

# ARGONAUTA

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## **ARGONAUTA**

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### Editorial

The examiner of Masters and Mates after steadily increasing the wind velocity became exasperated. The student, confronted by a ruddy faced interlocutor did as best he could with these much feared orals by telling the examiner that he would simply put out more anchors to hold his imaginary ship in place. "Where are you getting all those anchors?" The student, trapped but still full of self confidence said, "the same place you are getting all that wind - Sir."

Well - the wind is holding steady but we have lost one of our anchors. Mike Hennessy has resigned as an editor of *Argonauta* due to a promotion and with that, increased responsibility at the Royal Military College. That leaves me, and, with what looks like a

large museum project on the horizon.

This then is a call for help. We need volunteers to share the duties of getting *Argonauta* to press. The work is fun, it is interesting and worth doing.

Many hands make light work.

### Letter to the Editor

Alan Ruffman's article on the Saxby tide and Gale in your April issue deserves some clarification., it refers to the storm predicted by Saxby as an "equinoctial gale," usually meaning the sun being over the earth's equator. Saxby's letters to the Standard of London made it evident that his technique was based on lunar and not solar phenomena.

The technique is described in detail, itself unusual for progenitors of astronomical weather prediction techniques, in

his book Saxby's *Weather System, or Lunar Influence on Weather* published in 1864 in London. In the book he claims that: "when the lunar equinox or stitial colure (moon over the equator or the northern or southern extremes of its orbit) occurs at the same period as the new moon in perigee, the greatest atmospheric disturbances to which our earth is liable may then be expected with certainty of fulfillment."

All three events happened within a few hours of each other on October 5, 1869. Saxby's prediction was criticized because he didn't give a location for the storm. You can always find a storm happening somewhere, as can easily be seen by looking at a current global composite satellite image. Its unlikely Saxby's prediction would have received much attention in New Brunswick had it not been for the efforts of Frederick Allison, an amateur meteorologist and later official meteorological agent in Halifax.

Despite the formation of Canada's Weather Service in 1871 official storm warnings were so lacking for several years that astronomy-based warnings still prospered. Saxby's method was adopted with modification by E. Stone Wiggins. As detailed in my articles in the June 1999 issue of the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society journal, "CMOS bulletin SCMO", Wiggins was an eccentric Ottawa-based New Brunswicker who predicted a major storm for March 11, 1883. A rather

unremarkable storm, and high perigean tides, did occur. In an interesting coincidence it was also the day of Saxby's death.

John D. Reid,  
Scientist emeritus,  
Environment Canada.  
Jedr@intranet.ca.

## Comment

### The Canadian Calendar of Maritime Anniversaries

*Ed. As Bill Glover had hoped, a number of members have made passing comment while another has put opinion to print. This is from long time CNRS contributor Dan Harris.*

Your project is a brave one indeed! I expect that you will have difficulty keeping it from becoming encyclopedic in size. I do have one suggested addition, namely February 1, 1968, which was the day that the infamous Unification legislation came into force, killing the existing RCN, Canadian Army, and RCAF. Today it is curious that everyone talks about the Navy, Army etc but in law there are no such entities in this country.

And I do have a couple of quibbles:

Quibble 1. February 22, 1942 RMS *Queen Elizabeth* at Esquimalt: ships with contracts to carry the Royal Mails rate the RMS (Royal Mail Ship). *Queen Elizabeth* did not enter commercial service until after the war so was not yet an RMS. I think the entry should be simply

"SS". The Queens were not taken over by the Navy but were operated by Cunard with their civilian crews for the Government during the war, so perhaps she could be an HMT (HM Transport), but I am not sure on that point.

Quibble 2. June 26, 1959 the opening of the Seaway: the Seaway was opened by the heads of State of Canada and the US, namely HM The Queen and President Eisenhower. I suggest that the entry should read "...by HM Queen Elizabeth and President Eisenhower, accompanied by Prime Minister Diefenbaker.

## Museum & Institutional News

### Maritime Museum of British Columbia

The maritime Museum of British Columbia, housed in the province's original courthouse in Bastion Square, Victoria, began the last year of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a fresh portrayal of Pacific maritime history. Part of a million-dollar museum renovation, the main-floor gallery now walks visitors through three hundred years of exploration, maritime commerce and adventure.

The nineteenth century vice-admiralty courtroom, which may optionally be accessed via a 100 year old "bird cage" elevator, has proven to be more than an historic artifact. While the courtroom offers visitors films with historic nautical themes, its oak, etched glass and red plush

ambiance lends a unique atmosphere to modern court hearing when it is rented because of their own limited space by the BC law courts.

Highlight of the 1999s special exhibits is an overview of charting the Pacific and voyages of discovery which runs until November 26. The exhibit, which will include Captain James Cook's voyages, complements the visit to Victoria in August of the Australian built replica of the *Endeavor*. The maritime museum is designated as co-host to the *Endeavour* during her visit.

### HMCS Haida

The Royal Canadian Navy Historical Society have obtained a new radar antenna for the *Haida* in Toronto. The SPS antenna was secured from the Artificial Reef Society of British Columbia after being removed from HMCS *Yukon*. This antenna will closely replicate the SPS 6 antenna carried by *Haida* during it's post-war service in the Canadian Navy.

### Marine Museum of the Great Lakes

The **Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Centre**, a project of the **Marine Museum of the Great Lakes** now has over \$340,000.00 on hand or pledged this about 1/3 of the phase 1 budget. The official start of the project will depend on a decision of the Millennium Bureau this September. The Caisson was recently inspected and found to be structurally sound. The 109

year old gate is now in the Metalcraft Marine drydock, Kingston undergoing 'treatment' and will be returned to the marine museum by late summer. A trail pump-down of the 1889 drydock is expected this fall followed in the spring, 2000 by the docking of the museum ship *Alexander Henry*.

### The National Museum of Science and Technology

Work is now underway at the museum on a new exhibit on the Canadian Canoe, slated to open in June of 2000. Following its stay in Ottawa, the exhibit is intended to travel.

### Yarmouth County Museum

The Phase 1 expansion of the museum is expected to be completed in late September. This expansion will make many needed improvements including increased protection and storage of the museums outstanding collection of ship portraits.

*Sampson - The Titanic's Mystery Ship - The Yarmouth Connection* by E.M. (Susie) Sweeney was published to accompany an exhibition produced by the museum with the assistance of Canada/Nova Scotia Cooperation Agreement on Economic Diversification. The exhibit shows Yarmouth's connection with the *Titanic* disaster and the Norwegian sealing vessel *Samson* which was lost off Yarmouth in 1952 as the *City of New York*. You can order the book by writing the museum at 22 Collins Street, Yarmouth, NS, B5A 3C8,

\$10.00 plus \$5.00 postage and handling.

### The Greenwich Maritime Institute

The Institute is a new established research and postgraduate centre, free-standing within the University of Greenwich. The first two postgraduate courses to be offered are a MA in Maritime History and a MA in Maritime Policy, each one year full-time or two years part-time with a required 20,000 word supervised research dissertation. More information can be found at **PORT**, <http://www.port.nmm.ac.uk>.

### People

**Barry Gough** is in the final stages of completing his book, *Fighting Sail on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay: 1812 and After* which includes discussion of the United States Navy on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay in 1814, and the history of the Penetanguishine naval base. At Wilfrid Laurier University his two undergraduate naval history courses, *Sea Power to 1906*, (the *Dreadnought*) and *Sea Power since 1906* remain popular. He also teaches a MA course in Naval and International History and continues as the editor-in-chief of *The American Neptune History & Arts*, now in its 59<sup>th</sup> year.

