



## Annual Conference looks at rich history of Great Lakes region



An illustrated history of the **Christopher Columbus**, the world's only whaleback passenger steamer, was one of the programs at the 2010 AGLMH Conference (UW-Superior Maritime Collection photo).

Recent shipwreck discoveries, historic Great Lakes vessels, the region's naval history, and wreck preservation were among presentation topics for the speakers program portion of the 2010 Annual Conference of the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History.

### FREIGHTER L.R. DOTY

In June, a team of divers and maritime historians announced the discovery of the Lake Michigan wreck site of the

19th century freighter **L.R. Doty**. The wreck was discovered in 300 feet of water near Milwaukee.

Brendon Baillod, one of the team members, presented a program on the history of the ship and its discovery. The **Doty** was built in 1893 at West Bay City, Michigan by F.W. Wheeler & Co. for the Cuyahoga Transit Co. of Cleveland, Ohio. The 291-foot wooden

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## Moir wins 2010 Barkhausen Award

Three individuals whose research and service have furthered the goals of the Association for Great Lakes Maritime history were honored during the 2010 Annual Dinner which was held in the University of Wisconsin Superior's Yellow Jacket Union.

### BARKHAUSEN AWARD

The 2010 Henry N. Barkhausen Award for Original Research in Great Lakes

Maritime History was presented to Michael Moir, an archivist at the York University Libraries in Toronto, where he is also head of the Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections.

Moir's paper was entitled "Harbour Commissioners, Civil Engineers, and the Large-Scale Manipulation of Nature on Toronto's Waterfront, 1883-

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### ASSOCIATION NEWS

The Association held its annual business meeting at the University of Wisconsin-Superior in Superior, Wis. on Sept. 10, 2010. In addition to a discussion of future strategic initiatives, there were also updates the Mackinac Custom House records projects and improvements to the Association's web site.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In her annual report, President Laura Jacobs noted that institutional and individual members of the Association have been struggling with the economic slump. However, she also reported that many are still managing to do amazing work despite those conditions.

Jacobs also reported that the board of directors has begun a strategic planning process to discern how the Association can best serve members in the future. She also recognized a number of members for their long-time dedication to the Association, including Henry Barkhausen and C. Patrick Labadie.

Bob Graham, John Polacsek, and Ed Warner were also thanked for their support and quiet leadership throughout the year. Jacobs also noted the retirement of Fred Neuschel, long-time chair of the Research & Publications Committee, this past year and the able job that Steve Brisson has done replacing him. Finally, Ron Bloomfield and Bob O'Donnell were thanked for helping with for this year's annual conference.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

Following the president's report, Laura Jacobs lead a brief discussion of some strategic initiatives for the board of directors to consider.

At the 2010 mid-year meeting, the board was asked to submit a list of what they saw as the Association's organizational strengths and weaknesses, as well as its opportunities and threats. During the business

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## NEWSLETTER

The **Association for Great Lakes Maritime History** is an international organization of institutions, museums, societies, and individuals interested in preserving and interpreting the maritime history of the Great Lakes.

Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter and the opportunity to participate in Association activities. In addition to its newsletter, the Association also sponsors an annual meeting, and encourages research, the exchange of information, and the publication of materials on Great Lakes maritime history.

Individual membership is \$40 per year.  
Institutional membership is \$60 per year.

**To become a member or for a brochure** containing more information about the Association, write to:

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**For more news and information,  
visit the Association Web Site**

**[www.aglmh.net](http://www.aglmh.net)**

# Roundtables look at preservation and research using ship's papers

The challenge of preserving historic buildings and vessels, and researching 20<sup>th</sup> century maritime history using ship's papers were the focus of the roundtables of the 2010 Annual Conference of the Association for Great Lakes Maritime History.

### LIGHT STATION RESTORATION

During the annual Museum Directors Roundtable, Lee Radzak, manager of the Split Rock Lighthouse Historic Site, discussed the many challenges involved with a three-year restoration of the Lake Superior landmark, and a celebration of its centennial in 2010.

In addition to its iconic lighthouse, the Split Rock Lighthouse Historic Site consists of several other historic structures. Those structures include a fog signal building, hoist & derrick, oil storage building, pump house, boathouse, tramway, and three light keeper dwellings, each with a detached storage barn.

The light station was decommissioned by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1969. The State of Minnesota acquired the site from the federal government in 1971, and assigned responsibility for the station's historic preservation and interpretation to the Minnesota Historical Society in 1976.

Because of its lakefront location, water and moisture are continually damaging the site's many buildings. Repairing that damage and finding ways to prevent it have been the focus of three major restoration projects at Split Rock since the early 1980s.

Prior restoration work also addressed the presence of lead paint in many structures, and restored the interior and exterior woodwork in several buildings. Planning for the current three-year project, which was the largest ever undertaken at Split Rock Historic Site, started in 2007.

The Collaborative Design Group Inc. of Minneapolis provided planning services for the project, which was one of several historic preservation efforts around the state that were funded by \$5.7 million in bonding authority approved by the Minnesota legislature in 2006. In 2008, work at Split Rock focused on masonry repair and

repainting of the keeper dwellings, storage barns and the 54-foot light tower.

The focus in 2009 was on the repair of interior and exterior brick work and the concrete foundation of the light tower, and the exterior masonry and brick work of the fog signal building. Repairs were also completed to the pump house, oil storage building, and two wooden storage barns. The lead contractor on many of the building projects was Anderson & Hammack Construction of Superior, Wis.

Those projects employed a number of innovative restoration techniques. Among those techniques was the use of dry ice blasting in place of soda blasting. After seeing the aftermath of soda blasting in a previous project, Radzak recommended the use of dry ice blasting since it leaves less residue, can be used on metal and wood, and removes rust scaling without removing old paint.

The blasting contractor used a dry ice blasting technique developed by Cold Jet LLC of Loveland, Ohio. Other innovative techniques used on the project included the application of titanium putty to repair holes in cast iron components. One of the most dangerous parts of the Split Rock project was the replacement of seven quarts of highly, toxic mercury from the vat on which the lighthouse's Fresnel lens floats.

The mercury replacement process, along with most work involving the light tower, had to be completed in a narrow window between April 1 and the beginning of the visitor season on May 15. During that time period and for a few weeks into June, the tower was encapsulated in scaffolding so that its metal top could be cleaned and repainted, and each of the light's 27 curved windows removed and their brass frames stored and resealed.

The project also required creamery brick with a special radius to be crafted for use in restoring Split Rock's light tower. Bricks also had to be produced in three different shades to match the original appearance of the structures at the light station.

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# L.R. Doty wreck

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vessel was named after the general manager of the Cuyahoga Transit Co., Lucius Ramsey Doty.

The freighter was one of the last of the giant wooden lake steamers, as steel hulls were quickly replacing wood in the construction of large bulk carriers at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The **Doty** was one of six nearly identical sister ships that were built in West Bay City, a group that included the steamers **William F. Sauber**, **C.F. Bielman**, **Tampa**, **Iosco** and **Uganda**.

Built of white oak with steel arches embedded in the sides of her hull to provide needed stability, the **Doty** had a cargo capacity of over 2,000 gross tons. The ship had nine deck hatches, and was built with a tall fore-mast, on which it could set canvas, if necessary.

The **Doty** was powered by three cylinder triple-expansion steam engines built by Frontier Iron Works of Detroit, Mich. that generated 1,000 horsepower. It was also fitted with two Scotch boilers built by Wickes Bros. of Saginaw, Mich. that could generate steam pressure of 167 psi. The ship was also equipped with a steam power system for her deck winches, but had neither electric lights nor wireless communications.

When her fitting out was completed, the **Doty** immediately entered the iron ore and coal trade making trips between Cleveland and the ports of Duluth, Superior, Marquette, and Escanaba. On these runs, the ship also towed the 242-foot, four-masted schooner-barge **Olive Jeanette**. When not hauling iron ore or coal, the two would carry cargoes of grain between various Great Lakes ports.

Over the years, the **Doty** successfully weathered many severe storms, and had relatively few mishaps for a vessel of her day. The ship was, by all accounts, a relatively sturdy vessel when it sailed out of South Chicago in fair weather on the afternoon of Monday, Oct. 24, 1898.

Loaded with 107,000 bushels of corn, the **Doty** and the **Jeanette** were bound for Midland, Ont. before proceeding to Lake Superior for a cargo of iron ore bound for Cleveland. On Monday, the pair headed uneventfully up the Wisconsin shore of Lake Michigan. On Tuesday, around 1 p.m. the ships

were off Milwaukee when the wind began to pick up out of the northeast and the seas began to build.

By 4 p.m. snow and sleet began to obscure visibility and the waves had built to over 20 feet. The **Doty** and **Jeanette** were several miles north of Milwaukee by 5 p.m., when suddenly the towline between them broke.

Captain D.B. Cadotte of the **Jeanette** reported that the **Doty** continued to steam off to the north and was soon lost from sight. The schooner-barge crew scrambled to set canvas in what was later said to be one of the worst storms on the Great Lakes in 30 years.

