

## 2008 Tall Ships Challenge® Gains Momentum - Update March 2007-



(VICTORIA) March 26, 2007 – Geoff Corbett is the new Executive Director of the Victoria Tall Ships Society, the organizing group for the 2008 Tall Ships Challenge®, visit to Victoria June 26 – 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Selected by the Board of Directors of the Victoria Tall Ships Society, Geoff Corbett, the former Executive Director of the Oceanside Tourism Association in Parksville, will be responsible for organizing and coordinating the marketing, strategic planning and sponsorship initiatives for Victoria's second participation in the Tall Ships Challenge®.

“Mr. Corbett brings more than 30 years of tourism and marketing experience to our organizing team,” said Society president John Anderson, “We're extremely pleased that he has agreed to lead and oversee business initiatives critical to the continued success of the Tall Ships Challenge® in Greater Victoria.”

More than two dozens ships from around the world sailed into Victoria's Inner Harbour during the 2005 Tall Ships Challenge. Visitor spending resulted in a \$5.2 million impact to the local economy.

“My priority is to build on the success of 2005,” said Corbett, “The festival showcased Victoria as an international destination of choice -- a reputation that continues to gain momentum with mariners from around the world.”

Three foreign ships have already confirmed their participation in the 2008 Tall Ships Challenge:

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| • <i>Lady Washington</i>    | 112' two masted brig          | Aberdeen, Wa. USA      |
| • <i>Hawaiian Chieftan</i>  | 65' gaff rigged topsail ketch | Aberdeen, Wa USA       |
| • <i>R. Tucker Thompson</i> | 85' gaff rigged schooner      | Whangerei, New Zealand |

In addition, the American Sail Training Association (ASTA) has selected Victoria for its annual conference this fall, November 8 – 10<sup>th</sup>. The Hotel Grand Pacific has also signed on as the official host hotel for the festival in 2008.

ASTA, in conjunction with Canadian and US ports on the Pacific and Atlantic Coasts of North America and in the Great Lakes, organizes the Tall Ships Challenge® Race. The series of sailing races, cruises, crew rallies and maritime festivals promotes traditionally rigged sailing vessels crewed by young people (either civilians or cadets) ages 13 – 25.

The Victoria Tall Ships Society is a not-for-profit organization, incorporated in May 2003 for the purpose of bringing a Tall Ships Festival to Victoria. The Society's vision is to promote a legacy for youth and the life lessons learned through sail training.

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