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ON THE COVER:

The SD Aisemaht, a RAsalvor 4400-DFM escort and rescue tug, as designed by Robert Allan Ltd. for KOTUG Canada.
Photo provided by Robert Allan Ltd.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the fall issue of *B.C. Tugboat* magazine, where we take a closer look at the people, vessels, and companies that keep British Columbia's tugboat industry moving.

From the wheelhouse to the engine room, on deck and on shore, this is a business built on experience, trust, and knowing how to get the job done when conditions aren't always ideal.

That is particularly true in British Columbia. Our waters can be demanding, our weather can change quickly, and the work doesn't stop because it's a long weekend or the forecast isn't cooperating.

In this issue, we look at some of the people and companies behind that work. We also look at how new vessels and technology are changing how the work gets done, along with some of the projects and operations taking place around the coast.

Thank you for reading, and thank you to everyone who spends their days, nights, and weekends keeping B.C.'s tugboat fleet working. 🐟



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Navigating uncertainty: The outlook for British Columbia's tug industry



Provided by Robert Allan Ltd.

British Columbia's tug industry has always been closely tied to the health of international trade, resource exports, and marine transportation. Today, operators face a challenging environment shaped by global trade uncertainty, elevated fuel costs, and continued pressure on operating margins. Yet despite these headwinds, there are strong reasons for optimism as a new wave of marine infrastructure, energy, and port development projects takes shape throughout the province.

Ongoing tariff disputes, shifting supply chains, and geopolitical tensions have created volatility in cargo volumes moving through Canadian ports. Export-dependent industries such as forestry, mining, and agriculture continue to experience fluctuations in demand, making long-term planning more difficult for marine service providers. Tug operators must often make investment decisions years in advance while facing uncertainty about future vessel traffic and cargo movements.

At the same time, fuel prices continue to challenge profitability. Marine diesel remains a major operating expense for tug fleets, and the significantly increased prices can have a meaningful impact on operating costs. Rising carbon compliance costs and emissions regulations add another layer of complexity. Labour availability and certainty also remain a concern. Like many sectors of the marine industry, tug operators face an aging workforce and increasing competition for experienced mariners. Recruiting and retaining qualified crews has become both more difficult and more expensive, particularly as vessel technologies become more sophisticated and regulatory requirements continue to shift with an unclear timeline on resolution.

Despite these challenges, the outlook for British Columbia's tug market remains positive.

The Port of Vancouver and Prince Rupert continue to demonstrate resilience and growth, supported by increasing trade with Asian markets and rising

export volumes. Recent cargo records highlight the long-term importance of Canada's West Coast gateway and reinforce the need for reliable harbour, escort, and towing services. The continued success of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project has also generated sustained demand for escort tug operations and marine safety services, creating stable long-term employment opportunities within the sector. Construction at both the Cedar and Woodfibre LNG terminals is advancing quickly and will build on the strong successes of LNG Canada which benefits the whole country.

Looking further ahead, several major projects offer significant opportunities. The proposed Roberts Bank Terminal 2 expansion will increase container handling capacity and drive additional vessel traffic through the region. Meanwhile, investments in LNG infrastructure, including the expansion of FortisBC's Tilbury LNG facility, support growing marine fuel demand and broader industrial development throughout the

Lower Mainland. These projects have the potential to generate decades of additional marine activity requiring tug support.

The industry is also benefiting from technological innovation. British Columbia is emerging as a leader in low-emission and alternative-fuel tug development. New battery-electric, hybrid, and dual-fuel escort tug designs are helping operators reduce fuel

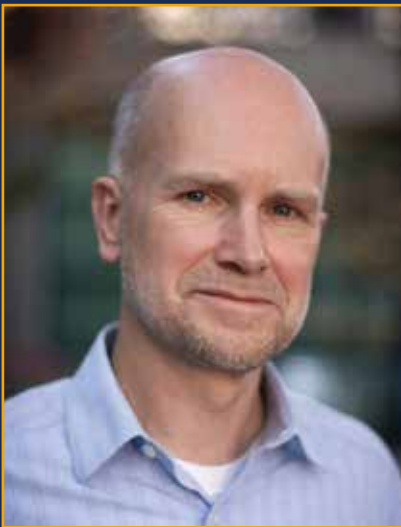
consumption, lower emissions, and improve long-term operating economics with B.C.'s access to zero-emission, low-cost electricity. These advances position the province's tug sector to remain competitive while meeting increasingly demanding environmental standards.

