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NOVEMBER 2021

WATCHING OVER SHORELINE INTERESTS

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 9

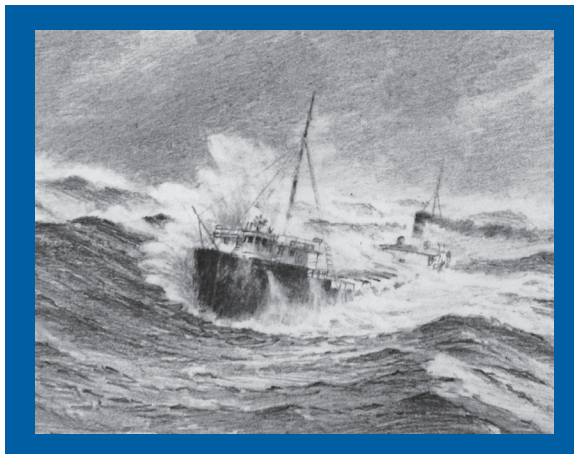
Sunken History & Maritime Treasures

Ghost Ship of the White Hurricane

Part 1

By David Trotter, with Jared Daniel

South of Port Sanilac, Michigan, there is a small roadside park that provides a magnificent view of Lake Huron. Looking out into the lake, a giant 1,000-foot freighter and another ore carrier can be seen on the southbound course. In 75 feet of water, just below the park, the 250-foot *Regina* was lost in the 1913 storm. Thirty-five miles north (off Port Hope, Michigan) in 180 feet of water is the location of the 432-foot *John A. McGean*, also lost in the 1913 storm. The giant freighters are likely oblivious to the fact that their trip includes passing by the graveyards of hundreds of men and women and the many ships that challenged the Great Lakes – and lost.



The Hydrus, fighting for her survival. Courtesy of Robert McGreevy.

The Great Storm of 1913 was a natural disaster; however, this is a story of humans making decisions that led to fatal consequences. The captains were competent seamen entrusted with great responsibilities of caring for their ships and crews. They were very mindful of the shipowners' need to "pay the bills" and

The Great Lakes

—From Herman Melville's book, *Moby Dick*
Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* gave a terrifying description of Great Lakes savage storms in 1851, 62 years before the Great Storm of 1913. He graphically described the Great Lakes as "they are swept by Borean (north winds) and dismasting blasts as direful as any that lash the salted wave; they know what shipwrecks are, far out of sight of land, however inland, they have drowned full many a midnight ship with all its shrieking crew."

make a profit, so a skillful captain was highly valued.

The Captain's Responsibilities

Captains were expected to have acquired an excellent crew and, with a "sound" ship, use their judgement to expeditiously move their boats on the Great Lakes. This meant they often discounted storm warning signals. In this era, captains often ignored the

See **GHOST SHIP** on page 22

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In the Kitchen with Chef Dennis

Stuffed Zucchini Boats

We're now moving toward our Michigan winter, so it's farewell to our home gardens until spring. No more of those delicious Michigan tomatoes or the sweet corn on the cob. I sure will miss them. The fresh herbs can be brought inside and transferred into pots. That's a story for another article. One of the



other vegetables I'll miss is one that produces so much you can't even give them away: zucchini. It's one of the more versatile veggies in the garden. Time to start cooking one of my favorites.

Prep: 20 min. Cook: 45 min. Rest: 5 min.
Total: 70 min. Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 medium zucchini
- 1lb. ground venison
- ½ c. onion (small diced)
- 1 clove garlic (minced)
- 1 medium roasted red pepper (small diced). Reserve ½ for another day.
- ½ tsp. salt + ¼ tsp. to season the empty zucchini boat.
- ½ tsp. ground pepper
- 1 Tbs. Italian seasoning. I make my own. Combine ½ tsp. each of dried oregano, basil, and thyme.
- ¼ c. basil (chiffonade) for garnish

See **KITCHEN** on page 14

Low Maintenance Mock Scrape

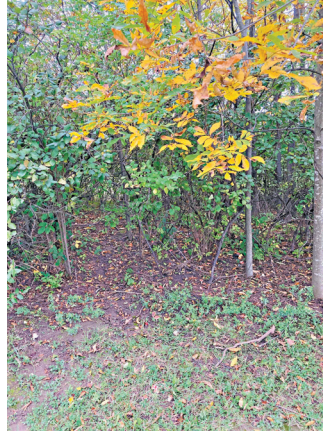
By Ryan Walker

It's fair to say that my hunting methods and techniques tend to trend in the old-school direction. I'm a firm believer in hunting whitetail deer stands based on the wind direction of that given day. My repertoire doesn't include a lot of the cutting-edge technology that is currently taking the outdoor industry by storm. Make no mistake, I'm not against most of the technology available on the market today. No, my hesitation is two-fold. One, I'm not skilled enough on the use of most advanced forms of high technology to comfortably implement them before, during, or after the hunting season, and two, probably the biggest reason, I'm frugal. To most people who know me, they might use a different word: cheap. I still use a trail camera that requires several battery changes and a memory card that has to be manually pulled before checking its contents. Wind direction, weather, and deer activity apps all sound cool when other hunters are talking about them. However, as I squint to read the information on their phones, I realize I will just accidentally call someone if I tried to access an app while out hunting.

In addition, my old-school mentality emphasizes the separation of hunter and deer. In short, I try not to frequent the areas I plan to hunt at least three weeks before the archery season.

Educating a mature whitetail buck's eyes, nose, or ears is the quickest way, in my experience, to part company with him for a long period of time. So, I was filled with severe doubt and consternation when my brother told me his plan to create a mock scrape in one of our food plots last season. Scrapes are used by whitetail deer, bucks and does, as a way to

communicate with one another. When scouting, I always keep my eyes peeled for both old and new scrapes that indicate deer activity in the area I plan to hunt. Many of my stands in the past have utilized a scrape which in turn has yielded some great Michigan whitetails.

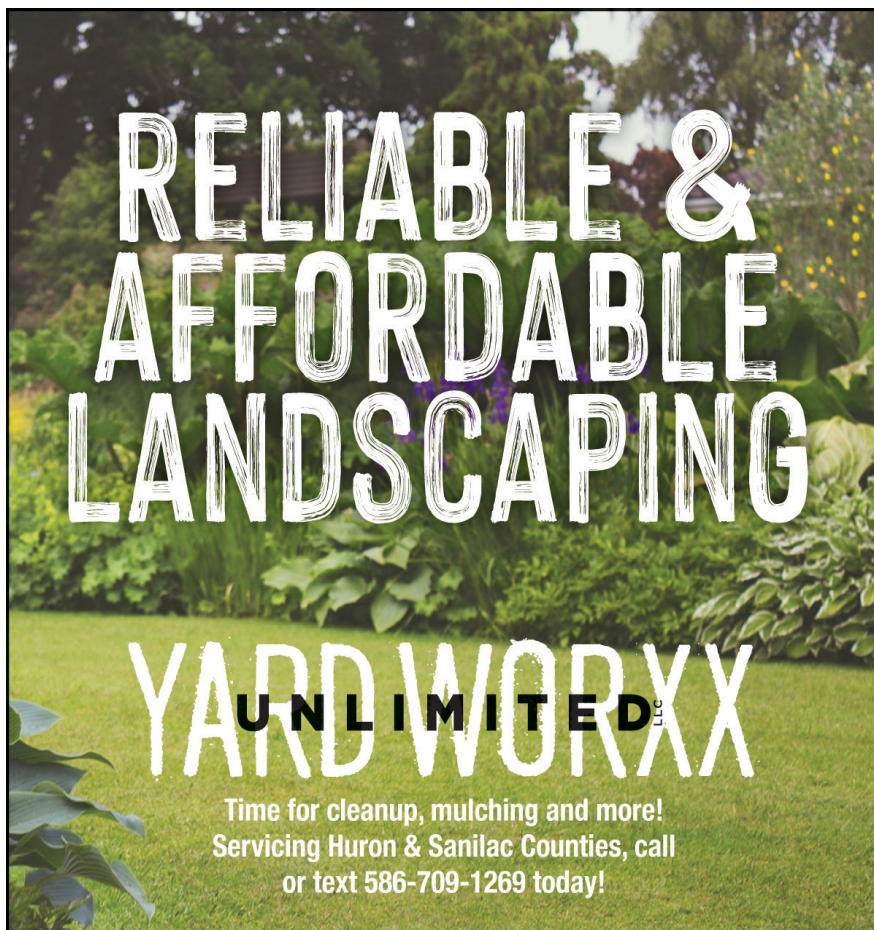


Note where the open area meets the tree line. This is a good place for a scrape.

However, the idea of invading the whitetail's realm to create a fake scrape, otherwise known as a mock scrape, seemed like a longshot. My brother assured me his presence in the food plot would be minimal, and the mock scrap would be low maintenance, which meant future human intrusions wouldn't be invasive. Within 15 minutes, he had the mock scrape and a trail camera set up and ready to go. The first three weeks' worth of trail cam pictures showed two mature bucks frequenting the mock scrape. One of which was an eight-point with heavy antlers who seemed to show up at the same time each evening during daylight hours. A week later, our dad put his tag on same bruiser buck that was consistently freshening my brother's mock scrape creation.

Now that I have seen a successful mock scrape in action, I'm a believer in its usefulness. The construction of the scrape was simple. First, my brother sought out an area of our food plot that had heavy deer activity. Tracks, scat, and runways all converged to point out the east side of the food plot as an ideal location for the scrape. Open areas bordering on a fencerow or tree line are great for scrape activity. Next, he looked for an overhanging branch that would serve as the licking branch nearly every scrape will have hanging over it. That proved to be the toughest part of the experiment

See **HUNTING** on page 16



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VOLUME 23 ~ ISSUE 9

"Whoever is happy will make others happy too."

—Anne Frank

Inside This Issue

COLUMNS & EDITORIALS

- 2 — Ryan Walker
- 3 — Who Am I?
- 11 — A Great Lakes Sailor
- 16 — Legally Speaking
- 16 — Allison Stein
- 18 — Countryside Yarns

HEALTH & HEALTHY EATING

- 1 — In the Kitchen with Chef Dennis
- 3 — The Doctor's Corner

HISTORY

- 1 — Sunken History & Maritime Treasures
- 4 — Schools of Yesteryear
- 6 — Guardians of Freedom
- 10 — The Way It Was
- 17 — Thumb Rails

HUMOR

- 16 — Smile Awhile

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The Doctor's Corner

Please! Please! Please!

By Dr. Timothy Grondin



Hi Folks: It's November now, and the days are shorter; there's a lot less sunlight to go around, so I thought I'd remind you how important vitamin D is. There has never been, to my knowledge, a case of Covid-19 where the patient's vitamin D level was above 50ng/ml. That's how important it really is. If your D level is above 50, then the likelihood of Covid infection is zero! Get your level checked before winter, so you know where you stand. I like my patients to be above 80ng/ml, so they get all the anti-cancer benefits of D, but that's another story.

As you know, during the winter months there's a lot less sunlight, so you're not making as much vitamin D. Please, please, please, take a vitamin D supplement daily. At least 4000 IU per day. I take 10,000 IU daily, but I'm a type 2 diabetic now, and we diabetics need more. Also, you need to get out in the sunlight when we have a nice day. Bundle up, go outside, and get some sunshine on that face. Every time that sun comes out... you need to get out also. Your vitamin D level can drop

fairly fast when you're dealing with an infection, so take more during the infection. Vitamin D literally flushes all viruses from the body.

It's nearly impossible to get a virus when your D level is high. I've been taking it daily for a decade now, no colds, no flu, or virus of any kind. In 10 years. Protect yourself this winter.

Yours in health,
Dr. Grondin

If you have any questions or suggestions for future topics, feel free to email Dr. Grondin at docgrondin@gmail.com, or call his office at 810-984-3344.

