



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: April 26, 2021

OLD SHIP SALOON

Application No.: LBR-2019-20-035
Business Name: Old Ship Saloon
Business Address: 298 Pacific Avenue
District: District 3
Applicant: Eric Passetti, Business Owner
Nomination Letter Date: May 8, 2020
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Old Ship Saloon is the oldest known bar to still be operating in San Francisco and may be one of the oldest bars on the West Coast. Opened by Englishman Joe Anthony in 1851, the Old Ship Saloon is in its original location at the corner of Pacific Avenue and Battery Street. After 170 years in business, the Saloon has a long, storied history that almost outspans the State of California itself. Despite such a lengthy operation period, the Old Ship Saloon (or "Old Ship Ale House" as it was first known, followed by subsequent name changes) has a well-documented and fascinating history, starting with its inception as a shipwreck-turned-ale house during the Gold Rush period. The bar would later become a refuge for fire victims in 1859 and then a Barbary Coast icon as a bar and part-time brothel, operating for 9 years out of the ship's landlocked hull.

When the ship's remains were finally swallowed by the area's muddy terrain (which was the shoreline at that time, before it was covered with landfill), a wooden structure was erected to continue operations. After the 1906 earthquake, the brick-and-mortar building we see today was constructed with burnt bricks salvaged from the area.

During Prohibition, the Saloon became the Toscano Hotel and Monte Carlo Café, but the main floor was converted back to a bar once provision restrictions were lifted. The upper floors persist as "Single Room Occupancy" (SRO) units, converted over from the former hotel rooms.

Old Ship Saloon has weathered many turbulent storms in San Francisco's history and has been able to stay afloat throughout its ever-changing tides. The business is an anchor to its community, as well as a living artifact and testament to the neighborhood's long-desired need to gather and relax at their local pub. Old Ship Saloon is a family-owned business, and the applicants are committed to maintaining the features and characteristics of the business that make it so iconic and recognizable. The bar has been featured in several books and countless news outlets, including (but not limited to) the San Francisco Chronicle, Daily Alta, San Francisco Examiner, SFist, and San Francisco Eater. The managing staff of the Old Ship Saloon are active and offer meeting space for the local neighborhood association, Barbary Coast Association, and the Jackson Square Merchant association.

CRITERION 1

Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

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San Francisco, CA 94102
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Yes, Old Ship Saloon has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

298 Pacific Avenue from 1851 to Present (170 years)

CRITERION 2

Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, Old Ship Saloon has contributed to the history and identity of the Financial District neighborhood and San Francisco.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- The business is associated with sea-faring history, craft libations and pub cuisine.
- The property has been surveyed and given a Department Resource Status Code of "Category A" for its association with the Old Ship Saloon. The property has not been formally listed on any historic resource registry as of this time but has been determined eligible for such listing.
- There have been a number of features and articles on Old Ship Saloon throughout its history, including write-ups in the San Francisco Chronicle, Daily Alta, San Francisco Examiner, SFist, and San Francisco Eater, among others.

CRITERION 3

Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, Old Ship Saloon is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Old Ship Saloon qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Its use as a bar and its name as "Old Ship Saloon."
- The location at the northeast corner of Pacific Avenue and battery Street (its original shipwrecked location).
- Predominantly serving the proximal merchant and residential community.
- Amber-hued transom windows and 1906-era recovered brick cladding and construction.
- Mahogany bar top, "commissary dinner bell", and essence of old-world saloon barkeeping.
- The current signage and former signs from past iterations of the saloon's uses and names, on display around the business to pay homage to its history.
- Historical photos and records of the Old Ship Saloon's history, framed and displayed about the bar.
- Traditional, humble Old English / classic American pub fare and libations such as classic cocktails, beer, and wine.
- Unbiased, friendly service to all who patron the business.
- The Old Ship Saloon honorary plaque, affixed to the exterior of the building (bestowed to the business and structure by the Clampers Historical Society).

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CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Bar.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Old Ship Saloon currently located at 298 Pacific Avenue in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Program Manager
Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

April 26, 2021

OLD SHIP SALOON

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Business Name: Old Ship Saloon
Business Address: 298 Pacific Avenue
District: District 3
Applicant: Eric Passetti, Business Owner
Nomination Letter Date: May 8, 2020
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Old Ship Saloon, currently located at 298 Pacific Avenue.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on April 26, 2021, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Old Ship Saloon in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Old Ship Saloon.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

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- Traditional, humble Old English / classic American pub fare and libations such as classic cocktails, beer, and wine.
- Unbiased, friendly service to all who patron the business.
- The Old Ship Saloon honorary plaque, affixed to the exterior of the building (bestowed to the business and structure by the Clampers Historical Society).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Old Ship Saloon on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Bar.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on April 26, 2021.

Regina Dick-Endrizzi
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

- Ayes –
- Nays –
- Abstained –
- Absent –

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2019-20-035
Business Name: Old Ship Saloon
Business Address: 298 Pacific Avenue
District: District 3
Applicant: Eric Passetti, Business Owner
Nomination Letter Date: May 8, 2020
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes No

298 Pacific Avenue from 1851 to Present (170 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes No

NOTES: N/A

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: March 11, 2021

Richard Kurylo
Program Manager, Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

AARON PESKIN

May 8, 2020

Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi
San Francisco Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Director Dick-Endrizzi,

It is my honor and privilege to nominate the Old Ship Saloon for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

The Old Ship Saloon is one of San Francisco's oldest and most historic bars, having opened for business aboard the land-locked Gold Rush sailing ship The Arkansas in 1851. It occupied the corner of Battery and Pacific streets during the bawdy days of the Barbary Coast and was broken up for salvage in 1857. Subsequently, it opened in a two-story brick building which was severely damaged in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake. A three-story brick building went up on the site in 1907 and a bar has operated there ever since. Remains of the actual "old ship" were unearthed in 2016 during construction of an adjacent condominium development.

Not only does The Old Ship Saloon serve as an ad hoc community gathering spot and respite for the many residents and workers in the area, it also hosts organized meetings for neighborhood groups such as the Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association. In addition to a full bar, it has a hearty food menu and in normal times operates until 2 a.m. daily, providing a welcome beacon of hospitality in an area where many businesses close early and/or on weekends.

The Old Ship Saloon would greatly benefit from inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry, and it is my honor to nominate it for inclusion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron Peskin".

Aaron Peskin

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information.

