



# Telescope

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GREAT LAKES  
MARITIME  
INSTITUTE

DOSSIN GREAT LAKES MUSEUM  
Belle Isle, Detroit, Michigan 48207

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**MEMBERSHIP NOTES** ●

With the opening of the shipping season, members from around the lakes sent news and photos of activities in their ports. We easily could have expanded the news to eighteen pages, but space is limited. Since we couldn't print all the photos (many of which were excellent color photos), we'll try to publish more of them in the next issue. The publication of *Telescope* is due to the contributions of the membership and those of us involved in putting together this issue were very appreciative of the many contributions.

Among the new books available at the museum is the *Fleet Histories Series-Volume One*. This book details the histories of the Mack, Becker, Jenkins, England, Seither and Midland fleets. Author John Greenwood of the *Namesakes* series has begun a new series that tell the history of individual ships in these fleets. Along with the basic statistics of the vessel, interesting sidelights and accident details are also presented. The well-written histories, plus the numerous full page photos make this book well worth the 14.75 price.

*Life on the Great Lakes-A Wheelsman Story* by Fred Dutton is a collection of stories based on his experiences on the lakes beginning in 1916. Even though Mr. Dutton left the lakes to become a lawyer, he still sailed as relief wheelsman during his vacations. Beginning in 1981 *Inland Seas* (Great Lakes Hist. Soc.) began publishing his stories and now they are available in one book. This book is available for 14.75. Those ordering either book by mail should include 2.50 for postage.

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**MEETING NOTICES** ●

The next entertainment meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 15th at 8:00 p.m. at the museum. Our guest speaker will be Mr. Harry Benford of the Naval Architecture School at the University of Michigan.

Future Board of Director meetings are scheduled for Thursdays, October 10th and December 12th at 7:30 pm.

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**OUR COVER PICTURE:** . . The oldest ship on the lakes is the *E.M. Ford*, built in 1898. Her unique profile made her easy to spot on the horizon as she came off the lakes and into rivers. The photo of the *Ford* was taken at 9:00 p.m. by Steve Elve as she was entering Muskegon, MI. on April 17, 1991. □

*Telescope* is produced with assistance from the Dossin Great Lakes Museum, an agency of the Historical Department of the City of Detroit.

## THE LAST YEARS OF THE D.G. KERR

by  
SKIP GILLHAM  
*Special to Telescope*

Many familiar Great Lakes freighters left the inland seas in the eighties. They were the victims of changing economic times, the reduced availability of cargoes, and the new thousand-footers. Among those headed for scrap was the *D.G. Kerr* (ii).

The *D.G. Kerr* (US 214147) was typical of these casualties. She was built in the early part of this century, was coal-fired, and only capable of hauling payloads under 15,000 tons per trip.

This vessel was launched on May 6, 1916, at

the American Shipbuilding Company yard at Lorain, Ohio. She was laid down as their *Hull 714* and measured 600 feet in overall length, 60 feet at the beam and 32 feet in depth. Her tonnage, in later years, was registered at 8,017 gross and 6,267 net. She was powered by a 2,200 horsepower triple expansion engine and her original three Scotch boilers were replaced by two Water Tube boilers about 1950.

According to John Greenwood's *Namesakes* series, this ship recognized Mr. David G. Kerr, the second Great Lakes bulk carrier, named in



McNutt Photo/Dossin Museum Coll.

*The D.G. KERR was a regular workhorse for U.S. Steel. Her 15,000 capacity would make her obsolete when the 1,000-footers were built.*



*The D.G. KERR in the St. Marys River in 1972.*

Photo by John Vourmakis

his honor. Mr. Kerr served as Vice-President of the Mining and Transportation for United States Steel from 1909 to 1932.

Mr. Kerr had previously worked for Carnegie Steel. He had been named Assistant Vice-President, with responsibility for raw materials, in 1897. Carnegie joined in the formation of United States Steel in 1901 and the first ship named for Kerr was built by the Superior Shipbuilding Company and launched at Superior, Wisconsin in 1903.

This 468-foot freighter served the Provident Shipping Company to 1913, and then the Interlake Steamship Company to 1955. The latter firm applied the name *Harry R. Jones* in 1916 and she last sailed for Cargo Carriers Inc. in 1958. The vessel was eventually towed overseas and arrived at Troon, Scotland on February 15, 1961, to be broken up for scrap.

On June 29, 1916, the second *D.G. Kerr* cleared Lorain for Duluth to take on the first of her numerous shipments of iron ore. It was destined for the blast furnaces along the lower lakes and this proved to be the first of many similar voyages in the colors of the Pittsburgh Steamship Division of U.S. Steel.

Usually her voyages were very routine and she took about seven days for a round trip. Ore,

as would be expected of a member of the U.S. Steel fleet, was her primary cargo throughout her sixty seasons on the lakes. Coal and stone were also handled as the demand warranted.

*D.G. Kerr* made news at Two Harbors, Minnesota, on September 7, 1921. On that occasion the vessel set a record that may well stand forever and it was the result of a concentrated, well organized effort.

In a space of sixteen and one half minutes, the *D.G. Kerr* took on 12,507 tons of iron ore or 758 tons per minute. The normal loading rate such a shipment was reported as three hours and forty-two minutes. From arrival to clearance, *D.G. Kerr* only spent nineteen minutes at the dock.

The *Kerr* carried on through the good years of the twenties and the bleak thirties. Her workload increased due to the demands of World War Two and she continued to haul vital payloads for U.S. Steel in the post war era.

Even into the sixties, this was a very busy ship. Some fleetmates took advantage of the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway to travel east to new territory. But I believe *D.G. Kerr* remained on her old haunts on the upper four Great Lakes.

During her final nine years of duty this ship carried 301 payloads or an average of 33.4 trips per year. Her busiest season in that span, was 1973 when she loaded forty-four cargoes while 1971 was her quietest with only twenty-seven.

