairs about what's new and what's on the horizon.

Bob Hrdlicka, experienced OMM Board member and former Education Chair, will lead two sessions for volunteers. You only need to attend one! Both sessions are on the Steamer PORTLAND and snacks will be provided.

Sunday, January 22, 2012 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Saturday, February 11, 2012 – 1:00pm – 2:30pm

All volunteers – crew, docents, library assistants and researchers – are strongly encouraged to attend. This is a great chance to network with the other wonderful people who do so much to support the museum.

Please let us know which date you will attend. Contact Gloria Holman at 503.224.0054, or email: volunteer@oregonmaritimemuseum.org.

President's Letter and 2011 Year in Review

Arlen Cole, President of the Board

Do you ever watch a TV show where the lead characters are talking fast while striding down a hallway, and at the same time, countless other characters are bustling about, and you think: "No real workplace is that busy all the time!" Well, the Oregon Maritime Museum is a reality show, and we seem to be that busy every day! Just try to get a word in edgewise during a Wednesday lunch "meeting" in the galley of the Steamer PORTLAND! The doors open and close as people drop in; docents pass by outside with a tour group; and someone is raiding the refrigerator for leftover goodies – all while some Board members and volunteers crowd the galley and discuss the upcoming board meeting, how to recruit more volunteers, or when the remodel of the former library space will be complete so that future meetings can be held in our new conference room. OMM doesn't just hum – it buzzes with activity.

Thanks to dedicated staff and volunteers, the work of our small maritime museum moves ahead, sometimes at a dizzying pace. Thanks to donors, visitors and supporters at all levels, we are Portland's landmark for the very important business of sharing the maritime heritage of this region.

2011 was a year of many challenges, changes and progress. I don't want to paint too rosy a picture of how hard it is to attain the successes we see every day. We take nothing for granted, and we recognize that without an extra effort, 2012 will be one of our most challenging years. We are laying the groundwork for the next 12 months, and the next decade. It is our personal mission to honor the work of those who formed OMM, 31 years ago.

We have much to be proud of. Following is a summary of committee reports for 2011:

ADMINISTRATION AND THE BOARD

- Reconfigured and expanded Ash Street offices for improved administration & library use.
- Additional workstations installed, and improved networking strengthens the

museum's data management, organization and communications, and helps attract volunteers.

- Problem solving at all levels streamlined due to more hands-on Board participation.

ARTIFACTS & EXHIBITS

- Completed re-mounting exhibits in main salon so that visitors better grasp the flow of local maritime history.
- Set a high level of integrity for care and storage of museum holdings, and communicated to board members, staff and volunteers.

EDUCATION (AND OUTREACH)

- Consistent, high quality Museum Family Saturday programs attract new visitors.
- Promoting education mission through lecture series and participating in off-site events at Port of Portland, Portland Public Schools, Portland Boat Show, etc.
- Networking with Maritime Heritage Coalition to broaden OMM's outreach and community involvement.

FUND DEVELOPMENT

- Grant writing activity stepped up; already receiving grant awards for 2012 events.
- Acknowledging fundraising challenges for 2012; business plan in the works.

MEMBERSHIP

- Completed transition to using Past Perfect software for member tracking, reporting, and streamlined member correspondence.
- Cooperative relationships with staff and volunteers to implement system changes.
- Organized two successful and fun member thank-you events.

PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Quarterly newsletter returns in new format; email option offered.
- Upgraded and enhanced the museum web site; using Facebook page to reach public.
- Updated media contact lists, including social media; updated listings and involvement with key travel partners and web listings.

LIBRARY

- Training volunteers to expand utilization of the features of Past Perfect software.

- All current donations have been put into the system correctly by volunteers.
- Significant effort to move materials to and from museum vault and/or Steamer PORTLAND for better access to volunteers and public.

MUSEUM STORE

- Complete rearrangement of store displays improves visitor flow and encourages shopping.
- Transitioned to Point-of-Sale system to process sales, input member receipts and track volunteer hours.
- Oversees upkeep of main deck spaces to a high standard; great first impression for visitors from all over the world.

VESSEL OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

- Steamer PORTLAND has received significant replacement/overhauls in key systems.
- Volunteers offer valuable support to all levels of the operation, from toilet repairs to building bookcases in museum store, to laying new flooring in former library.
- Improved likelihood of taking the steamer upriver; training new captains.

VOLUNTEERS

- Recruiting, training and retaining volunteers is still a challenge; developing a plan to improve recruitment for 2012. Full reports from each committee will be available at the Annual Membership meeting on Thursday, February 9. The official meeting notice and agenda for this meeting is enclosed with this newsletter. One of our agenda items is certain to be: what is the future of the Oregon Maritime Museum? From needing new signboards at our main gate, to considerations for longer hours in the summer, and a possible raise in admission fees, we will have a busy meeting. We hope you will be there to ask your questions – and to help us find answers that will help us celebrate our 32nd year, and another 32 more.

