

# THE LIGHTSHIP

LAKE



LORE

MARINE SOCIETY

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( Editor )

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our first scheduled 1998 joint entertainment meeting with the Marine Historical Society of Detroit was held on Jan. 31st at the Port Huron Museum. Approximately 50 people attended the "member's slide night" and were treated to a two hour array of Seaway photos including Lakeboats (old & new), scrap tows, Salties and even a few wheelhouse shots. Our thanks to those who brought slides and to all those who attended.

**Mark your calendar** - Our next dinner meeting will be held on Saturday, March 14th at 6:00 p.m. at the Port Huron Museum. It will begin with our usual social hour, followed by dinner served by members of the Museum Guild. The evening's entertainment will be provided by fellow member, Bob Campbell of Grand Ledge, MI, who will present a slide show entitled, "The Soo Secretary With A Camera". This is also a joint meeting with the Marine Historical Society of Detroit. The cost is \$10.00 (U.S. funds) per person with checks & money orders made payable to "Museum Guild" and envelopes addressed: "Dinner Meeting" (Museum address). \* Invitations were sent to all L.H.L. members in early February \*

**Next meeting** - will be a dinner meeting held at the Museum on Sat. May 9th with entertainment provided by Mr. Dick Wicklund. An invitation will be mailed to all L.H.L. members.

**New Members** : L.H.L. welcomes on board Ron Webb of Owen Sound, ON, Jason LaDue of Rochester, NY, John Meyland of Clarkeston, MI, Terry Ernest of Port Huron, E.B. (Skip) Gillham of Vineland, ON, Richard Workman of Corunna, ON, Fred Winters of Port Huron and Capt. John Rigney of Port Huron.

## M/V Capt. Henry Jackman - 1997

On February 11th, 1998, Algoma Central Marine's *Capt. Henry Jackman* tied up in Sarnia's North Slip to finally end her first **full** season as a self unloader. The vessel began the 1997 season when she departed her winter berth in Sarnia on April 3rd and sailed to Goderich, Ont. to load a cargo of salt, bound for Milwaukee, Wisc. Aside from a short lay-over in the Welland Canal to receive repairs to her self-unloader belt and a dockage in Valleyfield, Quebec for engine repairs, the *Jackman* had a steady and successful season hauling an estimated 63 cargos, consisting of salt, stone, iron ore, sand and slag. Below is a list of ports and cargos, compiled by L.H.L. member Skip Gillham, to show us what the *Jackman* did last season.

<u>Loading Ports &amp; Cargos</u>		<u>Unloading Ports &amp; Cargos</u>	
Goderich	salt	Windsor	stone, sand
Windsor	salt, sand	Burns Harbor	ore
Quebec City	ore	Milwaukee	salt
Meldrum Bay	stone	Chicago	stone, salt
Sept Iles	ore	Detroit	salt, slag, ore, stone
Calcite	stone	Hamilton	stone, sand
Drummond Island	stone	Buffalo	salt
Prescott	stone	Valleyfield	salt
Ferrysburg	stone	Johnstown	salt
Thessalon	stone	Cote Ste. Catherine	sand, salt
Fairport	salt	Quebec City	salt
Grand Haven	sand	Montreal	salt
Duluth	ore	Green Bay	salt
Hamilton	slag	Marysville	stone
Marblehead	stone	Bath	salt
Port Inland	stone	Marinette	salt
		Three Rivers	salt
		Muskegon	salt
		Michipicoten	stone
		Nanticoke	ore
		Ogdensburg	salt
		Thunder Bay	salt
		Fisher Harbor	salt
		Toronto	salt
		Sarnia	stone
		Courtright	stone
		Amherstburg	stone

The vessel was built by Collingwood Shipyards as Hull No. 223 and launched as the *Lake Wabush*, a bulk carrier for Nipigon Transport Ltd. In 1986, the vessel was sold to Algoma Central Marine and given her present name. Near the end of the 1995 shipping season, the *Jackman* entered the Port Weller Drydock and was converted to a self-unloader.

