

THE LIGHTSHIP



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The last Member's Slide Night of the year was held at the Museum on Saturday, Oct. 28th with 25 members and their guests in attendance. Thanks to the members who brought slides, we were treated to views of ships, tugs and lighthouses all around the Great Lakes including places such as New Orleans, Houston, Los Angeles, Panama Canal and the Caribbean. Of great interest were a number of slides shown of various ship's wheelhouse interiors, then a quiz to name the ship it was taken on. The door prize was a new Interlake Shipping Co. hat donated by your Editor. The winning ticket was drawn by 8 year old Ray Bawal, son of one of L.H.L.'s Directors. Imagine the look of amazement on young Ray's face when he realized that he had drawn his own ticket. The expression of disbelief quickly transformed into an enormous smile.

The final dinner meeting of 2000, a joint meeting with the M.H.S.D., was held on Saturday, Nov. 11th and was attended by 65 members and guests. Our entertainment program, entitled *My Lake Huron Memories*, featuring ports, ships and lighthouses around the lake, was presented by long-time member Dick Wicklund of Burton, MI. The show was very informative and well received, especially his beautiful Lake Huron sunset scenes. Thanks again Dick for sharing your fine work with us. There were 6 gifts donated for the evening's raffle, 3 new calendars given by the MHSD which were won by Capt. Ted Belcher of Midland, ON, Michael Van

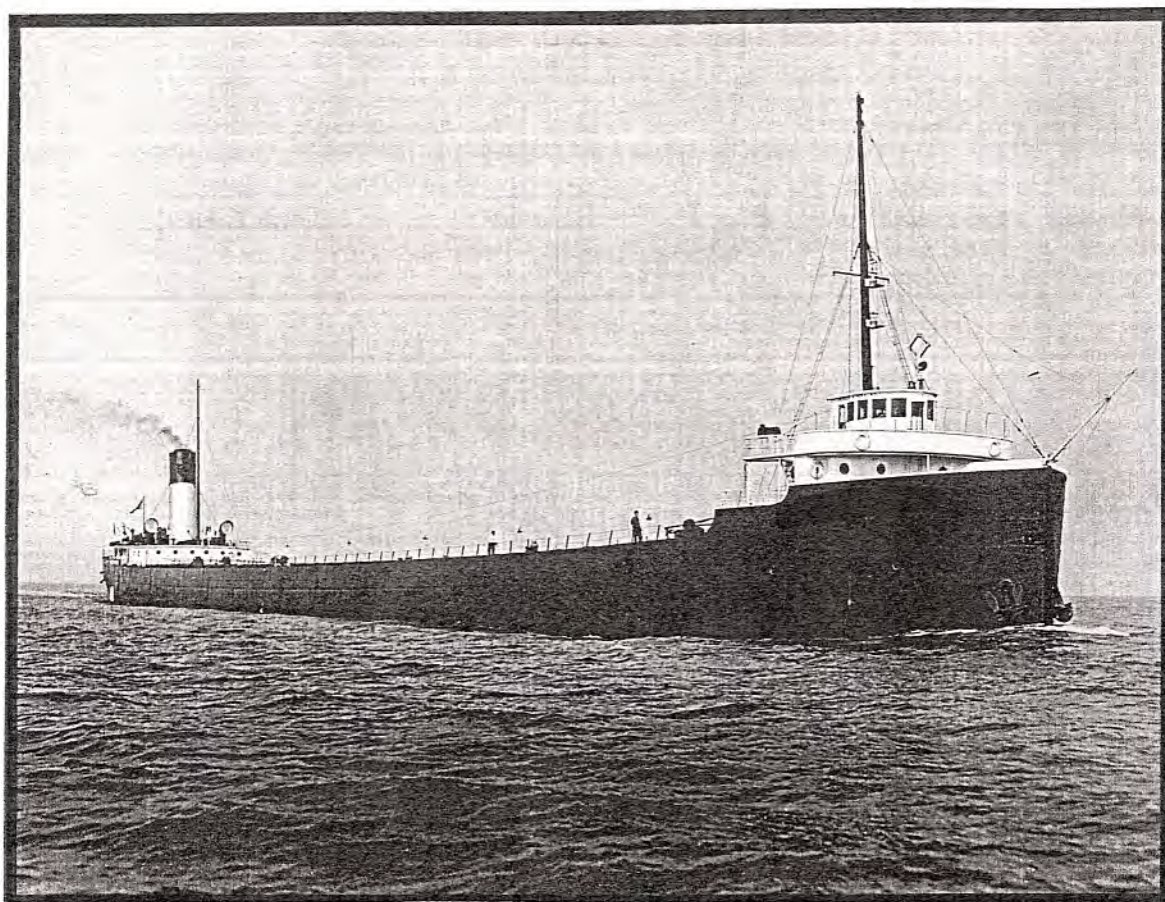
Maldeghem of Marine City, MI and Rick Ryan of East China, MI. The other 3 gifts, donated by the evening's speaker, Dick Wicklund, consisted of a book entitled *The Night the Fitz Went Down*, by Hugh E. Bishop, won by Bob Jardine of Sarnia, ON, an 8 x 12 color photo of the steamer *George A. Sloan* won by Don Blain of St. Clair, MI, and the magazine *Lake Superior*, won by Ginny Lietzau of Port Huron. Thanks again to our raffle prize donors.