Please provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:	
The Old Ship Saloon	
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business):	
Eric Passetti	
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE NUMBER:
298 Pacific Ave. San Francisco, CA 94111	(415) 788-2222
	EMAIL ADDRESS:
	oldshipsaloonssf@gmail.com
MAILING ADDRESS – STREET ADDRESS:	MAILING ADDRESS – CITY AND STATE:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Address	
	MAILING ADDRESS – ZIP CODE:
WEBSITE ADDRESS:	
www.theoldshipsf.com	
FACEBOOK PAGE:	
@oldshipsf	
TWITTER NAME:	
APPLICANT'S NAME:	APPLICANT'S TELEPHONE NUMBER:
Eric Passetti	
APPLICANT'S TITLE:	APPLICANT'S EMAIL ADDRESS:
Business Owner	
SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	
1068783	
SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (If applicable):	
201634110220	

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS	ZIP CODE	START DATE OF BUSINESS
298 Pacific Ave.	94111	1851
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	1851 - Continuous	

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified. A business deemed not current with all San Francisco taxes, business registration and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for grants through the Legacy Business Program.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Eric Passetti

07/30/2020

Eric Passetti

Digitally signed by Eric
Passetti
Date: 2020.07.31 09:31:46
-07'00'

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

OLD SHIP SALOON

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

The Old Ship Saloon, located at 298 Pacific Avenue, is a rare historic business that witnessed the birth of the city of San Francisco, survived the earthquake and fire of 1906, and still operating today. The bar started as “Old Ship Ale House,” experienced several name and address changes, and is today known as “Old Ship Saloon.”

Although the business was established in 1851, the legacy of the Old Ship Saloon begins in 1849 with the launch of the ship called the Arkansas that epitomizes the story of San Francisco’s transformation. In June of 1849, the Arkansas left New York Harbor with 206 passengers and crew. UC Berkeley has preserved Robert Ferrell’s personal diary of the trip, describing a firsthand account of the Arkansas as it battled storms around the horn of South America, and fought winter swells up the western coast. Though they arrived safely in San Francisco Bay, Ferrell chronicles the tragic ending of the Arkansas. An overnight storm trapped the Captain and crew and blew the ship off its anchor, smashing upon an island now known as Alcatraz. The next day, the Arkansas was run aground parallel to Pacific Street, and adjacent to the current building that houses The Old Ship Saloon.

Like countless California Gold Rush ships, the Arkansas was abandoned where it lay, but even in death it added to the fabric of the city: It’s cargo of bricks became a building on Kearny street; the missionaries it disgorged populated a silver-mining town in Nevada; its captain joined the police force and became a judge; and its cabin boy James Laflin became one of the most prolific “Shanghai-ers” in history.

In 1851, an Englishman named Joe Anthony cut a hole into the abandoned ship from the Pacific Street side, laid down a ramp, and opened The Old Ship Ale House in its hull. What began as a sailor’s saloon and part-time brothel would evolve into a Barbary coast legend, operating for nine years out of the land-locked hulk.

The scuttled Arkansas functioned as a store-ship with the saloon and brothel operating out of its land-locked remains, then later provided shelter to fire victims in 1859. When the ship was finally swallowed by mud, its spine was added to the fill that extended the San Francisco coastline, and the neighborhood of Jackson Square would literally be built upon its back.

Many of San Francisco’s oldest businesses have changed their address, name, and housing due to progress, fire, and earthquakes. Joe Anthony began an unbroken line of Old Ship owners,

anchoring the business to the corner of Pacific and Battery streets, floating with the changing tides of the ever-changing landscape in the city. What began as a saloon and brothel housed in an abandoned ship would become a wood building, and eventually a cornerstone brick structure.

Henry Klee purchased the American Hotel and revived the name of The Old Ship Saloon in 1897. The destruction following the 1906 earthquake and fires forced Klee to rebuild the brick-and-mortar bar and boarding house above. Forged from fire-scorched bricks pulled from neighborhood rubble, the Old Ship Saloon was edified in a famous aerial photo of the lone building standing amidst absolute devastation in 1907. The current building was completed steps from the final resting place of the Arkansas herself.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

The Old Ship Saloon has never ceased operations for more than six months, including during Prohibition where it operated as Toscano Hotel and Monte Carlo Café.

Surviving the pandemic in 2020 has proven a challenge, but the year unfurled its significance to San Francisco as an institution and the owners' responsibility as custodians of the Old Ship Saloon. During the early stages of the shelter-in-place order, several weeks of uncertainty and unrest plagued the community as much as the virus. Residents and businesses fled the neighborhood in due course. However, essential workers like firefighters and contractors needed sustenance, and Old Ship Saloon decided to open as soon as possible. With a few employees and the decision to serve the present community, the owners began to realize two things: the business is a beacon for the neighborhood at large, and the employees need to work. The Old Ship Saloon has undoubtedly been financially impaired by the pandemic, and it will take several year to recuperate, but what has surfaced as a result of the shelter-in-place order is how important community is to this neighborhood, from basic needs to companionship and providing support for Old Ship Saloon's employees.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

Old Ship Saloon is a family-owned business. The current ownership is brothers Eric Passetti and Marc Passetti.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

Old Ship Saloon is the oldest continuous saloon and bar in San Francisco. The original address was NE corner Pacific & Battery in 1850s; numbered to 230 Pacific Street by 1861; partitioned in half creating 228 Pacific Street and 230 Pacific Street from about 1872 to 1897; renumbered to 268 Pacific Street by 1907; renumbered to 298 Pacific Street after Prohibition. The ownership history of the business is as follows:

1850/1851 to 1857 (“Old Ship Ale House”):	Joseph Anthony
April 1857:	The ship Arkansas was dismantled
1858 and/or 1859:	Building was constructed
1860 to 1861 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Kleinhammer & Co., run by John Kleinhammer and Amandus Reekmann
1861 (“Grocery Saloon”):	John Kleinhammer
1862 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Tietjen, R & Co., run by Richard Tietjen and Henry Klopman
1863 to 1868 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Richard Tietgen
1869 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Tietgen & Hagemann, run by Diedrich W. Tietgen and Mathias Hagemann
Circa 1872:	Building was partitioned in half creating 228 Pacific Street and 230 Pacific Street
<u>228 Pacific Street:</u>	
1872 to 1873 (“Saloon”):	Simon Koch
1874 (“Saloon”):	Ownership information unknown
1875 (“Saloon”):	George Dettner
1876 (“Saloon”):	George Dettner and Henry Peterson
1877 (“Saloon”):	Henry Peterson and Pothoff
1878 to 1880 (“Saloon”):	Henry Peterson and Dieckoff
1881 (“Saloon”):	Henry Peterson
1882 (“Saloon”):	Diedrich (Dick) A. Ahlers (a Shanghaier) and Hauerken (first name unknown)
1883 to 1889 (“Saloon”):	Diedrich (Dick) A. Ahlers
1890 (“Saloon”):	Otto Schmidt