Dr. Timothy Grondin started his career as a medic (corpsman) in the Navy where he examined, diagnosed, and treated people for minor illnesses under the direction of an M.D. When Grondin left the military, he became a nurse and worked on the medical/surgical ward at Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital for a number of years. Though he began taking pre-med courses at Oakland University, Grondin changed his mind, choosing to become a chiropractor instead. Grondin graduated from Palmer College of Chiropractic in 1988 and has been in practice in Port Huron since 1989.

DISCLAIMER: The information provided here is intended for educational purposes only. It is not meant to either directly or indirectly diagnose, give medical advice, or prescribe treatment. Please consult with your physician or other licensed healthcare professional for medical diagnosis and treatment.

Who Am I?

Researching Your Family History

Researching Your Railroading Ancestors

By Grace Grogan



Michigan has a long-standing history of railroading, dating back to 1832. In 1832 the E&K started out as a horse-powered operation, then switched to steam by 1837.

You may have ancestors who were involved in the railroads by laying tracks, working maintenance on the engines and cars, or handling administrative jobs in the railroad office. They may have served on the train as an engineer, conductor, fireman, or brakeman. You may even be related to Ephraim Shay, who in 1877 built his first prototype of the Shay locomotive in Cadillac, Michigan.

Classic railroads serving Michigan included:

- New York Central/Michigan Central
- Ann Arbor Railroad
- Pennsylvania Railroad
- Pere Marquette Railway
- Chessie System
- Grand Trunk Western

- Detroit & Mackinac Railway
- Soo Line
- Milwaukee Road
- Chicago & North Western

The above list does not include the secondary branch lines operating in the state.

Railroading is still in operation across the United States. In Michigan, there are only 3,600 miles of track that are operational compared with the original 8,734 it once used.

If railroading is in your ancestry, you will want to check out railroad records. Your ancestor may have worked locally or been involved in the westward expansion. If someone in your history lived near railroad tracks, they or another family member probably worked for the railroad.

Back in its heyday, railroad work provided steady employment at a good wage with room for promotion. Some people made their entire career in railroad employment, turning it into a family business that their children and grandchildren continued. Employment was listed on census records beginning in 1880, so that is a great place to see if ancestors are railroad connected.

Begin your research with the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board. This organization provides benefits to current railroad workers and maintains records for anyone working a decade or more after the board's establishment in 1935. They provide detailed employment, personnel, and retirement records.

See **ANCESTORS** on page 15

Schools of Yesteryear

By Janis Stein

Port Austin No. 2, Fractional - New River School

Part 4

Join in the continuation to learn about the teachers who taught at New River during the early years of the twentieth century, along with details gleaned from a 1920 report about the schoolhouse building.

In approximately 1883–1884, a new school was built on the west side of the New River creek though the deed was not recorded for the parcel until 1888, and as indicated on the 1890 and 1904 plat maps, it was located on present-day Hunter Road, one-eighth of a mile east of Kinch Road on the south side of M-25, or one-eighth of a mile east of the southwest corner of the southwest quarter of East Section 32 of Port Austin Township, Huron County.

According to the Annual Statistical Report for the year ending July 14, 1913, enrollment at New River declined to just 27 students – 15 boys and 12 girls. Of the 27 pupils, nine were enrolled in the seventh grade, and three, the eighth. One student graduated from the eighth grade. Of the 51 children between the ages of five and 20 living within the district's boundaries, 19 were between the ages of 14 and 18, and six of those attended school. Olive M. Clark taught seven months of

school and earned \$450 for her work. In addition to the traditional subjects taught, she, too, taught Music and Drawing. The value of the school property totaled \$800. The three-man school board remained the same, all with a post office address of Grindstone City, but school officers listed for the ensuing year showed that George Stewart would replace Patrick McKeever as treasurer.

Miss Olive M. Clark returned to teach 30 students the following year, and her wages stayed the same at \$45 per month. The Huron County School Directory for the 1913–1914 school year confirmed the school board included Percy O. Golden, director; James F. Kilpatrick, moderator; and George Stewart, treasurer. Three students graduated from the eighth grade. No students within New River School were studying above the eighth grade, nor were any students pursuing a high school education elsewhere.

Olive Clark signed the teacher's contract the following year, and statistics for the 1914–1915 school year remained much the same with the exception of a \$40 expense for tuition for two students who had graduated and were pursuing additional education. The Annual Statistical Report was signed by director Carl W. Tinsey, who had replaced Percy O. Golden, and approved by moderator James Kilpatrick and treasurer George Stewart.

The Annual Statistical Report for the 1915–1916 school year showed 47 children between the ages of five and 20 lived within the district, and of those, 28 were enrolled at New River. Of those 28, two each were studying in the seventh and eighth grades, and three students enrolled were between the ages of 14 and 18. Grace E. Sampson signed on as the new teacher; she taught nine months of school and earned \$360. No new library books were purchased, and the total number of volumes decreased to 70. The report indicated eight grades were taught at the school, and three students graduated from the eighth grade, with two of those graduates entering high school. The three-man school board included director Carl W. Tinsey, moderator Verner Latham, and treasurer George Stewart. The school board for the ensuing year would remain the same with the exception of George Foster, who would replace George Stewart as treasurer.

Grace E. Sampson returned to teach 28 students during the 1916–1917 school year, 10 of whom were studying in the seventh and eighth grades. Ms. Sampson likely enjoyed her raise; she earned \$405 for teaching

nine months of school. The library books must have been assessed again as the total number of volumes decreased to 60.

The Annual Statistical Report for the 1917–1918 school year showed 37 children between the ages of five and 20 lived within the New River school district, and of those 37, 27 were enrolled in school, with five studying in the seventh grade and two, the eighth. Mrs. Mabel Cook taught nine months of school and earned \$540 for guiding her students, who had just over a 79 percent attendance rate. No new books were added to the library, and the value of the school property remained at \$800. No students graduated from the eighth grade, nor were any attending high school. In addition to the \$540 spent on the teacher's salary, an additional \$117.79 was spent for general purposes.

According to the Annual Statistical Report for the year ending July 14, 1919, Mrs. Mabel Cook returned to teach 6 ½ months of school and earned \$455, and Mrs. J. B. Frances taught the remaining 2 ½ months of school and earned \$178.15. A total of 23 students were enrolled. Statistical information remained much the same with the exception of higher education; the report indicated a number of students living within the district were attending high school, with the district paying \$100 in tuition for four students, one of whom was attending Harbor Beach, and three, Grindstone City. The school board included Carl W. Tinsey, George Stewart, and George Foster, director, moderator, and treasurer, respectively, and they were also listed as the board for the ensuing year.

The Annual Statistical Report for the 1919–1920 school year offered additional information in comparison to previous years. Miss Ella McGeachy taught eight months of school and earned \$600. Although the report showed 25 children were enrolled, the breakdown of students by grade showed only 20 students at the end of the year. The student body was comprised of two first-graders, four second-graders, four third-graders, one fifth-grader, four sixth-graders, four seventh-graders, and one eighth-grader. One student graduated from the eighth grade at year's end, and one student who graduated the previous year was attending high school. However, "none" was written in the blank in answer to "No. of pupils in district under 20 years, who are graduates of a 12 grade High School." New River School was listed as a standard school, however a "Standard School Plate" had not

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See **SCHOOLS** on page 5



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SCHOOLS from page 4

been awarded. The schoolhouse was listed as a one-room school (rather than a two-room), with dimensions of 40 feet long by 26 feet wide and 10 feet high. A total of eight windows allowed for natural light. The kind of heating plant used was a “Stove,” and the school was located in “Sec. 32 Port Austin.” The school term was comprised of 160 days with the year running from September 15, 1919, to May 6, 1920, and the school board remained the same.

Leila Phair signed the teacher’s contract for the 1920–1921 school year, and she earned \$600 for teaching eight months of school to 29 students. Of those 29, seven were students “received by transfer during the year from other schools.” Of the 29, there were four students each in kindergarten, second, third, and fourth grades. Three students each were enrolled in the first and eighth grades, and one student each was enrolled in the fifth and sixth grades, with two students studying in the seventh grade. This year’s report stated that the school was not a standard school, and that one student was attending Port Hope High School, which cost the district \$35 in tuition. The school board remained the same although for the ensuing year Will M. McDonald would replace George Stewart as moderator.

According to the Annual Statistical Report for the year ending July 10, 1922, a total of 49 children between the ages of five and 20 lived within the district, and enrollment shot up to 38 students, 10 of whom were studying in the eighth grade. Mrs. Ella Chesney taught nine months of school and earned \$810. Other expenditures included \$1.10 for the purchase of one library book, bringing the total reported volumes to 56, and \$90 was spent on high school tuition for two students pursuing higher education at the high schools in Port Austin and Bad Axe.

Enrollment dropped back to 29 students during the 1922–1923 school year, and Mrs. Ella Chesney returned to guide them. In addition to the \$810 spent for the teacher’s salary, \$325 was spent on tuition for six students who were attending high school in Bad Axe, Port Austin, and Port Hope. An additional \$324.45 was paid for “general purposes.” The three-man school

See **SCHOOLS** on page 9

—An excerpt from the 1925 Annual Statistical Report. Courtesy of the Huron Intermediate School District.

SCHOOL CENSUS of District No. 2 Fr. of the Township of Port Austin, County of Huron, State of Michigan, for the school year ending July 13, 1925, as taken by Mrs. Carl Tinsey in a house to house canvass, during the last fifteen days next preceding June 1.

Mrs. Carl Tinsey above named, being duly sworn, says following is a correct list, as taken by him, of the names and ages of all children belonging to District No. Fr. 2 aforesaid, five years of age and under twenty years, together with the name and address of parent or guardian, and that said census was taken in a house to house canvass during the fifteen days prior to June 1, 1925.

Subscribed and sworn to this 30 day of June, 1925. (Signed) Mrs. Carl Tinsey
Before me a Notary Public, Lawrence M. Yaroch

(The census list must be sworn to, to entitle the district to public money.)

READ THESE NOTES

Fill out affidavit correctly and be sure that it is sworn to. Arrange the names alphabetically. Use form 2a for additional names that can not be placed on this sheet. If a child or children are reported with one not the parent: 1. Explain why child is not with parent. 2. Give residence of parent if living. Census of married people of either sex, who are of school age, shall be taken in district where husband resides. Names will be canceled if these explanations are not made. Give ages of children as they are May 31, 1925. If a child moves from the district during the fifteen days preceding June 1, he should be enrolled in district where he is resident May 31, 1925.

NAME OF CHILD	AGE	NAME OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN	NAME OF CHILD	AGE	NAME OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN
1. [Kinch], Janette	19	Frank Kinch	21. Berry, Katheran	13	Joseph Berry
2. [Kinch], Charlotte	17	" "	22. Berry, Josephine	9	" "
3. Kilpatrick, Sherman	17	Jim Kilpatrick	23. Stewart, Georgena	9	George Stewart
4. Kilpatrick, Mural	12	" "	24. Stewart, Margaret	6	" "
5. Kilpatrick, Lottie	10	" "	25. Golden, Mary	13	Ben Golden
6. Kilpatrick, John	19	Frank Kilpatrick	26. Golden, James	10	" "
7. Kilpatrick, Will	16	" "	27. Golden, Mabel	8	" "
8. Kilpatrick, Ralph	13	" "	28. Isler, Keneth	5	Walter Isler
9. Kilpatrick, Andrew	10	" "	29. Foster, Annie	19	George Foster
10. Kilpatrick, Julia	7	" "	30. Foster, John	17	" "
11. Kilpatrick, Maggie	5	" "	31. Foster, Eva	15	" "
12. McDonald, Andrew	19	Will M. McDonald	32. Foster, Ethel	11	" "
13. McDonald, Ethel	17	" "	33. Foster, Russell	7	" "
14. McDonald, Mordoch	15	" "	34. Foster, Gernith	5	" "
15. McDonald, Florabelle	14	" "	35. Golden, Gorden	15	Ora P. Golden
16. McDonald, Janette	12	" "	36. Tinsey, Darius	19	Carl W. Tinsey
17. McDonald, John	10	" "	37. Tinsey, Ruth	17	" "
18. McDonald, Girneth	8	" "	38. Tinsey, Willard	14	" "
19. McDonald, Gertrude	8	" "	39. Tinsey, Edwin	6	" "
20. McDonald, Landon	6	" "			

Author’s Note: Some of the above names look like they are spelled incorrectly by today’s standards, but the names were listed as spelled on the report. However, difficulty in deciphering a century-old document did exist; some name transcription errors may have occurred as a result.