Mark your Calendar - Our first meeting of 2001 is a Member's Slide Night and will be held on Saturday, January 20th at 7:00 pm in the Studio Gallery, located in the lower level of the Port Huron Museum. Please use the building's side entrance off of Wall Street. Bring along your slides and a friend to the meeting which is also a joint meeting with our friends of the Marine Historical Society of Detroit.

Membership Dues for 2001 - All membership renewal notices for 2001 were sent with the November / December issue of *The Lightship*. Please be aware that this will be the last newsletter that you will receive if you have not renewed your Lake Huron Lore membership by January 31st. For those members who have already renewed their membership, our Treasurer, Cy Hudson, thanks you for your prompt response which helps to reduce our expenses.

New Members - L.H.L. wishes to welcome aboard David Bury of Eastpointe, MI, Don Dotzert of Tecumseh, ON, Philip E. Gehring of Berea, OH, Anna Marks of Mt. Clemens, MI, Capt. Ray I. McGrath of St. Ignace, MI, Daniel Michelson of New Baltimore, MI, Jeanine Selk of Chesterfield, MI, Capt. Glen F. Shaw of Detour Village, MI, Jeff Short of Chesterfield, MI, and Capt. Clyde P. Trueax of Fitzwilliam, NH.

*** NAME THIS SHIP ***



Our 2000 Christmas Card

Everyone's favorite, the esteemed *E. M. Ford* (US 150786), a cement carrier built by Cleveland Shipbuilding Co. at Cleveland, OH as Hull # 30 in 1898. The vessel was launched as the bulk freighter *Presque Isle* (1) for Presque Isle Transportation Co. (Cleveland Cliffs Mgr.) with O.A. dimensions of 428' x 50' x 28', and equipped with 1 quadruple expansion 1,500 ihp steam engine built by the ship builder. The ship was converted to a self-unloading cement carrier by Christy Corporation, Sturgeon Bay, WI in 1956 and renamed *E. M. Ford* in honor of Emory Moran Ford. He was chairman of the board of the new owners, Huron Portland Cement Co. from January, 1953 until May, 1959. The ship's life was nearly ended on Dec. 24th, 1979 when she broke free from her winter berth in Milwaukee harbor during a winter storm, and slammed against a neighboring dock until she eventually sank on Christmas Day. The *Ford* was raised and taken to Sturgeon Bay where she received extensive repairs. The *Ford* was the oldest operating commercial vessel on the Great Lakes, some claim in the world, until 1996 when she was taken to Carrollton, MI (near Saginaw) and laid up. Since that time, the vessel has been used in a storage capacity.

Entertainment Meetings for 2001

The following events have been arranged for the enjoyment of our members, all of which are joint meetings with the Marine Historical Society of Detroit, and will be held at the Port Huron Museum.

- 1) Saturday, Jan. 20th - Member's Slide Night at 7:00 pm.
- 2) Saturday, Mar. 31st - Dinner Meeting at 6:00 pm - "Winter Navigation" by Greg Rudnick of Lakewood, OH.
- 3) Saturday, May 12th - Dinner Meeting at 6:00 pm - "Boat Watching 25 Years Ago" by Bob Campbell of Grand Ledge, MI.
- 4) Saturday, Sept. 29th - Dinner Meeting at 6:00 pm - "Lake Erie Passenger Boats - The Beginning" by Andy Sykora of Rocky River, OH.
- 5) Saturday, October 27th - Member's Slide Night at 7:00 pm.
- 6) Saturday, Nov. 10th - Dinner Meeting at 6:00 pm - "Wreck of the Propeller *Troy*" by Chris Roth of Sterling Heights, MI.

