

A Tribute to Frank A. Clapp Maritime Researcher and Historian

By: Jacques Marc

In 2021, Warren and I began a Foghorn series profiling some of BC's early Maritime History researchers, writers, and explorers. In this article I want to share with everyone the contributions made by Frank Clapp.



Frank at his desk circa 2000.

Frank Arthur Clapp was born in Powell River, BC on April 13, 1922, to James & Nancy Clapp. Frank's father worked in the Powell River Pulp & Paper Company office. Frank's interest in ships began at an early age. His father would take him down to the deep-sea dock at the Powell River pulp mill to see the freighters. In his pre-teen years, he would often make his own way down to the docks from the family home on Maple Street. He recalls talking with the dock workers and learning where the rolls of pulp and paper were bound around the world. Ships arrived in Powell River from all parts of the world. Some would bring supplies like clay and sulphur needed in the paper making process, while others loaded newsprint for delivery around the world.

Upon leaving high school Frank worked for the Imperial Oil agent at the bulk storage dock in Powell River. From here he moved on to work on one of the paper machines in the mill. In 1942 he was offered a job as deckhand on the company harbour tug *Teeshoe* and jumped at the opportunity. (The *Teeshoe* was built in 1924 and was sunk by the Italian freighter *Giovani Amendola* December 4, 1955).

Continued on page 2



Tug Teeshoe in Powell River log pond circ 1943.

Photo by Frank Clapp

In 1943, Frank was poisoned by toxic sulphur fumes from the mill and was hospitalized. Once he recovered, he decided to move into the BC interior. He got a job with the BC Department of Public Works on highway location surveys. In 1946, he was transferred to the construction branch of the Department and spent seven years working on the construction of the Hart Highway between Prince George and Dawson Creek. In 1950, he began working out of the Department's Victoria Office in the winter and would return to the field in the summer. In 1958, he was transferred to Victoria full time to administer the legal survey program, where he remained until retiring in 1987.

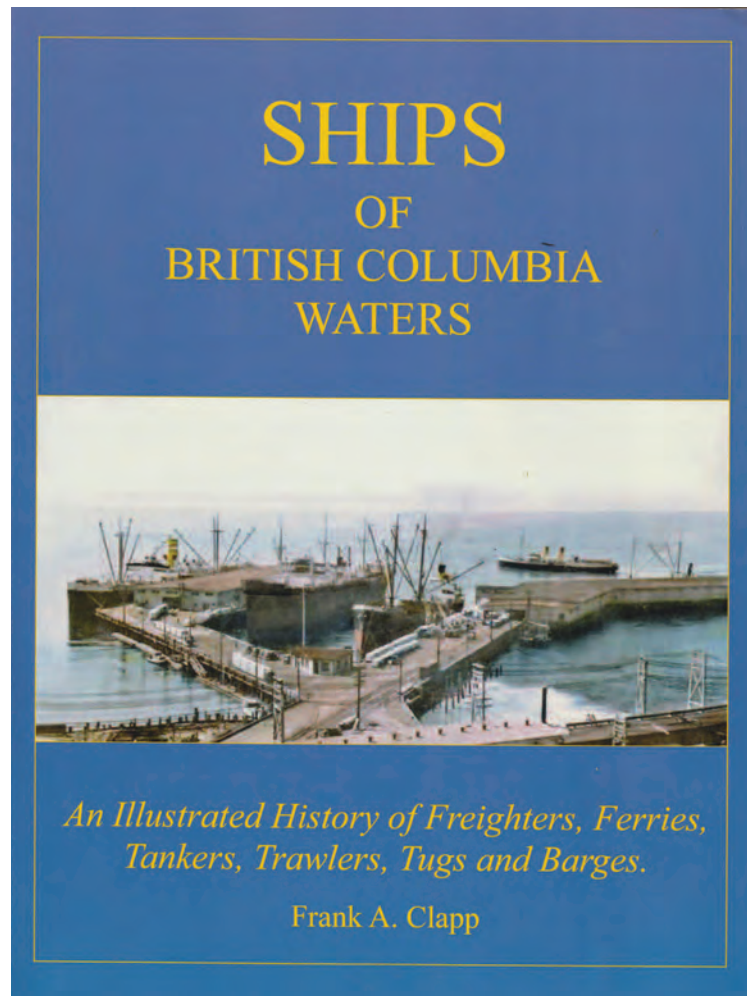
In June of 1953, Frank married Lenora and eventually they had four children. Frank said that while raising his family he needed a hobby, which led him back to his early interest in ships. Initially he wanted to learn what became of the many ships he knew in his youth. In the early days he visited the Provincial Library which had copies of the Lloyd's Registers, Pacific Marine Review, and other nautical magazines.