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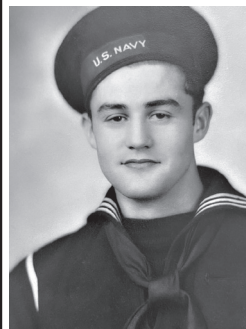

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Guardians of Freedom

Saluting Those Who Served

Gerald "Jake" Cleary in the U.S. Army Part 3

By Janis Stein

Join in the continuation to learn whether Jake's experience playing baseball with farm boys in a Sanilac County league will be enough to compete with professional and minor league players...

Jake drove the colonel around for a few weeks; he thought both the colonel and the major were really nice guys, and if he was a little envious that his buddies were playing ball, he only needed to remind himself that at least he had gotten off that godforsaken island. And then an idea came to Jake. One day he asked the major if he supposed the colonel might allow him to try out for the ball team. The major replied that he didn't really know. He then followed that statement up with a question of his own: "Who did you play for?"

Jake had no intention of lying to the major, but a small part of him wondered if there was a slim possibility that the truth could set him free. Jake told the major he played for Minden City in the Sanilac County league. And that was certainly the truth! Jake had attended high school at Sts. Peter & Paul, which was affiliated with the Catholic church in Ruth. During his junior and senior years of high school, Jake Cleary, along with Kenny Susalla and Jim Pedrotte, had been taken off the high school team and were asked to play

for the Minden City team. The major didn't ask any more questions, nor did he question where or how big of a city Minden was – and Jake didn't offer any further explanation!

A few days later, Jake was out with the colonel, and they were driving down the road when the colonel said that the major had mentioned whether Jake could try out for the ball team. The colonel followed up with same question as the major: Who did you play for? And once more Jake spoke the truth, telling him that he played for Minden City in the Sanilac County league. When the colonel didn't have any further questions, Jake let the subject drop and figured that would be the end of it.

A few days later, the major came in and told Jake that the colonel was making out the papers to transfer Jake to Ascom City, where the ball diamond and the team were located. The colonel decided to let him try out for the ball team under one condition: The colonel had taken a liking to Jake, but if Jake didn't make the team, the colonel wanted Jake to come back and be his driver. Although Jake liked the colonel, he wasn't necessarily fond of being his driver, but he agreed to the terms – what else could he say?

Jake wasted no time in loading up his belongings, and one of the guys got in a jeep and drove Jake over to Ascom City, which was about 12 miles away. It was late spring in 1956, and the team had already been practicing for a few weeks. The lieutenant was out on the ball field when Jake arrived, and Jake went out to meet him. Jake's driver walked out with him, in case Jake was told he had to go back. Jake's papers were for TDY Special Services. The lieutenant hemmed and hawed for a bit as he explained that they had their team pretty well picked. Then he asked Jake if he'd had a ball in his hand lately. Jake replied that he had not. The lieutenant then told him to pick up a ball and get one of the guys to play catch. He also cautioned Jake to take it easy because he didn't want him to end

up with a sore arm.

And so it was, Jake had been allowed to be on the ball field to practice. Would he make the cut though?

All of the players had experience in playing college ball or in the minor leagues. But Jake *had* played for Minden City, and that wasn't nothing!



The Ascom City team, Jake among them, practiced every single day, seven days a week, from the time lunch concluded at noon until suppertime. Jake hadn't made the team yet, but they were trying him out! The barracks were located just beyond the fence, and after practice, Jake took off his spikes and threw his glove on his bunk before walking to the mess hall to eat. The team was all done until the next day when it was time to practice again.

There were two barracks, and it was interesting that everyone chose the first barracks except for Tom the postman, Nickelson, and Jake. Those three men who had been on the island in the Yellow Sea together ended up once more in the same place with their bunks right alongside one another. As it turned out, Tom really did know a thing or two about baseball; he had played two years with the Pittsburgh Pirates farm team.

Jake had always played shortstop for Minden, but this team already had a good shortstop, so the coach placed him at second base. Jake said a lot of prayers in hopes of making the team. He thought he was just as good as the second baseman they'd had before he came along, and just maybe Jake could even outplay him. He continued to pray that something would happen that the team would keep him. Tom and Nickelson kept asking Jake if he had made the team, and Jake reluctantly told them that no one had said anything to him yet. The pair was a source of encouragement, telling Jake that he had a good glove and a good arm. He covered more ground and could hit just as good as the other guy slated for second base.

See **FREEDOM** on page 7



Jake Cleary and Nickelson, June 3, 1956, at 74th Ordinance Battalion in Korea. This pair had been together all through the Army.

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FREEDOM from page 6

All Jake could do was keep his eye on the ball and play to the best of his ability. He might not have played college ball, nor had he spent time in the minor league, but the boys from Minden sure knew how to play. On Friday night after Jake had his last practice for the week, he went into the barracks with his teammates to put their spikes away and their gloves on their bunks. The next day, Saturday was going to be the first game, but would Jake be in the lineup? As the men walked out the door to go to the mess hall, the lieutenant was on his way in, and he said, "Hey Cleary, I forgot to tell you when we were out on the field. We could use you. We're going to keep you!" Jake gave him a hearty, "Thank you, sir!"

Jake's prayers had been answered, and he played ball the whole summer of 1956. All of the guys playing had either been in the minor leagues or had played college ball. The pitcher was from Cuba and had been playing for UCLA, and the catcher had been a full-blooded Cherokee from Oklahoma, who happened to be Oklahoma's number one catcher. And then there was Jake, who had played for Minden City! The men played hard, they had a good team, and they even won the championship! There were six South Korean teams in all playing in the league. Because Ascom City had won the championship, they qualified to play against an all-star team, which consisted of the best players from the other five teams. It was a one-game knock-out, and the winning team representing South Korea would get to go to Japan to play. The winner in Japan would get to play in Hawaii, and the winner in Hawaii would play in the States!

Jake's team lost.

The Ascom City team had been in the lead, but the opponent's left-handed pitcher was excellent and had gained some of his experience in the minor league for St. Louis. In the seventh inning, the Ascom City team made a few errors in the outfield, and they lost the game; the final score was 5-3. For the soldiers playing for Ascom City, it was time to go



The Ascom City ball team in Korea. The back of the photo read, "74th Ordnance Battalion, the team, July 11, 1956."

back to work.

Jake went back to work in communications, and when he went to headquarters to fix the colonel's phone, the colonel asked Jake how he had made out. Jake told him he had made out just fine and thanked the colonel again for letting him go try out for the team in the first place.

Jake recalled the importance of telephones in communication; it was so important that they had a cable running under the water from the island to headquarters. They had two-way radios but couldn't use them because they couldn't risk that North Korea wouldn't use their radios and listen in. For Jake, it was often frustrating to learn of the South Koreans' disloyalty. The telephone wire was a good quality wire, and the South Koreans would steal it. US troops were over there saving them, and this was the appreciation that they showed. The South Koreans would be riding down the road on their bicycles with a stack of items on the backs

of their bikes secured with the telephone wire.

The thievery was such a problem that US troops made raids. Jake didn't get in on that because the phone happened to be out, so he had to stay behind and fix it, but several men from his outfit had participated in the raid and surrounded a South Korean village. These raids happened when Jake had been on the island and when he had worked at headquarters. US troops would surround a village, and some of the men would go into the houses; these were mud houses made of clay with straw roofs. Other troops would remain in the back to make sure the South Koreans didn't run



Jake in the radio shack pictured with the two-way radios they never used because the North Koreans could be listening.

out of the houses. Jake didn't know whether the South Koreans had stolen these items or how they had come to be in their possession, but US soldiers confiscated sidecutters, which were used to cut the wire, and even a couple .45 revolvers.

On one occasion, Jake and Tom went down to the village to take pictures, and there was an old shack of a house that must have been somewhat of a store. They had meat hanging – no refrigeration – and people would come and buy from their selection that included octopus, fish, and other meats. Jake was standing beside a girl who pointed at a piece of meat hanging up. A man reached up and cut off a little hunk of meat and handed it to her. Jake's stomach flipped when he saw the meat move – it was covered in maggots!

Be sure to look for the conclusion next month as Jake's time in the service gets short...

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SCHOOLS from page 5

board included director Carl W. Tinsey, moderator Will M. McDonald, and treasurer Walter Iseler.

Mae McDonald signed the teacher's contract for the 1923-1924 school year, and she earned \$765 for her efforts teaching 28 children. The student body included six first-graders, five second-graders, one third-grader, four fourth-graders, three fifth-graders, four sixth-graders, and five seventh-graders. Ms. McDonald

taught Agriculture, Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, History, Civil Government, Penmanship, Reading, and Spelling. The school property still held its value at \$800, and the school board also remained the same.

According to the Annual Statistical Report for the year ending July 13, 1925, Miss Irene Millard taught nine months of school to 28 students, five of whom were kindergarteners, and she earned \$765 for her work. The value of the school property jumped to \$1,200 though there was no indication as to why. Ten

library books were added to the shelf at a cost of \$24, and \$240 was spent on tuition for four students. The school board remained the same with the exception of Emma Kilpatrick (Mrs. Frank Kilpatrick), who replaced Will McDonald as moderator.

Be sure to look for the continuation next month to find out when New River School closed its doors for good.

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The Way It Was

Butchering Days and the Old Smokehouse

By Al Eicher

As I remember, visiting my grandparents' farm at Pigeon during the fall season in the 1940s was the time for butchering and preparing hams and bacon for Grandpa's old smokehouse. I think it is safe to say this seasonal meat processing event is now a lost art. My Grandpa Sting and fellow farmers worked together to perform the task of butchering. Grandma and her friends also helped. Grandma, when canning chickens, would invite her friends,



Grandpa Sting's smokehouse. Courtesy of the Eicher Collection.

Grandma feeding chickens.
Courtesy of the Eicher Collection.



who willingly helped and received some of the newly canned food.

Back then, there were no freezers for preserving the meat taken from pigs, goats, and beef cattle. The meat

was shared with those who helped with the tasks. Each family smoked or canned the various meat cuts. Without refrigeration, they quickly feasted on the better cuts of meats that were not cured.

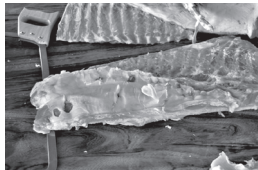
What were the conditions for picking the time for butchering? You usually waited for the day temperatures to not exceed the mid-40s, thus avoiding a population of

flies. The butchering was done outside as the odor could sometimes be overwhelming. Years of experience proved that pigs weighing as much as 250 pounds had a lot of fat, so they selected pigs at lower weights, which still had plenty of fat for lard and sausage. Ideally, a pig weighing 200 pounds or less was killed, gutted, and hung for a day. The hair was removed by lowering the carcass into a large caldron of boiling water. This was the scalding process, which made it easy to scrape off the hair.



A farmer with pigs. Courtesy of the Eicher Collection.

There was usually an experienced person to direct the quartering and cutting to harvest the chops, ribs, loins, hocks, and hams. Just about every part of the animal was used, including the stomach to hold blood sausage. Remember the tongue and the pickled pig's feet? They tell me the ears and tail added flavor to a pot of beans.



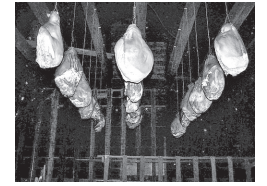
Cutting rib sections during the butchering process. Courtesy of the Eicher Collection.

By the way, the pig wasn't fed for 24 hours before it was killed, which made the cleaning of intestines a little easier. Some of my friends remember turning the crank on the sausage grinder and stuffing the sausage casings. I was surprised to hear the skin was left on slabs of bacon, but I do recall the skin on the hams hanging in my grandpa's smokehouse. I also remember the sweet smell of the smokehouse. Several people I interviewed said at their farm they used hickory and apple wood to burn for several days during the smoking process.