1891 to 1896 (“Saloon”):	Warren P. Hermann (who shanghaied sailors out of the saloon)
<u>230 Pacific Street:</u>	
1872 to 1873 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Ownership information unknown
1874 to 1877 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Kelting & Tietgen, run by Jacob Kelting and Diedrich W. Tietgen
1878 to 1884 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Giese Brothers, run by Clause Giese and Jurgen H. Giese
1895 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Giese & Nickel
1896 (“Grocery Saloon”):	Jurgen H. Giese
Circa 1897:	Partition dividing building removed; Address now 230 Pacific Street until 1906
1897:	Ownership information unknown
1898 (“Old Ship Saloon”):	Henry Klee and Anton Mehl
1899 to 1906 (“Old Ship Saloon”):	Henry Klee
1906:	Building burned by fire on April 18, 1906; rebuilt by 1907
1907 to 1914 (“Old Ship Saloon”):	Henry Klee
1914 to 1915 (“Old Ship Saloon”):	Katherine Klee
1916 to 1919 (“Old Ship Saloon”):	Hans Alsheimer
1920 to 1923, Prohibition (“Rooms”):	Hans Alsheimer
1924 to 1936, Prohibition:	The business survived Prohibition as “Old Ship / Toscano Hotel” (Unknown whether “Old Ship” was officially part of the name and who the owner was)
1937 to 1954 (“Monte Carlo Café”):	Gus Piagnieri
1954 to 1973 (“Babe’s Monte Carlo”):	Attilio "Babe" Ballati

1973 to 1974 (“Battery Bar & Grill”):	Dan and Ardine Kanights, Coke Infante, and Frank Gudiera
1974 to 1977 (“Bricks Bar & Grill”):	William (Bill) Duffy, run by Dan and Ardine Kanights, and Vic Parilla
1977 to 1992 (“Bricks Bar & Grill”):	William (Bill) Duffy, run by Ardine Kanights and Aldo Di Pasqua
1992 to 1999 (“Bricks Bar & Grill”):	William (Bill) Duffy
Late 1999 (“Old Ship Saloon” henceforth):	Bill Duffy renamed the saloon back to its original incarnation, the "Old Ship Saloon" after an extensive interior remodeling and building retrofit; The saloon was commemorated by a bronze plaque dedicated on March 23, 2002, by the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus
1999 to 2017:	William (Bill) Duffy
2017 to Present:	Eric Passetti and Marc Passetti, run by Eric Passetti

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Documentation of the existence of the business verifying it has been in operation for 30+ years is provided in this Legacy Business Registry application.

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The historic resource status of the building of the building that houses Old Ship Saloon is classified by the Planning Department as Category A, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The substantial brick building was constructed in 1907 after the earthquake and fire and is historically registered by San Francisco. The building recalls gold rush days when vessels were pulled up on the muddy foreshores and used for commerce. It is considered to relate to the ship Arkansas, which was beached nearby and converted to an English ale house in 1850.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

The Old Ship Saloon has operated continuously for 170-years, from the hull of an abandoned ship to a brick building surrounded by the heights of modern progress. “The bar was built upon the ruins of a Gold Rush-era ship, the Arkansas, which ran aground on ‘Bird Island’ (aka Alcatraz) in 1849. The ship was hauled to what was then the shore in the Barbary Coast waterfront of SF. Eventually it was covered with landfill, and the building that now houses Old Ship was constructed above it.”¹

The saloon has been a place of respite, relief, relaxation, and rejuvenation for dock workers, masons, printing press operators, candy factory workers, advertising professionals, lawyers, politicians, and radio and television anchorpeople. To this day, the Old Ship Saloon continues to feed and invigorate its community. The lasting impact on the history of San Francisco is that of a bar that has anchored its neighborhood since the neighborhood itself first landed on these shores. And though Tadich Grill may lay claim as the oldest restaurant in San Francisco, there is not another bar or saloon with an older lineage than The Old Ship Saloon.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

Old Ship Saloon is actively involved with the Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association (BCNA) and Jackson Square Merchants Association (JSMA). The business dates back to the establishment of the city of San Francisco in 1850, so it is associated with all significant events in the city’s history from the California Gold Rush to the 2020-21 coronavirus pandemic.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

Old Ship Saloon has been referenced in countless newspaper articles in publications including, but not limited to, the San Francisco Chronicle, Daily Alta, San Francisco Examiner, SFist, and San Francisco Eater.

The bar has also been featured in several books, including *Shanghaied in San Francisco* by Bill Pickelhaupt; *Gold Rush Port* by James P. Delgado; and *Men and Memories of San Francisco In the “Spring of ‘50”* [1873] by T.A. (Theodore August) Barry.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

One of its first bartenders at Old Ship Saloon was James (Jim) Laflin, who departed from New York on the Arkansas as a cabin boy. Jim became one of the most prolific “Shanghaiers” in

¹ San Francisco Eater, <https://sf.eater.com/2017/6/14/15803542/old-ship-saloon-open-menu>

history, also known as “crimpers” or “crimps.” “Shanghaiing or crimping is the practice of kidnapping people to serve as sailors by coercive techniques such as trickery, intimidation, or violence.”² Jim was notorious in San Francisco, dying rich and infamous after a 50-year career as a Shanghai artist.

Another crimper associated with Old Ship Saloon was James Kelly, better known as "Shanghai Kelly." A legendary figure in San Francisco history, he wore a red beard and had a fiery temper to match. He regularly kidnapped men and forced them to work on understaffed ships. Shanghai Kelly kept a boarding house in San Francisco. Local bars like the Old Ship Saloon provided Kelly with a steady supply of victims. In the early 1870s, Kelly was reported to have shanghaied 100 men for three understaffed ships in a single evening by announcing he was hosting a free booze cruise to celebrate his "birthday," and to say "thank you" to his fellow crimps and runners who had helped him through the years. After leaving port, his bartenders served opium-laced whiskey to his guests, who were then offloaded to the waiting ships.³

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) residents are above the saloon. Old Ship Saloon frequently feeds and/or employs the residents of these rooms, formerly the "hotel" and "boarding house" of the Barbary Coast era. The Old Ship Saloon also employs underserved or under-represented citizens of the world such as Altynai Raeva who resides in the Bay Area on an Amnesty Visa from Kyrgyzstan and is currently studying at UC Berkeley. Additionally, ex-convicts have called this saloon home. In short, the Old Ship Saloon welcomes any and all who wish to imbibe and peddle a living. Management staff serve on the Jackson Square Merchant Association and provide meeting locations for all neighborhood associations such as the Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

Old Ship Saloon serves dock workers, masons, advertising professionals, accountants, lawyers, politicians, radio and television workers, tech workers, and anchor people. The Old Ship Saloon serves the greater public from all over the Bay Area and in many instances tourists from all over the world.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

The current ownership wanted to pay homage to the Old Ship Saloon’s past and various iterations. There are signs from two past businesses that once occupied the space, Babe’s Monte Carlo and Bricks Bar and Grill. There are also original photos of the Old Ship Saloon run

² Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shanghaiing>

³ Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Kelly_\(crimper\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Kelly_(crimper))

by Henry Klee. The current ownership recently recreated the original photos with current staff for generations to come after they are gone.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

If the Old Ship Saloon were to close, San Francisco would lose its oldest continuously operating bar location, possessing considerable detail of the history of the Gold Rush and Barbary Coast era. Given its rich history, closure would be “a San Francisco tragedy of epic proportions.”⁴

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

The essential features that describe the businesses character are its literal location, predating any surrounding business or structure. The business continues to operate as it was originally intended, to service the proximal merchant and residential community.

