

S & D

REFLECTOR

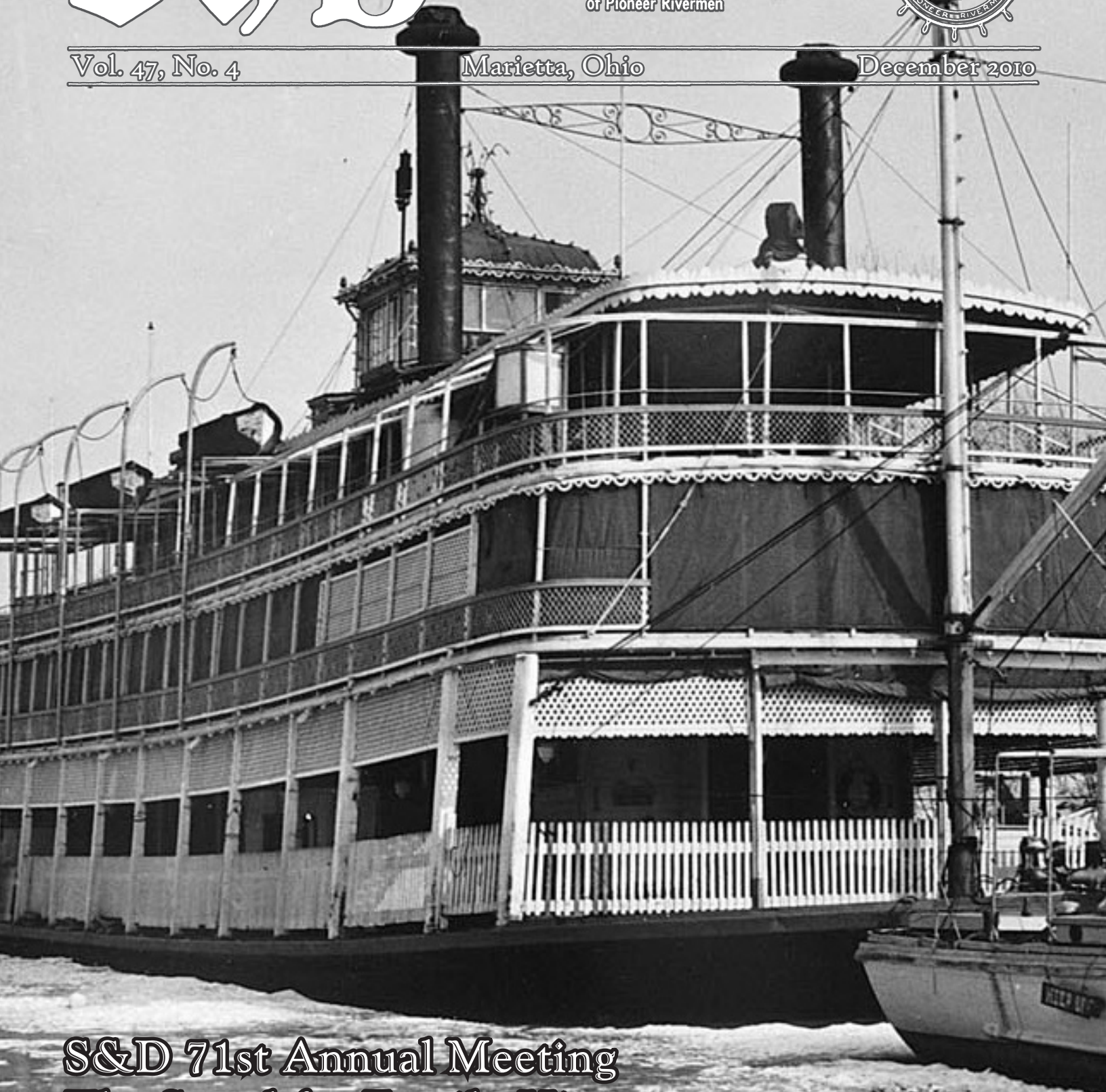
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of Pioneer Rivermen



Vol. 47, No. 4

Marietta, Ohio

December 2010



S&D 71st Annual Meeting
The Streckfus Family History
Winter Layups on the Upper Mississippi

Front Cover

December on the inland rivers, in regions where navigation came to a halt because of ice and snow, marked the start of winter lay-up for many boats. Shown here is the excursion steamer IDLEWILD of the New St. Louis and Calhoun Packet Corp in January 1935. After spending her summer at Louisville, she returned to her fall trade on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. At season's end, owner Capt. Jim Phillips laid her up for the winter at Alton Slough. See "Winter on the Upper Mississippi" on page 23. *Photo courtesy of Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.*



Reflections from Our Readers

Don Hattery writes: "I just got volume 47, number 1, and spent four hours reading the whole thing. I don't know about your other subscribers, but when the S&D REFLECTOR arrives, it gets first attention and I enjoy it very much. Your efforts will only add to this enjoyment, I'm sure. Best regards."

🦉 Don's reaction, we ardently hope, is shared by many of our readers. For those who have not previously had the pure pleasure of reading an issue by Capt. Fred Way, we offer the two "reprint issues" as our special gift to you. You are reading the words of the man who set the gold standard for river publications. Long-time S&D members simply smile when reading Capt. Way's somewhat tentative appraisal of what he set in motion back in Vol. 1, No. 1: "Admittedly this is a trial attempt. At this early stage we are uncertain whether this publication will be issued twice a year, quarterly, or even occasionally. If plans work out as anticipated, S&D REFLECTOR will become the magazine of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen." That Capt. Way succeeded far beyond any of his expectations has been confirmed by forty-six years of priceless reading.

Barb Hameister writes: "Been really busy, including a WONDERFUL weekend on the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE sponsored by Hanover College. Beautiful October weather, olive-green Ohio River flowing along past deep valleys and hills of fall color, bright blue sky, a Dixieland band, and David Morecraft to play calliope. Alan Bates, Jerry Sutphin and Chuck Parish hanging around to talk rivertalk and a whole herd of river rats/MOR on board, plus the delightful BELLE crew. Louisville to Madison on Friday [October 8] and return on Saturday."

Also present for the boat's Moonlite ride, John Fryant observed: "How long has it been since you have seen 700 people lined up on the landing for a ride on an excursion boat? I can fully understand the late Capt. Ernie Wagner's feelings about seeing the ISLAND QUEEN all lit up at night for the first time and wanting to get a job on her."

🦉 Yes, Cap'n Ernie told it exactly the way it was: "Just about the purdiest thang I ever saw." Judge for yourself by the accompanying Moonlite Magic photo.



Photo by John Fryant

Matt Dow writes: "I just read about the S&D weekend, and I wanted to congratulate you on the new job title you have. The main reason for this message is to say that although my knowledge about steamboats may be very limited, if you ever want a guest article (maybe something like a New Orleans trip report from the decks of the NATCHEZ) please feel free to ask. I would love to contribute. Best of luck, and I look forward to seeing the S&D REFLECTOR."

‡ Matt's willingness to contribute an article, letter, or comment is the lifeblood and future of our magazine. Thank you, Matt. Each of us has our own part to play and story to tell in sharing our common passion for the people, boats and life on the inland rivers. None of us, young or old, grizzled veterans or newcomers, has a corner on that market. Matt, we hope to see you in the pages of the REFLECTOR on many more occasions!

Capt. Tom Dunn writes: "I was unable to attend the annual meeting, was in Ireland and Germany. I asked Ann Blum to make a brief report on our chapter and from what I've heard she did a great job. Prior to leaving I sent her some bullet points as to our chapter's activities (or lack thereof) and a copy is listed [herewith]. Please feel free to call if I can be of any help in the future ... Make sure you have fun [editing the REFLECTOR]."

‡ Tom's full point-by-point annual report of the Mississippi River Chapter of S&D can be found in its witty entirety on page 33 of this issue.

Taylor Abbott sends this photo: "Visitors to the Monroe County River Museum view the former Clarington Rescue Boat, built circa 1918. The boat was found stashed away in the attic of a storage barn owned by museum curator Barbara Rush, a little over a hundred yards from the Ohio River, believed to have been floated into the barn during the 1936 Flood where it was last used."



‡ Taylor also sends a letter of introduction for our regular column "The Newer Faces of S&D" found on page 32.

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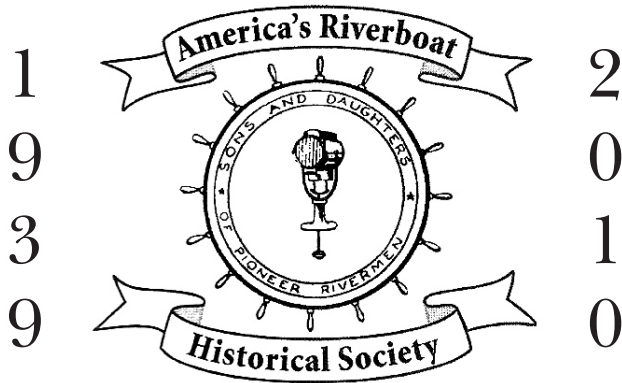


The steamer NATCHEZ is dressed in her holiday finery to bring you our warmest wishes.

Season's Greetings

from the Reflector

"Lighting Up the Past, Present, and Future of the Mississippi River System"



SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF PIONEER RIVERMEN

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The name of this publication comes from the *Fleetwood Reflector* published in 1869 aboard the packet FLEETWOOD. This quarterly was originated by Capt. Frederick Way, Jr. in 1964.

Correspondence is invited and serious papers on river related history from our readers are always welcomed. Please check with the Editor before sending any material on a "loan" basis.

David Tschiggfrie, Editor
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REFLECTOR BACK ISSUES AND INDICES

Copies of the current or of the immediate prior year are available at \$5 each, postpaid for members, \$8 for non-members. Issues for most years through 1972 are available at \$3 each or \$10 for a complete year (4 issues).

Indices for five year increments of the quarterly, 1964 through 2003, are available for \$5 per volume.

Please address the Secretary, Richard R. Kesterman, for these items.

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There are two classes of membership - full and family. Full membership includes the quarterly S&D REFLECTOR, admission to the Ohio River Museum and towboat W. P. SNYDER, JR. at Marietta, and voting rights at the Annual Meeting. Family members enjoy all privileges except the REFLECTOR.

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Getting Posted Up

Following in the Wake of a Great Legacy

Sometimes the enormity of a situation obscures the obvious. It was with a healthy degree of trepidation and anxious reflection on just what I had gotten myself into, that I stared at the empty computer screen, realizing that I had thirty-two pages to fill with text and photos (lots and lots of photos, I was advised). And I had all of eight weeks to pull off this minor miracle. Up in the Twin Cities, son Jonathan was putting together the new software, hardware, stoneware, Tupperware, etc. needed to equip and train his Dad in the use of strange, exotic tools. For these are the modern electronic devices which produce the fine magazine that readers of the *REFLECTOR* have come to expect as a matter of course.

Then there was the matter of Capt. Fred Way, Woody Rutter, and Capt. David Smith. It was like walking in the footsteps of the Founding Fathers. Capt. Fred set the standard and created a work which was a unique mirror of his genius, wit and wealth of experience. Woody continued that tradition seamlessly at Capt. Way's passing, one of an extremely elite group in S&D who could have achieved that transition with such apparent ease and skill. And when it came time to change watches again, Capt. David Smith stepped to the fore, and with an insight and experience in the Diesel era of towboating, capably made the next transition for the magazine by encompassing an ever-expanding story of the people, boats, and experiences on our nation's rivers. The bar was set incredibly high.

Somewhere in Capt. Way's *Saga of the Delta Queen*, he opined that in the course of the boat's extensive renovations at Dravo in 1947, Capt. Tom Greene realized that he was involved in a story that was greater, much greater than himself. He was merely fulfilling his particular role in that bigger story. With that insight, Capt. Way put things in perspective once more, this time for your new editor. This writer, along with each of our contributors and readers, and those who love rivers and boats, are inheritors of a legacy that is entrusted to all of us. We each have our particular role in preserving, telling, and inviting others to explore the richness

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of our river tradition. Truly this is a family matter, and together we share in that responsibility and privilege of passing on our passion to those who follow. We are all Sons and Daughters.

This job is not an enormous, lonely task. Your support of the *REFLECTOR* by submitting articles and photos, suggestions and letters to the editor, makes this a joy and delight, even if not totally devoid of the pressure of deadlines, etc. So I invite you to view this magazine as yours, as ours, and take as your own its mission of "Lighting up the past, present and future of the Mississippi River System." Together we follow in the wake of a great legacy.

I would be ungrateful if I did not express my deep appreciation for the kind words of support and encouragement which many of you have already extended. Assuming the risk that singling out particular individuals always involves, my special thanks go to Capt. Alan Bates, Bob Stump of Richardson Printing in Marietta, and my son Jonathan, for their wise counsel and down-to-earth nuts-and-bolts advice that only comes from the voice of experience. 🌀



Meet Our Contributors

John Fryant (*S&D Marches On*, p. 8; *Small Stacks*, p. 28) is a native of Springfield, OH, and graduated from Wittenberg University and the School of the Dayton Art Institute in Dayton with a major in Industrial Design. He served a three-year enlistment in the U.S. Army. John and wife Sharon have two children and four grandchildren.

