

## Oil slick traced to 60-year-old shipwreck

By JOAN DELANEY  
Epoch Times Staff

A sunken Canadian steamship that played an important role during the Second World War and then provided luxury cruises between Vancouver and Alaska has begun leaking oil into the waters off Juneau.

The historic Princess Kathleen, a Canadian Pacific passenger liner that went off course and sank off southeast Alaska almost 60 years ago, has been identified by the U.S. Coast Guard as the source of oil in the waters north of Juneau.

When it sank near Lena Point on its last voyage of the season in 1952, the 120-metre, 5,900-tonne vessel was carrying an estimated \$80,000 litres of fuel.

Responding to reports of oil in the waters near the shipwreck, the Coast Guard along with other U.S. government agencies have launched an underwater inspection of the ship through dive operations using a re-

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mately operated vehicle.

"Based on the recent reports of a sheen from the Princess Kathleen and our concern for the environment, the Coast Guard felt diving on the vessel to determine its actual condition was necessary," Capt. Melissa Bert, Sector Juneau Commander of the Coast Guard's Juneau section, said in a statement.

"Any action we take with regard to this vessel will be done in conjunction with our state and local partners and balance our concern for the environment and its historical significance."

The statement said the ship "continues to periodically cause small unrecoverable oil sheens in the area."

Carrying 307 passengers, the Princess Kathleen ran aground on a reef and sank about 10 hours later in 40 metres of water. All passengers and crew made it safely to shore in lifeboats. As it slowly slipped beneath the waves, every moment of the vessel's descent to its watery grave was captured by photographers and witnessed by onlookers.

Part of a large fleet of Pacific Princesses, the Kathleen was one of CP's top coastal cruise ships in the 1920s and 1930s, carrying tourists on the busy 50-called triangle route between Vancouver, Victoria, and Seattle.

She was pressed into service as a troopship during the Second World War, sailing both alone and in convoy to Malta during the German siege of the island and carrying troops and supplies to Libya and Italy, among others. She also carried Jewish refugees to freedom in Palestine.

After the war, the Princess Kathleen was refitted and began service as a cruise ship between Vancouver and Alaska.

The sunken ship rests on a slope in 25 to 50 metres of water. The Coast Guard statement said that further examination by divers is necessary to accurately assess the amount of oil on board the Princess Kathleen and the risk of future discharges.

Fuel leaks from old shipwrecks has become a problem in several areas, including in Pearl Harbour in Hawaii where the USS Arizona is leaking oil at the rate of about a litre a day.

The USS Arizona was one of seven battleships attacked by Japanese aircraft on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941. Six of the ships were salvaged, but the Arizona remains submerged in 13 metres of water.

It is feared that the collapse of the ship's deteriorating fuel bunkers—which contain more than two million litres of fuel—could result in a highly damaging release of oil into Pearl Harbour.

The Canadian Pacific's elegant Princess ships were considered the finest liners on the Pacific coast and were a big hit with tourists. Lore has it that the Princess Kathleen was kept in pristine condition with the brass duly polished to a high sheen throughout the ship.

The wreck of the Princess Kathleen has become a popular destination for scuba divers and according to one diver, some of that brass still gleams despite decades underwater. In an online forum, Dave Mitchell, who frequently dives to the site, wrote that the ship "was a beauty and remains so today."

"The wreck is deteriorating rapidly but is still beautiful. There are places where the brass still shines!" he wrote.

## More change needed on use of ultra thin models, says designer

By ANDREA HAYLEY  
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Montreal Fashion Week had a somewhat healthier appearance this season thanks to a Quebec charter calling on fashion designers to help reduce extreme thinness in runway models.

However Katrin Leblond, a Montreal fashion designer who participated in fashion week, says it's still difficult to find healthier-sized models in the city and the charter needs some teeth to be more effective.

"There's no centralized industry, there's no centralized monitoring of modeling agencies," she says.

Leblond, who supports a more realistic portrayal of women in fashion, broke out of the pack with her own choice of models at fashion week, which included a six foot tall "extra-large model" and a 75-year-old grandma.

She says she had a hard time finding models size 6-8 to show her collection. She searched four agencies and five freelance groups, including the circus community, the acting community, and Craigslist to find her 10 models.

"Most of the agencies couldn't even provide me with a choice of more than one or two girls of that size."

The majority of designers are still using size zeros and twos, says Leblond.

"I choose size sixes and size eights instead of zeros and twos. They've got curves, they've got bums and boobs, and they look beautiful."

Introduced by Quebec culture minister Christine St. Pierre, the charter calls on partners in all fields to work together to diminish social pressures leading to unhealthy weights.

Post fashion week last Friday, St. Pierre, along with supporters from the industry and health professionals, held a press conference and a fashion show of their own. With

the goal of promoting appreciation for different body types, they featured seven models ranging from bony to average to plus sized.

The charter is voluntary and has no legal implications, St-Pierre told reporters. "A law is not the good approach."

