

Cruising through the cold

Restored Astoria tugboat Arrow 2 will give winter tours

By **NIKKI DAVIDSON**
COAST WEEKEND

Launching a new tourism business on the eve of a worldwide pandemic could have been a recipe for disaster.

But the newly-restored Arrow 2 tug boat is not sinking — it's cruising through the choppy waves of the future.

The boat spent a busy 50 years ferrying river pilots on the Astoria waterfront from the 1960s to 2012. When the tugboat retired it was reported to be the oldest working pilot launch on the West Coast.

After an eight-year hiatus on the water and a major facelift, it returned to service as a tourism vessel this spring.

The tugboat won't be locked up this winter. The restored vessel's captain plans to make it one of the few outside attractions open year-round in Astoria. History tours will be open to the public into the darker, wetter winter months.

"The weather is nicer on the water in the wintertime than it is in the summer," assured Arrow 2 Capt. Mark Schächer. "You can't stand outside the boat, but unless you've been inside, you don't realize that the visibility is so good because there are so many windows."

Restoring the vessel was a labor of love for Schächer, who has been working on local boats since he was 14 years old. Schächer is his own harshest critic, pouring his heart into the tiny details amid a supply shortage.

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Andy Cameron

From the Arrow 2, guests get a new appreciation for the size of the Columbia River's largest vessels.



Andy Cameron

Arrow 2 history tours

Three hour tour

Groups of 3 to 6 people

\$100 per person

\$75 for children 12 and under

Contact Arrow 2 to schedule a trip

503-791-6250

arrowtug@gmail.com

As Astoria fades into the distance, passengers are treated to the hidden history of the area's east end. This manually rotated bridge allowed train traffic to cross the slough.



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