His art career was spent in the Washington D.C. area as a civilian employee of the Department of Defense. Although he has worked for three of the armed services, most of John's career was spent with the Navy Department. Work in designing traveling exhibits, museum exhibits, graphics and illustrations were supplemented with writing, public affairs work, and photography.

A lifetime interest in steamboats and river history the world over have led to John's memberships and director's positions in the Steamship Historical Society of America, S&D, and the Nautical Research Guild. Nearly thirty steamboat models have come from his skilled hands, those built for himself as well as commissioned models for museums and collectors. In addition to paintings and drawings of steamboats, he has written articles and columns for several magazines, including our own S&D REFLECTOR. John retired from government service in 1995 and now lives in Maineville, OH.


Judy Patsch (*Excursion Boating's First Family*, p. 16) recalls her first steamboat encounters in the early 1950s when the tramping AVALON came to Rock Island, followed by the DELTA QUEEN's eight-day layup in 1954. But she didn't get the fever until her first DQ trip in 1973, and that did it. She took 41 DQ trips, worked a couple of weeks on the MQ as Jr. Activities Director, and then began 11 summers and 2 years on the NATCHEZ in New Orleans, working in the dining room, gift shop, and as narrator. She has devoted much of her time to researching the Streckfus family, whose origins also are anchored in Rock Island.

During her many NOLA visits each year, she still "moonlights" a bit as narrator, and supplies the crew with chocolate chip cookies, a tradition which started in 1977 whenever the QUEENS came through the Quad Cities. Judy has an extensive collection of memorabilia, postcards and photos, and gives presentations on various steamboat topics when not playing golf or feeding her four cats.

Capt. Steve Huffman (*Collision on the River*, p. 21) has been an S&D member for ten years. He is a licensed Master of steam and motor vessels of up to 100 tons. While growing up in the northern Indiana lakes area, Steve's family owned the 200-passenger sternwheel excursion boat DIXIE. The DIXIE has plied Webster Lake since 1929, replacing an earlier DIXIE of 1914. These boats were built by Ohio River ferryboat captain Joseph Breeck of Lamb, IN.

Steve began working as a deckhand aboard the DIXIE in 1977. He was promoted to captain in 1983 and worked in that capacity until 1986 when his Computer Science degree led him into the field of CAD/CAM software. In 1999 Steve traveled to Lamb to meet Captain Breeck's descendants and get more information about the DIXIE's builder. While there Steve noticed property for sale which, coincidentally, he later purchased.

Steve met his wife Barbara aboard the DELTA QUEEN in May 2000. They were married in June 2001. Barbara is an author in her own right, having written *Greetings From Beautiful River* and *Beatty's Navy*. She has also revised and edited Frank Grayson's *Thrills of the Historic Ohio River*, and copy edited several other river-related books for various authors.


After moving to Lamb in 2000, Steve acquired the DONALD B, a 1923 sternwheel towboat, which he restored and renamed BARBARA H. Like the DELTA QUEEN and BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, the BARBARA H is among a very select group of vessels that have been designated National Historic Landmarks. Steve and Barbara reside in the former home of Captain Leon and Alma Ash, at Lamb. When not marketing his CAD software, Steve can often be found maintaining the BARBARA H and her moorings. 

News from Ohio River Museum

by Floyd Barmann

The Ohio River Museum would like to extend a special invitation to S&D to play a significant part in the development and implementation of a new river festival planned for the museum next summer. Slated for Saturday and Sunday August 6-7 on the grounds of the museum, the **INLAND WATERWAYS FESTIVAL** promises to be the largest undertaking by the Friends of the Museums in Marietta since assuming management of the museums last fall. If successful, this initial event will become a major annual fundraiser. It will also honor and promote the importance of rivers in the development of the nation.

We are looking for people who are willing to share their passion for our inland waterways by bringing and displaying historic boats (both models and full-sized), assist in a tent for S&D, participate in story-telling, and help in running games and other river-related activities. As of this writing we have already scheduled many activities which will be described in the March issue of the REFLECTOR and may be accessed on the S&D website at www.s-and-d.org.

If you are a "behind the scenes" person or someone who is willing to be actively involved during the festival (supervise an event, be a first person re-enactor or recommend someone who is) or be on a committee, contact Glenna Hoff at 740-373-3750 or email at ghoff@campusmartiusmuseum.org. 


Name That Tune

Mention was made in John Fryant's Annual Meeting Report that the song *Wildwood Flower* was performed in memory of Capt. Nelson Jones. Two other performers also offered calliope tunes that afternoon of a more obscure origin, and in fact, neither we nor anyone else we have spoken to are able to come up with names for these pieces. A pair of custom-made ear plugs will be awarded to anyone identifying the name of Dave Morecraft's rendition of a beautifully melodic waltz. Dave first heard it performed in a vintage recording by Homer

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Oral Histories Project at the National River Halls of Fame

John "Corky" Bickel, president of the National Rivers Hall of Fame at the Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium, was on deck at the Annual Meeting to give S&D an update on things at Dubuque. Corky's father John was the founder of the Hall of Fame, and from its beginning in 1984, he envisioned a place where the stories of men and women of our nation's rivers could be collected and shared. Four years ago the J. Mack Gamble Fund generously supported the NRHOF's Oral History Project, which made that vision come to life by providing the means to make audiotape and videotape interviews of river people. To date, nearly 200 interviews have been recorded, transcribed and archived. Included in that group are interviews conducted by Museum volunteers and Board members, as well as a collection of audio tapes made by local radio newscaster Gordie Kilgore. The contents of the collection was expanded this past summer when Jane Curry selected the Museum as the repository for all of her taped interviews with river pilots and captains included in her book *The River's in My Blood*.

Corky's report concluded with a request for assistance in identifying river people who need to be interviewed, and also for volunteer help in conducting those interviews in the various river locales around the country. The NRHOF has a packet of information available to assist potential interviewers. On a bittersweet note, the urgency of capturing these remembrances as soon as possible was brought to mind by the recent passing of Capt. Charles Stone and Capt. Nelson Jones. Further information about the Oral History Project is available by contacting the National Mississippi River Museum at 350 East 3rd Street, Dubuque, IA 52001, by phone at (800) 226-3369, or by going online to the www.mississippirivermuseum.com/aboutus_archives.cfm website. 



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S&D Marches On

Report of the 71st Annual Meeting

by John Fryant

The seventy-first annual meeting of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen was held on September 17 and 18, 2010 at the historic Hotel Lafayette in downtown Marietta, OH. This year's event was highlighted by the return of the ninety-two year old sternwheel towboat W.P. SNYDER, JR. to her longtime home port at the Ohio River Museum. She had been absent for the past ten months having her hull completely restored. Her big sternwheel also sported all new wood parts, although they have not yet been painted.

The weekend gathering informally opened on Friday morning when the SNYDER was returned to her mooring at the Ohio River Museum, accompanied by calliope music from the Amherst-Madison whistle barge which had come up under tow of the sternwheel LAURA J. The regular Friday evening event was the mixer in the Lafayette's Sternwheeler Room with approximately seventy members present. The highlight of this gathering was an outstanding PowerPoint presentation given by Mr. Fred Smith of the Ohio Historical Society. This covered the complete process of the SNYDER's 1.4 million dollar hull restoration and the challenges encountered in the process. Retired Coast Guard Commander Jack Deck assisted in the presentation and answered many of the member's questions afterward.

Saturday's events opened with the annual business meeting led by Board of Governors chairman Capt. Bill Judd. Reports were heard from the organization's three chapters as well as the Inland Rivers Library in Cincinnati, the Pott Library in St. Louis and the Howard Steamboat Museum. Announcement was made that the program speaker David Tschiggfrie had been appointed to the position of Editor of the *S&D REFLECTOR*.

Mr. Floyd A. Barmann, the new Administrator of the Campus Martius and Ohio River Museums, reported to the members that both museums' attendance was up considerably from last year now

that the buildings are open five days per week. This has been due to the takeover of the operation by the newly formed Friends of the Museums. Upon being introduced to Mr. Barmann, I was surprised to learn that we share some common background in being native sons of Springfield, OH. Having learned that, I'm sure that the museums will continue to be in good hands.

The morning's events concluded with the election of Officers and two Board of Governors members. All of the present officers were re-elected by unanimous vote for another term. A vacancy on the Board was filled by the appointment of Taylor Abbott, organizer of the new river museum in Clarington, OH, to complete the term of John H. White, Jr. who had resigned. During the election yours truly was nominated from the floor (and later elected) to run for the remaining position held by Capt. David Smith which was up for re-election.

Saturday afternoon was filled with several events, all of which took place at the Ohio River Museum. A picnic-style box lunch was served outside on the museum grounds, complete with live music by the Athens (OH) High Society Dixieland Band. At 1:00 PM inside the Museum, members were treated to the first half of David Tschiggfrie's wonderful program on the history of the IDLEWILD/AVALON, the nation's last tramp excursion steamboat (now the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE). After the program, a formal presentation was held outside to welcome the SNYDER home. Master of ceremonies for the occasion was Dr. Jean Scott, President of Marietta College. Other speakers included the Honorable Michael Mullen, Mayor of Marietta and Ohio's First Lady, Mrs. Frances Strickland. Mrs. Strickland announced that the SNYDER has been given an additional grant of \$736,000 for further restoration work on her superstructure and electrical system. A local match of \$222,000 will be required for the grant to go through. The Ohio Historical Society is also seeking an additional \$245,000 to fund an endowment for ongoing maintenance of the SNYDER.



A ragtag collection of river rats (aka former DELTA QUEEN crew) assembled for a group shot. From left to right: Bela Berty, Sharon and Capt. Bob Reynolds, Fred Carmichael, Capt. Jim Blum, your editor, and Capt. Gabe Chengery.

Photo courtesy Fred Carmichael

Don't know what was going on at this moment, but had to have been pretty interesting: Connie and Gary Frommelt are engrossed in the goings-on Saturday afternoon at the Ohio River Museum.

Photo courtesy Fred Carmichael



Just a portion of the crowd that gathered on the museum grounds, viewed from the deck of the steam barge ANNA MARIE. Would-be calliopists were obliged to walk the plank prior to performing.

Photo courtesy Jonathan Tschiggfrie

This photo spread, featuring “notes from the weekend,” displays some highlights from Saturday’s impromptu calliope concert. To the right, Capt. “Doc” Hawley reprises his career at the vintage Nichol calliope on the AVALON as he plays Capt. Nelson Jones’ favorite tune, “Wildwood Flower...”

Photo courtesy John Fryant



... on an authentic Nichol replica, the first of its kind built by David Morecraft of Peru, IN, seen here making adjustments to the middle E^b on the instrument aboard the steam barge ANNA MARIE. Dave would join in serenading the S&D crowd with Capt. Hawley, Capt. Gabe Chengery, and others ...

... including his son, Zach, pictured here. Zach and Jonathan Tschiggfrie, two up-and-coming young calliopists, also inflicted musical mayhem upon the crowd, and indeed upon anyone within earshot.

Photos courtesy Jonathan Tschiggfrie





A small portion of the attendees at the Saturday afternoon program at the Ohio River Museum. Part one of the program “Paddlin’ into the Past” detailed the history of the IDLEWILD and her conversion into the tramp steamer AVALON.

Photo courtesy John Fryant

W. P. SNYDER from the deck of the LAURA J after the welcoming program for the veteran towboat and the memorial ceremony for Capt. Nelson Jones. Clearly visible is the SNYDER’s newly restored hull, preserving what may have been an original Thomas Rees Tarn design (see “Winter on the Upper Mississippi,” page 23).

Photo courtesy Jonathan Tschiggfrie



Close-up of the SNYDER’s completely rebuilt sternwheel, measuring 21 feet in diameter, 29 feet in length, with a 36 inch dip. Together with the new hull, these renovations will ensure that the towboat will welcome museum visitors well into the future.

Photo courtesy John Fryant



Planting the memorial white Dogwood tree in honor of Capt. Nelson Jones on the grounds of the Ohio River Museum.

Photo courtesy Barb Hameister



Michael Jones, Ruth Guenther and Bill Hindman pose alongside the SNYDER after her homecoming.

Photo courtesy Barb Hameister

Capt. Gabe Chengery, Capt. Jim Blum, Corky Bickel, Capt. Doc Hawley, and Gary Frommelt gathered at Saturday night's banquet before the evening's program on the AVALON.

Photo courtesy Capt. Jim Blum



continued from **page 8**

Former S&D President J. W. “Woody” Rutter then gave some reminiscences of the SNYDER’s last trip under her own power from Pittsburgh to Marietta in the Summer of 1955. Later, Woody showed a DVD in the museum made from 8mm color film he had shot during that memorable trip.

