

Kitsap Transit

Connecting Communities

For Immediate Release

November 15, 2018

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New Kitsap Fast Ferry vessel has a decorated history

Eight-minute documentary on vessel's journey premieres online Friday, Nov. 16

BREMERTON—An eight-minute documentary, “Finest: A Ferry Reborn,” will debut on Kitsap Transit’s [Facebook page](#) at noon tomorrow followed by an online chat about the film and the upcoming launch of fast-ferry service on the Kingston/Seattle route.

The documentary, produced and directed by Kitsap Transit and edited by All Industrial Images, chronicles M/V Finest’s journey from her service in New York Harbor, to her transportation through the Panama Canal, to her recent refurbishment on Whidbey Island.

On September 11, 2001, Finest played an integral role in the Great Boatlift that evacuated as many as 500,000 people from Lower Manhattan following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. The maritime evacuation of Lower Manhattan is one of the lesser known facets of 9/11 and has been called the largest rescue by sea in history. The U.S. Coast Guard’s callout for all available boats – and the massive response by mariners -- has often been compared to the evacuation following the Battle of Dunkirk in World War II.



Professor James Kendra, Director of the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware and coauthor of *American Dunkirk: The Waterborne Evacuation of Manhattan on 9/11*, has studied this miraculous evacuation and offered this comment:

“On September 11, 2001, a spontaneous fleet of ferries, tugboats, dinner cruise boats, and other harbor craft evacuated hundreds of thousands of people from Manhattan. The M/V *Finest* and over a hundred other vessels accomplished this extraordinary effort over the course of about 10 hours. Kingston's residents can be proud of the M/V *Finest*'s service in a time of great crisis.”

Narrated by Jennifer Cook, Kitsap Transit's project manager on *Finest*'s refurbishment, the film recounts the vessel's incredible journey and her substantial renovation process that included rebuilding the engines, installing new windows and replacing part of the hull.

In January, Kitsap Transit purchased *Finest* for \$1.5 million. The 350-passenger vessel was hoisted onto a heavy-lift ship in New York Harbor and arrived in Victoria, B.C., in March. Kitsap Transit marine engineers then delivered *Finest* to Nichols Bros. Boat Builders on Whidbey Island, where the vessel underwent extensive refurbishment. Kitsap Transit has invested more than \$5.9 million to refurbish *Finest*.

For community members and maritime enthusiasts interested in the craftsmanship that goes into the refurbishment of marine vessels, the documentary provides satisfying, behind-the-scenes perspectives. You can see the film on Kitsap Transit's [Facebook page](#) (@KitsapTransit).

The film was recently previewed and received with acclaim by select audiences during Kitsap Transit's Launch Preview events on November 3. The film's online premiere this Friday is part of a series of events leading up to the launch of its fast-ferry service on the Kingston/Seattle route:

- Monday, November 19: Grand Opening with Gov. Jay Inslee and U.S. Rep. Derek Kilmer.

At this event, Kitsap Transit will celebrate the new era of fast-ferry service on the Kingston/Seattle route and offer boat tours to the dignitaries and the general public.

- Friday, November 23: *Finest* Friday

On the day after Thanksgiving, widely known as “Black Friday,” Kitsap Transit will offer a special day of sailings on the Kingston/Seattle service, plus special bus services that connect to the Kingston Ferry Terminal, in order for the public to sample the new services.

- Monday, November 26: Start of Service

On this day, Kitsap Transit will launch regular Kingston/Seattle service with three roundtrips in the morning and three roundtrips in the afternoon during commute hours.

For schedules and other details, visit <http://kitsaptransit.com/kingston>.

About Kitsap Transit

Kitsap Transit has been operating friendly, convenient public transit since 1983. The transit agency for Kitsap County carried more than 3.59 million riders in 2017 across a multi-modal system of routed buses, passenger ferries, paratransit shuttles, vanpools, and worker/driver buses for the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

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