All across the region, ships were wrecked and many lives were lost. The schooner **Barbarian** was driven on the break wall at Milwaukee and wrecked. The **Olive Jeanette**, for its part, was to endure one of the most harrowing ordeals in Great Lakes history before being rescued adrift off Chicago.

Nothing was known of the fate of the **Doty** until the morning of October 26 when the tug **Prodigy** located a debris field floating 25 miles off Kenosha. The debris consisted of a stem post, a large amount of wood trim, a cabin door, hatch covers and other items bearing the brown colors of the **Doty**.

There was a great deal of conjecture in marine circles as to how a relatively new vessel could have foundered with the loss of all 17 men aboard. In the years that followed the **Doty's** loss, the ship faded into history as one of the many thousands of Great Lakes vessels to be wrecked during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the 1960s, there was considerable interest in locating shipwreck sites in the region spurred by the advent of scuba diving. Many sport divers also began to search for wrecks with remote sensing equipment. Occasional rumors of the discovery of the **Doty** surfaced but all proved to be false.

In August 1991, the commercial fish tug **Butchie B.** was gill netting chubs out of Milwaukee when her captain pulled alongside the **LenDer**, a dive boat operated by Milwaukee charter captain Jerry Guyer. The tug reported that it had snagged its nets on a deep obstruction over 20 miles from shore in about 300 feet of water.

Guyer, who was also the owner of the Pirates Cove Dive Shop, became interested in the site, but had no

intention of taking divers to it since the technology to safely visit deep wrecks was still not commonplace in the early 1990s. Eventually, however, he did make a trip to the site and imaged it with a fish finder, revealing a large object on the bottom.

However, due to the depth and the distance from shore, the site was of little further interest to him. Brendon Baillod learned of the deep snag in the mid-1990s and researched possible identities for the large object on the bottom. Several vessels had been lost in deep water south of Milwaukee over the years, including the steamers **R.G. Peters**, **Monitor**, **Thomas Smith** and **Lac La Belle**.

Beginning in 2000, mixed gas diving began to gain popularity in the Great Lakes, and soon technical divers began safely visiting shipwrecks in over 200 feet of water. By the end of the decade, mixed gas diving using helium and rebreather technology pushed technical diving well beyond the 400-foot mark.

At about this time, Milwaukee charter captain Jitka Hanakova, a technical diving enthusiast, began working with historians and wreck hunters to visit deep water wrecks in Lake Michigan. In 2008, she worked with Baillod on the wreck of the **Robert C. Pringle** which was found in about 300 feet of water off Sheboygan.

The two later discussed the **Butchie B.'s** deep water snag in 1991, and Hanakova relocated the site by doing an extensive search around the area based on LORAN coordinates. That process was complicated by the fact that LORAN coordinates had a non-standard error when converted to latitude and longitude.

On June 16, 2010, a team of technical divers arrived on the site to try and determine the identity of the object on the bottom. A sonar outline of it was created, and markers dropped. The process revealed that whatever was on the bottom was at least 200 feet long. After carefully hooking the wreck with a grapple, John Janzen, John Scoles and Tracy Xelowski began the long, cold dive to the bottom.

Approximately 40 minutes into the dive, a red lift bag shot up the grapple line to the surface. Since no one had expected any messages from the divers, there was immediate concern.

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Accidents at extreme depth, although uncommon, are usually fatal. The note read "all divers ok . . . up in 80 minutes . . . huge wooden steamship."

According to Bailod, this is when the team knew that it had found the grave of the long lost **L.R. Doty**. To confirm that conclusion, Janzen and Scoles shot about 40 minutes of hi-definition video of the wreck, some of which is now on-line (go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and search for "L.R. Doty").

The video was made possible, in part, by the invasion of the Great Lakes by Quagga mussels. Ten years ago, there would have been little or no ambient light at the depth where the **Doty** lies. However, the wreck is now covered with mussels which appear to have filtered much of the zooplankton from the surrounding waters.

Both visibility and natural light have increased to the point where divers reported that, at 300 feet, the ambient light is now nearly bright enough to film without lights. Visibility on the deck of the **Doty** itself, however, is only about 40 feet and the site has very strong surface currents.

Future plans of the team include the possible nomination of the **L.R. Doty** for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. There is also talk of producing a short documentary.

#### WHALEBACK CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

An illustrated history of the passenger whaleback **Christopher Columbus** was the subject of a presentation by Al Miller. The **Columbus** was built by Alexander McDougall's American Steel Barge Co. shipyard in Superior, Wis., not far from the site of the 2010 AGLMH Conference.

The World's Fair Steamship Co. contracted with Capt. McDougall for a ship to transport passengers between downtown Chicago and the World Columbia Exposition of 1893 on the city's south side. He closed the deal on the **Christopher Columbus** on Aug. 26, 1892 with a promise to complete work on the vessel in three months at an estimated cost of \$360,000.

The contract specifications also called for the 362-foot **Columbus** to be able to make the six-mile run from its dock downtown to the exposition grounds in 20 minutes. To achieve that speed, the ship's propulsion system consisted of two reciprocating triple-expansion

steam engines powering a single four-bladed propeller. Part of the required vessel speed would also be the result of the whaleback's distinctive hull shape with rounded tops over which waves broke with considerably less force than a conventional hull.

The contract between the parties also required rapid loading and unloading of passengers. McDougall predicted that the **Columbus** would be able to embark 5,000 people in five minutes, and disembark the same number in even less time.

The hull framing for the whaleback was completed on Sept. 13, 1892. The rounded hull top was then added, followed by six turrets, which were substantially larger than those employed on freighter versions of whalebacks.

After the **Columbus** was launched on Dec. 3, 1892, two superstructure decks were mounted on the turrets along the centerline of her hull. The turrets afforded passengers access to the ship's two internal decks, one in the turrets and one in the hull below.

Electric lighting was used throughout the ship and its grand saloon. The promenade deck contained several fountains and a large aquarium filled with Great Lakes fish. The cabins and public spaces were fitted out with marble, oak paneling, velvet carpets, etched glass windows, and leather furniture. There were also shops and restaurants on board.

McDougall set up a holding company, the Columbian Whaleback Steamship Co. of Duluth, to own and operate the **Columbus**. Painted all white, the ship was commissioned on May 13, 1893. An estimated 7,000 passengers were carried on its maiden voyage from downtown Chicago to Jackson Park, the site of the Columbian Exposition's Beaux Arts "White City."

For the six months of the Exposition, the **Columbus** made multiple round trips daily. By the time the event closed, it's been estimated that the whaleback transported between 1.7 and 2 million people. Although its performance exceeded expectations, McDougall was unable to interest any Great Lakes passenger lines in the whaleback design.

After the Columbian Exposition, the **Columbus** entered excursion service, primarily between Milwaukee and Chicago. In 1899, the ship was leased

to the Goodrich Transit Line, which operated it for a total of 30 years. A third deck was added to the ship's superstructure during the winter of 1899-1900.

At some point between 1906 and 1909, the livery of the **Columbus** was changed to a black hull with yellow accents. Following the capsizing of the steamer **Eastland** with the loss of over 800 lives in 1915, officials ordered the **Columbus** and other passenger vessels to undergo stability testing.

For its test, 7,500 sandbags (each bag simulating one passenger) were piled on one side the ship, and tugboats began pulling in the same direction. Even with that force, the **Columbus** listed only 12 degrees. However, the whaleback did have three accidents during its sailing career. The most serious was on June 30, 1917 when the ship had a collision with a water tower on the Milwaukee River.

The **Columbus** was maneuvering away from her dock with assistance of tugs when the river current caught it, spinning the ship sideways. The bow of the **Columbus** then sheared off two legs of the Yahr-Lang Drug Co.'s water tower causing it to topple onto the steamer and flood its decks with about 25,000 gallons of water.

In the process, 16 passengers were killed, the ship's pilot house was severely damaged, and the whaleback was put out of service for the rest of the year. The **Columbus** was taken out of service for the final time in 1933, and was scrapped in 1936 in Manitowoc, Wis.

#### GREAT LAKES NAVAL MILITIAS

"The Corn Belt Navy: The Great Lakes Naval Militias: 1895-1955" was the title of an illustrated presentation by Bob O'Donnell. His program looked at a little known part of the naval heritage of the Great Lakes region.

At the close of the Civil War, the U.S. Navy was one of the largest naval fighting forces in the world with 6,000 officers and 45,000 enlisted personnel manning over 600 vessels. By the 1870s, however, most of those ships had been abandoned or scrapped, and those that remained in naval service were considered antiquated by world standards.

