

# S & D

# REFLECTOR

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of Pioneer Rivermen



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Marietta, Ohio

September 2012



**Nashville Bridge Company Boats: 1921-78**  
**Falls Heroes: Chapter Six**  
**MINNE-HA-HA's New Calliope**

## Front Cover

One of our features this issue is the story of Nashville Bridge Company boats. Pictured on the front cover is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer towboat/snagboat KENTUCKY (T1512). Her 127 x 30 x 5.5 wood hull had engines 15 7/8 with 5-foot stroke when built by Howards in 1909 for \$24,600. Within a few years, all government boats were being built with steel hulls, and in 1921 NABRICO had their first steamboat contract to place a steel hull on the KENTUCKY measuring 148.5 x 32 x 5.5.

Fifty-seven years later, after a notable career of pioneering designs in both towboats and unit tows, NABRICO built their final inland river towboat for Ingram Barge Company, the triple-prop m/v PATRICIA I. HART, 150 x 50. She is pictured here upbound at St. Louis on her first trip, May 8, 1978.

*Photo of KENTUCKY courtesy of Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.  
Photo of PATRICIA I. HART courtesy of Dan Owen and Boat Photo Museum.*

📍 Kinniconnick Creek empties into the Ohio at Mile 368.1, just below Quincy, KY and about 12 miles upstream from Portsmouth, OH. There used to be a Kinniconnick Creek Light at Mile 367.9, still listed in the 1964 *Light List*, but removed by 1968. Lexie mentioned Bill and Harry Louden's days together on the SCIOTO, so in their memory we print this shot of their old U. S. Engineers boat hard at work. Bill's photo might even have been snapped from the boat. SCIOTO (T2279) was built in 1913 at Cincinnati by Charles Barnes Co. for the Cincinnati Engineers District, 157 x 31 x 4.2, about same size as IDLEWILD/BELLE OF LOUISVILLE. Her engines were 14's with a 6-foot stroke. She was sold in 1947 to Nugent Sand Co. of Louisville and renamed R.J. NUGENT.



James Stapleton writes: "In reading the piece in the most recent REFLECTOR about Capt. Cooley and Galena, the article describes a trip made by the AMERICA in 1923 to Alton, IL and later states that the boat 'delivered five carloads of Anheuser-Busch beer south on her return trip from St. Louis.' Given that Prohibition had been in effect since 1920, it seems highly unlikely that the AMERICA would have been transporting such a large load of A-B beer or, for that matter, any A-B beer. A-B ceased brewing operations in 1920 (but quickly resumed them in 1933 when Prohibition ended) and sold brewers yeast and a number of other products during the 1920-1933 interval, one of which was a non-alcoholic malt beverage. Perhaps the latter was the product that the AMERICA carried south."

📍 We certainly did not intend to impugn Capt. Cooley's honor, nor suggest that he was involved in a bootlegging operation! How we missed the obvious fact that the country was in the midst of Prohibition at the time, amazes even your

## Reflections from Our Readers

Lexie Palmore writes: "Here's another of Bill Kelly's pictures. I enhanced this to give it more contrast, but the title is what Bill wrote on the back. 'Cutting loose from a snag at Kinnykinick. Quite a runout, farmers came out looking for their farms.'"



editor at this re-reading. A-B did indeed brew a non-alcoholic beverage called Bevo (locally dubbed 'near beer') beginning in 1916. It was such a popular drink that by the early twenties, 5,000,000 cases were shipped annually, perhaps some on the AMERICA. A well-known St. Louis landmark, the Bevo Mill, was built by August Busch in 1917 and operated in later years as a restaurant. While closed for a period of time, it reopened under new management in October 2009. Your editor has been the guest of Capt. Jim Blum and his family for several fine dinners and Sunday brunches at this establishment.

Capt. Doc Hawley writes: "The enclosed article was tailor-made for the Father's Day issue of the *Times-Picayune*. Unfortunately, Juan Mendivil Sr. will retire in August and return to Peru . . . and Juan Jr. has not yet passed his Chief's exam." We share excerpts here from that story which appeared in a feature appropriately titled 'Pop Culture.'

"Steven Nicoulin didn't plan to follow his father, Steve Nicoulin, up the gangplank, but now he can't imagine another profession. He is a captain and a pilot on the NATCHEZ, like his dad. 'I've been on it since it was brand new,' says Steve, 27. The elder Nicoulin, 57, who is also the master on the boat, says 'I first became a deckhand at 19 in Louisville.' When Capt. Clarke Hawley of the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE was hired as captain of the NATCHEZ before its launch in 1975, he asked some of his deckhands to come aboard with him, and Steve was one of them. 'The captain is in charge of the whole vessel, and the pilot is in charge of navigation,' he says. 'You can't serve as both on the same cruise.' So sometimes Steve is captain and his son Steven is pilot; now that Steven has his captain's license, sometimes it's the other way around.

"The Nicoulin's are one of three long-time father-son pairs working together on the NATCHEZ. Juan Mendivil Sr., 69, Chief Engineer, came to New Orleans from Peru. 'I've been working on the NATCHEZ for 26 years,' he says. His son, Juan Jr., 42, a fireman, has been working with him for the past 19 years in the boiler room tending the two boilers. 'I've been trying to get a Chief

*continued on page 41*

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### Thinking about submitting to the REFLECTOR?

*Please follow these guidelines:*

#### Articles

- » 500 words or less
- » .rtf or .doc format (no PDFs)

#### Features

- » 750 words or more
- » .rtf or .doc format (no PDFs)

#### Images

- » at least 300 dpi
- » .jpg, .tif, .png, or .bmp format
- » minimal compression

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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.

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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).

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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

**S&D: Steam and Diesel  
Present and Past**

Your September REFLECTOR tells the story of one of the most noted builders of inland river towboats as Capt. Bob Reynolds chronicles Nashville Bridge Company. Bob has graciously and very ably responded to our invitation to continue the narrative of the nation's towing industry in the pages of this magazine. We encourage our other readers to follow his lead and that of Capt. David K. Smith in helping us tell more of that story in future issues as well.

The tale of Louisville's Lifesavers nears its final chapter as Leland Johnson relates events at the Falls of the Ohio from early in the second decade of the twentieth century in this next-to-last installment of the Falls Heroes saga. And a classic steamboat photo collection coupled with early volumes of *The Waterways Journal* help recall a near-forgotten episode in the life of the towboat SPRAGUE. Another striking photo on our back cover provides us an enticing snapshot of the Vicksburg riverfront of a century ago, while the classic steamboat packets are remembered in John Fryant's "Small Stacks" column with stories about three antique models.

The contemporary story of steamboating in this country puts in an appearance this issue with a feature about the MINNE-HA-HA, part of the steamboat family on New York's Lake George. Add to that a look at the two remaining overnight paddlewheelers on the Mississippi system, the AMERICAN QUEEN and QUEEN OF THE MISSISSIPPI. Special exhibits opening at Ohio River Museum and Campus Martius in Marietta are highlighted, as well as ceremonies at Howard Steamboat Museum to dedicate the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN roofbell and new pilothouse on museum grounds. In addition, a rechristening ceremony and anniversary celebration for the Upper Mississippi riverboat TWILIGHT rounds out our fall issue.

