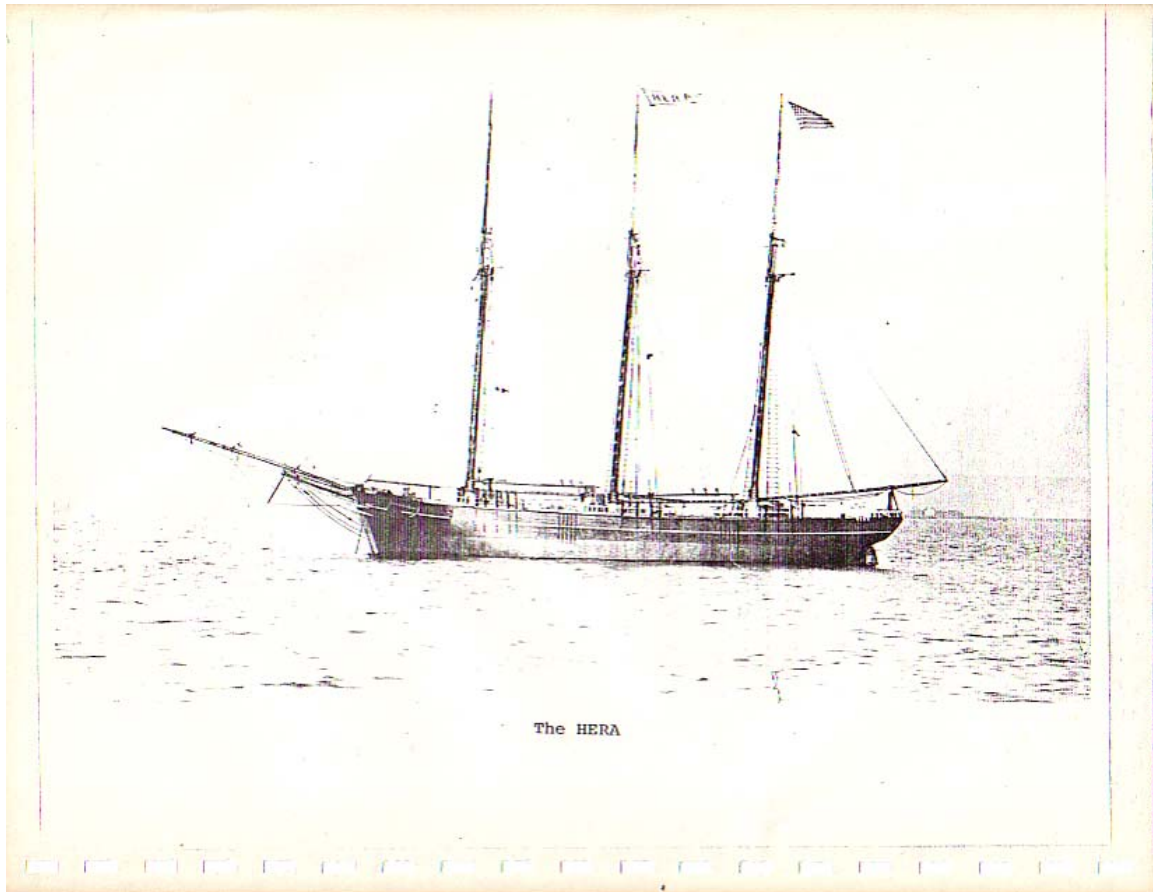


**A REPORT ON THE PROTECTIVE MARKING &  
INTERPRETATION OF THE HISTORIC SCHOONER  
*HERA* (DGS1-054) AND ASSOCIATED ARTIFACTS**



**PREPARED FOR THE  
CLAYOQUOT BIOSPHERE TRUST  
BY THE**



**JUNE 2007**

## **HISTORY**

The *HERA* was an American, three-masted schooner of 388.81 tons, built at Boston, Massachusetts in 1869.

On November 18<sup>th</sup> 1899 the *HERA* departed Seattle for Honolulu with a mixed cargo which included 60,000 bottles of Seattle Malting & Brewing Company's "Rainier" beer and 1000 barrels of Roche Harbour lime.

