CAPT. H.J. LOCKERT

1975 1976

M 5207

11-1

the alaska ferry

Deja vu and the specter of economic plenitude appeared in Bellingham last March, in the person of Bert Kleinenberg, port steward for the Alaska Marine Highway System.

"He came into my office," recalls Tom Glenn, Port of Bellingham manager, "and his question was, when can you land our ferries in Bellingham?"

The question has enticed this community before. But this time, Glenn said, there is a "good, solid, even chance" the Alaska ferries' southern terminal will move from Seattle to Bellingham. Glenn and area businessmen expect an answer from Alaska this March.

This community's interest in the Alaska ferries dies hard and revives easily. It well might. They represent not only romantic intrigue, but possible economic boom, as well.

The ferries could bring extensive, non-polluting tourist industry to town. A recent study for the port and Whatcom County Development Council estimates the ferries could generate $3 million to $8 million annually, just in tourist expenditures.

That doesn't include wholesale business. Local firms would have a shipping rate advantage that could make them major suppliers to southeast Alaska, according to David Morse of Morse Hardware, a company that has supplied Alaska for generations.

"This is one of the biggest opportunities on the horizon for Whatcom County," Glenn estimated. "It may be one of the biggest ever."

It's hard to compare a tourist industry to a permanent smokestack, he pointed out, but the economic advantages are no less real.

A Council of Governments study, prepared by Karen Stern, for the port and development council, estimates gasoline sales alone, to ferry travelers, could total $98,000 to $148,000 annually.

The study is based on "a lot of assumptions," says Tom Randall, Council of Governments director, since data on ferry passengers' buying habits isn't readily available. But Ms. Stern has developed estimates of what the 37,727 passengers expected to ride the ferries in 1977 will spend.

The most important impact, Randall said, would be on motels, camping facilities and retail sales.

If 30 per cent of the passengers spent one night annually in a Bellingham motel or hotel, they would spend $113,000 to $261,000, the study says. If 95 per cent ate one meal here, they would spend $143,000 to $330,000. If 20 per cent had one drink or attended a motion picture or theater, they would spend $37,000 to $87,000 annually.

If 30 per cent bought travel supplies like film or gifts, they would spend $169,000 to $391,000 in Bellingham, Ms. Stern estimates. Grocery sales could amount to $264,000 to $609,000.

Alaskans have a tendency to ask friends on the ferries to buy household goods for them, a habit that could bring $1,700,000 to $3,900,000 to Bellingham each year.

Roy Gillespie, executive director of the development council, estimates, "If the ferries came in here, it would be the equivalent of two Intalcos."

A 1973 survey in Seattle showed that ship construction, maintenance, fuel, food, liquor and other supplies brought more than $9 million to the city that year, Gillespie said. Included in the figure were 599 local fulltime jobs valuing $6,714,000 annually and 300 part-time jobs worth about $2,590,000.

"If the ferry came here we wouldn't get the shipyard work, we don't have a shipyard that big," Gillespie said. "But we could get a big chunk of that ($9 million). You've got to realize, too, that's only one ship a week."

"Considerably" more than one ship a week is being discussed for Bellingham, he said.

A good idea

The Marine Digest reports that the Washington State Ferry System is promoting off hours traffic in a novel way. Alaska's traffic is more seasonal, instead of having daily rush hours and low-volume hours such as in the Washington fleet.

But Washington's idea is worth exploring for the Alaska system. Says the Marine Digest;

"To offset some of the financial loss incurred with low-traffic ferry operations during evening hours, Washington State Ferries has been actively promoting the use of ferries during late-evening hours for special charter cruise functions.

"The idea of conducting a special event aboard a Puget Sound ferry has caught on. The most popular night of the week for such events is Saturday. Ferries can also be chartered on any night except Sundays and holiday weekends when they must handle increased traffic loads.

"Most cruises are for non-profit organizations engaged in fund-raising efforts. Great success has been achieved by many groups with the typical situation being more demand for cruise tickets than the organization can handle.

"A typical cruise is handled with a super ferry-class vessel such as the Hyak, Yakima, Kaleetan or Elwha.

"Washington State Ferries report that many guests on one such cruise recently ignored the sightseeing available to them with on-board buffets, bars and live music getting most of the attention. Areas where daily commuters are accustomed to reading their newspapers are transformed into huge dance floors.

"On this same cruise, both ferries which were used eased back into their berths at the Seattle Ferry Terminal. After guests departed, the clean-up crews moved in. Both vessels were ready for service the following morning.

"Congratulations are in order for this move by the Washington State Ferries. It is always rewarding to see a state-maintained operation employ resourcefulness and intelligence to reduce costs. Rather than becoming a burden to the state."

It is ironic that those Washington ferry cruises go right by a laid-up Alaska ferry, moored to the dock for the winter because of a lack of positive action by the Alaska state administration.

State Launches Ferry Fixup

KETCHIKAN (AP) — For the first time ever, winter maintenance to portions of the state ferry fleet will be handled in Alaska under a pilot project launched by the division of marine transportation.

Officials said repairs to the ferries Le Conte and Chilkat at dockside in Ketchikan would be limited to interior painting and minor alterations this year. More extensive repairs will be done in Seattle as usual.

The two vessels, the smallest of the eight-ship fleet, were to spend about two weeks in Ketchikan during January and February, after they have been taken to Seattle for major maintenance.

Ferry crews were to be used for the work, but city manager Pat Teague said that if the in-state repairs were established on a permanent basis, it would mean "lots of jobs" for the area.

The city has purchased the Alaska Steamship dock for the maintenance work and as part of a waterfront development project.

Meanwhile, state officials said they hoped repairs to the state dock at Ketchikan would be completed by Dec. 22. The ferry Columbia has been prevented from taking on automobiles in Ketchikan since it malfunctioned and pulled the dock into the water three months ago.

Since then, the Le Conte has been ferrying cars to Wrangell for transfer to the Columbia and larger vessels.

From The Ketchikan Daily News

THE CANADIANS are setting some examples on how not to operate ferries in case Alaskans are watching.

It is reported from Vancouver, B.C. that the British Columbia Ferries, the government-owned ferry system, is expected to lose up to $25 million in its operations this year.

The other news out of Vancouver is that independent truckers using the B.C. ferry system have threatened further demonstrations if the government refuses to either increase ferry sailings or give some priority to commercial trucks.

Meanwhile, all is quiet with Alaska ferries for the moment. Repair work is continuing on the Ketchikan terminal ramp, the Taku is in mothballs for the winter without a truckers protest on this side of the border and the Columbia is laid up for mechanical troubles (that's news?).

Best of all, Alaska ferries have lost only about $14 million. Or, at least, that is the subsidy we are told that it takes this year to keep the ships afloat. Before we all panic and run for the boats, it is well to remember that maintenance on an equivalent mileage of highways would be considerably greater and the highway construction costs would be thousands of times greater.

Ferry Dock, Jail In 1977 Capital Budget

By CLARK MILLER
Empire Staff Reporter

The proposed $700 million capital projects budget for fiscal year 1977 includes several items of local importance, including ferry dock and terminal construction at Auke Bay and upgrading of the state jail at Lemon Creek.

Auke Bay appears on the capital project list with $300,000 in state bond funds and $2.2 million in other money, largely federal, specified. Sen. Bill Ray, D-Juneau, has reservations about this project, however, saying it may pose a threat to the future of the downtown ferry terminal.

Ray said William Hudson, director of marine transportation, "believes Auke Bay is a more efficient operation. But how do you supply the foot traffic. It's not practical, more evaluation is needed...the ferry system is a service to the public. If you have problems with the service, you don't eliminate the service, you eliminate the problems."

A project currently under way will change the state-operated restaurants on the state ferries into cafeteria-style food outlets. Ray wants this idea investigated also. "Universal Service had the concession on the ferries and made money...the state took over, now even the bar loses money."

No justification has been shown to me for the change," Ray said, adding that if the state got out of the food business on the ferries, "there would be no end of applications for the lease."

Both legislative finance committees will meet with marine transportation Jan. 21 to discuss these projects.

The Lemon Creek jail is earmarked on the capital projects list to receive $3.6 million in state bond money for remodelling, additional housing and a gymnasium.

Kent Dawson, director of budget and management, said the net effect of this work would be to make all of Lemon Creek a high security prison.

Juneau is also listed for $300,000 in state bonds funds for entry and service road work.

Other Juneau projects include the following:

—$300,000 in general funds and $15 million from state bonds for the University of Alaska at Juneau; the money would upgrade water, roads, parking and utilities and buy chemistry lab equipment.

—$35,000 in general funds and $239,000 from bonds for construction of a maintenance shop for military affairs.

—$119,000 in general funds for maintenance, painting and repairs to government buildings in Juneau.

Juneau won't see a significant influx of new state employes in fiscal 1977. There are 377 new positions in the governor's proposed budget, the lowest number of new positions in 10 years, according to Gov. Jay Hammond.

Roughly $40 million of Hammond's proposed $240 million in state bonds funds would go for fisheries rehabilitation. What impact this would have on Juneau has not been determined yet.

Ferry

KETCHIKAN, Alaska (AP)—More than 100 days after Ketchikan's dock was ripped apart, mainline state ferries can take on automobiles in the gateway city.

The ferry Columbia completed a successful test boarding at the repaired dock Wednesday, the first time cars have been able to leave Ketchikan on a mainline vessel since early September.

About $400,000 in repairs were required after an engine malfunction in theColumbia pushed the ferry away from the dock, destroying the ferry slip to which it qas still tied.

Although smaller ferries have deen able to take on cars at another dock, passengers with their vehicles have been forced to travel to Wrangell to board any larger ferry operating between Seattle and Southeast Alaska.

PETERSON BUILDERS MEN'S
(Three Man Teams)
Results Jan. 8

High ind. series: Mark Richards 572, Rick Yedica 567, Alton Smith 468.
High ind. singles: Mark Richards 212, Rick Yedica 201, Dave Voeks 199.
High team series: Richards, Weckler & Pagels 1615.
High team single: LeCloux, Virlee & Lockert 588.

HOMEWARD BOUND: The sleek Columbia, flagship of the Alaska Marine Highway System, is pictured gliding past the central Seattle waterfront toward her berth at Pier 48. Harry Gilmour

Upgrade Your License

There are immediate openings at the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School for upgrading of licenses. Why put it off any longer. Get an application form now from your MEBA Union Hall, or write for one to the Calhoon MEBA Engineering School 9 Light Street, Baltimore, Md. 21202.

Unwise Action

I believe it unwise to lay up some of Alaska ferries as a means of saving money, as our Governor has ordered.

The Governor says the cut in service will save a million dollars this winter. But that is peanuts, compared with the spending budget for the state in this fiscal year. It will only work a hardship on those who must depend on ferry service on Alaska's coasts.

I remember a number of years ago when the first ferry bonds were voted. It was for the purpose of giving so many coastal towns an outlet to other parts of Alaska and to Stateside. It relieved things, just as paving of roads took Kansas farmers out of the mud—a must in this day and age.

So it is a case of being pennywise. It is fine to cut costs. But there are better places to do it than to deny the people a regular, frequent transportation outlet. The blow will strike at Cordova, for example, which although on mainland Alaska, has no highway outlet. In Southeast Alaska frequent ferry service is a must for obvious reasons.

It was back at the outset of the 1960s that we voted the first bonds for construction of ferries and terminals. How happy we were and how we looked forward to seeing the fleet which would allow us arm room, so to speak, in Southeast Alaska.

We watched with great interest the construction of those first three vessels in Seattle shipyard and when it came time for sea trials I flew down to Seattle from Ketchikan and later rode the first vessel, the Malis pina, to Alaska. What a thrill that was. I remember well, while standing at the rail of the vessel as we sped with the tide through Seymour Narrows, that this was a new era for Alaska. That was my thought. This was finally an outlet for the people of the Southeast Islands. This was a whole new thing.

I thought too that this was just the beginning, that we would have more vessels to serve more places in Alaska and that we never again would suffer for lack of ferry transportation. But not so, apparently, for two of our new vessels are to be laid up for the winter down in the states.

We do not wish to seem critical, but we feel that the people paid for those vessels with the idea that they would provide regular, frequent service to Alaskans and our visiting friends.

Therefore, we believe this move to be pennywise and pound . . .

It is unfortunate that the people of Alaska and the ferry system itself must suffer. We seem to have plenty of money to spend otherwise, despite the fact that for the next couple of years we face a New York-type form of bankruptcy. Compared with the total state budget, the savings from the layup of two vessels would be infinitesimal. And what about the jobs of crewpeople?

And service will be cut even further as each of the remaining vessels must go to Seattle for a two-month winter overhaul—a must each year. It would be much more farsighted to use the layups for fill-ins during overhaul times.

Granted, traffic on the ferries falls off sharply in winter. Still, it should be there when needed. That would not be the only subsidy Alaskans support. When the bonds were voted Alaskans were told that they never again would suffer for lack of water transportation.

This move is a disservice to the people. —ABG

Ferry System

Gov. Jay Hammond and his appointed administrators of public works and marine transportation must fly everywhere they go. Or walk on water. They certainly don't use the Alaska ferry system.

If they did, the Hammond administration surely wouldn't have allowed Southeast Alaska's only surface link to the rest of the world to take such a low place in the pecking order of state spending.

If you think the next thing we're going to do is launch a tirade against transformation of the Malaspina's dining room into a cafeteria. forget it. Designed correctly and administered properly, a cafeteria system instead of separate snack bar and formal dining room is probably a much better idea. After all, the ferries are supposed to provide relatively economical transportation, not the frills of luxury liners. A lot of people will probably prefer the cafeteria over the all-or-nothing situation presently offered.

We are concerned, however, about a lot of other recent administrative decisions regarding our ferry system. First was the decision to tie up the Taku for the winter in an effort to trim the budget. You certainly didn't see the Department of Highways closing the Anchorage to Fairbanks highway when Hammond ordered belt tightening, yet Marine Transportation Director Bill Hudson's first thought when asked to pare down the budget was to drastically reduce ferry service.

Second is the decision to close Juneau's downtown terminal in favor of the Auke Bay facility. So what if people destined for Juneau end up isolated on the road north of Auke Bay. The ferry system's administration aren't concerned about service, just saving a buck here and there. We agree that efficiencey should be a major concern of any operation, but not to the extent that the job at hand simply isn't done.

Third is the talk of leasing out the Columbia to Hawaii during the winter months, another money saving idea which takes the all-time prize for irresponsibility. The people of Alaska paid for the Columbia; we in Southeast pay the lion's share in fares. We are entitled to year-round use of the flagship of our ferry fleet. To grandly lease the Columbia to the state of Hawaii—as much as we may like that sunny state—while leaving Alaskans with reduced ferry service is absurd.

Of course there's also the indication that fares for the ferry service will be raised again. We should all be happy to pay more for less.

At a time when Juneau is becoming more and more in need of regular, reliable surface transportation, our state government is bounding headlong backward to the days when the Alaska Marine Highway was no more than an idea.

Regardless of what some may think, Juneau is still the capital of Alaska. We need more and better ferry service, not less and worse.

We need a land connection to the Alaska Highway, but it looks like we're not going to get that in the forseeable future. Our second choice—the very least Juneau by all rights and reason should have—is a year-round maintained road to Echo Cove with a daily ferry shuttle to Haines.

But instead we have the cutback kings Jay Hammond and Bill Hudson and their once in awhile Alaska ferry non-service.

Ferry Rates

It's just not right.

First the Hammond administration cuts back on service provided by the Alaska ferry system, now we're faced with the prospect of paying more for less.

Beginning May 1 rates will go up about 20 per cent across the board, to $79 for a walk-on passenger from Seattle to Juneau and $278 for a standard-sized auto on the same trip.

And to top it all off, it will cost a flat $10 for the family pooch to ride along. The pet fee is the crowning insult of the new rate schedule, since animals must stay in their owners' vehicles and thus constitute no expense to the ferry system. It is strictly a way to squeeze out a few more bucks from passengers.

The marine highway system is not a money-maker for the state. Even with increased rates, Alaskan taxpayers will still have to come up with about $16 million to operate the system next fiscal year.

However, the ferry system is not supposed to pay for itself, no more than the state's highways are supposed to be self-sufficient.

The Alaska Marine Highway is, after all, just that—a highway which spans not the land between Anchorage and Fairbanks but the inland passage between Seattle and the road connection at Haines.

Somewhere along the line it was decided that the ferry system, while it serves the function of a highway to roadless cities, should be at least partially financed by those who use it. We have to agree with that decision, especially since many users are nonresidents who pay no Alaska taxes.

But with the price of a one-car ticket from Seattle to Juneau approaching $300, things are getting just a bit out of hand. The ferry system is still obligated to provide relatively economical transportation to those communities without alternative surface transportation. The excessively high prices the current administration seems to be heading toward will quickly place ferry travel above what the average citizen can reasonably be expected to pay.

Southeast Alaska is getting the dirty end of the transportation stick already, and at the rate Gov. Jay Hammond and his appointees are going that stick will get dirtier and dirtier. A lot more attention is being paid to the highway network in Southcentral and Interior Alaska then to improving Southeastern's ferry service or—as the state should be—working toward the day when we in Southeast aren't soley dependent upon the Seattle to Juneau ferry run for surface transportation.

No one else in Alaska is expected to pay even half the operating cost of their highways. We will gladly pay the increased ferry fares when the Anchorage to Fairbanks highway becomes a toll road.

Alaska Ferries

Dear Editor:

Alaska has one of the finest fleets of marine vessels designed for public transportation in the world and is a unique reminder of Alaska's historic past when steamships and sternwheelers sailed the inland waters. Alaskans are lucky to have such a system which has helped to make the beauty of the inland waters and Alaska famous throughout the world. However, some people would perfer to view it as a rather expensive orphan which should be thrown to the wolves of private enterprise by refusing adequate government support.

An historical parellel can be drawn between the ferries and the disastrous condition of America's railroad passenger service. When the airlines emerged the government refused to assist the railroads and as a result the railroads abandoned public transportation. Today there is nothing left of the fine passenger service cars in America forcing people to fly from one crowded and conjested city to another with nothing in between but clouds while at the same time in Europe and Japan trains with government support exist and thrive and are now competing with the airlines for convenience, speed and economy.

Converting the dining room of the Malaspina into a cafeteria is like throwing away a steak for a hot dog. Inevitably this will result in a decrease in passengers which will offer the state justification again for cutting back services. With this continuing downward spiral Alaskans can look forward to a fleet of fast moving barges equiped with glorified hamburger stands.

This type of attitude towards public transportation makes the inscription on Alaska license plates of "North to ths Future" seem a little more than ironic and should be changed to "South to Los Angeles."

Michael Dixon,
Waiter and an endangered species of the Marine Highway Svstem

Ferries

Dear Editor:

The following was sent to the Senate and House Finance Committees.

We, the undersigned submit this document to protest the "false economy" expenditures currently underway on the M/V MALISPINA.

We would like management to consider the years of experience that the licensed officers have earned. We deal with the public daily and we have learned what the public wants and needs for a smooth and more pleasant trip for all of us. We are all proud of and loyal to our trasportation system, therefore, we feel obligated and duty bound to express feelings, objections and views and to make them public if needed.

Basically, the purpose of the Marine Highway System is to serve the public, not to be a monument to one man's ego. Further, each and every time there is a new temporary Port Steward he is virtually allowed to run rampant with a blank check. Immediately many changes occur, they seem to be bound to outdo their predecessors, sometimes to the extent of reckless thinking and spending. The office files showing their expenditures on galley changes memos and personnel changes will show this to be a fact. The latest change, to the tune of approximately $300,000.00 is to convert the fine dining rooms on the Malispina and Columbia to a fast food line, similar to what was already attempted and changed on the Malaspina class vessels in 1963. Foolish? Reckless? Yet, on December 29th an experienced sailor lost three-fourths of his thumb while heaving the Columbia into the Skagway Terminal. The accident happened because of undersized warping heads on the anchor windlass. We could not afford $22,000 for larger, safer drums.

The above is just the latest accident. We have consistently requested that funds be channeled into expenditures which we all know are necessary for proper maintenance and greater safety to the vessel and our passengers.

Here are a few of the absolutely vital safety items that we have listed time and again on our annual overhaul lists:

1. Anti-collision Radars on all ships.
2. Stablizers for M/V Columbia and M/V Malaspina.
3. Anti-icing window washdown systems for Pilot House windows on all vessels.
4. Higher horsepower bowthruster for the Columbia and Taku.
5. Power capstands at springline stations on all vessels.
6. Console gyro repeaters for Taku and Malaspina.
7. Radar magnifiers for Columbia.
8. Hospital facilities and properly trained personnel on all vessels.

And, as any mariner is fully aware of, this safety list could go on and on. For years as these items have been cancelled with the cry, "We have no money" we have more or less accepted that this was the way things were. But No More!

As taxpayers we are not so gullible as to believe that it is essentail to change an existing Dining Room to a Cafeteria, especially when the existing Cafeteria and Dining Room are well received by our passengers. We are outraged by this conversion because the facts and figures used to support this change are so obviously contrived. For example, with accounting the labor and food supplies for the Cafeteria are charged as expenses to the Dining Room. For example, the menu in the Cafeteria has too many selections and is in competition with the Dining Room; this is especially bad at breakfast. Lately, the closing of the Dining Rooms on all vessels for breakfast and lunch has caused many people to state that they are making their last trip with the ferry system. We feel that the way to reduce the amount of the subsidy is to increase passenger services in all areas, for a price.

We wish copies of these statements, opinions and pleas to go into each of the undersigned personal files.

Signed by
30 officers
of the
state ferry system.

Lawmakers Probe State Ferry Policy

By CLARK MILLER
Empire Staff Reporter

Leaders of the House and Senate Finance Committees confronted state marine highway officials Wednesday afternoon with charges of misuse of appropriated funds, policy changes without legislative or public hearings and failure to communicate openly with the legislature.

The committees met jointly under the direction of Senate Finance Chairman Bill Ray, D-Juneau, to question Commissioner of Public Works Donald Harris and director of marine transportation William Hudson about the rationale and funding of the current conversion of the state ferry Malaspina from restaurant-style to cafeteria-style food service.

The conversion is being done for about $260,000. Testimony by Harris confirmed that marine transportation has come up with $430,000 for this project and possibly the conversion of the Columbia as well by taking $50,000 out of the current personal services budget, $50,000 out of the commodities budget, $250,000 out of $500,000 appropriated last year for repair of fleet car decks, $42,000 out of $142,000 appropriated for engineer sound-proofing for six vessels and $38,000 out of $50,000 appropriated for two new dishwashers for the Matanuska and the Taku.

Ray said the legislature had been convinced last session of the need for these repair and equipment expenditures and had appropriated the money accordingly. He asked Harris and Hudson why they hadn't stuck with their priorities and then requested a supplemental appropriation for the legislature for the conversions—especially since the approval of Gov. Jay Hammond for the transfer of funds out of personal services came on Jan. 8, only four days before the legislature convened.

Legislative indignation is further aggravated by a current marine transportation request for a $2.2 million supplemental appropriation for salaries.

Harris assured the legislators that none of the supplemental money requested will be used to pay any existing contracts through fiscal year 1976. He said the legislature had been skirted because of the press of time to get the conversion done before the tourist season begins. He and Hudson attempted to justify each of the transfers of money out of an appropriated fund into the conversion project.

As for why they had made haste to undertake the conversion to fast food on the ferries between sessions, Harris and Hudson pointed out that the ferry system costs the state twice what it brings in and that the situation is expected to get worse every year. Hudson said personal services—salaries—accounts for 70 per cent of the total budget, and that the only practical way to save money is to eliminate people on the payroll.

Conversion of the Malaspina will eliminate 14 waiters, cooks and cocktail waitresses. If the Columbia is converted, it will eliminate 20 restaurant workers.

Neither Ray nor House Finance Chairman Hugh Malone, D-Kenai, were appeased by these points. Malone said a mechanism for changing appropriations exists but was not used. He said the juggling of funds looked like a "shell game" to hide money, and that the supplemental request to cover anticipated union contract costs, after taking money out of existing personal services, seemed to inflate the costs of the contracts unfairly.

Rep. Jim Duncan, D-Juneau, reminded Hudson and Harris that the extent of past legislative approval for the project was for a modest pilot program involving "one small vessel up north."

Ray also asked why they started the project with the fleet's largest vessel, the one which has the newest restaurant. Ray recalled the "total disaster" of the car decks project, in which the whole fleet was outfitted with car decks without a pilot program. As indicated by last year's appropriation, the car decks are falling apart because of wear by studded tires, he said.

Ray said "what I resent most is the almost studied callousness given ideas advanced by Southeast spokesmen."

To illustrate his point, Ray read from promotional brochures from Bellingham, Wash., which dwell on Bellingham's good fortune in being the future site of the present southern terminal in Seattle. He said he had not been appraised of such a move and asked Harris if the move was planned.

Harris said it was being studied and the answer would come in March.

Ray also asked if the possibility of leasing ferry bars and restaurants had been considered. "You erode my support when you can't make money in the bars," he said.

Harris said "we're taking proposals right now from businesses" to lease the restaurants and bars. Ray replied by suggesting that such a future lease on the Malaspina might entail dismembering all the work that is currently being done.

Rep. Mike Miller, D-Juneau, was also concerned about the absence of Southeast voices in ferry decisions. He asked why Southeast legislators had not been consulted about the winter-long Taku tie-up and why there had been no public hearings on the scheduled rate increases.

"You may be forcing us to make another oversight committee...or else a line item budget," Miller said.

Duncan said he was "dismayed" that Harris had no plans for public hearings on the rate increases. He said Harris had earlier said he would hold the hearings, and that a letter from Hammond had also said such hearings were likely.

Harris admitted that he had planned to hold hearings, but eventually decided he didn't have the manpower or the time to do so. He said the modest degree of the increases did not warrant the hearings anyway.

Harris and Hudson repeatedly justified their decisions by pointing to the growing deficit in their budget.

Sen. Genie Chance, D-Anchorage, objected, however, to the use of the term "deficit." "This is a highway system, not a business to make money," she said. She suggested maintenance costs per one-lane mile be computed, as is done with roads.

Sen. Terry Miller, D-Fairbanks, said the new rates, while perhaps modest, may hit Alaskans the hardest because they have to use the ferries, while tourists have the option of driving up the Alaska Highway in the summer or flying.

Hudson said the decision to raise the rates was an "agonizing one" but added that "my job becomes very simple if all I do is continue operations as before...we're seeking efficiency."

Hudson said plans for converting the Columbia were contingent on legislative approval, as well as the time factor. The Malaspina will be ready by March 1.

Sen. Robert Ziegler, D-Ketchikan, probably spoke for many of the legislators present in the meeting when he suggested marine transportation "watch the Malaspina" this summer, to see if the fast food service saves the projected $715,000 in personnel costs and brings in $68,000 in increased revenues.

Ray recessed the meeting without announcing another and said the two committees would think about what had been said, with one possible action being to stop the conversion project now.

Cable problem delays Columbia

One of the two supporting cables of the ferry dock at Wrangell was repaired Monday morning after the anchor eyebolt broke Sunday, said Winston Davies, terminal operator at Wrangell.

Due to the broken cable the ferry Columbia was unable to dock safely in the 50 knot winds Sunday, said William Bendixen, marine superintendent.

Lawmakers Question Ferry Terminal Move

Legislative leaders have indicated they want a hand in deciding whether the Alaska Marine Highway System moves its southern terminal from Seattle to Bellingham.

The proposal, now under study by a state consultant, was among several areas of ferry operations that two legislative committees explored and then asked for more details.

Generally, said Senate Finance Committee Chairman Bill Ray, legislators were concerned because "all we know about it, is what we read in the Bellingham papers."

Don Harris, commissioner of public works, said there was little information he could give the legislature until the consultant completed his report in March.

"I hope to be in the position to make a recommendation (to the legislature) sometime in March," said Harris.

The possibility of relocating the system's southern terminal to a more northern port has been kicked around for years by state officials as an economy move saving sailing time on the two mainline ferries, the Columbia and Malaspina.

Meanwhile, Harris came under criticism from the committees for a planned system-wide rate hike that would take effect May 1 without a public hearing.

The increase would boost passenger rates by 11 per cent, charges for passenger cars by 8 per cent and fees for vehicles more than 19 feet long by 20 per cent. In addition, Harris disclosed officials were considering a 20 per cent hike in food charges.

Sen. Terry Miller, R-Fairbanks, urged Harris to examine the pending increases "to see if they will impact Alaskans more than the tourist from outside."

Asked why a public hearing had not been called, Harris said his staff "frankly didn't have the time." A public hearing on the rate increases is not required.

The increases would be the third general rate hike in as many years and generate an estimated $2.7 million.

Legislators and others learned of the plan when Gov. Jay Hammond unveiled his 1977 budget last week.

The town is now negotiating with the Alaska state ferry system to give the ferry Chilkat longer hours for certain days of the week so the people of Metlakatla can benefit more from the use of the ferry. They said they will probably begin this on May 1.

Bill Would Give Public Voice In Ferry Policy

Legislation aimed at letting the public have its say on policy decisions and fare changes by the often criticized state ferry system has been sponsored by the House State Affairs Committee.

A revision of a bill introduced in the closing hours of last session, the measure would create a seven-member committee to review and make recommendations concerning ferry system policies, operating budget, fares, scheduling and capital improvement projects.

Last month, legislators questioned marine transportation officials about a fare hike that was to be put into effect without a public hearing. They also questioned economy moves some lawmakers said were not authorized by the legislature.

Shortly after the hearing, ferry officials announced a series of public meetings on the proposal to raise fares by nearly 20 per cent in May.

Juneau Democrat Mike Miller, the prime sponsor of the original measure, said a new section requiring a comprehensive public hearing process in any changes in the rate schedule was influenced by the reluctance to have public input in the proposed rates.

"It wasn't prompted in the original sense by the flap this year, but it pointed out the need," Miller said. "The bill will ensure fewer decisions are made in the commissioner's office."

Membership of the unpaid advisory committee would include three residents of towns served by the ferry system "who are broadly representative of the travelling public," two representatives of commercial users of the ferries and two legislators.

"I'm satisfied if the advisory system had been in existence this year," Miller said, "the ferry system wouldn't be in the hot water it is with the legislature."

The bill also includes a declaration of policy of the marine transportation system that Miller said "articulates what most southeasterners have felt for years."

"The state ferry system...is a moving highway," the bill says. "As such, it is a substitute for a network of roads and highways along and through the maritime areas of the state..."

Although he admitted the declaration wouldn't "change much" of the way the system is run, Miller said it was necessary because "the commissioner puts more emphasis than there should be on paying its own way."

Statements by ferry officials that the cost per mile of the ferries is almost the same as a modest two-lane asphalt highway, Miller said "points out the present subsidy is about where it should be—they should not be preoccupied with cutting back services."

KETCHIKAN, Alaska (AP)—More than 100 days after Ketchikan's dock was ripped apart, mainline state ferries can take on automobiles in the gateway city.

The ferry Columbia completed a successful test boarding at the repaired dock Wednesday, the first time cars have been able to leave Ketchikan on a mainline vessel since early September.

11-5

ON THE FIRING LINE—Director of marine transportation William Hudson, right, and staff member Douglas Burton drew a packed house last night in a public hearing held both to enlighten the public on ferry system problems and changes and to hear complaints and comments about the system. The two officials discussed everything from new summer rates to planned terminal improvements. (Clark Miller-Empire photo)

Ferry System Issues Aired

By CLARK MILLER
Empire Staff Reporter

A public hearing on problems and changes in the marine highway system last night included debate on scheduled rate increases and a hint from ferry officials that city-borough must take the lead in saving the downtown terminal.

Ferry rates are scheduled to jump 11 per cent for passengers in May, eight per cent for smaller vehicles and roughly 20 per cent for larger private and commercial vehicles and vans.

William R. Hudson, director of marine highways, and staff member Doug Burton fielded questions and several hours last night in the City-Borough Assembly chambers. Why the increases? Inflation. Why the extra burden on commercial vehicles? The delays and expenses of handling.

Asked why Alaskans don't get an inter-city rate for Southeast Alaska, Hudson said such a break is already built into the rate schedules—a slight break.

After hearing about how much money the system loses every year, a member of the audience asked if the same could not be said of highways. Commissioner of Public Works Donald Harris, who attended the meeting, replied that "beyond a certain level of subsidizing, the user must pay" for the system. "The highways are paid for at the same level by the consumer, in the form of highway fuel tax," he said.

There was a noticeable absence of discussion about the recently announced conversion of the Malispina from restaurant-style to cafeteria-style food service. Persons at the meeting last night seemed content to accept the much-debated change without comment.

Asked to justify their plans for improving the staging area, terminal and sewer at Auke Bay, the officials described their policy on Juneau's split terminal as the only practical way of dealing with the immediate future, since an alternate dock to the occasionally wind-threatened downtown dock is essential.

"I'm not quite so adamant—or directed—toward the Auke Bay Terminal as I was," Hudson said. "We're not discontinuing the downtown terminal...until we have a through evaluation of Auke Bay and an economic study of both terminals," he said.

Hudson said, however, "we've had no proposals from the city-borough for downtown work" on the terminal. The question was raised repeatedly of what the city-borough's desires are regarding the terminal. Juneauites testified that it is neglected, poorly maintained, short of visitors parking, threatened by rotting docks—"a third of our staging can't be used for holding the standard car," a city-borough terminal staff member said, adding that garbage trucks and vans have gone through the dock in the past.

Hudson said the staging at both terminals is presently inadequate, "but we own Auke Bay," whereas the city-borough owns the downtown terminal. "So we're going to triple the staging area out there," Hudson said. As for the road out to the terminal, Hudson concurred with the many criticisms of it, but said "if we do more, the Highway Department will do more."

"If the city-borough will triple its terminal staging, get parking, shore up the dock...we'll listen." Hudson said.

Mayor Ginny Kline read a resolution to the officials from the Southeastern Conference requesting a comprehensive land and water transportation plan within one year for Southeast Alaska.

Hudson said the possible formation of the Department of Transportation this year might make such a plan feasible.

Burton had no trouble justifying the new charges for pets that will come into effect May 1—"we've had to return money to people trying to sleep in rooms above yelping dogs," he said.

Bob Loescher of the Tlingit-Haida Housing Authority spoke on behalf of 16 Southeastern villages when he formally opposed the rate increases, especially high summer commericial rates that effect village construction projects. He also objected to ths absence of service to Hoonah and Kake since Dec. 19, and further urged the construction a port at Angoon.

Regarding Angoon's dock, Hudson said preliminary designs are being made and construction may take place this summer with possible ferry service by October.

The possibility of moving the southern terminal from Seattle to Bellingham was also discussed. Hudson said Kent Miller, an Alaskan consultant, was studying the idea.

The problem of travelers being turned away from half-empty vessels in Seattle, because of excess reservations and no-shows will be solved this summer, according to Burton, by requiring payment within 30 days of making the reservation.

Similar hearings will be held throughout Alaska in the next month by Hudson and Burton.

Public Meetings Set On Marine Highway

Operations of the Alaska Marine Highway will be discussed at a series of public meetings next month in major communities served by the system's main line vessels in Southeastern and Southcentral Alaska, Marine Transportation Director Bill Hudson said today.

Hudson said interested persons are urged to attend the informal meetings and offer their views.

All aspects of the system will be open for discussion, and views on the system's passenger and vehicle rate structure will specifically be sought, Hudson said.

The Juneau meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday in the City-Borough Assembly chambers of the Municipal Building.

Public Works Commissioner Don Harris; Bill Hudson, director of the Division of Marine Transportation; and Doug Burton, Marine Transportation traffic manager will preside over the meeting.

Ferry System Seeks Food Service Bids

The Division of Marine Transportation is soliciting private businesses in Juneau and Seattle to see if any firm wants to provide food, beverage and room maintenance service on the state ferries.

Newspaper ads are appearing in the Empire, the Seattle Journal of Commerce and the Seattle Times, according to Ginger Johnson, the division's information officer. So far, three firms have replied to get more information.

The division is seeking the proposals as part of its effort to reduce the growing imbalance between its revenues and expenses, Johnson said. If private industry can provide satisfactory personal services at a reasonable cost to the consumer, the division will consider turning over the business, Johnson said.

The division was criticized recently by Sen. Bill Ray, D-Juneau, for proceeding with the conversion of the Malaspina to cafeteria-style food service without attempting to find out if private industry can operate at a profit on the ferries.

Employes in the marine highway system are, by union contract, resident Alaskans. The same contracts would apply to employes of a private firm working on the ferries, Johnson said. They would have to join the ferry unions and be paid at union scale.

Johnson said the residency requirement is considered to have little legal stability. It has never been challenged, but if it were, it would probably be knocked down, she said.

Therefore, a firm agreeing to hire only Alaskans would probably do so "on a gentleman's agreement," Johnson said.

The last private firm to provide food service on the ferries, before the state went into business for itself, had a contract guaranteeing it 25 per cent income beyond cost. The contract "killed us," Johnson said, adding that the service provided on those terms was poor. "There was a giant improvement when we took over." She said the division doesn't plan to make any more deals like that.

The three firms to respond so far are the Mannings Corp. of San Francisco, Burtco Logistics of Seattle and Zabo Co. of Los Angeles.

The simultaneous conversion to cafeterias and soliciting of private management would suggest the division is intent on getting out of the food business, but the division has not stated this intention. Johnson said she did not know if the division wants to try to operate cafeterias at a profit before seeking private management.

But the division is convinced, as director William Hudson has said repeatedly, that cafeterias are the answer to the high cost of public food service.

Any firm proposals finally received by the division will be evaluated by the port steward and director, Johnson said.

11-6

Ferries

Dear Editor:

Could you imagine such a news story?

"Anchorage and Fairbanks Citizens Up In Arms."

It was disclosed at a recent meeting of the State Highway Department that new regulations were going into effect on the Anchorage to Fairbanks Highway beginning the first of February. It was announced that these regulations were due to rising costs of maintaining the highway.

The new regulations consisted of: Mondays through Fridays there would be only one lane traffic between Willow and Denali State Park. Cars would only be allowed to travel between Fairbanks and Nenana on Monday and Fridays. A fee of $10.00 would be imposed on all pets being transported in cars or trucks between Anchorage and Fairbanks. Reservations to travel between the two cities would have to be made at least two months in advance because of the heavy traffic load.

It would seem to me that the merchants and citizens of Juneau and the whole Southeast Alaska should really be up in arms at the arbitrary changes and poor service that the Marine Highway has put upon traffic along the water highway of this part of the state. It seems to me that this is in the same category as the rest of the State Highway system and should be treated in the same manner. And then to add insult to injury the Marine Highway intends to cut down on the "service" by building the main terminal for Juneau out at Auke Bay making it almost impossible for travellers to get into the city except at an extremely high extra fee. What kind of "highway" is that? It would be like stopping the Anchorage to Fairbanks highway fourteen miles outside the city limits of Anchorage with a barrier so that all travellers would have to park their cars and take a bus the rest of the way into town.

Let's do something about this state of affairs.

Sincerely,
Robert H. McNabb
Douglas

ferry (including the Wickie), some of them several times. Because my husband, Bo, is the friendly type we always meet new people. The most frequent comment heard over the years (except "all the Alaskans are in the bar") has been favorable comparison with cruise ships including praise for the restaurants.

Our last trip, from Seattle to Juneau on January 23-26, was different. The favorite topic of conversation was the poor quality of the food service. Apparantly a new conversation starter has cropped up, the Alaskan equivalent of Mexico's "how to avoid Montezuma's Revenge" is a form of "can you top this" in eating disasters, which range from cold dinners to no chopped onions for hot dogs. The tops so far is the fact that, although the cafeteria advertises "full service" all day, toast is only available during certain hours, the toast machine is shut off the rest of the time!

Good cooks take professional pride in their work, but even the best skills can not overcome the new procedure's disabilities. Breakfast loses something when it is prepared ahead of time and kept hot for hours. A delicious plate lunch becomes unappetizing when plastic fork times break in it and have to be avoided. The diningroom, which is only open for dinner, would be a welcome change if properly staffed. Excepting a cook's heavy hand with the Rosemary, all the diningroom complaints we heard were attributable to having only three waiters and two bus girls for a room with seating capacity of about two hundred people. Besides cold dinners, the complaints included no water or coffee refills, very slow removal of dirty dishes and no cocktails because the mini bar was not working and the main bar was at the opposite end of the ship.

All of these problems would seem petty if there was another

Ferry Union Takes State To Court

The major state ferry system union is taking the state of Alaska to court to challenge the state labor board's authority over ferry unions.

The other two ferry system unions are taking the same stand. The Alaska Labor Relations Board held a hearing in Juneau yesterday to consider collective bargaining status of state shipboard personnel, but all three unions objected to the hearing and refused to take part in it.

The Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific went one step further. The union's attorney, Allen Compton, served the agency's three-man panel a legal complaint, charging the agency with not giving proper notice of the hearing to the union and not having the jurisdiction to hold such a hearing anyway.

"We don't believe you have any authority over us. we won't participate in the hearing," Compton said.

C.R. Hafling, Ronald M. Henry and Morgan Reed, governor-appointed members of the state labor board, conceded that of the three unions, only Masters, Mates and Pilots was properly given notice of the hearing.

The Masters, Mates and Pilots also objected to the hearing, however. MMP attorney Mike Thomas told the three men the Labor Relations Board has "no authority for rule-making" over shipboard personnel. "There are no regulations giving those powers to you," he said.

What is apparently at stake is the right to strike. The hearing, which will reconvene in Anchorage—with proper notices for everybody—on Dec. 15, is being held to consider whether shipboard personnel under the Division of Marine Transportation should be classified as class two employes for purposes of collective bargaining.

Class two employes have a conditional right to strike. The three unions don't fear being moved out of that class. They say they fear having their right to strike rule interpreted and modified or eliminated by the board. They are apparently anticipating such a threat by attacking the board's authority.

In defense of the board, Bob Johnson of the Attorney General's Office said there is a history of rule interpretations by the Labor Relations Agency, that such is its legal duty. On behalf of the Department of Administration, he asked that the hearing proceed.

Hafling and his colleagues, however, chose to adjourn the hearing until next month.

A Look At The Fleet

MEMBERS of Alaska's legislature, the Associated Press reports, have expressed "surprise and anger" over the administration's plans to tighten up some of the operations of the Southeastern ferry system.

A hearing that is supposed to be "wide-ranging" has been called on the subject for today, with the House and Senate finance committees putting some of Gov. Jay Hammond's people on the grill.

It's proper, of course, for the legislature to look into such things. After all, the administration is proposing some major alterations in operations of the marine highway fleet.

Among other things, it is exploring the possibility of abandoning Seattle as the southern terminus of the system— and setting up shop instead at Bellingham, Wash. That would be a big shift, indeed, if it comes about.

But other things are cooking, too, including a major change in food service operations aboard the Malaspina, the Columbia and the Tustamena. The state has ordered remodeling of those two ferries to do away with sit-down, full-service dining room facilities and to offer instead fast-food, self-service.

On top of that, a higher rate schedule has been ordered into effect May 1.

THESE ARE all moves planned to trim back huge deficits that have been piling up in the ferry operations.

And since they represent significant shifts in policy and procedures, it's easy to see why some legislators — especially those from Southeastern Alaska — would be very much interested and concerned.

But it's hard to see how they might be surprised and angered, as the AP reported.

There's nothing new in the proposals, so far as we can see from this distance. All of the changes — including the conversion to buffet-style dining — have been discussed for some time. Reports by the score have been printed in the state's press, with particularly heavy coverage in the newspapers of the Panhandle.

Not only that, the proposal to make Bellingham the southern terminus of the ferry system has been a matter of controversy for months — not only in Alaska but in Washington, as well.

THE HEARINGS, however, may provide the opportunity for all of these changes to be discussed at one time. And that should be a welcome development for all the taxpayers of the state.

After all, the ferry system has turned out to be one of the more costly services offered by the state government. And with a new ferry scheduled to go on line this year, in the form of the Le Conte, the red ink will flow even more.

Defenders of the ferry system also should welcome the forum to be provided by the finance committees. If they can't come up with some strong arguments on why operations should be continued at the current pace, they may find that Gov. Hammond will be justifying some sharp reductions in service.

His rule, he says, is that each state service should pay its own way. If that rule is to be followed on the ferries, most of the ships would wind up in dry dock.

Then the legislature would have reason to be surprised and angered

Legislators Surprised, Slate Ferry Hearings

JUNEAU (AP) — The legislature is scheduled to launch a wide-ranging hearing Wednesday into the state ferry system, from its pending rate increase to a planned move of its southern terminal from Seattle.

The hearing was called by the House and Senate finance committees after legislators expressed surprise and anger over a remodeling program that started last week on the ferry Malaspina.

Bill Hudson, director of marine transportation, and Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris were to explain the system's bidding procedures and steps taken to reduce the huge deficit of the eight-vessel fleet.

The Malaspina was docked at Bellingham, Wash., last week for conversion of its dining room to a "fast-food service" area, a $261,000 project and the first of three conversions planned by ferry officials.

Bellingham is the focus of a feasibility study now underway by a private consultant examining the possibility of shifting the system's southern terminal from Seattle. The study is to be completed in March.

The shift has been eyed by state officials as an economy move that would save sailing time between Alaska and Puget Sound.

By converting the dining facilities aboard the Malaspina, the Columbia and the Tustamena to buffet-style service, Hudson said, the system could save $1.2 million during fiscal 1977.

Southeast legislators said they were unaware last week that the Malaspina was going to be remodeled, in part because money had been appropriated only for changes to the Tustamena.

Rate increases planned by the system would take effect May 1 and hike revenues by $2.2 million to $15.7 million total, or less than half of its $32.4 million operating budget.

Under the new rates, for example, a passenger traveling between Seattle and Juneau without a stateroom would be charged $79, up from $70.

And, for the first time, persons taking their pets aboard would be charged $10 on the Seattle-Juneau run. The pet fee within Alaska will be $5.

Marine terminal may move

JUNEAU (AP) — Leaders in the Alaska legislature say they want a hand in deciding whether the Alaska Marine Highway System moves its southern terminal from Seattle to Bellingham.

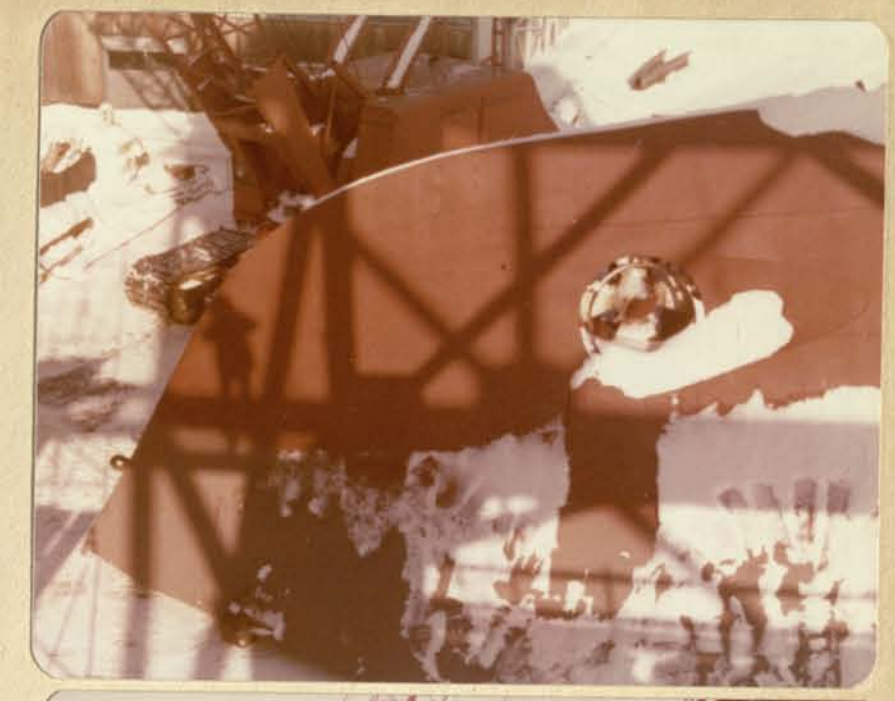
The proposal is now under study by a state consultant.

Alaska State Senator Bill Ray says legislators are concerned because — quote — "All we know about is what we read in the Bellingham papers."

But the commissioner of public works, Don Harris, says there is little information he can give the legislature until the consultant's study is completed in March.

A ferry terminal facility to serve a new state ferry is planned for the north side of Twelve Mile Arm off Kasaan Bay, nine miles west of Kasaan, Alaska.

11-7



Ferry stretching may be okayed:

Hudson pessimistic about Hawaii plan

By NORMAND DUPRE
News Editor

State ferry system Director William Hudson is "less optimistic" than he had been that the ferry Columbia could be used for a trial run by the state of Hawaii, which wants to start its own ferry system.

In a related ferry system development, Hudson said he is "more optimistic" that funds will be available next winter to stretch out or "rehabilitate" either or both of the ferries Matanuska and Taku.

Finally, Hudson said, controversial plans to convert three ferries from dining room to buffet style dinner service have hit a snag because bids on the work were three times the estimates.

Hudson, in an interview this morning from Juneau, said the state of Hawaii had asked top Alaska officials for the use of the ferry Columbia to test the feasibility of that island state's starting its own inter-island ferry system. The state of Alaska has had a ferry fleet for about a dozen years.

Hudson said a decision on sending the Columbia to Hawaii will depend on whether one or more of the smaller Alaska ferries are in drydock next winter for stretching or "rehabilitating."

"If one or both of the vessels are unavailable because of stretching, then the Columbia lease (to Hawaii) doesn't appear practical. However, because the funding process is still open, I can't make a final decision," Hudson said.

Hudson said if the Columbia was to be used in Hawaii it could cost between a half-million and a million dollars to modify it for use in open ocean. He said the state of Hawaii would have to pay for that.

Changes would include addition of fin stabilizers, installation of major radio and other bridge navigation aids, crewing changes and addition of about four more lifeboats.

Hudson said Admiral E. Alvey Wright, head of Hawaii's department of transportation, visited Gov. Hammond, Commissioner of Public Works Donald Harris, and Hudson "several weeks ago" with the request for use of the Columbia.

On another matter, Hudson said he is "more optimistic" at this point that funds will be available to allow major improvements to the Taku and Matanuska next winter, although such work would preclude leasing the Columbia to Hawaii.

"Stretching" of the two ferries has been planned for several years. The ferry Malaspina was identical to the smaller vessels until it was cut in half and stretched with the addition of a 50-foot mid-section about two years ago. The project added more staterooms, more car space and more passenger facilities to the vessel.

Hudson said options for work include stretching one or both of the vessels, or "rehabilitating" one or both of them. Rehabilitation could include major changes to passenger service areas, as well as replacing parts of the plumbing and piping systems, overhauling the car decks, adding sewage holding tanks, and other work.

Finally, Hudson said a call for bids on conversion of formal dining room on the Malaspina to a buffet style cafeteria brought in poor results.

Only one shipyard, Todd's of Seattle, bid and the bid was almost triple the initial state estimate of the cost. The bid came in late in November, but had not been announced.

The bid amount was about $394,600; the state estimate was about $135,000 including materials and labor.

The state rejected the bid and is now trying to negotiate an acceptable price with a number of shipyards.

Time is critical, however, because, the Malaspina is due to go into routine drydock this week or next and the conversion was to have been done at that time. Hudson said a decision on proceeding with the plan will be made in the next 10 days.

The proposal had run into criticism from regular ferry users, especially in Southeastern Alaska which is heavily dependent on the ferry system.

Hudson said, however, he still is committed to the conversion if he can find the funds, because he believes it will save money.

Two other ferries due for the conversion are the Columbia and the small Tustumena.

Ferry-Go-Round

ECONOMY in government is great, just so long as the penny-pinching is done to somebody else.

That's the message that emerges rather clearly in the current flap at Juneau regarding moves ordered by the Hammond administration to stanch the flow of red ink in the state ferry system operations.

Sen. Bill Ray, the Juneau guardian, is outraged that the administration would attempt any cutback of funds in the ferry operations.

He's boiling about food service costs.

The state says labor costs have gone so high that a meal which sells to a ferry passenger for 10 bucks cost the state about a hundred. It's a losing proposition. To cut off that drain, the administration began renovations to do away with fancy plates and waiter service and provide fast-food cafeteria lines.

THE WORK on this conversion already has begun on two ships of the fleet, and it's too late for Mr. Ray to stop that. But he's pledging to prevent it on a third vessel — and to hell with the economics.

Meanwhile, the ferry workers, whose escalating wage rates have helped kicked the economics of the marine transportation system out of shape, are joining the battle.

They have lodged a complaint against the state, saying the money being spent on remodeling the dining rooms should be spent instead on "absolutely vital safety items" — such as hospital facilities and medical personnel on all vessels.

NOBODY would oppose installation of necessary safety equipment aboard any vessel operated as a public carrier. However, the protestations of the ferry workers should be carefully examined.

If they are contending the Alaska ferries are unsafe, then perhaps the whole fleet should be drydocked and not another ticket sold — or crewman's salary paid — until the vessels are safe for the travelling public. If the Coast Guard is being accused of not establishing proper standards for safety equipment, perhaps a federal investigation should be ordered.

But if the ferry crewmen are playing a political game, perhaps their complaint should be ignored.

What Others Say

From The Ketchikan Daily News

THE CANADIANS are setting some examples on how not to operate ferries in case Alaskans are watching.

It is reported from Vancouver, B.C. that the British Columbia Ferries, the government-owned ferry system, is expected to lose up to $25 million in its operations this year.

The other news out of Vancouver is that independent truckers using the B.C. ferry system have threatened further demonstrations if the government refuses to either increase ferry sailings or give some priority to commercial trucks.

Meanwhile, all is quiet with Alaska ferries for the moment. Repair work is continuing on the Ketchikan terminal ramp, the Taku is in mothballs for the winter without a truckers protest on this side of the border and the Columbia is laid up for mechanical troubles (that's news?).

Best of all, Alaska ferries have lost only about $14 million. Or, at least, that is the subsidy we are told that it takes this year to keep the ships afloat. Before we all panic and run for the boats, it is well to remember that maintenance on an equivalent mileage of highways would be considerably greater and the highway construction costs would be thousands of times greater.

Ferry Director Predicts Loss

By PAUL NUSSBAUM
Times Staff Writer

If labor-saving renovations and rate increases are not made on the state ferry system, the ferry network could lose more thn $16 million this year and up to $20 million next year, the director of the embattled marine transportation division said yesterday.

Director William Hudson also responded to charges that the ferry system is not installing sufficient safety devices. Sailing officers of the ferries recently listed eight specific safety problems in a letter sent to Hudson, Public Works Director Donald Harris and legislative finance chairmen.

As part of a drive to reduce financial losses on ferry routes, marine transportation officials have awarded a contract to convert the dining facilities on the ferry Malaspina to cafeteria style. Plans are also underway for a similar conversion of the diningroom on the fleet's flagship, the Columbia.

In another financial move, ferry rates will be increased May 1, the third general rate hike in as many years. The rate increases, which will boost passenger charges by 11 per cent and food charges by 20 per cent, are scheduled to go into effectwithout a public hearing.

devices sought by sailing officers of the ferry system would be an important addition but he said most cost too much to be installed immediately.

Hudson responded to each of the employes' eight safety needs in a telephone interview yesterday:

— Anti-collision radars on all ships. Hudson said all vessels have two radars, and that with prudent sailing practices, the existing radar "should allow safe navigation."

— Stabilizers for the Columbia and Malaspina. Hudson said such stabalizers "would be nice," but would cost up to $1 million for the Columbia and about $500,000 for the Malaspina.

— Deicing window washer systems for pilot house windows. Hudson said he had not seen the request before but would examine it further.

— More powerful bowthrusters for the Columbia and Taku. Hudson said his division will purchase a second bowthruster for the Columbia or replace the existing 700-horsepower bowthruster with a 1,000-horsepower thruster. Other modifications are planned for the Taku, Husdon said, and the bowthruster need will be studied. Changes in the Taku will be paid for by federal government highway funds.

— Power capstands at springline stations to help in docking. Sailors contend the lack of power capstands have caused injuries, including an accident Dec. 29 at Skagway in which a sailor lost part of one thumb while the Columbia was docking. Hudson said power capstands would cost $22,000 for each vessel and he indicated careful docking procedure would eliminate the need for power capstands.

— Console gyro repeaters for the Taku and Malaspina. The devices, which help a pilot determine if a vessel's head is swinging, will be installed, Hudson said. If the crew installs the gyro repeaters, cost to the state will be limited to several thousand dollars, the director said.

— A radar magnifier for the Columbia. Hudson said he had not been aware of the request before and would study it.

— Hospital facilities and properly trained personnel on vessels. The ferries have bed space for ill or injured persons and six or seven ferry officials will attend an advanced first aid instruction course this spring in Sitka, Hudson said.

A chief cause of the complaints is a lack of communications between the ferry employes and the administration, Hudson admitted.

"But we are taking steps now to improve communications with them and with the public."

Hudson defended the move to replace the dining room service with buffet-style service.

"Last year, we had a $13.5 million loss. Twenty-two per cent of that was in food and beverage services. This year, with new wage increases, the loss from food could go up to $3.5 million or $4 million if we don't do something.

"When you try to reduce the loss factor, you can't do it on material. The only area is in labor.

"The cafeteria conversion is absolutely necessary."

Seattle Handles Big Cargo Share

SEATTLE (AP) — More than 45 per cent of Pacific Ocean cargo bound for the Midwest now moves through the Port of Seattle, port marketing manager Henry Levinger said.

Levinger told a seminar examining the port that Seattle imports had increased from a 6.8 per cent share of the market of nine years ago.

He said the increase was attributable to aggressive marketing, application of computer technology and a program of consolidating customer cargoes here to save in truck or rail shipment to the final destination.

Chicago, Levinger said, is a major draw for cargo moving through Seattle.

He said the port runs truck and rail consolidations to every major point in the nation.

Most port gains in the last 10 years, he said, have been at the expense of California. But he said a recent maneuver—a negotiated rail tariff that allows the port to take over full railcars at a standard rate—has hurt business that used to move through Gulf ports and Baltimore.

Eldon Opheim, the port's general manager, said the Alaska ferry system is considering moving its terminal from Seattle to Bellingham. But, he said, Alaska has a four-year lease on Seattle's Terminal 48.

He said most passengers or cargo let off in Bellingham would have to travel to Seattle by assorted "rinky-dink" transport.

Some Rules Must Be Bent

GOVERNOR HAMMOND told the legislature last week that state programs ought to pay their own way.

He said, in his economic message, "We must assure that those who use Alaska's resources do so not at state expense and those who benefit from state programs be obliged to pay for them."

He used that premise to justify his efforts to slow down economic development and "not build our population base much above what it is now." All of which translates into what some are inclined to call a "no growth" policy.

HIS IDEA that each should "pay your own way" has attractions, but what would happen if he applied it equally to all state operations, instead of only to economic development and population growth?

He did apply it partially to the state highway program. He noted that highways cost the state $48 million a year to maintain and that fuel taxes and license fees are yielding only $34 million. This, he said, leaves the highway users with the need of a state subsidy of $14 million a year.

The governor said he was supporting an increase in the motor fuel and other taxes on motor vehicles to "reduce that subsidy substantially."

BUT THE GOVERNOR forgot his basic premise when he talked about the ferry system, which costs $36 million a year to operate and yields only $17 million in revenue. The state provides a subsidy of $19 million.

His premise would wreck the ferry system were it applied. Passenger and vehicle fares pay only half the cost. The tariffs would have to be doubled to reduce the subsidy substantially.

The administration is asking for a 20 per cent increase in the fares, but that is hardly a beginning toward a "pay your own way" policy. The administration is also recommending other economies in the ferry operation which are drawing fire from Southeastern Alaska legislators.

But even if the governor got all that he asks for he will have bent his basic "pay your own way" policy well out of shape in regard to the ferry system.

HE IS WISE in granting an exception to the ferry system. He would be dead politically if he didn't.

He would also be wise if he looked around for other exceptions to his "pay your own way" rule.

The benefits of state programs often exceed the financial returns to the state treasury. Such is the case with the public education system, which sops up nearly half of the state budget. Schools don't pay. Who would abolish them for that?

Neither do police services pay, yet efforts are continuous to extend and improve them, not wipe them out. The various state services in inspections of buildings, working conditions, health, sanitation, safety, contracts bring no revenue to the state treasury.

