

SKEETER NEWS

A newsletter from The Steamer VIRGINIA V Foundation

SUMMER 2019 * VOL. 97, NO. 2



From left to right: 2018 intern Kat in the forward hold; 2017 intern Jack at the engine throttle; and the 2017 internship cohort enjoying the view from the boatdeck.

Interns Ahoy!

By Margaret Saunders, Programs Manager

Please help us welcome our 2019 C. Keith Birkenfeld summer interns! You may run into these students aboard the ship in July and August, as they learn alongside our crew to work as deckhands and engineers operating and maintaining the SS VIRGINIA V.

This is our sixth year hosting the high school internship program, and we are proud to share with you how the program has grown and changed since its inception. We received eighteen applications this year—a new record!—from students all across the Seattle area. By expanding our network and outreach, we were able to fill the six internship spots with enthusiastic and deserving teens. Here are the partners that helped us recruit a stellar pool of candidates:

- Ballard Maritime Academy
- Highline Public Schools
- Interagency Academy
- Project RISE
- Puget Sound Skills Center
- Goodwill Youth Maritime Program
- Sea Scouts
- Seattle Public Schools
- Seattle Skills Center
- Seattle World School

Another facet of this internship we have sought to expand in 2019 is building career skills. This year, our interns will be attending the week-long Experience Maritime workshops at Seattle Maritime Academy to learn more about ocean literacy, shipboard operations, marine safety, survival at sea, marine mechanics, and more. They will be able to network with industry peers at Youth Maritime Collaborative's South Lake Union intern fair with MOHAI, the Center for Wooden Boats, and Northwest Seaport. The Foundation will also host our own career training seminar to help these students build soft skills like resume writing, networking, and interviewing.

We aim to provide our summer interns with a unique, hands-on experience that will inspire them to pursue further opportunities in the maritime industry. We hope that these changes to the Birkenfeld internship program will help better serve the youth of Seattle as well as our mission.

Read on to learn more about the six young people joining us this summer and, if you spot these interns aboard, be sure to say hello!

SKEETER NEWS

is produced by

The Steamer Virginia V Foundation

Our Mission:

To promote the Puget Sound's maritime heritage through the restoration, preservation, operation, and interpretation of the National Historic Landmark Vessel, the S.S. Virginia V.



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**Send us your
comments, suggestions,
and stories!**

PO Box 9566
Seattle, WA 98109

(206) 624-9119 * info@virginiav.org

From the Executive

The story of the VIRGINIA V is a remarkable one of survival. Looking back, I am struck by the incredibly long odds she beat to continue plying the waters of the Sound. It's been 97 years since the VIRGINIA V was christened with a bottle of creek water broken across her bow, a birthday we celebrated last month with a dinner cruise that raised more than \$27,000. Thanks to the support and generosity of this community, she'll continue full steam ahead into the future.

When she was built in 1922, vessels were designed to last a generation at most. They were working boats that lived only as long as they were useful, and then they often were burned on beaches or left to rot on mudflats. But the VIRGINIA V was different. Maybe it was her graceful lines or her marvelous steam engine, but every time her story was on the verge of ending, she persevered. She has withstood devastating storms, the wartime economy of the '30s and '40s that forced vessels out of service, and continual maintenance, repair, and replacement of her old timbers.

Her first brush with disaster was in the storm of 1934. Hurricane-strength winds pinned the VIRGINIA V against the pier, piercing through her side, leaving her topside in pieces. And yet she was returned to service only six weeks later. In 1942, she made the treacherous journey down the Washington coast in search of a stable source of revenue on the Columbia River. Less than five months later, she was seized by the United States marshal to cover outstanding debts. Thankfully, she was saved from the scrapyard and went on to serve Puget Sound communities yet again.

At each of these crossroads, her caretakers decided that the VIRGINIA V was worth saving. Today, each of you, this community, are her caretakers. We are grateful and humbled that through your donations, membership dues and volunteer hours, you are casting your vote to keep the VIRGINIA V afloat. The story that began 97 years ago continues to be written with your support.

The future will not be driven by what she does commercially, but by what service she provides our community. We believe strongly that service is education. I hope you read on to learn more about the cornerstone of our education programs and summer internships.

