

# THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION

OLD CITY HALL, 524 WEST FOURTH AVENUE, SUITE 203, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501, TELEPHONE (907) 274-2311

MARCH 1989

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## SHIPWRECK PRESERVATION: AN ISSUE FOR ALASKA

### ALASKA'S ARCTIC SHIPWRECKS

By William S. Hanable, President, Alaska Historical Society

National and international news recently reported attempts to rescue two whales from the ice in which they were trapped off Alaska's Arctic Coast. There is some irony in this. Nearly a century ago efforts were underway to rescue the crews of whale-hunting ships which were trapped in the ice off that same Arctic Coast.

The whales recently were freed, and the crews a century ago were aided, but the ships remained behind to be crushed by the ice and sunk. Nearly one-hundred years later, those shipwrecks are either submerged cultural resources or a treasure-hunter's bonanza.

Commercial whaling began in the Arctic in 1848 when the bark *Superior* sailed through Bering Strait and discovered bowhead whales there. During the summer of 1850, 200 whaleships sailed in Arctic waters, taking over 1700 whales. The pursuit would continue for another 50 years, killing 20,000 of an estimated 30,000 total bowhead whale population.

In the 1860s, natural hazards such as ice claimed nine Arctic whaleships. In the 1870s, 57 Arctic whaleships were lost. Over 30 were abandoned to the ice in 1871 alone. Additional ships were lost in the 1880s. In 1897, eight more, including *Orca*, were trapped in the ice and four sank.

The large number of shipwrecks left by the commercial whaling industry in the Arctic, the preservative quality of Arctic waters, and the efficiency of modern detection devices combine to make an exciting potential for marine archeologists interested in the technology of the 19th Century and for treasure hunters, as well.

Until 1988, remoteness and severe conditions had discouraged investigation of the Arctic shipwrecks. However, a recent project to salvage the steamwhaler *Orca* has raised questions regarding the public interest in these resources.

As the situation in the Arctic now stands, those wrecks lying within the three-mile limit fall under jurisdiction of the State of Alaska and are, by reason of the new Abandoned Shipwreck Act, the property of the state. Shipwrecks lying outside the three-mile limit are subject to admiralty law principles, under which except for U.S. warships and public vessels, the vessels are treated according to a "finders keepers" rule.

*Orca*, and many of its companion vessels, are believed to lie outside the three-mile limit. Thus, whoever finds one of them can probably keep the wreck and its cargo. In the case of *Orca*, this prospective right has been traded to public agencies for financial assistance to locate the wreck.

(continued, page 3)

### HISTORIC SHIPWRECK PRESERVATION -- A STATE PERSPECTIVE

By Judith Bittner, State Historic Preservation Officer

The Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987 established that historic shipwrecks within state waters are public property, resolving the conflicting claims of Admiralty laws of salvage and find and state land management laws.

The shipwreck law gives states title to historically significant shipwrecks which located on their submerged lands and directs states to provide public access, protect and preserve significant underwater sites, and encourage research and conservation. Specific guidelines will be developed by the National Park Service to assist states in the management and protection of historic shipwrecks.

Shipwrecks on tidelands and submerged lands within the State of Alaska are already protected under the Alaska Historic Preservation Act (AHPA) (A.S. 41.35), which provides for preservation and protection of the state's historic, prehistoric and archeological resources. While the Division of Land and Water Management is the managing agency, the AHPA provides policy for historic resources on submerged lands.

The Office of History and Archaeology (OHA), Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, assists land managers in implementing the AHPA. One of its tools is a statewide inventory of historic sites which is used to determine whether federal or state projects will affect cultural resources. Through OHA's survey and inventory grant program, an archival study to survey historic shipwrecks was funded in 1983. Creating an inventory of historic shipwrecks was an important first step in preservation planning. However, accurate location information is available for only a few shipwrecks. A severe cutback in funding has hindered further efforts to survey historic shipwrecks.