Ore haulage remained her main duty. Almost seventy-five percent of all shipments were ore in this period while 20.9 percent were stone. Eighteen of the sixty-three stone cargoes came aboard in 1974 and rivalled ore that year as the main cargo.

Coal, on the other hand, only accounted for thirteen shipments in this period and over half, a total of seven, were carried in 1975. One shipment of slag, taken from Buffington to Duluth in 1973, completed her cargo tally. The ship hauled approximately 3,925,000 tons in this nine year time frame.

Duluth was the primary loading port for *D.G. Kerr* at the end of her career. She called there for 178 cargoes. The stone dock at Calcite accounted for 48 payloads while Two Harbors was the origin of another 37 shipments.

Her other loading ports were Port Dolomite for stone, Ashtabula, Toledo and Conneaut for coal plus Superior and Marquette for ore. The latter being only a single cargo.

U.S. Steel docks at Conneaut (27.2%), Gary (25.6%), Chicago (21.9%), and Lorain (17.6%) received most of her shipments. All took a mixture of ore and stone with Gary leading in the ore trade and Conneaut in stone.

There were twenty backhaul cargoes to Duluth including twelve of coal, seven of stone and the previously mentioned load of slag.

The remaining three cargoes were delivered to Allouez (stone), Thunder Bay (coal) and Cleveland (ore).

For most of her career *D.G. Kerr* was accident free. An exception was July 29, 1970 when she ran aground at Buoy 101 in the St. Marys River (Mission Point) at 04:50 a.m. The ship was released and went to anchor at 07:27 a.m. and returned to service at 16:33. There is no evidence that a shipyard visit was needed for repairs.

During the winter of 1972-73 *D.G. Kerr* had her final inspection. She was drydocked at Sturgeon Bay and sent back for two more years of lakes trading.

Her final season was 1975 and it was relatively busy with thirty-two payloads before tying up for good at Duluth on October 5. A total of 424,706 tons were carried that



Photo by Don Dube

The D.G. KERR on her last trip on September 28, 1972. Tug GLENADA is on the stern.



Photo by Doug Gross

D.G. KERR below Lock 7 in Welland Canal in 1980.

final year including a large, for her, load of 14,416 tons of coal out of Ashtabula for Duluth.

The 600-footers were coming to the end of the line in the seventies and *D.G. Kerr* was never recalled for service. She was towed to Superior April 14, 1976, and spent her final years at that port.

The ship was among five tinstackers sold for overseas scrapping in 1980 and her final trip was certainly an adventure.

While outbound from the Twin Ports with a part load of scrap on September 23, 1980, behind the tug *Tusker*, *D.G. Kerr* hit the north pier of the Duluth Ship Canal, damaging both the vessel and the piers.

Then, on September 30, while navigating the waters of the Welland Canal, the *Kerr* went aground near Port Robinson. By now three tugs were involved with *Glenada* and *James E. McGrath* assisting *Tusker*. The *Kerr* was released, but then delayed in Lock 5 due to a dispute between the tug's Captain and the towmaster. That was later resolved and the entourage got underway once again.

Enroute across Lake Ontario, the *Kerr* had to anchor while *Tusker* went into Kingston for needed repairs.

Finally the *D.G. Kerr* reached Sydney, Nova Scotia, to await a deep sea tug. But a wild fall storm swept the area, snapping the cables holding *D.G. Kerr*. As a result the ship broke loose and went on the beach on November 19. She was refloated two days later and returned the dock.

The tug *Federal 6* took the *D.G. Kerr* out of Sydney and headed across the Atlantic enroute to Spain. Typical late fall storms buffeted the ship enroute and she eventually succumbed to the punishment.

On December 12, the leaking *D.G. Kerr* gave up the struggle and sank eight miles off Santa Maria island near the Azores. Bad weather on the North Atlantic had claimed another victim.

*D.G. Kerr* had weathered many a fall storm on the Great Lakes, but her age and possibly her weakened condition, proved to be no match for the open waters of the Atlantic.

Note: The author wishes to thank Gene Onchulenko and Al Sykes for research assistance and acknowledge the help of the Toronto Marine Historical Society publication *Scanner*. □

## SHIPPING OUT ON THE GREAT LAKES

by  
LAWSON BROWNE

It was fall, 1939, "Brownie", (Lawson Browne), was living in Lansing, Michigan. Work had slowed, and for Brownie, stopped. He did have a seaman's book, correctly called a "Continuous Discharge Book", which would qualify him for a beginner's job on a lakeboat, if he could find one.

These books were issued by the Bureau of Inspection and Navigation of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Eventually they were taken over by the U.S. Coast Guard in the Department of Transportation.

Brownie would have liked to stay with his wife and infant son, but expenses must be met. He must find work, and try as he would, nothing was available or hopeful in Lansing. There should be some beginners jobs on the lakeboats this time of year. Toledo would be the best place to look. So he took a few dollars, some clothes, bade his small family good-bye, and got on a Greyhound bus for Toledo, where

he arrived late in the afternoon.


Staying in a low priced hotel, he was out early the next morning, searching for the Lake Carriers Hall. There were a dozen or more sailors in the hall, some just came to pass time and talk, a few were seeking jobs. Those who sought work were older fellows, looking for jobs that were not too strenuous. As for Brownie? He wanted to work on any ship.

After a couple of hours of seeing no action at the hiring level, he was surprised to see a fellow from his hometown of Alpena, Michigan. Joe Skowronek, a well-known ship's steward, especially on the Boland boats, was coming in the hall.

They recognized each other immediately and waved. When Joe had finished asking at the desk, he came over to Brownie for a visit. "How are you doing?" "Not good. Not good at all." "Come with me, I've got a place. Stay with me and we'll look for work together."

