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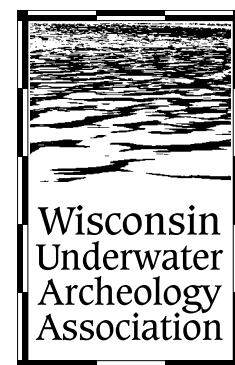
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March 2010

Fathoms Deep But Not Forgotten: Wisconsin's Lost Shipwreck Sites

Part VII: Port Washington

by Brendon Bailod



This article continues our series examining the historical maritime archeology sites in Wisconsin. Of the four port cities discussed so far, Port Washington has taken on the strongest maritime character. Even its name suggests its nautical roots and reveals the intent of its early residents.

The mouth of Sauk Creek was first settled in 1835. The first lighthouse was erected in 1849 on a bluff overlooking the port. 1860 saw the construction of the present-day historic Port Washington Lighthouse to replace the crumbling 1849 structure. In 1869, a major plan was undertaken to improve the harbor. The massive harbor project resulted in the first entirely manmade harbor on the Lakes. In 1935 came the construction of Port Washington's current "art

deco" pierhead light along with the current angled north breakwall.

Today, Port Washington is a charming tourist destination with a harbor full of pleasure craft and charter boats. The waters off the harbor however, still hide the bones of many undiscovered shipwrecks and divers routinely set out from the harbor to dive the area's historic wrecks. The following accounts detail every commercial vessel known to have ended her career in Ozaukee County waters. Accounts are also given for vessels that were salvaged but had significant loss of life or were reported incorrectly as total losses.

Brig Illinois (no#), built 1834, 99.0 x 25.2 x 9.5 ft., 209.31 gt. hermaphrodite brig.

The Brig *Illinois* stranded and was nearly lost north of Port Washington in a November 1841 gale. She was released by salvors before the winter set in and was repaired. She was lost November 4, 1847 when she stranded in a storm at Ahnapee, WI.

Schooner W.G. Buckner (no#),

built 1837, 74.2 x 21.4 x 7 ft., 106.93 gt.

The schooner *W.G. Buckner* sprang a leak and capsized 6 miles off Ozaukee with a lumber cargo bound from Bay de Noc to Chicago on September 28, 1849. The cargo owner, his wife and 5 children died. Survivors clung to wreckage for over 24 hours until they were taken off by the schooner *Erwin*. The *Buckner's* hull drifted ashore and was reportedly recovered but she disappears from all records after this accident.

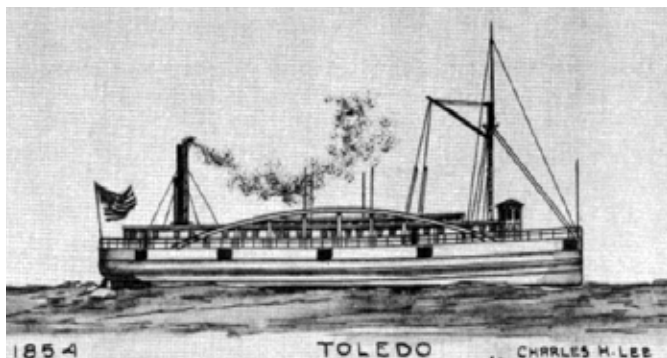
Sidewheel Steamer Lexington (no#), built 1838, 152.0 x 20.6 x 11.1 ft., 353.53 gt. BOM. Later 162.0 x 22.5 x 11.1 ft., 363.53 gt.

The sidewheeler *Lexington* was driven aground and stranded June 15, 1850 about 10 miles north of Port Washington in a rare June blow. Although she was reportedly pulled free, she never sailed again after this stranding and was condemned and dismantled.

Brig Fashion (9189), built 1846, rebuilt 1864, 123.6 x 24.5 x 10.1 ft., 282.52 gt.

The brig *Fashion* reportedly went ashore October 14, 1851 with a cargo of iron northeast of the Ulao Pier in

The Toledo – from an Erik Heyl print in the author's collection



continued on page 4

Association News

Action Meeting

An action planning meeting was held on February 13, 2010. The first few minutes of the meeting were used by the President, VP, Treasurer and Secretary to give individual officer reports before proceeding on to the primary meeting agenda.

The first order of business involved discussion for this summer's training objectives regarding preparation and timelines for both the classroom session which is to be held at Discovery World and the in-water session to be held at Pearl Lake.

Further conversations involved discussions on whether the organization should pursue affiliation with the Nautical Archaeology Society for the upcoming WUAA survey training and workshop. The group agreed that more information is needed before a decision can be made.

Greg provided a proposed course curriculum that could be used as a starting point and refined with input from the group. The group felt comfortable with the timeline and agreed to pursue refinement of the curriculum.

The group then went on to review the (near) final draft of Brendon's book "Fathoms Deep...". Brendon proceeded to walk the group through various areas of the book pointing out items of interest and offering additional insight into his vision of the final compilation. This walkthrough was met with tremendous approval from the group. Options for the initial printing were discussed in terms of the cost of printing and funding. All present agreed the organization had the funds available at this time to back this initial printing.