The reorganization of the Maritime Museum of British Columbia earlier this year brought **Yvonne Sharpe**, an experienced Victoria businesswomen on board as

Executive Director. Former director **Guy Mathias** had requested the reorganization to allow him to focus on collections, exhibitions and programmes. At the recent annual meeting of the Canadian Museums Association, he received an Honourable Mention for outstanding achievement in museum management.

**Fraser McKee** is now finishing a naval novel about the Naval Reserve 'Gate Vessel' in the high Arctic. Fraser says it is proving to be much more difficult than writing RCN history! He and Captain Darlington's the *Canadian Naval Chronicle* has been reprinted in an updated and corrected softcover 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.

And from **Keith Angus** commenting on **Fraser McKee's** review of *Flag 4: The Battle of Coastal Forces in the Mediterranean 1939-45* in the January **Northern Mariner** - "unmentioned was **Gordon W. Stead**, whose book *A Leaf Upon the Sea* describes those times. Stead was a RCNVR lieutenant who commanded ML 126 based in Malta during the bad times. Of seven MLs to leave Britain for Malta during 1941 his was the only one to make it. Stead won a DSC and Bar and after the war set up the Canadian Coast Guard.

**Andrew Lambert** has been appointed Professor of Naval History at King's College, London with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1999. His has recently had published *The Foundations of Naval History*:

*John Laughton, the Royal Navy and the Historical Profession*, Chatham Publishing, 1998.

New Interpretations in Naval History, Selected Papers from the Thirteenth Naval History Symposium held at Annapolis in October 1997 is now available published by the Naval Institute Press. Included is a paper by **James Pritchard**, *The Franco-Dutch War in the West Indies, 1672-1678: An Early "Lesson" in Imperial Defense*.

At the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association in Sherebrooke, Quebec, **Garth Wilson**, Curator of Marine Transportation, chaired a session entitled:

*Interpreting History Through Objects: The Contribution of Maritime Archaeology*. Three other papers of maritime interest were presented; *Renaissance Ship Design and Forests: Material and Written Knowledge* by Brad Loewen; *Underwater Archaeology's contribution to History: The Example of the Anse aux Bouleaux Shipwreck* by Marc Andre Bernier and by Charles Moor, *The Fisherman's Wake: Small Craft Studies and History*.

### Web Site News

The **British Columbia Maritime Museum** web site at <http://mmbc.bc.ca> is providing more content to visitors, particularly to educators. It has a strong link to the school system through Canada's SchoolNet. The Museum has an extensive library and archive holdings that offers the researcher a vast

amount of resources that includes an online data base of ships drawings.

You can get information about the **The Marine Heritage Committee** based in Southampton, Ontario and their project to restore the **Chantry Island Lighthouse Keeper's Quarters** at [http://www.bmts.com/chantry\\_island](http://www.bmts.com/chantry_island).

The **National Maritime Museum at Greenwich** has mounted a new web site directed primarily to the researcher. **Port** is a gateway to maritime information on the internet with information and links to societies, courses, discussion lists, and museums. A feature of particular interest are the Research Guides that include the Royal Navy, the Merchant Navy, World Wars One and Two, Shipping Companies, passengers, Lloyds and whaling. Although the emphasis is on the collections at the National Maritime Museum and other UK resources there are many international links including a very generous description of MarHst-L the Canadian based international maritime history discussion list. Port can be found at <http://www.port.nmm.ac.uk>.

And from Murray Lundberg . "**Is Industrial Archaeology just a fancy name for junk?** There are a lot of people who should know better who apparently think so. "Two years ago I was able to identify the last remains of a 50-

foot steel-hulled sternwheeler that was carried across the Chilkoot Pass into the Yukon over the winter of 1898-1899. There wasn't a lot left of the *F. H. Kilbourne*, but I told the Heritage Branch, and explained that there was enough to let people know how determined the pioneers of Alaska and the Yukon were. The wreckage was cut up into little pieces and taken to the garbage dump on a government project.

I'm now trying to make sure this doesn't happen with some of our other industrial artifacts. I spent over 4 hours with a CBC film crew. The footage was aired on CBC North's program "Northbeat". I have much more information, including photos of the *F. H. Kilbourne*, on my Web site at <http://arcticculture.about.com/> "

Thoroughly up to date The **Northern Mariner** has a new web page where you will find links to a complete index of the Mariner and a 'team' photo of the Editors, Lewis R. Fischer, Olaf U. Janzen and Managing Editor, Margaret M. Gulliver - all at <http://www.mun.ca/mhp/northmar.htm>

### \$1.3 Million for Sunken Ships

The federal government has provided matching funds to the City of Hamilton to preserve and promote two 19<sup>th</sup> century warships at the bottom of Lake Ontario near Port Dalhousie. This project was announced by Minister Shiela Copps will not in

itself raise the two ships from where they lie in 91 meters of water. The three year project which includes two planned dives will develop archaeological, conservation and research strategies. When questioned, federal officials could not identify which programme the money came from.

The two merchant ships were converted to US Naval use in the War of 1812. They sank in a squall, August 6, 1813 killing 53 sailors, the greatest single loss of life on the Great Lakes during the war. The well preserved ships offer a rare opportunity to understand a type of merchant vessel common on the Lakes during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Nautical Nostalgia by William Glover

You will probably read this near the end of the summer - a summer that may have included travel to visit friend and family. Most of us drive on those sorts of summer holidays, unless distance is just too great, in which case we fly. Not many of take a ship or ferry somewhere. With the fixed link to PEI, drivers are now compelled to take a ferry notably to get to Newfoundland, as some may have done for the CNRS conference at Cornerbrook, or to Vancouver Island. But of course at one time a ship, be it a ferry, a river paddlwheeler or a coastal steamer offered the comfortable and luxurious portion of an otherwise arduous and dirty journey.

The importance of river communication on the prairie, as used for example by the Hudson's Bay Company, or to move soldiers west to counter the 1885 Riel Rebellion, is now forgotten. Robert Turner, in an excellent series of beautifully illustrated books, has shown how in British Columbia the railways used inland lake and river service to complete rail routes before track could be laid on precipitous slopes by the water. In this column I would like to highlight two men who instrumental in establishing that essential shipping service - John Irving and James Troup.

These men were not only close contemporaries but knew each other and had interconnected careers. As Irving was born a year earlier, and left shipping first, let us begin with him. Described as an "outstanding pioneer of transportation" in British Columbia, he was the son of Captain William Irving, a prominent steamship captain and owner of the Pioneer Line of Fraser River steamers. Irving was born in Portland, Oregon, on 24 November 1854. His father, an Englishman, moved the family to New Westminster in 1862. Irving started in the steamboat business when he was 16. His father died suddenly and he inherited the Pioneer Line when he was only 18 years old. The next year, 1873, he took his first command on a return trip up the Fraser to Yale. So began his own flamboyant days as a ship's captain. Ten years later, with the support of some prominent BC business men and financiers, he helped form the Canadian

Pacific Navigation Company through a merger of the Hudson's Bay company fleet of coastal steamers and his own Pioneer Line. Irving became the general manager of what was the first big shipping company on the coast, with a capital of \$500,000. He supervised construction of the *Islander*, the first modern screw steamer built for the coast trade by the CPN at Glasgow, Scotland, in 1888. When she was delivered to the west coast, John T. Walbran, another sailor to become a prominent and colourful figure in BC shipping and author of *British Columbian Coast Names*, (still in print) sailed in her as the first officer. In 1889, while retaining his interest in the CPN, Irving was one of the original investors in the Columbian & Kootenay Steam Navigation company. This provided a much needed transportation service in the interior on the rivers and lakes. The C&KSN was bought out by the Canadian Pacific Railway on 1 February 1897. They wanted to integrate the inland service with their burgeoning railway schedule. In 1901 the CPR also bought Irving's first company, the CPN, to create their famous coastal and passenger service. In addition to all this, Irving had been elected in 1894 to the provincial Legislative Assembly for Cassiar in northern BC, and served as an MLA until he was defeated in 1907. He died in Vancouver on 10 August 1935. James Troup was also born in Portland Oregon. At the age of 19 he became river boat captain. In 1883 he began working for