While short-term uncertainty is likely to remain a feature of the business landscape, the long-

term fundamentals supporting British Columbia's tug market are strong. Continued port expansion, growing energy exports, investment in marine infrastructure, and the adoption of new technologies provide a solid foundation for future growth. For operators willing to adapt and invest strategically, the years ahead offer significant opportunities despite today's challenges. 🐟

Vince den Hertog

April 1966 – August 2026



***Forever in our thoughts.
Fair winds and following seas.***

1989, he began his career in the sub-sea robotics industry, contributing to the development of both manned and unmanned vehicle systems. He later returned to UBC to earn his Master of Applied Science in Aerodynamics and Control before joining Robert Allan Ltd. in 2001 as a project engineer.

Throughout his time with us, Vince brought care, precision, and remarkable depth of expertise to every project. His work in structural analysis, propulsion, hydrodynamics, HVAC, vibration analysis, and marine systems helped shape many of the vessels and innovations that define our company's work. As Vice President of Engineering and coordinator of research and development, he guided teams with quiet confidence and helped

foster the technical excellence that continues to inspire us.

More than his many professional accomplishments, Vince will be remembered for his generosity, dedication to his colleagues, and the calm, thoughtful way he approached challenges. We are grateful for the time we had with him and for the lasting impact he made on our team and our industry.

We send our heartfelt condolences to Vince's family, friends, colleagues, and all who had the privilege of knowing and working with him.

— The Robert Allan Ltd. team. 🐟



ROBERT ALLAN

We are deeply saddened by the passing of our friend and colleague, Vince den Hertog, MAsc, P.Eng. Vince was a key part of Robert Allan Ltd. for more than two decades, and his presence, knowledge, and steady leadership will be deeply missed.

Vince's career reflected a lifelong curiosity and love of engineering. After graduating from the University of British Columbia as a mechanical engineer in

Seaspan readies for Canada's next generation of submarines



Seaspan Shipyards is preparing to take on a major role in sustaining Canada's next fleet of submarines after the federal government selected ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) as the strategic build partner for the Canadian Patrol Submarine Project (CPSP).

The announcement puts Seaspan in line to support the new fleet through its Victoria Shipyards operation in Esquimalt, where the company has maintained Royal Canadian Navy submarines for decades.

Seaspan and TKMS signed a teaming agreement in January to support the CPSP. Canada will also become part of the 212CD submarine program involving Germany and Norway, bringing the country into a multinational program with experience in submarine operations, Arctic conditions, sustainment and NATO interoperability.

For Seaspan, the focus now turns to building on its existing submarine maintenance capability and supporting the development of a Canadian sustainment program for the new fleet.

"Canada has made a generational decision about

its security and sovereignty today and Seaspan, as part of the integrated sustainment team, is ready to answer that call," says John McCarthy, CEO of Seaspan Shipyards.

"We have spent more than 20 years building up the specialized expertise and a highly qualified Canadian team who can perform this work. Seaspan will provide the comprehensive through-life support this fleet requires, entirely within Canada. Today marks a new chapter for this country's defence industrial base, and Seaspan is immensely proud to be a part of it."

Victoria Shipyards currently maintains Canada's Victoria-class submarines and has more than 30 years of experience working on Royal Canadian Navy submarines and ships. The yard employs more than 1,000 people, including more than 300 technicians and tradespeople working in its submarine program.

That existing workforce will be an important part of Canada's effort to develop a domestic sustainment capability for the new fleet.