A nonrenewable resource, historic shipwrecks must be treated with care. Shipwrecks are time capsules which yield important information on ways of life, activities, and technologies of the past. Recovery of any portion of a historic shipwreck requires a permit from OHA to ensure that basic scientific standards are met, that information is properly recorded during recovery, and that artifacts receive adequate conservation care. To receive a permit, applicants need to meet certain professional qualifications, have a research design, and serve the public good. Material recovered from the site belongs to the state.

Shipwreck sites in state waters will provide future opportunities for underwater marine parks. Cooperative efforts between state agencies and recreational dive groups for interpretation and protection of sites are likely to be explored as the state addresses the management and recreational use of its shipwrecks.

# FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## OCEAN RESEARCH CENTER OF THE ARCTIC AND "PROJECT ORCA"

By Donna Lane, Office of History and Archeology

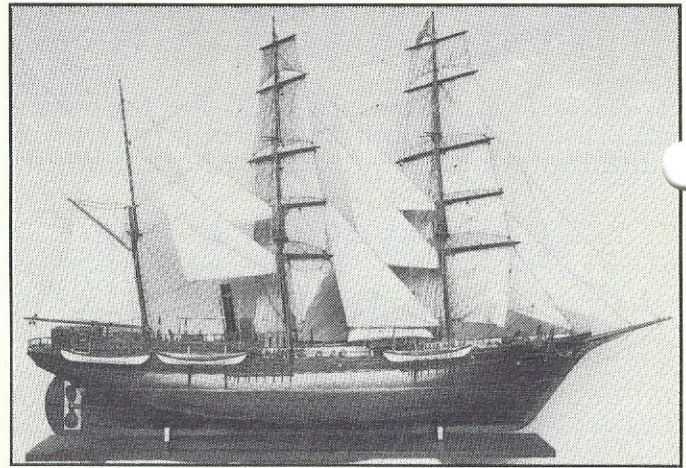
In 1985, former U. S. Coast Guard search and rescue diver Dan Shirey organized the Ocean Research Center of the Arctic (ORCA) to identify and recover historic shipwrecks in Arctic waters. Over the past three years ORCA has researched over forty major shipwrecks, targeting for its first recovery project the steam whaler *Orca* which sank off Point Franklin in the Chukchi Sea in 1897.

With the support of the Explorers Club and a number of maritime interest groups, ORCA planned a full scale search for the ship in the summer of 1987. When shore-hugging pack ice made this impossible, a shoreline search was conducted which located a large section of hull believed to be from the 1871 whaling fleet. Wood and metal artifacts were tested and found to be in sound condition compared to samples from ships of about the same period but recovered in warmer waters. Because the cold temperature of arctic waters is believed to aid artifact preservation, the group expects to find *Orca* in an equally well-preserved state.

In 1988, ORCA solicited the support of state and local entities to continue the project and implement a plan for the ultimate disposition of the vessel and its artifacts. The State of Alaska, Municipality of Anchorage, North Slope Borough and Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau signed an agreement with ORCA to provide financial and other assistance in exchange for salvage rights to the vessel and its contents, should the *Orca* be found outside state waters. The State Legislature provided \$50,000 to help locate the ship.

The group got a late start last season, and deep water exploration was again limited by harsh weather. Near-shore investigations, however, resulted in location of two new wreck sites.

ORCA will continue the project this summer. Once the shipwreck is located, the site will be surveyed and photographed. Plans for the recovery of *Orca* include



Courtesy of the Anchorage Museum of History and Art

*Orca* was the largest steam whaler constructed and the flagship of the Arctic fleet. The 628 ton vessel was built in 1882 at San Francisco especially for the whaling trade. A three-masted bark, *Orca* was 177'x32.5'x18.9' with 3/4" iron plates sheathing her forward hull to provide ice breaking capabilities and a unique internal tryworks system. Most whaling ships of the era had large sand pits located above deck where fires could be built and steel pots placed over them for boiling whale blubber down to oil, which was then poured into wooden barrels and stored below deck. *Orca's* tryworks were built into her hull. Blubber was placed in a large steel tank which was heated by steam; the rendered oil was transferred through pipes to a steel holding tank for cooling and storage. This saved considerable time and space aboard ship as well as removing the danger of open fires. *Orca* made 15 voyages to the Arctic before being crushed between ice floes in September of 1897, 60 miles southwest of Barrow.

