



Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



Volume 16 Issue 2

Winter 2022/2023

ISSN 1913-8660

Captain Cliff Morrison

By Phyllis Chant

This past October we said good-bye to our good friend Captain Clifford Morrison. If you didn't happen to know Cliff, he would be best described as the true definition of a gentleman. This soft-spoken, kind man was always quick to help us with our nautical questions regarding ships, tugs, and his life on the water, especially his career with McQueen Marine.

Cliff was born on Manitoulin Island and came to Amherstburg at the age of ten with his parents Captain Angus and Violet Morrison. His father started him working on the Patricia McQueen when he was just a young teenager and Cliff never looked back. He spent 46 years licensed both in Canadian and U.S. Waters working on the Detroit River and the Great Lakes. He retired in 1998. Cliff donated to the Marsh a nautical chart book with annotations made by him showing the approximate positions of ships in trouble, mainly groundings, that he worked on with the tug Atomic.

Cliff was also artistically talented and shared his artwork, model tugs and photos with the Marsh Historical Collection. All these treasures we will cherish here, but most of all we will hold close are the memories of his visits and his friendship.

To his family, dear wife Julie, his children and grandchildren, we offer our deepest condolences.

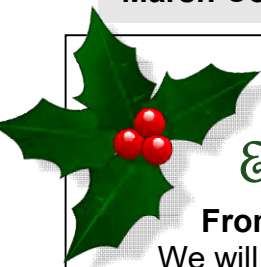
*"With fair weather assured every voyage.
No storms. No clouds in the sky.
And with calm blue waters to sail on.
And ever, bright stars to steer by."*

Richard John Scarr



What's Inside

Happenings at the Marsh.....	2
Collection Highlights.....	3
Upsetting the Hour Glass.....	4
Sandsuckers.....	5
Christmas Ads.....	6
Then & Now.....	7
Bricks-N-Beams.....	8




Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year

From the Marsh Collection Society

We will be closed beginning December 24th
& will reopen January 9th.

Happenings at the Marsh



**PRESENTATION &
BOOK
SIGNING**




Meet Reverend Gene Lotz
Author of *The Anguish of War*

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 17TH
10AM- 12 NOON**

THE MARSH COLLECTION SOCIETY
80 RICHMOND STREET, AMHERSTBURG

The Anguish of War is the result of two decades of in-depth research into the lives of many from Windsor and Essex County who "rallied to the colours."

2-VOLUME SETS AVAILABLE FOR \$40

What's In the Collection?

The Marsh Collection Society 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 & visitors from 10am to 4pm Monday- Friday.

Email: research@marshcollection.org

Website: www.marshcollection.org

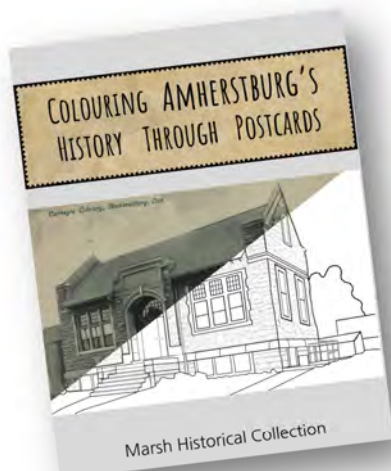


THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

If you enjoy reading our newsletter please consider making a donation through our website:
<https://www.marshcollection.org/donate/>



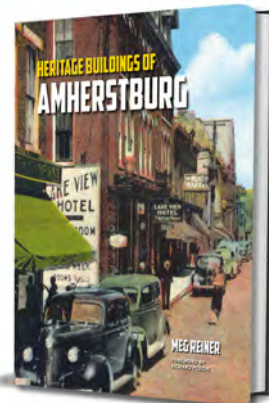
GIFT SHOP *Come & check out our selection of books, calendars, cards & prints*



Marsh Historical Collection
Colouring Books \$15



2023 Calendar \$20



Heritage Buildings of Amherstburg
available for purchase
across the street at the
River Bookshop.
A portion of each sale
goes to the
Marsh Collection!

Gifts for the local history enthusiast!

