

THE LIGHTSHIP

Volume XIII NO.1

JANUARY 1991

Museum of Arts & History
Marie Gallery
1115 Sixth St
Port Huron MI 48060

LAKE

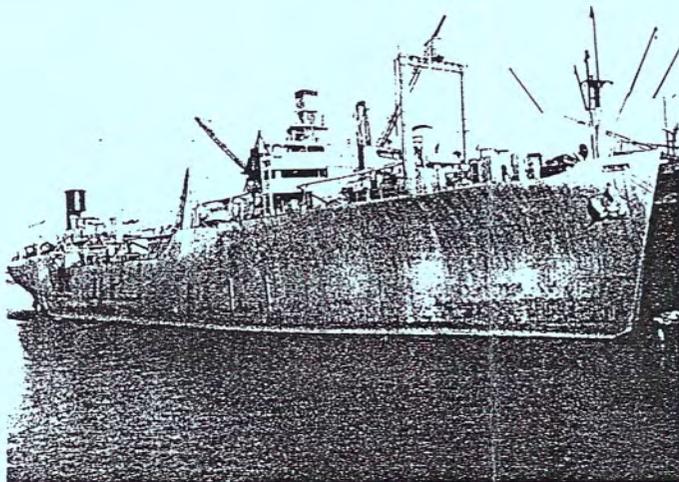


LORE

Fr. Pete Van der Linden Editor 1317 7th St. Port Huron, MI 48060
(313)985-9616

MARIN
SOCIETY

Joseph H. Thompson



MARINE ROBIN as a C-4 troop transport.

Originally built in 1944 as a C4-S-B2 design troop transport by the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Company as its Hull No.342 at Chester, Pennsylvania (US.245496). Her original dimensions were: 496.2 x 71.6 x 23.6; 11757 gross tons. Her maiden voyage took her from Newport News to Naples and for the next three months she moved thousands of troops from North Africa to Italy.

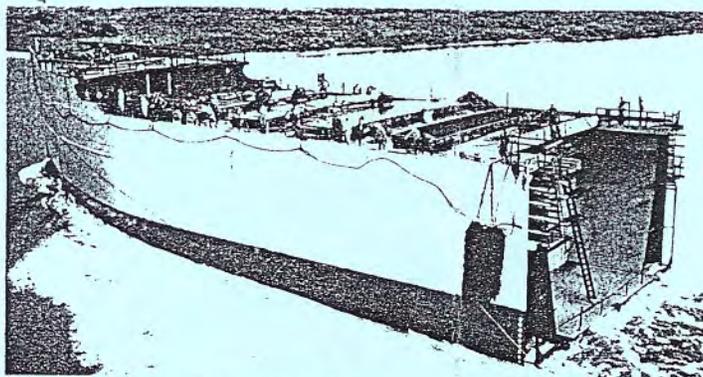
The MARINE ROBIN was the first ship to land American troops in southern France in World War II. After D-Day, she brought 1,500 German prisoners of war to the states and was a frequent troop-laden visitor to Oran, Le Harve, Naples, Southampton, Marseille and other Mediterranean ports.

Then in October, 1945, her theatre of operations was changed to the Pacific, and the ship proceeded through the Suez Canal to Calcutta. She carried troops and war supplies and was in continuous military service until August, 1946. Her log tells of visits to the Hawaiian Islands, Japan, the Philippine Islands, a supply-personel voyage to General MacArthur's newly established Tokyo headquarters, and a repatriation journey for German nationals from the heart of war-torn China

Finally the MARINE ROBIN returned to the United States, bearing scars of world-wide service. She was consigned along with many other ships to serve out her retirement in the James River in Virginia.

The Sands Products Company and the Hanna Coal & Ore Co. joined to form the Hansand Steamship Company. Officials of this company decided that they wanted a ship to carry not less than 18,500 gross tons. They employed as naval architect the J.J. Henry Co. of New York.

A contract was let to the Maryland Drydock Co. for the conversion job, and in October, 1951, the MARINE ROBIN was towed to Baltimore. The ship was immediately placed in dry dock and work started in cutting her in two, 247 feet from the bow. The forward section was floated out of the drydock and scrapped. Simultaneously work was started on the fabrication of the 221 foot bow section and the 222 foot midsection at Pascagoula, Mississippi. The mid-section was towed to Baltimore and joined with the old stern section. The new bow section was towed to New Orleans where it was met by the mid and after sections and towed up the Mississippi River to Chicago. There all three sections were joined and the new vessel was named the JOSEPH H. THOMPSON in honor of the president of M.A. Hanna Company. The new dimensions of the ship now were: 696.0 x 71.6 x 34.7; 12217 gross tons.

