

THE LIGHTSHIP



Incorporated in the State of Michigan October 21, 1963

Vol. XXV, No. 5

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September / October, 2004

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Membership (annual) - \$12.00 (U.S.) \$18.00 (Can. funds)
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark Your Calendar – Our third Dinner Meeting of 2004, which will also be a joint meeting with our friends from the M.H.S. of Detroit, will be held at the Port Huron Museum on Saturday, September 18th. The doors of the Museum will be opened at 6:00 pm and the dinner, prepared by Faulkner's Catering, will be served at 6:30. The cost is \$13.00 (US funds) per person with checks or money orders made payable to **Lake Huron Lore Marine Society** and received by the closing date of Thursday, September 9th. The evening's entertainment program, presented by Jim Luke of Marysville, MI is entitled *Growing Up With Bill Luke*, a program featuring the life and times of Jim's father, Great Lakes Historian, William J. Luke. As usual, a raffle will be held providing our guests with a chance to win some interesting nautical prizes. Please join us for an entertaining and enjoyable evening.

Slide Night – Another Member's Slide Night will be held in the Port Huron Museum's lower level at 7:00 pm on Saturday, October 9th. Bring some of your favorite marine-related slides and feel free to bring along a friend.

Please use the Museum's Wall Street (side) entrance. A door prize will be presented to a lucky winner during the evening.

Marine Flea Market – Lake Huron Lore, the Port Huron Museum and Acheson Ventures will be jointly hosting a Marine Flea Market on Saturday, October 23rd from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Port Huron Seaway Terminal, located at 2336 Military Street in Port Huron. Bring your family and experience one of the most popular and enjoyable Marine Flea Markets on the Great Lakes!

Membership Renewal – That time is fast approaching. That time, of course, is January 1st, 2005, the time when you are required to remit your annual dues to renew your membership with Lake Huron Lore Marine Society. As we fast approach the Holiday Season, tasks such as membership renewals can be easily overlooked. To ensure your membership with L.H.L. is not forgotten, why don't you renew your membership now? Your continued support of our Society is highly desired and appreciated. Please remit \$12.00 (U.S. funds), or \$18.00 (Canadian funds), payable to **L.H.L. Marine Society**, to Theresa Miller, LHL Marine Society, 5250 Robinwood Dr., North Street, MI, 48049.

*** NAME THIS SHIP ***



* See Answer of Page 5 *

The Log of an Incurable

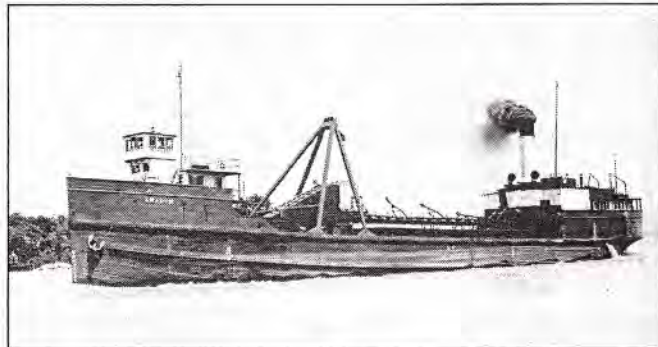
By Don Dotzert

Growing up on the west side of Windsor, Ontario in the early 1930's was dreadfully lean and mean, but it was okay for me. At the foot of our street was Chick's Sand Dock with the steamer *ARAGON* sitting on the bottom except for Saturdays when the ship-keeper would re-float her as the story went.

One terribly hot day I ventured down to the river where my pal, an unemployed U.S. veteran from World War I, taught me to dog paddle out to the anchor of the *ARAGON*. From that day on the Detroit River and I became one.

