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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name M. V. PLOVER
other names/site number PLOVER FERRY; ALASKA PACKERS ASSOCIATION FERRY

2. Location

street & number 245 Marine Drive, Blaine Harbor Berth A-11 not for publication
city or town Blaine vicinity
state Washington code WA county 073 Whatcom code zip code 98231

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 4.16.97
Signature of certifying official Date
David M. Hansen, Acting State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson A. Beall 6.4.97

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Property Name M.V. PLOVER

County and State WHATCOM CO., WA

6. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION

MARITIME HISTORY

INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

1944-1947

1944-1947

1944-1947

Significant Dates

1944

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

1	<u>1/0</u>	<u>5/1/7/6/6/0</u>	<u>5/4/2/6/5/6/0</u>	3	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing			Zone	Easting

2	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	4	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Vessel is contained and bound within Berth A-11, Blaine Harbor.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary is the appropriate marine boundary as delineated by its marine berth.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Sturgill; edited by Lauren McCroskey (WA SHPO)

organization Whatcom Maritime Historical Society (Mr. Sturgill) date 11-20-96

street & number 1218 Fourth Street telephone (360) 332-5742

city or town Blaine state WA zip code 98230

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner (complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Whatcom Maritime Historical Society

street & number Post Office Box 5157 telephone _____

city or town Bellingham state WA zip code 98227

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The nominated vessel's registered length is thirty feet, with a measured length overall of thirty-two feet, with a beam of nine feet, seven inches, and a maximum draft of five feet. Her gross tonnage is 12.0; her net tonnage is 11.0.

The M. V. Plover may be categorized as an enclosed caravel-built day launch with slightly flared bows, moderate sheer, molded stern, and slightly raked transom. She is constructed 1 1/4" x 4" fir and yellow cedar over 1 1/2" x 2 1/2" bent white oak frames on ten-inch centers.

No provision for galley or head was made. The superstructure is a split-leveled trunk cabin, constructed of plywood over wood frames. The pilot house cabin top is eight inches taller than that of the passenger cabin behind it. There are five glazed windows in the forward aspect of the pilot house; two sliding, windowed doors open on each side of the pilot house and lead out upon a narrow catwalk deck ranging along the vessel's sides. Three glazed, square ports ventilate either side of the passenger cabin. The top of the pilot house and passenger cabin have been covered with fiberglass: the initial application was done in 1968; with this present renovation, the restored portion of the passenger cabin has been covered as well.

The inboard layout is divided into four general compartments. The first is the area beneath the foredeck and is used for miscellaneous storage. The second is the pilot house with its helm station on center. The helmsman stands upon a short, elevated deck. No partition exists between the pilot house and the third compartment, the passenger cabin, which also houses the engine. The engine is enclosed within a box that is lined with soundproofing. An insulated dry exhaust pipe leads up through the overhead to an enclosed stack with the Alaska Packers Logo painted on it. Benches accommodating seventeen passengers range the full length of the passenger area along either side. The after cabin transom is pierced by a "companionway" with stairs providing access to the stern deck (fantail), which is enclosed with a pipe railing. This railing wraps around the stern and ends before it meets the cabin trunk on either side to allow for passenger boarding. These sally ports are closed by chain gates when the vessel is under way. The fourth compartment is aft, below the stern deck and is an enclosed lazarette and fuel tank compartment.

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The exterior hull is black; the pilot house and passenger cabin trunks white, and the cabin tops red. Red anti-fouling paint is used below the waterline. The interior of the pilot house and passenger cabin is green, with the exception of the cabin sole, the engine box, and the passenger benches which are deck red.

The foredeck, catwalk decks ranging along the sides and stern deck have been covered with fiberglass and painted gray.