Next the group discussed upcoming changes for the WUAA website. Brendon and Lee brought the group

up-to-speed on plans to convert over to a content management site called Joomla which will provide more effective site organization and management and make tasks for collaboration and coordination of future projects easier to perform. Joomla will also allow us to incorporate things such as an online payment service for the upcoming WUAA online store.

Finally, the group discussed plans for the WUAA booth at this year's Ghost Ships Festival. Brendon indicated that he will be sending out an email to the officer group shortly asking for feedback on booth content and layout. He will also be coordinating an upcoming conference call within the next few weeks.

The next action planning meeting will be in Marshall, WI on Saturday, April 24 starting at 10AM. All members are welcome to attend. Check the WUAA web site for details.

Wisconsin's Underwater Heritage

is published quarterly by the Wisconsin Underwater Archeology Association, a nonprofit association of individuals and organizations interested in studying and preserving the underwater cultural resources and historical sites of Wisconsin.

In addition to publishing this newsletter, the Association also holds

semiannual meetings and provides support to members' research and publication projects. Annual membership dues are \$20. For membership information write to the postal or email address below.

Mail correspondence to:
WUAA
PO Box 6081
Madison, WI 53716

email:
wuaa@mailbag.com

web site:
www.wuua.org

President:
Brendon Baillod
Marshall

Vice-President:
Kevin Cullen
Milwaukee

Treasurer:
Lee Hintz
Oak Creek

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Madison

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Middleton

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Bailey's Harbor - 2010

On June 5 and 6, 2010 WUAA will be continuing drawing pieces of wreckage in Baileys Harbor. We will be in the harbor of Baileys Harbor in about 12 - 18 feet of water. If you are interested in participating contact either Steve Wagner at swagner1922@sbcglobal.net or Russel Leitz at rleitz@mwwb.net or 715-258-2935. If you are interested but are unable to make these dates, please contact us anyway, since other dates will be planned.

Norlond Survey

The 2010 WUAA/GLSRF survey project will be on the wreck of the *Norlond*. The *Norlond* was a wooden steamer built in 1890. In 1922 she was caught in a heavy storm and foundered just south of Milwaukee with the loss of all on board.

Dives will be made on Thursday evenings during the summer. A fee of \$20 per diver will be collected. If you would like to participate contact Kimm Stabelfeldt at kimms@ghost-ships.org or check the WUAA website.

Meteor Workday

April 24-25 is this year's workday on the *S. S. Meteor* at Superior, Wisconsin. The *Meteor* is a whale-back vessel used as a museum. Volunteers will be doing such things as scraping and painting to get the vessel looking better and assist in other maintenance. Phil Kerber from GLSPS is planning the workday. If interested in helping this year contact Russel Leitz at rleitz@mwwb.net or 715-258-2935 and he will coordinate with Phil.

Report on the WUAA Baileys Harbor Project - 2009

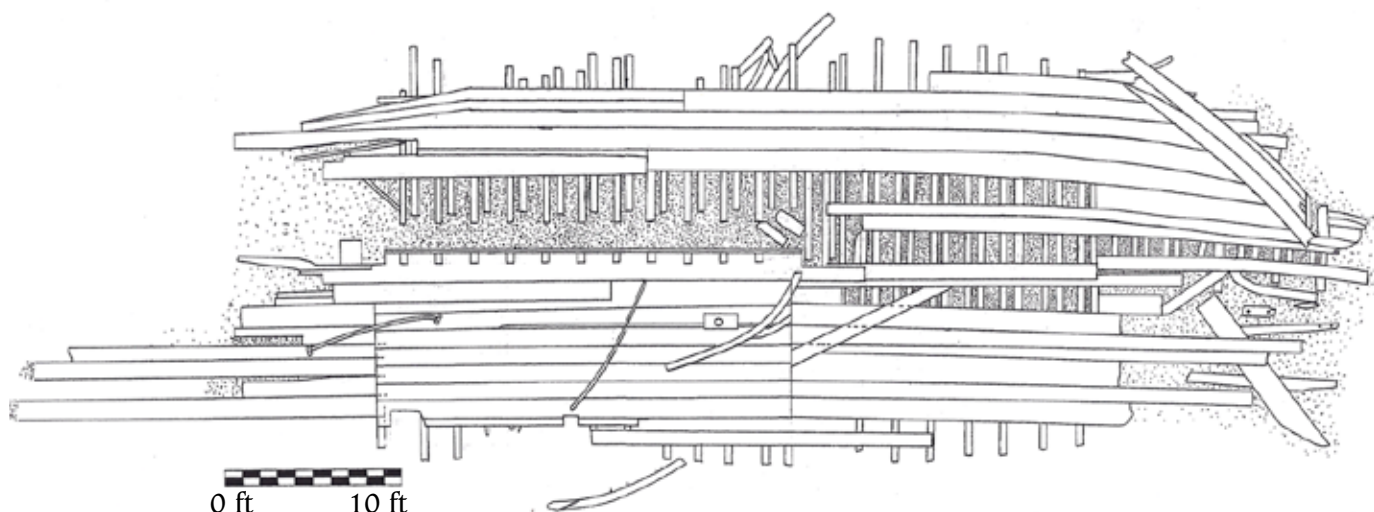
On August 29 and 30, 2009, Ruth Magnus, Mike Brutlag, Bob Lijewski, Jon McKenzie, Michael Schroyer, Russel Leitz, Jon Van Harpen and Steve Wagner completed the BH 106 site drawing in Baileys Harbor. Jon Van Harpen and Steve Wagner furnished the boats to support the work. This particular site survey was started in 2008.