### CERTIFICATION OF DISCHARGE

Nº 158368

No.	NAME OF SHIP, OFFICIAL NUMBER AND CLASS	DATE AND PLACE OF ENGAGEMENT	RATING	DESCRIPTION OF VOYAGE	DATE AND PLACE OF DISCHARGE	SIGNATURE OF (1) MASTER, AND (2) SHIPPING COMMISSIONER AND OFFICIAL STAMP
13	Robert J Paisley 127583 Conveyor Steer.	March 16 1942. Ferryburg	whale man	Great Lakes	June 12 1942 Manuelic	1. R. M. Crocker 2.
14	Robert J Paisley 127083 Conveyor Steer.	June 13 1942. Manuelic	5th mate	Great Lakes	Dec 12 1942 Ferryburg	1. R. M. Crocker 2.
15	Robert J Paisley 127583	5/22/43 Ferryburg	"	"	12/13/43 Toledo	1. H. N. Wellington 2.
16	PERCIVAL ROBERTS, JR. 211025 STEAMER	3-23-44 St. Chicago Ill.	Wheels man	Great Lakes	6-17-44 Detroit Mich.	1. J. Brissette 2.
17	PERCIVAL ROBERTS, JR. 211025 STEAMER	6-24-44 Gary Ind.	Wheels man	Great Lakes	6-30-44 Gary Ind.	1. J. Brissette 2.
18	HENRY FAILING 243203 STEAMSHIP	Nov. 18, 1944 SEATTLE WASH	JR 3rd MATE	Coastwise	Dec 21, 1944 SEATTLE WASH.	1.  2.

NOTE—Whenever a master performs the duties of the Shipping Commissioner under this act, only the master's signature is required.

A Continuous Discharge book from able-bodied seaman Arthur Miller.

Joe had a one-room apartment out a way on Summit St. and knew his way around Toledo in his car. He was well-liked by grocery suppliers, tug office and dock people, so he could go where Brownie was barred.

After another day of bumming around, searching without success, Joe called the tug office, as was his wont, and found the New York Central dock was expecting the *Dow Chemical* in late that evening.

The two job seekers left Joe's place about midnight and went down to the dock, located on the east side of the river, just above the Cherry St. bridge. The *Dow Chemical* was there and they went aboard. No hesitation at the gate, the watchman waved Joe by. In the galley, Joe was chatting with the crew. Apparently he had sailed on the ship, he knew them all.

The Chief Engineer came in and he was perturbed. "I've been on the phone half an hour. No one can find a coalpasser." Joe said, "My chum has the ticket, but no experience." Chief said, "I'll take him!" It seemed a coalpasser who wanted to get off was a German alien and did not want to go to a Canadian port. Canada was at war, and would detain him at the Welland Canal. The ship was loading for

Toronto. Brownie had a relief job, ten days or so. It would be quite an experience for him working in a firehold.

When they got to Toledo again, the crewman came aboard and Brownie got off. He looked for Joe, but was told he had headed back to Michigan. Brownie thought he probably went back to Alpena. Joe died young and Brownie never saw him again to thank him the way he should.

Now Brownie was "flush". Twenty-eight dollars in his pocket! He sent twenty to his wife and planned to try again for another job. "I can tough out a few days."

When he was despondent, four days later with only enough money for a ride home, a break came. Sitting in the Lake Carriers Hall, the man in charge called out, "One AB deckwatch!" No one stirred, although Brownie was sure a couple of the older fellows were AB's, the term for Able Seaman. He then pointed at Brownie and beckoned. At the desk, he said, "This is a rough job, but only a fill-in. You take it and handle it, and I'll see you get a good one next time." Brownie said, "I need work bad, send me." With bus fare and a job slip, away he went, to the C&O coal dock and the *E.G. Mathiott*. She was an unpleasant ship



*The DOW CHEMICAL loading coal in Toledo in October, 1963.*





McDonald Coll. / Dossin Museum

*The E.G. MATHOITT unloading at St. Joseph, Michigan in 1949.*

to work on, an old scraper type self-unloader. A collier, dirty and crude, and the crew all worked hard with coal dust everywhere. Brownie now knew why the not so young fellows sat quiet in the hall.

Well, it had some pleasant points. A trip or two to Detroit, and a nice long trip to Superior, through the Portage and on to Ontonagon in a snowstorm. Brownie never saw the Portage again. It was beautiful, even with all the snow and ice.

Back to Toledo and there the AB showed up. The ship is required to carry a certain number of AB's, so Brownie got off.

The third day ashore, a call came in for a deckhand at the Lake Carriers Hall. Sure enough, true to his word, the big man called Brownie to the desk. He was smiling when he said, "Here's a real job, rest up!" Away went Brownie. First he sent all his money home. Then he went to the C&O dock again. There lay the *Colonel*, 360 feet long and ten hatches. "I'll love this". So he stayed the rest of the season, laid up in Detroit and had \$100 to take home.

Yes, the Lake Carriers Hall was good to him when he was in need.

After toughing out the winter in Lansing, he decided to get out of Lansing and try Detroit. He had tried everywhere for work and nothing looked hopeful. A relative got him to Detroit with his wife and son. Writing letters for work, painting houses, scouring the area for permanent employment. It was a trying time.

Unknown to Brownie, he had a friend on the Huron Cement boats, who wanted to help him. So he found a spotty season on the cement carrier *John W. Boardman* and finished the 1940 season there.

He found work in Bay City, Michigan that winter and decided he should stay with his wife and son. It was great until August, 1942, when he realized he was experiencing a twenty-five pound weight loss. After consultation with his doctor, he decided foundries weren't the best place for him to work. His past sailing experience was his chance to regain health. World War II was in full swing and demand for sailors was high.

Discussing the situation with his wife, and considering their three year old, the decision to change was made. They filled the pantry with staples. He sold the car since his wife didn't drive and boarded a bus to Detroit.

The Greyhound Bus depot was on Washington Blvd. at that time. After lunch he walked down to the foot of First Street. At the river's edge, he found the building. Over the second floor the sign proclaimed "Lake Carriers Association" and "J.W. Westcott Co." Climbing the stairs, he entered the Lake Carriers Hall. There he found only a man behind a desk. Not a single job hunter in sight.

