



Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



Volume 10 Issue 4

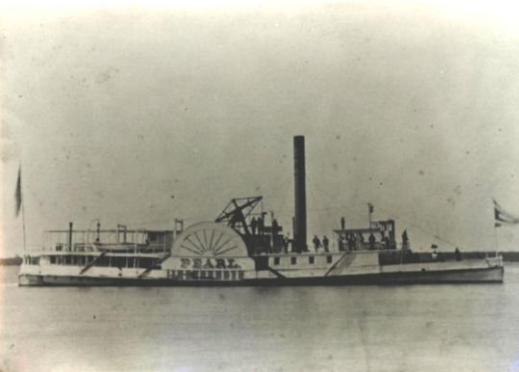
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150 Years Ago in Amherstburg



Horsman House, now the Artisan Grill, was constructed in 1867 by William Horsman and operated as a hotel.
MCS photo 5102



The ferry steamer called Pearl left Amherstburg every morning at 7a.m. and returned at 6:30p.m.
Fort Malden Photo Collection 0079

According to the *County of Essex Gazetteer* for 1866-67, Amherstburg had a population of approximately 2500. It was a prosperous town of industry and commerce driven by its advantageous position along the Detroit River and the resources offered by the land. Wharves lined the waterfront and various establishments throughout town supplied goods and services for travellers and locals alike.

In total, there were 7 general stores, 1 gristmill, 1 saw mill, 9 hotels, six wagon shops, 4 harness shops, 10 blacksmith shops, 12 groceries, 1 physician, 5 schools, 5 churches, and 2 drug stores.

The Malden Lunatic Asylum occupied the former Fort Malden grounds. At this time the asylum had 235 patients.



Dr. W.C. Lambert, physician. His home and office was on Ramsay Street.
MCS 2009.019



Alexander Hackett, wood merchant, had a shop on Dalhousie Street and residence on Murray Street.
County of Essex Gazetteer 1866-67

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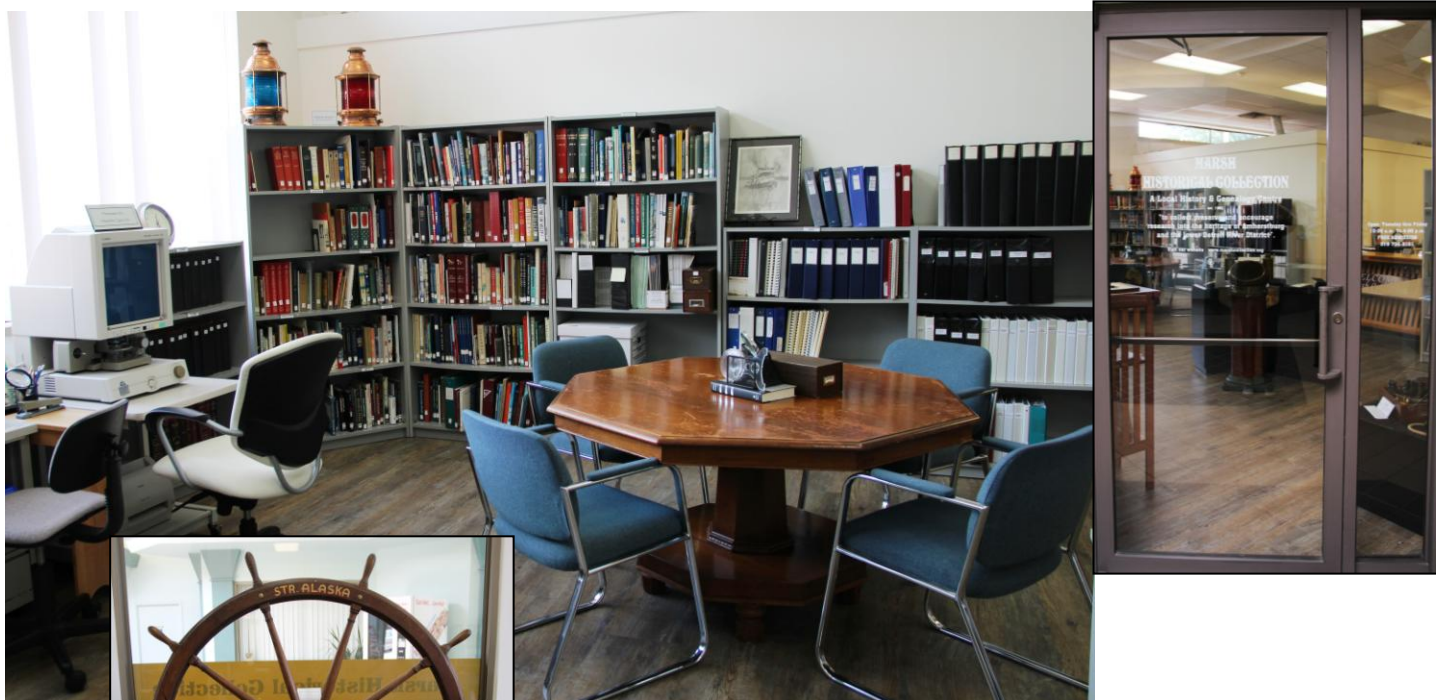
One of two drug stores in town, John Lowe operated his shop on Murray Street.
County of Essex Gazetteer 1866-67