There are fourteen schooners documented as wrecked in Baileys Harbor. There are nineteen pieces of

wreckage presently located eighteen sites. (One site has one side piece on top of another.). Eight have drawn so far. Besides drawing the pieces, construction details are being gathered in order to determine which pieces belong to the same wreck and then attempt to determine which vessels they are from. Some of the wrecks were probably used for construction on land or as firewood, leaving no wreckage from them.

On October 8 and 9, Keith Meverden, Tamara Thomsen, Matt Carter (visiting from New Zealand), Steve Hubbard and Russel Leitz dove on several of the pieces. Keith was able to answer many questions and verified that four sites have attached ceiling arch planks from a few planks to almost a complete arch on site BH 101. He also verified that site BH 111 is part of a transom and was measured as being 13.0' x 13.2'. A new side piece, BH 118, discovered in 2009, was measured as being 116.9' x 13'.

Site BH 106
Bailey's harbor



Port Washington Shipwreck Sites

continued from page 1

the Fall of 1861. She was freed with \$1500 damage before winter set in and continued to sail until December of 1877, when she was wrecked at the mouth of the Kalamazoo River on the Michigan coast.

Schooner *A. V. Knickerbocker* (no#), built 1840, 66.8 x 17.4 x 6.0 ft., 58.91 gt.

The schooner *A. V. Knickerbocker* capsized and came ashore August 26, 1855 in a storm and washed ashore six miles North of Port Washington. The captain was lost trying to swim ashore, but the crew survived. The vessel was a total loss. She was abandoned in the surf and her remains are probably still buried under the beach. The remains of the *Knickerbocker* were reportedly visible on the beach as late as 1920, but their exact location is no longer known.

Brig *Racine* (21183), built 1852, 106.5 x 26.2 x 9.2 ft., 229.05 gt.

The brig *Racine* capsized in a storm, drifted for days and sank in shallow water off Ulao in October of 1855. Her master was Capt. Charles Cramer. The crew was rescued by the brig *Hutchinson*. The *Racine* was recovered with \$8000 damage (a

*Scow schooner Felicitous –
Great Lakes Historical Society*



constructive total loss) and rebuilt as a schooner. She was lost for good on October 30, 1868 off Pt. Aux Barques in Lake Huron.

Schooner *Active* (no#), built 1845, 25.62 gt.

Bound Manitowoc for Chicago, the little schooner *Active* capsized and foundered October 10, 1855 in a squall off Port Washington. Her crew clung to her upturned hull until rescued in a risky maneuver by the schooner *Thornton* on the 11th. She was last seen floating bottom-up by the *Sciota* on the 13th, 15 miles off Milwaukee. There is no record of her after this date. She had struck a bar and sunk off Manitowoc in June of the same year. Vessel and cargo worth about \$2500.

Propeller *Toledo* (no#), built 1854, 178.7 x 29.2 x 11.1 ft., 585.21 gt.

About 40 people drowned when this vessel was driven ashore and broke up at Port Washington on October 22, 1856. Only three were saved. Merchandise was scattered for miles on the beach. The *Toledo* has just taken on a load of wood and departed when a severe gale blew up. The *Toledo* was unable to make headway and was being blown toward shore. The captain consequently dropped the anchor, but it became fouled and the *Toledo* was blown into the shallows 100 yards north and 25 yards east of Port Washington's north pier where the waves took her apart.

She was a total loss of over \$100,000. Her broken and scattered remains reportedly uncover periodically on the sandy bottom in 20 ft of water. Remains displayed at Port Washington attributed to the *Toledo* are now believed, based on location, to be from the schooner *Bohemian* which wrecked at the same time.

Schooner *Bohemian* (no#) built 1856, 137 x 26 x 11 ft., 372.54 gt.

The schooner *Bohemian* stranded at Port Washington in October 22, 1856 in the same gale that wrecked the *Toledo*. She was driven onto the south shore of Port Washington Harbor, 200 yards south of Silverman's Pier. She carried a mixed cargo of pig iron and railroad wheels. Her crew rescued by local citizens. The *Bohemian* was a brand new vessel and was launched only four months earlier in Buffalo, New York. Some of her cargo was found in 1930 when the harbor was dredged. It is now on display, misidentified as being from the steamer *Toledo*. The *Bohemian's* remains have never been positively identified.

Sidewheel Steamer *Niagara* (no#), built 1845, 245.0 x 33.6 x 14.0 ft., 1099 gt.

The steamer *Niagara* burned and sank north of Port Washington on November 24, 1856, taking the lives of over 60 Dutch immigrants and crew. She was bound from Collingwood, Ontario to Chicago and carried some flammable cargo, which started the fire. The *Niagara* was run for shore when the fire was discovered, but this only fanned the flames and the ship's hull eventually burned through and she sank. The steamers *Traveler* and *Illinois* and a number of schooners including *Marble* and *Mary Grover* helped to rescue the survivors. Her approximate location was charted by the Lake Survey before WWII and was found with a fish finder about 1963 by Pat Delaney. The Wisconsin Historical Society did a detailed archeological survey of the site in the 1990s. The wreck is upright and partially intact in 50 ft of water. Her sidewheels are still present, but collapsed in the 1980s, boilers are a short distance from hull.