dredging beneath the vessel, attaching large slings to its frame and lifting it with barges. The ship itself is to be displayed in Anchorage and representative artifacts displayed in Barrow.

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## SHIPWRECK PRESERVATION COSTS "ASTRONOMICAL"

By William S. Hanable

National maritime preservation experts, polled in a February 1989 telephone survey, almost unanimously reported shipwreck preservation costs to be "astronomical." Few could give more precise planning figures, although some offered a rule-of-thumb and others cited costs for specific projects. Overall, the picture was dismal, whether on an international or national basis.

The experts' rule-of-thumb is that initial preservation costs for a shipwreck are 15 to 20 times the cost of raising the wreck from underwater. Thus if the costs of raising a vessel are estimated at \$2.5 million, initial preservation costs are estimated at \$37.5 to \$50 million. Prerequisites for preservation include consistent control of humidity and temperature, while conservation treatments for the various fabrics such as copper, iron, and wood found in a ship are often mutually destructive.

Internationally, two of the most well-known shipwreck preservation projects are in Sweden and in England. The *Wasa*, a 17th century warship sank in Stockholm harbor in 1928 and was raised in 1961. The *Mary Rose*, a 16th century English warship sank in 1545 and was raised in 1970.

Preservation efforts for each of these vessels have been well-funded by national governments, cost millions, and are not yet complete. Nearly 30 years after the raising of the *Wasa*, preservationists are still looking forward to construction of the controlled-environment building that may arrest further deterioration of the ship although over \$20 million has been on preservation efforts to date.

Nationally, there have been a number of attempts to raise, preserve, and display shipwrecked vessels. These include an 1840s schooner, the *Alvin Clark*, recovered from the Great Lakes and several Civil War gunboats found in the South.

The *Alvin Clark* was raised by private efforts in the 1960s and offered as a tourist attraction until the 1980s. Income from the tourist business never matched the cost of upkeep. After unsuccessful attempts to transfer ownership to government agencies, the owner finally burned the vessel in the late 1980s.

The *USS Cairo*, a Civil War ironclad sunk in 1863 on the Yazoo River in Mississippi, was raised in the 1960s. The raising itself severely damaged the vessel. Ten years followed during which the *Cairo* languished at the Ingalls shipyards in Pascagoula, Mississippi. The costs of these private and state preservation efforts are unknown. In 1977, the National Park Service acquired the *Cairo*. Congress provided \$7 million for preservation and construction of a museum to house artifacts. Another decade later, only 30 percent of the original fabric of the vessel is left. Displayed at Vicksburg National Military

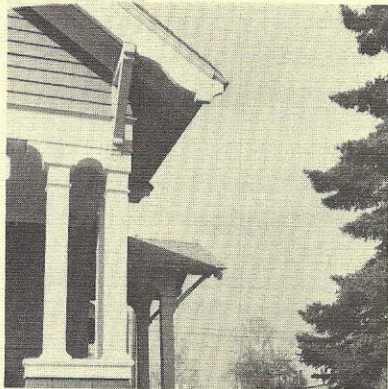
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# THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION

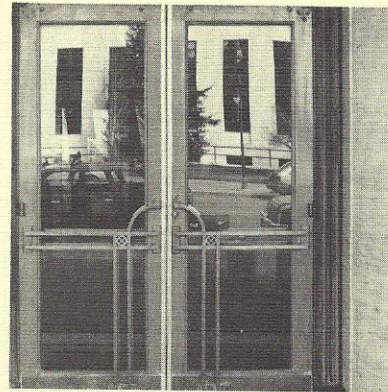
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## Treasure Hunt

An architectural treasure hunt was Anchorage's way of celebrating National Historic Preservation Week in May. Sixteen photographs published in the Anchorage Daily News led contestants on a merry chase in the downtown area. Winners had to correctly locate the 16 architectural details. Four sample photos are shown here. The hunt was sponsored by the Anchorage Daily News, AAHP and Anchorage Historic Properties.



