



# TAHOE MARITIMES

VOLUME 15 • ISSUE 3 FALL 2011

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Museum Assistant  
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## VISIT US

Tahoe Maritime Museum  
5205 West Lake Blvd.  
P.O. Box 627  
Homewood, CA 96141  
Truckee Annex  
10434 River Park Place  
Truckee, CA 96161  
(530) 525-WAKE (9253)  
(530) 525-WAVE (9283) fax  
info@TahoeMaritime.org  
www.TahoeMaritime.org

## FALL/WINTER HOURS

Open 10 am to 5 pm  
Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays

Admission: \$5;  
Museum Members and youth  
under 12, free



## How the Museum benefits the community

**A**nother successful summer season is wrapping up at Lake Tahoe. As we finish the year and make plans for the future, it is appropriate to reflect on the benefits of having a maritime museum at Lake Tahoe. As a history museum, we focus on preservation and interpretation of Tahoe's maritime history, which benefits different constituents in the community at large.

For the local community, we provide a year-round cultural experience. Our education program supplements and enhances local school programs. By changing our exhibits and through new public programs like our lecture series, we explore and understand different facets of maritime life at the Lake. Our emphasis on living history leads to getting more people on the Lake with its unique perspective. As historian Wendell Barry has said, "If you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are." The museum helps the community better understand itself by improving its sense of place.

The Lake's natural beauty and exceptional history attract visitors from around the world. Our collection now contains vessels and artifacts with international as well as Tahoe significance making Tahoe a destination for boating enthusiasts. So far this year, we have had visitors from 34 states and 12 different countries. We work hard to enrich the visitor experience providing fresh perspectives as they return from their travels.

Since opening in Homewood in 2002, we have provided a fun, educational experience for chil-

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Tom Bredt



dren. We have organized tours and drop-in activities for all age groups. By stimulating young people's interest in the Lake, we help prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead.

Stimulating tourism and enhancing the quality of life also provides economic benefits to the area. Visitors use local restaurants, stores and overnight lodging. The Lake becomes a more attractive place for second homeowners. As we work to be recognized as a leading history museum, we provide meaningful, professional careers for our staff. Maintenance of our facilities, care for our collection and need for accounting and other professional services helps sustain other local businesses.

These benefits would not be possible without the continued support of our members. We thank you for your past support and ask that you make a contribution to our Annual Fund drive this year. While we have accomplished a great deal, much remains to be done. As always, if you have suggestions on how to make our programs even better, please contact us.

Tom Bredt, Board President



DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT  
by Jesse Siess-Hadley

First, thank you to everyone for such a wonderful summer! Between the ACBS South Lake Tahoe Show, Tahoe Yacht Club Foundation's *Concours d'Elegance*, member events, open houses, lectures, and Family Days, we have been non-stop here at the museum. Our attendance numbers reflect this and are soaring. Now the boats have been pulled from the water and things are calming down...but that does not mean we will be slowing down!

This fall and winter, we have many things planned. We will be working on our next exhibit and programs featuring Lake Tahoe boats of the 1920s. The staff and Board have already sketched out a very exciting calendar for 2012 and I am looking forward to all the new things planned, along with our old favorites.

We are also sad to announce that our Museum Assistant Jordan Smith is off on a new adventure in Australia. Even though she was with us a short time, she was able to get a great deal of work done for the museum and has been a huge asset. In turn, we are excited to bring Katena Sanford on board and she has already been a great benefit to the museum and has just jumped right in.

In this current newsletter, our feature article speaks of what role the museum plays with its main artifacts, the boats. One of the challenges we face is making members and other community members aware of what it means for a vessel to become part of our collection. No longer is it a personal boat, it is now an artifact, and what, exactly does that mean? I hope that Christine Shook and I are able to help clear this up with our article.

I draw a great deal from my past museum experience, and in particular with

my time working for the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) at their site, Drayton Hall, in Charleston, South Carolina. Drayton Hall is one of the finest examples of preservation over restoration, and while the NTHP practices both restoration and preservation, understanding what each entails means a great deal to all museums.

**2011 Annual Fund**

Our Annual Fund Appeal is in full swing and with your help and 100% Board support, we have raised more than \$30,000 as of printing, toward our goal of \$50,000. These are just some of the things that our Annual Fund helps us accomplish:

► **BOATS**

Unlike most museums, our artifacts are regularly used on the water. This

means that care for our objects is more costly than for a piece of art that hangs on the wall. For four years we have had one of our boats on the water for member use as the Ride Boat. In order to continue this tradition, each vessel needs to be assessed, restored, and kept in safe working order. There is so much more that goes into keeping the boats working, but they truly bring history to life.