The weekend of September 14-15 brings with it S&D's 73rd Annual Meeting, details provided on

## S&D REGIONAL CHAPTERS

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page 7. We are extremely pleased to announce that our guest speaker at Saturday evening's banquet is Capt. Kevin Mullen, sharing his lifetime of experiences on the river and long career on the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE. This is an event you won't want to miss, so mark your calendar and come gather with all your friends for a weekend to remember.

Finally, a commercial announcement from your sponsor! Our special 50th Anniversary edition of the REFLECTOR will be published in March 2013. We want to make sure your favorite story or photo is part of that historic issue. So sit down now with pen in hand or start pecking away at that computer keyboard and get those items to us. Photos may be sent digitally via e-mail or CD, or the good old-fashioned way on paper. Our thanks to the dozens of you who have already responded with your contributions. As Capt. Fred Way reminded readers of the REFLECTOR, this is our magazine, dedicated to telling our stories of the river, its boats and people. All of us have a stake in preserving these treasures. We look forward to hearing from **you**. 



## Meet Our Contributors

**Capt. Robert Reynolds** (*Nashville Bridge Company Boats: 1921-78, page 8*) is well-known to S&D members. Bob serves on our Board of Governors, and presented his well-received dinner program “High Water, Hot Water” at the 2011 Annual Meeting. In addition, he is the author of some lively and insightful narratives about towboating in his “Reflections Online” at our S&D website. A native of Memphis, TN, Bob is Captain of the motor vessel MAGNOLIA for Magnolia Marine Transport Co. of Vicksburg, MS, handling barges in the heavy oils trade on all inland waters.

His career on the river began in the summer of 1975 as a dishwasher on the Steamer DELTA QUEEN. After working several jobs on the DQ, Bob became Mate on the big steamboat in 1978. He continued working there until 1980 when he started decking on towboats, eventually becoming pilot in 1981. Bob and his wife Sharon met on the DQ and married in 1979. They reside in Paragould, AR with their 2 sons, Walt and Jeff.

**Leland Johnson** (*Falls Heroes, Louisville’s Lifesavers: Chapter Six, p. 18*) was first introduced to readers of this column in our June 2011 issue. Leland and Chuck Parish are currently collaborating on a book-length narrative of the story of Louisville’s Lifesavers and the Lifesaving Station. We will be on the outlook for their publication, and trust that S&D members will have advance notice when that volume makes its appearance in print.

**Matthew Dow** (*MINNE-HA-HA’s New Calliope, p. 30*) was featured in the REFLECTOR’s “The Newer Faces of S&D” column of March 2011. Matt spent the summer of 2011 working aboard the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, gaining more experience and new insights into the excursion steamboat business to bolster time already spent aboard his family’s steamboats NATCHEZ and MINNE-HA-HA. Matt will graduate from the Maine Maritime Academy this year, and expects to “make the excursion boat business my life.”

**Travis Vasconcelos** (*The First Days of the Grande Dame of the Mississippi, p. 32*), Riverlorian on the steamer AMERICAN QUEEN and calliopist extraordinaire, feels very much at home on the boat as he played an important role in the design of her calliope. His love of the river began at age 3, when he first remembers hearing the unique pied piper of the river in his home town of Louisville.

After making his first trip on the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, Travis came to know the officers and crew. This led to other opportunities to meet “perfessors” and crew on steamboats, as he absorbed stories of the river from these men and women. Travis says, “I was very fortunate to have come to the rivers when I did, for I got to know and work with some of the last steamboaters from the end of the steamboat age.” He didn’t know it at the time, but the calliope called him to the river for a reason.

Beginning in 1981 as calliopist on the BELLE, he soon found himself working as deckhand, narrator, concessionaire, and later as public spokesperson for the vessel during his 14-year career with the boat.

After an 8-year hiatus ashore in the computer field, Travis came back to the rivers in 2003 as Riverlorian on the MQ, also serving aboard the DQ and AQ over the next six years. Then came the fall of 2008. Travis lamented, “When overnight steamboating came to an end, I was lost.” He filled his time writing articles, giving talks about river history, and performing on calliopes.

In 2012 he returned to the rivers for a second time on the AQ. Along with seasoned veterans Jerry Hay and Mary Charlton, he shares duties of educating guests about steamboating and America’s inland rivers. And he even manages to get in a little calliope playing when time permits, for he has once again answered the calliope’s call.

### **2013 Inland Waterways Festival Fundraiser**

Have brunch with Mark Twain while cruising the Ohio on the VALLEY GEM, Saturday morning, September 15, 2012 from 9:00 to 11:00. This fundraiser will support the 2013 Inland Waterways Festival at ORM on August 3-4, 2013. Reservations required. \$25 per person. Call 740-373-3750 for information.

**You are Invited to Gather with Your Friends  
for the 73rd ANNUAL MEETING  
of the Sons & Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen  
at Marietta, OH  
Friday and Saturday, September 14-15, 2012**

Once again the program and festivities are set for S&D's Annual Meeting, a weekend which promises to be packed with good times, good food, and wonderful memories. Our Friday night Meet-and-Greet takes place at Ohio River Museum at 8:00 for the ribbon cutting ceremony officially opening the Capt. Charles Ritts steamboat exhibit. Refreshments and a cash bar will be available. Afterwards, S&D faithful traditionally gather in the Lafayette Lobby and environs to catch up on the latest news since last year's gathering and to give a warm welcome to new members and those attending for the first time.

Saturday morning's business meeting convenes at 9:30 in the Lafayette's Sternwheel Room. Reports are shared by S&D officers on the status of the organization, along with updates from the chair of the J. Mack Gamble Fund, the editor of the REFLECTOR, the Ohio River Museum chairperson and S&D adjunct organizations. River museums and libraries in Cincinnati, Jeffersonville, and St. Louis typically report news of their activities. Election of officers for the coming year concludes the morning .

Noon luncheon at the Hotel is available for \$8.75 with chicken salad sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie and drink. Capt. Bill Barr will present our luncheon program, "Big Things That Move by Water." As a very special treat, Campus Martius is also offering S&D members free admission to their new Civil War exhibit throughout the weekend.

Our evening banquet is served at 6:30 with entree choices of prime rib (\$27), salmon (\$26) or chicken (\$22), all served with roasted potatoes, vegetable, salad, dessert, coffee and tea. Our featured speaker for the evening is Capt. Kevin Mullen, longtime pilot and master of the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, and now independent consultant on inland river marine safety. A complete schedule for the weekend's events will be available at the Hotel desk. ①



**Touched by Conflict**  
*Southeastern Ohio & the Civil War*

A New Exhibit  
at Campus Martius Museum

Lee Ann Hendershot from Friends of the Museums sends us this word of their newest exhibit. As part of the multi-year observance of the momentous events surrounding the Civil War, Campus Martius Museum has prepared a three-year major exhibition which opened on July 7 this year.