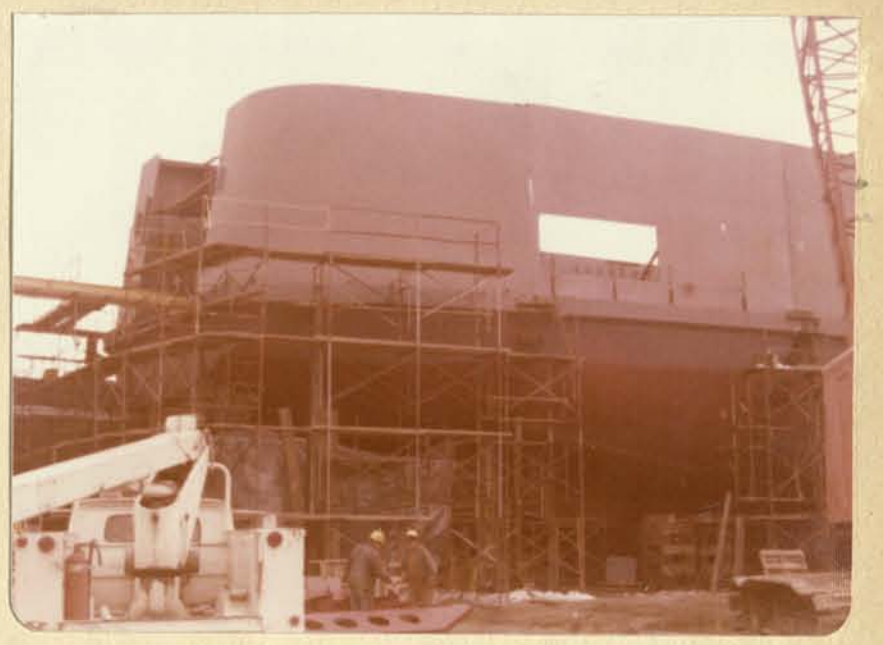
The court system costs $18 million a year. It yields only $4.5 million for the state. Who would abolish courts because they don't pay their own way?

ONE AREA it would be politically wise for the governor to exempt from his rule involves the coastal communities which stand to benefit from offshore oil explorations.

The governor has placed first emphasis on the fact that the activity would cost the state more than it would produce for the treasury.

But he is overlooking the benefits to the townspeople in new and greater choices of employment, new and greater sources of income, improved services and the uplift that comes with growth and prosperity.

The properity of the people in places like Cordova, Whittier, Seward and Homer could cancel out a lot of what some people call "double zero growth."



Ferry remodel plans anger legislators

By JOHN GREELY
Associated Press Writer

JUNEAU — A key legislator vowed Wednesday he would block a plan for converting dining facilities aboard the flagship of the Alaska Marine Highway into a cafeteria.

However, Sen. Bill Ray of Juneau acknowledged it was too late to cancel the remodeling of another state ferry now anchored at the Puget Sound port of Bellingham.

ALTHOUGH both projects would save a projected $1.2 million, top ferry officials took a verbal beating from Ray and other legislators Wednesday because the remodeling work was approved without their consent.

Technically, the conversion already underway on the Malaspina and changes scheduled for the Columbia were legal, but legislators said the projects violated their intent in allocating funds for the ferry system last year.

Ray, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said he resented "the almost studied callousness" of state officials in juggling more than $300,000 in funds to pay for the remodeling from other items of the budget.

BILL HUDSON, director of marine transportation, and Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris offered no rebuttal to accusations they had misled legislators and breached normal protocol.

However, both officials defended the remodeling work as part of a larger goal of reducing the ferry system's $13.2 million annual subsidy, primarily through permanent and temporary layoffs of workers.

Under a $261,000 contract for the Malaspina's conversion, traditional "towel-over-the-arm" dining would be replaced with buffet-style service and 14 cooks, waiters and waitresses laid off. The Columbia would lose 20 members of its crew.

BUT, BECAUSE OF high bids from contractors, work planned on the Columbia has been delayed.

Ray and Rep. Hugh Malone, chairman of the House Finance Committee, questioned Hudson and Harris sharply about why the Columbia — the newest of the state's eight ferries — and the Malaspina — remodeled extensively less than four years ago — should be changed.

"There is absolutely no way," Hudson said, "that costs can be held back . . . decreased or even stablized except in the area of labor."

More than two-thirds of the ferry system's $28.5 million operating budget is devoted to salaries and other costs for its 600 workers, he said.

THE DINING-ROOM changes were conceived after Gov. Jay S. Hammond announced in June a government-wide "freeze" of about $8 million in funds allocated by the 1975 legislature. Hammond said the restrictions were needed to head off future budget deficits until Prudhoe Bay oil revenue arrives.

Of that total, about $1 million was slated to come from a six-month winter layup of the ferries Taku and Bartlett.

However, the savings amounted to only $300,000, Harris said, because "we were not able to pull crews (from the ships) at the pace anticipated."

FACED WITH THAT shortfall, ferry officials then decided in September to cut other costs by converting the dining rooms to cafeterias by milking money from other projects, including:

—$250,000 from a $500,000 appropriation for upgrading the car deck of the Matanuska;

—$38,000 from a $50,000 allocation for the purchase of two commercial dishwashers; and,

—$42,000 from a $140,000 appropriation for soundproofing the engine rooms of all ships.

Legislators accused Harris and Hudson of attempting to mislead them by shifting so-called "surplus" personnel funds to the remodeling work and then submitting a $2.2 million request of additional money, mostly for pay raises during this fiscal year.

Last year, the legislature approved $100,000 for converting the ferry Tustumena to a cafeteria-style service, a project yet to be started.

Hudson said the changes to the Tustumena would begin "if we have the money available" after bids are received.

Matanuska is 1000 trips old

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—The Matanuska marked its 1,000th trip as a state ferry last week, logging more than one million miles in the process.

The Matanuska has carried more than 850,000 passengers in its 12 and ½ years of service as part of the Alaska Marine Highway System.

In noting the milestone, Gov. Jay Hammond commended the captains and crews who served on the ship "for their valuable past labors, an enviable safety record and collective concerns for their traveling public.

Port of Seattle officials were in Ketchikan this week on their annual tour to Alaska's capital to meet state legislators. The Seattle business leaders did mention a few reasons why Seattle is a better place for the southern terminus of the Alaska ferry system than Bellingham. Not any hard sell involved with the Seattle effort but we could see they'd hate to lose those ferry worker families to Bellingham.

Maybe, if ferry system workers want to live in Seattle, the state of Washington should be operating the ferry system from Seattle to Alaska, rather than Alaska running one of its ships south. After all, it is Seattle that benefits from Alaska trade.

Let Washingtonians pay the bond issues on the big ferries. Alaska might even throw in the Columbia as a gift if someone pays shipyard bills.

Oh, for the relative monotony of ferry service when the Wickersham was on the run.

Ferry Decision To Be Based On Economics

A decision by state officials this spring whether to move the southern end of the state ferry system from Seattle to Bellingham, Wash., will be made on "purely economic reasons and no others," says the state director of marine transportation.

A Ketchikan consultant is studying the feasibility of moving the system's southern terminal to Bellingham when the current contract with Seattle expires in 1978.

William Hudson, director of the state division of marine transportation, said yesterday the consultant is to make his recommendations to the Department of Public Works by March 1 and that the department will relay its suggestions to Gov. Jay Hammond within about 30 days.

Bellingham is 62 miles north of Seattle. The city of 40,000 is making a concerted bid to win the Alaska trade. The possibility of relocating the southern terminal has been considered by state officials for years as an economy move saving sailing time on the two mainline ferries, the Columbia and Malaspina.

Bellingham and Seattle both claim to offer the most advantages for the ferry system.

"We hope to weigh every aspect before making a decision," Hudson said. "But (Public Works Commissioner) Don Harris has said any decision to move will be predicated on purely economic reasons and no others."

Legislative leaders this week indicated they want a hand in the decision.

"All we know about it is what we read in the Bellingham papers," Senate Finance Chairman Bill Ray, D-Juneau, said Wednesday.

Earlier this month, in an open letter to "citizens of Alaska," Bellingham claimed it could save the ferry system at least $276,000 a year. In an accompanying survey, Seattle freight traffic consultant Fred H. Tolan wrote, "There is a very substantial advantage to use Bellingham today rather than Seattle for freight shipments."

According to the Bellingham backers, a Bellingham terminal would:

— Reduce total transportation charges since the port is 62 miles closer to Alaska.

— Cut at least two hours in traveling time.

— Give the ferry system 3½ times more terminal space.

— Create at least $276,000 savings.

"The people of Bellingham will build a first-class terminal for the Alaska Ferry System," the open letter to Alaskans promised. "Bellingham is a small city that really wants the Alaska Ferry Terminal in their city. They cannot and will not base their case on anything other than straight-forward economic and service facts."

Cutting Ferry Costs

THE STATE is getting serious about moving the southern terminus of the Alaska ferry system out of Seattle. Bellingham is the likely new locale, although it may be two years before the shift actually takes place.

But the wheels are in motion and the whole goal is to reduce expenses. One of the substantial savings would be in fuel costs. Bellingham, which is actively soliciting the state's business as a major civic effort, is 62 nautical miles closer to Ketchikan than is Seattle. Operating out of Bellingham would reduce sailing time to Ketchikan by five hours each trip and mean savings in crew time.

Bert Kleinenberg, Alaska port steward, was quoted in the Bellingham newspaper the other day that "as far as the staff of the marine highway system is concerned, we pretty much have made up our minds" in favor of the switch.

AT THE SAME time, however, Mr. Kleinenberg admitted there were a lot of political considerations on the horizon which could erupt "as soon as we get down to the nitty-grity."

The logistical details are enormous. Support facilities required to service Alaska's ferry fleet are extensive and Bellingham will have to commit itself to a considerable construction effort if the state agrees to move out of Seattle.

But the Ketchikan Daily News, which follows the ferry operations more closely than any other Alaska newspaper, summed things up this way: "The day is coming soon when Alaska ferries will operate out of Bellingham instead of Seattle, for financial reasons."

The prediction was made without any qualifying ifs, ands or buts. And it's probably right on target.

Damage To Ferry Strands Tourists

SEATTLE — About 350 passengers of the Alaska state ferry "Columbia" remained in Seattle last night with the vessel to be placed in drydock for repairs.

The Alaska Marine Highway ferry was scheduled to depart northbound but officials say the voyage will be delayed until at least tomorrow night.

Seattle terminal manager Mil Griffiths says the Columbia apparently snagged a steel cable and damage was done to a shroud.

LeConte Resumes Its Ferry Route

The state-owned ferry LeConte left Ketchikan last week to resume its runs after becoming the first of the state fleet to undergo routine winter maintenance in Alaska.

The maintenance work was done in Ketchikan drydock.

Damage Delays Ferry

The Alaska ferry Columbia is expected to sail into Auke Bay at 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, nearly two days behind schedule because of damages that postponed its departure from Seattle.

The Columbia normally leaves Seattle Friday night. However, a snapped steel cable and subsequent damage to a housing shroud around the port shaft delayed the ferry until Sunday evening and stranded about 350 passengers in Seattle for the weekend.

According to Milt Griffiths, Seattle terminal manager for the ferry system, the ship was taken out of the water Saturday to repair the damages.

The Sitka stop reportedly will be dropped on the Columbia's southbound trip to return the ferry to Seattle Friday and to its regular schedule.

11-11

Ferry Workers Charge State

The state ferry system, facing financial cuts as part of an administration move to save money, is spending money on remodeling instead of safety innovations, 30 ferry employes have charged.

(Related Story, Page 7)

In a letter sent to Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris, marine transportation director William Hudson and legislative finance committee chairmen, the ferry workers accused the state of failing to pay for "absolutely vital safety items."

The safety list includes anti-collision radar on all ships, stabilizers for the Columbia and Malaspina, de-icing window-washing systems on the pilot house windows in all ferries, more powerful bowthrusters for the Columbia and Taku and hospital facilities and medical personnel on all vessels.

•The mariners charged a lack of $22,000 in safety devices on the Columbia caused a sailor to lose part of a thumb while docking at Skagway on Dec. 29.

"We have consistently requested that funds be channeled into expenditures which we all know are necessary for proper maintenance and greater safety to the vessel and our passengers," the ferry employes wrote.

Two projects are planned by ferry officials to convert dining facilities aboard the two newest ferries to cafeterias. The projects would save an estimated $1.2 million.

The state is trying to reduce the ferry system's annual $13.2 million subsidy, primarily through temporary and permanent layoffs of employes.

State Sen. Bill Ray, D-Juneau, State Finance Committee chairman, has said he will work to block remodeling of the Columbia but that it is too late to cancel remodeling scheduled for the Malaspina.

Sen. Ray Says He'll Block Remodeling Aboard Flagship

JUNEAU (AP) — A key legislator says he would block a plan for converting dining facilities aboard the flagship of the Alaska Marine Highway to a cafeteria.

However, Sen. Bill Ray of Juneau acknowledged it was too late to cancel the remodeling of another state ferry now anchored at the Puget Sound Port of Bellingham.

Although both projects would save a projected $1.2 million, top ferry officials took a verbal beating from Ray and other legislators Wednesday because the remodeling work was to be done without their consent.

Technically, the conversion already under way on the Malaspina and changes scheduled for the Columbia were legal, but legislators said the projects violated their intent in allocating funds for the ferry system last year.

Ray, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said he resented "the almost studied callousness" of state officials in juggling more than $300,000 in funds to pay for the remodeling from other items of the budget.

Bill Hudson, director of marine transportation, and Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris offered no rebuttal

However, both officials defended the remodeling work as part of a larger goal of reducing the ferry system's $13.2 million annual subsidy, primarily through permanent and temporary layoffs of workers.

Under a $261,000 contract for the Malaspina's conversion, traditional "towel-over-the-arm" dining would be replaced with buffet-style service and 14 cooks, waiters and waitresses laid off. The Columbia would lose 20 members of its crew.

But, because of high bids from contractors, work planned on the Columbia has been delayed.

Ray and Rep. High Malone, chairman of the House Finance Committee, questioned Hudson and Harris sharply about why the Columbia — the newest of the state's eight ferries — and the Malaspina — remodeled extensively less than four years ago — should be changed.

"There is absolutely no way," Hudson said, "that costs can be held back . . . decreased or even stabalized except in the area of labor."

More than two-thirds of the ferry system's $28.5 million operating budget is devoted to salaries and other costs for its 600 workers, he said.

The dining room changes were conceived after Gov. Jay Hammond announced in June a government - wide "freeze" of about $8 million in funds allocated by the 1975 Legislature. Hammond said the restrictions were needed to head off future budget deficits until Prudhoe Bay oil revenue arrives.

Solons launch hearings into the state ferry system

JUNEAU (AP)—The legislature is scheduled to launch a wide-ranging hearing Wednesday into the state ferry system, from its pending rate increase to a planned move of its southern terminal from Seattle.

. The hearing was called by the House and Senate finance committees after legislators expressed surprise and anger over a remodeling program that started last week on the ferry Malaspina.

Bill Hudson, director of marine transportation, and Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris were to explain the system's bidding procedures and steps taken to reduce the huge deficit of the eight-vessel fleet.

The Malaspina was docked at Bellingham, Wash., last week for conversion of its dining room to a "fast-food service" area, a $261,000 project and the first of three conversions planned by ferry officials.

Bellingham is the focus of a feasibility study now underway by a private consultant examining the possibility of shifting the system's southern terminal from Seattle. The study is to be completed in March.

The shift has been eyed by state officials as an economy move that would save sailing time between Alaska and Puget Sound.

By converting the dining facilities aboard the Malaspina, the Columbia and the Tustamena to buffet-style service, Hudson said, the system could save $1.2 million during fiscal 1977.

Southeast legislators said they were unaware last week that the Malaspina was going to be remodeled, in part because money had been appropriated only for changes to the Tustamena.

Rate increases planned by the system would take effect May 1 and hike revenues by $2.2 million to $15.7 million total, or less than half of its $32.4 million operating budget.

Under the new rates, for example, a passenger traveling between Seattle and Juneau without a stateroom would be charged $79, up from $70.

And, for the first time, persons taking their pets aboard would be charged $10 on the Seattle-Juneau run. The pet fee within Alaska will be $5.

Summer schedules now available at ferry office

The ferry office has received copies of the summer schedules for both the Southwest and the Southeast system, says Jim Ashford, ferry agent.

Ashford reminds ferry patrons that the Tustumena will leave Kodiak at 4 a.m. March 3 for Seward. This will be the last trip to the mainland as the Tustumena will then go on to Seattle for annual overhaul." . The last trip is filling up fast and persons wishing to travel should make their plans now," Ashford says.

The Tustumena resumes service to Kodiak May 3.

Reservations are still being accepted for the overhaul trip to Seattle, and chances are good for confirmation, Ashford says. There are still openings for foot passengers, as well.

LeConte due Sunday for winter work

The state ferry LeConte is due to arrive in Ketchikan late Sunday afternoon to begin a pilot project of winter maintenance in Alaska.

The vessel was due Tuesday but was delayed by other problems in a Seattle drydock. The problems apparently are not serious, but they required the more extensive repair facilities not available in Alaska.

City Manager N. L. Teague said he had word of the delay from the ferry system coordinator in Juneau, Bert Bennett.

The ferry is due in Ketchikan Sunday and will offload at the ferry terminal and then tie up at the city-owned downtown dock Sunday afternoon. It will be at the dock adjacent to the warehouse where cruise ships tie up in the summer.

The LeConte's stop here will be followed by a maintenance stop by the Chilkat. Teague did not have a date for arrival of the Chilkat but said he had word that it too had been delayed by the need for additional work in Seattle.

The pilot project grew out of efforts to keep routine winter maintenance in Alaska rather than in Seattle. Major overhauls and drydocking will continue to be performed in Seattle.

The city has provided free utility hookup for the ferries here, Teague said.

Senator Ray blasts ferry officials on funds switch

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—Sen. Bill Ray, who has termed the administration of the ferry system "arrogant" and disrespectful, has called the ferry chiefs to testify Wednesday afternoon at a joint session of House and Senate finance committees.

Ray, a Juneau Democrat, said the hearing was called to "explore" ferry system capital improvement priorities, bidding procedures and the administration's reasons for not seeking legislative approval for transfering capital project monies.

Ray, chairman of the finance committee, last week reportedly became enraged when he learned the ferry Malaspina was in Bellingham undergoing conversion of its dining room to a buffet style operation.

buffet style operation.

He said the ferry chiefs had transfered $100,000 from one portion of its budget—personnal services—to another—converting the Malaspina's dining room—without first gaining approval from the legislative budget and audit committee. Ray advised Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris and ferry Director William Hudson at the first of the year to do so, according to the senator.

The marine transportation department rejected a bid from a Seattle firm for approximately $400,000 for the Malaspina's conversion, and later accepted a Bellingham's firms bid for about $280,000 in a second bid call.

Ray first learned that Malaspina was in Bellingham in the Daily News.

"This shows not only disrespect but outright arrogance on the part of the administration," Ray said. "It tends to erode the statewide support that the ferry system has enjoyed in the state."

Ray voiced disapproval with the ferry system plans to scrap its dining rooms in favor of more cheaply run buffet lines. Hudson, who was not available for comment at press time, has said quality of food would not decline, and that substantial savings in operating costs would be realized.

Ray also said the entire Southeast Alaska legislative delegation opposes the dining room plans for the Malaspina and Columbia, a sentiment echoed by Ketchikan Sen. Robert Ziegler.

"He knows what he's talking about," Ziegler, a Democrat and chairman of the judiciary committee, said.

Ray said ferry system management should look into ways of solving existing operating problems, "Don't eliminate them. We all should be working to solve these problems."

Ray suggested the ferry system lease restaurant and bar service as one option of meeting operating costs. "If they're that poor at managing they should get out of the business.

"There's no way possible to put the ferry system on a paying basis. It's a service."

THE ALASKA FERRY COLUMBIA pulled into Seattle yesterday for hurry-up repair of a bow tank she holed last Sunday when an electrical failure threw her rudder hard aport in Wrangell Narrows.

Capt. Merle Adlum of the Port of Seattle tells us Alaska can thank the Columbia's skipper, Capt. Bob Smith, for saving its $20 million flagship from a bad pileup. Adlum was coming up to the bridge when the steering system went haywire. It was daylight. The 418-foot ship was approaching Buoy 6, at one of the narrowest necks in the Narrows.

"When she went out of control," Adlum recalls. "Smith leaped across the bridge like a panther. He put her on engines, backing down full on No. 1, and steering with the engines, he almost maneuvered her about without touching the bottom at all."

KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1976

City still awaits Chilkat that has already gone by

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

"We're still waiting for the Chilkat that we know isn't coming."

That was City Manager N. L. Teague's comment today on the fact that the Chilkat arrived too late from its Seattle winter maintenance to take part in the Ketchikan pilot maintenance project, and that the division of marine transportation has not officially advised him of that fact.

The Chilkat, the second of two ferries slated to moor at the Ketchikan downtown city-owned dock to undergo finishing touches on its annual maintenance, won't participate in the pilot program, a ferry official Monday told the Daily news. Information officer Ginger Johnson, Monday said her office would soon be in contact with Teague.

Teague's staff placed a call to the ferry division in Juneau late Monday, and was told the proper person would call back. The person hadn't called as of noon today.

"No, we haven't heard anything," Teague said.

Teague and his assistant Jim Van Altvorst viewed the Chilkat Friday sailing from Seattle north between Gravina and Pennock islands. They figured it would turn around and head for the city moorage to undergo a few days maintenance as per plan.

It didn't. Instead it began

City still waits . . .

Cont. from page 1

sailing on its regular runs to Prince of Wales Island and Metlakatla Saturday, as it was scheduled to do. Teague's call to the local ferry terminal confirmed that.

The no-show Chilkat has caused a minor inconvenience. The city administration turned away a tug owner who wanted to use the dock at approximately $50 a day. And Teague said it is likely that publicity of the Chilkat's planned use of the facility discouraged other potential customers.

The state was allowed free use of the moorage facilities.

The Le Conte was the only vessel to participate in the pilot project, and its stay was abbreviated to 15 days because of complications surrounding the destruction of the Ketchikan ferry terminal by the Columbia.

The Le Conte was diverted from its regular northern run to shuttle passengers and cars between Ketchikan and Wrangell, and was delayed in meeting its scheduled winter maintenance in Seattle.

The two boats were originally to stay here three weeks each.

The Chilkat met delays in Seattle due to Coast Guard hedging over approval of a power steering system which was to have been installed this year in Seattle, according to Port Captain William Bendixen. The steering system will be delayed another year.

According to Ms. Johnson, engine overhauls aboard the Chilkat delayed its arrival here even longer.

Today the Chilkat was chugging between Metlakatla and Ketchikan.

And today Teague was still waiting for a phone call from Juneau.

"We at least should have had the privilege of being advised."

Seven State Employes Top Governor's Salary

By SUSAN ANDREWS
Times Staff Writer

Seven state employes were paid more than Gov. Jay S. Hammond during 1975.

Four of the seven work for the Department of Highways, and counting overtime pay, they earned more than their boss, Highway Commissioner Walter Parker.

Another of the seven top-paid state employes was a state Superior Court judge in Anchorage. Still another was the state ferry master, who works for the Department of Public Works. The seventh was a psychiatrist for the Department of Health and Social Services.

Hammond's annual salary was listed at $49,999.92 but he drew only $49,564.98 during 1975, according to a computer printout of state salaries which came from Commissioner of Administration Andy Warwick's office.

Topping the list of state employes in amount of money earned during 1975 was Ronald J. Davis, Department of Highways project engineer in Fairbanks, who was paid $55,658.52. Davis' base salary was $34,596.52 and overtime accounted for the other $21,062, according to the department's Administrative Director Frank Baxter.

Most of Davis' salary, however, will be reimbursed by the federal government, Baxter said. Davis was project engineer on two federally funded bridge projects. The federal government pays an average of 88 per cent of those projects, including the project engineer's salary. To qualify for federal funds, a state representative must be on the job at all times the contractor is working.

Another Highway Department engineer, Raymond V. Gutoski, ranked fourth among the seven state employes who earned more than the governor. Gutoski was resident engineer for the North Slope haul road overseeing maintenance. His total salary during 1975 was $52,159.91, of which his base salary was $33,792 and overtime accounted for the rest. Only 12 per cent of that will have to be paid by the state, Baxter said.

Other Highway Department employes earning more than the governor are Woodrow Johansen, Fairbanks district engineer, who received $52,412.75 last year, slightly less than his scheduled annual salary of $52,548.

Johansen's salary is one of the highest in the state, Baxter said, because of the fact that he lives in Fairbanks where the base pay is high and because he has been with the department since 1960. "He is one of our most valued employes," Baxter said.

Highway Commissioner Parker's annual pay was listed at $48,576 for 1975. He drew only $43,930.65 during the year. Seventeen members of his department staff earned more than he did.

John C. Becker, state Highway Department director of advanced planning and special projects based in Juneau, earned $49,905.72 last year, ranking among the top seven state employes. His base wage was $45,816, but he received $4,089 more in longevity pay, awarded retroactively as a result of a Supreme Court ruling.

Seven Top Hammond Salary

(Continued from Page 1)

Herman H. South, a Fairbanks regional psychiatrist [illegible] the Department of Health and Social Services, was third on the list of highest-paid state employes last year. He drew $52,393.10, slightly less than his scheduled annual pay of $52,548.

J. Justin Ripley, Superior Court judge in Anchorage, received $52,039.05 during 1975. His yearly base pay is listed at $48,576.

Robert W. Smith, master in the state ferry system, was paid $50,282.42 in 1975. He was one of seven Public Works Department employes who earned more than their boss, Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris, who was paid $43,930.64 last yer. Smith's base pay was $35,075.04; the other $15,207 was overtime.

The state's five Supreme Court justices were entitled to yearly pay of $52,992, although four of the five drew only $48,121.35 and the fifth, Edmond Burke, was paid $46,909.33.

Six National Guardsmen who normally are paid by the federal government went on temporary active duty with the state in December, when the Bethel power plant burned to the ground. The computer printout mistakenly shows them earning from $25.83 to $42.11 an hour, when those actually were their daily wages.

The incorrect hourly figures add up to annual salaries ranging from $50,368.44 to $82,114.44 for the six, and those are listed on the printout. However, the highest paid guardsmen, Joseph P. Beans, actually received only $246.65 from the state, according to Brig. Gen. William Sharrow, assistant adjutant general for the Department of Military Affairs.

$210.55. But Sharrow said, "They apparently didn't crank in subsistence pay for the five days Beans was on active duty."

JUNEAU (AP) — Administrators of the state ferry system were to be put in the hot seat today by legislators angered or curious over a proposed 20-per-cent fare hike and other economy moves.

The wide-ranging hearing was called by the House and Senate Finance Committees to investigate ferry operations after lawmakers learned of an alleged misappropration of funds to remodel the dining room of the ferry Malaspina.

The fare increase, conversion of dining rooms to "fast-food service" and relocation of the southern terminal from Seattle have been described by ferry officials as steps needed to reduce the system's huge deficit.

By hiking walk-on and vehicle fares by an average of 20 per cent, revenues could be boosted by $2.2 million to $15.7 million total, or less than half its operating budget.

In addition to the fare increase, the cost of berths will jump and persons taking pets aboard the ferries will be charged for the first time.

Sterling Gallagher, commissioner of revenue, said the reason for the rate increase, scheduled to take effect in May is to close the budget gap and to pay for improvements to the system.

A private consultant is scheduled to complete a study on March 1 of the feasibility of moving the feasibility of moving the southern terminal of the ferry system from Seattle to Bellingham, Wash. Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris was to announced his decision on the move by March 30.

The consultant, Kent Miller of Seattle, also is studying potential cost savings of locating ferry maintenance facilities in Alaska, rather than in Puget Sound. A pilot maintenance project was scheduled to get under way in Ketchikan on the ferry Leconte.

The Malaspina was docked in Bellingham last week for conversion of its "towel-over-the-arm" dining facilities to buffet-style service, the first of three conversions planned by ferry officials.

By changing the dining facilities of the Malaspina, Columbia and Tustamena, Director Bill Hudson said the system could save $1.2 million next year.

Solons grill ferry officials

11-13

Ferry officials criticized for fund juggling

By JOHN GREELY

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — A key legislator says he would block a plan for converting dining facilities aboard the flagship of the Alaska Marine Highway to a cafeteria.

However, Sen. Bill Ray of Juneau acknowledged it was too late to cancel the remodeling of another state ferry now anchored at the Puget Sound Port of Bellingham.

Although both projects would save a projected $1.2 million, top ferry officials took a verbal beating from Ray and other legislators Wednesday because the remodeling work was to be done without their consent.

Technically, the conversion already under way on the Malaspina and changes scheduled for the Columbia were legal, but legislators said the projects violated their intent in allocating funds for the ferry system last year.

Ray, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said he resented "the almost studied callousness" of state officials in juggling more than $300,000 in funds to pay for the remodeling from other items of the budget.

Bill Hudson, director of marine transportation, and Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris offered no rebuttal to accusations they had misled legislators and breached normal protocol.

However, both officials defended the remodeling work as part of a larger goal of reducing the ferry system's $13.2 million annual subsidy, primarily through permanent and temporary layoffs of workers.

Under a $261,000 contract for the Malaspina's conversion, traditional "towel-over-the-arm" dining would be replaced with buffet-style service and 14 cooks, waiters and waitresses laid off. The Columbia would lose 20 members of its crew.

But, because of high bids from contractors, work planned on the Columbia has been delayed.

Ray and Rep. Hugh Malone, chairman of the House Finance Committee, questioned Hudson and Harris sharply about why the Columbia — the newest of the state's eight ferries — and the Malaspina — remodeled extensively less than four years ago—should be changed.

"There is absolutely no way," Hudson said, "that costs can be held back . . . decreased or even stabilized except in the area of labor."

More than two-thirds of the ferry system's $28.5 million operating budget is devoted to salaries and other costs for its 600 workers, he said.

The dining-room changes were conceived after Gov. Jay Hammond announced in June a government-wide "freeze" of about $8 million in funds allocated by the 1975 Legislature. Hammond said the restrictions were needed to head off future budget deficits until Prudhoe Bay oil revenue arrives.

Of that total, about $1 million was slated to come from a six-month winter layup of the ferries Taku and Bartlett.

However, the savings amounted to only $300,000, Harris said, because, "We were not able to pull crews (from the ships) at the pace anticipated."

Faced with that shortfall, ferry officials then decided in September to cut other costs by converting the dining rooms to cafeterias by milking money from other projects, including:

—$250,000 from a $500,000 appropriation for upgrading the car deck of the Matanuska;

—$38,000 from a $50,000 allocation for the purchase of two commercial dishwashers; and,

—$42,000 from a $140,000 appropriation for soundproofing the engine rooms of all ships.

The shifts left $330,000 for the dining room projects, but the lowest initial bid received was nearly $400,000 for conversion of the Malaspina only.

Thus, on Dec. 30, Hammond approved the transfer of $100,000, a part of it from the "frozen" $8 million, to the conversion project. The $100,000 was identified in a memorandum from Commissioner of Administration Andy Warwick as surplus money.

Later, the state received a bid of $261,000 to convert the Malaspina.

Legislators accused Harris and Hudson of attempting to mislead them by shifting so-called "surplus" personnel funds to the remodeling work and then submitting a $2.2 million request of additional money, mostly for pay raises during this fiscal year.

Last year, the legislature approved $100,000 for converting the ferry Tustumena to a cafeteria-style service, a project yet to be started.

Hudson said the changes to the Tustumena would begin "if we have the money available" after bids are received.

more than governo

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—The top paid state employe in 75, a Fairbanks highways engineer, was id $55,658, of which $24,266 was overtime id perhaps other extra pay, according to formation from Commissioner of Administration Andy Warwick and the highway partment.

Six other state employes also made more an Gov. Jay Hammond's $49,500 salary last ar, but four had to draw extra pay to surss the chief's executive's check.

The computerized report from Warwick's fice revealed a great many state ferry nployes take home paychecks in the $20,000 $40,000 range and practically all are avily padded with overtime and perhaps her extra pay.

Some even drew larger pay checks than eir boss, Public Works Commissioner onald Harris. His earnings amounted to 4,500 last year, according to the computer intout. The computer printout of what was tually paid state employes last year is more curate than the recently publicized base y of top state employes.

The highway department passed out five of e top nine paychecks, each totaling more an Highway Commissioner Walter Parker's ay of $33,930. However, highway department Administrative Director Frank Baxter said many of his employes work on federal projects which require overtime and that the federal government pays 88 per cent of salaries to state highway workers on federal projects.

Also, he said, employes may have received in addition to their base salaries, retroactive pay. However, of the amount in excess of the base salaries on the computer printouts, he said: "I'd be confident that the majority of it is overtime."

Ronald J. Davis, a highway engineer assistant III, whose base salary was $31,392, drew the top wage of $55,658. He has worked for the state since 1961 and was involved in several federal projects during 1975, Baxter said. He was not able to acertain the amount of overtime by press time.

Woodrow Johansen, a Fairbanks district highway engineer III, with the second largest state salary, made $52,413, actually less than his base of $52,548.

Herman H. South, a Fairbanks regional psychiatrist with the Department of Health and Social Services, made the third largest. His pay check totaled a few dollars less than his annual $52,500 wage.

Raymond V. Gutoski, a highway engineer I from Fairbanks, was paid $52,159. His base salary was $33,792.

J. Justin Ripley, a superior court judge from Anchorage made $52,039. His base was $48,576. The extra amount on Ripley's check is apparently leave pay he collected when he terminated a state law position, Warwick said.

Ferry Master Robert W. Smith of Juneau drew the sixth highest state salary of $50,282, some $15,000 more than his annual base wage of $35,075.

Ferry Information Director Ginger Johnson confirmed that $15,207 of Smith's wage was overtime, and she was quick to point out benefits Smith received that did not appear on his paycheck. They were, welfare, $477; retirement, $1,500; accumulated vacation, $9,433; accidental sick leave, $2,891; insurance, $370; FICA, $824; uniform allowance, $312. Those items if added to his $50,282 pay check would total $66,366.

John C. Becker, director of advanced planning and special projects for the highways department in Juneau, was paid a base wage of $45,816. He drew $49,905 last year.

Hammond's salary was next in line, followed by that of Edgar A. Spruce who drew several hundred less than his base $48,816 annual salary. Spruce of Juneau is classified a district highway engineer I.

There were some salaries over $50,000; about 170 between $30,000 and $40,000; 2,255 from $20,000 to $30,000; and 3,500 from $10,000 to $20,000. Many others made less.

Other salaries in the top 50:

Robert W. Finnerty, highway department highway engineer assistant III, had a base of $29,148 and drew $46,358.

Clifford H. Broussard, ferry system chief engineer from Ketchikan; base, $33,262; draw, $45,561.

Justin G. Maile, highway department highway engineer III; base, $30,252; draw, $44,897.

Herbert E. Storey, ferry system master; base, $35,075; draw, $$44,803.

Michael E. Grahek, highway department engineering geologist II; base, $28,116, draw, $44,612.

Walter Jackinsky, ferry system master; base $33,284; draw, $43,956.

Notables of the top 80 salaries:

John A. Vogt, highway department; base, $28,116; draw, $43,918.

William W. Mitchell, ferry system chief mate; base, $28,850; draw, $43,556.

Maynard L. Reeser, ferry system master from Ketchikan; base, $33,284; draw, $43,282.

Cecil H. Rice, ferry system master from Ketchikan; base $35,075; draw, $43,222.

Arlen C. Davis, highway department; base, $29,148; draw, $43,108.

Ronald E. Miller, highway department; base, $21,156; draw, $43,091.

William H. Wilkinson, ferry sys assistant engineer; base, $18,127, dra

Here are more of top salaries wor

Edmond W. Williams, ferry sys mate of Ketchikan; base, $27,27 $42,543.

Miles D. Remly, ferry syst assistant engineer of Ketchika $25,378; draw, $42,390.

Loren T. Lindsoe, highway de base; $21,586; draw $42,027.

George L. Lewis, ferry departm engineer; base, $33,638; draw, $42,

James M. Lane, highways de base, $32,566; draw, $41,881.

Gary A. Cramer, ferry system pi $30, 969; draw, $41,685.

Clement P. Mulcahy, highway de base, $30,252; draw, $41,570.

Robert M. Johnson, ferry system Ketchikan; base, $33,284; draw, $4

Richard T. Hofstad, ferry system base, $33,284; draw, $41,305.

Eugene A. Racine, ferry syste mate; base, $30,441; draw, $41,278.

Donald J. Oldow, ferry system base, $37,065; draw, $41,252.

Walt A. Kuehny, ferry syste engineer; base, $30,859; draw, $41,

Thomas P. Kintner, ferry syste engineer; base, $30,226; draw, $40,9

11-14

Unlucky Columbia Heads For Drydock

By LIZ DASH
Empire Staff Reporter

The damaged state ferry Columbia left Juneau at 8 this morning, due early Wednesday in Seattle where she is to be drydocked for repairs to a forward section of the bow.

The Columbia suffered an undetermined amount of damage at 4:15 p.m. Sunday when she ran aground in the Wrangell Narrows.

A spokesman for the ferry system said the accident happened when an electrical malfunction in the steering system caused the ship "to veer hard to the left, momentarily making contact with the beach."

Divers assessed the damage after the Columbia docked at Juneau's downtown ferry terminal early this morning.

Damages "appear to be isolated solely" to the ballast tank in the bow's forward section, the spokesman said.

The Columbia's Captain Bob Smith immediately switched to its alternate steering system and steered it to the Petersburg dock where it had been bound to pick up passengers.

But the spokesman said the Petersburg bridge had also suffered an electrical malfunction and Petersburg passengers mounted the Columbia by a makeshift gangway.

The Columbia navigated back to Juneau, still on its alternate steering system and unloaded its 167 passengers here on the Coast Guard's orders. It left for Seattle with only the crew aboard.

The passengers have been shuttled onto other ferries or aided in making other travel plans, the spokesman said. She said more than half of those beached left on the LeConte from Juneau at 8 this morning, bound for Haines, Skagway and Sitka. Haines, Skagway, Sitka and Seattle had been the Columbia's planned destinations before her mishap.

The accident will inconvenience many Juneauites who had planned to ride the Columbia Tuesday to Sitka for the high school basketball tournament.

All empty seats aboard the LeConte to Sitka were soon sold, so the overflow travellers will probably have to fly, she said.

Director of Marine Transportation Bill Hudson doesn't know how long the Columbia's repairs will take, the spokesman said. "He's not optimistic about the ship being ready for her normal departure Friday from Seattle "back to Juneau" she said.

The cost of repairs can't be estimated until the Columbia is drydocked in Seattle, the spokesman said.

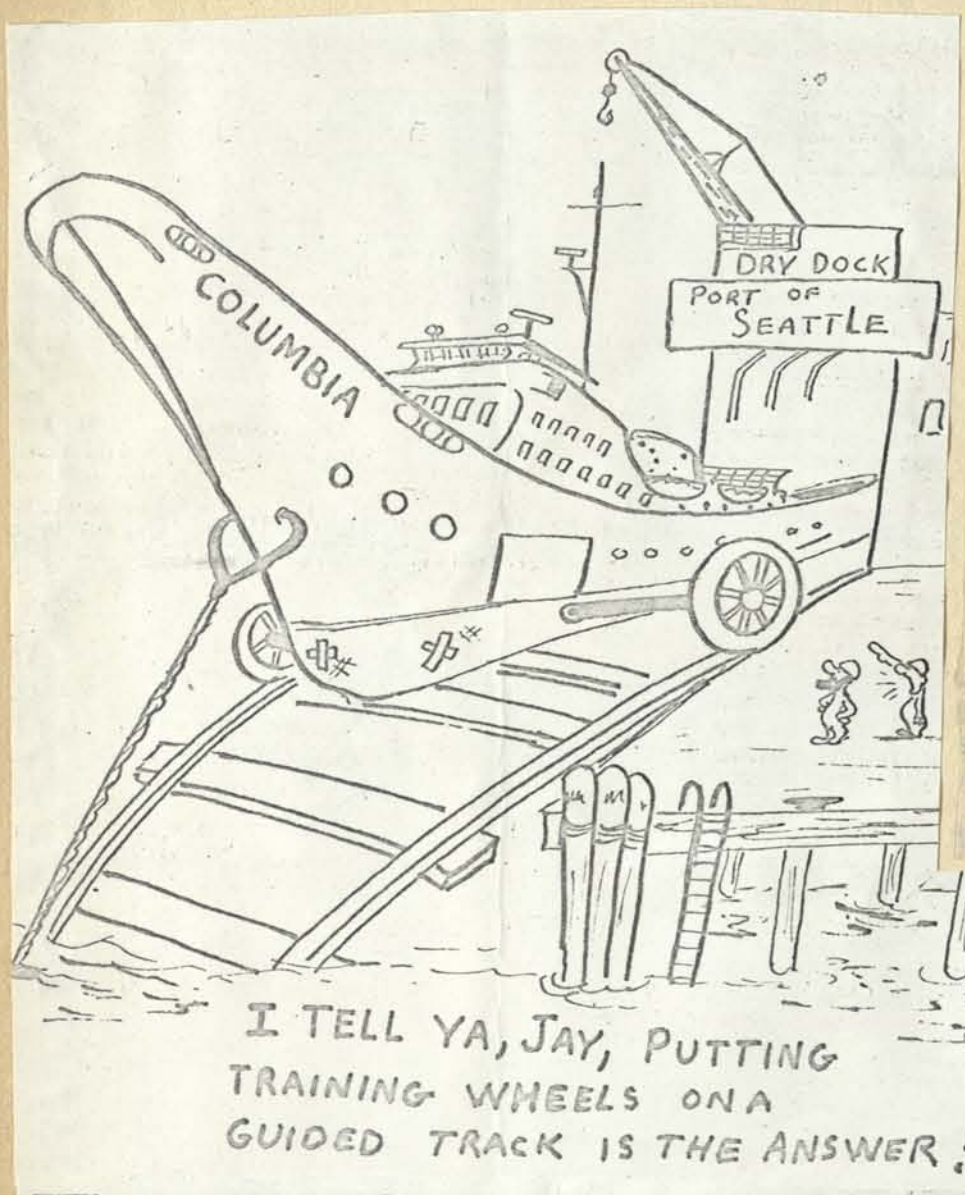
"She just touched down gently. It's not a tear even, it's just a crack, a very small crack."

The ferry system's flagship, the Columbia has been unlucky since she began service in 1974. In her first mishap soon after she went on line, the Columbia ran on the rocks in the Wrangell Narrows during October, 1974 and was laid up for repairs.

More recently, she was taken out of service for more than a week last October when exhaust problems caused fumes to leak into the engine room.

The LeConte's planned trip today to Hoonah was cancelled so she could make two trips today to Haines and Skagway, dropping off and picking up waiting passengers from the Columbia.

The LeConte was to return tonight to Juneau, to leave Tuesday for Haines and Skagway on her normal run.



LeConte due Sunday for winter work

The state ferry LeConte is due to arrive in Ketchikan late Sunday afternoon to begin a pilot project of winter maintenance in Alaska.

The vessel was due Tuesday but was delayed by other problems in a Seattle drydock. The problems apparently are not serious, but they required the more extensive repair facilities not available in Alaska.

City Manager N. L. Teague said he had word of the delay from the ferry system coordinator in Juneau, Bert Bennett.

The ferry is due in Ketchikan Sunday and will offload at the ferry terminal and then tie up at the city-owned downtown dock Sunday afternoon. It will be at the dock adjacent to the warehouse where cruise ships tie up in the summer.

The LeConte's stop here will be followed by a maintenance stop by the Chilkat. Teague did not have a date for arrival of the Chilkat but said he had word that it too had been delayed by the need for additional work in Seattle.

The pilot project grew out of efforts to keep routine winter maintenance in Alaska rather than in Seattle. Major overhauls and drydocking will continue to be performed in Seattle.

The city has provided free utility hookup for the ferries here, Teague said.

ALASKA FERRIES' FLAGSHIP Columbia went into the Lockheed yard yesterday noon for repair of grounding damage. Delayed a day by another ship on drydock. Lockheed will work double crews, try to turn the Columbia out in time for tonight's scheduled run north.

One casualty will be a Maritime Press Association meeting originally set for this noon on the Columbia.

Ferry fix up test will be rerun

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

Officials from state and city governments agree a pilot winter maintenance project in Ketchikan for the ferry system probably must be tried again next winter before any firm conclusions can be drawn.

This year's attempt was less than a blazing success, officials acknowledge.

Both the Le Conte and the Chilkat were scheduled to participate for three weeks each in the pilot project at the city's newly purchased downtown dock. But the Le Conte's stay was cut short and the Chilkat never did arrive.

"I'm disappointed that we didn't have a longer period of time and more work to be done to evaluate the thing on its own merits," state ferry Director William Hudson said today.

The ferries did complete the usual annual winter maintenance in Seattle. Routine maintenance and touch up work were to be completed in Ketchikan.

Many of the delay problems surrounded the destruction of the Ketchikan state ferry terminal when the Columbia crashed into the facility on Labor Day weekend rendering it useless to the ferries. The Le Conte was forced off her regular run and was brought to Ketchikan to take cars and passengers from the First City to Wrangell and back.

The Le Conte missed its starting date for annual maintenance in Seattle and was late to arrive here.

The Chilkat was delayed in Seattle because of recurring engine problems and hangups with Coast Guard approval of a power steering system the ferry division wanted to install. An okay never was received and the power steering system will have to wait until next year.

City Manager N. L. Teague agrees the state will have to try the pilot project next year. And if the state decides to go ahead, he says, "We're ready. They have an inventory of what's available locally...I can't see what they can evaluate this year."

Despite the apparent flop, Hudson said both good and bad came out of the project. The good was "that we dropped off a few dollars in Alaska" and proved that maintenance could be done here.

The bad was that not enough time or work was available to fullfill the project's intent—a relationship of the costs of labor and materials between Ketchikan and Seattle, which has long been the site of the ferry division's annual maintenance.

And most significant, said Hudson, was that "we did try it...we weren't able to give it the shot we wanted to. We'll have to do it again."

Whether or not the Ketchikan project is attempted again, the results will be weighed in conjunction with a legislative study. Some $50,000 was appropriated last year to study possible sites in Southeastern for a permanent maintenance center for the ferries.

Ketchikan is a top contender for the facility.

11-15

Introduced: 2/26/76
Referred: State Affairs and Finance

IN THE HOUSE BY THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 842

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

A BILL

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to pay differentials between state ferry employees residing inside and outside the state."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

* Section 1. AS 23.40.040 is amended to read:

Sec. 23.40.040. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT. The commissioner of public works or his authorized representative, in accordance with secs. 10 - 30 of this chapter, may negotiate and enter into collective bargaining agreements concerning wages, hours, working conditions, and other employment benefits with the employees of the division of marine transportation engaged in operating the state ferry system as masters or members of the crews of vessels or their bargaining agent. No collective bargaining agreement is final without the concurrence of the commissioner of public works. The commissioner of public works may make provision in the collective bargaining agreement for the settlement of labor disputes by arbitration, and for area differentials in pay as between employees residing inside and outside the state, not to exceed six pay steps.

Ferry system notifies city

The division of marine transportation late this morning officially notified the city that the Chilkat would not participate in a pilot maintenance project in the First City.

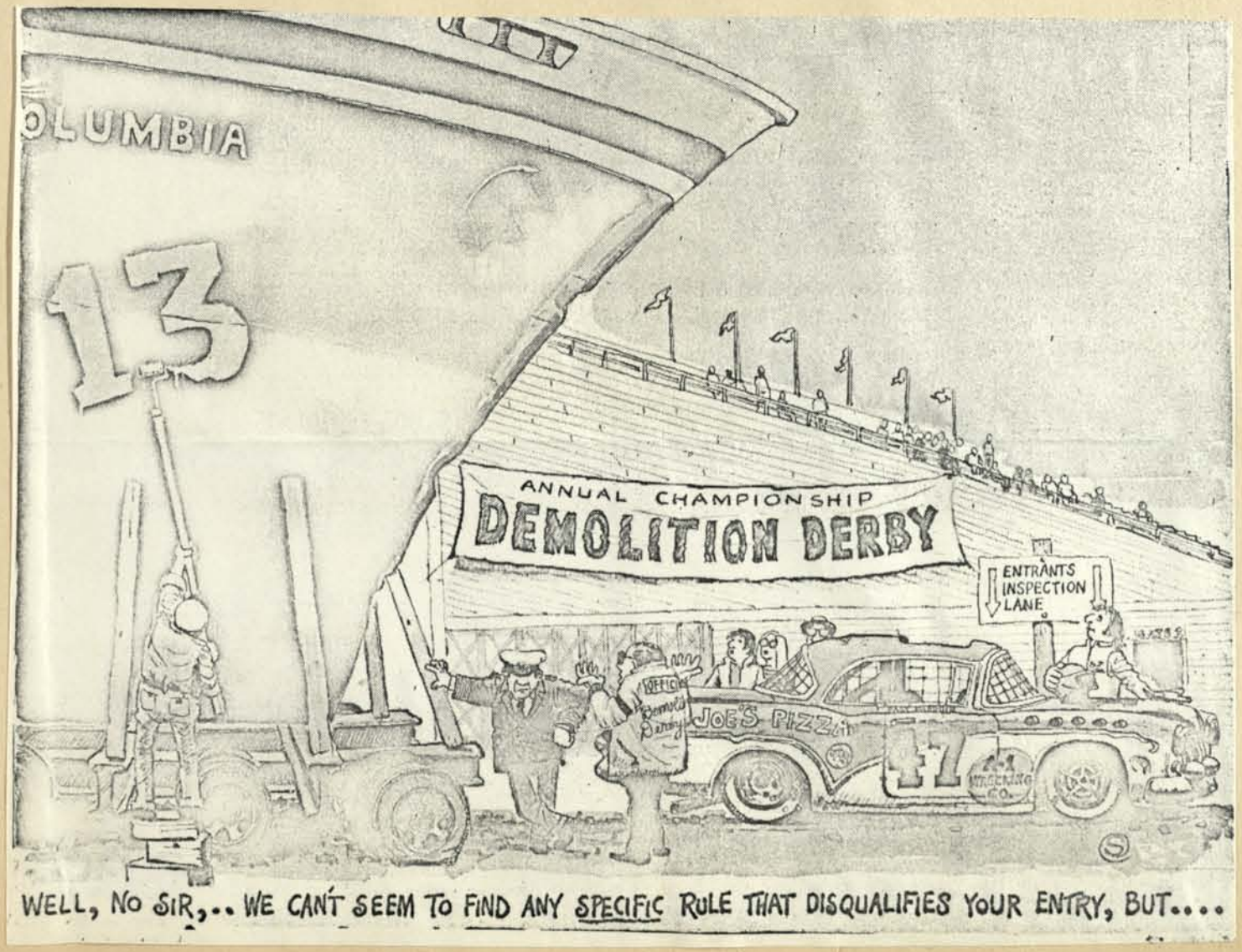
The Chilkat was delayed in Seattle during its regular winter maintenance and arrived here only one day before it was scheduled to resume its Ketchikan-Prince of Wales-Metlakatla run Saturday.

The city unofficially became aware of the change in plans Friday when the little ferry sailed into the channel, but nobody from the state bothered to notify city officials.

Today Information Officer Ginger Johnson telephoned City Executive Assistant Jim Van Altvorst to tell him about the hang up.

Ferry Director William Hudson was out of town today to conduct a public hearing on proposed rate increases and other items and was unavailable to answer a Daily News query of whether the pilot program here was a success.

The Le Conte, the other ferry scheduled to participate in the Ketchikan project, stayed 15 days here. Both ferries originally were to spend three weeks each in the city owned docking facility.



Columbia And Dock Don't Meet

The state ferry Columbia was driven from Wrangell's terminal on Sunday afternoon by winds gusting to more than 40 miles and hour.

Terminal Mgr. Winston Davies said 29 Wrangell-bound passengers had to sail away with the ship when she finally despaired of landing and continued to Petersburg. The ship had been northbound from Seattle and Ketchikan.

She made two passes at the Wrangell dock and bow and spring lines were secured by Davies with little trouble because the 418-foot Columbia is equipped with side bow-thrusters forward, but the stern was driven seaward each time by the wind.

On the second trip to the dock, crewmen got a purchase on the stern-dolphin cable and it appeared the docking could be completed, but the strain was too great on a shore-to-dock cable and it failed, causing the docking effort to be abandoned.

The Columbia arrived at about 1:30 p.m. and ied for about 45 minutes ' ip, finally sailing awa t 2:15 p.m., carrying her Wrangell-bound passengers along with her.

Audit ordered of ferry books

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—The legislative budget and audit committee has requested an audit of the division of marine transportation's records.

The audit is expected to be completed within several months, according to legislative auditor Garrey Peska.

Sen. Bill Ray, the powerful Juneau Democrat who heads the senate finance committee, called for the audit at a Jan. 26 budget and audit committee meeting. The scope of the audit was discussed in executive session.

Ray said the audit would focus on reported losses on the ferry's food and bar services and tariff structure.

Ferry Director William Hudson and public works Commissioner Don Harris two weeks ago were put on the hot seat at a joint hearing of the house and senate finance committees, which was called because of controversy over converting the restaurant aboard the Malaspina and over other policy matters.

The two at that hearing were accused of juggling funds and of tampering with legislative intent. Ray, however, said the audit would not center on alleged mishandling of appropriated funds charges, because that has been "publicly resolved."

The ferry system has justified its recent policy decisions by saying they were necessary as cost saving measures. But Ray said, "I don't want the doctor administering to the patient . . . and killing the whole thing."

Ferry director hears Ketchikan comments

By MIKE STRATTON
Daily News Staff Writer

Bill Hudson, director of the state ferry system, came to Ketchikan Friday to hear comments on rate increases and other proposed changes in ferry operations. He heard a variety of complaints from about 25 people at the evening hearing in the city council chambers.

Discussion ranged from rates to food service to the proposed move of the southern terminal from Seattle to Bellingham.

Those in attendance expressed both discontent and support of the various proposals. Hudson described the implementation of programs and even studying proposals as "anything but pleasant."

Hudson described Southeast Alaska as a "real ferry using land," but explained that the ferry system can only do so much, "physically speaking."

One of the largest discussions centered around the Bellingham move. Hudson said the only reason it was being looked at was its geographical location. It is 120 miles closer to Alaska. He said he was considering the proposal from the "point of view of Alaskans, traveling Alaskans."

Bill Palmer, businessman in Ketchikan, said the Bellingham proposal did not consider maintenance and licensing, standby time, load time, and lack of electrical equipment in handling food vans.

Hudson wrote the comments down and referred Palmer to Kent Miller, who is making a study of the ferry terminal moves.

Palmer also suggested a round trip rate benefitting Alaskans. Hudson said this would be studied.

Mary Fernandez complained of the mismanagement of personnel. Hudson said he was dealing with an old industry and "you do not just reverse it."

Hudson said one of the biggest criticisms he had encountered was the proposal changing the dining room to a buffet line. The only comment this brought was on food prices of the buffet vs. the regular dining room.

The rate changes were supported by a few persons and complained about by others. Businessmen complained of the 20 per cent jack-up and one traveler complained the rates were more expensive than flying.

To the latter complaint, Hudson said the ferry system is "the poor man's luxury cruise."

Hudson said ferries were not in competition with private business in answer to the rate raise complaint on vans.

Other complaints included charging for dogs on ferries and on scheduling.

The ferry hearings continue Monday and Tuesday in Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer Tues., Feb. 24, 1976 S* B 7

Damaged Alaska Ferry Returning for Repairs

BY DON PAGE
P-I Marine Writer

Alaska State Ferries' flagship Columbia is homebound for Seattle after taking a turn for the worse in Wrangell Narrows.

A steering mechanism failure is blamed for the ship's veering sharply to port in the narrow waterway Sunday afternoon and going briefly aground.

The grounding opened a hole in the Columbia's bulbous bow.

The bow reportedly is flooded with 15 feet of water. However, divers have reported the damage is "minor," and there is some hope the ship may be repaired in time to make her scheduled Friday night departure from Seattle for Southeast Alaska.

The Columbia sailed from Pier 48 here Friday with 284 passengers and 139 vans and other vehicles on her cardeck.

A similar load is expected this week, and Alaska has no other vessel in position to fill in for the gored Columbia.

Passengers aboard the Columbia when she ran aground included 43 Seattle transportation leaders en route to Juneau on a Port of Seattle goodwill trip to the 49th State.

After the accident the Columbia proceeded to Juneau with an alternate steering system. She discharged all passengers and vehicles at the Alaska capital and is southbound empty.

Officials expect her here tomorrow morning to go into drydock at the Lockheed Shipyard, where she was built and delivered for service in June, 1974.

The $20 million ship is the largest in the Alaska Ferries system.

She is 418 feet long and 85 feet of beam, with a design draft of 16 feet. Her size forces special caution on her weekly voyages up the Inland Passage 874 miles from Seattle to Juneau, Sitka and Southeast Alaska port cities en route. For instance, the Columbia's bulk forces navigators to adjust her schedules to traverse Wrangell Narrows with favorable tides.

The Columbia's service has been interrupted by frequent accidents and mechanical troubles in the year and a half she's been in service.

Her departure on the voyage before this one was delayed for repair of propeller damage apparently caused by a snagged steel cable.

The handsome ship's worst accident followed her delivery by only four months. On October 14, 1974, her hull was ripped open by a rock in Peril Strait, near Sitka, and she carried an 800-pound "chip" of that rock home to Seattle with her.

That Peril Strait accident knocked the Columbia out of service for three trips. Hopefully, this Wrangell Narrows grounding will cost her only the voyage she was on.

Native group plans pier shops

SEATTLE (AP)—An Alaska native group has proposed building a $1 million complex of shops, including a restaurant, bar and parking garage, at Pier 48 here.

The pier is used by the Alaska Ferries System.

Port of Seattle commissioners heard the proposal Tuesday from the Calista Corp. and referred it to the real-estate department for further action.

The company seeks a long-term lease for sub-renting to Alaska craftsmen and shopkeepers in a section of the covered pier.

STATE OF ALASKA

PORT CAPTAIN
$2,720 in Juneau

Graduation from accredited merchant marine academy, or college with appropriate major plus six years of progressively responsible marine experience including two years as a Master and two years experience in vessel construction, inspection or supervision of major vessel repairs. Additional appropriate experience may substitute for the required training year-for-year. Must have a valid USCG Master's license.

ASSISTANT PORT ENGINEER
$2,356 in Juneau

Assists with operation and maintenance of vessels and machinery in the State Ferry system. Acts as Port Engineer in his absence. Requires four years marine experience including at least two years as Chief Engineer of a vessel with 3,400 hp or more and two years in vessel construction and/or major vessel repair. Must have a valid USCG license as Chief Engineer for 3,400 hp motor vessel.

End of the week

To bring the Ketchikan Daily News readers a better idea of what is going on in Juneau during the start of the legislative session, one of our reporters, Harry Gamble is in Juneau.

Gamble is not only covering the parts of the legislative story missed by the wire service team, but he also is checking with state officials on areas of interest to Ketchikan and the rest of Southeastern Alaska.

It was Gamble's story in the Daily News on the state's study of a switch of southern ferry terminals to Bellingham and on remodeling of the Malaspina dining room that touched off the public hearing Wednesday by legislative leaders on the ferry system.

The Daily News readers have another advantage in Juneau this year. One of the Associated Press team, Rodger Painter, is a former Daily News reporter with a good background in timber and fishing problems. He also is an Alaskan—from Kenai and Sitka—so he grew up with a knowledge of the state that is helpful.

Having Gamble on the Bellingham-ferry story has made it possible for the Daily News to stay ahead of other newsmen. Gamble used to edit a weekly newspaper in the Bellingham area and knows many of the officials active in the effort to attract the southern terminal of the Alaska ferry system.

From The Ketchikan Daily News

THE STATE administration tied up the ferry Taku for the winter, has remodeled the food service system on the Maluspina and contemplates remodeling the food service system on other ships. The aim, we are told, is to reduce the cost of running the ships. The inference is that the biggest losses come from the food service operations.

The method of reducing service by tying up one ship and by spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to remodel for a doubtful saving of any kind has been state policy. Almost completely ignored is the effort to attract more business. The extra business is there because the northbound ferries already are leaving cars behind at Seattle and Prince Rupert. And they have been since the middle of March.

IF ANY remodeling or rescheduling should be done, it should be to accommodate more vehicles through the system. The vehicle fares are much higher than passenger fares and the vehicles require less service aboard ship.

A little less attention to reducing food service (lease it out to a concessionaire) and a little more attention to moving a volume of cars would be a better goal for state ferry administrators.

11-17

Ferry maintenance study:

Ketchikan leads—Gardiner

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—A study of where to put a Southeast Alaska state marine maintenance center should point to Ketchikan, according to information received by Rep. Terry Gardiner.

And he and Rep. Ed Naughton say the study has a new twist—the state could make available a long term, low interest loan for private enterprise to build the maintenance base.

Naughton is a Kodiak Democrat and member of the house finance committee that heads the $50,000 study, authorized by the legislature in 1975. Gardiner spearheaded the measure.

Ketchikan consultant Kent Miller and several other individuals are piecing the study together, which should be compelted and in the hands of the legislature by the first week of February.

The study originally was to take a look at a half dozen Southeastern communities as possibilities for the marine base. Naughton says Ketchikan, Kodiak and Juneau are the strongest runners.

Gardiner says an eventual need for maintenance centers will exist both in Southeastern, of which Ketchikan appears to be the logical spot, and in the northern areas, for which Kodiak possibly would be a central location.

Ketchikan offers more marine base support facilities than does Juneau, he said.

The marine base idea was conceived by Ketchikan businessmen, who were successful this year in getting a pilot project started with two state ferries. However, Gardiner said the amount of work that the eight state ferries could offer such a base would not justify its creation.

If private enterprise were given the opportunity to run it, the base men then could provide a service to private craft as well as to the state ferries and "reduce complications" that a state run operation would generate.

Still, the two lawmakers maintain, a few possibilities exist. The state could build and operate the center; the state could build and lease it; or the state could provide the loan for private industry to build and operate it.