Opaque amber transom windows shed gold light across the gloss of the mahogany bar top. Every brick-and-mortar union tells a different story of the shanghaied Barbary Coast to the business suit clad power brokers of modern commerce. Original signage from past iterations of the saloon adorns the walls with neon from Babe's Monte Carlo and Bricks Bar & Grill, paying homage to its storied past. Historical photos commemorate a bygone era in San Francisco that brings patrons back out of nostalgia and educates those new to the city. The aroma of traditional Old English pub fare fills the room as the commissary dings the bell, telling the barkeeper fish & chips are ready and the burger is hot as the crisp clink of ice falling into glass and the shake of a Pisco Punch satisfies another order.

Old Ship Saloon continues to serve its public unbiasedly. From local hospitality industry, marketing agents, contractors, radio personalities, and travelers alike, the saloon serves humble pub fare and classic cocktails, beer, and wine to all walks of life.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

Old Ship Saloon is committed to maintaining its historical tradition as a bar.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical

⁴ San Francisco Eater, <https://sf.eater.com/2017/6/14/15803542/old-ship-saloon-open-menu>

characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

The current ownership wanted to pay homage to the Old Ship Saloon's past and various iterations. There are signs from two past businesses that once occupied the space, the original Babe's Monte Carlo neon and Bricks Bar and Grill. The Clampers Historical Society commemorated the Old Ship Saloon with an honorary plaque:

"After a 178 day voyage from New York via Cape Horn in 1849 the sailing ship 'Arkansas' arrived in San Francisco Bay. Among her 112 passengers were 75 Methodists, all bound for the gold fields or church propagation. The ship was nearly lost while anchoring off bird island, now Alcatraz, then was towed and purposely grounded in Yerba Buena Cove. Here an entrepreneur cut a hole in her bow creating an instant saloon. The ships colorful past has included a seaman's bar, boarding house, bordello and 'shanghai-shop.' Yet the Old Ship has never lost its main attraction, that of a first rate saloon.

- Dedicated March 23, 6007 (2002), by Capitulus Redivivus, Yerba Buena Number One, Ancient and Honorable Order of e Clampus Vitus"

Original photos of the Old Ship Saloon run by Henry Klee connect the past with the present. The current ownership recently recreated the original photos with current staff for generations to come after they are gone.

The Old Ship Saloon is best described as a classic American Pub serving standard food such as cheeseburgers, fried chicken sandwich, and fish & chips. Classic cocktails such as the Pisco Punch and draft beers keep the bartenders moving at a quick pace.

The original brick structure erected in 1851 and rebuilt in 1907 highlights the revolutions of San Francisco's boom and regrowth. The "Old Ship Saloon est. 1851" replicated signage on the edifice of the structure pays homage to the Gold Rush era and pre-Prohibition period of San Francisco.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

The UC Berkeley Library has a record of the Arkansas ship's travel log, as well as the bar in San Francisco directories, newspaper mentions, and archeological studies. The recent construction of the adjacent condominium buildings was required to provide a historic study of the site. This information is available upon request.





EAGLE SALOON

BURR GREY & CO

NIANTIC HOTEL

GENERAL

CHANDLER

STOR

CEA
AIR



3. The Old Ship Saloon, circa 1907. The moustached man standing just to the right of the post (wearing a vest) is Henry Klee, the proprietor.





OLD SHIP LOON

EST. 1854

Pacific

OLD SHIP LOON

EST. 1854

THE OLD SHIP SALOON



PARKING
2nd - 4th
FIDELITY

DCS



OLD SHIP
1851
SALOON

OLD SHIP
EST 1851
SALOON

701











BABE'S

MONTE CARLO



ATTENTION, MINORS!

Buying or Drinking Alcoholic Beverages Is Prohibited!

The California Alcoholic Beverage Control Act Provides:

Any minor who buys any alcoholic beverage, or any minor who drinks any alcoholic beverage in any place dispensing such beverages is guilty of violating the law.

Violation of This Law May Mean:

Six months in jail, or \$500 fine, or BOTH.

Expense and embarrassment to your parents and your family.

Disgrace to you, discredit to your school.

A Juvenile Court record to follow you through life.

BE A LOYAL AMERICAN!

HELP WIN THE WAR!

OBSERVE THE LAW!

STATE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

Open for Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Monday through Sunday 9am - 9pm

OLD SHIP

1851

SALOON

298 Pacific Ave. SF. CA 94111

oldshipsaloonsf@gmail.com

(415) 788-2222 • @oldshipsf

Starters

Chips & Guacamole - \$11

Made from Hass avocado and served with housemade tortilla chips

Buffalo Wings

6 wings \$10 / 12 wings \$18

Served with ranch and blue cheese dressing

Potato Skins with Bacon - \$11

Cheddar and jack cheese, Sriracha, scallions and crema

Chicken Mole Nachos - \$15

Chicken braised in a rich mole sauce, cotija cheese, black beans, tomatillo salsa, crema Mexicana and avocado

Mac & Cheese - \$10

Chevre, blistered cherry tomatoes and bacon

Sides

Seasoned Fries - \$5

Sweet Potato Fries - \$5

Grilled Broccoli - \$7

Parmesan, chili flakes

Miss Vickie's Kettle Chips - \$2

Breakfast Burrito - \$8

Home fried potatoes with caramelized onions, jack cheese and scrambled eggs
add bacon +2 / chorizo +1 / guacamole +2

Breakfast Sandwich - \$8

Scrambled eggs, smoked white cheddar on pan de mie served with home fried potatoes

add bacon +2

Buttermilk Griddlecakes - \$8

Served with maple syrup and a side of scrambled eggs

add bacon +2

Sandwiches

The Burger - \$14

Caramelized onions, dill pickles, melted american cheese, house-made russian dressing served on a sesame seed bun

add bacon +2 / fried egg +2 / avocado +3

Crispy Chicken - \$16

Buttermilk fried chicken, chipotle mayonnaise, spicy cole slaw and roma tomato on ciabatta