After the Welcoming program, a dogwood tree was planted on the museum grounds in memory of Capt. Nelson Jones, longtime S&D member, leader in the river transportation industry and a great friend and benefactor to the Ohio River Museum. Nelson’s wife Robyn, his father, Charles T. Jones, and other family members were present. The Jones family had bought the sternwheeler LAURA J. with the whistle barge up from Charleston, WV. During the course of the afternoon an impromptu calliope



A salute in memory of Capt. Nelson Jones from the HERBERT E. JONES’ whistle, blown by Dave Morecraft.

Photo courtesy Jonathan Tschiggfrie

concert and whistle blow was held, featuring Capt. Clarke “Doc” Hawley, Dave and Zach Morecraft, Jonathan Tschiggfrie, and Capt. Gabe Chengery at the keyboard.

Among the other steamboat notables on hand for the meeting were Capt. Jim Blum and his wife Annie, and John “Corky” Bickel and wife Med from the Upper Mississippi. Also present were former Delta Queen Steamboat Co. Riverlorian “Steamboat Mary” Sward Charlton and Chief Engineer Gary Frommelt and his wife Connie. The Ohio River was well-represented by former S&D President G. W. “Jerry” Sutphin, his wife Lenora and former Secretary Dick Prater and his wife Nancy. As it is nearly impossible to see and greet everyone at one of these gatherings, my apologies for not mentioning others of the river family who were present.

Saturday evening’s events began with the traditional happy hour and banquet at the Hotel Lafayette. I counted ninety-two in attendance for the meal and several others came in later for the program. After the dinner David Tschiggfrie presented the second half of his outstanding program on the IDLEWILD/AVALON. Both parts of this pre-recorded slide presentation were highlighted with sound clips from former captains and crew of the boat, recordings of the engines, wheel, whistle and roof bell and music from the boat’s original calliope. Dave and son Jonathan are to be congratulated on the thorough research and preparation that went into this excellent presentation.

After the program, the election results were announced and the meeting was closed. As usual, there was much “afterglow” following the formal meeting, as members retired to the lobby and hotel bar. I came away from the event with a positive feeling that the organization has turned a corner and is now headed for better days. The S&D REFLECTOR is promised to be “back on track” by December 2010. New editor David Tschiggfrie and the officers and Board members urge the support and contributions of the membership in returning the REFLECTOR to its regular quarterly issues. To those who missed the seventy-first annual meeting, I urge you to join us as we gather for next year’s event. 🎪

An Epistle to the Brethren

A Letter from Capt. Joseph Streckfus

One of the icons in the steamboat business of the past century was the Streckfus family – father and four sons. These rivermen and their business soon became synonymous with excursion steamboating on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Illinois, spanning over eight decades. To characterize the Streckfus family as autocratic, tight-lipped and prone to keeping their own counsel is an exercise in understatement. As Alan Bates observed, “The Streckfi, as Doc calls them, were a pretty irascible bunch. All the Streckfuses were paranoid about money and passenger counts. Only relatives were allowed to handle cash. Secrecy was a full-blown fetish with them.” And yet, for all their personality traits and idiosyncrasies, this family was pre-eminently successful and perfected the art of operating an excursion boat fleet.

When a rare copy of a 1928 family letter regarding proposed construction of a new vessel surfaced recently, it provided “an intriguing glimpse into the management style of the Streckfus clan and laid out what had to be considered in the excursion business so popular and lucrative at the time,” according to Woody Rutter.

This letter’s existence and its contents were made available to the REFLECTOR by Capt. Doc Hawley. In forwarding the 8-page letter to us, Doc wrote: “The enclosed letter is a revelation, and was among other letters, some photos and harbor maps. All this passed to me by Capt. Verne Streckfus during a visit to his home in 1984. This 1928 memo indicates interest in steel hulls and diesel engines six years before acquiring and converting the PREISIDENT in 1933 and ALBATROSS in 1937. The letter even mentions the ISLAND QUEEN, which dared to compete on the Mississippi.”

The author of the letter is General Manager Capt. Joe Streckfus, who writes to his three younger brothers, seeking their input on the design and outfitting of one or two proposed vessels (steam or diesel) to update their fleet of wooden hulled steamers. His first and last admonition is that they do their homework and make certain they address

needs and not wants. Laying out in precise and lengthy detail each consideration to be weighed and decided upon, the letter ends with a stern charge to his siblings:

“I don’t want replies coming back in generalities, such as, it is a cinch that we want a boat or need a boat or we want a boat big enough for the trade but not too big. Boil your answer down to concrete facts so that I can put two and two together and form a conclusion so that when we go to a draftsman we can tell him we want a boat so many feet long ... [and here he launches into a catalog of specific requirements suggested by a forty-item list he had previously enumerated]. When you get down to concrete figures like the above, you can get somewhere with a draftsman. They can’t give us any ideas that I know of to give us a first-class boat ... so we can’t expect any architect or builder to work out these things for us. We have to get them ourselves. If we can’t work them out in our own minds how in the name can we expect some outsider who has never been aboard an excursion boat or a boat of this size and type to tell us how it ought to be?”

Alan Bates again: “His final admonition to communicate their ideas in detail was wise. Some of the details would be thrown out by designers for reasons of law, stability, and efficiency, but above the main deck the Streckfuses should be listened to.” Woody further noted that an introduction to the Streckfus family and its success in developing the tramping trade would be necessary for a fuller appreciation of the problems detailed in the letter. Since the REFLECTOR has not yet published a comprehensive story about the Streckfus Line, we use the discovery of this letter to introduce the feature story of this family’s history in the article which follows.

Mrs. Ann Blum has worked for years for the Streckfus family and currently is reading and archiving all the company and family correspondence in the Capt. Bill Carroll Collection at St. Louis. That work has made it possible for her to suggest a reason why their company was the longest-lasting family owned excursion business on the Mississippi/Ohio River system. Annie wrote to us: “The success of this family was not blind luck. They used many skills which can be summed up with the words experience, confidence, openness to learning and research. Time on the river and with

boats, learning from mistakes and poor judgments led to experience. Experience, learning about boats and the needs of the buying public led to confidence. So one boat led to another until they built their own boat. Confidence does not mean smugness. New ideas were not scoffed at because as some would say, 'We will stay with what we have always done.' On the other hand, no new idea was immediately seized upon simply because it was a novelty. Masterful boat handling and attention to safety, cleanliness and class combined with experience, confidence, openness to learning and research. It was a powerful mix that made for successful results." Judy Patsch's article on the Streckfus Family follows on page 16. 🕒

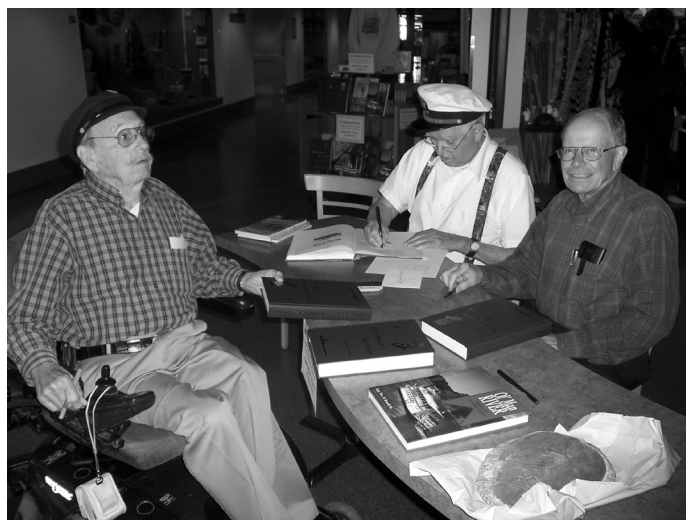
The full text of the letter, along with complete commentaries by Capt. Alan Bates, Capt. Doc Hawley, and Ann Blum, can be read on our website at www.s-and-d.org.

Capt. Alan Bates Honored

Receives National Rivers Hall of Fame Achievement Award



On April 30, Capt. Alan Bates received the Achievement Award from the National Rivers Hall of Fame in Dubuque. Present at that banquet was Mat Stage and his grandfather from Mayville, NY on the shores of Chautauqua Lake. The family operates the little sternwheel steamer CHAUTAUQUA BELLE there in the northwest corner of the state. The CB was the first steamboat designed by Alan, and Mat presented him with a plaque featuring an image of the boat cast in brass, and affixed to a section from the boat's oak bucket boards. Photos of that little beauty are printed with the article "Steamboat Views from New York State" on page 22 of this issue.



The following day found Alan, Capt. Charlie Lehman, and Capt. Bill Bowell at the Museum autographing copies of their river books for guests and visitors. Alan tells us that he has stopped selling copies of his *Engineroom Cyclopædium* and *Western Rivers Cyclopædium*, but they are available at the Howard Museum. If you don't have a copy, you've missed out on two of the most authoritative volumes about steamboats to come down the pike in a long while. Alan advises us that *Moonlite* at 8:30 is close to selling out and will not be reprinted. 🕒



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Excursion Boating's First Family

A Streckfus Family History

by Judy Patsch

Streckfus Steamers' policy was not only to keep up-to-date, but a day ahead of everyone else in the steamboat business. The letter written by Capt. Joe reflects that forward thinking, which was evident from the company's beginning and which made Streckfus Steamers the largest excursion boat line on the rivers in the early 20th century. Although large and geographically spread out, Streckfus Steamers was truly a family enterprise. Following is a brief profile of this enigmatic Streckfus clan, to whom I refer as the "Streckfi."

John (The Commodore) 1856-1925

The first of the steamboating Streckfi, John was born to Balthazar and Anna Marie Streckfus in 1856. His parents had emigrated from Bavaria

in 1852. They arrived in New Orleans and made their way up the Mississippi River to Edgington, Illinois, a farming community south of Rock Island. Balthazar combined farming and wagon making in his early Illinois years. Young son John once accompanied Balthazar into Rock Island. John tried to stow away on the steamboat carrying his father's sacks of corn, in order to see the steam machinery in operation. This was one of John's few failures, as his father quickly found him and administered a less than happy levee remembrance to his son. But this interest in steamboats would surface again a decade later and be the start of a steamboat company unmatched by its contemporaries.

Balthazar moved the family into Rock Island, where he established a very successful wagon shop. Several years later he opened a grocery store for his sons to operate. Although John had two brothers and two sisters, he soon became the sole proprietor when his brothers moved to Kansas. John often delivered groceries to customers, many of whom lived a few miles downriver. His childhood fascination with the steamboat generated the idea to transport these goods and customers via the river. He bought the FREDDIE in 1884 and not only delivered groceries, but transported and sold farmers' grain and produce. He saw the kind of service that was needed and supplied it well and efficiently. This ingenuity led to the development of the Acme Packet Company in 1893. Keeping a day ahead of everybody else, John saw the decline of the packet business and had a boat built for day trade and excursions at night. The JS was built at Howard Shipyards in 1901 and featured a ballroom on the boiler deck rather than passenger cabins. It was quickly determined that the day trade trips were not going to be profitable or timely, so the JS became exclusively an excursion boat which had great success until its fiery demise in 1910. John bought the laid up boats and facilities of the Diamond Jo Line to replace the JS, and gradually converted them from packets to excursion boats. With this acquisition, the Streckfus Steamboat Lines Company was incorporated that year. John

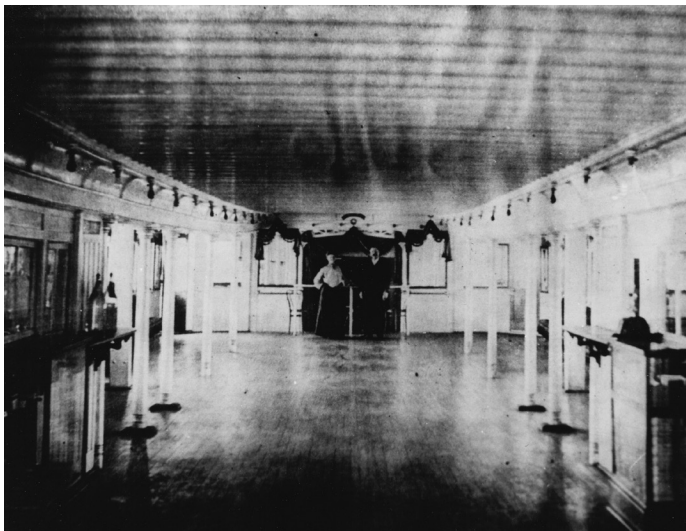


CAPT. JOHN STRECKFUS, SR.
HE WAS KNOWN AS "COMMODORE"
SHOWN HERE ON THE J.S.
FEB. 25, 1924

Commodore John Streckfus on the J.S. DELUXE in 1924, one year before his death. (All photos not otherwise credited are from the collection of Judy Patsch.)

was President of the company until his death in 1925. He was called Commodore for two reasons: to recognize his ownership of a fleet of steamboats, and to differentiate him from his sons, all of whom became Captains.