Aboard were Captain J.J. Warren, part-owner Mr. Shirk and his daughter Mabel, as well as fifteen crewmembers.

Of Cape Flattery the *HERA* sprung a leak, causing the lime cargo to begin to smoulder. Despite the efforts of the crew the fire became uncontrollable and the *HERA* drifted before the wind to finally come to anchor off Lennard Island, at the entrance to Clayoquot Sound. The Captain, passengers and crew reached safety by means of the ship's boat and the timely intervention of local residents.

Ultimately, the *HERA* drifted in to what is now Tofino Harbour and sank.

The wreck was located in 1974 when one of commercial crab fisherman John Svoboda's traps became entangled.

Local diver and marine historian Rod Palm identified the wreck as that of the *HERA* soon after its discovery.

The *HERA* was designated British Columbia's first protected underwater heritage site in 1975 (Borden # DgS1-054).

The wreck is located approximately one-third of a mile northeast of the northeastern point of Felice Island at position **49° 09.4' N by 125° 54.9' W**.

## **BACKGROUND**

In February of 2005 Tonquin Foundation divers determined that the wreck of the *HERA* had become inundated with numerous commercial crab traps which had and were causing substantial damage to the site.

In April of 2005 the Tonquin Foundation's Executive Director David Griffiths made application for an Alteration Permit, under the auspices of the Provincial Heritage Conservation Act to undertake the removal from the site of the commercial crab gear, to mark the site with temporary shipwreck marker buoys and to disseminate information on the location and significance of the site to the appropriate agencies.

In May of 2005 Alteration Permit 2005-162 was issued to Griffiths to undertake the work. Between May and August 2005, with the financial support of the Archaeological Planning & Assessment Section of the Archaeology Branch, of the then Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, the work was undertaken, which included the removal of a total of 30 traps and associated ground tackle and the installation of moorage anchors off the bow and stern of the wreck, with large green "Scotchman"-type buoys attached, marked "Wreck HERA".

See "**A Report On The Remedial Clean-Up & Protective Marking Of The Shipwreck *HERA* (DgS1-054) – Griffiths – 2005**".

Recommendations contained within the above-cited report included the installation at the site of permanent, Coastguard approved information buoy(s), a moorage system for visiting dive vessels, a series of underwater interpretive plaques, a bronze plaque and additional interpretive materials to accompany the *HERA*'s main anchor on display on the Tofino waterfront and the dissemination of the wreck's location and significance via Notice To Mariners and marking on future Canadian Hydrographic Service charts.

Between January and March of 2007 the Tonquin Foundation sought and received funding to implement the above-described recommendations from the Archaeological Planning & Assessment Section of the Archaeology Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust's Cultural Committee, the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District and the District of Tofino.

### **Information Buoys**

As a manufacturer/supplier of these type of specialized buoys could not easily be located in Canada the buoys were ordered and shipped from Rolyan Buoys of Cedarburg, Wisconsin, USA.

They consist of 2X9" diameter ABS-type cylindrical buoys, measuring 61 inches in total height, with 36" exposed above the surface when attached to the anchoring system.

The international orange, rectangular information symbol appears on both sides of the buoys, with a 3" orange reflective band above and a 2" orange non-reflective band below. The words "HERITAGE WRECK HERA" appear on both sides of the buoys in 3" black lettering.

The buoys are urethane-foam-filled, with concrete ballast (Net Weight=49lbs / Submerged Buoyancy=84lbs) and are equipped with a 1" diameter stainless steel mooring eye.

One information buoy was installed at the bow section of the wreck, with the second being kept as a replacement for future use.

### **Moorage Buoy**

A 75" diameter, red "Scotchman"-type moorage buoy with swivel moorage fitting and pick-up eye was installed off the stern section of the wreck.

The words "HERITAGE WRECK – TIE UP – DO NOT ANCHOR" appear in 4" black lettering.

