

REGULAR MEETING
Saturday Eve, Nov. 9
7:30 in the Museum

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Great Storm Damage of 72 Yrs Ago

HURON LIGHT BLOWN OFF LOCATION IN THE BIG STORM
WHILE SIX LIVES ARE LOST WITH THE SINKING OF LIGHT SHIP IN LAKE ERIE

On the night of the 72nd anniversary of the Great Storm of 1913, November 9th, 1985, Mike and Darla Van Hoey, some of the founding members of the Great Lakes Light House Keepers Association will relate the story of the damages suffered by the Lighthouse Establishment around the lakes. To set the background for the scene we will report extracts from

Ship Launch at Collingwood

A launch date has been set for the new Canadian Coast Guard Ice Breaker being built at Collingwood Shipyards. The date is on Thursday, December 5, 1985.

Her principal dimensions are: Length on waterline 78.5m; Length, b. p. 75m.; Breadth, moulded, 16.2 m.; depth, moulded, 7.5m; draught, design, 5.75m.; main engines, total installed power 6300kW speed at 5222kW 15.3 knots, approx.; range at 15 knots in excess of 6500 nautical miles; complement, 52; consumables, 120 days provisions, water and stores.

The MUSEUM OF ARTS & HISTORY is planning on a two day bus trip to Collingwood for the occasion. For information and reservations call Bernie mornings at 982-0891.

om "Climatological Data for November, 1913, Dist. 4, the Lake Region:

The storm of the 7th to 10th was one of the severest that has ever crossed the Lake Region. While higher winds have been recorded in connection with other disturbances, the velocities experienced in this storm were at most stations far above the verifying limits for windstorms, and they continued so long as to cause extraordinarily high seas which swept the lakes with tremendous force. Many disasters and casualties occurred as a result of the storm. Breakwaters were broken up, and banks on the windward shores were badly washed out. The disturbance was accompanied over the central and eastern portions of the lakes by driving snow, which increased the precarious situation of vessels, tied up land traffic, and caused much damage to a considerable distance from the shore.

Owing to the exceptional severity of this storm, reports of various weather Bureau officials relative to it are given in considerable detail:

GIVE A FRIEND A MEMBERSHIP
IN LAKE HURON LORE FOR
CHRISTMAS--Call Edith Hoyer at
765-8037. We will send card and
bill you after Jan. -

CLIFFS-VICTORY, AN ADOPTED DAUGHTER PLANS TO LEAVE THE LAKES
UNDER HER OWN POWER....AT LEAST DOES NOT LOOK QUITE SO FINAL!!

Word has it that our friend, and the boat watchers delight, CLIFFS VICTORY will leave the Great Lakes under her own power... perhaps by the time that this is published it will be an accomplished fact. To the purist of Great Lakes history she was nothing but a misplaced salty that had been remodeled. But to her hosts of admirers she was a thing of beauty.

Looking back over the years she was born in Portland, Oregon in 1945, built by Oregon Shipbuilding Corp., named NOTRE DAME VICTORY. Her family name was Victory for the class of 716x62x38. She was purchased from the Maritime Commission by Cleveland-Cliffs and remodeled and lengthened 165'6" and converted to bulk cargo carrier at Key Highway Yards, Bethlehem Shipbuilding, Baltimore, Md. in 1951. She was christened CLIFFS VICTORY on March 21, 1951 and towed up the Mississippi River and thence to Chicago. In 1957 she was again lengthened another 96'3" Amship, Chicago yards.

We have only one eye-witness account of her during the 1941-1945 unpleasantness with Japan. An Algonac See-Bee on a South Pacific Atoll which we took island by island until the enemy was confined (for the benefit of those too young to remember, the name See-Bees... whose shoulder patch was a mean looking bee holding a pneumatic jack hammer in action... came from the Navy term CB or construction batallion) that followed an invasion unit ashore and as soon as the beach was secure started to build the first airstrip to establish another point from which to harass the enemy. His account was that she had a pretty rough passage early that year from both weather and the enemy and her crew was getting some rest while unloading supplies. After a week she was still not in a hurry to leave. The Japs discovered her and just at dawn the next morning her upper works were strafed by aircraft fire. The witness said that within the hour she was gone and her whereabouts were unknown.