We have also chartered the Hammond Bay for the annual Lake Huron Lore river cruise to be held on Saturday, August 4th. The annual Lake Huron Lore Marine Society Flea Market will be held at the Port Huron Museum on Saturday, June 2nd. Further information on these events will appear in future issues of *The Lightship*.

Pellet Trivia

The Duluth Seaway Port Authority recently printed some iron ore pellet facts in their quarterly magazine, obtained from the Spring 2000 edition of *Cliffs News*, published by Cleveland Cliffs. Some of the choice "nuggets": a) A box 1 foot high, 1 foot wide and 1 foot deep can hold more than 20,000 iron ore pellets. b) There are 360,000 pellets in 1 long ton. c) Each pellet is worth \$0.0083. d) An average Great Lakes ship can carry about nine billion pellets. e) Strung end to end, 1 day's pellet production at Northshore Mining in Silver Bay could make about 90,000 necklaces. This could develop a new market for pellets - and save the world's oyster population.

Why Do We Say It ?

By Cy Hudson

"Sailing Close to the Wind"

Why do we say a person who is following a course that is close to being illegal is *sailing close to the wind*? Because a sailing vessel *sailing close to the wind* is in danger of being caught by a gust and jibing or keeling over, and so being swamped. So too, a person engaging in a practice that is just short of being illegal is in danger of being caught.

The Winter Lay-Up List of Ports in Our Area 1980-81 ... 20 Years Ago

By Cy Hudson

Ecorse, MI

Adam E. Cornelius (1), Leon Falk Jr., George M. Humphrey, George A. Stinson & Joseph H. Thompson.

Dearborn, MI

John Dykstra (1), Benson Ford (1), Henry Ford II & William Clay Ford (1).

Detroit, MI

Columbia & Ste. Claire (excursion boats)

Ojibway, ON

Saguenay (2)

Windsor, ON

Fort Chambly

Port Lambton, ON

Samaru

Sarnia & Point Edward, ON

Algobay, Algolake, Algorail, Canadian Enterprise, Canadian Transport, C.C.G.S. Griffon, Hilda Marjanne, Imperial Sarnia, Island Transport (2), Lakeshell (3), Montcliffe Hall & Texaco Warrior.

Goderich, ON

Meldrum Bay, Lionel Parsons, Pierson Daughters, D. B. Weldon & R. G. Sanderson.

Collingwood, ON

Algowood, Paterson (1) & Ungava Transport.

Owen Sound, ON

Howard F. Andrews, Chi-Cheemaun & Robert S. Pierson.

Port McNicoll, ON

Algocen, Algosoo, A. S. Glossbrenner & Scott Misener (3).

Tiffon, ON

V. W. Scully

Midland, ON

Sir James Dunn, H. C. Heimbecker, J. N. McWatters, John E. F. Misener & C.C.G.S. Montmorency.

Muskegon, MI

Highway 16, Roger M. Kyes & H. Lee White.

Alpena, MI

S. T. Crapo & Lewis G. Harriman

Bay City, MI

Amoco Illinois

As is to be expected in the last 20 years since the above list was compiled, many of these vessels have been scrapped, sold, renamed, converted to barges, used for cargo storage or in lay-up.

Vessels Still in Service (on the Lakes):

Algobay, Algocen, Algolake, Algorail, Algosoo, Algowood, Canadian Enterprise, Canadian Transport, C.C.G.S. Griffon, Chi-Cheemaun, George A. Stinson, Joseph H. Thompson (barge conversion) & H. Lee White.

Vessels Renamed:

Adam E. Cornelius (3) to Sarah Spencer (barge), A. S. Glossbrenner to Algosteel, V. W. Scully to Algosound, Roger M. Kyes to Adam E. Cornelius (4), J. N. McWatters to Algogulf (2), Montcliffe Hall to Cartierdoc, & Lakeshell (3) to W. M. Vacy Ash and later to Eltokaween (off lakes).