In time he joined the World Ship Society of London, England and became a member of the Steamship Historical Society of America and the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society based in Seattle. He began writing articles on ships and shipping for the Steamship Historical Society. Eventually he became the West Coast Editor for Steamboat Bill the Steamship Historical Society publication which he did for 25 years. His articles also occurred routinely in the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society newsletter Sea Chest.

Shortly after his retirement Frank wrote three booklets on the history of the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, Lake & River Ferries. These are an invaluable to have in your library if you want to know the history of ferries in the BC interior.

Frank will be best remembered for his seminal work "Ships of British Columbia Waters" published in 2014. Others have written about the large shipping companies in British Columbia like Canadian Pacific Steamships, Union Steamships and Canadian National Steamships. Frank filled in the blanks by writing about the little-known utilitarian companies and their contributions to BC's maritime history.

Continued on page 3



Ships of British Columbia Waters by Frank Clapp

The UASBC crossed paths with Frank many times. It was standard practice at the start of each regional shipwreck project to drop by and have coffee with Frank. Jacques would provide him with the list of vessels we were going to study, and he would provide comment and direct us to applicable information sources. His specialty were the benign coastal tugs and barges.

Frank was awarded the prestigious H. Graham Wood Award by Steamship Historical Society of America.

This award recognizes an individual for their long-time dedication and service to the Steamship Historical Society of America.

Frank passed away in Victoria on January 29, 2022, two months short of his 100th birthday.

He will be remembered for his passion for ships and meticulous recording of ship history.

Underwater Archaeology Course 2023



Underwater Archaeology for Divers Course October 7 & 8th.

Underwater Archaeology for Divers (UAD) is a 20-hour course, with a pool session and an open water survey dive.

The course is designed to introduce students to the essential skills required to undertake basic underwater archaeological recording work.

Eight modules will be completed online in advance of the 2 field days.

On **Saturday October 7th** there will be a pool dive to learn and practice survey techniques. On **Sunday October 8th** we will do an open water dive to implement surveying skills and learn about shipwreck conservation.

Graduates receive a Certificate of Achievement for successfully completing the course.

The course cost is \$250 for UASBC members and \$290 for non members.

To register call Jacques (250) 474-5797 or email: jmarc@shaw.ca

**Please refer to
WWW.UASBC.COM for latest Updates!**

UASBC Diver Explorations

Fall Diver Schedule 2023

Nanette

Saturday August 19th

On this first trip of the fall schedule, we will visit the Nanette site on Race Rocks. The Nanette was a wooden sailing barque that was wrecked on Race Rocks December 27, 1860. It eventually drifted off leaving much of its cargo on the bottom. The Nanette will be a documentation dive.

Since slack isn't until 1:00 we will do our first dive on a nearby site. There may be some current on the Nanette, but we will be using a live boat for pickup. We will depart from Pedder Bay

Cost: \$100.00 per person. Limit 7 divers.