The man behind the counter was very friendly and helpful. He asked about certificates, qualifications, etc. and searched through a journal-sized book for a suitable job. Brownie, having had some slight experience, was wary of taking the wrong job. A scraper-type self-unloader? No! A thirty-six hatch ore boat? No! The red-nosed man put the reversed book on the counter. "About eighteen jobs for you! Pick one." Brownie picked the *J.J.H. Brown*. Not because of her name, but for twenty-four hatches and not very large.

"Do you have a Port Security card?". No."

"You've got to have one. Get on the East Jefferson bus and tell the driver you must go to the Coast Guard office on Jefferson, not Belle Isle Coast Guard. The *Brown* should be here at 3:30 p.m." Brownie followed the instructions and was photographed, fingerprinted, issued a card and headed back.

Walking down from Jefferson to the hall, he saw the *J.J.H. Brown* passing downbound, already past the Westcott dock.

So back to the counter to visit with the friendly man again to pick another ship. "The *Perkins* is coming down, ten men short. She's not too big." "Anything tonight? I would rather get out tonight." This picking a job was new to Brownie, as he was accustomed to taking anything offered. "The *Saucon* between ten and eleven. She'd be good for you, rebuilt deck, good captain and mates. Runs steady to Erie and Buffalo." "O.K., I'll go on her." "You can pull some chairs together and lie down. I'll give you some coffee."

After four or five hours of fitfully trying to rest, the *Saucon* approach was confirmed. "Take your bag, go down and get on the mailboat." Along the ship's starboard side, the mailman shouted "Bethlehem Steel,



*The COLONEL was considered one of the easier ships to work on with only ten hatches.*



McDonald Coll./Dossin Museum

*The SAUCON was a regular visitor to Bethlehem Steel's plant in Buffalo.*

Buffalo!" Mail went up and came down. A ladder was lowered and Brownie clambered aboard.

It was apparently change of watch time, as the 2nd and 3rd mates were both at the rail. The 2nd mate asked, "You from Detroit?" "No, I'm from Bay City." "Oh well, a Detroit suburb." (Only 100 miles apart.) Brownie learned later they were John Ingles-2nd and John Bobula-3rd mates. First mate was Carl Vieira and Capt. Fred Desjardins. A few other names are remembered: Mack Waters and John Popp, both wheelmen, Ronnie Vincent, watchman and Dave Smith, deckhand.

Fresh air, good food, pleasant people had Brownie feeling better in about a month. He stayed with the *Saucon* to the end of the season and laid-up in Huron, Ohio on December 12th.

Those two Lake Carriers Association halls were good to Brownie. Mostly the old Toledo hall when it was on the west side of the river. The big man in charge there, named possibly Hibner, treated Brownie like a fellowman. Brownie wished he'd thanked him more emphatically for the relief jobs and fill-ins.

Recalling the port of Detroit in World War II is a task for a historian now. The waterfront development, the expressways and the new buildings have changed it so much. The landmarks are gone to urban development and the river is nowhere as active.

There were passenger ships overnight to Cleveland, excursions to Bob-Lo, ferries, automobiles loaded on ships and even the little boat *Pine Ridge*. And, of course, the lakers passing every few minutes.

Toledo, too, has been upgraded by urban renewal. The old haunts have disappeared. The "Banjo" fireman probably left with the old reciprocating steamers.

While writing this, a few more names have been recalled. On the *Dow Chemical* - Capt. Jim Healy. 1st mate - Arnold Ellingson. 2nd mate - Bill Smith. 3rd mate - John Ross. Chief Engineer - Julius Lawrence. 1st Engineer Herb Dietlin. 2nd Engineer-Melvin Kerr. On the *E.G. Mathiott* - Capt. H. Millington and on the *Colonel* - Capt. Henry Tucker. □

## DETROIT'S MOTOR BOAT LANE

The street that runs from Jefferson Avenue down to the Detroit River at the western edge of Waterworks Park officially became known as Motor Boat Lane in 1910. It was on this small stretch of slips, shops, and canals that a number of early marine interests collected, and began to create plans, engines and recreational craft for the public.

Along the lane in 1910 were the offices of Bosserdt Yacht & Engine Company, A.G. Liggett-yacht builder, Earlton Wilby-naval architect, American Boat Company, Concrete



Scott Gregory Coll.

*In the 1930s, Fisher Boat Works handled all types of crafts.*



Scott Gregory Coll.

*A variety of craft were stored at the Detroit Yacht and Motorboat Basin.*

Form & Engine Company, and the H.A. Schmidt Boat Livery. The end of the lane was the home of the original Detroit Motor Boat Club, which was founded by William E. Scripps.

In 1921 Edgar M. Gregory purchased all the leases on the narrow strip of boatwells, shelters, slips, shops, gas pumps and a few years later, acquired title to the property. This four acre site was needed for the production of Gregory's Belle Isle Bearcat, a sleek styled speedboat that was being produced at the Belle Isle Boat & Engine Company.

The Belle Isle Bearcat Runabouts were 26 feet long, powered by a 200 horsepower Hall Scott Engine and were priced at \$6,500. The big innovation on the boat was the forward cockpit, and when the first Bearcats were shown at the New York Boat Show, they were called 'suicide boats'. Until then no one had challenged the idea of putting a cockpit in front of an engine.

A change in the design, with Russ Pouliot assisting, brought out the Super Bearcat, a real dream runabout for its day. With a Liberty engine they sold for \$12,000. The bootleggers during prohibition days loved the Super with the Liberty engine for they could outrun anything that the river patrol had.

These boats could make a speed of 50 to 55 miles per hour.

In the late 1920's, Gregory sold Motor Boat Lane, and ceased the production of the Bearcats. A new competitor, the Chris-Craft Company came out with a 26-footer powered with a Curtis aircraft engine which they obtained as war surplus. They were selling boat and engine for \$3,700, well below the standard Bearcat price.