Using southeastern Ohio as a model, exhibit themes will explore events in the state leading to the conflict, local support of the War effort, recruitment, service in various campaigns, and the private lives of both officers and soldiers as they engaged in campaigns in various armies. The exhibit will also examine human costs of the conflict on Ohio communities and how veterans were assimilated back into home life following military duty.

The exhibition, a cooperative venture between a number of area institutions and Ohio Historical Society, will highlight the stories of individuals who served in many capacities during the War as soldiers, women from relief associations, politicians, fraternal organizations and religious support groups.

Contact Bill Reynolds for more info at **740-373-3750** or at **breynolds@campusmartiusmuseum.org**

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# Nashville Bridge Company Boats

## 1921-1978

by Capt. Robert Reynolds

We all love old steamboats. There is always something new to be discovered about them – the boats themselves, their crews, their builders, the list goes on and on. Equally fascinating to this writer is diesel boats, and let's face it, the diesel era is now over 70 years old!

Captain Fred Way wrote in *The Saga of the Delta Queen* that when he and Capt. Tom Greene were on their way to California in 1947 to look over the DELTA QUEEN with an eye toward her purchase, they were on a diesel train for one leg of their trip. The diesel broke down at some point, causing them delays, but the parts of the trip that were steam powered had no problems. Capt. Fred stated that this was why Capt. Tom still wanted a steamboat – he felt the reliability of diesel was not yet where it needed to be for passenger boat operations. Of course, diesels have reached the point where they are very reliable and are actually the engine of choice for many reasons, but that is the subject for another time.

### NASHVILLE BRIDGE COMPANY

Though they began their boat-building activities by building steamboats, one of the premier builders of diesel towboats in the mid-twentieth century was Nashville Bridge Company (NABRICO) of Nashville, TN. Many considered a Nashville Bridge boat to be the “Cadillac” of towboats, and several towing companies were fiercely loyal to NABRICO for both towboats and barges. A fair number of Nashville Bridge boats are still running today, despite the fact that they built their last towboat in 1978. NABRICO boats were noted for their solid engineering and construction, good shoving power and speed, and aesthetic beauty.

Arthur J. Dyer, an 1891 graduate of the Vanderbilt Engineering School of Vanderbilt University in

Nashville, founded the Nashville Bridge Company. Dyer had worked for a variety of bridge companies in the 1890s before he borrowed \$750 and entered a partnership with H. T. Sinnot in a bridge-building firm known as the H. T. Sinnot Company. The business reorganized in 1902, when Dyer purchased Sinnot's interest and renamed the firm the Nashville Bridge and Construction Company. In late 1903 or 1904 the firm underwent a second reorganization and became known as the Nashville Bridge Company. The firm built its headquarters in downtown Nashville on the banks of the Cumberland River, where a large complex containing a six-story office building remains. It also maintained a Latin-American branch office in Colombia.

The commissions of Nashville Bridge Company came from throughout the southeastern United States as well as many Central and South American countries. The firm was recognized for its work in movable bridges and built several along the Gulf Coast. The company claimed to have built over half of all the bascule bridges in Florida.

As a result of federal legislation passed in 1916, the bridge building industry changed and standardized bridge plans. While independent bridge companies continued to design and build bridges for cities and counties, their work on state projects was generally limited to providing steel or construction activities.

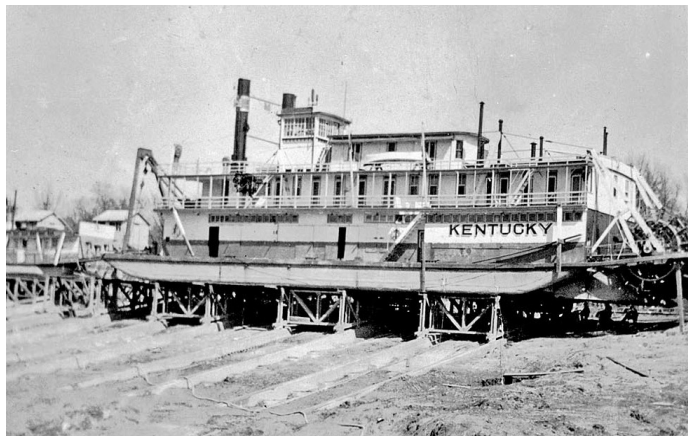
### The transition to boat building

In 1915 the Nashville Bridge Company built a small floating derrick hull for the Army Corps of Engineers, which marked the beginning of its shift from bridge construction to the marine field. In the late 1920s Arthur Dyer's son Harry took over operations of the firm's Marine Department. His crews built barges on a production line basis and launched them from pivoted arms, a technique

never used before. This new method proved very successful, and the company's barge business expanded substantially. Although the Great Depression resulted in bankruptcy and closure of innumerable bridge companies across the country, the Nashville Bridge Company's anomalous survival was due, in large part, to its diversified interests in marine production. In the early 1940s the U.S. Navy hired the firm to manufacture dozens of vessels, and the company expanded its Nashville complex.

Over the years, the Nashville Bridge Company decreased its bridge building and expanded its Marine Department. By the 1960s it had become the world's largest builder of inland barges. In 1969 the Dyer family sold the company, and there have been several subsequent owners. In 1972 the firm sold its bridge and structural building operations. Although Trinity Marine of Dallas is the current owner, it is still known locally as the Nashville Bridge Company. The company relocated its Tennessee barge building yard to Ashland City when the city chose its downtown location as the site for Nashville's Adelphia Stadium. Demolition of most of the complex occurred in 1997, although one of the buildings is preserved as part of the Shelby Street Bridge pedestrian walkway.

Though they built their last towboat in 1978, the shipyard remains active today in Ashland City, TN as a builder of inland barges. Even today many companies in the oil transport trade will not consider barges built by any other builder.



*In 1921 the snagboat/towboat KENTUCKY (T1512) received the first steel hull built by NABRICO for a steamboat, replacing her Howard-built wooden hull. Photo from Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.*

One of the first boats NABRICO built (in 1922) was the Str. GEORGE PRINCE. I had thought that this was the ferry boat involved in a collision with a ship above New Orleans in 1976, but was wrong. Keith Norrington helped me with my research, and came up with the following:

"I went to *Way's Packet Directory*. There was also a steamboat named GEORGE PRINCE, built by Nashville Bridge Company in 1922. Sternwheel packet, steel hull. 144 x 29.5 x 6.2. Cross compound condensing engines, 12", 24" - 7 foot stroke. Owned by the Royal Route Co., Vicksburg, MS, run by Capt. George Prince. Sold later to Capt. L.V. Cooley, New Orleans, who changed her name to OUACHITA. The machinery on this boat came from the PERCY SWAIN.