Leopold David House



Fourth Avenue Theater

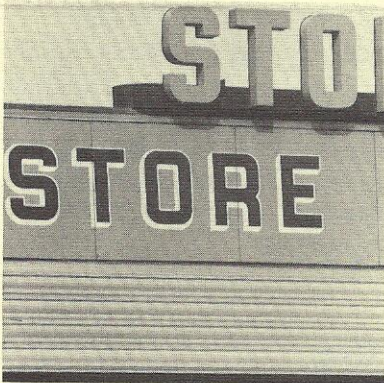
## Hope and Sunrise Celebrate Gold Discovery

The 100th anniversary of the discovery of gold in the Hope-Sunrise area of southcentral Alaska was observed in July with a three-day celebration in Hope.

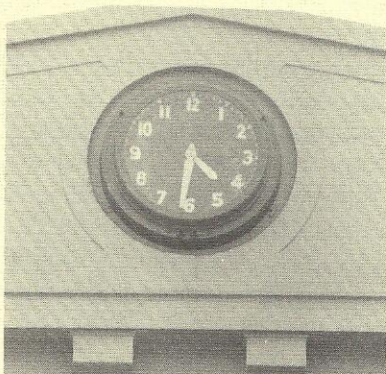
Several hundred people showed up for festivities that included square dancing in the city's social hall—built in 1903, a miner's triathlon and a Robert Service reading contest.

One of the weekend's highlights occurred when a helicopter arrived and deposited an old horse-drawn grader in the center of town. The equipment was hauled from Gull Rock, a logging community that supplied railroad ties during construction of the Alaska Railroad.

The townsite of Hope is the site of two buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.



Rexall Store



City Hall

## Money Is Topic of September Workshop

Interested in fixing up some of the old buildings in your town as tourist attractions but don't have any money? Think about attending "Fund Raising for Historic Preservation Organizations" in Anchorage on Sept. 16 and 17.

Learn how to raise funds from an expert. For just \$50, your organization can receive an hour of advice from consultant John M. Carter Jr. Carter, who has a broad background in fund raising and grantsmanship, currently lists as clients the University of Alaska, University of Washington—College of Engineering, Lewis and Clark College, and Gemological Institute of America. He is senior vice president and director of Brakeley, John Price Jones Inc. of Newport Beach, Calif. His firm is a founding member of the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel.

Carter has scheduled 10 one-hour periods for individual consultations, so sign up before all the slots are filled.

# FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

## Kenai Church Icons Counted

A massive project aimed at eventually preserving most of Alaska's historic Russian Orthodox churches and icons got off to a start last summer with a complete inventory of the Church of the Holy Assumption in Kenai.

A six-member inventory team surveyed all the church's furnishings, photographed them, made a list of all old liturgical books, and translated from Russian an 1898 inventory. Members of the team included the reverends Paul Mercuriaf and Macarius Targonsky. The format used for the inventory was developed by the U.S. National Park Service.

Scattered throughout Alaska are more than 100 parish churches and chapels, many in tiny villages with less than a hundred residents. Concerned for the preservation of this remarkable legacy of the Russians' sojourn in Alaska, a group of churchmen and other interested people formed the Icon Preservation Task Force in 1986.

This year's humble beginnings are a stepping stone to an ambitious preservation project that includes five National Historic Landmark churches and 29 churches on the National Register. All in all, the task force has identified 48 churches that merit inclusion in the future inventory. A complete inventory would probably cost upwards of \$500,000, according to Barbara Sweetland Smith, a member of the task force and principal investigator for the pilot study.