Call Jacques (250) 474-5797 or email: jmarc@shaw.ca

Rosalia & Discovery Isle Wrecks

Saturday September 23rd

The Rosalia was Prussian barque that was wrecked on Discovery Island in 1868. The Discovery Isle was a private yacht lost off Gonzales Point. The goal at the Rosalia site will be to relocate the large anchor and then expand our search area to the south looking for more artefacts. At Gonzales Point, we will refamiliarize ourselves with what is on site and relocate a known brick pile. We will depart from Victoria.

Charter cost \$100 per person. Limit 7 divers.

San Pedro & S.F. Tolmie

Saturday October 21st & Sunday October 22nd

On this trip we will visit the San Pedro a large steel coal freighter that struck Brochie Ledge and sank on November 22, 1891. Our second dive will be on the wooden four masted auxiliary schooner S.F. Tolmie.

wrecked on Harrison Island December 27, 1944. The goal on day one will be to cut kelp in preparation for doing photogrammetry. Please bring a pruning saw or garden shears to cut kelp. On the Sunday we will return to the San Pedro to carry out the photogrammetry. On the S.F. Tolmie we will establish a baseline and UAD graduates can practice their newly acquired surveying skills.

Both dives are suitable for all open water divers.

Charter \$100 per person. Limit 7 divers.

Call Jacques (250) 474-5797 or email: jmarc@shaw.ca

2023 FALL DIVING SCHEDULE

Plane Wreck

Saturday November 11th

In December 2022 we did our first dive on a recently discovered Hadley Page Hampden bomber wreck in Saanich Inlet. We have since surveyed the site and identified the wreck as Hampden P3433. It crashed on a training run killing all 4 crew members. The plan is to place a memorial plaque on the site on Remembrance Day to pay tribute to the crew lost. We will depart from Tulista Boat Launch in Sidney.

Charter cost \$100 per person. Limit 7 divers.

Call Jacques (250) 474-5797 or email: jmarc@shaw.ca

SOUTHERN INTERIOR 2023 FALL DIVING SCHEDULE

Thompson and Columbia Wreck Tour

Sunday October 1st to Tuesday October 3rd

Diving the historical dive sites in the Shuswap and Upper Arrow Lakes, such as the Whitesmith, the Sicamous car wreck, the Alvera tug, and the SS Bonnington.

Open to UASBC divers with cold water diving experience.

Contact Bill Meekel (billmeekel@gmail.com) for more information.

Kootenay Wreck Tour

Sunday October 22nd to Tuesday 24th

Diving the historical dive sites in the Slocan and Kootenay Lakes, such as the Silverton ore cars, the SS Slocan, the Proctor Railcars, and the SS Ymir.

Open to UASBC divers with cold water diving experience.

Contact Bill Meekel billmeekel@gmail.com for more information.

**Please refer to
WWW.UASBC.COM for latest Updates!**

Remembering Michael Paris 1947-2023



It is with great sadness that I learned that Mike Paris passed away on May 6, 2023.

Mike served as UASBC President from 1990 to 1995. These were defining years for the UASBC. We undertook some of our most ambitious projects (Montague Harbour, the Arctic Bay Maude survey, Friendly Cove, and Northeastern Vancouver Island) under Mike's watch.

I first met Mike in 1983 when I joined the UASBC. He was the Treasurer at the time and active in all aspects of the society. He was our official photographer, he developed display panels for the 1984 Boat Show and helped organize the UASBC's 10th anniversary bash at Powell River in 1985 and duplicated and printed endless rolls of film for our various projects.

Mike was born and raised in Vancouver and graduated from Vancouver College. He then completed a Bachelor of Economics degree at UBC. Before long, his passion and eye for taking photos took him to Langara College to study photography. Mike worked as a photographer in the Eaton's advertising department for several years. He then moved on with his friend and colleague, Hans Sipma, to open "PS Photography" where they shared the studio for over 20 years.

One of the first UASBC trips I participated on was establishing the mooring buoy on the Del Norte in the spring of 1983. Mike was on that trip. In the spring of 1984, we traveled to Nootka Sound in search of the Boston.