Motor Boat Lane saw a number of changes in the 1930's. The area was diked and then the whole slip complex was excavated to allow for the installation of a 250 ton marine railway which could move boats 600 feet from the water. New shops and storage yards were constructed. The yacht of Edsel Ford was serviced at the marina, along with the boats of the Fisher Brothers and Russell Alger. Russ Pouliot berthed his famous Mackinac race winner Baccarat there. Alger & Pouliot operated the marina for a while, then Bill and Tom Fisher followed the Pouliot Boat Works with the Fisher Boat Works.

In the late 1930's cruisers and yachts were constructed in the shipyard, and with the coming of World War II, government work was done. In 1940 two prototype U.S. Navy Torpedo Boats were constructed, *PT3* & *PT4*. These 59-foot torpedo boats left Detroit on



Scott Gregory Coll.

*One of the most colorful Gold Cuppers in the late 1940's was MY SWEETIE, built in 1948 for Ed Gregory, Jr. and Ed Schoenherr.*

June 16, 1940 and arrived in the Norfolk Navy Yard on June 26th. The company succeeded in obtaining some government contracts for the production of small craft during World War II.

Just after World War II the name of the area changed to the Detroit Boat Basin and while repairs and storage of recreational boats were the major interest, some craft were produced for the government. In 1953 a number of 63-foot Air Force Rescue Boats were designed with special features, among which was a transom gate which could be lowered to pick up a floating pilot and his rubber liferaft. Six of the boats were used at the Air Force bases on the Great Lakes: Sault Ste. Marie, Niagara Falls and Oscoda, Michigan.

In 1958 the Gregory Family again purchased the property and returned to their original 'home' on the river. The Detroit Boat Basin became a part of the Gregory Boat Company. They have been active in the sales and servicing of recreational boats, and carry a complete line of marine supplies for boaters. □



Scott Gregory Coll.

*Aircraft rescue boat under construction.*



63 FT. AIRCRAFT RESCUE BOAT  
HULL NO. R-37A 1365  
CONTRACT NO. NOBS-5633  
DETROIT BASIN INC.  
TRANSM GATE CLOSED  
30 NOV. 1954 DETROIT BASIN

Scott Gregory Coll.

*The 63-foot rescue boat finished with the transom gate closed.*

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## I.S.M.A. DETROIT LODGE NO. 7 CELEBRATES 100TH ANNIVERSARY



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On April 2, 1991, Detroit Lodge No. 7 of the International Ship Masters' Association celebrated their 100th Anniversary at Mariners' Church in Detroit. Although the 1991 shipping season had already begun, forty-two of the 105 members were present. While recalling the numerous advancements made in technology over the past 100 years, two members recalled their early years when they sailed on the few remaining schooners on the lakes.

On April 2, 1891, forty-three vessel captains met at the Cowie Building at the foot of Woodward in Detroit and were initiated into the Excelsior Marine Benevolent Association. This association was begun in Buffalo, New York on March 8, 1866, and with the addition of the Detroit Lodge, membership exceeded 700 members. (Membership was restricted to vessel captains, who held a masters certificate.) In 1893 the name of the organization was changed to Ship Masters' Association.

Today the American and Canadian Lodges continue to work closely with the United States and Canadian governments, as well as others in the shipping industry to make the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, the safest waterways in the world.



Photo by John Polarssek

# GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



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Seaway News Editor: Skip Gillham

Those who have contributed to the News  
Section in this issue are:

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S. ELVE	WM. HOWELL	C. HUDSON
T. KROEFF	C. LUHRS	A. MANN
D. MCORMICK	D. MERCER	J. MICHEAL
P. NASH	D. POHTO	G. SCHWEITZER
T. SECHEN	J. SPRUNT	D. STORY
J. VOURNAKIS		J. WALTER

Feb. 2. . . The U.S. Coast Guard has charged the captain, first mate and third mate with negligence in the grounding of the *Kinsman Independent* near Isle Royale on November 24, 1990. The Coast Guard determined that human error was the cause for the vessel being 24 miles off course. She was bound for Thunder Bay, Ontario.

. . . On February 26th, the captain pleaded no contest to the charge and his license was suspended for three months. He was placed on probation for nine months, beginning April 1st. The third mate also pleaded no contest and his license was suspended for two months. He was placed on six months probation, beginning April 1st. The first mate received a written warning for his part in the grounding.

Mar. 2. . . The ferry *Sugar Islander* suffered severe damage when she ran aground in the lower St. Marys River while attempting to rescue a man who had fallen through the ice. The *Sugar Islander* hit one of two shoals of Aune-Osborne Park while standing by the man in the water. She lost both rudders and damaged both propellers and their shafts. The man was rescued by a land-based rescue crew.

Mar. 3. . . About 180 barrels of fuel oil leaked from the freighter *Lucien Paquin* while she was being refueled at Halifax, NS. The spill was apparently contained by clean-up crews. The owners of the vessel, Logistec Corp. will pay for the clean-up, which could run as high as \$500,000.

Mar. 5. . . Algoma Steel has entered into an agreement with Purvis Marine Ltd., to sell the *Yankcanuck*. The sale hasn't been finalized yet, but is expected to be completed by the opening of the season. Algoma Steel has owned the vessel since the early 1970s and used her to deliver finished steel products. The vessel was named by its first owner: *Yank* for his American wife and *Canuck* for Capt. Manzutti, a Canadian.

Mar. 12. . . Benjamin Newman passed away at St. Catherines, Ontario. Mr. Newman has been involved in shipbreaking with A. Newman & Company and later with Port Maitland Shipbreakers.

Mar. 18. . . Oglebay Norton renamed the two vessels they purchased from Bethlehem Steel last December. The *Lewis Wilson Foy* will become *Oglebay Norton* and the *Sparrows Point* will become the *Buckeye*.



