

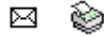


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South Street Seaport Museum  
By Paul Thompson



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VOICE ONE:

This is Steve Ember.

VOICE TWO:

And this is Shirley Griffith with the VOA Special English program EXPLORATIONS. Today we take you to visit another unusual museum in New York City, the South Street Seaport.

((THEME))

VOICE ONE:

On September Second, Sixteen-Oh-Nine, British Captain Henry Hudson was sailing along the east coast of North America. He ordered his ship into the opening of a wide river. Mister Hudson was working for the Dutch East India Company. He was looking for a way across North America from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. What he found was one of the best natural ports in North America.

Less than sixteen years later, settlers supported by the new Dutch West India Company arrived near the opening of the same river now called the Hudson

River. They had come to stay. They began building homes on the southern end of an island called Manhattan. They also began building a port. Forty years later, the Dutch gave up their claim to the area to the British.

VOICE TWO:

The new British rulers named the area after James, the Duke of York. The area became New York. The British added to the small port. The area began to grow quickly. By the year Seventeen-Forty-Seven the people of the little port owned ninety-nine ships.

Less than twenty years later there were more than four-hundred ships in the port. The little city continued to grow very quickly. Today, New York is the largest city in the United States and one of the largest in the world.

VOICE ONE:

Early maps of Manhattan show a street across the southern end of Manhattan Island. The settlers built a wall there as protection. They named it Wall Street. Another was named Water Street. A third street was called Pearl. The street closest to the water was named South Street.

Wall Street now is known around the world as the financial center of the United States.  
South Street Water Street and

South Street, Water Street and Pearl Street are still there, too. It is within this area of Manhattan that some of the first European settlers tried to develop businesses in North America. Today it is the home of the South Street Seaport Museum.

((MUSIC BRIDGE))

VOICE TWO:

If you say the word 博物馆?most people think of a large building that holds objects that are important to history. The South Street Seaport Museum has such a building, but it includes much more. The Museum is a group of buildings, streets, homes, businesses and eating-places. It also is a dock area for several ships that once sailed the oceans of the world. The Museum is a continuing work that will not be completed for many years.

A visit to the South Street Seaport Museum should start at the corner of South Street and Fulton Street. On this corner, you can see much of Fulton Street. If you look across South Street you can see two huge sailing ships, the Peking and the Wavertree. A little more than a hundred years ago, goods were carried around the world by thousands of huge ships powered by wind in their sails. Today there are only a few such ships, including the two that belong to the Seaport Museum.

VOICE ONE:

To the left of the ships is the Fulton Street Fish Market. Buyers and sellers of fish worked here since Eighteen-Twenty-Two. Very early each morning tons of fish arrive here. So do hundreds of trucks and crowds of people.

Fish are bought, sold and transported to eating-places all over the United States. The buyers and sellers speak several different languages. You can hear shouts in English, Italian, Chinese, Korean and Japanese.

VOICE TWO:

Most visitors to the South Street Seaport Museum come to see the ships. The Peking is a huge sailing ship. It is one of the largest sailing ships left from a time when these were the only ships on the seas. It is more than one-hundred-two meters long. It has four tall wood masts that hold up its many cloth sails.

The Peking looks very new. It is not. In fact, it is ninety years old. It was made at the ship-building company of Blohm and Voss in Germany in Nineteen-Eleven. It took workers at the South Street Seaport Museum twelve years of very hard work to make the ship look new.

VOICE ONE:

Next to the Peking is the Wavertree. It is almost as large. The Wavertree was built in the British port of

in the British port of Southampton. It was built for the R-W Leyland and Company of Liverpool.

The Leyland Company used it for many years to carry goods and some passengers from Britain to the United States. It also carried goods to India, Australia, and South America.

A severe storm almost sank the Wavertree in Nineteen-Ten near the coast of Cape Horn, at the end of South America. The ship was kept in that area and used for storage for many years.

Officials of the South Street Museum found the Wavertree in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in Nineteen-Sixty-Six. A year later, Museum officials decided to buy the old ship and take it to New York.

VOICE TWO:

Workers began rebuilding the huge ship in Nineteen-Seventy. The work continues today. Progress is extremely slow because of the cost and the amount of work needed to rebuild a ship the size of the Wavertree. For example, workers had to re-build the three, tall wooden masts that hold the ship 担 sails. Each mast had to be built specially for the Wavertree.

The work is extremely hard. It can also be very dangerous. People who work on the masts often work many meters above the deck of the ship.

deck of the ship.

VOICE ONE:

Sal Polisi (PO-LEE-SEE) is an artist. All of his unusual art is cut out of wood. Mister Polisi is a wood carver. He makes signs for the South Street Sea Port Museum. He also makes woodcarvings for the Wavertree and the Peking.

Sailing ships like the Wavertree had a large woodcarving called a figurehead on the very front of the ship. A figurehead helped identify a ship. It could be a carving of an animal or a human or perhaps a bird. The Wavertree 担 figurehead is a woman.

Sal Polisi used a very small and very old photograph of the Wavertree to reproduce the figurehead. It took several years to complete the huge statue of the woman. It weighs more than three-hundred-sixty kilograms.

((MUSIC BRIDGE))

VOICE TWO:

The South Street Seaport Museum also repairs the many old buildings that are part of the museum. The museum officials try to make them look as they did hundreds of years ago.

One good example of this kind of repair work is the museum 担 Bowne and Company Stationers. This building was home to a company of that name more than

one-hundred years ago. Bowne Stationers printed paper documents such as tickets, timetables of trains and boats, and business papers. The museum repaired the building and printing now continues in it.

VOICE ONE:

Today, computers control most printing. At the museum's Bowne and Company printing shop, all of the printing is done the same way it was done a hundred or more years ago. The workers use hand operated machinery that produces specially printed materials. Visitors can have the museum shop print something just for them.

A woman and man who are about to get married can get the Bowne and Company Stationers to print their wedding announcements. The little shop produces unusual and beautiful work.

VOICE TWO:

Officials of the South Street Seaport Museum are busy repairing a large group of buildings called Schemerhorn Row. A family with that name first owned the buildings more than two-hundred years ago. The buildings will be the home of a museum show called World Port New York. This new show will follow the history of the South Street area for more than seven-thousand years.

World Port New York will have objects that belonged to the

first humans that lived in the area. It will show the early development of the area by the first settlers.

The new part of the museum will show drawings and pictures of the South Street buildings and ship docking area, as they looked more than one-hundred years ago. It will show how the little port helped the great city of New York develop into an important center of world trade.

VOICE ONE:

The oldest buildings of the new World Port New York show have a long and interesting history. The oldest was built in Seventeen-Twenty-Six. Many people have lived in some of the buildings. Other buildings have sheltered businesses, hotels and eating-places. They have been used to store goods brought by ships from all over the world.

The old buildings, like the rest of the South Street Seaport Museum, will continue into the future as a living link with the past.

((THEME))


VOICE TWO:


This Special English program was written by Paul Thompson. Our director was Caty Weaver. Our studio engineer was Keith Holmes. This is Shirley Griffith.

VOICE ONE:

VOICE ONE:

And this is Steve Ember. Join us again next week for another EXPLORATIONS program on the Voice of America.

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