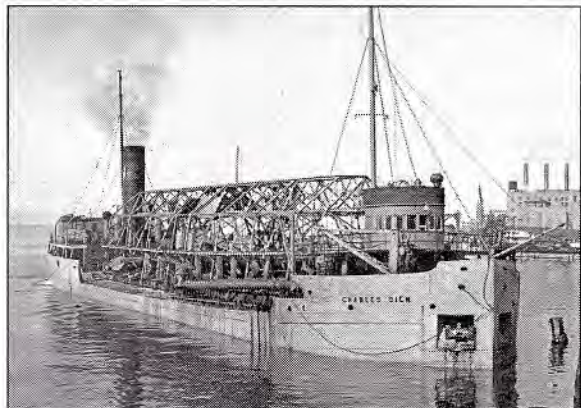
Well, the *ARAGON* went away but a couple of blocks upstream we hosted the steamer *SAND MERCHANT* and just astern of her was the palatial American yacht *ANONA*. History tells us what happened to the *SAND MERCHANT* but what became of the *ANONA*, I do not know.

Later our humble waterfront became a base for the steamer *CHARLES DICK*. She became a somewhat local fixture. It was said that the crew of *down-easters* from Nova Scotia received room and board but wages only when the company had orders for sand and gravel since all three of



these vessels were sand suckers. Perhaps me and my neighbors discovered the *DICK* before the late Captain John Leonard who later became her master for some time. The young jocks of the area would impress their girlfriends by diving off the wings of the ship's bridge. I satisfied myself by being the self-appointed mascot with more or less having the run of the ship.

The bubble burst because our rent went up a few dollars a month and we had to move. I lucked out again. This time I was just a few city blocks from the Government Dock, the local terminal for the Canada Steamship Lines and Northern Navigation Company. At this point in my life I



discovered two Queens. On Monday and Friday afternoons, I spent more time looking at the big clock on the wall than the blackboard. I would hop on my \$8.00 secondhand bike and rush down to the wharf to see the *HAMONIC* turn to tie up in Detroit for an hour before coming over to tie up in Windsor till 10:30 pm and then depart for Detroit and onto Duluth. Of course, the *NORONIC* did the same drill on Friday but she was really my favorite. I can still see Captain Aitken looking down from the wing of the bridge with his goatee and red cravat while his proud ship was making the dock. He had to be one of the most colorful captains of the Great Lakes and highly thought of by all. Of

course, First Mate Horace Beaton would always buy a newspaper from me, helping me in my only attempt in the business world. I soon graduated to mail-boy for C.S.L. until I was old enough to ship out on the package freighters for ten years.

One November day while at the wheel of the *WEYBURN*, we met the *Norrie* (*NORONIC*), as she was affectionately called, rolling along downbound in a Lake Superior sea as though Superior was no match for her. I'm told she was a wonderful sea boat but she had an unusual trait. When she would roll to one side, she would pause before rolling to the other side for this gallant and beautiful ship was built top heavy.

After ten years of freshwater steam-boating, I opted for a shore life where I discovered a new passion, that of being a passenger on the cruise ships whenever possible. Now enters the other two Queens, the first *QUEEN MARY* and the first *QUEEN ELIZABETH*. These two ladies of the Atlantic were great liners all riveted and built from the keel up (the last steamer of this type is the *Q.E. II*). The one commonality between these four ships was that in each case, the older of each pair apparently carried a larger, more dedicated clientele than their newer sister ships. Alas, I will end this tale by saying to have walked the docks of the grand old *QUEEN MARY* in Long Beach is to have lived!

NAUTICAL NEWS

Hot Off The Press

Pride of the Inland Seas: An Illustrated History of the Port of Duluth – Superior. This 288-page book is said to be exhaustively researched and richly illustrated with 200 historical photographs, a must for anyone interested in Great Lakes shipping and history. A great gift for friends and family, the book sells for \$35.00 (U.S. funds) plus shipping & handling, and can be ordered from Afton Historical Society Press, P.O. Box 100, Afton, MN, 55001. Phone (800) 436-8443 or e-mail aftonpress@aftonpress.com

Another Edition of the “Looking Back” Series

St. Clair River, Canadian Shoreline by Alan Mann offers a snapshot of sixty years of the shoreline’s rich and colorful history. These vintage images not only portray the early days of the shoreline and its residents, but also attest to the pleasures of summers picnics and boating. Readers are also given a glimpse into the rivers’ history of ship collisions, fires and dangerous ice flows, all of which have marked the colorful life of this important waterway. The 230 B & W photos, many of which are previously unpublished, help to make this book an excellent journey back in time. This 6” x 9”, 128-page, soft-cover book can be purchased by sending a check or money order for \$22.95 (Canadian funds) to Looking Back Press, P.O. Box 2131, 1 Northrup Crescent, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, L2R 7S2. (e-mail address is vanessa.kooter@vanwell.com)