The **U.S.S. Michigan** was the sole U.S. naval vessel in the Great Lakes region even through the provisions of the

Rush-Bagot Treaty of 1817 allowed the U.S. and Great Britain to maintain three warships each there. Inspired by the "New Navy Movement" of the 1880s, however, the presence of the U.S. Navy on the Great Lakes grew to include a fleet that numbered nearly twenty warships during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The goal of the New Navy Movement was to create a modern Navy capable of protecting the nation's overseas interests. One of the challenges, to that goal however, was finding enough qualified individuals to man the new ships. Up until the Civil War, the U.S. Navy had depended on a strong national merchant marine to supply needed officers and enlisted personnel in wartime.

However, Confederate commerce raiders had led many U.S. shipping companies to flag their vessels in other countries during the war. At the war's end, many of those companies continued the practice since foreign seaman worked for significantly less wages than American mariners.

To meet its wartime personnel needs, Congressional supporters of the New Navy Movement and leading naval officers proposed a national naval reserve in 1887. Unable to secure passage of legislation in Congress, supporters convinced several state legislatures to pass laws creating state naval militias.

In the Great Lakes region, naval militias were established in New York (1889), Pennsylvania (1892), Michigan (1893) Illinois (1893), Ohio (1896), Minnesota (1903), and Wisconsin (1906). Most state militias initially focused on training for harbor and coastal defense. In the 1890s, militia training was added to the duties of the **U.S.S. Michigan**.

Although her iron hull showed little sign of age after 50 years of service, the Navy rebuilt the **Michigan** in 1897 to better serve in its new role as a training vessel. In 1903, the ship became part of the newly-established Ninth Naval District headquartered at Lake Bluff, Ill. at the site of the new Great Lakes Naval Station.

In addition to training on board the **Michigan**, several of the region's naval militias sought to acquire their own training vessels. In 1897, the Michigan Naval Militia made its case to then Assistant Secretary of

the Navy Theodore Roosevelt during a summer training voyage from Mackinac Island to Detroit.

The militia was conducting training exercises in Lake Huron when some of its officers proposed to Roosevelt that a new ship be assigned to their unit to alleviate the congestion aboard the **Michigan**. Upon returning to Washington, Roosevelt made some inquiries and determined that the **U.S.S. Yantic** was available.

Built in 1864, the 179-foot vessel saw action during the Civil War, and later served in the waters of Asia, South America and the West Indies. In 1898, 150 volunteers boarded the **Yantic** in Boston and sailed it to Detroit where it was assigned to the First Battalion of the Michigan Naval Militia.

In 1907, the First Battalion acquired a new training ship, and the **Yantic** was sent north to Houghton-Hancock, Mich. to serve the Second Battalion of the Michigan Naval Militia. There, the ship was used for weekly drills of militia members, and the battalion's annual two-week summer cruise.

In the years that followed, the **Yantic** was significantly altered. Her rigging for sail was all but eliminated, and the ship was given new engines that allowed her to attain cruising speeds of up to 12 knots. Several small boats were also added to her complement of training equipment, including a 28' steam cutter, a 28' sailing launch, two 26' whale boats, two 24' cutters and a 16' dinghy.

The **Yantic** and its fleet of small craft were often used during the early 1900s when the ships of the various state naval militias in the Great Lakes region gathered at Lake Michigan's South Manitou Island for summer maneuvers and gunnery practice. With the U.S. entry into World War I, the Civil War-era vessel was put back into federal service and transferred to the Great Lakes Naval Station.

At the end of the war, the **Yantic** was struck from the Navy list and ordered sold. However, the venerable vessel was withdrawn from the sale list in 1919 and re-assigned to duty as a training ship for a Naval Reserve unit in Cleveland. In 1926, the ship was decommissioned and transferred back to the State of Michigan for use as a training vessel.

The **Yantic's** last years were spent at dock in Detroit where her boilers

were used to heat the Broadhead Naval Armory near Detroit's Belle Isle. On Oct. 22, 1929, the aged ship sank alongside her moorings, and was struck from the Navy List in 1930.

Another Great Lakes naval militia vessel with a storied past was the wooden-hulled screw steamer **U.S.S. Essex**. Built in the Boston Navy Yard in 1876, the 185-foot vessel was decommissioned in 1889. The ship was re-commissioned in 1893 for use as a training ship, and assigned to the Ohio Naval Militia in 1904.

When underway, the **Essex** was manned by a crew of over 150 officers and enlisted personnel. In 1917, it was reassigned to the Ninth Naval District where it was used to train Naval Reserve personnel until 1926. The ship was then assigned to Duluth where it was used as a Naval Reserve station until 1930 when it was struck from the Navy List.

In addition to training aboard the **U.S.S. Michigan**, the Naval Brigade of the National Guard of Ohio, as it was officially known, also acquired the former U.S. Revenue Cutter **Andrew Johnson** in 1897. Built in Buffalo in 1865, the 172-foot vessel required a crew of 40 officers and men. It was sold about a year later.

As the crisis with Spain over Cuba deepened in the late 1890s, the U.S. Navy recognized that combat operations in the Caribbean would be severely restricted without a large number of auxiliary warships. The Navy scrambled to convert existing vessels into cruisers and gunboats, and find crews for them.

The **U.S.S. Yosemite**, a merchant ship built in 1829, was one of nine ships acquired by the Navy in 1898 for use as armed auxiliary cruisers. The ship's crew of 300 officers and enlisted ranks was made up entirely of members of the Michigan Naval Militia.

That same year, the Navy purchased a large civilian yacht that had built in 1897 and commissioned it as the gunboat **U.S.S. Dorothea**. In 1901, the vessel was transferred to the Illinois Naval Militia. The ship was used for training until 1909 when it was then transferred to the Ohio Naval Militia. The **Dorothea** was recalled to federal service at the start of World War I.

The gunboat **U.S.S. Hawk** started out as a 145-foot civilian yacht that had

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been built in Scotland in 1891. The yacht was purchased by the Navy in 1898 and, after seeing action off Cuba, it was decommissioned at the end of the Spanish-American War. In 1900, the **Hawk** was re-commissioned for use by the Ohio Naval Militia.

When underway the **Hawk** required a complement of 47 officers and enlisted personnel, and was armed with 3-pounder and a 21-pounder guns. In 1909, it was transferred to the New York Naval Militia and then decommissioned in 1919. The **Hawk** was re-commissioned in 1922 for use as a Naval Reserve training vessel, and finally sold for scrap in 1940.

Following Spanish-American War, several former Spanish naval vessels were transferred to Great Lakes naval militias for training use. One of those vessels was the **U.S.S. Isla de Luzon**, a second-class protected cruiser that was captured by the Navy at the Battle of Manila Bay

The **Isla de Luzon** was transferred to the Illinois Naval Militia in 1901. The ship was later transferred to the Ohio Naval Militia in 1909 where it served as a training vessel until 1918.

In 1906, the New York Naval Militia acquired the **U.S.S. Sandoval**. The **Sandoval** was a refurbished Spanish gunboat that required a crew of 21 officers and enlisted ranks. Based in Charlotte Harbor on Lake Ontario, the ship frequently called at Ogdensburg and Sackets Harbor, N.Y. during its summer training cruises.

The First Battalion of the Michigan Naval Militia acquired the **U.S.S. Don Juan de Austria** in 1907. The cruiser had been captured at the Battle of Manila Bay. The ship required a crew of over 150 officers and men.

In 1909, the **U.S.S. Nashville** was assigned to the Illinois Naval Militia and based in Chicago. Commissioned in 1897, the 233-foot gunboat served in the North Atlantic Fleet during the Spanish-American War.

The **Nashville** was decommissioned in 1905, but re-commissioned in 1907 for service on the Great Lakes. While underway, the ship required a crew of 180 officer and enlisted personnel.

In 1911, the **U.S.S. Dubuque** was assigned to the Illinois Naval Militia. Built in 1904, the 200-foot gunboat was manned by a crew of 198 officers and enlisted personnel. Both the

**Dubuque** and **Nashville** returned to federal service just before the start of World War I. Following the war, both were decommissioned. The **Dubuque**, however, was re-commissioned in 1922 for use as a Naval Reserve training vessel based in Detroit.

The Minnesota Naval Militia's first training vessel was the **U.S.S. Gopher**. Launched in 1871 as the U.S. Revenue Cutter **Fern**, the 160-foot vessel was transferred to the U.S. Navy in 1891. After service in the Spanish-American War, the ship was decommissioned at the war's end.

In 1905, after two years of repair work in Detroit, the ship was returned to service as the **U.S.S. Gopher** and transferred to Duluth where it was manned by a crew of 120 officers and men. At the start of World War I, the vessel was returned to federal service at the Great Lakes Naval Station for use as a Naval Reserve training ship.

In 1906, the aging **U.S.S. Michigan**, was renamed **U.S.S. Wolverine** and, in 1912, it was turned over to the Pennsylvania Naval Militia. Manned by a crew of 88 officers and enlisted personnel, the **Wolverine** served as a militia training vessel for the next eleven years.

The Wisconsin Naval Militia dates back to 1909 when the First Division of the First Battalion was formed in Ashland, Wis. The Second Division of the First Battalion was formed in Bayfield, Wis. in 1913. Upon the entry of the United States in World War I, both battalions were disbanded after their members joined the U.S. Navy.

