



Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



Volume 10 Issue 1

Fall 2016

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Back To School

Ads from the
Amherstburg Echo

1953
**THE GENERAL AMHERST
HIGH SCHOOL**
will re-open on
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
at 9:30 a.m.

The FOLLOWING COURSES ARE OFFERED

- **GENERAL COURSE** — Leading to High School Graduation, College, Nursing, etc.
- **GENERAL COURSE** — with Typewriting, Shop, Home Economics, or Agriculture options.
- **SPECIAL COMMERCIAL COURSE** — of ten months for those who have completed at least three years of High School.
- **UPPER SCHOOL COURSES** — for those who desire to enter College or Normal Schools or any advanced course requiring Honor Graduation.

New students who expect to use the school buses are asked to contact the school by Sept. 3. Information respecting bus routes may be secured by telephoning the school office on Sept. 3 or 4 — RE 6-4551.



Pants Wear House AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO

IF ITS FASHION OR FUNK FOR BACK TO SCHOOL

"male cut" and the PANTS WEAR HOUSE are ready for you. For a total fashion look nothing can compare with "male cut". Plaids, bold, bolder or their solid gabardine and flannel baggies with 24" bottom in all the new fall shades — from \$12.95.

If Funk is more your style get into the new "male cut" "Screwdriver" pant with a 22" uncuffed bottom in corduroys, shades of blue, navy, brown and camel — only \$13.95.

And now at the PANTS WEAR HOUSE Flaired Rider Blue Jeans designed by Clint Eastwood, only \$9.95.

So far back to school for young men and women it's "male cut" and the PANTS WEAR HOUSE...

ACROSS
FROM
CUSTOM
CLEANERS

Wide Leather Belts From \$2.50
Silk Ties From \$3.00

1938 CLOTHES

--FOR--

School Opening

Sturdy Clothes that will
stand hard knocks.

Bring your Boy in and out-
fit him at the lowest prices
in the district.

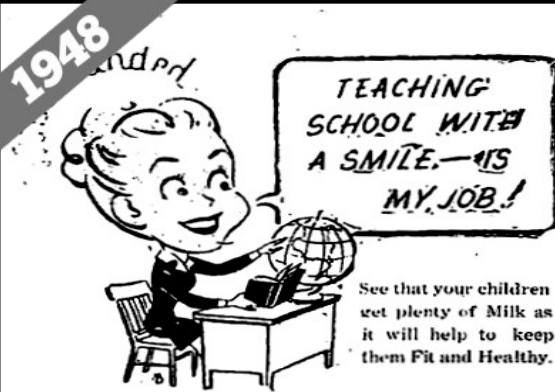


Send them off to school properly equipped and help make this a successful-year for your youngsters. Make your shopping for them successful, too, by buying their supplies in our shop. You'll find grade "A" values in every selection, "all at" budget-pleasing prices.

"SHOP IN AMHERSTBURG FIRST"

COPELAND'S

Richmond Street — RE 6-4461 — AMHERSTBURG



TEACHING
SCHOOL WITH
A SMILE.—IS
MY JOB!

See that your children
get plenty of Milk as
it will help to keep
them Fit and Healthy.

Teachers know how important it is to keep healthy and alert. That's why they drink plenty of milk. Adults as well as children need nourishing, vitamin-rich Purity Dairies milk in their daily diet.

DRINK PLENTY OF MILK—FOR GOOD HEALTH

Daily Deliveries in Amherstburg and Harrow

Purity Dairies Limited

WINDSOR, ONTARIO

1913 FULL LINE OF School Books

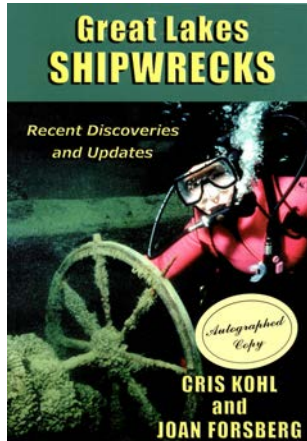
Text Books,
Note Books,
Scribblers,
Pencils, &c.