Heron Scott

Executive Director of The Steamer Virginia V Foundation

Meet the 2019 Birkenfeld Summer Interns



Name: **Xavier Auer**
Your school: **Raisbeck Aviation High School**
Favorite thing to do on the water: **Canoe**
Pick one: sailboat or speedboat? **Sailboat**
If you had your own ship, you would name it... **ROXANNE**



Name: **Benjamin Schlemmer**
Your school: **Raisbeck Aviation High School**
Favorite thing to do on the water: **Fish**
Pick one: sailboat or speedboat? **Sailboat**
If you had your own ship, you would name it... **ECLIPSE**



Name: **Carlton Redpath**
Your school: **Ballard High School**
Favorite thing to do on the water: **Relaxing**
Pick one: sailboat or speedboat? **Sailboat**
If you had your own ship, you would name it... **CARLTON**



Name: **Clara Rasmussen**
Your school: **Roosevelt High School**
Favorite thing to do on the water: **Rowing**
Pick one: sailboat or speedboat? **Sailboat**
If you had your own ship, you would name it... **YARMO**



Name: **William McVicar**
Your school: **Fusion Academy**
Favorite thing to do on the water: **Fish or cruise around**
Pick one: sailboat or speedboat? **Sailboat**
If you had your own ship, you would name it... **WILL'S WAY**



Name: **Jose Reyes**
Your school: **Opportunity Skyway, Interagency Academy**
Favorite thing to do on the water: **Swim and fish**
Pick one: sailboat or speedboat? **Sailboat**
If you had your own ship, you would name it... **SS LA POCHIS**

Calendar of Events

Welcome aboard! The following is a preview of public events scheduled aboard the *Virginia V*. For details and the latest updates, go to www.virginiaav.org/calendar. Questions? (206) 624-9119 or info@virginav.org

July

Open Ship Days In Bold

12:00 - 5:00 PM on Lake Union

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

04 THURSDAY, 8:00-11:30PM Firework Viewing Party

Dockside event for the best view in town from the upper deck. Only 42 tickets to be sold. TICKETS: \$125/general, \$100/member, & \$50/ages 12 and under. Includes appetizers from City Catering. Beer and wine available to purchase.

12 FRIDAY, 8:00 - 11:00PM DRYFT Concert

Dockside acoustic concert with rotating artists. TICKETS: \$25/person booked through AirBNB Experiences.

13 SATURDAY, 1:00 - 4:00PM Steamship Saturday

Two one hour narrated cruises departing at 1 and 3 PM. TICKETS: \$20/general, \$15/member, & FREE/12 and under.

18 THURSDAY, 7:00 - 9:30PM Working Waterfront

A public cruise with MOHAI featuring historical narration, activities, and more! TICKETS: \$30/general, \$25/member, & FREE/kids 12 and under.

20 SATURDAY, 2:30- 5:00PM Locks Cruise to BBI

A one way trip through the Ballard locks to Eagle Harbor. TICKETS: \$30/general, \$20/member, & FREE/12 and under.

27 SATURDAY, 1:00 - 4:00PM Steamship Saturday

Two one hour narrated cruises departing at 1 and 3 PM. TICKETS: \$20/general, \$15/member, & FREE/12 and under.

August

Open Ship Days In Bold

12:00 - 5:00 PM on Lake Union

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

02 FRIDAY, 8:00 - 11:00PM DRYFT Concert

Dockside acoustic concert with rotating artists. TICKETS: \$25/person booked through AirBNB Experiences.

03 SATURDAY, 12:00 - 3:30PM Blue Angels Cruise

Watch the Blue Angels perform overhead. TICKETS: \$85/general, \$70/member, & \$35/ages 12 and under.

04 SUNDAY, 12:00 - 3:30PM Blue Angels Cruise

Watch the Blue Angels perform overhead. TICKETS: \$85/general, \$70/member, & \$35/ages 12 and under.

10 SATURDAY, 1:00 - 4:00PM Steamship Saturday

Two one-hour narrated cruises departing at 1 and 3 PM. TICKETS: \$20/general, \$15/member, & FREE/12 and under.

16 FRIDAY, 8:00 - 11:00PM DRYFT Concert

Dockside acoustic concert with rotating artists. TICKETS: \$25/person booked through AirBNB Experiences.