The First Battalion was reformed in 1927 with volunteers from Milwaukee and Madison. That same year, the Navy assigned two World War I subchasers, the **SC-412** and **SC-432**, to the militia for training purposes. Each vessel was manned by a crew of 17 officers and men.

Although the role of the state naval militias during the Spanish-American War had proved the value of a reserve force of trained naval volunteers, all attempts by Congress in the early 1900s to create a national Naval Reserve failed. In 1914, however, Congress did pass legislation that placed state naval militias under the supervision of the Navy Department.

In 1915, Congress finally authorized creation of the U.S. Naval Reserve which officially came into being in

1916. By the end of the 1920s, most members of the state naval militias had transferred to the Naval Reserve. Several of the militias, however, still exist today in non-military roles.

Although their history was eclipsed by that of the Naval Reserve which had an active presence on the Great Lakes from the 1920s to the 1960s, the region's state naval militias involved hundreds of citizen-sailors from all walks of life. Those volunteers played a critical role in the modernization of the Navy and its role in the Spanish-American War and World War I.

#### PRESERVING THE U.S.S. ESSEX

Dr. Ann Merriman and Christopher Olson, both of Maritime Heritage Minnesota, presented an overview of their efforts to develop a preservation plan for the remains of the **U.S.S. Essex**, which now lie on Lake Superior's Minnesota Point.

The 185-foot, wooden hulled steamer was built in the Boston Navy Yard and commissioned in 1876. After a 50-year career on both salt and fresh water, the **Essex** was assigned in 1927 to Duluth where it was used as a Naval Reserve station ship until 1930.

After the **Essex** was decommissioned, it was sold to a local salvage firm that removed everything of value. The hull was then burned as a public spectacle in 1931. A 56-foot long section of the vessel now lies in the surf zone of Minnesota Point.

Researchers have identified several reasons to preserve the remains of the **Essex**. Among them is the fact that it was the last vessel built by master shipbuilder Donald McKay who was world renown for building clipper ships that set speed records.

In 1854, one of those ships, the **Flying Cloud**, set a record for passage from New York to San Francisco, a record that stood until 1989. Clipper ships, however, were only one expression of McKay's shipbuilding skill. His packet ships were also known for the quality of their construction.

In addition, McKay's East Boston shipyard was supplying ships for the British merchant fleet at a time when that country was considered the pre-eminent shipbuilder in the world. The section of the **Essex** at Minnesota Point is the only known fragment of a Donald McKay-built vessel in the world. There may be undiscovered

remains elsewhere, but researchers note that it is the only known physical evidence of his handiwork.

In addition its connection to a famous American shipbuilder, the remains of the *Essex* are also the only surviving fragment of a U.S. Navy vessel built in the late 19th century, a period of technological stagnation often called the "Dark Ages" by naval historians.

However, several researchers have noted that unarmored naval ships like the *Essex* were not entirely deficient when compared to contemporary foreign designs, and were actually well-designed for maintaining a worldwide naval presence. Iron hulls of the period were at a disadvantage to wooden hulls due to their tendency to quickly foul with marine growth.

The *Essex* also belongs to the last class of wooden-hulled ships powered by both sail and auxiliary steam engines that was ordered by the U.S. Navy. It was built during the transitional period when the Navy relied on steam-powered ironclads for coastal defense, and wooden-hulled ships, equipped with sails as their main propulsion, for worldwide cruising.

Previous studies of the remains at Minnesota Point have led historians to believe that it was part of the *Essex's* engine room. According to Maritime Heritage Minnesota researchers, however, the presence of concrete chunks indicates that the fragment may actually be a part of its boiler room.

A cursory examination of the remains in 2010 showed that its condition had deteriorated significantly from wave, ice, and human interaction; and action was urgently needed to ensure that the wreck fragment is not destroyed. To achieve that goal, researchers at Maritime Heritage Minnesota have identified six preservation options.

The first of those options is to simply leave the fragment where it is and at regular intervals cover it up with sand dredged from the bottom of the Duluth-Superior harbor. Periodic monitoring is then recommended to make sure the wreck fragment remains totally covered.

A second option would involve the removal of the remains of the *Essex* to another location in Lake Superior that is deep enough not to be affected by wave and ice action but not too far from its current location.

A third option entails removing the remains from Minnesota Point, and transporting it to a display tank at an outdoor venue in Duluth. Ideally located on the city's waterfront, the tank could serve as a permanent display and possible "dive tank" for sports divers. Interpretive displays detailing the history of the *Essex* could also be added to the venue.

A fourth option entails removing the remains and displaying them in an indoor wet environment. As with the previous option, the display tank could serve as both a display and "dive tank" for divers to explore the remains of the *Essex* in a controlled environment. Interpretive displays could also be used at this venue.

A fifth option involves the display of the remains dry and fully conserved at an outdoor, waterfront setting. This option would require that the wreck fragment spend an estimated ten years in a conservation tank before being displayed. Conservation would be time consuming and expensive.

The sixth option involves display of the remains dry and fully conserved in an indoor setting. The researchers view this option as the most favorable option in terms of preservation. They envision the wreck fragment being displayed in a climate-controlled building, and viewable at all angles. The venue could also display a model of the *Essex* as originally built and interpretive labels detailing the ship's history, construction and significance.

To aid in the development of displays and exhibits on the *Essex*, Maritime Heritage Minnesota researchers are continuing their work on a detailed history of the vessel and searching for original source material. In the process, they are also developing a list of archival sources that may aid future researchers.

### **GREAT LAKES CRUISING INDUSTRY**

Dr. Richard Stewart of the University of Wisconsin Superior and co-director of the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute was the keynote speaker for the Association's 2010 Awards Dinner. His presentation was entitled "Great Lakes Cruising – Past and Future."

Historically, there were two major customer segments for Great Lakes passenger vessels industry during the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. They included overnight travelers between

cities, and leisure travelers similar to today's cruise ship customers. Research has also identified three major market reasons for the decline of Great Lakes cruising industry following World War II.

First, automobile travel became easier and cheaper for moderate-income passengers. Second, economical air travel to "exotic" destinations became readily accessible to higher income passengers. And, thirdly, ports of the Great Lakes became less "passenger friendly" in terms of facilities due to growing industrial use of waterfronts.

Other factors in the industry's decline were the high replacement cost of aging Great Lakes vessels due, in part, to the loss of passenger shipbuilding capacity in the region. As cruising declined in the 1950s and 1960s, many of the remaining vessels also required increased maintenance; experienced increased operating costs for fuel, crews and insurance; and were not attractive to customers due to a lack of modern amenities.

Today, there are a number of physical factors that prevent the growth of a cruising industry on the Great Lakes, including limitations on the width and heights of vessels that can pass through the Welland Canal. The best docking facilities in the region are also now reserved for industrial uses, and many waterfronts are inaccessible due to residential and retail development.

The seasonal nature of Great Lakes cruising limits vessels to a six-month sailing season and requires operators to incur high repositioning costs to continue generating revenue during the remainder of the year. There are also more piloting costs, security regulations, and environmental requirements for cruising on inland waters compared to the ocean.

Another factor is the economics of modern day cruise vessels, which generate only 10% of their revenues from ticket sales. Another 50% of revenue is generated by on-board shopping, and the remaining 40% generated by gambling. The need for gambling, along with labor intensive nature of modern day cruising, makes it difficult to use that business model in the Great Lakes region.

Based on recent studies by the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute and others, there may be some specific

*Continued on next page*

cruising opportunities in the region. They include cross-border travel between the U.S. and Canada aboard U.S. or foreign flag vessels, same country travel between ports on the Great Lakes, repositioning voyages, and roll-on-roll-off cruises.

With 50 million potential customers living within fifty miles of the Great Lakes, one or more opportunities may prove profitable. However, a major marketing effort will be required to support a regional cruising industry since recent research has shown that potential customers have little or no understanding of the nature of modern cruising on the Great Lakes.

## AROUND THE GREAT LAKES

### SCHOONER DENIS SULLIVAN

In addition to celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its launch and serving as the flagship for the 2010 Great Lakes United Tall Ships Challenge Series, the schooner **Denis Sullivan** also provided high school students with an opportunity to learn about navigation and science last summer. The week-long program was part of the youth programs of Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Mich.

The ten students from three states joined the schooner while it traveled between port calls in Bay City, Mich. and Duluth. While on Lake Huron, they learned about the science of navigation and then collected water and mud samples from Lake Superior. After disembarking in Houghton, the students analyzed their samples as part of an environmental engineering program at the MTU campus.

### PIE ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

Officials have announced that the Pie Island Lighthouse near Thunder Bay, Ont. was demolished in September. Located on the north side of the island, the wooden frame lighthouse was built in 1904 and abandoned in 1953. As part of the demolition, a 30-foot radius around the base of the structure was mitigated for lead paint contamination.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Pie Island was prospected extensively for silver by companies from both Canada and the United States. The island is now essentially wilderness except for a few summer cottages on its south

side. Several years ago, officials of the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans determined that Pie Island Light was unsafe and presented an environmental hazard.

