

PROGRAM MEETING  
SATURDAY EVENING  
SEPT. 20 at 7:30 P. M.  
MUSEUM

VOLUME 8, No. 3  
Sept. 1986

# THE LIGHTSHIP

Office Address:  
Mail Only:  
1115 6th Street,  
Port Huron, Mi 48060

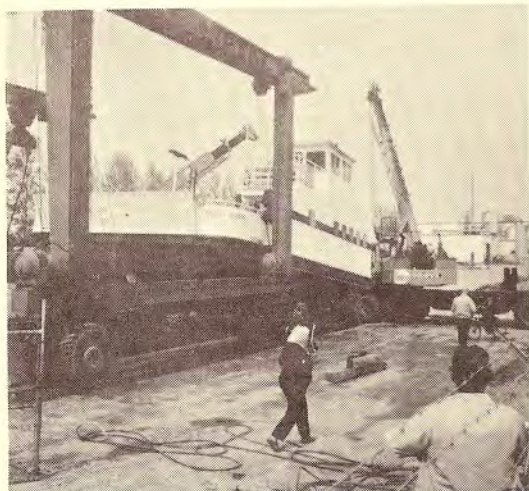


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F. R. CREVIER, Editor, Co-Ordinating Director, 365 Dixie, Algonac, Mi. 313-794-3466

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NEW SHIP ON THE RIVER AT ALGONAC  
EASES CONGESTION ON BW BRIDGE  
PROVIDES SCENIC ROUTE TO CANADA



Five members of the Society for the Preservation of Side ship Launching.. stretched things a point and witnessed the end launching of WALPOLE ISLANDER on May 14 at Wheatly, Ontario. She is a brand new auto ferry, taking over the regular duties of the 40' year old LOWELL D., which becomes spare boat for weekend traffic. For the first time in years, since Webster Dawson operated LARRY and LOU between Roberts Landing and Port Lambton, we have 4 boats operating at two crossings. Dalghty's are operating DAL-DEAN with ONTAMICH as spare boat at Marine City-Sombra. Either is a pleasant trip at two of the widest spots in the St. Clair River.

## Fred Miller's Great Lakes Boats Opens LHL Season Sept. 20th

We want to set up all the seats we have in museum on Saturday Evening, Sept. 20 to see the pictures of 'Freddie' Miller... his intrepertation of the marine scene.

"Freddie" Miller is something special to Lake Huron Lore... the date of his entering membership is clouded in antiquity in the archives of the society. He was the protege of our late Commander for Life, Lee M. Cooper, who took him in tow at either age eight or eleven and instilled in him his love of ships and the blue water. This is a fine example of what Lake Huron Lore is all about. In addition to fostering research in things marine, collecting artifacts from the background of our marine ancestry, and most important of all is to PASS IT ON TO OUR DESCENDENTS.

We urge every member to bring a guest to this program, especially the younger generation... to see what a young member can accomplish. We planted the seed but his drive and ambition made him the photographer he is today.

**Reserve October 24** FOR THE GRANDE FEAST OF THE DEPARTURE of the last canoes for Three Rivers... the home of the fur traders in Quebec. A French dinner with pea soup, roast duck, with wild rice and a suprise French dessert is being prepared by the Museum Guild. Sixty tickets are available on first reservation basis from treasurer. See enclosure.

### THREE HUNDRED YEARS AND THE RAPIDS ROLL ON!!!

Like the fabled Phoenix, there rises near the rapids the brick and mortar of the Thomas Edison Hotel... rising for the sixth time since the area has been known to the white man at the head of the St. Clair River... encompassing the hopes and ambitions of those who strongly advocated and voted for a better and more abundant life on this same piece of real estate. Three hundred years ago this summer Duluth erected Fort St. Joseph to establish the first industry of the white man here. His was a fort and trading post for the beginnings of the great fur trade. It was a great financial success but did not last for too many years. The next great work on the site was the erection of Fort Gratiot. No shot was ever fired at an enemy from this fortification. It was built because the British were not convinced that had lost the Revolution and continued to hang on to their possessions on the Lakes. The next big influx to the site was that of the Grand Trunk Railway terminating at a point called "The Rapids", later named Point Edward for Victoria's son. The area's first great hotel was named for him on the Canadian side of the river. The famous swing ferry carried box car across the river with the help of the current and landed them along with thousands of Northern European immigrants who stood on U. S. soil for the first time in the community of Fort Gratiot, a separate political entity from Port Huron. The Grand Trunk contributed materially to the prosperity of the community with the railroad yards and the Block "I" car shops. Fort Gratiot Station was built... the oldest historic building in the area... a place where thousands of immigrants were "fumigated" and passed into the United States. Next came the lease of the site by the Grand Trunk to Peerless Portland Cement Co., a steady contributing factor to the community over many years. The Grand Trunk swap with the city of Port Huron was next. The site disposition then aroused the citizenry, like nothing has in years. The historic little station has withstood all these years, now in the hands of the new hotel owner. May he take good care of her... and preserve and restore her to her original condition... AND NOT LET ANY HARM BEFALL HER!

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### COMMISSIONING OF THE U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, DETROIT DISTRICT, SURVEY VESSEL "JAMES M. BRAY" MAC ARTHUR LOCK

August 8, 1986, the date set for the new vessel's commissioning, was a typical Sault Ste. Marie Day, tolerable in August because it came out of the Northwest in the form of rain, a month from that date the rain would have turned to sleet and probably snow before the next morning. She was brought up to the viewing stand in lock and was raised to high water level. At this point the Commissioning Ceremony took place. A welcome to the occasion of the invited guests, those who knew Jim and were associated with him in his work consisted of approximately 250 people. The rain stopped and Colonel Robert F. Harris, Detroit District Commander, Corps of Engineers, delivered the welcome to the guests. The Invocation was delivered by Fr. Ted J. Brodeur, pastor, St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Sault Ste Marie.