► **EDUCATION**

For most, the reason a museum exists is to teach young and old alike. The Tahoe Maritime Museum strives to create and implement dynamic programs that are informative and yet fun and entertaining to nourish a love for maritime history. Our goal is to continue the expansion of school tours, traveling trunks, and family public programming.

► **RESEARCH and EXHIBITS**

In May 2011, the museum saw its first major exhibit change since its grand opening in 2008. Our new exhibit plan calls for a change of the main exhibit every year, which not only entails moving boats, but a great deal of time and research. We are excited to share stories that have not been heard before with members and the public.

Our board is committed to helping achieve the Annual Fund goal. Please support them in their efforts to provide the best museum experience in the Lake Tahoe basin.

**Planned Giving**

There are many ways to give to the museum and one way is through planned giving. There are many ways in which you can do so, from a gift on an IRA, through a will or bequest, or insurance. Remembering the Tahoe Maritime Museum this way is greatly appreciated and essential to our financial stability.

If you would like to find out more about how your legacy can help the museum, please contact Jesse at 530.525.9253, ext. 101 or Jesse@tahoemaritimemuseum.org.

Memorial Gifts in memory of  
**Bryte Johnson**  
June 24, 1935 ~ September 10, 2011

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# ANNUAL FUND DONATIONS

June 16 through October 20, 2011

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South Lake Tahoe Yacht Club  
Swiss Lakewood  
Chambers Landing Restaurant and Bar

## Membership

I/we would like to join the Tahoe Maritime Museum and share in the Lake's rich maritime history.

PLEASE CHECK:

- New Membership  
 Renewing Membership  
 Gift Membership

FAMILY:  \$40  \$100  \$200  \$300  \$500

FRIEND OF THE MUSEUM:  \$1,000  \$2,500

## Annual Fund

I/we would like to help the Museum's mission by making the following donation to the Museum's Annual Fund in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**Thank You!**

Tahoe Maritime Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

## TAHOE MARITIME MUSEUM

P.O. Box 627, Homewood, CA 96141 • PHONE (530) 525-9253 • FAX (530) 525-9283

[www.tahoemaritime.org](http://www.tahoemaritime.org)

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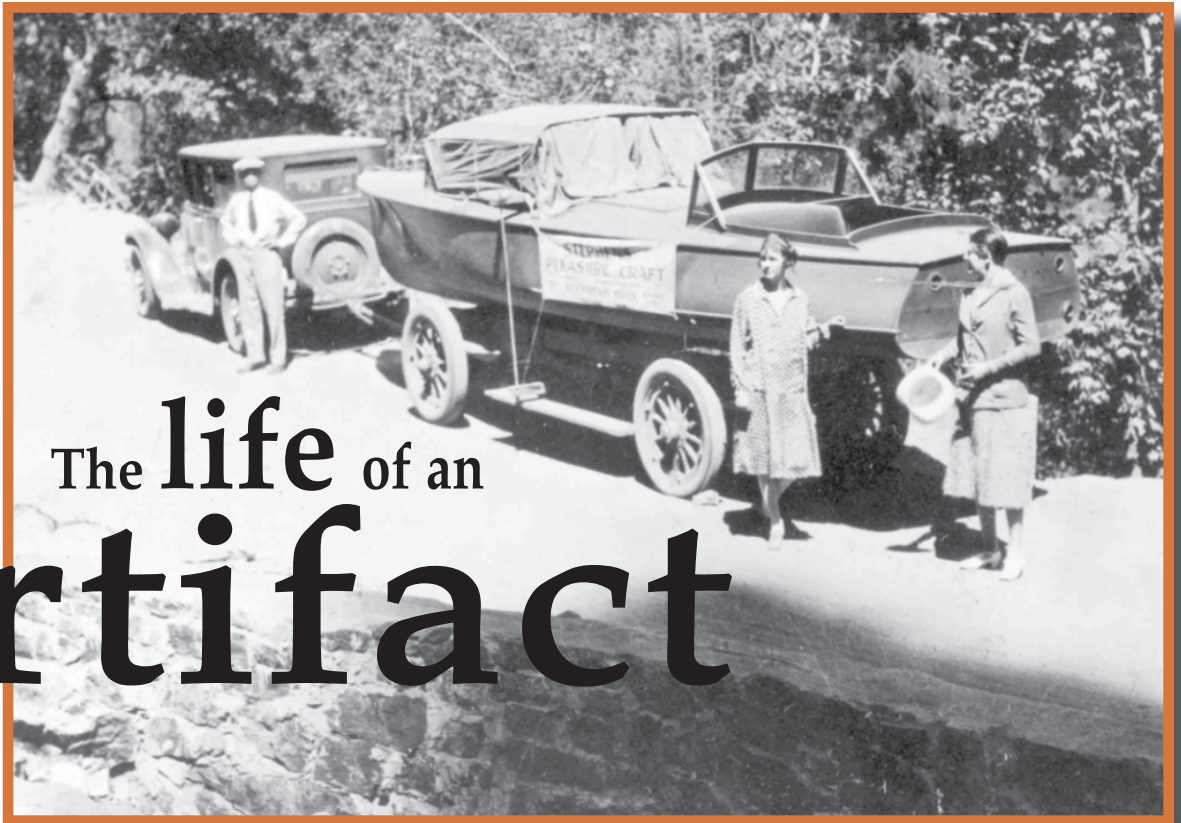
My check for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (*Payable to Tahoe Maritime Museum*)