### COMMODORE PERRY'S VICTORY

The 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry was celebrated at the Perry's Victory and International Peace Memorial on Lake Erie's South Bass Island last August. Perry was commander of American naval forces on Lake Erie during the War of 1812.

His forces defeated a British squadron in 1813 in the waters off South Bass Island in one of the most decisive naval victories in the early history of the United States. The Perry's birth celebration included 30-minute tours of the memorial with a costumed interpreter portraying the famed naval commander. There were also living history re-enactments of life during the War of 1812 and black powder musket demonstrations.

### INTERNATIONAL EXPLORATIONS INC.

Over \$8 million in pirate treasure and artifacts were on display in Duluth during a "Treasure Adventure" event sponsored in August by International Explorations Inc. of Ashland, Wis. The two-week event was held at the former LaFarge Cement terminal and coincided with the 2010 Tall Ships Duluth Festival.

An investment group headed by local developers Alessandro Giuliani and Sandy Hoff purchased the terminal from LaFarge North America for \$1.3 million in December 2009. Located next to the city's Bayfront Festival Park, the site is currently zoned "waterfront industrial" which limits its use for non-industrial purposes.

The new owners of the property, which is adjacent to land owned by the Duluth Economic Development Authority, are seeking to have it re-zoned "commercial waterfront" to allow for mixed use development. They envision redeveloping the site with the same mix of commercial, residential, retail and hospitality uses as currently found in the city's Canal Park district.

International Explorations Inc. was founded by Scott Mitchen, who has been involved in wreck exploration and treasure hunting for over 30 years. Mitchen is also known for his

discovery of large virgin pine logs on the bottom of Chequamegon Bay in the early 1990s. He went on to form Ashland-based American WetWood LLC to market the wood from those logs under the Timeless Timber brand name.

### GRAND HAVEN COAST GUARD FESTIVAL

The arrival of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutters **Neah Bay** and **Buckthorn**, and Canadian Coast Guard Ship **Samuel Risley** marked the official beginning of Grand Haven, Mich.'s 2010 Coast Guard Festival in late July. Following a parade of ships, the Coast Guard vessels were open for public tours in Escanaba Park.

Based in Cleveland, the **Neah Bay** is a 140-foot icebreaking tug that is used in icebreaking operations throughout the Great Lakes from November thru May, and public safety duties year-round. The **Buckthorn** is a 100-foot inland buoy tender based in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. which is specially designed to maintain almost 400 aids-to-navigation along the St. Marys River.

The **Samuel Risley** is a 229-foot light icebreaker and medium tender based in Amherstburg, Ont. The **Risley** tends aids-to-navigation in Canadian waters of the Great Lakes during the navigation season. In the winter, it breaks ice in both Canadian and U.S. waters in an area that stretches from Port Colborne on Lake Erie to Thunder Bay on Lake Superior.

### PORT OF LUDINGTON MARITIME MUSEUM

The federal government officially transferred title to the former U.S. Coast Guard Station in Ludington, Mich. to the City of Ludington last summer. The transfer process started in 2004, and the building will now be used to create a museum of the city's maritime history to be operated by the Mason County Historical Society.

The centerpiece of the new Port of Ludington Maritime Museum will be the former pilothouse of the Lake Michigan car ferry **Pere Marquette 22**. Built in 1924 in Manitowoc, Wis., the 348-foot vessel was home ported in Ludington from then until it was retired from service in 1972.

In 2009, several artifacts from the ship were donated to the Historical Society by a Chicago area junk dealer. Those artifacts included the ship's bell, a

gyro repeater compass, a steam gauge and steering mechanism.

The new Port of Ludington Maritime Museum will also feature a 100-foot panorama painting of Pere Marquette Lake in the 1800s, and displays on local Coast Guard history. The Mason County Historical Society was assisted in its exhibit planning and design by Lafferty van Heest & Associates, an AGLMH Associate member.

### DISCOVERY WORLD AT PIER WISCONSIN

While its schooner **Denis Sullivan** was away for the Great Lakes United Tall Ships Challenge Series this past summer, Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin in Milwaukee offered its shipwreck exploration program aboard the cruise vessel **Voyageur**. In August, the program explored the Lake Michigan wrecks of the schooner **Sumatra**, the steamer **Sebastopol**, and steamer **Volunteer**.

The **Sumatra** was built in 1874 at Black River, Ohio. On Sept. 30, 1896, the schooner was bound from Chicago to Milwaukee with a load of railroad iron under tow of the steamer **B.W. Arnold**. After taking on water for several hours, the ship foundered with the loss of four crew members off South Point less than two miles from Milwaukee Harbor.

Built in 1855 in Cleveland, the side-wheel steamer **Sebastopol** foundered during a gale on Lake Michigan on the night of Sept. 18, 1856. The ship came to rest about 500 feet from shore near St. Francis, Wis. After the crew took to the life boats, the steamer's 60 passengers reportedly had to wait until morning to be rescued by a local Life-Saving Service crew.

Built in 1888 at Trenton, Mich., the 270-foot steamer **Volunteer** was part of a large fleet of wooden steamers laid up in Milwaukee during the early 1900s. In 1914, City of Milwaukee ordered it and the other aged vessels to be scrapped. Rather than pay the cost of scrapping, the owner of the **Volunteer** reportedly took the ship out and scuttled it about a mile south of the present day South Shore Yacht Club.

In addition to shipboard exploration programs, Discovery World also hosted two programs on underwater archeology in its digital theater in August. David Thompson of the Nautilus Marine Group gave a

presentation entitled "Cutting-Edge Acoustic Sonar Mapping of Shipwrecks in the Great Lakes" and Kevin Cullen of the Discovery World staff presented "Shedding New Light on Old Ghost Ships."

### GREAT LAKES NAVAL MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM

The Great Lakes Naval Memorial and Museum in Muskegon, Mich. has launched a new educational initiative that seeks to link submarine history with underwater exploration. The initiative uses remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) technology for programs for secondary and post-secondary students.

The new programming is being led by Dr. Mark Gleason who was most recently with Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin. Prior to his joining its staff, the Naval Memorial and Museum supported Gleason's efforts in 2009 to locate the wreck of the **U-97**, a German submarine that was captured during World War I and later sunk off the Great Lakes Naval Station near Chicago in 1921.

In other news, the Naval Memorial and Museum hosted a photography exhibition on the 100-year history of the Great Lakes freighter **St. Marys Challenger** this fall. The "Centennial: Steaming Through the American Century." exhibit was created by photographer Chris Winters.

A memorial service for the World War II submarine **U.S.S. Flier** was held at the Great Lakes Naval Memorial and Museum in August. The submarine was lost on Aug. 13, 1944 after it hit a mine in the South China Sea. Eight crew members survived the sinking and escaped capture by the Japanese.

Among them was Alvin Jacobson of Muskegon. The last of the sub's remaining survivor, Jacobson spent considerable time and effort in recent years trying to locate its final resting spot. Following his death in 2008, Steve Jacobson, his son, gathered his father's research and took part in a 2009 expedition which was searching for the wreck site of the **Flier**. The expedition was led by Mike and Warren Fletcher of Port Dover, Ont.

The submarine was eventually located in about 360 feet of water, and its identity confirmed by the U.S. Navy last February. The Fletchers and YAP Films of Toronto have documented the discovery of the **Flier** wreck site

for a future episode of the History Channel's "Dive Detectives" program. Entitled *Submarine Graveyard*, the episode was premiered at the recent memorial service.

### GRAND HAVEN SOUTH PIERHEAD LIGHTHOUSES

The U.S. National Park Service informed the City of Grand Haven, Mich. that its application for title to the Grand Haven South Pierhead Inner and Outer Lighthouses had been approved by the agency's Midwest regional director. His recommendation was then forwarded to the Department of the Interior.

A final decision by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior is expected before the end of 2010, and the title transfer process completed by next summer. Once Grand Haven acquires title to the historic structures, they will be operated by the new Grand Haven Lighthouse Conservancy.

Built as a fog signal building in 1875, the South Pierhead Outer Light was moved to end of the harbor's breakwater in 1905. The red, wood frame structure was sheathed in corrugated iron in 1922. Its most recognizable feature is a V-shaped concrete front facing out into Lake Michigan. The structure gives the appearance of a ship's bow and is designed to protect the light from storms and ice.

The South Pierhead Inner Light is a red 51-foot conical structure made of steel plate fabricated by the American Bridge Co. in 1905. The light's original Sixth Order Fresnel Lens was donated to the City of Grand Haven when it was replaced by a plastic lens.

### ELGIN MILITARY MUSEUM

The Elgin Military Museum in St. Thomas, Ont. has announced plans to acquire the submarine **HMCS Ojibwa** for use as a floating museum in Port Burwell, Ont. Officials have estimated the cost of towing the 297-foot sub to the Lake Erie community and then preparing it for use as a museum ship to be almost \$3 million.