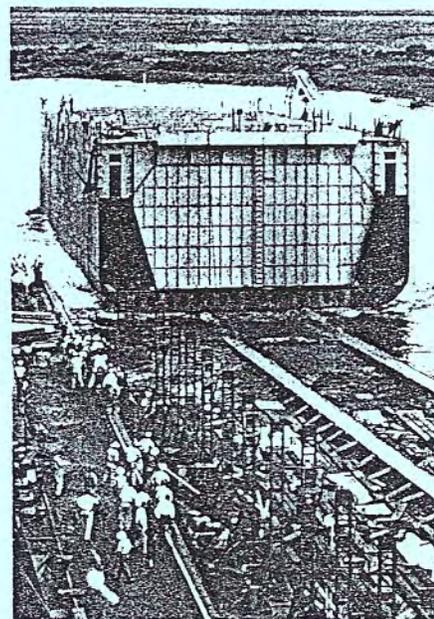


The new bow section.

Slide Program PRESENTED BY FR. PETE

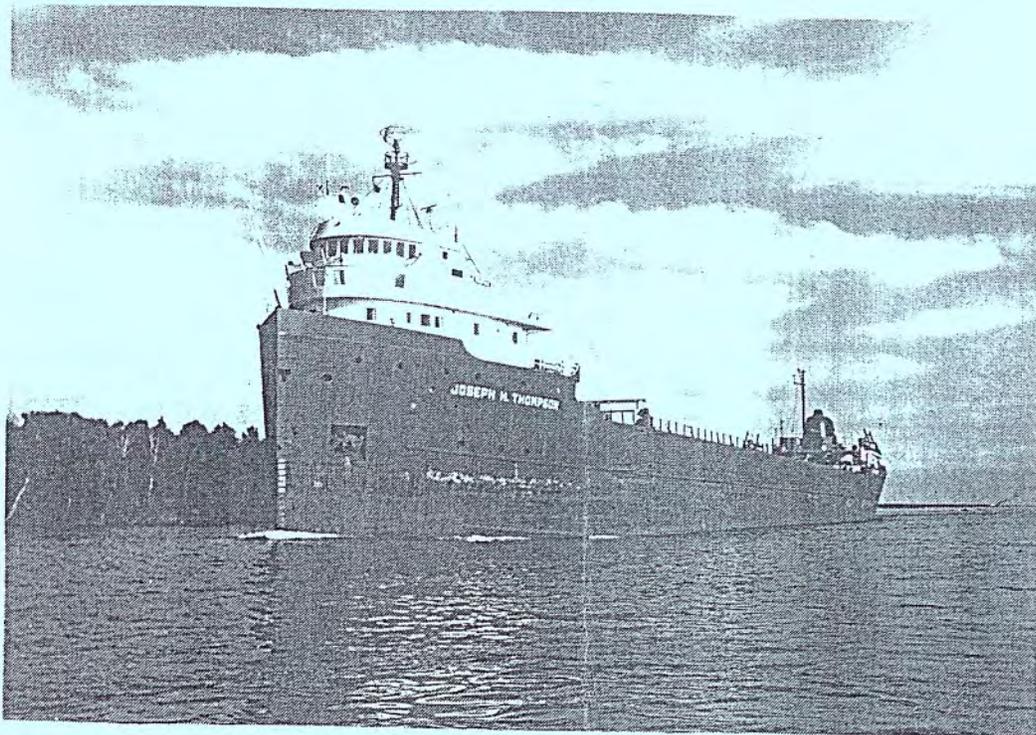
→ SATURDAY FEBRUARY 2, 1991 at 7:30 p.m

Museum of Arts and History
1115 Sixth Street
PORT HURON, MICHIGAN



The new mid-body

The JOSEPH H. THOMPSON sailed the lakes regularly with most of its cargoes being red iron ore and then taconite pellets. In the early eighties, she was laid up for lack of cargoes and spent most of her time in ordinary., waiting for a few breaks to allow her to sail again.

