



Shanghied From Astoria

I've noticed a penchant among writers for the Upper Left Edge to define significant words and terms they use to illuminate ideas and thus our lives. My well worn copy of The American College Dictionary, a faithful servant since I was in the fifth grade, defines endeavor so: "to exert oneself to do or effect something... a strenuous effort". I'm here to tell you that in the case of H.M. Bark Endeavour the emphasis is definitely on the strenuous side. For clarity's sake I'll mention that H.M. stands for His Majesty and a Bark is a three-masted sailing ship fore-and-aft-rigged on the mizzenmast and square-rigged on the two other masts. The Endeavour stretches a graceful 108 feet from stem to stern and is laced with a dizzy matrix of lines and rigging with which to set and manipulate the vast array of sails. The H.M. preface and the British spelling of the name "Endeavour" derive from the fact that the original ship sailed under the eighteenth century English flag. The skipper was the intrepid Captain James Cook who endeavored to sail the ship around the world and in the process "discovered" Australia, Hawaii and the Society Islands. Like that other white guy, Columbus, who proceeded him by nearly three centuries, Cook had an uncanny knack for stumbling upon various land masses which had already been inhabited for eons by brown skinned folks who weren't particularly excited about being "discovered".

This said, and in lieu of any further technical definitions or history lessons, I'll jump to the chase and relate how I came to dance on the deck of this magnificent vessel. The Endeavour Replica set sail from Australia in 1996 and after sailing east to west two-thirds of the way around the world it crossed the Columbia River bar and approached Astoria on Friday morning, July 23. I happened to be listening to radio station KMUN that morning and heard station manager Doug Sweet doing a live cell phone interview with a programmer named John Hunt who crewed on the Coos Bay to Astoria leg of the voyage. John was saying that they would be docking at the Maritime Museum in about forty-five minutes. I dropped whatever it was I was doing and steered my car north, arriving just in time to witness the ship's cannons blast a resounding salute.

After watching the docking and mooring procedure carried out by an apparently seasoned crew I spoke with a few hands on deck and learned that all but a few were volunteers who had only been on board for five days. Most of these folks had applied to sail with the ship as much as three to six months prior to actually being accepted as crew. Finally, I met Dominique, the manager of the shore support crew that travels by land from port to port to facilitate the ship's harbor visits. Boldly, I asked him how I could circumvent the application process and get signed on for the next leg of the voyage. He said I must speak with the first mate, Geoff, who acts as the administrative officer on board. A couple of hours later when Geoff got word that a total stranger was waiting by the gang plank to have a word with him he came on deck and greeted me warmly with apologies for the long wait. I sought to assure him that I didn't intend to disrupt his busy routine, but he waved off these comments and invited me to join him below decks in the chart room. There, I told him of my previous sailing and travel experiences and also noted that I'm a licensed acupuncturist with the not too subtle implication that I might fill a special "position" on board. He immediately made it clear that if I were to be signed on as crew that I must demonstrate an ability to perform the rigorous, heavy work and that that would be my only "position". When I told him that I'd be interested in going all the way to New Zealand we came to the agreement that once I had proven to myself as well as to him that I could handle the required work load I would be considered for the longer voyages to Hawaii and New Zealand.

That evening I got acquainted with several of the fourteen permanent crew members as they got acquainted with copious amounts of beer at the Wet Dog Cafe. The following Sunday at two in the afternoon myself and thirty-one other volunteer voyage crew members met the captain and officers under more sobering conditions. We had been assembled to receive a briefing on safety issues and general operating practices on board. We were each assigned to one of the three "captains of the tops" who would be our watch commanders -- for 10 to 12 crew members -- and direct officers for our handling of the sails and rigging for one of the three masts. I was assigned to the foremast under the direction of Helen who hails from England, is a seasoned sailor, a fiddle player, a civil engineer by profession, a patient instructor and an all around great person. Most of the permanent crew are from Australia and the volunteers come from all over North America and Canada. My assigned watch buddy, Sarah, is a delightful twenty-year old biology major at Cal Poly. Her trim athletic body and sharp mind make her especially suited for the crew and a fine companion for me.

