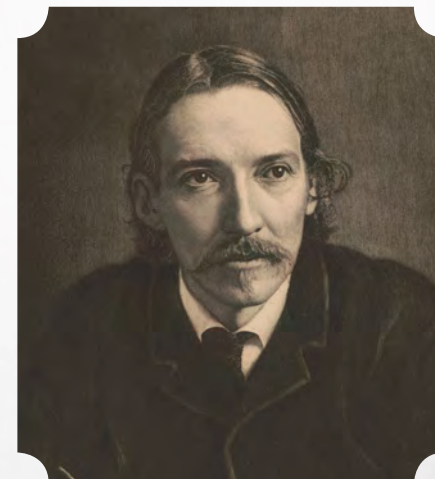
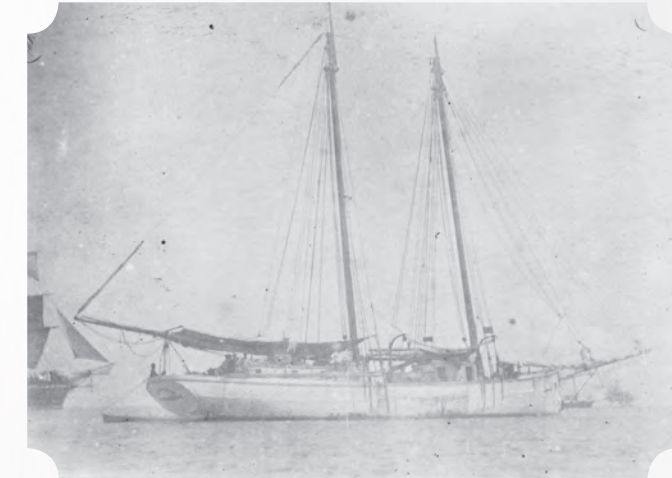


# THE EQUATOR'S STORIED HISTORY

**1888**

The *Equator* was built as a two-masted sailing schooner by noted San Francisco shipbuilder Matthew Turner in Benicia, California. It was Turner's 126<sup>th</sup> boat.



**1889-1890**

Famed poet and novelist Robert Louis Stevenson, best known for writing "Treasure Island" and "Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde," chartered the *Equator* to sail from Honolulu to the Gilbert Islands. While aboard, he was inspired to write the novel "The Wrecker."

**1915**

The *Equator* was sold to Cary-Davis Towing Co. and altered for service as a tugboat operating out of Seattle.



**1922**

Cary-Davis Towing converted the boat to oil power.

**1929**

Cary-Davis Towing became Puget Sound Tug & Barge Co. in a merger. The *Equator* was the new company's first tugboat

**1956**

At 68 years old, the *Equator* was deemed obsolete and retired from Puget Sound Tug & Barge's fleet. She was dismantled and beached on Jetty Island as part of a breakwater with other discarded derelict vessels.



**1967**

An Everett Kiwanis Club group led by Eldon Schalka formed *Equator* Inc. to rescue the decaying boat from the breakwater along Jetty Island and to try to raise funds to restore the vessel. The *Equator* was right-sided at high tide, towed by tug and hauled out by Fishermen's Boat Shop at the Port of Everett's 14<sup>th</sup> Street Dock.

**1985**

*Equator* Inc. was reformed into a nonprofit with Eldon Schalka, Dick Eitel, Buzz Rodland, Lee Johnson, Harry Spencer, Jim Deno, Dick Moore, Terry Buckridge, Jim O'Neil and Charles Gilkey as founding members. The *Equator* Foundation had viewing platforms built and hired a restoration consultant. It was estimated that refurbishing would cost \$200,000 and take three years.

**1989**

The aim of the *Equator* Foundation was no longer to resurrect the boat — just to keep her on display for the public to enjoy — because of costs.

**1992**

Eldon Schalka, founder of the *Equator* Foundation, died in a plane crash. The foundation eventually dissolved following Schalka's death and the *Equator* was abandoned on Port property.



**2017**

The stern of the *Equator* collapsed.

**2023**

Robert Yorczyk of the Washington Ship Model Society in Washington, D.C., loaned a model he built of the *Equator* to the Port of Everett. Students studying maritime archaeology and conservation at Texas A&M University visited Everett to document the *Equator*.

1888

TIMELINE OF THE EQUATOR

2023

**1889**

The schooner, designed as a South Seas dried coconut trader, rode out a great typhoon in Samoa that sank four large warships.

**1896-1914**

The *Equator* worked as a cannery tender for the Arctic whaling fleet and fishing operations in Alaska. She was converted to a steam tug by Joseph Hume in 1897. She was passed to the Pacific Packing Navigation Co. of San Francisco in 1901, and the Northwestern Fisheries Co. of Seattle around 1904.



**1916-1917**

The boat was chartered as a research vessel for the U.S. Coast Guard. The *Equator* cheated death again when nearly swamped in Deception Pass during a storm en route to Alaska for the 1917 survey.

**1941**

After thoroughly overhauled and equipped with a diesel engine, the *Equator* was put to work hauling fish and logs up and down the Pacific Coast.

**1962**

A.G. Harmon, librarian for the San Francisco Maritime Museum, traced the *Equator* to Everett. Soon after that, a "Save the *Equator*" project launched. The museum hoped to display her in California, but these plans ultimately fell apart due to a lack of resources.



**1972**

The *Equator* was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was the first Snohomish County artifact to receive this designation.



**1986**

The tugboat was moved six blocks to a shelter at the Marina Village on 17<sup>th</sup> Street next to the *Equator* Foundation Interpretive Center.

**1990**

Dick Eitel, a member of the *Equator* Foundation and owner of the Fishermen's Boat Shop, organized the vessel's relocation. The crumbling hull was moved to a shed off 10<sup>th</sup> Street, near the boat launch.

**2016**

The vessel's remains were documented by maritime archaeologists Katie Custer and Piotr Bojakowski of Texas A&M University. They visited Everett twice to take photos, electronic surveys and a sample of its timbers.



**2022**

The Port of Everett obtained custody of the orphan vessel and made plans to memorialize the *Equator* with the help of the historical community.