EVERYTHING
WANTED
IN SCHOOL

—AT—

A. J. WILKINSON'S
Amherstburg Ontario.

Latest Additions to the Gift Shoppe

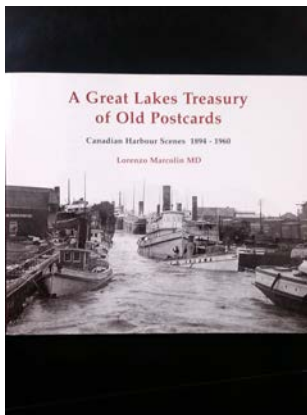


Great Lakes Shipwrecks: Recent Discoveries and Updates

By Chris Kohl and Joan Forsberg

Covering over 100 of the newest shipwreck discoveries made in the Great Lakes. Includes images, locations and histories of the wrecks. Great for divers and historians alike.

\$16



A Great Lakes Treasury of Old Postcards: Canadian Harbour Scenes 1894 - 1960

By Lorenzo Marcolin MD

A window into Canadian History as shown through a collection of old postcards containing Great Lakes harbour scenes (over 300 postcards!).

\$35

There are more books in various stages of production which we hope to have available for sale for Christmas giving:

"McGregor News"- The first 25 years' columns , as originally published in The Amherstburg Echo.

"Soundings"- Marine News columns from years 1920-1925- as originally published in the Amherstburg Echo.



Reminiscing about the good ol' days?

Here's your chance to revisit the past!

The Marsh Collection has over 5000 photos. A selection of them contain local people who have not yet been identified, just like this one.

If you ever want to browse through old photos, and maybe spot a familiar face or two, you are welcome to stop by during regular business hours and submerge yourself into the bygone era. We appreciate the help!

What is the Marsh Collection Society?

Our mandate is to collect, preserve and encourage research into the heritage of Amherstburg and the lower Detroit River district.

This registered, non-profit organization was founded in 1983 by the late John and Helen Marsh, whose family published the Amherstburg Echo for over 80 years. Our funding comes from various foundations and private Individual donations which are welcome. A receipt for income tax purposes can be issued for any monetary donation of \$20 or more.

Open

**Tues – Fri: 10am – 4pm
235 A Dalhousie Street
Amherstburg
(519) 736-9191**

www.marshcollection.org



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Facebook!

Upsetting the Hour Glass

1966

September - Woodall Construction Company has started construction of a new industry in the industrial park, corner of William and Victoria Street. The new plant will be owned by Reflex Corporation of Canada Limited which is a subsidiary of International Tools Limited, Windsor.

October - A bold robbery took place in Amherstburg early Monday morning when safecrackers entered Taskey's Market, Sandwich and Murray, and carried off the safe.

November - Stedmans Christmas Catalogue offers the greatest variety of gifts such as never before seen under one roof in Amherstburg. Over 3,000 of these catalogues in full colour, have been mailed to householders of Amherstburg and District

1956

September - The Amherstburg plant of Canadian Cannery Limited is being operated on a round the clock basis to take care of the 1956 tomato pack. Except for a couple of hours each day devoted to clean up the plant is at top operation night and day.

October - The first of the series of monthly Square Dances sponsored by the churchyard committee of Christ Church held Friday night at the Anderdon was a huge success.

November - The scrap iron carrier Tampico owned by Nicholson Transit Company of Detroit piled up on the spoils bank south of Bois Blanc Island, Wednesday morning. She was downbound in the Livingstone Channel when her steering gear let go.

1946

September - Schools have registered the following number of students, St. Rose, 119 pupils in the High School and 14 in the Commercial; General Amherst, 148; Amherstburg Public, 260 and St. Anthony's 335.

October - The Ladies Bowling League of the Brunner Mond Club got under way October 1 with eight teams composed of six bowlers each, four teams bowling at 7 p.m. and the remaining four at 9 p.m..

November - The town clerk was instructed to write the Union Natural Gas Company saying that Amherstburg wants gas piped to the town as soon as possible.