In 1964, Plover was converted to a harbor tug. The conversion took place at the A.P.A. shipyard at Semiahmoo. The after eight feet of the passenger cabin was removed, and a new transom placed just behind the engine. The passenger compartment then well exposed, was traversed with beams and decked over with plywood, which was then covered with fiberglass. A towing bit was installed on this enlarged after deck for use in towing operations. For Plover's initial service as a ferry, two fuel tanks were installed on each side of the lazarette beneath the stern deck. When the conversion was made in 1964, these were removed and replaced with a single on center one-hundred-and-twelve gallon fiberglass fuel tank, with a fuel cap above the tank in the center of the deck. This was the extent of Plover's conversion.

Plover was restored to her original ferry boat configuration between September 1995 and July 1996. During this phase of restoration, three hundred linear feet of the original clear vertical grain (CVG) fir planking was replaced in kind or with yellow cedar.

Fifty oak hull frames were sistered to fifty existing oak frames.

Two years after being built in 1944, Plover was double planked from six inches above the water line to ten inches below, with an iron bark ice sheathing to protect the hull during winter service. As the Coast Guard required a visual inspection of all the hull fasteners, this sheathing was removed during restoration, which damaged it beyond re-use, as it had grown brittle during the hull's "dry" years. Many of the hull's iron fastenings were found to be "wasted;" therefore, two thousand three-hundred silicon bronze twelve-by-two-inch screws were driven to secure Plover's sound planking. In the process, her keel cooler was removed to access this planking and it was not replaced. Instead, a salt-water-to-heat-exchanger cooling system was installed.

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Shipwright Mike Bryant (no relation to the original builders) replaced fourteen feet of the portside rub rail, which was found to be rotten, with fir to match the original material. The foredeck portside toe rail was missing entirely and this Mr. Bryant replaced with yellow cedar. All of the existing portland cement and cotton caulking was reefed out of her plank seams; new cotton was driven in and sealed with portland cement. Sixteen new keel bolts were sunk to refasten the floor frames to the keel. Reconstruction of the passenger cabin was done in kind with plywood laid down upon overhead beams. The original companion way door was reused in the retrofitted cabin trunk transom. In the 1964 conversion to a tug, the original steep companion way stair to the passenger area was maintained. Reconstruction and enlargement of the passenger cabin allowed for a stairway with a small landing, less steeply inclined, with broader treads and a handrail. The fiberglass fuel tank was replaced with a U.S.C.G. certified one hundred fifty gallon aluminum diesel fuel tank and fuel lines.

Plover's original power plant was a Chrysler marine in-line six cylinder gasoline engine. This was replaced during restoration with a circa 1964 Daggenheim in-line six cylinder diesel engine that formerly belonged to the Alaska Packers Association.

Plover's restoration to her initial design made use of traditional boat building methods and shipwright's skills, working with materials used in the vessel's original construction. Complete with paint work in her documented color scheme, she retains her historic character and integrity.

July, 1996 ended a nine-month U.S. Coast Guard marine safety office inspection protocol during which all necessary requirements of law and regulations governing vessels requiring a Certificate of Inspection (U.S.C.G. Case # M1-95042664) and Letter of Stability were met. This enabled Plover to convey passengers for hire. On July 23, 1996, Plover received both the Letter of Stability and her Certificate of Inspection and began serving the public.

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M.V. Plover's antecedents have been part of Blaine's maritime heritage since the first wave of settlers arrived in the 1870s. As a ferry, Plover and her predecessors, beginning with the rowing dories, contributed to Blaine's commerce by providing water-borne transportation for the cannery workers and others one thousand feet across the mouth of Drayton Harbor. Although there was an eight-mile narrow and circuitous route around Drayton Harbor, when impassable by winter snow or tidal water which covered it at the neck of Semiahmoo Spit, Plover was at times the only way to get to and from the cannery. The vessel is the singular example of its type in the state and possesses unusual integrity of location in its continued service in the original route.