In addition to Smith, Mercuriaf and Targonsky, the inventory team consisted of Patrick MacKnight, National Park Service; Barry McWayne, University of Alaska Museum and Jerri Clark, a volunteer.

ERA Aviation, MarkAir and Southcentral Air provided free travel for conference participants.

## Museums Alaska Opens Office

Museums Alaska, the statewide museum organization, has opened a headquarters office. The association has contracted with Patricia Oakes to act as executive director, operate the office, and edit a newsletter. The address and telephone number are:

Patricia Oakes  
P.O. Box 30009  
Central, Alaska 99793  
(907) 520-5227

## New and Renewing Members

Glenn Bacon, Fairbanks	Karen Hanson Pitchner,
Louetta (Ward) Brittain,	Ketchikan
Sequim, Wash.	Eugene G. Roguszka,
Robert C. Ely, Anchorage	Anchorage
Charles Hawkes,	John Sandor, Juneau
Anchorage	Skagway News Depot,
Sandra Johnson,	Skagway
Anchorage	Barbara and Floyd Smith,
Janet McCabe, Anchorage	Anchorage
Ted and Claire Pease,	Katherine M. Weaver,
Anchorage	Anchorage

## Alaska Magazine Announces Interns Sponsors

Projects in Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan, the Mat-Su Borough and Valdez were selected for this summer's Alaska magazine intern program.

Now in its third year, the intern program supports 12-week summer internships that actively promote preservation of Alaska's vast cultural heritage.

In Fairbanks at Creamer's Wildlife Refuge, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is sponsoring intern Robin Lewis, a graduate student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Lewis is doing research for a visitor brochure and an interpretive photo display at a new farmhouse-visitor center being developed at the 1,758-acre refuge, formerly Creamer's Dairy.

At the Mat-Su Borough, Becky Kersey is working on the design, writing and layout of a historic driving-tour brochure. A full-time student majoring in journalism and photography at the University of Alaska Anchorage, Kersey lives in Wasilla.

The City of Juneau is being assisted by intern Katherine Hocker in preservation efforts at the historic Last Chance Basin, a gold-mining district recently nominated to the National Register. Hocker, a Harvard University student and Juneau resident, is researching and developing 25 plaques/signs for historic structures. She also is accessioning objects and artifacts to the City Museum and hosting openings at the Mining Interpretive Center.

Intern Tamsin Stone, a University of Montana architecture student from Ester, Alaska, is indexing an 18,000-photo collection for the City of Ketchikan Museum Department. She will compile a street-by-street guide to the photos.

The city of Valdez is trying to preserve its past with a City Museum exhibit dedicated to the history of Valdez from 1898 to 1965. Intern Mary Bottge, a resident of Juneau and an art history major at the University of Oregon, is locating, identifying and cataloging historic Valdez photographs, many of which exist in the original form of plate glass negatives. Bottge's work will result in a photo archive database.

## Board Meeting

AAHP board of directors met at Cynthia Toohey's Crow Creek Mine on July 23.

Treasurer Rolfe Buzzell reported that total assets of AAHP are \$5,099.22.

Board member Jerry Strang turned over \$818 he collected for selling pull tabs for the association at his historic Gakona Lodge.

The Kenai Historical Society is selling a cook book that contains almost 500 recipes collected from all over the Kenai Peninsula. A photo of the Cooper Landing Post Office—on the National Register—is on the cover, and sketches in the book are by Olivia Schemanski. The book has a glossy cover, is in a ring binder, and can be purchased for \$8.00, plus \$1.50 for postage, from Mona Painter, P.O. Box 711, Cooper Landing, Alaska 99572.

Following the short meeting, members and their families and guests enjoyed a potluck in board member Toohey's front yard.