Patty Melt - \$16

Beef patty, caramelized onions, swiss cheese served on rye

California Reuben - \$16

Robert's corned beef, sauerkraut, thousand island dressing on rye

Grilled Pimento Cheese - \$8

With garlic aioli on pan de mie

Plates

Fish & Chips - \$16

Beer battered local cod, seasoned fries, caper tartar sauce

Quesadilla - \$8

Jack cheese, salsa verde and crema

add chicken +5

Soups

Roasted Red Pepper & Fennel - \$6

Garlic crouton

Salads

Add Salmon \$8 / Chicken \$5

Baby Kale - \$13

Red cabbage, carrot, jicama, cilantro, toasted pumpkin seeds, cotija cheese, chipotle-lime dressing

California Caesar - \$10

Gem lettuce, crispy garlic croutons, parmesan, creamy caesar dressing

Butternut Squash Panzanella - \$10

Baby kale, garlic croutons, roasted pumpkin seeds, goat cheese, maple-cider dressing

Wedge-Burger Salad - \$15

1/2 lb. burger patty, gem lettuce, bacon, blue cheese and crispy onions

Quinoa - \$15

Baby Kale, cherry tomato, english cucumber, olive red onion, feta cheese

Beer

DRAFT

Kilsner - *6

Old Ship Brewing, San Francisco, CA. 5.4% abv

Scrimshaw Pilsner - *8

North Coast Brewing, Fort Bragg, CA. 4.5% abv

Evil Goat Bock Strong Lager - *8

Harmonic Brewing, San Francisco, CA. 6.6% abv

Mt. Tam Pale Ale - *8

Marin Brewing, Larkspur, CA. 5.5% abv

Wheat Ale - *8

Allagash Brewing, Portland, ME. 5.1% abv

Pranqster Belgian Style Ale - *8

North Coast Brewing, Fort Bragg CA. 7.6% abv

Rent Control IPA - *6

Old Ship Brewing, San Francisco, CA. 6.2% abv

Hazy Little Thing IPA - *8

Sierra Nevada Brewing, Bend, OR. 6.5% abv

Space Dust IPA - *8

Elysian Brewing Co., Seattle, WA. 8.2% abv

Stout - *8

Guinness, St. Jame's Gate, Ireland 4.2% abv

BOTTLES & CANS

Miller High Life 7oz. - *3

Miller Brewing Co. Milwaukee, WI. 4.6% abv

Modelo Lager - *4

Grupo Modelo, Mexico 4.5% abv

Budweiser - *4

Anheuser-Busch, St. Louis, MO. 5% abv

Bud Light - *4

Anheuser-Busch, St. Louis, MO. 4.2% abv

Anchor Steam - *6

Anchor Brewing, San Francisco, CA. 4.9% abv

Dry Cider - *7

Golden State Cider, Sebastopol, CA. 6.9% abv

Cocktails

Philosopher's Manhattan

Old Forester Rye, Grand Marnier,
Carpano Antica Vermouth

Jerry "the Professor" Thomas, Father of the American Cocktail and consummate saloon keeper resided in San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Pouring His signature libation the Blue Blazer at the El Dorado on Portsmouth Square. Thomas introduces this variation of the Manhattan in His seminal work "How-to Mix Drinks or The Bon Vivant's Companion."

Pisco Punch

Frisco Brandy, Pineapple Gum, Lemon

Made famous in the late 19th Century by Duncan Nicol, owner of the Bank Exchange Saloon, located at Washington & Montgomery, now the site of the Transamerica Pyramid. This historic watering hole was lavish and opulent and discreet. So much so, Duncan Nicol took the original recipe to his grave.

Gold Rush

Conciere Bourbon, Lemon, Honey

By the mid-1850's 300,000 49er's flooded the state of California. Some found wealth, but many were thrown to the wolves. Those who threw in the pick-axe early became merchant's, building mercantile's and offering service's across the City. One in particular, the Old Ship Saloon.

Tequila Daisy

Pueblo Viejo Tequila, Luxardo Maraschino,
Lemon & Lime, Agave, Seltzer

As the precursor to the Margarita, the Tequila Daisy is reported to be a complete accident. Said to be invented by a Mr. Madden, an Irish barkeeper in Tijuana, Mexico in 1936. We thank Mr. Madden for grabbing the wrong bottle while preparing a Daisy cocktail and changing the way we enjoy our tequila forever.

Pimm's Cup

Pimm's No. 1, Cucumber, Mint, Ginger

James Pimm, a farmer's son from Kent, England became the proprietor of an oyster bar in the City of London, where he offered a secret concoction of gin, herbs and liqueurs as an aide to digestion. Stored and served from tankards, patrons would bring their own mugs to get their fill of Pimm's, henceforth becoming a Pimm's Cup.

Wine

SPARKLING

Brut - *11

Bouvet-Ladubay, France nv

Cremant Rosé - *11

Gerard Bertrand, France nv

ROSÉ

Rosé - *10

Rosé the Day, Sonoma County, CA. 2018

WHITE

Sauvignon Blanc - *8

Joel Gott, Napa, CA. 2019

Chardonnay - *12

Martin Ray, Sonoma Coast, CA. 2018

Vermentino - *11

Olianas, Sardinia, Italy 2018

Gewurztraminer - *11

Gundlach Bundschu, Sonoma Coast, CA. 2018

RED

Syrah-Cabernet Blend - *8

Farmhouse, Sonoma, CA. 2018

Pinot Noir - *11

Sea Sun, Rutherford, CA 2019

Cabernet Sauvignon - *12

Intrinsic, Columbia Valley, WA. 2017

Zinfandel - *9

Cline Cellars, Sonoma, CA. 2018

COCKTAILS TO-GO

Inquire with your Bartender about
available options.



SAN FRANCISCO

FINANCIAL DISTRICT SAN FRANCISCO CONSTRUCTION NEWS

Remains of Gold Rush-era ship found under San Francisco bar

But did the captain go down with it?

By **Adam Brinklow** | Updated Nov 14, 2016, 10:33am PST

It's one of San Francisco's most enduring local legends: That the bones of dozens of Gold Rush-era ships still rest where they sank beneath what are now the streets of the [Financial District](#).

It also happens to be true, as the team excavating next to the venerable [Old Ship Saloon](#) confirmed a few weeks ago when they discovered something interesting beneath their site: the original old ship.

When scores of ships arrived in the bay in 1849, crews swiftly abandoned many of them, eager to give up the seafaring life for new opportunities in gold country.

Local columnist Gary Kamiya writes in his book [Cool, Gray City of Love](#) that locals often raided derelict ships for timber to build housing.

But some remained, only to eventually sink from neglect and later be buried under landfill as the city expanded its shoreline.