Who ran the town in 1867?

Denis D. Delisle was the Reeve, and John Conroy Deputy Reeve. The councillors were John G. Kolfage, Andrew Botsford, and Mark J. Salmoni. James Kevill was postmaster.

Come Visit Us

At our new location in Heritage Plaza
(80 Richmond Street)



What's In the Collection?

The Marsh Historical Collection mandate is "to collect, preserve and encourage research into the heritage of Amherstburg and the lower Detroit River district."

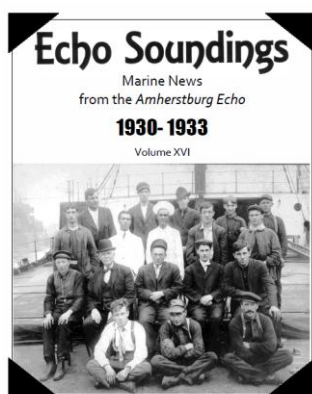
The facility contains a large collection of photos, books, genealogical records, maps and reference files on a variety of historical topics, plus microfilm of The Amherstburg Echo from 1874 to 2012. There is also a small gift shop which contains various publications about local history.

Funding comes from various foundations and private individuals. While **ADMISSION IS FREE**, donations are most welcome. A receipt for income tax purposes will be issued upon request for any monetary donation of \$10 or more.

The Marsh Collection is open to researchers and visitors from 10am to 4pm Tuesday through Friday.
Email: research@marshcollection.org
Website: www.marshcollection.org