The curing of bacon took about a week at 40-degree temperatures. The hams took much longer: up to 6 weeks. The curing process for 50 pounds of hams and bacon required a five-gallon container with the following ingredients: 4 lbs. of pickling salt, 1 lb. of sugar, honey, and brown sugar; some people used maple syrup. These ingredients were dissolved in boiling water before adding spices, such as cayenne, black pepper, and garlic. The meat was then placed in this brine solution, making sure

none of the meat was floating to the surface. They often put a large dinner plate over the meat with a rock to hold the meat down in the brine.

Some smokehouses used what looked like a small fireplace, and some used an old wood stove. You had to have damper control and a method for releasing the smoke at a low level in the smoke house...the low-level fireplace was ideal. Smoking the hams could take up to 48 hours, and the bacon was usually ready in about 14 hours. During this period, the smokehouse was kept at 100 degrees.



Hams hanging in the smokehouse. Courtesy of the Eicher Collection.

So, after the smoking process was complete, what happened to the hams and slabs of bacon? How were they stored? Some people hung hams and bacon in their attics or cellars until they were ready to eat them. If you didn't want them hanging in the house, you could find



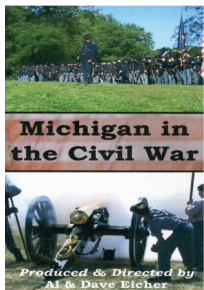
Hams hanging to be enjoyed later. Courtesy of the Eicher Collection.

a big grain barrel in the barn and begin to fill it with oats and then add a ham and some bacon and more oats, another ham, and more bacon. The oats made a great insulator. You could store hams and bacon for several months in this manner. My cousin Calvin remembers digging in the oat barrel at Thanksgiving time to find a ham for the family dinner.

The smokehouse was a unique fixture on the farms in the Thumb area for over 100 years. Very few are still around, but if you find one, I am sure you can still smell the sweet aroma of hams and bacon cured many, many years ago. The smoking process basically pulled most of the moisture out of the meat to prevent it from spoiling, using the simple ingredients of salt, sugar, and smoke... and that's The Way It Was.

Al and Dave Eicher provide television production services to corporations, ad agencies, and nonprofit organizations. They also create Michigan town histories and offer lecture services on a variety of Michigan History Events. You may contact them at 248-333-2010; email: info@program-source.com; website: www.program-source.com.

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A Great Lakes Sailor

David Connell

Part 6

By Janis Stein

Join in the continuation to learn about the pairing of the Joseph H. Thompson and the Laura L. VanEnkevort.

The *Laura L.* was a little bit smaller than the *Joseph H. Thompson Jr.* but much more maneuverable, plus the new tug had more accommodations for the crew of 19. David had a great experience during the 11 ½ days it took to travel from Tampa to Toledo and was glad he was able to go. The crew worked out a few bugs on the way up the ocean, and the tug's fuel capacity was around 100,000 gallons, so there were no concerns there. The biggest issue was they had been hoping to do some fishing as they worked their way up the coast, but the tug traveled too fast for angling!

VTB had already made plans to take the *Joseph H. Thompson Jr.* tug out of commission and rehab it, and the *Laura L. VanEnkevort* would be paired with the *Joseph H. Thompson* barge. The barge and both tugs met in Toledo, and David was then awarded the job of driving the *Joseph H. Thompson Jr.* all the way across Lake Erie to Erie, Pennsylvania, where the tug would undergo an upgrade over the better part of the next year; improvements included a new steering system, and the pilot house was raised, along with space added to accommodate an entire crew. For the first time, the *Joseph H. Thompson Jr.* tug, which was originally built in the 1980s, was separated from her namesake barge. After the tug repairs were completed, VTB paired the *Jr.*, renamed the *Dirk S. VanEnkevort*, with its brand-new barge, the *Michigan Trader*, which sailed in November 2020.

The *Laura L.* hit the Great Lakes in September 2019, and she's been in the notch pushing the *Joseph H. Thompson* ever since. David has always been associated with the *Thompson*, and 2020 was the first full season with the *Laura L.* Though a desire for speed is always present – after all, time is money – there's always a give and take, and what the *Laura L.* lacks in speed, she makes



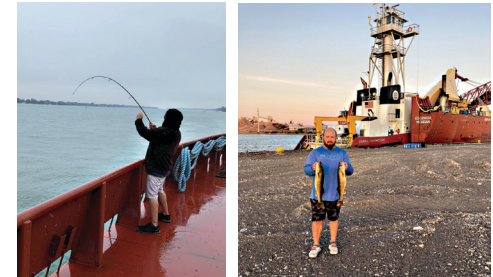
The Joseph H. Thompson passes by the lighthouse with Harbor Beach's iconic skyline in the background. Photo credit: Karen Murphy Photography.

up in maneuverability, and VTB needs that capability in the river trade, especially in places like the Cuyahoga River, which has a depth limit of about 21 feet and looks like a snake from overhead with all its twists and turns.

As first mate, one of the biggest challenges David currently faces working for a growing company is training new employees. When VTB had just two boats, there were about 15 active sailors, with another 10 or so at home at any given time. There were some years with zero turnover, and when a first mate has trained and constant guys to work with, it makes his job so much easier. It's anticipated in 2021 that VTB will have four working tug/barge units on the Great Lakes, which means more people need to be trained in the VTB way. Training ranges from actual job training to monthly safety meetings. VTB's safety program implemented within the fleet needs to be followed with safety measures assessed monthly. David knows – and teaches shipmates – that if an unexpected event occurs, the crew needs to be prepared, and a crew is only as good as their participation and mastery of training and drills.

New situations on the Great Lakes can present their own challenges. Vessels on the Great Lakes have been operating in high water for the past few years, and David has learned to take good notes in areas he's unfamiliar with; after a few times, those runs are perfected. A task that may have seemed impossible five years ago is now doable without question because David has seen it all, as far as loads and drafts are concerned, and thus has the experience to know how to handle various situations far beyond the norm.

What does David like best about sailing? He's achieving his goals, the greatest of which when he started with VTB was to provide financial security for his family, and if a sailor is prudent in how he manages his money, the opportunity for early retirement is valid. David fully appreciates the upbringing and support his parents provided him while growing up, and he, in turn, will be ready with that same offering of support when his daughters are ready to go off into the world to pursue their education.



Left: David taking advantage of a little down time by fishing in the St. Clair River in Marine City, Michigan. Right: Our sailor posing with his catch of two walleye. Photos courtesy of David Connell.

Another perk is the time off. While it always varies, when David gets into a set rotation schedule of 30 days on the boat followed by 15 days off, he can plan vacations. Having 15 days off six times a year is equivalent to about 200 workdays, give or take, and that's about the same as a regular 9 to 5 job with weekends off. Admittedly, sailing presents challenges for families trying to create a home life, but the Connells are making it work. For David, it's not necessarily the aspect of being gone that is the biggest challenge though that is difficult, too. Rather, one of David's initial challenges was adapting to the life created by his wife, Michelle (Mausolf), and daughters, Lola and Natalia, who at ages eight and five are very active in extracurricular activities, but David learned early to assimilate to their established routines when he returns home.

Be sure to look for the conclusion next month to learn which of VTB's tug/barge units were the first and second to pass through the Soo Locks in 2021.

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KITCHEN from page 1

- 1 ½ c. cherry tomatoes cut into quarters. (You can substitute 1 cup canned diced tomatoes or stewed tomatoes. If using tomato sauce, use only ¾ cup. You don't want it too moist.)
- ½ c. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 c. shredded cheese of choice. I didn't have any mozzarella, so I used yellow and white cheddar.
- 1 Tbs. olive oil

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Slice the zucchini in half the long way, and use a spoon to scoop out the flesh, leaving a 1/2-inch thick shell all around the zucchini. Chop the zucchini "meat" and put into a medium size bowl; set it aside. Line zucchini boats on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or lightly greased with oil.

Heat olive oil in a nonstick skillet. Cook onion for 2-3 minutes or until it begins to golden. Add the garlic and cook for a few seconds. Add meat and cook until it's no longer pink, 3-5 minutes. Add the red pepper, zucchini pulp, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper.

Simmer for 8-10 minutes.

Stuff both halves of the zucchini with the meat mixture. Sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese. Place the zucchini halves into a baking sheet and cover tightly with foil. Bake in preheated oven for 30 to 40 minutes. Until a fork inserts easily into the zucchini.

Remove from oven, and remove the foil. Put the shredded cheese over each zucchini half. Move an oven rack to within 6 inches of the oven broiler's heat source, turn on the broiler, and broil the zucchini until the cheese is browned and bubbling, about 5 minutes.

Remove from oven and sprinkle the basil chiffonade over the top and let it rest for 5 minutes. Cut in half and serve. Each half is a portion. This dish goes really well with garlic bread. Enjoy!!

This is Chef Dennis saying "Savor the Food You Eat."

I look forward to your questions and comments.

You can visit me online at my website, <https://YouCanCuisine.com>, Facebook page, and YouTube channel. You can also contact me at The Lakeshore Guardian: <https://lakeshoreguardian.com/contact-us/>.



Tips from Chef Dennis:

- Chiffonade is a very pretty word for the very simple process of slicing basil or any other delicate herb into very thin ribbons. A chiffonade of basil is also an easy way to add a bright touch of green and the fresh taste of basil to your spring and summer dishes.
- Roasted red peppers can be bought in most grocery stores or specialty stores. They're usually packed in oil in a jar. I roast my own; it's cheaper, and they're fresher and tastier. Please feel free to contact me if you'd like more info on roasting your own.

Chef Dennis Sturtz has worked in many venues in the restaurant business from owner to chef. With a degree from Macomb Community College's Culinary Department, Chef Dennis has, in turn, taught at numerous colleges and institutions, thereby sharing his passion for cuisine.



Chef Dennis Sturtz Sr.



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ANCESTORS from page 3

If your ancestor worked for the railroad but will not have records at the Retirement Board, tracking down records is still possible. If you know what railroad company they worked for and it is still operational, try contacting them.

When railroad companies merged or went out of business, they usually sent their records to a repository. Repositories include railroad museums, local history museums, libraries, history archives, university libraries, and online sources.

Begin by searching the railroad name online to see if there is a website containing records or a phone number you can call. Depending on the location, you may be able to go to the repository and review them in person or pay a fee to have them sent to you.

Records may include work history at the railroad, applications completed requesting a pension or their spouse requesting a survivor pension, and retirement records. Here

are some sources to get you started:

Railroad Retirement Board <https://www.rrb.gov/> - Began maintaining records in 1936. Workers received a special social security number between 700 and 728 until 1964. Their website includes information on researching railroad employees both before and after the board's creation.

Railroads in North America <https://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/m/c/mch/railroad/> - a database of over 6,900 railroads, including all railroads that existed in the U.S. and Canada since 1826, plus current mainline, switching, and terminal railroads.

Virginia Tech Image Base <https://imagebase.lib.vt.edu/> - search for "railroad" to see thousands of historic digitized photos of old railroads, including railway yards, trails, advertisements, and timetables.

Erie Railroad Internet Employee Archives <https://freepages.rootsweb.com/~sponholz/genealogy/erie.html> - for genealogy research of people who worked for the Erie Railroad, with the primary informational source being the

company's *Erie* magazine.

Riding the Rails Up Paper Mountain/National Archives <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1997/spring/railroad-records-1.html> - textual records, photographs, motion pictures, and maps regarding railroads. Additional information is in 50+ regional record groups.

A Federal Railroad Adventure/Andrews Raiders <https://www.pddoc.com/skedaddle/059a/index.html> - documents related to Andrews' Raiders and the Great Locomotive Chase, which was a federal military raid on April 12, 1862, in Georgia. The purpose of the raid was to interrupt Confederate communications by destroying telegraph lines and railroad bridges during the civil war.

Here's to railroading research and finding out new information about your ancestor who helped build the rails or rode them in their heyday.