*GEORGE PRINCE (2305), second steamboat built by NABRICO, was followed a year later by J. N. PHARR. Photo from Murphy Library, Univ. of Wisconsin - La Crosse.*

"Capt. Cooley suffered a stroke aboard this boat while up Ouachita River loading cotton in December 1931. He was taken off the boat at New Orleans and died less than two weeks later on December 19th in a hospital.

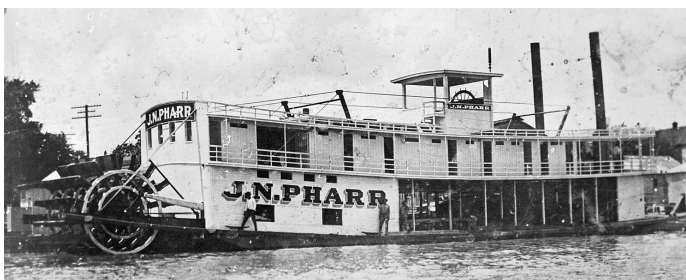
"Capt. Fred Hornbrook and investors bought the boat in 1934 and ran her in the Pittsburgh-Cincinnati trade. Sold to Ohio River Transit Company and ran Cincinnati-Louisville in 1935 with Capt. Hornbrook in charge. Sold to Greene Line Steamers in November 1936 and dismantled in January 1940. Her hull became a barge named STOGIE WHITE.

"The GEORGE PRINCE which was hit by the FROSTA on October 20, 1976 was, according to



Capt. Fred Way in the March 1977 S&D REFLECTOR, the 1938 vessel.”

Another early boat built by Nashville Bridge in 1923 was the J.N. PHARR, a steam sternwheel towboat built for Capt. Joseph Chotin (pronounced SHOW-tan). This inaugurated a long association between Chotin Transportation and Nashville Bridge. Not only did NABRICO build several towboats for Chotin, they built their barges as well.



**J.N. PHARR (T1281) 108.2 x 26 x 4.4, engines 12's with 6 foot stroke. Towed for Capt. Jos. Chotin on Tombigbee, Ouachita, Intracoastal Waterway and eventually the Cumberland. Capsized on lower Ohio June 30, 1936; her hull was recovered and used in construction of diesel towboat IRVIN S. COBB. Murphy Library photo, Univ. of Wisconsin - La Crosse.**

It is said that Harry J. Dyer, President of Nashville Bridge, wanted Capt. Chotin to try their new “unit” tow concept -- integrated petroleum barges that would operate at high speed while saving fuel. Mr. Dyer got Capt. Chotin to buy a 4-piece (4 barge) unit with the stipulation that if Chotin didn't like it and the way it handled, and if it did not save fuel, Dyer would buy it back. Not only did Chotin like the concept and the tow, but unit tows of this type became the standard in the petroleum transportation industry and are still used today.

Unlike coastal shipyards, inland shipyards have always maintained their own design and engineering staffs, resulting in certain characteristics that set that yard's work apart from its competitors. It is easy to spot a Nashville Bridge boat (or a Dravo boat, a Jeffboat, a St. Louis Ship boat or even a Vickers/Greenville boat) due to its lines and design characteristics. Many towing companies became fiercely loyal to “their” yard, and had most, if not all of their boats built by that same yard.

Big changes came to the rivers in the 1930's with the advent of diesel engines. Nashville Bridge was a pioneer in this transition to diesel power –

one of Arthur Dyer's friends and associates was a man named George W. Codrington, an executive of General Motors Corporation. Born in 1888, Codrington was a marine steam engineer. He was hired by the Winton Engine Company as their chief designer, and by 1917 he was president of the company. In 1930, Winton sold out to General Motors, and Codrington developed a newly engineered diesel engine, the model 278. Mr. Codrington convinced Mr. Dyer at NABRICO to use these new engines in towboats, and soon the entire inland shipbuilding industry followed suit, making GM diesels the engine of choice for towboats on the inland waterways. There were (and are) other diesel engine manufacturers whose products were used on the inland towboats, but GM's Electro-Motive Division (EMD) engines dominated the market for many years. In 1945, Nashville Bridge built a stock towboat on speculation that they named CODRINGTON in George's honor. It was operated for many years by Canal Barge Company of New Orleans.

Nashville Bridge towboats were innovative, distinctive in their appearance and operational characteristics. NABRICO's barges were just as innovative and distinctive. Focusing intently on petroleum tank barges, NABRICO pioneered systems for liquid barges, and those barges are not only well built and tough, but incorporated the most advanced systems for loading and discharging cargo, with ease of operation for Tankermen. Their “spoonbill” rakes (developed by Mr. Dyer for Chotin) were highly prized for their handling and speed. NABRICO deck fittings are still manufactured (though in China) and are often specified on boats and barges by other builders even today.

Besides Chotin, other loyal customers of Nashville Bridge equipment were Hougland Barge Line, Ingram Barge Company, Inland Oil & Transport Company of St. Louis, and Canal Barge Company and Oil Transport Company of New Orleans. These were by no means the only barge lines ordering NABRICO built boats and barges, for Standard Oil (Esso) had several boats built at Nashville Bridge, along with a fair number of their barges. Mid-South Towing Company was another one of NABRICO's customers, and one of the few

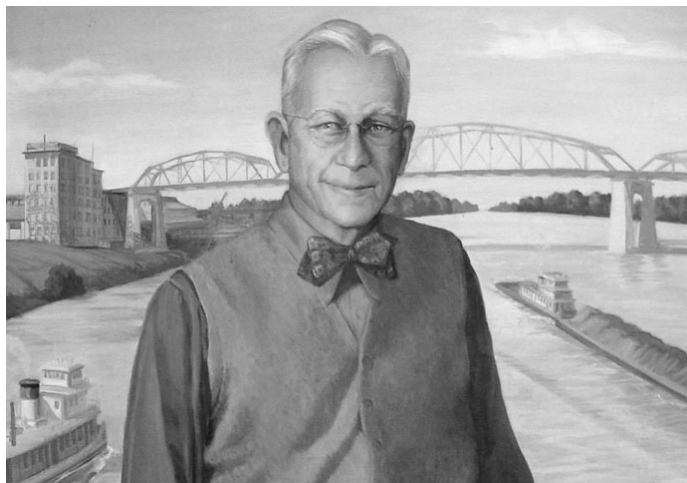
dry cargo transporters to specify NABRICO-built barges.

NABRICO constructed not only inland towboats and barges, but also several offshore supply vessels, tugs, and even built minesweepers and submarine chasers for the U.S. Navy during World War II.

The motor vessel ARTHUR J. DYER was a Nashville Bridge boat (naturally!) built for Ingram Barge Company of Nashville. Ingram at the time was primarily in the petroleum transportation business. Two of the pilots on the ARTHUR J. DYER with whom S&Ders might be familiar are Capts. Arthur H. Zimmer and Ray Prichard, both of whom in their later years worked as pilots on the Str. DELTA QUEEN and are fondly remembered by many readers.