The Old Ship Saloon on Pacific Avenue began as a New York schooner, the *Arkansas*, present Old Ship owner Bill Duffy tells Curbed SF. It brought Methodist missionaries from New York, along with fortune seekers picked up along the way from New Orleans and the ports of South America.

You couldn't find a more quintessentially San Francisco story: the East Coast, the Mississippi, and the South American coast all rolling into the bay and touching down on the Barbary Coast, the dangerous and wile locale that "turned San Francisco into more than just a freaky frontier," as Duffy puts it.

[The San Francisco Chronicle writes](#) that the original Old Ship (which the owner simply cut a hole in the side of, added a plank, and invited miners into for a drink back in its day) probably collapsed during the 1906 earthquake, replaced by the structure you see today.

But workers excavating the lot next door for (what else?) a new condo project discovered bits and pieces of a classic ship this month—almost certainly the *Arkansas*.

[According to Hoodline](#), the most significant part of the wreckage pulled up was the ship's false keel, a bit of timber strapped onto the real keel to protect it.

Which is ironic, since it now seems possible that in the end the false keel fared better than the actual one.

After some consideration of what to do with it, workers buried the Old Ship parts once again, perhaps to wait another 110 years for curious shovels to next come prying.

- [Gold Rush Ship Unearthed](#) [Chronicle]
- [Condo Developer Unearths Ship](#) [Hoodline]

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO RESTAURANT OPENINGS

Old Ship Saloon Has Opened Its Historic Doors Once Again

It's still a classic, but with a new menu

by [Ellen Fort](#) | [@ellenfork](#) | Jun 14, 2017, 12:45pm PDT



Old Ship Saloon | Ellen Fort

Old Ship Saloon, one of the oldest bars in San Francisco, has opened its doors in Jackson Square once more, following a change of hands and brief remodel. It's the best case scenario for the historic watering hole, which narrowly **escaped closure** after the owner and landlord Bill Duffy announced his intention to retire last year.

The bar was built upon the ruins of a Gold Rush-era ship, the *Arkansas*, which ran aground on "Bird Island" (aka Alcatraz) in 1849. The ship was hauled to what was then the shore in the Barbary Coast area of SF. Eventually it was covered with landfill, and the building that now houses Old Ship was constructed above it. Closure would have been a San Francisco tragedy of epic proportions, given its rich history.



Ellen Fort



Luckily a group of (mostly) anonymous bar and restaurant owners, led by Marc Bruschera and Eric Pasetti under the name Beware of Bird Island, banded together to save the saloon, which Duffy purchased in 1992.

It was a labor of love and preservation— one of the main goals was to retain the charm and aesthetic of the bar, while gently upgrading it. Hardwood floors have replaced the carpet and period wallpaper has been applied. Some minor kitchen updates accompany the remodel, which took place during a brief closure. Eventually patio seating will become available, depending on permits from the city.

The bar has reopened with a new menu, executed by chef **Matilda McNamara**. Consulting chef **Erik Hopfinger** helped put together a short selection of sandwiches, salads, and macaroni and cheese that includes a roast pork sandwich with garlicky rapini, Fontina cheese, and parsley salsa verde (\$14). A secret menu includes truffle fries and other delights.

The cocktail list, led by barman Tim Gapchenko, is a selection of historic and simple drinks like the Gold Rush, with bourbon, lemon, and honey — named after San Francisco's big boom as treasure-seekers flocked to the city in the mid-1800's.

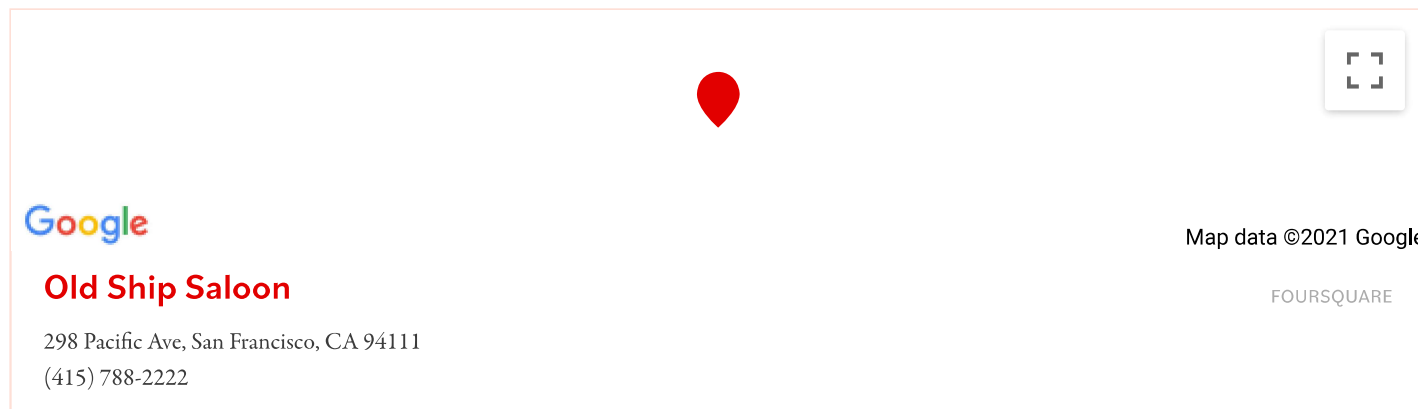
GUD, BAD AND INDIF'RENT SPIRITS

BEER \$7	COCKTAILS \$12	
<p>Anchor Steam <small>ESTD 1896. SF, CA</small></p> <p>Lagunitas IPA <small>ESTD 1993, Lagunitas, CA</small></p> <p>805 Firestone <small>ESTD 1996, Los Olivos, CA</small></p> <p>Ninkasi Double IPA <small>ESTD 2006, Eugene, OR</small></p> <p>Acme California Pale Ale <small>ESTD 1988, Fort Bragg, CA</small></p> <p>Guinness <small>ESTD 1758, Dublin, Ireland</small></p> <p>Stella <small>ESTD 1708, Leuven, France</small></p> <p>Allagash <small>ESTD 1995, Portland, MA</small></p>	<p>Bird Island Gimlet Mezcal, Basil, Cucumber, Lime <i>In 1849, after 176 days sailing from New York, The Arkansas in high winds ran aground on Alcatraz, at the time sometimes referred to as Bird Island or White Island. The original name "Alcatrazes" was Spanish for the "strange birds" they saw - Pelicans</i></p> <p>Pimm's Cup Pimm's, Cucumber, Mint, Ginger <i>Pimm, a farmer's son from Kent, became the owner of an oyster bar in the City of London, where he offered a secret mix of gin, herbs and liqueurs as an aid to digestion, served in a small tankard known as a "No. 1 Cup."</i></p> <p>Gunny Bags Rye, Chartreuse, Kina <i>In 1856, San Francisco is declared to be in a state of insurrection, and Judge David Terry is sent to negotiate. Arrested and confined to a cell at the Headquarters of the Vigilante Committee (243 Sacramento st.), fearing a rescue attempt, sandbags - also called gunny bags - were piled outside - becoming known as "Fort Gunny."</i></p>	<p>Babe's Montecarlo Vodka, Elderflower, Grapefruit, Lime <i>Attilio (Babe) and Lillian Ballati ran the bar for many years until 1994, called it Babe's Montecarlo, but in 1851 - it first became a bar when an 'enterprising Englishman' cut a hole in the side of the ship, dropped a gangplank with a sign reading "Gud, bad and indif'rent spirits sold here!"</i></p> <p>Pisco Punch Pisco, Lemon, Pineapple, etc <i>Made famous by Duncan Nicol, the last owner of the Bank Exchange Saloon (Montgomery and Washington) at the end of the 19th century. Pisco came to San Francisco in the 1830s when it was first brought from Peru on trading ships.</i></p> <p>Gold Rush Bourbon, Lemon, Honey <i>The fastest mode of transportation to the first stop for the gold fields, San Francisco, was aboard a vessel. By the summer of 1850, over 800 vessels were recorded as being anchored in the vicinity of Yerba Buena Cove - where you're standing right now! In one year the small town of San Francisco went from 800 to 25,000.</i></p>