## Memories of Keeping Ship

Annetta Blain Hillis

(12/05/1901 to 05/14/1997)

By Donald J. Blain

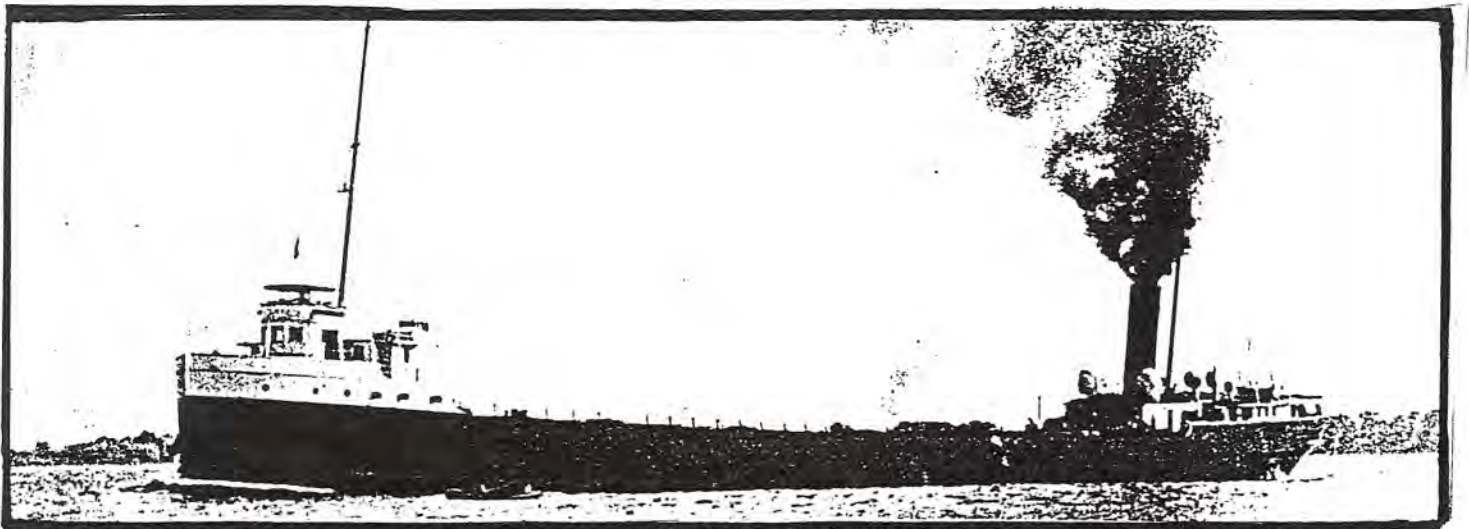
This is a story of a mother's adventures growing up as a sailor's daughter, told to you by one of her three sons who has sailed the Great Lakes.

Mother had been associated with sailors all her life. Her father and my uncle were captains, her two brothers were engineers, her's and my uncles sailed, and of course she had three sons who were sailors.

By the way, my mother's name was Annetta Blain and one of the stories Mother told me about herself and her family was about when they were kids and keeping ship at the elevator K grain dock in Superior, Wisconsin. She remembered walking along the dock of elevator K grain dock and up the hill to church every Sunday and where they ice skated around the slip of the harbor of elevator K dock in the winter. At the time, my Grandfather Bernard Benson, Mother's dad, was a third mate and back then, in the early 1900's, it wasn't unusual for a mate on the Great Lakes to keep ship over the winter months.

My grandfather and his family kept ship in Toledo, Buffalo and Superior for some years. My Grandfather Benson and my Grandmother Katherine Benson lived in Marine City, Michigan and when they were going to keep ship, my grandfather's boat would stop out in the river at Marine City on the last trip of the season, and a man would row my grandfather, my mother, and her sister Jeri and her brother Edward out to my grandfather's boat. They would ride either up or down the Lakes to the lay-up dock and in the spring do just the opposite.

Mother recalled the last time the family kept ship was around 1915 on the S.S. *John J. Albright* and again it was at elevator K dock in Superior, Wisconsin. She told me that living on a ship back in those days wasn't easy. She said they had to cook on a wood and coal stove and had to take a bath in a wash tub and that the other facilities were not of the modern kind today. Back then the school would give my grandmother a list of school work that she had to teach the kids over the winter months. And when they got back home in the spring, they had to take a test to see if their grades were up with the other kids in their class.