The address, which outlined the work of the Corps and the people who performed it was presented by Major General N. G. Delbridge, Deputy Chief of Engineers, Washington, D. C.

Mary Bray, Jim's widow and five of their sons and daughters were introduced and Mary was presented with a duplicate builders plate for the ship, a picture of the ship, the United States Ensign that was flying when she was commissioned and the Medal of Honor, the highest civilian award the Corps presents. The presentations were made by General Delbridge and Colonel Harris.

Carol Bray Davis, daughter of Mary and Jim, responded for the family.  
Colonel Harris made the closing remarks for the Corps of Engineers.

The Benediction was delivered by the Rev. George Poffenbarger II, rector of St. James Episcopal Church, Sault Ste. Marie.

Following the commissioning a reception for the invited guests and friends was held in the Area Office. It was a special occasion for you editor for among the trainees of the same period were Mr. and Mrs. Ray Kestner of Houghton and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Wasisen of Marquette. It was good to see those gray haired kids once again.

As we left the reception in the rain and fog, the new "BRAY" received her first salute as a part of the Great Lakes fleet, pulling out of the McArthur Lock... three long and two short from an Algoma Central ship pulling into the Poe Lock west bound!

The vessel was then open for inspection. The rains came and the guests retired to the administration building for a reception.

#### THE MAN THE VESSEL WAS NAMED FOR

Mr. James M. Bray, for whom this vessel was named, served as Area Engineer of the Soo Area Office, Detroit District, U. S. Army Engineers, from June 1975 until his death at Alpena in an plane crash in March 1986. Mr. Bray had the primary responsibility for planning, directing, co-ordinating and supervising the St. Mary's Falls Canal, as well as the United States Power Plant. As construction and contracting office representative, Mr. Bray consistently demonstrated superior engineering ability, outstanding operational continuity, and a sensitive awareness to the Soo Area residents.

Jim was always the gracious host on Engineer Day each year to the many members of Lake Huron Lore and the "River Rats" who made the pilgrimage as regularly as that to Mecca in order to get closer to the giant freighters... close enough to virtually pet them.

Throughout his tenure as Area Engineer, Mr. Bray proved to be an effective liaison to his employees, superiors and associates. He maintained productive relations with the shipping industry and served as onsite observer for the International Joint Commission. Mr. Bray was always enthusiastic about doing the best job possible in his thirty-year career with the Corps of Engineers. A native of Houghton, Michigan, he began his career with the government as a civil engineer in 1956... as a part of the Corps trainee program for the Kincheloe Area Military Construction Office, and later resident engineer for the support facilities constructed for the Air Force at Bomarc Site, Racoon, Mich. he served as project engineer Bay City/Saginaw; Chief, Rouge River Project office; Resident Engineer, Wurtsmith AF Base; chief, Construction Branch, Detroit District. He was a veteran of both U. S. Army and U. S. Navy, civil engineering graduate of Michigan Tech and Professional Engineer, State of Michigan.

#### ORGANIZATION PLANNED FOR MARINE ENTHUSIASTS AND HISTORY BUFFS IN WELLAND CANAL AREA

St. Catharines--International marine enthusiasts and history buffs will gather at St. Catharines October 2 and 3 to participate in a specially arranged information/education Welland Canal program sponsored by the Welland Canals Foundation in co-operation with the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority.

William A. O'Neil, Seaway authority president, will launch the William Hamilton Merritt lecture series Thursday evening, October 2, speaking at Brock University. His topic will be: "The Contribu-

tion of the Welland Canals to Canadian Achievement.

The foundation has extended invitations to members of Lake Huron Lore, T. M. H. S., American Canal Society, Canadian Canal Society, Detroit Marine and the G.L. Maritime Institute. There will be a tour of the control center of the canal, tours of the operating sections of the canal. Details of the entire program including continental breakfast, bus transportation. Those wishing to participate are requested to forward \$15(Can.) to Welland Canal Foundation, P. O. Box 745, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 6Y3 not later than Sept. 15.



The Survey Vessel JAMES M. BRAY is the latest addition to the Corps of Engineers fleet on the Great Lakes. The mission of the ship is to survey the St. Mary's River Shipping Channel. In way of explanation, she and "THE PAG" will take the place of the old and waterlogged rafts that have seen over fifty years service on the two channels. This ship is shown in a port side view with bow of course to the left. The upper deck-house is of course her pilot house. The lower deck house is an electronic marvel of electric equipment that can plot the bottom soundings with uncanny accuracy. They will be working in the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair this fall and no doubt on the St. Clair River in the spring. Her vital statistics are; length, overall, 128'; beam, 31'; draft, 5'2" Engines, twin G. M. Detroit Diesels, model 6V-92; propellers, two 36" diameter; radio, Standard Marine FM radio; Cruising range. The hull was an outdated dredge scow built by Sturgeon Bay Drydock Co. and the upgrading was done at the Detroit Boatyard of the Corps of Engineers. The waterlogged raft, known as Sweep 4, will drift off into oblivion along with her foam filled floats and Chlorox bottles. The romance of barefooted men on a raft disappears.

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YOU MUST KNOW A YOUNG PERSON OR YOUNG COUPLE WHO HAVE  
RECENTLY MADE THEIR HOME IN THE AREA... A GIFT MEMBERSHIP  
TO LAKE HURON LORE WOULD MAKE THEM FEEL AT HOME HERE!