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GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●

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. . . In Lake Erie off Port Dover, the fishing trawler *Captain K* was struck by the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker *Griffon*. The *Captain K* sank immediately with the loss of three crewmen, all from Port Dover. There was a dense fog on Lake Erie at the time of collision. In the last seventeen years, two other fishing trawlers have been lost off Port Dover. Two brothers were lost in 1974 when their boat sank in heavy seas. In 1984, three men were lost when their boat sank in a violent storm.

. . . Icebreaking begins in the St. Marys River, Whitefish Bay and the Straits of Mackinac.

Mar. 19. . . USX's *Edgar B. Speer* cleared her winter lay-up berth at the Duluth Port Terminal and opened the Twin Ports season. She cleared for Two Harbors to load taconite for Gary, Indiana. Ice was not a problem for her as it was only four to eight inches thick.

. . . Inland Steel's *Wilfred Sykes* was the first ore boat of the season to clear Bay Shipbuilding at Sturgeon Bay, WI. The next day she opened the season for Escanaba when she loaded pellets for Indiana Harbor.

Mar. 20. . . The *Medusa Challenger* opened the season at Cleveland.

. . . The St. Lawrence Seaway cutter *Robinson Bay* began icebreaking in the Seaway.

Mar. 21. . . The Soo Locks opened with the *Edgar B. Speer* being the first down-bound laker. She spent most of the day battling ice in the upper St. Marys River and at the locks. At one point she was stuck, but was freed by the *USCG Mackinaw*.

. . . When the *Speer* locked through, she was greeted by a salute from the newly installed whistle from the str. *George Crawford*. The whistle will be used to salute the first and last vessel of the season to pass through the locks.

Mar. 22. . . Lake Shipping's *Kaye E. Barker* was the first upbound laker through the Soo. She was followed by the *Paul R. Tregurtha*. Both were bound for Duluth.

Mar. 24. . . The *Kaye E. Barker*, *Paul Tregurtha* and *George Stinson* were trapped in heavy ice in Lake Superior off the Twin Ports of Duluth-Superior. The icebreaker *Sundew* made several attempts to free the trio without success. Ice is reported to be eight to ten inches thick below the surface and up to six inches above the surface. Three days of high winds were blamed for the ice pile-up.

Mar. 25. . . The icebreaker *Mackinaw* arrived off the Twin Ports to assist the trio of lakers.

. . . The *Algonorth* was the first Canadian laker to pass upbound at the Soo. She is bound for Thunder Bay for grain. She opened that port when she arrived on the 26th.

Mar. 26. . . PH&'s *Willowglen* was the first upbound laker to pass through the Welland canal and her captain received the traditional tophat. A Canadian icebreaker was the first downbound vessel.

. . . C.S.L.'s *Rimouski* opened the Seaway at St. Lambert. The *Silver Isle* opened the port of Massena, N.Y.

. . . St. Lawrence Seaway officials announced that Canadian grain shipments are in full swing.

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● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS

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They expect to handle four million tons of grain through early June, thanks to a large purchase by Russia.

Mar. 27. . . The tug *Traveller* and barge *Black Carrier* passed up the Welland Canal. They are bound for Port Dover to raise the fishing trawler *Captain K*.

. . . The *Paul Tregurtha* was freed and entered the Twin Ports to load coal at Superior's Midwest Energy Terminal.

Mar. 28. . . The *Kaye E. Barker* was freed and entered Duluth to load taconite at the D.M.&I.R. ore dock. She opened the Twin Ports ore shipping season. She cleared the next day for the Rouge Steel plant. Later that same day, the *George Stinson* was freed and entered the Twin Ports to load ore.

. . . Bethlehem's *Stewart J. Cort* arrived in Superior, WI. to load at the Burlington Northern dock. She opened that dock's shipping season and cleared on the 29th for Burns Harbor. The *Stinson* loaded pellets for Great Lakes Steel in Detroit after the *Cort* was loaded.

. . . Philip Nash reports that the *Algolake* opened the port of Goderich when she arrived with coal. She cleared the next day with salt for Milwaukee.

. . . The Detroit-Wayne County Port Authority announced that for the first time in over ten years, there will be regular service between Detroit and northern Europe. Baltic Shipping Co. of Leningrad will offer service between Detroit and the ports of Bremen, Hamburg and



Photo by Tim Kroeff

JOSEPH L. BLOCK is outbound in the Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal on March 20, 1991.

GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●



Photo by Terry Sechen

EDGAR B. SPEER departing her lay-up berth at Duluth Port Terminal on March 19, 1991.

Helsinki every two weeks. The 12,000-ton general cargo Novo class ships will provide the service and they will dock at Nicholson Terminal & Dock. Baltic is also committing a roll-on, roll-off ship which will run between Detroit and Leningrad on a 25-day schedule.

Mar. 29. . . C.S.L.'s *Frontenac* opened the port of Toledo when she arrived with 21,000 tons of potash.

Mar. 30. . . The *American Mariner* opened the port of Marquette when she loaded pellets at the L.S.&I. ore dock.

Mar. 31. . . The tanker *Chippewa* was the first salties to pass through the Welland Canal.

. . . The *Agawa Canyon* suffered a six-foot crack in her hull while battling ice in Whitefish Bay. She anchored off the Carbide Dock at the Soo so that a temporary patch could be applied. She was bound for Toledo with a cargo of potash.

. . . The *Captain K* was raised and the bodies of the three crewmen were recovered.

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS

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Apr. 1. . .C.S.L.'s *Stephen B. Roman* opened the port of Toronto when she unloaded 7,000 tons of cement at Lake Ontario Cement. This is the 8th straight year that the *Roman* has opened the port. Her Captain received the traditional silk and beaver tophat.

. . . C.S.L.'s *Winnipeg* was the first Canadian laker to load at the Twin Ports. She loaded pellets at the Burlington Northern ore dock in Superior.