When the legislature receives the report, lawmakers will hold public hearings. That information will determine which site or sites to further study and what service levels would be desirable for the center.

Asked whether the marine highway department would have any say so in where to place the center, Naughton replied, "Personally I think it should be a legislative decision."

Gardiner disagrees, preferring instead a joint decision. "The administration has to be behind the concept to make it work." However, he said Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris is more amenable to the project than he was a year ago.

Alaska Ferry Spruced Up At Bellingham Terminal

(Editor's note: The following story was written Jan. 9 by Linda Schild, Bellingham Herald reporter. The clipping was sent to Carol Winger of Sitka by relatives in Bellingham.)

At 4 this afternoon, the 408-foot Alaska ferry Malaspina was scheduled to dock at the Port of Bellingham's North Terminal.

The ship is to be in Bellingham about 40 days, under contract to Haskell Corporation for remodeling.

No time has been wasted getting it here — the ferry has arrived before the contract.

But Haskell "definitely" has the job, according to William Bendixen, marine superintendent for the Alaska Marine Highway System. No one else bid on the project, he said.

Bids to remodel the Malaspina's dining room were called in December, after an original $394,000 offer by Seattle's Todd Shipyard was rejected because it was too high. Ferry system officials had estimated the job should cost about $175,000.

Two other Seattle firms and a Tacoma company showed interest when the project was rebid, Bendixen said, "but when the cards were all in, they decided to back out. They were working hard and decided they just couldn't make it."

Haskell's bid comes to about $260,000 Bendixen reported. Some negotiating remains but "we wouldn't send the ferry up there is we weren't sure Haskell was going to do the work," he pointed out.

The Malaspina left Seattle this morning with a crew under Capt. Harold Payne. The ship was to enter Bellingham Bay sounding a whistle which, according to local sources, would carry announcement of its arrival as far as Lynden.

Some 30 to 40 Alaska state marine employes will stay on the ferry while repairs are being made, Bendixen said. They will live on board but will eat ashore.

"Bellingham restaurants should get a nice piece of change out of that," the Alaska marine superintendent noted.

While the Malaspina is at North Terminal, its dining facilities will be remodedled, transforming the falley into a fast-food service, the cocktail lounge relocated and enlarged and more seating created in the dining room.

The ship will also undergo its annual engine overhaul.

"Haskell will have a change to do it (engine overhaul) if they have the facilities," Bendixen said. The job will be offered to local firms, at any rate.

The Malaspina's visit has other important ramifications.

"If the Malaspina and the state of Alaska get an excellent job done and we're happy with it, that's another feather in Bellingham's cap to get us into Bellingham," Bendixen said referring to the possibility of moving the ferries' southern terminal from Seattle to Bellingham.

"We're having a lot of trouble fighting Seattle. They say it's cheaper down there," Bendixen said.

Haskell — and the city of Bellingham — now have the opportunity to prove otherwise.

At the moment, he is pleased with Bellingham's response, Bendixen said. "So far, we've had wonderful cooperation from the Port of Bellingham — excellent cooperation."

Pendixen will be in Bellingham briefly on Monday to inspect the ferry at its moorings.

No visitors will be allowed on board during the reconstruction period, the port has announced, but toward the end of the Malaspina's stay guided tours may be arrnaged.

Goodies make up class ingredients

Pies, rolls, and other goodies are all part of a new food technology program initiated this month.

The program is sponsored by the division of marine transportation, Ketchikan Community College and Ketchikan Gatweay Borough School Dst.

The course is approved by the Alaska health dept., and the Inland Boatmen's Union of Alaska.

Earl Drayton, member of the Ketchikan Community College Advisory Committee, said the program's purpose is to improve the skills of employes aboard the state ferries and help other businesses that provide food services.

Of 29 students enrolled in the course, 80 per cent are employes of the marine highway system.

Dawn Drayton, bakery instructor for Ketchikan Community College, said the raw materials for the class are provided by the ferry system. The Ketchikan High School cafeteria is provided by the school district.

The products of the class are distributed to three state ferries; the Le Conte, Matanuska and Columbia.

The course ends Feb. 14.

Move a boon to business

One Ketchikan businessman says a move of the southern ferry terminus to Bellingham, Wash., from Seattle would be a boon to the local business community.

William Pauli, manager of the Heckman Co. and chairman of the chamber of commerce visitor and convention committee, said he endorses the move because it would "help the Ketchikan business community tremendously."

He said if the port of Bellingham "does everything it said it would" to create facilities and accommodations, then the move would not inconvenience travelers.

Pauli said the move could spur business in Ketchikan because the plan may include making Ketchikan a transfer point where all passengers arriving from either north or south would off load and board another ferry to continue their trip.

Ferries from Seattle and Prince Rupert would make round trips between Ketchikan and those southern ports leaving their passengers and cargoes here. Ferries from northern ports would do the same.

"Ketchikan would become a transfer hub and a certain amount of business would be generated in the community" by persons waiting until their connecting ferry departed, he said.

He said he believes Bellingham officials said at the Southeastern Conference meeting in November that a bus line had promised direct bus service between Bellingham and downtown Seattle.

Even with the bus travel time and the transfer time passengers would still arrive in Seattle in less time than they would riding a ferry there.

Bellingham is several hours closer to Ketchikan by boat than is Seattle.

Pauli said Bellingham indicated it would provide "maximum convenience and comfort for people going north and south" through its port by providing secure parking, play facilities for youngsters during waiting times, and dining facilities.

No more reservations taken for Seattle run

Travel agents selling Alaska ferry tickets have been directed by the ferry system not to take more reservations until further notice for the scheduled runs between Seattle and Alaskan ports.

This is a routine measure, according to Doug Burton, traffic manager for the ferry system, to guard against overbooking in case one of the two ferries on the route is held up in drydock.

The ferry Malaspina is currently in a Bellingham, Wash., drydock for conversion of its dining room to a cafeteria and is scheduled to return to service March 18. The ferry Columbia is scheduled to be drydocked March 19 for two months in Seattle for routine work, to return to service in time for the summer period of heavy traffic.

Although the ferry schedule lists one trip a week by both the Columbia and Malaspina, the contingency plan, in case the Columbia is still out of service, is to keep the smaller Malaspina from being overbooked and turning away passengers with reservations, Burton said.

Burton and Ginger Johnson, public information, stressed that no delays are expected at this time, and Johnson said the Malaspina may leave Bellingham a week early.

Lawmakers tell ferry fathers how they feel

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

It's hard to say what is going to come out of the special joint finance committee hearings on the state ferry system.

But at least one thing is crystal clear: Southeastern lawmakers are unhappy about the way the system is handling programs and the ferry bosses know it.

The ferry system was not created to grow into a big business operation, the Southeastern delegation says. Rather it was built to provide Alaskans with a link between Alaskan communities that are separated by water. There is no other substitute for the lack of a hard surface road.

Ask Sen. Genie Chance of Anchorage, she'll tell you the same. So will Ketchikan's delegation, Sen. Robert Ziegler, and Reps. Oral Freeman and Terry Gardiner. So will Sen. Pete Meland of Sitka and Sen. Bill Ray of Juneau as will the rest of the Southeasterners to a man.

Sen. Chance was right when she asked the administration to consider the taxpayers' share of the ferry system's budget as "maintenance" rather than "subsidy," and if the administration does, there is reason to believe the original legislative intent of the ferry system will be restored.

The administration already considers the "subsidy" on hard surface roads as "maintenance." And by comparison, the "subsidy" for hard surface roads is 90 per cent, while the "deficit" for the ferry system is 45 per cent.

The philosophic flipflop in ferry operations has become apparent in recent months. And maybe it happened as easily as Ziegler suggests: "I don't think these guys (Harris and Hudson) even understand the philosophy."

These unpopular changes have occurred because of the "new" philosophy: the layup of the Taku for the winter; the conversion in the Malaspina's dining room; the elimination of several on-board restaurant jobs; and increases in ferry fares.

In addition many lawmakers are outraged because they had no chance to voice opinions while those decisions were being made—they were home between legislative sessions.

The lawmakers are further outraged because the ferry bosses decided only a few days before this legislature convened to transfer tens of thousands of dollars in funds from priority projects that the legislature had approved in 1975 to pay for the unpopular Malaspina conversion. Whatever happened to legislative intent the lawmakers understandably have asked.

This week the legislature did only what it could do. They sat Harris and Hudson in the hot seat and demanded clarification of their actions.

Because of that there is hope that the ferry system will revert to its former "in-lieu-of-a-highway" philosophy, and that the ferry system will heed legislative intent.

If Hudson and Harris can reduce the so-called deficit within the realm of that legislative intent, so much the better.

The second session of the Ninth Legislative session is now into its second week and the Legislators have heard the Governors State of the State and Budget addresses. A bond package totaling $239 million that includes over forty million for fisheries development projects has been proposed by Governor Hammond. This sounds very good to me and should to all of us who live in S.E. Alaska. The general obligation bonds outlined in the Governors budget proposal also include eight million for port construction which is also important to us here in S.E. Alaska.

Governor Hammond is asking for $1.4 million in bonds to renovate and improve State Ferries Matanuska and Taku, and the Federal Government will kick in another $10.5 million. Improvements include a change to a "fast food buffet" style of service rather than the present dining room style we are accustomed to. I am not in agreement with this change and would like to see the food and beverage service remain the same and back in the ahnds of Universal Foods, or some other professional food service firm that knows how to make a profit for themselves and the State of Alaska. Universal Foods had the original contract with the State and did make a profit. Business just has to be better now, in 1976, than in the Ferry systems infancy.

State hires consultant to study ferry move to Port of Bellingham

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

The Alaska public works department has hired a Ketchikan consultant to look into factors surrounding a change of the ferry system's southern terminus from Seattle to Bellingham, a high level ferry official told the Daily News Tuesday.

The report by consultant Kent Miller, who also has been contracted to do other state and Ketchikan consulting work, is scheduled to be completed on March 1, ferry Director William Hudson said. Hudson said public works Commissioner Donald Harris plans to review Miller's study in March and make his selection by the end of that month.

Hudson said Harris likely would take more time making his selection if necessary. The public works department controls the ferry system.

Miller will begin his two-pronged study Jan. 15, the consultant told the Daily News, and it would focus on the overall economy of the ferry system and on the convenience to travelers.

Miller said he would sample ferry customers at both ends of the ferry line through questionnaires. The travel industry also would be queried.

Miller's other government jobs include a feasibility study for placement of a ferry maintenance center in either Juneau, Ketchikan, Seward, Kodiak or Sitka, due for completion this month. He also is working on an electric power study for the University of Alaska and the state legislature, as well as helping the implementation of a port department for the city of Ketchikan.

Hudson said the selection of the southern ferry terminus would be decided on an "economic basis."

Sitkans Urge Uniform Ferry Tariff Change

Sitkans attending the ferry system hearing here Wednesday night urged that the tariff increase for vans be held to a minimum and that a proposed plan for seasonal variations in the charge be eliminated.

A 20 per cent summer season tariff increase on vans with a cutback in the winter had been proposed by the Department of Public Works along with a 10 per cent increase in passenger and non-commercial vehicle rates.

Doug Burton, traffic manager of the Division of Marine Transportation, conducted the hearing at the Centennial Building. About 20 persons attended.

Representatives of Hames orp. and Lynden Transport, Inc., which rely on the ferry system for shipment of cargo vans, protested the proposed 20 per cent increase.

The tariff increases are part of a package already being undertaken by the Hammond Administration to reduce the operating deficit of the ferry system.

Municipal administrator Rocky Gutierrez pointed out that the freight increases would be passed on with interest to the local consumer. Despite the hefty rate increases projected on all ferry rates, the new revenue would amount to only about $1.5 million, against the operating deficit of $16 million.

Ferry terminal changes expected for new vessel

JUNEAU—The division of marine transportation is planning alterations to the Ketchikan ferry terminal to accommodate the Le Conte II, a spokesman said. However, plans are contingent on the passage of a state bond issue and a future engineering study.

The Hammond administration is seeking $48,000 in bond monies, enough to qualify for $352,000 in federal aid to highway funds. The total $400,000 package would provide the funds to purchase land near the ferry terminal and alter the present Chilkat-borough ferry dock to accomodate the Le Conte II.

The Le Conte II, both a side- and stern-loading vessel, could dock at either the modified Chilkat dock or the existing mainline dock, ferry officials say.

The additional lands, two parcels immediately southeast of the present terminal, would be used to expand the vehicle staging area. Cost of parcels is in the vicinity of $250,000.

The balance of the money would be used to relocate existing pilings at the Chilkat dock and dredge four feet of mud from the moorage area.

According to highways department and public works officials, no decision has been made to relocate the borough airport ferry dock, although the relocation is possible.

Doug Burton, ferry system traffic manager, said the Gateway Borough was looking into possible sites. Southeast District Engineer Warren Wild said federal highway funds might be available to relocate the borough ferry dock.

However, Burton said if federal funding is not available for that relocation, the ferry system will go the drawing board and attempt to come up with a ramp design compatible with both the state and borough ferries.

The Le Conte II is expected to go on line in the spring of 1977 and will serve Ketchikan, Hollis and Metlakatla.

Malaspina Sidelined Due To Minor Blast

The Alaska ferry Malaspina will be sidelined for at least two weeks after a minor dockside explosion crippled one of its generators.

A spokeswoman for the Marine Highway System said Monday the 400-foot ship had been taken to Seattle for repairs following the mishap Sunday in which no one was injured.

The Malaspina had been docked at Bellingham for alterations converting its dining room to a "fast-food service area," or cafeteria-style dining arrangement.

The spokeswoman said that when the Malaspina's engines were started during a test, an apparent malfunction "blew the bottom out" of the ship's auxiliary generator.

The mishap, she said, would delay by two weeks the scheduled annual drydocking of the Columbia, the only other state ferry making weekly trips between Puget Sound and Alaska.

11-19

Ketchikan Daily
News
Ketchikan, Ak
JAN 2 6 1976

Ferry move to Bellingham draws Ketchikan criticism

5-

By NORMAND DUPRE
News Editor

Three Ketchikan business leaders have entered the fracas over a proposed ferry move from Seattle to Bellingham, Wash., with doubts about the plan's effect on freight, food and passenger service.

Travel agent Len Laurance believes a move to Bellingham will be a major inconvenience to travelers—both Alaskans and tourists—and will cost them more money.

Grocer Lloyd Hames, owner of Sea Mart Super, has written a letter to the ferry system, protesting the impact of the move on movement of food to Ketchikan.

Jerry Kvasnikoff, of the chamber of commerce transportation committee, said he believes the move would deter foot traffic to Seattle aboard the ferry liners.

The proposed shift in the southern terminus of the marine highway system has also been criticized in the state legislature.

The Ketchikan businessmen were asked for their comments on the idea.

Laurance, who is also a borough assemblyman, said that although the move would save the marine highway system money, he believes it would increase the cost of trips between Ketchikan and Washington State.

Even if the fare to Bellingham was a few dollars lower than to Seattle, the difference would be more than overcome by the cost of transfering by bus, train or charter airline to downtown Seattle.

"Transportation out of Bellingham is very poor," the travel agent said, listing Amtrak trains, Greyhound buses and a charter airline—Harbor Air—as the only carriers.

"The number one destination of most travelers that go from here is Seattle," Laurance said. Others use Seattle as a transportation hub—for connections elsewhere. The connections would not be available in Bellingham."

He said freight now handled through Seattle would have to be trucked first to Bellingham. Grocers and others would have to pay freight charges to Bellingham, and back to Seattle, resulting in added cost and delay.

Also, Laurance said, Port of Bellingham officicals project capital improvements to be paid back over a 20-year period and would therefore require a 20-year lease from the marine highway system.

By comparison, Port of Seattle requires only a two year lease.

"With the changing patterns in transportation it's inadvisable to enter into long term leases," he said.

Crew changes must frequently be made by flying crewmembers to Seattle, he said. A move to Bellingham would require an additional flight to Bellingham from Sea-Tac airport.

Laurance also foresees problems with the idea of making Ketchikan a turnaround and transfer point.

Fresh and frozen seafood from Wrangell and Petersburg would need special refrigeration facilities in Ketchikan, he said.

The size of the Ketchikan ferry terminal staging area is too small to accommodate the traffic that would be needed when a full load from the Columbia pours ashore, where another load is waiting to board.

Laurance said the Ketchikan transfer would create problems for unaccompanied vehicles. Many persons load vehicles on the ferry at one end of the system and fly to their destination, then pick up their car when the vessel arrives. Many problems would arise if they had to transfer it to another boat mid-trip.

Hames said he has written the state ferry system that the move would cost grocers more to ship food and could mean perishables would arrive less fresh.

"The cost of pulling a van to Bellingham from Seattle would mean a large increase over the present Seattle costs," he said. "The state has not committed itself as to what reduction there would be in the tariff (ferry rate) from Bellingham" to make up for the increased cost.

He said Seattle is the hub for distribution of products as well as the termius for rail, bus and ship passengers.

The cost of additional diesel power to refrigerate food for the two to 2½ hour drive from Seattle to Bellingham must also be figured.

Food shipped from Bellingham would be one day older than food that leaves from Seattle because the items would have to be trucked from Seattle the day before the ferry departure in order to be loaded aboard the vessel on time.

Hames said the important point is that perishable items would have one day less shelf life than they do now.

"With that we wouldn't need the ferries at all for food. It would be no fresher than shipping by Foss."

Hames said Sea Mart ships only perishable food by the ferries as he does for his stores in Sitka, because it arrives sooner. All other foods are shipped by containers aboard Foss Alaska Line barges.

Perishable food shipped through Seattle on the ferries is taken to the dock the same day the ferry leaves for Alaska.

He added that ferry system is talking about a six day turnaround for the round trip from Ketchikan to Bellingham instead of the seven days now required between Seattle and Ketchikan. That could mean staggering the weekly departure from Bellingham and preventing advertised sales of perishable items.

Also "any schedule other that a weekly departure would be a deterrent to the food industry," he said.

Jerry Kvasnikoff, customer service manager for Alaska Airlines in Ketchikan, and head of the chamber's transportation committee, said that without any in depth study he "has a tendency to favor the Seattle terminal."

He said he feels a shift to Bellingham would reduce foot passenger travel.

"For tourists that travel with their vehicles, I personally don't think it will make a bit of difference to drive another few hours (to Bellingham). In fact they may enjoy the drive.

"But it appears the traveler using the ferries solely as a means of transportation would be at a disadvantage. His primary destination is probably the Seattle-Puget Sound area. He will have to make some kind of connection with ground transportation when he gets there."

Ferry system director William Hudson says he will decide on the southern terminus based on what will save the system money.

Kvasnikoff said "I hope they (the ferry system officials) are not shortsighted. Basing a decision on economics is very sensible, but there is a difference between short and long term benefits. I hope they consider the long range effects on both transportation and tourism."

House Panel Sponsors Ferry Advisors Bill

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Legislation aimed at letting the public have its say on policy decisions and fare changes by the often criticized state ferry system has been sponsored by the House State Affairs Committee.

A revision of a bill introduced in the closing hours of last session, the measure would create a seven-member committee to review and make recommendations concerning ferry system policies, operating budget, fares, scheduling and capital improvement projects.

Last month, legislators questioned marine transportation officials about a fare hike that was to be put into effect without a public hearing. They also questioned economy moves some lawmakers said were not authorized by the legislature.

Shortly after the hearing, ferry officials announced a series of public meetings on the proposal to raise fares by nearly 20 per cent in May.

Juneau Democrat Mike Miller, the prime sponsor of the original measure, said a new section requiring a comprehensive public hearing process in any changes in the rate schedule was influenced by the reluctance to have public input in the proposed rates.

"It wasn't prompted in the original sense by the flap this year, but it pointed out the need," Miller said. "The bill will ensure "fewer decisions are made in the commissioner's office."

Membership of the unpaid advisory committee would include three residents of towns served by the ferry system "who are broadly representative of the travelling public," two representatives of commercial users of the ferries and two legislators.

"I'm satisfied if the advisory system had been in existence this year," Miller said, "the ferry system wouldn't be in the hot water it is with the legislature."

The bill also includes a declaration of policy of the marine transportation system that Miller said "articulates what most southeasterners have felt for years."

"The state ferry system...is a moving highway," the bill says. "As such, it is a substitute for a network of roads and highways along and through the maritime areas of the state..."

Although he admitted the declaration wouldn't "change much" of the way the system is run, Miller said it was necessary because "the commissioner puts more emphasis than there should be on paying its own way."

Statements by ferry officials that the cost per mile of the ferries is almost the same as a modest two-lane asphalt highway Miller said "points out the present subsidy is about where it should be—they should not be preoccupied with cutting back services."

Pay Differential Proposed For Ferry Workers

Employes of the state's marine highway system who live outside Alaska may eventually receive as much as 25 per cent less pay than Alaskan employes because of the cost of living difference. The House passed a bill today authorizing such a distinction.

Voting 32-3, the House approved the bill with the understanding that the division of marine highways will implement the provision gradually, in the course of several years of negotiating with ferry workers, so that the bill will not require either an immediate large increase in pay for Alaskan residents or freeze on pay scales of non-residents.

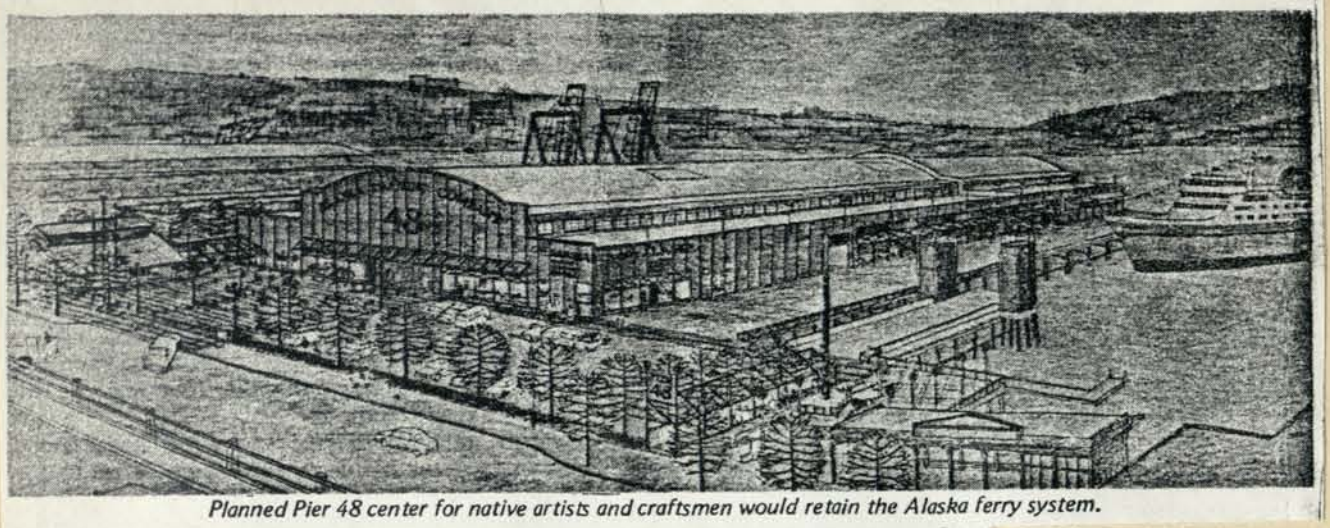
Rep. Lisa Rudd, D-Anchorage, stood in solitary opposition to the bill, saying residency is an improper factor for determining pay scales, and that the same goal could be met by authorizing pay differentials based simply on cost of living.

Rep. Terry Gardiner, D-Ketchikan, whose Judiciary Committee originally sponsored the bill, replied that the "reality of the case is that it really does cost more to live in Alaska" than other states and residency is therefore a valid basis for the distinction.

A spokesman for marine highways was not available this morning to say how much money the state could save by the pay differential or how many employes would be affected.

11-20

Coming—the Waterfront You've Always Wanted



Planned Pier 48 center for native artists and craftsmen would retain the Alaska ferry system.

By WILLIAM G. CUSHING

Unfurling an armload of blue-inked architectural drawings on a Port of Seattle office desk last week, a native Alaskan corporation laid out the latest proposal to develop the city's best-ignored resource—the central waterfront.

Calista Corporation, one of the 12 regional native companies formed to utilize an expected $1 billion in Alaska native land settlements and oil revenues, wants to revive Pier 48, present home of the Alaska Marine Highway System at the foot of S. Main Street.

Important as it was, last week's scene in the Port's offices was only the most recent to be played as the waterfront verges on a metamorphosis that will make it one of Seattle's strongest attractions—for residents and tourists alike.

Until recently, commercial development along the stretch of Elliott Bay lying adjacent to the Central Business District has occurred despite a pitiful lack of inducements. Major impediments still remain, mainly in the form of undeveloped (in fact, seedy) pedestrian access from the CBD north of Pioneer Square. But a planned "people-mover" that would use elevators and escalators between the Pike Place Market and the waterfront promises to dissipate part of that objection and even mitigate the physical and psychological barrier imposed by the gray presence of the Alaskan Way Viaduct.

Pedestrian access will require more effort towards a total solution, but the impending waterfront renaissance seems to have transcended even that shortcoming. After a century of exclusive use as a transportation terminal, Elliott Bay's jutting piers are about to realize their long-neglected potential for simple human enjoyment.

The evidence is abundant and unmistakeable. Beginning with the opening of the first phase of the Waterfront Park at Pier 58 last year, a wave of already started and planned projects is breaking up the waterfront's predominantly industrial character. If completed as planned, the proposals will neatly tie both ends of the central waterfront into a cohesive, marine-oriented section stretching from Pier 48 to Pier 70.

The Calista Corporation proposal would turn Pier 48 into a showplace and marketplace for Alaskan Native artists and craftsmen, activities that would complement and strengthen the Alaskan theme created by the Alaska ferry system, which is expected to remain at the pier.

SEATTLE (AP)—Representatives of tug operators, oil companies, the Alaska Ferry System and others participated Friday in a "give and take session" with Coast Guard officials leading to a marine traffic system for the Alaska oil port of Valdez.

The public meeting here last about 1½ hours. The purpose was to solicit input on what the proposed regulations should address.

Lt. Cmdr. Ken Thompson, chief of Port Safety Branch, and program manager for the 17th Coast Guard District in Juneau, said the Coast Guard hoped to have the draft regulations completed by this summer.

Downtown Dock Still Restricted

When the state ferry Columbia comes to town early Monday it will dock at Auke Bay instead of the scheduled downtown terminal as the city-borough has restricted load limits on the downtown loading ramp.

The city recently carved out a section of the ramp for inspection after rusting was observed through the asphalt.

Although the bridge was deemed sturdy enough for at least another year, the city plans to put re-enforcement planks on the lower third of the deck next week to make sure.

The city has reduced the load limit at the dock to 75 per cent of the maximum legal axle load—following guidelines imposed by the Alaska Department of Highways. The loading ramp is posted at 35-ton limit, with no restriction on axle loads.

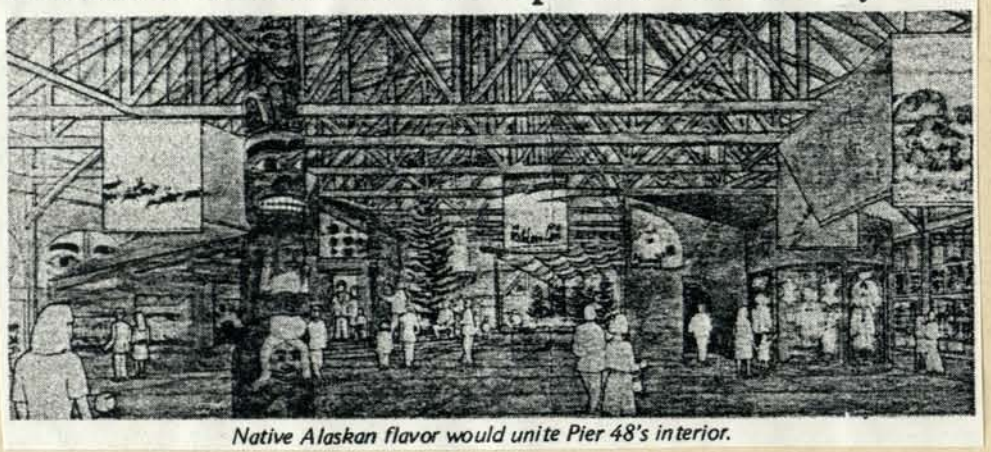
However, the city is apparently afraid a truck might cross the bridge, heavily weighted on one axle, and poke a hole in the ramp.

Unwilling to take this chance, the Alaska Marine Highway System has detoured the Coumbia—and any of her sister ships which might visit Juneau before the restriction is lifted—to the Auke Bay dock. The smaller LeConte will dock in downtown Juneau as scheduled.

City engineer Ron Eckhardt said the planks should be laid next week. However, he said this will probably be a temporary, patching measure as the corrosion will continue.

Eckhardt said the bridge will probably have to be redecked in the next year or two—a costly proposition. "We can make it safe right now, he said, "but eventually we'll have to redeck the whole thing."

Seattle's Marine Metamorphosis Underway



Native Alaskan flavor would unite Pier 48's interior.

Columbia remodeling ad was 'mistake' says Hudson

By BOB SPEED
Daily News Staff Writer

A recent advertisement in several trade publications for remodeling of the Alaska State Ferry Columbia was "a mistake due to a mix-up in communications, and has been canceled," according to ferries director William R. Hudson.

Hudson also said the Division of Marine Transportation has received "considerable, even overwhelming response" to the ferry system's offer to lease food service on state ferries, and said the remodeling of the ferry Malaspina is ahead of schedule.

Concerning the advertisement for remodeling of the Columbia's dining facilities, Hudson said he had directed architects to come up with an accurate cost estimate for the work to give to the legislature and the governor. Due to a communications mix-up, he said, the "word went out to solicit for bids," resulting in publication of the erroneous advertisements.

Earlier, Hudson had promised not to proceed with conversion of the Columbia's dining facilities to a cafeteria without legislative authorization.

He said the cost estimate now being made will probably be finished by the end of next week, and will be given to the public works commissioner for review and then to the legislature's budget and audit committees and to the governor's office.

The conversion of dining facilities to a cafeteria on the ferry Malaspina, planned and initiated late last year without legislative authorization, caused considerable controversy when the legislature found out work was already in progress.

That conversion, now being done in Bellingham, Wash., is "progressing in very good fashion," Hudson said, and is now scheduled for completion by March 15, slightly ahead of schedule.

The ferry system's response from several private firms about food and liquor concessions on state ferries has been good, Hudson said. He said at least five firms are interested, including Saga Food Corporation, which runs the concessions aboard Washington State Ferries, and ARA Services, Inc., which has the food concession for the University of Alaska.

Hudson said he expects firm proposals from those and several other companies interested in the concessions.

One of our readers, a tugboat owner and skipper, says we haven't lived until we've had a chuckwagon breakfast in the new cafeteria of the Malaspina. This is the controversial dining facility that evolved when the state ferry system administration decided to do away with the regular dining room and the snack bar in what is called an economy measure.

Our tugboat skipper friend says for $3.25 the breakfast consists of rubbery scrambled eggs cooked about midnight and served on plastic plates. He said the prisoners at the state prison in Juneau went on strike over better food.

The reader really got wound up when he told us the ferry system has fancy new cash registers in the cafeteria areas but can't afford a pair of binoculars on the bridge. The inference is that the officials of the system are more concerned with food than the safety of the ships and the convenience of the traveling Alaskans.

Our reader says the only stopgap solution he has found to the breakfast problem on the ferry is to run up to the City Cafe near the ferry terminal in Juneau, when the ship is at the downtown terminal.

We could add that lunch passengers going south will find the Hilltop Motel restaurant handy during the afternoon stops in Ketchikan on the way south.

The only other solution for hungry Alaskans under the current administration, we guess, is to get locked up in the state correctional system where there is a concern for the customer.

11-21

Ferry director rides waves of discontent

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—Although riding the whitecaps of legislative and public ire, the administrator of the Alaska Marine Highway System is convinced he is doing basically the right job.

Director William Hudson is so firmly convinced of that, he would "be the first to tender my resignation" is he wasn't, he said.

Week before last legislators accused Hudson and his boss Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris of mishandling appropriated funds and for tampering with legislative intent. The flap was stirred up when the ferry system began a belt tightening campaign last fall with the announcement of the planned winter layup of two ferries and the intended dining room conversion aboard the others.

Hudson's justifications for the department's actions are extremely complex. It started when the administration ordered the ferry system to hold down fiscal year (FY) deficit spending as closely as possible to the $13.5 million 1975 deficit, but yet to maintain 1975 ferry service levels to all communities.

The economy drive began with a trimming of $1 million from the department's $28.4 million budget. To complicate matters, wages, now under negotiation, are expected to rise $2.5 million. Wages account for 70 per cent of the total budget.

Hudson's problem was this, he said: "How (do you) hold the deficit to $13.5 million in the face of exceptional inflation (20 per cent) in labor, commodities, and all contractual areas. . . with a fleet that is aging, a shore plant showing signs of appreciable deterioration, and a Columbia that has been less than dependable."

The annual deficit, an amount the legislature makes up for in appropriations, is nothing new for the ferry system. According to Hudson, the $15 million budget of FY 1973 required a $4.5 million subsidy; the 1975 budget of $26.5 million, for a $13.5 million subsidy.

The current year's budget has been increased to $31 million because of the added labor costs demanded by new wage contracts. Since revenues total only $14.7 million, the ferry managers figured they would have a deficit of $16.2 million. But the administrative mandate wouldn't allow that.

Hudson said fuel costs have increased since 1973 from $4.50 to $16 a barrel, vessel maintenance costs have doubled, service has increased to all communities, plus stops at several new cities are now on the line.

In addition, several other factors have made it tougher to make ends meet, he said: vessel summer traffic "has reached maximum capacity"; winter capacities are light; crews have increased vacation maximums from three to seven weeks ("a prime factor" in doubling the subsidy in four years).

In short, the ferry system still needed to reduce its budget by $2.7 million to step down to the 1975 deficit level.

The initial step was to take the Taku and Bartlett off the line for the six winter months, a measure that has saved $550,000 during the first three and one-half months of the layup, Hudson said. The measure initially was expected to save over $700,000 in wages and materials.

If the layup has caused a service drop, it's hardly noticeable, Hudson said, especially in Southeastern where the Columbia was off line must of last winter.

By tying up the Taku, the ferry system saved $532,000, likely enough of an incentive to repeat the layoff next winter. However the ferry manager will be spared making that decision because the Matanuska will be drydocked for six or seven months for lengthening.

The Bartlett layoff has resulted in a $30,000 savings in the Southwest portion, somewhat less than Hudson expected to save.

Hudson isn't sure just how many people are out of work because of the tieups. However, crews were on board at their Seattle winter moorages performing maintenance work. Some bottom rung people definitely lost their jobs, he said.

The next step was to reduce or eliminate certain money losing services on board, specifically to convert the dining rooms of the Malaspina and Columbia to buffet style operations.

That decision drew the biggest protest from the legislature and the public. First, the legislature originally appropriated money for the conversion of the Tustumena as a pilot project. Second, nobody seemed to want to change the restaurant and cafeteria set up, despite management convictions that the projects will pay for themselves within a year. Third, the legislature frowned on the way Hudson and Harris manipulated their budget to find money for the project.

Ferry officials assured the legislature that funds still are available for the Tustumena's dining room change, although the project might not be completed until a year from now.

Ferry riders were unhappy with the proposed restaurant change, perhaps because of concern over food variety and convenience. But Hudson said the food choice would remain identical to what menus now offer. Besides, four of five passengers now use the cheaper cafeterias in favor of the restaurants, figures indicate.

Then, in the attack led by Sen. Bill Ray, chairman of the finance committee, legislators accused the ferry boses of misappropriating funds. Hudson and Harris were faced with a dilemma, Hudson explained, when bids for the Malaspina's construction phase of the conversion came in at $400,000, much higher than expected. Bids were recalled, resulting in a lone bid from a Bellingham, Wash., firm at $261,000. Equipment purchase and installation plus consultants' fees, put the total cost at $400,000. But the ferry system did not have enough money in the right accounts.

The ferry system lifted $250,000 from a project for which the legislature had appropriated money last ver.

That project, rehabilitation of car decks on several ferries, was devised by the Egan administration as its number one priority. According to Hudson, retesting of the decks proved the job could be done for half the price.

Some $50,000 was taken from other Egan hangover projects—engine room soundproofing and dishwasher purchases. The soundproofing was done at a savings (some still remains to be completed), and the dishwashers could be purchased at half the price.

Still the system was $100,000 short. The final sum was obtained equally from personnel services and from operating commodities, which were monies saved from the Taku and Bartlett layups.

The legislature complained because ferry managers sought additional appropriations for personnel services to make up for the $2.5 million in salary increase. Harris admitted he would understand why they thought a "shell game" was being played.

Lawmakers also obtained a promise from Harris that he would seek offers from private enterprise to take over food and beverage services on the ferries, a promise he has kept. In last Tuesday's Juneau Empire the department solicited "proposals from interested logistics firms to privide personal service son board" the ferries, according to an advertisement on the newspaper's classified ad page.

The ad stated: "Such services include all food, beverage and room maintenance as well as gift shops."

The department also received legislative flak over a proposed May 1 rate increase that would raise prices for passenger and vehicles up to 19 feet long 10 per cent. Rates for all other vehicles were to rise 20 per cent.

The prices of meals were increased 20 per cent on Dec. 31, and another 20 per cent hike is scheduled to take place on May 1.

However Harris and Hudson have bowed to legislative demands and have scheduled public hearings throughout the state on the increases.

Complaints about the ferry system haven't all stemmed from external voices. The employes also have complained.

"It has been brought home to us sharply in attempting to lay up the vessel and convert the restaurants," Hudson says. "In all honesty we have not adequately informed our crews of all actions we felt best to take and perhaps many of our crews haven't felt free to communicate views to this division."

That is changing. During 1976 the ferry system will initiate a monthly news letter to its employes, and implement some means whereby employes can express their "recommendations" to management, as well as for management to respond, Hudson said.

Columbia Broken

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — The Columbia, flagship of the Alaska ferry system, was due to arrive in the Juneau area tonight, nearly two days behind schedule, after being drydocked in Seattle for repairs.

Bill Hudson, director of marine transportation, said a retaining ring on the out-board muff coupling on the port tail shaft snapped, leaving the ship without full power.

"It's a minor repair," Hudson said, but the ring is located underwater so the Columbia had to be drydocked.

Describing the mishap as "mechanical" Hudson said a report out of Seattle saying the retaining ring was broken by a snapped cable had "no documentation."

About 350 passengers were stranded in Seattle while the Columbia was undergoing repairs.

The Columbia was expected to be on its normal schedule next week after dropping its southbound Sitka run on this trip to make up lost time. Officials said Sitka traffic had been rerouted to the Leconte and Matanuska.

While the Alaska state administration complains about the high cost of operating the Alaska ferry system, the losses in operating a ferry system are not unique to Alaska. The British Columbia ferry system required a $25 million subsidy from the B.C. government to operate last year. The state of Washington has an $11 million deficit for Puget Sound ferry operations.

Alaska falls about halfway in between with $16 million needed above revenues to keep the fleet operating on drastically reducec schedules.

Washington ferry system officials are proposing an 11 per cent fare increase to reduce its deficit. In Alaska, the fare increase varies and is higher, up to 20 per cent on cargo vans.

In Alaska, the fare increase on commercial vehicles and vans is creating protest. The argument of shippers is that the vans are not causing the ferry system the deficit. The passenger traffic is the portion where the big deficit occurs.

Alaska ferry system administrators apparently blame food service for their troubles in failing to meet expenses. They are revamping that part of the operation and hope to farm out the food concession to a private firm.

No one seems to know, or at least the ferry system is not making it public, where the costs lie and in what proportion each service offered by the ferries is running in the hole. This gives the impression that the state is just assessing rates where the traffic will bear it with the least complaint.

The Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce has come up with a solution to that situation. It suggested in a resolution last week that the ferry system operations be put under the scope of the Alaska Public Utilities Commission. We believe that is a fair idea if the state administrators or the legislature also will allow the ferry system so much a mile in lieu of highway maintenance to make up the losses in operations. After all, the ferry system is an alternate to a highway system.

With APUC inspecting the books and requiring the state ferry people to justify fare adjustments, with the legislature allowing a set amount for payment in lieu of highway maintenance, the ferry system will have tighter fiscal control.

Now, if someone could just find a way to keep the Columbia running.

Health officials deny reports of unsanitary state ferries

By JANE HANCHETT
Daily News Staff Writer

District Sanitarian Earl May, of the state health department, recently denied a report of unsanitary food service conditions aboard the state ferry Columbia.

May said he inspected the largest ferry of the state system last Wednesday and found "no gross problems."

The Daily News received a report, from a person refusing to give his name, that the ship's galley was "insufficiently clean" and crew quarters contained badly worn and stained mattresses.

The person said the lack of adequate sanitation was caused by layoff of a day utility man and a resultant short-handed situation. The person alleged the cutback was made so ferry system officials could justify a proposed conversion of the ferry's cafeteria and dining room into one fast food service.

Conversion to a fast food service has been completed on the ferry Malaspina and pending on the Columbia on the results of the service during this year aboard the Malaspina. Ferry officials say the conversion will save the system money by reducing personnel and making the ferry food operation more efficient.

May said he had ordered some laminated pressed wood salad dishes replaced because they were frayed and could harbor germs.

Reportedly, the Columbia's walk-in icebox was in a state of disarray and contained spoilage, but May said his unannounced inspection did not turn up such conditions.

The anonymous source said he wanted to contact federal health officials because he did not believe the state would adequately regulate itself through state sanitarian inspections.

May termed his inspections thorough and extensive with more than 40 items checked. The source said a disinfectant-deodorant substance was in much use to keep down odor in a sewage holding area.

May said ferry officials are aware of the sewage problem and were arranging to have Lockheed, the builder of the Columbia, resolve the ventilation problem.

The source said he had knowledge that some unsanitary conditions existed on other ferries. Specifically, he said officers aboard the Taku had personally ordered some dirty mattresses changed on that ship and the state had promised for six months that some mattresses would be changed aboard the Matanuska.

Gary Hartz, Ketchikan's representative of the U. S. Office of Environmental Health, said regular inspections of the ferry sanitation was the domain of the state sanitarian and somewhat of the Coast Guard under water pollution laws.

The anonymous individual also said:

—A Columbia service elevator opened near a steep stairway creating a safety hazard.

—Top bunks in crew quarters have no hand holds on the outside to prevent crewmen from falling when the ship rolls.

—By Coast Guard law, he though there should be two means of exit from crew quarters and only one exists.

—Crew members have to have a doctor's note when they are ill. Getting one, especially after a three-day allowed sickness period, is inconvenient and expensive.

Roland Whitman, chairman patrolman of the Inland Boatmen's Union Alaska region, headquartered in Ketchikan, said he had heard "rumor" about the mattress and salad bowl situation, but that no crewmen had filed a formal grievance through IBU, which represents ferry workers.

He said the ferry system had experienced a considerable personnel turnover and that "could be part of the problem."

The Coast Guard performs an annual inspection every year on ferries, usually as they go into drydock for annual maintenance, and reinspections every three months.

A Coast Guard marine inspection officer in Juneau said ferries did comply with federal requirements.

Bill encourages state residency for ferry workers

Rep. Terry Gardiner Thursday introduced a measure into the state house that ultimately would encourage state ferry employes to live in Alaska

The bill proposes that ferry system administrators establish with labor unions a cost of living differential, paying more to Alaska residents and less to those living down south.

The fact that an exodus of ferry employes are heading south with fat paychecks "really galls a lot of people in the ferry system," Gardiner said. He is "pretty certain" unions would find the plan attractive.

Gardiner's bill would set up a cost of living differential similar to the federal government's and the state's. The federal government pays its employes up to 25 per cent more than its workers in the lower 48.

Angoon Due Ferry Project

The Department of Highways announced today that it will begin advertising for bids to construct Project RS-0998 (1), Ferry Terminal Facilities at Angoon.

The project will consist of construction of a ferry terminal and an approach road near Angoon, Alaska.

All work is scheduled for completion in 150 Calendar Days.

Advertising will begin March 31, 1976

Judge Moves Out Ferries As State Employes Strike

By BOB SPEED
Daily News Staff Writer

An Alaska State Trooper untied the Alaska State Ferry Taku at Ketchikan's ferry terminal at 4 p.m. yesterday, because ferry personnel were honoring the picket lines set up by the striking Alaska Public Employes Association (APEA).

State Director of the Division of Marine Transportation William Hudson verified that he had requested Deputy Director Larry Talbert of the Department of Public Safety, to have an Alaska State Trooper untie the lines for the ferry Taku before it left Tuesday afternoon.

Talbert said he had received the request and had complied with it, saying he considered it a one-time-only request. He said he had received a call from APEA members Tuesday evening concerning the request.

At press time, it was not known whether the union had taken any formal or informal action requesting the state not to allow troopers to work the ferry lines.

Asked who had tied and untied lines in Juneau, Hudson said "Myself and several key members of my staff did it. We opened up the ferry terminal, made coffee and opened the bridge" leading to the ferry ramp.

"The last time I handled lines was quite a few years ago in the Coast Guard," he chuckled.

Hudson said it was his job as a partially exempt government employe to keep the ferries running, even if it meant tying and untying ferries.

Hudson said he enjoyed waving and talking to the ferry passengers as they came aboard.

A ferry terminal spokesman today said that "Alaska state employes" tied up and untied the ferry Columbia when it arrived about 11 a.m. today, but the spokesman refused to say from which department or union the workers came.

One observer reported that ferry workers themselves climbed off the Columbia to tie up their own ship as it reached dockside.

In Ketchikan and other cities, people receiving public assistance were among the most acutely affected by the APEA strike, as negotiations were set to resume this afternoon. The department of family and children's services remains shut down along with many other state agencies, leaving low-income people with few if any places to turn.

Other state agencies remain open for emergency or limited services today, staffed by managerial personnel only. The department of revenue office in Ketchikan is open, according to its manager, Janette Edwards.

Mrs. Edwards said that office is open for income tax assistance and business and other licenses, while the agency's motor vehicle division is open for emergency services only.

Mrs. Edwards said she is the only person in her office, and believes some other state offices are staffed by skeleton crews, but isn't sure because she is "to busy to look around."

Meanwhile, the APEA and state negotiators are set to go back to the bargaining table at 4 p.m. today.

The action follows ratification by the Tri-Trades unit Tuesday evening of a state offer on an agreement concerning a previously negotiated contract.

While APEA Executive Director Ellison Ferral claimed the Tri-Trades agreement had no effect on that unit's support of the APEA strike, State Commissioner of Administration Andrew Warwick said, "Most Tri-Trades people are back to work today."

Warwick said slightly more state employes are back to work today, estimating that 60 per cent of state workers were on the job today compared to yesterday's estimate of 56 per cent.

Ferrall agreed that some offices were better manned today, but countered that other agencies have more people off the job honoring picket lines. He said he had instructed all pickets to remain on the line until further notice, and requested all state employes to honor picket lines, saying union support is as strong today as yesterday.

Warwick said he was contacted by federal mediator Harold Mayes, who has been the mediator throughout the negotiation.

Warwick said there is no change in the state's position. The state has expressed willingness to talk about union demands for a closed shop, but will not budge "on the financial end—it's a matter of principle," he said.

Ferry Hearings Are Endorsed

By The Associated Press

Legislation requiring the Alaska Marine Highway System to hold public hearings vefore jacking up its rates has gained an overwhelming endorsement from the state House.

Sent to the Senate Thursday was a bill that also sets up a review committee of five citizens and two legislators to monitor the ferry system. The committee could issue only recommendations, however.

The requirement for hearings was generated after ferry officials told legislators in January that major tariff changes were to take effect in May without consultation with the public. Hearings on the increases were held later.

Adopted 30 to ten the legislation requires a 90-day notice of any rate changes, as well as public hearings in "all or a representative number of communities served by the state ferry system."

11-23

Court Sets Ferries In Motion

By PAUL NUSSBAUM
Times Staff Writer

A Superior Court judge in Juneau this morning ordered state ferry workers to cross picket lines set up by striking state supervisors. The ferry workers had refused to cross the lines, shutting down two ferries in Juneau.

Meanwhile, officials for the Alaska Public Employes Association were claiming 90 per cent success in halting state operations with the strike. The state administration, though, said about half of its work force was on the job as usual.

Pickets marched in front of most state offices, and Ellison Ferrall, executive director of the employes association, said about 6,000 workers were honoring the lines and staying away from work. Commissioner of Administration Andy Warwick put the figure at about 2,000.

The court order, issued by Superior Court Judge Tom Stewart at about 9:30 a.m. Anchorage time, set the state's marine highway system back in motion. The state ferries Columbia and Leconte had been tied up near Juneau while attorneys debated in court.

The strike, the second formal walkout by the supervisors and the second strike in state history, was called when negotiations between employes association and the state administration broke down.

LeConte, Columbia Stranded At Docks

Superior Court Judge Thomas Stewart today issued a temporary restraining order against marine workers honoring state employe picket lines, in a move to loosen two state ferries from their strike-bound perch at dockside in Auke Bay.

The 10-day order is to be served "immediately," said Atty. Gen. Avrum Gross, and the Columbia was scheduled to dock at the terminal early this afternoon.

In a recorded message at the Auke Bay terminal, the court order will force the ferries to sail in and out of the terminal, but picket lines will still be erected at Auke Bay.

The order freed the Le Conte, which was tied up all night at the terminal, and the Columbia, which was anchored in Auke Bay.

The state had diverted all its ferries from the downtown terminal to Auke Bay in an apparent attempt to prevent what actually occured.

The state reportedly hoped labor problems might be averted by docking the ferries at Auke Bay-but found the IBU was powerful enough to keep the ferries from loading or unloading at either terminal.

Early reports that the downtown ferry terminal was closed due to mechanical problems were false, said City-Borough Public Works director Art Morrison.

"There is nothing mechanically wrong with the dock," said Morrison. "The state just suggested if we want to do some work on it, now would be a good time."

Public Works officials were unavailable for comment today, and it was uncertain how long the downtown terminal would be closed.

Unofficial reports said the main Alaska ferry office in Seattle was also closed by the strike.

Ferry report delayed on Bellingham move

The report on passenger response to a proposal to move the southern terminus of the Alaska Ferry System to Bellingham, Wash., will be turned over to the ferry system "within a week," according to the study's author.

Kent Miller, a Ketchikan-based consultant assigned the project, said the report was originally due to be finished the first of March. However, the ferry system delayed in processing some information Miller needed, and set the deadline back to mid March, he said.

Miller said he was further delayed in finishing the report by illness, but he plans to have it completed during the next week.

The report will be sent to William R. Hudson, director of marine transportation, who will make a final recommendation on the terminus move to the governor, based on the Miller report and other studies being done on the proposal.

Bill provides for pay according to residence

JUNEAU (AP) — State ferry employes living in Seattle would be paid less than their colleagues residing in Alaska under a bill passed by the state House Tuesday.

The cost-of-living pay differentials would be built into the next collective bargaining agreement and would not mean a pay increase for ferry workers living in the state, said Rep. Terry Gardiner, D-Ketchikan.

Pay increases granted Ferry employes under the collective bargaining process would be withheld from non-resident workers, Gardiner said, until the differences in salaries reflect the higher cost of living in Alaska, now roughly 25 per cent for Seattle compared to Anchorage.

The House approved the bill by a 32-3 vote after slapping down an attempt to amend the pay plan so that the pay differential would reflect the differences in cost of living, regardless of the place of residence.

The bill was to be returned to the floor for additional debate before passing to the Senate.

Pay Differential Proposed For Ferry Workers

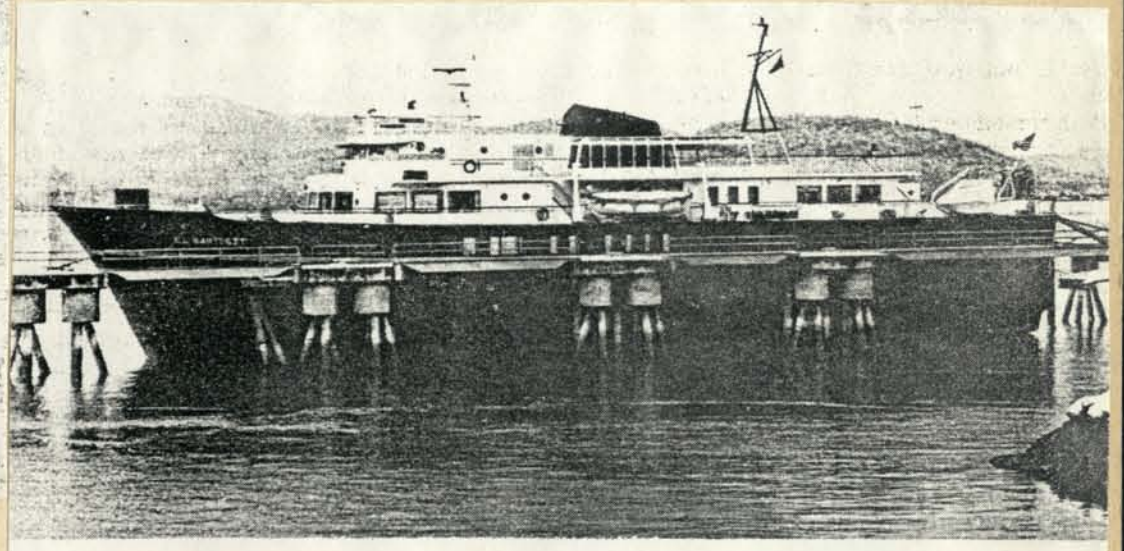
Employes of the state's marine highway system who live outside Alaska may eventually receive as much as 25 per cent less pay than Alaskan employes because of the cost of living difference. The House passed a bill today authorizing such a distinction.

Voting 32-3, the House approved the bill with the understanding that the division of marine highways will implement the provision gradually, in the course of several years of negotiating with ferry workers, so that the bill will not require either an immediate large increase in pay for Alaskan residents or freeze on pay scales of non-residents.

Rep. Lisa Rudd, D-Anchorage, stood in solitary opposition to the bill, saying residency is an improper factor for determining pay scales, and that the same goal could be met by authorizing pay differentials based simply on cost of living.

Rep. Terry Gardiner, D-Ketchikan, whose Judiciary Committee originally sponsored the bill, replied that the "reality of the case is that it really does cost more to live in Alaska" than other states and residency is therefore a valid basis for the distinction.

A spokesman for marine highways was not available this morning to say how much money the state could save by the pay differential or how many employes would be affected.



THE BARTLETT IS BACK!—After a 109-hour journey from Seattle, the Bartlett arrived in Cordova for the first time this year on Feb. 28. She begins her eighth year of service in the Alaska Marine Highway system and will be serving Cordova, Valdez, and Whittier this summer. In Seattle most of the winter for her annual overhaul, the Bartlett returned with a repaired bow thruster, both engines overhauled, and a fresh paint job. Welcome back!

Differential pay passes state house

By NORMAND DUPRE
News Editor

Non resident ferry workers will see a difference in their salaries after their next contract settlement under a bill passed by the state house Tuesday.

Gardiner said enforcement won't be a problem because the state has a list of which workers live inside and which live outside the state.

Letter Slams Ferry Workers

Senator Pete Meland
State Senate Building
Juneau, AK

Dear Senator Meland:

This letter is in regard to our outrageous Alaska Marine Highway System.

I have several observations which I would like to communicate to you.

I strongly object to the removal of the dining rooms from the ferries. They remain the only fine point of the system. Who would want to stand in line three times a day to eat while on vacation? It will be a complete mess during the peak of the season. It is hard to believe the reason offered for the conversion is to cut back on the number of employes. Flying becomes more attractive with each change of policy.

Now, when an employe on any job has time to get drunk, there, must be a lot of inefficiency. Cut this worker, then we'll be getting somewhere.

Last week when we arrived in Prince Rupert aboard the Matanuska, my husband sat an employe in the garbage can of the car deck. He was so drunk he didn't know who or where he was. He later staggered off the ship in full uniform to represent our state.

Another time as we departed the ferry in Petersburg, the purser was so drunk he had trouble standing. I think they can save that kind of action until they are on the beach. Of course there are many fine people associated with the ferry system, but which ones do we remember?

The vessels are beginning to look like tramp ships. Whatever happened to the ships that once made us proud, and the once friendly service we could look forward to?

Now the reservations have to be paid 30 days in advance, and the rates are going up again. What next?

The original purpose of the Marine Highway System (remember) has bowed to tourism.

Sincerly yours,
Dot Olson

cc: William R. Hudson
Gov. Jay Hammond
The Pilot

11-24

Ferries 'virtually full' already

By JANE HANCHETT
Daily News Staff Writer

Alaska Marine Highway ferries traveling northbound from Seattle and Prince Rupert are "virtually full" for passenger vehicles, whose owners have reserved space for the coming summer season.

State ferry system traffic manager Doug Burton reported today that ferry personnel "may well have to turn back" some passengers and vehicles during peak traffic "from July into the first part of August," about three or four sailings.

The rest of the season the ferries probably will be able to handle an expected 10 per cent increase in ferry traffic this year over last, he said. State ferries carried 260,000 passengers in 1975.

Ferry officials expect mainline traffic to increase six to eight per cent and intra-Southeast traffic of shuttle ferries such as the Chilkat and LeConte to bring an overall system increase up to 10 per cent.

Mainline ferries that ply up and down the Panhandle are the large Columbia, second largest Malaspina and the smaller Taku and Matanuska.

The system never books ferries completely full, thus allowing a certain number of standby vehicles. The Columbia takes about 30 standby vehicles and the other vessels about 15, Burton said.

The last couple of trips north the Columbia left two or three vehicles in Seattle and Prince Rupert, he estimated. Because a slide blocked the highway into Prince Rupert Monday, about 20 vehicles "missed the boat" on its Tuesday sailing. Burton said probably vehicles will be left Thursday morning and perhaps for some time because of the backlog caused by the slide.

Burton said the system likely will have to use a policy it used a few times last year in Seattle again this year during peak traffic. That is to issue even walk-on passengers numbers as they come to the terminal to determine boarding order. During peak traffic last year the Columbia was full of passengers a time or two, he said.

The busy season is expected despite an approximate 10 per cent increase for passengers and their vehicles in summer rates over last summer's rates. Winter rates on the ferries usually are 20 per cent lower than summer fees. Therefore, where summer rates start May 1, effective rate increase (above a ride April 30, for example,) will be about 25-30 per cent on the mainline vessels, Burton said.

Vehicles under 19 feet currently travel between Seattle and Ketchikan for $148, and a passenger, for $44. After May 1, the figures will be $210 and $62, respectively.

Burton expects a lull in traffic only the first two weeks after the new rates take effect. Large vehicles, such as commercial trucks, will experience a 20 per cent rate raise, but their rates are the same year-round.

Burton said the system is "hoping to cut down on no shows," which create trafficking problems, by a new policy, now in effect, whereby a fare is paid within 30 days after the system confirms a reservation.

Fares paid to the system's Juneau office during the first two and a half months of 1975 for reservations last year totaled $129,000. The figure this year during the same period for reservations for the coming season is $368,000. Burton attributed the difference to increased traffic and the new policy.

"Early mail and inquiries for reservations are definitely up," he said.

Columbia hits land.

By BOB SPEED
Daily News Staff Writer

Ferry traffic south from Ketchikan has been canceled for the remainder of the week due to damage sustained Sunday by the ferry Columbia, when it ran aground in Wrangell Narrows.

A spokesman for the ferry system said the Columbia, hard-luck flagship of the Alaska Marine Highway System, sustained a crack in a saltwater ballast tank in the accident. An electrical malfunction in the steering system of the ship apparently caused the ship "to veer hard to the left, momentarily making contact with the beach."

Divers assessing the damage after the ship arrived in Juneau said the damages "appear to be isolated solely" to the ballast compartment, the spokesman said.

The Coast Guard ordered the ship to off-load all passengers before proceeding south to Seattle where it will be drydocked for repairs.

Ferry service to Hoonah by the LeConte was cancelled today so the LeConte can make two trips from Juneau north to Haines and Skagway to service passengers from the Columbia.

Ferry system director William Hudson siad the Columbia "most likely will lose one" of its weekly Alaska runs.

The ferry was carrying 157 passengers and 87 cars when the mishap occurred at 4:15 p.m. Sunday at North Thorofare Point in the Wrangell Narrows.

The Columbia left Juneau under her own power today and was expected to arrive in Seattle early Wednesday.

The mishap stranded a large number of travelers planning to take the ferry to Sitka for the Southeastern Alaska High School Basketball Tournament. The travelers will be forced to make other arrangements because the LeConte, the only other ferry available for the Sitka run, departed for that island community with a full load today.

A number of vehicles destined for Petersburg were also left stranded in Juneau, since the Petersburg landing slip experienced an electrical failure shortly before the Columbia pulled into Petersburg.

The Columbia's accident was the latest in a series of mishaps involving the newest and largest stateferry. She was drydocked less than two weeks ago after hitting a submerged object and damaging a portion of her hull.

The Columbia has been involved in three other accidents and at least five mechanical breakdowns, one of which left her dead in the water for ten minutes while on her shakedown cruise June 22, 1974.