From The Files By Cy Hudson

10 Years Ago ... (1994)

Sept. 4 – Erie Navigation Company’s cement-carrying canal motor ship *DAY PECKINPAUGH* sailed from Oswego with her last cargo of cement bound for Rome, NY and returned light on the 6th. Local residents turned out in force to witness the final passage of the last commercial freight vessel operating on the New York State Barge Canal system, under the command of her longtime master, Captain Olav Kaldefoss. On the 7th, the 1921-built *PECKINPAUGH* headed out of Oswego bound for her home port of Erie, Pennsylvania where the ship will be held in lay-up until her future is decided. The retirement of the ship was a result of Essroc Materials Ltd. purchasing the old Independent Cement Terminal in Oswego, which made their terminal in Rome obsolete.

Oct. 1 – On Lake Erie, off South Bass Island, the 390 foot barge *KELLSTONE I* was being pushed by the tug *FRANK PALLADINO JR.* when they struck a 21 foot fishing boat throwing two of the four occupants into the water. The bodies of Ian Crane, 14, and Mike Burghard, 15, were later recovered in Lake Erie on October 8th. The accident occurred when the *KELLSTONE I* was empty and was heading to Kelly’s Island in clear weather and light winds with a visibility of eight miles.

Oct. 4 – The CSX Transportation crossing between Port Huron and Sarnia, most recently serviced by the barge *PERE MARQUETTE 10* pushed by the tug *C&O 452*, officially and permanently ended the service, which had begun in 1945, when the tug and barge tied up at Port Huron at 10:05 pm.

Oct. 15 – Diamond Jack’s River Tours excursion boat *DIAMOND BELLE* made an excursion from Detroit to Wallaceburg, ON. Commercial passenger vessel service to the Sydenham River port has been inactive for several decades. Prior to the *DIAMOND BELLE*’s trip, the last excursion boat trip from Detroit to Wallaceburg was made by the much-loved and long lamented Ashley & Dustin steamer *PUT-IN-BAY*, which made an afternoon and moonlight run up the Chenal Ecarte in 1951.

15 Years Ago ... (1989)

Sept. 6 – The burnt-out and vandalized hulks of the former Grand Trunk car ferries *GRAND RAPIDS* and *MADISON*, which were built in 1926 and 1927 respectively as Hulls 226 & 227, were recently purchased by Marine Salvage of Port Colborne, ON. Both ferries, built by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Corp. at Manitowoc, WI for Lake Michigan service, departed Muskegon in tow. The tugs *ANGLIAN LADY* and *PRINCESS NO. 1* towed *GRAND RAPIDS* to Port Maitland to be scrapped, arriving there on Sept. 11th. The tugs *CHIPPEWA* and

THUNDER BAY arrived with the *MADISON* at Port Colborne on the 11th, but when it was found that the ferry was drawing too much water to permit entry to the Marine Salvage scrapyards at Ramey's Bend, the tugs towed the ferry to Port Maitland arriving there later the same day. Both of the ferries last saw service in the mid-1970's and were placed in lay-up at Muskegon where they were both badly damaged by arson and vandalism in 1987. Demolition of the ferries was completed by the fall of 1994.

Sept. 23 – The c) *EVA DESGAGNES* (1987-1989), a) *GRIFFON* (1955-1967), b) *FRANQUELIN* (2) (1967-1987), was built in 1955 as Hull # 18 by Port Weller Dry Docks. The Lake & Limited Coastal Bulk Freighter last saw service with the Group Desgagnes in December of 1988 and was sold for off-lakes use to Navisur S.A. de C.M., Mexico and was renamed d) *TELCHAC*. She departed Toronto with her port of registry as Progreso and was flying the Mexican flag. Three years later, on Sept. 13th, 1992, she was sold to Mexican ship breakers at Tuxpan.