*m/v ARTHUR J. DYER, 124 x 27.5 x 11.3, twin prop, pictured when new. Built in 1951 for Ingram Barge Co. Photo courtesy of Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.*

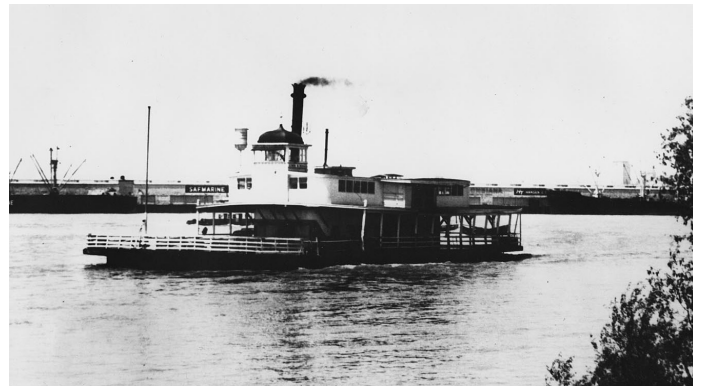


*Arthur J. Dyer (1867-1951), founder of Nashville Bridge Co.*

## Other NABRICO Steamboats



*COLBERT (To461) built 1891 in Jeffersonville for U. S. Engineers with engines 10 3/4 by 4 1/2 foot stroke. Steel hull placed by Nashville Bridge in 1925 measuring 137.9 x 26.2 x 4.5. Capt. Paul Underwood was Master in her later days. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse*



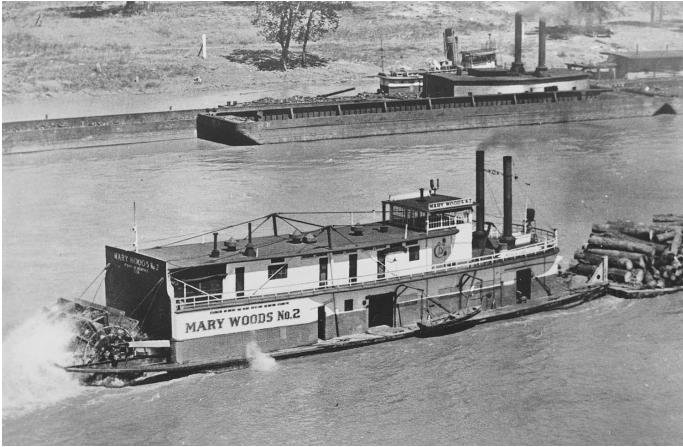
*EDWIN N. BISSO (1728) built 1925 for Bisso Ferry Co., New Orleans. Allowed 273 passengers and 50 cars. 130.3 x 46 x 7.5 catamaran hull. Converted to diesel in 1968, renamed CITY OF GRETNA. Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse*



*LEO B. BISSO (3419) built 1929, catamaran hull 136 x 62 x 8 with engines 16 1/2 by 6-foot stroke. Carried 232 passengers and 80 cars. Dieseled in 1968 as GOV. JACQUES P. VILLERE. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse*



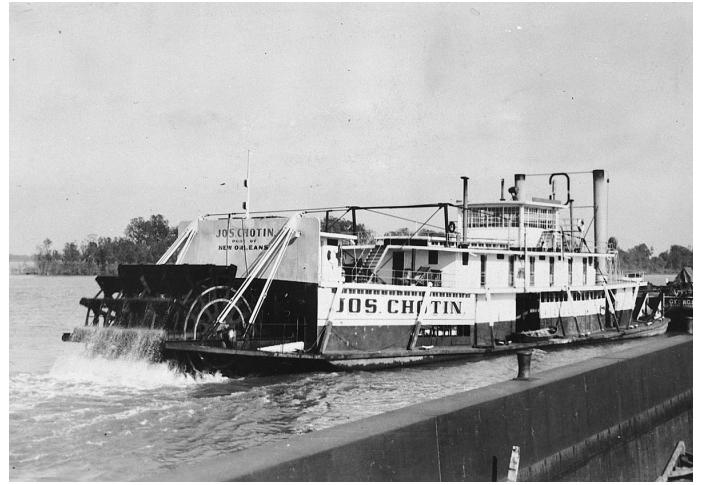
The hull of JOE COOK (T1384) built 1930 by NABRICO. Engines were 12's-5 from towboat WESTERN, replaced in 1947 with 16's-5 from snagboat KENTUCKY. Exploded a boiler at Ravenswood, WV Apr. 1, 1947, claiming 3 lives. Last boat to blow QUEEN CITY whistle. Murphy Library photo.



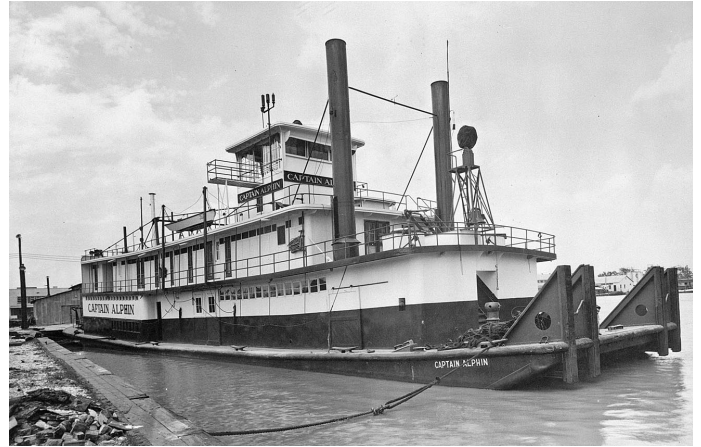
MARY WOODS No. 2 (T1764), built with a 111 x 26 x 4.4 NABRICO hull, was completed at Memphis in 1931 with Gillett & Eaton engines (who also manufactured those placed on JULIA BELLE SWAIN), 12 3/8 - 6 foot stroke. Converted to diesel at Memphis in 1949. Murphy Library photo.



CHARLES H. WEST (T0381), 195 x 38 x 7.6 towboat/snagboat built 1934 for Vicksburg U. S. Engineers. Iowa Machine Works compound engines 14's and 28's with 6-foot stroke. Decommissioned in 1958 and rebuilt as floating restaurant LT. ROBERT E. LEE at St. Louis. Burned in March 2010. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.



JOS. CHOTIN (T1453) built 1936 for Capt. Chotin. Spent most of her sternwheel time towing for Standard Oil. Engines 12 1/2's, 24 1/2's with 6-foot stroke on a hull 128.4 x 31.8 x 5.8 Towed Memphis-Nashville; to Burlington, IA and Midland, PA. Converted to twin prop diesel in 1945-6. Murphy photo.



CAPTAIN ALPHIN (T0340) was last steel steamboat hull built by NABRICO in 1937 for Capt. George E. Roper, New Orleans-Ouachita River service. 132 x 30 x 6; Iowa Machine Works engines 13's, 24's with 6-foot stroke. Murphy photo.

## NABRICO Gas/Diesel Sternwheelers



Sternwheel gasboat TOM (?) 74.1 x 16 x 4, built 1923. Photo by Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse. We are in need here of an assist from Steve Huffman or Dan Owen for a positive ID!