She destroyed nine pilings, but sutained no damage herself when she docked in Ketchikan the same day. "The ship performed exceptionally well," said Buel A. (Tex) Taggart, then commissioner of public works.

The ferry sustained a 99-foot gash in her hull when she struck a submerged rock near Sitka Oct. 14, 1974.

Last August 31, the Columbia destroyed the loading ramp and towers at the Ketchikan ferry terminal. No damage was caused to the ship in the accident, caused by an engine malfunction.

Gov. William Egan charged in July, 1974 that former Senator C. R. Lewis of Anchorage criticized the Columbia "for purely partisan political purposes." Lewis charged that the Columbia was unsafe. Lewis later dropped the safety charges.

As Columbia heads for maintenance:

Hudson again promises to okay dining change

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

State Division of Marine Transportation Director William A. Hudson today reaffirmed his promise made earlier that the ferry system would seek approval of the governor and the state legislature before converting the dining room to fast food service aboard the flagship Columbia.

However, he said, his department was awaiting that approval now and he did not rule out the possibility that the okay could come while the Columbia is undergoing annual maintenance in Seattle, expected to begin sometime within the next two weeks.

Some confusion has surrounded the conversion issue. First, Columbia crew members have reported to the Daily News that the ferry system was going ahead with the conversion job while the flagship is in Seattle this year undergoing its annual maintenance.

That report apparently surfaced when Port Steward Bert Kleinberg told several crew members of the Columbia two weeks ago that efforts were being made for conversion this year.

Second, Haskell Corp., the Bellinghim firm which just completed the conversion of the Malaspina's dining room last week, told the Daily News today that it had submitted a preliminary bid for the Columbia job and that officials from the firm would make a trip to Seattle Friday to inspect the Columbia in order to meet an April 1 bid deadline.

The ferry division had called for bids by advertising in several trade publications, but had cancelled the order, declaring some confusion over the bid call had arisen. Hudson said Haskell's bid apparently was in response to the erroneous advertisement. The director also said he would phone Haskell Corp. to inform the firm of that fact.

Hudson today said several companies which are "marine experts" were drawing up preliminary cost estimates of converting the dining room on the Columbia. That information, he said, would be supplied to the governor and the legislature in support of the division's contention that the conversion would be a significant cost saving measure.

"We have not solicited a bid," he said.

Meanwhile, the ferry Malaspina will not be able to display its newly installed fast food service for at least two weeks. The ferry, which was scheduled to go on the Seattle-Alaska run Friday, "blew the bottom out of her auxiliary generator." Repairs are expected to detain the ferry in Seattle for two weeks.

The ferry departed Bellingham, where the conversion was completed, Sunday morning and was scheduled to take over for the Columbia, which was set for winter maintenance in the Puget Sound region between Thursday and May 21. The Columbia will continue on the run until the Malaspina is repaired.

Before the Malaspina departed Bellingham, a community of 40,000 which is bidding with Seattle to become the Alaska ferry system's southern terminus, some 5,600 people boarded the ship during an open house Saturday from 4-10 p.m., according to Bellingham Port Manager Tom Glenn.

The open house had not been announced in Alaska.

11-25

BILL HUDSON

Cutting costs on the ferry fleet

By SCOTT ANDERSON
Staff Writer

Exploding costs on Alaska's Marine Highway are a prime factor in causing the state administration to consider money-saving alternatives for operating the system, a marine transportation official says.

Bill Hudson, director of the Alaska Division of Marine Transportation, was in Fairbanks Monday for a public hearing on proposed rate increases on the Alaskan ferries.

One cost-cutting effort already under way is the conversion of the motor vessel Malaspina's dining room to a self-service cafeteria, Hudson said. The same bill of fare will be offered, but those who are able will serve themselves while the elderly and disabled will be served.

Hudson said conversion of dining areas on the Malaspina and the Columbia to cafeteria-style service could result in a savings of $1.2 million in operating costs in 1977. Conversion of the Columbia's dining area has yet to be approvd by Gov. Jay Hammond, but Hudson said preliminary work to get approval is underway.

Hudson said an additional $500,000 could be saved during fiscal year 1976 if dining areas on both ferries are converted. He said with conversions of both dining areas, the state is looking at a total reduction in force of about 34 people, which would result in a labor savings of about three-quarters of a million dollars.

About 14 positions would be eliminated on the Malaspina and about 20 on the Columbia, mostly waiters and waitresses, Hudson said. The job loss will be mostly by attrition, he said, with the biggest impact at the entry level, where new employes will not be rehired.

If the Marine Highway system were to continue as in the past, with no changes in operations, Hudson said, projected costs are $16.5 million for fiscal year 1976; $18 to $19 million for fiscal year 1977; and possibly $22 to $23 million for fiscal year 1978.

The statealso is looking at other alternatives to cut its operating costs on the Marine Highway, including:

- moving its Puget Sound port from Seattle to Bellingham, creating a shorter run which could bring an additional $1 million in revenues to the state at very little cost because of the possibility of more trips.
- winter layups of some vessels.
- addition of 56 feet in mid-vessel to the Matanuska to increase cabin space from 95 to 300 and increase the car deck and all other areas about 20 per cent.
- creation of a "mainline" system from Alaska to Puget Sound, with ferries from smaller communities acting as "feeder vessels."

Hudson views the Alaska Marine Highway system as "a steamship company owned by all the people of Alaska" and as such it should be conducted "with the soundest business principals. We think we're doing that."

Hudson stressed he is receptive to comments from all residents. Under the proposed rate increases, passenger fares are up approximately 8 to 11 per cent; rates for vehicles to 19 feet are up about 9 per cent; and fares for all vehicles over 19 feet are up about 20 per cent. Comments may be addressed to Hudson at Pouch R, Juneau.

By JANE HANCHETT
Daily News Staff Writer

State marine transportation Director William Hudson announced today that the dining room aboard the state system's flagship Columbia will not be converted this year to a cafeteria style service.

The state administration had planned, as a cost saver, to convert the dining room and snack bar into one fast service cafeteria aboard the Columbia as well as the system's three smaller, mainline ferries in Southeast. Public protest apparently now has halted the conversion on the Columbia.

The administration based its decision on operation and response to the conversion already finished this month on the Malaspina, second largest of the state ferries, Hudson said.

The ferry service, operating at a $15 million annual deficit, loses about $3 million a year on food and beverage service, according to state officials.

New food service styles will permit 20-hour a day service for the same amount of money as spent now on food services, which operate nine hours a day, officials have said.

The Malaspina is scheduled to go back on its Seattle-Alaska run April 9, he added. The vessel departed March 14 from Bellingham, where the conversion was completed, but then blew an auxiliary generator and has been dockside for repairs since.

The generator is being replaced and cost of the repairs will amount to about $100,000, Hudson estimated, but added that his division has not received bills yet so the figure is rough.

After the Malaspina resumes operation, the Columbia will go into drydock in the Puget Sound area for annual maintenance. The Columbia's maintenance had been scheduled to start March 12.

Hudson said he expects Tuesday to receive a report on passenger response to a proposal to move the ferry system's southern terminus to Bellingham from Seattle. Port officials in Bellingham have bid for the service saying that the system could save up to $300,000 a year by trimming five hours of travel time off the longer trip to Seattle.

Kent Miller, a Ketchikan-based consultant, is making the study.

No move to a different terminus will occur before May 1978 when the system's terminal lease at Seattle expires.

Overtime common on ferries, but 'not prevalent' in Juneau

By HARRY GAMBLE
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—While overtime pay is common among state employes working on the Marine Highway System, overtime in Juneau, where most state employes are based, "is not that prevalent," officials say.

Some overtime is "highly justified," said Commissioner of Administration Andy Warwick. For instance, highways department employes working on highway projects along the pipeline draw heavy amounts of overtime "to justify" working in the same area with highly paid pipeline workers.

Then, Warwick said, there are some jobs "that at 4:30 you can't shut down," such as state trooper offices. He also said fish and game workers draw overtime when performing field work.

However, state employes in Juneau office building don't make much overtime. "It's not that prevalent."

Some ferry workers take home paychecks in the $30,000 to $40,000 range, although their base salaries are only $18,000 or so. Ten thousand dollars annually in overtime is not unusual for ferry workers and many make more.

According to ferry Director William Hudson, some workers drawing large amounts of overtime live their jobs, he said. Although the ferry system has cut back on services, and received a lot of flack while doing it, there appears to be little if any attempt in the marine transportation division to limit large amounts of overtime. "We would have to thoroughly analyze" the problem, Hudson said, and then devise "a maximum overtime configuration which would actually be preferable to our employes."

Hudson also said much of the overtime paid employes is demanded by union contracts.

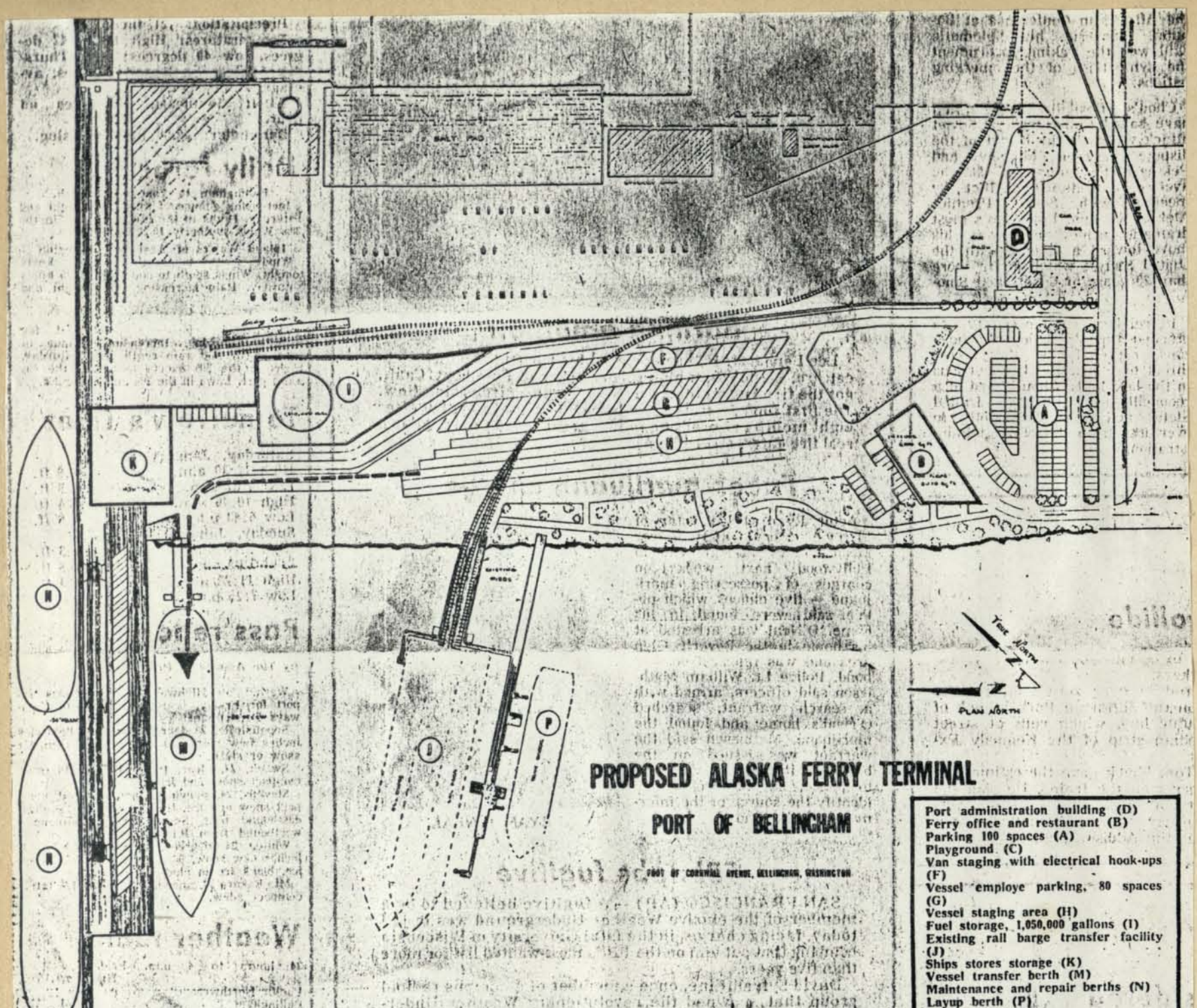
The ferries require two 12-hour crews aboard each ship, with each crew receiving at least four hours overtime daily. Crews called off board to tie up docking vessels are paid a minimum two hours pay at time and one-half, whether they work the full two hours or less. The same is true for on board relief help.

Alaska's higher cost of living demands higher wages. However, Hudson said many of his people were moving to Seattle where the cost of living is perhaps 25 per cent lower than in Southeast Alaska. "We'd like very much to see Alaskan employes remain Alaska residents, however constitutionally our hands are tied."

Hudson did not have figures on how many ferry workers reside out of state, but he said the exodus is continuing.

Columbia returns to run; Petersburg dock repaired

11-26



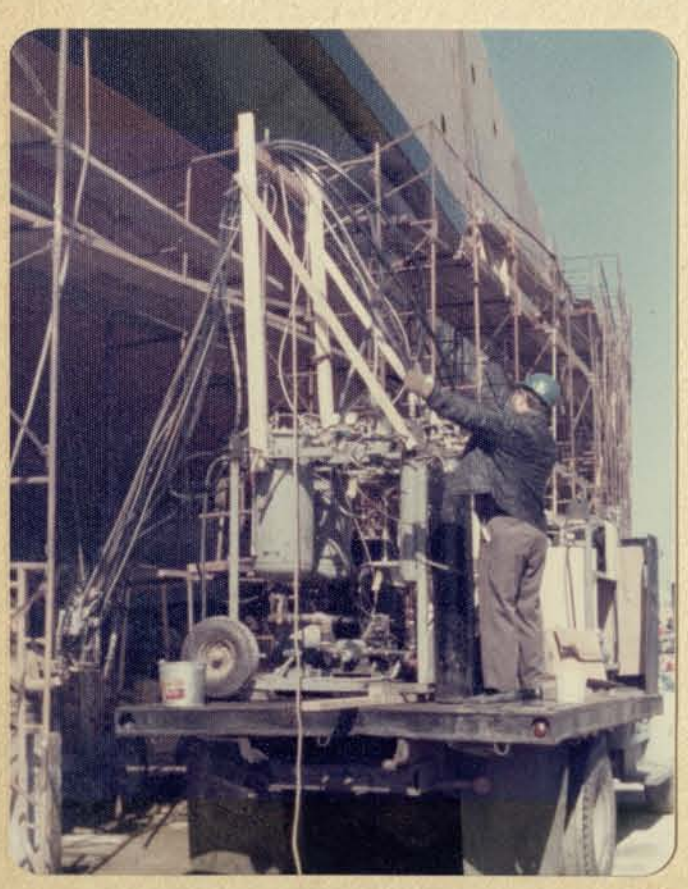
PROPOSED ALASKA FERRY TERMINAL

PORT OF BELLINGHAM

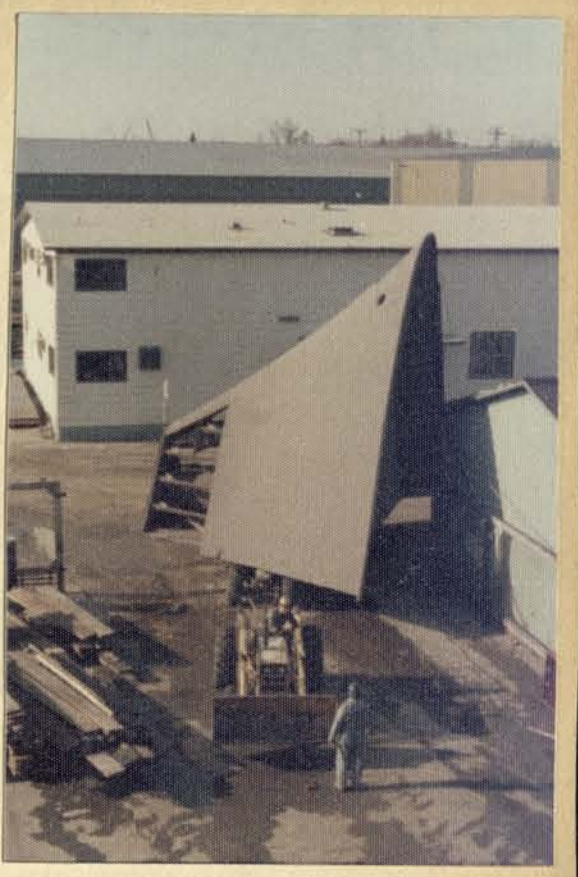
FOOT OF CORNWALL AVENUE, BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

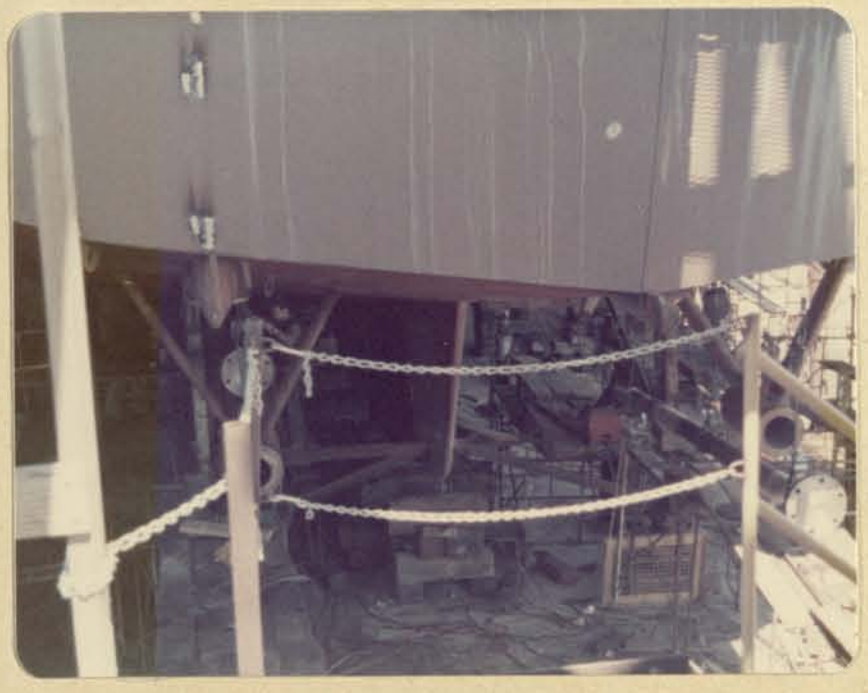
Port administration building (D)
Ferry office and restaurant (B)
Parking 100 spaces (A)
Playground (C)
Van staging with electrical hook-ups (F)
Vessel employe parking, 80 spaces (G)
Vessel staging area (H)
Fuel storage, 1,050,000 gallons (I)
Existing rail barge transfer facility (J)
Ships stores storage (K)
Vessel transfer berth (M)
Maintenance and repair berths (N)
Layup berth (P)

This proposed terminal plan and a list of the advantages Bellingham can offer the Alaska ferries are being prepared for presentation in Juneau later this month. The draft plan places the terminal at the foot of Cornwall Avenue where Port of Bellingham's Warehouse I, scheduled to be torn down since 1966, stands. It is a working document, port Manager Tom Glenn stresses, and may undergo change, although basic features such as the restaurant and playground will remain.

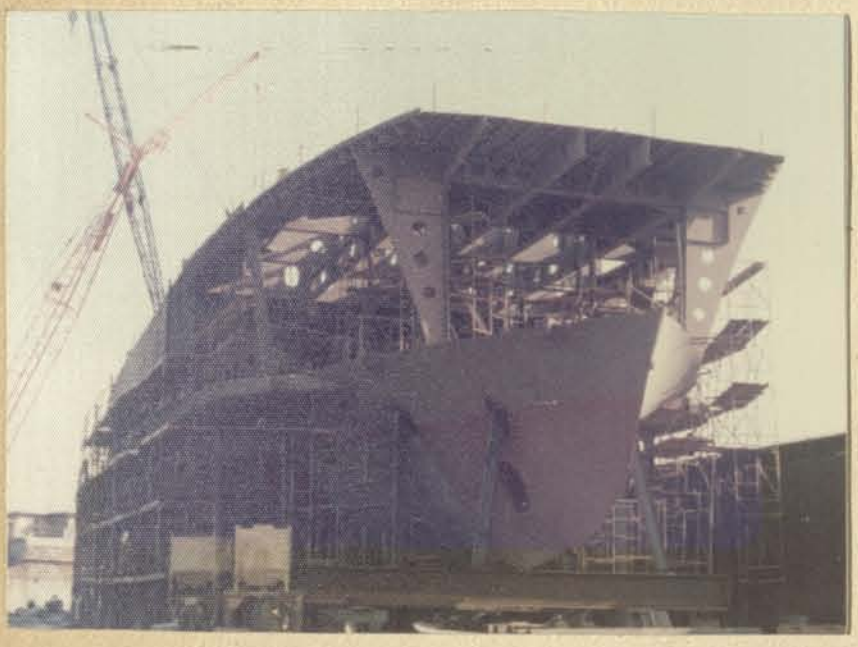


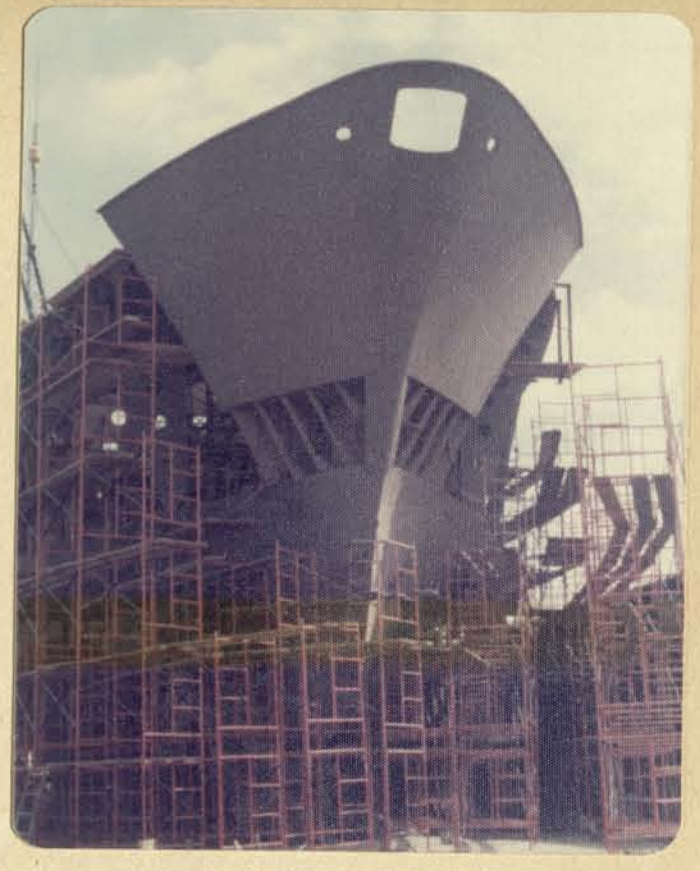
11-27





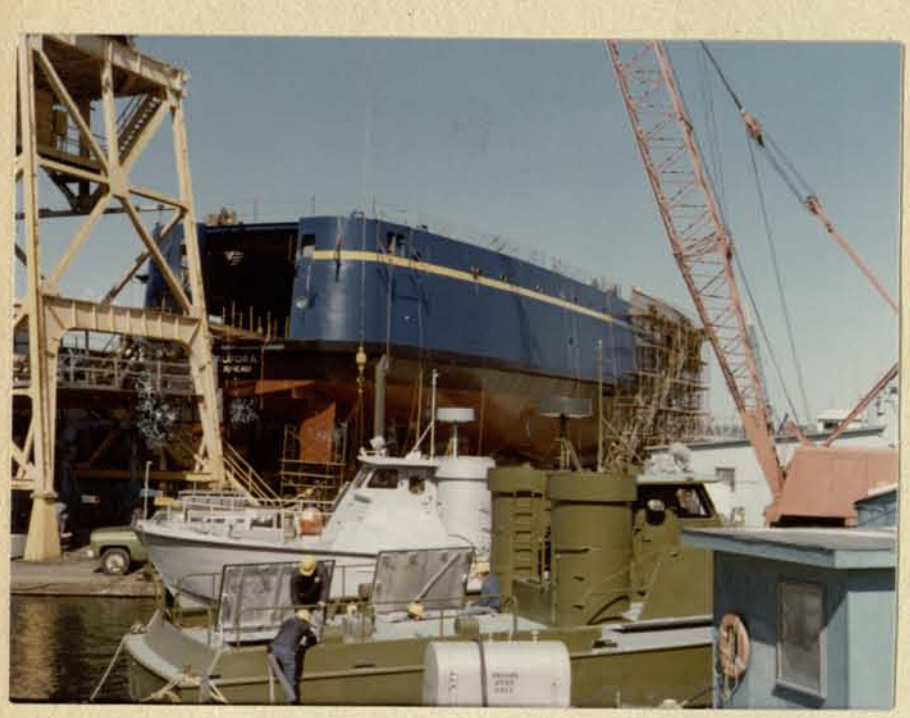
P B I





AURORA
JUNEAU

7
6
15
4
3
2
1
10
9



Assembly Wants Ferry Service

5-

The Anchorage Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution urging reestablishment of the Anchorage to Kodiak state ferry service.

Citing the growth of Anchorage's population and tourist industry, the assembly seeks to have the service reinstituted between May and October.

The state ferry Tustumena carried passengers between Anchorage and Homer, Seldovia and Kodiak on weekends until the state canceled the service in November 1973.

At that time, then Commissioner of Public Works George Easley said the ferry route produced insufficient revenue in relation to the cost of operation to justify continuation. Easley also said the Anchorage-Homer run paralleled a main highway and, that the Tustumena could be better used in Prince William Sound on a route between Seward and Valdez.

The Alaska Marine Highway System reported a deficit of $13.15 million in 1975.

Anchorage residents "will pay the largest share of that deficit to operate the Alaska Marine Highway System, yet will realize no direct benefit from their tax dollars," according to the resolution.

Anchorage taxpayers constitute more than 50 per cent of the state's population and account for more than 60 per cent of the general revenue tax base.

11-31

STURGEON BAY, WIS. 54235 PRICE 15¢ TUESDAY, MAY 4, 1976

Peterson Builders launched a 235-ft. ferry for the state of Alaska Saturday morning. It is the second such ferry to be constructed at PBI in recent years and the third Alaska ferry to come out of Sturgeon Bay. —Harmann

MILWAUKEE SENTINEL Tuesday, May 11, 1976

A ferry boat was side launched at Peterson Builders, Inc., in Sturgeon Bay. The 235 foot long passenger-vehicle ferry will become a part of the Alaska marine highway system when it is delivered in the spring of 1977. —Harmann Studios Photo

PAGE FOURTEEN Southeast Alaska Empire, Juneau, Alaska, Friday, May 21, 1976

FERRY LAUNCHED—The State of Alaska's new sister ship to the 235 foot LeConte, slides into the water at recent launching ceremonies at Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. The new Alaska Marine Highway vessel, which will operate on a feeder run between smaller communities in Southeast Alaska, is being constructed by Peterson Builders, Inc. and is scheduled to go into service next year.

3
2
1
10

PBI
PBI

P B I

Tusty Has Full Runs

Southcentral Marine Transportation System Manager Glenn Clarke informed the LOG this week that the ferry Tustumena's Seward-Kodiak run has been much heavier so far this season than in previous years. Clarke said the increase in traffic may possibly be due to the fact that traffic piled up during the time the vessel was Outside for minor repairs. "I don't think so, though", he stated. "Homer has two round trips to Kodiak a week--we have one--and all three of the runs have been full."

Clarke said the traffic appears to be mostly inter-Alaskan with just a few tourists. "The decks have been full of vehicles. We've had to turn folks without vehicle reservations away," he said. He added that there are only 58 berths on the Tusty so those wishing sleeping accommodations would be advised to arrange for them in advance. The ferry can take on 200 passengers, so there is always room for walk-ons.

The first Prince William Sound weekend trip was booked solid but unfortunately had to be cancelled. The Bartlett's second was average but Clarke believes once the trips are advertised they will be full too.

"I'm expecting a good season," Clarke confided. "With the apparent increase in traveling we'll really be kept busy when the summer visitors arrive in force," he concluded.

Paving of Haines Road Said Nearer

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Gov. Jay Hammond said today British Columbia has agreed to work out a plan for rebuilding and paving the Haines Road, 300 miles of highway used eavily by Americans.

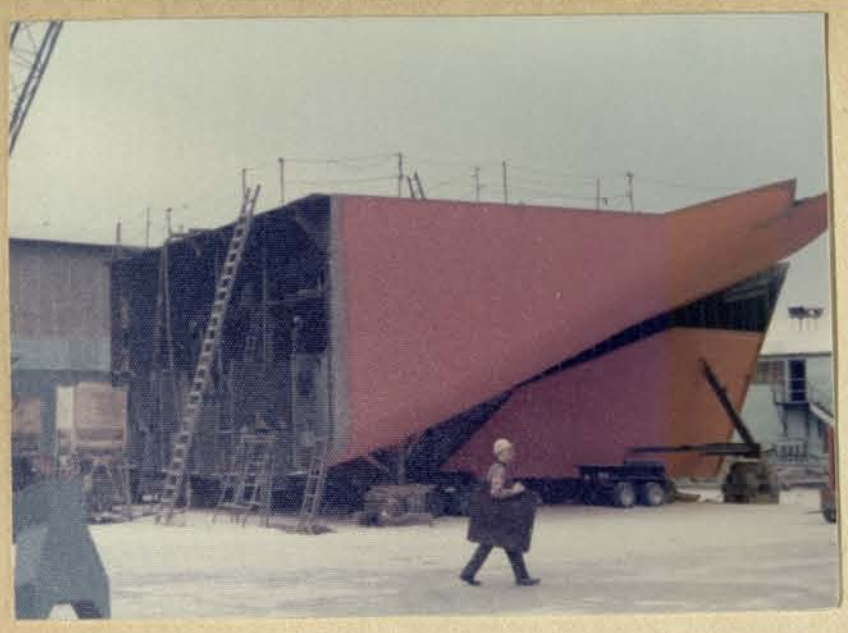
Last year, Congress appropriated about $58 million for paving portions of the road, but work was stalled by the lack of an agreement over rights-of-way in British Columbia.

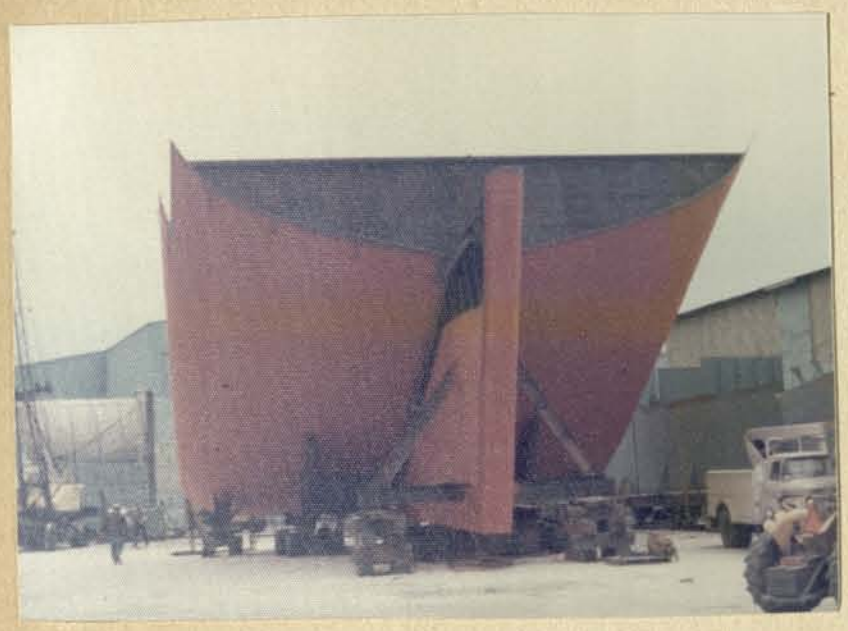
"I have been advised," Hammond said, "that the British Columbia cabinet has given approval in principle to work out a formal agreement with the federal government in Canada regarding the necessary right of way..."

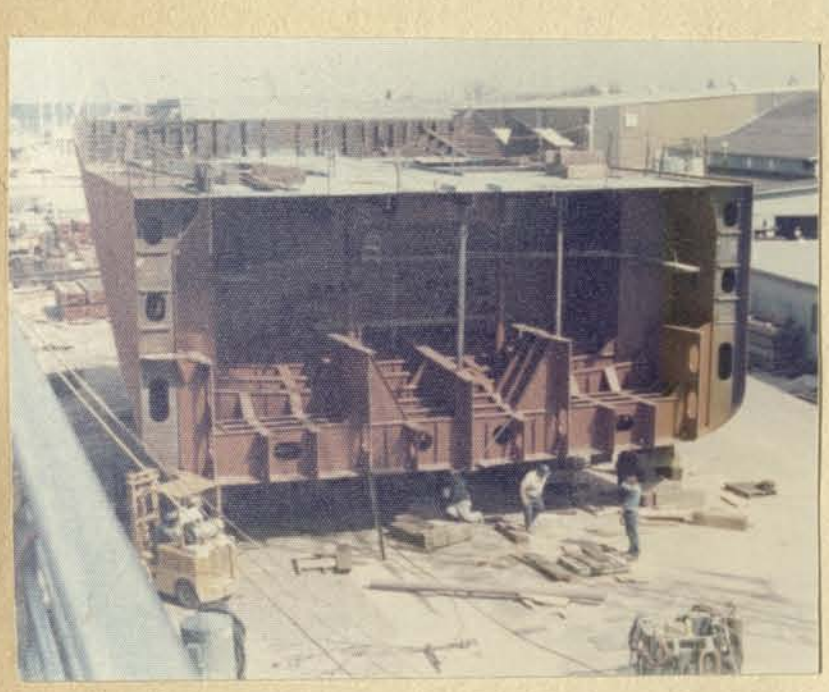
The road stretches northward from Haines in southeast Alaska through northwestern British Columbia to the Alaska Highway. It is used by travelers leaving the Alaska ferry system to reach interior Alaska and Whitehorse, Y.T.

"This will be an added inducement to tourism in Southeast Alaska," Hammond said, "and will generally improve transportation to and throughout our state."

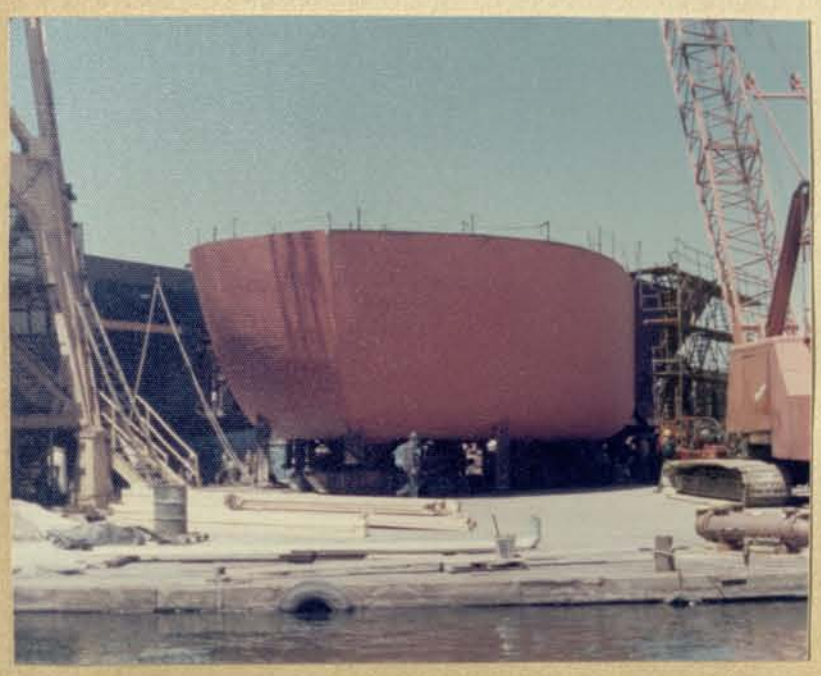
11-36







PBI



Malaspina's return delayed

By JANE HANCHET
Daily News Staff Writer

State ferry system officials this week moved back the date for the Malaspina resuming service. Director William Hudson projected that the vessel, dockside in Washington after blowing a generator March 14, will be making its next run Friday.

The vessel was leaving Bellingham, where its cafeteria and dining room were converted into one fast food service, when it blew the generator.

Hudson previously estimated cost of repairs at roughly $100,000. Officials earlier had projected the vessel would be back in service today.

In other ferry developments, Hudson confirmed that he has received a report on passenger response to a proposal to move the ferry system's southern terminus to Bellingham from Seattle.

Kent Miller, a Ketchikan-based consultant, made the report. Hudson said he had just a "working draft" of the report and it was only for in-house perusal until facts and figures were checked and a final report issued.

Bellingham port officials have bid for the southern terminus service, saying that the system could save up to $300,000 a year by trimming five hours of travel time off the longer trip to Seattle.

Initial public opinion has appeared against the move as well as against further conversion to fast food services aboard other state ferries.

Hudson in March announced that his division would observe operation and public response this season to fast food service on the Malaspina before committing the state's largest ship, the Columbia, to the change.

Malaspina Goes Again

SEATTLE (AP) — The Alaska ferry Malaspina has left Seattle on its northbound run after a work stoppage delayed its sailing by 22 hours.

The Marine Engineers Beneficial Association staged the walkout in protest of the firing of a chief engineer. The ship was to have left Seattle Friday night but was delayed until Saturday.

Two other Alaska ferries also were delayed by the protest, both at Alaska ports.

A truce was reached just before an injunction was to have been served against the walkout. Superior Court Judge Thomas Stewart issued the injunction in Juneau Saturday.

MALASPINA RETURNS SUNDAY

The state ferry Malaspina resumes service today from Seattle after undergoing repairs since it blew a generator March 14 near Bellingham, Juneau ferry officials have confirmed.

The ferry is expected here about noon to 1 p.m. on the run usually of the Columbia which now will go into drydock in Washington for annual overhaul.

The Malaspina's generator trouble occurred just after it had completed conversion of its dining room and cafeteria into a fast-food service.

State Asks End To Ferry Halt

JUNEAU (AP) — Lawyers for the state were preparing to seek a court injunction today to unite three Alaska ferries embroiled in a work stoppage by marine engineers.

The ferry Malaspina was tied up in Seattle late yesterday, and engineers later refused to sail the Leconte from Juneau and the Taku from Petersburg.

Atty. Gen. Avrum Gross said a restraining order would be sought.

Ferry's back on schedule

Alaska State Ferry service between Prince Rupert and Southeastern ports is back on schedule after the return of the ferry Matanuska to service.

The Matanuska was out of service for a week for repairs after a mechanical malfunction, and many Alaska-bound ticket holders found themselves on the waiting list for the sailings of the ferry Taku.

According to ferry system traffic manager Doug Burton, the ferry Malaspina will also be switched to the Prince Rupert run, in early June, following return of the flagship Columbia to duty between Seattle and Alaska ports.

The Columbia has been in a Seattle drydock for routine winter maintenance since the April return to service of the Malaspina, following her winter conversion to cafeteria food service.

The Malaspina conversion took longer than expected, which meant the Columbia was late getting into drydock. Burton said the Columbia is now due to be back in service on the weekly Seattle run June 4.

When the Columbia returns to service, the Malaspina will join the Taku and Matanuska on the Prince Rupert run, increasing from four to six the number of weekly trips from that terminal.

Whose fault?

There were complaints from the state administration that the ferry system cost too much to operate. The answer was to reduce service to reduce the subsidy. So, they tied up the ferry Taku for the winter. For the first time in the history of the system a ship was laid up.

We can say that the reduction in service sure came about. In fact service has become so bad that the state's big reduction can be blamed for costing the taxpayers even more in subsidy, costing the traveling public a lot in inconvenience and costing the state in loss of revenue.

An added fiasco to ferry operations has been the remodeling of dining facilities, which is saving little considering the length of time it will take to amortize the investment, and considering the time the ferry Malaspina was out of service for modifications.

Then, what happened to that promised program of doing some ferry maintenance this winter in Ketchikan on an experimental basis? It never came about. This year with the ferry system the failure of the winter maintenance program is just one addition to a long list of failures.

Take the ferry schedule for example. The ferry system office in Juneau told the Daily News that the system is back on schedule this week. That is real news because there is a difference between the printed schedule and the service we are receiving. The printed schedule says that since March 2 there have been two trips a week out of Seattle, one on Tuesday and one on Friday. This is supposed to be the schedule until June 2. Then the Malaspina is supposed to move to the Prince Rupert run, leaving the Columbia alone on the Seattle run.

Those two trips a week out of Seattle, the money-making run for the state ferry system, have not materialized. The Columbia won't be back in service until June 4. We've had one ferry a week, which has resulted in cancelled reservations, backlogs of cars and passengers and a loss of revenue to the state. So, next year when the state lawmakers complain about the ferry system budget, they should put the blame where it belongs, on the state administration.

If the ferry system officials had kept the Taku running, they would have been able to keep their schedules. If they had performed some of the maintenance at Ketchikan, they would have saved considerably over flying crews to and from Seattle.

If they would just try to run a ferry system and give service, rather than reduce service and raise rates, they would find increasing business. They would have happy travelers and happy personnel with less subsidy requirement compared with overall gross business.

Malaspina heads northward after work stoppage ends

SEATTLE (AP)—The Alaska ferry Malaspina has left Seattle on its northbound run after a work stoppage delayed its sailing by 22 hours.

The Marine Engineers Beneficial Association staged the walkout in protest of the firing of a chief engineer. The ship was to have left Seattle Friday night but was delayed until Saturday.

Two other Alaska ferries also were delayed by the protest, both at Alaska ports.

A truce was reached just before an injunction was to have been served against the walkout. Superior Court Judge Thomas Stewart issued the injunction in Juneau Saturday.

The tieup was triggered by the firing of chief engineer Richard Brown for "failure to perform his duties in getting the ship under way," said William Hudson, director of the Alaska Marine Transportatpon System.

Officials promised that Brown would get a hearing.

Ferries embroiled in work stoppage

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Lawyers for the state were preparing to seek a court injunction today to untie three Alaska ferries embroiled in a work stoppage by Marine Engineers.

Atty. Gen. Avrum Gross said a restraining order would be sought, if the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association did not return to work soon.

Three Alaska state ferries were tied up at various ports today when engineering officers refused to work. According to the office of the commissioner of public works, Don Harris, the work stoppage was precipitated by the firing of a relief engineer.

Details were unavailable about the incident but the ferry Malaspina failed to leave Seattle on schedule at 9 p.m. Friday. The ferry LeConte was tied up in Petersburg and the Taku was tied up at Auke Bay in Juneau this morning.

The Taku was delayed leaving Ketchikan for about three hours Friday afternoon because of mechanical problems. But that was not related to the work stoppage that began last night.

An announcement this morning from the office of Commissioner Harris stated that management considered the work stoppage illegal.

Deputy Commissioner Richard Holden was in Seattle this morning meeting with members of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

First word of the dispute reached the commissioner when the skipper of the Malaspina reported the engineers refused to sail from Seattle Friday night.

Early this morning, the ferry terminal office in Seattle was asking passengers to plan loading after 11 a.m. today in anticipation of a settlement of the dispute by that time.

No more comment on ferry move plan

State officials were unavailable for comment today on statements made Friday concerning the move of the southern terminal of the Alaska Marine Highway System to Bellingham from Seattle.

On Friday a ferry official said the proposed move "didn't come out as well as we had thought."

Don Harris, Alaska's commissioner of public works said a decision on whether to move the ferry terminal to Bellingham is delayed while a feasibility study is revised.

Kent Miller, Ketchikan, who prepared the report, said he thought Harris was referring to the conclusions of the report not appearing favorable.

The revision of the study, Miller said, involves details and the format of the report. He said he has not been asked to change the conclusions of the report.

Miller refused to comment further on the study.

"The client orders a study because he wants advice. It's up to him whether he takes it or not," he said.

The report was presented to the ferry system a month ago but is still unpublished.

"It's really hard to say at this time what the comparisons will be, but based on preliminary information, Bellingham didn't come out as well as we had thought," Harris said.

The report was prepared by Kent Miller of Ketchikan.

Bill Hudson, director of the ferry system, said he has made some suggestions on ways to revise the study.

Harris said that economics will be the only factor considered in the decision. Bellingham officials have been concerned that Alaska legislators will try to block the shift to please Seattle interests.

Ferry Repair

Kodiak, Alaska (AP) — The ferry Tustumena has been sent to Seattle for repair of an oil leak, leaving Kodiak Island without service until June 4, according to director Bill Hudson of the Division of Marine Transportation.

Hudson said the 290-foot motor vessel had a "minor oil leak" in the bow thruster. The Tustumena left Kodiak Friday for repair. Hudson said the rate of spillage was about one quart per 24 hours at dockside, and less than one gallon per 24 hours when underway.

He said the Coast Guard had been notified of the ferry's condition.

Questions Cloud Plan To Change Ferry Terminal

BELLINGHAM, Wash. (AP) — A proposal to move the southern terminal of the Alaska Marine Highway System to Bellingham from Seattle "didn't come out as well as we had thought," a ferry official says.

But Don Harris, Alaska's commissioner of public works, said a decision on whether to move the ferry terminal here is delayed while a feasibility study is revised.

The report was presented to the ferry system a month ago but is still unpublished.

"It's really hard to say at this time what the comparisons will be, but based on preliminary information, Bellingham didn't come out as well as we had thought," Harris said.

The report was prepared by Kent Miller of Ketchikan.

Bill Hudson, director of the ferry system, said he has made some suggestions on ways to revise the study.

Harris said that economics will be the only factor considered in the decision.

11-41

Wavemaker:

In regards to the Ketchikan ferry terminal—how come the waiting room is only open when larger ferries come in and leave and not open to accommodate the Chilkat ferry passengers who must wait out in the rain and cold for the ferry—often delayed by the airport ferry being in the slip. We feel the ferry terminal personnel have steady state jobs and could have waiting room open to departure time of Chilkat—a short wait can become long and wet.

ANNETTE ISLANDER

Dear Islander:

Ivan Jones, terminal manager, says the hours are established by the division of marine transportation, which does not authorize additional personnel or overtime to keep the terminal open for Chilkat traffic.

He says he presumes you refer to the terminal's being closed on Saturdays, which is only in the wintertime. The terminal is certainly open on Saturdays during the summer season of expanded traffic of the larger ferries.

—Wavemaker

Stoppage Is Rumor, Ferries Continue Run

"Erroneous rumors have been floating around Seattle but there is no work stoppage and the ferries are running," said Tim Ramirez, an official with the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association, whose members handle the equipment operation for the Alaska state ferry system.

Last week the union went out on an apparent wildcat strike after chief engineer Richard Brown was fired "for failure to perform his duties in getting the ship (Malespina) under way," according to William Hudson, director of the marine highway system.

The members returned to work after the division of marine transportation secured a court order forcing them to do so.

Hudson charged that Brown failed to go through proper grievance procedures the week before and left the ship to notify union officials of his complaints, delaying sailing for one hour.

The subsequent strike held up the ferry schedule for more than 20 hours before the court order was secured.

According to Ramirez, Brown has been reinstated with full pay and is on suspended status until a hearing is held. Union representative William Henry was in Juneau yesterday meeting with ferry system officials on the hearing.

Hudson said he and Henry were "establishing the final proceedings" on the upcoming hearing.

"Brown may be fired, rehired, reprimanded or suspended for a period of time. I don't know what will happen at this point," Hudson said.

Grievance procedures in the union contract require alleged grievances to be reported first to the employe's immediate supervisor, Hudson said, preferably in writing. "We want an attempt to solve the problem on sight," he said.

If this fails a labor representative and a management official get together on the matter. The third step is a hearing, and if this does not solve the problem, a board of arbitration hears the information, Hudson said. The board is selected by both the management and union and the results are binding t: both parties, he said.

Firing ties up three state ferries

By BOB SPEED
Daily News Staff Writer

A work stoppage resulting from the firing Friday of the chief engineer of the Alaska State Ferry Malaspina caused that ship and two others to fall behind in their scheduled departure times.

The Malaspina was delayed 22 hours in Seattle, after Marine Transportation Director William R. Hudson fired the ship's chief engineer, Richard Brown, of Seattle. The walkout spread to the ferries LeConte and Taku, in Alaskan ports, as the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association protested the firing.

The LeConte remained in Juneau all day Saturday, after her run to Sitka was canceled due to the walkout. A scheduled trip to Hoonah was also canceled but for other reasons. She returned to her regular run Sunday.

The Taku, 20 minutes late leaving Prince Rupert Friday, was delayed in Ketchikan three hours because she missed high tide, and was delayed another three hours in Petersburg by the walkout.

A truce was reached just before an injunction against the walkout was to have been used. Superior court Judge Thomas Stewart issued the injunction in Juneau Saturday.

The walkout was triggered by the firing of the engineer for what Hudson called failure to carry out his duties to prepare the engine room of the Malaspina for sailing, apparently due to personal grievances. The engineer also failed to notify the captain of the ship of his refusal to carry out his duties. Hudson said both offenses violate labor contract obligations.

Hudson said the failures were apparently due to personal grievances held by Brown. The director would not comment on those grievances.

Hudson said his actions were not taken because of any personal grievances, but because Brown violated his duty obligations through an "illegal work stoppage."

Hudson said it is management's right to fire anyone in the system who can "impact the departure of any ferry carrying (in this case) 300 people, cars and perishable produce aboard.

Hudson said he had a preliminary meeting with Brown's agent Sunday afternoon, and another meeting was to be held today. He said Brown has not yet filed a written grievance, but has 60 days to do so according to the labor contract with the ferry system.

He said Brown's unilateral actions were illegal and a violation of the labor contract. Employes with grievances must, according to that contract, file a written statement detailing those grievances.

The normal process, he explained, would be for the grievance to be filed, and for meetings between management and labor to be held, usually within 24 hours. If no agreement is reached at that meeting, a three-member negotiating team is set up, consisting of one representative each of labor and management, with a third member acceptable to both parties selected by them from a list.

State's Ships Running Late

Two of the state's ferries will be running 6 to 20 hours late this week, with the third ferry's schedule rearranged, said public works commissioner Donald Harris.

The schedule revamping came after an apparent wildcat strike by members of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, which stopped the service for about 24 hours. The courts ordered the engineers back to work yesterday.

The Malaspina left Seattle at 6 p.m. last night, some 20 hours behind schedule, and is due to arrive in Haines about 18 hours late, Harris said, after stops in Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Juneau. After going on to Skagway, the ferry will start back toward Seattle, he said, skipping the Sitka stop.

"This will save up about 20 hours," Harris said, "and put us back on schedule." He said the ferry should arrive in Seattle at its scheduled time.

The Taku, which was set to leave Petersburg at 5:45 a.m. yesterday, did not leave until noon, delaying it some six hours, Harris said. A six-hour delay will mark its entries into Sitka, Auke Bay, Haines, and Skagway, where the ferry departs for Juneau, Petersburg, Wrangell, Ketchikan and Prince Rupert, B.C.

The Leconte, the third ferry involved in the strike, will have its schedule rearranged to accommodate the Sitka run, skipped by the Malaspina, Harris said. He offered no details on the Leconte's new schedule.

Columbia Delayed

SEATTLE (AP) — Tonight's scheduled departure of the Alaska state ferry Columbia has been delayed at least two days, officials say.

Terminal manager Milt Griffiths said the delay is caused by late receipt of parts for a six-week annual overhaul now being completed on the 418-foot ship.

He said the Columbia is expected to be ready for a test run Saturday

It's A Dog's Life, Says Ferry Crew

Jack, a three-year-old Airedale, was glad to get back to the warm confines of his kennel recently, after spending nearly an hour in the icy waters just south of Ketchikan.

The dog, owned by Dan Fruits of Albany, Indiana, was riding in a kennel in his master's truck aboard the Malaspina enroute to Seattle. He apparently tired of the restrictive quarters and began to gnaw his way out. Once he had freed himself, Jack went looking for some fresh air and found a tie hole in the rear of the ship.

The dog apparently fell through the tie hole into the water and began swimming toward land. Crewmember Kim Peabody, scanning the waters with binoculars, spotted him and informed Captain Cecil H. Rice.

Rice immediately ordered the ship's course altered 180 degrees and the Malaspina went into a "Williamson turn."

When the Malspina drew to within about 300 yards of the Airedale, Chief Mate Thomas Aspinwall and two other crewmen were lowered from the ship in a lifeboat. They plucked Jack from the chilly waters and returned him to his owner.

The Alaska ferry Tustumena, which operates between Homer, Seward and Kodiak, has developed an oil leak and is being repaired in Seattle.

The division of marine transportation hoped to have the Tustumena back in service by June 6, but is not accepting bookings until June 13. Kodiak is without ferry service while the ship is off the run.

11-42

Columbia Blows Cylinder

JUNEAU (AP) — Baffling mechanical problems have plagued the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet on its first voyage out of annual drydock and into the summer tourist season. A newly repaired starboard engine aboard the 418-foot Columbia blew one cylinder head shortly before it reached Ketchikan yesterday. The ferry then had to be nudged to dockside by a tugboat. The Columbia had left Seattle on Monday — some 48 hours behind schedule after about two months of repair work.

Oil leak sends TUSTUMENA south for repair

KODIAK—The ferry Tustemena has been sent to Seattle for repair of an oil leak, leaving Kodiak Island without service until June 4, according to Director Bill Hudson of the Division of Marine Transportation.

Hudson said the 290 [illegible] vessel had a "minor oil leak" in the bow thruster.

Apparently no replacement vessel was available to serve Kodiak and other Prince William Sound communities.

11-43

Bill Ray

(Editor's note: Juneau's Bill Ray, acknowledged by many Alaskans to be one of the most canny and effective state senators, is the subject of the following editorial reprinted from the Anchorage Times. The question that logically arises is whether the Times is fearful or jealous.)

Senator Ray lets few things interfere with his three burning ambitions:

1. Supporting the state ferry system lavishly with public funds,
2. Spending most of his spare time at his mansion in Spain and,
3. Trying to keep the state capital in Juneau where he made his fortune as a liquor dealer.

He took care of the ferry system during the recent legislative session when he, among other things, curbed the effort of the Hammond administration to eliminate expensive food service in the dining rooms of the ferries.

Hammond and his people wanted to replace the white-coated waiters who serve dinners in salons made beautiful by white napery and all the fixings with a modern cafeteria service. The plan was initiated when auditors showed the state was spending $100 to serve a dinner for which the ferry passenger pays about $10.

Senator Ray stopped the economy program even though the Hammond people did manage to get one ferry boat converted to the cafeteria service. The white coats and linen tablecloths still continue on the rest of the fleet, at a cost of $100 per meal. And the state subsidy runs more than $26 million in a year.

About now Senator Ray should be heading for his mansion in Spain where Mrs. Ray has been waiting for some time. His arrival is long overdue because the legislature remained in session for so long.

But some of that extra length of the session was due to Ray's third burning ambition: to keep the capital in Juneau where he made his fortune.

He is reported to have delayed adjournment for at least a week while he tried to upset the schedule for relocating the state capital with his "None of the Above" gambit, but he failed.

Ray has been making waves in Anchorage the last few days, apparently trying to find someone to support his efforts to bring about another referendum vote on relocation.

But he is also toying with the idea of running for governor. He thinks he can win the Democratic nomination because there will be at least four candidates and only he will have the solid backing of the entire southeastern Alaska vote from Yakutat south to the Canadian border. That is the area that loves ferry boats, white-coated waiters and $100 dinners that cost $10 and wants the capital to remain where Ray can control it.

For Senator Ray politics is a game that never ends. And involves no scruples. And is based on selfish goals, entirely.

He often refers to is as a game and he is an enthusiastic player.

With these things in mind, it becomes obvious that everything Ray says and does is quite natural and is to be expected. Good government has nothing to do with him or his programs.

Good government is the motivating factor behind the effort to relocate the capital city. Only by bringing the seat of government closer to the people can the state be rid of the shenanigans that a politician like Ray exploits.

Ray defeats his own purpose by making himself one of the reasons for relocating the capital.

Engine rebuilding delays ferry again

-32

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

The sailing date of the Alaska ferry Columbia out of Seattle has been postponed another week, but a Division of Marine Transportation spokesman said he is confident the ship will leave on the new June 18 sailing date.

Ferry system director William Hudson said the continued delay was caused primarily by what he called extreme defects in both engines.

Hudson said the engines on the Columbia are being completely rebuilt because 25 per cent of all the heads were found to be cracked. The deficiencies were far greater than anticipated, he said, which caused the delay.

The Columbia was originally scheduled to leave Seattle today after six weeks of regular yearly maintenance, but that departure has now been delayed twice.

Husdon said the work that is being done on the main engines shouldn't be needed even over a ten-year period.

The Columbia has been part of the Alaska ferry fleet for just two years and has had a history of maintenance problems.

Water evaporators which convert salt water to fresh water were also replaced during the Columbia's current stop, and Hudson said a major portion of the ship's plumbing needed replacement because of corrosion.

Additionally, Hudson said, there are innumerable bugs in the propeller's controlled pitch. It was that same problem that caused the Columbia to pull out the Ketchikan ferry dock last year.

According to Hudson, the state is assuming everything under warranty, including the engines, will be paid for by the boat's builder, Lockheed Co.

"We've received some criticism," Hudson said, "and it's a shame we inherited this silly, damn ship." He added that the state is trying to get as many of the bugs worked out on this stop as possible to insure that unsafe conditions won't occur.

"We're doing everything humanly possible to have a dependable vessel from here on out," Hudson said.

In the meantime, the ferry Malaspina will continue to make trips to Seattle to cover for the Columbia.

Two Malaspina trips to Prince Rupert had to be cancelled.

Hudson said when the Malaspina leaves Seattle on June 11, it will sail with a "select take-your-own-chances" load as far north as Petersburg before turning back to begin the regular Prince Rupert schedule.

Hudson wouldn't go so far as to say the Columbia is a lemon, but he did admit that it had an abnormally large number of problems.

Engine delays ferry for one more week

5-

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

Next Friday's sailing of the Alaska ferry Columbia out of Seattle has been delayed another week because of engine overhauling.

Marine superintendent William Bendixen said, "It looks good right now but it's nip and tuck; we're hoping for the 11th." He said the delay wasn't because of further repairs, just a time overrun on the ferry's regular overhaul.

Bendixen said they had to get two months of regularly scheduled overhaul work done on the vessel in less than a month and a half because of earlier trouble with the ferry Malaspina.

Generator failure on the Malaspina in March caused the Columbia to be in service during part of the overhaul period.

Bendixen said the main engines are the main cause for the delay in the Columbia's work because they are completely broken down for maintenance.

If work extends past June 11, Bendixen said, the ferry can possibly leave a day and a half late and still catch up to that weekly schedule. Otherwise, the ferry would wait and leave the following Friday. "We're not looking at that," he said of a possible June 18 departure.

Ed Wood, shift superintendent for Todd Ship Yard in Seattle said their work probably would be finished at the end of next week. He said, however, that several other companies were doing work on the boat, including Lockheed and he didn't know about their finish dates.

The state had planned to have two ferries on line to Seattle March to June to help handle extra traffic produced by the end of the layup season. Because of repairs that extra service to Seattle never occurred.

Bendixen said there would only be one ferry, the Columbia, to Seattle during this summer season.

Kodiak, Alaska (AP) — The ferry Tustumena has been sent to Seattle for repair of an oil leak, leaving Kodiak Island without service until June 4, according to director Bill Hudson of the Division of Marine Transportation.

Hudson said the 290-foot motor vessel had a "minor oil leak" in the bow thruster. The Tustumena left Kodiak Friday for repair. Hudson said the rate of spillage was about one quart per 24 hours at dockside, and less than one gallon per 24 hours when underway.

He said the Coast Guard had been notified of the ferry's condition.

A spokeswoman for the division in Anchorage said no replacement vessel was available to serve Kodiak and other Prince William Sound communities. She said no bookings would be accepted until June 13.

Kodiak residents reportedly are concerned that the loss of their sea-link to the mainland could interfere with the Kodiak Crab Festival scheduled June 9-13.

The Tustumena serves Seward and Homer, as well as the island. The vessel is equipped to carry 200 passengers and 54 vehicles.

11-44

'Man number one lifeboat. Dog overboard!'

By PEG RICHARDSON
State Ferry

The state ferry Malaspina set sail for Seattle at 10:50 a.m. Wednesday. Passengers and crew were settling for another routine trip when barely two hours out of Ketchikan, the loud speaker blurted, "Emergency, emergency crew man number one lifeboat, dog overboard."

The starboard bow listed slightly as all passengers scurried to the rail to watch the crew of four men lower number one lifeboat into the water.

The ship's engines stopped and only the motor of the lifeboat could be heard through the hushed breathless silence as all eyes scanned the water's surface for a sign of the pup. A small spot could be seen about 1,200 to 1,500 feet beyond the vessel. The faint spot disappeared into the water and struggled through the surface within a few feet. The crew headed for the pup, who had already been in the cold, murky water for over ten minutes.

The lifeboat reached the area where the dog swam, having to circle once, and then trying twice before the dog was lifted safely aboard.