Sept. 27 – The new Drummond Island Automobile Passenger ferry *DRUMMOND ISLANDER III*, departed the Moss Point Marine Inc. shipyard at Pascagoula, Mississippi, for delivery to her new owners, Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority. Following the Intercoastal Waterway, she was in Boston Harbor on Oct. 16th and passed through the Welland Canal on Oct. 30th. The new ferry was in service at Drummond Island in November.

Oct. 22 – The former 1942-built tin stacker *LEON FRASER* was upbound past Detroit under tow of Malcolm Marine's *TUG MALCOLM* and Great Lakes Towing's *SUPERIOR*. With extra assistance from Wellington Towing's *CHIPPEWA*, she transited the Soo Locks on Oct. 25th and arrived at the Fraser Shipyard in Superior, WI two days later. The *FRASER*, which had been in lay-up at Lorain, OH since Dec. 20th, 1981, was converted from a bulk carrier to a self-unloading cement carrier for Inland Lakes Transportation, Inc. (Lafarge Corp.). This required her to be shortened by 120 feet and, with her new name *ALPENA* (2), was returned to service in 1991.

Oct. 23 – Gaelic Tugboat Company's recent purchase, the 115 foot *GAELIC CHALLENGE*, made her entry into the Lakes when she passed through the Welland Canal bound for her new home in Detroit. The tug was built in 1943 at the Jacobson Shipyard, Inc. of Oyster Bay, NY as Hull # 307 for the U.S. Army under the name *LT643*. The *GAELIC CHALLENGE* had cleared Norfolk, VA on Oct. 13th and arrived in Detroit on Oct. 25th, where over the winter months, she was fitted out for her new duties to tow the barge *LAKEWOOD*.

Oct. 30 – The Huron, OH ore dock, which had been closed for more than 10 years, was re-opened for business after the facility was leased by the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad Co. in order to handle iron ore cargos moving to the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Co. The first ship to unload at the dock following the re-opening was Oglebay Norton's *COURTNEY BURTON* with a 21,000 ton cargo of iron ore.

F.Y.I.

As of midnight, August 31st, 159 vessels requiring a pilot have passed upbound through the Bluewater area since the opening of the 2004 sailing season. The last vessel in this group was the *LISKI*, bound for Sault Ste. Marie, ON. *This number includes salt water vessels and passenger ships, as well as some Canadian-registered tankers. Many of the ships are repeat visitors.*

The Editor would like to thank Cy Hudson and Lakes Pilots Association Manager, Bill Wager

Answer to Name This Ship (Pg.2)

ELMDALE (C 199397) Built in 1909 as Hull # 56 at Ecorse, MI by the Great Lakes Engineering Works. Overall Dimensions: 444'-0" lbp x 56'-2" x 28'-0". 5141 GRT. Built for American S/S Co. as a) *CLIFFORD F. MOLL*. Renamed b) *STANDARD PORTLAND CEMENT* in 1933. On May 20, 1960, the vessel sank in Lake Huron, two miles above Port Huron / Sarnia, following a collision with the steamer *AUGUST ZIESING*. Raised, repaired and laid-up at Windsor, ON. Sold later that year to Redwood Enterprises Ltd. (Westdale Shipping) and renamed c) *ELMDALE*. Sold in 1974 to the Goderich Elevator & Transit Co. for use as a grain storage barge in the Goderich harbor and renamed d) *K.A. POWELL*. Sold for scrap in 1979 and towed by the tug *W.J. IVAN PURVIS* to Thunder Bay, ON for dismantling.

Bluewater Passages

By Dick Wicklund

THE FRANK ARMSTRONG BY INCHES

The 1943-built Maritime class steamer *FRANK ARMSTRONG* left Ashtabula, Ohio on its maiden voyage on June 3, 1943, bound for Superior, Wisconsin and a load of iron ore. The vessel was under the command of Captain H.C. Inches, the first and only vessel he sailed new from the shipyard.

H. Chesley Inches began sailing with his father on a wooden lumber steamer as a teenager in 1898. After graduating from High School in 1901, he started his years of sailing the Great Lakes. He worked for the Gilchrist fleet in 1910 and when it became part of the new Interlake fleet in 1913, he would sail for this fleet until his retirement in 1948.

