

Admiral Byrd's Old Ship Sold To Museum In U.S.

By ED WALTERS
DARTMOUTH, N.S. (CP)—The Bear, an 89-year-old wooden auxiliary sailing ship that took United States Admiral Richard Byrd to the Antarctic in 1933 and 1939, is to be restored and towed to Philadelphia, for conversion to a combination restaurant and maritime museum.

The 196-foot ship, owned by Shaw Steamship Company of Halifax since 1944, has been bought by Alfred M. Johnson of Philadelphia. Mr. Johnson said here the ship will be drydocked here for ten-day examination and then towed to Lunenburg, N.S. for re-rigging as a barquentine. The ship was originally rigged as a barquentine but was altered by Admiral Byrd who removed the mizzenmast.

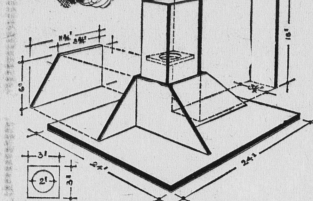
Mr. Johnson said the rigging job would take about two months and then the ship would be towed to Philadelphia. He said he first looked at the Bear about five years ago. He did not disclose the purchase price. The Bear was bought by the U.S. government in 1944 for \$5,190, and has been laid up here since 1953.

W. A. Shaw, president and manager of Shaw Steamships, said the ship's sale was "no private business" and he didn't care about erasing part of Canada's maritime history. Built at Dundee, Scotland, in 1873, the Bear spent her first ten years as a Newfoundland sealing vessel. In subsequent years she gained a reputation as the stoutest ship ever built. Her cabin hull is sheathed with Australian ironbark, the toughest wood known and so heavy it won't float.

The Bear was purchased by the U.S. government from Newfoundland interests in 1934 for \$100,000. As a U.S. naval vessel she led her sister ship Thetis and the British ship Alert in the search and rescue of the Lady Franklin Bay expedition. The expedition of 25 U.S. Army men had been abandoned in the north for three years. The Bear's dramatic rescue found only seven starving survivors.

She was then turned over to the U.S. revenue marine, a forerunner of the present coast guard. Following the purchase of Alaska by the U.S. from Russia in 1867 the Bear was given the job of patrolling the new territory's coastline. She made her last trip from Point Barrow, Alaska, to San Francisco Museum at Oakland, Calif., but came out of retirement in 1931 to help make the movie version of Jack London's 'The Sea Wolf'.

One day in 1932 Admiral Byrd came aboard, thumped her decks and said he wanted her. The following year, under the admiral's command, she sailed through Antarctic ice farther than any ship before. Again in 1939, this time with new diesel engines replacing the old steam boiler, she sailed for the U.S. Antarctic base of Little America. She was 118 days before returning to port without dropping a anchor, exploring more than 500 miles of Antarctic coast.



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Three inch squares of 3/4" fir plywood drilled with 2" diameter holes form the interior supports to barrel. These should be set about 5" apart. Note that two sides of barrel are 2 1/2" wide to overlap the 3" sides when attached to 3" square barrel supports. All sides of barrel are of 1/2" fir plywood 18" long. All 4 triangular braces are the same size and shape cut from 3/4" fir plywood and are attached in similar positions against each barrel wall.

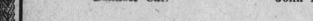
All contacting surfaces and edges are glued together and should be clamped while hardening. After barrel and braces are put together, exact position on base is marked and bottom edges glued to base. Quarter round strengtheners giving smooth surfaces for gluing both to braces and base can be added last.

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