\* *John J. Albright* sailing past Marine City \*

I sailed for Bethlehem Steel Corp. for 26 years and would sometimes stop and take on fuel at Sarnia, Ontario which is across the St. Clair River from where we live at St. Clair, Michigan. My mother would drive over to my boat and come aboard to visit for the hour or so that it took to fuel the boat. And many

times, Mother would say to me that she wished that she would have been a man so she could have sailed on the Lakes. But then she would say, she quessed she was luckier than a lot of people because she'd been on most of the boats I sailed on including two 1,000 footers, the M.V. *Lewis Wilson Foy* and the M.V. *Burns Harbor*.

She kept in contact with the boats with a scanner at home and listened to the boats going up & down the St. Clair River on channel 11 Sarnia Traffic Control, and she enjoyed that. Oh, by the way, on that last trip to the lay-up dock in Superior, Wisconsin to keep ship, they ran into a storm on Lake Superior and had to take shelter for more than a day. When they finally got to Superior, they learned that they were listed as overdue and missing. So Mother did have some adventures on the Lakes.

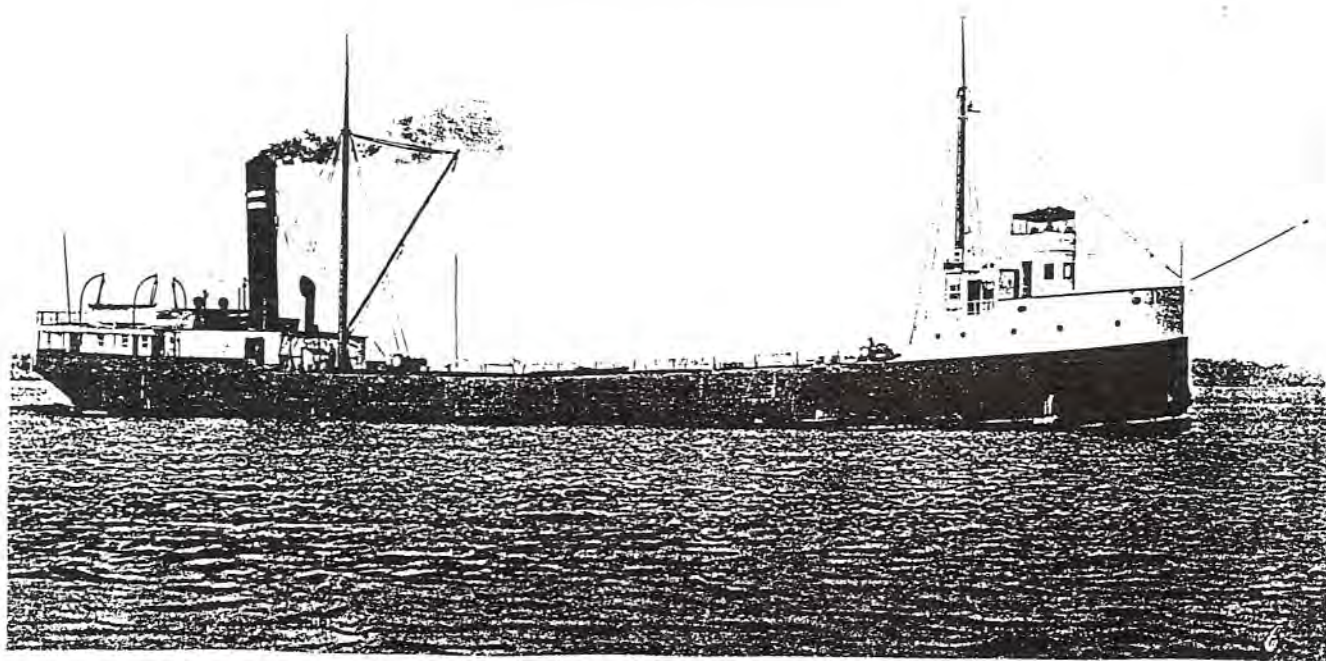
Annetta Blain raised one girl, Carol, and four boys, Fred, Bob, Ed and myself, Don. Three of the boys were sailors.

