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## AMM's St. George Island Historic Harbor now Open for Boating Activities

The St. George Island Historic Ferry Boat Basin (SGIFBB) is a 26 acre venue located on the West side of the causeway as it comes onto the island. This is an extended campus of the Apalachicola Maritime Museum (AMM) which was opened last month to celebrate the historical significance of this harbor to St. George Island and the region. To learn more about the past, present and future of the maritime heritage at this remarkable facility go to <http://SGIFBB.AMMFL.org/History.pdf>. This 42 page document tracks the harbor from 1951 through the current times with narratives and photographs. The story starts when Franklin County voted 1,120 to 34 to provide access to St. George Island. Subsequently the Franklin County Commission negotiated with the Florida Department of Transportation to develop the ferry

service. In 1953, the county announced the purchase of two ferry boats originally developed for use on the Hudson River in New York City. The first was the Spica and soon thereafter her sister ship the Sirius which came to be the vessel primarily handling traffic to Dog Island. The Sirius was utilized to support St. George Island traffic. The book "The Hudson Through The Years" documents the vessels with a 60' Length, 35' beam and 6' draft. The document provides newspaper accounts which track the subsequent years when the Spica and Sirius went on to Boston harbor as the first island bridge came on line in 1965 and the harbor transitioned into a haven for commercial and recreational vessels of all sorts, often numbering in excess of 60 and spanning the range from oyster boats to shrimp boats to sail boats and more. With



the harbor renovation project approved by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Franklin County Commission, we are continuing the long term planning to bring about the new harbor which will be a showpiece of the island with a 100' wide and 8' deep channel running all the way to the ICW. An especially nostalgic element of the plan is that the

entrance channel will utilize the historic St. George Island lighthouse as the range marker that will once again guide mariners into the harbor. This deep water access is critical to providing deep drafted vessels from sailboats to shrimp boats and trawlers with a safe harbor during times of storms and inclement weather as well as recreational access. The finger beach at the North entrance to the harbor will buffer windblown waves

coming from the Northwest winds and thus provide tranquil harbor waters even when the bay is tossed into a frenzy.

Until the harbor renovation project gets underway, the AMM has opened the basin for public use and enjoyment with a mix of pirogues built by youth in the Project Impact afterschool program, wooden sea kayaks constructed

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by our Wooden Boat School program and plastic tandem fishing kayaks made with recycled plastics taken from the Apalachicola Chattahoochee Flint river system. There will also be a mix of canoes, SUPs and rowing vessels available to compliment the paddle sports activities. In addition we will be adding a variety of light sailing craft to provide for a hands on experience. The routes vary by skill set wherein novices can learn and refine technique within the protected harbor while hardy and knowledgeable paddlers can take journeys to the West or East while where the waters wading depth for most of the time as long as you stay close to the northern shore of the island. Trips to the West travel along the AMM property until the Fourth Street canal and then past a range of residential homes and then to the natural areas of the plantation including Nick's Hole and on to the Cut. Past the Cut is Little St. George Island where primitive camping at designated sites are allowed by the State Park. Travel to the East takes you around the bridge causeway and then to refuge lands, past Shell Point and Rattlesnake Coves to find Goose Island and then on into park lands down to East Pass. We provide educational guides to expand your knowledge of the local flora, fauna, sea shells and maritime heritage. Visit <http://sgifbb.ammfl.org/> to get more information about the scheduled open times, rates and other amenities and activities. The entrance gate located at the first right off of the causeway road followed by a right roughly 100 feet down which.

Recreational sailing program aboard AMM flagship S/V HERITAGE

The flagship sailing vessel of the AMM, S/V HERITAGE, is the 58' LOA wooden ketch built to the L. Francis Herreshoff Mobjack design of the 1930s. The HERITAGE is a wooden boat of the highest quality constructed with a double planked hull of fir over cedar joined to laminate oak frames by Monel fasteners. The decks, cabin sides and sole are constructed of teak. Masts and spars are constructed from Sitka spruce. The founder of the AMM sailed the HERITAGE from Massachusetts in a six month journey down the east coast, through the Bahamas, the Florida Keys to arrive at her new home port in Apalachicola on a full moon passage in October of 2007 to become the first exhibit of the new museum. The HERITAGE educational program was updated earlier this year to provide more content about traditionally designed and built wooden sailing vessels and provide instruction on the process of raising and lowering the sails, trimming the running rigging based on concepts illustrated in the "points of sail" diagram and steerage using a tiller helm. The education program goes on to show the role of international sailing ships during the Apalachicola Antebellum cotton era and afterwards where lumber, sponges, naval stores and European fineries were the objects of commerce. Lastly, and most importantly, the education concludes with a safety briefing and then a sail trip where captain and crew provide an a hands on demonstration of the sailing concepts provided in the class room setting. The HERITAGE educational program provides a glimpse trip back in time, to the days before motor powered vessels, when wind powered sailing vessels of all types dominated the waters. Silently slicing through the waters aboard the magnificent HERITAGE provides

an experience which words alone cannot adequately convey. The More information including the Educational Guide can be found at <http://SVHERITAGE.AMMFL.org/>.