Passengers cheered and clapped and praised the crew. "It's marvelous the effort put forth to save even an animal."

There were not enough words to reward the kindness shown of the captain and crew. As the pup was handed over to the anxious owner, there were tears freely running down the faces of most of the passengers.

It seems that Jack, the 3-year-old Airedale, frightened by the ship's engines, tried escaping his shelter. He broke the strap on the door hinges, lunged forward, slipped, and fell overboard.

Jack was wrapped in several wool blankets and dried with hair blowers belonging to the crew. Jack remained in shock for over an hour when he finally gratefully drank the bucket of warm soup supplied by the crew mess and purser.

Jack's owners are from Indiana. They said that Jack has always shown great fear of water and has never been in water over his knees.

Jack proved to be a strong swimmer and a very brave, courageous dog. Thanks to the captain and crew of the M. V. Malaspina for the life of one dog saved.

Food Service Contracts Could Help Ferry System

The state's money-losing ferry system might cut some of its losses if it contracts with a private firm for food service operations.

So suggests a team studying efficiency in state government. The team's report notes that the ferry system is expected to cost more than $28 million this year to operate, yet will bring in only $14.9 million in revenues.

Savings could be substantial from contracting for food service and receiving income from licensing fees, the report points out. "By advertising for bids, the state could quickly determine if this approach is feasible."

The report also suggests that the state consider converting all its ferries from dining room service to cafeteria operations. One vessel is now being converted at a cost of $450,000. The division experts to realize an annual saving of $400,000 in labor costs.

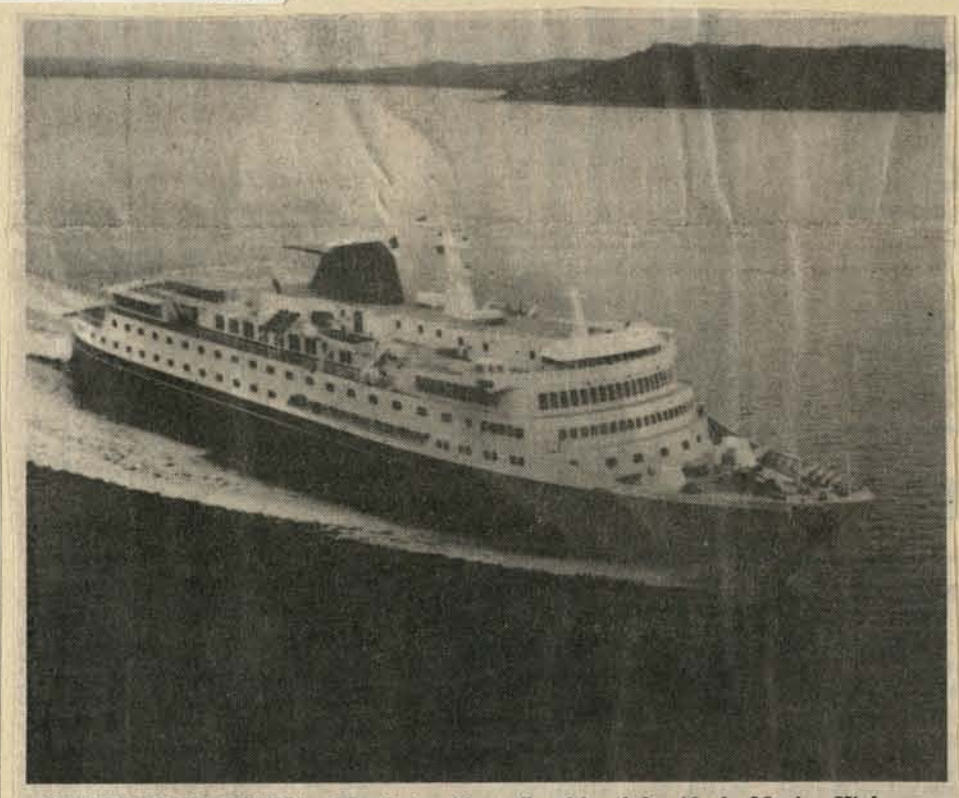
If the change is successful, the report says, the remaining vessels with dining room services should be converted on a staggered basis. The total annual saving could amount to a million dollars, the report estimates.

Other ferry system improvements suggested in the report:

— Contract for a computerized reservation system, such as those used by commercial airlines. This would cost $125,000 a year but would save $25,000 a year over the present manual system now operated from Juneau. Not only would a computerized system improve reservation services but it also would provide improved record-keeping data.

— Add a systems analyst to the division of marine transportation, to provide adequate cost accounting and management control information for the division's $30 million a year budget with more than 600 employes. This would involve $27,000 a year in salary and benefits.

— Install an inventory control system in the Seattle and Juneau warehouses to improve overall efficiency. The division now has no effective procedures for purchasing or inventorying its requirements, the report says. An inventory system would identify needs, turnover and appropriate reorder levels and quantities.



CRIPPLED COLUMBIA—The Columbia, a flagship of the Alaska Marine Highway system is limping north after engine and bowthruster problems. The ferry had just come out of drydock and was headed north with its first shipment of tourists of the summer season.

New ferry in '77, too

Columbia set to resume Seattle service this week

State ferry service hopefully will return to normal this week when the Columbia sails from Seattle Friday, June 18.

The largest of the Alaska Marine Highway fleet, the Columbia has been in Seattle for repairs for about two months. It first went in for six weeks of regularly scheduled maintenance, but its departure has been delayed because of additional repair work that was needed.

While the Columbia sat in Seattle, the Malaspina was pulled off its regular run to Prince Rupert and took over the Columbia's Seattle run.

The Malaspina left Prince Rupert Tuesday, June 15, to resume its normal schedule as the Columbia is put back into service.

Bert Kleinenberg, state ferry port steward in Juneau, said, "They hope there will be no more problems with the Columbia, but you never can predict engine problems."

During its recent stay in Seattle, the Columbia's engines, water evaporators, plumbing and the propeller's controlled pitch were all worked on.

Also making state ferry news is a new sister ship to the LeConte that is being built in Sturgeon Bay, Wis.

The 235-foot ferry will replace the 99-foot Chilkat on the Southeast Alaska run. The new sister ship to the LeConte will hold 250 passengers, versus the Chilkat's 75. The Chilkat was built about 20 years ago, Kleinenberg said. He added that the Alaska Marine Highway system probably will move the Chilkat into service elsewhere, but no decision has yet been made.

He said the new ship, still under construction, has been named, but the name will not be released for awhile. The name, the ship's schedule and the new route of the Chilkat will probably be released in December or January, Kleinenberg said.

He noted that the new ship will most likely run between Metlakatla on Annette Island, Ketchikan, Hollis on Prince of Wales Island, and maybe Angoon on Admiralty Island, and will start service in May of 1977.

Columbia Limping Through SE Circuit

By The Associated Press

Baffling mechanical problems have plagued the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet on its first voyage out of annual drydock and into the summer tourist season.

A newly repaired starboard engine aboard the 418-foot Columbia blew one cylinder head shortly before it reached Ketchikan Tuesday. The ferry then had to be nudged to dockside by a tugboat because its bowthrusters remained shut down.

The Columbia left Seattle on Monday, 48 hours behind schedule after about two months of repair work. It had a full cardeck and 492 passengers aboard.

"The fact that the crew got it ready by then and it sailed at all is a miracle," said Bill Hudson, director of Marine Transportation. "But they did, and she did, and it may take us a couple of weeks to get this smoothed out."

Commissioned two years ago, the Columbia has had a history of mechanical problems on its weekly runs between Seattle and southeast Alaska.

"The bowthrusters continue to baffle us," Hudson said.

The propellors used for maneuvering laterally were rebuilt during the overhauling period, but they failed shortly before the Columbia left Seattle, Hudson said. An expert was being flown to the ship to attempt repairs in transit.

Without the thrusters, the Columbia was unable to dock as scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday in Wrangell, Petersburg and Sitka. Skagway also was described as an "optional" stop, one that wouldn't be made in high winds, leaving the Columbia out of four of its six usual ports of call.

Hudson said temporary repairs had been made to the engine while the vessel was en route to Juneau, but it was about five hours behind schedule.

Columbia set after engine rebuild

11-45

Columbia—Still Sailing Into A Strong Wind?

By SUSAN GILMORE
Empire Staff Reporter

The state ferry Columbia, apparently in good health after a series of disabling injuries, sailed into Auke Bay today nearly five hours behind schedule.

But this time the delay wasn't a malfunctioning bow thruster, nor a damaged engine head, nor an unhappy marine engineer. It was the annual scourge of the ferry system: gill nets.

These nets, which lace the Inside Passage during the summer's salmon gill net season, force the ferries to gingerly weave their way through Alaskan waters hoping that an obscured net doesn't wind around a propeller. Schedule delays are expected during gill net season.

The reason for the delay came as a relief to Marine Transportation

Part One Of A Series

Director Bill Hudson, who has been watching the aches and ills of the troublesome Columbia with growing concern and exasperation.

But Hudson said his flagship appears to be shipshape for the first time in weeks and should be back on schedule next week.

The Columbia is running an abbreviated schedule through Southeast Alaska this week—missing the ports of Sitka, Petersburg, Wrangell and Skagway—hoping to buy time to allow the ferry an overnight rest in Seattle Thursday before resuming its regular schedule Friday night.

Hudson hopes his ferry will remain in the water and out of dry dock until her annual winter checkup next year. But, if the history of the vessel holds true, it may have to be patched and prodded along its Inside Passage travels.

The Columbia is the newest and sleekest member of Alaska's ferry fleet, heralded as the gem of Alaska's Pacific Ocean. But since it first set sail two years ago, the vessel has been plagued with countless mechanical problems that have caused passengers and employes alike to dub it the lemon of the sea.

But Hudson admits that many of the problems that have consistently hampered the Columbia could have been avoided if marine transportation officials under the William A. Egan administration had been a little more picky.

"The Columbia was accepted without adequate warranty procedures being followed," Hudson said. "She was put on the line before she was completed, even though many deficiencies were brought to the attention of authorities before she was accepted."

The Columbia was built to replace the ferry Wickersham, a foreign-made vessel that finally fell victim to the Jones Act which prohibits foreign ships from sailing between two American ports.

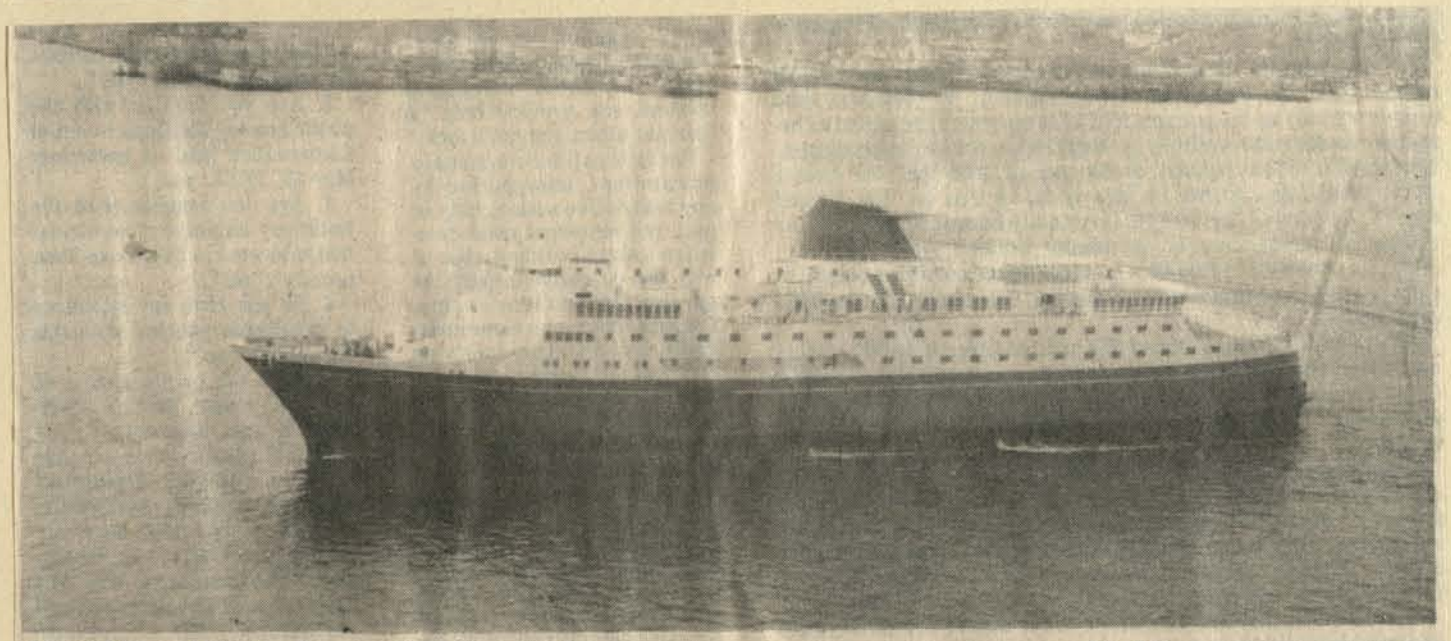
The Wickersham, plushest of the Alaska ferry fleet, was purchased by Gov. Walter Hickel who hoped a Jones act waiver would allow the vessel to sail from Seattle through the Inside Passage route. However, when law forced it to depart from Vancouver Island instead she became a millstone around the ferry system's neck and was dubbed "Hickel's folly."

The Egan administration, reportedly eager to gloat over mistakes of Republican predecessors, took satisfaction in finding a buyer for the Wickersham and promised Alaskans a new, sleek replacemnt.

The Columbia was launched in the summer of 1974—a year when William Egan was fighting to keep his office against a stiff challenge by now-governor Jay Hammond.

Some say the early launching of the Columbia was a political ploy to boost Egan's campaign. Others argue the ship was seaworthy and ready to be commissioned.

(Next: a look at the mechanical difficulties of the state ferry system flagship.)



LEMON OF THE SEA—The state ferry Columbia has cornered more than its share of the spotlight with its numerous mechanical breakdowns that have delayed countless voyages. While the reasons for the Columbia's ills are many and varied, Marine Transportation Director Bill Hudson said the vessel was accepted prematurely before it had been adequately tested. The flagship was built under the William A. Egan administration and served on a $20-million platter to Gov. Jay Hammond's staff.

Ferry Shows First Profit

For the first time the state ferry MV Malaspina has netted the ferry system a profit in the passenger service category, Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris said today. The vessel was converted to the buffet style service for food this past winter.

A comparison of May of this year with the same month last year shows a $7,000 profit for the system. A year ago during May a $90,000 loss was sustained to provide passenger services.

Harris said these initial results make the conversion to passenger self-service "very satisfactory."

Commissioner Harris cited a work force reduction of seven positions which is actually a fourteen-position reduction, since the vessel operates with a two-crew system and the extended hours of service in the dining area as the major factors for this first ever profit by the Malaspina.

Harris said that Bill Hudson, Director of the Division of Marine Transportation and his staff will continue to evaluate this new type of food service.

He noted that, overall, the vessel's operation yet requires a subsidy from the state general fund. But called the gain announced today "a good beginning" in the state administration's plans to make ferry operations more economic.

Harris said the conversion to buffet self-service style of operation has met with mostly favorable comments from the traveling public. Conversion to this style of service has permitted the public almost 24-hour access to the dining area, allowing them to take meals at their preference. In the past dining room on the Malaspina was available only seven and a half hours a day.

Malaspina Profit

By The Associated Press

The Alaska ferry "Malaspina" returned a $20,000 profit in June compared to a $44,000 loss for the same month last year, Public Works Commissioner Don Harris said today.

Harris attributed the turnaround "almost directly to the conversation of the 'Malaspina' last winter to fast food service" from the previous restaurant-style service."

"The conversion to this type of food service, which met with such controverssy last legislative session, is the prime reason for our more efficient operation," Harris said.

In just two months, Haris said, the $400,000 spent to covert the food service operation has returned to the state an adjusted profit of more than $160,000 even though passenger traffic on the ferry is down 10 per cent from last year.

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

The Alaska Ferry Columbia is scheduled to sail out of Seattle Friday, after spending several months in port for extensive repairs.

The sailing date has been delayed twice because the ship's engines were completely rebuilt. pletely rebuilt.

Marine highway system superintendent William Bendixen said he thought most of the bugs were getting worked out of the Columbia, after what he called "very costly and extensive repairs."

"We haven't totaled up the cost yet," he said, but if they are too high the state may seek court action against the ship's builder, the Lockheed Corporation.

Bendixen estimated the state still has about $300,000 withheld from the original contract which he said may run pretty close to the cost of repairs for the warranty items. However, some dispute has emerged over who should pay what, he said.

Lawyers for the state and Lockheed are at an impasse, Bendixen said, over the payment of some items. He also said if the total repair bill is more than the amount withheld from the original contract, the state would probably seek court relief.

Bendixen said he was confident the state wouldn't have to pick up the cost of repairs and noted that the Coast Guard icebreaker Polar Star was also built by Lockheed.

The Polar Star has experienced considerable problems with its engines during a shakedown cruise in the Bering Sea and needed assistance to make it into ice-free water.

The Columbia was built for the state for about $20 million, and in a little over two years the luxury ferry has had numerous problems.

11-4

Columbia—

Alaskan Officials Cross Their Fingers

Part Two Of A Series

By SUSAN GILMORE
Empire Staff Reporter

When the Alaska ferry Columbia hobbled north out of Seattle last week Marine Transportation officials crossed their fingers that mysterious mechanical problems plaguing the vessel would not abort the voyage.

They were disappointed.

Six hours north of Seattle the ferry dropped a valve and damaged another engine head—an ailment that has become quite common to Alaska's fancy flagship.

Marine Transportation director Bill Hudson ordered the ship returned to Seattle where it underwent extensive probing and repairs before setting sail again early Sunday—with the engines and bowthrusters apparently in shipshape order.

This latest episode in Columbia calamities is just one chapter in a history book of troubles that has plagued Alaska's sleek ferry since it was commissioned in the summer of 1974.

The most serious problems, said Hudson, are centered in the engines where "an unusual amount of internal damages have occurred with no particular known reason."

Before last week's failure that aborted the voyage, Hudson had planned to run the Columbia on two more abbreviated schedules—docking only in Ketchikan, Auke Bay and Haines—hoping to buy enough time to pull the ferry out of the water, diagnose and treat her troubles and return her to full schedule next week.

The engine cylinder heads had been mysteriously cracking and the bow thrusters—necessary for docking in Sitka, Petersburg, Wrangell and Skagway—were inoperative.

Saying the failures had him "baffled," Hudson said he hoped to keep the Columbia on the run and "search for solutions." But last week's additional engine problems made him reconsider.

'The vessel should never have been accepted prematurely by the state'—Marine Transportation Director Bill Hudson.

When the Columbia was returned to Seattle the engine head was repaired and the problem in the bow thruster was located, Hudson said. He said the problem in the thruster was "largely electrical," and was confident the ailing ship was finally in good health.

However, he said he plans to "dig into the Columbia again next winter" when the ship goes into annual winter layup.

The vessel was built by Lockheed Corporation for an estimated $21 million. However, since it was christened and first set sail from the Port of Seattle, Hudson said the state has spent "hundreds of thousands of dollars" keeping her afloat. He hinted the state may pursue legal action to recover repair costs from Lockheed.

Hudson blames part of the Columbia's troubles on the installation of new, unproven engines built by Enterprise Corporation.

"We've got the first of a high-rated power plant and not even the manufacturers fully understand why the vessel has been besieged with so many problems," said Hudson.

He said the vessel never should have been accepted "prematurely" by the state and he said he would not have allowed the installation of the new Enterprise engine, but would have "stuck to something proven and not taken a gamble on a new system." Hudson also charges the bow thrusters are undersized—a problem that should have been spotted before the ferry was accepted.

When the Columbia was hoisted out of the water for her annual drydock inspection this spring each of her 32 engine heads was overhauled—a lengthy process that Hudson said should only be needed every 10 years.

Other problems that have plagued the flagship in her short career include malfunctioning evaporators, which Hudson claims are not proper marine evaporators and shouldn't have been accepted.

The ship vibrated excessively and the state forced Lockheed into installing equipment to reduce the vibration. Another complaint was obnoxious odors on the vessel, which officials traced to a failure by Lockheed to follow specifications in venting sewage tanks, Hudson said. When the ship was in dry dock, Lockheed was forced to alter the system and vent the sewage fumes out of the ferry's stack.

Hudson said the state is keeping close tabs on the Columbia's medical bill, and is holding Lockheed responsible for all damages and repair costs associated with mechanical problems. Labor costs are the largest portion of the bill.

He said the state has withheld about $500,000 from Lockheed as some assurance Alaska taxpayers won't be forced to absorb the Columbia's costly aches and pains.

While Hudson only hinted that the state may take Lockheed to court, he said, "someone will pay Columbia costs...not the state. Hopefully the taxpayers won't have to absorb it."

Despite all its troubles, Hudson said there are no plans to scrap the Columbia. "It's going to be a good ship," he said. "We would re-engine it before we'd dump it."He said the vessel is probably worth $30 million today.

(Next: an overview of other problems hampering Southeast Alaska's ferry fleet.)

Labor Problems Rock Ferry System

7/2/76

By SUSAN GILMORE
Empire Staff Reporter

(Editor's note: this is the final article of a series examining problems of the state's Marine Highway System.)

When the Malaspina's chief engineer Richard Brown ordered his engine room crew to delay sailing from Seattle last April in a dispute over the ferry's food service, his action spotlighted two issues that have haunted Alaska Marine Transportation officials for more than a year: labor troubles and the controversial conversion of the Malaspina's dining room to a self-service restaurant.

While the food service controversy appears to have subsided, labor problems continue to ebb and flow with the expiration of each union contract.

Brown is a member of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association—a union that has been operating on Alaska's ferries without a contract for nearly a year.

Brown reportedly tied up the Malaspina to underline his objections to standing in line for cafeteria-style meals, rather than being served in the ferry's dining room. Crew members also have their own mess.

But officials believe the dissent ran deeper than the dining room. "Having no contract may have created some uneasiness in the ranks," said Marine Transportation director Bill Hudson, who ordered Brown fired after the April incident.

Brown's firing triggered a protest throughout the ferry system and his union initiated a work stoppage that temporarily tied up the Taku in Petersburg and the LeConte in Juneau—as well as the Malaspina in Seattle.

A hurried court order forced the ferries back into service.

Since then, Brown's dismissal became a one-month suspension and he reportedly is now back on the job with the ferry system.

But Brown's reinstatement may only be a bandaid on the deepening wound of unresolved contract disputes.

The state has been negotiating with the marine engineers' union for a year and has had a wage offer on the table since last July. The MEBA union, representing 65 licensed ferry engineers in Alaska, reportedly is demanding higher wages than the state is willing to pay.

"We've hit a stalemate, but we're still talking," Hudson said. "The membership has been extremely patient," he said in speculating why the union hasn't struck in protest.

Last summer state officials weren't so lucky.

In August the Masters, Mates and Pilots Local 6 walked off the job in protest over breakdowns in contract talks. However, the workers were back on the job within a week with a new offer by the state.

This fall the state will begin negotiations with the Inland Boatman's Union, and another wage standoff may be in the offing.

"We've taken a firmer line against demands of the past," Hudson said. "It's difficult for the maritime unions to accept, but we're gaining the respect of employes and unions." He said his division contains seven unions, but he deals most directly with the three maritime unions.

Meanwhile, Hudson boasts that the $260,000 conversion of the Malaspina to fast-food service saved the state nearly $100,000—mostly in labor costs—in one month. Passengers, though, have complained that the food prices are too high for the quality—especially when they have to wait in line to be fed.

Undaunted, Hudson said he hopes to convert the Taku and Matanuska to fast-food service if funds become available. He said his division is considering stretching the Matanuska, similar to remodeling performed on the Malaspina.

However, the Alaska Legislature may not echo Hudson's enthusiasm for further ferry conversion. The marine transportation division came under fire this year from leaders of the House and Senate Finance Committees, who charged the office with misuse of appropriated funds, policy changes without legislative or public hearings and failure to communicate openly with the legislature.

The brunt of the attack was levelled at the food service conversion on the Malaspina, the failure of the division to actively consider the leasing of the food and bar services to a private company, and the lack of public hearings on ferry rate increases.

The recently-completed Governor's Management and Efficiency Review study recommended that the ferries convert from dining room to cafeteria operations and that food service for the fleet be contracted out.

On May 1 the ferry rates rose about 20 per cent—expected to add $2.2 million in revenue to state coffers.

The ferry system will always be a deficit operation, Hudson said, but he is hoping to stabilize the subsidy needed to run the ferries through Southeast and Southcentral Alaska. He said the subsidy jumped from $6.5 million in 1974 to $13.5 million in 1975—a boost prompted primarily by skyrocketing labor costs.

However, Hudson said he hopes to keep the subsidy close to the $13 million mark this year by the fare increase and by holding the line on employe wages and benefits.

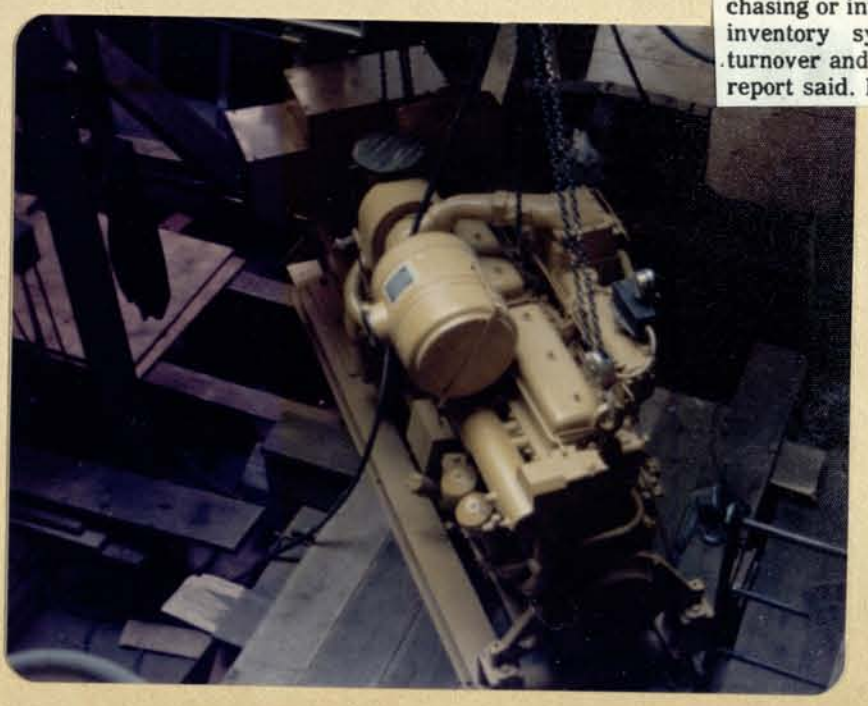
"The ferry system is very political," Hudson said, blaming its plight on the greater vying for general fund handouts and the increase in the political power in Anchorage and Fairbanks where ferries aren't needed to navigate its highways. "We have to be more economically responsible and assess the users for it," he said.

But there may be fewer users this year to pay. Hudson said the ferries are running lighter this summer than anticipated, citing the increased rates and lessening Alaska pipeline traffic as possible reasons.

He said a national magazine story on pipeline-related problems in Anchorage and Fairbanks brought a flood of ferry cancellations. But he is optimistic the traffic will pick up in July and August—generally the peak months for Alaska's ferries.

Ferry traffic, though, is the least of Hudson's headaches as he sits at the helm of Alaska's finicky ferry fleet. He is mentor to his trouble child, the Columbia, and middleman to feuding labor unions. But possibly his most difficult task is convincing elected officials each year of the need for paving Alaska's marine highway with taxpayers' gold.

alaska
marine highway



By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

The governor's Management and Efficiency Review recommends several changes in operation of the state ferry system, southeast Alaska's traveling highway.

The recommendations include a computerized reservation system, converting dining rooms aboard each ship to cafeterias and contracting food service to a private firm.

These are among a number of recommendations by the report that could effect Southeastern residents.

Recommendation number 171 said a computerized reservation system should be used to ease passenger handling. The report suggested the system could be contracted with an airline.

The report said manual reservation procedures cause problems in posting reservations, obtaining confirmations and insuring that manifests reach the proper embarking point.

An annual savings of $25,000 from reduced personnel costs could be realized through this change, the report said.

Converting ferry dining room service to cafeteria style operations was recommendation number 175. The committee said income from the dining facilities was more than $2 million last year but labor costs were $6 million.

By converting to a cafeteria, the ferry Malaspina expects to save $400,000 annually, the report said. If other ships were converted the total annual savings could be about $1 million, but no amount was claimed by the report.

By allowing the ferry food service to be contracted out to the private sector savings could be substantial, recommendation number 176 said.

The state food service deficits are increasing annually, the report said, and by advertising for bids, the state could determine if the approach is feasible.

A study to look into ways of reducing fuel cost for the ferry system is suggested in recommendation number 174. The state spent $2.8 million in 1975 for 9.54 million gallons, the report said, and even a 10 per cent reduction in fuel consumption would save $280,000.

One suggestion by the study to conserve fuel was slower speeds.

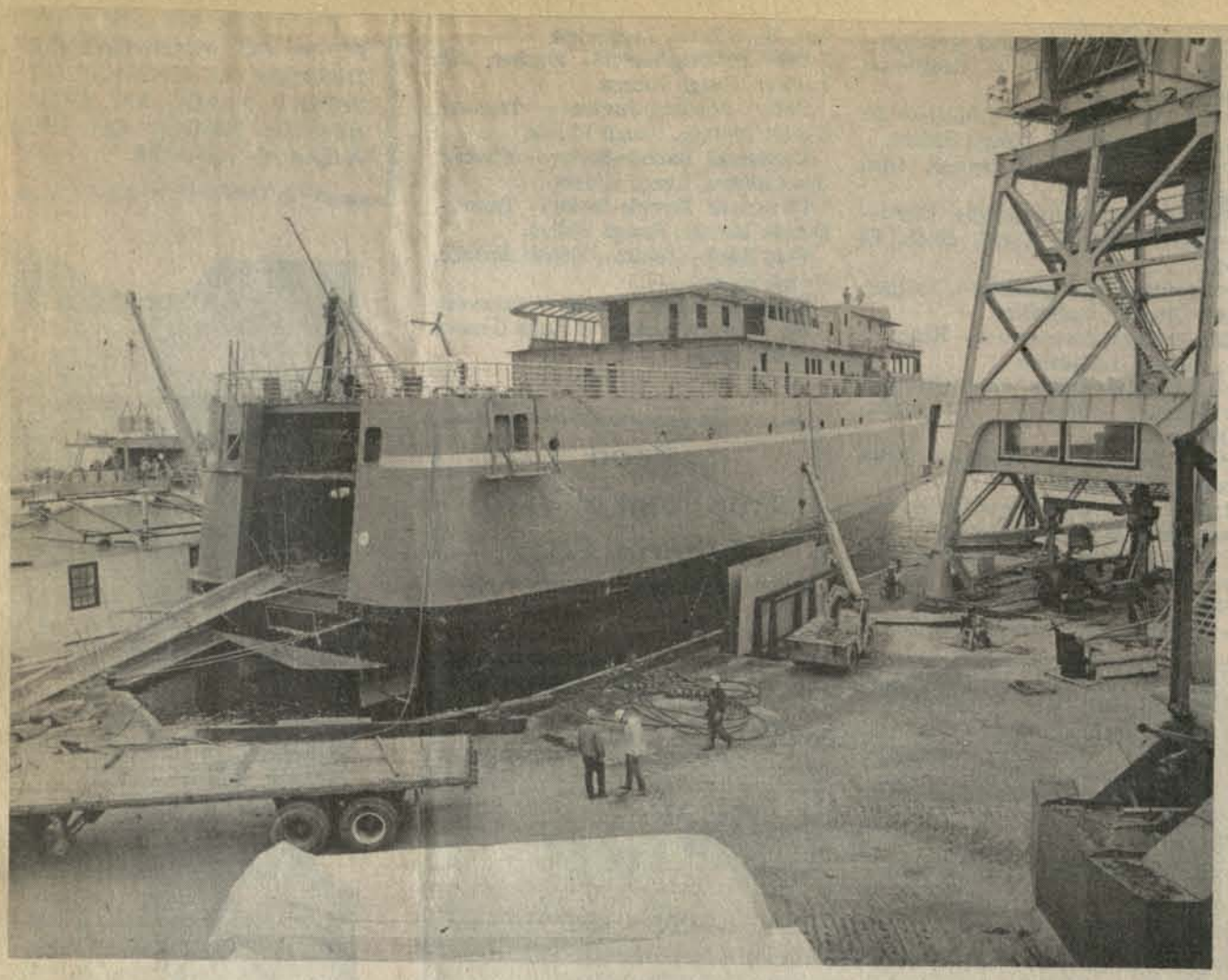
Recommendation number 172 suggests the hiring of a systems analyst to smooth the accounting process in the administrative section of the ferry system.

The report said the ferry system does not have adequate cost accounting or management control information. The cost to implement the job is $27,000, the report said, and no specific savings were claimed.

Inventory control systems were suggested for Seattle and Juneau warehouses in recommendation number 173.

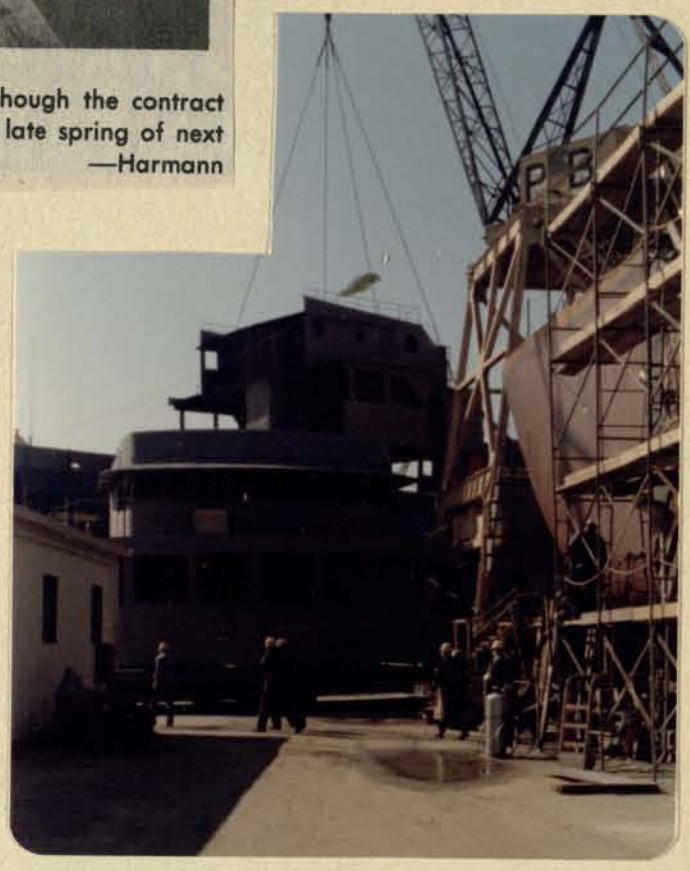
The division of marine transportation does not have an effective procedure for purchasing or inventorying, the report said. The inventory system would identify needs, turnover and improve overall efficiency, the report said. No cost savings was claimed.

11-48



A 235-ft. ferry for the state of Alaska is under construction at Peterson Builders. She is a twin sister to the previously delivered LeConte. The yard is scheduling the vessel for late fall delivery although the contract does not call for delivery until the late spring of next year.

—Harmann



Alaska May Sue Lockheed

JUNEAU (AP) — Alaska may go to court against Lockheed Corp. if the firm does not assume the cost of correcting "substantial deficiencies" aboard the $21 million passenger-auto ferry Columbia, a high-ranking state official says.

"We will be looking at what legal action we can take to remedy the deficiencies, including the cost to the state to date for operating a vessel with such deficient machinery," Richard Holden, deputy public works commissioner, said Wednesday.

Holden gave the assessment after disclosing that the hard-luck Columbia, commissioned two years ago as the flagship of Alaska's eight-ferry fleet, was going into drydock about Oct. 15 for the second time this year.

Engineers discovered recently, Holden said, that one of the 418-foot-long vessel's two stack boilers was nearly eaten away by corrosion caused by a faulty rust protection system.

The ferry, built by Lockheed Shipbuilding Division in Seattle, was in drydock for eight weeks this spring for repairs on her two huge diesel engines, which has suffered a total of 24 cracked cylinder heads.

The vessel also has suffered from severe vibrations, broken bow guidance thrusters and shutdowns in her fresh water evaporators.

Holden characterized the existing relationship between the state and Lockheed over the Columbia as "semi-legal and procedural."

"Our attorneys and their attorneys had earlier agreed on the correction of certain deficiencies like vibration, corrosion, the evaporators and several smaller items," Holden said. "And when the ship was last in drydock, we had some remedial work performed by Lockheed.

"But the question of the machinery—the engines and the boilers—is a different problem. We believe there are substantial deficiencies which Lockheed is obligated to remedy."

Bill Hudson, state director of marine transporation, said a new boiler for the Columbia will cost $25,000 and doesn't believe the state should have to foot the bill.

Columbia is running again

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

The Columbia is running.

After a shaky trip from Seattle to Juneau, the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet is doing well on its southbound run.

A problem with the ship's bow thruster, however, has not been identified, according to William Hudson, director of marine transportation.

The Columbia left Seattle Sunday after receiving substantial maintenance, including the rebuilding of both engines. Cracked cylinder heads caused a four week delay in the ship's departure.

On the way to Ketchikan, however, crewmen found a another cracked cylinder head and shut one engine down. The ship limped along on one engine.

With the loss of the engine the Columbia was five hours behind schedule on the northbound run. The shut down bow thruster made tug boat assistance necessary to get the ship into dock at several stops.

Without the thruster the Columbia was unable to maneuver laterally and stops at Wrangell, and Petersburg were cancelled. Hudson said passengers bound for those cities had to make their own arrangements for alternate transportation. Information was made clear to passengers before leaving Seattle that the state can't compensate for failures beyond its control, he said.

"Both engines were running quite well out of Seattle," Hudson said, "until the cracked head was found and we had to shut one down."

As for the bow thruster, Hudson said there is presently an expert on board trying to locate the problem and do some in-transit repairs.

The Columbia is still scheduled to get out of Seattle again on Friday but the amount of time needed to make repairs was "unknown," he said. Hudson termed dry dock repairs "possible."

In the event of another delay out of Seattle, the Malaspina will not take the run, Hudson said. "We are pleased to date that we have not missed a departure from Seattle."

Negotiations are going on with the ship's builder, the Lockheed Corporation, to determine who will pay for some of the extensive problems the Columbia has experienced since it was commissioned, two years ago.

Those talks are presently "up in the air," Hudson said.

Columbia sailing delayed again as court action, ship's future pondered

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

The Alaska state ferry ship Columbia will not sail tonight.

Instead, marine transportation officials said the ship will leave Seattle Sunday if all goes well during a Saturday shakedown cruise.

Meanwhile consideration of court action against the builders of the problem-plagued vessel continue and state officials ponder the ship's future.

The delay marks the fourth time in less than a month that the Columbia's sailing date has been cancelled. The ship was originally scheduled to leave Seattle from its annual maintenance work on May 21 but the discovery the extensive work was needed on the engines has caused the continued delay.

William Hudson, director of marine transportation, said the most recent setback was still a result of defective cylinder heads found in the main engines. The parts were flown in from New Orleans and repairmen have been running against the clock to finsh repairs, he said.

"We've had our troubles with the Columbia," Hudson said, "and I apologize for the continued delay."

After the Saturday shakedown spin, the ferry will need about 12 hours of work to make final adjustments, Hudson said.

In order to get the ship back on schedule the Sitka leg of the trip will probably be cut out next week, he said. "We would hope we could be close to the scheduled departure time on Friday, the 25th."

Hudson said there have been some informal discussions about the future of the Columbia if it continues to experience trouble. Since it joined Alaska's ferry system as a brand new ship two years ago, the Columbia has continually had problems.

"We are trying to make a good ship out of the Columbia," Hudson said "and I'm not prepared to discuss other alternatives."

"I see the Columbia eventually turning out to be a good ship," Hudson said. "In fact she's a good ship now in many respects, and it is unfortunate that some things turned out sour."

The cost of repairs and lost time have not been calculated, according to Hudson, but he indicated that it was considerably more than was budgeted. Some of those repairs were apparently the responsibility of the Columbia's builder, Lockheed Corporation. Court action over those responsibilities may be unavoidable, Hudson said.

About $450,000 of the original contract price of the Columbia has been withheld by the state, and Hudson said some of that money has been spent for the repairs. He said he did not want to speak in detail about the disposition of those funds, however, because of possible legal conflict with Lockheed.

"We accepted a vessel that was not adequately wrung out," Hudson said. "The ship did not meet certain specifications and those deficiencies have haunted us."

Donald Harris, commissioner of public works, will be responsible for any legal action with Lockheed, Hudson said. "The commissioner will pursue a definite course of action to get a vessel we can contend with," Hudson said.

Ginger Johnson, information officer for marine transportation, said people have been very understanding during the delays. "We've done our best to accommodate them," she said.

Flagship Columbia plagued by problems

JUNEAU (AP)—Baffling mechanical problems have plagued the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet on its first voyage out of annual drydock and into the summer tourist season.

A newly repaired starboard engine aboard the 418-foot Columbia blew one cylinder head shortly before it reached Ketchikan Tuesday. The ferry then had to be nudged to dockside by a tugboat because its bowthrusters remained shut down.

The Columbia left Seattle on Monday, 48 hours behind schedule after about two months of repair work. It had a full cardeck and 492 passengers aboard.

"The fact that the crew got it ready by then and it sailed at all is a miracle," said Bill Hudson, director of Marine Transportation. "But they did, and she did, and it may take us a couple of weeks to get this smoothed out."

Commissioned two years ago, the Columbia has had a history of mechanical problems on its weekly runs between Seattle and southeast Alaska.

"The bowthrusters continue to baffle us," Hudson said.

The propellors used for maneuvering laterally were rebuilt during the overhauling period, but they failed shortly before the Columbia left Seattle, Hudson said. An expert was being flown to the ship to attempt repairs in transit.

Without the thrusters, the Columbia was unable to dock as scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday in Wrangell, Petersburg and Sitka.

Hudson said temporary repairs had been made to the engine while the vessel was en route to Juneau.

B.C. To Rebuild Road

JUNEAU (AP) — Gov. Jay Hammond said today British Columbia has agreed to work out a plan for rebuilding and paving the Haines Road, 300 miles of highway used heavily by Americans.

Last year, Congress appropriated about $58 million for paving portions of the road, but work was stalled by the lack of an agreement over rights-of-way in British Columbia.

"I have been advised," Hammond said, "that the British Columbia cabinet has given approval in principle to work out a formal agreement with the federal government in Canada regarding the necessary right of way. . ."

The road stretches northward from Haines in southeast Alaska through northwestern British Columbia to the Alaska Highway. It is used by travelers leaving the Alaska ferry system to reach interior Alaska and Whitehorse, Y.T.

"This will be an added inducement to tourism in Southeast Alaska," Hammond said, "and will generally improve transportation to and throughout our state."

Columbia, No Gem

KEEP your fingers crossed.

The flagship of the state's ferry fleet, the Columbia, is back in operation on its scheduled runs between Seattle and Southeastern Alaska ports.

Correction on that. It's in operation, sort of. On its first trip out of the Seattle dry docks last week it had to skip stops at Wrangell and Petersburg and it completed its journey at a limp — with one engine shut down because of a cracked cylinder.

The cracked cylinder head was scheduled for repair on the next stop in Seattle, but there was an uncertainty about when repairs can be made to some ailing bow thrusters.

With the bow thrusters not operating, the Columbia is unable to maneuver laterally. That's what kept it out of Wrangell and Petersburg.

Passengers who want to stop there are being advised they'll just have to make other arrangements, state ferry officials report.

Meanwhile, William Hudson, director of marine transportation for the state, says this: "We're trying to make a good ship out of the Columbia."

Good luck.

Hudson confirms Columbia work

Marine transportation director Bill Hudson confirmed today that the Alaska Ferry Columbia will be taken out of service this fall.

Hudson said he didn't have an exact date yet but assumed it would be sometime in early October following the summer schedule.

11-52

The ferry COLUMBIA

Baffling problems continue to plague Alaska's flagship

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)— Baffling mechanical problems have plagued the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet on its first voyage out of annual drydock and into the summer tourist season.

A newly repaired starboard engine aboard the 418-foot Columbia blew one cylinder head shortly before it reached Ketchikan Tuesday. The ferry then had to be nudged to dockside by a tugboat because its bowthrusters remained shut down.

The Columbia left Seattle on Monday, 48 hours behind schedule after about two months of repair work. It had a full cardeck and 492 passengers aboard.

"The fact that the crew got it ready by then and it sailed at all is a miracle," said Bill Hudson, director of Marine Transportation. "But they did, and she did, and it may take us a couple of weeks to get this smoothed out."

Commissioned two years ago, the Columbia has had a history of mechanical problems on its weekly runs between Seattle and southeast Alaska.

"The bowthrusters continue to baffle us," Hudson said.

The propellors used for maneuvering laterally were rebuilt during the overhauling period, but they failed shortly before the Columbia left Seattle, Hudson said. An expert was being flown to the ship to attempt repairs in transit.

Without the thrusters, the Columbia was unable to dock as scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday in Wrangell, Petersburg and Sitka. Skagway also was described as an "optional" stop, one that wouldn't be made in high winds, leaving the Columbia out of four of its six usual ports of call.

Hudson said temporary repairs had been made to the engine while the vessel was en route to Juneau, but it was about five hours behind schedule.

Columbia Repairs Fail; Skips Most Ports of Call

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)— Baffling mechanical problems have plagued the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet on its first voyage out of annual drydock and into the summer tourist season.

A newly repaired starboard engine aboard the 418-foot Columbia blew one cylinder head shortly before it reached Ketchikan Tuesday. The ferry then had to be nudged to dockside by a tugboat because its bowthrusters remained shut down.

The Columbia left Seattle on Monday, 48 hours behind schedule after about two months of repair work. It had a full cardeck and 492 passengers aboard.

"The fact that the crew got it ready by then and it sailed at all is a miracle," said Bill Hudson, director of Marine Transportation. "But they did, and she did, and it may take us a couple of weeks to get this smoothed out."

Commissioned two years ago, the Columbia has had a history of mechanical problems on its weekly runs between Seattle and southeast Alaska.

"The bowthrusters continue to baffle us," Hudson said.

The propellors used for maneuvering laterally were rebuilt during the overhauling period, but they failed shortly before the Columbia left Seattle, Hudson said. An expert was being flown to the ship to attempt repairs in transit.

Without the thrusters, the Columbia was unable to dock as scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday in Wrangell, Petersburg and Sitka. Skagway also was described as "optional" stop, one that wouldn't be made in high winds, leaving the Columbia out of four of its six usual ports of call.

Hudson said temporary repairs had been made to the engine while the vessel was en route to Juneau, but it was about five hours behind schedule.

Buffet Brings Profit

Special To The Times

JUNEAU — The new buffet food service on the state ferry Malaspina has apparently put that department in the black for the first time ever.

This year the food service department made $7,000 during May. A year ago a loss of $90,000 was chalked up during the same month, according to Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris.

The Malaspina was converted from dining room service to the buffet set-up during the past winter.

Harris said the vessel still requires a subsidy from the state general fund in order to operate.

Conversion to buffet service permits the public almost 24-hour access to the dining area, whereas in the past the Malaspina dining room was avaiable only seven and a half hours a day.

The changeover means a reduction in the work force of 14 positions, Harris said. If results continue to be favorable, he added, other vessels of the system will be converted.

Efficiency Review

By The Associated Press

The cost-saving moves were included among 362 recommendations drafted by a panel of private businessmen appointed by Hammond last year to help make state government more efficient.

Included among the recommendations implemented so far were proposals to replace dining room service with cafeterias aboard Alaska's ferry system, require users to pay the costs of process service and close the Alcantra Youth Campus.

Buffet Service Pays Off

BUFFET SERVICE on the state ferry Malaspina is paying off handsomely, according to officials in Juneau. During May the food department turned in a profit of $7,000 compared to a loss of $90,000 the same month a year ago.

That announcement should embarrass Sen. Bill Ray of Juneau, but probably won't. He was the man who raised a first-class, full-blown and noisy objection to the idea of converting ferries to buffet service.

Ray wanted the ferries to continue serving dinners in salons showing white napery and with waiters in white jackets, despite the fact that each meal was costing the taxpayers more than $100.

Ray vowed during the last session to curb plans for converting more ferries.

THE ADDITIONAL conversions were curbed, as Ray promised, but he has claimed he didn't do it. He said the budget and audit committee did it.

But that sounds like typical political doubletalk to us. Ray was quoted day after day as the leader of the move that was determined, unequivocally, to prevent the conversions.

He is the one who inspired hearings that revealed the terrible losses incurred by the state from the ferry operations. In 1975 the loss was $13.5 million and 22 per cent of it was in the food department.

By converting the Malaspina to buffet service, 14 waiters were laid off. If the Columbia had been converted — as planned, but stopped by Ray and his crowd — another 20 waiters could have been terminated. On all eight state ferries, buffet service would eliminate more than 40 jobs.

The ferry system revenues were reported to be $28.5 million. Two-thirds of the money was used to pay salaries for 600 employes. The only way to reduce the deficit would be by reducing the number of employes.

THE LEGISLATURE responded to Senator Ray's outburst of opposition by leaving the ferry system with only the Malaspina converted to food service.

And now it is revealed that the buffet service is popular for many reasons. It makes food available 24 hours a day instead of seven and one-half when the waiters in white jackets brought the food.

It is essential that additional ferries be converted so that the system will benefit by the economies.

Meanwhile, ferry officials must be concerned about the plan to relocate the southern terminal of the ferry system to Bellingham. Senator Ray has already expressed his concern and no doubt will have a lot to say about that.

A decision was supposed to have been made this spring. Now that it is summer and winter is not far away, perhaps something will happen.

We might suggest that action might be followed by more objective and temperate discussion if it is announced after Senator Ray has gone back to his home in Spain.

New Food Service Nets State Profit

Special to The Times

JUNEAU — The MV Malaspinia continues to net the state a profit in her food and passenger service categories, Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris reports.

The vessel showed a profit of $20,000 after expenses for June compared to a loss of $44,000 during the same month last year.

This improvement can be attributed almost directly to the conversion of the Malaspina last winter to fast food service. The conversion to this type of food service, which met with such controversy last legislative session, is the prime reason for our more efficient operation, Harris said.

In the two months of operaton since the conversion the Malaspina has been chalking up an increasingly profitable profile.

Harris said the $400,000 spent to convert the Malaspina has, in two months, returned to the state an adjusted profit of over $160,000 although passenger traffic on the Malaspina is down 10 per cent for May and June of this year as compared to last year.

The division of marin transportation is continuing to monitor the system and is conducting onboard a users survey of the passengers traveling on the Malaspina. Initial response remains favorable.

The Alaska Ferry system is in the forefront with new innovations—either to save money or prove that it is truly an equal opportunity employer.

The Daily News has been advised that men and women crew members are sharing the 2-person staterooms allocated to the crew. Ferry system officials haven't advised us of the arrangment. We got it from the mate of one of the crew members who did the sharing.

We can imagine that someone else is "going to get it" when the word gets around to the wives and husbands who wait on the beach the seven days the crew members serve at sea.

11-53

Columbia Limping Through SE Circuit

By The Associated Press

Baffling mechanical problems have plagued the flagship of Alaska's ferry fleet on its first voyage out of annual drydock and into the summer tourist season.

A newly repaired starboard engine aboard the 418-foot Columbia blew one cylinder head shortly before it reached Ketchikan Tuesday. The ferry then had to be nudged to dockside by a tugbo t because its bowthrusters remained shut down.

The Columbia left Seattle on Monday, 48 hours behind schedule after about two months of repair work. It had a full cardeck and 492 passengers aboard.

"The fact that the crew got it ready by then and it sailed at all is a miracle," said Bill Hudson, director of Marine Transportation. "But they did, and she did, and it may take us a couple of weeks to get this smoothed out."

Commissioned two years ago, the Columbia has had a history of mechanical problems on its weekly runs between Seattle and southeast Alaska.

"The bowthrusters continue to baffle us," Hudson said.

The propellors used for maneuvering laterally were rebuilt during the overhauling period, but they failed shortly before the Columbia left Seattle, Hudson said. An expert was being flown to the ship to attempt repairs in transit.

Without the thrusters, the Columbia was unable to dock as scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday in Wrangell, Petersburg and Sitka. Skagway also was described as an "optional" stop, one that wouldn't be made in high winds, leaving the Columbia out of four of its six usual ports of call.

Hudson said temporary repairs had been made to the engine while the vessel was en route to Juneau, but it was about five hours behind schedule.

Firm May Sue State For Columbia Payment

5- 2

By DON HUNTER
Times Staff Writer

Even if state officials decide not to go to court with their complaints about the ferry system's flagship Columbia, they may be summoned there by the company that built her.

Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris said this week that Lockheed Shipbuilding Co. may sue the state because it is withholding about $470,000 owed the builders until corrections are made on the vessel. The state has used some of the money to make repairs on the Columbia, he said.

"At this time, we're making no attempt to sue Lockheed or go to court unless the warrantable items needing repair exceed the amount of funds retained," Harris said. The money was to have been paid off as items not in compliance with specifications were brought into compliance.

A spokesman for the division of marine transportation said a total repair cost for the Columbia is not available because it has not yet been compiled. The vessel bore an initial price tag of $20.3 million.

The entire vessel was under a one-year warranty when the state took delivery in June 1974, Harris said. "During that year we gave Lockheed written notice of a number of items that didn't meet specifications."

The company disagreed with state complaints on several items, he said. "But we've goone ahead anyway on some and used their money to make corrections. Lockheed may decide to collect their money through the courts."

Among the various ailments that have plagued the Columbia in her two-year history are engines built by DeLaval Corp. of Oakland, Calif., and bow thrusters necessary for docking at several ports on the ship's schedule. Harris said repeatedly cracking cylinder heads and turbochargers have cost the Columbia "seven weeks of running time in the last year and a half."

The bow thrusters have caused "major operational problems," he said. A score of lesser mechanical failures have hampered the ship's performance.

"We've been talking (to the DeLaval Corp.) about the specific engine problems," Harris said. "At this time we don't know definitely what direction we'll take. We have told them we're very unhappy with those engines."

Harris said the engines are designed to operate 50,000 hours between overhauls, but the Columbia's had to be overhauled at 5,000 hours and again at 8,000 hours.

"We expect them (DeLaval) to participate in some of the cost," he said.

As to a possible state-initiated legal action against Lockheed, "we've never made a decision to pursue legal recourse but we're keeping all our options open," Harris said.

Columbia To Court

5-

THE STATE has had a cabin full of troubles with the flagship of its ferry fleet, the $21 million Columbia. It's probably an exaggeration, but sometimes it seems the vessel has been in drydock more than it has been in service.

It's heading back into the repair yards in Seattle again in October, this time to replace a boiler which has rusted out. It will be the second trip into drydock this year, and the umpteenth time the ship has been pulled out of scheduled service since it was commissioned only two years ago.

Obviously, there are deficiencies that make the $21 million investment an increasingly costly affair for the taxpayers of the state. And some resolution of the financial problems needs to be made just as much as corrections need to be made to the design, construction or machinery.

REMEDIAL ACTION in this kind of situation is not always easy. Because of the amount of money involved, there are arguments as to where blame or fault should lie.

A major dispute is brewing between the state and the shipbuilding division of the Lockheed Corp. and attorneys for the state are threatening legal action.

It's the route to go. The Columbia's problems have been discussed, cussed and negotiated for more than two years. Both Lockheed and the taxpayers probably would be best served by simply pressing ahead, as quickly as possible, for a judicial settlement.

State Hinting Of Columbia Suit

By The Associated Press

Alaska may go to court against Lockheed Corp. if the firm does not assume the cost of correcting "substantial deficiencies" aboard the $21 million passenger-auto ferry Columbia, a high-ranking state official says.

"We will be looking at what legal action we can take to remedy the deficiencies, including the cost to the state to date for operating a vessel with such deficient machinery," Richard Holden, deputy public works commissioner, said Wednesday.

Holden gave the assessment after disclosing that the hardluck Columbia, commissioned two years ago as the flagship of Alaska's eight-ferry fleet, was going into drydock about Oct. 15 for the second time this year.

Engineers discovered recently, Holden said, that one of the 418-foot-long vessel's two stack boilers was nearly eaten away by corrosion caused by a faulty rust protection system.

The ferry, built by Lockheed Shipbuilding Division in Seattle, was in drydock for eight weeks this spring for repairs on her two huge diesel engines, which has suffered a total of 24 cracked cylinder heads.

The vessel also has suffered from severe vibrations, broken bow guidance thrusters and shutdowns in her fresh water evaporators.

Holden characterized the existing relationship between the state and Lockheed over the Columbia as "semi-legal and procedural."

"Our attorneys and their attorneys had earlier agreed on the correction of certain deficiencies like vibration, corrosion, the evaporators and several smaller items," Holden said. "And when the ship was last in drydock we had some remedial work performed by Lockheed.

"But the question of the machinery—the engines and the boilers—is a different problem. We believe there are substantial deficiencies which Lockheed is obligated to remedy."

Bill Hudson, state director of marine transporation, said a new boiler for the Columbia will cost $25,000 and doesn't believe the state should have to foot the bill.

In preparation for the potential legal battle, Hudson is now engaged in "an analysis of all the problems we've experienced so we will have it all on paper."

"We will be attempting to reevaluate the warranty provisions of the contract to see if they have been fully lived up to," Hudson said. "If she doesn't perform as warrantied, we feel we have the right to go back and ask for a correction of those deficiencies."

Hudson said Lockheed has made some repairs on their own, but describes Locheeed officials as "often uncooperative."

Both Hudson and Holden said the Columbia will make it through the busy summer tourist season on Alaska's inside waterway only because of her crew.

"Our engineers have done a tremendous amount of work to keep that vessel running," Holden said. "It's just not normal for a ship's company to keep a defective vessel running. They've done a fantastic job."

Hard-luck Columbia may trigger lawsuit

5-

JUNEAU (AP) — Alaska officials say they may take Lockheed Corp. to court if the firm does not agree to pay for correcting "substantial deficiencies" aboard the state's $21 million ferry Columbia.

"We will be looking at what legal action we can take to remedy the deficiencies, including the cost to the state to date for operating a vessel with such deficient machinery," Richard Holden, deputy public works commissioner, said in an interview.

Holden gave the assessment after disclosing that the hardluck Columbia, commissioned two years ago as the flagship of Alaska's eight-ferry fleet was going into drydock about Oct. 15 for the second time this year.

Engineers discovered recently, Holden said, that one of the 418-foot-long vessel's two stack boilers was eaten away by corrosion caused by a faulty rust protection system.

The ferry, built by Lockheed Shipbuilding Division in Seattle, was in drydock for eight weeks this spring for repairs on her two huge diesel engines, which have suffered a total of about 24 cracked cylinder heads.

The vessel also has suffered from severe vibrations, broken bow guidance thrusters, and shutdowns in her fresh water evaporators.

Holden characterized the existing relationship between the state and Lockheed over the Columbia as "semi-legal and procedural."

"Our attorneys and their attorneys had earlier agreed on the correction of certain deficiencies like vibration, corrosion, the evaporators and several smaller items," Holden said. "And when the ship was last in dry dock we had some remedial work performed by Lockheed.

"But the question of the machinery—the engines and the boilers—is a different problem. We believe there are substantial deficiencies which Lockheed is obligated to remedy."

State Considers Action Over Columbia's Repairs

5-

11-54

Whose fault?

There were complaints from the state administration that the ferry system cost too much to operate. The answer was to reduce service to reduce the subsidy. So, they tied up the ferry Taku for the winter. For the first time in the history of the system a ship was laid up.

We can say that the reduction in service sure came about. In fact service has become so bad that the state's big reduction can be blamed for costing the taxpayers even more in subsidy, costing the traveling public a lot in inconvenience and costing the state in loss of revenue.

An added fiasco to ferry operations has been the remodeling of dining facilities, which is saving little considering the length of time it will take to amortize the investment, and considering the time the ferry Malaspina was out of service for modifications.

Then, what happened to that promised program of doing some ferry maintenance this winter in Ketchikan on an experimental basis? It never came about. This year with the ferry system the failure of the winter maintenance program is just one addition to a long list of failures.

Take the ferry schedule for example. The ferry system office in Juneau told the Daily News that the system is back on schedule this week. That is real news because there is a difference between the printed schedule and the service we are receiving. The printed schedule says that since March 2 there have been two trips a week out of Seattle, one on Tuesday and one on Friday. This is supposed to be the schedule until June 2. Then the Malaspina is supposed to move to the Prince Rupert run, leaving the Columbia alone on the Seattle run.

Those two trips a week out of Seattle, the money-making run for the state ferry system, have not materialized. The Columbia won't be back in service until June 4. We've had one ferry a week, which has resulted in cancelled reservations, backlogs of cars and passengers and a loss of revenue to the state. So, next year when the state lawmakers complain about the ferry system budget, they should put the blame where it belongs, on the state administration.