Grace Grogan is a freelance writer and a member of Detroit Working Writers.

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MEAT

HUNTING from page 2

as there were no overhanging branches that would have worked as a licking branch. A quick trip to the barn produced a metal fence post that would provide a base in which a clamp could hold a small tree branch. The homemade licking branch looked odd, but it obviously did its job.

The next step involved a metal rake to create the actual scrape. It was approximately 24 inches wide by 24 inches long and completely clear of leaves, rocks, sticks, and any other debris. He used the teeth of the rake to replicate tine marks left by a buck attempting to

communicate with other deer. At that point, he sprayed some doe urine in the scrape to start a cervid conversation between a fake doe and a real buck; I know,



This mock scrape was made with a garden rake.

it sounds like some real-life internet scam, but no one lost their life savings in this exchange. Another option is to use a mock scrape drip bag to periodically drip synthetic doe urine into the scrape.

Many hunters won't see a mock scrape as high technology, but for this stuck-in-his-way hunter, it was a new technique to add to my bag of tricks. As the rut hits high gear this November, try a low maintenance mock scrape to pull in that buck of a lifetime.

Games

By Allison Stein

A pumping heart is something we misunderstand, for life is more than fun and games but winning comes to those who play. I've learned the rules, I've paid my dues, I've never lost to you but daily to myself.

I dream of youth, a time before we lost all sense of what we store in minds and hearts, in shattered glass of memories. I chant the curse, I think the worst to save my heart from greater hurt, I've lost my mind.

For what it's worth, I guess I learned it's better lost than never played, but life is more than fun and games and what a waste to learn the rules for nothing. Yes, a pumping heart is something we misunderstand.

Allison Stein is the author of three poetry books. She blogs about her journey as a writer and writing consultant at www.allisonsteinconsulting.com.

Legally Speaking

Durable Power of Attorney



By Amanda Roggenbuck,
Attorney at Law

Though 2021 may be less chaotic than 2020 was, a lot of people are recognizing the necessity of having their wishes properly documented and executed. Having a durable power of attorney can allow others to act on your behalf when you may not be in a position to make a sound decision or when you may be physically unavailable.

A durable power of attorney can allow someone to make business and financial decisions for you. It also may prevent you from needing a conservator to manage your financial matters and assets in the event that you are no longer able to manage them yourself. There are two main types of durable powers of attorney. Next month, I will explain the first.

The information in this article is not intended to serve as legal advice nor does it replace consulting a lawyer about your legal situation and questions. Amanda Roggenbuck, Attorney at Law, PLLC is currently accepting select cases in estate planning, family law, business planning, and probate fields.

smile awhile

How to Write Good

1. Avoid Alliteration. Always.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. Avoid cliches like the plague. They're old hat.
4. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
5. Be more or less specific.
6. Writers should never generalize.
- Seven. Be consistent!
8. Don't be redundant; don't use more words than

- necessary; it's highly superfluous.
9. Who needs rhetorical questions?
10. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.

RULES

Kid: I feel like you're always making up crazy rules and stuff.

Mom: Like what?

Kid: Like if I don't clean my room, a portal will open and take me to another dimension.

Mom: Well, that's what happened to your older brother.

Kid: What older brother?

Mom: Exactly.

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Northstar Bank Joins ABA and Banks Across U.S. for #BanksNeverAskThat Anti-Phishing Campaign

America's banks join forces in coordinated, industry-wide campaign to protect consumers during National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Today Northstar Bank joined the American Bankers Association and banks across the nation to promote an industrywide campaign educating consumers about the persistent threat of phishing scams. The FTC estimates that consumers lost \$3.3 billion to phishing schemes and other fraud in 2020, nearly double the losses in 2019. To combat phishing, the #BanksNeverAskThat campaign uses attention-grabbing humor and other engaging content to empower consumers to identify bogus bank communications asking for sensitive information like their passwords and social security numbers.


"Phishing attempts have become even more prevalent during the pandemic making it more important than ever that consumers learn how to spot a scam," said Paul Benda, Senior Vice President, operational risk and cybersecurity at ABA. "With help from participating banks like Northstar Bank, we're teaching consumers how to spot phishing red flags so they can stay one step ahead of the scammers."

Northstar Bank, along with banks across the country and ABA, are kicking off the campaign on October 1 to mark the beginning of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. Throughout the month, Northstar Bank will share eye-catching and engaging short videos, animated GIFs, and consumer tips on social media and in bank branches designed to highlight common phishing schemes. Because cybersecurity education and fraud awareness can often be dull and forgettable to many consumers, the campaign is designed to be bright and bold with a bit of comedy.

Think you can spot a scam when you see it? Prove it with this new phishing quiz from the American Bankers Association. Visit BanksNeverAskThat.com for more information. At that website, consumers will find the #BanksNeverAskThat quiz, videos, phishing red flags, tips, and FAQs.

For more information about phishing scams and how to stop fraudsters in their tracks, visit www.BanksNeverAskThat.com.

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Thumb Rails

The Pere Marquette Historical Society Archives Have a New Home! Part 2 - The "Big Move"

By T.J. Gaffney

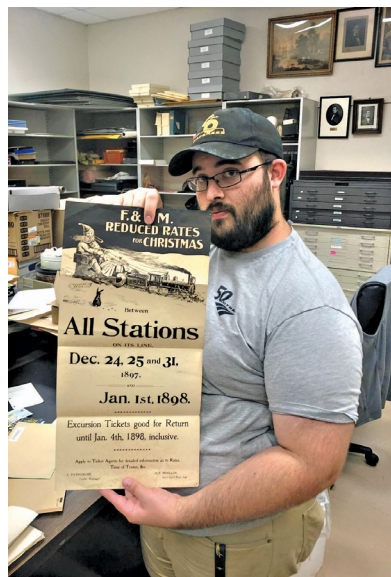
This month, we will continue discussing the recent announcement of a significant collection of archival materials, partially related to the Pere Marquette/ Chesapeake & Ohio/Chessie System Operations in the Thumb of Michigan, finding a permanent home. This collection, owned by the Pere Marquette Historical Society, is an important archive of corporate, municipal, and even personal documents related to the history of the Pere Marquette Railway Company, which operated from 1900–1947 and was arguably the largest and most significant operator of railroad lines in this region.

Welcome back readers! When we left off with last month's column, an announcement had been made about a significant collection, owned by the Pere Marquette Historical Society (PMHS), being moved to the Plymouth Historical Museum (PHM). Per an agreement signed August 6, 2021, the Pere Marquette Historical Society, Inc. (PMHS) agreed to house its archives and collection at the Plymouth Historical Museum, making it possible to better organize, protect, and make available for research this important archive for future generations. As we discussed in the previous month's column, due to a variety of factors, the decision was made in 2011 to remove the PMHS

archive from its former home at the Joint Archives of Holland in 2011. Since that time, it was in a variety of locations, eventually ending up in a climate-controlled storage facility outside of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Due to this fact, there was limited accessibility to either PMHS members, researchers, or the public. With the official announcement of the agreement between the two entities, a plan of attack was needed for physically relocating the archives to the Plymouth Historical Museum. A call was put out by PMHS Collections Manager and Archivist Bob Milhaupt for volunteers to help with this move. After much discussion by various members, a date of September 9, 2021, was decided as the best time to relocate the collection to the museum.


The morning of September 9 dawned as a warm one. The group of volunteers making the move turned out to number roughly around seven, with a few stragglers showing up a bit later than our original 10 a.m. meeting time. Included in the mix were several vehicles, as well as a small U-Haul trailer. One by one, the boxes were loaded out of the storage unit onto flatbed carts or two-wheel hand carts, taken through the maze of halls where the unit was located, and down to the waiting vehicles via elevator. With many hands, the work went quicker than anticipated, and by about 10:45, everything was loaded for its trip to Plymouth. Roughly a half hour later, the

small caravan of vehicles arrived at PHM, where we were met by archivist Pam Yockey and Director Liz Kierstens, who helped us unload the items for their trip on yet another elevator to the basement of the museum. There, the incoming collection remained



PMHS member and archive volunteer Tom Grambau shows off a Flint & Pere Marquette Poster from 1897.

See RAILS on page 18



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RAILS from page 17



PMHS members John Young and Fritz Milhaupt discuss the collection while Tom Grambau looks on.



PMHS Collections Head Bob Milhaupt (left) loads archive boxes into his truck as PMHS member John Young looks on.

under quarantine, for although the collection had been kept in a primarily climate-controlled environment prior to its arrival, PHM's policy is to treat all incoming collections in this fashion to protect existing collections for any possible contamination. The PMHS wish to thank all those who helped in what is now referred to as the "Big Move," which included your author, Tim Parker, Bob Milhaupt, Tom Grambau, Bill Ayars, Scott Shields, John Young, and Pam Yockey. Next would come the first "Big Sort" – but that's for next month's article!

The Plymouth Historical Museum is located at 155 S. Main Street in Plymouth. Hours are 1–4 p.m. on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The PHM archive is currently available by appointment only on Saturday and Sunday. The PMHS archive will take time to process, so please call 734-455-8940 x3 before making the trip. For more information, visit <http://plymouthhistory.org/our-history/collections-research/>.

Stay tuned for next month's article, where we discuss the process of doing the initial sort of this valuable collection in its new home! In the meantime, you can find some fascinating information in this issue by fellow Lakeshore Guardian writer Grace Grogan, who talks this month about "Researching Your Railroad Ancestors."

Gaffney is owner of Streamline Historic Services, and the author of *Port Huron, 1880-1960*. Images of Rail: Rails Around the Thumb, published by Arcadia Publishing, is also receiving accolades. Learn about the important contributions railroads made to the Thumb area; copies of *Rails Around the Thumb* are available through the author at 2747 Military Street, Port Huron, Michigan, 48060. Books are also available through Arcadia Publishing at www.arcadiapublishing.com.



Volunteer Tom Grambau places PMHS archive boxes on a cart with the help of PMHS board member Tim Parker.

Countryside Yarns

TALL TALE OR TRUTH? YOU DECIDE!

Peril in Purdyville

Part 3

By Janis Stein

Join in the conclusion as shoreline settlements battle the 1864 fire. Had the Burleys and the Purdys only known what was right around the corner in 1871...

The next year, in 1855, my son-in-law took me along to scout out some land in Sand Beach, but in the end, we traveled further along, about 1 ½ miles north of Sand Beach. There, in Rubicon Township, Theo purchased a 120-acre farm, just south of the John Hopson farm, where he would become employed as a shingle maker and farmer. Lewis remained in Purdyville to run the hotel, and Libbie and her brood stayed behind as well while I helped Theo build his cabin. Once it was up, we made the trek back home, and we said good-bye for the time being. Libbie was expecting with her fifth, and we vowed we'd not let so much time pass as the last time before we reconnected.

I, too, bought 120 acres in the area surrounding my hotel and sawmill. My daughters were growing up, and the Purdy family was expanding. Lucinda married Alonzo Trescott in 1858, and Harriet followed suit, marrying Joseph Cooper in 1860. Within a few years, Margaret, too, would marry, after taking a fancy to William Bell. The dowry for each of these daughters was a 40-acre farm, and our settlement, despite having only a hotel and sawmill, became known far and wide as Purdyville. A dowry of that size was not unheard of, but it was more than most for the times – and completely selfish on my part. While my sons-in-law were most appreciative, it was my wife and I who were the real beneficiaries. After having faced so much loss within our family in those early years, I knew it would be difficult when our daughters moved away. So I made good and sure they didn't.

Lewis never married but moved into our old cabin

See YARNS on page 19

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YARNS from page 18

after Libbie moved out, and Amy, too, chose to stay single, despite the continued interest shown by a few hopeful men; she remained with us at the hotel and brought joy to our lives each day. I feared I knew why Lewis and Amy chose to remain single; one day, Amy confirmed it when I caught *her* stealing a look at Mr. Snyder. She told me she was certain Mr. Snyder would have made a wonderful husband – that was not the problem. Amy's concern was what would have surely come after. She said she could never risk losing all that her mother did. Witnessing her mother's heartbreak over losing all those babies cemented in her heart that she would never have her own. Oh, Amy.