1936

September - The Howard Hanna Jr., of the Columbia Steamship Lines ran aground at Bar Point Saturday morning at 2.00 o'clock. This is the second boat inside of a week to run aground at this point.

October - The rates for Hydro power in Amherstburg will be reduced the same amount as in all other provincial points, according to the information received by the local Hydro Commission.

November - Growers of flue tobacco in Essex County have climbed far out of the red this fall by the sale of their two and a half million pound crop at a price that averaged about 34 cents a pound.

1926

September - Tyas Bros., of the Liberty Theater, are pleased to announce that they have been fortunate in securing the services of Miss Evangeline Monforton to preside at the pianoforte. Patrons are now assured of a pleasing musical program in conjunction with the best in motion pictures.

October - The incessant rains are becoming very serious to the farmers. The potato crop is badly damaged and many farmers will find the yield will not be sufficient even for their own needs.

November - The Sewing Circle of the First Baptist church will have a chicken dinner on Thursday night, November 25th.



Collection Highlights

Ship's Wheel



This wheel comes from the Steamer Alaska, built 1871 by Gibson & Craig in Buffalo New York. The Alaska was one of four similar iron ships built at that time for the Erie & Western Transportation Company, also known as Anchor Line. The Alaska operated as a package freighter for the company for forty years. In 1911, the vessel was sold to John O'Connor of the Empire Shipbuilding Company, who had the ship converted into a lumber barge.

By 1913, the Alaska was owned by the Mullen Coal Company. She was used as a collier, delivering the first load of coal to Amherstburg in June of that year. Captain Joseph Mahon of Amherstburg was the

skipper for her duration with the company. In 1926 the Alaska was decommissioned and sat idle in the docks at the end of Richmond Street and afterwards the Mullen wharf at Sandwich. The vessel was eventually brought to Hamilton by the tug Atomic to be scrapped.

The wheel, measuring 72 inches in diameter, is built of solid, dark-stained wood. After its time steering the Alaska came to a close, the wheel hung on the wall of the Mullen Coal Company Office at 254 Dalhousie. Later, the wheel was inherited by the Brond Community Credit Union, who donated the artifact to the Marsh Collection Society in 1998.



Ship's Wheel from the Steamer Alaska
Marsh Collection Society

BOB-LODOC

by Al Jackson

While standing on the Amherstburg shoreline and looking across the Detroit River to Bob-Lo Island, a person can easily see two objects that serve as testimonials to the rich marine heritage of the lower Detroit River. The first object, directly across from the Coast Guard Base, is the 125 ton concrete monument supporting an enormous sixteen foot high admiralty pattern anchor. This striking monument was built in 1909 so that all vessels passing Amherstburg would have a clear view of this grand tribute to all Great Lakes sailors.



The other object, about 1,000 feet downstream of the "Sailors Monument", is the rusting steel hull of a long forgotten canal sized freighter that serves as a reminder of days gone by when the Detroit River was known as the "busiest waterway in the world". This small steamship ended her days as part of the main ferry dock at Bob-Lo but prior to this ending the little "canaller" had a short but quite remarkable career.

In 1927 Paterson Steamships Ltd. placed an order with a British shipyard to build five new canal sized freighters for their Great Lakes fleet. The second of the new boats was named LACHINEDOC as Paterson named each of their ships after a port or province in Canada with a suffix of DOC (Dominion of Canada). At a cost of \$175,000 to build, the 252 foot canaller began her career by transporting grain through the Welland canal from Port Colborne to grain elevators along the St. Lawrence River. This service continued during the 1930's, until the onset of the Second World War.

In December of 1941 LACHINEDOC and fourteen of her sister-ships were requisitioned by the Canadian Government for use in the South American bauxite trade in the Caribbean. Because of their small size they were ideally suited for trips up the narrow rivers of

Dutch and British Guiana to load at the bauxite mines. The raw bauxite ore was delivered to an offloading facility in Port of Spain, Trinidad after a perilous run across the open ocean. These slow moving unarmed vessels were no match for the lurking U-boats that actively sought out vessels in the bauxite trade. The original Paterson fleet lost six ships and the lives of fifty-eight sailors while carrying out their duties in the West Indies.