Old Ship’s hours are Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. til 2 a.m.; Saturday and Sunday from 3 p.m. to 2 a.m.

- [Old Ship Saloon Scores a Second Chance at Life With New Owners \[ESF\]](#)





Business

Old Ship Saloon lives on thanks to new owners

Paolo Lucchesi

Feb. 8, 2017

The owner of the Old Ship Saloon is sailing off into the sunset, but unlike an increasing number of San Francisco legacy bars that have closed in the past several years, the watering hole will live on, thanks to a new, preservation-minded ownership group.

“I guess the easiest way to explain it is that I hit the end of the road,” said Old Ship Saloon owner Bill Duffy. “This business is a real good when you’re a young man, but it gets challenging when you get older.”

Duffy, 60, has been a presence behind the stick there since 1988. He bought the place in 1992, embracing the neighborhood’s Barbary Coast past. The rest was, ahem, history.

Located off Jackson Square, in what was once the Barbary Coast neighborhood, the Old Ship Saloon is arguably San Francisco’s oldest bar.

It’s a claim that may be disputed by the Saloon in North Beach, which opened in 1861. The Old Ship’s history goes back a bit further, depending on your definition of a bar: It is built atop the ruins of the Arkansas, a Gold Rush ship that ran aground on Alcatraz in 1849. After being towed to shore, the ship got a second life as a bar in 1851. Once the ship was landlocked by landfill, a building was built on the same site, which is now the corner of Pacific Avenue and Battery Street.

Roughly a century and a half later, the Old Ship Saloon is one of the last remaining watering holes in an area that was once filled with them.

“I’ve been here since 1988, and all around the neighborhood, I’ve watched drinking and eating establishments disintegrate and die and be turned into some other use or go to high-end dining that’s inaccessible for most people,” Duffy said.

Duffy said he never formally put the bar on the market, but put the word out, so the new owners found out through grapevine.

The group includes several San Francisco bar and restaurant owners who went in on the deal together and, as of now, prefer to stay anonymous. They are doing business as a limited liability company, Beware of Bird Island — a reference to Alcatraz, and the warning sign that the Arkansas should have heeded. Names listed on the pending liquor license are Marc Bruschera and Eric Passetti.



The historic sign outside of the Old Ship Saloon in San Francisco, Calif., is seen on Monday April 2nd, 2012. John Storey



Bartender Danny Grenolio pours a beer at Old Ship Saloon in San Francisco, Calif., is seen on Monday April 2nd, 2012. John Storey



Historic picture of one of the city's oldest bars, Old Ship Saloon, displayed in the bar over lawyers Chris Trainor (left) and Andrew Gasser (right) on Wednesday, February 8, 2017, in San Francisco, Calif. Liz Hafalia/The Chronicle



One of the city's oldest bars, Old Ship Saloon, has a plaque outside near the entrance on Wednesday, February 8, 2017, in San Francisco, Calif. Liz Hafalia/The Chronicle

“It’s a group of people that want to save San Francisco landmarks and don’t want to see what’s happening to Lefty O’Doul’s, the Gold Spike and all those places turning into clothing spots,” said Erik Hopfinger, a chef who will be consulting on the food side of the new Old Ship Saloon. “These are San Francisco landmarks being taken away.”

There is no set date for the changeover; both sides are waiting for the liquor license to transfer, a process that usually takes a few months. When the sale goes through, the saloon will close temporarily. Hopfinger said that during the hiatus, which is expected to last a month or so, there will be no construction, “just some lipstick and rouge.”

Duffy owns the building, so he’ll now be a landlord instead of a restaurateur. He said that he picked the new owners specifically because he wants the Old Ship’s legacy honored.

“This is a neighborhood bar,” he said. “I want this to be for people who might not be on the top floor of those office buildings.”

*Paolo Lucchesi is the food editor of The Francisco Chronicle.
Email: plucchesi@sfchronicle.com Twitter: [@lucchesi](https://twitter.com/lucchesi)*

OLD SHIP SALOON

AFTER A 178 DAY VOYAGE FROM NEW YORK VIA
CAPE HORN IN 1849 THE SAILING SHIP "ARKANSAS"
ARRIVED IN SAN FRANCISCO BAY. AMONG HER 112
PASSENGERS WERE 76 METHODISTS, ALL BOUND FOR
THE GOLD FIELDS OR CHURCH PROPAGATION.
THE SHIP WAS NEARLY LOST WHILE ANCHORING
OFF BIRD ISLAND, NOW ALCATRAZ, THEN WAS
TOWED AND PURPOSELY GROUNDED IN YERBA BUENA
COVE. HERE AN ENTREPRENEUR CUT A HOLE IN
HER BOW CREATING AN INSTANT SALOON.
THE SHIP'S COLORFUL PAST HAS INCLUDED A
SEAMAN'S BAR, BOARDING HOUSE, BORDELLO AND
A "SHANGHAI-SHOP", YET THE OLD SHIP HAS NEVER
LOST ITS MAIN ATTRACTION, THAT OF A
FIRST RATE SALOON.