The federal government has identified sovereign



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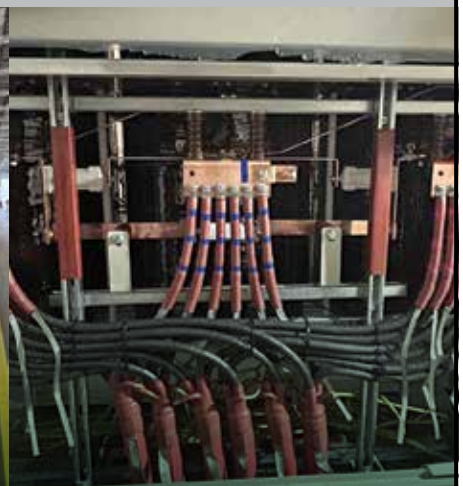
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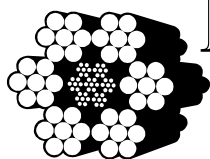
sustainment on both the West and East coasts as a priority for the CPSP. The planned capability will bring together the Royal Canadian Navy, the Maritime Equipment Program, Fleet Maintenance Facilities, and Canadian industry.

For Canadian suppliers and skilled trades, the submarine program is expected to extend well beyond the delivery of the vessels themselves. Maintaining the fleet over its service life will require specialized skills, infrastructure, engineering support, training, and a domestic supply chain.

"We look forward to working with Canada and TKMS in support of CPSP, bringing this tremendous capability to the Royal Canadian Navy's future submarine fleet for decades to come," says McCarthy.

Canada expects to acquire up to 12 new diesel-electric, ice-capable submarines under the CPSP. The new boats will replace the Victoria-class fleet, with the first submarine expected to be delivered in the mid-2030s.

For Seaspan, the next phase of the program represents an opportunity to carry its existing submarine expertise into a new generation of Canadian naval capability while keeping much of the work at home. 🇨🇦

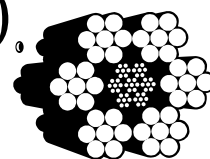


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That reality makes dependable maintenance partners and strong safety programs essential components of a successful marine operation.

At Arrow Marine Services, both priorities recently came together with the achievement

of Certificate of Recognition (COR) certification through the Occupational Safety Standard of Excellence (OSSE) program. The certification marks an important milestone in the company's ongoing commitment to safety, operational excellence, and customer service.

Capilano Maritime Design Ltd.

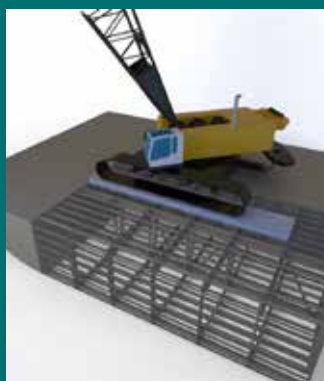
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Achieving COR certification required more than a year of preparation, system reviews, and continuous improvement initiatives. Following an independent audit, Arrow Marine earned a final score of 89 per cent, demonstrating that its occupational health and safety management systems meet recognized provincial standards.