Collection Highlights

By Meg Reiner

Some of our local businesses used yardsticks for advertising. We have a few in the collection: Conklin Planing Mills, Wigle Hardware, Kendall Hardware, and Shillington Hardware. The yardstick we chose to feature in this article advertised Roy McKim & Son, Imperial Oil Agent, on Murray Street.

Roy G. McKim started out as a teamster for Imperial Oil in 1917. After only three months he was sent to open a plant in Amherstburg. He travelled between this town and Harrow with a 480-gallon tank loaded on either a wagon or sleigh, pulled by a team of horses. An article from *The Amherstburg Echo* on May 23, 1962, covered the history of Roy's career, and described his work day as follows:

"A work day, then, for Roy, started at 4 a.m., when he fed and harnessed the team. Then he

loaded the tank and by 5 a.m. he was on the road to Harrow, 17 miles away. Roy would deliver kerosene on the way to Harrow, stay there overnight, be up again at 4 a.m. the next morning, load his tank from storage there and then work his way back to Amherstburg."

After conducting business in this manner for three years, the company provided a truck in 1920. Roy was a successful businessman and salesman, consistently expanding his customer base. During prohibition, he witnessed an increase in Petroleum sales to motor boats on the Detroit River making three-hour trips to "Cuba." By the time of his retirement from the oil business in 1939, Roy was the supplier for 16 gas stations and 328 farmers. His son Ray took over the oil business at that time. Under the name Roy McKim & Son, advertisements for Imperial Oil Products, "Shur-Shok" Electric Fences and Lincoln Grease Guns were advertised

throughout the 1940s. In the winter of 1950, the oil agents encouraged customers to convert furnaces to automatic oil heating, as a way to achieve "June in January." according to the ad.

After passing the oil business on to his son, Roy became the Hudson Dealer for Amherstburg in 1940, making record sales the first year. After a short stint with Buicks and Pontiacs, he was appointed the sales representative for Ford in 1941, selling Ford and Mercury cars, Ford Trucks, and Ford Ferguson tractors. In 1943, Roy and Ray purchased a building on the south side of Murray Street and remodeled it into a showroom. They became the sales representatives for Chrysler-Dodge DeSoto. In 1945, a garage was built adjoining the showroom and the old Ed Grondin barber shop on the east side was demolished for a new and used car lot in 1957. The Roy McKim & Son showroom and garage still stands at 87 & 89 Murray Street.

Form S-207 Drivers must account for all Tickets
Spoiled Tickets and Duplicates MUST be returned with Daily Report.

TANK WAGON INVOICE

PURCHASER: *Amherstburg* *Mar 29 1923*

MESSES: *Imperial Oil Limited*

IMPERIAL OIL LIMITED

TERMS CASH

GALLONS	GOODS	PRICE	AMOUNT
80	ROYALITE OIL	81	1080
	SALES TAX 2490		24
	PREMIER MOTOR GASOLINE		1074

Pay Driver: *Roy G. McKim* Received Payment: *Roy G. McKim*

Preserve this Ticket for Comparison by our Salesman, this for your protection.

To avoid mistakes, see that you receive the quantity you pay for.

GASOLINE NOT SOLD FOR ILLUMINATING PURPOSES IN BUILDINGS.

BUSINESS SYSTEMS LIMITED, TORONTO

One invoice issued by the tank wagon driver, Roy G. McKim, for 5 gallons of Royalite Oil from Imperial Oil Ltd., in Amherstburg.

HERE'S WHY DODGE IS YOUR BEST TRUCK BUY!

- 12-volt electrical system! Higher motor of course.
- More forward vision! Biggest windshield.
- More powerful engine! 120-h.p. 8-cyl. 175-h.p. V-8 or 150-h.p. 6-cyl. G.V.W.
- More payload capacity! (Exceeds 10,000 lbs. in 9 feet long 1-ton model.)
- Greater handling ease! Shortest turning diameter.
- More modern styling! Means extra business.
- Low loading height! Body floor less than 2 feet from the ground on 1-ton models.
- Powerful automatic transmission! Available on all 1-ton models.
- Many models! From 1-ton to 60,000 lbs. G.V.W.
- Lower prices, too, too! Come in for a dollar-saving deal!

