

FANTAIL LAUNCH ENA
313 Robert Bush Drive, West
South Bend
Pacific County
Washington

HAER WA-216
HAER WA-216

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

FANTAIL LAUNCH *ENA*

HAER No. WA-216

Location: South Bend, Pacific County, Washington

Rig/Type of Craft: Gasoline powered fantail launch

Trade: Service boat for oyster fishery

Official Number: 30F 816

Principal Measurements: Length (oa): 24'-11"
Beam: 7'-0"
Service speed: 5-6 knots
(The listed dimensions are current, but it should be noted that draft, displacement, and tonnages were subject to alterations to trim as well as variations in measurement.)

Propulsion: Engine missing. No record of original engine.

Date of Construction: 1904

Original Owner: L. L. Bush, Bay Center, WA

Present Owner: Louderback Family Boat Collection

Disposition: Roadside display

Significance: The fantail launch *Ena*, whose name means “beaver” in the Chinook trade jargon, was built by pioneer boat builder Dan Louderback in 1904. She was used for transportation in Willapa Bay by the oystering family of L. L. Bush of Bay Center for about twenty years. In the 1920s, Marion Louderback, Dan’s son, restored it. It was used for weekend pleasure trips from the 1930s until the 1960s by South Bend business owner Fred Badger. Marion Louderback eventually reacquired the *Ena*, and kept her floating during his lifetime. Today she is owned by Janet Furfiord, Marion’s daughter, and is displayed on land in front of the Eastpoint Seafood cannery in South Bend (see HAER WA-221). *Ena* is a rare surviving example of this type of, once common, craft.

Author: Clatsop Community College Historic Preservation Program, 2012.

**Project
Information:**

This project is part of an ongoing effort to locate, identify, and document the most important traditional boats of the lower Columbia River region. During the summer of 2012 a team composed of Clatsop Community College (CCC) students and faculty, Columbia River Maritime Museum (CRMM) volunteers and Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) interns began a project to document boats associated with the Willapa Bay oyster industry. *Ena* is the first vessel documented as part of an ongoing project to document the history, sites and vessels of the Washington State oyster industry.

In addition to inclusion in the HAER collection, the documentation produced will be used for future research and possible inclusion in CRMM and Willapa Maritime Museum exhibits. This project fits into a CRMM/CCC partnership to develop a regional documentation center affiliated with the National Park Service. The primary consultant is Todd Croteau, HAER Maritime Program Coordinator.

The project coordinator is Lucien Swerdloff, Coordinator, Historic Preservation and Computer Aided Design Programs, Clatsop Community College. Project support was provided by Sam Johnson, Director, Columbia River Maritime Museum. Data collection, 3D modeling and drawings were done by Joseph Wessinger, HAER intern, Brian Nice, CCC Historic Preservation Program, Gary Trenner II and Adam Dreke, CCC CAD Program, and Paul Putkey. Research and documentation were done by Earl Reynolds, CRMM volunteer, and Bruce Weilepp. Field sketches were done by Randy Brown, CCC Historic Preservation Program.

Funding was provided by National Park Service and Council of American Maritime Museums. Equipment and technical support was provided by HLB Otak, Clatsop Community College, and Columbia River Maritime Museum.

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

- 1. Date of Construction:** 1904
- 2. Designer:** Daniel Louderback, South Bend, Washington
- 3. Builder:** Daniel Louderback, South Bend, Washington

4. Original Plans: Unavailable. *Ena* is no longer configured as it was originally constructed. No record remains of the original deck configuration.

5. Modifications: Built by shipwright Daniel Louderback for oysterman L. L. Bush of Bay Center, the *Ena* moved people and supplies around Willapa Bay until the 1920s, when she was abandoned on a mud flat. Rescued by Daniel Louderback's son, Marion, she was repaired and sold to Fred Badger of South Bend. Badger's father-in-law Dan Coulter built the current cabin in the 1930s.