1984 Nootka Sound Expedition participants. Mike is second from the left in the front row.

Mike was always behind the camera so photos of him are scarce. However, I did manage to snap a photo of him underwater during our exploration and documentation of the SS City of Ainsworth, discovered in Kootenay Lake in 1990.



Photo by J. Marc

After years of working behind the scenes, Mike became President of the UASBC in the spring of 1990. He received the UASBC Volunteer of the year Award in 1993 for his years of service and contributions above and beyond. Perhaps Mike's greatest contribution to the UASBC was his legacy of photographs. He bought a large underwater photography system early on and chronicled many of the early trips underwater and on the surface. It is a result of his work that we have a great archive of early photos. In fact, it is fun to compare the dive gear from the 1980s to present. Mike was the kind of guy that would give you the shirt off his back in a time of need. I recall during the Montague harbour project the UASBC temporarily ran out of money to pay the bills. Our grant from the BC Heritage Trust was late arriving. Mike went to the bank and got a loan to carry us until the money arrived.

Mike resigned as president in 1995, but continued to be active, participating on the arctic Bay Maude survey in 1996 and the Northeastern Vancouver Island project in 1997.



Photo by J. Marc

During the early 2000's Mike stopped diving because of a shoulder injury. Not being able to dive he subsequently became less involved with the UASBC.

Personally, I continued to see Mike on a semi regular basis. I became President in 2003 and he and Leslie would put me up at their home when I travelled from Victoria to Vancouver for UASBC events.

Mike was a good friend and will surely be missed by friends and family alike.

Mike, we thank you for your contributions in the early years. The UASBC would not be where it is today without them.

Jacques

Exploration Speaker Series Victoria



Photo by Brian Kent

Photo Courtesy Vancouver Sun

Wednesday September 20th

Remembering the Moment, a Russian Freighter hit a BC Ferry in 1970.

Join us for our first fall speaker.

William Boardman was a teenager travelling with his mother when the Russian freighter Sergey Yesenin rammed the BC Ferry Queen of Victoria. William will recount his experiences, and the pandemonium that ensued on that fateful day.

Wednesday October 18th

Archipelago Marine Research

Andrew Rippington, Mgr. Operations, Sr. Biologist

Archipelago has been active for over 40 years in marine research and has worked closely with the Dept. of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO). Andrew will talk about the work that Archipelago does in the areas of marine environment and fisheries services such as coastal planning and habitat and fisheries monitoring. He will talk about the surveys and research he has done on marine growth occurring around shipwrecks

In the Wake of Oregon's Manilla Galleon: the Maritime Archaeological Society's 2023 Field Season



The British square rigger Glenesslin wrecked at Neahkahnie Mountain in 1913.

Photo Courtesy Vancouver Maritime Museum

"Ample evidence of a vast shipwreck on Oregon's north coast appeared from the very beginnings of the state's written historical record. John Ordway of the Lewis and Clark Expedition mentioned trade with the Clatsop people of "bears wax," a misspelling for "beeswax." Later chroniclers – fur trappers, explorers, and early historians – echoed Ordway's account, verifying that a large ship carrying tons of cargo had wrecked on Nehalem Spit long before the time of Lewis and Clark." – Oregon Historical Quarterly



Neahkahnie Mountain and the north end of Neahkahnie Beach

Photo by Warren Bush

Initially formed in October of 2015, the Maritime Archaeology Society (MAS) is the American Pacific-northwest-counterpart to the UASBC. MAS is an incorporated 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization headquartered in Astoria, Oregon, and UASBC members and maritime enthusiasts may be familiar with the organization's annual conference held at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. MAS's mission is to "seek out, investigate and document shipwrecks and other maritime archaeological sites; conserve artifacts from those sites, when appropriate, and educate the public in areas of maritime cultural heritage, historic shipwreck preservation, and the science of maritime archaeology."