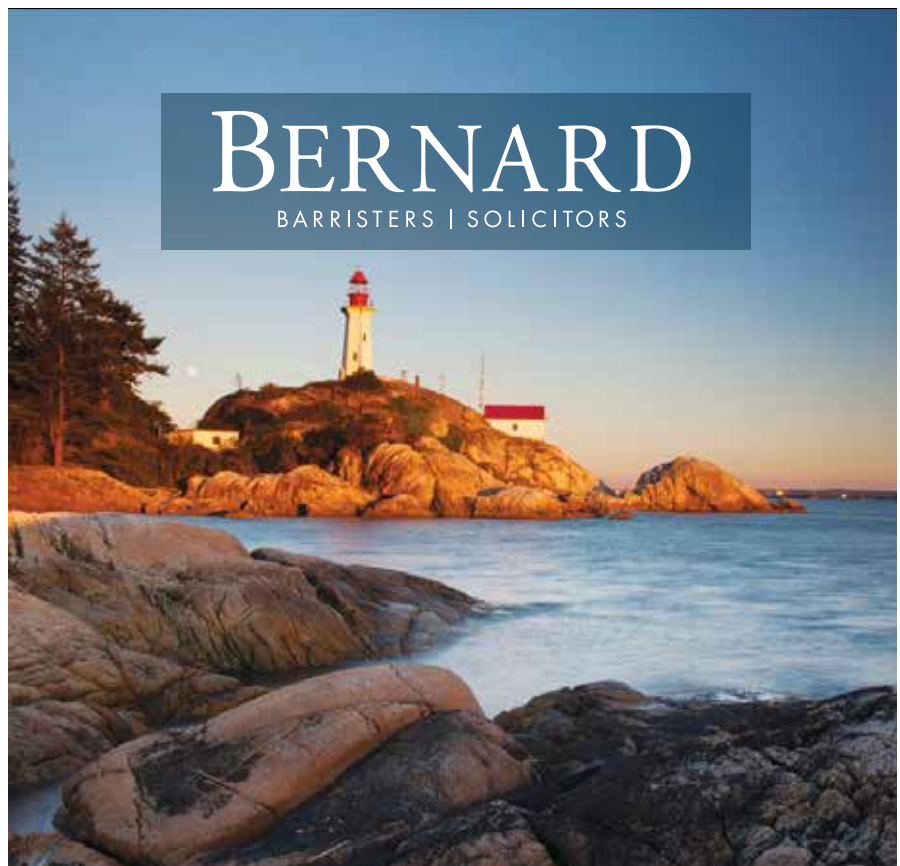
For vessel owners and operators, COR certification provides confidence that work is being completed within a structured framework focused on hazard identification, risk management, accountability, and continuous improvement. In an industry where crews, contractors, and assets operate in dynamic and often challenging environments, that commitment matters.

The certification also reflects the people behind the operation. During the audit process, the external auditor highlighted the strong workplace culture and employee engagement demonstrated throughout the organization. From managers and supervisors to tradespeople and support staff, the team's commitment to safety played a significant role in achieving this milestone.

Safety and reliability are closely connected. Well-executed maintenance programs, quality workmanship, and disciplined

processes all contribute to keeping vessels operating safely and efficiently. Those principles guide Arrow Marine's approach to serving commercial marine customers throughout British Columbia, Washington, and Alaska.

Located at the mouth of the Fraser River in Richmond, B.C., Arrow Marine Services has become a trusted partner for tugboat operators, barge companies, fishing fleets, and industrial marine customers. The full-service shipyard specializes

The advertisement features a background image of a rocky coastline with a lighthouse on a small island in the distance. The sky is a clear blue. Overlaid on the top half of the image is a dark blue rectangular box containing the word "BERNARD" in large, white, serif capital letters. Below it, in smaller white capital letters, is "BARRISTERS | SOLICITORS".

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in vessel repairs, refits, maintenance, fabrication, and emergency response services, providing customers with a single source for many of their marine service requirements.

For the tug and barge sector, Arrow Marine offers a broad range of capabilities, including steel and aluminum fabrication, propulsion system repairs, shaft and propeller work, vessel modifications, mechanical repairs, blasting and coatings, Transport Canada inspection readiness, and in-water repair solutions. The company is also a Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB) certified facility, providing customers with confidence that repair and fabrication work are completed to rigorous industry standards.

One of the company's most significant assets is its 330-ton Marine Travelift, the largest in the Lower Mainland. Capable of hauling vessels up to 150 feet in length and more than 660,000 pounds, the Travelift enables efficient drydocking for inspections, maintenance, emergency repairs, and major refit projects. For operators looking to minimize downtime, the facility also offers rapid haul-out and refloat services for inspections, propeller work, anode replacement, and other time-sensitive repairs.



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Arrow Marine has further strengthened its capabilities with the addition of a new 2,800-square-foot machine shop. Equipped with a 36-foot precision lathe, CNC milling machines, manual machining equipment, and a five-ton overhead crane, the facility is purpose-built to support large marine components. Propeller shafts, rudder stocks, steering components, winches, and other critical vessel systems can now be machined and repaired in-house, reducing lead times and helping customers return to service faster.

As marine operators continue to face increasing demands for performance, reliability, and safety, partnerships with experienced service providers become increasingly valuable. Arrow Marine's investment in advanced equipment, skilled tradespeople, and industry-leading safety systems demonstrates a clear commitment to supporting the needs of B.C.'s tug and barge industry today and into the future.