John married Theresa Bartemeier in 1880. This union produced nine children: Elizabeth Mary, Anna Cecelia, Mary Theresa Anna, Joseph Leo, Roy Michael, John Nicholas, Theresa Agnes, Verne Walter, and Nina Agnes. All seven of the children who reached adulthood worked on the boats, and



Theresa and the Commodore admiring the dance floor on their new boat, the sternwheel J.S.

the children all took violin lessons, as John was a 'fiddler' himself. He also provided gymnastic equipment and boxing gloves for his sons to use in the attic of their three story home in Rock Island. John moved the company headquarters and family home to St. Louis in 1915 - but he, wife Theresa, and daughters Theresa and Nina are buried in Rock Island's Calvary Cemetery. John was not one to forget his origins. By accounts from his family, customers, and fellow rivermen, he was strong-willed but yet had a pleasant disposition and was well-respected up and down the river. When all his children were working on the boats, he admonished them: If you can't get along together, how do you expect to get along with outsiders?

2nd Generation

John and Theresa had nine children. Two daughters died in childhood: Theresa Agnes lived only a few days after her birth in 1894, and Nina

Agnes, born in 1897, died at age 10 from diphtheria.

Elizabeth Mary "Lillie May" 1881 She married Fowler Manning who was a Traffic Manager for the company. They moved to New York and had one son. Prior to her marriage she worked on the boats as purser, as did all the girls. Lillie May was also an expert calliope player.

Anna Cecelia 1883 She married Edward Manthey. They had one daughter and two sons and resided in New Orleans. Today's Mantheys include two riverboat captains.

Mary Theresa Anna 1885 "May" never married and lived in Clayton, MO. She was the unofficial family historian and is remembered by many of today's generation, as she lived until 1973.



Streckfus family portrait showing Capt. and Mrs. John Streckfus and their children. From left: John Nicholas, Roy, the Commodore, Elizabeth (Lillie May), Verne, Joseph, Theresa, Anna, Mary (May). (From the Collection of The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County)

Joseph Leo 1887 Joe married Lola Laux. They had three daughters. Joe was the eldest son and as such assumed the Presidency of the company upon his father's death in 1925, and remained in that position until his death in 1960. He concurrently captained the St. Louis-based boats. Joe attended Notre Dame for two years and was then brought home to work in the company. His father apparently sensed this move would be more profitable than continuing to 'study' at college. While a college student, he did learn to play the calliope, a requirement set by his father. Joe was the music director for the company,

hiring the orchestras, setting their performance criteria, and conducting their rehearsals. Joe had both Captain and Engineer licenses. He was reportedly 'all business' and rather gruff at times. In the 1940s he actually fired his brothers Roy and Verne for a time - he wanted to continue to run the CAPITOL in the New Orleans harbor and it was Roy's opinion as her Captain that her wooden hull was no longer safe in that venue. Verne agreed with Roy's assessment and they were dismissed, but later rehired. There are two licensed officers in the current generation of Joe's family.



Of the three Streckfus homes in Rock Island, this is the only one remaining, at 908 4th Avenue. Balthazar, the Commodore's father, built this house across the street from his wagon works.

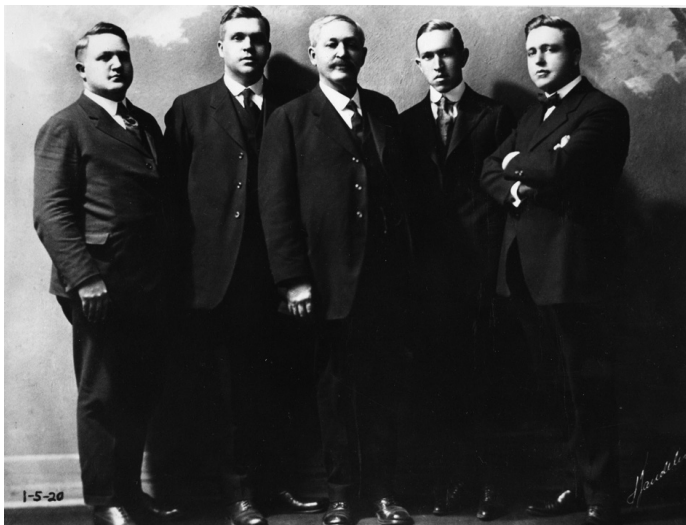
Roy Michael 1888 Roy married Isabel McPartland. They had six children: four sons and two daughters. Roy was the only child to have sons, thus any current day surnamed Streckfus is from Roy's lineage. He also held both Captain and Engineer licenses. Roy was President of the company from 1960-68 and had been the Captain of the CAPITOL for many years. Mary Otte, who worked as Purser on the JS DELUXE and the CAPITOL, recalls Roy as being a very congenial man. She and Capt. Roy would go to the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans for Sunday brunch, where the adjoining table would usually seat the Longs, a family high in Louisiana politics. Roy was well-known by the Longs and often invited young Russell

(later U.S. Senator Russell) to ride the CAPITOL. Roy was ignominiously fired by brother Joe when he disagreed about continuing to run the aging CAPITOL in the New Orleans harbor, but was rehired shortly thereafter. There are five captains in the current generations of Roy's family. While one often categorizes the Streckfus into the St. Louis branch and the New Orleans branch, Roy was quite the 'floater'. He lived on the SIDNEY, tramped on the CAPITOL, worked aboard during her winters in New Orleans, and alternated with brother Verne between the PRESIDENT in New Orleans and the ADMIRAL in St. Louis. Yet Roy is buried in neither town - his gravesite is in Burlington, IA, his wife's hometown.

John Nicholas 1891 Arguably the least well-known of the brothers, John married Shirley Wellnits at age 43. They had no children. In 1910 John was a starter on Rock Island High School's basketball team which finished second in the state. He held Master, Pilot, and Engineer licenses. John captained the St. Louis-based boats and was the superintendent for the construction of the PRESIDENT, and supervised the dismantling of the WASHINGTON, JS DELUXE, and CAPITOL. He was Captain on the PRESIDENT's first public trip and seven years later had the honor of taking the ADMIRAL out on her inaugural trip. He was considered a most kind and affable man, easy to work for. Mary Otte recalls being invited by Shirley to a luncheon. The entertainment was making decorative centerpieces - which were then taken and used on the JS DELUXE. Innovative was one term to describe the Streckfus, frugal was another! John was the first of the brothers to die, at the early age of 57.

Theresa Agnes 1894 Theresa lived for only 19 days. She is buried in the family plot in Rock Island.

Verne Walter 1895 Verne married Louise McCants. They had two daughters. Verne was easy to spot in family photos - while his brothers and father all had a stout Germanic build, Verne was quite slender. Verne was aboard the JS when she burned and sank in 1910 and told Capt. Doc Hawley he remembered seeing the wheel continue to turn as the boat disintegrated. Verne was responsible for getting Louis Armstrong onto the SIDNEY. He



Roy, Joe, the Commodore, Verne, and John Nicholas at Theresa's funeral on January 5, 1920. (From the Collection of The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County)

visited a club to hear him play, and later paid to get Louie's horn out of a pawn shop so he could join the SIDNEY's band. In his early years, Verne captained the tramping boats, but once the PRESIDENT settled in New Orleans, so did he. He was the Head of the New Orleans Streckfus operations (after having been previously fired with brother Roy over the CAPITOL flap). Upon Roy's death in 1968, the company's Presidency was Verne's, but he refused it and turned it over to Joe's son William. While many boatmen could be territorial and adversarial to competition, Verne was benevolent. He allowed Capt. Doc to earn his New Orleans harbor license by steering the PRESIDENT, and remarked when the NATCHEZ started in the NOLA harbor trade that while he didn't like to be beaten by competition, it was an honor to have such gentlemen as the Dows and Doc as the competitors. Capt. Verne died in 1984, the last surviving child of the Commodore.

Nina Agnes 1897 Nina died at the age of 10 from diphtheria. She is buried with her parents and sister Theresa in Rock Island.

3rd Generation

From this generation on, only those Streckfi who worked on the river will be noted. Many of the children worked on the family boats during their childhood, but this will focus on those who continued to make the river a career.

Joe had three daughters: Jeanne (Meesey),

Maysie (Schreier) and **Elizabeth (Carroll)**. Elizabeth, known as Betty, earned her Pilot license working on the tugboat SUSIE HAZARD. Betty married **William Carroll**, who became one of the Captains on the ADMIRAL. In later years Capt. Carroll was well known for chronicling the family history and making presentations about the Streckfi in the St. Louis area. He donated his vast steamboat collection to the Mercantile Library at the UMSL campus. One event too incredible and sad to leave out of this family history: Maysie and Harold Schreier had 10 children. When Harold was driving to the hospital with their first two daughters to bring Maysie and the new baby home, they were in an accident - both daughters in the car were killed.

Roy had six children. All four sons earned their Captain's license.

John Curran was the eldest. He was ADMIRAL Captain for five years before moving to New Orleans.

Roy M. Jr. was Captain of the PRESIDENT in New Orleans.

Robert became a NOBRA (New Orleans Baton Rouge) ship pilot.

William was Captain of the ADMIRAL and became the company President in 1968. Several



The family plot in Calvary Cemetery in Rock Island. The Commodore, his wife Theresa, and their daughters Theresa and Nina are buried here. Note there is no river insignia on the stone, just a simple cross. The Commodore's parents are buried about 100 yards to the north of this plot.

years after the ADMIRAL ceased operating, he was instrumental in the operation of the CASINO QUEEN in East St. Louis. Capt. Bill ran Master on the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN for several weeks in 2005.

4th generation

Anna Manthey's children didn't become rivermen, but a granddaughter, **Joy Manthey**, has her Captain's license and has been working on the river all her life. Joy began, as most Streckfi did, working as a child in concessions. In addition to her popcorn station on the PRESIDENT, it was her duty to open or close windows on the stern when the PRESIDENT was turning on a windy day. Joy earned her Captain's license and ran the SAM CLEMENS in Baton Rouge with her cousin. Joy brought the PRESIDENT to Davenport to begin its casino days and was one of its Captains when it still cruised. She is now with Kirby Marine, often



A fourth generation Streckfus at work: Capt. Joy Manthey in the PRESIDENT's pilothouse, Davenport, IA, 1991.

running the Intracoastal routes on the Gulf Coast.

Roy's branch has four grandsons and one granddaughter who earned their licenses:

John Curran Jr. operated the SAM CLEMENS in Baton Rouge with cousin Joy, but is no longer employed on the river.

Verne Chester (Roy M. Jr.'s son), is a NOBRA ship pilot along with his cousins **Robert** and **Steven** (Robert's sons). Prior to becoming a NOBRA pilot, Verne was pilot on the NATCHEZ, CREOLE QUEEN, and PRESIDENT in New Orleans. He also worked the Gov. Nichol traffic light. One evening he received a call from the Steamer CAPITOL - it was one of the few times Capt. Verne was speechless, but he soon figured out who was on the radio, calling from her French Quarter apartment.

Lisa is a double ender - she has both Captain and Engineer licenses. For several years she worked as Engineer on a gambling boat in Illinois, then later ran as Pilot on the DELTA QUEEN. In fact, in 2005 she was Pilot on the DQ while her father Bill was Master on the MQ. Unfortunately they never were able to get scheduled to work together. Lisa is now working on one of the gaming boats on Lake Michigan and was previously co-owner of a B&B in Indiana.

Verne's grandson **George Streckfus Clark** has been a towboat pilot for Exxon.

5th generation

Troy Manthey is the great-grandson of Anna, thus the great-great grandson of the Commodore. For years he was Captain of the CREOLE QUEEN and CAJUN QUEEN in New Orleans. He is now owner of a dinner cruise yacht in Tamp, FL.

The Streckfus family has been a part of the Mississippi River scene for over 150 years and has left an indelible mark on steamboating history. Their business acumen and strong family ties made them into an icon of many parts, but with one goal - to stay ahead of the crowd. They stayed ahead and they stand above, even today. 🕒

Collision on the River

by Steve and Barbara Huffman

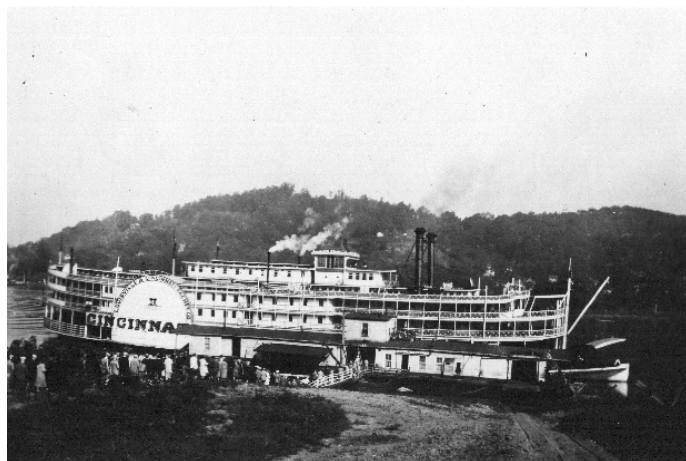
Imagine being jolted awake by the sound of a large sidewheel steamboat colliding with a sternwheel towboat! That is what happened one night in 1928, near Carrollton, Kentucky. It was said that this accident awoke people along the river more than a mile away. Captain Leon Ash's home was within a mile of this accident. Captain Ash, who is best known for serving as Master of the U.S.E. IROQUOIS (T1209) and first Master of the steam towboat JASON (T1345), was an active S&D member until his death in 1964. Living in Leon's former home, we often wonder if he was among those who heard the collision that night, and perhaps responded.