Following dinner on board those of us on the foremast watch who aren't assigned to one of the first three two-hour watches on deck are granted shore leave until 11 p.m. Sarah and I are assigned the 6-8 a.m. deck watch, so I join some of the older salts for a nightcap at the Wet Dog. I limit myself to one beer, but some of the permanent crew will likely be sailing with hangovers come morning. Our rough canvas hammocks are strung up cheek to jowl and the snoring and various other bodily sounds and odors are contained by the low ceiling, making sleep nearly impossible. Sarah's hammock is close to mine and we are awakened at 5:45 a.m. by a person from the previous watch. Nevertheless, when I ascend the companionway to a hesitant dawn Sarah is lagging behind, so I relieve the earlier watch and have a few quiet moments to myself before she joins me. It is barely light and a bright moon hangs just above the Astor Column. When a sleepy Sarah finally comes on deck I inform her that the penalty for arriving late for watch duty is to dance with her watch mate. With a youthful zeal she embraces me and we waltz about the deck by moonlight until the sun lightens the eastern horizon far up the wide Columbia. Nothing strenuous about that.

Bob Rice's Grande Endeavour will continue next month.


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You can't use tact with a congressman. A congressman is like a hog. You must take a stick and hit him on the snout. Henry Adams

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Defensively the Red Sox area lot like Stonehedge. They are old, they don't move and no one is certain why they are positioned the way they are. Dan Saughnessy

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The Local

Ed Dooney
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I would go down to Newport town to see the tourists feeding and watch them swill their microbrews and stroll about unheeding.

I'd start my hunt on the old bayfront and hear their merry laughter and smile upon their gay costumes, but that's not what I'm after.

(chorus)
Life, for the host on the middle coast is harsh, cold and uncertain. The pay is low. The jobs are few, and the rain falls down in curtains.

On a dull day in the middle of May a watery Sun peeps through. The streets are cleared. The merchants smile. The tourists are in view.

Handicrafts drawn from old Taiwan, kites and sticky sweets stock the shelves of the old bayfront, and neon lights the streets.

(chorus)

But I miss the squeal of wood against steel and the chuff of the great steam boilers, the tang of hemp and the Herring fish, and the tarry smell of the oilers.

The fisherman, smiling tied up to this piling, unloaded the Salmon here. If the weather was nice they took on ice and maybe some cases of beer.

(chorus)

Now the end of the land's an espresso stand. The old timers? They have all gone. and the tourist stares at the schlocky wares, slurps his ice cream and moves on.

(chorus)

6th Annual TOLEDO ART WALK & HOP

September 4th and 5th 11:00 thru 5:00

Refreshments will be served at each gallery/studio with at least five gallery/studios opened and also many participating restaurants, who will be exhibiting a minimum of 15 invitational artists' works. Participating nationally known gallery/studios include Gallery Michael Gibbons, Ivan Kelly of Kelly Fine Art Studio/Gallery, Doug Haga of Haga Studio/Gallery, and more. Guests artists include: Sculpturer Martin Eichinger from Portland; Watercolor Painter Bill Kucha from Otter Rock; and many others. There will also be a glass blower artist Chuck Willoughby exhibiting at Larry Sommer's Glass Blower studio with possible glass blower demonstrations and also other art slide presentations. The Art Walk in galleries/studios will be followed by Art Video presentations at Toledo City Hall and later on the 25th of September an awards reception followed by an outdoor concert. Please call Gallery Michael Gibbons (541) 336-2797 or Ivan Kelly Fine Art at (541)336-1124 www.ivankelly.com for more information.

Date & Time of Event:	Event:	Location:
September 4 & 5 11:00 thru 5:00	Gallery/Studio walk	12 locations - maps will be available
September 4 & 5 4:00 both days 1 video/day	Art Video Presentation - Guy Rose, Impressions of California - Andrew Wyeth, The Helga Pictures	City Council Chambers on Toledo Main Street
September 11 th thru September	"View From Toledo" with Invitational Artists	The Art Celebration Gallery, A Gathering of Artists, 192 S. Main St.
Sept. 17 th 1:00 - open	Open Mike	The Art Celebration Gallery, A Gathering of Artists, 192 S. Main St.
Sept. 25 1:00 - 2:00	Reception & Awards announced from "View From Toledo" Art Show	Toledo Public Library 173 NW 7 th St.
Sept. 25 th 2:00 - 3:30	Concert - Andrew Calhoun of New York	Toledo Public Library Courtyard (outside if possible) 173 NW 7 th St.

Please call above phone numbers for more information and copy of map.

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