# THE ALASKA ASSOCIATION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

presents  
A Workshop On

## FUND RAISING FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

Friday and Saturday, September 16-17, 1988

Alaska Public Lands Information Center, Old Federal Building  
4th and F Streets, Anchorage, Alaska

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• HISTORIC PRESERVATION SPEAKERS • INDIVIDUAL FUND RAISING WORK SESSIONS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION • LUNCHEON PROGRAM • WALKING TOURS OF HISTORIC ANCHORAGE • NATIONAL TRUST • ALASKA INTERN PROGRAM •

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### AGENDA

#### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

*Conference Room, APLIC*

8:00 Registration; Coffee, juice, and pastries

*Auditorium, APLIC*

9:00 Welcome, Eric Wallace (Master of Ceremonies)  
Introductions, Charles Hawkes, AAHP Board Chairman

9:10 Jack Walter, President, National Trust for Historic Preservation;  
Topic: "Fund Raising—A National Perspective"

10:00 Break

10:15 John M. Carter, Jr., Senior Vice President and Director, Brakely, John Price Jones Inc.

12:00 Lunch at Tea Leaf Restaurant, 313 E Street  
Kathy Burns, Western Regional Director of the National Trust, will speak on the Alaska Intern Program; slides

*Auditorium, APLIC*

1:30 Panel on Fund Raising: Representatives of Alaska, by Janet Matheson, historic preservation organizations and John Carter. Janet McCabe, moderator.

3:00 *Concurrent events:* (A) One-hour individual sessions for your group with John Carter and historic preservation organizations in APLIC conference room; or (B) Walking tour of historic downtown sites by Anchorage Historic Properties (start at Old City Hall, 524 W. 4th Avenue)

4:30-6:00 "Wine Down" at Oscar Anderson Historic House Museum, 420 M Street

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

*Conference Room, APLIC*

9:00 One-hour individual sessions with John Carter and historic preservation organizations

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### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

General sessions and activities—\$15 (\$20.00 at the door); \$7.50—Buffet Luncheon. Individual fund raising consultations for your group—\$50.00. These will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis with priority given to historic preservation groups. Long-term parking is available at lots at 3rd and F (\$4/day) and 3rd and E (\$5/day).

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### AAHP WORKSHOP ON FUND RAISING

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Registration      \_\_\_\_\_ \$7.50 Lunch      \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Individual session

Please make checks payable to AAHP, c/o Rolfe Buzzell, 3308 Doris Street, Anchorage, AK 99517. Pre-registration through 9/12 only.

## MEMBERSHIP

Donations to AAHP are tax deductible, as allowable under IRS regulations.

- |   |       |  |         |
|---|-------|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual . . . . .   | \$ 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Donor . . . . .                 | \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family . . . . .       | \$ 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit Library . . . . .    | \$ 15   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate . . . . .    | \$ 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-profit Sustaining . . . . . | \$ 50   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing . . . . . | \$ 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member . . . . .      | \$ 100  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining . . . . .   | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sustaining . . . . .  | \$ 500  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting . . . . .   | \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Donor . . . . .       | \$1,000 |

MY CHECK FOR \$ \_\_\_\_\_ IS ENCLOSED. Also, I would be glad to participate in the AAHP's activities in the following areas:

- |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Lobbying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other    |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: The Alaska Association for Historic Preservation  
Rolfe Buzzell  
3308 Doris Street  
Anchorage, Alaska 99517

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## MARITIME RESERVES -- PRESERVATION AND PUBLIC RECREATION

By Vickie Cole, Historian, Matanuska-Susitna Borough

"Even a well-known wreck that has been stripped provides a special diving thrill. It harbours quantities of marine life, has a history all its own, and always offers the chance of discovering yet-one-more brass plate or bell or other lost treasure." Thus a book on popular diving spots of the Pacific Northwest describes the intrigue of sport diving around shipwrecks.