Plans call for the **Ojibwa** to be docked alongside a museum to be built on land owned by the Municipality of Bayham (for more details, see [www.elginmilitarymuseum.ca](http://www.elginmilitarymuseum.ca)). The submarine was built in 1965 and decommissioned by the Canadian Navy in 1998. The vessel has been moored at a naval base in Dartmouth,

Nova Scotia since 2005 when federal officials announced that it and three sister ships would be scrapped.

### **NORTH TONAWANDA HISTORY MUSEUM**

The North Tonawanda (New York) History Museum recently hosted a program by Bernhard Thuersam, executive director of the Cape Fear Historical Institute in Wilmington, N.C. Thuersam is a graduate of North Tonawanda High School, and his presentation was entitled "The Niagara Region and the Southern Confederacy."

The program examined how several Confederate agents operating from the Clifton House Hotel in Niagara Falls, Ont. were involved in a wide range of wartime activities ranging from blockade running to a plot to free Confederate prisoners of war imprisoned on Lake Erie's Johnson's Island. It also looked at how British fears of a U.S. invasion of Canada affected the Niagara region during the Civil War.

### **GREAT LAKES SEAWAY TRAIL DISCOVERY CENTER**

Shipwreck explorer Jim Kennard presented two programs at the Great Lakes Seaway Trail Discovery Center in Sackets Harbor, N.Y. last summer. The first of those presentations was entitled "Deep Shipwrecks of Lake Ontario" and included video of the wreck site of the **HMS Ontario**, a Revolutionary War British warship that Kennard and Dan Scoville discovered in 2008.

The second presentation was entitled "More Wrecks of Lake Ontario" and looked at the discovery of the wreck sites of the schooner **Orcadian**, which sank in 1858, and a U.S. Coast Guard cable boat that sank in 1977. During the program, Kennard also discussed the search for a Republic RC-3 SeaBee amphibious aircraft that crashed in Quebec's Lac Simon in 1957.

### **NANCY ISLAND HISTORIC SITE**

The Nancy Island Historic Site and Town of Wasaga Beach, Ont. hosted their annual "Wasaga under Siege – A War of 1812 Experience" on the shores of Georgian Bay last July. This year's event attracted over 200 historical re-enactors and 4,000 visitors.

On Aug. 14, 1814, Nancy Island was the site of a battle between British and American forces that also involved

the schooner **HMS Nancy** and three American schooners. Following the Battle of Lake Erie, the **Nancy** was the last remaining British warship on the Upper Great Lakes in 1813. Built in Detroit in 1879, the schooner had been captured in the spring of 1812.

As part of this year's "Wasaga Under Siege" event, the release of a new book entitled **The Lake Captain 1812** was celebrated. Written by Roger Burgess, the book recounts the story of Capt. Alexander Mackintosh who was the master of the **Nancy** when it was pressed into service by the British. He and his uncle, Angus Mackintosh, served aboard the schooner until it was scuttled on Aug. 15, 1814.

### **POINT BETSIE LIGHTHOUSE**

A 2010 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation was presented to the Friends of the Point Betsie Lighthouse for its efforts to preserve and restore the lighthouse which is located near Frankfort, Mich. The lighthouse was built in 1858, and a U.S. Life-Saving Service station was later built nearby.

At the turn of the century as many as 100 ships per day would pass by the Point Betsie Light as they entered or exited the Manitou Passage on Lake Michigan. In 2004, the lighthouse was declared surplus federal property, and title to the site was later transferred to Benzie County.

Over the past seven years, the Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse group has raised over \$1 million for restoration of the light to its appearance during the mid-1940s, and its fog signal building to its appearance in the 1920s. In addition to the Friends group, the 2010 Governor's Award also recognized the efforts of Amy Ferris, Benzie County Commissioner Mary Pitcher, Mihm Enterprises, Inc., Quinn Evans Architects, Charles J. Clarke, and U.P. Engineers & Architects, Inc.

### **OLD FORT ERIE**

The Niagara Parks Systems has received almost \$9 million in federal and provincial funding to revitalize three historic sites in the Niagara region of Ontario for the upcoming War of 1812 Bicentennial.

Among those sites is Old Fort Erie which will use its share of the funding to replace a 1933 caretaker's residence with a modern visitors centre. The

new centre will include a museum, theater, archive workspace, public restrooms and storage space.

Plans also call for the construction of earthworks at the Fort Erie site to replicate those used by British forces to lay siege to the fort near the end of the War of 1812. The first fortifications at the site were built by British forces in 1764.

During the Revolutionary War, Fort Erie was used as a base for British regulars, Loyalist rangers and their Iroquois allies. The fort was seized by American forces during the summer of 1814, and later that year recaptured by the British. The ruins of Fort Erie were officially abandoned during the 1820s. A replica of the fort was built as a public works project in the 1930s during the Great Depression.

### **WEST MICHIGAN UNDERWATER PRESERVE**

The City of Muskegon, Mich. has gone on record in support of efforts to create a new underwater shipwreck preserve in the nearby waters of Lake Michigan. As currently proposed, the West Michigan Underwater Preserve would stretch from a point north of Holland, Mich. to Big Sable Point Lighthouse north of Ludington.

The preserve would be the thirteenth underwater preserve in Michigan state waters and its boundaries as now envisioned would include about a dozen historically-significant wrecks. Those wrecks include several victims of the Armistice Day Storm of 1940, including the 252-foot freighter **Novadoc** and the 380-foot freighter **Anna C. Minch**. For more details, see [www.wmup.org](http://www.wmup.org).

### **TUG SPORT SHIPWRECK**

The Michigan Lake Divers Association has placed a new historical marker on the wreck site of the tug **Sport** which was lost on Lake Huron in 1920. Built in 1873, the tug is thought to be one of the earliest steel-hulled vessels to have worked on the Great Lakes.

The **Sport** was purchased in 1913 by Capt. Robert Perry Thompson of Port Huron, Mich. During a fierce winter storm on the night of Dec. 13, 1920, the tug was lost about three miles off of Lexington, Mich. The new granite polymer marker replaces a severely deteriorated, aluminum marker that the State of Michigan removed in 1997 after just five years underwater. The replacement marker cost \$1,700.

## 1826 DUNKIRK LIGHTHOUSE

Archeologists have discovered several 19<sup>th</sup> century artifacts at the site of one of the earliest lighthouses to be built on Lake Erie. In 1826, a 60-foot light tower was built at Dunkirk, N.Y. to guide ships to traveling to Buffalo and the western terminus of the Erie Canal which had opened a year earlier.

The structure was taken down in the 1850s and moved to another location. Covered over with soil, the light's exact location was forgotten over the years. Violent storms recently eroded the shoreline exposing several bricks and stones which were part of the structure's foundation. Last summer, archeologists excavated the site and found artifacts including porcelain plates and pottery from the early 1800s.

## NEW GREAT LAKES SUBMERSIBLE

Jim Kocourek of Collins, Wis. has completed work on the **Bionic Guppy**, a 1,400 pound submarine which he hopes to use to explore Great Lakes shipwrecks. The three-person submarine is about 16 feet in length and 4 feet in diameter. It was built to dive to 1,000 feet.

Built at an estimated cost of over \$50,000, the sub's hull is constructed of half-inch thick steel and includes an observation dome made of 2.5 inch acrylic material. The submarine is powered by fourteen 6-volt batteries. With the addition of carbon dioxide scrubbing and oxygen generating equipment, it will be able to operate underwater for up to 72 hours.

Kocourek was assisted in the design and construction of his submarine by members of PSUBS, a nationwide group of avocational builders of submersibles. The sub was on display recently at its annual meeting. For more details, see [www.psubs.org](http://www.psubs.org).

## NINE MILE POINT LIGHTHOUSE

The Department of Fisheries and Ocean recently announced that it was declaring Canada's Nine Mile Point Lighthouse near Kingston, Ont. surplus federal property.

In response to that announcement, Yeida Miedema, a retired teacher, has begun forming a non-profit group to preserve the light. Located on Lake Erie's Simcoe Island at the entrance to the St. Lawrence River, Nine Mile Point Light was built in 1833.

The structure is reportedly one of the oldest lighthouses on the Great Lakes, and was automated in 1978. Its fog horn was silenced in 1991, and two keeper's dwellings at the site were later sold off to private parties.

## WELCOME MEMBER NEWS

### INSTITUTIONAL

**The Canadian Canoe Museum**, 910 Monaghan Rd., Peterborough, ON K9J 5K4; tel. (705) 748-9153; fax: (705) 748-0616; contact: John Summers, general manager.

**Harbor Springs Area Historical Society**, P.O. Box 812, 349 E. Main St., Harbor Springs, MI 49740; tel. (231) 526-9771; e-mail: [info@harborspringshistory.org](mailto:info@harborspringshistory.org); web site: [www.harborspringshistory.org](http://www.harborspringshistory.org); contact: Mary Cummings, executive director.