LACHINEDOC left the bauxite trade in 1944 and went across the Atlantic to help in the war effort by transporting materials around the British coast and airplane parts to combat zones. When hostilities ended she had miraculously survived two tours of duty. In 1946 she was returned to the USA where Captain Scott Misener of the Colonial Steamship Company bought her for \$113,800 and brought her back to the Great Lakes. She regained her Canadian registry and had her name changed to QUEENSTON. She served her new owners well in the canal trade for over a decade but the opening of the St Lawrence Seaway in 1959 spelled the end for her and many other small canal boats. QUEENSTON remained in layup until 1961 when Captain Misener sold the obsolete freighter to Captain Troy Browning and his brothers who were the owners and operators of Bob-Lo Island amusement park at the time.

A decision had been made by the Brownings to upgrade the main dock and jetty on Bob-Lo at the end of the 1961 season as the existing wooden structure had been in use for nearly seventy years. A new stone and concrete jetty would extend 355 feet out into the river and an old steamboat would be sunk at the end of the jetty to provide the foundation and facing of a new dock. Because of this decision the QUEENSTON did not



**continued on page 6*

"Bob-lodoc" continued

go to the scrap yard as did most of her running mates but instead was towed to her final resting place at Bob-Lo on October 2, 1961. The task of sinking the little canaller was given to McQueen Marine of Amherstburg

and on November 14 the QUEENSTON was successfully scuttled and remains in that location to this day. The threat of hostile U-boats and air attacks from the German Luftwaffe, mine fields, fierce ocean storms and other marine mishaps failed in their attempts to see an end to the little freighter. But now she rests peacefully as a testimonial to a bygone era of marine history.



River Adventures and the Smokes

by *"Bad Buoy"*

It was in the early sixties on a rare, warm December day when two boys who should have been studying for exams succumbed to "the Call." If you were raised on the water, you know it was the call of the river. With just enough gas "borrowed" from R.A.T.S.' dad, a twelve-foot boat and a five-horse motor, the adventure began.

Oh, sure, there was enough to do out there with exploring the three tiny islands on the other side of Bob-Lo (R.A.T.S.' dad had a duck blind on one) and looking through the big comfortable duck blinds of George Kopacz and Bill Heyden's on the dike, not to mention rolling rocks down Spider Mountain and zipping in and out of Crystal Bay (was Hidden Lake there then? I can't remember). But we got bored.

On through the "hole in the wall," past Sugar Island, we were looking for a smoke. "Easy enough," says R.A.T.S. So off we went across the the south tip of Grosse Isle and a short trip to Gibraltar (try this today with Homeland Security, etc... you wouldn't get four hundred yards; sad for todays' kids). Anyway, no boats there today, lots of places to tie up at the docks and on to the mainland we go.

After walking a few blocks, lo and behold, a store. Marlboroughs, Parliaments, Peter Paul Mounds, Almond Joys, New Era Potato Chips, Faygo Pop, all the good stuff we couldn't get in Canada. We tried, but they wouldn't sell us any wine. Just as well, enough trouble ahead.

After a few bites of Almond Joy and a drag on a Marlborough, back to the boat. Almost! The blue and white patrol car sure caught us by surprise! "Why aren't you kids in school?" was asked. Being polite and honest we answered back "We are writing exams and have the time off."

"Exams? What the h--- are you talking about? Where the h--- did you come from?" Again in honesty and politeness, "Amherstburg" was our reply. "Get in the &# % car," he replied. First time in a police car, I remember there were no door handles or window cranks.

When we arrived at the station there sat the Chief wearing a Smokey the Bear hat! "Whaddya boys up to? Where'd you come from? What's in the bag?" "Well, sir, we're from Amherstburg." "How'd you git here?" "12 foot boat and a 5 horsepower motor, sir." "12 foot... Are you boys crazy? I wouldn't go out there in a 20 footer this time of year, and you got cigarettes. You're too damned young." And with that he put our smokes in his desk drawer. Probably smoked 'em himself but he let us keep the candy. He told his constable to drive us back to our boat and "Make damn sure you see them leave." He did and we left, but he didn't return our smiles and waves as we putted under the small stone bridge to make our way home.