Well, I hope I didn't take up too much of your time, but I am so proud of my mother. She loved the sailing life so much, I just had to say something about her. By the way, I am glad Mother wasn't a man or I wouldn't be writing this today ....

*Annetta Blain passed away on the 14th of May, 1997 at the age of 95. Her son Donald sailed for Bethlehem Steel for 24 years and retired in August, 1993. He spent the last 19 years of his sailing career on the "thousand footers" **Stewart J. Cort**, **Burns Harbor** and **Lewis Wilson Foy**. He sailed on the **Burns Harbor & Foy** on their maiden trips. The last 9 years of his career were spent on the **Cort** as a wheelsman. Following his retirement, Donald lived with his mother and helped to bring her comfort in her final years.*

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**NAME THIS SHIP**



ANSWER ON PG. 8

The Editor will always welcome member's comments, suggestions & contributions.

## NAUTICAL NEWS

### OPENING DATES

The Welland Canal is to open on March 24th with the *James Norris* scheduled (at this time) to be the first upbound vessel in the canal for 1998. The Soo Locks are scheduled for opening on March 25th and the Lower Seaway, Montreal to Lake Ontario, on March 31st.

### SEAWAY LAKERS AND SALTIES 1997-1998

This book, by L.H.L. member Norm Eakins, contains detailed information on all of the more than 400 Lakers & Salties that could be seen on the Great Lakes in 1997. It's format is similar to that of *Seaway Lakers and Salties 1995* and *1996*, but now includes all Lakers. This book includes:

- an index listing these ships including previous & subsequent names.
- a section giving details of these ships (i.e.) hull numbers, dimensions, launch dates, owners, official numbers, etc.
- a listing of all transits of the Seaway that were made by over 80 % of these vessels including ports of call and cargos carried.
- a gazetteer covering one hundred locations on the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River & the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

For Canadian Orders - send \$19.50 (Cdn.) to Norm Eakins, 13 Alfred St., Point Edward, ON, N7V 1S4  
For U. S. Orders - send \$ 16.50 (U.S.) to Norm Eakins, P.O. Box 595792, Fort Gratiot, MI, 48059

### HARBOR FOR SALE

Transport Canada is presently divesting itself of 30 harbors around Ontario, including docks in Sarnia, Sombra, Port Lambton and Walpole Island. The City of Sarnia and five private companies are negotiating with the federal government to take over the operation of Sarnia's harbor this fall. The five companies involved are Algoma Central Marine, Shelley Machine & Marine Inc., Cargill Ltd., Sandrin-Kirchmair Industries Inc. and Sarnia Shipping.

Sarnia's mayor, Mike Bradley, says that negotiations are "many dollars away from reaching an agreement" but he is optimistic that a deal will be made by this fall. The stumbling block is the amount of money that the government is willing to pledge for "future capital expenditures". The mayor says the harbor is in good repair now but it could become a liability in the future. Bradley feels that it's possible a private/public partnership could make the harbor profitable, noting that Great Lakes traffic is increasing. "The harbor provides opportunity and economic benefits to this community. At the very least, city involvement could ensure the continuation of a healthy ship repair business every winter, Bradley said. At present, winter lay-ups in Sarnia create employment for 150 to 250 workers from January to March and generates 8 to 10 million dollars in repairs.

Sarnia harbor includes the Government Dock and warehouses on Seaway Road as well as the docking berths in the North Slip at the foot of Exmouth St. The property covers 287 acres, including water lots.

### LAKES VISITOR LOST

The M.V. *Flare*, which visited the Great Lakes, under this name, in 1993 and again in 1997, was lost on Jan. 16th off the coast of Newfoundland, near the French islands of St. Pierre - Miquelon. The vessel, owned by Abta Shipping Co. of Cyprus, broke in two with the stern section sinking. The *Flare* was in ballast, bound for Montreal from Rotterdam. There were 4 survivors from a crew of 25.

The vessel was built in Japan in 1972 as the *Doric Flame*. In 1987, the ship was renamed the *Flame* and made her first visit to the Great Lakes. She sailed under that name until 1989 when she was renamed *Flare*.