24 SATURDAY, 1:00 - 4:00PM Steamship Saturday

Two one-hour narrated cruises departing at 1 and 3 PM. TICKETS: \$20/general, \$15/member, & FREE/12 and under.

30 FRIDAY - SUNDAY Olympia Harbor Days

Roundtrip from Tacoma to Olympia, plus one-hour cruises during the festivities.

September

Open Ship Days In Bold

12:00 - 5:00 PM on Lake Union

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

06 FRIDAY, 8:00 - 11:00PM DRYFT Concert

Dockside acoustic concert with rotating artists. TICKETS: \$25/person booked through AirBNB Experiences.

13 FRIDAY, 8:00 - 10:00PM Chantey Sing

Organized by the Northwest Seaport, this group will charm you with their melodies and knowledge of maritime music. TICKETS: Free

20 FRIDAY, 8:00 - 11:00PM DRYFT Concert

Dockside acoustic concert with rotating artists. TICKETS: \$25/person booked through AirBNB Experiences.

28 SATURDAY, 12:30 & 3:30PM Lake Union Wooden Boat Festival Sailings

One-hour cruises during this annual festival hosted by the Center for Wooden Boats. TICKETS: \$10/general, \$5/member, & FREE/ages 12 and under.

29 SUNDAY, 12:30 & 3:30PM Lake Union Wooden Boat Festival Sailings

One-hour cruises during this annual festival hosted by the Center for Wooden Boats. TICKETS: \$10/general, \$5/member, & FREE/ages 12 and under.

New Deck Volunteer Advancement Procedures

By Heron Scott, Executive Director



From left to right: Port Captain Herb Hunt instructs deck volunteer Shelly during a wheel watch; Mate in training Jamie checks out the galley during his pre-sailing walkthrough of the ship; and Deckhands Giorgio and Ed practice operating the fire hose during a training session on board.

As a volunteer operated vessel, how we train and approve individuals for different functions in our Deck department is incredibly important. These volunteers handle lines, steer the ship, train other volunteers, and ultimately keep the vessel and our passengers safe; a duty that cannot be overstated.

When I started at the Foundation, we had no formal process for this training and advancement, but after years of hard work by Port Captain Herb Hunt and our volunteer Operations Committee, I am pleased to report that we have rolled out a new system for deck volunteer advancement which we will implement and refine in 2019.

The new system was designed to be transparent, fair, and easy to understand while still balancing our need to advance and train volunteers up the ranks in a safe and reasonable manner. We wanted a new volunteer to walk through the doors and understand what it would take for them to become a Captain or a Mate on the SS VIRGINIA V, and we wanted that information readily available so that volunteers could also self-assess and find the right fit for them within the Deck department.

On the SS VIRGINIA V we have seven Deck positions ranked (from lowest to highest) in this order: Deck 4-I, Bosun, Mate, and Captain. For each position the requirements for advancement are broken into three broad categories: sea time, skills and license checklists (only the Captain position requires a license), and approval by the Port Captain. One must complete all these steps prior to being approved for a new position. For an example of how the sea time works, if you are a Deck 2 and want to become a Deck 1, you must have served at least ten days as a Deck 2 and five days as a Deck 1 Trainee. As one advances up the ladder, these requirements become more stringent as a volunteer's responsibilities increase.

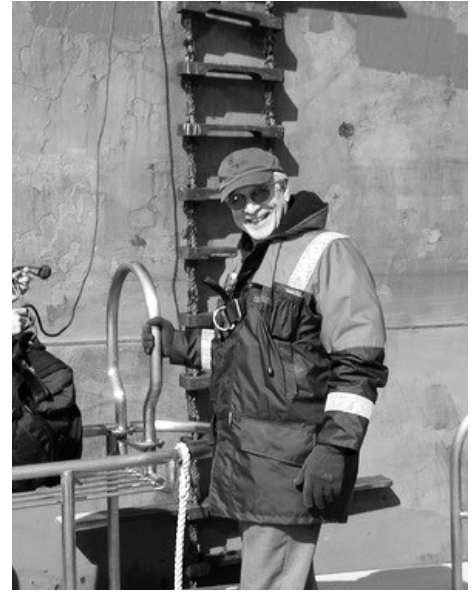
To increase transparency of the process, all these procedures, checklists, and requirements have been uploaded to a new landing page on our website dedicated to Deck volunteers. We envision this page evolving overtime as the information is updated and we develop more tools to help our Deck volunteers navigate both their training and advancement on the VIRGINIA V. Go to virginiav.org/volunteer-deck/ to learn more and let us know what you think.

