



# KEEPING YOU INFORMED

## S.S. Klondike National Historic Site of Canada

APRIL 2007

The S.S. Klondike National Historic Site of Canada commemorates inland water transportation in the Yukon. It is a representative of the Yukon steamers and other vessels. It is part of a Canada-wide family of special places.

### Restoration Work

In 1996, an inspection of the S.S. Klondike's hull uncovered a serious rot problem that extended from the bow to the stern. In response, Parks Canada invested more than \$2.2 million from 1999–2004 to restore the historic sternwheeler. Extensive renovations included rot repairs, re-canvassing and repainting.

Stage I of the project began in the summer of 2000. The focus was on replacing rotten planks and ribs throughout the hull. It was a massive and labour-intensive job. More than half of the workers required for the project were hired locally.

A historic ship's head saw was located on site to cut the outside carvel planking.



Stage II focused on eliminating all rot on the bow's wear deck. The bow deck was rebuilt and replaced and the paddle was rebuilt and repainted.

Parks Canada is extremely proud of the restoration work done on the S.S. Klondike. The work was done in record time using experienced craftsmen who had just completed work on the S.S. Keno in Dawson.

The project was managed by Pat Habiluk of Public Works Canada. Parks Canada Asset Management staff continued normal operational and main-



tenance work on the vessel throughout the project. Their expertise and knowledge of the vessel was greatly appreciated. Parks staff interpreted aspects of the restoration work to the general public.

This newsletter has recent news about the S.S. Klondike National Historic Site and provides an update on management initiatives that have occurred over the last five years. The management plan for the S.S. Klondike was completed in 2004 and is the primary tool Parks Canada uses to manage national historic sites.

In the coming months, look for further information on the review of the current management plan. We welcome your questions and comments.



### Sprinkler system

A 2003 report indicated that severe problems existed with the sprinkler system on the *S.S. Klondike*. The system was corroded and the report recommended that the problem be fixed. Replacement of the system began in 2004.

Since the *S.S. Klondike* is a historic site, great care had to be taken in replacing the system so that it met all new code requirements without compromising the vessel's historic integrity. The total cost of the sprinkler system replacement was \$250,000.



### Security system upgrade

The security of the *S.S. Klondike* is a high priority for Parks Canada. In 2003 the vessel's security system was upgraded at a cost of \$10,000. This included the installation of additional video surveillance cameras and motion detectors on the vessel. The system was converted from telephone to a high-speed DSL cable.

In 2004 additional heat sensors were installed within the hull of the *S.S. Klondike* as part of the sprinkler system upgrades.

More cameras and motion detectors will be installed on the boat during 2007.



### Heritage presentation

From 1985 to 2005 the visitor services and heritage presentation program at the *S.S. Klondike* was delivered through contract or licence of occupation agreements. These arrangements were successful but presented difficulties in terms of message control and managing the site's corporate image.

It became apparent that the heritage presentation program needed to be delivered by Parks Canada in order to meet the goals and key actions defined in the site management plan.

The first operational season was 2005–2006. Seven Parks Canada staff were employed on the boat, including three "Young Canada Works" students. The *S.S. Klondike* continues to anchor the visitor experience of the Whitehorse waterfront and truly is a focal point for the city.

### Site visitors 2000–2005

Over the last five years the number of visitors to the *S.S. Klondike* (shown below ca. 1940) has decreased by up to ten percent per year (from 20,385 visitors in 2000 to 13,847 visitors in 2005). After reduced visitation from 2000 to 2005, visitation was on the rise again in 2006, with 14,806 visitors to the site.



### Special events

In the past few years Parks Canada has looked for opportunities to increase the number of new programs and special events offered on the boat, with the Boat Builders Ball being of particular interest to many people in Whitehorse. Parks Canada continues to look for opportunities to work with the private sector on staging other events.



### How to contact us

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