The treacherous conditions around Washington and Oregon have played a part in destroying countless vessels over hundreds of years. Unpredictable currents and navigation dangers near the Columbia River have challenged mariners since 1775, when Bruno de Heceta became the first European to sight that famed tributary. Thirty six years later, John Jacob Astor's Tonquin lost eight men when the vessel's captain tried to send longboats over the river bar. Over following couple of centuries, winter storms have imperiled marine traffic both offshore and in coastal zones – the conditions have been threatening mariners since they first began transiting the region. Hundreds of years' worth of shipwrecks now lie around the area, with very few having been located or explored, much less documented.

Keenly aware of the potential for exploration, MAS has led a number of field activities since its inception in 2015, both underwater and in the intertidal zone. The society's first project occurred over June of 2016, and was a survey of the side-wheeler T.J. Potter, which authorities condemned in 1916 and later burned in Youngs Bay around 1920. In the fall of the same year MAS used an ROV to explore the lumber schooner the Silvia de Grasse, which sank in the Columbia River in 1849. The following year MAS surveyed an unknown wreck in Lewis and Clark National Park, which is likely a gillnetter from either the 1920s or 1930s. In 2019, the organization assisted the US Army Core of Engineers in positively identifying the midsection of the SS Iowa, which wrecked near Cape Disappointment in January of 1936. MAS held its annual conference in February of 2020, but the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic brought subsequent planned fieldwork to a standstill. With the Pandemic now over, MAS's Field Committee planned a busy and exciting field season for 2023, largely focused on one of North America longstanding shipwreck mystery's: the fate of the Spanish galleon Santo Cristo De Burgos, which disappeared after sailing from the Philippines on 1 July 1693.

The Spanish Empire aggressively colonized the Caribbean and parts of the west coast of the Americas following the initial European voyages of discovery to those areas. By the late 1500s the Spanish had thoroughly established their trade route between Acapulco, in present day Mexico, and Manila, in what is now the Philippines – their vessels would transport silver, seeds, crops and trade goods to Manila, and bring back spices, porcelain, silk, jade, wax, and other goods exotic to Europeans. The ships that became known as Manila galleons sailed between once and twice a year, and the final Manila-galleon-voyage occurred in 1815. Spanish shipwrights constructed Manila galleons in their shipyards in the Philippines, and the vessels ranged from roughly 140 to 170 feet in length, could displace up to 2,000 tons and carry up to 500 passengers. Due to the length and infrequency of a Pacific crossing and the potential profits on Asian goods in European markets, shipwrights built the vessels to be as large as practicable. One such vessel was the Santo Cristo De Burgos, which was built in Manila and probably displaced between 1600 to 1800 tons.

Although legends of a Spanish shipwreck have long been part of Oregon's coastal lore, historians had initially erroneously identified the vessel now thought to be Santo Cristo De Burgos as the San Francisco Xavier. However, by 2011 research conducted by archaeologist and MAS founder Scott Williams proposed the former vessel as a more likely candidate, in part through an analysis of the designs on porcelain shards recovered from beaches around Cape Falcon and Neahkahnie Mountain. Public interest in the shipwreck has focused on these ceramics and the unusual nature of the ships' beeswax cargo, resulting in the wreck being referred to as the 'beeswax wreck.' The mystery of Oregon's ancient wreck has influenced life in the area for centuries and has also spawned a rich tapestry of legends that have inspired academics, treasure hunters, and Hollywood screenwriters alike. MAS's 2023 field season brought remote sensing to the dark waters from Cape Falcon to Neahkahnie Beach in search of answers to this three hundred and thirty year old mystery.



Sea Caves near Cape Falcon similar to where archaeologists recovered timbers from the Santo Cristo De Burgos in 2022.