6. Names: *Ena*, the original name, means "beaver" in Chinook trade jargon.

B. Historical Context: The body of water today known as Willapa Bay, located in Pacific County on the southwest coast of Washington state, came into being during the last ice age when rising ocean levels and sand from the Columbia River created a shallow estuary, separated from the Pacific Ocean by the Long Beach Peninsula, where fresh and salt water mix. The resulting marine environment is both highly productive in a biological sense, and distinctively different from both the ocean and the freshwater rivers that flow into it. Willapa Bay is the second largest estuary on the Pacific coast and includes over 260 square miles of water surface.¹ Large portions of the Bay have been under aquacultural cultivation for over 150 years and are privately owned shellfish farms.

The name "Willapa" is adapted from the name given to a small group of Indians inhabiting the valley of the Bay's major tributary river by the neighboring Chinook Indians. The most common original phonetic spelling of the name is "Kwalhioqua" (Quill-I-oqua). Little is known about the Kwalhioqua Indians except that they probably lived more of a woodland lifestyle than the adjacent Chehalis and Chinookan groups. Their language, which is similar to the language of the Athapaskan Indians living in what is now Canada, was distinctively different from other coastal tribes, suggesting that they migrated to the area from regions in the North prior to white contact. By the time anthropologists arrived, the Kwalhioqua had merged with the neighboring Indian groups and little remained of their culture besides a few words and stories. Prior to the 1890s, the whole shallow bay was appropriately named Shoalwater by early white settlers. The name Willapa Bay, or Willapa Harbor, was substituted for the northern portion to make it less foreboding to visiting ship captains.

For over 150 years, Willapa Bay and the nearby Pacific Ocean have produced high quality seafood and supported the unique local communities of Pacific County. Oyster farming and commercial fishing are still an important part of the local economy. Since the 1850s there have been three historic periods of oystering in Willapa Bay named after the major type of oyster that was farmed: Native, Eastern and Pacific.

Oysterville, a small town on the Long Beach Peninsula founded in 1854, became the center of the burgeoning oyster industry.² Schooners filled with oysters sailed from Willapa Bay to San

¹ "Willapa National Wildlife Refuge," United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 2007.

² The Oysterville Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

Francisco during the gold rush years making Oysterville, for a time, the wealthiest town in Washington. This trade continued until the 1870s when diminishing numbers of oysters in Willapa Bay and transcontinental railways allowed Eastern oysters, shipped from the Atlantic, to dominate the California market.³ After the decline of the native Olympia oysters (*Ostreola conchaphila*), attempts to grow Eastern oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*) beginning in the 1890s were only marginally successful and the fishery was closed in 1920. In 1928, Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) were introduced to Willapa Bay from Japan reviving the industry. Today, Willapa Bay produces more oysters than any other estuary in the U.S.⁴

C. Operational History: Launched in 1904, the gasoline powered fantail launch *Ena* was originally used for transportation between Willapa Bay communities. Thousands of similar launches in bays and rivers around the world powered by steam and gasoline engines provided basic transportation until the coming of the automobile. *Ena* is one the very few original craft of this type to survive in the U.S.

Ena was built by shipwright Daniel Louderback for oysterman L. L. Bush of Bay Center. *Ena* moved people and supplies around the bay until the 1920s, when she was abandoned on a mud flat. Rescued by Dan Louderback's son Marion, she was repaired and sold to Fred Badger of South Bend. Badger's father-in-law, Dan Coulter, built the current cabin in the 1930s. From the 1930s to the 1960s, the *Ena* spent most of her life in a snug boathouse on the South Bend waterfront, adjacent to Badger's service station. Badger used her for weekend pleasure trips to North River. Eventually Badger shared ownership and upkeep for the *Ena* with friend Everett Kreitzer. After Badger's death, Kreitzer started a major rebuilding effort in the Louderback boatshop, but was unable to finish the project, and *Ena* became part of the Louderback boat collection. Dreams of fixing up the *Ena* kept her afloat for several more decades. She stayed moored at the shop dock until Marion's passing. In 2001 she was in danger of sinking and was rescued once again by Marion's son Dan and Bruce Weilepp. *Ena* was hauled out of the water and stored behind the Pacific County Historical Society Museum until 2006. *Ena* is currently owned by Janet Furfiord, Marion's daughter, and is displayed in front of the Eastpoint Seafood cannery in South Bend. Hurricane force winds during the winter storm of 2007 blew her over, but local volunteers saved her again.⁵