If the ferry system officials had kept the Taku running, they would have been able to keep their schedules. If they had performed some of the maintenance at Ketchikan, they would have saved considerably over flying crews to and from Seattle.

If they would just try to run a ferry system and give service, rather than reduce service and raise rates, they would find increasing business. They would have happy travelers and happy personnel with less subsidy requirement compared with overall gross business.

Proving The Boss Wrong

5-

DON HARRIS, state commissioner of public works, should be congratulated for the success of his plan to convert food service on state ferries to buffet style for the purpose of holding down expenses. His success, it must be noted, has been limited to only one of the eight ferries because Sen. Bill Ray, boss of the legislature, thwarted his plan to extend it to all the ferries.

That one ferry, the Malaspina, has turned in a profit on its food operations for the past two months. For May the profit was $7,000 and for June it climbed to $20,000. These profits are a striking contrast to the awesome deficits that had been incurred by the same ferry during the same months in the preceding year. The total deficit for those two months in 1975 was $134,000. Consequently the financial turnaround resulting from the buffet service in the first two months of operations was $161,000.

THE COMMISSIONER had programmed the conversion of the other seven ferries to the same buffet service but his plan ran on the rocks when Senator Ray sounded off loud and long. He was more interested in perpetuating the jobs of 42 waiters and other employes than he was in saving the taxpayers' money. Studies had shown that the dinners served on the ferries, with white-jacketed waiters, snowy white table linens and other elegance, cost the state $100 each. The customer paid only a tiny portion of the total cost.

As a result of Ray's dramatic opposition, the conversion program was halted. Only the Malaspina was equipped for the buffet service. Ray couldn't stop that conversion because it was under way and had already progressed too far.

IT IS HARDLY speculative when the Malaspina experience is projected to include the other seven ferries. The meals on those ferries are still being served in the high style with white jacket and all. Conversion to buffet service would certainly result in substantial savings, very probably equal to those on the Malaspina.

Thus it is reasonable to multiply the Malaspina profits by eight to calculate what Don Harris' original program might have netted the state had Senator Ray, instead of the program, been thwarted. Our pocket calculator indicates that eight times $161,000 is $1,288,000. That might have been the profit for May and June had the legislature not allowed Senator Ray to rule the roost in the Juneau halls of legislative wisdom.

For lack of figures to the contrary, it might also be calculated that the monthly losses from food service on the Malaspina in 1975 were about the same as on each of the other ferries. The Malaspina loss was $134,000 which, multiplied by eight to include the losses on all the ferries, totals $1,072,000.

While congratulating Commissioner Harris for discovering a way to cut ferry losses, it might also be appropriate to throw a dart to Senator Ray for limiting the conversion and to the members of the legislature who let Ray do it.

Maly makes money in cafeteria service

11-32

By BOB SPEED
Daily News Staff Writer

The state ferry Malaspina has vindicated a decision to convert its dining facilities to a buffet-style cafeteria by making money — something it never did with the old system, state ferry officials report.

State ferry officials took substantial statewide criticism when the decision was made last year to convert the more formal and fancy dining facilities complete with waiters to a cafeteria.

However, the profit-loss columns show a substantial switch from red to black ink. The dining room lost $90,000 in May of 1974 alone, while being open seven and a half hours.

In comparison, last month showed a $7,000 profit for the new cafeteria-style facility. In addition, the facility is open nearly 24 hours a day, and ferry system information officer Ginger Johnson said she expects an even bigger profit for the month of June.

State Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris said the initial results make the conversion to passenger self-service "very satisfactory," and ferry system officials say other ferries will probably be converted as well.

Over all, the Malaspina still operates at a loss, requiring subsidy from the state general fund. Ms. Johnson said the subsidy paid to the ferry system is not broken down into amounts per ship.

Harris called the passenger services profit "a good beginning" in administration plans to improve the ferry system's economic picture.

State ferry officials were criticized for the conversion, done in Bellingham, Wash., last winter. Part of the criticism centered on the fact the decision was made by ferry officials without legislative or public input. Critics said public hearings should have been held, while Gov. Jay Hammond defended the ferry officials' decision.

Critics also attacked the conversion itself, which did away with the fancy but costly formal dining room. However, ferry officials now say passengers have accepted the new facility.

Ms. Johnson said a "major factor in the profit of the cafeteria is its round-the-clock operation, which also gives passengers more flexibility in their meal patterns.

In addition, the operating staff was cut by seven positions, which actually amounts to 14 people because the Malaspina operates with a two-crew system.

State ferry officials have not yet decided which ferries will be converted next, although Ms. Johnson said such conversions are near certainties.

State asks for bids for POW terminal

5

The state department of highways began advertising for bids, today, on a new ferry terminal and access road at Clark Bay on Prince of Wales Island near Hollis.

Sealed bids will be received in Juneau until August 12 and the contract will be awarded soon after, according to Keith Hart, planner for the division of marine transportation.

A new Le Conte class state ferry is under construction and is expected to begin service between Ketchikan, Hollis and Metlakatla on May 1, 1977. The ferry terminal at Hollis is now served by the ferry Chilkat, but the facility cannot handle the new larger ship.

Hart said some modifications are also necessary for the Metlakatla ferry terminal. Because the project is smaller, bids won't be opened until later in the summer, he said. The larger Le Conte class ship will draw about six more feet of water than the Chilkat, he said, and some dredging may be necessary at the Metlakatla terminal.

The estimated cost of the Hollis terminal was not disclosed. The project includes 1.5 miles of access road and toilet facilities, but there are not plans for a terminal building.

The fate of the Chilkat has not been determined, Hart said, but he expected it might be sold. Cordova and Soldatna have asked that the ferry be used to suplement service in those areas. Hart said he couldn't see building a "half million dollars worth of terminals for a boat worth $100,000."

11-55

Southcentral Ferries Overbooked

Passengers Left On Shore

Reservations to ride the state ferry Tustumena were a dime a dozen earlier this month in Seward but 12 ticketed passengers were left ashore when the vessel pulled out for Valdez and Cordova.

Marine Transportation Director William Hudson attributed the July 9 mixup to doublebookings at Anchorage and Seward for the ferry's departure from Seward.

"Several of our key reservations staff in Anchorage were off on leave and we had a communications mixup," Hudson said.

Among those left behind was Paul Snow of Anchorage, a consumer education specialist with the Consumer Protection Agency.

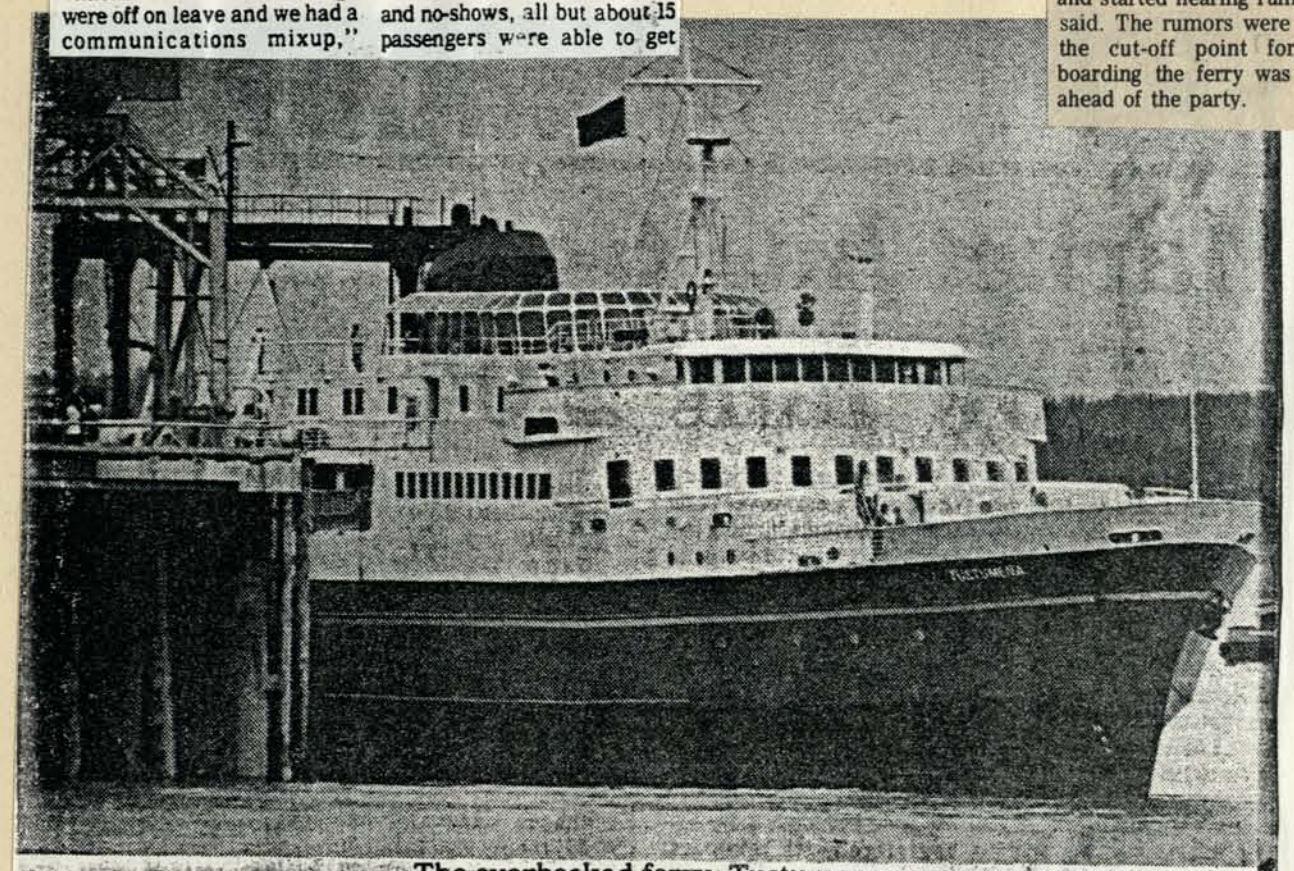
Snow said he had made reservations for the trip May 24.

"The line was cut off right in front of me," Snow said. "The official who came down the line said that they had oversold by about 60 tickets," but since there were some cancellations and no-shows, all but about 15 passengers were able to get aboard, he said.

A spokesman for the ferry system in Juneau yesterday estimated that about 12 ticketed passengers were left behind.

"When I got to Seward I heard a rumor that some of us might not get aboard," Snow said.

Snow said he was told the unused tickets would be refunded.



The overbooked ferry, Tustumena.

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Paul Snow has one memory of the two-day ferry tour of Prince William Sound: "Incredible disbelief that I was left standing at Seward at midnight, watching the boat sail away without me."

Snow was among 30 confirmed ticket holders left standing on the rain-soaked dock July 9 as the state ferry Tustumena headed for Valdez, Cordova and the acclaimed beauties of the sound.

Snow, an Anchorage resident, bought his ticket May 24. It was one of 150 tickets reserved six weeks before the sailing date by Florence Mason when she organized a group tour for the Prospectors' Club of Alaska.

Snow, a Vista volunteer, drove to Seward with four friends.

"We got in line a little after ten and started hearing rumors," he said. The rumors were true and the cut-off point for traffic boarding the ferry was one car ahead of the party.

"We kept hoping somehow at the last second they'd let us on, but it didn't happen," Snow said. The group spent the night in borrowed tents because they did not have enough cash for a hotel room, he said.

Snow intends to bill the state for gas used during the drive back to Anchorage.

"We're just embarrassed," Director of Marine Transportation Bill Hudson in Juneau said Tuesday.

Ms. Mason said more travellers were turned away at Cordova and Valdez on the same trip. The state has not confirmed her contention that the trip was oversold by 71 tickets. That figure would make it the worst, though not the first, overbooking this season.

Four complaints, including one from Snow, have been filed with Ombudsman Frank Flavin. The state troubleshooter said his office is looking into the problem.

Dennis Simonson of the ferry system visited Anchorage and Seward recently to probe the problem.

"This sort of thing does not happen often," he said. "This is the first summer it has happened this way."

He said the problem stemmed from new personnel in the Anchorage office and a misunderstanding between Anchorage and Seward reservation clerks.

"I am exceptionally disturbed by the breakdown in communication," Hudson said, adding overbookings were "infrequent, except for an isolated case here and there." He said customers complaining about reservations usually had received wrong information "here and there."

He said the division hopes to acquire and install a computer reservations system in early 1977.

Unhappy ferry tale

Left high and wet

By NANCY DOHERTY
Daily News Staff Writer

The two - day ferry tour of Prince William Sound is reputed to be one of the most spectacular and memorable trips you can take in Alaska. But Anchorage resident Paul Snow says his memory of a recent ferry experience evokes just one vivid emotion: "Incredible disbelief that I was left standing in Seward at midnight, watching the boat sail away without me."

On July 9 he and at least 30 other confirmed ticket holders were left, high though not dry, when the ferry Tustumena pulled out of its rain - slicked dock, en route to Valdez, Cordova and the vaunted beauties of the sound.

The Prospectors' Club of Alaska had organized a special group tour for the weekend, complete with entertainment.

The club's head, Florence Mason of Anchorage, says she reserved 150 places on the ship six weeks earlier through the local State Ferry System office. She was assured there would be no problems.

PAUL SNOW, a Vista volunteer, bought his ticket May 24. He drove down to Seward with four friends that Friday, looking forward to two days of partying and enjoying the scenic wonders. "We got on line a little after ten and started hearing rumors," he said.

The rumors turned out to be right. The person in front of Snow was the last one allowed on board. "We kept hoping somehow at the last second they'd let us on, but it didn't happen." So he and his friends consoled themselves with beer and — because they had not brought enough cash for a motel — spent the night outside in borrowed tents. Snow says he intends to bill the state for the gas used during the next day's mournful drive back to Anchorage.

According to Florence Mason, who made it aboard, more people were turned away that weekend at both Valdez and Cordova. She claims the trip was oversold by 71 tickets (a figure that has not been confirmed by the ferry system), making it the worst, but not the first, of the overbookings this season.

SNOW AND three other would - be passengers bumped from ferries in two separate incidents have filed complaints with the state ombudsman's office. Ombudsman Frank Flavin said this week that his office was looking into the problem.

Meanwhile, Dennis Simonson of the Juneau - based Division of Marine Transportation visited Anchorage and Seward recently to investigate the reservations confusion. "This sort of thing does not happen often," he said last Friday. "This is the first summer it has happened this way."

Simonson blamed the overbookings on personnel problems in the Anchorage office, which he said is being manned almost entirely by new people, still trying to learn the system. He said the July 9 fiasco was due to a misunderstanding during a telephone call between the Anchorage and Seward reservations clerks.

THE ANCHORAGE clerk who worked with the Prospectors' Club trip said she had been told not to discuss the situation with the press. The Seward office referred any questions back to Simonson.

"I am exceptionally disturbed by the breakdown in communication," Director of Marine Transportation Bill Hudson said Tuesday. "We're just embarrassed."

He called such overbookings "infrequent, except for an isolated case here and there." He said the few disgruntled customers who complained about ferry reservations usually had received "wrong information here and there."

ACCORDING TO Hudson, the ferry system is now in the market for a computer reservations system, similar to those used by airlines, which would eliminate future "mess-ups" such as the Tustumena snafu. He hopes to have it in operation by the beginning of 1977.

...n rule
...licted

...rt, 85, 1692 Haxt
...sday of a self-i...
...und, Robert Roo
coroner, said.
...ody was found at 6:...
residence by his son-in-...
Palm, 1976 Lummi

...n County sheriff's depu...
...stigating the r... ...r f...und a
...rifle in Lo... ...und. A
...tridg... ...n the
...r th...
...for ...

LOCKERT, John J., Age 85 of 1692 Haxton Way passed away Thursday August 19. He had been a 50 year resident of the community and was former owner of Lockert Typewriters. He is survived by 2 daughters Mrs. Gladys Richards of Douglas, Alaska and Mrs. Annette L. Palm of Bellingham, 1 son Herbert J. Lockert, of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, 4 grandchildren Carol Cramer, John Lockert, James and John Palm, 2 great grandchildren, 2 sisters and 1 brother and many nieces and nephews. At his request no funeral services were held. Cremation under the direction of the WEST FORD FUNERAL HOME.

11-56

Computerized Format May Improve Ferry System

The Alaska ferry system may operate with a more efficient ticketing process by next summer if plans to convert ticketing to a computerized format work out.

Bill Hudson, director of the division of marine transportation, said yesterday that Gov. Jay Hammond has approved a request for $450,000 for the program.

"We're shooting for early January 1977," Hudson said. "That period is critical if we are to have it (the computer system) to handle what we think will be a tremendous summer next year."

In the past, the manual method of handling reservations was sufficient because of lesser traffic demands, Hudson said. But last year the ferry system transported about 270,000 people and 60,000 vehicles and projections indicate an even larger demand this year and next.

Although a study conducted a year ago indicated that the ferry system was not yet ready for computerized reservations, Hudson said he thinks the division is now ready for the more sophisticated system.

"As director I've received many comments from people who've had a difficult time making and confirming reservations," he said. At present, a person wishing to make a reservation in Anchorage for ferry service from Haines to Seattle must wait while the request is relayed to Juneau, where it has to be checked through the manual system there, then called back to Anchorage before the reservation can be confirmed.

"With our old volumes (of traffic) this didn't present so much of a problem," Hudson said. "But with the higher number of people wanting reservations it's just too cumbersome."

Though the new system has not been approved finally, the Department of Public Works has sought bids for providing it. Hudson said that at last count at least five interested parties had responded to the bid requests.

"The new system might be operated through a computer of our own or through a leasing system where we would use a computer belonging to someone else," Hudson said. With it, ticketing personnel at any of the system's 17 terminals could "instantaneously get complete details" about passenger or vehicle space availability on a particular ferry trip.

Exactly how much the system will cost won't be known until the bids are tabulated, but "a ballpark figure might be anywhere from $300,000 for initial acquisition to $400,000 to $450,000 a year" thereafter, Hudson said. The ferry system could save possibly as much as $100,000 to $200,000 a year by eliminating many of the mostly temporary employes now required in the Juneau office to maintain the current reservations sytem, as well as reducing the number of no-shows at the dock.

The proposed computerized system, "almost identical to the airlines system," would be "a tremendous improvement in public service," Hudson said. "We know it would be more efficient, and allow us to more fully utilize our whole traffic system."

"The final cost will be the lowest priced system we can come up with," he said.

FERRY HEARING SET

Doug Burton, traffic manager for the Juneau office of the marine highway system, will be in Ketchikan Tuesday to hold a public meeting. Burton will discuss schedules, tariffs and plans for the system at 8 p.m. in the conference room of the state office building.

Ferry maintenance sites studied

The state ferry system is studying the possibility of using an Alaska site for winter maintenance of its ships—and it appears as if Ketchikan tops the list of possible choices.

Though William Hudson, director of the state Division of Marine Transportation, said Ketchikan has "not in my mind" been selected, a study by private consultants points to Ketchikan as the best site.

Hudson did caution, however, that it is not yet certain that a winter maintenance site for state ferries will be built in Alaska. Currently the ships travel to Seattle for drydock and in-water maintenance.

Hudson said his office "has not yet decided if it is feasible" to undertake such a project and must still "determine its costs."

The site, if constructed, would not include a drydock facility. Drydock work would continue to be done in Seattle.

Hudson said, "at the very earliest...we would seek funds from the legislature next session." He added it would be the winter of 1977-78, at the earliest, before any maintenance work would be done in the new facility, if it is planned.

Hudson said the ferry system "may try a test program this winter in Ketchikan or elsewhere to acquire statistics" before deciding whether or not to seek state funds next year.

He said ferry system winter maintenance costs "have been escalating dramatically in recent years," and that the "largest part of winter maintenance is labor costs." He did not have a total maintenance bill available, but said labor costs are in excess of $2 million.

The Alaska maintenance site probably would not be run by the state, but rather built by the state and leased to a private company. Or the state could provide a low-interest loan to a private company for construction of the facility. Suggestions that the state not operate the facility were made by private consultants hired by the state. The consultants' study cost the state $30,000.

An experimental maintenance schedule was prepared for Ketchikan last winter, but due to scheduling problems with the ferries the project was never completed.

The consultants' study reportedly considered six possible winter sites, but narrowed the field to Juneau, Ketchikan and Kodiak, and recommended Ketchikan as the most logical.

George Ballum new ticket agent for ferry system

George Ballum, owner and operator of Cordova Cleaners, is the new ticket agent for the state ferry system in Cordova. Ballum replaces Elmer Wentworth, who has served as ticket agent for 12 years. The announcement became official yesterday.

Prospective passengers may purchase their ferry tickets at the ticket office usually an hour to two hours prior to departure. The office is located on the right-hand side of the road approaching the city docking area. For tourists who may find these directions confusing, the city dock is where the state ferry ties up, and is on the same road which goes to New England cannery, northwest of town.

Ballum, who applied for the ticket agent's job once several years ago, has offered a variety of suggestions to the state Division of Marine Transportation in Juneau to improve the Cordova office.

"We've got a big sign around the back of the building," he said, "that should be moved around front so people can see that that's the ticket office. And I've asked them to cleanup the junk around the building, and furnish some signs for arrivals and departures, so passengers can see at a glance, and I won't have to go over this every time."

The ferry schedule, in case there are people who are unaware of its arrivals and departures, is published on page 9 of this newspaper.

When the ticket office is not in use, passengers may purchase tickets at Cordova Cleaners on Second Street.

Ballum urged all ferry passengers to be at the terminal at least an hour before departure, and campers and cars with trailers should be there about two hours early.

For traffic larger than a car or camper, such as a 40-foot trailer, special arrangements must be made with Ballum and the ship prior to loading.

A one-way ticket for a foot passenger on the Valdez/Cordova run is $11. Fare for an automobile being shipped one way is $32; so for a person in a car, the fare is $43 one way. Children between 6-11 are admitted for $5 (one way).

Certain pets may be carried aboard the ferry, but Ballum said regulations are very strict about transporting animals on the system. They must be contained in an approved enclosure, he said.

Traffic to and from Valdez is steady, but it will hit its peak in September. At that time, Ballum said he would "certainly have to have an assistant," but has made no decision on it yet.

STATE

JUNEAU—A Public Works Department official Wednesda issued a legislative audit report critical of the state ferry system.

Deputy Commissioner Richard Holden admitted problems, bu blamed them on the previous administration.

Budget and Audit Committee Chairman Ed Naughton has said the report indicates no one is in charge of the ferry system and the state is getting ripped off.

Holden says when Commissioner Donald Harris took over in May of 1975, there was no uniformity in bookkeeping or inventory, and no management practices.

Letter to the Editor

This is a copy of a letter to the Honorable Jay Hammond.

My Dear Sir:

Since Sitka is making news recently on the radio and elsewhere about that Sitka may be cut off the ferry system run and only the shuttle ferries will accommodate us. I feel obliged to make a few comments as to our own experience in traveling the ferry system. And, I might add, I can see why some of the reasons the system is in the red.

Going south on April 17, we were called to dinner in the dining room, and although there were three waiters, and only about 4 or 5 tables occupied, we waited an hour and a half for our dinner. We ordered a couple of drinks, and waited. My husband went to our state room for cigarettes, and waited some more. Finally, in disgust, we left the dining room and stopped by the cashiers desk to explain why. Just then the waiter brought our dinner in. You can guess we were in no mood to eat dinner by that time. There were two dinners wasted, and I can imagine many more people told us of the same problem that they had. We used the snack bar after that, but was that satisfactory? No, it was not. When we asked for a hamburger, we were told the griddle wasn't hot. Well, why wasn't it hot? And when we asked for a hot roll with our coffee in the morning, the waitress very reluctantly said, "Well, I'll have to go heat it in the kitchen." The little signs that say 5 cents for a spoon, 10 cents for a fork etc. is pretty cheap to say the least, when it is not sterling silver but throw away plastic items, and extra for cream and extra for sugar. Why not charge more for the coffee, or salad, or whatever, and the accutriments which goes with it for free? If private restaurants were run this way, they would all go broke. If you want to make money it had better be operated by a private concern not the state, or national government, for that matter.

On our return from Mexico, we decided in Oregon, we had better try to make reservations for the ferry in Prince Rupert to Sitka, as we were driving a car. We checked at a travel agency in Newport, and at Tillamook Oregon. The lady in Tillamook sadly shook her head and told us that she had been turning people away for weeks as the Alaska ferries were booked solid till October!

This I could hardly believe, so I called our daughter-in-law here in Sitka, and she gave me three reservation phone numbers in Juneau for me to call. We called these numbers. The phone operator was so nice and stayed with the calling of those numbers for over three-quarters of an hour. Nothing but busy, busy, busy. She said and I do believe, "the phones seemed to be off the receiver." So we decided to take our chances and get to Prince Rupert, which we did on Monday a.m., where we immediately went to the ferry offices. When I told the lady there what a time we had trying to get reservations, she was shocked. We were no. 1 on standby, but could have left next a.m. had we wanted to get off in Petersburg and change ferries, but we opted for the direct ferry to Sitka on Thursday. Had no problem getting aboard and that included a stateroom. They later announced how large the ferry was, room for 500 passengers but there were only 250 passengers aboard. I wondered how many there could have been had the Travel Agent in Tillamook Oregon not had to turn all those passengers that wanted to come, away?

What's wrong with the management of the ferry system. Wouldn't it be far better to lease these ships to private concerns? It makes me angry to think we the taxpayer has to support this poorly handled, mismanaged ferry line, that is slowly dying yet we so desperately need and must depend on it for our highway.

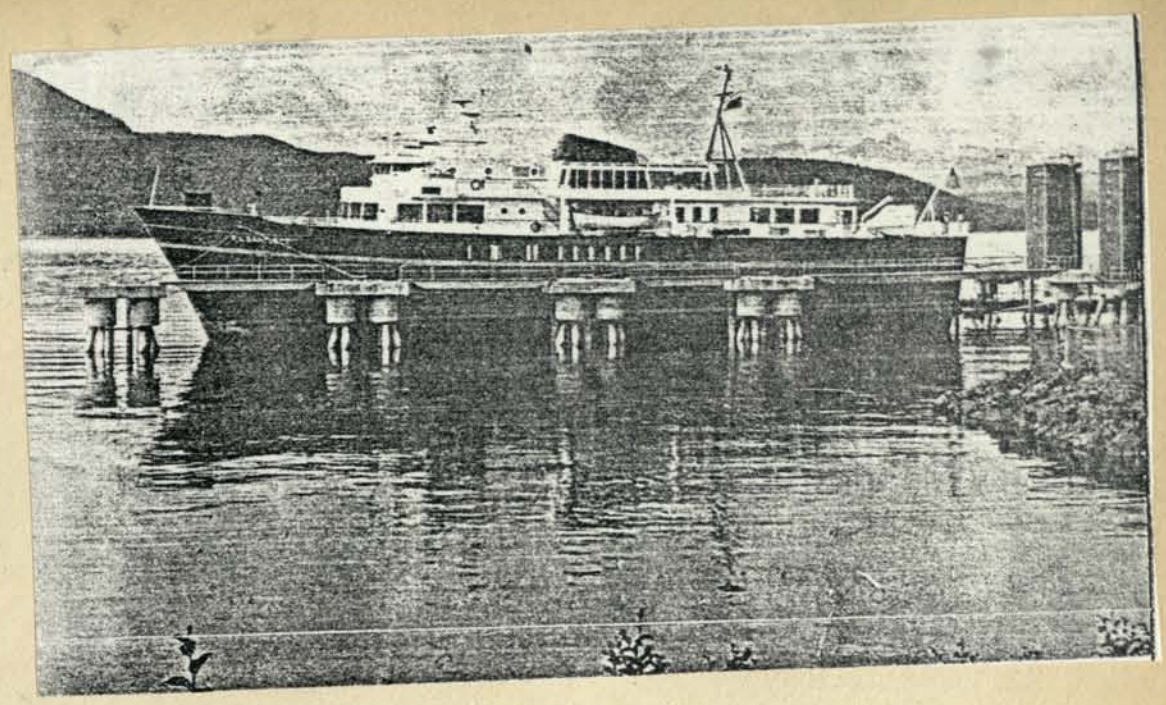
Mr. Hammond, you'd better do something about this, or this one vote and many, more more just like it won't be marking the X by the Hammond name come the future election.

Sincerely,
Mrs. K. J. Marvin
Star Route
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Alaska ferry flagship goes into drydock

SEATTLE (UPI) — The flagship of the Alaska ferry fleet, the Columbia, will go into winter drydock at Lockheed Shipbuilding Co. in Seattle for a major maintenance and overhaul program to correct chronic problems aboard the $20 million vessel.

William Hudson, director of Alaska ferries, said the need for major repairs results from a combination of poor designs by Lockheed, inadequate construction specifications and political expediency on the part of former Gov. William Egan's administration.



M/V E.L. Barltett makes her 1,000th voyage

When the M/V E. L. Bartlett left Valdez last Saturday for Whittier, the captain's log read "ex Valdez en route to Whittier", just as it has countless times before. But the voyage was marked by one ceremonial element—it was the Bartlett's 1,000th voyage.

And a good voyage it was. Capt. Ron Hamrick said the vessel was booked solid—170 passengers and 38 vehicles is the capacity of the 193-foot long state ferry. With all those passengers, the 24-person crew is kept busy. "It was just another working day for us," Hamrick said.

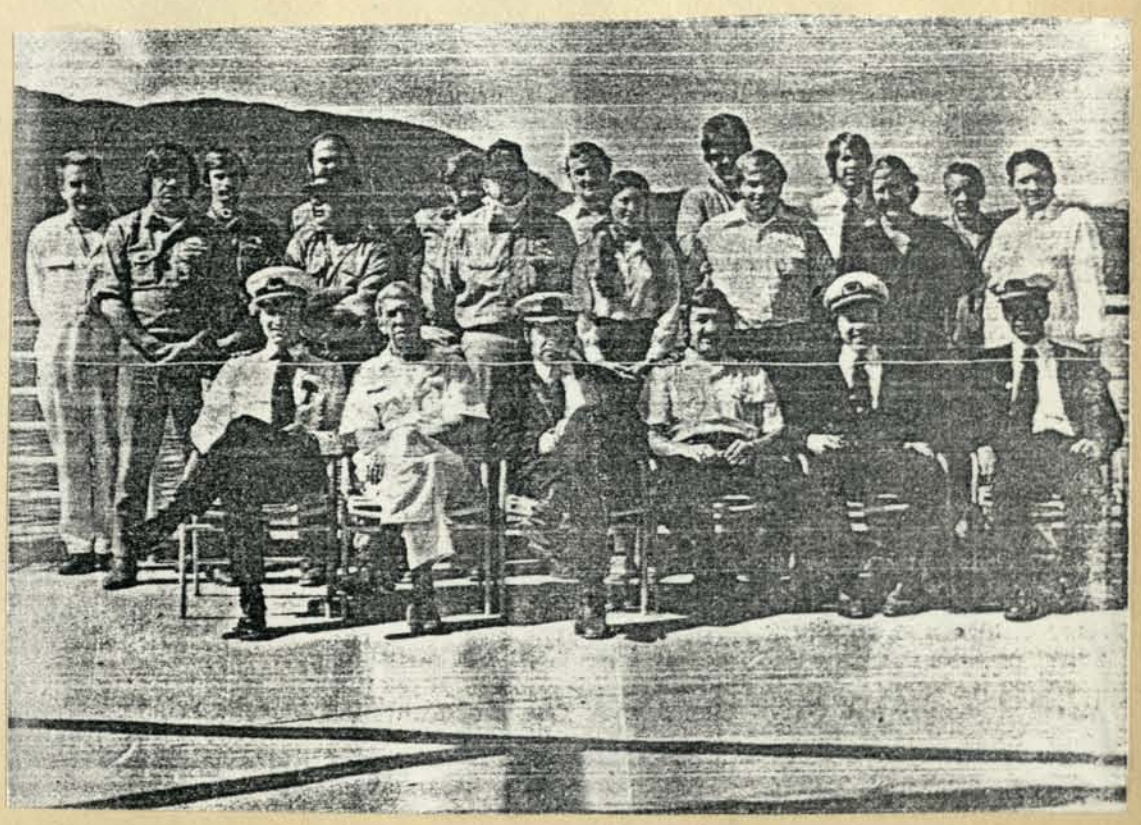
Commissioned in 1969, the Bartlett made her first voyage from Cordova to Valdez on July 10 of that year. Master Richard T. Hostad was skipper of the vessel, and chief engineer was Hugh McDonald.

In the seven years the Bartlett has been serving Alaska, she has carried 137,692 passengers, and allowed them a spectacular view of Columbia Glacier exactly 1,312 times. The glacier was missed only once because of fog, the captain said. Hamrick has been master during most of those sightseeing trips—a total of 1,134 times.

The Barlett has logged in 212,937 miles, and her engines have 16,600 hours on them. "We've never postponed trips due to mechanical failure or weather," Hamrick said, although the ferry's schedule has been juggled to accommodate school ball teams at times.

This summer's ferry traffic shows an increase over last summer's, Hamrick said. Average summer traffic is 21,000 passengers and 5,000 automobiles. The Bartlett continues serving Cordova and Valdez most of the winter, but drops their Whittier voyage in the fall due to the weather and seas.

"I think she's the cleanest ship in the fleet," Hamrick asserted proudly. "I know we have the cleanest engine room in the fleet—that thing sparkles!"



VOYAGE NO. 1,000—The summer crew of the Bartlett. Left to right, back row: Arthur E. Mack, first assistant engineer; Bill Cronin, bo'sun; John Stables, deck watchman; J. Wayne Johnson, seaman; Jerry Manley, seaman; Brian Spurling, chief cook; Bryan Lewis, steward; and Cline Reese, oiler. Second row, left to right: Don Peterson, seaman; Chambers, seaman; W.D. Little, seaman; Janice Baron, steward; Robert Crachino, second assistant cook; Wes Cade, oiler; Norbert Knudel, steward. Front row, left to right. Capt. Ronald D. Hamrick, master; J.D. Krepps, chief engineer; Bill Stidd, chief purser; Michael G. Anderson, chief steward; James M. Soucie, chief mate; Edward Barnes, second mate. The crew is decreased by seven in the winter months.

Out Of Control?

State Ferry System Knocked By Report

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Alaska's ferry system is "out of control" because of inadequate inventory controls and management difficulties, according to a legislative audit.

"The thrust of our report is that nobody's in charge and that the state is getting ripped off," said Budget and Audit Committee Chairman Ed Naughton.

The Democratic representative from Kodiak said the Division of Legislative Audit report indicated "almost nonexistent inventory controls," poor supervision of supplies, inadequate liquor control and crew meal costs are key factors in the difficulties.

Naughton said ferry crew members "have been allowed to order directly from the menu in ferry dining rooms, and the average cost per person is $36.93 every day."

He said losses due to poor inventory control is potentially a more serious problem. The audit indicated liquor unaccounted for could result in a revenue loss of more than $20,000.

Food also is unaccounted for, Naughton said, adding, "We couldn't prove that it walked away, but the records sure don't show that it didn't."

Naughton said the poor records system makes it impossible to determine whether recent changes are saving money.

"There's no way to make a statement like, 'We're saving money compared to last year,'" he said. "There just isn't any information base to make those judgments."

And in a recent interview with the Ketchikan Daily News, Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris said state acceptance of the ferry Columbia was a "tragic mistake."

Harris said the commissioner in 1974 was forced to take delivery when the administration of former Gov. William A. Egan failed to extend a waiver from the federal government to operate the Wickersham, the foreign-built vessel used formerly.

Operation of such a ship in American ports is prohibited by the federal Jones Act. A limited waiver had been granted for use of the vessel in Alaska's ferry system.

The Columbia was commissioned two years ago. Problems with its engines, bow thruster, piping system, ventilation system, evaporators and vibration have resulted in numerous repairs. The ship has missed several of its scheduled runs between Seattle and Haines.

The state Division of Marine Transportation recently announced the vessel will be taken out of service in October for replacement of corroded pipes in one of its stack boilers.

Harris said the state declined the federal government's offer to extend the Wickersham waiver another year. When the Wickersham went out of service, the state was forced to accept the Columbia too soon, he said.

Richard Holden, Public Works Department deputy commissioner, said Wednesday the report's general conclusions of inadequate inventory controls and poor supervision over supplies were accurate, but stemmed from "the informal way things were done" prior to the administration of Gov. Jay Hammond.

"We inherited a real mess with the ferry system when Commissioner (Donald) Harris took over in May of 1975," Holden said. "It was in a shambles.

"There was no uniformity in bookeeping or inventory, and there were no management practices. Everytime we turned over a rock, something else would pop out. We've been working on it hard but it takes time to implement a whole new accounting and management system."

Holden also flatly disputed the audit claim on the cost of crew meals, saying that stewards' estimates of a cost of $6.50 per day, per crew member "has been verified by costs of running food service for crew while the vessles have been in dry dock status."

Holden also challenged Naughton's claim that the department's accounting system makes it impossible to determine if new procedures are saving the state money.

"Admittedly, we can't totally compare what we are doing now to previous years because of the bad bookeeping of the past," Holden said. "Prior to May 1975, they didn't even keep expense books by ship. But we're now doing that and we are saving money."

Holden said accounting records clearly show, for example, that the ferry Malaspina, which has been converted from restaurant to cafeteria food service, showed a 20,047 profit in June of this year as compared to a $43,844 loss for June of 1975.

Legislative Audit Report

The Bremerton Sun Wednesday, Aug. 18, 1976

Alaskan Ferry System Called 'Out Of Control'

Alaska official disputes findings in audit of state ferry system

JUNEAU — (AP) — A high-ranking Public Works Department official has challenged key sections of a critical legislative audit of the state ferry system and blamed acknowledged management deficiencies on the previous administration.

According to Representative Ed Naughton, Kodiak Democrat who is chairman of the Budget and Audit Committee, the report disclosed that "nobody's in charge and that the state is getting ripped off."

Richard Holden, Public Works Department deputy commissioner, said the report's general conclusions of inadequate inventory controls and poor supervision over supplies are accurate. But he said they stem from "the informal way things were done" before the administration of Gov. Jay Hammond.

Holden took exception to charges that auditors discovered $20,000 worth of liquor missing and that the state was paying $36.93 a day for meals for each crew member.

He said the auditors failed to account for the transfer of $7,000 worth of liquor between vessels and maintained that the remainder of the unaccounted-for supplies was traced to bookkeeping errors and not stealing, and that meal costs have been verified at ..6.50 a day for a crew member.

Hammond vetoes bill for citizens' review of ferry system

JUNEAU—Legislation creating a citizens' board to review operations of the state ferry system was quashed recently by Gov. Jay Hammond.

In vetoing the measure, Hammond also killed a vehicle the legislature devised for him to set up a Department of Transportation for consideration by lawmakers next year.

The ferry board was vested with a host of powers to review operations, including yearly budget requests, although it was labeled an "advisory" committee.

Some of the committee's authority, Hammond said, "involves a questionable or confusing invasion by both legislators and advisory committees in administrative functions," going "far beyond the scope" of other such boards.

During the closing days of the legislative session, the senate attached to the ferry bill what legislators described at the time as authority for Hammond to create a transportation agency through executive order.

Hammond could take such a step anyway to combine the functions of the Departments of Highways and Public Works, a marriage that has been debated for the last decade.

Stetson Begins Duties As State Port Captain

Herb Stetson, a 17 year resident of Seward, assumed his duties as Port Captain for the Division of Marine Transportation on July 16th. His appointment to the third highest position in the ferry system necessitated his moving to Juneau.

Stetson's new position consists of being in charge of all port facilities for the state ferries in the various communities served by the system, hiring of personnel, maintenance and selection of new harbors and dock facilities. Stetson anticipates some improvements and changes in existing facilities.

Stetson came to Seward as an agent for the Alaska Steamship Company. He owned his own tug and barge firm for some years and has been with the state ferry Tustumena for the past five years.

Stetson graduated from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy in 1939 and spent many years in the merchant marine service and related work.

Stetson's wife Gwen and daughter Rebecca will be moving to Juneau later this month. Gwen intends to return to Seward in the summers to continue operation of Gwen's Garden Centre, which supplies plants and garden materials. Gwen also does landscaping, having the contract for the 1st National Bank "mini-park" and the Bayside Apartments, among others. The Stetson's will rent out their house.

Gwen is proud of Herb's new appointment. "Not only is Seward gaining another position in state government, but the Port Captain is actually an Alaskan this time," she says.

Congratulations Herb, and best wishes to the whole family!

11-59

EDITOR, Daily News:

I, James M. Clay, am employed on the MV Columbia of the Alaska Marine Highway system in the capacity of Able Seaman.

During our last two voyages there have been women crew members berthed with men crew members in the same room. The women held the jobs of watchman and oiler. Since men have always held these positions now problems as to berthing have come up before.

On our last trip these women crew members were asked to move to the women's quarters. The woman holding the watchman job agreed which I considered an intelligent and considerate move. The woman holding the oiler job wouldn't move and this caused, to say the least, a lot of unhappy feelings amongst the crew.

The right of women to hold men's jobs, if they can handle them, I won't dispute. But I do object to women sharing a room with a man who is not her husband while employed on our ships.

If a crew member was caught with a passenger member of the opposite sex in his room while on the ship in a working capacity it would be grounds for immediate dismissal.

Why should the morality or legality of the situation change because she is employed at the time?

When we stand watches north of Ketchikan they are six hours on and six hours off. In this case only one person is in the room at a time. When we leave Ketchikan heading for Seattle our watches are four hours on and eight hours off therefore for four hours two people must share the same room at the same time for sleeping.

I have not had to share my room on the ship with a woman yet but the possibility does exist.

I consider myself to be a reasonably intelligent and flexible person who is not given to lecture people on their moral preferences, but after considerable thought I will state my objections to this situation as follows:

I have been married for eleven years and have compelte trust in my wife, but if she held a job that required her to share a sleeping room with a man for seven days at a time, or even one day, I would insist that she quit. I don't feet that she or any wife should have to agree to having another woman share her husband's bedroom. I feel that a woman sharing my room on the ship would cause me problems at home and on the ship.

No matter how well adjusted a person is, if he is human, he is effected by his senses of sight, smell, etc and I think that most, if not all of us would be affected by a strange woman sharing our room. Probably with loss of sleep and at least with some mental and physical discomfort.

I feel that women have a right to work, but when their rights extend to the point where they are effecting me and my family in an adverse manner my rights as a human being have been encroached upon and I do object to that.

Sincerely,
JAMES M. CLAY
3104 Tongass
Ketchikan, Ak.

Crewpersons Share Same Cabins on Alaska Ferries

Don PAGE
Marine Writer

Tally a score for women's liberation aboard Alaska state Ferries. A sociological formula of tomorrow may be brewing — and sometimes bubbling — in crews' quarters of the boats that call on Seattle and coastal Alaska cities. For about a year now the state has been assigning men and women crew members to share cabins aboard the ferries.

Not routinely, and not as part of some sociological experiment. But more and more often lately circumstances have forced crewmen (oops, crewpersons) to double up unisex-style.

THE DIRECTOR of Alaska's Marine Transport Division, Bill Hudson, didn't reply to our calls this week, but Greg O'Claray, Alaska Region vice president of the Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific, confides:

"This is one of the most emotional issues we have to deal with today in the maritime industry. The industry just isn't prepared with facilities to keep up with the changing times . . . It's a particularly delicate issue in the domestic relationship between men and their wives at home."

SINCE AUGUST, 1975, some women have been sleeping in men's quarters aboard the state ferries, O'Claray tells us. The situation has come about principally through women's stepping into traditional male roles in the deck and engine departments.

There are about 10 women in those departments now, but there'll be more. The ferry system is working under a conciliation agreement with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission to work toward 42 per cent female employment aboard the boats. Right now there are about 70 women among Alaska Ferries' 400 crewpersons, most of them in the stewards department.

THE STATE FERRY SYSTEM started out fairly skittishly about protecting the virtue of women in its crews. A few years ago when it first hired cocktail waitresses, the state considered having them get off the boats to spend their nights ashore.

Today there's some sexual doubling up in stewards quarters, O'Claray says, when an odd number of men and women are in the crew. And in deck and engine room departments, there's another complication. Aboard the boats there's a specific bunk assigned to each crew position, and as O'Claray says, "the women don't want to play musical chairs."

DON'T GET THE IDEA that changing times have transformed Alaska ferries into floating love nests. On most runs watchstanders stand eight hours on and eight off, and cabinmates' watches are juggled so the occupants are in the cabins at different times.

The run between Ketchikan and Seattle is an exception to that rule. South of Ketchikan watches run four hours on and eight off, and that can raise problems. Like a recent voyage of the Columbia, when a woman watchman and a woman oiler were offered space together in women's quarters. The watchman agreed, but the militant oiler dug in her heels. Able Seaman James Clay was not directly affected, but he wrote the Ketchikan Daily News:

"The right of women to hold men's jobs, if they can handle them, I don't dispute. But I do object to women sharing a room with a man who is not her husband while employed on our ships . . . I have been married for 11 years and have complete trust in my wife, but if she held a job that required her to share a sleeping room with a man, I would insist that she quit."

Clay thinks a woman sharing his room would give him problems aboard and at home.

"No matter how well adjusted a person is," he wrote, "if he is human, he is affected by his senses of sight, smell, etc, and I think that most, if not all, of us would be affected by a strange woman sharing our room."

NO HOMES HAVE BROKEN UP over the cabin situation, so far as O'Claray knows, and no men have quit their jobs. Several of the women are married, including the militant oiler of the Columbia. The system tries to assign mixed quarters to single, rather than married, men, to keep from worrying the little women at home.

Of course, aboard ship as everywhere else, there's more hankypank in imagination and conversation than in reality. Union leader O'Claray thinks he sees an interesting age trend. People over 40 accept the new situation. People under 30 cope with it fairly well. It's the people between 30 and 40 who stew over it.

AS TO HIS RESPONSIBILITY, O'Claray says, "We union officers are right in the middle, and the company officers are, too. Our attorneys advise us we can't do a thing about it. We just have to see if we can make it work."

And O'Claray adds:

"I'll give the membership a lot of credit for keeping their heads about this."

Ferries, fireworks on assembly agenda

An ordinance to prohibit the use or sale of fireworks in the borough, resolution to name the new state ferry and a resolution rename the borough ferries, are part of a full agenda facing the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly when it meets tonight at 8 p.m.

The assembly will also consider two zoning changes and vote on a resolution to change the structure of the planning department.

Public hearings are scheduled from 7:30 until the meeting begins on the proposed zoning changes, an ordinance to establish an assessment role for residents of Shoreline Drive service area, an ordinance to repeal provisions for the borough attorney's and Clerk's contracts and the ordinance prohibiting fireworks.

Resolution 232 requests the Governor to name the new LeConte class ferry, "Chickamin" after the glacier and river of the same name. The resolution said the Chickamin Glacier is the largest in the Ketchikan area. Ketchikan will be the home base for the new ship.

Resolution 234 would establish a contest for renaming the two airport ferries operated by the borough. An unspecified award would be given to the best Alaskan name chosen. The ferries are currently named the Abnaki and the Algonquin, which they received while working for the state of Vermont on Lake Champlain.

An ordinance allowing the borough manager to waive the airport ferry rates under certain conditions will also be introduced. That ordinance said the manager can waive the fee for people traveling free by authorization of the Civil Aeronautics Board, the State of Alaska, or the Division of Marine Transportation. The fee could also be waived for government officials in the community on borough business and special groups traveling in a national or commemorative entertainment capacity.

An item to discuss the wilderness area proposal of Sen. Mike Gravel, D-Alaska, is also on the agenda.

Official Disputes Ferry Report Charge

11-60

ARGUS

The Pacific Northwest's Independent Magazine of News, Comment and Opinion

Volume 83, No. 23 June 4, 1976 25c

The Probable Blues of Bellingham Bay

By DUFF WILSON

Bellingham appears to have missed a boat it wanted very much to catch, the Alaska ferry.

Alaska's quiet but serious study on the feasibility of moving its only Puget Sound ferry terminal from Seattle (as if the Port of Seattle did not have enough problems), to Bellingham has been underway for over a year. The rationale was to look for savings over the next few years, and room for expansion after that.

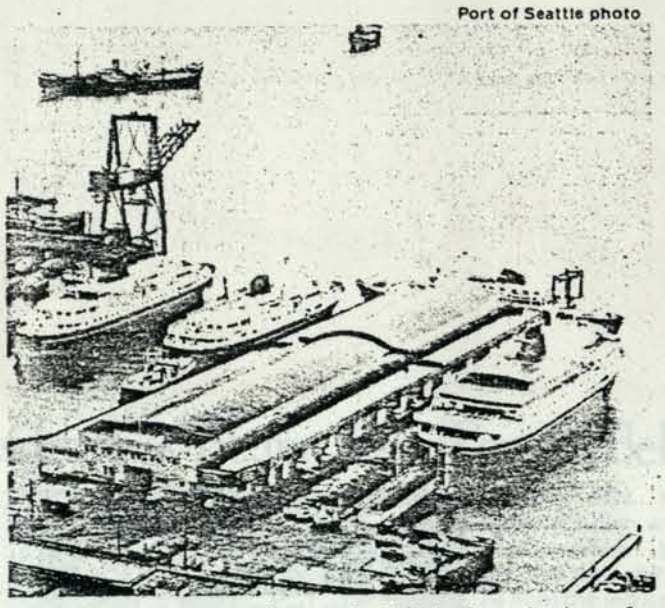
Though final word is not due until early July, it seems that Seattle will remain the southern terminus of the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS), and the Port of Bellingham's dream to attract the glamorous Alaska ferry will remain wishful thinking.

That is the bottom line of Alaska's recent relocation study which pitted Seattle's crowded but existing Pier 48 facility against Bellingham's new, spacious plan, described by the director of Alaska ferries as "a Cadillac proposal."

AMHS director Bill Hudson told Port of Seattle real estate director Glenn Lansing last week that a move to Bellingham is unlikely . . . but still possible.

The politics involved are delicate. Both cities' port officials want to make their best case, but not too forcefully; that would be counterproductive. The AMHS resembles many budding institutions with bright futures in its lust for political independence. It hired an Alaskan consultant to study the economics of moving its southern terminus from Elliot Bay to Bellingham Bay.

Port of Seattle photo



Pier 48, before the waterfront park. Will the boats be there after 1978?

Ketchikan economist Kent Miller was retained in January, with a budget of about $8,000, to do the primary fact-finding study on the feasibility of a move. Miller submitted a draft report March 27. But ferry officials thought the consultant's work incomplete, inaccurate in parts, and biased toward Seattle. " . . . Based on preliminary information, Bellingham didn't come out as well as we had thought," Don Harris, Alaska's public works commissioner, told the Associated Press.

Miller was asked to improve parts of his report. He submitted, in his words, "my recommendations and final report" two weeks ago.

It "generally favors Seattle over Bellingham," said Keith Hart, project manager of the terminal reevaluation. But Hart was "not sure we agree with some of the basic findings and recommendations" in Miller's report. The major problem was that different time frames for Seattle and Bellingham made comparative costs unclear.

The AMHS now plans to review the Miller report and other studies, its own and the ports'. AMHS Director Hudson and Public Works Commissioner Harris are expected to make their final recommendation by July 1 (it was originally expected by April 1). In the event it advocates a move, this decision would be reviewed by Alaska's governor and legislature.

The best bet is that the Alaska ferry terminus will remain at Seattle's Pier 48, at the foot of Main St. — but final-hour negotiations could tip the balance toward Bellingham, despite Miller's report. Tom Glenn, general manager of the Port of Bellingham, noted that he has not yet received an Alaskan response to his proposed ferry plan, which could be amended.

Seattle's neighbor 90 miles to the north, in the best entrepreneural tradition, is eager to entice the ferry. As the Bellingham Herald noted on Jan. 1, 1976:

"This community's interest in the Alaska ferries dies hard and revives easily. It well might. They represent not only romantic intrigue, but possible economic boom as well.

"The ferries could bring extensive, non-polluting tourist industry to town. A recent study . . . estimates the ferries could generate $3 million to $8 million annually.

Continued on Page 4

"One A

Continued from Page

just in tourist ex

If the ferry
Bellingham, Se
convert Pier 48
paid, if less des
port officials
$485,000 ferry tr
would have to
possibly to E
Bellingham site
would start during
summer of 197
speculated.

The Port of Se
with the AMHS exp
1979.

There is no do
wants to retain
ferry. A 1973 im
reported, "The
indirect impact of
System's Seattle
upon King County
to amount to 900 j
almost $9.3 millio
Annual sales and-
in the Seattle Po
generated by the
traffic, approach $30
million . . . Trebling of this
impact by 1990 appears to be
likely."

Alaskan business is the Port
of Seattle's bread and butter.
And as Bellingham's Glenn
noted, if the AMHS "found an
economic advantage here, the
roof might fall in on them,
politically and otherwise."

Ferries director Hudson,
though, said he is largely
isolated from political
pressures. The economics for
the AMHS itself will decide the
issue, its director stressed.

The Alaska state government subsidizes its ferry system about $1 for every $1 in revenue — projected 1977 expenses are about $32 million, revenues $16 million — and although the Seattle run is in the black, this overall red ink is a definite problem.

All Alaska state services are facing a budget squeeze from now until 1978, and prosperity after that. State spending had escalated after $900 million was received for Prudhoe Bay lease sales in 1969, but the bottom dropped out with the delay of the Alaska Pipeline, originally due in 1974. As now planned to open in June 1977, the pipeline will bolster the State of Alaska's income with royalties and taxes of more ostensibly for short-range savings, the medium- and long-range plan for a larger ferry fleet and multiple weekly sailings from Seattle or Bellingham is also important. Presently, all but one of Alaska's eight ferries are used on the in-state or the Prince Rupert, B.C., runs, where demand is heaviest, during summer months.

Seattle traffic could easily fill a second weekly ferry to Alaska at least eight months out of the year, if Alaska could afford to build one, said H.M. (Milt) Griffiths, the Alaska ferries' Seattle terminal manager. Vehicle decks have been full each trip since 1970, the second year of operation, he said; staterooms are booked solid through September this year, and car spaces reserved until the middle of July.

The scenic two and a half day trip up the Inside Passage from Seattle to Skagway costs $88 per passenger, half that for children six through 11 years old (excluding meals and berths). Fare for the average car is $298.

Why would the Alaska ferry system like to relocate its terminal away from Seattle?

Insufficient space for traffic marshalling has been a major

Bellingham's 10-acre plan includes ample space for 175 cars and 20 vans; Seattle's existing 2½-acre facility has space for only about 55 cars comfortably, Griffiths said, but can squeeze in the necessary 175 cars temporarily.

"We've heard complaints about congestion but none of the people from Alaska Marine Highway have told us what they want in terms of layout," responded Port of Seattle real estate director Glenn Lansing, admitting Pier 48's efficiency could be improved. Then about two weeks ago, Lansing said, ferries director Hudson agreed to send AMHS planners to Seattle for talks with Port planners on improving Pier 48's layout. The Port also plans to demolish a concrete building to the south of Pier 48, opening up about 15,000 square feet, and to make other improvements Lansing did not want to discuss. "Personally I'm quite encouraged by recent developments," the real estate director said.

Paradoxically, the Anchorage-based Calista Corporation's plan for a native Alaskan arts and crafts center in the partially-empty transit shed on Pier 48 (see *Argus*, Feb. 20, 1976) is viewed by Alaska ferry officials as a thorn afterwards, optimistic that both groups could use the Pier and complement each other. He added, "Calista will go ahead at 48 no matter what the ferry system does."

The cost of the lease is the second major factor in Alaska's decision between Seattle and Bellingham.

"The total they pay here is less than $100,000 a year," said J. Eldon Opheim, the Port of Seattle's general manager. "Near as we can determine it would be at least $200,000 a year to start all over up at Bellingham." Seattle estimates Bellingham would have to float $2 million in bonds to finance its "Cadillac proposal"; the bonds would have to be backed up by a 20-year firm lease with Alaska.

Bellingham's Glenn said his proposed lease was "not near" $200,000 a year. But he would not specify its terms because it is a "what if" plan, Glenn said.

In Bellingham's favor are the 62 nautical miles the Alaska ferry would save by docking there at the first possible contiguous U.S. port. This would save fuel, labor and ship depreciation for about five hours' one-way running time. Bellingham port manager Glenn has stated $300,000 a year could be

m direc
$100,0
he fuel
5 perce
ce wou
said, is f
an four
a defin
wded fer
, why st
way to t
ing cent
Alaska
sion of t
ilcote sa
am "wou
the freig
n extra d
f life,
would a
by havi
the ferry
Seattle is
enter and
preferr
cote sai
k at it,
would incur much more th
$100,000 costs on users."

Seattle Port manag
Opheim said that from
marketing viewpoint, "o
acre on our waterfront is bett
than 10 in Bellingham."

Both sites, Seattle's existi
and Bellingham's propose
include a waterfront park,
warehouse and office spac
Bellingham's choice site, clo
to downtown and south of t
Georgia-Pacific plant, wou
include fueling facilities, wh
in Seattle Alaska ferries mu
refuel at Pier 32. Seattle's Pi
48 houses ferries for wint
maintenance, b
Bellingham's could too, with
trained work force.

Hudson wants to "p
everything in two columns"
his final comparison of the tw
Ports' offers, and decide fro
the figure on the bottom lin
But preliminary reports i
dicate Seattle's existir
facilities and improvemer
under study outwei
Bellingham's shortened rou
and necessary capital cor
mitment and long-ter
contract.

The Port of Bellingham w
negotiate further for the fer
it badly wants, but that sh
may have already passed b
en route to proven waters.

11-61

The Alaska Carriers Assn. has written the state requesting a review of state ferry rates charged to truckers. The group alleges that the current rates "discriminate" against them and that the ferry system favors tourist traffic. The state disputes the truckers' charges. See story on Page 8. [Sentinel photo]

Truckers ask review of Alaska ferry rates

The Alaska Carriers Assn. has sent a letter to Donald Harris, Alaska Department of Public Works commissioner, requesting that state ferry rates be revised to end what the group calls "discrimination...to members of our industry."

The truckers group alleges that state ferry officials favor the tourist business on ships "over freight movements in this last round of ferry rate increases."

The state carriers association asks that the Alaska Marine Highway system establish a special round-trip fare for commercial vehicles that travel on ferries year-round, "or that some other revision be made in the marine highway rate structure toward the end result of equity in charges."

Larry Venable, acting general manager of the group, in his letter to Harris, stated that truckers "recognize the value of tourists to Alaska's economy." The association charges, however: "Reviewing the pattern of rate increases in the past five years, the maximum increase on passenger vehicles has been some 31 percent while commercial vehicles are paying up to 51 percent more."

Venable said in a phone interview, July 9, "some legal action" might be considered by the association if it does not receive what it wants from the state. "We had hoped that the Department of Public Works would consider round-trip rates for commercial vehicles," he said, noting that he believes the state will not grant that request.

An official of the state Division of Marine Transportation office in Juneau said, "No response as yet has been prepared to the truckers round-trip proposal."

He added that the division "has done an analysis of vans versus vehicles and we have found that we would increase our revenues by eliminating vans" and boarding more cars on the ferries.

He said no additional state ferry rate hikes are expected until next year at the earliest, following the most recent rate increase that went into effect May 1.

Ed Bradley, of C & E Bradley's, Wrangell, "agrees 100 percent" with the association's position. Bradley is a member of the group and is Lynden Transport's agent in Wrangell. He added, "They (state ferry officials) are penalizing Southeast Alaskans" by charging what he believes is an unfair amount to commercial vehicles using the ferries.

Dave Murdy, of Wrangell Transport, said, "They put the ferries in for the people of Southeast Alaska...and the original purpose has gone by the wayside."

Murdy said the ferry system now serves the tourists rather than area residents and their transportation needs.

Wrangell Transport does not belong to the carriers association, but Murdy said, "We've filed our protests and written letters, too."

EDITOR, Daily News:

The enclosed copy of a letter to public works Commissioner Don Harris reflects our concern over increases in the ferry rate structure which we feel are discriminatory and penalize the business, industries, and consumers in areas served by the Marine Highway System.

Reviewing the pattern of rate increases, in the past five years the maximum increase on passenger vehicles has been some 31 percent while commercial vehicles are paying up to 51 percent more. Since these charges must be passed on to the consumer, the question of equity in rate structure becomes important to every community served.

A choice of transportation modes is in the public interest and preserves for the public the benefit of competition for their shipments of goods. Removal of one of these choices, such as raising of ferry rates to the point at which they are no longer competitive for movement of goods, not only affects jobs and investment of our industry but has a long range impact on the rates and services by other transportation modes where they are offered.

We wish to make it very clear that we are not discounting the importance and value of the tourist industry to our Alaska economy, but we do feel that rate increases for trucks serving the residents of the state should not be higher than those paid by the tourists coming into our state to visit.

We are hoping that a further review by Marine Highway officials will result in a revision of rates to a more equitable basis. If this request is not successful then the association will have to consider what other avenues may be open to achieve this result.

LARRY VENABLE
Acting General Manager
Alaska Carriers Assoc.
3443 Minnesota Dr.
Anchorage, Ak. 99503

Carriers protest high ferry rates

The Alaska Carriers Association is protesting to Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris about the size of a rate increase for trucks on the state ferry system.

And the truckers are threatening action "by other avenues," presumably in the courts, if rates are not revised.