Vessels Scrapped:

Leon Falk Jr., George M. Humphrey, John Dykstra, Benson Ford, Henry Ford II, William Clay Ford, Fort Chambly, Meldrum Bay, Paterson (1), Howard F. Andrews, Robert S. Pierson, Scott Misener (3), Sir James Dunn, Amoco Illinois, John E. F. Misener, H. C. Heimbecker, Lionel Parsons, Pierson Daughters, D. B. Weldon & R. G. Sanderson.

Vessels Sold Off Lakes:

Samaru in 1988, *Texaco Warrior* in 1984, *Lakeshell* (3) (*W. M. Vacy Ash*) in 1997 and renamed *Eltokaween* (Panamanian registry), *C.C.G.S. Montmorency* was decommissioned in 1991 and renamed *Lady Janet I*, presently being used as a combination rail / tank barge at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and *Island Transport* (2) in 1990 as *Recovery VIII*.

Vessels Used For Storage:

Ungava Transport at Hamilton, ON as *Provmar Terminal*, *S. T. Crapo & Lewis G. Harriman* at Green Bay, WI & *Imperial Sarnia* at Hamilton, ON as *Provmar Terminal II*.

Miscellaneous Vessels:

Columbia & Ste. Claire are in lay-up at Ecorse, MI, *Hilda Marjanne* - hull section now part of *Canadian Ranger*, Highway 16 - expected to be a museum ship at Muskegon, MI & *Saguenay* (2) is presently used as a spoils barge at Thunder Bay, ON and renamed *M.A.C. Gagne*.

* Thanks to Fred Miller II & Doug Schilz for their assistance with this article *

NAUTICAL NEWS

USS GREAT LAKES FLEET SELLS 3 OF THEIR VESSELS

Lower Lakes Transportation of Port Dover, ON and Grand River Navigation of Buffalo, NY, a recently created company affiliated with Lower Lakes, recently purchased 3 of United States Steel Great Lakes Fleet's oldest and smallest vessels, the *Calcite II*, the *Myron C. Taylor* and the *George A. Sloan*. All 3 vessels are presently laid up in Point Edward's North Slip for the winter. Change of ownership of the 3 self-unloaders is to take place on December 31st, 2000. No word as of yet regarding renames and paint schemes. Lower Lakes Trans. currently operates 2 former U.S. lakers, *Cuyahoga* and *Saginaw* while Grand River Nav. operates the integrated tug / barge *Invincible / McKee Sons*.

NOVADOC SINKING

In our previous issue of *The Lightship*, we printed Lloyd Belcher's remarkable story of his harrowing experience as a crew member on the *Novadoc* when the vessel sank on Lake Michigan during the Armistice Day Storm, Nov. 11, 1940. The *Great Lakes / Seaway Log* recently featured an item of Lloyd's reunion with the wheel of the ill-fated vessel at a meeting of the Pentwater, MI Historical Society. Clyde Cross, a local fisherman who helped save the 17 crew members in a brave rescue, later salvaged items including the wheel from the stricken *Novadoc*. Lloyd, who was 21 at the time of the shipwreck, once again held the ship's wheel in his hands, no doubt with vivid memories of the calamity some 60 years ago.

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

North-West Transportation Company (The Beatty Boats) by Mary Wheeler, the granddaughter of J. D. Beatty, the owner of the Sarnia ship company of the late 19th century. The 50 paged A4 sized book, which contains 23 B & W photos, may be obtained from Arnold's Books, 218 Water St., Marine City, MI (810) 765-1350 or 1-800-276-3092, at a cost of \$22.00 (U.S. funds) plus \$3.00 shipping & handling (Michigan residents must add \$1.32 sales tax) for a total cost of \$26.32. Our Canadian readers may contact Author Mary Wheeler at (519) 542-7039 for the price in Canadian funds.

SHIPBREAKING IN ALANG

In our July / August 1999 issue of *The Lightship*, we ran an article from the Baltimore Star entitled *Where Ships Go To Die* which told the story of the shipbreaking trade in Alang, India. Perhaps if you have access to the Internet, you may have read *The Shipbreakers* last August from the pages of the Atlantic Monthly which also brought attention to the appalling conditions the workers are exposed to and the indifferent, callous attitude of

BLUEWATER AREA SHIPWRECKS

JOHN A. McPHAIL

By Skip Gillham

The 9 year career of the double-ended auto ferry *John A. McPhail* came to an end crossing Lake Huron on May 9th, 1964.