But what preservationists and sport divers alike have come to realize is that a stripped wreck, though it may have some intrigue for a novice diver, is a lost opportunity for both knowledge and recreation. Marine reserves and underwater parks provide an alternative by protecting maritime resources and, at the same time, encouraging the public to experience "the intrigue" of these environments. In a well-planned marine park, underwater trails lead the visiting explorer through exotic marine habitats and glimpses of the seafaring past. Appropriate signs or underwater trail guides identify and interpret features of the vessel, artifacts, and marine life fostered by the very presence of the wreck. And when a diver catches the glint of brass, the discovery is captured in a photograph--not a mesh bag.

Because shipwrecks are undisturbed time capsules, they are among the most important archeological resources in the world. The U. S., Canada, Mexico, and other governments have taken steps to protect their maritime heritage through protective laws and the establishment of parks and reserves. Yet problems of law enforcement and effective resource management remain.

Several states and the U. S. National Park Service have had success with programs which enlist volunteer sport divers as partners in the preservation effort. South Carolina has had good results training and licensing sport divers to assist in maritime resources management. Under the guidance of archeologists, licensed volunteers participate in documentation of shipwrecks, and even excavation and recovery. The National Park Service has found that sport divers participating on similar projects have become vocal advocates for shipwreck preservation, while contributing to public knowledge of the resources.

Maritime parks and underwater preserves are proving to be a good management tool to protect the interest of divers, preservationists, and the general public in the fascinating remains of our maritime history.

NOTE: In 1986 the Alaska Maritime Heritage Society proposed the *Armenia* shipwreck site as an addition to the Alaska State Park and Recreation System. Supporters feel that this site could become an important first step in underwater resources management in the state while developing the tourism potential in this as yet untapped resource.

(Arctic Shipwrecks, Continued)

The problem remains of finding ways in which to protect the public's interest in other wrecks that may be contemporary with *Orca*. That interest includes not only preservation of the wrecks and the artifacts that may be found in them, but also collection of information about the context in which the hulls and artifacts are found. Once the wrecks are disturbed, the integrity of that information will have been destroyed.

The commercial whaling shipwrecks of the late 19th Century in the Arctic offer a fascinating subject for archeological and historical study, and possibly a rich storehouse of materials for interpretive display.

The shipwrecks also offer serious challenges to those who would protect the public's interest in them. The possibilities for exerting jurisdiction are limited: perhaps only to a Congressionally-mandated marine sanctuary such as that which protects *USS Monitor*. Whether that solution, or its equivalent is found will depend upon the interest of groups such as the Alaska Association for Historic Preservation.

### A RESOLUTION OF THE ALASKA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### Preservation of the Whaling Ship *ORCA*

WHEREAS, the Alaska Historical Society is interested in furthering the interests of historical research and presentation of that research to the public in a responsible fashion, and

WHEREAS, the North Slope Borough, in cooperation with the Alaska State Legislature, the Alaska Division of Tourism, the Municipality of Anchorage, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the private non-profit group, ORCA, is considering raising the sunken wreck of the whaling ship *Orca*... and

WHEREAS, all wrecks within the three-mile limit as measured from mean high tide belong solely to the State of Alaska, and

WHEREAS, all wrecks from three to twelve miles from the mean high tide mark are under the jurisdiction of the United States Government, and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Historical Society believes these sunken ships are an historically valuable source of information important in national history as well as in the history of Alaska,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alaska Historical Society:

(1) Urges the Alaska Legislature to study the cost of floating, transporting, housing, and conserving the associated maritime artifacts and maintaining them in perpetuity before assigning funds to raise the *Orca*, and