L.V. Venable, acting general manager for the carriers, told Harris that the rates discriminate against commercial vehicles. In the past five years rates have increased on passenger vehicles by 31 per cent while the rates on commercial vehicles has gone up 51 per cent.

"Since these charges (commercial rates) must be passed on to the consumer, the question of equity in rate structure becomes important to every community served by the ferries," Venable said.

The carriers are asking that the ferry system establish round-trip rates for commercial vehicles on a year-round basis to put the rates "on a more equitable basis."

"If this request is not successful then the association will have to consider what other avenues may be open to achieve this result," Venable said.

Although the carriers' acting general manager did not say it directly in his letter to Harris and his statement to the press, the association may seek a court injunction, one trucker told the Daily News privately. That action could be expected within the next few days.

But Harris said that the state will not save any money by the early drydocking because of the cost involved in the structural repairs.

"The cost of the repairs is going to absorb all the operational funds available," Harris said. "In fact, we may have to try to get more funds from other sources."

Harris said the exact cost of the structural work will not be known "until the ship is hauled out down in Seattle," but predicted that the figure will be large.

Special Ferry Due For Alaska Day

A special trip of the Marine Highway vessel LeConte is scheduled to bring visitors from Juneau to Sitka for Alaska Day, Municipal Administrator Rocky Gutierrez told the Assembly Tuesday night.

The vessel is scheduled to leave Juneau at 7:15 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15 and arrive here at 7:35 a.m. on the 16th. The return trip will depart Sitka at 1:45 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 19.

Gutierrez said he inquired about the possibility of a special schedule to accomodate the visitors expected from Juneau,

No substitute for ferry to Kodiak

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—The state will not be able to provide a substitute vessel to replace the ferry Tustumena, which was pulled off the Kodiak-Kenai Peninsula run more than two months earlier than usual today for repairs to structural cracks in her hull.

Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris said officials had concluded that neither the funds nor a viable substitute for the Tustumena were available.

11-62

Four Years of Family Dreams Sink With Home Near Ketchikan

Family Saved by Ferry After 'Duck' Takes Dive

Georgesons Relive Helpless Feeling

KETCHIKAN (AP) — In 1974 the Berneil Georgeson family helplessly watched their 12-ton World War II landing craft go up in flames as they began an Alaskan vacation after spending two years converting the craft into a floating home.

Saturday that old helpless feeling was back.

The Georgeson's Navy surplus "duck," a 40-foot steel contraption that got eight miles per gallon on land and putted along at a reasonable rate at sea, rested on the bottom of Alaska's Inside Passage halfway between Prince Rupert, Canada, and Ketchikan.

The victim of a submerged log, the boat-on-wheels sank Saturday morning, taking four years worth of backyard work and dreams with it.

But Georgeson, his wife and four children escaped with their lives, their dog and their pajamas and were picked up only two hours later by the state ferry Taku as it steamed toward this fishing port on Alaska's southern tip.

Georgeson, a high school teacher from Sacramento, Calif., bought the amphibious landing craft nearly a decade ago for about $5,000. Five years ago the family successfully drove-sailed it to Skagway at the top of the Inside Passage. Two years ago, while attempting to repeat the trip, the "duck" caught fire at Prince George, Canada.

The family took the gutted hulk back home and spent the last 24 months re-outfitting it with bunks, a galley, and even a color television set.

Four days ago they left the British Columbia community of Prince Rupert headed north with six weeks of provisions.

Saturday morning Georgeson felt a thump. Twenty minutes later his wife Jean yelled they were taking on water. Four minutes later they were in a 12-foot skiff watching ripples mark the "duck's" watery grave.

The Taku's crew and passengers loaned the family dry clothes; Gary, 17, Jon, 14, Carol, 12, and Jim, 10, didn't even have time to grab shoes before the family abandoned ship.

Duckless but safe

After being rescued by the Alaska state ferry Taku, a Sacramento, Calif. family sat in the sun outside the home of a ferry employe who offered them a place to stay. Pictured, is the Berniel Georgeson family, whose 40-foot military surplus amphibious "duck" sank west of Duke Island, Saturday. From left are Jon, age 14, Gary, 17, Jim, 10, Berneil, who teaches high school electronics in Sacramento, his wife Jean, and daughter Carol, 12.

Public Hearing

State Ferry Changes Suggested

By SUSAN GILMORE
Empire Staff Reporter

The Alaska Marine Transportation system, one of the state's biggest headaches, came under subdued fire last night at a public gripe session in Juneau. But criticism of the system's rates and service was tempered with praise for the water highway that is cursed with squabbling maritime unions and finicky ferries.

The hearing, first of a series of public meetings to be held throughout Southeast Alaska, was sparsely attended by Juneauites with a small contingent from Haines present to lobby for special services during the Southeast Alaska fair.

Marine Transportation director Bill Hudson, sympathetic with many of the critic's complaints, punctured a hole in the main argument of costly fares with his announcement that, barring commissioner disapproval, rates will be lowered 20 per cent across the board this winter for all ferry users.

Hudson also announced that he will recommend the winter season begin Sept. 1 instead of Oct. 1 and extend to June 1—in effect, adding two months to the lower rates.

The seasonal rates, though, were little consolation to representatives from Juneau's van and shipping lines who lobbied for a special reduced fee for their heavy use of the ferry system.

Hudson also announced a proposal to operate two vessels, rather than just the Columbia, out of Seattle each week. Hudson is eyeing a Tuesday and Firday departure from Seattle, revising the schedule from Prince Rupert and through the panhandle.

He also said that the $5 fee for dogs travelling the ferries has been eliminated for intratate voyages—an announcement that was cheered by one local dog-racer who said the high cost would preclude him from taking his dogs out of Juneau.

Hudson termed a "viable consideration," a proposal to move the southern ferry terminus to Bellingham—a plan that came under fire when it was made public last year. Also still under consideration is a proposal to establish a winter ferry maintenance facility in Alaska and a plan to eliminate Juneau's downtown ferry terminal.

When the meeting was opened to the public, most of the criticism was prefaced with praise for the ferry system and sympathy for its problems.

Several critics, including Rep. Mike Miller, urged the division to reinstate regularly scheduled cruises to Glacier Bay in the LeConte—a proposal Hudson said he would recommend.

Miller also recommended the ferries instigate a round-trip discount fare to help Alaskans travelling on the ferry syatem and he joined with the Haines group to lobby for a better ferry schedule during the annual Southeast Alaska Fair, asking that a ferry overnight in Haines as a floating Hotel.

It was generally a peaceful gathering last night, an anomoly from what ferry officials are expecting in other Southeastern communities.

Ketchikan, though, should be pleased with Hudson's announcement that the LeConte's sister ship, now under construction in Wisconsin, should be on the line to serve the southern panhandle next summer.

But Hudson is unhappy with the LeConte, one of the biggest money losers in the ferry fleet because, he said, it is too slow and too big for the route it serves, and doesn't contain revenue-producing staterooms.

He also appeared dismayed with the prospect of a sister ship with the same problems, an unavoidable problem since the purchase of the vessel "happened on Bill Egan's watch."

In other announcements Hudson said his department has contracted with a Navel architectural firm to stretch the Matanuska 56 feet, similar to the rennovation done to the Malaspina. If funds are available to stretch the vessel, Hudson said plans also call for conversion of the ship's dining room to buffet food service. The longer ship should be on the line by July 1, he said.

Audit: Ferry Line Is Sinking

11-63

Nobody's In Charge

THE DIRECTOR of the state's ferry operation has denied that the marine highway system is running out of control, fiscally and managerially speaking. He's irate that such allegations were made in an audit of the operations done by the Legislative Budget and Audit Review Committee.

Down in Southeastern Alaska, where the ferry system is big business, others are more than irate — they are alarmed. Fiscal audits which tend to show the magnitude of the red-ink ferry operations are not received with favor.

This particular audit, however, was accompanied by some strong explanatory language from the chairman of the group, Rep. Ed Naughton, D-Kodiak. In case anybody might fail to appreciate the formal language of the auditors, Mr. Naughton spelled things out this way:

"The thrust of our report is that nobody's in charge and that the state is getting ripped off."

There have been changes made in ferry operations in the past couple of years, the chairman said. But he said poor record-keeping makes it impossible to say whether the changes actually have resulted in any monetary savings.

THAT'S PRETTY rough. And, naturally, those responsible for the ferry operations reject the charges and say both Mr. Naughton and his committee, not to mention his audit, don't understand the situation.

Since the denial is as strong as the accusation, the public at this stage can't make a proper judgment as to whether the state is getting ripped off or whether the ferry system is being whipped into excellent shape despite some problems.

But one thing is clear. The audit report should open the way toward full and frank public discussion of the ferry system. There is much to be told and much to be taken into account. But there can be no understanding if the discussion centers more on rhetoric than on facts.

THERE'S no real argument about whether the ferry system is a money loser, from a strictly operational standpoint. It is. However, the losses are brushed aside by Southeastern advocates of more and more ferries, who argue that the ferries should be compared with highways, which don't turn a profit, either.

But the size of the deficit apparently has never been open to public review. This should be done—not in a way that would threaten the continuation of ferry service, because the ferries are of great value, but so that taxpayers can get a true picture of what is involved.

The matter has another angle now that should not be ignored. At a time when Southeastern politicians are maneuvering in every way possible to block the will of the people on the capital move, primarily by arguing that the state cannot afford such an expense, it's proper to ascertain just how much expense is involved in providing a service to portions of the state that are so remote that it takes a subsidized ferry service to do the job.

Ferry rates may drop for winter season

Rates on the state ferry system may be lowered for the 1976-77 winter season, according to William Hudson, director of the state Division of Marine Transportation.

Hudson said, "I'm leaning toward recommending lower winter fares. It's good business...to reduce winter rates."

Hudson explained he will soon make recommendations concerning the winter season rate structure to Donald Harris, commissioner of the state Department of Public Works. Harris will make the final decision, Hudson said.

The head of the ferry system also hopes to have the winter schedule finalized by Oct. 1, when the winter season officially begins for the ferries.

Hudson explained that a schedule committee now is working out the timetable and hopes to have the complete program ready by Oct. 1. If it is not ready, he said, a temporary schedule will be published and then revised when finalized.

Hudson did say that service to Wrangell will be about the same as last winter.

Adding to scheduling problems, Hudson noted, is the planned renovation and lengthening of the Matanuska, now slated to be out of service from January, 1977 to June 1, or June 15 at the latest, he said.

The Matanuska will be lengthened from 352 feet to 402 feet, as was the Malaspina about four years ago.

Its dining room also will be converted to a buffet-style dining area, he said. This conversion was done to the Malaspina last winter and this summer the Malaspina buffet-style dining service has shown a profit, while the other ships' dining rooms have continued to lose money.

The state plans to eventually convert the Columbia and Taku dining rooms to buffet-style services, too.

Bids will soon be let out on the conversion of the Matanuska, Hudson added.

In mid-October, the Columbia will head south for repairs to one of its boilers, Hudson said, which adds scheduling difficulties. Hudson is not yet sure how long the Columbia will be out of service. He said the ship may stay south after the boiler corrosion is repaired and have its winter maintenance work completed at that time.

Hudson said his office is "trying to work with Lockheed (builders of the Columbia)" to resolve disagreements over warranty work.

In other ferry news, plans for a winter maintenance site for state ferries, possibly in Ketchikan, have been slowed down, Hudson said.

A legislative feasibility study on the subject has been completed and Hudson's office will make recommendations later this year, but nothing will be built this winter, he said.

The facility would perform much of the winter maintenance that is now done on the ferries in Seattle, Hudson said, though the ships still would have to travel south for major drydock work.

Ketchikan, Juneau and Kodiak are being considered for the possible facility.

Also, the state plans to sell the ferry Chilkat when it takes possession of a new ferry now being built in shipyards in Sturgeon Bay, Wisc.

The new ferry will be a sister ship to the 235-foot LeConte. It will replace the Chilkat on the Metlakatla-Ketchikan-Hollis route.

The Chilkat is 99 feet long and about 20 years old.

Ferry Plan Is Criticized

By The Associated Press

A move by the state Division of Marine Transportation to pull the ferry Tustumena off the Kenai Peninsula-Kodiak Island run earlier than usual this year prompted an angry response from one of the division's most frequent critics.

William R. Hudson, division director, announced Wednesday the Tustumena would be taken off the run Oct. 14 and sent to Seattle for dining room remodeling and repair of stabilizers. The division said pulling the Tustumena off early will save $500,000.

But Rep. Ed Naughton of Kodiak said the move raises serious questions about the management of the entire system.

"They are pulling the vessel out of service when it is most needed by the community," said Naughton, who is head of the Budget and Audit Committee.

"This is being done for the purpose of promoting an idea that has been under considerable fire from southeastern legislators and which, in a legislative audit, has shown that they do not know will result in any savings."

Naughton called the management of the food service "derelict," adding "now this decision reflects that the operations management of the system appears to be just as slipshod as is the food service management."

The state needs to reassess its role in the marine highway service, Naughton said.

"The taxpayers of the state are subsidizing the operation of a cruise line to the tune of $19 million per year," he said. "It's time for Alaska to make ferries out of its cruise vessels.

"That means one vessel on the Seattle to Ketchikan run and return, another vessel for the Ketchikan to Petersburg route and return, and another ferry for the Petersburg to Juneau route and return, making intermediate stops."

The Tustumena is the only open ocean certified ferry that can be used between the Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak.

Harris ferry acceptance 'tragic mistake'

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

Commissioner of Public Works Donald Harris says acceptance of the state ferry Columbia from the manufacturer was a "tragic mistake" made by the administration of former Gov. William Egan.

In an interview with the Daily News last week, Harris said the previous commissioner of public works (George Easley) was forced to take delivery of the Columbia when the state failed to extend a waiver from the federal government to operate the former ferry Wickersham.

Harris did not mention Egan or Easley by name.

The Wickersham was a foreign built ship, operating in American ports which is prohibited by the federal Jones Act. A limited waiver to the Jones Act had been granted earlier for the ship.

According to Harris, the federal government had offered to extend the waiver for the Wickersham for another year, but the state declined.

"The previous commissioner kept telling the previous governor that they would be getting quick delivery of the Columbia," Harris said. When the Wickersham went out of service, and the summer schedule was already set, the administration was forced to accept the Columbia too soon, he said.

The state should have been looking for possible defects and poor workmanship of the ferry at that time, Harris said. "When they accepted the ship, they accepted what was there."

The Columbia has been a "hard luck" ferry since it was commissioned two years ago. Problems with the engines, bow thruster, piping system, ventilation system, evaporators, and vibration have caused the ship to spend a lot of time in port for repairs.

Two related malfunctions caused the Columbia to tear down the Ketchikan ferry ramp which had to be rebuilt from scratch last fall. The ramp was out of commission for several months, severely limiting ferry traffic to Ketchikan.

The ship has missed numerous scheduled trips on its run from Seattle to Skagway and in at least one case had to turn back to Seattle after beginning a voyage.

The state division of marine transportation has recently announced the Columbia will be taken out of service again in October to replace corroded pipes in one of the ship's stack boilers.

The Daily News has interviewed members of the Columbia's crew and in many cases, they were quick to point out poor workmanship and apparent use of below specification material.

The Coast Guard announced last week that below specification material was used in the propellers of the icebreaker Polar Star. The Polar Star was built by Lockheed Corp. which also built the Columbia at about the same time. The Polar Star also has experienced many problems since its completion.

Harris also admitted that extensive engine work done on the Columbia in early spring isn't going to solve the engine problems.

"The heads will continue to crack until there is a change of design in the heads," he said.

Those engines were constructed by Enterprise Engine Company of Oakland, Calif.

They were prototype engines, never before used in a ship.

Harris said the state will look to Enterprise and Lockheed to recover much of the cost on some of the warranty items. He said there were 15 or 16 items the state has already claimed as being deficient.

Harris said the state has withheld about $500,000 of the $22 million contract for the Columbia. He guessed that would be pretty close to covering the cost incurred by the state. There are no figures available for the cost of repair on the Columbia, Harris said, because it is an ongoing process.

A study of all items repaired, and an accounting of the cost, is being conducted and would be finished Jan. 1, 1976, he said.

11-64

9-30-76 SEATTLE TIMES

Columbia to get massive overhaul

By GLEN CARTER
Maritime Editor

The ferry Columbia, flagship of the Alaska fleet, will go into winter drydock next month for a massive maintenance program and major surgery aimed at curing chronic ailments aboard the $20 million vessel.

William Hudson, Alaska ferry-system director, said the major repairs are the result of poor design by Lockheed Shipbuilding, inadequate construction specifications and poltitical expendiency under the previous administration of Gov. Bill Egan.

"I know the vessel was accepted by the state before it was even completed because they wanted it on the line by the tourist season in June two years ago," Hudson said.

INCLUDED in the drydock program for the 418-foot Columbia are:

— Replacement of the vessel's saltwater-piping system which has been eaten away by rust, at a cost of between $50,000 to $100,000.

— Replacement of the boiler at an estimated $200,000.

— Replacement of the tubing system in the stack boiler, eaten away by rust, at a cost of $10,000 to $15,000.

— Evaluation and repair by De Laval Turbine, Inc., of the Columbia's two 10,000-horsepower diesel engines which have experienced major mechanical problems, including cracked cylinder heads, high temperatures and excessive lubrication-oil consumption.

"Each engine has 16 heads. We've replaced every head once and some twice," Hudson said. "The engines have had more major overhauls in two years than most vessels have in five or six years."

HUDSON SAID additional ventilation in the upper and main car deck will be added because high carbon-dioxide levels have been found in the blood of crew members. This will cost about $5,000.

"Lockheed, in many cases, have washed their hands of the problem," Hudson said. "I don't think we're going to get another dime from Lockheed unless we go to court and there are no plans for that at this time."

Hudson told the Associated Press that many of the deficiences were noted by division employes at the time the Columbia was being built, but they were under pressure from then-Gov. Bill Egan to get the vessel operational by the 1974 summer tourist season.

Here's a chance

5-32

State ferry system traffic manager Doug Burton holds a public hearing in Ketchikan Tuesday night on the future scheduling and tariffs for the ferry system. He is holding it in the conference room in the state office building. We hope he has enough room and doesn't have to move to the Elks Hall as Sen. Mike Gravel had to do with his hearing on Tongass National Forest land use. The ferry system is almost as controversial this year as creating wilderness areas in the Ketchikan area. In fact, there are hints by some that ferry system policy is creating some economic wilderness.

For the first time in many years, truckers protested the rates set by the ferry system last year. There has been extensive debate over the conversion of dining rooms to cafeterias. For a while, the state failed to cooperate with tour operators in allowing the sale of tour tickets aboard ship prior to arrival in port. The cancelling of scheduled departures created havoc for travel agents and the traveling public. The system's policy of bunking men and women crew members in the same cabin is causing trouble at home for crew members. And even the state's policy of selling only two relatively unknown brands of beer in the bar has brought complaint.

Well, Tuesday is the time to ask the questions and to voice the complaints. It also is the time to make suggestions for improving service. An example of that would be asking the ferry officials if they have discussed with U.S. Borax the likely place for a ferry terminal near the Borax molybdenum operation near Wilson Arm in the event the company goes ahead with its mining venture. With over 500 people in that area, and the possibility of a town of 1,500 created, ferry service should be planned before and not after the fact.

Oh, there is a lot to cover with Traffic Manager Burton Tuesday, aside from new schedules and tariffs. And this is the time to do it.

SEATTLE TIMES 10-13-76

Fight over Alaska ferry settled for time being

JUNEAU — (AP) — A truce has been declared in the running political and legal squabble over conversion of the MV Columbia, the flagship of the Alaska state ferry fleet, from restaurant to fast-food service.

The battle was expected to be called off today with the signing of a tentatively agreed-upon legal stipulation between the state administration and the Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific.

The agreement calls on the state to cancel the Columbia conversion, which had been planned during the vessel's winter drydock beginning Friday, and to seek a specific approval for the work from the 1977 Legislature.

In return, the union agreed to halt its suit against the conversion pending outcome of the agreement.

"We agreed we won't do anything until the Legislature meets and approves the money," said Assistant Attorney General Rod Pegues.

The Columbia runs between Seattle and Anchorage.

The suit challenged the planned conversion on the grounds that the $225,000 earmarked for the work was unconstitutionally transfered within the Department of Public Works and that the project would cause irreparable harm to the union.

Kent Dawson, an assistant to Gov. Jay Hammond, said the state administration still believes the conversion is necessary as an economy move and will press for approval of its plans during the 1977 legislative session.

STURGEON BAY, WIS. 54235

"Don't tell me. It's party time. They launched another ship."

Letter To Editor

(Ed. Note--A copy of the following letter was submitted as a Letter to the Editor):

Captain Donald J. Oldow, Master
M/V Tustumena

Dear Captain Oldow:

I have just received and accept with regret, your letter of resignation effective September 30, 1976.

In our short acquaintenceship I have acquired a deep appreciation for your sincerety, loyalty and obvious mastering of the sea.

I am sure Captain Racine and Elde, as well as a host of Tustumena sailors share my respect.

I am very sure you'll make your reputation felt in your new endeavors and I personally wish you God speed and fair winds.

The Alaska Marine Highway owes a debt of gratitude to your part in her historical development.

I will not hesitate to call on your wealth of knowledge as I find the need.

My highest regards to you and Pam. I wish you much happiness.

Respectfully,
W.R. Hudson, Director
Division of Marine Transportation

11-65

Columbia Diners Win A Reprieve, Fast Food Service Switch Delayed

By The Associated Press

The state ferry Columbia will not be converted from restaurant to fast food service this year even if the state prevails in a union suit to block the economy measure, a spokesman for Gov. Jay Hammond says.

Press Secretary Scott Foster says Hammond will seek a specific appropriation from the 1977 legislature for the conversion instead of transfering existing funds within the Division of Marine Transportation for the job.

The division had planned to covert the Columia at a cost of about $150,000 when the vessel goes into winter drydock Oct. 15.

The Inland Boatman's Union filed suit last week to stop the work on the grounds that the transfer of funds was illegal and that the conversion would cause irreparable harm to the union.

In a court stipulation, the state agreed not to initiate the work until the legal issues were settled.

But then critics of the conversion plans pointed out a letter written to the legislature earlier this year by Andy Warwick, commissioner of administration, in which he promised not to undertake the work pending specific legislative authority.

Foster said the division went ahead with the conversion plans despite the promise because of "some confusion about how far forward this letter committed the state."

"But because it was written, we decided to go back to the legislature with a budget item for authorization for the conversion," Foster said.

The conversion last year of the ferry Malaspina from restaurant to cafeteria service sparked heated criticism from lawmakers who challenged the state's claim that the move represented good economics.

Marine transportation director Bill Hudson claimed earlier this summer that the $260,000 conversion of the Malaspina to fast food service saved the state nearly $100,000, mostly in labor costs, in one month. Passengers, though, have complained that the food prices are too high for the quality—especially when they have to wait in line to be fed.

The Alaska Legislature has attacked the food service conversion on the Malaspina and the failure of the division to consider the leasing of the food and bar services to a private company. They also criticized the division for the lack of public hearings on ferry rate increases.

Since that criticism the division has held several public hearings on ferry system policy decisions.

On Conversion Squabble

Columbia Truce Declared

By G. MICHAEL HARMON
Associated Press Writer

A truce has been declared in the running political and legal squabble over conversion of the MV Columbia, the flagship of the Alaska state ferry fleet, from restaurant to fast food service.

The battle was expected to be formally called off today with the signing of an tentatively agreed upon legal stipulation between the state administration and the Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific.

The agreement calls on the state to cancel the Columbia conversion, which had been planned during the vessel's winter drydock beginning Friday, and to seek a specific approval for the work from the 1977 legislature.

In return, the union agreed to halt its suit against the conversion pending outcome of the agreement.

"We agreed we won't do anything until the legislature meets and approves the money," said Asst. Atty. Gen. Rod Pegues.

The suit challenged the planned conversion on the grounds that the $225,000 earmarked for the work was unconstitutionally transfered within the Department of Public Works and that the project would cause irreparable harm to the union.

Kent Dawson, an assistant to Gov. Jay Hammond, said the state agreement to drop plans for the work was premised on a previous political promise and did not represent a concession to any of the legal points raised in the suit by the union.

Dawson said the administration still believes the conversion is necessary as an economy move and will press for approval of its plans during the 1977 session.

"The union's suit admits the conversion will save money by its allegation that it would eliminate a minimum of 12 positions from the ferry crew," Dawson said.

Dawson said the truce decision was primarily based on an April 5, 1976 letter from Commissioner of Administration Andy Warwick to Sen. Bill Ray, D-Juneau and Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

In the letter, Warwick told Ray, a leading critic of the conversion, that "we have decided not to go ahead with the conversion to fast food service of the MV Columbia during this fiscal year through a proposed transfer of funds between appropriations."

Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris said he went ahead and scheduled the conversion for the 1976 winter drydock because of a misunderstanding over how far in the future the Warwick letter committed the adminstration.

Harris said he assumed the promise not to proceed with the work "this fiscal year" referred to the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1976.

However, after the union filed the suit and cited to the letter in its brief, Dawson said the administration concluded that pressing ahead with the conversion would indeed "be in violation of the overall understanding."

Theresa Bannister, a Juneau attorney representing the union, emphasized that the tentative agreement does not incluce a provision for the labor organization to drop the suit but only to hold it in abeyance.

"We are going to keep it until we see what happens during the legislature," she said.

Ms. Bannister said the agreement provides for the state not to pursue the conversion, including taking bids for the work or any further commitment of funds, pending legislative approval.

Approval, she said, could either take the form of a specific appropriation or formal endorsement of a fund transfer by the joint Legislative Budget and Audit Committee or the individual finance committees of the House and Senate.

No Replacement Planned For Tustumena Route

By The Associated Press

The state will not be able to provide a substitute vessel to replace the ferry Tustumena, which was pulled off the Kodiak-Kenai Peninsula run more than two months earlier than usual today for repairs to structural cracks in her hull.

Public Works Commissioner Donald Harris said officials had concluded that neither the funds nor a viable substitute for the Tustumena were available.

In a public hearing last month, Kodiak officials proposed that the state use funds saved by placing the Tustumena in Seattle drydock in October instead of January as usual to lease a substitute vessel.

They also suggested a number of vessels that the state might be able to lease to maintain service between the island and the mainland during the critical months when residents use the ferry extensively to haul in winter supplies.

But Harris said that the state will not save any money by the early drydocking because of the cost involved in the structural repairs.

"The cost of the repairs is going to absorb all the operational funds available," Harris said. "In fact, we may have to try to get more funds from other sources."

Harris said the exact cost of the structural work will not be known "until the ship is hauled out down in Seattle," but predicted that the figure will be large.

He also said officials in the Division of Marine Transportation evaluated all the proposed substitutes for the Tustumena and found that "none could provide a viable operation."

He said none had sufficient capacity below decks for vehicles

Union sues to halt work on state ferry

JUNEAU (AP) — A hearing has been set in superior court here Oct. 8 on a suit by the Inland Boatman's Union to halt the conversion of the state ferry Columbia from restaurant to fast food service.

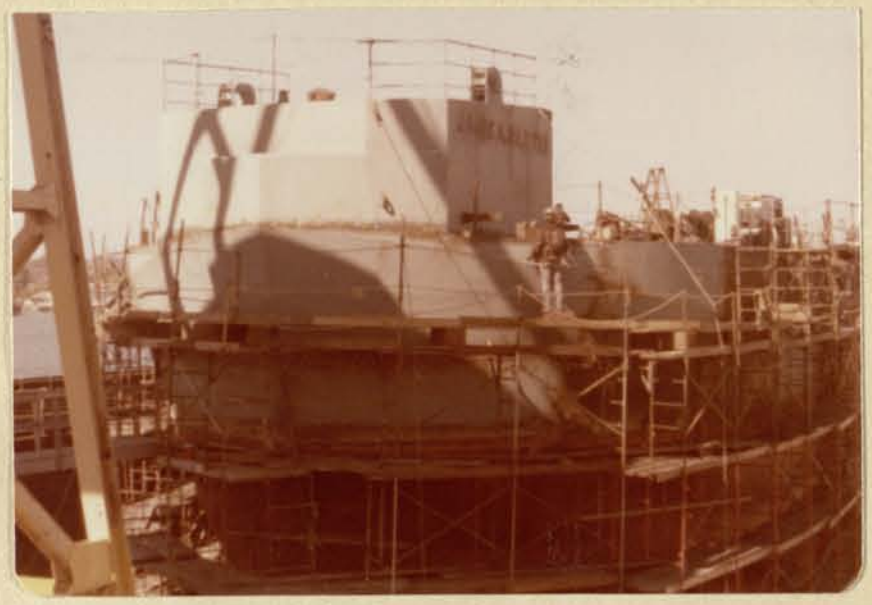
The suit filed Monday challenged the legality of the transfer of capital funds to convert the Columbia which is scheduled to go into winter drydock in Seattle Oct. 15.

In addition, the union charged that the conversion would cause irreparable harm to its members through the elemination of 12 jobs.

Ferry 'Mess' Blamed On Past Administration

11-66

PETERSON
TAURUS



CHRONIC AILMENTS—The state ferry 'Columbia' is scheduled to go into drydock next month for major repairs and maintenance. The ferry has been plagued with mechanical problems since she replaced the 'Wickersham' as the flagship of the marine highway system.

Major Surgery Planned For State Ferry Flagship

By The Associated Press

MV Columbia, the flagship of the Alaska ferry fleet, goes into winter drydock next month for precedent-setting maintenance program and major surgery aimed at curing chronic ailments aboard the $20 million vessel.

The planned repair-maintenance work schedule on the two-year-old Columbia represents the first time ever that a state ferry has gone into drydock with a specific repair program set down in writing.

The surgery, both exploratory and corrective, as well as the work program also represents an effort by officials of the administration of Gov. Jay Hammond to correct what they view as major deficiencies of past administrations in operation of the Division of Marine Transportation.

"We inherited a lot of problems in the division," says Director William Hudson. "And we're trying to correct them as fast as possible.

"For the first time with the Columbia as far as I know we will have a specific, pre-prepared schedule on required repairs which will be put out on bids with specifications."

The precedent-setting drydock program also calls for major repairs which Hudson attributes to a complicated combination of factors, including poor design by Lockheed Shipbuilding, inadequate construction specifications and political expediency.

Included in the work schedule for the 418-foot Columbia is:

—The complete replacement of the vessel's salt-water piping system, which has been eaten away by rust, at a cost of between $50,000 and $100,000.

'We inherited a lot of problems in the division and we're trying to correct them as fast as possible.'—Hudson

"The system installed in the vessel when she was build was composed of black iron instead of a corrosion-resistent marine system," says Hudson. "Lockheed claims the specifications did not preclude them from installing iron pipes. But certainly they should have known that such material should not have been used."

—Evaulation and repair by De Laval Turbine, Inc. of the Columbia's two 10,000 horsepower diesel engines which have experienced massive mechanical problems, including cracked cylinder heads, high temperatures and excessive lubrication oil consumption.

"Each engine has 16 heads and we've replaced every head once and some twice," Hudson says. "The engines have had more major overhauls in two years than most vessels have in five or six years."

Because the engines were newly-designed by De Laval, Hudson says experts are unsure whether the problems stem from design deficiencies or internal mechanical defects.

"But whatever the cause," Hudson says. "De Laval officially recognizes the engines are not performing in a satisfactory manner and have advised the division that they are committed to making them perform to specifications at their expense."

—Replace the tubing system in the vessel's stack boiler, which also is eaten away by rust, at a cost of between $10,000 to $15,000.

"We wanted to replace the entire boiler, but it has to be specially fabricated and we couldn't get a replacement in time," Hudson says, estimating that the total replacement woud cost up to $200,000.

Hudson blames the boiler corrosion on a combination of poor design and inadequate specifications which resulted in rust prevention chemicals from blowing out of the system without doing their job.

"Lockheed's position is the boilers met specifications as set by the state," Hudson says. "Our position is the state may have accepted specifications which now have been proven to be inferior but also that the boiler construction did not meet specifications."

—The addition of ventilation in the upper and main car deck, where high carbon dioxide levels have been found in the blood of crew members, at a cost of up to $5,000.

"We found the ventilation to be insufficient," says Hudson. "We certainly believe it is a design problem, but Lockheed disputes it."

—A propulsion design study aimed at finding the source of a persistent vibration which remains above standards.

Hudson says Lockheed has made several efforts to eliminate the vibration, and has succeeded in reducing it. However, Hudson adds that "we are not satisified although they (Lockheed) do not acknowledge any more responsibility."

—A survey of the entire ship from main propulsion system to hull which Hudson calls "the most comprehensive any of our vessels have ever received."

The survey, Hudson says, is aimed in large part at collecting data for further efforts to resolve disputes with Locheed over responsibility for disputed deficiencies aboard the Columbia.

"Lockheed in many cases has washed their hands of the problem," Hudson says. "At this point in time, I don't think we're going to get another dime from Lockheed unless we go to court and there are no plans for that at this time."

Hudson says many of the deficiences were noted by division employes at the time the Columbia was being built, but were under pressure from then Gov. William Egan to get the Columbia operational by the 1974 summer tourist season.

"Many times the solutions to some of these problems probably was more money and more time," Hudson says. "But a limited budget, an accelerated time table and political considrations may may caused the people in responsibility back then to accept construction standards they would not have under normal circumstances.

"I know that the vessel was accepted by the state before it was even completed because they wanted it on line by June."

11-69

ALASKA FERRY TUSTUMENA DOCKS AT BELLINGHAM

Pictured above is the Alaska ferry Tustumena, docked at Bellingham. (Photo by

Bellingham's second Alaska ferry docked at North Terminal the morning of Oct. 20, while hardly anyone was looking.

Haskell Corp. learned the night before that its bid had been accepted to complete structural steel work on the Tustumena.

Port of Bellingham Manager Tom Glenn reported that he, too, had learned of the ferry's arrival less than 24 hours before it arrived.

The ferry appeared on the horizon at about 7:45 a.m. and was at dock a half-hour later, before Alaska Marine Highway System officials had told Haskell exactly what work would be expected of them.

According to Harry Case, the ferry system's marine superintendent, construction on the Tustumena will not include remodeling the galley, as previously announced.

The job will involve refurbishing some of the ferry's car deck plating and deck beams. Most of the work will be on the car deck or the structure supporting it, he said—"a very, very small part of the ship, I hope."

Haskell Corp. was the low bidder among five competitors for the job, Case said, and the contract will "be in the order of $60,000."

Last January, Haskell attracted Bellingham's first Alaska ferry, the Malaspina, to North Terminal for a $260,000 remodeling job that included changing the galley to a cafeteria line.

Similar remodeling was planned this winter for the Tustumena, Case said, but all bids were rejected for exceeding the ferry system's cost estimates.

"We're not entirely abandoning the remodeling," he explained. "A revised version is under study."

It is not scheduled to go to bid this winter, but "in this shipping business, you never know," Case said. "Anything's possible."

The Tustumena is scheduled to remain in Bellingham 30 to 40 days for the project at hand, according to Case. A crew of about 36 persons, under the direction of Capt. Eugene Racine, will live on board during the repair work.

Tustumena to dry dock; no replacement found

Harris said the exact cost of the structural work will not be known "until the ship is hauled out down in Seattle," but predicted that the figure will be large.

In one piece of good news, however, Harris said the Tustumena should be returned to service during the first week in January around the time she normally is removed for annual drydock work.

Tusty heads south early

The state ferry Tustemena sails from Homer on Tuesday, Oct. 12, with the unusual destination of Seattle.

The Tusty is being taken off its Seward-Homer-Seldovia-Kodiak run early this year to head for drydock, where it will undergo repairs and remodeling.

On its trip south the Tusty will carry passengers, stopping in Kodiak, Seward, and Juneau before reaching Seattle on Oct. 19.

The major reason for the move, according to Bill Hudson, director of Marine Transportation for the state, is structural defects that have been discovered in the ship.

Ferry COLUMBIA won't get fast food service this year

Ferry Fear

Dear Editor:

I am writing to your column as a hopeful measure to express not only my opinion, but the opinions voiced to me by my shipmates in regards to the poor working conditions upon the Alaska Marine Highway Systems ferries. It's not the living quarters or galley conditions that we're talking about, it's the mind games which come to fall on us continously. The constant threat of losing our jobs due to ship layups, in winter, personal appearence (hair and dress) personality conflicts (with a port steward who's impossible) and now the conversion of the Malaspina and possibly the Columbia, will create more threat and tension amongst the crew. Whose job will be next, seems to be the whisper around all the ferries. The Malaspina conversion cost 14 jobs. The Columbia's conversion will be another 24 jobs if approved. When will it all end.

Our lives are in the hands of the Port Steward it seems.

Wheres the life jackets!

Name on file

Columbia To Keep Restaurant

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — The state ferry Columbia will not be converted from restaurant to fast food service this year even if the state prevails in a union suit to block the economy measure, a spokesman for Gov. Jay Hammond says.

Press Secretary Scott Foster says Hammond will seek a specific appropriation from the 1977 legislature for the conversion instead of transfering existing funds within the Division of Marine Transportation for the job.

The division had planned to covert the Columia at a cost of about $150,000 when the vessel goes into winter drydock Oct. 15.

The Inland Boatman's Union filed suit last week to stop the work on the grounds that the transfer of funds was illegal and that the conversion would cause irreparable harm to the union.

In a court stipulation, the state agreed not to initiate the work until the legal issues were settled.

One-Sided 'Agreement'

THE HAMMOND administration caved in when it shouldn't have in canceling plans to convert to cafeteria service aboard the flagship of the state ferry fleet, the Columbia.

The ferry is scheduled to go into winter drydock at Seattle tomorrow. While there, the new food service facilities were to be installed as part of a major cost-cutting conversion on the ships of the marine highway system. A couple of ferry boats already have been converted and the elimination of table service by a crew of seagoing waiters already has saved taxpayers of the state many thousands of dollars.

But the changes have not been made without complaints by those with a special interest to protect. Chief among those howling against the conversion has been Sen. Bill Ray of Juneau, who regards the ferry system as one of his pet pork barrel projects. His love for fat ferry payrolls and subsidies is exceeded only by his hate for anything that would help move the capital of Alaska out of Juneau and closer to the majority of the state's population.

IN THE CASE of the Columbia, the decision to do away with catered table service also was opposed by the Inland Boatmen's Union, which is upset because installation of a cafeteria line would eliminate the need for the state to employ 12 union members.

The union filed suit against the state to block the conversion, alleging that the $225,000 to be used to finance the job was illegally transferred within the appropriated budget of the Department of Public Works. Besides that, the union said it would suffer irreparable harm if the Columbia offered its passengers cafeteria food service.

In its formal agreement with the union, the administration agreed to cancel the conversion plan unless the work is specifically approved by the 1977 legislature.

THERE ARE several things wrong with this agreement.

In the first place, it is a pretty one-sided affair. The "agreement" is all on the part of the state. The union didn't agree to a thing except to hold up on its suit for the time being. It's still going to proceed, the union indicated, if the legislature is so brash as to order the conversion next year.

In the second place, the way food service is handled aboard the taxpayer-subsidized ferries is strictly a management concern. The state, not a Seattle union, should be in command of the ferry system. Yet with this agreement the state yields some of the management rights with which it is entrusted. For efficiency, for economy and for ease of service the cafeteria style food facilities make good sense — as already has been proven on other vessels.

And there is no reason why the administration and its attorney general should be afraid to do battle with a Seattle labor union and Sen. Bill Ray. The Juneau strongman is not the governor of this state. And the Inland Boatmen are not the ones who are footing the bill to operate the ferries.

The hope now is that the next legislature will have the backbone to stand up to Mr. Ray and to the Seattle union. Unfortunately, as a result of this agreement at least a year will elapse before the conversion can be made. And when the job finally is done it will cost much more than if the work had been completed on schedule this fall.

Another bite out of the taxpayers' hides.

State Delays Ferry Work

JUNEAU (AP) — The state ferry Columbia will not be converted from restaurant to fast food service this year even if the state prevails in a union suit to block the economy measure, a spokesman for Gov. Jay Hammond says.

Press Secretary Scott Foster says Hammond will seek a specific appropriation from the 1977 legislature for the conversion instead of transfering existing funds within the Division of Marine Transportation for the job.

The division had planned to covert the Columbia at a cost of about $150,000 when the vessel goes into winter drydock Oct. 15.

State To Put The Columbia Into Drydock For Repairs

The controversial dining room of the Columbia will not be switched to cafeteria service this year.

11-70

Latest ferry tale: no Columbia cafeteria

State, Union Sign Pact on Columbia Food Service

Ferry Won't Serve Fast Food

MAIDEN VOYAGE—The state ferry LeConte steamed into the tiny fishing village of Pelican Monday, linking the community with other towns on the ferry's panhandle route. Despite chilly, drizzly weather nearly the whole town turned out to greet the ferry.

Pelican—Hooked Up With The Rest Of Southeastern

By SUSAN GILMORE
Empire Staff Reporter

PELICAN—As the LeConte rocked and pitched through the stormy seas of Cross Sound, those of us on board wondered if it was worth all the effort. An hour later, sailing through calm Lisianski Inlet toward the small fishing village of Pelican, queasy stomaches had quieted and spirits had lifted.

The small group of passengers on the LeConte, including an official party of dignitaries and an unofficial delegation of bar owners from Juneau, squeezed to the front of the ship to wave to Pelicanites who played hookey from school and work to greet the ferry and argue over who would tie the ferry up.

The occasion was Monday's inaugural once-a-month voyage of the LeConte to Pelican, a small cannery town some 75 miles southwest of Juneau on Chichagof Island. For most of the residents the LeConte's arrival was cause for wild celebration. Others, however, viewed the ferry an an unwelcomed intruder into the peaceful life of the village.

"I think it's great," beamed Rosey, the hefty bar-owner who spread a feast of king crab in honor of the occasion. "You can't stop progress, even in Pelican."

"It's the ugliest thing I've ever seen," countered Pelican's 25-year-old mayor Bruce Anderson. "A lot of people didn't want to see the ferry here," he said. "It's fear of the future. Many feel its the first step in the wrong direction."

A carpenter by trade, Anderson said he moved to Pelican four years ago from Bellingham, Wash. hoping to avoid the civilization he sees the ferry spawning.

The ferry dock, a four-year effort by Pelicanites, cost $360,000. Of that total, $17,000 was footed by tax revenues from the town's 160 residents.

The major push behind the construction of the dock and subsequent pledge by Alaska Marine Transportation officials to include the town on its itinerary, was the need for low-cost transportation. Previously all supplies came into town on the Pelican Cold Storage's barge and all passengers came in by air.

But now some residents are concerned that freight charges will remain high as vans must be rented to haul freight on and off the ferry. While Anderson said he objected to the high price charged by the cold storage, he said he'd "rather pay the price than see the town grow."

For passengers who can afford the month layover, a roundtrip ticket to Pelican on the LeConte costs $24. A roundtrip airline ticket via Eagle Air costs $64.

Even those who objected to the ferry joined in the celebration Monday. Streamers hung from the ceiling of John and Marion's Bar and Grill welcoming the 60-some passengers from the LeConte. Bella Hammond, wife of Gov. Jay Hammond, headed a list of dignitaries which also included Marine Transportation director Bill Hudson.

Rosey, bubbling with exhuberance, passed out balloons and bumper stickers that blared, 'Move the Capital to Pelican.' Bill Macomber, Juneau's colorful ex-mayor, was one of the first off the ferry in his circus calliope, blowing its siren as he drove it up Pelican's boardwalk.

A reception was held in the town's new high school, built on stilts near the ferry dock. Schools closed early for the occasion, and youngsters raced to the dock to watch the arrival. "I like the ferry," said one, "because someday I may want to leave Pelican."

Things were quieter at the other end of the boardwalk near the cold storage dock. An old resident, tending his fishing boat, squinted at the bright lights twinkling on the LeConte.

"You know, there's more lights on that ferry than in the whole town," said "Oso" Pete, an 81-year-old fisherman from Norway who arrived in the area before the town did.

"I emigrated from Norway in 1911," he reminisced with a trace of a Norwegian accent, "and I haven't been back since." He said he sailed around the world and Pelican is where he ended up.

Unlike many of Pelican's oldtimers, he didn't view the LeConte's arrival as an intrusion. "It's what the people wanted," he said.

Because it was a special occasion, the LeConte stayed in Pelican for four hours; on its regular schedule the first Monday of each month the ferry will stay only long enough to load and unload.

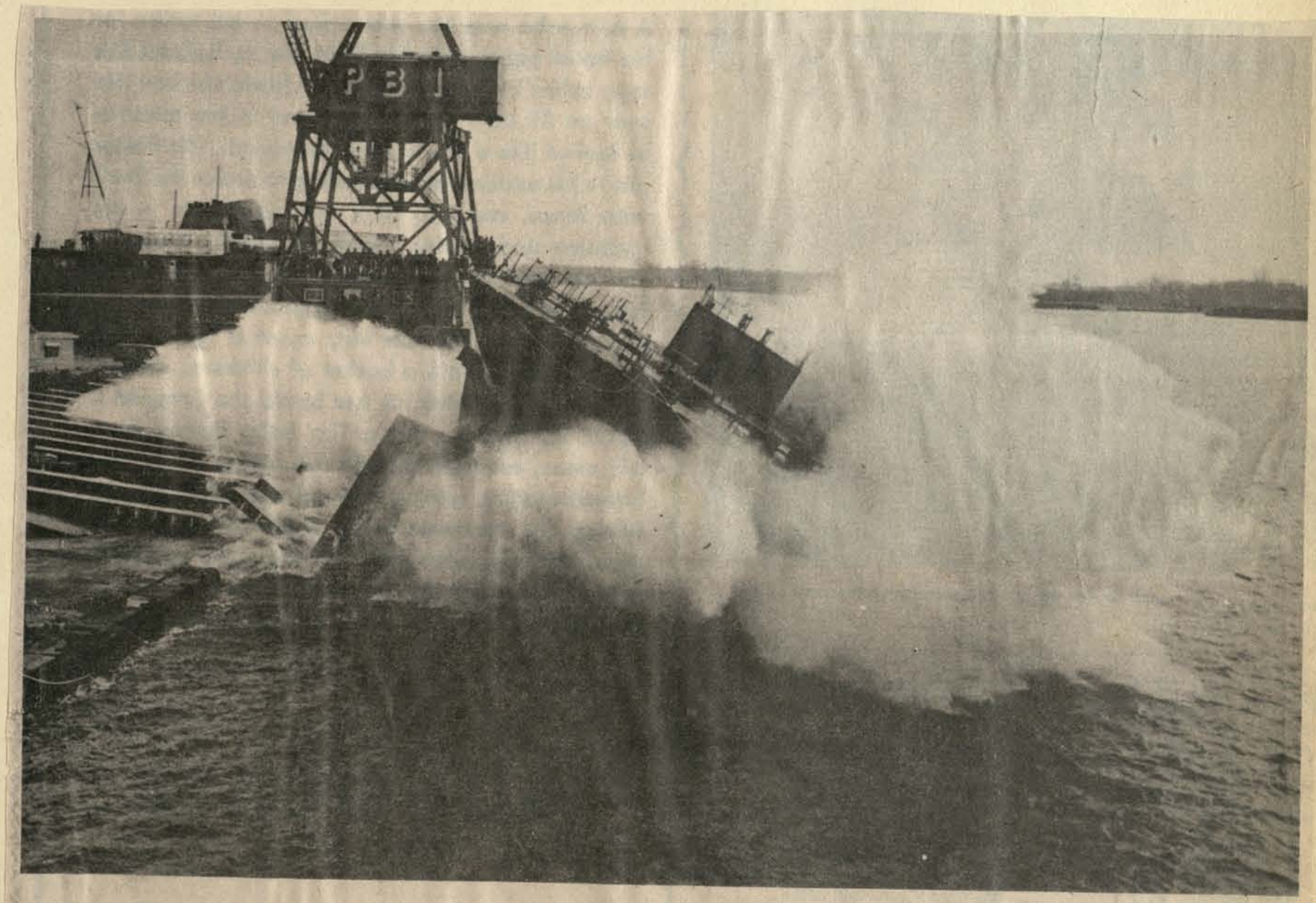
The ferry was heavier when it left Pelican Monday evening. On board was a big fork lift bound for Seattle for repairs and a large contigent from Pelican who carried the party from Rosey's to the LeConte's bar.

Rosey was on board too. After partying all night on the vessel, she planned to fly back to Pelican today.

ROSEY'S TREAT—Rosey, the vociferous owner of one of Pelican's most famous bars, greeted the arrival of the state ferry LeConte on her small motor bike. After the ferry docked, she was embraced by several Juneau bar owners who travelled to Pelican to join the celebration.

11-71

PELICAN-BOUND—The state ferry LeConte will begin regular service to the small fishing village of Pelican on Chichagof Island Monday. A special cruise with dignataries including Bella Hammond aboard will leave from Auke Bay Monday for the round-trip via Hoonah. Beginning in December, the LeConte will sail to Pelican the first Monday of every month. The state agreed to include the town as a regular port-of-call after Pelican citizens funded the construction of a city dock. The town will host a reception when the ferry docks in Pelican Monday to celebrate its addition to the LeConte's itinerary.



Launching of the 144-ft. oceangoing tug Jamie A. Baxter at Peterson Builders Wednesday resulted in one of the most spectacular splashes in memory. The tug will be delivered to C. F. Industries, headquartered in Chicago, next spring. The tug fit into a 570-ft. barge. It has a 45-ft. beam, 7,200 horsepower and will carry a 12-person crew. Six decks will be added before delivery.

—Harmann

11-72

LeConte brings civilization to Pelican

'You can't stop progress'

Ferry ends Pelican's isolation

Ferry Ends Frontier Isolation

PELICAN(AP)— Another slice of Alaska frontier life vanished forever in the predawn darkness today as the gleaming state ferry LeConte linked this boardwalk fishing village deep in the misty Alexander Archipelago with mainland civilization.

For some, the 200-mile maiden, round trip voyage of the MV LeConte from Juneau on the Southeast Alaska coast to Pelican on Chichagof Island was a cause for celebration.

"You can't stop progress, even in Pelican," beamed Big Rosey, the hefty saloon-keeper, ad hoc banker and mother figure to the 200-odd men, women and children who make their home in this 40-year-old cannery town. "We've got it made now."

For others, however, the first of a once-a-month appearance by the 250-passenger auto ferry represented the untimely end to a disappearing Alaska lifestyle.

"That ferry is the ugliest thing I've ever seen come in here," glowered Pelican's 25 year-old mayor, Bruce Anderson, as the LeConte tied up to the town's new $360,000 dock. "A lot of people like myself came here to escape from from civilization, but a majority of the people want it."

The majority prevailed because of the unquestionable need for low-cost transportation and freight service to the town where previously all supplies must come in by barge and all passengers by air.

Before the ferry, Pelican residents had to pay up to $160 to charter a plane to or from Juneau. And it cost Rosey nearly $100 a case to ship bring in beer.

In contrast, a passenger ticket on the LeConte, the smallest of six state ferries which ply between a dozen towns on Alaska's Inland Passage, is $12 one-way. The bill for the first freight load out of Pelican, a big forklift bound for Seattle for repairs, was less than $300.

Bella Hammond, the wife of Gov. Jay Hammond, headed a party of dignitaries among the approximately 70 passengers who made the inaugural 16-hour, round trip voyage, which which was marred by an outbreak of sea sickness as the LeConte rolled through 12-foot seas while steaming near an open passage to the stormy Gulf of Alaska.

"Everything would have been okay I think if I hadn't eaten the poached salmon for lunch," said one female passenger as she emerged pale and shaken from a crowded restroom.

Progress, Ferry System Arrive at Tiny Pelican

By G. MICHAEL HARMON
Associated Press Writer

PELICAN, Alaska (AP)—Another slice of Alaska frontier life vanished forever in the predawn darkness Tuesday as the gleaming state ferry LeConte linked this boardwalk fishing village deep in the misty Alexander Archipelago with mainland civilization.

For some, the 200-mile maiden, round trip voyage of the MV LeConte from Juneau on the Southeast Alaska coast to Pelican on Chichagof Island was a cause for celebration.

"You can't stop progress, even in Pelican," beamed Big Rosey, the hefty saloon-keeper, ad hoc banker and mother figure to the 200-odd men, women and children who make their home in this 40-year-old cannery town. "We've got it made now."

For others, however, the first of a once-a-month appearance by the 250-passenger auto ferry represented the untimely end to a disappearing Alaska lifestyle.

"That ferry is the ugliest thing I've ever seen come in here," glowered Pelican's 25-year-old Mayor, Bruce Anderson, as the LeConte tied up at the town's new $360,000 dock.

"A lot of people like myself came here to escape [illegible] from civilization, but a majority of the people want it."

The majority prevailed because of the unquestionable need for low-cost transportation and freight service to the town where previously all supplies must come in by barge and all passengers by airplane.

Before the ferry, Pelican residents had to pay up to $160 to charter a plane to or from Juneau. And it cost Rosey nearly $100 a case to [illegible] bring in beer.

In contrast, a passenger ticket on the LeConte, the smallest of six state ferries which ply between a dozen towns on Alaska's Inland Passage, is $12 one-way. The bill for the first freight load out of Pelican, a big fork lift bound for Seattle for repairs, was less than $300.

Bella Hammond, the wife of Gov. Jay Hammond, headed a party of dignitaries among the approximately 70 passengers who made the inaugural 16-hour, round trip voyage, which was marred by an outbreak of sea sickness as the LeConte rolled through 12-foot seas while steaming near an open passage to the stormy Gulf of Alaska.

"Everything would have been okay I think if I hadn't eaten the poached salmon for lunch," said one female passenger as she emerged pale and shaken from a crowded restroom.

Sharing the limelight with Mrs. Hammond's official party, was an unofficial delegation of Juneau bar owners and their friends, who spent the entire round trip ensconced in the LeConte's lounge.

"We may not break even in fares to and from Pelican, but we'll probably make up for any losses in the bar," said one LeConte crew member.

Pelican Due Ferry Service

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—The state marine highway system will begin regular ferry service to the tiny fishing village of Pelican next week, Gov. Jay Hammond has announced.

Beginning Nov. 8, the MV LeConte will sail from Auke Bay to Pelican the first Monday of every month with an intermediate stop at Hoonah, Hammond said.

The state agreed to include the town as a regular port-of-call after Pelican citizens funded the construction of a city dock.

"The initiation of ferry service to Pelican exemplifies both the importance of the marine highway to residents of Southeast Alaska and the progress that can be made when a community gets behind a project," Hammond said.

Pelican is located on Chichagof Island about 80 miles southwest of Juneau.

State ferry to serve Pelican

JUNEAU (AP)—The state marine highway system will begin regular ferry service to the tiny fishing village of Pelican next week, Gov. Jay Hammond has announced.

Beginning Nov. 8, the MV LeConte will sail from Auke Bay to Pelican the first Monday of every month with an intermediate stop at Hoonah.

"The initiation of ferry service to Pelican exemplifies both the importance of the marine highway to residents of Southeast Alaska and the progress that can be made when a community gets behind a project," Hammond said.

Pelican is located on Chichagof Island.

Ferry service for Pelican village

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—The state marine highway system will begin regular ferry service to the tiny fishing village of Pelican next week, Gov. Jay Hammond has announced.

Beginning Nov. 8, the MV LeConte will sail from Auke Bay to Pelican the first Monday of every month with an intermediate stop at Hoonah, Hammond said.

The state agreed to include the town as a regular port-of-call after Pelican citizens funded the construction of a city dock.

"The initiation of ferry service to Pelican exemplifies both the importance of the marine highway to residents of Southeast Alaska and the progress that can be made when a community gets behind a project," Hammond said.

Pelican is located on Chichagof Island about 80 miles southwest of Juneau.

Pelican linked to the world

Pelican gets ferry service

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — The state marine highway system will begin regular ferry service to the tiny fishing village of Pelican next week, Gov. Jay Hammond has announced.

Beginning Nov. 8, the MV LeConte will sail from Auke Bay to Pelican the first Monday of every month with an intermediate stop at Hoonah, Hammond said.

The state agreed to include the town as a regular port-of-call after Pelican citizens funded the construction of a city dock.

"The initiation of ferry service to Pelican exemplifies both the importance of the marine highway to residents of Southeast Alaska and the progress that can be made when a community gets behind a project," Hammond said.

Pelican is located on Chichagof Island about 80 miles southwest of Juneau.

Hammond Announces Switch In Ferry Reservation System

Governor Jay Hammond has announced a contract has been awarded to begin the conversion of the Alaska Marine Highway's reservation system from a manual to a computerized operation. The three-phase, $100,000 contract for the RMS (Reservation Management System) was awarded to Systems Northwest, Inc. of Juneau.

The first phase of the contract, which is already underway, is to analyze present reservation procedures, and the administrative practices affecting them. Based on this analysis, formal reccomendations for change and improvement will be made, culminating with a basic systems design.

The second phase will be the detailed design and programming of the computerized reservation system, along with the development and implementation of supporting manual procedures.

The third phase will be the actual installation of the system. Plans call for initial use to be provided to Juneau, Seattle and Anchorage stations via computer terminals and communications lines. Then the system will be extended to remaining ferry terminals and reservation locations as demand arises.

The Governor said, "This new Reservation Management System will be comparable to those used by major airlines, only it will be adapted to the special needs of our Marine Highway. This system will be an important aid to Alaskans who travel the Marine Highway in Southeast Alaska, Prince William Sound, the Cook Inlet area, and Kodiak, and to our tourist insdustry overall since it will provide faster and highly reliable service to consumers."

4-73

Another slice of Alaska frontier life vanished forever as the gleaming state ferry LeConte linked the boardwalk fishing village of Pelican deep in the misty Alexander Archipelago, with mainland civilization.

For some, the 200-mile maiden, round trip voyage of the MV LeConte from Juneau on the Southeast Alaska coast to Pelican on Chichagof Island was a cause for celebration.

"You can't stop progress, even in Pelican," beamed Big Rosey, the hefty saloon-keeper ad hoc banker and mother figure to the 200-odd men, women and children who make their home in this 40-year-old cannery town. "We've got it made now."

Ferry delayed by ramp repairs

The Alaska ferry Matanuska is tied up in Ketchikan for a 24-hour delay because of problems in Prince Rupert.

A ferry terminal spokesman said that the Prince Rupert terminal has been closed for three days for loading ramp repairs, but the ferry has only been delayed one day.

Passengers are on board the Matanuska today to wait out the delay. It is expected to leave Ketchikan tonight at 11 o'clock and arrive in Prince Rupert Saturday at about 5 a.m.

Ferry stop designated at Pelican

Gov. Jay Hammond has announced the town of Pelican will become a regular port-of-call for the ships of the Alaska Marine Highway system.

Beginning this autumn, the M/V Le Conte will sail from Auke Bay (the North Juneau landing) to Pelican the first Monday of every month. The timetable calls for two intermediate stops at Hoonah.

Pelican Note

Dear Editor:

I think there is a need to make a statement regarding my comments in Tuesdays Empire about the ferry coming to Pelican.

The quotes attributed to me are indeed accurate, but obviously were not meant to represent the City of Pelican nor the majority of its citizens. Although it most often proves difficult, I do not believe that my involvement with local politics should limit me from expressing my feelings as a private citizen. It is unfortunate that distinction was not made clear in the article.

Both our new municipal dock and the state's decision to run a ferry to Pelican are the result of a concerted effort on the part of the City of Pelican and the State of Alaska. I would hate to see those efforts diminished in any way because of my own personal comments.

Thank You
Bruce E. Anderson
Mayor/Pelican

Two fires reported

An overheated woodburning stove caused damage to a storage shed owned by D. E. Bay, Cove Rd., on Wednesday morning. Firemen were called to the scene at 8:20 a.m. the fire was quickly extinguished but portion of the rear wall was burned out. There was no damage to the rest of the shed or contents. Firemen returned to the station at 9:05.

Earlier in the morning firemen were called to Peterson Builders Inc. when a pile of oily rags on the Alaskan ferry caught fire. The fire was out before firetrucks arrived on the scene.

Seniors must pay

The Alaska State Ferry System has corrected a statement made Nov. 20 in an article on senior citizen specials.

The article stated that senior citizens are able to travel free of charge from Ketchikan to Seattle and back on the ferry. The statement should have read that there is no charge for passage from Haines to Ketchikan for those 65 and older.

Ferry Offer

STEWART, Canada (AP) — This community at the south end of the Alaskan panhandle is considering an offer to use the Alaska ferry system, Mayor Ian McLeod said Wednesday.

He said the offer involves a 235-foot vessel capable of handling 250 passengers, cargo and vehicles. The route would include the communities of Stewart and Hyder, Alaska, as well as Prince Rupert and Ketchikan, Alaska.

He said the rates would be lower than what both Northland Navigation used to charge and what Rivtow Straits now charges.

The mayor said passengers would travel for $12 instead of $30 and cars would be charged $30 compared to the present rate of about $100.

Rupert work delays ferry

Repair work at the Prince Rupert, B.C., ferry terminal will delay the sailing of the Matanuska northbound one day—from Friday, Nov. 19, to Saturday, Nov. 20.

Though the Alaska state ferry will leave the Canadian port one day late, it will return to its normal schedule for its northbound sailing fom Prince Rupert Tuesday, Nov. 23.