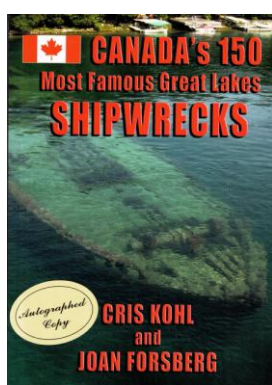


NEW ADDITIONS TO THE GIFT SHOP



Echo Soundings
Vol. XVI
Marine news from the Amherstburg Echo 1930-33.
\$20

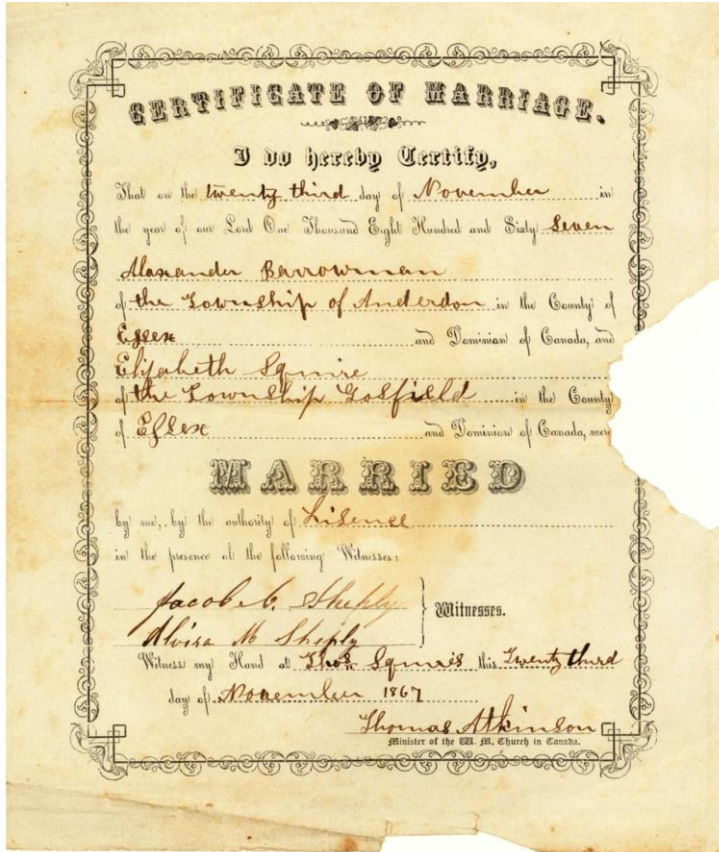
Published by the Marsh Collection Society
Amherstburg, Ontario



Canada's 150 Most Famous Great Lakes Shipwrecks
By Chris Kohl & Joan Forsberg
\$20

Collection Highlights

Marriage Certificate: Alexander Borrowman 2nd & Elizabeth Squire



After their marriage in 1867, Alexander purchased the family farm on Concession 3, Anderdon on May 22, 1869. He and Elizabeth had 4 children:

Alexander 3^d (1868-1921)
 Thomas (1871-1943)
 Hattie (1872-1873)
 Frank (3 weeks)
 1 child died in infancy.

Alex and his son Frank died in 1875 after contracting typhoid. Elizabeth later married Joe Fox in 1882.

Letter from Alexander Borrowman 1st (father-in-law) to Elizabeth Squire:

"To Lizzie and her Husband.
 Lizzie I with pleasure greet thee- Welcome to my heart and home, Freely give up my Alex- For to take you for his own, Happy may you live together- Selfishness may you forego, While your friendship is protected- May your love increasing grow, If you would be truly happy- Serve your master here below, Honour also with your substance- If you would his goodness know, Love your Lord supremely- His alone your idol be, Next, you cannot prize too highly- Any gift he sendeth thee, Live to love and serve your Maker- with your soul and strength in mind, Always vieing with each other- Never to be unkind. In your home contentment reigning- Peace and plenty round your board, Gratitude your hearts o'erflowing.
 For the goodness of the Lord."

*A History of Peter Barrowman-Borrowman,
 D. Alex Borrowman (Source)*

Other Marriages of Confederation Year

Joseph Beaudoin and Archange Bondi; Gabriel Bondi and Eleonore Langlois; Joseph Beedle and Mary Ann McQuade; Michael Conroy and Mary Broughen; Israel Durocher and Marthilde Laferte; Richard Elliot and Elizabeth McGuire; J.B. Jubenville and Marie Dube; George Leslie and Philgenie Grondin; Oliver Leidwell and Hana Sinasac; Isaac Minville and Julie Hamelin; Zenobie Morin and Sarah Maloney; David Mongeau and Margaret Bouffard; Jerome Parent and Agnes Primeau; Francois Poirier and Helene Cayer; James Risdale and Catherine O' Driscoll; Thomas Renaud and Louise Dube; William Rouen and Marie Molay; Richard Shaw and Vitaline Goulet; Joseph Vigneux and Mary Navin.

