

# THE LIGHTSHIP

Office Address:  
Mail Only  
1115 Sixth Street,  
Port Huron, Mi. 48060



F. R. Crevier, Editor, 365 Dixie Blvd., Algonac, Mi., 48001

313-794-3466

## NICHOLSON TO THE SEA IN 1986

A PROGRAM THAT PARAPHRASES THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER ROUTE FROM GREAT LAKES TO SALTWATER.... "NIAGARA TO THE SEA"... THE SCENERY OF ROUTE AND THE LOCAL CONNECTION WILL HIGHLIGHT PROGRAM OF NOVEMBER 22ND.

The members and friends of Lake Huron Lore will be able to enjoy a trip by slide presentation of the scene of the beginnings of steam navigation on the Great Lakes. The cradle of all this was, of course on the lower St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario. The year was 1815.... the construction of the FRONTENAC was started at Kingston. In 1816 Henry Gildersleeve arrived from England to start a dynasty that ended in Sarnia with the burning of

### Michigan 150 Yrs..

Your publication "LIGHTSHIP" will observe, beginning with this issue, and continuing through Michigan's Sesqui-Centennial in 1987.... glimpses of the past from the early newspaper files; will be enlightening and will spur others on to research and to writing!

The first ship of course to travel the St. Clair River was "Le Griffon". her model by Harvey Nissley, now graces the place of honor in the French Era Section of the history room, through the kindness of her owners, Lake Huron Lore Marine Society. The next ship, and history says, to be built on the St. Clair River was the schooner "Ranger" She was built on the 'Newburgh Plantation' of Lt. Alexander Harrow, R. N on the site of the Algonac State Park, by none other than Daniel Dobbins. She was sailed by him for several years, over the route sailed by Lt. Harrow in HMS Wellcome in the trading business between Detroit and Mackinac. We will attempt to cover by publishing recorded raw history in that period from after the Civil War until the demise of "the world's largest builder of motorboats" in Algonac.

turn to page 4

the Hamonic, ending the fleet by cutting it down to one ship.... 165 years of travel... under the same family management... running under the slogan... Niagara to the Sea!

Trustee Bill Luke, boarded the Carnahan at Nicholson dock in Detroit late this summer and retraced this voyage.... sans the shooting of the rapids at Lachine and the Long Sault on her final trip from service on the lakes. This is probably the most beautiful fresh water trip on the face of this earth. It is a shame that it is so infrequently available to the traveling public. Enjoy it with us on the evening of the 22nd of November.

=====

LAUNCH OF HON. PAUL MARTIN AND THE PATERSON, LAST MERCHANT SHIPS BUILT AT COLLINGWOOD YARDS

Video tapes of the launching of the last two merchant ships, Hull #229 will be shown that evening if our new video system at the museum is in working order.

These video tapes were the gift to the Archives of Lake Huron Lore from Trustee Bill Luke, and were made by Collingwood Shipyard Photographers.

=====

## NUMBER 230... THE END OF AN ERA

The ancient art of side ship launching of large merchant ships on the Great Lakes came to an end last December with the launching of the Canadian Government Ice Breaker, Sir Wilfrid Laurier at Collingwood. Our sympathy goes to the town and the many friends we were to make there over the years. We print here for the record of history the address by Jim Elder, Senior Vice-President, CSL Group, Inc., at Collingwood, Ontario, August 22, 1986.

"It is with considerable regret that I am here today to announce formally the permanent closing of the Collingwood Shipyard... effective September 12, 1986.

In addition, as a consequence of our decision to close Collingwood, we will be merging the remainder of our shipbuilding and repair facilities with those of USL International of Toronto.

My regret is sincere, particularly from two points of view. First of all, the town of Collingwood and shipbuilding have been synonymous for more than 100 years. From the launching of the S. S. HURONIC, a Great Lakes passenger vessel launched in 1901, to the christening just a few weeks ago of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier, an icebreaker for the Canadian Coast Guard, the Collingwood yard has produced 214 ships of all classes and sizes.

Secondly, during this time, we have attracted a skilled and loyal labour force who are in no small measure responsible for the good reputation and success that the Collingwood yard has enjoyed over the years.

Currently, we are down to less than 50 production workers. In the next few weeks, after the icebreaker finishes its sea trials, our work force would have to be reduced to zero. I want to emphasize that our first priority is to treat employees fairly and responsibly in this difficult time.