Semiahmoo Spit was the dropping off point for the early settlers arriving by steamer. Row boats were employed to convey the new arrivals across Drayton Harbor. Dick Richards began operating a ferry using row boats in 1889 between Tongue Point, Semiahmoo Spit, and the "mainland" to the east. (1) In 1881, the first salmon cannery in Whatcom County was built on the Spit at Tongue Point by James Tarte. John Elwood and J.A. Martin bought the cannery from Tarte and by 1891, it had been sold again to Daniel Drysdale, who began major remodeling of the docks and a rebuilding of the facility in order to make room for a "new modern cannery." In 1894, a newly formed fish cannery, The Alaska Packers Association, bought out Daniel Drysdale's canning operation with Drysdale becoming vice president of The Alaska Packers Association combine. Following the buy-out, more buildings were built and changes were made to existing structures. (2)

In the 1900s, Manuel Salvidore and his nephew Manuel Lopez, operated a ferry service using small, open boats propelled by oars or sail between the Alaska Packers Association cannery and the Milhollin Wharf, located on the tidal flats on the east shore of Drayton Harbor (present day Marine Drive.) Several of these boats were traditional flat-bottomed plank skiffs, fitted with two pairs of oar locks. At least one was a longer, round-bilged pulling boat with three pairs of oar locks, a rudder manned by a tiller and shipped over the transom, and the step for a mast well forward upon which a small (due to the extreme narrow beam of the boat) gaff mains'l could be set up. Passenger traffic across the mouth of Drayton Harbor can be assumed to have been fairly busy for by 1903, The Pacific Fisherman magazine showed the busy cannery on Semiamoo Spit waterfront comprising two large warehouses, enlarged cannery bunk- houses, buildings for Chinese workers, two

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main dining halls, a mechanics bunkhouse, two reservoirs and a two-story square frame office building. These buildings became familiar harbor landmarks of the Semiahmoo area. Warehouse #6, also known as the commissary, exists today on its original location. The ferry landing was located on a floating dock next to the wharf on which Warehouse #6 is located, and is one of the oldest existing buildings of the former cannery. (3)

The era of the hand rowed and sailing ferries ended in 1910 when the Alaska Packers Association cannery had the M.V. Balena built to serve as a motor ferry. The Balena, a thirty-foot-long wooden vessel, had a tall tumble home style passenger cabin with passenger loading doors both forward and aft, and sliding doors in the starboard side. A single screw, one cylinder five horse power Regal gasoline engine powered the vessel. It had "lifebelts" for thirteen but it was not uncommon for the ferry to carry up to twenty passengers. Balena worked as a ferry for the A.P.A. cannery for twenty-four years. Sometime early in 1934, Balena's clutch became inoperative. The A.P.A. cannery used the company's work boat, Seal Gull, to carry workers across the channel while repairs were made; but Balena was severely damaged in an October storm that year and never was used again at the cannery.

The cannery closed between 1934 through 1938. There is no verification of what conveyance was used to transport cannery workers between 1939 and 1943.

M.V. Plover, a small craft, was built by "Bryants Marina, Inc." (as written on the brass manufacturer's plate), Seattle, Washington in 1944. T.E. Brackett was the master shipwright in charge of her construction. (4) Located on the Seattle waterfront, the company began operation in the 1940s, and was at one time the largest Chris Craft yacht dealer in the United States, and also the largest distributor of Evenrude outboard motors. The shipyard at Bryants was known for the refinishing wooden yachts and built a variety of wooden boats, including the Plover in 1944. In the 1950s and 1960s, Bryants built over one hundred, thirty-two foot Bristol Bay commercial slamon fishing boats.

Plover was built expressly for the Alaska Packers Association Inc. cannery, Blaine, Washington. When Plover arrived in 1944 at the A.P.A. cannery dock on Semiahmoo spit, she was accompanied by the framing jig over which she was set up. (5) The jig was

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not used to produce any more hulls of Plover's type and was later destroyed by intentional burning at the cannery. (6) Plover is the sole representative of her type of vessel built by Bryants Marina Inc. This makes her historically significant and distinguishable.