Thank you to our corporate sponsors for recognizing the need for ongoing preservation and operation of the S.S. Virginia V as a vital part of Puget Sound's maritime history.



Board Member Spotlight: Mel Flavel

by Heron Scott, Executive Director



From left to right: Mel at the wheel of a sailboat; Mel as a child in Idaho; and Mel boarding a container ship as a pilot.

Mel Flavel joined the Virginia V Foundation Board of Directors in the spring of 2018. He has served as a member of the Puget Sound Pilots and the Greys Harbor Pilots.

Why do serve on the Board of Directors?

I have a wooden [Bill] Garden designed Vic Franck boat and I'm interested in maritime history. As a lifelong mariner, ships and boats are right up my alley, and after an active duty as a pilot for 35 years this seemed like an enjoyable thing to do. I have expertise in wooden boats, because I own one, and I have expertise on the maritime industry and piloting boats which I hope to share with the VIRGINIA V.

Why did you choose a maritime career?

I felt I had to. I grew up on an 80 acres farm in southern Idaho and knew that I had to go to college. I had a friend applying for the Airforce academy, and he suggested that I apply for the merchant marine academy at King's Point. And when I got it, my mother had a conniption fit when I told her (in a good way)!

I graduated in '66, just as the Vietnam war was ramping up. I graduated early as they needed officers to run

military supply ships; the old liberty ships and victory ships. It was run as a civilian company carrying military cargo. After that I worked for American Presidents Line until I got enough time to transfer into the pilot program in Washington state.

Why did you want to become a pilot?

It was a clear path all the way from King's Point. I knew that being a pilot was where I wanted to go. It fit me, and I knew that I could make more money than milking cows. At one point I was looking at becoming a Panama Canal pilot, but I chose Washington state, as it was a little more accessible than the East coast or the Mississippi and there were good opportunities for accumulating seetime.

What do you hope for the future of the VIRGINIA V?

It's all about keeping the finances in control. Do you have the money to keep it alive? I see the ship thriving with all the resources it needs to stay operational and to keep providing programs for the community. I see a broad tent of support, keeping us afloat and I see a stable trust fund that keeps the boat running for generations to come.

From the Archives

by Keith Sternberg, former VIRGINIA V crew



Above: VIRGINIA V departing the locks westbound sometime during the ownership of J. S. “Cy” Devenny, 1958-1968, characterized by the black-painted stem and the oversize gay-90s’ lettering style. When I hired on as a fireman in 1966 the most modern piece of gear in the engine room was the boiler, locally built in 1920. In the pilot house was a Northern vacuum tube AM radio-telephone which looked like it might date from the ‘40s; otherwise there were no electronics of any kind. This apparent commitment to historic preservation may have been more accidental than intentional. When I was in his employ, I was told that he had made an attempt to convert the old steamer to diesel! This idea was thwarted by the local Coast Guard commander, Captain Eastman, who liked steamboats and informed Devenny that if any major changes were made the ship would lose her certificate of inspection, which only existed on a “grandfather clause.”



Above: Cy Devenny proudly posing at the bowsprit of his clipper-bowed yacht EL PRIMERO sometime in the late ‘50s. EL PRIMERO was built in 1893 by Union Iron Works, San Francisco, for E. W. Hopkins, heir to the fortune of Mark Hopkins, one of the “Big Four” who created the Central Pacific Railroad. Devenny was not a seaman or a marine engineer and, when he bought the steam yacht EL PRIMERO from the estate of the late S. A. “Sam” Perkins in 1955, he unfortunately did not appreciate that EL PRIMERO was a perfectly preserved 1893 museum piece and the last steam yacht operating on the West Coast. He junked the steam plant and added a lot of deckhouse which quite spoiled her looks. In 2017, EL PRIMERO underwent a refit in Port Townsend. *Photograph courtesy of Cherie Christensen.*

The Steamer Virginia V Foundation
PO Box 9566
Seattle, WA 98109

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The S.S. *Virginia V* is a
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