Coming to the lakes she established herself as a fast ship... quick turnarounds were the order of the day and she was apparently profitable to CCI for they kept her in operation until the great oil fiasco... To go fast took lots of oil and lots of oil cost lots of money, that we all know. So she laid at Chicago until now!

On one occasion after the war when visiting home... part of a vacation called for a trip to the Sans Souci Bar on Harsens Island, Kenny Ring, the long time proprietor displayed a mark about eight inches above the floor in his establishment. The customers raised their feet to adjacent chairs and the bar-maids waded, someone opened the doors and the water went out. CLIFFS VICTORY had passed another ship on her way up the lakes, just a mite too close to shore. In a few days someone from Cleveland appeared on the island with a check book in hand and life again resumed its leisurely pace on Harsens Island.

LHL President Smith has some friends who were crew members in her glory days and we hope to be able to present some stories that will become the legends of our adopted daughter.

Those speed trials of the ships after they were built that lasted many years were strictly illegal from the marine law point of view and were officially frowned upon by the owners... but who does not enjoy a horse race ?

"DETROIT MARINE HISTORIAN".....A SCRAP BOOK!

When my copy comes I immediately set it to one side... I guess that I am wishing that its contents would go away... after a few days it is opened... no such a chance... there are the pages, not enough of them to contain, along with their chronology to give

a bit of their past. . . . what tug is going that last mile with them to the scrap yard. It makes one feel even worse when no one cares. . . . as in the recent article where the old woodwork was set afire for a Welland Canal fire department to practice. Perhaps the Phoenix will arise and some good will come out of it all. I am happy that we were able to preserve what we could in the Museum of Arts & History of the pilot house and cabin of a turn of the century ship.

This is the second time around for some of us on the lakes to see the disappearance of entire fleets. . . . first it was the great passenger fleets one by one and then fleet by fleet ending with SOUTH AMERICAN.

Then the great package freight fleets. The railroad fleets disappeared before your editor's time. . . but remembered was the great white hulled, red stacked fleet of the Anchor Line of The Great Lakes Transit Co. all ships with beautiful and graceful lines. Then the modern Fort boats of CSL that were the latest word in speed and simplicity and they became obsolete and now their survivors are the shoebox fleet with the modern highrise aft. . . . oh. . . . and the pusher tugs and barges.

SEAWAY BLOWS AGAIN THIS FALL---IS IT A CONTINUING SAGA?

Word that the Welland canal lock walls are falling on passing salties does not sound like a thing that would encourage ship owners to send their vessels into regularly. A recent issue of the Detroit News hinted that perhaps there was some neglect at maintenance on the canal, the constant bickering over the tolls, the same goes for the pilots that are required. All of this sort of thing is nothing new to the St. Lawrence Seaway. Back in the late 1930's when the "Fourth Seacoast" as it was called, had considerable opposition in Congress. It became an almost formidable opposition when you lined up the Congress of the Eastern Seaboard, The Gulf seaboard and the West Coast and each port was going to become a wasteland if that monstrosity was built way up north and way out west. Looking back in years the whole project had trials and tribulations that were seemingly insurmountable and it was not until New York state was promised all that cheap hydro-electric power that construction was able to start at all. A considerable amount of the preliminary planning and engineering was accomplished by "borrowing" personnel of other districts of the Corps of Engineers to get something on paper. Each time one of these incidents happens more trade is syphoned off the system. Last year a lot of the Michigan bean crop was trucked to the Ohio River by empty trucks going back south, a trade that will not return. A lot of the container trade is offloaded on Lake Ontario. Last Tuesday soon after the recent break was reported the writer was going south on Michigan Road an was held up by an eastbound GT train from Chicago over half of which was made up of super long, brand new flats each holding two big blue boxes with the letters CAST on the side. Canadian Shipbuilding and Engineering had a short article on the experimental unit train, similar to our coal trains to be tried on the transcontinental rail line to haul the western grain crop to Vancouver for water shipment. We wonder how long the Canadians will have any interest in the Welland system?