Life went on as life will do. It was a blessing to be sure to have all but one of my children in Purdyville, and Libbie wasn't just too far away. Theodore and Libbie had two more children to complete their family, one in 1856 and another in 1857. When Theo wasn't making shingles, he worked at clearing more land and cultivating the land he did have cleared.

In 1864, word came on the return stage that a massive fire had destroyed a good amount of acreage to our north. Shoreline homesteads in Center Harbor, Sand Beach, and Rubicon all met a fiery fate. Jane and I were sick with worry over Theo and Libbie, prompting Lewis and I to stock the boat with provisions and travel north. The further north we traveled, the worse it was, and we could not believe the devastation we saw. We hurriedly beached the boat when we arrived at the Theo and Libbie's place. Everything was gone. The log cabin, various farm sheds – everything they owned. We thought we'd lost them, too, but Theo appeared as if out of thin air, looking eerily ghostlike. He rubbed his eyes as if to clear them from smoke, as if he were seeing things as we approached. We ran to him, and I shook him out of his almost trance-like state, asking after Libbie and the children.

Alive, he said. They all survived and were temporarily sheltering at a neighbor's barn that had miraculously escaped the flames. I fell to my knees in thanksgiving. Thank you, Lord.

Lewis and I returned to the boat, hauling flour bags filled with provisions for the Burley family and all with whom they wished to share. We then made our way to Libbie, so we could see for ourselves that she and the children were really okay. Libbie saw us from some distance away and, with a babe in each arm, started running toward us. She was indeed alive! What a reunion!

With some food in his belly, and Lewis and I there to support him, Theo came around, little by little. We wanted to take them all back home with us to Purdyville. They were completely burned out after all; there was nothing left. But Theo refused, and Libbie,

by his side, agreed. This was their home. They had neighbors and friends to check on. Stands of timber still stood further inland on their property. They would start over, build again. Lewis had the wherewithal to suggest we take their three youngest children, aged 11, 8, and 4, with us. They would get more done with fewer to look after, Lewis reasoned, and it had been so long since they'd seen us. And so it was that Amelia, Rill, and Helen returned with us to Purdyville. Halfway home I realized if my wife was watching out for us from the shoreline, she would think the worst when she saw only part of the family, but it couldn't be helped. There was no way to get word to Jane in advance of our arrival. We bid them goodbye with a promise to return with the children in three weeks' time.

The Burley family did rebuild, and in time, Theo and Libbie had their homestead standing tall once more. We returned the children as promised, and this time, Jane insisted on coming along to see for herself that Libbie was okay. Lewis stayed behind with Amy to run the hotel, and I took a neighbor with me who also had family quite near Theo's place. He wanted to take supplies to them, and I was glad to have him aboard, as manning the sails, I thought, was a bit too much for Jane to manage at the age of 58 – though I'd never tell her that.

Life returned to normal for several years after the 1864 fire. Jane and I slowed down a bit with each passing year, but we relished the fact that everywhere we looked we could see our family. We quite literally carved Purdyville out of the wilderness, and it was the first home of ours where no tragedy had befallen us.

That all changed when October of 1871 rolled around.

We had been suffering from a terrible drought all summer. Every week, my daughters and their families came to the Purdy Hotel for Sunday supper, and every week, their husbands shared their concerns about the crops withering before their eyes. If we didn't get rain soon, all would be lost.

On the afternoon of Sunday, October 8, Jane mentioned that she could smell smoke. I didn't pay her too much mind because the smell of smoke always lingered in the air, and as more timber was cleared, all the brush piles had to be burned. Jane insisted, though,

that this was different, that we should check on our daughters. A ride might be nice, I agreed, so I went out to the barn to harness the buggy horse. On my way, my eyes were drawn to the south, and I couldn't quite comprehend what I was seeing. All of White Rock had to be ablaze!

I ran back to the hotel and rang the dinner bell to sound the alarm. Jane and Amy came running, with Lewis behind them. I instructed my wife and daughter to start hauling our valuables outside while I brought the wagon around. Meanwhile, Lewis was already sprinting for the barn. Riding bareback, he shot down the trail to warn his sisters. Everyone must get to the lake. Lewis argued with one brother-in-law after another, each determined to save all they'd worked for. They'd stay and fight. In the end, the sisters gathered in two wagons and made their way to the hotel, while Lewis and his three brothers-in-law worked together, bucket-brigade-style, to wet down the roofs of each of their houses.

The cattle in Alonzo Trescott's barn were already nervous, prancing in place. Lewis told him to open the gate to let them out, but Alonzo refused. It was possible the fire wouldn't reach them – he wasn't just going to set the cattle free. What if they didn't come back? But if the fire did reach them, Lewis argued, and all of the Purdy families made it to the safety of the water's edge, there would be no time to go back to save the animals. In the end, the cattle made the decision for them as they stampeded through the gate and headed down the trail.

I heaved a sigh of relief when I saw my three daughters and all their children in two wagons race by the hotel and onward to the shore. My own wagon

See YARNS on page 20

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YARNS from page 19

was loaded to the hilt: the sewing machine, bedding, lanterns, barrels of provisions. We followed the path of my daughters as we made way for the lake, and their men and Lewis were right behind us. Jane breathed a sigh of relief. All her children, in Purdyville at least, were accounted for. We whispered a prayer for Libbie's safety as well.

We argued over the boat at the short dock we built years before, but in the end, we left it. I feared with the high winds, it would only swamp. Better to risk leaving it on the dock, or we wondered, perhaps it would be better to beach it; if the fire didn't reach us, we'd need it. My sons-in-laws took matters into their own hands and fetched it, bringing it into the lake and tying it to the wagon.

To see that wall of flames coming toward us, hemming us in, was hard for the mind to comprehend. We edged the horses and wagons into the water as far as we dared. And then we waited. Lewis then had the realization that we needed to release the horses – so they could swim if needed. It was difficult to hear over the roar of the wind, and it soon became clear that we needed to follow the horses' lead. Free now from their constraints, they were heading for deeper water, driven there by the flames. So hot was the air, Lake Huron felt like bath water. We Purdys huddled together as best we could, driven deeper into the water because of the heat.

From our vantage point, the entire country was on fire.

All Sunday night we remained in the water. By dawn, I counted heads with all 24 of us accounted for. We made it through the night. All was dark, so

the fire must have burned itself out, save a few small ones burning here and there. The dock had burned; that much we'd seen – we'd all watched in horror – but what of the rest? Together, as one big family, we inched our way toward shore, all fearing what we would find. The lingering smoke made for poor visibility, but still we pressed on.

Amy let one sob slip out as we passed our wagon – it was burned down to the water line. The sewing machine, all our provisions, everything we tried to save was gone. The other wagons suffered the same fate, as did our boat. Still, we made our way forward until we reached land, arms linked, hands held, tears falling.

The Purdy Hotel was gone. All that was left were ashes. Amy let another sob slip when she remembered her beloved piano. That, too, had burned. Lewis' cabin – the first home we built in Purdyville – was gone. We – all of us – walked on to each of my daughters' homesteads. Gone were all the homes and barns and livestock. All that remained was a charred landscape, devoid of any life. Everything was black – soot and ashes – as far as the eye could see. A few forlorn-looking trees had escaped the blaze. They stood out in stark relief against the horrid backdrop of my beloved Purdyville.

We started to make our way back to the lake. We had no food, only the clothes on our backs. But we were alive, and we prayed to God that Libbie was, too. The shock of it all was almost too much.

We slowly made our way to the lakeshore and started walking south. The smoke was still thick, and it stung our eyes something fierce. Lewis let out a shout then. Our old hunting shanty was still standing!

We left the womenfolk and children at the shanty, which was rickety and measured only 12 by 16 feet – not nearly big enough for the 24 of us, but we had no choice but to make do. We set out to scout for food and survivors. We didn't get too far before we turned back – we heard screams coming from the direction of the shanty. It was tough going because of the smoke, but we'd run that trail for decades and ran by rote. We stopped short when we saw the biggest bear that I'd ever seen ambling away from the hunting shack. The bear lingered by the shoreline there all day, and a few more wild animals came, too, their instincts, like ours, leading them to the only place in Purdyville that hadn't burned.

We slept on and off all of Monday, exhausted from our ordeal. We didn't realize yet the extent of the fire, nor did we know help would soon be on the way.

On Tuesday night, October 10, Captain James Moffatt and his son offered their fast tug, the *Frank Moffatt*, to the relief committee, which organized at Port Huron. The ship was made ready for the trip, with two large yawl boats in tow, along with provisions, clothing, and medicinal supplies. Many experienced

sailors volunteered to man the boats, the expedition under the charge of relief committee member Thomas Stevens. The rescue party left Port Huron at half-past midnight on the morning of Wednesday, October 11.

The smoke on Lake Huron was so dense that Captain Moore ran the *Frank Moffatt* under check. The whistle sounded every minute all through the night until daybreak, and even then, it was only possible to see little more than 150 feet in the distance.

Many of the shoreline landmarks were no longer visible, in fact, many had burned, and the captain did not have the benefit of celestial navigation through the night. Captain Moore had only his instincts to rely on. When he believed he was near Sand Beach, he changed course, heading for shore. Within minutes the *Moffatt* ran alongside the schooner *Sweepstakes* of Chicago; the schooner was anchored, its mainsail gone. The vessel's crew could not say if they were near Sand Beach – they hadn't seen land in four days. Several small birds flew aboard the tug, and one very large wild pigeon found respite there, too.

At 7 a.m., the *Moffatt* made land and sent a boat ashore. The yawl crew quickly realized they were not at Sand Beach after all; rather, they beached at Purdyville, five miles above White Rock.

My wife, Jane, was the first to spot the yawl boat when it emerged through the smoke. We were sitting outside, our backs leaning against the shanty, when Jane nudged me awake. She said she feared she was dreaming as she pointed toward the water, but I scrambled to my feet. The yawl boat was real. The crew aboard asked how many of us there were, as they were prepared to take us back to Port Huron with them. I'm quite certain not all understood why we refused to go with them. Purdyville was our home. We needed to learn what became of our friends and neighbors. We also thought after the ground had a chance to cool, perhaps some of our livestock would return.

But we had little in the way of food. My daughters' husbands and son Lewis had gone on foot Monday afternoon and brought back some potatoes stored in one of the root cellars – they were already baked, but we all agreed, they were the best potatoes we'd ever tasted. We managed to keep two guns dry; we'd taken turns all through the night, holding them above the water. But other than that bear, we hadn't seen any animals or game, so there was nothing to hunt. Perhaps, the wildlife would return when our cattle did.

The relief committee left with us a barrel of crackers, a ham, bread, and tea. I told them I did have some money to pay for it, but they refused. Amy had had the wherewithal to grab the money bag filled with coins out of the safe before we fled to the lake. She had tied it around her waist and rescued my savings when



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See YARNS on page 21

YARNS from page 20

I hadn't given it a thought. I had only been concerned about my children, for Jane and I learned long ago that the greatest riches were born of the heart.

I asked the crew where they were off to next, and they said since they came ashore here rather than Sand Beach as planned, they would take the yawl boat down to Forestville to leave provisions there if needed. They would then return to the *Moffatt* and head toward Sand Beach. My family had some food to get by on now, but we lacked transportation to get more. I asked if Lewis and I might go with them to Forestville. I needed to place an order for saws and pick up additional staples. If time did not allow them to return us back to shore at Purdyville, we would spend the night at Forestville and walk home the following day.

And so it was that Lewis and I boarded the yawl boat. The shock of losing everything at Purdyville suddenly paled in comparison to what we found at Forestville, and for the first time, I began to realize the scope of this tragedy. Both docks were gone – as were all the stores of shingles and lumber that were left on the docks waiting to be shipped out. As far as we could see, no stores, houses, or barns – no buildings of any kind – were left. We would not be getting saw blades ordered anytime soon. At least not from the general store. My eyes then settled on what once was Forestville's beautiful apple orchards; all had turned into black stubs. And I will never get out of my mind the sight of all those hogs and cows and chickens laying in the streets. My stomach turned when I realized where my thoughts were going – none of the animals were salvageable for meat. They were all burnt to a crisp. The only thing left in Forestville was the huge mill chimney. It's solitary presence, the only indication that just three days before, this was a thriving village of 500 pioneers.