Irving in the Pioneer Line on the Fraser River and Kamloops Lake. However, he returned, briefly, to the United States to be the Superintendent of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. In 1892 he came back to Canada permanently to manage the Columbian & Kootenay Steam Navigation Company. He proved himself to be an "experienced captain, talented designer and good administrator." When the CPR bought the company he remained as their superintendent of the Lake and River Service. Following the CPR purchase of Irving's other shipping concern, the CPR. Troup moved to Victoria as the manager. The CPR was the first operated as a separate division, but in due course it was renamed the British Columbian Coast Steamship Service. Troup held the post of superintendent until he retired in 1928. As a ship designer "his career was highlighted by a succession of ships that demonstrated his instinctive ability to understand the qualities needed in steamships to best capitalize on traffic conditions. His vessel designs tended towards the fast and elegant although there were of course some utilitarian exceptions. They also developed reputations for good, reliable performance and long service lives."

Robert Turner has said of Troup that "he left an indelible mark on the history of North Pacific shipping and was, more than any other individual, responsible for the success of the CPR's fleet of

Princess steamers." Troup died on 30 November, 1931.

The CPR coastal and ferry service on the BC coast continued in operation until the summer of 1958 - the summer of the BC centennial. Strikes hit both the CPR and its competitor, the Black Ball line. In response, Premier W.A.C. Bennett moved to establish the provincially owned ferry service. If you crossed between Vancouver Island and the mainland this summer, you almost certainly were on board a BC ferry - in a sense a successor of the companies established and operated by John Irving and James Troup.

## The Maple Leaf

**A report from CNRS Member,  
Peter G. Sunderlund based in  
Virginia.**

The shipwrecked *Maple Leaf* lies under 20 feet of water twelve miles south of Jacksonville, Florida where it has been since April 1, 1864 when it was struck by a submerged Confederate mine. The seventy calvarymen and their horses which the *Maple Leaf* had transported to Palatka has safely disembarked before the last leg of the trip.

Before the war the ship served as a 500 ton luxury steamer carrying passengers on Lake Ontario. It was converted in 1862 to a transport ship and leased to the Union. Discovered in 1984 the ship has since received Florida state preservation grants and been the subject of extensive archaeological investigation by the maritime History and

Nautical Archaeology program at East Carolina University and the United States Military History Institute.

*Editors note: this vessel was built at Kingston Ontario, outside my office window. M Smith.*

## Ships' Boats to Lifeboats & a Canadian Experience

**Maurice D. Smith**

*This paper was first presented to The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, Eastern Canadian Section at a Meeting in Kingston, at the Royal Military College, Saturday, June 5, 1999. Adapted, it is presented here, warts and all for discussion and critical comment.*

### Introduction

Preserving the lives of mariners, passengers and expensive ships was a battle fought on many fronts. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century this battle to save lives was conducted by those in direct communion with the sea and by surrogate forces - those not directly involved in shipping and shipbuilding. Legislators were confronted by ship owners and sailors, government agencies and not the least, the relatives of the lost. The result was a potent emotional brew conducted with missionary zeal that took many years to resolve. In this short paper I will review the



emergence of the lifeboat on seagoing ships and ashore and then focus on one political battle conducted in our nations capital that saw a result on Lake Ontario.<sup>1</sup>

The shipping industry was virtually unregulated until the great Imperial Shipping act of 1854 passed by the British parliament. Boiler inspection regulations in the colonies were in effect by the 1840s but were poorly enforced and there were the inevitable jurisdictional disputes and suspicions of irregularities. Ships were not required to carry lights at night in Canada until 1837 and red and green side lights were not required until 1851. The the steering rules that defined right of way, only applied to Upper Canada. The first Canadian Steamboat Act was passed in 1868 with Samuel Risely appointed as a Canadian inspector. Not until 1882 was an act passed dealing with the number of passengers carried, hull and equipment inspections.<sup>2</sup> Although the

great British activist, Samuel Plimsoll had some success in having load line regulations passed in 1876, they were voluntary on the part of the shipowner. It was not until 1891 that rules for putting load lines on Canadian vessels was passed. From an historical point of view, regulated safety at sea is a recent phenomenon.<sup>3</sup>

### Early Sailing Ships

Early sailing ships carried ships' boats that in extremis, became lifeboats. Ships boats were wood, clinker or carvel built - the planks overlapping in the former and edge to edge in the latter. The primary function of these boats was to transport crew and goods, usually under oars while the mothership was anchored. While there are many remarkable long distance passages recorded for ships boats, the best known by Captain Bligh, they were in general, not suited for extended work heavily laden with crew in heavy seas.

The model for the ships boat evolved from specialized inshore craft that were adapted for use aboard ship. Terms such as gig, skiff,

longboat, whaleboat, jollyboat, yawlboat and ships boat - the initial hull form these boats took was determined by their regional points of origin. Typical sources of designs included small fishing communities that used boats that emphasized capacity rather than clean lines. The inshore fishery depended on capacity rather than speed. At the other end of the scale are whaleboats, initially shore based that had high length to beam ratios and very fine lines.<sup>4</sup> Shore based whaling depended on a quick launch, getting to the prey fast, making the kill and then returning to a convenient beach quickly with the whale. In general, this type of boat was not suited to the utilitarian tasks performed by a typical ships boat. These tasks included taking barrels ashore for the transport of water back to the ship, taking soundings in unfamiliar waters, carrying anchors for the purpose of kedging and

<sup>1</sup> My thanks to Ken McLeod whose article provided the impetus to proceed with this paper. Ken McLeod, *The Canadian Great Lakes Lifesaving Service, FreshWater, A Journal of Great Lakes Marine History*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Summer 1998. Marine Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston.

<sup>2</sup> *Usque Ad Mare, A History of the Canadian Coast Guard and Marine Services*, Thomas E. Appleton,

Department of Transport, Ottawa, 1968

<sup>3</sup> Steamboat Inspection on the Great Lakes, chapter 6, an unpublished manuscript, Walter Lewis. The opportunity to read this chapter is appreciated.

<sup>4</sup> For a good discussion of the various factors affecting boat design see Eric McKee, *Working boats of Britain*, Conway Maritime Press in Association with the National Maritime Museum, London, 1983. For the Canadian context some very useful work has been undertaken by the National Museum of Science and Technology. There is a growing body of literature of this subject, some of it from those engaged in experimental archaeology.

the ever familiar business of moving ships officers to their pleasure. Ships boats came in many shapes and sizes but they all needed to be stowed safely on deck to protect them from heavy seas and thus deck space was a prime determinant.

The decks of commercial sailing and naval vessels were crowded with gear needed to operate the ship and handle cargo. In most sailing vessels there was a forecabin and poop and in between the main deck. As a result boats were usually stowed inboard on skids or on booms in the amidships area. The lifeboat on davits configuration, typical of present day passenger ships was not possible in sail. There were exceptions to this, the whaling ship being the most common example, but that very limited. Coastal sailing vessels typically carried a small boat in davits across the stern or they towed a small boat. The shipowners were right when they declared there was little room in their sailing ships for extra boats. The sheets that controlled sails and the large number of tackles that made up braces for swinging yards required a free run and space on deck for the crew to work the gear. Too much gear on deck interfered with hatches. The use of lifeboats aboard sailing ships is a non-starter and was

only resolved with the development of the inflatable liferaft.<sup>5</sup>

### Evolution

Ships' boats evolved into the lifeboat. As in modern Darwinian theory, there was a state of stasis with small scale development and then sudden and accelerated changes.<sup>6</sup> This was brought on by legislation, new technologies and the development of high freeboard passenger ships and later by the offshore oil industry.