During World War II the U.S. military procured needed canned salmon from the A.P.A. cannery. Plover contributed to the war effort by providing transportation for many of the five hundred cannery workers, conveying up to twenty-eight at a time across the harbor mouth. Cans of salmon were being coated during those years with an olive-drab, rust resistant paint called "Pro-coat," to be consumed by U.S. forces engaged in the Pacific Theater. When Plover was not conveying cannery workers, it worked as a day tug on the cannery waterfront, assisting in positioning the cannery's fish boats on and off the company's shipyard marine railway. The railway enabled boats to be taken out of the water where they were "side-tracked," repaired and stored during the winter. Plover also towed company barges around the "corner" of Tongue Point into the relatively protected waters of Drayton Harbor where they were tied up to the numerous dolphins (pilings) to lay over the winter. In early spring, the process was reversed. In 1964, however, after twenty years of ferry and tug service, Plover was converted to work strictly as a harbor tug. Shipwrights Ron Walsh, Chuck Levine and foreman Bob Metiever did the conversion. Plover, in this configuration, continued to work assisting the A.P.A. fish boats on and off the cannery's marine railway and towing the company's barges to and from the mooring dolphins in Drayton Harbor. (6)

In 1981, the Demonte Company, which owned the Alaska Packers Association cannery complex and land holdings on Semiahmoo Spit and uplands adjacent to Semiahmoo, sold the property to the Trillium Corporation. Trillium sold parcels of land where the Semiahmoo Marina was built to Foster and Marshal, and to the Whatcom County Park Department where a park has been built. During the construction of the Inn at Semiahmoo many of the former cannery buildings were incorporated into the new resort complex. Marina Construction threatened the bunkhouses which were reserved by the Whatcom County Parks. These were moved to the new park site on Semiahmoo. The buildings have been restored and are the focus of the Semiahmoo park museum and interpretive center which consist of exhibits of salmon canning and local maritime history. The museum is currently operated by the Whatcom Maritime Historical Society with funding for maintenance by the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department. (3) (7) (8)

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Plover's thirty-eight years on the water ended in 1982, with the closing and sale of the cannery. The Alaska Packers Association Cannery had been the sole cannery on Semiahmoo Spit throughout the settled history of the area and had operated the only ferry service across Drayton Harbor. Upon retirement, Plover was given to the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department and trailered to Bay Horizon Park, a county facility, near Birch Bay. There, she was put on blocks and dry docked in a shed for fourteen years.

In 1995, the Whatcom County conveyed Plover to the Whatcom Maritime Historical Society, (W.M.H.S.). The first phase of her restoration began in September 1995 and was completed in June 1996, which was officially acknowledged by a Letter of Stability and a Certificate of Inspection from the U.S. Coast Guard. Plover then began once more to ply her traditional route over the waters of Drayton Harbor, no longer carrying cannery workers but tourists, visitors, and town folk.

Plover's present passenger landing at the wharf on Semiahmoo Spit is within two hundred feet of her original landing during her former period of historical significance and evokes a feeling of her historic past. Her passenger landing in the Blaine harbor is located on the commercial vessel side of the mooring facility, within one thousand feet of her original landing, situated among the commercial fishing vessels, several of which are over fifty years old.

