

Research Questions

The following are research questions to be answered by this project:

- 1. What is the history of the site?
- 2. What are the dimensions of the wreck site?



T. J. Potter

- * Port Captain J. W. Troup, of the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company in 1888, built *T.J. Potter*, a side-wheeler steamboat, in Portland, Oregon.
- * She was named after Mr. T.J. Potter, joint manager of the Oregon Short Line and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Co.
- * Potter was modeled after the famous Hudson River steamer Daniel Drew with changes made in the design.
- * The dimensions were: 230 feet long, 35 foot beam, 10 foot 4 inch hold, 659 gross tonnage, 589 registered net tonnage, with engines 32"x 96".



Service on the Puget Sound

* T.J. Potter was transferred to Puget Sound in September, 1888 to compete with the Bailey Gatzert, beating the speed record of 82 minutes from Tacoma to Seattle.

* She outraced all the fastest boats in Puget Sound, returning to the Columbia River with a gilt broom and gilt greyhound lashed

to the masthead.

* T.J. Potter was, however, ill suited for the Puget Sound as the 30' side wheels worked against each other with the slim hull rolling in between. Passengers and crew alike suffered from seasickness.

1889 Great Fire of Seattle

* While operating in the Puget Sound, T.J. Potter responded to the 1889 Great Fire of Seattle with an engine manned by the chief of the Victoria Fire Department and 22 firemen, and fought the flames at the Canadian Pacific Pier.



Mural Images Depicting the Ship's Performance in the Seattle Fire.

Return to the Columbia River

- * In 1901, T.J. Potter was rebuilt, dimensions were length 233.7', width 35.6', depth 11.4' and tonnage 533. She was fitted with yet more luxurious furnishings as well as a distinctive blue dome above the pilot house.
- * Speed was negatively impacted by the changes though she remained one of the fastest steamboats on the river. Oregon Railway and Navigation Company bought Ilwaco Railroad and Navigation Company and put T.J. Potter on the Ilwaco Portland run.
- * She was again refurbished in 1910 at a cost of \$86,000 with a record season following that year and again in 1911. *T.J. Potter* met the railroad as the primary steamer and was considered the height of luxurious travel.





Abandoned

- * Abandoned 1921
 - * Dismantled and burned



MAST Survey





- * During low tide on the morning of 11 June, 2016, MAS volunteers met across the street from the site and discussed safety precautions, and established the basic procedures for survey. All volunteers were graduates of the MAS basic and survey training courses.
- * The site was too large to use a single baseline, so the volunteers were divided into three teams.

The East End Team



* The east end team, supervised by Rachel Stokeld, included Rex Russell, Christine Trexel, and Clark Trexel. They used predominantly baseline-offset and relative distances methods of recording the ship's remains. The east end of the site appeared to be the bow section with frames from the port and starboard side showing.



Amidships Team

- * The amidships section covered much of what is believed to be the center of the ship including several keels and/or bilge keels. The team was supervised by Rick Rogers and included, Harvey Schowe, Ned Rogers, and Nessa Rogers.
- * Because of the different types of structures in this area, the team used a combination of trilateration, bearing/distance, and relative measurements.
- * Some of the work in the amidships section included documenting the keel areas, some of which were covered in stone, mud, and grass.



Stern Team

- * The stern section was also imbedded in the mud and grass, but not as nearly as the amidships area. Jeff Groth supervised the team with Chris Pendergrass, Jim Pendergrass, and Mike Robertson.
- * This team also used all three methods of site survey including baseline offset, trilateration, bearing/distance, and relative measurements.



Photo and Video Documentation



* Jennifer Kozik and Megan Cassidy conducted extensive photographic and video surveys of the wreck.

Forward Section

* Chris Dewey surveyed the far forward section on September 17th. He recorded the location of the frames and the forward bow section in the same grid.



The Full View

* Following the survey, during discussions with Jeff Smith, curator of the Columbia River Maritime Museum, new photos of the site from the museum photo collection were identified. One image changed how the site was perceived during the survey day.

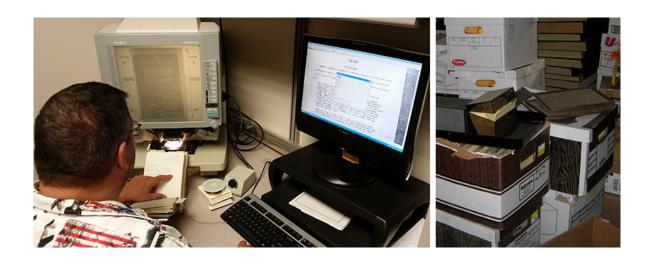


T. J. Potter Survey Diagram



Report to Oregon State Archaeologist

* MAS submitted a detailed report to the Oregon State Archaeologist



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