The moorage buoy anchor is located some 7 metres off the actual stern of the wreck; an information plaque has been placed adjacent to the moorage anchor in such a configuration that when a visiting diver reads the text he or she will be oriented in the direction of the wreck's stern and a guide-line, tied off to the stern section, runs along the seafloor from the moorage anchor.

### **Ground Tackle**

Both the moorage and information buoys are attached to their respective 300lb concrete moorage anchors by means of 1" nylon braided line.

### **Underwater Information Plaques**

Five underwater information plaques were constructed and placed at suitable locations throughout the wrecksite.

The plaques consist of 5 X 9"x 11" Plexiglas "sandwiches" with text and logo(s) digitally printed and encased between the Plexiglas layers.

The top layer is clear; the bottom layer is black, so as to highlight the white text.

Quarter-inch holes are drilled in each corner of the plaques, which are affixed to 12"x14"x4" thick concrete bases by means of stainless steel bolts and anchors.

A plaque similar to the ones described above was placed at the site in 1985 and continues to be clearly legible and intact. Periodic inspection/maintenance dives are planned, however it is not foreseen that any major maintenance or repair will be required for decades.

(The text appearing on each underwater plaque appears on the following page)

“A Mixed Cargo”

The *HERA*'s 700 ton cargo included 60,000 quart bottles of Seattle Malting & Brewing Company “Rainier” beer, packed in straw in 1000 oak-staved barrels.

A number of the intact barrels are stenciled with the Hawaiian importers name “Lovejoy & Co. Honolulu”, with some of the packed bottles still retaining their labels, corks and contents.

In addition to the beer the cargo included 1800 barrels of Roche Harbour lime. Many of the barrels have long since disintegrated, leaving the solidified lime molded into the shape of the barrels.

11 grand pianos are also listed on the *HERA*'s manifest but to date no trace of these items have been located.

“Lost at Sea”

Originally owned by bankers Herman Chapin and E.C. Neufelder, the *HERA* spent her early years crisscrossing the Pacific between San Francisco and Australia.

It was on one of these voyages in 1870 that the *HERA* was thrust into the international limelight when her first mate was washed overboard to his death. Not a particularly unusual incident at face value perhaps, except that the lost sailor turned out to be none other than George Gordon, the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Aberdeen and the eccentric heir to the Gordon Distillery fortune, for whom scores of private detectives had been scouring the globe.

In 1873 the *HERA* joined numerous other fast sailing vessels in the lucrative trade between San Francisco and Portland, Oregon.

“In Distress”

With the discovery of gold at Nome, Alaska in 1893 the aging *HERA* was pressed into service transporting the massive rush of miners north.

In October of 1899 the old schooner was front page news when she was reported in distress off Cape Flattery, Washington State, with two hundred returning miners aboard. Her captain indicated that he was short of supplies; an understatement indeed, given that most aboard were in a state of starvation, with two of their number having already perished from hunger.

Upon the stricken schooner's rescue by the tug *SEA LION* and the U.S. Revenue Cutter *GRANT* the *HERA* was towed into Seattle Harbour where she underwent \$1500.00 worth of repairs prior to departing on what would be her final voyage.

“By this time the ship was red hot”

On the evening of November 25<sup>th</sup> 1899 Mrs. Spain of Clayoquot, the wife of Provincial Constable Frederick Spain, wrote to a friend;

*“We have had great excitement here all day. At about 10 o'clock Fred (Constable Spain) and several others sighted a ship at sea flying a flag of distress.*

*They thought she was on a rock so Fred and five others decided to go out to her, even though there was a terrible sea running.*

*When they got to the ship after a long, hard pull they found it to be on fire and six desperate men ready to jump into the boat as soon as she came near enough.*

*Of course if they had done this the boat would have been swamped and all drowned, and it was only by standing up with axes in hand and calling out that the first man to jump would be killed that this was prevented.*

*By this time the ship was red hot”.*

“One of the most awful sights”

Six local residents risked their lives in an open boat to save the stranded crew of the *HERA*.