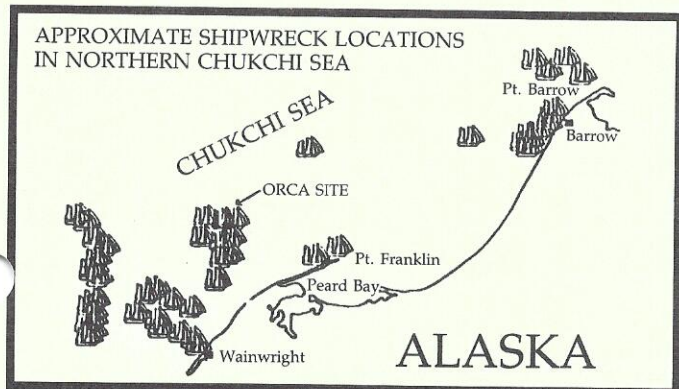
(2) Urges the state and federal governments to take immediate steps to hold the *Orca* and other sunken ships and their contents in public rather than private ownership, and

(3) Calls for a conference for public education on issues of law affecting historic maritime resources, preservation and management of historic shipwrecks, and the specific issues involved in the proposed salvage of the *Orca*, this to be sponsored by the Office of History and Archeology, Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, and the National Park Service, and held before the 1989 underwater research season, and

(4) Requests that no public funds be expended on private underwater research or salvage efforts until such time as state and national significance of the resources has been determined and that any such research proposal affecting resources under state or federal jurisdiction be a part of an agency-approved resource protection and management plan, and

(5) Directs that this resolution be forwarded to the Governor and Legislature of the State of Alaska, the Mayor of Anchorage, the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau, the North Slope Borough, the Office of History and Archeology, and the Alaska Region, National Park Service.

(1 January, 1989)



(costs astronomical, continued from page 2)

Park, the *Cairo* is inadequately protected from the elements by a canopy. While the ship's iron armor plating is stabilized, wood continues to spall off the vessel itself. A recent estimate projects a cost of \$100 million to prevent the *Cairo* from turning to dust.

There have been no efforts in Alaska to preserve ships that have been wrecked and raised, but lessons can be drawn from one project to preserve a steamboat of relatively recent construction. The Steamer *Nenana* served the Alaska Railroad from 1933 to 1954. Placed out of service in 1955, only three years after being completely reconditioned at a cost of \$164,000, the *Nenana* fell into the hands of Fairbanks entrepreneurs in 1957. They spent \$45,000 to move the still-functioning steamboat to Fairbanks. Attempts to operate the boat as a "boatel" and restaurant failed. In 1965, state and

federal funds were obtained to remodel the *Nenana* in preparation for the Alaska Purchase Centennial of 1967. The sternwheeler became the centerpiece of a centennial park known as Alaskaland. Time has obscured exactly how much of the \$1 million-plus total grant for Alaskaland was spent on the *Nenana*. It was probably no less than the \$164,000 rehabilitation ca. 1952. Since 1967, nearly \$350,000 has been spent to repair and preserve the *Nenana*. A ten-year plan for preservation of this 20th century vessel estimates future preservation costs at \$1.5 million. These figures are for a boat that was newly-reconditioned when taken out of service and since the subject of nearly continuous preservation work.

Tutored by such experiences, the national maritime preservation experts invariably concluded their answers to the February 1989 telephone survey by advising that, "unless the preservation money is in hand, sunken vessels are best left in the water."

## MARITIME PRESERVATION WORKSHOP UPCOMING IN ANCHORAGE

A workshop on maritime preservation will be offered on March 23 in Anchorage under the joint sponsorship of the Alaska Historical Society and the National Park Service. The workshop will be held at the Alaska Public Lands Information Center, Suite 105, 605 West 4th Avenue, Anchorage, from 9:00AM to 4:30PM.

James P. Delgado, head of the National Maritime Initiative for the National Park Service will be the featured speaker. Topics include maritime preservation responsibilities under federal and state laws and the opportunities and problems of preserving historic ships and shipwrecks in Alaska. The speakers will explain the new federal Shipwreck Act and discuss maritime preservation projects undertaken in other states.

For more information or to register for the workshop, please call William Hanable (257-2661) or Susan Morton (257-2559) at the Alaska Region, National Park Service, 2525 Gambell Street, Anchorage 99503. Registrations will be accepted until space is filled; there are no workshop fees.

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