10 ways better...for your job...for your budget!

PRICED WITH THE LOWEST!

DODGE "Job-Rated" TRUCKS ... A TRUCK TO FIT EVERY HAULING NEED

ROY McKIM & SON Murray Street, Amherstburg, Ontario

The Amherstburg Echo March 8, 1956

A Worthy Cause

"Quite a number of old toys have been brought to the R.G. McKim and Son garage, Murray Street. These will be rebuilt and repainted and given to needy children at Christmas. If you have any old toys about your house please send them to the McKim Garage to help this worthy cause." - *The Amherstburg Echo* November 20, 1952

Upsetting the Hour Glass

1932/33

December- The Amherstburg Hydro Commission started putting up the colored strings of lights for Christmas decorations. Richmond and Dalhousie streets will be decorated with red and green lights.

January- Mr. Heslet, popular manager of the Bois Blanc dance hall has about decided on launching into a new venture, namely raising frogs, not those little frogs which we catch down in the creek, but those giant frogs that make excellent eating. Mr. Heslet is going to start in a small way with two pairs of frogs in a nine foot pond which he has built in his back yard.

February- Because of all the rain the country roads are breaking up quite badly, and it looks as if we were in for a season of hub-deep mud before spring.

1942/43

December- Private Roy Wigle - Official word was received by Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Wigle, Dalhousie Street South, that their eldest son, Private Roy Wigle, was killed in action at Dieppe on August 10.

January- Dances are held at the Stone School House on Pike Road every Wednesday night.

February- In order to avoid further confusion as to the proper name of the extension of Sandwich Street, the council on Monday evening passed a resolution that the Sandwich Street signs be removed and the street be known as Apsley Street.

1952/53

December- Money is being taken out of milk bottles in town and householders should be on the alert to aid police if possible, in rounding up the culprits.

January- Dick Golden found a small eight inch lamprey eel sticking to the wire at the Brunner Mond pump house on Monday. The lamprey has a large round sucker mouth and preys on fish.

February- Members of the different committees on the Musical Tea with fashions of the Canadian Women's League met at the home of Mrs. Caldwell Marontate on Thursday last with the merchants who are connected with the showing of the fashions.

1962/63

December- Something new has been added to the area this Christmas season, decorations - a lighted sign atop the high Brunner Mond Canada, Limited building with the word 'greetings' in many colored lights. The sign is on the west side of the building and is not only seen by people passing along the King's Highway #18 in the Anderdon Township but by the residents of Grosse Ile living along the East River Road.

January- The Verdi Club, Texas Road, is a very popular place this winter as the members have installed an open air rink alongside their club rooms.

February- 'Bee my Valentine' was the theme used by Otto Nissen, proprietor of the Seaway Cafe, Dalhousie Street, in the baking of



The Amherstburg Echo December 26, 1924

a valentine cake for members of the staff of C.K.L.W. TV. On the top of a large cake he built an edible bee hive around which bees were flying. The bees were provided by Jimmie Pouget.

1972/73

December- McQueen Marine Limited has been awarded the contract to place 1,500 tons of core stone on Peche Island. The wall will protect the buildings near the shore. The stone will be trucked from Amherst Quarries on the Pike Road, to the Thomas Inn wharf and taken over to the island on the McQueen Marine flat scow.

January- Several days last week a number of fishing enthusiasts cut holes in the ice near the shore, south of the Bob-Lo wharf, Callam's Bay, Malden.

February- The strong east winds last Wednesday caused the water levels to rise and this resulted in flooding along the Detroit River and Lake Erie. Serious flooding conditions were reported along the beaches. The water rose over the Amherst Fuel and Supply Dock, foot of Richmond and over Highway 18 at the River Canard.

Sandsuckers

With thanks to Al Jackson for his research on this topic.