The evolution of the ships boat into a dedicated type, the lifeboat coincided with the development of the propeller driven steamship built of steel and a corresponding change in the passenger ship market. Sailing ships carrying immigrants, often in the hundreds across the oceans were amazingly bereft of more than a few boats. Steamships in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century were often derived from sailing ship designs and were complete with masts and sailing gear. The high freeboard, conducive to

carrying lifeboats typical of the modern passenger ship was not common until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the replacement of sidewheel paddle boxes by clean lined sides and most important, an increase in the size of ships and with that freeboard, it became possible for the first time to introduce standard design lifeboats along ships topsides. The new problem then became one of fitting a sufficient number of boats to carry a good proportion of the passengers. The shipbuilders of course were challenged by the technical problems but the shipowners were challenged by the "optics". Too many lifeboats suggested a ship that might not be safe. They compromised.

The modern late 20<sup>th</sup> century ships lifeboat, totally enclosed and equipped with automatic mayday transmitting equipment has evolved from those designed for use aboard oil rig platforms and in terms of sea travel is a recent development - post World War II. This type of boat does not always depend completely on gravity to reach the sea, some free launched from a skid but the early ships lifeboats did. They were lowered from davits mounted on an upper deck and under the control of a crew manning tackles consisting of blocks and rope (called the fall) attached to the

<sup>5</sup> For a good discussion of the technical difficulties see Chapter 20, Lowering and Hoisting Boats in John Harland, *Seamanship in the Age of Sail*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 1996.

<sup>6</sup> The 'science' version of this can be found in Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Chicago, 1970.

bow and stern of the boat - this operation needed a high degree of cooperation from two different teams of crew to keep the lifeboat level. The only direction the boat could go is straight down. The impediment was that ships did not sink evenly. They leaned to port or starboard or in the case of a high seas they rolled, thus interfering with the lowering of boats. The odds were so great against a boat being launched successfully that in many cases the crew and passengers perished. The statistics gathered by the seaman's friend, the 19<sup>th</sup> century parliamentarian, Mr. Plimsoll amply prove that losses were great.

There was never any consideration given to naval vessels carrying enough boats until well after World War II and that only with the development of a new technology that had a different stowage characteristic - the rubber raft. Boats interfered with the fighting machinery of torpedo tubes, swinging gun turrets and other gear and when under fire, they were the first to be destroyed - admirals did not think it good for morale to have lifeboats on a naval vessel - it suggested an unacceptable outcome to a confrontation. During World War II Canadian naval and merchant vessels were

typically equipped with carley floats that could float off as the ship went down, the 27 foot naval whaler or some similar variant.<sup>7</sup>

Regulations, specifications and conformity to standards in virtually any category you wish to choose is very much a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon. It was not until the introduction of the steel ship and its higher capital and operating cost and a significant increase in the volume of passengers carried that designers started thinking about evolving designs for the specific task of serving as a lifeboat. The heyday of travel at sea and the development of shipping companies and of ever increasing sized ships originated at the height of laissez-faire capitalism in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. "People did not expect government to interfere with the right to free trade".<sup>8</sup> There

<sup>7</sup> We can still see vestiges of the naval whaler in fiberglass boats sailing out of Royal Military College by Sea Cadets. I can recall halcyon days of sailing these clinker built yawl rigged vessels off the Atlantic coast some years ago. They were good seaboats but you had to know what you were doing, or survive in lucky ignorance. We actually set a sail called a 'leg o mutton' mizzen - the 19<sup>th</sup> century was closer then.

<sup>8</sup> *The Load Line - A Hallmark of Safety*, Captain Neville Upham, Youngest Brother of Trinity House, Assistant Keeper of Ships, Maritime Monographs and Reports,

is of course a reason for this beyond the simple explanation that owners were rapacious. It was primarily the uncertainty of world trade patterns, the high capital cost of building steamships and the very real risks at sea that discouraged owners from deviating from traditional patterns or deviating from 'what they knew'. You had to be tough and nervy to be a successful. There was a calm acceptance that life at times was "nasty, brutish and short" and that disaster encountered was simple bad luck. The corporate culture of shipping companies ran along certain directions that was a mix of self interest and the very real understanding of the risks attendant in keeping a ship at sea - so why bother increasing an operating expense by making too many changes.<sup>9</sup>

#### **The Shore based Life Saving boat.**

The development of the shore based lifesaving boat follows a more linear path. It is a line of development where the operating variables were fewer and more predictable than those found on ships at sea. In much the same way that you need fatalities at railway crossings

No. 33 - 1978, National Maritime Museum, London, 1978.

<sup>9</sup> Communications theory would probably provide some insights into rates of change in attitudes and values during this period. Do these studies exist?

before a bridge is built many lives had to be thrust up on shore before moral outrage led to the invention of boats suited to rescue at sea. This occurred off the east coast of England near Newcastle Upon Tyne.<sup>10</sup> This coastline was particularly busy with sailing ships in regular transit between England, Europe and the Baltic Sea. The worst weather was from the north east making the east coast of England a lee shore and a dangerous one alternating between cliffs and offshore shallows. In 1789 a Mr. Greathead designed a vessel that could be launched from a wheeled cart. It had buoyancy at each end and was ballasted with cork so that when filled with water it would not sink. This boat was a great success, so much so that in 1802 the British House of Commons awarded Mr. Greathead 1200 pounds. This then became the design that has formed the basis of subsequent developments over the next 150 years with features that have remained intact almost to the present day.<sup>11</sup>

The next leaders in lifeboat design were Americans and this follows the pattern of development taking place where the trade was most frequent and

subsequently most at risk. In the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century they used local pulling boats that were characteristic of a regional coast. These were usually open with no other features than lightness and an ability to be rowed by a small crew. It was a case of making do with 'what we have got'. In a ten year period alone twenty-five of these open surfboats were capsized with a loss of crew. Clearly this was not acceptable and way had to be found to break the loyalty to this kind of craft.<sup>12</sup> In 1873 a British design was imported it being thought this would provide a model for subsequent designs that suited American conditions. This British boat weighted some 4000 pounds. It was considered a good rescue boat at sea but virtually impossible to launch from a sand beach by a small crew. The boat had to be placed in position by being pulled on a horse drawn cart. The crew would wait for a particularly heavy wave and then row like hell. This design was well suited to British shoreline conditions where the launch could be made from a river or into deep water from a ramp. On the North American Atlantic coast and on

the Great Lakes beach launching were more common. As a result the design was reworked to a smaller version first in metal and then, more successfully in wood. The objective was a selfbailing, self righting and self ballasting boat suited to North American waters, a set of requirements that challenged many worthy and accomplished builders and designers. The man who deserves the credit is Captain David Porter Dobbins, based in Buffalo at the east end of Lake Erie. His first boat was self-righting which was good but it was easily swamped. By 1881 he had achieved the three objectives, self bailing, self righting and self ballasting. Subsequent improved models were developed. The self ballasting was accomplished by placing waterproofed cork in a hold below the deck. The self righting was achieved by placing turtle-backed air cases at each end, these could be filled with people if need be. Spring loaded scupper ports on each side of the hull opened to let water out when the boat was swamped. This double ended boat weighed between 1,600 and 2,000 pounds. The design was patented in both United States and in Canada. There was a lighter version of this boat produced along the lines of a surfboat that had a flat stern and was self bailing and self righting. Two of these were placed in Canadian waters on Lake Ontario in the 1880s.