Published in the Amherstburg Echo: July 8, 1927

Upsetting the Hour Glass

1927

June- The White Star Navigation company has leased Sugar Island as a landing place for weekend excursions of their steamers.

July- About two thousand is the average attendance at the Street Fair. It is the big event of July in Amherstburg.

August- Cutting of Burley tobacco has begun throughout South Essex.

1937

June- There has been a decided improvement in Amherstburg this summer shown by the fact that the number of people receiving welfare aid in the municipality this year has decreased from 186 to 58.

July- Hundreds of young people enjoy Rick Roberts' orchestra nightly at Bob-Lo. Free dancing.

August- Amherstburg's bugle band under the leadership of Mr. Cullington, gave a street parade Monday.

1947

June- The recently organized Malden Fire Department made its first run Monday morning.

July- The popularity of Bob-Lo Island is shown from the fact that over 2,000 people from Essex County came to Amherstburg on Dominion Day and took the small ferry "C.E. Park" to the island.

August- The northern entrance to Amherstburg is a beauty spot. The Calvert gardens are at their best.

1957

June- The Amherstburg Public Utilities Commission is erecting mercury vapour street lights on Dalhousie Street between Richmond Street and Gore Street.

July- A night long remembered for lovers of band music when Amherstburg Community Band stages a Festival of Bands on the Amherstburg Town Park.

August- A lot of visitors came to Amherstburg over the Civic Holiday weekend with the peak of traffic on Sunday. Fort Malden reported 410 visited the museum.

1967

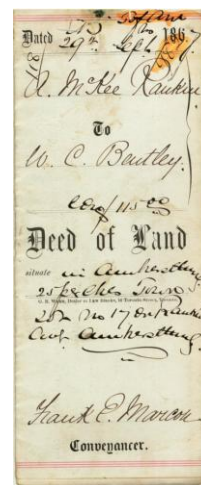
June- There will be eight bands, over a hundred units and 1, 250 participants in the Centennial Celebration parade on Monday, July 3rd.

July- Swimming off the foot of Murray Street will be prohibited and the area posted as such.

August- The Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden District Rescue and First Aid Squad has the honour of receiving the first license issued under the regulations of the Ambulance Services Act.



Property Research



Land Deed: A. McKee Rankin to W.C. Bartley, 1867

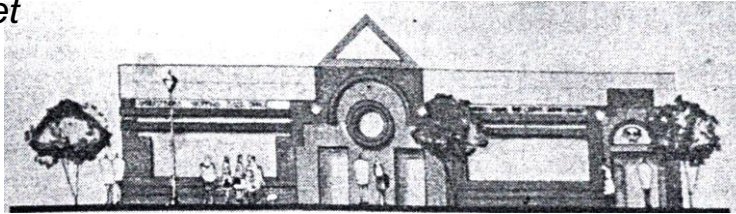
Interested in learning about the history of your house? The Marsh Collection will perform in-depth historical property research for a \$25 fee. Depending on availability, the information provided may include copies of historic land instruments, photos, and articles presented chronologically. Stop in or contact us for more details.

Bricks-N-Beams

From Amherst Recreation to Heritage Plaza

80 Richmond Street

By Eleanor Warren



Some of us are old enough to remember playing hooky from high school and sneaking into the basement rec room of this 71-year-old building for a coke and a smoke. Well, maybe it only happened once or twice before we were told in no uncertain terms to scram. Some memories do seem to be exaggerated as we add a few years. Being aware of that dreaded aging symptom is the reason we fall back on the good old Amherstburg Echo files for the facts and history of the Heritage Plaza.

In August 1946, The Echo announced that "...Lucien Beneteau is constructing a recreation centre on Richmond Street on property which he purchased from J. H. Florey." It was going to be built on the north side of the street, next to the former Brunner Mond Club (which is now a parking lot).

