



# North Star of Herschel Island - The Last Canadian Arctic Fur Trading Ship.

*R. Bruce MacDonald*

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In 1935, at the height of the Great Depression, two Canadian Inuit fur trappers ordered the largest private sailing ship ever delivered to be used in transporting their annual catch of fur to Herschel Island on the MacKenzie Delta in exchange for the supplies that they needed to survive another winter hundreds of miles north of the Arctic Circle. Three times she did not make it into port in time and was frozen solid into the ice. This is the story of one of the most historic ships in Canada, who under three owners faced many challenges including; holding land at the entrance of the fabled NorthWest Passage to protect Canadian Arctic Sovereignty, was used in sail-training for Inuit, surveyed the controversial B.C./Alaska border and was chartered to search for mermaids off of the Aleutian Islands. North Star of Herschel Island is now a familiar sight on the Victoria, B.C. waterfront and a regular participant in Classic Boat and Tall Ship Festivals. In 2005 she represented her country as the Canadian GoodWill Ambassador in an international gathering of Tall Ships. This is the true story of a remarkable ship and the people who have known and loved her.



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