His first command as a captain was in 1925 on the *SATURN*, a 1901-built 436 foot vessel. Even following his retirement, Capt. Inches would sail as a relief captain for eight more years. In all, during his lifetime, he sailed on some 76 ships!

Capt. Inches was also an avid Great Lakes historian and specialized in wooden-hulled vessels. He served as a director of the Great Lakes Historical Society Museum in Vermilion, Ohio during his retirement years.

His book, *The Great Lakes Wooden*

Shipbuilding Era, is a classic example of a by-gone time he remembered well. He said of his transition from sailing the Lakes to being a marine museum director, "I spent my working days on the Lakes. Now I am with the Maritime Museum – it is all the same atmosphere."

Although Capt. Inches passed away some 30 years ago, he left a legacy for all who have a passion for the Great Lakes and their history. Museums have benefited from his research and his marine collections. The Port Huron Museum was also a natural place for his work, since he grew up in Algonac and knew the St. Clair River well.

On that day in June, 1943, sailing the new 621 foot *FRANK ARMSTRONG* on its maiden voyage must have been a memorable moment, passing places he knew along the St. Clair River, the memory of his family, as well as how proud and pleased his father would have been of his son, a captain like him.

Captain H.C. Inches sailed many ships but only one on its maiden voyage. He would always remember that one ship, the *FRANK ARMSTRONG*. He said, "There is no thrill comparable to being the very first person to sail a new ship like the *ARMSTRONG*. Later, you may be given bigger and more powerful vessels to sail but the one you *brought out* will remain the outstanding ship of your career."



* Steamer *FRANK ARMSTRONG* – Fr. Peter Van der Linden Photo *

BLUEWATER AREA SHIPWRECKS

By Skip Gillham

SYDNEY E. SMITH JR.

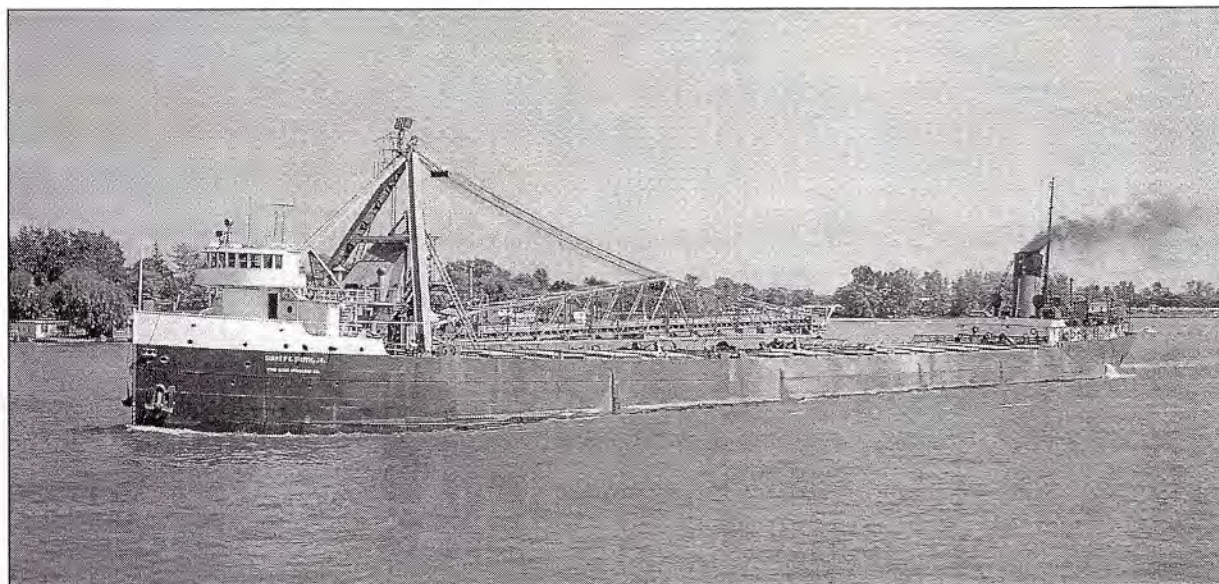
One of the most memorable Bluewater area accidents was the collision between the *PARKER EVANS* and the *SIDNEY E. SMITH JR.* on June 5, 1972. The latter had only recently returned to service for Erie Sand Steamships after a long career in the Reiss fleet as *J.L. REISS*.