The educational program is organized to take advantage of optimal sailing conditions and announced via email, on the chalkboard at the AMM location at 103 Water Street, through the Facebook page and other means. As trips are scheduled and announced, they will be published at the web site above, or you may contact the AMM via telephone, email or in person at the AMM to sign up. The sail trips are free and open to the public however there is a cost for the educational program which is required before embarkation. Donations in excess of that are greatly appreciated and will help us to continue our educational activities and programs. For safety purposes, the HERITAGE is fitted out with state of the art electronics including dual helm redundant GPS navigational systems, RADAR, VHF and Single Side Band radios, refrigeration, hydraulic emergency bilge, EPIRP, air horn and more. Type I PFDs are on board for all guests in addition to a life sling and dual block retrieval system. Review her survey document at the above referenced web site for more information.

Paddlewheel boat JEAN MARY journey to Apalachicola

The completion and imminent departure of the paddlewheel boat JEAN MARY for the approximate 1,000 mile journey to Apalachicola. Go to the AMM Facebook page to find recently published 360 degree virtual reality views of the interior cabins and entertainment spaces of the JEAN MARY including the Wheelhouse, Salon, Dining Room, Engine Room, Galley and

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the cabins. Click on the photo to get an all-around view of each location. Use your mouse to scroll around or up and down, or use your phone/tablet device to view it all by simply moving your device to the angle you would like to view. We think you will enjoy the feeling of this virtual reality experience of being here. Now more than just a journey to her new home port, she has now been officially designated by the Franklin County TDC as a promotional ambassador for our Forgotten Coast. As this article went to press, the new propulsion system has been installed with resumption of sea trials underway and plans for a 214 mile round trip to Sanford to be undertaken as a final four day sea trial. We are very busy punching through the remaining tasks and look forward to departing on the tour of twenty coastal communities in early April with plans to arrive into her new home port of Apalachicola in late May.

With the arrival of April we are now just one month short of the fifth anniversary of commencement of the JEAN MARY restoration which began in late May of 2012 with the haul out on the marine rail in Mayport on the St. John's River. Throughout this very demanding endeavor we have faced and overcome many challenges. All along we held fast to the objective of delivering a vessel capable of meeting the challenges of the Apalachicola Chattahoochee Flint river system. Many unexpected and underestimated hurdles were encountered and ultimately overcome in the renovation effort which

is now very near completion. We are sure that in the near future we will be faced with many new challenges in the passage to Apalachicola and subsequent operations on the river and bay. Throughout the endeavor, we maintained the commitment that delays were preferential to deficiencies. With a project that began with a three to six month scope now having spanned over sixty, the resulting outcome is breathtaking albeit a very difficult achievement.

The most significant recent task was the upgrade to the propulsion system on the paddlewheel that will boost torque by 560% while lowering the pressure by increasing the displacement on hydraulic wheel motors by 249%.

In order to provide power to the expanded wheel motor configuration, we utilized implemented an electronic spool valve that will be able to power the starboard side of the paddlewheel to achieve the upper range of torque when needed to achieve higher speed and then, to be returned to thruster operations when needed for close quarters navigation at slow speed. When doing close in maneuvering, the starboard side of the paddlewheel is switched to a closed loop so that the only power to the wheel comes from the dedicated port side wheel motor which has a direct separate hydraulic feed. In addition, we had the valves altered by Ring Power to allow 60 GPM of flow rather than the original 48 GPM to utilize the full amount of flow from the hydraulic pumps. These changes have taken months to plan and implement, but the difference in

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speed should be very close to the theoretical hull speed of 12.4 knots versus the barely acceptable speed of 4.5 knots of the original configuration. Speed is a parabolic curve requiring exponentially greater torque to increase linear speed so the resulting speed is not precisely calculable. Moreover the effect of possible cavitation may be offset by varying the depth of the wheel in the water, but probably will have a negative effect as RPM of the wheel increases. Whatever the resulting max speed is, we feel certain it will be a sizable improvement and equally important, we expect that the larger displacement of the new wheel motors will greatly lower the pressure required on the hydraulic system from around 4,000 PSI to around 2,000 PSI which will greatly reduce strain on the pumps and promote much longer life of the components.