### INDIVIDUAL

**David Balfour**, 17058 Sycamore Ct., Northville, MI 48168; tel. (248) 347-7499; e-mail: [balfour74@gmail.com](mailto:balfour74@gmail.com).

**John Sorensen**, 125 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Duluth, MN 55805; tel. (218) 727-2525; e-mail: [soren@visi.com](mailto:soren@visi.com).

### RETURNING MEMBERS

**Kathleen McGraw**, 18007 Colgate, Dearborn Heights, MI 48125; tel. (313) 791-8452

**Peter Rindlisbacher**, 6790 County Road 50, RR5, Harrow, ON N0R 1G0; tel. (519) 736-7568; e-mail: [rindli@xplornet.com](mailto:rindli@xplornet.com).

### ADDRESS CORRECTION

**Janet E. Defnet**, W180 S8204 Pioneer Dr., Muskego, WI 53150.

## Roundtables

*Continued from Page 1*

Pre-project testing also showed that the brick in many of the structures at the site had unacceptable high levels of moisture. To address the problem, contractors developed a system of cotton rope wicks that were installed in the brick walls to draw out water.

The concrete base of the fog signal building, which last underwent any type of restoration in 1979, had to be chiseled and repaired, and stamped metal shingles fabricated for its roof.

In addition to the physical challenges of the restoration project, two of the management challenges were keeping the site open to visitors during the project and preparing for a season of special events to celebrate the centennial of the lighthouse's construction in 2010.

The Split Rock Lighthouse Historic Site annually attracts over 120,000 visitors. The staff used the restoration work as an opportunity to do special programs on the materials used in the construction of the lighthouse and the causes of its deterioration. Following completion of the restoration project, the Minnesota Historical Society now plans to apply for National Historic Landmark status for the light station as early as this fall.

In conjunction with the restoration project, the Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society recovered a four-ton anchor from the schooner-barge **Madeira** for display at the historic site's visitor center. The 436-foot vessel was one of almost 30 ships lost or damaged during the **Mataafa** Storm of November 1905 which led to the construction of Split Rock Lighthouse.

### METEOR RESTORATION PROJECT

Following the roundtable, during a tour of the whaleback **Meteor**, Phil Kerber, president of the Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society, provided some insight into the Society's efforts, since 2003, to assist the Superior Public Museums in the preservation and restoration of the historic vessel.

Built in 1896, the **Meteor** has been on display as a museum ship in Superior, Wis. since 1971. For the past seven years, the Preservation Society has organized a volunteer work weekend. The annual event now draws over 60 members of the Society, Lake Superior Marine Museum Association, Superior Public Museums, and Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association.

In addition to general housekeeping and cleaning, the volunteers have worked on scrapping and repainting the ship's upper and lower engine rooms, and other interior spaces including the galley, chart room and crew's quarters. They have also repaired and repainted window frames in the pilot house and repaired sections of the floor in exhibit spaces in the former cargo hold.

*Continued on next page*

The brass in both the pilot house and engine rooms have been polished and sprayed with clear lacquer, and the interior of the unique turret stairway was repainted. Work has also started on restoring the **Meteor's** engines, and replacing rusted brackets and plates on exterior stairs and walkways.

Volunteers have also documented display artifacts with digital cameras and documentation forms. The goal of the Superior Public Museums is to ultimately restore the ship to its appearance in the 1920s when it was sailing in the iron ore trade as the **Frank D. Rockefeller**.

Currently, the museum ship is buried several feet into the ground and many interior sections of the vessel have been filled with concrete to create floors, walkways and exhibit spaces. Consultants recommended, earlier this year, that the **Meteor** be raised and moved 50 feet north from its current location.

The 380-foot vessel would then be permanently displayed on concrete, support piers alongside a reflecting pool that would help visitors better envision what the whaleback looked like during its sailing days. Site plans also envision an interpretive center, connected to the ship by a skywalk that explores the shipbuilding history of Duluth-Superior.

#### RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE

The 2010 Maritime History Research Roundtable featured Al Miller, author of **Tin Stackers: The History of the Pittsburgh Steamship Company**. Based on his experience writing the book, Miller discussed the use of ship's papers to research 20<sup>th</sup> century Great Lakes maritime history.

**Tin Stackers** is a detailed history of a steamship line which, for many decades, was the largest and most influential fleet on the Great Lake during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Drawing on company records and interviews with managers, ship's captains and sailors, Miller documented corporate efforts to assemble and streamline the fleet, and resolve labor conflicts.

His research also examined how the Pittsburgh Steamship Company came to lead the Great Lakes shipping industry in operational efficiency, technological advancement and employee safety. In his presentation, Miller noted that a ship's paperwork can provide a firsthand look at the

relationship between a shipmaster and the vessel's owners. He showed how that insight can be gleaned from exchanges of letters between fleet managers and captains, confidential letters to ship masters, and sailing orders.

The Pittsburgh Steamship Co. and its successor, the USS Great Lakes Fleet, also generated a number of reports which can provide valuable insight into daily life aboard a Great Lakes vessels in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They included trip reports, meal reports, job evaluation reports, and weekly reports of hours worked.

To fully understand those reports, however, it's also necessary to review the manuals that determined how they should be prepared. In addition, in an attempt to implement uniform management methods, the U.S. Steel Corp. commissioned a number of fleet manuals for the Pittsburgh Steamship Co. and USS Great Lakes Fleet during the 1970s and 1980s.

These manuals covered a wide variety of topics, such as ship loading and ballasting, and tried to document marine knowledge and practices that had once come only from firsthand experience. Other documents, such as hull manuals for masters and mates, attempted to set standards for ship handling rather than relying solely on the decisions of the ship's officers.

During the discussion that followed Miller's presentation, it was noted that ship's papers from several Great Lakes fleets of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries can be found in collections of both public and private institutions. They include research institutions like the Historical Collections of the Great Lakes at Bowling Green State University, and corporate archives, such as those of Koch Industries Inc. which, after a merger, acquired the archives of the Reiss Steamship Co.

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## Annual awards

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1912." The paper traced the complex relationships between nature and society that marked the development of European settlements along the water's edge in North America.

Moir's historical study examined those relationships within the context of Toronto's waterfront, where several commissions of varying structure and

influence have been at work since 1833. Because of its longevity, and the dramatic changes it effected to the city's waterfront, the Toronto Harbour Commission is the best known of these organizations along with its Waterfront Plan of 1912.

Accounts of its creation by the federal government in 1911 have largely attributed the Harbour Commission's considerable development powers to the ineffectiveness of its predecessor, the Harbour Trust. In particular, its critics cited the failure of that body to stop Toronto's port from deteriorating into a series of ramshackle wharves that discouraged shipping.

Based on his research, however, Moir shows that port facilities were never the focus of either the Harbour Trust or its predecessor, the Committee of Commissioners. These 19<sup>th</sup> century bodies were occupied primarily with the natural features of the harbor, and in particular its preservation as a safe and navigable body of water.

Merchants, manufacturers, and civil engineers struggled to react to natural changes and manmade abuses of the harbor, until rapid industrialization and the increasing involvement of municipal and federal governments led to a transition in governance from harbor commission to port authority. In the process, Toronto's waterfront experienced an almost complete reconfiguration.

#### AWARD FOR HISTORIC INTERPRETATION

The 2010 Joyce S. Hayward Award for Historic Interpretation was presented to Kenneth Pott, executive director of The Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph, Mich. Prior to joining The Heritage Museum in 2000, he was the curator of the Michigan Maritime Museum for almost twenty years.

Over a 30-year career, Pott has been involved in the development of more than 15 major museum exhibitions. Those exhibitions include an award-winning collaboration with Western Michigan University on a landmark traveling exhibit entitled "Fish Today, Gone Tomorrow: A Story of the Great Lakes Fishing" which documented the rise and fall of the region's fishing industry.

Shortly after joining The Heritage Museum and Cultural Center, Pott began a multi-year project to create a

major exhibition on the interaction of French and Native American cultures in the Great Lakes region during the 16th and 17th centuries. The resulting "Shared Waters: Natives and French Newcomers on the Great Lakes" exhibition included artifacts from the collections of museums in the United States, Canada and France.

Many of the items on display in "Shared Waters" had never previously been put on exhibition outside of their collecting institutions. Pott's most recent exhibition project is entitled "Working Waterfronts: Planning and Preserving the Maritime Traditions of St. Joseph and Benton Harbor" and is an example of the collaborative and scholarly approach that Pott has become known for.

Developed in collaboration with Western Michigan University's Public History Program, the planning and exhibit development for the two-year exhibition involved a team of scholars, researchers and museum staff. There was also an advisory committee made up of local government officials, port and harbor authorities, maritime industries, and government agencies.

#### AWARD FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Association's 2010 Award for Historic Preservation was presented this year to Ken Merryman, one of the founding members of the Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society. The Society is a unique organization dedicated to both the search for and preservation of historic shipwrecks.