**HARVEY**, 92 x 26.8 x 4.3, built in 1923. Murphy Library.



**GILLETTE**, 90 x 20 x 4.6, built 1926. Murphy Library photo.



**JOHN C. IRWIN** at Nashville on October 25, 1935. Built in 1924 for U. S. Engineers with hull 98 x 20 x 4.5 Murphy photo



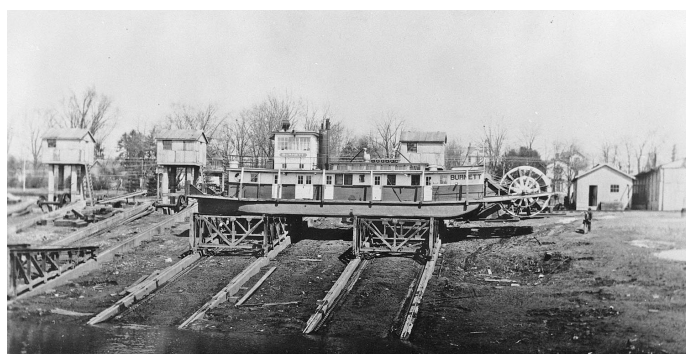
**NASHVILLE B.** when new at NABRICO yard in 1926. Hull 111 x 29.4 x 5.6 From Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.



**MARGARET R.** built in 1925 on 64.4 x 14 x 3.2 hull. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.



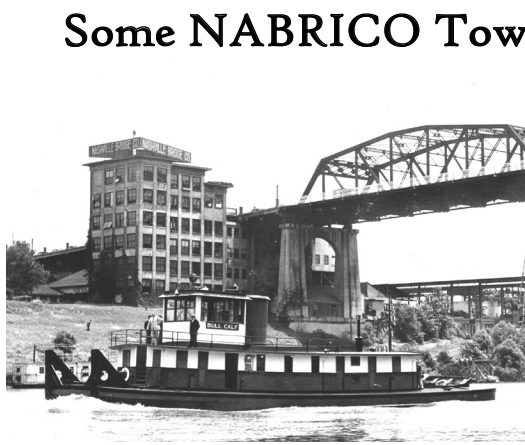
**DIXIE**, 76.5 x 18.8 x 4, built in 1937. Probably the last diesel sternwheeler built by NABRICO. Murphy Library photo.



**BURNETT**, 77 x 20, under construction at NABRICO in 1926. Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse photo.

## Some NABRICO Towboats

New m/v  
B U L L  
C A L F in  
May 1939 at  
Nashville.  
Single prop  
88 x 21.5 x  
7.5. First  
t o w b o a t  
fitted with  
air clutch.





**FRANCES M. HOUGLAND** on Oct. 4, 1963 at Monaca, PA, pushing into water plant to take on drinking water. Built 1947 for Houglan Barge Line, twin prop, 128.5 x 28 x 8.5. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**NELSON M. BROADFOOT** at Nashville. Built 1949, twin prop 80 x 30 x 10 for Ingram Barge Co. and named for Capt. Nelson M. Broadfoot (1893-1953), vice-president and director of Ingram at the time. Photo by Boat Photo Museum.



**WHAYNE H.**, second boat of that name. Built 1948 as **ALEX SMITH**, twin props, 111 x 26.5 for Charles C. Smith Co. of Houston, who sold her soon after completion to Houglan Barge Line of Paducah. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**ELEANOR GORDON** shown in official NABRICO portrait. Built for Mid-America Transportation Co. in 1956, twin prop 149 x 35. A classic example displaying the lines of a Nashville-built boat. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**CATERPILLAR**, twin prop 100 x 25 x 8, built 1949 for NABRICO. Used as party boat, as she had a large galley, and helped deliver new barges and towboats to Paducah. The venetian blinds below pilothouse shielded an open-air veranda where guests of the new boat could view the river. NABRICO erection yard is behind boat with company offices behind pilothouse. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**LADY ROSE-MARY** shown May 29, 1964 upbound entering old Lock 10 at Steubenville, OH. Slag pile from Weirton Steel Company in left background. Built 1957 for Inland Oil and Transport Co., twin prop 130 x 30 x 10.5 Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.





**ANN KING** upbound in Upper Mississippi River lock. Built for Mid-America Transportation Co. in 1964. Twin prop with Kort nozzles, 165 x 35 x 10.4. Photo from Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.



**OLINDA CHOTIN** shown at Brookport, IL above Lock and Dam 52 on the Ohio River on November 22, 1967. Built that year for Chotin Transportation, Inc. of New Orleans. Twin prop, Kort nozzles, 154 x 48. Photo from Boat Photo Museum.



**JULIA WOODS** shown at Carrsville, KY enroute to pick up first tow on April 25, 1965. Built for Mid-South Towing Co. of Tampa, FL. 180 x 50 x 11.5, triple props with Kort nozzles. Named for wife of president of Peninsula State Bank in Tampa. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**MARILYN M II**, downbound at Columbus, KY on her delivery trip January 15, 1968. Single prop, 1800 hp. towboat built for B & M Towing, Houston, for pushing chemical tows on Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. 100 x 30. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**KEVIN S. CANDIES**, ocean-going tug at New Orleans. Built 1967 for Otto Candies, Inc. of Des Allemonds, LA. Sank in 2000. The CANDIES was one of four ocean-going tugs built for that firm. NABRICO completed at least six tugs going back to 1949. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.



**JAMES E. SNYDER** upbound at St. Louis on May 27, 1977. Built 1976 for Wisconsin Barge Line of Cassville, WI. Triple prop, 195 x 54. Sister boat to JIM BERNHARDT and MISS KAE-D. This trio, along with HARRIET ANN of 1966, are the largest built by NABRICO. Photo by Boat Photo Museum.



**JIM BERNHARDT** of *Wisconsin Barge Lines* pictured on June 5, 1976 upbound in Chain of Rocks Canal. She is brand new and enroute to her christening at Wood River, IL. Triple prop, 195 x 54. Within two short years, NABRICO would build their last inland river towboat, the m/v **PATRICIA I. HART**, pictured on our front cover. Photo courtesy of Boat Photo Museum.

As Capt. Bob Reynolds has detailed in this history of Nashville Bridge Company, these yards on the banks of the Cumberland River were the site of a major boat-building concern for over six decades. In tracing the lineage of Western Rivers steam, gas and diesel towboats since 1921, the *Inland River Records* from 1945-1978, Capt. Way's *Steam Packet Directory* and his *Steam Towboat Directory* document a minimum of 158 different vessels coming from this boatyard. At least 12 were steam, 11 were gas or diesel sternwheel, and perhaps some 135 diesel towboats bore the builder's plate of Nashville Bridge Company.

In addition, the company built two minesweepers in World War II, as well as 14 sub chasers. The six ocean-going tugs are represented by the photo of **KEVIN S. CANDIES** on page 15. Added to this total output are a tanker, tank ship, and a jackup for an offshore drilling rig. A spreadsheet with the known listing of "Boats Built by NABRICO for Western Rivers Service" is available on our S&D website by clicking the REFLECTOR tab. Your editor welcomes additions or revisions to this listing.

