

# Unterwalden sparkles with a new lustre

**Lake Lucerne has yet another beauty: the paddle steamer Unterwalden is coming back into service, with renewed vigour, at an opening parade on 7 May 2011. For thirty months, experts have been renovating the paddle steamer, now more than a hundred years old, at a cost of over ten million francs.**

This general overhaul of the Unterwalden is the most wide-ranging in the history of steamship renovation on Lake Lucerne, and by far the most ambitious.

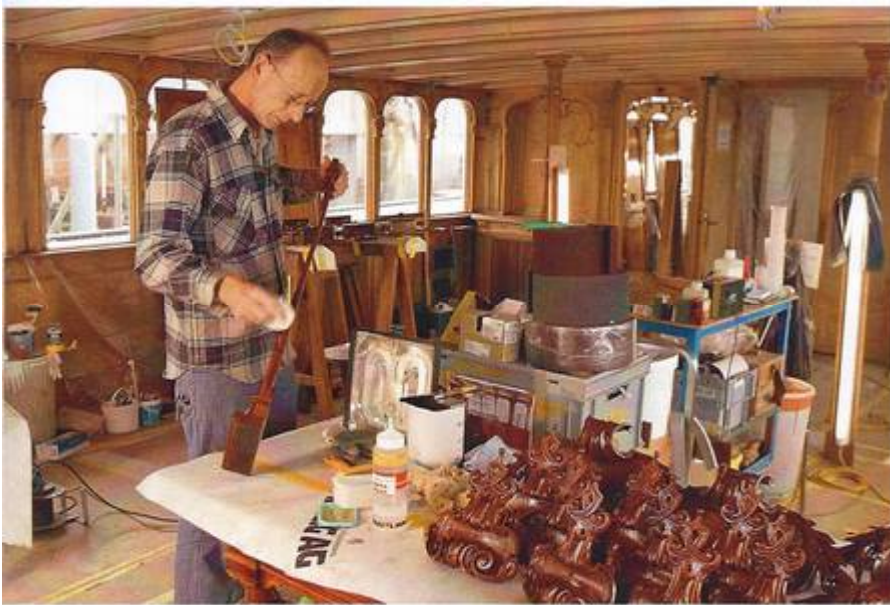
## **General overhaul**

More than 60 people from a wide range of trades have spent 74,000 working hours over the last two years making the Unterwalden shipshape. By the time the job is finished the total will be 90,000 working hours - 45 years' work for one person. Specialist engineers, constructors, architects, mechanics, fitters, plumbers and heating engineers, electricians, painters, carpenters and restorers have laid 20 kilometres of cables, installed 600 square metres of wooden deck, and brightened up every bit of the ship with 3 tonnes of paint. According to Francesco Lapicciarella from SHIPTEC Lucerne, one of the SGV's business areas and project leader of the Unterwalden's over-

haul, the renovation took 30 months, and included modernising, reconstructing and restoring the ship. During this time she spent 22 months in the SGV dry-dock.

## **Moving history**

The steamship Unterwalden, built by the renowned Swiss company Escher Wyss, entered into service on 18 May 1902. She has experienced four general overhauls since then, including a period from 1978 to 1985 when she was completely out of service, and has also had two close encounters with the lakeshore. Substantial rebuilding was carried out in 1961, to allow the steamship to navigate the Acheregg motorway bridge in Stansstad, which ensured continued service to the Alpnachersee by paddle steamer. Says Lapicciarella: "The Unterwalden is the only steamship on Lake Lucerne that is able to lower her mast, funnel and wheelhouse." But the alterations



Liebevolle Restaurierung der Holzverzierungen.

Lovingly restored woodworking.

Photo SGV

adversely affected the ship's appearance, marring her noble profile.

### Return to original state

Over the past months, the paddle steamer has been returned to her pre-1961 condition. The traditional structure of the ship has been adapted to contemporary technology, taking away the eyesores of yesteryear. In order for the Acheregg bridge to be navigated,

the mast, funnel and wheelhouse can still be lowered. The outside steering stand and constructions such as the tent structure on the upper foredeck have been remodelled. Restoration of the First Class saloon required special efforts to reconstruct the original chairs and the hand-painted ceiling decorations. The replacement of the steam engine's two cylinders with a single one incorporating the latest technology is another feature: so

that the old boiler could be removed, parts of the rear middle and upper decks had to be dismantled. Project leader Francesco Lapicciarella says: "A ship should not put on weight when she is overhauled. We removed and then put back a total of 150 tonnes on the Unterwalden - but not all in their original place. And finally it was important to produce a consensus between the needs of the Friends of the Steamships, the captain, and cantonal conservation regulations, the Federal Inspectorate for Heavy Current Installations, SUVA and the Federal Office of Transport."

The general overhaul of the steamship Unterwalden was possible only thanks to the generous financial and professional support of the Dampferfreunde Vierwaldstättersee (Friends of the Steamships of Lake Lucerne) and the cantonal historic monuments service.

### Key milestones

The story of the restoration has been marked by a number of milestones. One special memory is the transport of the boiler from Italy. Francesco Lapicciarella says: "The transport of the boiler required special permission, and the size of the freight meant it often had to deviate onto alternative routes." The final, most important milestone will come on Saturday, 7 May 2011, when an opening parade ceremony will welcome the steamship Unterwalden back into service.

### Extra nostalgia

From May 2011, the newly restored steamship Unterwalden can be hired for special occasions. She provides a wonderful setting for a cruise down memory lane, a cocktail party, anniversary celebrations, weddings, or banquets of any kind.



Die «Unterwalden» in neuem Glanz zurOck auf dem vierwadtstättersee.

Photo Armin Grassl

The "Unterwalden" in new splendour, back on the Lake of Lucerne.

**The 2011 calendar - discover the 100-year history for yourself**

The steamship Unterwalden - a listed monument - will be open to the general public again from 14 May. During the 2011 season the paddle steamer will run a regular timetable, showing her passengers the sights of Lake Lucerne between Lucerne and Fluelen, Alpnachstad or Kiissnacht. And she will also be making special outings such as the sunset trip or "Music and Steam".

You can find further information about the activities of the Unterwalden in the "Dampfschiff Unterwalden Jahresprogramm 2011" (annual programme). This can be found at the ship's ticket office or online at [www.lakelucerne.ch](http://www.lakelucerne.ch).



Restored woodwork and ceiling painting in the 1st class saloon

