



San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

FERRYBOAT *EUREKA*



“... the exultation I always experienced when, returning from a trip, I would stand on the forward upper deck of the ferryboat and see the city rising out of the Bay, gilded with the gold

of the setting sun, or silvered with the phantom fog. Today I know that much of my love of San Francisco was born of those upper-deck views of the city.” Samuel Dickson

The Vessel

EUREKA is a side-wheel paddle steamboat. From the passenger deck up, she is nearly identical fore and aft. Her “double-end” design made

disembarking quicker and easier. *EUREKA*'s large, “walking beam” steam engine remains intact; it is maintained in working order.

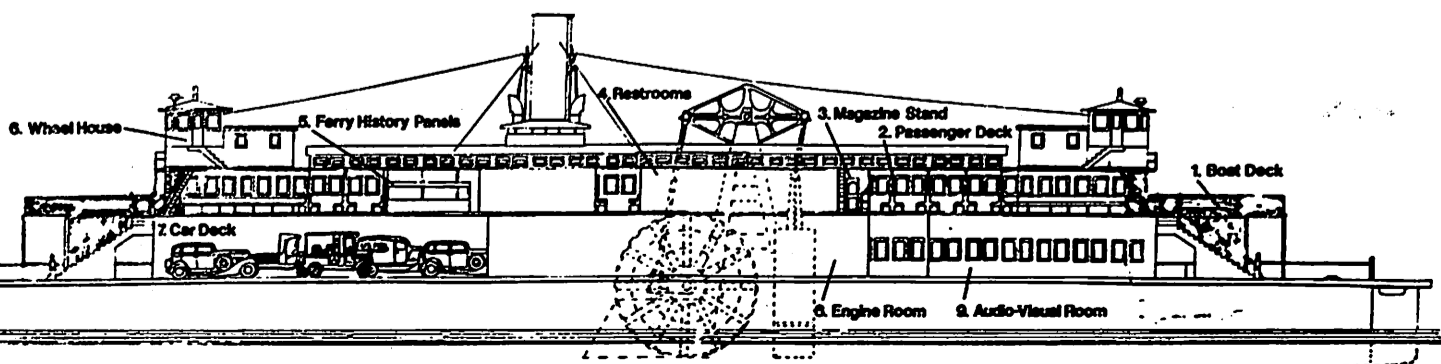
EUREKA's History

EUREKA was built in 1890, at Tiburon, for the San Francisco and North Pacific Railway (and named *UKIAH* to commemorate SF & NPR's recent rail extension into that California city). A freight-car ferry, *UKIAH* was SF & NPR's “tracks across the Bay,” ferrying trains from Sausalito to San Francisco.

labored for two years — eventually replacing all of her structure above the waterline. This kind of reconstruction was called “jacking up the whistle and sliding a new boat underneath.”

After WWI, *UKIAH* needed extensive repair, and shipwrights at the Southern Pacific yard

Re-christened *EUREKA*, she slid from the Southern Pacific yard as a passenger and automobile ferry (her present form) in 1923.



Steam Ferryboats on the Bay

The Bay's first steam ferry (the tiny *SITKA*) arrived in 1847, stowed aboard a Russian cargo ship. But *KANGAROO* made the first regularly-scheduled crossings in 1850.

After Mexico ceded California to the U.S. in 1848 (and John Marshall discovered gold in the American River) the Bay Area's population exploded. It is said that San Francisco's Ferry Building was once second only

to London's Charing Cross Railway Station as the busiest passenger terminal in the world. At one time, Southern Pacific Railroad operated forty-two ferryboats on the Bay (they transported 50,000,000 passengers per year). Construction of the Bay and Golden Gate bridges signaled the end of the ferryboat era, however.

In 1941, *EUREKA* had the dubious distinction of making the

last Marin County run, and by the 1950s regular ferry service was limited to railroad connections.

EUREKA kept working, but in 1957, when her crankpin snapped in mid-crossing, she was removed from service. Just one year later, *SAN LEANDRO* made the last transbay ferry run.

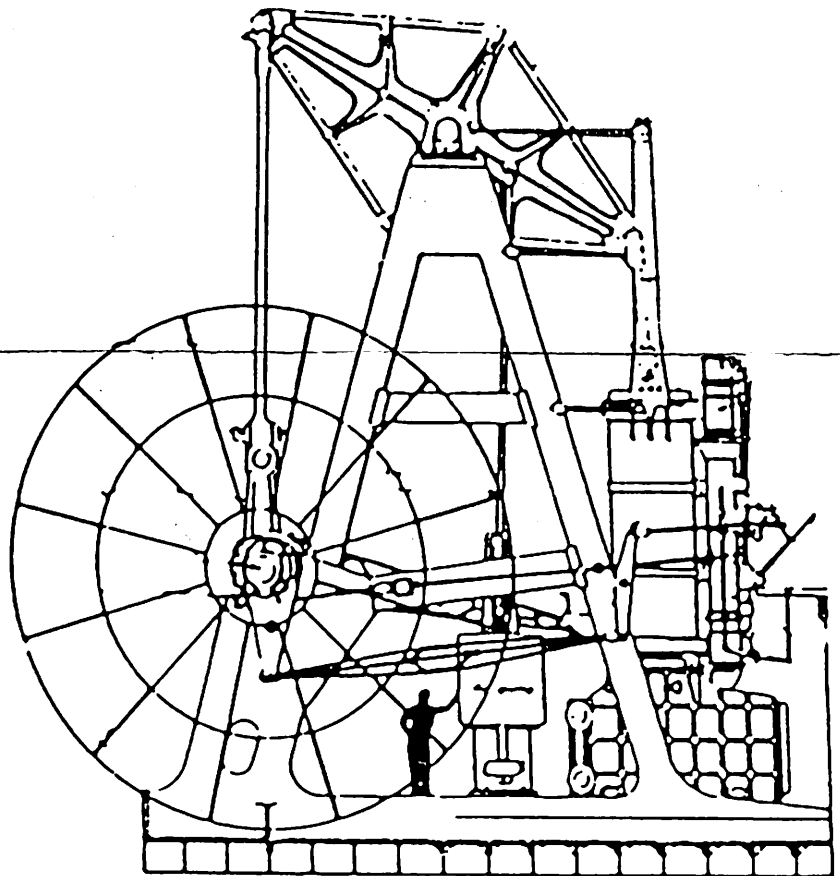
The Walking Beam

EUREKA's tall "walking beam" is the last working example of an engine-type once common on America's waterways.

Manufactured by Fulton Iron Works of San Francisco, this engine remains unaltered to this day.

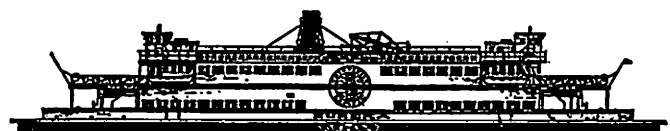
Coal (and later oil) was burned in boilers to produce the steam which drove a huge, vertical piston. Perched atop the engine, the "walking beam" changed this "up and down" motion to "rotary" motion via a connecting rod linked directly to the paddlewheel shaft.

The twin paddlewheels (each twenty-seven feet in diameter) made twenty-four revolutions per minute.



Vital Statistics

Length	277.0 feet
Breadth	42.7 feet
Gross Tons	2420
Horsepower	1500
Capacity:	
Passengers	2300
Automobiles	120



"As big as she was, she was about the fastest ferryboat on San Francisco Bay. She made the trip from the San Francisco Ferry building to Sausalito in twenty-seven minutes."

Captain A.R. Gustofson