Photo by Warren Bush

The 2023 field season was organized by MAS's Field Operations Committee, chaired by Christopher Dewey. The organization's membership had the opportunity to log into a monthly Zoom call to learn about planned fieldwork, and key personnel discussed certain logistics during those calls. The first event occurred on 19 May in Boring, Oregon, which is southeast of Portland. The purpose of the day was to familiarize the season's field team with the vessels and equipment that would be used to search the waters thought to be the Santo Cristo De Burgos's resting place. The exercise was useful for deciding where sensitive equipment would be stowed and secured for sea, how it would be deployed or retrieved while underway, and for deciding the most practicable and convenient locations for certain things (GPS sensors, batteries, laptops, monitors, etc.).

The Field Committee kept a weather eye on the marine forecast for the remainder of May and June, but the sea state and winds consistently did not allow for remote sensing work. Luckily, the team had acceptable weather and a correct tidal window on Sunday 16 July. Four MAS members met in the Port of Garibaldi, seven miles north of Tillamook, and put to sea around 0830. The unprotected nature of the Oregon coast became clear after crossing the bar at nearby Barview and transiting north towards Neahkahnie Mountain. The team deployed a magnetometer and successfully conducted a calibration test before retrieving it and taking station in a predefined area decided on by MAS's Field Committee. The team 'mowed the lawn,' recording the magnetometer hits and trying not to succumb to seasickness. After several hours of magnetometer and sonar work, the team returned to Garibaldi, satisfied with the data collected.

Continued on page 13



Equipment setup on one of two vessels employed during MAS's 2023 field season. The laptop is connected to the magnetometer and runs associated software, while the boat operator uses the computer monitor and an integrated GPS to drive transects

Photo by Warren Bush

The next tidal and weather window occurred the following Friday and Saturday, 21-22 July. The team employed a different boat for the surveying, and left from a marina south of Brighton, on the Nehalem River. The slightly larger size of the vessel and the deeper draught made for better seakeeping, and far more benign conditions than the previous survey also helped. The team again consisted of four MAS members (an international member of the team also got clocked by the local sheriff going twice the speed limit en route to the marina, but escaped a ticket using his pluck, determination, and roguish charm). The team spent two full days completing an extensive magnetometer and sonar survey of MAS's pre-defined search area and collected further data southeast of that area, roughly parallel with Neahkahnie beach. Overcast conditions prevailed on 21 July, but 22 July couldn't have been better sea state one, light airs and bright sunshine. And plenty of hits on the magnetometer.



Stellar conditions and sea-level navigation dangers near Neahkahnie Mountain

Photo by Warren Bush-



UASBC Presidents' message *by: Keith Bossons*

Hi Everyone,

I hope everyone is enjoying the wonderful summer weather. As we move into the latter half of August and the visibility improves, we are looking forward to getting back into the water and exploring shipwrecks. The fall dive schedule has been posted to the website and Jacques has done a great job of lining up some exciting dives for the fall. Check out the schedule on the website and sign-up to go diving.

As I mentioned in my June message, we are in the process of restarting the Speaker Series meetings for the lower mainland. Specific details and speakers are still being finalized but we are committed to having two meetings in the fall and another two in the new year. We will confirm the details by a separate communication to you once we have everything line up.

The Victoria speaker series will be kicking off September 20th. William Boardman will talk about Remembering the Moment, a Russian Freighter hit a BC Ferry in 1970.

There is also an Underwater Archaeology for Divers course scheduled to be run in Victoria on October 7th and 8th.

All the best
Keith Bossons
UASBC President

Wake of Oregon's Manilla Galleon*(continued)*

With the entire search area successfully surveyed, MAS will now process the data and collate notable targets, and also look for patterns – one anticipated challenge is the Glenesslin, a British square rigger that wrecked at Neahkahnie Mountain in 1913, possibly nearby where the Santo Cristo De Burgos may rest. Any number of the magnetometer hits recorded by the survey team are very likely from that vessel, or possibly from a handful of other wrecks thought to be in the area. However, for an organization focused on undersea exploration and shipwrecks, that's not the worst problem to have. MAS will continue its search for the Santo Cristo De Burgos during the summer of 2023.

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