One of the boats involved in the accident was the sternwheel towboat BELFONT. She was built in 1926 by the Marietta Manufacturing Company, Point Pleasant, WV for Belfont Iron Works. Her steel hull measured 100' by 24', powered by a 360-hp Fairbanks-Morse Diesel engine. When she was new, Diesel power was just coming into use aboard towboats, and she was considered the most powerful Diesel sternwheeler on the rivers.

Her first regular captain was Campbell "Cappie" Beatty, father of well-known river salvageman, Captain John Beatty. Cappie took delivery of the BELFONT in 1926. During the BELFONT's early years she would make three round trips weekly up the Licking River to Andrews Steel with loads of pig iron. By the spring of 1928 she was making

trips as far south as Louisville and Memphis, under contract to Federal Barge Line.

Shortly after midnight on May 24, 1928, the sidewheel packet CINCINNATI (1033; later known as the PRESIDENT) backed away from the Carrollton, KY wharf and headed downstream toward Louisville. Minutes later, the BELFONT, running full ahead, broad-sided the big steamer immediately forward of her port wheelhouse,



resulting in the death of Assistant Engineer Homer Johnston aboard the CINCINNATI. Two other crew members of the CINCINNATI were badly scalded. The collision occurred near Notch Lick, about two miles below Carrollton, KY. Using only her starboard engine, the CINCINNATI steamed to Louisville for repairs and was back on her regular schedule within 24 hours.

Cappie and 14-year-old John Beatty had disembarked from the BELFONT only a few hours prior to the accident. The BELFONT, suffering only minor damages from the collision, was repaired, sold to Pure Oil Company, and renamed R. H. McELROY JR. In 1939 she was relocated from the Tombigbee and Mobile rivers to the Cape Fear River area. During the War she gained some notoriety for making a special trip up the Atlantic Coast towing three gasoline barges. By 1945 she was back on the Kanawha River and renamed L. M. SMITH. In 1956 she was sold to Merdie Boggs & Sons, of Flatwoods, KY and renamed F. L. BOWERS. She was sold again in 1960 to Capt. Harry F. White, of Belle, WV who dismantled her in 1962. ⓘ



Photos from the Collection of The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

The BELFONT is pictured in the 2011 Sternwheel Towboat Calendar. For more information, see page 33.

Steamboat Views from New York State

While heading to New England after S&D weekend, your editor and wife Debbie spent some pleasant fall days in New York State. A visit to the Chemung County Historical Museum in Elmira surprised us with a lobby display of half of the pilotwheel from the former Union Barge Line towboat SAM CRAIG. A nearby plaque reported



the wheel had previously taken up residence in the Mark Twain Hotel. The whereabouts of its other half is unknown to us, and perhaps one of our readers can supply the missing details. An e-mail to the good people at Elmira inquiring about the circumstances of the wheel's acquisition has provided no new information. One of Elmira's claims to fame is its location of the Samuel Clemens Family plot in Woodlawn Cemetery. Mrs. Clemens family, the Langdons, hailed from Elmira, and Sam spent many a summer authoring at the family's Quarry Farm on the outskirts of town and walking about the city's streets in his white suit.



Photo courtesy of the Murphy Library, UW-La Crosse.



On the return trip through the state, a brief visit was made to the shores of beautiful Chautauqua Lake at Mayville. The little steamer CHAUTAUQUA BELLE gently rocked at her landing as we arrived to greet her owner and operator, young Mat Stage. Alas, it was Friday and Mat was still away attending classes at the New York Maritime Academy, with no trips scheduled until the weekend. After some telephoning, we located Mat's uncle Paul and made a brief visit to offer our regards and to drop off a video of the JULIA BELLE SWAIN which Mat was interested in seeing. Capt. Roddy Hammett often referred to the JBS as a "pocket packet." The CB is an even more diminutive version of a classic Western Rivers steamer, thanks to the design of her architect, Alan Bates. The proof of that is evidenced in these photos. 🕒



In Our Next Issue:

*The Steamers of the Streckfus Fleet
Z-Drives and Paddlewheels
W. P. SNYDER on McGinnis Drydock
On the Trail of the DELTA QUEEN's Calliope*

Winter on the Upper Mississippi

Some of the most tragic images recorded on the Ohio River are those of the destruction of the CITY OF LOUISVILLE and CITY OF CINCINNATI by ice in January 1918. Albeit these were wood hulls that succumbed. However, the danger was no less real for steel-hulled steamers of a later generation. The covers of our December issue picture several well-known steamers during their winter lay-up in the 1930s on the Upper Mississippi. The navigation season above St. Louis extended from mid-March to mid-December, excepting annual periods of low water prior to the completion of the nine-foot channel, and boats in the off-season sought safe haven to avoid the dangers of ice. Some would head for the waters of southern climes, while others would seek shelter provided by sloughs and backwaters out of the main channel. And in a few cases, steamboats would seek refuge inside natural harbors.

On the Ohio River, where the topography of the river and valley lacked the maze of islands and backwaters of the Upper Mississippi, steamers would occasionally find some protection tied off below ice piers. Finding a winter home just upstream inside the mouth of smaller tributaries emptying into the Ohio was also a common practice. The covers of our December issue picture two winter hibernation spots just north of St. Louis and further upriver at Dubuque. As is so often the case with a steamboat picture and the scene depicted, there is more here than meets the eye, and thereby hangs a tale.

Longtime S&D pillar C. W. Stoll was a young college student, home in Louisville for the Christmas holidays. But it was now January 1935, and C. W. was headed north for the resumption of classes at Carleton College in Northfield, MN, just south of the Twin Cities. (I have often wondered how it was that C. W. chose to attend this prestigious school in the frozen tundra of Minnesota.) Stopping at St. Louis en route, he undoubtedly visited the offices of *The Waterways Journal* and its editor, Capt. Donald T. Wright. Also meeting him on the sixth day of January were compatriots in the Hot Stove Navigation League of America: Rudy Gerber, Ruth

Ferris, and Dick Lemen. Together they motored up to Alton Slough to visit the IDLEWILD, a summertime fixture on the Louisville riverfront running to Rose Island Amusement Park, and now bedded down for the winter.

Also tucked away in winter quarters were the CAPE GIRARDEAU and GOLDEN EAGLE of the Eagle Packet Company. None of the group realized that in just a few months, Capt. Buck Leyhe would sell his beautiful packet CAPE GIRARDEAU to Cincinnati's Greene Line, where she was destined to achieve tourist-boat fame as the GORDON C. GREENE. Ruth Ferris recalled how the quartet slogged through mud and slush to reach the boats that day, where they were greeted and allowed to board the steamers by the Watchman in charge.

Dick Lemen, future St. Louis photographer of great merit, continued to click the shutter as they moved from boat to boat, capturing the forlorn look of a laid-up steamboat and preserving the three images of the IDLEWILD presented in these pages. Meanwhile, an exuberant C. W. grabbed the rope on the CAPE's roof bell and gave several long, hard tugs. Although the sound of a steamboat roof bell is music to a steamboatman's ear, to the watchman it meant only one thing: FIRE! His reaction, presumably, was swift and predictable, and probably not fit for print in the pages of a family magazine like the *REFLECTOR*. Fearing they had worn out their welcome, the group beat a hasty retreat back to St. Louis for a shoe shine to remove



the frozen Mississippi mud before attending a birthday dinner party at the home of Capt. Wright. Fortunately for us, both the memories of that day and Dick Lemen's photos survive.

Jim Swift, writer and editor for *The Waterways Journal* and well-known for his Old Boat Column in that publication, penned an obituary for Dick at his passing on June 13, 2001. According to that tribute, Dick was born in East St. Louis, IL in 1917 and was valedictorian of his high school class in the same year as this notorious excursion to Alton Slough. He served with Greene Line in Cincinnati as a cub pilot and also as watchman on the GOLDEN EAGLE in his early twenties. Dick was single-minded in recording and preserving images and stories of steamboats, along with his friends Rudy Gerber and Ruth Ferris – a love that began when he took steamboat excursions with his mother and father as a child at St. Louis.

Approximately 3,000 glass plate negatives, ten boxes of photographic prints and 200 small film negatives were collected and archived by Dick during his lifetime. In addition to his prolific photographic work, he wrote novels about the Mississippi and Ohio, and filled numerous journals and notebooks. Many of the photos in Dick's collection consist of St. Louis scenes taken by a local photographer in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Focusing on the most significant details in each photo, and enlarging them to 11 by 14 inches, he was able to create a pictorial commentary on life along the river. His photographs have been exhibited at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, St. Louis's Mercantile Library, the St. Louis Public Library, and the Missouri Historical Society. After his passing, Dick's neighbor Theresa Majetic helped secure a permanent place for the Lemen Collection at the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque, where researchers and those who love the river and steamboats can marvel at his lifetime of work and photographic artistry.

The IDLEWILD pictured in these images reveals a boat that is not unlike the proverbial family axe: unquestionably the finest tool ever made and a marvel of longevity, having its handle replaced only three times and its blade twice. To those who would venture into the nebulous world of dating

a steamboat photo by the boat's appearance, Alan Bates cautions historians and others of that ilk that there is many a slip between the drawing board and the ship (or steamboat.) And that evolution never ends. The minor changes to a boat over succeeding years are legion, as captains, mates, and engineers rework the vessel in their own image. Boats evolve in subtle ways and changes occur throughout a season. All of these lead to genuine frustration in attempting to depict a boat or define her appearance at any given time. With the advantage of a specific date for these photos, we know that the IDLEWILD lost her scape pipes by 1935, her exhaust routed up the inside of her stacks. The lights outlining her decks, pilothouse, dome, mast and boom are all visible, probably placed in 1928 upon her arrival at St. Louis after her Memphis years. Stack feathers are gone, and so are her original bull rails, replaced with the picket fence and wood latticework enclosing the upper regions between main deck stanchions. Canvas tarps protect the boiler deck interior and searchlight from winter elements. It does not appear that any covering is in place on the stack tops.

Four hundred miles upriver, and turning back forty-three years on the calendar, the winter scenes now shift to the shores of the Ice Harbor at Dubuque. Pictured opposite bottom are the Diamond Jo Line packets SIDNEY (outboard) and MARY MORTON in 1892, frozen in at the mouth of the harbor adjacent the headquarters of the company. That two-story brick office building at the corner of Jones and Terminal Street still stands, and today serves as offices for Newt Marine Service. Note that the boom of one steamer has been unshipped, while that of the MARY serves to keep the two boats sparred out and clear of ice that may build up between their hulls. The SIDNEY's hull (5103) was built in 1880 at Murraysville, WV and the upper works completed at Wheeling, where she entered the Cincinnati-Wheeling trade. Capt. Way's notes indicate she was painted yellow at first, with colorful trim. She was sold to Diamond Jo in 1883 for \$23,000 and was promptly placed in the St. Louis to St. Paul run. The SIDNEY was popular on the Upper River, and was one of four remaining boats of the Diamond Jo fleet purchased by Capt. John Streckfus in 1911. She had the honor of being the first commercial steamer to pass through the new Keokuk Lock in 1913, followed closely by the