The prevalence of extreme thinness in runway models and in fashion industry advertising is widely understood to be a contributing factor in eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia, mostly in girls and women.

Although a small percentage of women are naturally extremely thin, problems arise when 'super thin' is seen as a beauty ideal. The vast majority of people cannot achieve the ideal through healthy means, so they fall into a destructive pattern of restricted and unhealthy dieting in an attempt to feel beautiful.

According to the Quebec Association for Assistance to People Suffering from Anorexia and Bulimia, between 40,000 to 65,000 women in the province suffer from eating disorders.

Runway models are notoriously the absolute thinnest in the fashion industry. They are also often very young—something that doesn't make sense to Leblond.

"I'm not interested in having 15-year-olds on my runway. I sell clothing to 40-year-old women—how are they going to identify with a 15-year-old who weighs 100 pounds?"

The Quebec charter is the not the first effort to address extreme thinness in the industry. A furor arose a few years ago when a pair of Uruguayan sisters embarking on modeling careers died from starvation within six months of each other. One collapsed on the catwalk while the other passed away from complications arising from anorexia.

Some countries have gone so far as introducing binding regulations that seek to measure body-



Monique Larose Grisé, 75, models one of Katrin Leblond's creations at Montreal Fashion Week. JIMMYHAMELIN.COM

mass index in models, a measure that can identify a healthy body weight. However, critics claim such measures have been unsuccessful due to the challenge of calibrating measurements as well as enforcement.

In a major move last October, Germany's highest circulation

women's magazine, Brigitte, decided to stop using professional models and use average-sized women instead in an attempt to reach out to readers.

Supporters of Quebec's charter say it is not out of the question that they will try legislative solutions in the future.

## Canadian groups urge U.S. to stop new GE alfalfa

ALFALFA CONTINUED FROM P1

The plant prevents erosion, is a soil builder that aids soil fertility, and its competitive nature gives it the ability to crowd out weeds—making it invaluable in organic agriculture where using herbicides and fertilizers is not an option.

GM crops are also not an option. In compliance with organic standards worldwide, Canada prohibits the use of GE organisms in organic production. Contamination, says Taylor, would almost certainly destroy organic agriculture in many areas.

"This alfalfa thing is directly aimed at the heart of organic farming because without alfalfa it's going to be a big disaster. The biggest threat to us is once that GMO gets into our alfalfa we won't be able to seed alfalfa and there's no substitute for alfalfa for soil building."

In addition, animals that consume contaminated alfalfa could no longer be classified as organic, and organic dairy production would become extremely difficult, if not impossible, once feed stocks became contaminated.



Cows eat a mixture of alfalfa, hay and corn in Point Reyes Station, California. Organic farmers are concerned their crops could be contaminated by GE alfalfa from the U.S. and affect crop and animal organic industries in Canada. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

The USDA supports the "co-existence" of GM crops with conventional and organic crops. In its EIS, the agency suggests that contamination is unlikely to occur because alfalfa is typically harvested before 10 percent of the plants reach full flower.

Terry Pugh, executive secretary with the National Farmers Union (NFU), says that while this may be true in theory it won't work in practice.

"The reality is that when you're farming, you can't always harvest [alfalfa] at the appropriate time. Sometimes it rains, so that means you lose a few days or a week and you can't get at it. Then the flowering occurs and you've got the spread of that gene. So even the best of intentions often just can't overcome the vagaries of nature."

Pugh says the USDA is not looking at the market impact, has not provided any protections for non-GM alfalfa farmers and exporters in the EIS, and in fact puts the onus on non-GM farmers to prevent contamination by avoiding simultaneous flowering with GM alfalfa in neighbouring fields.

Non-GM alfalfa farmers are also required to be responsible for removing commercial beekeepers' hives from the vicinity of GM alfalfa fields.

"Given the fact that honey bees forage at distances over 10 kilometres, the task of controlling this method of contamination is nothing short of herculean," says the NFU's submission to the USDA.

Monsanto Canada spokesperson Trish Jordan says alfalfa markets wouldn't be negatively impacted if Canadian non-GE alfalfa became contaminated because Roundup Ready alfalfa is fully approved in both Canada and Japan, a market for Canadian alfalfa.

"There is zero-tolerance anywhere in the world, by any country, for unapproved events and rightly so. Once the events are approved then it's a different situation, because there are typically thresholds and tolerance levels in place."

Roundup Ready is Monsanto's line of GE crops designed to be resistant to Roundup, the agrochemical company's best-selling pesticide. When Roundup is sprayed on a field, it kills the weeds but not the crop.

Jordan maintains the reason the European Union blocked shipments of Canadian flax last September that were contaminated with a deregistered GE seed was because the seed was unapproved. After the incident, flax prices fell from \$12 a bushel down to about

\$6, dealing a devastating blow to Canada's flax industry. Shipments resumed in late 2009 under new restrictions.

As for introducing GE alfalfa in Canada, Jordan says Forage Genetics, which handles commercialization of the product, hasn't made a decision on that yet.

