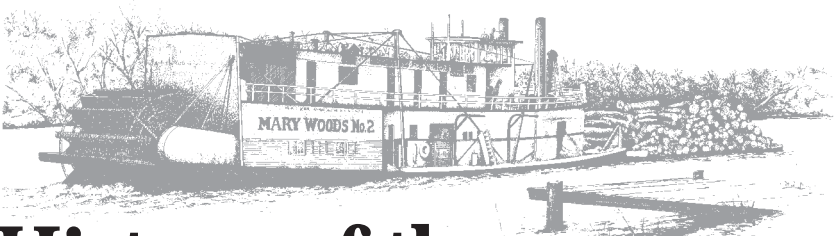




History of the Mary Woods No. 2

Jacksonport State Park, Jacksonport, Arkansas





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Notice: To preserve scenic beauty and the ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.



The history of the steamboat Mary Woods No. 2

begins in 1931, when Eugene Woods, owner of a lumber and milling operation in Memphis, needed a new boat to replace the boat then in use. The existing boat had a wooden hull, and Mr. Woods desired a more durable boat. So he designed the *Mary Woods No. 2*, which was named for his daughter.¹ Incidentally, there was a *Mary Woods* “No. 1,” the *Mary Woods*. She was built in Paducah, Kentucky, in 1926 for the Woods Lumber Company and was later sold to a lumber concern on the lower Mississippi. *Mary Woods* was used on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers until she burned in the later 1930s on the Ohio River in Paducah, Kentucky.²

The *Mary Woods No. 2* had a hull consisting of sixteen steel compartments. The hull was constructed in Nashville by the Nashville Bridge Company. The remainder of the boat, including the cabin and stern wheel, were constructed in Memphis by Mr. Woods.³ The *Mary Woods No. 2* utilized boilers and pumps from another vessel owned by the Woods Lumber Company, the *Frank E. Woods*. The cost of building the *Mary Woods No. 2* was \$75,000.⁴

The *Mary Woods No. 2* was first used on the Mississippi River under the command of Captain George Thomas. However, upon the Woods



Above: Eugene Woods
Below: Mary Woods



History of the Mary Woods No. 2

Mary Woods No. 2 in the 1930s in use as a work boat in the timber industry; the steam engines were replaced by diesel in 1949.



Lumber Company's purchase of the White River Lumber Company, she was moved to Clarendon and began operating on the White and Cache rivers. While in Clarendon, the *Mary Woods No. 2* was commanded by Captain Emmons and traveled a path ranging from approximately 100 miles south of Clarendon to 160 miles north of the town. In 1940 Captain Emmons was replaced by Captain Fred Paul, and the *Mary Woods No. 2* was moved to Greenville, Mississippi. However, the Greenville operation was destroyed in a fire, and she was later returned to Clarendon. Captain Paul served as captain of the boat until 1958, when he suffered either a heart attack or a stroke at the helm. He later died at a Memphis hospital. Shelby Dawson became her



Above: Captain Ashmore at the helm is flanked by deckhand Raymond Guthrie and engineer Pete Carley.



Below: Ethel Mae Owens stokes the crew with biscuits, fried chicken, catfish and hush puppies.

History of the Mary Woods No. 2

next captain, and in 1963 Captain Claude Ashmore became her final captain.⁵

The boat was a logging boat, used to push hardwood log barges over the Mississippi, White and Cache rivers. Drawing less than four feet of water, the *Mary Woods No. 2* was able to work near to the banks. The logs were stacked along the river banks. The *Mary Woods No. 2* would arrive with two log barges, which could each carry 85,000 board feet of logs. These barges were then loaded and towed to the mill.⁶

Originally a coal-burning steamboat, the

Above: Woods Lumber Co. office

Below: Aerial view of Woods Lumber Company in Clarendon, Arkansas



History of the Mary Woods No. 2



Above: Mary Woods No. 2 engineer, L.D. "Pete" Carley, oils the bearings of the paddle-wheel chain while it is in operation.

Below: The Mary Woods No. 2 pushes a derrick barge loaded with lumber up the river.