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# The life of an artifact

Artifacts in museums are as varied as one can imagine. From pickled pigs, to Picasso, to large military tanks, to ancient twigs, almost anything one can imagine has found its way into museum collections. Once an object comes into a museum it sheds its past life to take on a new role, but what exactly does it mean to be an “artifact”?

The main role of a museum artifact is to tell a story. Curators examine the object and its history so that they can then interpret and share that story. Artifacts need not be perfect and shiny. Often times it is the bumps and holes, and the wear and tear that object received along the way that reveal the best part of the story. One of the foremost examples of such an artifact in TMM’s current collection is the *Florence M II*.

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Image (above) courtesy of the Haggin Museum, Stockton, Calif. Note the rounded bilge that was part of the *Florence M II* original configuration

Elliot Edmund Morse first towed the 26-ft. Stephens Brothers runabout named *Florence M II* to Lake Tahoe in 1925. The Stephens developed their boats with speed in mind. They knew their primary customers—agricultural brokers—needed to travel quickly in order to ensure the best possible prices for their products, and as a rancher in Lodi, Morse would have been well aware of and influenced by the company’s reputation when purchasing *Florence M II*. After purchasing

her, the family undoubtedly made their trip up the mountain imagining the many fun times they planned to have behind their new runabout.

At about the same time *Florence* and her family were making their way to their Lake home, Edwin Letts Oliver and his cohorts sat down to form an organization that they hoped would “promote sociability, power boating and other aquatic sports and good sportsmanship on Lake Tahoe.” This new group became known as the Tahoe Power Boat Club (later the Tahoe Yacht Club).

In order to advance their mission the group took to organizing annual regattas in which boats of various makes and models competed to be the fastest on the lake; Morse’s daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Morse Skinner, was keen to earn that title but she knew that the agricultural racer, *Florence M II*, wouldn’t stand a chance against the racing pedigrees of Gar Wood and Chris-Craft boats without a bit of modification.

Skinner quickly went to work modifying her family boat. She ordered hard chines added to the rounded-bilge and replaced

This modern photo shows *Florence M II* with the addition of the hard chines and the altered exhaust.



the 125-hp Scripps F-6 motor with a 175-hp Chrysler Crown engine. In order to accommodate the new, faster engine, the gas tank had to be relocated behind the rear cockpit and the exhaust pipe moved to the starboard side.

Racing at a time that women racers were rather scarce, Skinner took no chances when it came time for the regattas. When the club declared that there had to be two riders per boat, Skinner turned the requirement to her advantage. Skinner's

niece Marilyn Bewley recalled that while the other boats had two grown men in the cockpit, Skinner ensured her boat stay light and quick by calling on her then 12-year-old niece to ride alongside her.