On the promotional front, we received a grant from the Franklin County TDC in November of last year to host a promotional event at each of the twenty most significant coastal communities along the way. To this end we have begun planning the educational program that will be coordinated with and conducted for those communities. The emerging plan is to provide the opportunity to come aboard and view this remarkable achievement, to make trips of short duration operated by a captain and crew in period uniform, to provide tasty treats from the galley, to have all on board televisions running a centrally controlled continuous video with educational and promotional content about the history of the boat and the renovation effort, historical role that paddlewheel boats played in Florida, the opportunity to visit the Forgotten Coast of Franklin County to enjoy the treasures of our people, places and the unique opportunities to experience maritime history and heritage in person. We expect this remarkable reflection on the paddlewheel boats of the Antebellum era will soon become a new cornerstone of international appeal that will expand on the appeal of historical travel and life in our forgotten coast. The planned journey to Apalachicola is shown in a red line of the nautical chart of Florida.

The contemplated promotional stopovers include the following cit-

(upriver) from Green Cove Springs where she is currently docked. We will travel to and make our first overnight stop at Palatka. Then we depart early the next morning to continue travel upriver with brief stops at San Mateo, Welaka, and Georgetown before traveling on to Lake George where we will overnight at Silver Glen Spring run before starting on to Sanford at lake Monroe before embarking on the journey back to the docks at Green Cove Springs. It is interesting to note that the length of the Apalachicola River is also 107 miles and the overall length of the Jean Mary with the walkboards extended is 107 feet. This will give select guests the opportunity to experience travel aboard this incredible historical paddlewheel vessel now completed (if a boat can ever really be considered complete) as we implement operations for multiple day cruises.

It is our plan that the paddlewheel boat will make overnight trips spanning from a few days to week long trips. The shorter excursions will be to the barrier islands .... The ponds at St. Vincent, Lower Anchorage off of Little St. George and Ballast Cover on Dog Island ... and to other nearby coastal cities, bays and the archipelago of small islands and rivers in the river delta region. Longer trips will go all the way to Columbus, GA in the fashion of historical riverboats that once flourished in the 19th and early 20th century. She will carry up to 12 passengers and offer opulent accommodations, extraordinary dining and an unparalleled educational experience.

### Wooden Boat Building Classes

Wooden boat building at the Apalachicola is on the rise one again. In the 1800s and 1900s Apalachicola was well known as a center for wooden boat building. Throughout the river system and local coastal areas, the large number of boat building artisans of Apalachicola were well known for their abilities to build boats ranging in size from the 153 foot sternwheeler JOHN W. CALLAHAN launched in 1907 down a myriad of lesser sized vessels including coastal schooners and the sloop rigs used in oyster harvesting long before the advent of outboard motors. Over the last forty to fifty years, these skills have nearly vanished until recently. Like the Phoenix of Greek

**EAST COAST :** Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, St. Augustine, Palm Coast, Daytona Beach / Port Orange, Melbourne / Palm Bay, Vero Beach, Port Saint Lucie.

**WEST COAST :** Cape Coral / Fort Myers, Port Charlotte, Sarasota, St. Petersburg, Tampa / Clearwater, Tarpon Springs, Crystal River.

**NORTHWEST COAST :** Cedar Key, Saint Marks, Ochlocknee Bay, Carrabelle, Apalachicola.

An additional route may be added to visit the cities of West Palm Beach, Boynton Beach, Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale and Miami. The plan for each stopover is to establish contact with local TDCs, Chambers and radio/TV media well before arrival in order to provide the opportunity to visit the vessel before arrival and determine how best to promote the visit. During each stopover, we will host a day long reception with hors-horderves with a desk full of promotional literature and trip information. We may do short tours as fundraisers for local community charitable organizations.

In preparation for the promotional trip, we will undertake a 107 mile voyage on the St. John's river which also has a rich history stemming from the paddlewheel era. The trip will run southward

mythology, a long-lived bird that is cyclically regenerated or reborn, the boat building programs are once again leading the way in defining Apalachicola as a place of premier boat building craftsmanship. The dramatic enthusiasm for the seven day long wooden kayak construction program at the AMM has led to a significant expansion of the classes offered for 2017.

The classes provide visitors an opportunity to see the construction process live in our workshop and talk with the students and instructors. Alternatively, you can watch videos of the boat building process at the AMM on our local Forgotten Coast TV or on the AMM YouTube channel at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW7v\\_VaRLTc\\_Lf7Ah4Q9Z8Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW7v_VaRLTc_Lf7Ah4Q9Z8Q) or doing a Google search for "YouTube Pygmy kayak construction class at the AMM Wooden Boat School". You can sign up to participate in a class wherein you own the final product by contacting us with an email to [woodenboatschool@ammfl.org](mailto:woodenboatschool@ammfl.org) or visiting <http://www.pygmyboats.com/boat-building-classes.html#florida> to enroll. Beyond this we continue to build Pirogues and other light craft in 3 to 7 day long weekend sessions and also will resume renovation work on the 45' leeboard ketch, the Golden Ball, once the paddlewheel project is completed.

## COAST LINE