Mary Woods No. 2 was converted to a fuel burning steam vessel in 1937.⁷ She burned Bunker C fuel, which, was described by Captain Claude Ashmore as "crude oil with everything taken out that could be used for something else."⁸ In 1949 the *Mary Woods No. 2* was once again transformed, this time from oil-burning steam power to diesel engines.⁹

In 1960, the Woods Lumber Company sold the Clarendon operation, including equipment such as the *Mary*

Woods No. 2, to Potlatch Forests, Incorporated.¹⁰ Seven years later a more modern boat was built to replace her. It was decided that the *Mary Woods No. 2* would be donated to the Arkansas State Park system and be moored in Jacksonport. Great celebration accompanied her travel to Jacksonport. Her old crew was aboard, along with members of the media, for the three-day journey from Clarendon to Jacksonport. People lined the river banks to watch as the *Mary Woods No. 2* passed through their areas. At

History of the Mary Woods No. 2

Jacksonport approximately 750 people greeted the *Mary Woods No. 2* with car horns and fireworks.¹¹

Funds were raised for remodeling the boat, and the renovation occurred in 1969. The *Mary Woods No. 2* was transformed from a twentieth-century workboat to a nineteenth-century packet.¹² Ornate trimwork was added to the balconies and smokestacks, and the interiors were altered. In May, 1976, the *Mary Woods No. 2* was opened as a floating museum.¹³ In 1979 she appeared in a PBS film entitled “Mark Twain: Beyond the Laughter” (her name was changed briefly to *Paul Jones* for this film appearance).¹⁴

On Tuesday, January 3, 1984, a 3" water line bringing river water into the boat's cooling system froze, and later ruptured as it began to thaw, allowing the *Mary Woods No. 2* to take on water.¹⁵ Park officials boarded the boat and removed documents and small artifacts. By Friday she had settled to the bottom of the 12' channel with 100 tons

Above: The Mary Woods No. 2 on her voyage from Clarendon to Jacksonport; notice the celebratory pennants.

Below: The boat as she approached the Cotton Belt railroad bridge outside Clarendon; the bridge was rotated to allow her safe passage.



History of the Mary Woods No. 2

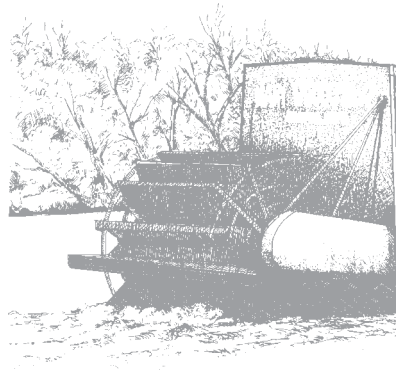
of water in her hull.¹⁶ A diving team was brought in from St. Louis to go down and replace compartment and salvage hatches and begin a two-and-a-half-day pumping operation costing \$5,500.¹⁷ By Sunday afternoon the Mary Woods No. 2 was once again floating. Upon being raised, the boat was steam cleaned to remove silt and oil from a slight leak that occurred while submerged. The Mary Woods No. 2 reopened that spring.

March 1, 1997, saw the advent of more damage for the *Mary Woods No. 2*. At approximately 4 P.M. an F4 tornado struck Jacksonport. With

winds ranging from 200–240 miles per hour, the storm caused considerable damage.¹⁸ The steel cables and

Above: Mary Woods No. 2 while being used as a museum; notice the gangplank access to enter the boat.

Below: Mary Woods No. 2 in 1984 as she sinks due to a frozen water line bursting



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both mooring arms were twisted free by the force of the storm, and the boat was pushed about 100 yards up the flooded channel. The smokestacks were brought down on the boat, and most of the pilot house was blown into the river. A large hole was made in the lower deck on the starboard side, rails and porches were blown away, and extensive roof damage was incurred.

Historical investigation of the boat began in 1997, and restoration was completed in 2000.




Above: Due to the 1997 tornado, the Mary Woods No. 2 was pushed up against the bank.

Below: Current photo of Mary Woods No. 2 after recent restoration



History of the Mary Woods No. 2

NAVY DEPARTMENT

 UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

APPLICATION FOR LICENSE TO OPERATE VESSEL IN TERRITORIAL WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES OR TO DEPART THEREFROM

Vessel MARY WOODS No. 2 AMERICAN 111 feet 222212
(Name) (Nationality) (Length) (Official number)

Owner FRED E. PAUL AMERICAN CLARKSON, ARKANSAS
(Name of applicant) (Nationality) (Address)

Operator FRED E. PAUL
(Name of applicant)

Agent _____
(Name of agent)

Purpose for which vessel will be employed TUNING
(Fishing, towing, trade, etc.)

Waters in which vessel will be employed FOR CONTINUOUS OPERATIONS ON ALL PORTIONS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, ITS TRIBUTARIES AND CONNECTING CANALS NORTH OF MOBILE, MISSISSIPPI UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE U. S. COAST GUARD, ST. LOUIS DISTRICT, AND TO NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.

A license is hereby requested to operate the vessel described above for the purpose and on the waters as listed. I certify that the statements made in this application are true, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

11 JANUARY, 1948 FRED E. PAUL
(Date) (Signature of applicant)

LICENSE

The vessel described above is hereby authorized to operate for the purpose and on the waters described in the application from the date indicated below until REPEATED
(Date of expiration)

with the following exceptions: SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

This license is issued pursuant to section 6 of the regulations for the control of vessels in the territorial waters of the United States, prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury with the approval of the President, and is subject to revocation pursuant to the provisions of said regulations. The issuance of this license does not in any manner relieve the vessel, or its owner, master, or operator from compliance with the provisions of any other applicable laws and regulations.