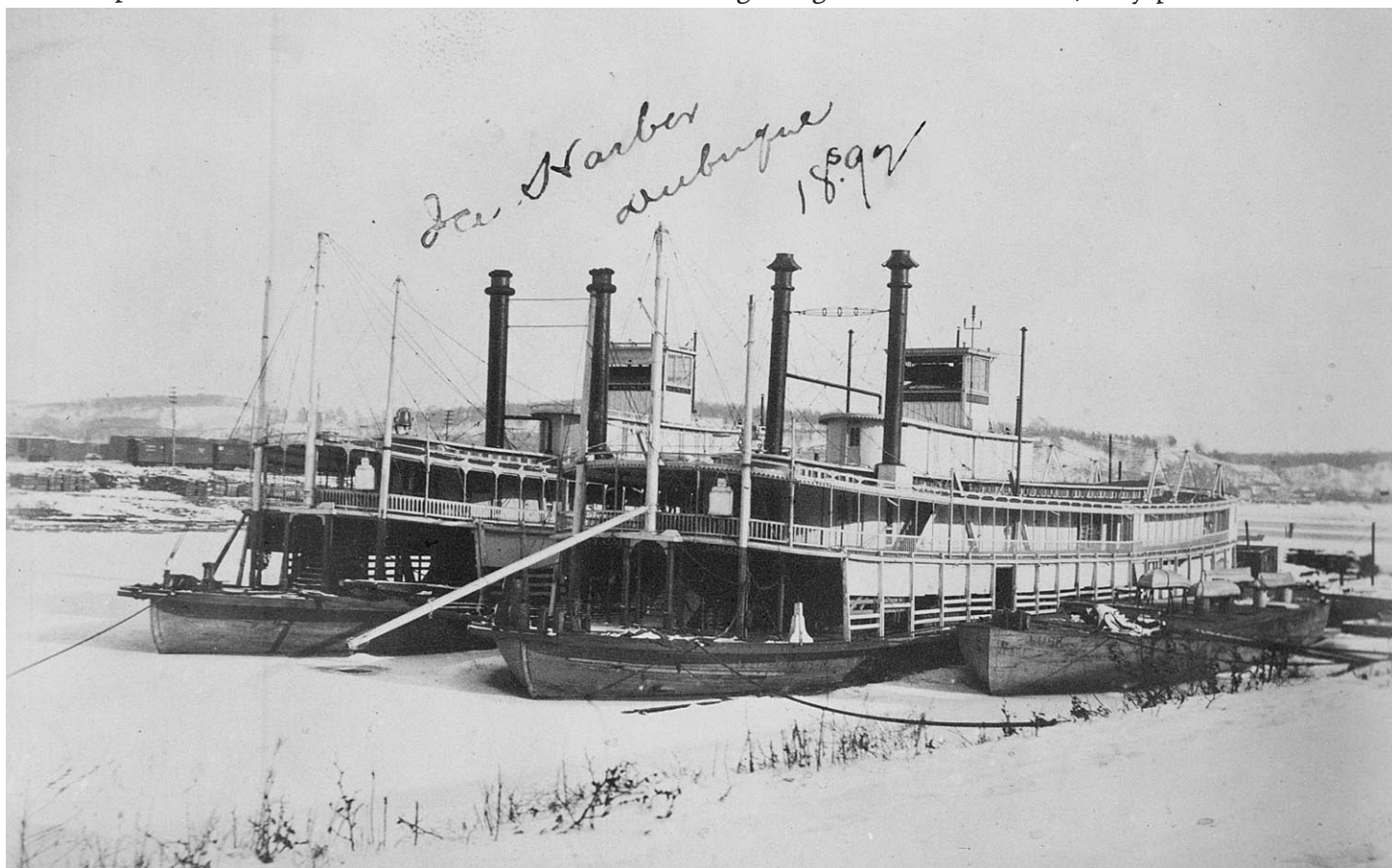
G.W.HILL. In 1921 she was converted into the excursion steamer WASHINGTON at Mound City, IL, and ended her days on the Ohio River under the watchful eye of Capts. Fred Way and Bill Pollock in the pilothouse.

The steamer MARY MORTON (3834) was built at the company's Eagle Point Boatyard in 1880 and served the Line for fifteen years. She was named in honor of Diamond Jo Reynold's wife, the former Mary Morton. On Sept. 10, 1892, just months before this photo was snapped, the boat had been snagged and sunk below Clarksville, MO. She was raised by Marine Superintendent John Killeen, who had her back on the ways at Eagle Point eighteen days after the accident for the meager sum of \$3000, "one of the quickest and best pieces of work on record," according to steamboat historian George Merrick. In 1897 she was sold to the Anchor Line, was snagged and sunk, a total loss, near Grand Tower, IL. A fine model of the sternwheeler was long displayed in the offices of the Waterways Journal in St. Louis, a gift of Capt. Killeen.

Looking ahead forty years, we arrive at the scene depicted on our back cover. Shown there are

six steam sternwheel towboats in winter layup, adjacent to the yards of Dubuque Boat and Boiler Company in the Ice Harbor in January 1932. From the right they are: ALTAIR, JOHN W. WEEKS, C. C. WEBBER, S. S. THORPE, and judging by the steel framework supporting the searchlights, JAMES W. GOOD and PATRICK J. HURLEY. The cupola appearing in the right background is atop the Illinois Central R.R. Passenger Depot. The Ice Harbor, named for the protection afforded wintering boats, was a natural harbor at Mile 580 on the Upper Mississippi, dating back to the days of the Northern Line, Davidson Line, Northwestern Line, Minnesota Packet Line, and Diamond Jo and Streckfus Lines.

The wood-hulled ALTAIR (T0119) was built in 1926 at the well-known boatyard in Wabasha, MN, 131.5 x 26.4 x 3.9 feet. Her two boilers powered engines with 12-inch cylinders and a six-foot stroke. Owner W. G. Peters chartered her to the Army Corps of Engineers early in her career for work on dams between St. Paul and Minneapolis. According to Capt. Fred Way, one of the dams broke and stranded the boat. As the Engineers had no way of getting her out at the time, they purchased the boat



from Peters! By 1929, she was under charter again, this time to Federal Barge Line to help deliver barges and make up tows between Prescott, WI and the Twin Cities. She would continue towing between St. Louis and St. Paul with the new fleet of FBL sternwheelers. Her master then was the dean of Upper Mississippi pilots, Capt. Roy Wethern, who would complete his long career as UMR and St. Croix trip pilot on the AVALON. In a future issue, we will tell the story of Capt. Roy's father and the tragic loss of his excursion steamer SEA WING in Lake Pepin during a tornado. The ALTAIR was eventually sold to John I. Hay Co., who towed at various locations with her. She finally sank at Seneca, IL in 1943 and was broken up.

The WEEKS (T₁₄₄₇), WEBBER (T₀₃₁₃) and THORPE (T₂₂₁₉) were identical sisters, built 1927-28 at Dubuque with steel hulls 130.1 x 35.1 x 5.1 feet. Their Foster-Wheeler watertube boilers supplied steam to Nordberg tandem compound condensing engines, 15's and 30's with 6½-foot stroke. They were rated 600 hsp. at half cut-off, 1,000 hsp. full stroke, and turned the 19 by 22-foot sternwheel at 19 rpm in normal service. Fifteen cabins with bath facilities for the crew were located on the boiler deck, and when completed, each boat carried a price tag of \$175,000. In March 1927 the WEBBER splashed into the waters of the Ice Harbor, followed by the THORPE days later, then the GENERAL ASHBURN, and the WEEKS in the following year. To the THORPE would go the distinction of inaugurating modern-day barge traffic on the UMR when she delivered three loads to Minneapolis from St. Louis in August 1927. By 1929, the boats were regularly delivering eight loads, among them the shipment of auto parts from Detroit to Dubuque by rail with final delivery to the Ford plant in St. Paul by barge.

By March 1930 traffic had grown to the point where three new, larger steamers were added to FBL's Upper River fleet: the HURLEY (T₂₀₀₇) and GOOD (T₁₃₄₀) from the Dubuque yard, and the MARK TWAIN (T₁₇₂₇), last steam towboat to come from the famous Howard Yards in Jeffersonville. All three of these boats were built from the same set of plans on hulls 158.1 x 42 x 6.1 feet. Watertube boilers supplied steam for the tandem compound condensing engines, 18's and 36's

with 9-foot stroke and rated 1,000 hsp. These boats were the workhorses of the Upper Mississippi.

The C. C. WEBBER had the dubious honor of sinking in the Dubuque harbor while laid up on December 14, 1929. Capt. Dennis Trone, last president of DBBCo, relayed to your author that on another occasion a steamboat engine was being transferred from the machine shop on shore to one of the FBL sternwheelers. Somehow the engine parted company from the grip of the steam crane, and was deposited on the bottom of the harbor where it disappeared under ten feet of water and muddy ooze. Denny never mentioned whether or not that engine still lies buried in the harbor, but I suspect not! That old steam-powered crane was still in use as late as 1970 with the building of the JULIA BELLE SWAIN. Its veteran operator could reputedly perform wonders of hand-eye coordination in lifting and placing bulky, awkward things like steel sheets with dead-eye accuracy. It was also well-known that he liked to tip a few at lunch time and on breaks. One afternoon Mr. Operator was obviously struggling to manipulate the crane with his usual precision, and after some discreet questioning, it was discovered that he had no opportunity that day to slake his thirst. The yard superintendent promptly sent him up the hill with instructions not to return to work until he had taken care of the problem.

Winter lay-ups at boatyards like Dubuque also provided time for making major renovations or alterations to vessels. During the winter of 1929-30, the pilothouses on the THORPE and WEBBER were raised atop a new texas cabin which housed their radio rooms. Stacks and searchlight towers were also heightened an additional 7½ feet to make provision for handling the larger tows which were common by this time. Later that year similar alterations were made to the WEEKS and ASHBURN.

None of these FBL steamers could be called handsome. In fact, they were very plain, utilitarian to the nth degree, and in truth, downright homely. Arguably, the only UMR steam sternwheeler that could be called handsome, at least in this writer's opinion, was the ALEXANDER MACKENZIE of Central Barge Line. But these FBL workhorses

were well-suited to the work they were designed to perform, transporting loads on the oftentimes winding, narrow and shallow channels of the Upper Mississippi. Undoubtedly they were required to flank, and in these pre-screw wheel, pre-Kort nozzle, pre-bowthruster or Z-drive days, all of the work of handling depended greatly on good hull lines and the design of the stern rake. All maneuvering had to be accomplished using the action of the sternwheel against the main flanking rudders and the steering or monkey rudders aft of the wheel, and the shape of that stern made all the difference.

Now, good reader, a little trivia question: What do the IDLEWILD on our front cover, the FBL towboats on our back cover, and perhaps the W.P. SNYDER JR. (former W.H. CLINGERMAN) featured inside this issue, all have in common? Answer: Their hulls, and in particular their stern rakes, were all designed by a famous marine engineer employed



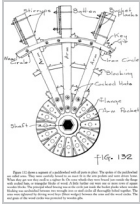
by James Rees and Sons Co. in Pittsburgh. He was Thomas Rees Tarn, and both the IDLEWILD and CLINGERMAN came from their Allegheny River yards. Tarn was also employed by the Inland Waterways Corp. (forerunner of FBL) to design the towboats being built by DBBCo, since small yards like Dubuque rarely had full-time marine architects on their payroll. In fact, Tarn rode along on the S.S. THORPE's maiden trip to Minneapolis. Although your editor can't state with certainty that Tarn designed the CLINGERMAN, a comment by Capt. Doc Hawley tends to point in that direction. After he had viewed the slides taken inside and outside the SNYDER's hull during renovations at McGinnis Shipyard this year, he observed that it was exactly as if he were looking at the BELLE's (IDLEWILD) hull. This gifted architect also did all the drawings for the 1914 Rees Company Catalogue.

His father, John Tarn, was an employee of the Rees firm, and when Thomas was born, his middle name was chosen to honor the president of the famed boat builders. By May 1926, the younger Tarn was working in Pittsburgh in cooperation with Cox & Stevens, Naval Architects and Marine Engineers of New York City, in completing the drawings for the four new sternwheelers in the FBL towboat fleet. Perhaps it was while working in association with that firm earlier that he met his future wife. For on January 10, 1922, the social columns of *The New York Times* reported his marriage to Marjorie Irene Hewitt of New York City.

And so our close scrutiny of the bottom and rear end of a steamboat brings us back to the point from which we set sail. Winter lay-ups on the Mississippi: times to shelter boats from the peril of ice and times to perform major repairs and renovations in the off-season. But always with a look to the future. For the promise of spring always brought with it excitement as the crew gathered again to bring the boat out, and witness the wonder as she came alive when the boilers were lit off and steam was raised once again! ❁

Photos: p. 23, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium; p. 25, Murphy Library, UW-La Crosse; p. 27, Murphy Library, UW-La Crosse.

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Small Stacks

Capt. Jesse P. Hughes, the Steamer FAR WEST, and the Smithsonian

by John Fryant

What is the connection between the man, the boat and the museum? Actually, there was none, except for my involvement with all of them. Read on, please.