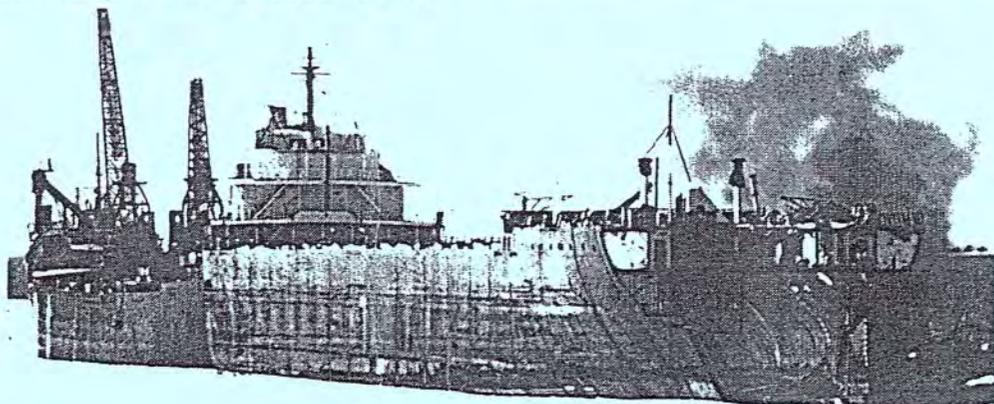


JOSEPH H. THOMPSON upbound in the St. Mary's River June 13, 1969.

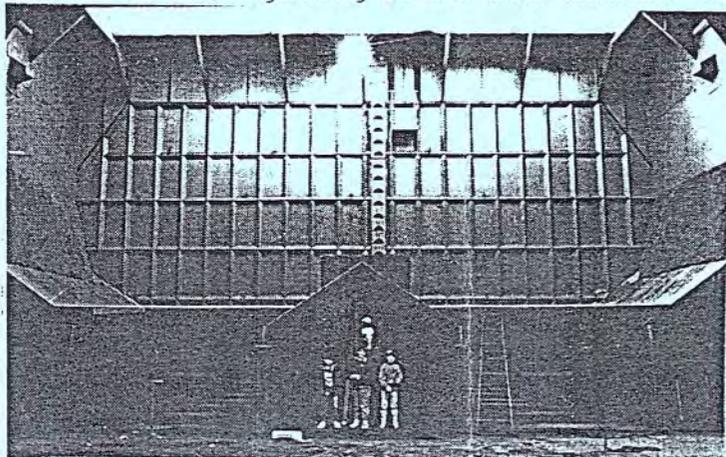


JOSEPH H. THOMPSON in Lake St. Clair

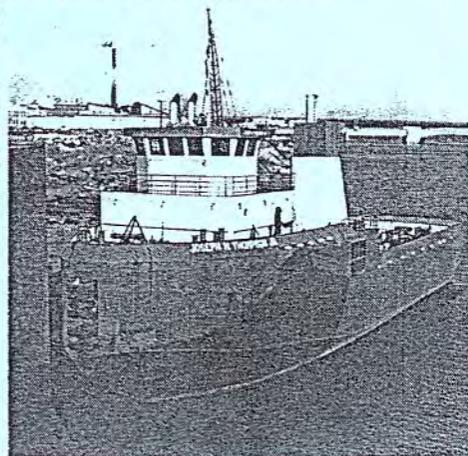
At the end of the 1982 season, the THOMPSON was laid up at River Rouge/Ecorse across from the Nicholson dock. She was purchased by John Strotich and Clyde Van Enkevork, the Upper Lakes Towing Company in 1984 and was towed by the tugs OHIO and WISCONSIN on December 15, 1984 to Marinette/Menominee. Two new General Electric 3,000 hp engines were purchased to supply the power for the new tug to be built from the stern of the THOMPSON. Work on the conversion of the THOMPSON to a selfunloading barge was begun in 1985. In the meantime work progressed on the stern section to be converted to a tug, which was named JOSEPH H. THOMPSON, JR. After the tug was finished in 1989, it was taken to Port Weller Dry Dock to be finished and inspected. This year, when the tug was to be joined to the barge section, the US Coast Guard required that the forward cabins be dismantled and taken off the barge and that the tug be a separate unit, not joined to the barge. The photo of the tug on this page shows her without the extended tower pilot house. The JOSEPH H. THOMPSON/JOSEPH H. THOMPSON, JR. is now in service in the coal and stone trade while the former barge/tug BUCKEYE/ OLIVE L. MOORE is being used as a stoage barge. We do not have the official number of the new tug as yet, nor the new dimensions of the barge, JOSEPH H. THOMPSON.



At the beginning of the conversion. BUCKEYE ahead at Menominee



Inside the hull being converted to a self-unloader



Tug minus her new extended