The 115 foot long by 36 foot wide vessel was built as Hull 153 by the Collingwood Shipbuilding Company. The keel was laid on April 5th, 1955 and the hull was launched on June 4th. After the final touches were applied, the ship sailed June 21st for service between Sault Ste. Marie, MI and Sault Ste. Marie, ON.

John A. McPhail was owned by the International Transit Company and shuttled all year between the twin cities straddling the St. Marys River. Only 18 cars could be handled for the short, cross river run.

Ownership moved to the Government of Ontario in 1961 and the ship was laid up on October 30th, 1962 when a new International Bridge connected the two cities.

The ferry left Sault Ste. Marie on May 8th, 1964 behind the tug *G. W. Rogers*. They headed for Kingston, ON and a new service to Wolfe Island. The tow, that also included the *James W. Curran*, got caught in a storm the next day. The line could not handle the strain and when it broke off Saginaw Bay, both ships drifted and eventually sank.

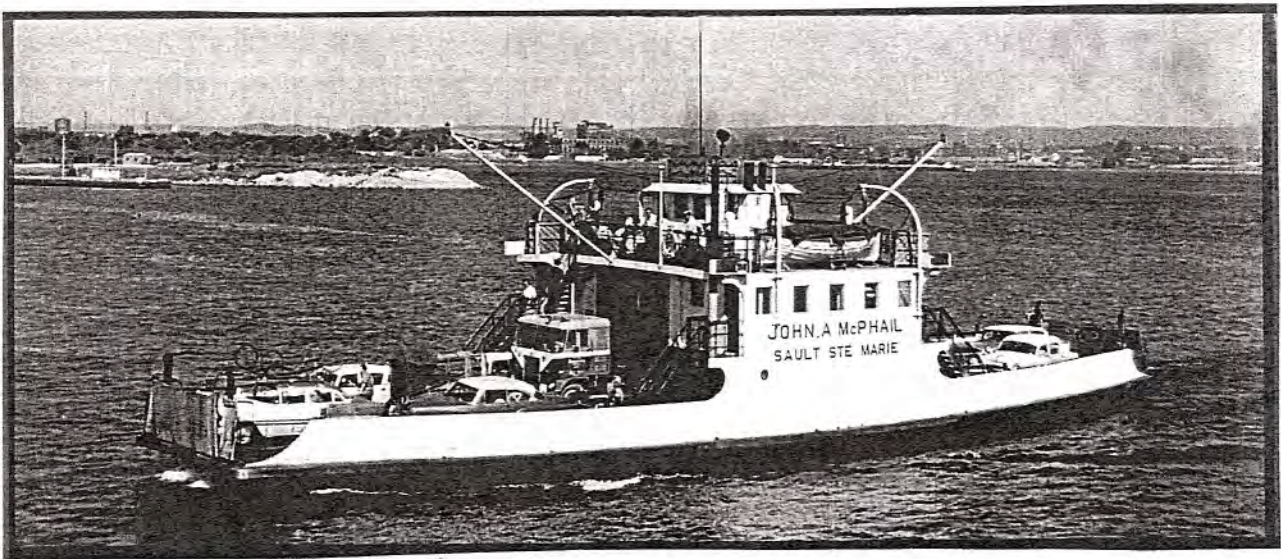


Photo: John H. Bascom

Answer to Name This Ship (Pg. 2)

George W. Perkins (US 202166) built as Hull # 512 by the Superior Shipbuilding Co. at Superior, WI. Launched June 26th, 1905 as the a) *George W. Perkins* for the Pittsburgh Steamship Co. 569' loa (549' lbp) x 56' x 31', 6,406 GRT. The vessel was sold in January, 1964 to Redwood Enterprises Ltd. (Westdale Shipping Ltd., Mgr.) and renamed b) *Westdale* (2) (BR 317133) British registry. The ship was sold again in late 1971 to Reoch Transports Ltd. and continued to sail as the *Westdale* until 1977 when she was sold to Robert Pierson Holdings Ltd. (Soo River Company) and renamed c) *H. C. Heimbecker*. The vessel was sold for scrap to Triad Salvage in 1981 due to a cracked boiler and was taken apart at Ashtabula, OH.