In addition to providing equitable financial settlements, we have made arrangements to provide at no cost to all employees, specialists in employment counselling and financial and tax planning. We will also be providing on our premises, facilities for those employees to meet with these specialists as well as counsellors from the Department of Employment and Immigration.

There are those who will argue, I am sure, that the shipyard is just going through another slow period and that the company should tough it out until times get better. While that may seem like a reasonable argument, there are at least five things in today's world that make that course of action impossible.

FIRST:-The crisis that has been growing in the world-wide shipbuilding industry. World-wide demand for new ships this year will be approximately one third of what it was just 10 years ago. The plain fact is that the world's capacity to build ships far outstrips current and projected demand for new ships.

SECOND:-The situation in Canada reflects the world scene--greater supply than demand. In this declining market, competition has been fierce, and in addition, Canadian yards have lost production to offshore suppliers.

THIRD:-Collingwood's historical customers, the Great Lakes shipowners, have vessels lying idle and have no need for additional ships. We currently have no contracts in hand, although we have been working aggressively to obtain work. We have not had a new contract since 1984 and there is no prospect that significant new contracts will arise in the future.

FOURTH:-The Collingwood shipyard is at a particular disadvantage because of the lack of a large drydock for ship repair. Without the potential revenue from ship repair, the yard cannot survive economically. In addition, the geographical location of Collingwood, which is 12 hours from the main shipping routes in the Great Lakes, makes it even more difficult to compete effectively for minor repair work.

LASTLY:The staggering costs of keeping the shipyard open while we wait for new contracts. The current costs of keeping the yard open under these circumstances would amount to more than \$4 million a year.

We all know that the world has changed dramatically during the last decade. The shipbuilding industry has not escaped this change. There is no one factor or reason that has led us to today's announcement. Rather the Collingwood yard has been subjected to a combina-

LAKE HURON LORE MEMBERS  
HAVE THE EQUIPMENT AND SAVVY  
FOR FINDING GREAT LAKES WRECKS

Once again a Lake Huron Lore member was the one to find another wreck on the bottom of Lake Huron. This time it was the Canadian package freighter REGINA. Wayne Brusate, Marysville, who presented the enlightening program last season on the many aspects commercial diving discovered her last summer with his excellent equipment and the mastery of the way it is operated. We hope to have him with us in the future to describe the operation.

This is a one part story from the discovery of the DANIEL J. MORRELL when it was discovered by another expert, Larry Coplin. However Larry only found half a ship the first time, and returned a second time to locate the other half.

The discovery will make oodles of tourist business for the Thumb and we hope for some recovery for an area that suffered other water related damages during the past year.

It also brings to life again the Regina-Price Affair with reams and reams of speculation that make good reading, when executed by someone who will research the story.

These were cast by P. Zochowski.

Harry and Rose Burgess and Virginia Darling for their portrail of the never dull family life of the French. The traditional music group that added so much to the evening was always a part of the early French settlers life... for history records that at those parties dancing continued until daylight... probably because they were afraid to go home in the dark. The Museum Guild prepared a delightful repast and many others contributed to the display for the show.

APOLOGY IN ORDER FROM DIRECTOR  
FOR NOT SEEING DEPARTURE OF THE  
"GREAT FUR BRIGADE" ON THE 24TH.

I feel that an apology is in order for the part of the program that was missed that evening. The whole thing was billed as the departure of the "Fur Brigade" for winter quarters in Montreal. I cannot however, take the whole blame for this grand departure as Corp., Sgt., Lieut., Captain or what have you( I was not able to determine his rank(Frenchman) Harry Burgess, was having so many problems with his French wife, Rose and his Indian wife Virginia, the Angelus rang from the chapel and the brigade took off down the river. I rushed to the front door and just barely saw the outlines of their canoes, against the refinery lights of Sarnia, disappearing into darkness.

From the aftermath of that evening we can record that party as a success. I received several calls the next day reporting the same. In fact we had several memberships recorded, and one member wants to build a Dulcimer. Lake Huron Lore is not particularly noted for being musically inclined(with the exception of steam whistles) but living along the blue water will do the job of bringing out many talents.

Through the combined efforts of the committee on the 300th Anniversay of the establishment of Fort St. Joseph and Lake Huron Lore this how was probably a record setter for attendance, somewhere over 8,000 people saw it during the summerrun. Lake Huron Lore wishes to especially thank Mr. and Mrs. Dave Long of Crosswell for their loan of the pelts and artifacts to complete so well... the French trading post and also for slicing the miles of deer hide lacing for the Cross of Lorraine presented to each guest at the closing party.

tion of pressures from a variety of sources. The action that we are taking today, while unpleasant, is inevitable under the circumstances.