Capt. Reynolds wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the [tennesseencyclopedia.net](http://tennesseencyclopedia.net) website and Capt. Bill Judd's editorial advice in preparation of his article. And a big thank you to Dan Owen for his valuable assistance with photos and captions. 📷

## Record Tow Opened 1945 UMR Season

Among NABRICO's regular customers was Hougland Barge Line of Paducah, owner of at least five Nashville-built towboats. A recent letter from Daniel McCay of Louisville provided information about his grandfather and great grandfather, both pilots for Hougland.

Capt. Horace Speck Jr., Daniel's grandfather, was pilot on **WALTER G. HOUGLAND** during her record trip at the start of the 1945 Upper Mississippi navigation season. An article in a Quad Cities newspaper reported: "Breaking all records for towing on the Upper Mississippi, the Hougland flotilla of three towboats and ten gasoline barges opened the 1945 season by locking through the Davenport locks (L&D 15) at 7 p.m. Monday [March 12]. It was not only the first tow of the season but also the greatest tow ever brought up the Mississippi [to date]. On the ten barges were more than 100,000 barrels of approximately 4,500,000 gallons of gasoline.

"The two largest barges were 240 feet long each by 48 feet in width. The next two largest were 195 feet by 48 feet. There were three barges each 150 by 35 feet; two 170 1/2 by 35 feet, and a tenth barge 130 by 30 feet. The largest barges were arranged two wide ahead of the towboats with the six smaller barges in sets of three at the head of the tow. They were towed by the **WALTER G. HOUGLAND**, the **WHAYNE H.**, and the **COURTNEY H.**, all owned by Hougland Towing Co. of Paducah. The **HOUGLAND**, a 1,600 hp. diesel boat with twin screws was centered behind the barges. On the right was the **WHAYNE H.**, an 800 hp. diesel with a single screw. On the left was the **COURTNEY H.**, a 350 hp. sternwheel boat.

"The **COURTNEY H.**, by the way, was formerly the **HELEN H.** which burned to the water's edge in April 1942 at Bettendorf. At that time the boat seemed a total loss, but the sturdy steel hull, though blackened, was sound, and by the expenditure of \$90,000, was rebuilt into as trim a little diesel towboat as can be found on the Mississippi.

“Capt. Mark Ragsdale, channel inspector for the U.S. Army Engineers, went downstream in the speedboat FULTON Monday forenoon and boarded the tow just above the Muscatine Dam (L&D 16). The Coast Guard cutter LANTANA, which the super-tow passed below Muscatine, has not set out navigation buoys yet between Muscatine and Davenport and the inspector was on hand to assist. But Capt. Horace Speck of Paducah, KY, who was on watch during that section of the trip, held the 1,000-foot tow steady in the channel.

“The HOUGLAND with her four large barges in tow left Helena, AR on March 5. The complete tow was made up at East St. Louis, where the HOUGLAND’s log shows that the flotilla left Alton, IL at 1:05 a.m. last Friday. The tow moved northward steadily at approximately three and a half miles an hour, double locking at all locks except Keokuk, where triple locking was necessary.”



**Capt. and Mrs. Horace Speck Jr. on Houglan Towing Co.’s WHAYNE H. All photos courtesy of Daniel McCay.**

In another article from the Paducah *Sun-Democrat* of January 19, 1974, the family’s towboating history was described. “For a man who is not especially fond of his job, Horace Speck has stuck with his for long time. This is his 58th year working on the river, and although he admits he may ‘wear out,’ he does not plan to retire and ‘rust.’

“The 71-year old Houglan Barge Line employe was 14 when he took his first job on the river as a rouster. The year was 1916 and the port was Bowling Green on the Barren River. Five years later, Speck received his pilot’s license and later went to work on a steamboat, served as mate for the government, became a pilot for Kentucky Rock Asphalt Company,

and in 1925 went to work for Houglan as pilot on the WALTER JR. He’s been with Houglan ever since.

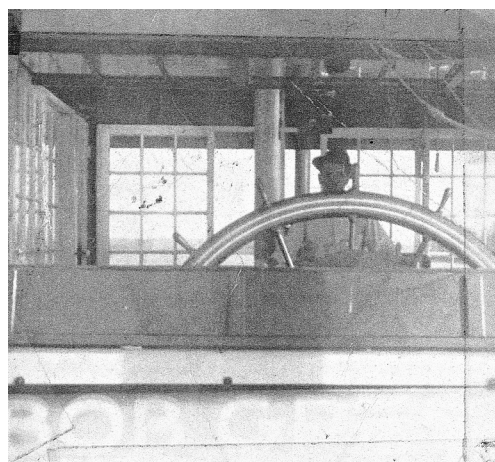
“‘My family moved to Bowling Green so that the children could get an education,’ Speck recalls. ‘My father was a captain on a packet boat at that time.’ Because he did not have any money and could not wear the kind of clothes he wanted, Speck left school and went to work. After having odd jobs, the elder Speck told his son to come on the river. ‘If you’re not going to go to school, you’ll come on the boat where you can’t spend your money and I can look after you,’ his father said, according to Speck. Remembering those days, Speck said that he liked the work back then. ‘But it’s a different world today.’

“He is now working the Huntington, WV to St. Louis run towing coal, but he has worked on every boat Houglan has and ‘has made more pilots than any man you’ll find on the Western waters,’ seeing every stop along those waters.”



**Capt. Horace Speck Jr. and niece on WHAYNE H.**

**Capt. Horace Speck Sr. in pilothouse of Str. BOB GREENE. In 1928, he was master of the Green River steam towboat M.C. CLAY (Tr668) for Kentucky Rock Asphalt Co.**



# Falls Heroes: Louisville's Lifesavers

## Chapter 6

by Leland Johnson

### HERO OF THE OHIO RIVER

*H*ero of the Ohio River headlined Captain Billy Devan's obituary in May 1911. Devan's diabetes had often forced his absence from the lifesaving station in 1910, leaving Jack Gillooly in command, and in January 1911 Devan scratched his hand on a gate entering his yard and it became swollen with blood poisoning. He never returned to the station thereafter and died on May 5 at age sixty-four. His wife Mary and two of his children, Frank and Mary, survived him, and along with the lifesaver crew, were at his funeral at Calvary Episcopal Church. He was buried in the Devan family plot of St. Louis Cemetery on Newburg Road about three miles from the station.

Jack Gillooly calculated that since 1881 Devan and the lifesavers had rescued 6,000 persons, saved \$5,250,000 in property, and recovered 400 bodies. These figures did not include people and property Devan saved as a volunteer striving to do the right thing at the Falls before 1881. Perhaps no hero in all American history left a better record of contributions to humanity. In his lifetime, he received golden lifesaving medals from his state and nation, the highest awards given by Kentucky and the United States. Some of the grateful people he saved also presented him with gold medals and other evidence of their eternal debt to him. Yet, his grave was never ornamented by his state, his nation, his hometown, or the U. S. Coast Guard with any marble stone or metal marker explaining to passersby that here lay one of the greatest heroes of his time.