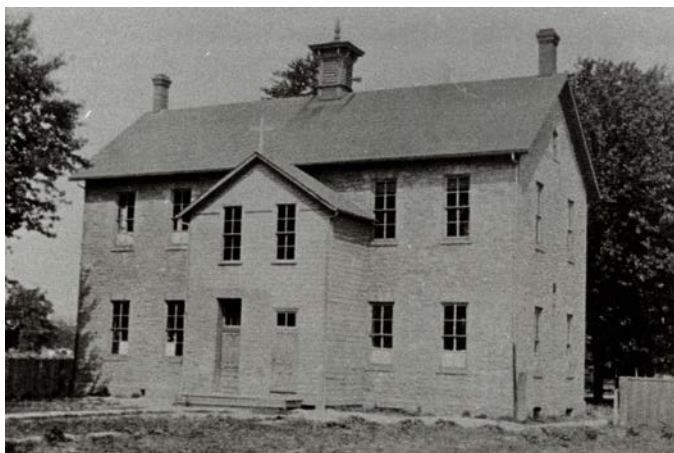
Just a couple of river rats who never thought that this river adventure would stay with us for fifty-odd years.

Bricks-n-Beams

St. Rose School 1879-1971

In 1879 the local firm of Park & Borrowman was awarded the contract to build a new school building for the Separate School Board at a cost of \$2990. This new structure was erected on Richmond Street, just east of St. Joseph's Academy. During excavation of the land to lay the foundation, water rapidly accumulated, forcing the project to be suspended until a new sewer could be built to drain the water. A ceremony, including a procession from the Parish Hall to St. John the Baptist Church, to the school ground, was held Sunday, May 25th 1879 for the laying of the cornerstone.

The new stone building was rectangular in plan with a gabled roof, prominent chimneys at either end, and deep entrance porches on the front and rear. The exterior was left fairly austere and highly symmetrical with a simple cornice and unadorned entrances. Tall, narrow windows and a bell cupola at the center of the roof reflect elements of the Italianate style, while the overall design reflects Georgian influence as well. The interior was divided into four rooms, approximately 30 ft² in size, to accommodate 250 students. The second floor classrooms could be combined by opening the folding doors to create a large hall.



Rear of St. Rose School facing Murray Street, c. 1924
Marsh Collection Photo



St. Rose High School, Grade 10 Class, c.1938
Marsh Collection Photo

The building opened in the fall of 1879 as an elementary school dedicated to St. Rose de Lima. The school hosted junior classes, with separate entrances and grounds to isolate boys and girls. Secondary education for girls was obtained at St. Joseph's academy on Brock Street. Senior boys were educated in the 1875 Parish Hall school on King Street until 1891 when they also moved from Parish Hall to St. Rose School elementary school. By 1911, to alleviate overcrowding at St. Rose, students in the junior grades were transferred to the new St. Anthony's school on Brock Street. In 1892 St. Rose was evaluated by the Government Inspector. In terms of quality of education he noted that this was a good "all round" school, which was considered high praise at the time.

In 1929 the senior grades were moved from St. Rose to St. Anthony's. A Continuation Class had been set up in 1901 at St. Joseph's Academy for 23 students. This eventually evolved into St. Rose High School. The first "commencement" or graduation of four students took place in 1924. Those numbers gradually increased in the ensuing years.

In 1950 St. John the Baptist School for grades seven through ten was built next to the church on Brock Street. This left only grades 11 and 12 at St. Rose High School. As enrollment declined and maintaining the 71-year-old building became problematic, it was decided to close the school following the last graduation in June 1966. In 1971 St. Rose School fell to the wrecking ball.

Then & Now – 247 Brock Street



St. Anthony School, c. 1910



House of Shalom, 2016