Over the past 14 years, Merryman has worked tirelessly with government agencies and volunteers to preserve several historically significant Lake Superior shipwrecks, starting with the schooner **S.P. Ely** in the early 1990s. Working with other Society members, he has also led efforts to document and preserve the passenger steamer **America**, a unique part of the history of Minnesota's North Shore and Lake Superior's Isle Royale.

Merryman has also taken a leadership role in the Society's work to discover the wreck sites of several long-lost Lake Superior shipwrecks, including the freighters **Benjamin Noble** and **Robert Wallace**. Many of those wreck sites required years to discover.

Several of the sites have since been meticulously documented by teams of Society divers. That documentation

has also lead to several of the wrecks sites being successfully nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Writing in one of those nominations, Merryman expressed his philosophy that "establishing shipwreck sites as historically significant sites helps protect them from potential claimants and those who would pilfer their artifacts. It is our hope that this site with its artifacts will remain intact for divers to enjoy and study for years to come."

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## Business meeting

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meeting, members began to consider how to use that information to craft a vision for future. Specifically, the Association is trying to discern what endeavors should receive its attention, and what new initiatives it might risk undertaking.

During the meeting, there was some discussion of asking institutional members to designate a liaison person to work with the Association during the planning process. That input would be helpful since one of the strategic questions is whether the annual conferences should continue as a venue for research, or should we shift our attention in other directions to attract more participation.

Among the other possible initiatives discussed at the meeting were items to increase the Association's visibility for both institutions and individuals. The upcoming Bicentennial of the War of 1812 may be such an opportunity, particularly since the North American Society for Oceanic History (NASOH) is holding its 2012 Conference in Alpena, Mich.

The conference will be hosted by the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and NASOH has approach the Association about holding a joint event. Subsequent to the board of directors meeting, the Association was also contacted by the organizers of the triennial Maritime Heritage Conference about the possibility of co-hosting the next such conference in Cleveland in 2013.

#### MACKINAC CUSTOM HOUSE RECORDS

John Polacsek gave an update on the Association's digitization project

involving approximately 5,000 records from the Mackinac Custom House that are now in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library (see July-August 2010 newsletter for more details).

About 10,000 digital images have been created and are being published in chronological order on 12-DVD sets. To date, 50 sets have been produced and the Association is just waiting for permission from the Detroit Public Library to begin distributing them at a cost of \$15 per set.

The next phase of the project will involve creating an index of the records. Association members who are interested in assisting with the indexing should contact John Polacsek by e-mail at [artistofdetroit@aol.com](mailto:artistofdetroit@aol.com).

During the meeting, there was some discussion of additional Mackinac Custom House records and how they might someday be incorporated into the project. Records are thought to be in the Judge John Steere Collection at the Bayliss Public Library in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., and the J. M. Longyear Collection of the Marquette (Mich.) County Historical Society.

The Bentley Library at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor is also thought to have original documents in its collection. There are also microfilm copies of custom house records at the Clark Historical Library at Central Michigan University, and Historical Collections of the Great Lakes at Bowling Green State University.

#### ASSOCIATION WEB SITE

Brendon Bailod, the Association's webmaster, reported on the addition of several databases to the research section of the web site and a virtual library of on-line copies of historical publications. The library was created, in part, using Google Books.

The web site currently contains links to fourteen Google Books including several volumes of the **Annual Report of the U.S. Life-Saving Service** for the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There are also links to an 1856 book entitled **A Trip Through the Lakes of North America** and an on-line copy of **Report of a Committee of Citizens in Cleveland in Relation to Steamboat Disasters on the Western Lakes** that was published in 1850. There several other documents on Google Books that could be linked to the Association

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web site in the future including more volumes from the annual reports of the U.S. Life-Saving Service for the period 1875 thru 1915.

The Association web site also includes links to fifty issues of the **Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States**, some dating back to the 1860s; and a nearly complete run of the **Blue Book of American Shipping**. All of the documents are accessible by going to the web site ([www.aglmh.net](http://www.aglmh.net)) and clicking on the "AGLMH Great Lakes Maritime Internet Research Engine" link, and then the "Archival Great Lakes Books On-line" link.

Some additional resources that could be added to the web site were also discussed during the meeting. They include the annual reports of the Boards of Trade for Milwaukee and Chicago, which contain a surprising amount of maritime-related news and information. Lastly, the ongoing efforts to re-acquire the "aglmh.org" domain address were discussed.

#### RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Steve Brisson reported that he received several entries for the Henry N. Barkhausen Award for Original Research in Great Lakes Maritime History. The winning entry was submitted by Michael Moir, an university archivist and head of the Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections at the York University Libraries in Toronto.

Moir's paper was entitled "Harbour Commissioners, Civil Engineers, and the Large-Scale Manipulation of Nature on Toronto's Waterfront, 1883-1912." Due to a scheduling conflict, Moir was not able to attend the Annual Dinner but hoped to be at future conferences.

During the business meeting, several ideas for encouraging more entries for the Barkhausen Award were discussed, including promoting it using social media. Association members interested in assisting with that effort were encouraged to contact Steve Brisson at [brissons@michigan.gov](mailto:brissons@michigan.gov). There was also some discussion of the possibility of posting abstracts or summaries of the winning papers and entries on the Association web site.

#### AWARDS COMMITTEE

Committee Chair Bob O'Donnell reported that four nominations each were received this year for the 2010

Joyce S. Hayward Award for Historic Interpretation and the Association's Award for Historic Preservation. The nominations were reviewed by a five-person Awards Committee.

Committee members included Bob Graham of the Historical Collections of the Great Lakes at Bowling Green State University, Chris Gillcrist of the Great Lakes Historical Society, Laura Jacobs of the University of Wisconsin-Superior's Maritime Collection, and Bob O'Donnell.

Kenneth Pott, executive director of The Heritage Museum and Cultural Center in St. Joseph, Mich. was chosen for the 2010 Joyce S. Hayward Award. Ken Merryman, a co-founder of the Great Lakes Shipwreck Preservation Society, was selected for the Award for Historic Preservation. Although Pott was unable to attend the Annual Dinner, Merryman planned to be there with several members of the GLSPS.

#### UPCOMING ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The board of directors accepted the offer of the Great Lakes Historical Society to host the Association's 2011 Annual Conference at the site of its new museum in Toledo. Tentatively scheduled for September 8-10, the conference will also be an opportunity to celebrate the centennial of the launch of the museum ship **Willis B. Boyer**. The ship is being rechristened the **Col. James M. Schoonmaker** in honor of the anniversary and will eventually be moored alongside the Historical Society's museum.

The board also accepted an invitation to hold the 2012 Annual Conference in Owen Sound, Ont. where it will be hosted by the Owen Sound Marine & Rail Museum. Preliminary plans include a presentation on the ongoing archaeological survey of the **General Hunter**, a British naval brig built in 1806 and captured by the Americans in the Battle of Lake Erie in 1813. The wreck was discovered on a beach near Southampton, Ont. in 2001.

#### NEWSLETTER & MEMBERSHIP

Editor Bob O'Donnell reported that there was about a 2% increase in the average cost of the six most recent issues of the Association's newsletter compared to the same period last year. Most of that increase was due to a rise in printing costs that were partially offset by decreases in postage expenses.

For the twelve-month period ending September 1, the Association had a net increase in membership of five members compared to the same time period in 2009. Membership now stands at 12 sponsoring institutions, 73 regular institutions, five patrons, five associates and 116 individuals.

At the meeting, a list of individuals and institutions which did not renew their memberships during the past year was distributed to the board. It was also reported that work has been completed on a new electronic version of the membership brochure.

The brochure will now be posted on the web site, and made available to interested institutional and individual members. Work is continuing on an institutional guide publication which will also be posted on the web site when completed. Following the report, there was some discussion of ways to increase Association membership.

It was suggested that institutional members more widely circulate copies of the newsletter among officers, directors and staff to increase their awareness of the Association. Extra copies of the newsletter are available from Bob O'Donnell by e-mailing him at [odonnell521@aol.com](mailto:odonnell521@aol.com).

#### AUDIT COMMITTEE AND TREASURER'S REPORT

For 2009, Treasurer John Polacsek reported that the Association had membership revenues of \$8,167. Total revenues, including interest and publication sales, for the year were \$8,411. The major expenses were \$7,296 for the newsletter and \$1,051 for the awards programs.

The balance in the Association's checking account as of Dec. 31, 2009 was \$5,414 compared to \$6,117 on the same date in 2008. The Audit Committee reported that it had reviewed the Association's revenues and expenses for 2009, and found them to be in order.

In 2010, the Bay County Historical Society donated \$434, or half the net proceeds from the 2009 Conference, to the Association. In June, a \$15,472 certificate of deposit was redeemed. Of that amount, \$6,000 was deposited in the Association's checking account to cover the cost of the Custom House records digitization project, and the remaining \$9,472 placed in a new certificate of deposit.