

Please  
take  
one!

# Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection  
Amherstburg, Ontario



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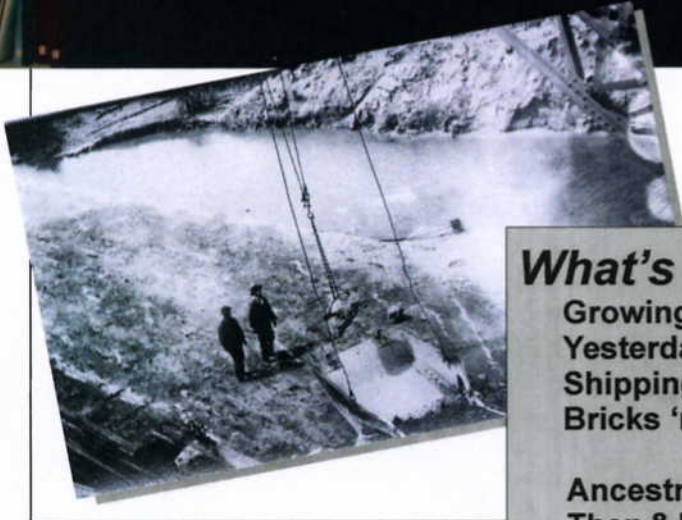
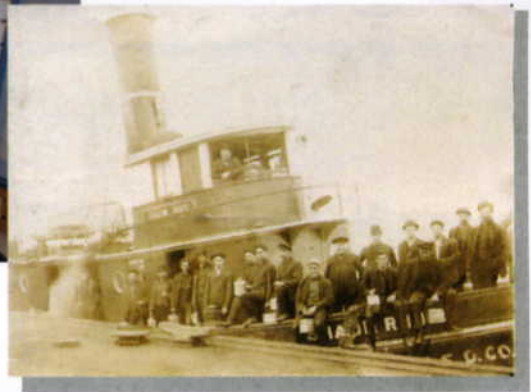
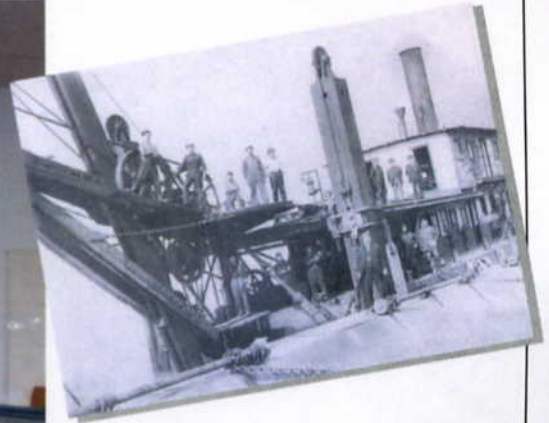
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## \$10 Million Ditch

### Building the Livingstone Channel

A timeline commemorating the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Livingstone Channel, opened October 19, 1912

235 Dalhousie Street (upstairs) • Open Tuesday to Friday 10am to 4pm • Free admission



#### What's inside...

Growing Up in the 'Burg.....	pg. 2
Yesterday's News.....	pg. 3
Shipping the Detroit - <i>Good to Be Home</i> .....	pg. 4
Bricks 'n' Beams - 1927: <i>Happy Days Are Here Again</i> .....	pg. 5
Ancestral Lines- <i>The Noted Sadler Family of...?</i> .....	pg. 6
Then & Now - <i>West Town Park</i> .....	pg. 8

# Growing Up in the 'Burg

## Missing Person

by anonymous

I'm not sure of the exact date, but I do know it was in the latter part of the 1940s. I was just getting started in school at St. Anthony's, now the House of Shalom. We quickly learned that our favourite part of school was just before class, recess, lunch, recess and dismissal for the day. New friends were made at every turn and as school was some distance from home, this meant, at least to me, new avenues for exploring and adventure. The area behind St. Anthony's at the time was certainly not like it is today. Then it was nothing but empty fields, an abandoned house and a large ditch that ran next to a dirt path that today is called Kempt Street.