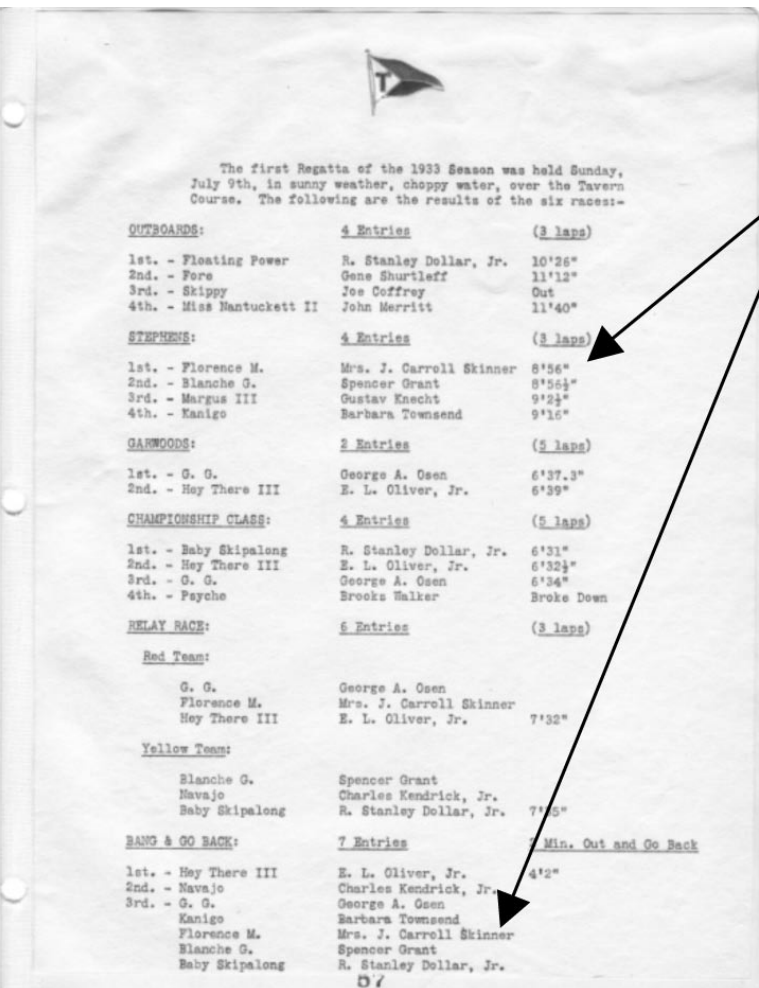
Bewley viewed the races with a mixture of fear and excitement as she fought to stay in the boat by clinging to Florence's dashboard, while her aunt fought to reduce her speed by cutting in as close to the buoys as she could. Despite the intensity during the race, Bewley attests

that the Tahoe Power Boat Club's goal of promoting sociability and good sportsmanship stayed at the top of everyone's lists.

The changes that Skinner made to the boat would undoubtedly make any modern day *Concours d'Elegance* judge's head spin, but they are a sign of the competitive nature that the Tahoe Power Boat Club encouraged and that Evelyn Morse Skinner embodied. If *Florence M II* was still a member of the private boating world she would probably be taken back to factory specifics. As the will of the owner, this would be perfectly acceptable and greatly ease the nerves of the judges. However, as a museum artifact her new life calls on these alterations to tell the stories of her life and the lives of those she encountered.

By maintaining her in the same condition that she was donated, we preserve the visual elements that will connect museum visitors to the stories of the development of the Tahoe Power Boat Club, the fighting spirit of the Morse and Skinner families, and ultimately the importance of Lake Tahoe's maritime history.

**Christine Shook and Jesse Siess Hadley**  
with contributions by Ross and Marilyn Bewley



These results from the 1933 Tahoe Power Boat Regatta reveal Skinner and Florence's victory in the Stephens category and loss in the Bang & Go Back relay race.

## Call for photos...

We are in need of photos of **boats on Lake Tahoe from 1969 and before**. We are more than happy to scan and return the photo(s) to you if you are not ready to donate yet. This is imperative to helping us build up our collection, continue our research and create unique exhibits.

Do you have a copy of the book

- **Tahoe Heritage: the Bliss Family of Glenbrook, Nevada**, by Sessions S. Wheeler with William Bliss or
- **The Railroads and Steamers of Lake Tahoe** by Owen F. McKeon?"



If you have copies of these books (above) that you are willing to donate to the museum library or photos to add to our collection, please contact:

Christine Shook, Exhibits Associate  
Christine@tahoemaritime.org  
530.525.9253, ext 104



EDUCATION  
CORNER  
by Corey Moffat

## New content and structure for museum educational programs

As summer winds down on the Lake, the museum is preparing for a busy fall full of school field trips and other educational opportunities. Our school visit program has been revitalized with new content and structure to better offer the students an educational and interactive experience. Flyers have been distributed to all local school districts with our first school group visit of the fall on October 7.