The *SIDNEY E. SMITH JR.* was upbound with a load of coal when it met the downbound *PARKER EVANS* below the Bluewater Bridge. The collier sank on her starboard side and, battered by the current, broke in two with the bow falling into deeper water. All on board were rescued by the pilot boat *SALLY M.*

Salvage was a challenge but the stern was re-floated on August 6, 1972. The bow was pulled to within 100 feet of shore on September 22 and the cabins were removed. The two sections were taken to Sarnia and re-sunk as a breakwall off the Sarnia Yacht Club.

This vessel had been built as the *W.L. BIXBY* and launched at Wyandotte, Michigan on November 15, 1915. She was delivered to the National Steamship Co. (McMillan) on April 16, 1906.

In 1920 the ship was sold to Reiss and renamed *J.L. REISS*. She was converted to a self-unloader at Manitowoc in 1933 and had survived another St. Clair River collision with the *SEWELL AVERY* on September 24, 1962. She joined the American Steamship Co. in 1969 and Erie Sand late in 1971. The ship had perhaps only one or two trips in the stone trade before being lost.



* *SYDNEY E. SMITH JR.* (2) Upbound in the Detroit River on June 4, 1972 (her last trip) – Hal Jackson Photo *

Liberties on the Lakes, another informative book from author Skip Gillham, looks back at the Liberty ships that visited the Great Lakes. This 80-page, soft-cover book contains 80 B & W photos and provides information including the vessel's previous & subsequent names, builders, owners, flags, number of trips while visiting our waters, as well as their fate. This book can be purchased by sending a check or money order for \$21.00 Canadian funds for Canadian addresses or \$21.00 U.S. funds for U.S. addresses, to E.B. Gillham, Box 443, Vineland, ON, L0R 2C0. (The prices include postage)

SALTY SPOTLIGHT



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

REGINA OLDENDORFF

Built in 1983 by Dalian Shipyard; Dalian, People's Republic of China, as Hull # B270/8.

Length: 639' 9" Breadth: 75' 10" Depth: 46' 11"

GRT – 18,121 M. Bulk Carrier (Chinese Seaway Class)

Main Engine – B&W 10,700 bhp

While recently checking out Oldendorff's website on the Internet, I noticed that the *REGINA OLDENDORFF* was no longer listed on the company's ship-list. So far this year, she has been trading in the Pacific region with visits to Japan, China and Australia. If this is the case of possibly being sold, she might never trade again on the Great Lakes.

Ironically, she was the first salt-water visitor to the Great Lakes for the 2003 season and made 5 inland voyages. She carried a variety of cargos including sugar, steel, fabricated iron, steel products and wheat.

Originally launched as the *ST. CROIX*, she was sold, renamed and never sailed under that name. She was bought by Egon Oldendorff (Hong Kong) Ltd. in 1986 and registered in Hong Kong. She made her first inland voyage to the Great Lakes in September of 1986. She first visited Sarnia in November, 1987 and though I am not positive, she may have loaded polypropylene at the Government Dock. The *OLDENDORFF* became a regular visitor to the Lakes and I can only reveal two years previous to 2003 that she didn't, that being 1992 and 1995. The vessel returned to Sarnia in November, 1998 and unloaded a cargo of fertilizer at Cargill's elevators. In 1999, she underwent a slight name-change when she was renamed *EGON OLDENDORFF* and her registry was transferred to Liberia. The *OLDENDORFF* again visited Sarnia in 2000 with another cargo of fertilizer for Cargill.

Anyone who has stood beside this ship will remember her fine lines and of course, the deep sounding rumble of her B&W engine. She has been a well-maintained vessel while under the ownership of Oldendorff and hopefully 2003 wasn't the final visit of this ship.

REGINA OLDENDORFF

Downbond in the
Welland Canal
on June 26, 1998.
Jeff Cameron Photo