SALTY SPOTLIGHT

By D. R. (Doug) Schilz
(saltydug@yahoo.com)

ISOLDA

Built in 1999 by Mitsui Engineering & Shipbuilding Co. Ltd., Ichihara, Japan as Hull # 1467.
Length - 655'-10" Breadth - 77'-7" Depth - 50'-2"
21,387 GRT M. Bulk Carrier
Main Engine - 8,130 bhp B&W

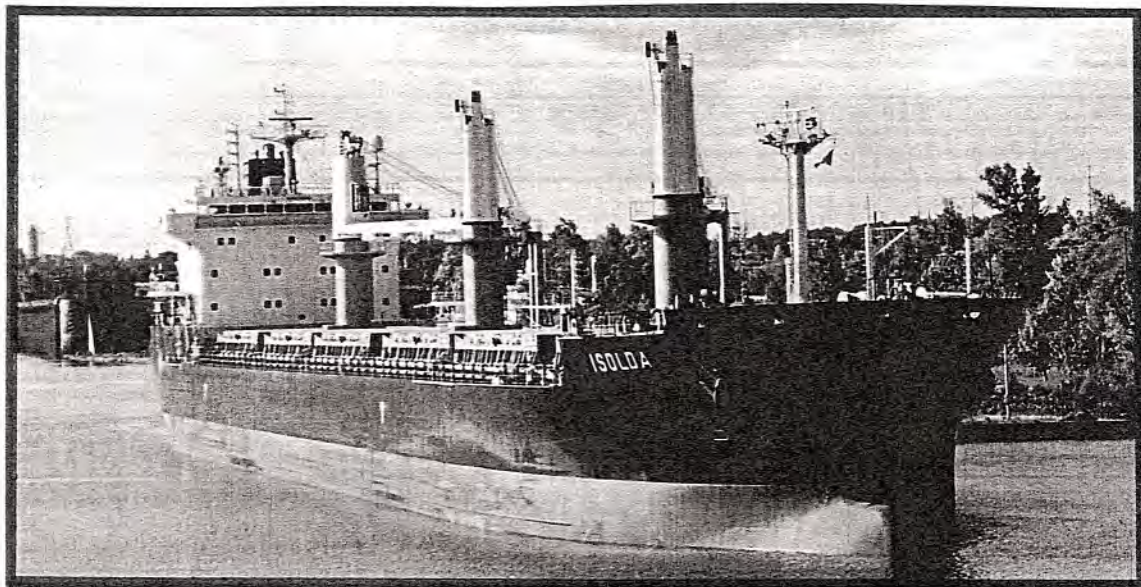
The arrival on the Lakes of a new class of ocean ships for the Polish Steamship Company (Polska Zegluga Morska) signalled a commitment to the use of the Great Lakes for transportation of cargos.

The *Isolda* was the second of five new ships owned by the Polish Steamship Company to arrive on the Lakes. Her first inland voyage was on Aug. 31st, 1999 with a cargo of steel bound for Windsor, ON. Outbound, she departed Thunder Bay with a cargo of wheat.

The familiar black hull that was so accustomed to the ships has now been replaced by blue. The stack markings PZM have been replaced by, in this case, IS, which, I presume, represents the owning company of the ship, which in this case, is Isolda Shipping Ltd. Other notable changes to this particular ship-type if the registry. In the past, and with the older ships in the Polish fleet that sail the Lakes, the ships have been registered in Szczecin, Poland. The new ships are registered in Limassol, Cyprus and, like other countries, Poland is also taking advantage of the flags of convenience.

I asked a Polish co-worker of mine, out of curiosity, as to the meanings of names of the five new ships and he informed me that they are women's names. The five new ships are named: *Isa*, *Isadora*, *Isolda*, *Irma* and *Iryda*. The first three ships sailed on the Lakes for the first time in 1999 and the last two in 2000.

At times, when it seems that the future of Great Lakes shipping is in doubt, it is very refreshing to see a shipping company make a commitment to the future of Great Lakes shipping. While none of these new vessels have stopped at either the ports of Port Huron or Sarnia, it is hoped that in the future, this might happen. If these ships are like any of the other past Polish ships, they will be frequent callers to the Lakes and a familiar sight to this area.



James R. Hoffman Photo: Downbound at Bridge 5, Welland Canal in 1999