11 JANUARY, 1948 J. W. BETH WALTER HOOKER
(Date) (Captain of the Port) (Special Agent)

00000, 004
(Serial number)



Above: Captain Fred Paul was the pilot of the Mary Woods No. 2 from 1940–1958. This is his application for license to the U.S. Coast Guard, which governs all boats operating within the United States.

Left: Captain Fred Paul, 1950s

History of the Mary Woods No. 2

Mary Woods No. 2 Timeline

- 1931 Construction begins on the *Mary Woods No. 2*. The hull is constructed in Nashville, Tennessee, and the remainder of the boat is built in Memphis. Construction costs total \$75,000.
- 1937 *Mary Woods No. 2* converted from coal-burning steamboat to oil-burning steamboat.
- 1949 Boat converted from steam power to twin diesel engines.
- 1956 Boat damaged when Highway 70 vertical drawbridge collapses under weight of its new asphalt. Stern is clipped.
- 1960 Potlatch Forests, Incorporated acquires Woods Lumber Company, including *Mary Woods No. 2*
- 1967 November 1: *Mary Woods No. 2* is donated to the Arkansas State Parks system. A ceremonial voyage from Clarendon, Arkansas, to Jacksonport, Arkansas, occurs with old crew members and members of the press aboard her for the event, which is observed by hundreds in the towns along the river.
- 1969 *Mary Woods No. 2* undergoes a renovation project to make her appear as an 1890s river packet.
- 1976 Boat opens as floating museum—admission price fifty cents
- 1979 *Mary Woods No. 2* appears as the boat, *Paul Jones*, in a PBS film, “Mark Twain: Beyond the Laughter”
- 1984 January 3: Water line freezes and ruptures, allowing the *Mary Woods No. 2* to take on water. January 8—Diving team from St. Louis facilitates the raising of the *Mary Woods No. 2*
- 1997 March 1: Tornado strikes Jacksonport, *Mary Woods No. 2* severely damaged
- 1997 May: Steelman/Connell/Moseley Architects P.A. was hired to design plans to restore the *Mary Woods No. 2* to its original use condition.
- 1999 September: Seiler Building corporation contracts with Arkansas State Parks to restore the *Mary Woods No. 2*.
- 2002 April: *Mary Woods No. 2* re-opens after restoration project is complete.

History of the Mary Woods No. 2

Bibliography

Endnotes:

1. Letter from Eugene Woods, Jr. to the Jackson County Historical Society addressing mistakes printed in the Society's *Stream of History* publication. The article, "The *Mary Woods*: A Steamboat Has Come Home," mistakenly stated that the boat was named after the wife of Eugene Woods, Sr. The letter was dated February 29, 1968.
2. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel. "Steamboat Shows Durability in Face of Disasters" *River Country* (a publication in the *Batesville Daily Guard*), Saturday, July 26, through Friday, August 1, 1997.
3. Letter from Eugene Woods, Jr. to the Jackson County Historical Society. Dated February 29, 1968.
4. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
5. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
6. "The *Mary Woods* Revisited," *The Potlatch Story*, October/December, 1978.
7. Fleming, John. "*Mary Woods* Reaches Jacksonport, To Stand as Relic of Steamboat Era," *Arkansas Gazette*, November 17, 1967.
8. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
9. Anderson, Alfred. "The Last Voyage of *Mary Woods No. 2*" *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, November 14, 1967. There is some disagreement as to the actual date of the conversion to diesel. *Ways Steamboat Directory* and the article by Juanita McDoniel Bainbridge also list the year as being 1949. The *Arkansas Gazette* article by John Fleming and the article, "The *Mary Woods* Revisited," found in the October/December, 1978, issue of *The Potlatch Story* list the event as occurring in 1948.
10. "The *Mary Woods* Revisited," *The Potlatch Story*, October/December, 1978.
11. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel. There is some discrepancy in the reports regarding the size of the crowds who gathered to welcome the *Mary Woods No. 2* to Jacksonport. An article in the *Newport Daily Independent* entitled "*Mary Woods No. 2* Greeted by Cheering Throng of 500" states the crowd as being "more than 500."
12. Ogilvie, Craig. "Jacksonport's Steamboat is Opened to Visitors." This press release provides valuable information regarding the state of the *Mary Woods No. 2* after she was renovated to resemble an 1890s packet.
13. Ogilvie, Craig.
14. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
15. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
16. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
17. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.
18. Bainbridge, Juanita McDoniel.