It was a year later, in June 1947, that Amherst Recreation opened its doors for the first time. The Echo called the new centre "one of the finest in Ontario." It contained 8 bowling alleys, 6 billiard tables (4 Snooker and 2 Boston) and a Soda Bar. The facility was open every day from 12 noon till 12 p.m. Frank Burck was the first manager. In addition to the above, Jim Finlay operated a barber shop in the basement of the building. Other businesses such as Bezeau's Home Appliances and Frank Williamson Men's Wear, soon moved into spaces on the main floor.

In October 1949, Sam Pearl was in charge of Amherst Recreation, soon to be followed by Jim Parent as proprietor. Between 1951 and 1954, the Pennington Shop Ladies' Wear occupied a store in the building, as did Leslie's Style Shop and Bill Wigle's Sport Shop. In 1953, Frank Williamson's store relocated to another site on Richmond Street and Mrs. Pennington moved her shop to Windsor, where it was called Sergison's.

Disaster struck in December 1954. The Echo reported that in an early morning blaze "the Amherstburg Recreation Building was gutted. In the building were bowling alleys, pool room, Bill's Sport Shop and Leslie's Style Shop." The loss was estimated at \$100,000. It was May 1955 before the debris was cleaned up and Parent considered rebuilding.

By February 1956, the east side of the building was being converted into a supermarket for Dominion Stores Limited. At the same time, work on the new Federal building (Post Office) next door, as well as a new depot on the Department of Transport Dock were progressing. By 1982, no longer able to compete with the large A & P Store in the Fort Malden Mall, Dominion Stores Limited closed its Amherstburg operation.

In 1983 The Echo announced that the new owner of the property, Motorco Credit Union, was renovating the building. The architect, David A. Novick, proposed "a brick covering with a heritage flavour" which would convert the structure to a mini-mall, with a dozen commercial spaces inside. It wasn't long before 'Heritage Square' was filled with tenants, all of whom and many since have since moved on. As of this date of writing, Computer Data Products, owned and operated by the Joel Ouellette family, has the distinction of being the longest remaining tenant, having moved into Heritage Square in June 1991.

Since that time there have been other changes and alterations to the building, as well as long-lasting tenants, far too much detail for this article. Just in the past year the property changed hands again and the interior is being restructured for new tenants. Perhaps that's a story for another time. As of today, now called 'Heritage Plaza,' the 71-year-old building has a new lease on life once again.

Mischief on Bois Blanc!

As Reported in The Amherstburg Echo

July 14, 1905:

"Kid" Commodore, a Delray pugilist of some repute, whose occupation is bartender in a Detroit hotel, ran amuck on Bois Blanc Island, Monday afternoon, and caused all kinds of excitement for a few hours. Commodore, accompanied by his trainer and two young ladies had just stepped off the Pappoose landing at Bois Blanc, when George Vincent, an Anderdon man of some 60 years of age, made a remark which grated on the girls' feelings. "Kid" resented the alleged insult by landing an upper cut on the old gentleman's jaw, which put him down and out knocking out three teeth, not to speak of the injury to his feelings. He returned to Amherstburg a warrant for Kid's arrest which Max Laporte, C.O.P. attempted to execute. Max has never been bluffed in his life but this time he ran into a crowd that were prepared to do gun work. A fierce fight occurred at the dancing pavilion, during which the Chief downed his man twice, and had partly got a handcuff on when one of his pals shoved a revolver in Max's face. Not to be foiled he raised his handcuffs, struck Commodore over the head, nearly cracking his skull, and he fell like a log, bleeding profusely. It took two doctors an hour to bring the injured pugilist to. During the scrap, Pat Delmore, who is employed on the island, and who was assisting Laporte, received a severe gash on the neck from a knife. In the meantime Mr. Laporte, sore from sundry blows and kicks, his collar and shirt soaked with blood, returned to Amherstburg for a change of apparel and on returning to the island his man had gone. He must have hidden at the north end, for next morning, he was arrested at the Anglo American corner, when waiting for the car gaoled, and same day appeared before P.M. McGee. He pleaded not guilty, and the case was enlarged for a day, but taking the advice of some pals, who came from Detroit later in the day, he changed his plea to guilty, and was fined altogether on two charges, together with costs \$51.50. The gang hiked back to Detroit, to raise the cash, but it was not until Wednesday that the prisoner was released from the coop, going home with a sore head and a greater respect for Canadian law and order.