When I first joined S&D in 1958 there was no publication and the dues were one dollar per year. I was still in art school, which prohibited me from attending any of the annual meetings. By the mid 1960s with school and military service behind me I was able to start making the annual trek to Marietta. In those days there were still "pioneer rivermen" who were active in the organization. One of them was the late Capt. Jesse P. Hughes, with whom I struck up a friendship. The famous Ohio River

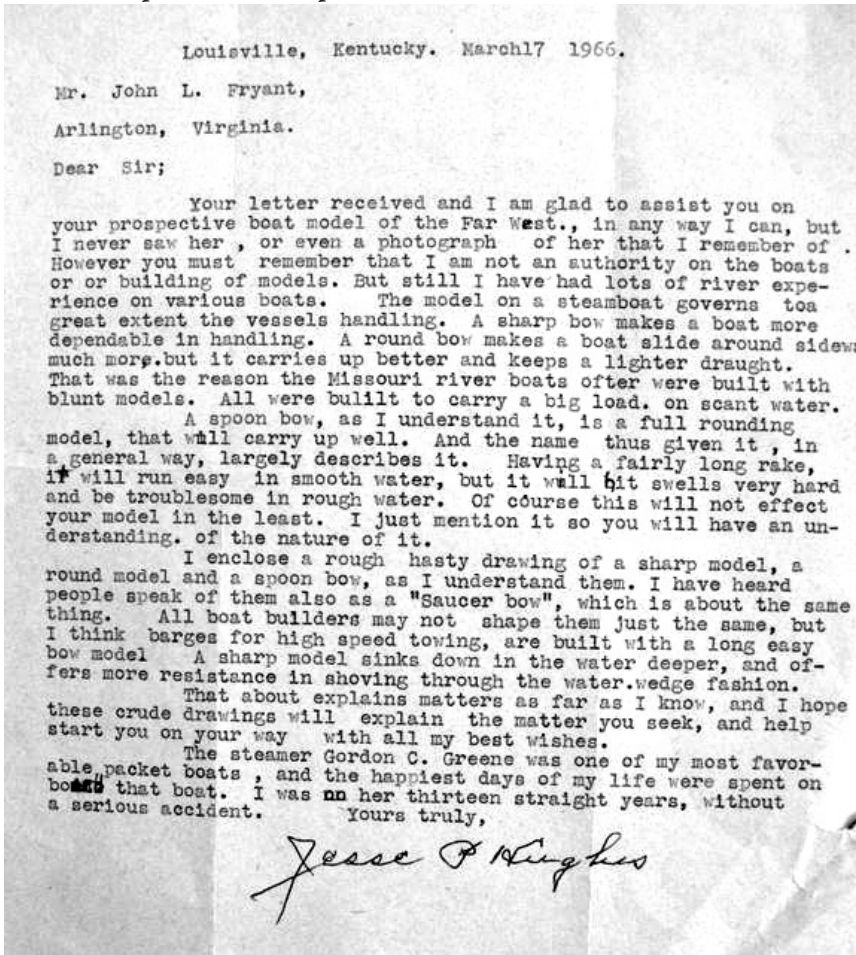
pilot was a very likeable person, always with a friendly smile and willing to share his experiences. However, I once told him of my first steamboat ride on the old Gallipolis ferry JOHN W. LANE. A frown appeared on Capt. Jesse's otherwise pleasant countenance. "Oh my," he said. "That's the only man I ever met that I didn't like." I didn't pursue the subject any further, for fear of ruining my relationship with the good captain. I probably should have, because to this day I still don't know why Capt. Jesse didn't like Capt. Lane.

During the decades of the nineteen seventies and eighties, I built a total of five models for the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of American History in Washington DC. One of them was of the Missouri River sternwheeler FAR WEST. In the process of doing research for this model, I came across the terms "spoonbill bow" and "spoon bow" referring to the shape of that portion of Missouri River "mountain boat" hulls. In my youthful enthusiasm I figured that Capt. Jesse would know all about this, so I wrote to him. The reply I received

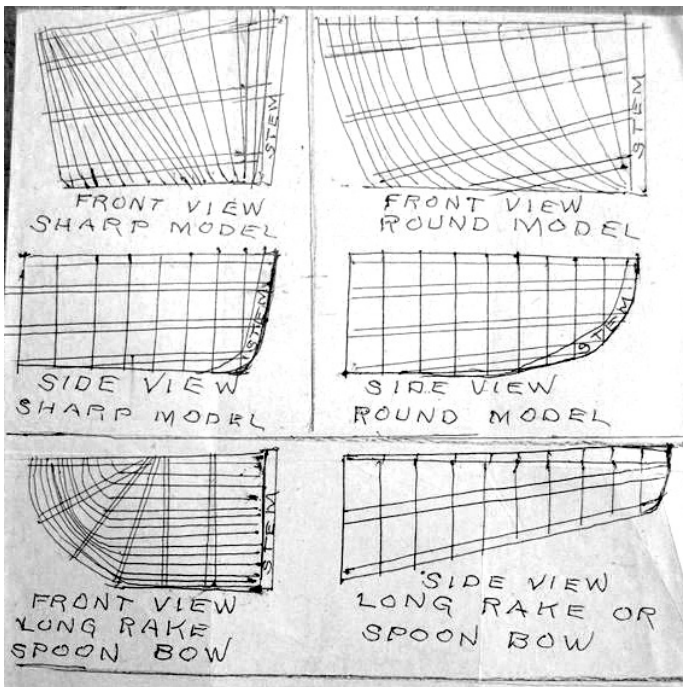
included a letter and a sheet of three drawings, shown here. As they were from a legendary Ohio River Captain, I consider them one of the treasures of my modest collection of steamboat memorabilia. I did later find out more about spoon shaped bows, which were designed to carry maximum cargoes on minimum depths of water. When I eventually built the model, it turned out to be one of my best efforts and is still exhibited as part of the Smithsonian's collection.

Which brings me to "the rest of the story" as the late Paul Harvey would have said.

About four years ago the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History was closed for a total renovation. It is now again open (under a new name) and the transportation history portion of the museum has been totally re-done. During a trip to the Washington DC environs in the summer of 2009 I had time for a brief visit to the renovated museum to see the new maritime exhibit which is titled "On the Water: Stories from Maritime America,"



Above and opposite top: Letter and drawings from Capt. Jesse P. Hughes.
(Photos by John Fryant)



an exhibit devoted to American commerce afloat on the oceans, inland rivers and Great Lakes. It is no longer just an exhibit of a model collection. The models are shown in context to their era and to the jobs that their real-life counterparts performed.


Model-wise, the history of the Mississippi River system is well represented with models of the J. M. WHITE, JOSEPH HENRY, CHARLES H. WEST, GREENBRIER, BUCKEYE STATE of 1850, a modern ACL towboat, BRYANT'S NEW SHOWBOAT with its towboat VALLEY BELLE and the FAR WEST. The last three are from the five models that I built for the museum. Sadly missing from this portion of the exhibit is my model of the IDLEWILD as she appeared when new in 1915. I also built a model of the Great Lakes railroad car ferry ST. IGNACE, which is no longer exhibited. Those two may now be stored in some vast government warehouse along with the Ark of the Covenant, (as in the movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark") or they may be on loan or in use in some other exhibit.

From the standpoint of models, steamboat history on the West Coast Rivers is totally ignored, as well as much of Hudson River steamboating and the roles played by the many steamboats on

other U. S river and lake systems. The museum's beautiful model of the Hudson River side-wheeler HENDRICK HUDSON is exhibited along with a model of a steam lighter.

I took photos of all the above mentioned riverboat models intending to share them in this column. However, modern technology intervened and my computer chose to delete them (or was it the operator...) Fortunately, my two children and their families got together and also paid a visit to the Smithsonian that same summer. Son-in-law Brock Morrison photographed my three models, so I can share the FAR WEST model photo with readers of this column.

And to the late Capt. Hughes, my thanks for sharing your knowledge with me, which contributed to the production of the FAR WEST model. Hopefully its display in the museum will contribute some knowledge of history to future generations.

If you plan to visit the Washington DC area, be sure to include the new "On the Water" maritime exhibit in your itinerary. It is definitely worth seeing, as is the whole of the newly remodeled Smithsonian National Museum of American History located on the Mall at the Southeast corner of 14th St. and Constitution Ave. 



From left to right: Sage Morrison, age 7, Bryce Fryant, age 6, Brendan Morrison, age 9 and Danielle Fryant, age 8 pose in front of their Granddad's model of the FAR WEST.

(Photo by Brock Morrison)

GOLDENROD's Golden Days to be Resurrected?

2009 and 2010 have been devastating years for historic riverboats. The ignominious demise of the BECKY THATCHER (former US Engineer steamer MISSISSIPPI no. 3) at Pittsburgh on Feb. 20-21 of this year was closely followed on March 21 by the burning at St. Louis of the former restaurant boat LT. ROBERT E. LEE (built on the hull of the Engineer snagboat CHAS. H. WEST). And just over an hour's drive due east sits the scattered remains of the former excursion/casino boat PRESIDENT (ex-CINCINNATI) in a weed lot at St. Elmo, IL. Like most, we fear that all the king's horses and all the king's men won't be able to put Humpty Dumpty together again. The hulk of her one-time sister ADMIRAL (former railroad transfer steamer ALBATROSS), sits above Eads Bridge, dejected, without a gaming license, her days numbered.

The summer of 2009 saw the demolition of the JULIUS C. WILKIE (ex-JAMES P. PEARSON) up in Winona, MN. That year also brought down the curtain on overnight passenger service by steamboats. Down in the Harvey Canal the once Magnificent steamer MISSISSIPPI QUEEN awaits her fate, which at this writing appears to be in the hands of a salvage crew wielding acetylene torches. Meanwhile, it's anybody's guess what will happen to the AMERICAN QUEEN mothballed at Beaumont, TX in the MARAD fleet. A similar gigantic question mark hovers above the graceful little JULIA BELLE SWAIN laid up at Brennan Marine in La Crosse, WI. Only the veteran DELTA QUEEN has escaped abandonment or the decay of prolonged layup over in Chattanooga. Which brings us to the GOLDENROD.

Plans to restore the National Historic Landmark Showboat GOLDENROD to her former glory were the focus of a fund-raiser held at the Lemp Mansion in St. Louis on October 17. Sponsor was the Historic



Riverboat Restoration Association, founded by Steve DeBellis, owner and publisher of a nostalgic monthly edition of the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. The group's vision for the fabled showboat include a restaurant, gift shop, sponsored tours, "River History Clubs", and, of course, live theater performances. Old-time theatrical productions would be accompanied by the lively strains of jazz and Dixieland which once echoed on the St. Louis riverfront decades ago when six or more vessels lined the levee there, a beehive of tourist activity.

Above: The busy St. Louis riverfront in 1973 showing the Str. ADMIRAL with the GOLDENROD and the BECKY THATCHER. Opposite: The GOLDENROD at Herculaneum, MO in 1937, towed by WENONAH. (Photos courtesy Keith Norrington)

According to an article in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, the

restoration group must first come up with funds to pay off past-due mooring fees on the Illinois River in Calhoun County, where the boat has been tied off since 2008.

The GOLDENROD was built in 1909 for Capt. W. R. Markle, and later operated by veteran showboatman Capt. Bill Menke. She took up permanent residence on the St. Louis levee in 1937, where she remained until 1990. Purchased that year by the city of St. Charles for use on the Missouri River, she operated there with limited success as a dinner theater until 2001. Upon closing, the city intended to make necessary structural improvements required by the Coast Guard and offer her to a new owner, but a renovation tab approaching \$300,000 brought no takers.

In 2003 she was given to local businessman John Schwartz, who was unsuccessful in his attempt to find a use for her. Again she was moved from St. Charles to the Material Sales Co. docks south of downtown St. Louis and then to the Illinois River at Kampsville, where she languished for



the next five years. In late 2008, Schwartz donated the showboat to DeBellis' group.

According to Mr. DeBellis, "The first priority is to save it. Once it's saved, we'll find out what it needs, what it's going to cost and roll up our sleeves." We wish the restoration group well, and commend them for their vision. Those who want further information about the progress of their efforts may visit them on-line at www.ivorytheater.com. As the REFLECTOR went to press, no word was available about the success of the fund-raiser or the outcome of the Oct. 22 court hearing where Pool 24 Tug Service has asked that the boat be sold at auction to pay off the \$30,000 in mooring fees. 📍

"Name That Tune" continued from [page 7](#)

Denney in Mike Martini's Cincinnati radio special "ISLAND QUEEN Remembered." Could it be that Homer himself composed and performed it while playing countless concerts on the IQ while enroute to and from Coney Island?

The other tune will also go down to posterity without a name, but at least its pedigree is known. Jonathan Tschiggfrie serenaded us with a number he says is reminiscent of *The Charleston*. He heard it, the one-and-only time it was recorded, while listening to a 1957 tape of Capt. "Doc" Hawley on the AVALON at Prairie du Chien, WI. He played

the tape for him a few years ago, and asked the song's name. "Well," was his smiling reply, "I remember playing that, but it was just something I made up at the time and it doesn't have a name." So there you have it folks! From the overused and hackneyed *Here Comes the Showboat* and *Cruising Down the River*, to the obscure and anonymous works of master calliopists, you heard it all at S&D's CalliopeFest this September. And by the way, Jonathan's two-year research project on the history of Western Rivers steam calliopes and their music will make its first public appearance as a continuing feature in upcoming issues of the REFLECTOR. Stay tuned. 📍



The Newer Faces of S&D

Taylor Abbott

While growing up along the banks of the Ohio, I have been very blessed with a wonderful family and town. I have always called Clarington, OH my home. All of my twenty-one years has been spent there, nestled up against the foothills, where many of my family before me enjoyed life. Coming from a long and distinguished line of rivermen, it is easy to see why I inherited this love. When I was young, my great-grandfather Reuben Thomas would tell me about his childhood days in Clarington, growing up in the Thomas Family, and earning his pay on the river just as generations of his family did before him.

I was envious while listening to his stories. As a young boy he spent his days running around the boat yards in Clarington where his father, Elmer Thomas, was a Master Ship Builder and carpenter. His older brother Robert G. Thomas was often found in the woodshop, crafting a pilot wheel out of native white oak from the hills of Monroe County or putting final touches on one of his steamboat models that now grace the Ohio River Museum and other places around the country. Born in 1918, my great-grandfather would live to see the steamboat's demise, the conversion to diesel, and a whole new generation of river history take root. Had it not been for his generosity and love, I likely would not be writing this today.