They included Phillip Jacobsen at the tiller, a Mr. Brewster and British Columbia Provincial Police Constable Frederick Spain.

The *HERA* incident is credited by some as being the impetus for the establishment of an official lifeboat station in the Clayoquot/Tofino area.

Abandoned, the *HERA* ultimately drifted with the tide into Tofino Harbour.

Constable Spain's wife would write to a friend;

*“As I write she (the *HERA*) is just in front of the house, one of the grandest yet one of the most awful sights I have ever seen.*

*The whole room is lit up, and I have only to turn my head to see her.*

*She is one mass of roaring flame, and it is a very black night, the whole harbour is lit up”.*

### **Bronze Interpretive Plaque**

A bronze, interpretive plaque was commissioned to be displayed with the *HERA's* main anchor which has been on public display in Grice Park, on Tofino's waterfront for a number of years.

The plaque measures 12" x 16" and is set in a raised concrete plinth on the concrete pad upon which the anchor is located.

In addition to the interpretive text, the emblems of the Province of British Columbia, the District of Tofino, the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust and the Tonquin Foundation appear upon it.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> 2007 the plaque was publicly unveiled.

Local dignitaries and members of the general public were in attendance, with refreshments being supplied.

Additional interpretive display materials are currently being designed for installation in Grice Park, in the vicinity of the *HERA's* anchor.

### **FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
2 x Coastguard Approved Information Buoys + Shipping & Customs/Brokerage Charges	\$700.00
75" Scotchman-type Moorage Buoy	\$209.05
120 feet of 1 inch diameter Nylon Braided Line	\$363.68
Lettering for Moorage Buoy	\$ 4.15
5 x U/W Plexiglas Interpretive Plaques (Speedpro Signs)	\$452.00
Cement & Fittings for U/W Plaques	\$ 69.14
Surface & U/W Plaque Text, Layout & Report Preparation	\$250.00
Public Event (Grice Park Inauguration – Anchor Plaque Unveiling)	\$ 74.81
U/W Plaque Construction – Setting of Site Buoys & Plaques (Vessel Hire, Divers & Support)	\$785.46
U/W Videographer & Unit Hire	\$212.00
Bronze Interpretive Plaque (Grice Park Anchor)	\$1241.87
Grice Park Interpretive Displays	\$ 758.13
<b><u>Total to Date</u></b>	<b><u>\$5120.29</u></b>

### **Conclusions & Follow-up**

It is hoped that this project will serve to protect and interpret the wreck of the *HERA* for many years to come, for both the diving and non-diving public alike.

By placing a Coastguard-approved information buoy at the site and having it marked on Canadian Hydrographic Service charts it is hoped that mariners (and in particular the commercial crab fleet) will be alerted to its presence, significance and fragile condition.

The moorage system will allow dive support vessels to moor at the site without anchoring, so as to lessen the detrimental affect of anchors disturbing and/or damaging the site.

The underwater interpretive plaques will enhance the experience for divers visiting the site. Similarly, the interpretive materials which accompany the *HERA*'s anchor in Grice Park will hopefully alert the non-diving public to one aspect of the area's rich maritime heritage and enhance their appreciation of it.

Commercial crab traps that have become fouled on the wreck since the original remedial clean-up in 2005 and prior to the placing of the information and moorage buoys in 2007 will be removed pending issue of an Alteration Permit from Archaeology Branch.

The wrecksite will be monitored periodically by the Tonquin Foundation in order to gauge the success of this project.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Tonquin Foundation would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their support, interest, advice and participation:

The Archaeology Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts

The Parks & Recreation Department of the District of Tofino

The Clayoquot Biosphere Trust

The Alberni Clayoquot Regional District

The Navigable Waters Protection Department of Transport Canada

The Canadian Hydrographic Service

The Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia

Method Marine Supply

Shark Salvage

Schooner Restaurant

Rolyan Buoys

Speedpro Signs



Information & Moorage Buoys



Underwater Information Plaque



Hera Anchor & Bronze Plaque



Bronze Plaque in Grice Park