

Washington State Ferries

Modernization Program

1964 - 1967



The MV HYAK, newest addition to the State fleet, is one of four identical vessels being built to update and improve cross-Sound transportation. The HYAK arrived on Puget Sound on July 4, 1967 and soon thereafter entered service on the Seattle-Bremerton route. The vessel is 382 feet long with a capacity for 160 autos and 2,600 passengers. Assignment of the HYAK and her sister ships the KALEETAN,

YAKIMA AND ELWHA will make possible the retirement of several old, small, costly-to-operate ferries presently in the State fleet. The "superferry" construction program is being financed jointly by the State of Washington and the Housing & Urban Development Agency through the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964. All four superferries will be in service on Puget Sound by early 1968.

The MV HIYU was built in Portland, Oregon, by Gunderson Brothers Engineering Corporation for the State of Washington. The HIYU, delivered in June, 1967, was designed for the Point Defiance-Tahlequah (Tacoma-South Vashon Island) route. The vessel has capacity for 40 autos and 200 passengers. Despite the HIYU's small size of 162 feet, it can accommodate 16 foot trucks. The HIYU entered service in July, 1967, replacing the MV SKANSONIA.

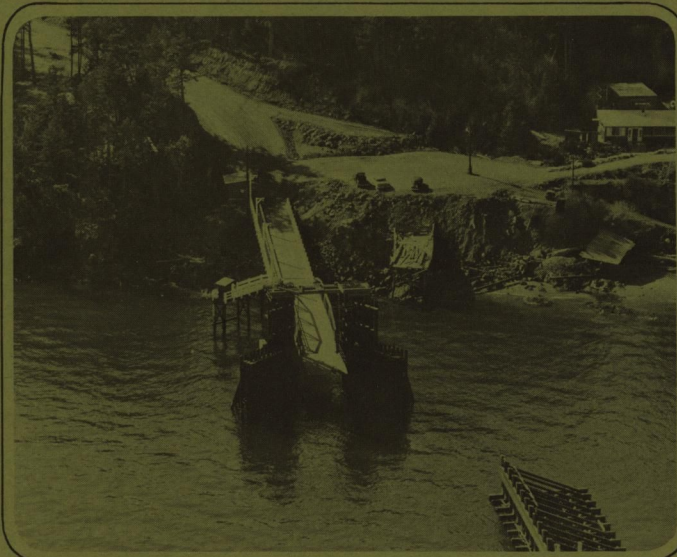


On May 18, 1966, the new \$3,000,000 Seattle Ferry Terminal was formally dedicated. The beautiful three-slip 24-lane terminal facility is an excellent addition to Seattle's famous waterfront. Three slips serving ferries to Bremerton and Winslow, vast passenger waiting room space, restaurant facilities on upper and lower levels, executive offices for operations and administration, a staffed information counter, and a host of other improvements all make the new Seattle terminal a major improvement over the old Colman Dock facilities which could no longer accommodate the ferry system's vast growth.

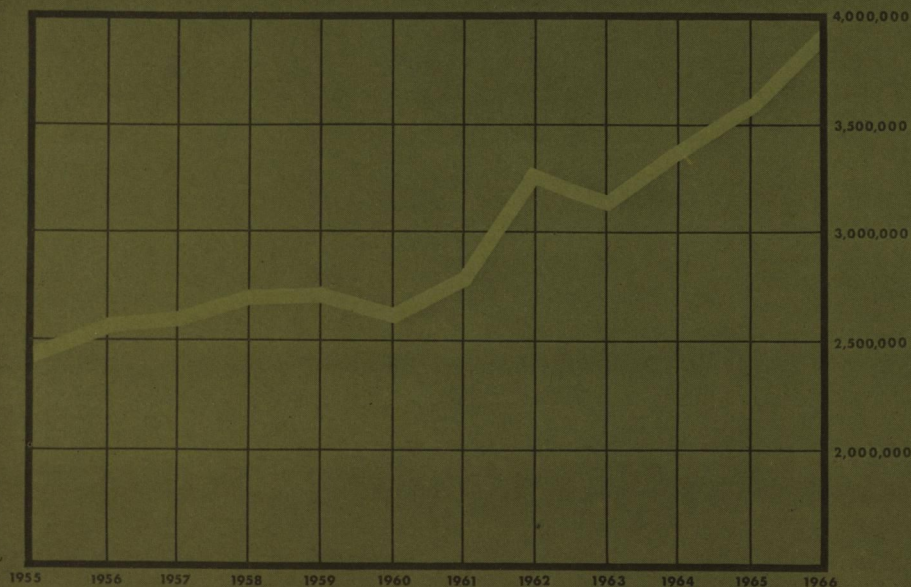


In November, 1966, work was completed at the Winslow (Bainbridge Island) terminal after several months of construction in widening the vehicle holding area and adding an auxiliary slip. Continuous growth on the Seattle-Winslow route necessitated the addition of more lanes for traffic. The major importance of the route as a primary route to and from the Olympic Peninsula via the Hood Canal Floating Bridge made the construction of an auxiliary slip a must, since no other slip facility had been available, in the event of an emergency affecting the existing double-lane slip.

Major improvements to the Lopez Island terminal were made beginning in June, 1964, and were completed in October, 1964. Landing facilities were completely replaced, the dock approach was straightened, and a utility building was constructed just off the slip. The changing of the slip's position has brought about vastly improved navigational characteristics for vessel landings which in the past had been highly unfavorable due to the location of Upright Head, the terminal location.



Ten Year Vehicle Statistics



Traffic increases throughout the ferry system is reflected in a decade's examination of vehicle numbers. Phenomenal growth in recent years has paralleled extensive growth throughout the Puget Sound region. Traffic, already at an all-time high, continues to increase at about 10% per year and since 1964, traffic volume has been climbing steadily higher than the peak year of 1962, the year of the Seattle World's Fair. Commuter traffic, week-end traffic, and tourist traffic are all causing ferry system management a variety of problems in providing adequate ferry service as needed. Administration and operations are necessarily changing rapidly in the system in an all-out effort to meet the growth demands of the present, and the projected demands of the near future.