Sandsuckers are marine vessels designed to collect sand from the lakes to be used for building material and in other industries. They have a bad reputation for the role they've played in depleting shorelines. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the effects of the sand harvest has been a major topic in newspapers. An article in *The Amherstburg Echo* in 1918 referred to the sandsuckers as "ancient enemies." While the main focus of headlines regarding the detrimental effects of sandsuckers has been centred on Point Pelee, this activity went on in Amherstburg too. Amherstburg's own prominent shoreline feature, Elliott's Point just south of town at Callam's Bay, was victim to sandsucking activity. Reports of the vessels called ELLA, WALTER D., MARY,

OHIO and C.H. Little taking material from the Elliott's Point/Patton's Beach area were often published in *The Amherstburg Echo*. Other private properties along the Malden Riverfront, including at Bar Point, were also tapped into.

The following appeared in *The Amherstburg Echo* April 29, 1910: "The absence of sandsuckers on the lower Detroit River this spring is noticeable. Usually at this time there are 4 to 6 plying their trade daily and the selling of sand has quite an industry to owners of Malden front property. The reason for their failure to come as usual is because the sand is practically all gone and the only one that put in an appearance this year had to depart empty handed. Building material is now being hauled from the shores of the St. Clair River and Lake Huron."

Despite the negative associations with sandsuckers, they are interesting machines. How exactly do they work? An article published in *The Telescope* in 1990 titled "Vacuuming the Lake Floors: Vessels That Mine Sand from Lake Bottoms" by Christine Rohn Hilston, sheds some light on the process. Sandsuckers are equipped with hoses that are lowered into the lake. Pumps use suction to pull sand and gravel from deposits on the lake bottoms. This material goes through a screen before being collected in the hull. Once full, the vessel delivers the material to its destination. Sand scows are also used in the collection of lake bottom material; they use cranes and clamshell buckets to dredge sand. Let's take a look at some of the sandsuckers that were familiar in this area.



Photo from the Al Jackson Photo Collection

The CHARLES DICK was built in 1922 at Collingwood and was owned by the National Sand & Material Co., Ltd. of Toronto for over half a century. In 1961, Jacobus Hanswyk, a member of the crew aboard the DICK, fell 26 feet into her hatch and was saved by the mound of sand that had been collected from Point Pelee. The DICK made for Amherstburg, where Dr. Hutchinson examined Jacobus, and found that he had no serious injuries.

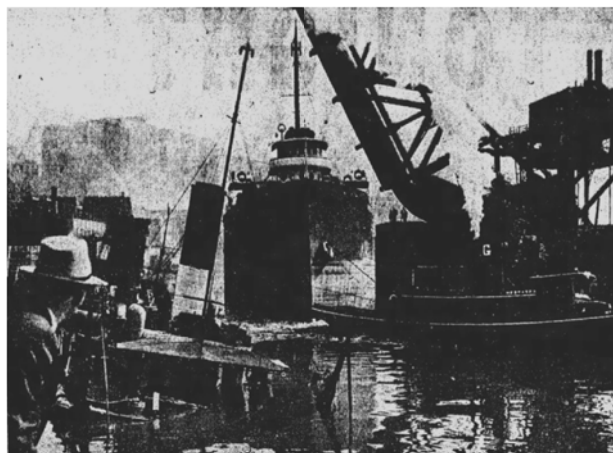
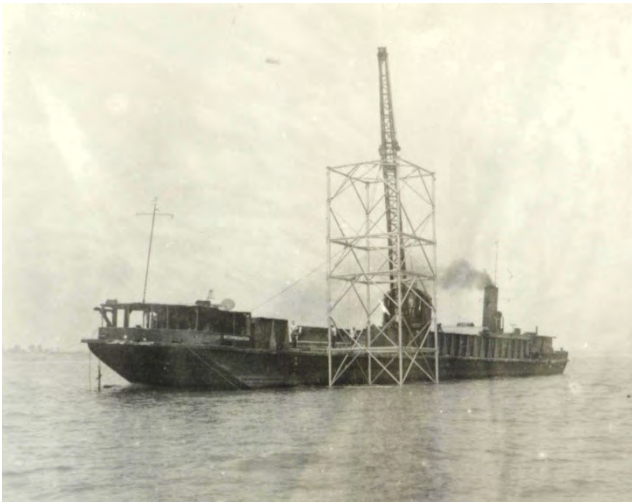


Photo from The Sandusky Register September 15, 1939.