## The Liberty Ship: S/S John W. Brown

By Cy Hudson

In the Nov / Dec 1997 issue of *The Lightship* there was a brief mention of the above ship as being one of the last two remaining active Liberty EC2-S-C1 type ships of WWII, the other being *Jeremiah O'Brien* of San Francisco. The *Brown* was built by Bethlehem - Fairfield Shipyard, Baltimore, Maryland, Yard # 2062 in Sept. / 1942. The vessel, named after a labor leader of the West Coast carpenters, was completed in 42 days. She and her crew gave the United States gallant wartime service, her log showing incidents of near bombing and torpedoing, plus damage by exploding depth charges. With the cessation of hostilities when hundreds of other wartime-built ships were being placed in reserve by the U.S. Maritime Commission, the *Brown* was loaned to the New York City Board of Education for use as a stationary school ship. This role enabled the ship to escape the fate of many Liberty ships by not going to the scrapyards over the following years. However, in 1978, she was no longer needed in her "floating school" capacity, and was declared redundant by the N.Y. City Board of Education. Returned to the U.S. Maritime Commission, her future looked gloomy, but shortly after, she was rescued when the National Maritime Historical Society established a program to save one of the rapidly declining fleet of Liberty ships for posterity and the *John W. Brown* was selected. However, after lots of set-backs, it was not until Oct. 18, 1983 that President Reagan signed the Transfer Bill that allowed the U.S. Government (MARAD\*) to have the ship handed over to the N.M.H.S., and a fellow organization, the John W. Brown Preservation Project (JWBPP). A year later, the two groups merged to form a new body named Project Liberty Ship. Their plans included a future location and restoration, along with an operation budget for a ship museum. Like many other proposals of a similar nature, no doubt the project directorship had plenty of continuing money crises. Note: Over the years, the ship was in service as a museum.

The magazine "Steamboat Bill" reports that in the winter of 1996/97, Project Liberty Ship was trying to raise money during this period, for the replacement of 2,600 rivets in the *Brown*. This work was necessary if the ship was to retain her U.S. Coast Guard Certificate, the needed \$250,000 also included a drydocking. However, the officials were hopeful of achieving their goal. It is interesting to note that the 1941 bare construction cost of a Liberty ship was \$1,500,000, though this amount did vary, according to the shipyard, some cost nearly \$2,000,000. Also, these ships were not completely of welded construction as commonly thought, as they later had a "crack arrester" (a steel band riveted around the hull at the sheer strake). This was a preventative move after some of the earlier built Liberty ships suffered hull fractures in heavy weather. The money raising effort must have succeeded because, in late 1997, the Project Liberty Ship was now advertising "Spend a day in 1943", an exciting 6 hour cruise into history on both May 23rd and Sept. 5th, 1998, which will feature great food, live music of an 18 piece "Big Band", fly-bys of wartime aircraft, President Roosevelt speech, and the ship's crew manning the guns to fight off air attacks. Also the ship is completely open for tours including the engineroom, with its great triple expansion steam engine, built by Worthington Pump & Machinery Corp. of Harrison, N.J. You'll experience a day you will never forget.

It certainly does look to be an inviting and attractive fun day on Chesapeake Bay. In retrospect, over 54 years ago, it certainly was not "fun days" for the U.S. Merchant Marines, of whom 6,000 gave their lives in the more than 750 merchant ships which were lost by enemy action in W.W.II.

\* MARAD - **M**aritime **A**dministration

Bibliography - The Liberty Ships - L.A. Sawyer & W.H. Mitchell  
- Lloyds of London, Ltd.

