

Explorer Amundsen's polar ship to return to Norway

November 26 2012



A statue honours Norway's polar explorer Roald Amundsen stands in Ny-Aalesundin. Amundsen's three-mast ship the Maud, long abandoned in the Canadian Arctic ice, is to be salvaged and next year will be sent back to Norway to be the centerpiece of a new museum.

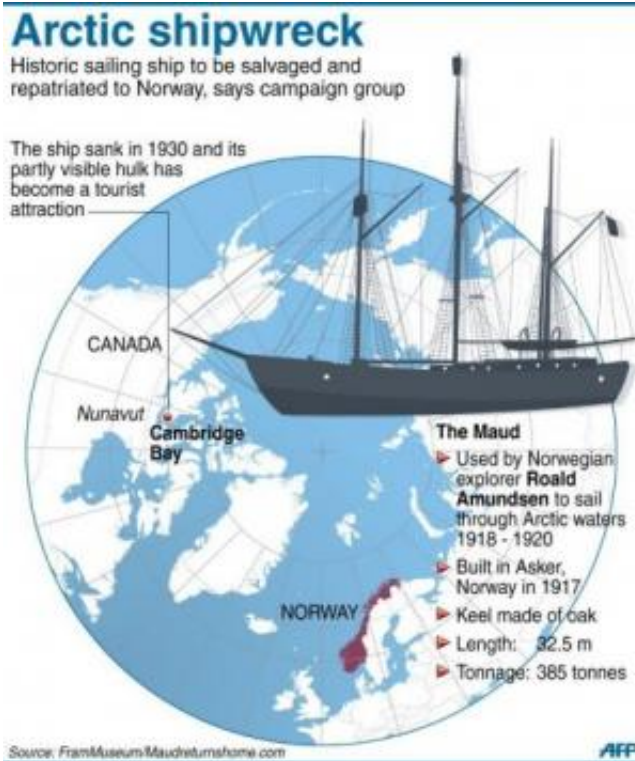
Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen's three-mast ship Maud, long abandoned in the Canadian Arctic ice, will be salvaged and repatriated mid-2013, a Norwegian group has announced.

The group, which plans to return the old polarship to Norway to be the centerpiece of a new museum, is this week in Cambridge Bay in Canada's far north filming and photographing the shipwreck trapped in ice.

Jan Wanggaard, manager of the effort to bring the Maud to Norway, said the shipwreck was stripped by locals and torn by ice over the years, but also has been conserved by the [cold temperatures](#) "in an incredible way."

"The oak wood in Maud still seems to be in prime conditions," he said in a statement.

The documentary film team has prepared a tent on the ice with a dive hole inside for access under the ice "to document the old ship in her true element" on the seabed in the shallow waters of Cambridge Bay.



Graphic on the Norwegian sailing ship The Maud, used by Roald Amundsen to explore Arctic waters until it sank in 1930. The ship, which has been preserved in an icy Canadian bay for more than 80 years will be salvaged and repatriated to Norway, says a group that has campaigned for its return.

"Just to be here now in the winter—with temperatures around minus 30 Celsius—makes me feel much closer to the ship and its history than ever before during our two earlier summer surveys," Wanggaard commented.

"The impressions of seeing and feeling her tied into the iron grip of the ice really makes me emotional and respectful to the ship and its physicality as well to the whole story of the ship."

In 1906, Amundsen became the first European to sail through the [Northwest Passage](#) searching for a shorter shipping route from Europe to Asia, something explorers had been trying to find for centuries.

Five years later, he became the first person to reach the South Pole. His attempts to reach the North Pole however failed.

Amundsen again sailed through the [Northeast Passage](#) with the Maud in 1918-20, but was unable to get far enough north to launch a North Pole expedition.

Amundsen tried, and failed, one more time from the [Bering Strait](#) in 1920-21.



Norwegian explorer of the polar regions Roald Amundsen (1872-1928). He was the first person to reach the South Pole. Amundsen disappeared in 1928 while flying a rescue mission in the Arctic.

The Maud, built in Asker, Norway and named after Norway's Queen Maud, was sold to Hudson's Bay Company in 1925 and rechristened the Baymaud. It ended its days as a floating warehouse and the region's first radio station before sinking at its moorings in 1930.

In 1990, Asker Council in Norway bought the wreck for just \$1.

Cambridge Bay residents fought its removal but the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board granted an export permit for the ship in

March.

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