Schooner *Fair Play* (no#), built 1857, 55.0 x 14.0 x 4.6 ft., 30.88 gt.

The little schooner *Fair Play* reportedly foundered in November 1857 north of Port Washington in a late season gale with a cargo of supplies. She was a new vessel, having just been launched that spring at Sheboygan. She should not be confused with the other schooner *Fair Play* lost 1855 at Sheboygan.

Schooner Mars (no#), built 1855, 46.10 x 13.8 x 5.0 ft., 27.75 gt.

The small schooner *Mars* was lost in a gale on November 17, 1857 bound from Port Washington to Milwaukee. She was initially reported to have foundered, but her battered hull was found ashore two days later several miles south of Port Washington with no sign of her four crewmen. She was a total loss valued at \$2000.

Schooner Lavinia (no#), built 1847, 107.5 x 22.1 x 9.1 ft., 199.01 gt.

The schooner *Lavinia* was blown ashore north of Port Washington in a storm on October 7, 1858 along with the schooner *Gazelle*. The *Gazelle* was freed, but the *Lavinia* proved a total loss. She was reportedly carrying a cargo of cobblestones and was valued at \$2000.

Brig Mahoning (no#), built 1847, 119.1 x 25.5 x 9.8 ft., 259.42 gt.

The brig *Mahoning* capsized and sank a few miles off shore half way between Port Washington and Ulao. She was being towed to Milwaukee for repairs following a stranding at Sheboygan and had two large steam pumps running to keep her free of water. A heavy sea was running and the pumps began losing ground, causing the *Mahoning* to capsize and sink, taking the salvage captain and mate with her. The wrecking tug *Magnet* with a diver salvaged some of the pumps, blocks, anchors, chains and rigging in June 1865. The wreck was located by Paul Ehorn and Butch Klopp in 1999 on a tip from local

fishermen. The wreck was located again by diver Brad Ingersoll in August 2005.

Scow Schooner Scud (no#), built 1854, 63.8 x 17.4 x 3.4 ft., 32.37 gt.

The little scow schooner *Scud* is reported to have been lost when she stranded south of Port Washington in 1866.

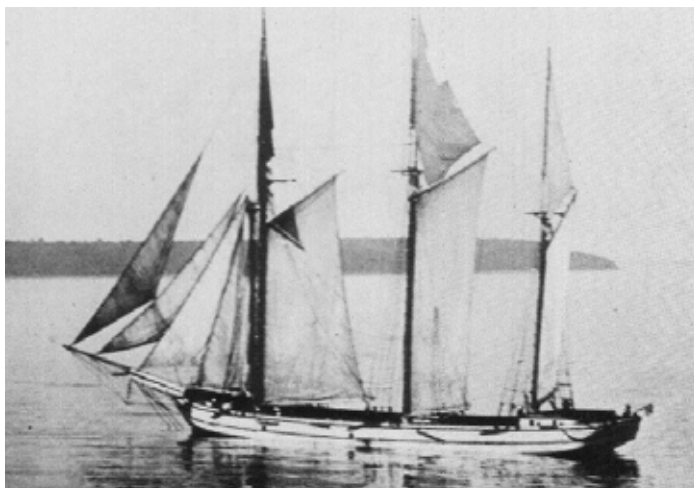
She had stranded at Sheboygan the previous year, but was reportedly recovered. Supporting data for this loss is very fragmentary as a primary reference has never been located. However, the loss is plausible, as the *Scud* was still sailing in the area in the 1860s.

Brig Alexander Mitchell (no#), built 1853, 119.6 x 20.1 x 9.8 ft., 275.56 gt. BOM, 185.14 gt.

The brig *Alexander Mitchell* was bound for Chicago with a cargo of lumber on October 24, 1866 when she capsized off Port Washington in an October squall. Her crew escaped in their yawl, but the *Mitchell* was driven across the lake and came ashore at White Lake, MI where she was abandoned as a total loss.

Schooner Northerner (18176), built 1851, 81.1 x 18.6 x 7.6 ft., 77 gt., rebuilt 1859.

The schooner *Northerner* damaged her hull on the lake bottom while loading at Amsterdam, WI. On November 29, 1868, while enroute to Milwaukee, she began to leak profusely and put into Port Washington. Later the prop *Cuyahoga* attempted to tow her to Milwaukee for repairs, but she capsized and foundered enroute. Her crew was rescued by the *Cuyahoga*. Butch Klopp and Roger Chapman located the wreck in 1976.



schooner Narragansett – author's collection

The wreck is very well preserved and intact. She sports a rare ram figurehead. The site was the subject of a video survey by the Wisconsin Historical Society in 2009.

Scow Schooner Supply (23497), built 1861, 78.3 x 20.9 x 4.0 ft., 60.45 gt., rebuilt 1874 to 81.5 x 21.7 x 5.9 ft., 89 gt.