As we did in Purdyville, the people of Forestville had sought the relative safety of the lake during the conflagration, and now people from the back country were making their way to town. All looked as if in a daze; the horror in their eyes no doubt reflected the events they'd endured to get here. From them, we learned that the Polish settlement north of Minden had been entirely wiped out with several lives lost, but Jacob Buel's place at Cato, later called Charleston, had escaped the blaze.

The relief committee left enough provisions at Forestville to last them until the steamer *Huron*, already on her way up, arrived with more. Lewis and I planned to walk back to Purdyville as discussed, but the yawl crew invited us aboard, insisting it would take little time to drop us off. The smoke was still reasonably thick, so they planned to run as close to the shoreline as was feasible.

Word trickled in over the coming weeks. We rejoiced to learn that Theodore, Libbie, and their

children all survived. But all their possessions, the house, barn, and shed – all newly built after the 1864 fire – was lost. After the 1871 fire, Theo sold 40 acres of his farm to his son Malden. The rest he sold off to neighbors and moved to Sand Beach, one mile north of the village, where he built a two-story frame house and lived there all their days. Jane and I rejoiced over that news, despite the circumstances, because Libbie was that much closer to us. In addition to caring for his new farmland in Sand Beach, Theo would become the school board director of Rock Falls School, a position he would hold for decades.

From Theo, we learned nearly every building at Forest Bay burned. John Hopson's mill and residence below Forest Bay were entirely destroyed. A girl of about 15, who lived at Hopson's was so badly burned, it would be a miracle if she lived. The docks at New River and Huron City were ashes. Only one building survived at Huron City, the hotel belonging to Mr. Winterbottom. Mr. Langdon Hubbard of that village shot his fine team of horses through his stable windows; there was no time to get them out, and knowing they could not be saved, he regrettably, yet graciously, chose the lesser of two evils. He would not let them suffer by burning to death.

At Port Hope, the mill, dock, 10 homes, and the large steam tannery of S. M. Mann & Company burned to the ground. Reports of 2,000 cords of wood and 600 cords of bark also burned. The rest of the village of Port Hope was left standing, but all the barns and homes between Port Hope and Forest Bay had burned.

Sand Beach suffered greatly. The entire village burned, save Mr. Carrington's store. Mr. Pritchley's hotel, the mill, dock, barns, homes – all of it, gone up in smoke. Eyewitnesses reported the dock at Sand Beach caught fire from sparks 200 feet from shore, then burned back toward the water's edge. Verona, 12 miles west of Sand Beach, was completely wiped out. Center Harbor, the shoreline settlement just south of Sand Beach was gone, too; the dock, completely destroyed. All that remained standing at Center Harbor was Dr. Durant's home. And the list went on.

At Purdyville, my three daughters and their families all rebuilt. I was getting on in years, and Jane was right behind me; I was 66 years old, and Jane, 65. We made the difficult decision not to rebuild the hotel. It had been a glorious building – I can still see its grandeur in my mind's eye. The Purdy Hotel served us – and our clientele – well for almost 20 years, but we were exhausted and could no longer handle the tiring job of being hoteliers. I built a one-story frame house just north of where the hotel once stood. We would live out our remaining days at Purdyville, and daughter Amy lived with us, caring for us in our later years. Amy never did marry, nor did Lewis, who, after the fire, decided to move to the city to make his way.

Jane and I suffered many tragedies and losses during our marriage, but at the center of it – at the heart of it –

was always the blessing of family. We built Purdyville from nothing, a place stolen from the wilderness, and when I look back, I have no regrets. Life is often hard, but it can be good, too – if you've a mind to make it that way.

The Purdyville settlement lived on for decades. In 1935, two of the Purdy daughters' houses were still standing though Harriet Purdy Cooper's home was torn down. The particular piece of land, which the county then owned, was the parcel of land owned by Joseph and Harriet Cooper. Joseph Cooper died in 1903, and about five years later, Mrs. Cooper sold the land but retained a life lease on the house, which she held until about one year before her death in 1922. Due to her poor and declining health, she had been forced to sell the lease and go live with her daughter; and after her death, the parcel had been used as pasture. With the county owning the land, in March of 1935, it was announced that the new 57-acre county park five miles south of Harbor Beach would be named the Pierre O. Wagener Park, in honor of Doc Wagener, who practiced medicine in that region, arriving in Sand Beach in 1851. Wagener Park on M-25 became a wonderful place to gather on Huron's lakeshore, but the Purdy family was none too happy with the park's name. Only descendants of the Oscar F. Purdy family had lived on that parcel for 86 years, and the Purdy family thought it more appropriate that the park be named Purdyville Park, or at the very least Purdy Park, but the name of Wagener Park had been decided. Someone placed a sign across the road from the park, which remained for many years. The wooden sign read "Purdyville," lest the public forget the Purdy family – and the name that maybe should have been there in the first place.

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GHOST SHIP from page 1

weather and pushed their boats and crews into violent storms rather than lose a profitable day of moving cargo. It has been said that some captains actually hung their hats over the barometer, so they wouldn't have to see what it was telling them. As one owner's representative said, "No master ever paid attention to the weather reports. If he had, they would never had got anywhere." Indeed, the captain seeking shelter during the frequent fall storm warnings, when other vessels successfully made their port of destination, could expect to "hear about it" from the owners. Actually, the greatest number of tragedies have occurred in the late fall when, in their eagerness to get one more "run" in, the owners exposed their ships to the devastating storms and the white hell of ice.

Operating Conditions

Captains of this time period operated without radar, marine radios, cell phones, direction finders, Loran, GPS, or equipment to digitally measure depth. They operated based on their experience, with buoys, beacons, landmarks, taffrail logs to measure speed, clocks to estimate distance traveled, and a magnetic compass to steer by. In the savage storm of 1913, the only thing of value was the captain's experience; and, as we shall see, this was not enough for a dozen ships.

The Great Storm

Hell hath no fury like a Great Lakes fall storm. Sunday, November 9, 1913, is the blackest day in the history of navigation on the Great Lakes. The storm had its beginning on Lake Superior on Saturday morning. "Heavy gale" warning flags were flying in most ports, some on Friday.

Late in the evening of November 7, 1913, loaded with iron ore, Captain Lowe, with a crew of 24, moved the 436-foot *Hydrus* through two days of gale force winds and a blizzard across Lake Superior. The first through the locks to enter Lake Huron was the 550-foot *James Carruthers*, followed by the *J. H. Sheadle*. The *Hydrus* "locked down" and was followed several hours later by the 250-foot *Wexford*. Of the four ships, only the *Sheadle* would survive and arrive at its destination.

Winds of 70+ miles per hour and 35-foot waves battered the ships. The blizzard coated the vessels with many tons of ice, covering the wheelhouse windows and freezing the doors shut. Even if you could get outside, the blinding snow offered no visibility. It was a white hurricane. Captains had to take the waves head-on or run with them. In either direction, the problem was that the ship would run out of lake. Without seeing shore or having any navigation aids, the captain was not sure of his location. With adequate water under the hull, the captain had to make the turn and try to power his ship 180 degrees without being trapped in the "trough." Being sideways to the waves and unable to escape guaranteed the boat's demise.

The Storm's Aftermath

As the storm subsided, the horrific carnage became evident. Twelve ships had been lost: one each on Lake Michigan and Lake Erie, two on Lake Superior, and eight on Lake Huron. When a ship sank, not a single

individual lived to tell the story of what happened. The Canadian side of Lake Huron was a horror story, with confirmation of each ship lost: life preservers, oars, window frames, hatch covers, lifeboats, and bodies. In places along the Canadian shoreline, the debris was six feet deep.

In twos and threes, the bodies bobbed offshore, until coming to rest on the beach. Lifejackets answered the roll call of those ships gone missing. The *Wexford*, the *McGean*, the *Scott*, the *Regina*, the *Carruthers*, the *Price*, the *Argus*, and her sister ship the *Hydrus* were represented in the deadly roll call. The *Hydrus*, according to several accounts, sent a special representative when the first of her two lifeboats came ashore. It reportedly contained the frozen bodies of four crewmen and one woman tied to their seats. The lone woman was Mrs. Emma Walker. She was the stewardess and was found wearing the chief engineer's heavy coat and the captain's lifebelt. Two brothers, Lesley and Kernol Christy, of Marine City, Michigan, served together on the *Hydrus*. They managed to escape in the lifeboat only to die together before reaching shore. The father, Dickson Christy, frail with age, made the trip to Canada with his remaining son to identify and claim the bodies of Lesley and Kernol.



The *Hydrus* kept giving up her dead. Searching was terminated on November 26 when the body of the *Hydrus* porter, R. A. Summerville, came ashore near Stokes Bay, Ontario, Canada. In early December, the body of William Burns was the last body recovered in Lake Huron. He was also from the *Hydrus* and had a story to tell three years later.

It was reported on October 16, 1916, two men, John Campbell and James Blue, found a bottle with a final message from 23-year-old William Burns. We can imagine their reactions when reading, "Everyone has given up and I think we are about done. The only thing I wish now is that I could say good-bye to my dear mother. Please write my mother and tell her I said I died a happy death and my only wish is that I could see her." Burns provided his mother's Marine City address, and the message was forwarded. At last, the *Hydrus* would now be silent.

Of the known 178 seamen lost on Lake Huron, less than one-third were ever recovered. For the majority, Lake Huron is the final resting place until the lake gives up her dead. In all the Great Lakes, with an estimated 270 lives lost, the families of nearly 200 missing sailors

would live out their lives without knowing their final moments and what happened to their loved ones.

Secrets of Ships That Went Missing

Missing ships mean unanswered questions, mysteries to be solved, and the opportunity to discover and explore. The discovery of the missing ship means swimming "back into time" and going where no one has gone since the ship sailed into oblivion. Questions asked for 100 years will now have answers.

Between 1972 and 1986, five of the six ships that disappeared on the U.S. side of Lake Huron were discovered: the *Price*, the *Argus*, the *Regina*, the *Scott* and the *John McGean*. All had a story to tell, but many kept most of their secrets because they were upside down (turtled).

The 432-foot Steamer *John McGean* Discovery (1985)

In the spring of 1985, with others having commitments, only two would survey that day in the 22-foot Starcraft boat. And it was not the best of conditions as we put "the fish" over the side and played out 600 feet of cable. On the last run of the day, being pushed by five-foot following seas, we had an enormous target. One "pass" and that was it, as sea conditions were going from bad to worse, and we had to retrieve the 600 feet of cable and fish by hand. With no autopilot to hold course, we used a bungee cord tied to the wheel and railing. It marginally worked due to the drag of the cable and sonar fish behind the boat. Both of us had to pull cable (hand over hand) simultaneously, and only for a few feet at a time as we had to recover from each pulling effort. Finally, 1 1/2 hours later, the cable and fish were inside the boat. We both agreed, "never again with two people."

Several days later, two of us descended down the grapple line. I will never forget the emotional impact of seeing the raised letters "MC GEAN" upside down, at the bow. We had found one of the shipwrecks from the Great Storm of 1913! The discovery was in the days of very limited visibility in the Great Lakes, before the zebra mussel infestation, so our perspective on the *McGean* site was much different than it would be today.

Ironically, Captain "Dancing" Chauncey Nye and the *McGean* were lost directly off Port Hope, Michigan, where he was born and raised. During terrific Lake Huron storms, portions of the cargo of coal still come ashore to this day.