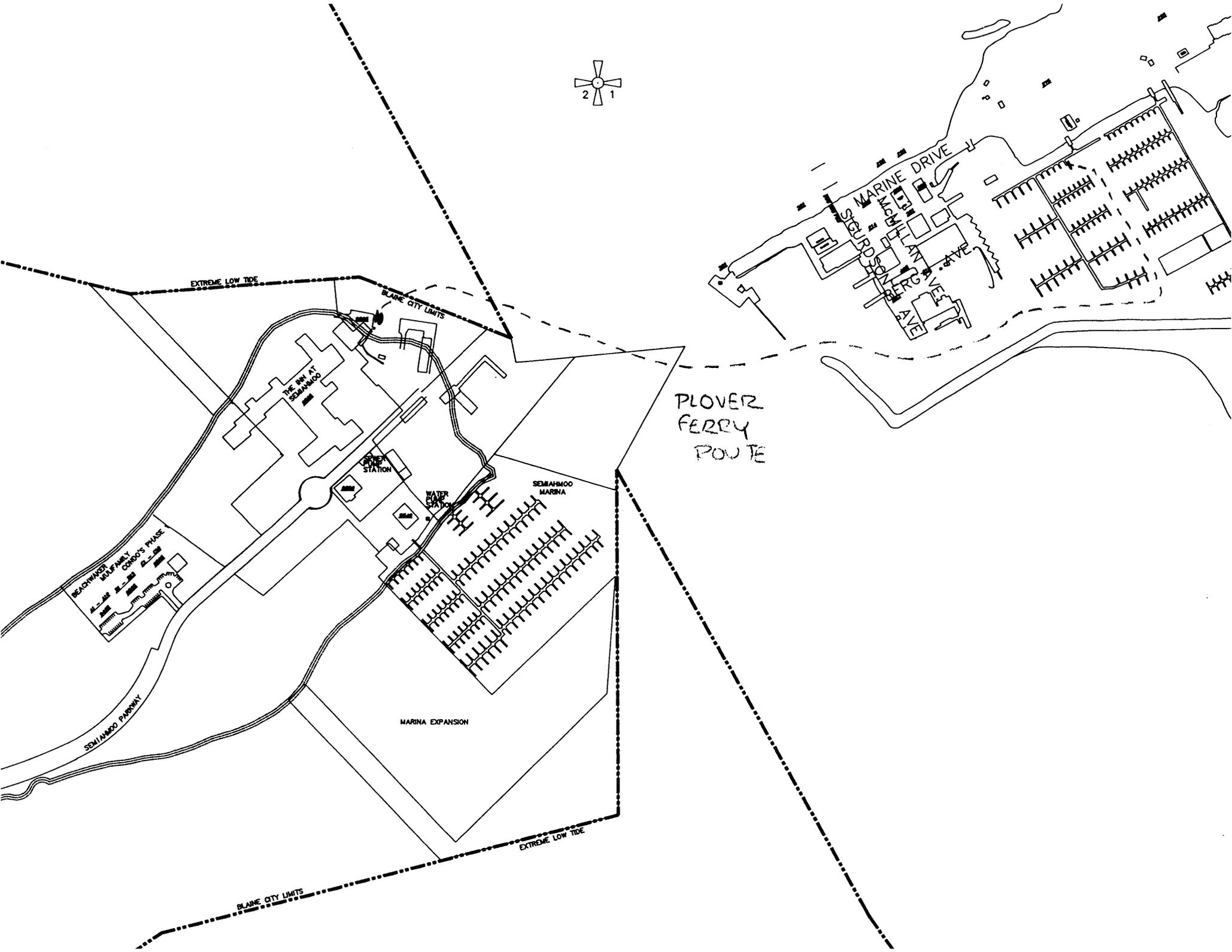
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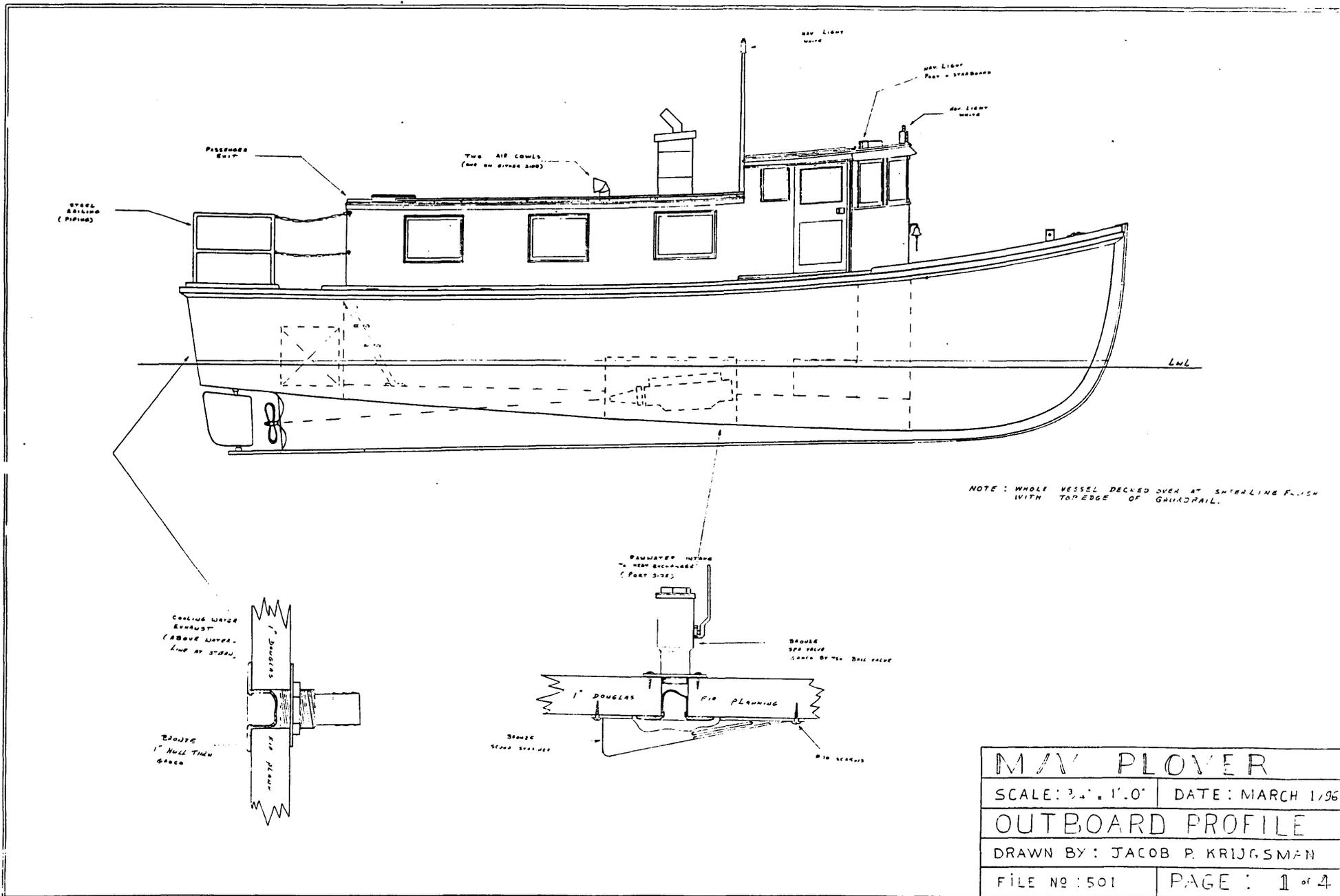
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Bibliography

- (1) Pioneers of Peace, Diamond Jubilee, 1884-1959, by Wolten, Christensen, Miller & Skelton, August 1959, Blaine, Washington
- (2) The Blaine Journal, March 2, 1906, "Conquering the Wilderness."
- (3) Blaine Centennial History, 1884-1984, "A Symbol of Our Heritage - The Old Fir Tree." by Arbuckle, Barnes-Hinds, Post & Reichhardt, 1984, Blaine, Washington.
- (4) Master Carpenter's Certificate, Department of Commerce, Seattle, Washington, October 3, 1944.
- (5) Work Boat, Sept/Oct 1996 issue, page 76.
- (6) Interview in July, 1996, at Blaine, Washington, with Bob Metiever, Alaska Packers Association shipwright, by Richard Sturgill.
- (7) The Blaine Journal, April, 1909.
- (8) Blaine Waterfront, 1984, by Marjorie Reichhardt, Curator, Museum at Semiahmoo Park.





M/V PLOVER	
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"	DATE: MARCH 1, 1966
OUTBOARD PROFILE	
DRAWN BY: JACOB P. KRIJGSMAN	
FILE NO: 501	PAGE: 1 of 4