The scow schooner *Supply* was bound from Montague, MI for Chicago with a cargo shingles when she capsized off Port Washington on July 13, 1869. Her crew were rescued by the schooner *Len Highy* and taken to Sheboygan. The vessel was reported as a total loss, but was recovered and rebuilt. She sailed until July 3, 1890 when she capsized and foundered off Traverse City, MI.

Propeller Belle (2159), built 1859, 90.5 x 9.6 x 7.5 ft., 120 gt.

The little passenger steamer *Belle* burned to the waterline and sank on November 20, 1869 off Port Washington with a cargo of lumber and two lives while bound from Manitowoc to Milwaukee. The fire originated around her smoke stack and spread rapidly. Two crew were lost, but the remainder made it to the life boat and rowed to Port Washington. The *Belle* foundered later the same day. In 1982, com-

continued on page 6

Port Washington Shipwreck Sites

continued from page 5

mercial fishermen reportedly snagged a wreck in 360 ft. of water off Port Washington. Butch Klopp and Harry Zych imaged the wreck with sidescan sonar and found it to be consistent with the Belle's description.

Schooner Eva M. Cone (7522), built 1859, 51.6 x 13.2 x 4.4 ft., 26.21 gt.

The little schooner *Eva M. Cone* was making an early season run from Milwaukee to Port Washington for a lumber cargo. Just after leaving Port Washington she struck an ice flow and began to leak uncontrollably. Within minutes, she rolled over and her crew had to abandon her in the yawl. The crew rowed to Port Washington while the *Eva M. Cone* blew ashore three miles south of Port Ulao, where the waves took her apart. Wooden vessel remains have been reported just offshore in the area between Port Washington and Ulao, which may belong to this vessel.

Scow schooner Mary Ludwig –
C. Patrick Labadie collection, TBNMS



Scow Schooner Felicitous (120121), built 1873, 126.0 x 26.6 x 7.8 ft., 198.78 gt., rebuilt 1888, 216.13 gt.

The scow schooner *Felicitous* was reported stranded and sunk in shallow water southeast of Ulao in the fall of 1874 with a cargo of railroad ties. Details of the accident are sketchy, but the *Felicitous* was recovered and sailed until she was abandoned in 1924. A primary account of this accident has yet to be located, but it seems plausible, as the ship was trading in the area at that time.

Scow Schooner Mary Booth (16392), built May 1857, 100.0 x 24.7 x 6.8 ft., 131.78 gt.

The scow schooner *Mary Booth* was caught in a gale off Port Washington on November 6, 1877, when she began to leak. Her pumps were soon overwhelmed and she became waterlogged and subsequently capsized. Her crew escaped in yawl and blew across the lake to Montague, MI, but the *Mary Booth* is believed to have foundered southeast of Port Washington in deep water.

Schooner Norma (?), build info unknown, reported at 315 gt.

The US Life Saving Service index to wrecks and casualties on Lake Michigan records the total loss of the schooner *Norma* by going ashore 15 miles north of Milwaukee in September 1879 with a financial value of \$1000. No vessel of matching name or tonnage appears to have sailed in US waters at this time. This may have been the little 18 gt. scow *Norma*, #18605, which was lost in 1900 near Egg Harbor, WI.

Schooner Narragansett (18110), built 1861, 139.9 x 26.1 x 11.6 ft., 316 gt.

On July 13, 1880 the big schooner *Narragansett* was run down by the schooner *Falmouth* off Port Washington, killing one crewman. The *Narragansett's* hull was cut

12 planks deep and several of her frames were shattered. She narrowly avoided foundering. Her grain cargo was damaged and she required major repairs at the Wolff and Davidson yard in Milwaukee. She continued service until May 13, 1901 when she foundered 50 miles off Port Sanilac, MI on Lake Huron.

Scow Schooner Pilot (19667), built 1848, 98.7 x 24.9 x 8.7 ft., 180.82 gt. BOM, rebuilt 1861, 131.16 gt.

The scow schooner *Pilot* was bound from White Lake, MI to Chicago with shingles when she was run down by the upbound schooner *R. Halloran* 3 miles south and 5 miles off of Port Washington. The *Pilot* was struck on the starboard bow and cut nearly to her foremast. The crew abandoned ship to the *Halloran* and were landed at Manitowoc. The next day, the *Pilot* was found afloat and under sail 20 miles NE of Milwaukee and towed to port where she was rebuilt. She sailed until being abandoned in 1895.

Schooner Guiding Star (85006), built 1869, 139 x 26 x 11 ft., 324 gt.

The schooner *Guiding Star* was driven ashore in a fall gale on November 6, 1883 twelve miles North of Milwaukee with a cargo of 560 tons of coal. Eight crew were rescued by Milwaukee Lifesaving Station crew and 2/3 of the cargo was recovered. The ship broke up a few weeks later. What are believed to be the ship's remains lie just south of parking lot of Virmond Park on the beach buried under the bluff with coal and a salvage cart buried near the keel. After storms, the wreckage is sometimes exposed.

Schooner W.W. Brigham (26363), built 1849, 90.3 x 24.8 x 7.2 ft., 93.71 gt., later 93.0 x 21.1 x 7.1 ft.

