

Gwin Logging Salvages Timber for Deck of USS Constitution

By Scott Laird

A local Vernonia logging outfit, Gwin Logging, had the distinction and honor of recently providing three large logs that were used in a very special way-- to re-deck the famous Navy vessel, the *USS Constitution*, one of the most celebrated warships in American history. The ship is undergoing a three-year and \$7 million renovation that will return "Old Ironsides" to her original reconfiguration.

The three old-growth Douglas Fir logs that are being used, were salvaged from the Avery Family Tree Farm: a 12,600 acre expanse of timber near Scio, Oregon, which is managed by Mason, Bruce and Girard, Inc. According to property manager Pete Mastenbroek, his facility was contacted this past February by Ray Haroldson, a specialty log buyer, who had been tasked with procuring suitable timber for the re-decking project. "We were waiting for spring, but the market was so bad, no one was going out in the woods," said Haroldson in a recent interview. "The Avery Farm said they would take a look to see if they had any blow-down trees that might be salvageable. The

Avery folks called me back and said they thought they had something, and it turned out to be literally the perfect logs," said Haroldson.

Gwin Logging was brought in to buck and yard the old-growth timber. "We were working on the Avery Farm doing selective cutting for transmissions poles. We just happened to be there," said Rick Gwin of Gwin Logging. "It was just one large tree that looked like the roots were rotten and blew over a couple of years ago," continued Gwin. "It was still sitting there as sound as ever." The Gwin crew cut the tree into the three logs that were hauled out.

According to Haroldson, the yield was more than was needed for the deck, and the excess was sold to the US government to be used for other parts of the renovation. The harvested timber was then sent to Glenwood Forest Products, a specialty mill in Washington. "They are very meticulous, really take their time, real artisans in their work," said Haroldson.

son about Glenwood Forest Products.

The deck was installed on the *USS Constitution* this past summer.

Masterbroek, of Mason, Bruce and Girard, Inc., said the tree farm has been in the Avery family for 101 years, and that his company has managed the property for fifty-one years. "The family has set aside a reserve of old-growth, but we do have a green light to harvest blow-down and dead standing trees," said Masterbroek. "We like to look holistically at the forest and manage it for sustainability," he said.



The *USS Constitution* was originally launched in 1797 and is the oldest commissioned warship still afloat in the world. It was active during the War of 1812 when the ship earned the nickname "Old Ironsides" for its seemingly-impenetrable wooden hull. The Constitution was involved in 33 battles and never lost an engagement. It has been through numerous renovations, the largest beginning in 1992, after which the ship sailed under its own power for the first time in 116 years. The current restoration is expected to be completed by December, 2010, in advance of the 2012 bicentennial of the War of 1812.



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2009 Schedule of Meetings

First Wednesday of each month at the Vernonia Community Learning Center at 9:00 AM.

September 2nd
October 7th
November 4th
December 2nd

Open to the public, input is welcome.

For more information contact:
DeAnna Pearl, VPC Director
503-369-7370

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