The members of the Board join me in thanking you all for your support this year – it is a privilege to be part of this museum. Happy New Year to one and all!



Get Your Hands Dirty: Build a Boat!

Caitlin Shrigley, OMM Outreach Program Manager

Last summer, ten teams built ten rowboats in two days during the Wooden Boat Festival. Do you think your family or group of friends could do the same?

This July, 12 teams will begin transforming flat pieces of wood from RiversWest Small Craft Center kits into 12 river-worthy vessels. Less than 48 hours later, cheering crowds will watch as the boats are launched from the docks at the Willamette Sailing Club.

Families and groups who participate in the Wooden Boat Festival's Boat Build come away from the event with a boat; and they also take away memories for a lifetime. This may be the first time participants use wood working tools. Over the weekend they will learn how to use those tools, discover how boats are built, and identify parts of boats that many sailors rarely see. Boat building helps individuals gain confidence working with their hands, and brings the satisfaction of achieving the lofty goal of finishing a boat that's ready to launch - and with just a weekend of effort. Work begins on Saturday, July 7.

The Wooden Boat Festival opens to the public at Willamette Sailing Club on Sunday, July 8. Visitors are invited to watch the teams at work, ride on small sailboats, and attend a showing of beautiful, locally owned, antique and classic wooden boats. There will also be live music, food, a beer garden, and children's crafts.

DATE: Sunday, July 8, 2012

TIME: 12 - 6:00pm

WHERE: Willamette Sailing Club
6336 SW Beaver Avenue
Portland, OR 97239

ADMISSION: Free

To learn more about building a boat, or to sign up to join a boat building team, offer financial support, or for any other details, please visit www.WoodenBoatFestival.com, or call 503.246.5345. The Portland Wooden Boat Festival is organized by Willamette Sailing Club, RiversWest Small Craft Center, and the Oregon Maritime Museum.

OMM will be at the Boat Show

January 11-15

The 52nd Annual Portland Boat Show is coming soon to the Portland Expo Center. OMM has been invited to participate, and we will be at Booth #113. We love being part of this event, so we can give the public a chance to learn more about our very special boat, and promote maritime history. We'll have informational materials, and a few interesting, hands-on items for everyone.

Volunteers! If you have a few hours, there are slots available for you to help staff the booth. Contact Susan Spitzer at info@oregonmaritimemuseum.org, or call 503.224.7724. You'll have plenty of time to do some boat shopping, too!

Please go to the Portland Boat Show's web site for hours, directions and to download a discount coupon for admission: <http://www.otshows.com/pbs/>

Two Nautical Art Shows Coming in May

"The Great Nautical Art Show" is coming May 2012 to the Oregon Maritime Museum (OMM) and to the Oregon Society of Artists (OSA) Gallery. The two organizations have spent months planning and producing two upcoming nautical art shows.

During the summer and fall of 2011, area artists from OSA set up easels on the Steamer PORTLAND's decks, to capture the historic tug and its environs on canvas. It was inspiring to watch the progress of the artworks, use of different media, and to offer hot cocoa to a couple of artists who braved a particularly blustery fall day that threatened to blow paints and easels into the Willamette. OSA artists continue to come on board to start new works or put finishing touches on their projects.

OSA's newest nautical paintings will be featured in the mutual art show in two locations, starting at OMM the first weekend,

and moving the next weekend to the OSA Gallery. At the OMM location, additional art and artifacts will also be available for viewing. The dates and times are:

- Sunday, May 6, 1:00 to 4:00 pm, on the Steamer PORTLAND
- Sunday, May 13, 1:00 to 4:00pm, at the OSA Gallery, 2185 Southwest Park Place
- Admission: \$10.00 per adult; discounts for OMM members

If you are an OMM member and would like to submit nautical artwork to the show, please email Caitlin at programs@oregonmaritimemuseum.org for paintout dates and submission deadlines. Art of all media are encouraged — ship models, paintings, photography, etc. For more information, call 503. 224. 7724 or email programs@oregonmaritimemuseum.org.

For information on OSA: 503.228.0706; <http://www.oregonsocietyofartists.com/>.



Want to bring a church group, Cub Scout group, your business meeting or event, or your family for a special meeting or celebration?

The Steamer PORTLAND can be rented during the day or evening (at the dock) for reasonable rates. Buffets can suit groups up to 100; seated dining can suit groups under 40. Details: 503.224.0054 or events@oregonmaritimemuseum.org.

Rent the Steamer PORTLAND!

OREGON MARITIME MUSEUM