The schooner *W.W. Brigham* sprang a leak and capsized August 25, 1884 in a storm. She was found bottom up ENE of Port Washington.

The crew floated on a raft 3 days and 3 nights without food or sleep before rescue by the schooner *Walter Smith*. The floating wreck was located about midlake by the schooner *Tennie & Laura* and later towed to Grand Haven on September 1, 1884 where it was abandoned as a total loss.

Schooner *Advance* (365), built 1853, 118.9 x 25.6 x 9.8 ft., 268.40 gt.

The schooner *Advance* was bound Ahnapee to Chicago in a heavy sea and blinding rain with a lumber cargo on September 8, 1885 when she began to leak. Her captain launched the lifeboat and made for shore but it capsized in the breakers drowning all but one of the crew, including Captain Paulson and his son George. The *Advance* went down 2.5 miles from shore off Oostburg, about 10 miles north of Port Washington. She is very badly broken up for a wreck at her depth. Her hull is only partially intact. She was located in 1978 by Robert Vander Puy and Ray Larson.

Schooner *Gertie Wing* (85665), built 1880, 41.4 x 12.8 x 5.6 ft. 16.99 gt.

The little schooner *Gertie Wing* had just departed from Port Washington for Manitowoc in a heavy sea on September 25, 1886 with 5 tons of apples when she became unmanageable. She dropped her anchor but the chain parted and

she was driven aground ½ mile north of the Port Washington piers. By the time a tug arrived, she was firmly aground. Her Captain, William Burmaster of Manitowoc unloaded the apples and left the ship to break up. Her remains were still visible two years later.

Schooner *Maggie Thompson* (16425), built 1867, 110.3 x 25.6 x 7.9 ft., 155.53 gt.

The schooner *Maggie Thompson* capsized off Port Washington in a gale on July 25, 1888 bound for Milwaukee with a cargo of tan bark. Her crew escaped and her upturned hull was located the next day and towed to Milwaukee where it was repaired. The schooner remained in service until November of 1900 when she was stripped and abandoned in the Jones Island boneyard at Milwaukee.

Schooner *Sophia Bonner* (115402), built 1875, 65.0 x 18.5 x 6.0 ft., 36.98 gt.

The schooner *Sophia Bonner* had only recently been sold to new owners, John Watt & John Rooney of Ludington, MI at a Federal Marshall's debt sale when she capsized in a gale 18 miles northeast of Milwaukee on September 28, 1888. Her crew escaped, but the *Bonner* went to the bottom.

Schooner *Two Sisters* (145340), built 1883, 69.5 x 18.1 x 3.9 ft., 34 gt.

The schooner *Two Sisters* was sunk outside the harbor piers at Port Washington sometime in August of 1889. Her partially submerged hull was struck by the steamer *R.A. Seymour Jr.* on September 3, 1889, sinking the *Seymour*.

The *Two Sisters* was later raised and lost in 1899 at Forest Bay on Lake Huron.

Propeller Steamer *R. A. Seymour Jr.* (110672), built 1876, 110 x 23 x 8 ft., 131.46 gt., built as Lewis Gilbert, rebuilt and renamed in 1882.

The steamer *R.A. Seymour* struck the wreck of the schooner *Two Sisters* just outside the Port Washington pierheads and foundered on September 3, 1889. She was raised by the tug *W.H. Simpson* and taken to Milwaukee where she was repaired. She sailed until 1925 when she was abandoned at Chicago.

Scow Schooner *Silver Cloud* (115025), built 1869, 79.4 x 21.9 x 6.3 ft., 96.94 gt.

The scow schooner *Silver Cloud* was bound from Bailey's Harbor to Milwaukee with cedar posts when she capsized on July 7, 1891 in a rare July gale northeast of Port Washington. Captain Johnson had gone below decks to rescue his wife and child, and was drowned with them when the ship capsized. Three of her crew were rescued from the debris by a fish tug. The vessel's hull came ashore two miles north of Port Washington where it was abandoned. She was valued at \$3000.

Schooner *Starke* (115474), built 1876, 124.2 x 27.3 x 9.0 ft., 209 gt.

The schooner *Starke* was bound from Norwood, MI to Milwaukee with maple lumber when she was run down by the schooner *Charles E. Wyman* 16 miles off Port Washington on June 30, 1891. She began to sink and ran for Sheboygan but capsized 7 miles off Amsterdam, her crew escaping in the yawl. Her hull was located by the tug *Welcome* and towed to Sheboygan for repairs. She went to sea and was lost February 5, 1906 at Chandeleur Island, LA by stranding.



J.M. Allmendinger – Historical Collections of the Great Lakes

Port Washington Shipwreck Sites

continued from page 7

Schooner *Knight Templar* (14110), built 1865, 136 x 26 x 11 ft., 289.74 gt.

The schooner *Knight Templar* was reported in Arthur & Lucy Frederickson's Lake Michigan shipwreck maps to have been lost in a storm south of Sheboygan, WI, approximately off present-day Harrington Beach State Park in 1893. This erroneous account is based on an actual stranding to the schooner *Knight Templar* in October 1893 south of Cheboygan, MI, but the error has been repeated enough that it has become a local oral tradition. Schooner remains were located in the surf about 1000 ft south of the old dock at the park and were attributed to the *Knight Templar*, but they remain unidentified. The *Knight Templar* was eventually lost in December of 1905 near Alpena, MI.