### Lifesaving Service on the Lakes

<sup>10</sup> Invention of the Lifeboat contributed by Frederick C. Wigby, *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol 58, No 3, August 1972.

<sup>11</sup> The Canadian Coast Guard now has under construction a series of 47 foot boats that transfers most of the buoyancy formerly in the ends of traditional lifeboats to the watertight bridge area amidships. This design has been adapted from a US Coastguard design.

<sup>12</sup> The argument continues but within the sphere of contemporary traditional boatbuilding. See Jenny Bennett, What Price Legislation: Europe's new rules may restrict custom and traditional boatbuilding in Britain and beyond, *Wooden Boat Magazine*, Number 148, June 1999. In the same issue will be found a description of a passage of a knarr replica from Greenland to L'Anse aux Meadows in northern Newfoundland.

By 1888 there were thirty lifesaving stations established on the Quebec and on the Atlantic coast. On Lakes there were nine. Most of these were of the modified Dobbins Pattern, 25 feet overall with an 8 foot beam.<sup>13</sup> Building these lifesaving stations was by no means an easy political task. At the beginning of the decade in the Canadian parliament, the opposition MP, Mr. Keeler asked if "it was intention of the government, in view of the great loss of life by shipwreck of late, to establish any life-saving stations on Lake Ontario. The answer from Mr. Pope was "that is was not the intention of the Government to establish any life-saving stations on Lake Ontario. The government would be quite willing to supply boats at dangerous points, provided individuals or municipals would agree to man them. Nothing of this kind is done in England."<sup>14</sup>

Two days later Mr. Charlton did his best to embarrass the government into providing a "few" life-saving stations. He quoted extensively details about the service provided by United States life-saving since 1871 to the commercial shipping industry - over 10,000 lives and \$12 million in property saved. The motion was agreed to.<sup>15</sup>

For the government it was probably a question of choosing a strategy with the usual long

term cost benefits versus an immediate and expensive demand for life-save facilities that bled resources from long term plans. Logic was on the side of the long term planners but not humane behavior. Sailing ships, the most at risk were in obvious decline to be replaced by steamships that had more control over their movement and there was a programme of upgrading and increasing the number of lights and buoys. These developments suggested the need for a shore based lifeboat would shortly disappear - as it did. The government did respond and lives and property were saved. Stations were established at Cobourg in 1882, Collingwood, 1885; Goderich, 1886; Kincardine, 1903; Port Stanley, 1885; Toronto, 1883; Wellington, 1883; Traverse Point, 1883; and Port Hope, 1889.

#### The *Ida Walker*<sup>16</sup>

There were of course spectacular rescues by surfboats and perhaps this one example will help illustrate the heroism and skill of those who manned the boats on all coasts. The events leading to

this rescue sees its origin in 1860 when the American government was forced to generate revenue by taxing liquor. An increase, from 25 cents per gallon to \$2 per gallon helped pay for the American Civil War. Drinkers seeking quantity and at a cheaper price switched. This led to the sudden popularity of beer. American brewers said the best beer was made from imported Canadian barley. Forty thousand acres of barley were grown in Prince Edward County by the descendants of Loyalists. The American farmers eventually got mad and heavy tariffs were introduced in 1890, but for a thirty year run, scores of sailing vessels were kept employed past their prime carrying grain across Lake Ontario to ports like Oswego.<sup>17</sup> Naturally farmers preferred the schooners to load as close to the fields as possible. This resulted in many a dodgy harbour being established that simply tempted fate beyond the norm. One of these is the dock at Wellington Ontario.

The schooner *Ida Walker* was alongside that dock. When a westerly came up that November day in 1886 the schooner found herself on a lee shore partway up the bay. She managed to tack out and then sailed northerly along the coast to take refuge in the lee of Presqu'ille Point. She had onboard, some 6,000 bushels of barley, about half her cargo. The wind, turning into a gale had a lot of westerly in it resulting in

<sup>16</sup> Built At: [ SOPHIASBURG, ONTARIO, CANADA ] Date Built: [ 1867 ] Length: [ 109.00 ] Beam: [ 26.00 ] Depth: [ 9.10 ] Gross: [ 218.12 ] Net: [ 186.78 ] LOADED WITH BARLEY AND BECAME A TOTAL WRECK. ONE LIFE WAS LOST.") ]

Source of Data N.A.C., RG-42, C-2470, VOL. 222; MG-40 D3 B.T., B-3718, 1883, VOL. 3 - WHITBY

<sup>17</sup> The McKinley Tariff, a response by US legislators to their angry farmers ended the 'barley days' in Prince Edward County.

<sup>13</sup> Sessional Papers (No. 5) Appendix No. 33, 1888.

<sup>14</sup> Commons Debates, page 155, December 20, 1880

<sup>15</sup> Commons Debates, page 207, December 22, 1880.

200 miles of open fetch and a heavy sea that was soon rolling over her decks. The inevitable happened and she started dragging her anchor across the open water where she went aground just by the entrance to Wellers Bay. Her bulwarks and yawlboat were swept away leaving her a painful sight with two masts and a cabin showing above the deck. Onlookers gathered on the beach, fires were lit, prayers were uttered and the crew remained helpless - the furies prevailed.

The surfboat was in Wellington, where the *Ida Walker* had been. It was loaded on a boxcar and shipped the short distance overland where dozens of men grabbed her dragging the boat through the bush from the rail line. They then rowed across the inner bay and then dragged the boat across the sand bar to the beach. By now there were enormous combers. Captain Hugh McCullough took charge. His crew lashed themselves to the thwarts and the six men slowly rowed out and past the grounded schooner. The Captain held the surfboat head to wind and to windward of the *Ida Walker*. Letting the surfboat ease back, he then threw a line to the men on the schooner but missed and the surfboat, on a roller, was swept back to the beach. They made three more runs and on the last, the heaved line was caught, made down to the schooner, and it held. The mate and the cook of the schooner were quickly into the rescue boat along with the rest of the crew. As the boat made its way back to a beach littered with wreckage and over

a hundred spectators watching, a wave swept over the *Ida Walker* taking away the cabin.<sup>18</sup> The captain of the *Ida Walker* was not a happy man. On the beach a witness heard him cursing himself for going into Wellington.<sup>19</sup>

#### Shipshape and Bristol Fashion

The best traditions of sea service, a place for everything and everything in its place was exemplified and acknowledged by the regulations issued by the Canadian Minister of Marine. "The stowage space is necessarily limited" he said, "owing to so large a part of the boat being taken up by the air-cases and compartments which give her buoyancy, yet in order to meet the conditions and emergencies of her work, she is obliged to carry a great number of articles and these must be so placed as to be readily available for action and to not impede in any way the movements of her crew.

Two principals must never be lost sight of in stowing the lifeboat -

1<sup>st</sup>. Every article ordinarily in use should be always in the boat ready for service.

<sup>18</sup> *The County, The First Hundred Years in Loyalist Prince Edward*, Richard and Janet Lunn, Prince Edward County Council, 1967, Picton Gazette Publishing Company, Picton, Ontario.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, the witness was Scott Hutchinson the builder of the Mowat boat now in the possession of the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes.

2<sup>nd</sup>. Every article should be carefully disposed in a particular manner.

In these matters nothing should be considered trifling or unimportant. The smallest deviation from these two rules may involve disastrous failure. The object of having all articles ordinarily in use kept constantly in the boat is to prevent anything from being forgotten and left out in the excitement attendant upon a sudden summons to put out to sea for a rescue. At such times something of importance is very apt to be overlooked, all hands being mainly intent upon the work of getting afloat and saving those in peril."<sup>20</sup>

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the number of incidents had been reduced. Vulnerable sailing ships were in decline to be replaced by properly powered steam vessels that had the ability to at least take evasive measures in a good sea. There was a proliferation of aids to navigation, lighthouses and buoyage and there was now an insistence on the proper training of masters, mates and engineers. By the end of World War I most lifeboat stations had been closed down in Canada.