Documentation and restoration of the *Ena* is a long term project of the Louderback family and members of the Willapa Maritime Museum. Several generations of the Louderback Family built watercraft for pleasure and work on Willapa Bay. Dan Louderback was born in Washington Territory (1864-1934), and although the exact source of his boatbuilding skills is not known he was renowned for the large sailing oyster sloops (also known as "Plungers") he built during the 1880s and 1890s. Dan built boats at several locations around the Bay, but mostly in his shop on Louderback Slough, a branch of the Willapa River near Raymond. Launches like the *Ena*, tugs, fishing boats, oyster dredges, and rowing skiffs were Dan's stock and trade. After the turn of the century he converted many of the early sailing oyster sloops to engine power. Dan never owned

³ Michael De Alessi, "Oysters and Willapa Bay," Competitive Enterprise Institute, 1996.

⁴ "Willapa Bay," Ruesink Lab, Department of Biology, University of Washington, Seattle, <http://depts.washington.edu/jlrlab/willapabay.php>

⁵ Bruce Weilepp, unpublished material, 2012.

a power tool, however, building entirely by hand. Even larger projects rarely took more than a month to build.

Marion Louderback (1903-2000), Dan's son, learned the boatbuilding trade from his father, and assisted in the power conversion of many of the sailing craft. Skilled in wood working but fascinated by engines, Marion and his father moved from job site to job site after the Louderback Slough boatshop burned in 1925. New construction projects became rare after World War II, but Marion kept busy with repairs, eventually building a waterfront shop in South Bend with a marine railway in the 1950s. Marion's son Daniel worked alongside his father in the shop for years, but preferred astronomy to boatbuilding, and the shop eventually ceased commercial activity with Marion's passing. In later years, Marion collected and preserved an assortment of historic watercraft and antique engines. Efforts are underway to document the Louderback collection and preserve some of the rare and significant examples.

PART II: STRUCTURAL/DESIGN INFORMATION

A. General Description:

1. Overall: *Ena* is a gasoline powered fantail launch. The hull is wood, as is the pilothouse and deck cabin. It is an example of a common type of maritime transportation from the early part of the twentieth century before paved highways became common. The boat is 24'-11" long and has a beam of 7'-0".

2. Scantlings:

- a. Ribs: double 1-³/₄" x 1" oak at 8-¹/₂" o.c. Hull frames are steam bent, fantail frames are sawn.
- b. Hull Planking: ³/₄" mahogany
- c. Stern post knee: yew (varied dimensions)
- d. Engine Stringers: from 4-¹/₂" x 7-¹/₂" fir
- e. Hull ceiling: ¹/₂" fir

B. Mechanical Features:

1. Equipment: No original equipment is left on the boat. There is no record of original or replacement engines. The original engine was probably a Union or Standard single cylinder gasoline engine.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Primary Sources:

Bush, L. L. "Oystering on Willapa Bay." Willapa Harbor Pilot Special Edition, 1906. Reprinted in *The Sou'wester*, XL, no. 3, Fall 2005.

De Alessi, Michael. "Oysters and Willapa Bay." Competitive Enterprise Institute, 1996.

B. Secondary Sources:

"Willapa National Wildlife Refuge." United States Fish and Wildlife Service, 2007.

"Willapa Bay." Ruesink Lab, Department of Biology, University of Washington, Seattle.
<http://depts.washington.edu/jlrlab/willapabay.php>

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Stevens, Sydney. *Oysterville*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010.