# BLUEWATER AREA SHIPWRECKS

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## Thousand Islander

By Skip Gillham

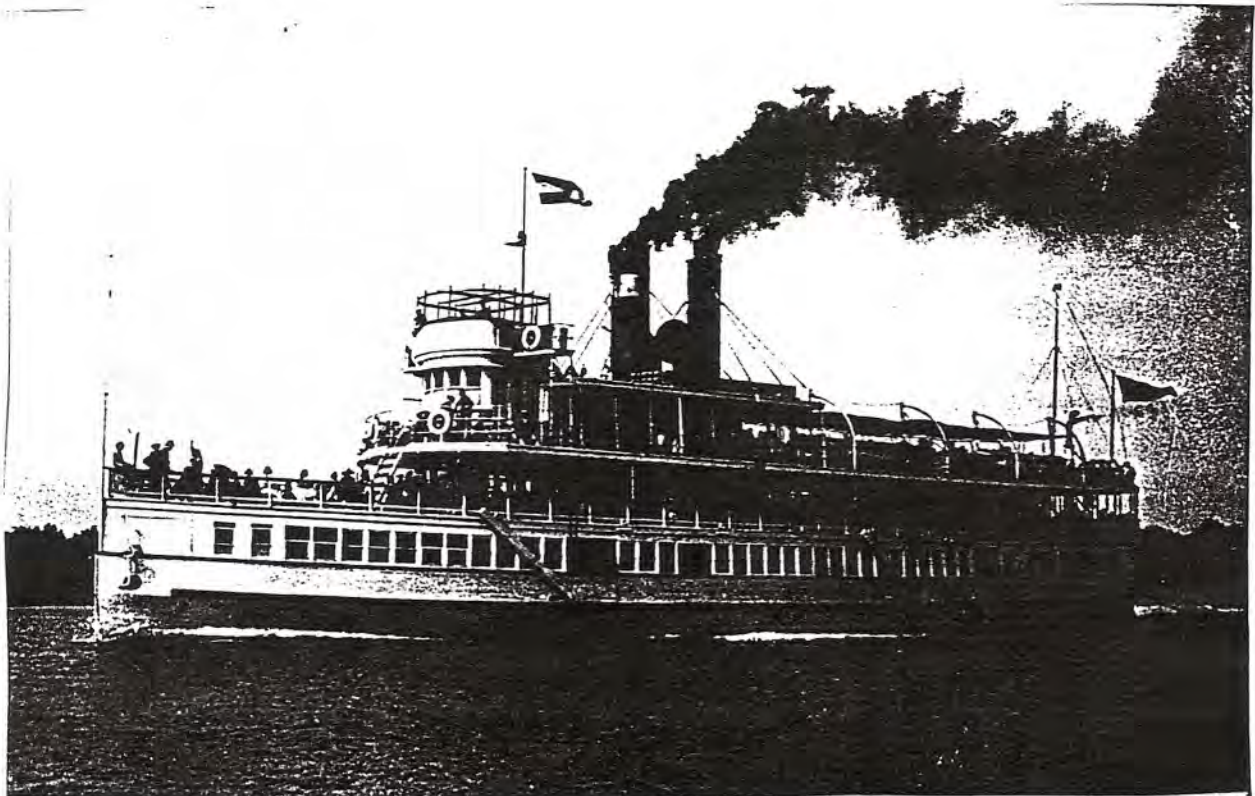
The *Thousand Islander* is not one of the better known Lake Huron shipwrecks. The vessel was lost almost 71 years ago in what was likely her only voyage on the lake.

*Thousand Islander* was a day passenger ship that was constructed by the Toledo Shipbuilding Co. of Toledo, Ohio. She was completed in 1912 for the St. Lawrence Steamboat Co., a U.S. subsidiary of the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Co., to run between Alexandria Bay and Clayton, N.Y. The intended service was cancelled when two leading area hotels burned.

This carrier moved to Canada Steamship Lines in 1915 and operated from Cape Vincent to Alexandria Bay and from Clayton to Kingston. The ship headed west in 1918 to run between Chatham, Detroit and Wallaceburg.

Patronage of the 172 foot, 9 inch, 587 gross ton vessel declined as the popularity of the automobile increased. *Thousand Islander* tied up at Sarnia in July, 1927 and was subsequently sold to the Georgian Bay Tourist Co. for cruising the 30,000 Islands.

The ship left Sarnia for Midland Nov. 25, 1927, under tow of the C.S.L. bulk carrier *Collingwood*. The pair encountered violent weather on Lake Huron smashing windows and flooding the cabins of the trailing passenger ship. The eleven sailors on board were rescued by the *Collingwood* prior to the *Thousand Islander* sinking some 26 miles southeast of Thunder Bay Island.