Teachers visiting the museum now have the option of selecting two or three additional sessions to add on to their museum tour experience. Options include:

- Industry Steamships, which compares logging and tourism through the use of steamships;
- Mapping Tahoe, which teaches about coordinate mapping and lake geography;
- Tahoe Fishing, which looks into local fish and historical fishing techniques;
- Native vs Invasive Species, which explores the native ecosystem to see what is native;
- Nautical Knots, which teaches different knots and explains their uses; and
- Does It Float? which explores why some things sink and others float.

In these sessions, students will learn specific standards-based information on each of the topics through fun and engaging games that will be sure to have them smiling as well as learning.

### Travelling Trunk

Besides school visits, the museum is also in the final stages of establishing its Travelling Trunk program. This mobile presentation will go into classrooms rather than requiring students to travel to the museum. Students will learn about the history of the Lake and experience some

of the incredible resources of the museum. The Travelling Trunk program will add an exciting option to the museum's educational offerings.

### Goin' Fishing

Finally, the museum is also excited to continue to participate in children and family days throughout the local area. On October 1-2, we took part in the U.S. Forest Service-sponsored Kokanee Salmon Festival, where we set up our magnetic fishing game that teaches children about the fish of the lake and about historical fishing practices. The two-day event, at the Taylor Creek Visitor Center next to Camp Richardson, saw an estimated 400 kids pass through the museum's station.

The event also saw new employee Katena Sanford get her maritime education feet wet by running the station for an entire day. Great job, Katena!

## Introducing new Museum Assistant Katena Sanford

Katena Sanford grew up in Livermore, though she frequently



trekked to Lake Tahoe with her family to explore. She received her bachelor's degree in 2010 in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism

Administration from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo where she was involved in planning community events and races. She spent one more year in sunny San Luis Obispo as a naturalist for Rancho Outdoor School, teaching kids about environmental science and leading classroom groups on wilderness hikes. This summer she worked for Tahoe Meadows Historic District in South Lake Tahoe as summer supervisor, coordinating and running the community's events. She is thrilled to be our museum assistant, learn how the Museum runs, interact with the community, and take in all the fascinating Tahoe history.



Children learn about Lake Tahoe fish and historical fishing practices with the museum's magnetic fishing game set up (above) on October 16 for Truckee River Day River Fair at the Granite Flat campground and, earlier in the month, at the U.S. Forrest Service's Kokanee Salmon Festival at the Taylor Creek Visitor Center adjacent to Camp Richardson.

## New co-chairs for 2012 Friends

The museum's Friends marked their 10th anniversary with an annual dinner on August 29 and the announcement of new co-chairs—Nancy Cunningham and Steve Lind pictured below—for the coming year. The team will lead the program, begun in 2002 by Paul and Suzanne Walker and chaired since 2006 by Rich and Sue Stout.

While providing the financial 'keel' for



Steve Lind and Nancy Cunningham

the museum with membership contributions of at least \$1,000 each year, Tahoe Maritime Museum's Friends enjoy the camaraderie of other Friends at social events planned just for them. This year included a casual Sunday brunch in the museum's parking lot in July, along with the more formal annual dinner catered on the lawn of Friend Kay Turner's "Play-time" in Homewood. To learn more about the benefits of the Friends program, visit [www.TahoeMaritime.org](http://www.TahoeMaritime.org).

Thank you **A&M Marine** for being our first **Business Member!**



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# TAHOE MARITIME MUSEUM

P. O. Box 627  
HOMEWOOD, CA 96141

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**December 2 thru 18 - Toy Drive**, FREE admission when you  
bring a new toy donation for Toys for Tots.

About Us • Collections • News & Events  
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Olga and Bill Keever (foreground) stand ready for their made-to-order omelets at the Friends' July Sunday brunch at the museum.



(Above) Doug and Pam Elmore; (right) Ross and Marilyn Bewley pose with the brunch 'center-piece,' *Florence M II*, which Marilyn raced as a young girl.



On the lawn at Turners' Playtime for the Friends' annual August dinner: BJ Miller and Fred Gellert (left) and Steve and Cheryl Caplan

## Friends

...brunch at the Museum;  
dinner at "Playtime"



STORY:  
PAGE 7

PHOTOS:  
ROY DRYER III



Jeanie and Gordon MacAulay with Wes Schimmelpfennig (center)