CITY OF MILWAUKEE APPEARS TO BE SAFE FROM THE SCRAPPER!-----

The Detroit News carried an article about the saving of the CITY OF MILWAUKEE at Frankfort. She is to be preserved and will be put to multiple use and we hope profitably for her promoters. She was built in 1931 by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Company for the Grand Trunk-Milwaukee Car Ferry Company. She and her two sisters, MADISON and GRAND RAPIDS. They were the last of the high varnish ships to be built by master carpenters on the Great Lakes. In the observation room were large photographs of the western Canadian National Parks, writing desks and excellent wicker furniture. In the main cabin were cowhide upholstered comfortable chairs. The staterooms, if you got two of the forward ones, were connecting with the forward one equipped with a folding Pullman type upper that made a sittingroom when folded. All the others were standard upper and

lower with a washstand between. You may ask why all the fuss over a trip across Lake Michigan... but that was not what they were used for. They carried only 12 passengers, no autos, no tourists, no schedule. You got aboard, the only thing that you had to take aboard your steam yacht was a comfortable deck chair. It was a delightful trip, after trip with a harbor tour of Milwaukee, for she always docked away up River at Jones Island. The CITY OF MILWAUKEE, sole survivor of the three, finished her operating life with the Annie Line operating with the VIKING out of Frankfort to Kewaunee, Wis. After the state decided to stop supporting the railroad and go into something sensible like the Detroit People Mover, the operation ceased to exist. We hope that CITY OF MILWAUKEE has a future in Frankfort.

WEATHER BUREAU --1913
Concluded from page one

The Storm on Lake Huron on November 9, 1913.. The storm of November 9 will be entered into navigation history as one of the most violent and one that exacted a greater toll of life and property on Lake Huron than any other storm within the memories of local navigators. After its fury had subsided, it was found that eight boats were missing, some of which ranked with the best on the lakes, and with them went down 200 lives. Ten boats were stranded, of which 2 were abandoned as a total loss, while the others were released in more or less damaged condition. The greatest casualties occurred on the southern part of the lake, presumably within a hundred miles of Port Huron. Here 9 out of the 10 boats were stranded and all of the 8 missing boats were supposed to have foundered. Most of the stranded boats were found near the entrance to Saginaw Bay, between Port Austin and Harbor Beach, Mich.

The survivor's accounts of the storm and of their struggle to keep their vessels afloat were heart rending. The water, they claim was just a seething mass, such as they have never seen before. So helplessly were they tossed about by the waves and carried by the currents that most of them did not know where they were. Some of those that were stranded near Saginaw Bay felt absolutely sure that they were at least 10 or 15 miles from the shore, others again were under the impression that they were near the middle of the lake, somewhere near Sturgeon Point.

The story of the struggle of the eight vessels that were lost in Lake Huron, will never be known, neither are the places kno-

wn where 7 of them foundered. The bodies of some of the crews, as well as the wreckage, were washed ashore on the Canadian side of the lake, all along between Kincardine and Kettle Point, so the natural supposition is that the boats were lost in the lower half of the lake ..

One of the foundered boats, the CHARLES S. PRICE, was discovered 11 miles north of Port Huron, and seven miles off shore completely turned over. Her hull protruded about 20 feet above the water when she was first discovered, evidently bouyed up by the imprisoned air that was bubbling up all around her. She settled gradually and disappeared under the water on the 17th of November. Some of the bodies were washed ashore near Goderich, Ontario, about 55 miles northeast from where she sank.

(Concluded in Supplement)

DUES MAY BE PAID FOR 1986
AND CARDS PICKED UP AT
NOVEMBER 9TH MEETING

Your 1986 dues card will be made out and ready at the meeting on Saturday, Nov. 9.

Our congenial treasurer Edith Hoyer, will be out of town for this meeting but she has the 1986 cards made out... and your payment at this meeting eliminates the need for mailing statements. Let us pleasantly surprise her on this occasion!

HAVE YOU SEEN THE LITTLE
SELF-PROPELLED DUMP SCOWS
UNDER THE BLUE WATER BRIDGE

There are two small self propelled dump scows working with a dredge on Sarnia Harbor. The dump ground is up in Lake Huron. They almost appear like submarines on their way upstream loaded.