The Nov. 20 sailing will "make up" its one day by bypassing its scheduled northbound stop at Sitka.

The Matanuska will reach Wrangell northbound Saturday night, rather than Friday night, and will return here southbound in the middle of the afternoon Monday, rather than Friday night, and will return here southbound in the middle of the afternoon Monday, rather than early in the morning.

The late sailing is necessitated by a three-day repair project Nov. 17-19 at the Prince Rupert ferry dock.

Doug Burton, traffic manager for the state Division of Marine Transportation, said bridge, cable and pulley work is scheduled for the Prince Rupert facility, operated by the Canadian government.

"Things started getting wobbly," he said, so the repairs were scheduled, along with normal maintenance.

After the fact

One suggestion for a joint Wrangell chamber of commerce and city council venture. . .

The state ferry system next summer will put into service a new ferry.

This ship will be of the same mold as the LeConte—235 feet long, with room for about 250 passengers, almost 50 vehicles and no staterooms.

The ship was built in Wisconsin, on Lake Michigan, and after a very long trip up the lake, through the St. Lawrence Seaway, down the East Coast, through the Gulf of Mexico, through the Panama Canal, up the West Coast and final outfitting in the Seattle area later this winter and spring, is expected to start serving Southeast Alaska sometime next June.

What Wrangell officials should be concerned with is that the new ferry's routing through Southeast has not yet been decided.

An official of the Alaska Marine Highway said the ship might serve Prince Rupert, Ketchikan and Hollis, and it also might come as far north as Petersburg.

Well, Wrangell is just about as far north as Petersburg.

Perhaps now is the time for the council and chamber to jointly write letters to those at the helm of the ferry system, asking that the new ferry also serve Wrangell.

The ferries were first brought to Southeast for the convenience of area residents, and what could be more convenient than another ship on the line?

* * *

Acceptance Of Ferry Was 'Tragic Mistake'

Commissioner of Public Works Donald Harris said this week the acceptance of the state ferry Columbia from the manufacturer was a "tragic mistake" on the part of the administration of former Gov. William A. Egan.

In an interview with Richard Foley, a reporter for the Ketchikan Daily News, Harris said that the commissioner of public works at the time was forced to take delivery when the state failed to extend a waiver from the federal government to operate the former ferry, the Wickersham.

Harris did not mention Egan or former commissioner George Easley by name.

The Wickersham was a foreign-built ship, operating in American ports. This is prohibited by the federal Jones Act. A limited waiver to the Jones Act had been granted earlier for the Wickersham.

The Columbia has had a number of problems since it was commissioned two years ago. There have been problems with engines, bow thruster, piping system, ventilation system, evaporators and vibration and the vessel has spent a lot of time in port for repairs.

Consequently, the ship has missed a number of scheduled trips on its run from Seattle to Skagway.

The state division of marine transportation has recently announced the Columbia will be taken out of service again in October to replace corroded pipes in one of the ship's stack boilers.

The Lockheed Corp. built the $22-million vessel.

According to Harris, the federal government had offered to extend the Jones Act waiver for the Wickersham for another year but the state declined.

"The previous commissioner kept telling the previous governor that they would be getting quick delivery of the Columbia," Harris is quoted as saying. When the Wickersham went out of service and the summer schedule was already set, the administration was forced to accept the Columbia too soon, he said.

State Ferry makes food service profit

The M/V Malaspina continues to net the state a profit in her food and passenger service categories, Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris said.

• Ferry Taku

We have just returned from a very enjoyable trip to Scagway, Alaska, arranged through the Auto Club's Seattle office. Driving to Prince Rupert was a lovely experience and the ferry ride through the Inside Passage was something we shall never forget. Even the Scagway Motel which was our last and only choice turned out to be really enjoyable with very friendly people to serve us and extremely clean rooms.

However, our only bad experience was the Ferry Taku. Had we only known what it was like we would have waited over in Scagway and taken another Ferry. The weather was in the mid-80s, there was no air conditioning on the Ferry and the stateroom was worse than a jail cell.

There was one tiny vent near the ceiling of the room which seemed to have no air whatsoever filtering through. The room was unbelievably hot and needless to say it was impossible to sleep. We were on this ferry for two nights!

Most people had to resort to leaving the doors open and with people moving through the halls all night, it was very disturbing.

I would suggest that members be made aware of the conditions of this Ferry. The Malaspina was a palace compared to the Taku, and it is surprising the Alaska system is yet using it.

Mrs. Ralph Birum
Mountlake Terrace

State to rebuild dolphin at ferry terminal here

The state is funding a $20,000-$30,000 project to rebuild the dolphin at the north end of Wrangell's ferry terminal.

Bids for the project now are being taken. The deadline for bids is Thursday, Nov. 18, and state officials have required the project be completed by April 15, 1977.

Don Statter, director of the state Division of Water and Harbors, said the project "is essentially a rebuilding of the existing north dolphin fender system . . . it's kind of cobbled up."

He explained work will include installing a walkway to the north concrete-and-steel dolphin, three rock-bolt anchors for tie-up and rebuilding the dolphin's fender system, including new rubber bumpers.

Though the Division of Water and Harbors is contracting the work, Statter said, the project is being funded by the Division of Marine Transportation.

As soon as the selected contractor receives his building materials, the project may begin, he said, noting April 15 is the deadline for completion, though Statter expects it could be done earlier.

Depending on weather in Wrangell, Statter said, the work could be completed by mid-January.

Juneau Firm Wins Ferry Contract

JUNEAU (AP) — The first step has been taken toward conversion of the Alaska Marine Highway's reservation system from a manual to a computerized system, Gov. Jay Hammond said reports.

The governor said a three-phase, $100,000 contract for the system has been awarded to Systems Northwest, Inc., of Juneau.

11-74

11-75

End of the week

The trend of Alaska State Ferry System to move to Seattle finally has led to problems. As it was predicted, a large portion of non-residents now man the ships in the engineering department. And resident Alaskans are being discriminated against.

State ferry system officials are partially responsible for the situation. The problem now is how to correct things.

Most of the engineers for the state ferries live in Seattle. The way this has been made possible is that the state has agreed that they can serve two weeks on shift and two weeks off and the state has agreed that Seattle can be a change port for engineers.

The problem arises when the few engineers remaining in Alaska are discriminated against. When an engineer has to be found to fill in for someone who is ill, or for other reasons cannot make a trip, the ferry system officials are unable to obtain anyone in Seattle. A wife answers the phone and reports the engineer is out of town. So one of the Alaskans fills in. The Alaskans are doing all of the extra work.

One Alaskan engineer transferred to the Seattle run ferry was the senior engineer in the position. He had the prerogative of choosing which port would be the change port for his shift. He picked Ketchikan. So he was transferred back off the Seattle run and to a lesser position on a ship that runs only to Prince Rupert. The Seattle-based engineers want things their way, regardless of seniority or residence.

Alaskans have been complaining that it is unfair to have state employes live in Seattle. But the state has failed to discourage it by allowing crewmen to juggle shifts and change ports for the convenience of Seattle living.

The answer, if corrective measures aren't taken administratively, is to pass a few laws in the Alaska legislature. It may be unconstitutional to dictate where people live, but it won't be unconstitutional to declare that change ports are in Alaska. It would be legal to declare that shifts are limited to one week on and one week off. Or, as one lawmaker said, it would be possible to limit Alaska ferry service to Alaskan and Canadian waters. The northern lawmakers would love to do that to keep tax dollars at home but Southeast Alaska residents would be punished with the engineers.

These are all just possibilities. They are not threats. They are predictions of the kind of proposals that will be made in the next session of the legislature. Many Alaska residents who work for the ferry system are unhappy with their Washington-resident shipmates. Alaska lawmakers and ferry system administrators are unhappy with the tactics of the engineers. And Alaska taxpayers resent the tax dollars going to Seattle.

Freeman bills seek to curb 'discrimination' against Alaskans working on ferry system

In an effort to curb discrimination against Alaskan residents employed by the state ferry system, Rep. Oral Freeman, D-Ketchikan, has prefiled two bills. One piece of legislation would designate that the change port for Alaska ferry system crews be in Alaska. The other bill would require that shift changes be weekly, instead of every two weeks, except in emergencies.

The proposed legislation was filed by Freeman after "a steady stream of Alaskans" called on the lawmaker to protest discrimination practiced against them by Seattle residents employed on the ferries, particularly in the engineering department.

It was reported that the engineers, dominated by nonresidents, had changed their work shifts to two weeks on and two weeks off. And they designated the crew change port as Seattle. One Alaskan resident put on the Seattle run was transferred back to a ship operating solely in Alaska and demoted for trying to have Ketchikan made the change port for his shift, Freeman said.

Ketchikan businessmen and resident Alaska ferry workers have protested the trend of some ferry workers to move to Seattle to make their homes.

Freeman's legislation, reducing the working period and making the change port in Alaska, makes living out of state less attractive and more costly to ferry workers.

Freeman said he has discussed the proposed legislation with Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris and director of the ferry system William Hudson. His legislation has their support although a few minor adjustments may be needed to make it workable, Freeman said he was advised.

Freeman said that Harris advised that he was unaware of the discrimination being practiced by the engineers against Alaskans. He told Freeman that he probably could take care of the situation administratively.

Freeman told the Daily News and Harris that he is not concerned about which method is adopted to correct the situation, "I just can't stand by and see these people (Alaskans) discriminated against."

He said that he will keep his legislation alive in the legislature until administrative action is taken or the bills pass.

HEARING CANCELLED

Hearings on a proposed ferry terminal at Skagway which were scheduled in Skagway Jan. 12 and in Juneau Jan. 13 have been postponed indefinitely, according to the district engineer.

The Alaska Department of Public Works which had applied for a department of the army permit for the terminal construction, dredging and filling in Taiya Inlet, requested that its application be held in abeyance

Columbia Is Jinxed

PITY THE COLUMBIA, flagship of the Alaska marine highway system.

The ferry has been out of service for the last two months. During that time it has been in Todd's Shipyard in Seattle for general maintenance.

Now that the work is done, can you expect the Columbia back on duty?

Well, no, to be blunt about it. The Columbia now is in Tacoma, where Marine Indusrties Northwest has a contract to do major overhaul work that will not be completed until March 4, 1977.

THE COLUMBIA couldn't even get to the repair yard under its own power. It had to be towed there.

The bid on the work by Marine Industries: $322,473.

Pity the poor Alaska taxpayer.

11-76

Ferry name still secret

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

Although the name of the new Le Conte class ship has already been chosen, it is still a secret.

According to the marine transportation director Bill Hudson, the ship is scheduled for delivery by June 1, but the name won't be released until the vessel is dedicated.

A resolution by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough asking the governor to name the ferry "Chickamin" after a glacier east of Ketchikan was rejected. The governor informed the borough that a name had already been selected.

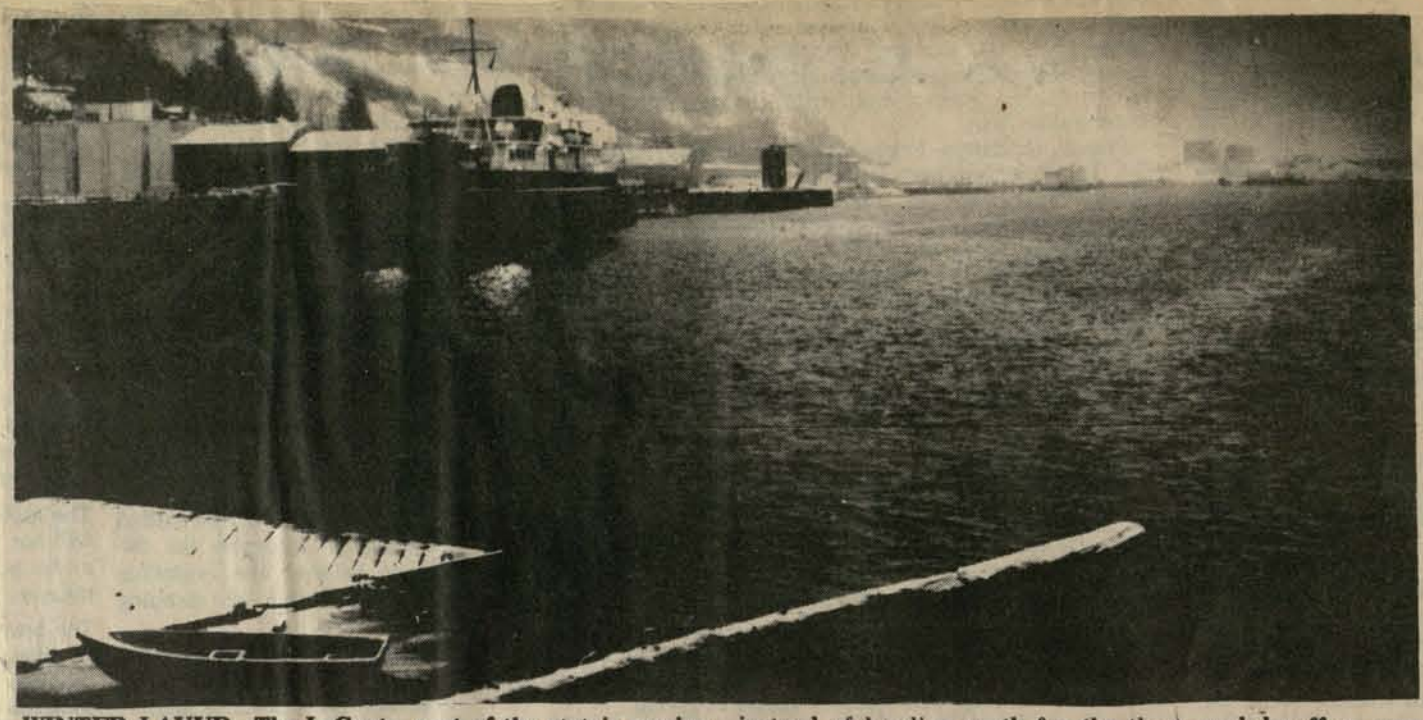
The state has a policy of naming its ferries after glaciers.

Hudson also informed the Daily News that the new 235-foot vessel will not be used to service the town of Metlakatla when it initially goes on line.

Major work on the Metlakatla docking facilities is needed before the new, larger ferry can get in there, he said.

Instead Hudson anticipates a day-boat operation with the Chilkat servicing Metlakatla seven days a week.

Eventually Hudson said the dock could be modified to handle the larger ferries, but he would not estimate when.



WINTER LAYUP—The LeConte, part of the state's marine highway system, will stay in Juneau during the winter layup this year. A city official said the Port Advisory Committee had asked the city manager if the ferry could moor at the city float instead of heading south for the three-week layoff so crew members could stay in Juneau with their families. The city assembly agreed with the request.

Loss of service to Stewart, B.C. sparks talks of Alaska ferry use

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

The loss of Canadian subsidized service to the towns of Hyder, Alaska, and Stewart, B.C., has generated some discussion that the Alaska state ferry system should consider a run up Portland Canal.

Stewart city manager Dennis Donald said today the city has not formally approached the state of Alaska to provide the ferry service, but it may do so if the Canadian government fails to provide adequate service.

In October the towns lost service when the Canadian government cut off a subsidy to the Northland Navigation Company which provided barge and ferry service. Since then, Donald said, Stewart has been without satisfactory service.

Unofficial discussion and some research has been done addressing the use of the new 235-foot LeConte class ship on a run to those towns.

"There are certain people who see the Alaska ferry as a very viable enterprise," Donald said. "It has excellent main line and feeder service."

Alaska marine transportation director Bill Hudson said his office has received calls inquiring about Hyder-Stewart service, but nothing is official.

"We have no intention of researching this on our own, but we would certainly consider any proposal from Stewart," Hudson said.

If some service was provided, Hudson said the Canadian government would have to provide some subsidy for the run. It takes about 12 hours to make the run up Portland Canal and the small population doesn't justify the tremendous expense, Hudson said.

A previous consideration by the ferry system to provide service to Hyder was rejected for those reasons, he said.

"I'm not optimistic about any change in our operation," Hudson said.

Stewart mayor Ian McLeod said his community would prefer Canadian service, but things are getting desperate under the present service.

"We've been cut off and we'll look at anybody who can provide service," Donald said.

Del Bradford new ferry terminal manager here

The Alaska Marine Highway System has appointed a new ferry terminal manager for Valdez. The position has now become a permanent position, instead of having a commissioned agent in Valdez.

On Dec. 1, Del Bradford became the new permanent ferry terminal manager for Valdez, replacing Mrs. Bonnette Cooper. Cooper was the agent for the past eight years in Valdez. The new manager has been transferred from Anchorage where he has been working for the ferry system for the past six years.

Bradford advises that the schedule for the M.V. Bartlett for the remainder of December and January and through February 22 will be as follows:

on the Valdez run by April 3, 1977.

Bradford said that all reservations including southeastern Alaska sailings may be handled through the Valdez office as well as any information regarding the Alaska Marine Highway system. The number at the Valdez ferry terminal office is 835-4436 during the posted office hours.

ALASKA TO ADD FERRY

JUNEAU — The Alaska Marine Highway System has reported that it will add a second ferry on the Seattle-Alaska run this summer.

Beginning in May, the ferry Malaspina will team up with the ferry already on the run—the Columbia.

The Columbia will sail from Pier 48 for points in Southeast Alaska every Friday, while the Malaspina will sail every Tuesday.

Passenger capacity on the Columbia is 650, while the Malaspina can carry 500.

Increased passenger movement from the Puget Sound-Alaska areas was the determining factor in this move by the Alaska Marine Highway System.

Canadians may decide to use Alaska ferry

STEWART, Canada (AP)—This community at the south end of the Alaskan panhandle is considering an offer to use the Alaska ferry system, Mayor Ian McLeod said Wednesday.

He said the offer involves a 235-foot vessel capable of handling 250 passengers, cargo and vehicles. The route would include the communities of Stewart and Hyder, Alaska, as well as Prince Rupert and Ketchikan.

He said the rates would be lower than what both Northland Navigation used to charge and what Rivtow Straits now charges.

The mayor said passengers would travel for $12 instead of $30 and cars would be charged $30 compared to the present rate of about $100.

He also said the vessel would also be ideal in rough weather.

McLeod said his community would prefer a Canadian service, but things are getting desperate under the present service.

He said that before making a decision on the Alaska offer, Stewart will wait a few weeks to allow the federal government to improve the present service.

11-77

Matanuska bid rejected by state

A spokesman for the department of public works said today that a single bid received for lengthening the Alaska state ferry Matanuska will be rejected, delaying the project until next year.

Bud Saylors, director of administration for the public works department, said the bidder, Willamette Iron and Steel Co. of Portland, Ore., will be notified of the decision this afternoon.

Willamette had bid $15,828,000 to lengthen the Matanuska 56 feet. The lone bid, opened Wednesday afternoon, was nearly $1 million over the engineer's estimate of $15 million for the job, but Saylors said cost was not the deciding factor. He said delays and time factors were the primary reasons, along with exception by the company to several of the bid specifications.

Saylors said the bid specifications cautioned against taking exception to any items, but the company said it could not deliver the vessel by the date it was needed. The state wanted the Matanuska completed by next July 15 and the company said they could not deliver until late September.

Saylor said Willamette's proposed delivery date was too late because it would mean the vessel would be out of service the entire tourist season. The plan now is to readvertise for bids in February or March for the work to be done next winter between the 1977 and 1978 tourist seasons.

The company objected to several other bid specifications, Saylor said, involving "four or five areas." One of the specifications the company took exception to was one which said any design omissions by the architect which might be discovered during the conversion would be included at the builder's expense. Willamette's opinion was that the additions should be at the expense of the owner.

The decision was made this morning during meetings involving the federal highway administration, which would fund part of the cost of conversion, and several state agencies also involved, including the department of highways and the marine transportation division.

Ferry Plan Is Delayed

JUNEAU (AP) — The state Public Works Department has decided to delay plans to lengthen the ferry Matanuska.

The decision was made after officials rejected the single bid tendered Wednesday on a proposal to lengthen the ferry 56 feet.

The Willamette Iron and Steel Co. of Portland, Ore. submitted a bid of $15.8 million, about $800,000 higher than the estimate of department engineers.

But Bud Saylors, the department's director of administration, said cost was not the deciding factor in rejecting the bid.

Saylors said the state wanted the job completed by July 16 but the Portland company said it could not finish the project before late September.

As a result, the department decided to readvertise for bids on the project in February or March and try to contract the job for next winter.

11-78

11-79

State's newest ferry to increase traffic in Ketchikan area

By NORMAND DUPRE
News Editor

JUNEAU—The Aurora will become highly visible in southern Southeast Alaska starting about July 1, but it will have nothing to do with atmospheric conditions.

Aurora is the name of the newest state ferry, a 235-foot shuttle ferry that will serve the Ketchikan area. The $7.6 million vessel is now awaiting final testing and outfitting before it joins the seven other ships of the state's marine highway system, said William Hudson, director.

Ceremonies marking the maiden voyage of the new ship are expected but have not been scheduled.

The Aurora carries 250 passengers and 47 vehicles. It is a sister ship to the Le Conte, which serves small communities in the northern Panhandle and is stationed in Juneau. Both ships have double crews of about 24 persons each.

Hudson said the crews would be made of members of part-time relief crews from other ships. These are personnel who have temporary jobs with the system, and who now will be given permanent positions.

The Aurora, like the Le Conte, has no staterooms or gift shop since it is made for short runs, but it is equipped with a sit-down snack bar and a cocktail lounge.

The side and stern loading vessel initially will use the mainline ferry ramp at the Ketchikan terminal because of conflicts on the smaller ramp with the state ferry Chilkat and Ketchikan's two airport ferries.

However, because of other conflicts with mainline ferry schedules, the Aurora will eventually use the smaller ramp after the borough finds a new location for its airport vessels.

The Aurora's schedule will mean an additional six to eight ferry calls to Ketchikan a week, necessitating another position in the terminal, according to traffic

The vessel is now 97 per cent complete and is expected in Seattle by May 15, said Merve Griggs, administrative officer. Outfitting includes installation of such things as linen, mattresses, dishware, charts, tools, food, etc., Griggs said. It will then take 30 days for trial runs and to acquaint the crews with the ship.

The Aurora will operate mainly as a shuttle ferry between Ketchikan and Prince Rupert, B.C., one of the busiest ports visited by the state ferries. Rupert is the northern terminus of the Canadian highway system on which much Alaska-bound traffic travels. The vehicles link up in Rupert with the ferry system.

The Aurora will travel three days a week to Rupert when no other mainline ferries are due. On one of those trips the Aurora will continue past Ketchikan to Wrangell, Petersburg and Juneau to fill a gap left in the schedule by the mainline vessels.

On most of the shuttle runs between Ketchikan and Rupert the Aurora will offload her passengers in the First City just in time to catch connecting ferries. Hudson said this is to encourage travel on the smaller feeder ferries which are less luxurious than the mainline ferries.

On one trip a week, however, the Aurora's passengers will have to overnight in Ketchikan before another ferry is due. Hudson said this is an experiment to see if tourists take advantage of the overnight to visit Ketchikan.

The Aurora also will make runs to Metlakatla and Prince of Wales Island. The ship will run only one day a week to Metlakatla because the state plans to retain the Chilkat for the Metlakatla run. The Aurora, therefore, will give Metlakatla additional service.

The Aurora will run to Hollis, the terminal on Prince of Wales Island, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Roads from Hollis extend to Craig, Klawock, Thorne Bay and to Klawock Lake and other recreation areas. The ferry may overnight at Hollis on Sunday and return Monday, but that is not firm yet.

Hudson said the Aurora at this time is frozen in the ice of the Great Lakes at the Peterson Builders shipyard at Sturgeon Bay, Wis., where it was built.

New Ferry

By The Associated Press

Alaska's new 235-foot ferry will be named "Aurora," Marine Highway System Director William Hudson has announced.

Hudson says the $7.6 million ferry should arrive in Alaska in time to begin its scheduled shuttle run between Ketchikan and Prince Rupert early this summer.

Gov. Jay Hammond selected "Aurora" from the names of three glaciers submitted to him, rejecting Chickamin and Mendenhall, a spokesman said. All Alaska ferries are named after glaciers.

Ferry Crews

By The Associated Press

Legislation aimed at discouraging state ferry system employes from living out of state won unanimous approval Thursday from the House State Affairs Committee.

The bill HB45 by Democratic Reps. Oral Freeman and Terry Gardiner of Ketchikan would require that ferries always conduct crew changes in Alaska ports.

Under current practice, crew changes occur in Seattle where most ferry engineers and masters live. The tradition requires Alaska crew members to fly back and forth to Seattle at their own expense.

'Aurora' to make debut

New state ferry named 'Aurora'

JUNEAU — Alaska's new 235 - foot ferry will be named "Aurora," Marine Highway System Director William Hudson has announced.

Hudson says the $7.6 million ferry should arrive in Alaska in time to begin its scheduled shuttle run between Ketchikan and Prince Rupert early this summer.

Gov. Jay S. Hammond selected "Aurora" from the names of three glaciers submitted to him, rejecting Chickamin and Mendenhall, a spokesman said. All Alaska ferries are named after glaciers.

The Aurora Glacier is located near Glacier Bay in the St. Elias Mountains.

The vessel, which is being built by Peterson Builders of Sturgeon Bay, Wis., currently is about 97 per cent complete, Hudson says.

Summer travel

New ferry to serve Wrangell; fare hike noted

The good news is Wrangell will be served this summer by the state's new ferry, the Aurora.

More good news is that when the ferry system changes its summer schedule May 1 through Sept. 30, and when all of the state's vessels are back in service from winter maintenance and when the Aurora is put into service, Wrangell again will enjoy seven stops each week both north and southbound.

But, for the bad news:

Ferry travel, just as Florida fruit and vegetables and the price of Arab oil, will cost more.

Doug Burton, traffic manager for the state Division of Marine Transportation in Juneau, said fares "are up about six percent" from last summer.

For large vehicles the rate increase averages three to five percent, he said. Passengers and passenger cars will pay seven to eight percent more this year.

For example, a ticket from Wrangell to Ketchikan will cost $12 this summer ($11 last year), and to ship a small car from Seattle to Wrangell will cost $254 ($236 last year).

The Aurora, about 97 percent completed, is frozen in the ice of Lake Michigan at a Sturgeon Bay, Wisc., shipyard.

The new ferry, sistership to the LeConte, is expected to come into service in Southeast in late May or early June.

The Aurora, named after a glacier in Glacier Bay, 61 miles northwest of Hoonah, is 235 feet long, carries 250 passengers and 47 vehicles and cost $7.6 million. It will have a double crew of 23 members each.

Like the LeConte, the Aurora has no staterooms or giftshop, but will have a sit-down snack bar and a cocktail lounge.

The Aurora will make three trips a week from Prince Rupert, B.C., to Southeast, and on one of the trips will head to Wrangell, Petersburg and Juneau, in addition to its normal stops at Ketchikan, Metlakatla and Prince of Wales Island.

Burton said the Aurora will serve Wrangell northbound Tuesday night and southbound late Wednesday or early Thursday.

Ferry system plans modifications to Ketchikan terminal

By BOB SPEED
Daily News Staff Writer

Ketchikan's ferry dock will not be modified for the first year's operation of the new ferry Aurora, scheduled to come on line about July 1. The vessel will be scheduled into the crowded main dock, according to Doug Burton of the state Division of Marine Transportation.

Burton said the problem the first year is that the Aurora will lay at pierside for six to eight hours a day in Ketchikan, its home port, getting in the way of docking for other ferries. The Aurora will have to pull out each time another ferry arrives to dock.

The state's six-year construction program released this week earmarks $1.2 million for improvements to the Ketchikan ferry terminal in 1977.

Modification scheduled for 1977 will increase dock space to allow two ferries to dock simultaneously. Burton said this will make passenger connections easier for people on the Prince Rupert and Seattle runs. The modification will also have to take into account docking room for Ketchikan's two airport ferries, the Abnaki and Algonquin.

Other modifications planned for the Ketchikan ferry terminal are expansion of the terminal building, and vehicle staging area, and perhaps addition of a customs house replacing the one at Prince Rupert, B.C., Burton said.

He said the U.S. Customs Service has several problems in Prince Rupert which might be solved by a move to Ketchikan. One problem is that U.S. Customs officials can't make arrests on Canadian soil, Burton said, and the service also has problems in Canada finding qualified U.S. citizens to man the station.

Burton said other alternatives suggested by the customs people include cost-of-living allowances for customs officials serving the ferry terminal there, to be paid by the ferry system. Burton said that could get expensive.

He said adding customs duties at Ketchikan for all Prince Rupert runs could present some scheduling problems for people having to change ferries, but the problems are still under investigation. He said it is too early to know what the total effect might be, and that negotiations between the ferry system and customs are also still in early stages.

Burton said dock modifications in Metlakatla have been delayed by possible problems of wind in docking and bottom depth for construction of a new dock to accommodate the Aurora. Those problems are being investigated now, he said.

In the meantime, the Chilkat will remain on the Metlakatla run and the Aurora will take over the Hollis run. The Hollis schedule has been worked out, Burton said, with visits three times a week between Friday and Monday. The current schedule by the Chilkat calls for trips to Hollis Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Burton said money appropriated for Wrangell will be used to upgrade the dock, which has deteriorated from age.

Money appropriated for refurbishing the Taku will include funds for upgrading passenger areas and staterooms, as well as replacing piping, ventilation systems and other operating equipment, Burton said.

Ferry bill goes to governor

JUNEAU (AP)—A bill aimed at ending discrimination against state ferry crew members who live in Alaska was approved by the Senate today and sent to the governor.

Senate lawmakers voted 19-1 to pass the bill (HB45) mandating that Alaska ferries always conduct crew changes in Alaska ports. The legislation was sponsored by Rep. Oral Freeman, D-Ketchikan, and is designed to halt the current practice of changing crews in Seattle.

11-80

Free student group ferry travel asked in resolution

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—Public school systems in Southeast could get some relief from the high cost of transportation for athletic programs as the state legislature considers a resolution to waive ferry fees for activity groups during the winter months.

House concurrent resolution 22 was introduced by Rep. Jim Duncan, D-Juneau, and is co-sponsored by four other Southeastern representatives including representatives Terry Gardiner and Oral Freeman, Ketchikan Democrats.

The resolution cites cutbacks in school budgets and rising costs as making it difficult for schools to provide worthwhile activities. By waiving the ferry fees for athletic teams and activity groups, extracurricular activities where students travel to other communities could be aided.

A similar resolution passed the house last year but died in the senate. Duncan said he expected the legislature to go for it this year.

The resolution said the off-season ferries often operate at less than full capacity and additional foot passenger traffic from activity groups would not significantly increase operating costs. The ferry travel for school-sanctioned activities would be provided on a space-available basis only between two Alaskan points from November through April, the resolution said. The resolution is now in the house state affairs committee.

Although the resolution would only request the administration to consider waiving the ferry fees, Duncan said he was hopeful the recommendation would be followed in the event that HCR 22 was passed.

"With school costs increasing, it could save local taxpayers some dollars," Duncan said. Although most teams are not traveling by ferry now, Duncan considered the legislation a good policy for the state to follow.

The fiscal note for last year's resolution was only $8,000 in lost revenue to the state, Duncan said, and some of that will be made up by the money which teams spend on food services.

Last week, the Ketchikan school board turned down requests by interested parties to permit second-place teams to go to state tournaments under any circumstances because of the cost involved. That action came about a month after the board had voted to permit only first-place teams to travel to statewide tournaments at school district expense.

Neither ruling affected travel or participation in regional competition, where both first and second-place teams are still eligible to participate.

The house resolution for free ferry service would have little effect on participation in most statewide tournaments since those are most often held outside the region, requiring air transportation.

Taku Accident

By The Associated Press

The state ferry Taku struck a submerged log Monday night, causing damage to the vessel's propeller assembly, state officials disclosed Tuesday.

Bill Hudson, Marine Transportation Division director, said the damage was discovered about 4 A.M. (PST) after the Taku arrived in Prince Rupert on a trip from Ketchikan.

Hudson said the damage was centered in the starboard hub assembly of the vessel's controllable pitch propeller.

The Coast Guard allowed the Taku to continue on the return leg of the roundtrip to Ketchikan, Hudson said.

"Present plans are to turn the ship around at Ketchikan and proceed to Seattle for drydock to begin repairs," Hudson said.

Hudson said he hoped to return the ship to service by Feb. 4.

Damaged by sunken log

Taku out one week

Passenger and freight traffic through Southeast was seriously disrupted by the Tuesday, Jan. 25, departure from the area of the state ferry Taku, damaged by a submerged log.

The Taku, which arrived in Seattle early Friday morning, Jan. 28, and headed into dry dock for repairs, was scheduled back into service in Southeast Alaska Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Doug Burton, traffic manager for the Division of Marine Transportation in Juneau, last Friday said, "Everything is going to plan" and the Taku should be back in service starting with its northbound run from Prince Rupert, B.C., Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Burton said the Taku was damaged by a submerged log as it headed south from Ketchikan to Prince Rupert Monday night, Jan. 24. The damage was discovered early Tuesday morning and the ship slowly traveled back to Ketchikan Tuesday, arriving about two hours late, where it unloaded passengers, cars and trucks and headed toward Seattle on one engine for repairs.

Burton said a log hit one of the ship's propellers and broke hydraulic oil seals at the base of the shaft. A warning light signaled the crew of the oil leak, he said, and Coast Guard permission was necessary for the vessel to turn back to Ketchikan to unload its passengers and vehicles.

The Taku then left Ketchikan for Seattle, stranding its riders in the Alaskan city until the northbound Malaspina arrived Sunday afternoon, Jan. 30.

With the Taku out of service until Feb. 1, and the Columbia and Matanuska south for winter maintenance, only the Malaspina remained to serve Southeast with one trip north and southbound for the week.

Burton said damage to the Taku probably was covered by insurance, though no cost estimate was yet available.

In other ferry system news:

•Burton said a consultant will visit Seattle and Bellingham to "gather costs" on possibly changing the state ferry system port of call to Bellingham, three to five ferry hours north of Seattle. He said a report will be prepared by the consultant and the Division of Marine Transportation, with recommendations from the division, and the report will be submitted to the governor and legislature for a final decision on the move.

The move would save ferry time, fuel costs and possibly allow for longer stops in Alaska ports, according to ferry officials.

•Early negotiations are taking place between ferry system and customs officials concerning possibly moving the U.S. Customs Service facility from Prince Rupert to Ketchikan.

•A bill in the state senate, which already has passed the house, would require personnel shift changes on state ferries to occur in Alaska ports.

Currently, according to the bill's sponsors, about 110 of the ferry system's 700 employes live out of state and many crew changes occur in Seattle.

The bill, according to its sponsors, would encourage ferry crews to live in Alaska.

It has been reported during debate on the bill, however, that some officials of unions representing ferry workers oppose the bill, charging it would make it difficult to hire qualified crew members, many of whom live outside Alaska.

Change port bill eases thru house

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—The Alaska ferry change-port bill, sponsored by Rep. Oral Freeman, D-Ketchikan, breezed through the state house today with a unanimous "yes" vote.

The bill must still pass the senate before becoming law.

Freeman's bill, one of the early bills to pass either body, would make it mandatory for all ferry shift changes to occur at Alaska ports. The bill was sponsored by all six Southeastern representatives.

Speaking on the bill from the floor of the house, Freeman called it a "motherhood and Alaska flag bill.

"The administration has been lax in the past, allowing crews to decide their own change ports," Freeman said. Members of the system in Alaska have been coming out on the short end of the stick."

If the senior member of a matched pair of crew members determines the change port to be in Seattle, the Alaskan employe is forced to fly south at his own expense to change ships. The seniority system on the ferries is determined by the length of time with the labor union, and not by the length of time on the ferries.

An associated bill, also introduced by Freeman, was waived from referral to the house finance committee today and will soon be on the house floor. That bill would establish the ferry shift period to be every seven days for the Southeastern vessels. Ferry crews now work either one or two week shifts.

If both bills pass, Seattle area residents who work on the ferries would be forced to fly one round trip weekly to Alaska at their own expense to make shift changes in Alaska ports.

"This is not an attempt to force them (Seattle residents) to live in Alaska," Freeman said. "It just makes it more attractive. It is good business on our part to see that pay checks are spent here in Alaska."

In other action, the house today passed a concurrent resolution honoring Langhorne (Tony) Motley, outgoing commissioner of commerce and economic development, for his two years of service to the state.

Motley has submitted his resignation effective Feb. 1. The resolution will be forwarded to the senate.

During testimony in the state House this week on legislation to discourage state ferry crew members from living in Seattle, Commissioner of Public Works Don Harris said he was unaware of the problem. The problem is that over 100 of the state's 700 ferry workers are living in Seattle. And they have pulled their seniority on Alaska based crew members and made the Alaskans fly to Seattle at their own expense to join the ship on crew changes.

Rep. Ed Dankworth, a former state trooper, said he found it hard to believe that Harris didn't know what was going on in the ferry system regarding employes.

Rep. Terry Gardiner, a Ketchikan Democrat who has been hearing a lot of ferry problems, said that he was not surprised. There are so many problems with the ferry system Harris was probably too busy working on others.

Statistics Tell Of Spending

The portion of the state budget document devoted to transportation reveals some interesting statistics. For example:

— Passengers on Southeastern ferries pay an average fare of $14.93 but it costs the state $32.42. These figures are expected to change to $16 and $25 under the proposed budget for fiscal year 1978. In the Southwest system, the average fare is $18.72 while the state cost is $64.50, a figure which the state hopes to reduce to $58 while the fare would remain the same.

FERRY TERMINAL MOVE—State planners are apparently still giving serious consideration to moving the southern terminal of the Marine Highway System from the Port of Seattle to Bellingham, Wash. The move would give longer stops in Alaskan ports and may shorten the ferry runs to such an extent that the state will save millions in not having to double-crew the Washington runs.

11-81

Move to Bellingham still possible, may be this year

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—Relocation of the southern terminal of the Alaska ferry system to Bellingham, Wash., could possible occur this year, although marine transportation director Bill Hudson expected any change was more likely to occur in 1978.

A planner for the ferry system is gathering information on the possible move. Hudson said he will make a recommendation to department of public works commissioner Donald Harris by the end of January.

Harris will make a final decision from the recommendation and supporting data.

The port of Bellingham is three to five hours closer to Alaska by ferry. That time difference could be increased by several more hours in the near future because of a proposed slowing of vessel speeds for Puget Sound shipping. The trip from Seattle to Bellingham by car takes about two hours.

Harris said an initial study didn't indicate the move to Bellingham would be a good idea. However, the slowing of traffic in Puget Sound and a new estimate for dock construction in Bellingham may allow the change to occur now, he said.

A new estimate has determined that capital construction costs could be cut in half by using an existing transfer dock at the Bellingham port.

If the Seattle run was shortened by several hours, Harris said the time could be used for more maintenance or for longer stops at Alaskan ports. Tourism promoters in Southeast Alaska have suggested longer stops by Alaska's ferries to stimulate that industry.

Meanwhile, the state has decided to rebid the lengthening of the ferry Matanuska sometime next summer. A single $15.5 million bid for the job was rejected last month because the contractor wanted to keep the ship longer than marine transportation division officials anticipated.

Harris expected more bids next summer because of the longer time being considered for construction. The new schedule calls for the Matanuska to be taken out of service next fall.

The 56-foot lengthening will increase the Matanuska's capacity by 20 per cent. A similar lengthening of the ferry Malaspina cost about $7.5 million in 1972.

Metlakatla to get Chilkat full time

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—The division of marine transportation has said it will alter the summer runs of the Alaska ferry Chilkat to provide "day boat" service to Ketchikan from Metlakatla. The ferry will be home ported in Metlakatla.

During a meeting of the house ferry oversight committee, Monday, director of marine transportation William Hudson said the service will begin in early June when the new 235-foot ferry Aurora goes on line. The scheduling changes will provide one trip to and from Ketchikan daily. Hudson said it would cost about half as much as it does now to operate the Chilkat on the new schedule.

Originally the Aurora was supposed to provide service to Metlakatla, and to Clark Bay on Prince of Wales Island from Ketchikan. However, inadequate state docking facilities at Metlakatla could not be altered to accept the new ferry as soon as previously planned.

Hudson said it currently costs about $500,000 a year to operate the Chilkat on its regular schedule. With annual revenues of about $130,000, yearly subsidy for the Chilkat is over $370,000. The operating budget for the Chilkat under the new daily service is about $250,000 with expected revenue of almost $125,000.

Hudson said contracts with the Inland Boatmen's Union, had to be revised before altering the Chilkat's service. He expects the contracts to be changed by the June 1 availability of the Aurora.

Although residents of Metlakatla have petitioned for some service from the new ferry Aurora as well as home porting the Chilkat at Annette Island, Hudson said he couldn't see how that program could be scheduled.

With the construction plans for the new dock not expected to be considered for another year, the Aurora will be unable to provide any service. Even if the port dock was reconstructed, Hudson said, the cost of serving Metlakatla with the Aurora would be about $1200 per stop. There is a problem determing the most prosperous runs while still providing adequate levels of service, Hudson said.

Matanuska lengthening delayed a year

Lengthening of the state ferry Matanuska has been delayed one year due to cost and time factors, according to state officials.

The ship was scheduled to be sliced apart and "stretched" 56 feet this winter (as was done to the Malaspina five years ago), but after receiving only one bid on the project, state officials decided to try again next year.

The Division of Marine Transportation, Department of Public Works, estimated lengthening the 352-foot ferry, converting its dining room to buffet-style service and refurbishing would cost about $15 million dollars. And if started this month, could be completed in time for the Southeast Alaska tourist season this June.

Willamette Iron and Steel Co., of Portland, was the only firm to bid on the work, state officials reported, and the company's bid was close to $16 million.

Willamette also took exception to some of the state's bid specifications and stated it could not complete the work until late September.

Faced with little choice, a state Division of Marine Transportation official in Juneau explained last week, the bid was rejected and the project scrapped until next winter.

He said ferry system managers now plan to take the Matanuska out of service Sept. 15 for lengthening and dining room conversion, assuming new bids (to be advertised for a March or April opening) are satisfactory.

"We couldn't deprive the public" of the ferry through the summer season, he explained.

The vessel now is in Seattle for normal winter maintenance, and is expected to rejoin the Southeast ferry fleet in May, he reported.

The Matanuska, which left Southeast for winter work in early January, was replaced on the Prince Rupert route by the Taku, which had returned from its seasonal maintenance.

In March, the Malaspina is scheduled to trade places with the Columbia and head south for winter work. The Columbia has been under repair since mid-October.

As part of state plans to do as much ferry maintenance in Alaska as possible, the LeConte will spend several weeks in Juneau for minor work before heading south for dry dock maintenance.

The Chilkat will be in Ketchikan during March for maintenance, and possibly the Bartlett might also stop in Ketchikan for repairs.

State officials report that work on the ferries in Juneau and Ketchikan would be performed by crew members

Bill Aims To End Bias

JUNEAU (AP) — A bill aimed at ending discrimination against state ferry crew members who live in Alaska was approved by the Senate yesterday and sent to the governor.

Senate lawmakers voted 19-1 to pass the bill mandating that Alaska ferries always conduct crew changes in Alaska ports. The legislation was sponsored by Rep. Oral Freeman, D-Ketchikan, and is designed to halt the current practice of changing crews in Seattle.

"Crew members who live in Alaska are coming out on the short end of the stick," Freeman said when the House passed his bill earlier in the session.

Freeman said his bill "doesn't tell people where to live, it just makes it a little more attractive to live in Alaska."

No ferries, flights in Ketchikan area —except Chilkat

Puget Sound Fleet

IN THE INTEREST of keeping everybody informed, let's enter into the log another word about the flagship of the state's ferry fleet, the motor vessel Columbia.

You remember the Columbia. It's the ship that seems to be in the repair yards more than it's at sea.

Anyway, as winter begins winding down and the tourist season begins to crank up, the Columbia is occupying familiar haunts. It's in a shipyard in Tacoma undergoing major repairs to its piping system, its stack boiler, its engines and its bow thrusters.

COME TO THINK of it, however, the flagship of the fleet was just about where it should be — right there with its sister vessels.

As reported in the Ketchikan Daily News last week, there were more Alaska ferries in Puget Sound than there were in Alaska waters. In addition to the Columbia at Tacoma, the LeConte, the Matanuska and the Chilkat are all in the Seattle area in various stages of repair or winter layup.

2 of 7 SE ferries are in service now

By RICHARD FOLEY
Daily News Staff Writer

JUNEAU—The Alaska ferries Taku and Malaspina are now carrying the entire traffic load in the Southeastern region, according to marine transportation director Bill Hudson.

The Taku got back on its regular schedule this week after missing last week's run when it hit a log and needed repairs.

The rest of the ferries, the Columbia, the LeConte, the Matanuska and the Chilkat are all in the Seattle area in various stages of repair, maintenance or layup. The Bartlett and Tustumena are serving the central region.

Hudson said the damage to the Taku was relatively minor, but enough to need service. A plug in the stern of the ferry was punctured by a log, causing hydraulic fluid to leak into Prince Rupert harbor. A propeller was also damaged.

The Columbia is still in Tacoma undergoing major repairs to the piping system, the stack boiler, ventilation system, engines and bow thrusters. The flagship of the Alaska fleet is expected out of Seattle this spring for the summer schedule after the repairs and conversion of its dining room to a cafeteria.

The Matanuska is unmanned and out of service for the winter months. Hudson said the winter traffic didn't warrant its use, so the Matanuska was layed up until spring.

The Matanuska was previously scheduled for nine months of work to lengthen it by 56 feet. When bids were rejected in December the ship was not rescheduled for winter service. Hudson said it would be "totally nonproductive for three months."

The LeConte is now at annual drydock in Seattle. It recently left Juneau after a five week winter maintenance trial at the capital.

Hudson said the work would be evaluated in consideration of future maintenance programs in Alaskan ports. The LeConte will return to service in a few weeks.

The Chilkat is scheduled for some winter maintenance later in Ketchikan. The Bartlett may also spend some time in Ketchikan for work.

But Hudson said a final decision has not been made.

$79 million contract
to Peterson Builders

Weather Recordings

r period ending Feb. 16, 1977.

eadings taken at 5 p.m. daily at the e experiment station covering eding 24 hours. Fahrenheit first ling; Celsius second.

	Max.		Min.		Prec.
sday	19	-7	3	-16	
nesday	18	-8	-6	21	

nrise Feb. 18 at 6:45; Sunset at 5:25.

Peterson Builders has won the biggest contract in the history of the firm, $78,943,000 for construction of nine 190-ft. aluminum missile gunboats for the U.S. Naval Sea Systems Command.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the ultimate owner will be Saudi Arabia.

The contract will run PBI's work backlog up to 1983 and will require an increase in the labor force, now at 638. Vice President Joe Gagnon said the yard is looking for skilled workers.

It will take about nine months of preparation before construction work begins on the new contract. Delivery of the first vessel will be in 36 months, last in 62 months.

The new ships will be bigger and more complex than the five 165-ft. gunboats previously built for the Navy at PBI. Power is the same, diesel for normal running and gas turbine for high performance.

Gagnon said PBI's experience in building the earlier five and the research vessel Alcoa Seaprobe, all aluminum ships, was a factor in the yard's getting the new award.

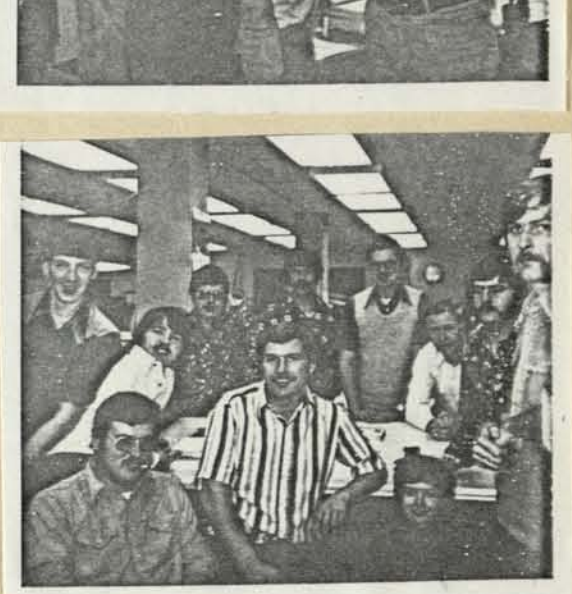
PBI is off to a fast start in 1977, winning $113 million worth of contracts in the past three weeks. Late in January an award was announced for $33.5 million for two 300-ft. vessels for the American Heavy Lift Shipping Co. of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Present work at the yard includes a 140 ft. ocean tug, 235-ft. Alaska ferry, four 154 wooden minesweepers, numerous 50 and 65 ft. aluminum boats and several repair jobs.

THE ADVOCATE

SECTIONS

15¢ Vol. 115—No. 96 STURGEON BAY, WIS. 54235—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1977



Ferry Expenses

IN ALL THIS talk about pay-as-you-go government in Alaska, not much is said about the ferry system.

Gov. Jay Hammond has been proclaiming that if people want roads, he's all for it — so long as gasoline taxes are increased and automobile license fees are raised to pay for them.

But we don't hear the governor saying the same thing about the cost of operating the state ferries.

Don't misunderstand. We are not suggesting that the governor favors ferries and opposes highways. We're not even suggesting that he has conjured up a tax increase to lay on the people served by the ferries, should they start badgering him for more ships and more service.

In fact, we rather suspect that Mr. Hammond regards the ferries as a horrible drain on the state's financial resources and that there are times when he wishes privately he could make them go away.

THE POINT IS that the governor's admirable desire to hold down state expenditures prompts another look at ferry expenses.

Of all the operations of the state government, the ferry system stands out as one for which it is almost impossible to get a true balance sheet exposed for public scrutiny by the taxpayers.

Somebody must know how much the ferries cost to operate, maintain, service and repair. But trying to get the costs down in a simple, easy-to-understand table of dollars and cents is harder than turning the tide with a paddle. For example, the flagship of the fleet, the Columbia, has seemingly spent more time in drydock being rebuilt, repaired and refurbished than it has in service.

Maybe before this legislature is adjourned some member of the House or Senate will courageously pull the facts and figures together. They should be interesting.

Seattle ferry runs doubled

Ferry service will increase

SEATTLE (AP)—Ferry passengers between Seattle and Alaska will find summer service doubled, beginning in May, as the ferry Malaspina joins the Columbia.

Twice-weekly service will be provided between Seattle and Haines, Alaska. Buses operated by Alaska-Yukon Motorcoaches will meet both ships at Haines to provide a two-day service through the Yukon to or from Anchorage.

On northbound trips, the Columbia will leave Seattle Friday evening and arrive in Haines Monday morning. The Malaspina departs Tuesday evening and arrives in Haines Saturday morning.

On southbound trips, the Columbia departs Haines Monday afternoon and arrives in Seattle Thursday evening. The Malaspina departs Saturday morning from Haines and arrives Tuesday morning in Seattle.

Ports of call will be Ketchikan, Petersburg and Sitka.

Ferry fare for deck passage between Seattle and Haines will be $90. Bus fare between Haines and Anchorage will be $69.

The two-day motorcoach run will have overnight stops at Beaver Creek in the Yukon Territory.

nd of the week:

A representative of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association s in Juneau this week assuring legislators that Alaska ferry stem engineers have nothing against polar bears.

He also will try to convince Alaska lawmakers that the state has ne little to encourage engineers in the ferry system to live in aska. And he doesn't mean the type of legislation pending in the islature that bans shift changes in Seattle and cuts the work riod to a week on and a week off.

What was pointed out is that there are a number of unlicensed n in the engine room of the ferries who could qualify for licensed sitions. They are Alaska residents now. A number of the licensed n have always been lower 48 residents. If the state wants ensed Alaskans in the engine rooms it should encourage askans to qualify for a license.

Right now, we are informed, the difference in pay between ensed and unlicensed personnel isn't great enough to encourage icensed men to seek a license—and spent $2,500 to join the union. nge benefits for unlicensed personnel are better than for ensed men.

The last time the state assisted unlicensed men to qualify for enses was in 1969 when four were sent to a special school which pares them to take the license exam. One requirement for a ense is three years experience in the engine room, and many askans, unlicensed, have that and then some.

t will be remembered that last week a representative of the rine Engineers Beneficial Association said of pending islation: "Why should they (the engineers) go along when neone (the state) says they have to live up there (in Alaska) with polar bears?"

s we said, an apology is being extended to the polar bears this ek. We hope the MEBA sent an oiler along because it will take a of lubrication to reduce the friction that remark caused.

The hollow threat

In response to legislation discouraging state ferry system employes from moving to Seattle, representatives of the licensed personnel on the ferries said it would shut down the system.

An official of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association said, "Why should they (the engineers) go along when somebody tells them they have to live up there (in Alaska) with the polar bears?

"The ferries will come to a screeching halt because they will have run those expert engineers and mates out of there."

Alaskans will take that threat lightly. The ferries have just about come to a screeching halt now with all of those experts running the system. There is only one ferry making a weekly round trip between Seattle and Skagway, the Malaspina. The other ships of the Southeastern Alaska portion of the ferry system, the Taku, the Matanuska, the Columbia and the LeConte, were tied up in Seattle all last week.

The Taku was back on the run Monday after repairs.

The alibi is that it hit a log, damaging something. We understand that was just an excuse to get the ship back to Seattle so the engineers could finish the overhaul work they were supposed to have done earlier.

It appears to us that if the Seattle-based engineers all leave the ferry system and go out on tankers, as they threaten, the ferry system will be better off. Alaskans can be trained and licensed to do the engineering and licensed deck work.

If the ferry system has to shut down in the meantime, or operate on a reduced schedule with the Alaska resident engineers and mates available, what would be so different in the amount of service we have now?

Aurora calling at Metlakatla may have to wait

By NORMAND DUPRE
News Editor

JUNEAU — Metlakatlans will be without the service of the new state ferry Aurora at least until the ferry system finds out what changes have to be made to the Metlakatla ferry dock.

Doug Burton, traffic manager for the ferry system, today confirmed reports that studies of bottom depths and winds must be completed before a decision is made to alter the dock to accommodate the Aurora.

Metlakatla is now served only by the small ferry Chilkat. It had been reported Thursday that the Aurora would supplement the Chilkat service to Metlakatla this summer.

Alterations to the ferry terminal could cost as much as $3 million, but Burton said that figure represents a "high estimate" required only if the dock needs the greatest chang

The minimum chang required will be movement some dolphins, or clusters pilings. That work could possi be done this summer, Burt said.

How quickly the dock is alte to fit the Aurora depends up how much it costs, he said.

The existing dock was built handle the Chilkat which holds maximum of 80 persons a about 15 vehicles.

The dock's reconstruction w based on a report by a consulti firm that studied por throughout Southeast Alaska a concluded that the only chang necessary to accommodate t Aurora at Metlakatla was move the dolphins, a relative minor change.

But captains of the Chilkat so became suspicious of the win and water depths reported in t consultant's study.

"Now all we know is that t masters have reservations. W are not about to let the contract go in and then find out that won't work. We can't s (without more study) whether is in the right place or wro place," Burton said.

He said the ferry system o ficials suspect the wind figur may have been based on winds the Annette Airport, sever miles from the city ferry doc

At the extreme, the entire doc may have to be resituate Burton said. Two ferry syste engineers are on their way now study winds and take dep readings.

The 235-foot Aurora ente Alaska service in July with capacity of 250 passengers an about 47 vehicles.

The biggest advantage of th Aurora to Metlakatla is that carries vans more readily tha the Chilkat.

Bartlett to get overhaul

To facilitate passage between Valdez and Cordova, the MV Bartlett will be making its regularly scheduled run up until Feb. 22, when the ferry will go to Seattle for its annual overhaul. The MV Tustumena will run on a schedule between Cordova and Seward, Port Lions, Kodiak, Seldovia, and Homer before it takes over the Bartlett run between Valdez and Cordova.

Ferry Flagship Columbia Gets Final Cure In Drydock

By CHERYL PROBST
Times Staff Writer

The M.V. Columbia, Alaska's tar- ed gem of the ocean, is on the ge of having most of her ills ed, Marine Transportation Direc- William Hudson said yesterday. The ferry, the flagship of the e's Marine Highway System, t into drydock in Seattle in Oc- er for major repairs and is ex- ted to be out in early March, lson said.

The Columbia has suffered one blem after another since she t on line in the summer of 1974.

"I believe we're drawing the wa- s in a circle and on the verge of ing most of the major ills," Hud- said from his Juneau office. Apparently nearly everything could go wrong with the ferry

"In general, we've tackled almost every problem of consequence," Hudson said. When the current ills are repaired "we're coming up with what we think will be a very reliable and enjoyable ship, God willing and everything else."

The Columbia is in the process of having her insides torn out at the Seattle dock.

Hudson said repairs involve "almost a complete replacement of sanitary lines throughout the vessel." Lines to be replaced include those to toilets in all passenger cabins and passenger and crew areas.

"Every area within the vessel must be opened up and pipes removed and new copper nickel piping put in" because "we're experiencing exceptional corrosion of the black iron pipes."

In another major repair project the ferry is having both of her stack boilers retubed and rehabilitated to eliminate corrosion, Hudson said. Doing this involves cutting through the decks and removing the boilers.

Hudson said inoperative boilers are the reason the Columbia was taken off its Southeastern-to-Seattle run for annual repairs earlier than anticipated. "We wanted to get this corrected before we had to provide heat to the passengers."

The state is seeking a reduction in carbon monoxide levels in the car areas, Hudson said, calling the carbon monoxide level on the upper car deck excessive.

These repairs have caused the ferry to be in drydock for "an astronomically long time," Hudson said, adding, "I shouldn't say astronomically but compared to normal vessel maintenance schedules, its a long time."

Hudson said he did not have the exact cost of the repairs handy but "certainly this entire sum is in excess of $350,000."

The director also said he didn't have handy the total of repairs to the Columbia since it went on line but "I know it's been exceptional."

Problems which have plagued the vessel during the past 2½ years include excessive vibration, excessive corrosion, noxious gases and incorrect propeller design, Hudson said.

The marine transportation division also will make another attempt to convert the Columbia's dining room, open only a limited number of hours, to fast food service which will be available 24 hours a day.

Ferry Crews

By The Associated Press

The House has passed and sent o the Senate a bill aimed at ending discrimination against state ferry crew members who ive in Alaska.

House lawmakers voted 36-0 Wednesday for a bill (HB45) to mandate that Alaska ferries always conduct crew changes in Alaska ports.

Rep. Oral Freeman, D-Ketchikan, said the measure was designed to halt the current union-controlled practice of changing crews in Seattle.

"Crew members who live in Alaska are coming out on the short end of the stick," said Freeman, who co-sponsored the bill along with five other members of the Southeast Alaska House delegation. "It doesn't tell people where to live, it just makes it a little more attractive to live in Alaska."

Highway Subsidy May Rise

By The Associated Press

The state's subsidy of its highway system will increase to 60 per cent in 1978, unless gasoline taxes are hiked, a top state official said Thursday.

But the subsidy on the Marine Highway System will remain at about 44 per cent, the level estimated for this year, said Ron Lind, director of the governor's budget and management division.

Gov. Jay Hammond has introduced legislation in the state House to hike gasoline taxes, and also has said Marine Highway fares will be going up soon. The philosophy behind Hammond's proposed increases is that consumers should pay for the services they use.

Ferry Story

Dear Editor:

Lately there has been much controversy concerning the ferries, change ports, watch hours, etc. Most of this is aimed at the Marine Engineers. It is only fair that both sides be heard. Legislation has been introduced that would make Ketchikan and Juneau the sole change ports for the ferry system and that a two week on and two week off agreement would be abolished.

This has to be a spiteful bit of law conceived by small men. Changing crews in Seattle poses no hardship whatsoever on the system. I live in Arlington (North of Seattle) and my relief lives in North Seattle. Where is the harm in relieving each other at Pier 48 in Seattle?

I lived in Ketchikan for twenty five years. Three of my four children were born and raised there and three of them still are residents of Alaska. Had I not been forced by the City of Ketchikan into selling my home to make way for the West End Fire Station I'd probably still be there. I have nothing against Alaska. It has to be the greatest of all the states.

However, let not the people of Alaska be taken in by the tactics presently being used by Juneau. You have an anti-labor administration and I urge all organized labor in Alaska to weigh all legislation that concerns labor, no matter how small. You may be next. As for editorial comment on work that engineers did not get done—this is sheer idiocy. Why don't these people with the mighty pens find out the

s before influencing thou- nds of people?

No group of people work harder under adverse conditions than the crews on the Alaska Ferries. I will not confine this to one group. All personnel on these ships work their heart out to keep hings going. This applies to the Deck, Engine and Steward's Departments, both licensed and unlicensed.

The Seattle Engineers—many of them have sailed Alaskan waters longer than most people have lived up there. On watch they are unsurpassed in their mechanical knowledge and ability. Off watch they are ambassadors of good will catering to the tourist's every whim. These tourists are dollar bills for Alaska.

In closing let me suggest that some of these legislators do something constructive for a change like finding out why the M/V Columbia, a relatively new ship, is having a new sanitary piping system put into her at a cost of a third of a million dollars. Somebody goofed and it could ossibly happen again. Believe me though, it wasn't one of those re ttle engineers.

Wesley Willians
Second Assistant Engineer
M/V Columbia