. . . Strong currents in the Saginaw River forced the *Buffalo* to back seventeen miles out to Saginaw Bay. The strong currents prevented her from turning in the river. She was the first ship of the season in Saginaw when she delivered limestone to Clawson Construction.

Apr. 2. . .Columbia's *Buckeye*, ex-*Sparrows Point* broke loose from her moorings in high winds at Toledo and struck the *Middletwon*. Three plates on the *Middletown* were damaged. The *Buckeye* departed her lay-up berth on April 9th.

Apr. 4. . . The rail/car ferry *Incan Superior* arrived in Duluth on her first trip of the season. She operates between Thunder Bay, Ontario and Duluth.

Apr. 5. . .Interlake's *Herbert C. Jackson* was floated out of the drydock at the Fraser Shipyard in Superior and tied up at the fit-out wall.

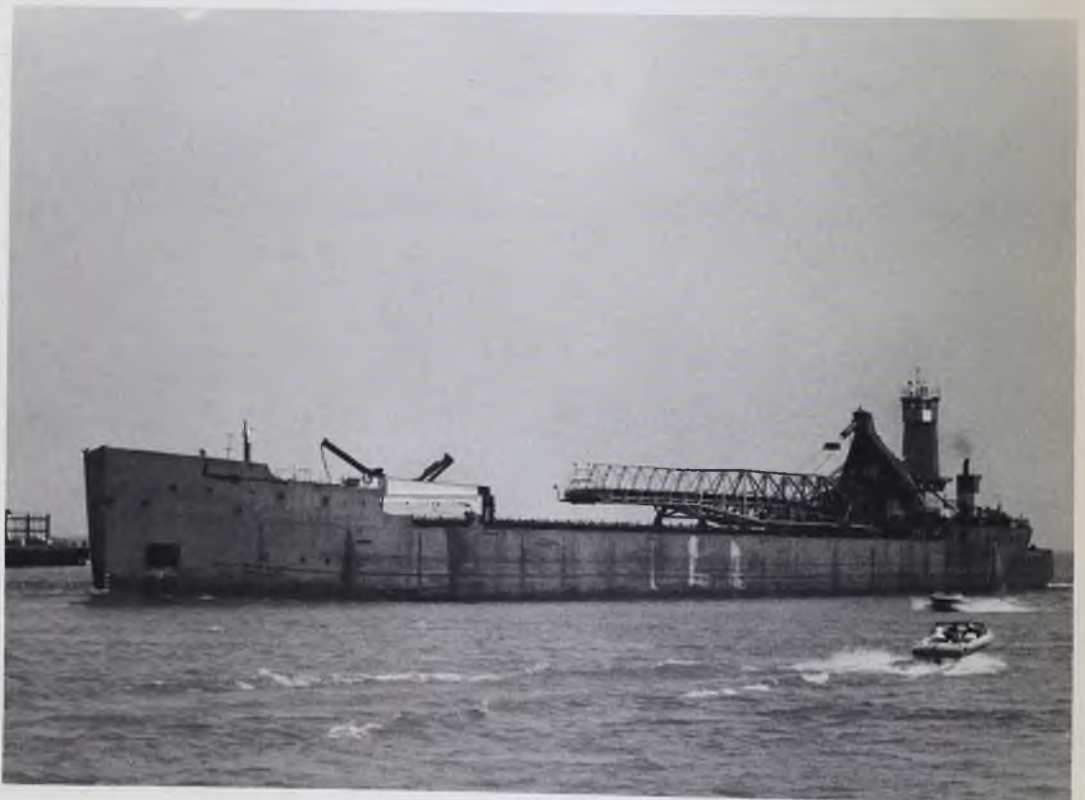


Photo by Jim Bearman

*Tug JOSEPH H. THOMPSON JR. & barge at Port Huron on April 27, 1991.*

## GREAT LAKES &amp; SEAWAY NEWS ●

. . . American Steamship's *John J. Boland* entered the drydock at Fraser Shipyard and was set down on the blocks. She has been laid-up at Fraser's frog pond since December, 1984. She is in need of extensive repairs and was still on the blocks at the end of the month.

. . . *Oglebay Norton ex-Lewis Wilson Foy* cleared her lay-up berth at Toledo for Taconite Harbor.

. . . *American Mariner* opened Fairport Harbor when she arrived with a load of stone for LTV Lime. This was her first visit to Fairport.

. . . A contract was signed in Toronto between the Ontario Government and Port Weller Drydock to build a new Pelee Island ferry. Construction begins on June 1st.

Apr. 6. . . *Federal Inger* was the first saltie to pass upbound at the Soo. She was bound for Algoma Steel.

. . . Jerry Walter reports that the tug/barge *Michigan/Great Lakes* opened Grand Haven's season when they arrived at the Koch Fuel dock. They were checking the moorings and they could replace the *Jupiter* in making gasoline deliveries to Koch this year.

Apr. 7. . . The *Buffalo* opened the port of Green Bay with a load of coal.

Apr. 8. . . The tug *Donald C. Hannah* and the barge *H-2801* ran aground in the St. Marys River above the Rock Cut. The barge received hull damage and docked at the DeTour Coal Dock for repairs. The barge is the former *OLS-30*, which sank off Rogers City, MI. in October, 1988. She was repaired at Harvey, LA.

. . . The Phillipine-flag *Furunes* was the first saltie in Detroit when she unload steel from Finland.

Apr. 9. . . There will be an increase in fares this year for the Manitoulin ferries. The increase will be about 9% and information is that the fares are not subject to the General Services Tax.

Apr. 10. . . Photographers were treated to a rare photo when the downbound *Oglebay Norton* passed the upbound *Buckeye* on the lower St. Marys River.

. . . The west side of the Flight Locks in the Welland Canal opened for the first time this season, but closed a few hours later because of gate problems in Lock 4.

. . . The Cuban-registered *Vardero* opened the port of Toronto overseas shipping season when she arrived with a cargo of sugar for the Redpath Sugar Dock. Her captain was presented with the traditional dispatch case and ship's barometer. After unloading, she cleared for Goderich to load grain for Cuba. Last year, 138 ocean-going vessels called at Toronto.