Scow Schooner *Mary Ludwig* (90601), built 1874, 81.5 x 19.7 x 6.0 ft. 68.84 gt.

The schooner *Mary Ludwig* stranded in a gale on a rock off Sucker Brook in September 1895. The crew's yawl overturned and they were rescued by a farmer and his

horse. The *Ludwig* was later recovered and taken to Milwaukee for repairs, but her anchor, which was left at the site was located by divers in 1980 and recovered. The *Ludwig* sailed for many years until she was abandoned at Grand Haven, MI on June 30, 1919.

Wooden Steamer *J. M. Allmendinger* (76411), built 1883, 104.0 x 24.4 x 10.0 ft., 230.64 gt., rebuilt in 1888.

The steamer *J.M. Allmendinger*, blinded by snow, went aground in a blizzard and gale just north of present-day Virmond Park on November 26, 1895 with a cargo of lumber. Her crew was rescued by the superhuman efforts of the Milwaukee Lifesaving Service, who rowed through the blizzard to the site. The lifesavers were frozen into the seats of their surfboat when they arrived, some having to be chopped out of the ice. The *Allmendinger* was quickly broken up by waves over the ensuing weeks and was a total loss. The wreck was charted by the Lake Survey and was salvaged by Max Nohl in the 1930s. A very large boiler with condenser is the most prominent artifact and is a hazard to navigation. The keel and ribs are also present.

Scow Schooner *J.B. Prime* (13749), built 1865, 114.2 x 25.0 x 7.2 ft. 170.08 gt., later 115.4 x 25.5 x 6.5 ft., 148.38 gt.

The scow schooner *J.B. Prime* was abandoned at Port Washington in March of 1896 and was dismantled. She had been used as an unmasted scow and hauled brick from Port Washington to Milwaukee. She was renamed *Noah's Ark* in 1895. She had wrecked off Kewaunee on September 25, 1878 but was recovered.

Scow Schooner *Tennie & Laura* (145115), built 1876, 73.0 x 19.0 x 5.6 ft., 56.69 gt.

The scow schooner *Tennie & Laura* was a frequent visitor to Port

Washington. She was lost on a trip from Muskegon to Milwaukee with a cargo of lumber when she capsized and sank 12 miles NE of Milwaukee on August 2, 1903. Her captain, John Sather, was picked up by the steamer *Mark Covell*, but her mate was lost. The vessel and her cargo were valued at \$1000. The wreck was located in January 1999 in 310 ft of water by the *USN Defender* during the search for the *Linda E*. She was filmed using an ROV by the *USCG Acacia* and more recently has been visited and filmed by technical divers. She was surveyed by the Wisconsin Historical Society in 2005.

Wooden Steamer *D.C. Whitney* (157075), built 1882, 240 x 40 x 23 ft., 1490 gt., renamed *Gargantua*, 1909.

The steamer *D.C. Whitney* was driven ashore just north of Port Washington in the big storm of 1905 on September 3rd. Many other ships were lost across the Lakes in this storm. The *Whitney* was one of the lucky survivors. She was pulled free a few days later with minor damage. In 1913, she was beached on Beausoliel Island, then used as a dry dock. Eventually she was abandoned in the Wingfield Basin, Georgian Bay.

Wooden Passenger Steamer *Atlanta* (106823), built 1891, 200.1 x 32.2 x 13.6 ft. 1129.17 gt.

The steamer *Atlanta* was bound from Manitowoc to Chicago with passengers and a cargo of furniture on March 18, 1906 when she was found to be on fire just south of Sheboygan. The fish tug *Tessler* of Port Washington noticed the fire and proceeded to the *Atlanta* where nearly 70 passengers were taken aboard the *Tessler*. One life was lost during the rescue. The *Tessler* towed the burning *Atlanta* to the shallows and beached her at Amsterdam north of Port Washington. Today, her wreckage is broken but concentrated

Scow schooner J.B. Prime –
Historical Collections of the Great Lakes



on sandy bottom with small artifacts in the sand. The vessel's hull outline can be clearly seen.

Gas Yacht Marguerite (205420), built 1908, 54.0 x 12.8 x 6.1 ft., 32.0 gt.

The gas yacht *Marguerite* burned 8 miles off Port Washington on August 12, 1914 and was a total loss. She was towed in to Port Washington by the tug *Torrent*. Her hull was later towed to Sheboygan where she was scrapped.

Steam Fish Tug P. Reckinger (150577), built 1892, 61.0 x 14.0 x 6.6 ft., 42.58 gt.

The big fish tug *P. Reckinger* was abandoned at Port Washington sometime in 1917 due to age and condition. Her remains were likely removed.

Wooden Fish Tug Julia C. Hammel (77076), built 1893, 55.2 x 14.5 x 6.0 ft. 28 gt.

The fish tug *Julia C. Hammel* was built for E. Hammel, Sr. of Two Rivers but was brought to Port Washington in 1914 by John Heula. In 1917, she was bought by Arthur Breault, who was her last owner. She was abandoned at Port Washington on April 20, 1918 as "unfit for use". Her final resting place is unknown, but her remains are believed to have been removed.