"They haven't even looked at Canada really and from everything that I understand they don't intend to do that until this situation in the U.S. gets resolved, because that's their priority market right now."

A number of American groups are also urging the USDA not to deregulate Monsanto's GE alfalfa lines. The National Organic Coalition (NOC), an alliance of U.S. organizations that includes farmer, rancher, environmentalist, and consumer groups, said in a statement that the contamination of non-GE and organic alfalfa hay and seed would "devastate livelihoods and the organic industry."

"If Roundup Ready Alfalfa is permitted to be sold commercially, the ripple effect would wipe out many organic and non-GE businesses, from organic seed and forage growers to organic dairy farmers and retailers," said NOC director Liana Hoodes. "Every American's right to cultivate, sell, and eat non-GE and organic food would no longer exist."

Pugh fears that if alfalfa becomes contaminated in Canada, there will be a repeat of what happened with the organic canola market. GE canola was approved for commercial use in Canada 15 years ago.

"Here in Canada there is virtually no organic canola any more as everything is contaminated by genetic material."

He believes the only truly effective way to safeguard non-GE alfalfa is to prevent genetically engineered varieties from getting into the environment in the first place.

"That's the only way you can do it. Because what happens is it is a living organism, and all genetic material is driven to reproduce, you can't stop it. So once it's out there it's out there—you can't round it up and bring it back."

## 'Statements' shows that MPs can be civil

MPS CONTINUED FROM P1

During the designated 15 minutes, a backbencher can raise the plight of a constituent family facing deportation or a local industry facing extinction due to the economic downturn. There is no onus on anyone to act on these problems, but they can at least be heard.

It is also during Statements that one can observe a full house of Parliamentarians on their best behaviour, brief as it might be.

That was the case earlier this week at least when MPs from both sides of the bench stood to speak about the death of Ontario police officer Vu Pham. Pham died after being shot on the side of the road in rural southwestern Ontario after he pulled over a 70-year-old man in a pickup truck.

That man, Fred Preston, faces charges of first-degree murder if he survives the wounds he suffered in the gunfight. He has also been charged with attempted murder for allegedly shooting at another officer.

"Sssshhhhhh" is not something you hear often in Parliament and many Canadians would likely be surprised by some things those elected to speak on their behalf say in the House of Commons. But there were calls for silence when Pham's death was spoken of, and those calls were heeded.

Cynics may claim it is just optics, and they might be right to some degree, but it would be a sad state of national affairs if that was the only thing that brought peace as Liberal MP Glen Pearson stood to honour Pham's sacrifice.

"Too often it takes an incredible tragedy for us to recognize the honour and heroism exemplified by our police officers across the country, the men and women who protect our families and serve as pillars to our communities," said Pearson, MP for London North Centre.

"Yesterday, in my community, one of those pillars was prematurely cut down. Vu Pham was only 37 years old when he was shot and killed in the line of duty just north of London."

"There is a gap in our community today where a deeply dedicated man once lived. Let us seek to fill it with our own commitment to better the public space. Let us have no more negative statements this afternoon. I ask only that we seek to honour a life lived to its highest in mutual respect."

It was too tall an order to ask that negativity be set aside, but there was a rare silence in the full house while the two elected officials who had the floor rose to pay tribute to a man who made Canada his adopted country, and protecting its people his duty and profession.

"Together with all Canadians, I was deeply saddened by the news yesterday of the passing of Constable Vu Pham of the Ontario Provincial Police. My deepest sympathies go out to his family, friends, and colleagues," said Ben Lobb, MP for Huron-Bruce, also in Ontario.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with [his wife] Heather and their three sons as they deal with this tragic loss."

It's a bit of a shame that it takes a death to bring decorum befitting the stature of Parliament, but it is also a small testament to the character of the men and women who work here. There is a time to heckle and make mock calls for lynch mob justice, like those of one Liberal MP calling for former Conservative MP Rahim Jaffer to be hanged after charges of drunk driving and cocaine possession against him were reduced to careless driving and punished with a \$500 fine.

But there are also times when it is distasteful to joke with the guy in the desk beside you while someone else is speaking, or call insults across the floor against someone you disagree with. It isn't too often that MPs have the kind of solemn attitude you might expect to be the norm in these distinguished halls, but when there is, it often comes out in these brief moments before question period begins.

One could argue that QP is essential to holding government to account, or that the ill-attended bill debates are what keeps Canada running. One could say both of these make Statements look like an appetizer no sooner ingested than forgotten, but in some ways it is the best part of Parliament.

For 15 minutes it doesn't matter if an MP is a rookie backbencher from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, or whether their statement has the sting of an airport temper tantrum. They can rise and represent the people who elected them and have the most powerful people in the country hear it.

And that, at its heart, is what we elected them to do.

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PUZZLES<sup>4</sup>PEACE

Guess the hidden saying, phrase or word(s) suggested by the graphic below



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FREE THE CHILDREN  
children helping children through education

SOLUTION ON P7