Both the Federal and Ontario governments have expressed their intention to provide financial assistance to help in the restructuring and to help the Collingwood community to adjust. I expect that both governments will be making early next week about their proposed actions in the light of our decision.

We will now work to combine our facilities in Thunder Bay with ULS's facilities in St. Catharines such that the new company will be better able to serve our current customers and to compete effectively for new shipbuilding contracts and repair work.

YOUR EDITOR WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE ARTICLES OF COMMENT OR ADDITIONAL MARINE HISTORY TO SUPPLEMENT THESE NEWS ITEMS. THEY WILL BE PLACED IN THE ARCHIVES OF YOUR SOCIETY. THAT THEY WILL BE AN INSPIRATION TO SOME FUTURE RESEARCHER TO PREPARE MANUSCRIPTS ON THESE BITS OF RAW HISTORY.....

=====

1873.. July 17. Dated Algonac, July, 15, 1873: Business in the shipbuilding line is very brisk here during the present season. Three very fine crafts have been launched here already, and another one is to go off the ways tomorrow (the 16th) if nothing arises to prevent it. The crafts built here were a steam barge, a barge intended to have the machinery put in her when desired, and a handsome schooner, launched with her outfit completed and everything ready for service. Messer. Smith and Stewart have another barge which they propose to launch tomorrow. She is a fine, staunch craft, designed for the lumber trade, and was built by Mr. James Galloway. She is 140 oa, 133 foot keel, 28 1/2 foot beam, and 11 hold. This craft is also fitted up to be a steam barge at some future date, but at present will be towed. Mr. Abram Smith, one of the owners, also owns the tugs ONTARIO and RED ERIC, and is interested in various other crafts. Parties from the city are engaged in raising the hull of the burned propellor BOSCOBEL, which now lies at Marine City. If she is worth anything she will be converted into a tow barge.

Tues, July 22nd... The new schooner, CHAS. H. BURTON was launched at Balentine's Yard, near Bay City, last Saturday. The sunken tug M. I. MILLS has been found, and the RESCUE is examining her position. She is in 90' of water. Mr. Leighton, master builder at the Fitzgerald yard announces a launch for 2:30 p. m. on the 24th.

Friday, July 25th... Launch of the Steam ship OSCAR TOWNSEND A new barge, or more properly steamship, built by Mr. E. Fitzgerald was launched on the afternoon

of the 24th at 2:20 which was about 10 minutes sooner than the launch was advertised. She went off beautifully amid the cheers of hundreds of people who had assembled to see it. She is of excellent model, well built, of great capacity, and looks well in all respects. She is intended for the iron ore trade and is owned by Captain Ed Kelley and others who constitute a firm known as the Lake Superior Transportation Co. She carries three masts and measures 123 feet, keelson to main truck, is 210 feet oa, and 200 foot keel, with depth of hold of 15', and breadth of beam is 33'10". She is painted a deep green. If weather remains fine, she will be ready for service in about 10 days. Much credit is due her builders, for this handsome specimen of Port Huron shipbuilding they have turned out.

Monday, July 28: The Windsor Record of the 19th says the Scow TRAVELLER of Port Huron which discharged a cargo of coal lately had neither reported inbound or outbound and has been seized by the Collector of Customs.

Tue., July 29: Plans to raise the tug M. I. MILLS for a cost of \$5,000.

Wed., July 30: George Hardison of Detroit, has decided to build vessels in Port Huron.

Thur. July 31: The NEW DOMINION has been docked at Fitzgerald's and has been painted a handsome green, bright green color. New Propellor: Candler Bros. are having a new propellor built at St. Clair, which is already in frame, for the engines that were formerly in the propellor EDITH. She will be completed this fall, but possibly not in time for business this present season. Aug. 6: From Mr. Bissell of the St. Clair Republican, we learned that the ferry boat MILTON COURTRIGHT was burned Tuesday night at St. Clair. The boat was lying at Agen's Dock, shortly after midnight, having been engaged in towing on Pine River, when the fire broke out. She was cut loose and floated down river, where she soon after sank, and is supposed to be a total loss. The COURTRIGHT was owned by Mr. Charles Sheldon. The city of St. Clair still has one ferry boat left, THE MESSENGER. The COURTRIGHT was about the size of the PRIDGEON.