Wooden Fish Tug Hope (207087), built 1893, 37.2 x 12.2 x 4.2 ft., 15 gt., rebuilt 1910.

The fish tug *Hope* was bought by the Smith Brothers in 1910 and rebuilt at Port Washington. She was used until 1918 when she was dismantled and her hull pulled up on the beach in the harbor. Her remains were definitely removed.

Wooden Steamer Cambria (127100), built 1894, 94.0 x 12.8 x 5.4 ft. 48.32 gt.

The steamer *Cambria* burst her boiler flue, sprang a leak and foundered in heavy weather 35 mi. NE of Milwaukee on September 21, 1921. One crewman was killed by steam,

six others were rescued by the Coast Guard. She was bound from Pentwater to Milwaukee with a cargo of 300 barrels of apples.

Steel Steamer Senator (116725), built 1896, 410.0 x 45.4 x 23.9 ft., 4048.75 gt.

The steel steamer *Senator* was struck in fog by the steamer *Marquette* 20 miles off Port Washington on October 31, 1929. She was bound for Milwaukee with cargo of 240 Nash autos. She sank in deep water and was a total loss with 10 lives. She had sunk on August 22, 1909 in the St. Mary's River, but was raised. The wreck was found on June 10, 2005 by Paul Ehorn and Rob Polich in over 400 ft of water off Port Washington.

Steel Fish Tug Evelyn C. Smith (226023), built 1926, 45.0 x 12.9 x 5.4 ft., 33 gt., renamed *Stella* 1945.

The steel fish tug *Evelyn C. Smith* sank at her dock in Port Washington on May 12, 1935 for unknown reasons. She was raised and returned to service. In 1945 she was renamed *Stella* and served on the Lakes until being retired in the 1980s. She was last owned by Ray Slupik of Chicago.

Steamer William B. Pilkey (116732), built, 413.2 x 48.0 x 24.0 ft., 4344 gt., built as *Sir William Siemens*, renamed 1929; later the *Frank E. Vigor* 1941.

The steamer *William B. Pilkey* was laden with coal when she ran aground 9 miles south of Port Washington in April of 1937, nearly ending her career. She was pulled off and her cargo was unloaded. She was lost April 4, 1944 when she collided with a vessel and sank in Lake Erie. She is now a popular Lake Erie dive target in 90 ft. of water.

Wooden Tug Commoner (211238), built 1913, 33.0 x 10.0 x 4.0 ft., 7.0 gt.

The wooden tug *Commoner* was driven ashore in heavy weather at

Port Washington on October 17, 1937. She was owned by salvager G.W. Falcon of Chicago, but she proved a total loss and was scrapped where she lay.

Steel Steamer Jennifer (C313980), built 1964, 210 x 36 x 15 ft., 1092 gt. Built as *Cacouna*, renamed *Lorna P* in 1973.

The steamer *Jennifer* capsized and foundered in a storm 30 mi. NE of Milwaukee on December 1, 1974 when her cargo of steel plates shifted. Her crew was rescued by a USCG helicopter and the British freighter *Fortuna*. The vessel was a total loss, foundering in very deep water.

Pleasure Boat Submersion Excursion.

The recreational dive boat *Submersion Excursion* became waterlogged and was beached north of Port Washington in heavy weather on May 28, 1989. The boat was a charter dive boat that had been visiting the wreck of the steamer *Niagara*. She was a total loss.

Steel Fish Tug Linda E (236906), built 1937, 39.8 x 13.0 x 5.7 ft. 29 gt., built as the *Le Clair Bros*.

The fish tug *Linda E* vanished on December 11, 1998 with three crew in calm, clear weather, bound Milwaukee to Port Washington with a cargo of chubs. The crew had radio and cell phone, but got no call off and no debris was found. Her last known position was 9 mi. SE of Port Washington. She was located on June 18, 2000 in 260 ft. of water, 6 mi SE of Port Washington by the Navy Minesweeper *USS Defender*. Underwater films showed clear evidence of a collision. It was later determined that she had been run down by the British Petroleum tug/tanker combination *Michigan/Great Lakes*. The tug is now a gravesite for her crewmen, captain Leif Weborg, Scott Matta and Warren Olson. ■

Wisconsin Underwater
Archeological Association
P.O. Box 6081
Madison, WI 53716



*For those interested in the study and preservation of
Wisconsin's underwater history and cultural resources.*

Coming Events

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| March 5-6, 2010 | Ghost Ships Festival , in Milwaukee. Films, seminars and presentations about great Lakes Shipwrecks. Sponsored by Great Lakes Shipwreck Research Foundation. For information check their web site at www.ghost-ships.org . |
| March 6, 2010 | WUAA Underwater Survey Methods Workshop , in Milwaukee. 9:30 am - 12:00 pm. For information check the association web site at www.wuaa.org . |
| April 24-25, 2010 | Meteor Project Weekend , in Superior. Volunteers assist in renovation and maintenance of the museum ship <i>Meteor</i> . For information check the GLSPS web site at www.glsp.org . |
| June 5-6, 2010 | WUAA Survey Project in Bailey's Harbor . For information check the association web site at www.wuaa.org . |