This next part I mention here because it plays an important part in the rest of this narrative. While in class, the first subject every day was Religion, and I remember the dear nuns drilling into our young heads the necessity for prayer. Prayer, they said, would take care of everything, and we believed them. Some of us more than others. Now back to the story.

It was a beautiful fall day and at the afternoon recess my new friend Larry and I decided to do some exploring near the ditch next to the bone-dry grass-filled field. One of us had some matches and we decided to see just how dry the grass was. Suffice it to say that it was drier than we had thought, and it didn't take long for the field to catch on fire. Naturally when this happened we both took off in different directions and I remember the Fire Department showing up quickly and putting out the flames before any major damage could occur.

The school bell rang for us to return from recess and when everyone had settled, one seat was empty. It was Larry's, and no one had seen him since the excitement. A search was quickly started with the students from the senior grades being the searchers. They checked the fields and everywhere else they could think of, to no avail. Everyone was wondering what our next step would be when suddenly the priest showed up with Larry. He had found him in church on his knees at the front altar, praying his heart out for the fire to be extinguished.

Whether it was the prayers that did it, I don't know. What I do know is that it firmly cemented in my mind that prayers will help everything, and even more so if you don't play with matches.

## The Double-ENDER

by River Rat

This boat story is about an old lifeboat that a neighbour's dad brought home from McQueen Marine. It was in pretty sad shape, as it had been caught between a couple of scows or barges and "sandwiched". The result was a lot of cracked ribs and shattered planks, but it was a real prize as far as we were concerned. The old grey paint was peeling, the ribs were cracked and there were numerous splits in the planking, but we knew we could patch the old girl and give her a fresh coat of paint.

Work was started by fabricating wooden blocks roughly 4 x 4 x 1" to cover the cracks in the planking, and with a mixture of white lead and putty smeared on one side, the blocks were placed face down between the ribs and secured in place with brass screws. After that we busied ourselves scraping and sanding the old paint in readiness for a fresh coat of McQueen Marine dark green and black paint. The outcome was better than we expected. She (almost) gleamed. It now came time to launch and I can't remember how we got her down to the river, but we did, and after tying a couple of lines on the boat it was pushed out into the water and then secured to the dock. It didn't take long before we could see the water seeping through the seams in the hull. The poor old thing had been out of the water for so long, it had dried out and needed time in the water to enable it to swell (take up) and close those smaller cracks in the hull, ones we either missed or couldn't see. Even our paint could not keep the Detroit River from invading our craft.

Our next job descriptions changed from "repairmen" to "watcher" and "bailer" so she didn't fill up and sink, and after about a week or so the leaks stopped, more or less. The boat, as I mentioned, was an old lifeboat and was fitted with two pair of oarlocks, so our new task was to secure a couple pairs of oars and back in those days there were numerous boats which were powered by oars, so procuring these was no problem - borrowed, of course, with the owner's permission. After our initial "shakedown cruise" we set to perfecting our rowing skills with two pairs of oars, and in no time we were a real team and making waves on Callam's Bay. My memory fails me again and I

## Where to find us

The Marsh Collection is located at 235 Dalhousie Street on the upper floor.

We are open Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 4pm.

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*If you enjoy Reflections, please let us know! We welcome your comments. Reflections is also available by e-mail - please contact us for details.*

## What is the Marsh Collection?

The Marsh Historical Collection is a local history/genealogy centre located in the heart of Amherstburg. Researchers, genealogists and history buffs utilize our information files, books, photographs, maps, genealogy files and other items. Even if you have no specific research purpose, come in to see our exhibits on Detroit River history and other aspects of Amherstburg's rich heritage. We also produce and sell a variety of local history publications and notecards.

The Marsh Collection takes its name from its founders, the Marsh family, who owned and operated the *Amherstburg Echo* for over 80 years.