To learn more about Arrow Marine Services' vessel repair, refit, machine shop, fabrication, and emergency response capabilities, visit www.arrow.ca/marine. 



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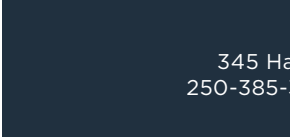


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Mcllwain Tug designs gain new reach with 3GA Marine



Tough, practical and proven on the West Coast, Mcllwain tug designs gain new reach through M3, backed by advanced engineering and the latest marine technology.

By Daniel McIntyre, P.Eng., Vice President, 3GA Marine Ltd.



On the British Columbia coast, a tug earns its reputation through years of hard work. Operators remember the vessels that handle well, pull reliably, remain stable under demanding conditions, and can be maintained without unnecessary complexity.

That practical understanding shaped the work of A.G. "Al" Mcllwain and the tug designs that carry his name. Mcllwain-designed vessels have served towing companies and marine operators across the West Coast for decades. They were developed around the realities of the work, the operating environment, and the people who would ultimately run them.

3GA Marine and Steve Mcllwain's MacMarine Development Ltd.

have established an exclusive collaboration to develop the M3 Series: M for Mcllwain and 3 for 3GA. The series combines proven Mcllwain designs with 3GA's engineering capacity. 3GA will market, sell, and deliver the modernized design packages, with Steve Mcllwain contributing to design development.

M3 covers river and barge-handling tugs, coastal towing vessels and ship-assist tugs, spanning a broad range of sizes and power requirements.

Owners can contact 3GA to review suitable designs and discuss a new-build configuration.

A West Coast design legacy

Trident Shield provides a recent example of the Mcllwain lineage. Built in 2022 by ABD Enterprises

for Trident Navigation, the tug has registered dimensions of 19.74 metres in length and 8.24 metres in beam. Its machinery includes two 1,000 hp Cummins KTA38 engines driving Veth azimuthing units, with a Burrard Iron Works Model 14 towing winch.

The vessel is an existing Mcllwain design, illustrating the heritage behind the collaboration. Future configurations will be developed for each owner's operating requirements rather than treated as copies of one vessel.

Steve Mcllwain of MacMarine will work alongside 3GA through the design iterations. His knowledge of why particular arrangements were chosen, how vessels have been used, and which features operators value will help preserve the original design intent.

That knowledge is especially important when adapting an established tug. Features that crews value can be retained and enhanced as the engineering develops, giving owners continuity with the vessels they know.

From proven design to yard pricing

Starting with an established design reduces initial design work and helps owners reach a credible construction budget sooner. It provides a basis for discussions with shipyards while leaving room to configure the tug for its intended work.

3GA will develop and deliver professionally engineered M3 design packages, with drawings and calculations stamped and sealed by the responsible professionals as required. Naval architecture and structural, mechanical and electrical engineering will be coordinated from concept through detailed design, with full production packages available to suit the selected shipyard.

Advanced design software, three-dimensional modelling and coordinated engineering will support efficient construction and competitive builds. Digital production information will help shipyards plan and execute the work, while a consistent technical package makes yard quotations easier to compare.

The scope will reflect the selected vessel, equipment and operating area. Owners can incorporate preferred machinery and working arrangements, with 3GA maintaining engineering continuity as the project moves toward construction.

Canadian and overseas construction

Owners can bring their preferred shipyard or work with 3GA to explore suitable builders in Canada and overseas. The firm can support the quotation process and help owners



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With multiple vessel builds currently underway across Canada, 3GA brings experience supporting both builders and owners. That perspective helps connect the production information a yard needs with the technical oversight an owner requires during a new build.

3GA also has relationships with shipyards around the world and experience supporting international vessel construction. Its involvement can continue through construction, commissioning and trials, with

the level of support tailored to the owner's team and chosen yard.

Carrying the McIlwain name forward

The collaboration builds on a tug design family that has helped shape West Coast operations for decades. Steve McIlwain's involvement preserves a direct connection to the vessels and their design intent. 3GA adds the multidisciplinary engineering capacity and digital packages expected by today's owners and shipyards.

