



Working Harbor Committee

For the heritage and future of the harbor of New York and New Jersey

Celebrating our 10th Anniversary Year

ON THE HIP*

E-Newsletter of the Working Harbor Committee

2 November 2012

Hurricane Sandy

We hope you are OK after Hurricane Sandy. We offer our best wishes, hopes and sympathies to everyone affected by the storm.

Thanks to Working Harbor Committee Steering Committee Co-Chair Capt Betsy Frawley



Photo Capt Betsy Haggerty

Haggerty for this photo from City Island, where she teaches sailing. In general most commercial vessels, and historic or educational boats fared well. However, infrastructure - including floating docks, offices and other facilities - were not so lucky. And the destruction of entire waterfront communities and the lives of their residents is beyond belief.

In this edition we offer the following:

- ◆ **Circumnavigation of Staten Island Cancelled**
 - ◆ **Keeping Historic Fireboat *John J. Harvey* Safe from Sandy**
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◆ **Tall Ship HMS Bounty and her Captain Robin Walbridge Lost**

Circumnavigation Tour of Staten Island Cancelled



Verrazano Bridge under construction, 4 December 1970 (c) Museum of the City of New York

Circumnavigation of Staten Island Cancelled Due to Hurricane Sandy

Unfortunately due to the lasting effects of Hurricane Sandy, we had to make the tough decision to cancel this tour. New York Harbor is closed to all except ferries and necessary shipping. The Arthur Kill waterway between Staten Island and New Jersey remains closed to all traffic. Lower Manhattan is still pumping out flood waters, dealing with power outages and damage. Our boat supplier, SeaStreak, is not operating - the staff can't even get to their docks or offices. Subway service will not be running in time to accommodate transportation to the Pier.

The Museum of the City of New York will be contacting ticket holders soon regarding refunds. Ticket holders will be offered free admission to the Museum ([Click here for directions](#)) on Sat 3 November - or call 917 492 3395 for scheduling another date.

Our apologies for this cancellation and thank you for your support.

Keeping Historic Fireboat *John J. Harvey* Safe From Hurricane Sandy



Fireboat John J. Harvey at Pier 25 for Hurricane Sandy (c) 2012 Capt. John Doswell
Notice the army of giant Styrofoam blocks, uplifted from the playground further East.

On Sunday 28 October, Capt John Doswell, Executive Director of the Working Harbor Committee and one of the owners of the historic fireboat *John J Harvey*, along with Capt Huntley Gill and several other owners and crew, moved the fireboat to

nearby Pier 59, Chelsea Piers, from her home at Pier 66 Maritime, which was not deemed strong enough to hold her for the storm. However after one night it became apparent that Pier 59 was too low for the storm surge expected on Monday evening at high water, (the boat would have ended up on top of the pier) so the owners made the decision to move the boat to a safer location.

At about 14:00 on Tuesday, Gill, Doswell, WHC Steering Committee member Renee Stanley and three others cast off from Pier 59, prepared to spend the next 24 hours on board. At no time was there any danger to the crew, and indeed, events proved that it was a good decision that likely prevented the loss of the fireboat. At about 16:00 we found a safe landing at Pier 25, a much taller pier in Hudson River Park, notified the dockmaster, and easily and safely landed against several large soft fenders called Yokohamas, next to historic ships *Pegasus* and *Lilac*.

Thanks to the fenders, we rode easily through the worst of the storm, watching the tide rise 36" over the top of the pier. At Pier 59 that would have been more like 8 feet. The most dramatic part of the evening was watching electric transformers explode with bright flashes downtown and across the river in NJ. We also saw portions of the playground at Pier 25 - giant Styrofoam blocks - float down the length of the pier -

looking like a surreal parade ([See this](#)). Overnight, it was relatively calm and comfortable. The next morning we cast off again and headed back to Pier 66 Maritime, that amazing barge, formerly a railroad car float, that is home to our fireboat *John J. Harvey* and the historic lightship *Frying Pan*, and among the most popular attractions in Hudson River Park, where WHC has held several Sizzlin' Summer/Fall Events.

For more on the historic fireboat John J Harvey, visit www.fireboat.org.

And here is a link to our good friend Will Van Dorp's blog [Tugster showing the vessels at Pier 25](#).

Hurricane Updates for South Street Seaport Museum Boats and Other Vessels in New York Harbor

In general, most commercial vessels, including historic & educational vessels, fared well in New York Harbor with a few notable exceptions ([See this about a tanker run aground on a street in Staten Island](#)).



Most damage was to waterfront facilities everywhere - but especially in New Jersey.

The South Street Seaport Museum's schooner *Pioneer* was safe up river anchored near Verplanck (where Capt Doswell took her last year during Tropical Storm Irene) but we hear the marinas up there, as in other locations, are in shambles and/or gone.

Back at Pier 16, *Pioneer's* floating dock is fine, but you can see in the photo above, the huge camel for it floated up and over the pier railing and got stuck there. The same thing happened to the lightship *Ambrose* - ship fine, camel on the pier.

The two tall ships at the Museum were fine, thanks to good shipkeeping by the Museum's Waterfront Director, Capt Jonathan Boulware. The schooner *Lettie G Howard* was well out of harm's way in Mystic CT. As for the Museum itself, although the exhibits and artifacts are all on higher floors and suffered no damage, the Museum's tenants and programs - as well as the lobby & mechanical equipment were

hard hit (see next story or [click here](#)).

