



> PROJECT UPDATES

The *SS Pacific* Project

Last year, the *SS Pacific* was discovered nearly 150 years after it sank in what was the deadliest maritime disaster in west coast history. The side-wheel steamer was located over 1,000 feet under the sea. It was found 25 miles off the coast of Washington State, south of Cape Flattery by a homegrown local Seattle team aboard the research vessel *R/V SeaBlazer* (pictured above).



SS Pacific at Yesler's Wharf, Seattle, 1875. Photo courtesy MOHAI, Seattle Historical Society Collection, SHS11765

Salvaging plans are underway for the *SeaBlazer* to sail to the site and begin in-depth surveying of the steamship in what is expected to be the first of many expeditions this year. This spring, the *SeaBlazer* crew, led by Jeff Hummel (President of Rockfish, Inc.) will head to the court-protected recovery zone for a pre-disturbance survey of the shipwreck and adjacent debris field. This summer, they will return to the site to test three newly built robots – larger and more advanced than the ROVs involved in the shipwreck's discovery. Finally, starting in August, the *SeaBlazer* team plans 45 days of artifact recovery in the *SS Pacific's* debris field.



> EVENTS

Love of all things maritime is an intergenerational fascination here in the Pacific Northwest – one that was easy to see at the first ever Northwest Shipwreck Alliance presentation for the public at Tacoma’s Foss Waterways Seaport on Thursday, March 17th.

First, it was the kids and their parents’ turn to hear from speakers Jeff Hummel and Matt McCauley aided by the robot Falkor. The seats full of toddlers to teens sat (or rolled around on the floor) spellbound as Jeff and Matt told the tales of their maritime exploration origins finding WWII aircraft at the bottom of Lake Washington and of the search for the long lost *SS Pacific* shipwreck - both requiring a healthy portion of perseverance. The kids enjoyed learning of Lilly the Octopus who was hiding in the shipwreck surrounded by her loot.

After the kids and family presentation, the team returned to a packed house of adults squeezing in to hear the full story of how the ship was found. Matt and Jeff delivered a riveting account of the history of the *SS Pacific*, the details they’ve pieced together of its final harrowing moments before sinking to the bottom of the ocean, and how the *Pacific* was finally discovered after many years of explorations to find it – the research and analysis, the robotics technology, and the clues that came from fishermen’s nets.

This is the first of many receptions the Northwest Shipwreck Alliance will be giving to Pacific Northwest families to spotlight the incredible - and until now little known - history of the *SS Pacific* and to show the region’s youth how they can use a STEM education in the 21st century.

Stay tuned for upcoming events!



Over 200 news stories of the discovery have been published around the world. Here are some of the highlights:



[The Guardian](#)



[KUOW/NPR](#)



[KIRO7 TV News](#)



Etching featuring the famous horses Tiger, Mazeppa, and Star from *Educating the Horse* by A.H. Rockwell

> HISTORY surfaced

The United States' premier equestrian troupe, Rockwell and Hurlburt from New York, who pioneered reinless horse driving were aboard the SS Pacific and went down with the ship in 1875. In fact, a saddled horse was found floating in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, dozens of miles away from the site of the shipwreck, as if the owners hoped they would be able to ride ashore.

> TEAM SPOTLIGHT

The Northwest Shipwreck Alliance was started by two high school friends – Jeff Hummel and Matthew McCauley – whose earliest experience was recovering a WWII aircraft in Lake Washington.

In 1984, at the age of 20, the two were sued by the US Navy in a landmark case (*United States vs. Hummel, et al.*). Jeff and Matt prevailed against the Navy in court and were awarded clear and free title to the plane (currently being restored and expected to fly next year!). The two managed the recovery of four more WWII-era naval combat aircraft from Lake Washington in 1987, among other wreck projects over the years.

Jeff now owns the *R/V SeaBlazer*, an 80 ft. research vessel which was used for the side scan sonar and ROV operations that led to his discovery of the *SS Pacific* and recovery of the first artifacts. Jeff is one of the world's leading experts in PC-based marine navigation systems, having worked for both Nobeltec



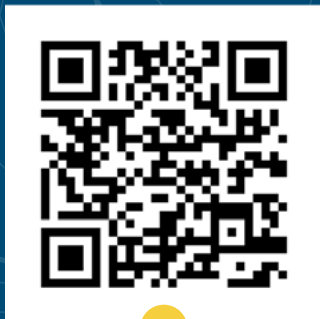
(acquired by Boeing in 2001) and Rose Point Navigation Systems.

Matt has since become a writer, historian, and business owner. He is the Executive Director of the Northwest Shipwreck Alliance, a Washington nonprofit created to discover, recover and preserve the most important shipwrecks of the Pacific Northwest. The Alliance is focused on building a waterfront museum to honor and display the vestiges and memorabilia of our rich maritime heritage.



For more information on the Northwest Shipwreck Alliance's other projects and team members, visit our website: northwestshipwreckalliance.org

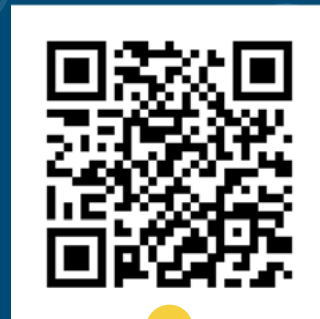
Scan or click on the codes to learn more about how to support the Northwest Shipwreck Alliance:



NEWSLETTER



DONATE



SHOP

What we're reading

Ever wonder what determines whether something remains preserved underwater for a year... or 100 years?



[Check out this article from Popular Mechanics.](#)

Our new look

The Northwest Shipwreck Alliance has a new look thanks to Selena Koosmann of SMK Creative:



smkcreative.com



**Northwest
Shipwreck
Alliance**

www.northwestshipwreckalliance.org