There is irony in this. Commercial vessels with sophisticated electronics no longer have a need for traditional navigation aids while the average yachtsman equipped with a GPS has more navigational accuracy than all the ships that sailed the seven seas from the beginning of time

<sup>20</sup> Canada, Sessional Papers (No. 5.), 1888.

until well after World 11. With user pay services being introduced in Canada the commercial firms would be happy to eliminate, even that icon of hope, the lighthouse.

### Appendix 1

#### The North American Great Lakes

Vessels operating in the Great Lakes were not included in those covered by the 1930 convention, but the governments concerned with the registration of these vessels decided the rules should be formulated. In 1935, A Great Lakes load line committee was formed to make special regulations for ships operating within the Lakes. These were based on the 1930 Convention rules.

The lengthened ice free navigational season and the opening of the longest locks on the St. Lawrence Seaway made the Canadian and United States authorities extend the rules to cover the longer ships built to transit the enlarged canal and locks.

In the Great Lakes load line markings the horizontal line whose top runs across the centre of the diamond shaped symbol placed exactly a the vessel's mid length, denotes the load line used by vessels engaged in Great Lakes Trade.

The only difference in the marking adopted by the United States and Canada is to be seen in the length of the

deck line, which is 154 inches in the former country and 12 inches in the latter.

The forgoing is from *The Load Line - A Hallmark of Safety*, Captain Neville Upham, Youngest Brother of Trinity House, Assistant Keeper of Ships, Maritime Monographs and Reports, No. 33 - 1978, National Maritime Museum, London, 1978.

### Shelves Noted in Passing

The essential library is as personal as ones nocturnal habits. Some private libraries are arranged as carefully as a dinner party with each title carefully placed to ensure good conversation between authors while other shelves may be ironic in intent. Some libraries are logical, following the subject headings laid down by the Library of Congress. I have not seen many of those. Some books are placed next to each other with the sole purpose of creating anarchy.

I have placed the evocative paean to lives lived, *Ships and Memories, Merchant Seafarers in Canada's Age of Steam* by Eric W. Sager next to *Information, mediation and institutional development, The rise of large-scale enterprise in British shipping, 1870* by Gordon Boyce. Both are must have titles and both are well written and relevant to the Canadian experience. Both deal

with business and private relationships.

C.H. J Snider did more than most to inspire a generation of readers to read and take up an interest in history. A journalist for the old Toronto Telegram he wrote over 1,300 columns called *Schooner Days*, nearly all featuring Great Lakes themes. He is not much admired by scholars, some of his ideas are just wonky but the course he set is right, especially in *Tarry Brecks and Velvet Garters, First Book of Schooner Days*.

*Jack Tar in History, Essays in the History of Maritime Life and Labour* edited by Colin Howell and Richard Twomey sits next to Snider. At least two generations, maybe three in temperament separate the enthusiasm of Snider from the sensibility of the many authors who have contributed to *Jack Tar*. I prefer the essays but I still peek into Snider.

Off by itself, sitting on the floor, no disrespect intended is a favourite, *RCN in Retrospect, 1910-1968* edited by James A. Boutilier. What a great service this book has done for the Canadian Navy.

Ye editor.

Now it is your turn!

## CALENDAR OF MARITIME ANNIVERSARIES

Compiled by William Glover

### JULY

- 12 1789 Alexander Mackenzie, who had left Fort Chipewyan, Lake Athabasca, "for parts unknown" on 3 June, arrived on the Arctic coast. He followed the river that now bears his name. This was the second point, (the other being the mouth of the Coppermine River, established by Samuel Hearne), to be determined on the Arctic coast of the continent.
- 15 1902 Donald Creighton, historian, was born at Toronto. His book, *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence*, published 1937, marked him as a major historian of his generation. He died 19 December 1979 at Brooklin, Ontario.
- 17 1771 Samuel Hearne, traveling overland from Prince of Wales Fort with Indians, led by the great Chief Matonabee, arrived at the mouth of the Coppermine River on the Arctic coast.
- 17 1840 The SS *Britannia*, owned by Samuel Cunard, arrived at Halifax from Britain. This was the first crossing of a steamship on a schedule carrying the mails.
- 20 1661 Pierre Le Moyne D'Iberville was baptized at Ville-Marie, now Montreal. A soldier, sailor and captain, merchant adventurer, explorer and colonizer, he was "beyond doubt the first truly Canadian hero." He died in July 1706 at Havana.
- 22 1793 Alexander Mackenzie arrived on the Pacific coast in the vicinity of Bella Coola. He was the first European to travel overland across the Rocky Mountains.
- 27 1886 The *W.B. Flint*, a three masted barque commanded by Captain H. Pearsons, arrived at Vancouver, carrying a cargo of tea. Three days later, the first special cargo train, carrying that tea, left for the east from Port Moody, then the CPR's western rail terminus.
- 29 1834 Commander George Back, Royal Navy, traveling from Fort Reliance on Great Slave Lake, where he had wintered, arrived at the mouth of the Great Fish River on the Arctic coast. The river was later named after him.
- 30 1578 Martin Frobisher, explorer, (1539? - 1594), arrived at Countess of Warwick Island, now Kodlunarn Island, off Baffin Island, on his third voyage. On his second voyage looking for the Northwest Passage (1577) he discovered what was thought to be gold. His third, (and last voyage) had the express purpose of mining the gold, that turned out not to be.
- 31 1618 Médard Chouart des Groseilliers, explorer and one of the originators of the Hudson's Bay Company, was baptized at Charly-sur-Marne, in France. He arrived in New France in 1641. He made several important expeditions into the interior. In the 1660s, with his brother-in-law, Pierre Esprit Radisson, he went to the English with a proposal for a fur trading venture based in Hudson's Bay. He accompanied the *Nonsuch* on a successful trial trading voyage in 1668. He died in New France about 1696.
- 31 1942 The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service was authorized. Approximately 6,500 women served in the navy, of whom over 1,000 served outside Canada.