DEDICATED MARCH 23, 6007 (2002)
BY CAPITULUS REDIVIVUS
YERBA BUENA NUMBER ONE
ANCIENT AND HONORABLE
ORDER OF
E CLAMPUS VITUS
~~REDACTED~~ CREDO QUILA ABSURDUM



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: APRIL 7, 2021

Filing Date: March 11, 2021
Case No.: 2021-002580LBR
Business Name: Old Ship Saloon
Business Address: 298 Pacific Avenue
Zoning: C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District
84-E Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0166/005
Applicant: Eric Passetti
298 Pacific Avenue
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Katie Wilborn – Katherine.Wilborn@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

The Old Ship Saloon is the oldest known bar to still be operating in San Francisco and may be one of the oldest bars on the West Coast. Opened by Englishman Joe Anthony in 1851, the Old Ship Saloon is in its original location at the corner of Pacific Avenue and Battery Street. After 170 years in business, the Saloon has a long, storied history that almost outspans the State of California itself. Despite such a lengthy operation period, the Old Ship Saloon (or “Old Ship Ale House” as it was first known, followed by subsequent name changes) has a well-documented and fascinating history, starting with its inception as a shipwreck-turned-ale house during the Gold Rush period. The bar would later become a refuge for fire victims in 1859 and then a Barbary Coast icon as a bar and part-time brothel, operating for 9 years out of the ship’s landlocked hull. When the ship’s remains were finally swallowed by the area’s muddy terrain (which was the shoreline at that time, before it was covered with landfill), a wooden structure was erected to continue operations. After the 1906 earthquake, the brick-and-mortar building we see today was constructed with burnt bricks salvaged from the area. During Prohibition, the Saloon became the Toscano Hotel and Monte Carlo Café, but the main floor was converted back to a bar once provision restrictions were lifted. The upper floors persist as “Single Room Occupancy” (SRO) units, converted over from the former hotel

rooms. The Old Ship Saloon has weathered many turbulent storms in San Francisco's history and has been able to stay afloat throughout its ever-changing tides. The business is an anchor to its community, as well as a living artifact and testament to the neighborhood's long-desired need to gather and relax at their local pub. The Old Ship Saloon is a family-owned business, and the applicants are committed to maintaining the features and characteristics of the business that make it so iconic and recognizable. The bar has been featured in several books and countless news outlets, including (but not limited to) the San Francisco Chronicle, Daily Alta, San Francisco Examiner, SFist, and San Francisco Eater. The managing staff of the Old Ship Saloon are active and offer meeting space for the local neighborhood association, Barbary Coast Association, and the Jackson Square Merchant association.

The business's location at 298 Pacific Avenue is a Category A (Historic Resource Present) structure on the northeast corner of Pacific Avenue and Battery Street, in the Financial District neighborhood. It is within a C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District and a 84-E Height and Bulk District, as well as the Northeast Waterfront Planning Area and the Washington-Broadway Special use District. 298 Pacific Avenue was included in several historic resource surveys, including the Here Today Survey and publication (1968, pg. 284), the Planning Department Survey (1976), and the Foundation for San Francisco Architectural heritage survey (1978), where it was identified as having "Major Importance."

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1851.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes. Old Ship Saloon qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Old Ship Saloon has operated continuously in San Francisco for 170 years.
- b. Old Ship Saloon has contributed to the history and identity of the Financial District neighborhood and San Francisco as a whole.
- c. Old Ship Saloon is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art, craft, cuisine, or tradition?*

Yes. The business is associated with sea-faring history, craft libations and pub cuisine.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, or architecture?*

Yes. The property has been surveyed and given a Department Resource Status Code of "Category A" for its association with the Old Ship Saloon.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No, the property has not been formally listed on any historic resource registry as of the date of this Executive Summary but has been determined eligible for such listing.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. There have been a number of features and articles on Old Ship Saloon throughout its history, including write-ups in the the San Francisco Chronicle, Daily Alta, San Francisco Examiner, SFist, and San Francisco Eater, among others. Please see the Legacy Business Application (attached) for a list of citations.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 298 Pacific Avenue (formerly known as 228 Pacific Street) (1851 – Present)

Recommended by Applicant

- Its use as a bar and its name as “Old Ship Saloon”
- The location at the northeast corner of Pacific Avenue and battery Street (its original shipwrecked location)
- Predominantly serving the proximal merchant and residential community
- Amber-hued transom windows and 1906-era recovered brick cladding and construction
- Mahogany bar top, “commissary dinner bell”, and essence of old-world saloon barkeeping
- The current signage and former signs from past iterations of the saloon’s uses and names, on display around the business to pay homage to its history
- Historical photos and records of the Old Ship Saloon’s history, framed and displayed about the bar
- Traditional, humble Old English / classic American pub fare and libations such as classic cocktails, beer, and wine
- Unbiased, friendly service to all who patron the business.
- The Old Ship Saloon honorary plaque, affixed to the exterior of the building (bestowed to the business and structure by the Clampers Historical Society)

Additional Recommended by Staff

- None

BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending the business listed above be adopted by the Small Business Commission to the Legacy Business Registry.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Resolution

Legacy Business Registry Application:

- Application Review Sheet
- Section 1 – Business / Applicant Information
- Section 2 – Business Location(s)
- Section 3 – Disclosure Statement
- Section 4 – Written Historical Narrative
 - Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business
 - Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
 - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1175

HEARING DATE: APRIL 7, 2021

Case No.: 2021-002580LBR
Business Name: Old Ship Saloon
Business Address: 298 Pacific Avenue
Zoning: C-2 (Community Business) Zoning District
84-E Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0166/005
Applicant: Eric Passetti
298 Pacific Avenue
Nominated By: Supervisor Aaron Peskin
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Katie Wilborn – Katherine.Wilborn@sfgov.org, 628-652-7355

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR OLD SHIP SALOON CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 298 PACIFIC AVENUE, BLOCK/LOT 0166/005.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on April 7, 2021, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that Old Ship Saloon qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Old Ship Saloon

Location(s):

- 298 Pacific Avenue

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Its use as a bar and its name as “Old Ship Saloon”
- The location at the northeast corner of Pacific Avenue and battery Street (its original shipwrecked location)
- Predominantly serving the proximal merchant and residential community
- Amber-hued transom windows and 1906-era recovered brick cladding and construction
- Mahogany bar top, “commissary dinner bell”, and essence of old-world saloon barkeeping
- The current signage and former signs from past iterations of the saloon’s uses and names, on display around the business to pay homage to its history
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- Traditional, humble Old English / classic American pub fare and libations such as classic cocktails, beer, and wine
- Unbiased, friendly service to all who patron the business.
- The Old Ship Saloon honorary plaque, affixed to the exterior of the building (bestowed to the business and structure by the Clampers Historical Society)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission’s findings and recommendations are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business’s eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2021-002580LBR to the Office of Small Business on April 7, 2021.



Laura Lynch
Acting Commission Secretary

AYES: Black, Foley, Johns, Nageswaran, Pearlman, So, Matsuda
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ADOPTED: April 7, 2021