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can't recall when we received permission to leave the confines of the bay and venture further out and away. I do recall rowing over to this side of Bob-Lo where large willow trees had grown out over the water, and in the shelter of the little bay we could nudge the boat up into a spot under cover of the branches, tie up and go exploring, over to the old blockhouse and the lighthouse.

*continued on page 4*

# Yesterday's News

from the archives of the *Amherstburg Echo*

## 1882

*June* - Tenders are being received for the construction of a hose tower at the town hall.

*July* - Amherstburg barbers agreed to close their shops at 8:30 each evening except Saturday during the summer months.

## 1892

*July* - The steamer *Labelle* has been seen dumping Detroit garbage in the Canadian channel at Turkey Island. Riverfront residents of Anderdon and Malden are complaining of the floating refuse and foul smells.

- The new organ for St. Andrew's Church, a Mozart Grand, has arrived.

*August* - Dedication of the new Methodist church in Malden will take place Sunday.

## 1902

*June* - The pastor of First Baptist Church has moved into the new parsonage adjoining the church on George Street.

- A petition is circulating asking Town Council to support a brass band.

- A by-law to grant aid to the S.W. & A. Electric Railway has been passed. This will induce S.W. & A. to extend their railway to Amherstburg.

*July* - The *Echo* has published a special Coronation issue on pink paper.

- The new D.B.I. & W. Ferry Co. steamer *Columbia* has made her first public trip.

## 1912

*June* - Machinery for the Lewitt Knitting Co. has arrived.

*July* - The new school for S.S. #11, Anderdon, is completed. [It is now a private residence on the west side of Concession 5 North, south of Middle Sideroad.] (See photo at right.)

- The first auto turned out by the Two-in-One Auto Co. is being tested this week.

*August* - The building of the new

canning factory at River Canard will be celebrated with a social dance on its new floor.

- The new Westcott Marine Reporting Agency at the Livingstone Channel is ready for operation.

- Work will soon start on the new church at River Canard.

## 1922

*July* - The D. & W. Ferry Co. is planning to build a new women's cottage, four large lavatories and a new wharf on Bob-Lo at the end of this season.

*August* - Dodge Brothers, auto manufacturers of Detroit, purchased a large factory site in Windsor and will erect a plant there.

## 1932

*June* - A.K. Duff has re-opened his restaurant above the Bank of Commerce.

*August* - Harry Wood is building a new frame store on the east side of Sandwich Street on property purchased from Wm. Haynes [now Maria's Restaurant].

- A memorial will be erected on the Mickle farm, riverfront, Malden, in honour of Simon Girty.

## 1942

*June* - Council has passed a by-law prohibiting use of bicycles on sidewalks.

*July* - Helen Marsh has resigned from the staff of Amherstburg Public



S.S. #11, as it appeared in 1942.

Marsh Collection P93

School to join the news staff at the *Echo*.

## 1952

*June* - The Women's Auxiliary of the Fort Malden Branch Royal Canadian Legion has received its charter.

*July* - Good progress is being made on the new Anderdon Central School.

- A service station will be built on the northeast corner of Alma and Sandwich Streets.

## 1962

*June* - The official opening of Ukrainian Village apartments will take place June 3rd.

- The federal plaque to mark historic Bellevue has been unveiled.

- A small boat ramp has been installed at the foot of Gore Street.

*July* - Wesley United Church has purchased 4 acres from the James Flynn estate on which to construct a new church.

*August* - Richard D. Thrasher has been appointed special assistant to P.M. Diefenbaker.

- The AAM First Aid Squad will hold an open house at their new quarters, northwest corner of Sandwich and Rankin.

## 1972

*June* - A 2-storey motel will be built at the northwest corner of Dalhousie and Gore by Zarko Vucinic.

- The old building in the west town park, originally built for the Amherstburg Lawn Bowling Club, will be moved to Sandwich Street near Pickering to be used as a real estate office.

- The new wading pool in the town park is ready. This replaces the one donated in 1928 by Malcolm McGregor.

## 1982

*August* - The Town of Amherstburg has a new official crest.

- The Verdi Club has increased its seating capacity to 550.