Hydrus (The Ghost Ship)

The best of historical research could not provide a definitive place to start looking for the *Hydrus*. Based on the sightings of ships that survived and the debris field, the *Hydrus* could be anywhere. The location of the five ships found, to date, ranged from lower Lake Huron (the *Price* off Lexington, Michigan) to the middle/upper third of Lake Huron (the *Scott* off Alpena, Michigan). The *Hydrus* could be hidden anywhere within thousands of square miles of Lake Huron bottomland still to be searched. The search area was prioritized on the very limited information available and wreck hunter's instinct.

See **GHOST SHIP** on page 23

GHOST SHIP from page 22

The Sea Hunters

Are shipwreck hunters a different breed? One could make the case they are. They can spend hundreds of hours in pursuit of solving a mystery that may or may not be solved for years. And when the Great Lakes gives up her secret, it occurs quickly, in a matter of minutes, as the image comes to life on the LCD screen.

During the years following the discovery of the *McGean*, we continued our search for other missing ships. We enjoyed many great “finds” over the next 30 years and uncovered and solved many mysteries of ships that “went missing.”

The 22-foot Starcraft boat was replaced by a 28-foot Marinette and followed by a 32-foot Marinette with twin screws. Some years the survey activity went well with hundreds of miles covered. Other years were less successful with weather against us and with typical boat and equipment operating issues. We replaced both engines in the boat increasing the engine power to allow us to get on and off the Great Lakes faster. Ralph Wilbanks, finder of the Confederate submarine, the *Hunley*, needed to upgrade his survey equipment to meet new specs for survey projects. He generously sold his existing equipment to me at a reasonable price. With Klein survey equipment updated, we were now “digital.” Later, an autopilot was installed, and most of the electronics were updated. One of our best additions was the installation of the drum retrieval device to return the cable and fish to the boat. This was a requirement for the use of a 40-pound depressor wing on the fish, as well as the use of 60 pounds of weight added to the cable to drive the fish deeper.

Jared Daniel, a young man 18 years old with a fascination for the Great Lakes and her shipwrecks, showed up in 2010. This is hardly the typical venue for someone his age. And he had an obsession with discovering the *Hydrus*, so much so that he had a nameboard built with the *Hydrus* name on it. We often discussed the possibilities of what happened to her, when the *Hydrus* would be located, and by whom.

The Great Lakes have become smaller, not in physical size, but in the capability of recreational boaters and sport fishermen to operate further offshore and have the confidence to return safely. With hundreds of boaters plying Lake Huron, “spiking the wreck” by accident was a real possibility. And with the fact that thousands of square miles were still to be surveyed, it seemed like the search was for the proverbial “needle in the haystack.”

Following the discovery of the *John McGean* in 1985, several miles south of the *McGean*, Wayne Brusate discovered the 250-foot *Regina*, upside down, off Port Sanilac, Michigan. By the end of that year, we had surveyed 100–150 square miles of Lake Huron. It seems like significant coverage until one realizes the scope of the task. We had barely touched the potential area to survey. Lake Huron (U.S. and Canada) has 23,000 square surface miles of which 9,100 are located on the U.S. side.

The Discovery

It only seemed a matter of time before the last shipwreck (the *Hydrus*) of the Great Storm of 1913,



At the dive site, with the nameboard. Sitting (L to R): Jared Daniel, Keith Colombo, David Trotter. Standing: Greg Grieser, Marty Lutz, Fred Nichols.

located on the U.S. side, would be discovered. The others had been discovered by different shipwreck hunters that were active at the time. This included R. Martin/Bill Hanson, Kent Bellrichard, Dick Race, and Wayne Brusate. I felt fortunate to be part of the 1913 storm shipwreck discovery group by adding the *McGean* find.

It was 30 years since the *McGean* discovery, and the area surveyed now exceeded 2,500 square miles in Lake Huron, an unlikely event not soon to be repeated. Lake Huron (U.S. side) exceeds 9,000 square miles, leaving a large area in which the *Hydrus* could be hidden. This was beginning to be “real money,” even for this low budget “nickel and dime” operation, plus another two or three lifetimes of searching.

On the last search effort for the year, we left port early Friday morning for an “around the clock” survey effort. This was, of course, if the “Weather Gods” allowed us 36 hours of favorable conditions. It is no fun sleeping on a boat bouncing in 4–6 feet (or more) seas, and the operational risks escalate considerably at night.

Arriving at the area to be surveyed, we placed the fish in the water and played 600+ feet of cable and dialed in the Klein equipment. We operated in shifts, with a helmsman and sidescan operator on duty while other team members slept, watched movies, etc.

It is very different searching today for “history’s mysteries” compared to 30 years ago when we discovered the *John McGean*. We viewed a LCD digital screen to watch the sonar fish descend to operating depth, dialed in the digital electronics using preset automated settings, aligned the boat with the GPS survey line we intended to run, and activated the autopilot course heading. With moderate seas, it was likely we would not have to touch the wheel again until the end of the survey line run. Engine rpm dictates the depth of the fish. The primary activity of the helmsman is to maintain correct survey depth with engine rpm and speed. All of this is a great change from “yesteryear.”

Jared Daniel was at the helm, and I was sitting at the sidescan console table watching the LCD monitor as the lake bottom unfurled on the screen. At 7:18 p.m., Jared saw a spike on the digital depth sounder, and we

realized we had “spiked” a shipwreck. A minute later, one of the most beautiful (first pass) images we have ever seen appeared on the LCD screen. There was no question we had found the *Hydrus*! It was a near perfect sidescan run past the target. Even with the Klein unit range set at 1,000 feet per side (2,000-foot sweeps), we marveled at the detail on the LCD screen. The ship’s length appeared correct, and the number of cargo hatches seemed to match. Most importantly, there was not another ship that size that fit that description in Lake Huron. It had to be the *Hydrus*!



The sidescan image of the Hydrus upon discovery.

All of the other ships, *Argus*, *Price*, *Scott*, *Regina*, and *McGean*, were upside down (turtled). Amazingly, the *Hydrus* is upright, standing proud. She is a wreck diver and historian’s dream for exploration, and it is apparent many of her well-kept secrets will be uncovered as she is explored. It is still hard to believe that the two people who knew the most about the *Hydrus* and most often fantasied about her discovery were on the R/V *Obsession*, and both were “on duty” when she was found.



Marine artist Robert McGreevy’s depiction of the Hydrus. Courtesy of Robert McGreevy.

Please watch for the conclusion next month.

David Trotter has been involved in Great Lakes shipwrecks – searching, diving, exploring, and documenting new discoveries – for 40+ years. David’s discoveries have been featured on the Discovery Channel, PBS, and NBC, and in The New York Times, Detroit Free Press, Lakeland Boating, Wreck Diving magazine, and Immersed magazine. The Great Lakes are “our treasure” to be enjoyed by all who love our inland seas. The programs are designed for people of all ages to enjoy, and each program is tailored to the audience, from children to grandparents. David can be contacted at dltrrotter@msn.com or 734-455-7585.

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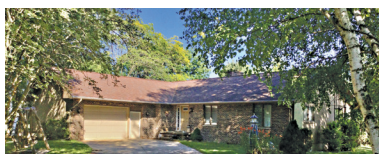
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Custom-built ranch with walkout basement on a wooded 8.28 acres. Only an eighth of a mile from Lake Huron, this secluded and private home features open concept living. The living room features a brick fireplace and views of the wooded backyard. The dining area has a doorwall that leads you to a two-tier deck and views of the well-groomed yard. This home has four heat sources: solar panels, corn stove, natural wood fireplace, and a forced-air oil furnace. There is a 32' x 40' garage, plus two other outbuildings, a kid's play house, and lots of wildlife.

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240' of Lake Huron frontage, on a deep sandy beach, with mature trees on 3 sides of the property offering complete privacy. A total renovation was completed in 2019 from top to bottom and nothing is over 2 years old. Granite countertops, hardwood floors, ceramic tile, cabinets and hardware, shiplap walls, solid doors, energy-efficient windows, and spray-foam insulation, are only a few of the above standard items. The main level consists of a comfortable living area with 2 doorwalls that lead to a 14' x 26' deck. The main level also includes the kitchen, laundry, and master bedroom with its own en-suite bathroom. The finished walk-out basement is perfect for a guest's private quarters. The basement doorwall leads to a 14' x 26' concrete, covered patio. There is also a 6' x 10' shed for added storage space.

018-21-0021 - **\$749,900**



Prime property in Port Sanilac overlooking Harbor Park and Lake Huron! This property is zoned residential/commercial and has 2 buildings on it being sold "as is." Sewer and city water are available. *Note: Information listed is for the main home on Lake Street. The 2nd home's measurements are approx. 1,000 sq. ft., has a living rm., family rm., kitchen, bath, bedroom, and cleaning sink station. There is only one property ID # for both homes, but property may be split.

018-20-0016 - **\$184,900**



Historical building with 1,500 sq ft. of open floor upstairs and down. The wide open staircase makes for easy access to the basement. There is a 30' x 30' addition on the back of the building and a 30' x 50' newer garage plus 2 additional lots included. The building has a new roof on the front part and all the materials to do the back roof. Many new improvements have been made and some need to be completed. Endless commercial possibilities or make it your own private residence. Walking distance to the beach, restaurant, and water park.

018-21-0009 - **\$124,900**



Custom-built 3-bedroom, 3-bath home in the village of Deckerville. Features include: finished basement with kitchen and bath, large area for family or recreational room, 2.5 attached, insulated garage, open concept dining and living room, new windows, fresh paint, 2 storage sheds (one has heat and electric), on-demand generator, and beautifully maintained yard with mature trees. The location is perfect, and the price is right! Give me a call today! All offers will be considered.

018-21-0007 - **\$144,900**



Prime piece of real estate in the village of Port Sanilac. This 2.2 acres is the perfect investment property. There are multiple possibilities, housing units, offices, you decide. Lot size is 300' x 320'. Multi-residential or commercial. A survey is available.

018-21-0004 - **\$154,900**



This beautiful brick building has been an icon in Forester for many years. It is currently being renovated and needs to be completed. The downstairs floor plan includes 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, kitchen, and living room with an open floor plan. Upstairs area could be a 1-bedroom studio apartment with a separate outside entrance. You can get a peek at Lake Huron and the private fenced-in back yard from the upper deck. There is also a 24' x 32' pole barn and a 10' x 14' utility shed. You are just steps away from a beach access. Possible income property.

018-21-0016 - **\$179,000**



Wooded 6-acre parcel that's loaded with wildlife. Some trails have been cut out; there are deer blinds, a pond, and electricity on site just waiting for its next owner to appreciate this beautiful piece of property. There is a plenty of space to build a home or leave it as is and just enjoy! The survey is from 1988, so the dimensions are a bit difficult to read. The driveway easement width is 30' x 584.82'. Once you reach the end of the driveway, then the 6 acres open up to approximately 328' x 735'.

018-21-0019 - **\$59,900**



Move-in ready year-around house or your summer getaway on 1.55 acres. The main house has an open concept, which makes it great for entertaining. 2 bedrooms, 1 full bath and open loft area. The large sunroom is perfect for your morning coffee or that afternoon nap! The 2-car unattached garage is great storage for all of your toys or a perfect man cave. Across the street is a 1-bedroom, 1-bath guest house. There is also storage shed. Close to town and the beautiful Lake Huron!

018-21-0022 - **\$179,900**



Walking distance to everything! This 3-bedroom, 1-bath home features a large 4-season sun porch with energy efficient windows and new blinds, a spacious living room and dining room area and a first floor master bedroom with walk-in closet. The bathroom has been completely remodeled. Upstairs offers 2 large bedrooms with walk-in closets. All of this is encompassed with a beautiful wraparound vinyl picket fence. Don't miss out on this one!

018-21-0020 - **\$204,900**



This 3-bedroom, 1-bath cottage in the village of Forestville is walking distance to Lake Huron. Open concept and extra sitting area in bedroom. There is new paint and flooring throughout. Enjoy the summer nights around the fire pit and the hot summer days under the back covered porch. There is a 13' x 16' storage shed and a little garden shed for all of your yard equipment and beach toys. This 3-season cottage is only a 1 1/2 hour drive from the Metro Detroit area. It is move-in ready and priced to sell!

018-21-0023 - **\$114,900**