Apr. 11. . . Northeast winds continue to cause ice problems off the Twin Ports of Duluth-Superior. The *Incan Superior* became stuck and was freed two hours later by the *Sundew*. That evening the *Lee Tregurtha* stopped because of engine problems and became stuck. She was being followed by the *Winnipeg* and *Tarantau*. All three became stuck and the *USCG Biscayne Bay* was dispatched from St. Ignace to assist the *Sundew*. While the two icebreakers were working the next morning, the *Stewart J. Cort* came along and also became trapped. The Coast Guard freed the vessels by the afternoon of the 12th. The *Biscayne Bay* will remain a few days to assist the *Sundew*.

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS



Photo by Philip Clayton



Photo by Jim Hoffman

*Top: The SPARROWS POINT is repainted into Columbia colors.  
Bottom: The newly repainted BUCKEYE at Toledo on March 31, 1991.*

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GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS ●

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Photo by Brian Bluekamp

*Tugs EVANS MCKEIL, GLENBROOK, STORMONT and W.N. TWOLAN assisting the BEECHGLEN into Port Weller on May 26, 1991.*

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Apr. 12. . . The *Sauniere* cleared Port Weller Drydock and returned to service.

. . . The *Silver Isle* and *Serson* collided in the St. Lawrence, east of Montreal. Both were severely damaged and the *Silver Isle* went aground.

. . . Dave Story reports that strong currents in the Saginaw River kept the *Paul H. Townsend* at the LaFarge Cement Elevator at Carrollton for several days. She cleared on the 17th with assistance of the tugs *Frederick T. Kellers* and *Tug Malcolm*.

Apr. 13. . . *Federal Richelieu*, ex-*Canada Marquis*, passed upbound in the Welland Canal for the first time under her new name.

. . . *Juleen II*, a new pilot boat arrived at Port Weller.

Apr. 14. . . *Federal St. Louis*, ex-*Selkirk Settler*, passed upbound in the Welland Canal for the first time under her name. She is gradually being repainted, but her hull is still blue.

. . . The Philippine saltie *Furunes* opened the overseas season at the Twin Ports. She docked at the Hallett Dock in Duluth to load bentonite clay for Norway. She cleared on the 15th.

Apr. 16. . . The Star Line cruise ships *Star of Chicago II* and the *Star of Chicago III* arrived at Port Lambton, Ontario on the St. Clair River. They were joined on the 18th by the *Star of Detroit* and *Star of Chicago*. All four cruise/dinner ships are for sale.

● GREAT LAKES & SEAWAY NEWS

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. . . C.S.L.'s *Manitoulin* arrives at Port Weller Drydock for inspection.

Apr. 17. . . Steve Elve reports that the *E.M. Ford* arrived in Muskegon on what could be her last visit there this year. From Muskegon, she will go to Waukegon, Green Bay, Heron Bay and then to Duluth for her 5-year inspection. After inspection, she will be laid-up as a spare boat after the *Alpena* comes out.

Apr. 19. . . John Michael reports that the *Richard Reiss* opened the port of Erie when she arrived with stone. She had cleared her winter lay-up berth in Erie on the 9th..

. . . Erie Marine Enterprises has leased the old coal dock properties at Erie from the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority. They apparently need more space for winter lay-up berths.

. . . Interlake's *J.L. Mauthe* shifted from her winter lay-up berth to load grain at the Peavey Elevator. She was the first vessel of the season to load grain. She cleared on the afternoon of the 20th for Buffalo.

Apr. 20. . . The *Silver Isle* arrived at the fit-out wall at Port Weller Drydocks for repairs.

Apr. 22. . . The tug *Patricia McAllister* sank in the early morning hours in the Gulf of St. Lawrence off Gaspé Peninsula. The sinking was apparently very sudden as no distress calls were heard. She was reported overdue and when she failed to arrive in Nova Scotia, a search was begun. Aircraft located two liferafts and one survivor, who couldn't say what happened as he was not on duty when the tug sank. Five other crewmen are missing.

Apr. 23. . . *Kathy Lynn*, a former U.S. Army tug passed up the Welland Canal on her delivery voyage.

. . . A 22 year-old marine navigation student is reported to be missing from the *Canadian Century* in Lake Erie. Provincial Police called off the search for the missing man on the 26th.

Apr. 26. . . At Ludington, MI., Federal marshals "arrest" the carferry *Badger* under a court order. A Kentucky coal company has filed suit against the owner of the *Badger* for allegedly not paying for coal last year.

Apr. 28. . . C.S.L.'s *Murray Bay* arrived in Duluth with a rare cargo of cement for the St. Lawrence Cement Terminal. She had loaded on the 24th in Clarkson, Ontario and cleared Duluth the 30th for Thunder Bay.

Apr. 30. . . P&H's *Beechglen* was unloading corn at Cardinal, Ontario when her hull buckled at number 4 hold. The bow was resting in 27 feet of water. After part of her cargo was offloaded into the *D.C. Everest*, she was towed into Port Weller.

Great Lakes Calendar

August 8th-GLMI Board of Directors meeting at 7:30 p.m. at museum.

September 20th-Curator Robert E. Lee Dinner at St. Clair Inn.

October 10th-GLMI Board of Directors meeting at 7:30 p.m. at museum.

October 12-19 GLMI Model Shipbuilding Contest at Dossin Museum.

*Back Cover Photo: Adam E. Cornelius, Jr.* (US86610). Built in 1902 at West Superior, WI. 4471 GT; 3703 NT. 418 x 48 x 28. Originally *G.J. Grammer*, renamed *Cornelius* on February 10, 1937. She is shown here on July 5, 1940. Vessel scrapped in 1964 at Hamilton. Photo from Dossin Great Lakes Museum Collection and taken by Capt. Taylor. □



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