June 17, 1921:

Magistrate Clark, of Crystal Beach, near Bridgeburg, during the week-end, gave six young Buffalo girls a fatherly talk to and sent them home because they persisted in swinging on park swings with rolled down stockings. Chief Scott, of Crystal Beach, placed them under arrest. "Go home to your mothers and learn to dress properly," was Magistrate Clark's final parting warning. Like incidents are of daily occurrence on Bois Blanc and the boats running thereto. Dimpled knees are much in vogue this summer.

June 21, 1877:

Notice-Bois Blanc Island

Notice is hereby given that all persons are forbidden from trespassing on Bois Blanc Island, or going on any part thereof, without receiving permission from proprietor or the undersigned. Any person found trespassing thereon will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

CAUTION

All parties having business with the undersigned must be careful in landing on the island they must land immediately opposite Cooke's lumber dock, at the fish shanties, and take the path straight to the house. This caution is given for I have placed SELF-SHOOTING GUNS all over the island and anyone not following out the above are liable to be shot. I have to adopt this means to stop parties from trespassing on the island, destroying the crops and stealing the property.

I have no objections to parties having pic-nics on the island, if they will first obtain permission, either from Col. Rankin or myself, so that all danger may be removed.

P.H. PETERSEN

Dominion Day Celebrations

Beginning with the first Dominion Day on July 1, 1867, Amherstburg has always put on extravagant festivities. The planning committee each year strived to outdo the last. The first celebration took place on Bois Blanc Island. John Brown, a leading organizer, is quoted in the Echo, saying: "We are going to make July 1st a bigger day in the Burg than Uncle Sam will have in Detroit on July 4th". The first Canadian flag brought to Amherstburg was flown on the Island on a pole supplied by John Pettypiece. Local boys created an impromptu bonfire by setting ablaze the middle blockhouse on Bois Blanc. These events have since been fondly remembered, and many of which repeated in the annual celebrations on July 1st.

An extensive program of activities and entertainment was drafted each year. Popular events included athletic games, boat races, firemen's competitions, a procession, and fireworks display.

An account in the Echo of the celebrations in 1887 describes the town decorated in red, white, and blue, with flags and streamers hung throughout the streets.

Business and home owners ornamented their facades with flags of all sizes. A banner along the front of Town Hall read: "God Save the Queen". From this point, a procession was led to the Park at Laird Avenue, and eventually back to Town Hall.

10,000 visitors were recorded attending. Five brass bands came to play at the events and march in the processions. The Ladies' Band of Fenton, Michigan and 21st Fusiliers' of Windsor competed in a tournament, and the latter of the two triumphed.

A rowing regatta took place on the river between Bob-Lo and Amherstburg, with first place prizes valued up to \$30. In East Town Park, athletic contests were held. First place for the 100 Yard Race went to J.B. Coyne, and F. Loria took first for the old men's race. In the firemen's competition, Wallaceburg, Windsor and Amherstburg competed, and the Amherstburg team won the fancy drill for a prize of \$15.00.

In the evening, the 20th anniversary programme came to a close with a fantastic fireworks display.

Amherstburg Centennial Parade Photos



MCS Photos 2016.029

Then & Now - 65 Sandwich Street North



Swiss Chalet Shop, c.1960s



Riccardo's Italian Restaurant, present