Meanwhile at **Classic Harbor Lines** at Chelsea Piers, operated by WHC Steering Committee members Sarah and Susan Greer and Meghan May Hart, and owner Rick Scarano, a great WHC supporter, the boats came through fine. But Rick & crew had a tough time keeping the floating docks in place. And the Classic Harbor Line office and stock room were ruined by flooding, with about 4 feet of water filling the building, which sloshed everything around.

According to Bill Buckley at our Hidden Harbor Tour partner **New York Water Taxi & Circle Line Downtown**, again the boats came through fine, but facilities suffered. Gus Markou, CEO at **Circle Line 42nd Street** and another great tour partner and supporter of WHC, said the story was much the same.

The large container and ro-ro ships that we see on our tours all went to sea for the event, and area tugs found safe places to hide - The **Reinauer** tug fleet holed up in Erie Basin according to VP Bert Reianuer. We saw the **Sandy Hook Pilots** boats spend the evening stemming the tide in the North River, an option that was considered for **John J Harvey** before we decided on Pier 25 (see story above).

Other historic ships came through well, according to their owners or keepers. The steamer lighthouse tender **Lilac** and historic tug **Pegasus** were fine at Pier 25, and the **Showboat and Museum Barge** (Lehigh Valley No 79) and tanker **Mary Whalen** (PortSide NewYork) fared well in Red Hook - but again facilities - and the neighborhood of Red Hook, among others - suffered much damage. And, as mentioned above, **Pier 66 Maritime** was not damaged, nor was the historic lightship **Frying Pan**, nor Manhattan by Sail's boats **Clipper City** or **Shearwater**.

As for the **Harbor School** on Governors Island, falling trees spared the school building and the fleet docked at Brooklyn Navy Yard survived. Captain Aaron Singh reported, "Our boats survived the storm with little to no damage. They are in good shape", thanks to the efforts of faculty, staff, and students.

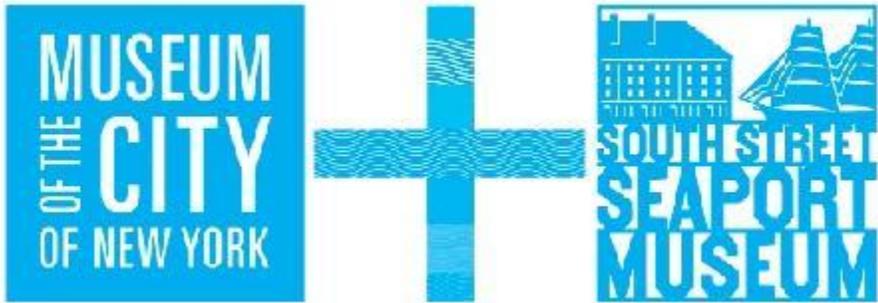
For the latest on the state of **New York Harbor** from the NY Times, [Click Here](#)

But even with relatively good news about many vessels, this was a destructive event on a historic scale that has brought great loss and misery to so many, including entire towns, especially in Staten Island, Brooklyn and many other waterfront areas in NYC and New Jersey, where many of our readers live, and our hearts go out to all those who have suffered from it.

Pleas for help are coming from many neighborhoods around New York and New Jersey. We can't list them all here but please check websites and twitter feeds for information on how you can help in your area.

If you would like to help but don't know where to start, here is the Red Cross link for Hurricane Sandy ([Click Here](#))

South Street Seaport Museum Hit Hard by Sandy



Unfortunately, the **South Street Seaport Museum**, which was started by the Working Harbor Committee's founder Peter Stanford, was hard hit with

loss of important tenants, mechanical equipment (escalator, etc) and programs, not to mention visitors. It has been under the management of the excellent Museum of the City of New York since spring and was moving in the right direction with ship restorations and a full set of new exhibits, but its very existence is now challenged by Sandy.

[For the complete story and how to help, click here](#)

Tall Ship HMS Bounty and her Captain Robin Walbridge Lost to Sandy

The tall ship **HMS Bounty** visited New York several times at Pier 63/66, the last being in 2009, when she laid up against fireboat *Johh J. Harvey*, where many of us met the master, Capt Robin Walbridge.



HMS Bounty at Pier 63 Maritime with Fireboat John J. Harvey. Source unknown.

She was built for the 1962 film "Mutiny on the Bounty," starring Marlon Brando, and

appeared in "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" in 2006.

Sadly, *Bounty* was lost to Hurricane Sandy on Monday morning, along with Capt Walbridge, of St. Petersburg FL.

See the following links.

[CNN Story](#)

[Tall Ships America Statement](#)

[Coast Guard Calls off Search for HMS Bounty Captain](#)

One of the crew who was lost was [Claudene Christian](#), a descendant of the Fletcher Christian, leader of the mutiny against William Bligh in 1789. 14 of the 16 person crew were saved by the heroic efforts of the US Coast Guard.

We join with tall ship lovers everywhere who mourn the loss of this iconic vessel.

Thanks

Many thanks to Working Harbor Committee members who contributed to this edition: WHC Communications Director Mai Armstrong, Capt Betsy Frawley Haggerty, and Capt Maggie Flanagan.

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*For definition of "[ON THE HIP](#)" [click here](#)

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Thank you and we look forward to seeing you on a Hidden Harbor Tour® soon!

Capt. John Doswell - Executive Director - Working Harbor Committee -
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