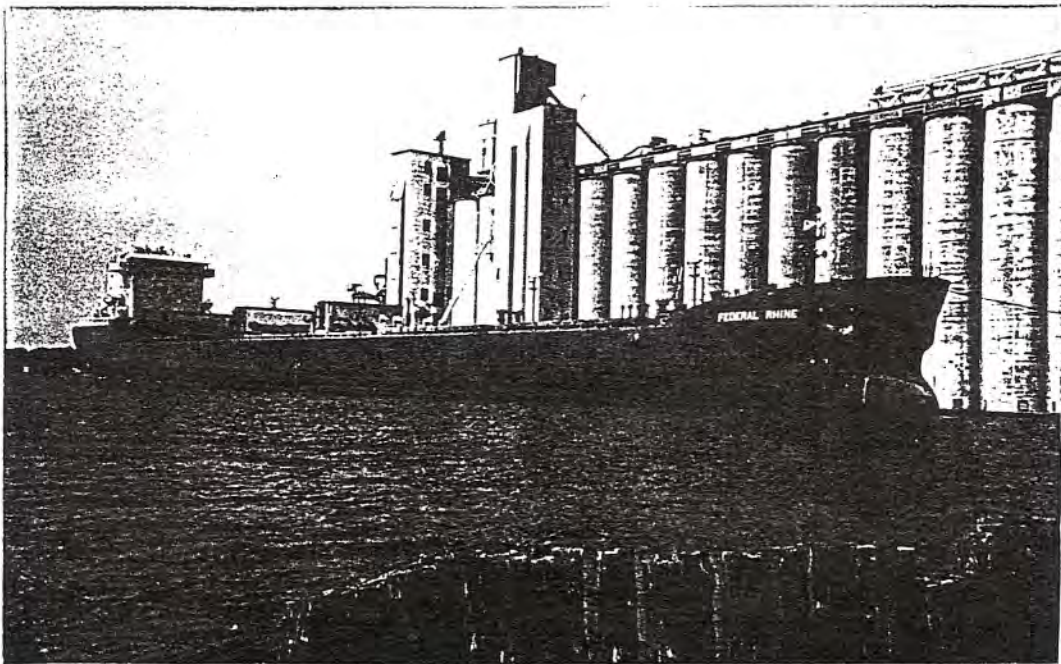
\* The *Thousand Islander* shown here on the Snye near Wallaceburg, Ont. in 1926 \*  
Photo : Mann Historical Files

# SALTY SPOTLIGHT

## M/V FEDERAL RHINE (1)

By D. R. (Doug) Schilz

- Built in 1977 by Hyundai Shipbuilding & Heavy Industries Ltd., Ulsan City, South Korea as Hull # 3054.
- 729' x 76' x 47' 22,649 GRT M. Bulk Carrier
- Main engine - (single) 10,400 BHP Mitsui B & W
- \* One of 4 sister ships to sail on the lakes \*
- \* There is currently a new *Federal Rhine* sailing on the Lakes \*
- Owned by Federal Pacific (Liberia) Ltd.; Liberia.
- Dec / 1986 - wintered in Detroit, Mich.
- 1993 - sold to Steelflower Shipping, Panama, South America and renamed *Steelflower*. Visited the Lakes in that year.
- 1997 - sold to Narragansett Shipping Corp. of Liberia and renamed *Narragansett*. Visited the Lakes 3 times in 1997.



\* *Federal Rhine* (1) loading cargo at Sarnia Elevators \*

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### Answer to Name This Ship (Pg. 4)

The steamer *Edmonton* C. 122856 - Built in 1906 by R. Stephenson & Co. at Hebburn-on-Tyne, Great Britain as Hull # 110. Dimensions: 256' x 42'-6" x 23', 1982 G.T. 1340 R.T. Built for Matthews S/S Co. Ltd. Sold to Merchants Mutual Line of Montreal, Que. in 1910. Merged into Canada Steamship Lines in 1913. Sold to Steel Factors, Ltd. and scrapped at Lauzon, Quebec in 1961.