## AUGUST

- 2 1904 William J. Stewart, (1863 - 1925), the Gold Medalist for his class at the Royal Military College of Canada, was appointed the first Chief Hydrographic Surveyor of Canada, in charge of the Hydrographic Survey of Canada. In 1928 the name was changed to the Canadian Hydrographic Service.
- 9 1782 The French naval officer and explorer, Jean-François de Galaup de La Pérouse captured the Hudson Bay Company trading post, Prince of Wales Fort, at Churchill, Manitoba, on the Hudson Bay coast. The fort's commander was the northern explorer Samuel Hearne.
- 12 1889 A.R.M. Lower, historian, was born at Barrie, Ontario. His books included *The Square Timber Trade*, (1932) and *Great Britain's Woodyard: British America and the Timber Trade, 1763 - 1867*, (1973). He died 7 January 1988 at Kingston, Ontario.
- 13 1883 Staff Commander John George Boulton, RN, arrived in Ottawa to head the Georgian Bay Survey. This was the first of several survey organizations to be funded by the federal government. The name was later changed to the Great Lakes Survey to reflect its expanded focus.
- 15 1875 Robert Bartlett, a famous Newfoundland sailing captain and arctic mariner, was born at Brigus, Newfoundland. He was the captain of ships for expeditions by Robert Peary, and of the *Karluk*, Stefansson's supply ship, that was crushed by ice in 1913. He died at New York on 28 April 1946.
- 18 1833 The SS *Royal William* left Pictou, Nova Scotia, with seven passengers. Twenty-five days later she arrived at Gravesend, England, becoming the first Canadian steamship to cross the Atlantic.
- 20 1875 *La Canadienne*, a successful, and one of the best loved, fisheries protection schooner, was wrecked on St. Paul's island, ending a twenty year career.
- 23 1711 The English expedition to capture Quebec, led by Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker, comprised of 19 warships and 41 other vessels including transports and supply ships, met with disaster at Ile aux Oeufs. Seven transports and one supply ship ran aground with a loss of about 950 lives.
- 23 1741 Jean-François de Galaup de la Pérouse was born in France. A French naval officer and explorer, he captured the Hudson Bay Company Prince of Wales Fort at Churchill Manitoba. He was shipwrecked at Vanikoro in the Santa Cruz Islands in June 1788, and probably died there. Lapérouse Bank off Vancouver Island is named after him.
- 23 1956 Marilyn Bell became the first woman and the first Canadian to swim across the Strait of Juan de Fuca, from Port Angeles, Washington, to Victoria.
- 28 1792 Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra and George Vancouver, representing Spain and England, met at Nootka Sound to discuss territorial issues arising from Spanish treatment of Captain Meares, an English fur trader. Although their meetings were amicable at a personal and professional level, final agreement was not reached between the governments until 1795, when Spanish claims to the area were effectively dropped.
- 29 1589 *Delight*, one of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's ships, was wrecked on Sable Island. At least 85 men were drowned. This is the first recorded shipwreck in what is now Canada.
- 29 1864 The Canadian Government Steamer *Queen Victoria* departed from Quebec City for Charlottetown, Halifax, and Saint John. Her passengers included John A. Macdonald, Georges Etienne Cartier, George Brown, Alexander Galt, William McDougall, D'Arcy McGee, Alexander Campbell, and Hector Langevin. They were going to Charlottetown as observers to a meeting that was to discuss political union of the maritime colonies. The meeting instead would agree to a proposal for the confederation of Canada.

- 31 1931 The first commercial cargo of grain from Churchill, Manitoba was shipped to Britain

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 1557 Jacques Cartier died at St. Malo. (He was probably born in the second half of 1491.) In 1541 he began a settlement at Stadacona, now the area of Quebec. However, all the settlers returned to France two years later.
- 5 1697 D'Iberville, commanding *Pélican*, 44 guns, in brilliant tactical victory, defeated the English ship *Hampshire*, 56 guns, and then captured the *Hudson's Bay*, 32 guns, leaving only the *Dering*, 36 guns, to flee. On 13 September Governor Bayly surrendered York Factory. The French maintained possession of at least one fur post in the Hudson Bay/James Bay area from this time until the Peace of Utrecht, 1713, formally "restored" the region to English control.
- 10 1954 Marilyn Bell completed the first swim across Lake Ontario. She was 16 years old.
- 14 1882 The 347-ton steamer, *Asia*, on scheduled service in Georgian Bay, sank during a fall storm with the loss of over 120 lives; there were only two survivors. A coroner's verdict placed emphasis on the number of uncharted rocks in the area of her loss. This led directly to the establishment of the Georgian Bay Survey.
- 16 1939 HX-1, the first Atlantic convoy of the Second World War, left Halifax harbour. HX 027 was the last fast convoy to leave from Halifax; 97 "SC" convoys, originally starting from Sydney, Cape Breton, also departed from Halifax.
- 18 1902 The cable ship *Colonia* left Bamfield, Vancouver Island at 1500, and commenced laying the trans-Pacific cable. She arrived at Fanning Island eighteen days later. This was the longest segment of the cable route, with a length of 3,459 nautical miles. The first signal was sent 31 October 1902.
- 21 1645 Louis Jolliet was baptized at Quebec. With the help of Frontenac, on 30 April 1697 he became the first Canadian-born Royal Hydrographer of New France. He died suddenly in 1700.
- 29 1668 The *Nonsuch*, which had sailed from England on 3 June, arrived off the Rupert River in Hudson Bay. Groseilliers was among those on board. The crew deliberately wintered there, and traded for furs with the natives. The ship arrived back in England with this important cargo of fur on 10 October, 1669. Having thus demonstrated the practicality of fur trading in the Bay, the Hudson's Bay Company was formally chartered the following year. A replica of the ship, built for the tercentenary, is now on display in the Manitoba Museum.

## OCTOBER

- 3 1914 The first troop convoy of the First World War of the Canadian Expeditionary Force sailed from Canada.
- 6 1751 John Webber was born in London, England. He was appointed "draughtsman" of Captain Cook's third voyage. "No voyage under taken in the days before photography ever returned so well documented with pictorial illustrations, nor had so great an area of the earth's surface come under one artist's observation." The first European drawings of west coast native life were done by him. He died 29 April 1793.

- 6 1760 Dionisio Alcala Galiano was born at Cordova, Spain. He died at the Battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805, in command of a Spanish ship of the line. In 1792 he commanded the *Sutil* expedition to what is now British Columbia, and became the first European to circumnavigate Vancouver Island. His hydrographic survey work was of a very high standard. Galiano Island in the Strait of Georgia is named for him.
- 14 1942 The ferry, SS *Caribou*, crossing from North Sydney, Cape Breton to Port aux Basques, Newfoundland, was torpedoed at 0221 in the morning by the German U-69. There were 101 survivors from a total of 237 passengers and crew.
- 15 1916 Charles Anthony Francis Law, naval officer and celebrated marine artist, was born in England, the son of a Canadian army officer. He died on his birthday in 1996.
- 16 1970 CSS *Hudson* returned to Halifax, completing the first circumnavigation of the two Americas. It took eleven months, and she steamed 57,956.5 nautical miles.
- 20 1586 Luke Foxe was born at Hull, England. A seaman and arctic explorer, he sailed in search of the northwest passage in 1631. The Foxe Basin, above Hudson's Bay, and the Foxe Peninsula of Baffin Island are named for him. He died 15 July 1635.
- 23 1918 The CPR coastal steamer *Princess Sophia* ran aground on Vanderbilt Ledge in the Lynn Canal, Alaska. The Captain decided not to remove the passengers and crew because of the adverse weather. Two days later the ship slipped off the ledge, taking with her all 343 people on board.
- 24 1921 *Bluenose* won her first International Fisherman's Trophy, and established herself as the fastest schooner.
- 27 1728 James Cook, the great navigator and explorer, was born in Yorkshire, England. He made important surveys of the St. Lawrence river, thus enabling Wolfe's army to get past the fortifications to the Anse au Foulon, of Newfoundland, and of the west coast of North America. He was killed in Hawaii on 14 February 1779.
- 27 1824 Joseph Frederick Wallet DesBarres, surveyor, died at Halifax, Nova Scotia. Between 1774 and 1784 he published a comprehensive series of charts of the Atlantic coast, known as *The Atlantic Neptune*. He had been born at either Basel, Switzerland, or Paris.
- 30 1899 Henry Larsen, famous as the commanding officer of the RCMP vessel *St Roch*, was born at Fredrikstad, Norway. Under Larsen, the *St Roch* became the first ship to travel the Northwest Passage from west to east, (1940 - 42) and, with the west-bound passage in 1944, the first ship to make the passage both ways. He retired from the RCMP as a Superintendent in 1961 and died three years later.