The HYDRO was built in 1913 by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co. While owned by the Kelley Island Lime & Transportation Co. in 1939, the HYDRO sunk in the Cleveland Harbour, blocking all Cuyahoga River Traffic for seven days. McQueen Marine, of Amherstburg, was awarded the salvage contract. McQueen was able to raise the vessel in five days, despite the 26 days allotted in the contract. The company was commended for the record time in which the operation was completed.

Continued on page 6...



Marsh Collection Society P928

At least two of the vessels in McQueen Marine's fleet were once sandsuckers. The ACCOMODATION (pictured above), used as a salvage barge by McQueen Marine, was once a sandsucker called the VICTORIA, owned by Charles Grace of Sarnia. The sandsucker was purchased and renamed by McQueen in 1950. Another McQueen vessel, the AMHERST, was built in 1912 as a sandsucker for the Lake Sand Co. For more on the AMHERST see the Spring 2019 issue of our newsletter *Reflections*.



Parks Canada- Fort Malden NHS 1295

Sandsuckers were used for other purposes as well. The Mullen Coal Company used them as coal tenders. At one time, Mullen owned the COMMODORE JARVIS and later the H. HOUGHTEN (pictured above). Sandsuckers were also used in salvage operations, to lighter coal from the sunken vessels.

We are compiling a list of sandsuckers that operated in the area. If you have any to add, please let us know!

—PLACE YOUR—
New Year Order Early.

Holly Wreaths, Evergreen Wreathing and Branch Holly for decoration.

For the Children and the Table—
 Choice Naval Oranges, Malaga Grapes, Bananas, Layer Raisins, Figs, Dates, Almonds, Filberts, Walnuts, Brazil Nuts, Cream Almonds, Fine Caramels, Choice Mixed Candies, Bon Bons, Cream Chocolates, etc.

N.B.—Boiled Cider for Mince Pies, Fresh Oysters and Saurkraut.

Lovegrove & Scratch,
 Prompt Delivery. Successors to D. Trotter & Son.

The advertisement above was published in *The Amherstburg Echo* December 23, 1904.

Today, when we think of the 80s, we think of the 1980s, right? In 1934, it was the 1880s. See the clipping from the Echo at right to read about 'Christmas in the Eighties'.

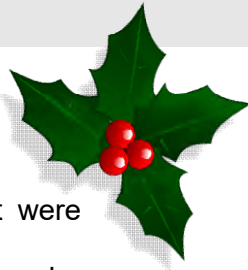
Christmas in the Eighties

A Wish for Christmas

A WAIT for a creaking board. Lights and music and song. Jest and story. Cheerful voices and wide-eyed children. Bright thoughts. Romance. Security and a contented heart. This is our Christmas wish for you, and to it we add the hope that 1935 will bring you opportunity to achieve and enjoy in no small measure.

The Amherstburg Echo

CHRISTMAS WISHES



Below is a selection Christmas 'wishes' that were featured in the *Echo* on December 22, 1933.

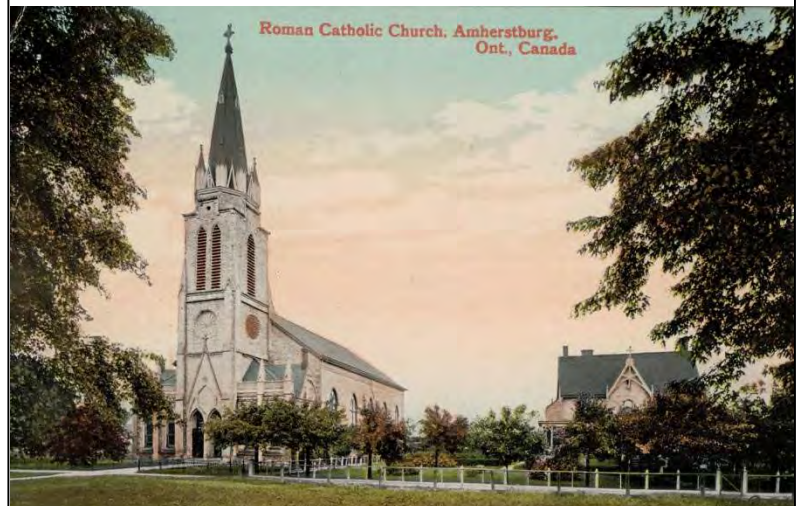
"Santa Claus let us have a peek at the letters he received from Amherstburg and here are some of the things that our local boys want in their stockings on Christmas morning:"