Through M3, owners can purchase a modernized McIlwain-derived design from 3GA, configured

for the job and supported from initial development through construction in Canada or abroad.

Owners considering a replacement tug or fleet expansion can contact Daniel McIntyre, P.Eng., Vice President of 3GA Marine, to review M3 designs and discuss the engineering scope and path to shipyard pricing. An initial conversation can begin with the operating requirements; a completed vessel specification is not required.

For more information, visit 3gamarine.com. 



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The Island sarlequun (pictured) and Island xwsaluxul are now operating between Nanaimo Harbour and Descanso Bay on Gabriola Island. Photo courtesy of BC Ferries.

BC Ferries adds two island class vessels to Nanaimo-Gabriola service



BC Ferries has added two Island Class vessels to the Nanaimo-Gabriola Island route, bringing new hybrid propulsion technology into service while also highlighting an ongoing effort to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities.

The vessels, Island xwsaluxul and Island sarlequun, are operating between Nanaimo Harbour and Descanso Bay on Gabriola Island under a two-vessel service

model. Their names were gifted by Snuneymuxw First Nation and reflect the Nation's historical and continuing connection to the area.

For BC Ferries, the deployment is part of a larger fleet-renewal strategy intended to replace aging vessels, improve operational flexibility, and introduce technologies that can support the transition toward lower-emission ferry operations.

The name xwsaluxul, translated as

"the grassy place," has particular significance to Snuneymuxw First Nation and is connected to the location associated with the signing of the Snuneymuxw Sarlequun Treaty of 1854. Sarlequun, meaning "People at Nanaimo Harbour," reflects the Nation's enduring connection to Nanaimo Harbour and surrounding waters.

"Seeing Island xwsaluxul and Island sarlequun now in service is an important moment," says Nicolas Jimenez, President and

CEO of BC Ferries. "We are grateful to Snuneymuxw First Nation for gifting these names and for the opportunity to carry them on vessels operating in these waters. We recognize the significance the names hold for the Nation and the importance of carrying them with respect, as we continue working to provide reliable and more sustainable connections for coastal communities."

Chief Mike Wyse, Xum'silum, of Snuneymuxw First Nation, said the vessels' names acknowledge the territory through which they operate.

"We are honoured to see the name xwsáluxʷl and sarlequun carried by these vessels as they travel through the heart of our territory," says Chief Wyse. "We appreciate BC Ferries' commitment to building a relationship grounded in respect, recognition, and meaningful action. We support this initiative based on a clear understanding of the rights enshrined in our Snuneymuxw Sarlequun Treaty of 1854. On behalf of Snuneymuxw First Nation, we

extend our well wishes for safe passage to all those who journey across sacred waters aboard xwsáluxʷl and sarlequun."

Beyond their role on the Nanaimo–Gabriola route, the vessels illustrate the operational advantages BC Ferries expects from its Island Class program. The ferries are battery-equipped diesel hybrids, with a design that allows them to transition to full electric operation when appropriate shore-based charging infrastructure is available.

That capability is significant as ferry operators across the industry examine ways to reduce fuel consumption and emissions without compromising service reliability. For BC Ferries, the fleet strategy also provides an opportunity to redistribute existing vessels as new ships enter service.

One example is Island Gwawis, which has been replaced by sarlequun on the Nanaimo–Gabriola route. BC Ferries plans to redeploy Gwawis to the Crofton–Vesuvius Bay route in early 2027, where it is expected to operate

as part of a two-vessel service. The additional vessel is intended to increase capacity and provide greater flexibility in managing traffic at the terminals.

The changes demonstrate how fleet renewal can have effects well beyond the routes directly receiving new vessels. Rather than simply adding capacity, new ships can allow operators to reorganize existing fleets and direct vessels toward routes where additional capacity or resilience is required.

For BC Ferries, the introduction of xwsáluxʷl and sarlequun represents several strands of its current strategy: modernizing its fleet, preparing for greater electrification, improving network flexibility, and strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities.

As more Island Class vessels enter service, the resulting redeployment of existing ships will be an important factor in determining how the broader ferry network evolves over the coming years. 



