

## Ship Report Transcript

Friday, September 3, 2024

By Joanne Rideout

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It's time for the Ship report the show about all things maritime. I'm Joanne Rideout. It's Wednesday, September 4th, 20, 24.

Well, in our marine weather forecast today, we have high pressure over the area that will maintain northerly winds across all of our waters through this week. We have a small craft advisory in effect from this morning through late this evening. And when you see that small craft advisory information creeping back into the forecast around this time of year, it's a sign that fall is tiptoeing in. So 20 to 34 knots is the range for small craft advisory level winds. Small craft advisory seas are ten feet or higher, and we're going to start seeing that more and more as the months segue through fall and into winter.

Today's forecast north winds 10 to 15 knots with gusts up to 25. Seas 3 to 5 feet. Wave detail waves from the north four feet high at 5 seconds apart. Also from the west, three feet high at 10 seconds apart and widespread dense fog in the morning. But that should burn off by midday.

And today, we're going to be talking about a new ship in town, a story that seems to have its second Coast Guard cutter. She's the Florence Finch. And she is a brand new Coast Guard cutter named for a very famous woman who served in the Coast Guard. We'll talk about that in just a minute.

But first, a look at our ship schedule for the day. We have the American Endurance arriving from Long Beach, California, headed for Portland. Refined petroleum there. She's delivering that to Portland, passing Astoria around 9:30 a.m. in Portland by about 3:30 p.m..

The Ernst Oldendorff is arriving from Los Angeles, headed for the Rice Island Anchorage near Astoria, just a little bit upriver from Astoria, Opposite Tongue Point. Corn, soy or wheat will be her eventual cargo at Kalama. She will pass Astoria and stop in the Rice Island Anchorage at about 11:30 a.m..

The Ocean Conductor arrives from the Panama Canal Zone, headed for the Longview Anchorage. She's picking up soda ash up there eventually at Longview, passing Astoria around noontime in Longview by about 3:30 p.m.. The Global Round is arriving from South Korea, headed for Portland. Cement is her cargo - passing Astoria around noontime in Portland by 6 p.m..

And the Arctic Taglu is arriving from Vancouver, B.C., headed for Warrenton for the night guard facility there. She's a tug and barge. I believe her cargo is woodchips and she'll be in Warrenton by about 3 p.m..

And the Wooyang queen is arriving from Mexico, headed for the Kalama anchorage. She'll be picking up wheat up there, passing Astoria around 3:30 p.m.. We'll see her in Kalama at about 8:30 this evening.

I was down by the Astoria waterfront yesterday, enjoying the morning. It was just beautiful out. And I saw a new ship in town at the 17th Street dock by the maritime museum. It turns out she is our latest hometown ship. Her name is the Florence Finch and she is the second new Coast Guard ship to be assigned to Astoria this year, to replace the Steadfast and the Aert, which spent decades moored on the Astoria waterfront by the museum.

Astoria welcomed the fast response cutter David Doren earlier this year. And now we have the Florence Finch, the same type of ship. These are slightly smaller vessels in length than the previous ships, which were called medium endurance cutters. And these new ones are called fast response cutters. And they are very modern and fast in the water and just recently built - so our new complement of U.S. Coast Guard cutters for Astoria is complete now with the arrival of this second vessel.

And this new cutter is named for a significant woman in US Coast Guard history. Here's a bit from a U.S. Coast Guard history page about the extraordinary person who was Florence Finch.

“Florence Finch was one of the first Asian-American women to don a Coast Guard uniform joining the Coast Guard Women's Reserve, referred to as SPAR in 1945, Finch was born in Santiago in the Philippines in 1915 to an American father and Filipino mother. After completing school, Finch worked at the Army, Navy, YMCA and later in the office of the Assistant Chief of Staff in Intelligence for the U.S. Army in Manila, where she assisted Lieutenant Colonel Edward Englehardt.

Finch married US Navy Chief Petty Officer Charles Smith in 1941, just prior to the start of World War Two. Smith, a crew member on a Navy petty boat, was killed in action in 1942. She was in Manila when the Japanese military invasion and subsequent occupation of the Philippines began in 1941.

Although Finch’s father, was a U.S. veteran of the Spanish-American War, she concealed her American connections to avoid imprisonment. Finch was eventually given a job managing fuel distribution vouchers from a Japanese controlled fuel company. Finch used this position to secretly supply Philippine resistance forces with fuel and assist them in sabotaging Japanese military supplies. She also managed to remain in contact with Englehardt, her former U.S. Army supervisor, who was by that time a Japanese prisoner of war. Engelhardt described to Finch the dire conditions to which prisoners of the occupation were subjected. Finch became instrumental in smuggling food and medicine into the prison camps. But in 1944, she was caught and arrested for her activities. She endured torture and received a sentence of three years hard labor.

When allied forces liberated the Philippines in 1945, Finch moved to New York to be closer to her American family members. Motivated by her experience in the Philippines and the wartime death of her husband. Finch enlisted as a SPAR soon after her arrival in the U.S.. When Finch's Coast Guard leadership learned of her resistance activities in the Philippines, she was awarded the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Ribbon. The first woman to be so decorated. Englehart also testified to Finch's actions, resulting in her being awarded the Medal of Freedom in 1947. Finch passed away in 2016 at the age of 101.”

And that is from a U.S. Coast Guard history page. So quite an inspiring woman. And it's an honor to have one of our Astoria cutters named for her.

Little bit about fast response cutters, which is what our two new Astoria ships are called... These new, high-tech ships perform a multitude of missions that include drug interdiction, joint international operations, and national defense of ports and waterways and coastal areas. So their mission is similar to the Alert and Steadfast. They are the updated modern editions in the U.S. Coast Guard fleet.

Each FRC, as they're called, is named after an enlisted Coast Guard hero who performed extraordinary service in the line of duty.

And more about these ships. Coast Guard has ordered 67 of them to date. 55 are in service, 13 in Florida, seven in Puerto Rico, six each in Bahrain and Massachusetts. So we have Coast Guard forces overseas as well. Four in California, three each in Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, Texas and New Jersey, and two each in Mississippi and North Carolina. In addition to Astoria, future FRC homeports include Kodiak and Seward in Alaska.

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