- Mayor Park – A bit of leisure time.
- A.W. McNally – A nice, new museum to house his relics.
- Lloyd Pettypiece – A team of husky dogs.
- Fred Nill – A perfect score in ten pins.
- Frank Falls – A stamp from one of Cleopatra's letters.
- Ben Shillington – A gun that will hit everything he aims at.
- Harry Bailey – A dahlia that will win prizes in every show he enters.
- Charlie Ayerst – A louder voice to use at ball games.
- George Jones – A successful year for the Rotary Club.
- Nick Marra – Plenty of dough.
- Constable Mulholland – Those chicken thieves.
- George Pettypiece – Another corn cob.
- Chief Timmis – Home runs for Mike and Bill with the bases full.
- E Gott – A secretary to write his letters for him.
- Major Balfour – A hockey team that can win a game.
- Earle Jones – A new seed catalogue.
- F.W. Haas – Longer nights in which to read.
- Rev. H.A. Wright – The return of his flock of chickens, both of which were stolen.
- Earl McQueen – A pipe that will stay lit.
- Captain Fred Simpson – 1929 crowds at Bob-Lo and a return to good health.
- Hunter Bernard – A dog, a dog, any kind of dog but a hot dog, Santa Claus.
- Ernest McGee – A rabbit's foot and a horse shoe.
- Carl Brandie – No more letters to Santa Claus.



The Amherstburg Echo
December 19, 1884

THEN & NOW



St. John the Baptist Church & Rectory, 1912.
MCS 2019.043.021



Present-day.

Bricks-N-Beams

By Meg Reiner

79-81 Murray Street

We've been getting a lot of questions about the building on the southeast corner of Murray and Ramsay, currently stripped of its modern siding. Long-time residents have shared their memories of the shops that occupied the space or those who lived there, and speculated about its age. History certainly repeats itself. In 1906, carpenters prepped the structure for new plate glass windows, and the following was printed in *The Amherstburg Echo*: "When the siding was taken off it was found that the building was built of logs. Old residents say it stood there for 80 years. The lath and nails are handmade and the timbers are as sound as the day they were placed there. No one so far remembers who was the first occupant."

An insurance application dates the structure to circa 1853. This estimation was provided by the owner, James Gott. Mr. Gott, who owned this property since 1843, is associated with some significant events in the town's history. According to his obituary, James Gott came to Amherstburg with the 34th Regiment in 1838, and served in the Rebellion in charge of a volunteer company. Afterwards, he became a shoemaker. Aside from serving as a town councillor, Mr. Gott is also remembered as one of the founders of Thistle Lodge (first Junior Warden). At the time that the insurance application was made in 1883, the building was being used as a combined milliner shop and dwelling, rented by James McGuire.

Alexander and George Park, brothers of Mayor William Fred Park, purchased the property and remodeled the building into a drug store in 1914. George died four years later, and Alexander continued the business as a notion store. That year, he had a cellar dug, built an addition to the structure, and installed a hot water heating system in the portion where he lived.

The Brewer's Warehouse set up shop in the corner building for six years. In 1934, it was announced that, "to eliminate beer-by-the-glass sales in bootlegging joints," keg beer and ale were no longer to be sold to individuals; only bottled beer would be available. Hotels were still able to purchase kegs. That same year, the warehouse moved to the building on the northeast corner of Dalhousie and Murray (now the Artisan Grill).

To be continued in our next issue...



Above: Present-day



Left: A fire plan from 1906 shows that the building was used as a harness shop. Thomas F. Tomlinson ran his business here for a number of years.

Below: Annie (Finlay) Nattress on Ramsay Street, 1918. 79-81 Murray is the building on the right.