In his later years he would often tell these stories, passing on to me what has been passed on to generation after generation since 1758. I will always be fascinated by the fact that the generations of my family have seen every stage of the Ohio River's modernization. From pioneers on flatboats, to pilots on steamboats, to engineers on towboats, they have seen it all.

Today I suppose I am the last connection to that long past. The very blood that coursed through the veins of so many before me now runs through me. I

sincerely doubt there is anything in this world I love more than the Ohio River's history. Becoming a part of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen was only natural. As its newest board member, I am extremely honored to serve the organization in this capacity. I cannot thank President Jeff Spear and the entire board enough for the warm welcome I received at the annual meeting in September. I enjoyed every minute of that weekend and look forward to building up our membership and keeping up steam.

Currently, I am a pre-law student at Ohio University in Athens. When I am not in Athens, I work with an extraordinary group of individuals who, like me, want to preserve the heritage we love. Over a year of hard work and several months of remodeling, painting, lugging, scouring and sweating, all culminated in the June opening of the Monroe County River Museum in Clarington.



Monroe County River Museum President Taylor Abbott stands in the first exhibit room based on Clarington's boat-building history.

A debt of gratitude is owed to many individuals and supporters who helped make this dream a reality and continue to support it. The winter months have much in store for our new museum, with new exhibits being planned and some temporary exhibits being converted into permanent displays. Visitors will find many interesting artifacts, including an 1835 oil painting by Charles Sullivan depicting "Sunfish", the original name of Clarington.

Anyone wishing to visit the museum may call our curator Barbara Rush at 740-458-1873, our historian Fred McCabe at 740-483-2490 or visit us

online at www.monroecountyrivermuseum.org. We welcome all to come and enjoy our facility in downtown Clarington.

I would like to thank the many members of S&D for their hospitality and generosity over the years. I also would like to thank my family, particularly my parents and grandparents, for their love and guidance. Without their support, none of what has been accomplished over these past few years would have been possible. I look forward to meeting more of you and working hard to keep this extraordinary organization going strong. 📍

Brief Annual Report of the Mississippi River Chapter

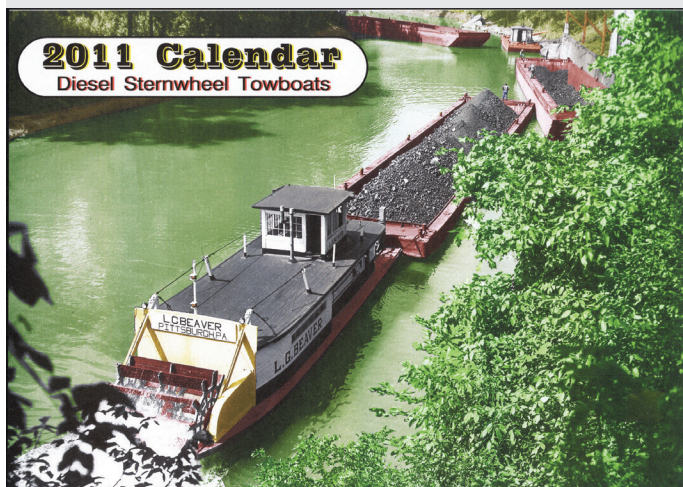
The following is Capt. Tom Dunn's report for 2010 given in absentia by Annie Blum in Marietta. We feel safe in saying that this is one of the most anticipated items of the business meeting.

Our chairman is not able to be here today as he is out of the country. He wants to assure our chapter members the trip is made without raiding the chapter's treasury. We still have in our treasury the same five dollars we had last year. Since we haven't attempted to collect dues, we guess we have the same number of members. It's hard to collect dues when our chapter hasn't really done anything. Our excuse this year is that our chairman was preoccupied for 61 days in which he was tending to a river that was over flood stage. A bad year to say the least. You will be pleased to know we have no plans to raise dues this coming year and there are no plans to offer universal health care. If anyone wants to form a complaint, has any negative comments, wants to issue a threat, please feel free do so to the person who was kind enough to read this brief report. Our chapter in 2011 looks forward to another exciting and memorable year.

Thank you! 📍

Interested in becoming an S&D member? Go to
www.s-and-d.org
for your membership form and more info.

2011 Sternwheel Towboat Calendar Available



The non-profit Historic Sternwheeler Preservation Society (HSPS) has begun its annual fundraising efforts with the publishing of its 10th annual wall calendar for 2011. The theme for the 2011 calendar is "Diesel Sternwheel Towboats." Of the 13 boats featured, four were originally steamboats, the oldest being built in 1911. Only three towboats from the calendar exist today, and only one of those is still operational. The calendar features 13 large boat photos printed on heavy card stock, suitable for framing. Each month features a specific boat and its history. For example, the "Collision on the River" article on page 21 in this issue was compiled partly from the November 2011 calendar page. Each featured boat also has a complete calendar page with holidays marked. Featured towboats include: FAYETTEVILLE, CHICKASAW, TENNESSEE, JOHN J. HOOPES, SKIPPER, IRVIN S. COBB, STEEL CITY, WALTER P. DOLLE, DOROTHY, CRITERION, F.L. BOWERS, PITTSBURGH, L.G. BEAVER. All proceeds go toward the maintenance and operation of the 1923 sternwheel towboat BARBARA H, a National Historic Landmark. You can learn more about the BARBARA H online, at www.hspsi.org. The calendars are priced at \$15.95 each, plus \$4.50 shipping (add \$1 shipping for each additional calendar). Checks or money orders can be mailed to the address below or purchased online from the HSPS Gift Shop at www.hspsi.org.

HSPS, Inc.
 158 Ashland Cove Road
 Vevay, IN 47043



Final Crossings

Capt. Charles Henry Stone



Capt. Charles Henry Stone, 95, of Point Pleasant, WV, rode the “Old Ship of Zion” to the shores of Heaven on Saturday, June 19, 2010. He was born to the late Capt. C. C. and Bessie (Reynolds) Stone on June 2, 1915 at Lock 11 in Henderson, WV. His grandfather Reynolds was a lockmaster at old Lock 11 on the Kanawha River there. And his grandfather Stone owned and ran the Kanawha River Ferry in the 1870s.

Captain Stone’s journey with the river began at a young age, working with his father, operating the ferry business until it was no longer needed. At that time, the family business was converted from ferry to steam and gasoline boats and then to Diesel boats. The company was known as Stone’s Towing and Harbor Co. and was located in Henderson.

Charles Henry graduated from Point Pleasant High School in 1932. He also periodically worked on the family farm, located on U. S. Route 35, and attended the Business and Commerce College in Charleston. The business partnership began alongside his father in 1950 and from ferry to their last Diesel towboat, they owned and operated nine boats. The business was operated until 1967 when, due to poor health for both the senior and junior Stone, the business was sold. However, Capt. Charles Henry remained active, working through the office with Capt. Bob Bosworth, to whom they had sold the business.

For many more years after his retirement, Capt. Stone gladly presented slide shows filled with pictures and wonderful verbal history of his beloved rivers and boats. Through the Point Pleasant River Museum, which he was instrumental in helping to establish, and his good friend Jack Fowler, Capt. Stone is sure that this treasured history will continue. He also was the author of the book

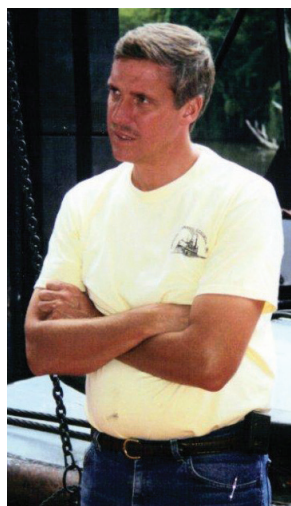
The History of the Marietta Manufacturing Company. In 2007, Capt. Stone was honored by the state of West Virginia with its “History Hero Award” for his outstanding work in preserving the state’s rich river history.

He is survived by his loving wife of 66 years, Jean (Rousch) Stone; daughters Jennifer (Sam) Bates and Bebe (Rick) Wilker, two grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. A memorial service was held on August 14 at the Trinity United Methodist Church, Point Pleasant. A luncheon followed the service, along with a visit to the Point Pleasant River Museum. Burial was in Lone Oak Cemetery.

One of Capt. Stone’s countless river friends observed that “Capt. Charlie will be sorely missed by all river historians and fans. His sparkling wit kept us entertained while he shared solid river information with all. Despite losing most of his eyesight, his vision – especially of the future – remained unimpaired. At every S&D meeting he managed in his offhand way to steal the show. Sound a long and two shorts.”

Our thanks to the *Point Pleasant Register* for Capt. Stone’s obituary notice.

Capt. Nelson Jones



Photos courtesy Keith Norrington.

Capt. Nelson Jones, boat lover, river industry icon and founder of the Charleston Sternwheel Regatta, died the afternoon of July 25 after an arduous war with cancer. He was 52. He was president of Amherst Madison, a marine transportation, construction and repair company in Port Amherst, WV.

Nelson fell in love with boats and the river as a boy hanging out at Port Amherst, his father’s river transportation business. Born into an affluent Charleston family, he preferred blue-collar labor on the docks and barges and drinking beer after work with deckhands to hobnobbing at the country club.

Tall, blonde and boyish with a contagious enthusiasm for pet projects, he had a Pied Piperish knack for organizing events and recruiting people

to help make them happen. At age 12, he mentioned the idea of a sternwheel race to the secretary of Charleston's mayor. On Sept. 5, 1971, he corralled five sternwheelers and launched the regatta. He added river-oriented events and provided barges and other equipment as the event grew into a week-long festival that attracted more than 30 sternwheelers and hundreds of recreational boats.

Like a kid collecting Tonka toys, he loved to buy boats, especially ones he could refurbish. Many were christened during festive gatherings at the levee. He named most of his boats for employees and several for community leaders.

He studied business management and marketing at what was then Morris Harvey College, but "my love was the river," he said. "I wanted to run a crane and pilot a boat, but I knew I had to get an education." He was 24 when his father put him in charge of Madison Coal and Supply and challenged him to revive the struggling company. Today, it operates a fleet of more than 33 towboats.

In 2006, Nelson helped establish a museum of river artifacts on the Amherst grounds. In cooperation with the Huntington District Waterways Assn., he also was a guiding light in the "Navigating History" educational programs staged for schoolchildren in St. Albans.

He is survived by his wife, Robyn Strickland; stepsons Carl and Caleb Simpkins; father and stepmother Charles T. and Mary Ellen Jones; sisters Laura Ellen Pray and Jennifer Hill Jones; brother C. Tandy Jones; stepdaughter Heather Strickland; and grandsons Nate and Aaron Ballard.

Visitation was held at the University of Charleston Rotunda on July 28. At noon that day, the steamers DELTA QUEEN, BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, NATCHEZ, MINNE HA HA, and CHAUTAUQUA BELLE all blew a whistle salute in Nelson's honor. Funeral services were held July 29 at the Oak Hill Baptist Church, with a private family burial following.

Our thanks to the *Charleston Gazette* for Nelson's obituary notice.

Alice C. Muirhead

Alice C. Muirhead, 77, of Searcy, AK passed away on June 10. She was born April 2, 1933 in LeFlore County, Mississippi. She is survived by her husband, Capt. Henry "Buddy" Muirhead Jr.; her

children Denise Jackson (Craig), Lisa Valentine (Stan) and Cris Muirhead (Crystal).

Mrs. Muirhead will be remembered as a gentle woman; a loving and devoted wife of 54 years to Henry "Buddy" Muirhead, a caring mother and grandmother. She was an exceptional seamstress and enjoyed making things for her family and others. She was known as "Miss Alice", the First Lady of the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, where she was loved and respected by the entire crew. She enjoyed vacations with her family, her reading group, and puzzles and poetry.

Services were held June 14 at the West Side Church of Christ in Searcy with burial at White County Memorial Gardens in Searcy.

Our thanks to Roller Funeral Home in Searcy for Miss Alice's obituary notice.

Alfred Kleine-Kreutzmann

Alfred Kleine-Kreutzmann, 70, of Hartwell, OH, past manager of the Inland Rivers Library at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, passed away on July 25. He was born in Berlinchen, Germany (now Poland) in 1940. After being forced out of their home during WWII, Alfred and his parents emigrated to the United States in 1952.

He was a graduate of University of Cincinnati and Kent State University, and was the Curator of Rare Books at the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County from 1986 to 1997. As a lifelong devotee of light opera, Alfred attended countless performances in Cincinnati.

A memorial service was held on August 15 in the Tower Room at the main Cincinnati Public Library.

Thanks to Frank Prudent for supplying obituary information.

Back Cover

Laid up for the winter at Dubuque's Ice Harbor on Third Street is Federal Barge Line's Upper Mississippi River fleet. Five of the six steamers pictured here were built at the yards of Dubuque Boat and Boiler Company, site of their winter quarters in this view taken in 1932. See "Winter on the Upper Mississippi" on page 23. Photo courtesy of Capt. William Powell Library, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium.