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Bringing the Hornet home

A tragedy that led to a two-year restoration and the revival of a family marine business.

By DEL Writers

At seven years old, Travis Logan was already learning the family business with his father aboard the Hornet. Twenty-five years later, he found himself rebuilding the same boat after it had sunk — this time without his father.

The Hornet had spent nearly two decades working the Fraser River under Mark Logan, towing and salvaging logs out of Richmond. Then, in October 2023, a trip toward Mosquito Creek ended in disaster. Mark was killed when the vessel capsized and sank in severe weather.

When the Hornet was recovered, Travis Logan decided to bring it back. It was more than a workboat to him. It was part of his childhood, his education, and his family's business. "I worked on this boat 20 years ago with my dad," he says. "I wanted to keep my father's legacy alive."

Logan's father Mark acquired the 18-foot dozer boat in 2006 after bringing it over from Vancouver Island. Powered by a 266-horsepower Detroit Diesel engine, the Hornet was designed specifically for working with log booms and primarily operated on the Fraser River, from the mouth of the river near Wreck Beach to the Maple Ridge area.

After the tragic sinking, the Hornet was recovered by



The rebuilt Hornet tugboat.

a marine crew and transported to Vancouver Island. From there, it was taken to Jenkins Marine, where Logan spent much of the following year personally working on the recovery and initial stages of the rebuild.

The restoration was hands-on from the beginning. Logan sandblasted and painted, while working alongside electrical and mechanical crews. The wheelhouse was modified so it could be removed, allowing the vessel to be loaded onto a flatbed truck and transported back to the mainland aboard a BC Ferries vessel.

After bringing The Hornet to Shelter Island in Richmond, Logan worked with Bracewell Marine spending approximately another year completing the restoration.

The rebuild touched virtually every part of the vessel, including a complete engine rebuild, new electrical systems, radios, LED lighting, safety equipment and a full paint job. The deck was also modified with a more modern rubberized system.

Smaller improvements included replacing the



Left: Mark Logan spent nearly two decades aboard the Hornet working the Fraser River prior to his death in 2023.



Right: Travis Logan aboard the revitalized tug.

lazarette hatch and modifying the wheelhouse with a wall and canvas system. A welded cage was added to the outside of the vessel.

The engine presented another major challenge. Because the specific engine had largely been decommissioned, finding replacement components proved difficult. Ultimately, parts from two engines were combined to create a functional replacement.

Logan says the process was not without its setbacks but there was never any question that the project would be completed. "There were some tough points. I lived away from home for a good eight months trying to restore the boat," he says. "At the beginning we knew that we would just do it. We would find a way to complete the project and just took it one step at a time from there."

Much of the work and decision making was handled

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The Hornet in action performing log salvage, towing logs and supporting marine and logging operators.



The recovered tug prior to restoration.

by Logan, his sister Kim Rudnik and his brother-in-law Carl Rudnik. After two years of work, the Hornet finally returned to the water. Logan says the first voyage after the restoration was a particularly meaningful milestone.

"It was fantastic because I was able to show my brother-in-law and sister the water because my sister hasn't seen it since she was a kid, and my brother-in-law hadn't seen it at all," he says.

The Hornet officially returned to service in July, and Logan relaunched the family's business, Log an' Tow – a name that pays homage to his family history.

Today, the Hornet is once again working the Fraser River, performing log salvage, towing logs and supporting marine and logging operators. The company also provides on-call emergency support when companies experience problems such as broken or escaped booms.

The business is drawing on both its history and a

new generation of customers, and Logan says he has received plenty of support.

"All of my dad's contacts from the past have reached out and have shown assistance or support in the ways that they can."

For Logan, the return of the Hornet meant rebuilding a boat, restarting a business, and continuing what his father built. Carrying on Mark's legacy of integrity and hard work is extremely important to both him and his sister. "My sister and I basically learned the whole business from our father, so I just knew I had to take on the project."

But perhaps the most meaningful part of bringing the Hornet back has simply been being aboard the boat where his story began.

"Being back on the boat was probably the biggest thing for me," says Logan. "I worked on it with my dad since I was a kid, so to bring it back and be on it again after all these years was pretty special." 🐦

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