## NOVEMBER

- 2 1917 Robert Hampton Gray was born at Trail, BC. In the Second World War he joined the RCNVR, and served as a pilot in the RN's Fleet Air Arm. He was killed on 9 August 1945 while pressing home an attack on a Japanese ship when his plane was shot down. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.
- 2 1936 The Department of Transport Act was proclaimed. The new department's responsibility included shipping, navigation, and other marine affairs.
- 3 1879 Vilhjalmur Stefansson, arctic explorer, was born at Arne, Manitoba. He led three trips to the north, including the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913 - 18. His most famous book is *The Friendly Arctic*, (1921). He died 26 August 1962 at Hanover, New Hampshire.
- 5 1894 H.A. Innis, historian, was born at Otterville, Ontario. He was widely known for his "staples trade" approach to economic history. His work included the important studies

*The Fur Trade in Canada* (1930) and *The Cod Fisheries* (1940). He died at Toronto 8 November 1952.

- 16 1889 The Union Steamship Company of British Columbia was incorporated. The first steamship line to base its operations at Vancouver, its stated purpose was to provide "transportation by water to the outlying new settlements, sawmills, logging camps, stone quarries, agricultural and mining districts."
- 19 1969 CSS *Hudson* sailed from Halifax on "Hudson 70," the first circumnavigation of both North and South America.
- 21 1787 Sir Samuel Cunard was born at Halifax. With his father he formed the shipping firm A. Cunard & Son about 1812. Samuel died in London, England, 28 April 1865.
- 24 1854 John Irving, an "outstanding pioneer of transportation" in British Columbia, was born at Portland Oregon. Amongst other companies, he was involved with the Pioneer Line, the Canadian Pacific Navigation Company, and the Columbia & Kootenay Steam Navigation Company. The CPR bought both the CPN and the C&KSN to form their own famous coastal service.

## DECEMBER

- 1 1860 The first lighthouse on what is now the Canadian Pacific coast went into operation at Fisgard Island, off Esquimalt Harbour.
- 6 1917 The Great Halifax Explosion was caused when, at 0904 in the morning, the Belgian relief ship *Imo* rammed the French munitions ship *Mount Blanc*. An estimated 1,400 people were killed outright or buried in rubble and died before they were found. Another (approximately) 600 died of their injuries.
- 11 1886 Frederick William Wallace, writer and publisher, was born in Glasgow, Scotland. He came to Canada in 1895 to work for shipping companies. In 1913 he began the magazine *Canadian Fishermen*. His most famous books are *Wooden Ships and Iron Men: The Story of the Square Rigged Merchant Marine of British North America* (1924) and *In The Wake of the Wind Ships* (1926). He died 15 July 1958 in Montreal.
- 12 1901 Guglielmo Marconi received the first radio signal at Signal Hill, St. John's, Newfoundland. It was sent in Morse code from Cornwall, England
- 14 1823 Pierre-Étienne Fortin was born at Verchères, Lower Canada. He qualified in medicine in 1841, and practiced for several years. In 1852 he "was appointed stipendiary magistrate and given responsibility for the protection of the fisheries in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; he was the first to hold such a position and he retained it until 1867. ... Fortin succeeded in endearing himself to the Gaspesians through his sincerity and interest in protecting fishermen's rights against foreign vessels and through his efforts to have measures passed which would improve their working conditions, such as the construction of lighthouses along the gulf coast." He died 15 June 1888.
- 18 1706 Jean Deshayes, royal hydrographer of New France, and described as "one of the founders of functional surveying in this country," died at Quebec. He was responsible for the survey of the St. Lawrence river that was incorporated in the first published chart of the river.
- 25 1635 Samuel de Champlain, born c. 1570, died at Quebec. He was the founder of New France and an explorer. He was the first European to see any of the Great Lakes. His astrolabe, lost on a trip up the Ottawa River, was found in 1860 between Renfrew and Arnprior shortly after the area was opened for settlers. The approximate location is marked by a National Historic Site plaque on Highway 17, north of Ottawa.

26            1860    The light at Race Rocks, at the eastern entrance to the Strait of Juan Fuca, was lit for the first time.

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 Thomson, Don W., *Men and Meridians*, 3 vols  
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Additions and corrections to this calendar will be gratefully received. I can be reached by mail at: PO Box 481, Manotick, Ontario, K4M 1A5. I do not have e-mail.

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## The Calendar

### 1999

October 26<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Conference of the Nautical Research Guild, San Diego Maritime Museum, San Diego, CA (Information: Nautical Research Guild, 19 Pleasant St., Everett, MA 02149  
[e-mail: [genenrg@Naut-Res-Guild-org](mailto:genenrg@Naut-Res-Guild-org) ;  
WWW: <http://www.Naut-Res-Guild.org> ])

November 9-14  
Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers Annual Conference, San Diego, CA (Information: Barbara Trentham, SNAME, 601 Pavonia Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07306 [tel.: +1 201- 798-4800 or +1 800-798-2188; FAX: +1 201-798-4975; e-mail: [btrentham@sname.org](mailto:btrentham@sname.org) ;  
WWW: <http://www.sname.org> ])

### 2000

January 5-9  
Society for Historical Archaeology Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Québec, QC (Information: William Moss, Program Coordinator, Archeologue Principal, Division du Design et du Patrimoine, Centre de Developpement Economique et Urbain, CP 700, Haute-Ville, Québec, QC G1R 4S9 [tel.: +1 418-691-6869; FAX: +1 418-691-7853; e-mail: [wmos@cmq.qc.ca](mailto:wmos@cmq.qc.ca) ;  
WWW:<http://www.azstarnet.com/~sha/meet20.htm>])

July 30-August 1  
Third International Congress of Maritime History, Sponsored by the International Maritime Economic History Association, Centre for Maritime and Regional History, Fiskeri- og Søfartsmuseum, Esbjerg, Denmark (Information: Prof. Poul Holm, Fiskeri- og Søfartsmuseet, DK-6710 Esbjerg V, Denmark [tel.: +45 75- 150666; FAX: +45 75- 153057;  
e-mail: [cmrhpho@inet.uni-c.dk](mailto:cmrhpho@inet.uni-c.dk) ;])

August 3-5  
Pre-Conference of the International Commission for Maritime History, Bergen and Oslo, Norway (Information: Adrian Jarvis, Secretary-General, ICMH, Centre for Port and Maritime History, Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool L3 1DG, UK [tel.: +44 151-478-4094; FAX: +44 151-478-4098])

August 6-12  
International Congress of Historical Sciences, Oslo, Norway, including Congress of the International Commission for Maritime History (Information: Prof. dr. François Bédarida, Secretary General, International Committee of Historical Sciences, Institut d'Histoire Temps Présent, 44 rue de l'Amiral Mouchez, 75014 Paris, France [tel.: +33 1-45-80-90-46; FAX: +33 1-45-65-43- 50]; ICMH Organizer: Adrian Jarvis, Secretary-

General, ICMH, Centre for Port and Maritime History, Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool L3 1DG, UK [tel.: +44 151- 478-4094; FAX: +44 151-478-4098])

September 14-16  
Tenth Historical Cartography Colloquium, Bonn, Germany (Information: Seminar für Historische Geographie der Universität Bonn, Konviktstrasse 11, D-53113, Bonn [tel.: +49 228-735061; FAX: +49 228-737650]; or Prof. dr. Wolfgang Scharfe, Fachrichtung Kartographie, Freie Universität Berlin, Arno-Holz-Strasse 12, D-12165 Berlin [+49 30-838-4807; FAX: +49 30- 838-6739;  
e-mail: [scharfe@geog.fu-berlin.de](mailto:scharfe@geog.fu-berlin.de) ])

October 27<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Conference of the Nautical Research Guild, Mariners' Museum, Newport News, VA (Information: Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Dr., Newport News, VA 23606-3759 [tel.: +1 757-596-2222 or +1 800-581-7245; FAX: +1 757-591-8212;  
e-mail: [info@mariner.org](mailto:info@mariner.org) ;])

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