Jack Gillooly acted as the Louisville station's keeper or captain from January until May 22, 1911, when Superintendent Kimball and Capt. E. E. Chapman of Ninth District made his appointment

permanent. At age fifty-six, Gillooly had spent thirty years of his life as Boatman No. 1, second in command to Devan, and he had definite ideas on how the station should be managed. Devan in his illness had become somewhat lax in later years, but not Gillooly. When one of the lifesavers became besotted while on liberty and was held by police, Gillooly promptly suspended him and with Capt. Chapman's approval soon terminated his services. Men who volunteered for employment as lifesavers, perhaps with romantic notions of the service, often resigned after just one day on Gillooly's station. Captain Jack moreover made small improvements at the station that had been neglected for years, and he began campaigning for other advances—the addition of telephone service, fire extinguishers, red and green running lights on the boats, and especially a steel hull for the station. Some thought him a martinet, but no one could question the value of his services to the United States.

### TWO STATES

The first rescue managed entirely by Gillooly came in February 1911 when the gasboat TWO STATES came downriver with a barge in tow on the way to Salt River. When its gasoline engine coughed and quit, winds swept the boat into the rumbling Falls. Gillooly sent the lifeboats but when the lifesavers arrived, they saw it was too late to try to restart the engine. Lifesaver Owen Curley took its helm and steered it as it went powerless down Kentucky Chute and over the backbone of the Falls into Indian Chute, thence on to the Portland wharf without loss of life or major damage.

Boatman William Drazel gave the alarm in October 1911 that the steamboat LENA MAY (3412) was in trouble near the head of Indian Chute and was out of the channel. Capt. Robert Hornbrook blew the distress signal and tried to keep control of

the wheel, but currents were too strong and his boat smashed onto the dike on the north side of Indian Chute. When lifesavers arrived, everyone aboard was panic stricken. They took all the crew ashore except the captain, pilot, and engineer. Examining the hull to see if it was taking water, they found it in good condition. One lifeboat returned to the station, while Ed Farrell stayed aboard the steamer throughout the night with the other boat and crew.



WILLIAM DRAZEL.

**Boatman William Drazell alerted the Lifesaving Station to the plight of LENA MAY near the head of Indian Chute.**

*Photo from Leland Johnson.*

**Below: LENA MAY (3412) built 1908 at Evansville, 113 x 28.5 x 4 by Capt. Robert Hornbrook and son Sam. Her engines came from upper Ohio ferry CONVEYOR. After twice escaping near-disaster at the Falls, she was sold in 1920 to St. Louis for the Calhoun County apple trade. Photo courtesy of Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.**



The distress signal had caused such excitement along the river that John W. Armstrong, who owned a forty-foot cruiser named CHRISTINE, had started down the Falls toward the LENA MAY to assist. He would have lost his boat and the lives of two men aboard with him in the swift currents, had not the station crew intercepted his boat and warned him.

The following spring, the LENA MAY again found trouble on the Falls. Proceeding down Indian Chute after dark, pilot William Littrell mistook the north pier for the south pier and drove the boat head-on into the concrete dam next to the channel.

Only prompt work by the lifesavers prevented loss of the boat.

## R. J. ARMSTRONG

Capt. M. N. Mullen had his towboat R. J. ARMSTRONG (T2090) hard at work in April 1912 helping the contractor widen the Louisville and Portland Canal for the Army Engineers. The ARMSTRONG and S. P. GILLETT (T2216) were towing barges loaded with spoil removed from the canal to a point near the Big Four Railroad Bridge, tripping back and forth several times a day. The ARMSTRONG was a little over ninety-six feet in length with a fifty-four ton capacity. She was built in 1907 at Lock No. 3 on the Allegheny River in Pennsylvania and belonged to the Ohio River Construction Company of Evansville, which had the contract for widening the Portland canal. The ARMSTRONG was making her last trip of the day when the wrist pin of its piston rod wore through. In an instant the entire mechanical portion of the boat was disabled, and Capt. Mullen's efforts to check the boat proved futile. She was carried by swift currents toward the concrete dam. Scores of loafers on the levee witnessed the hardest battle ever fought to save this steamer from destruction.

The ARMSTRONG was swept along by the current with such alacrity that Capt. Mullen, fighting the wheel, did not have time to sound the



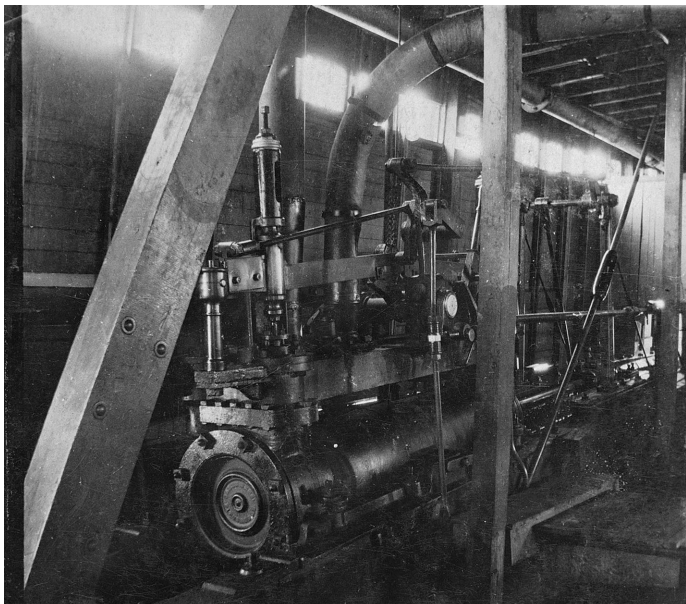
**R.J. ARMSTRONG's disabled crosshead resulted in her being carried toward the dam, until S. P. GILLETT got a line on her and towed her into the Canal for repairs. Murphy Library photo.**



distress signal, yet veteran Edward Farrell was on lookout duty at the station tower and his long experience forewarned him of the perils. Instead of sending a single crew to her assistance, he sounded a double alarm and every man at the station took to the boats. Capt. Jack Gillooly jumped into one of the boats and, taking a stand at its bow, directed the rescue work.

Summoning the S. P. GILLETT, which was going upstream, Gillooly ordered a line rigged from that boat to the ARMSTRONG. The GILLETT could not get close to the other vessel, however, on account of a long mud-filled barge she was towing. Hearing cries from the panic-stricken crew on the drifting ARMSTRONG, Gillooly sent a crew on ahead to her side. The lifesavers sought to calm the fears of the ten-man crew and the woman and child aboard, but as the boat rapidly approached the dam, threatening to crash over it to destruction, Gillooly feared at first that the crew and guests would have to be removed before they jumped.

As the line from the GILLETT strained and became taut, the other boat was just two feet from striking the dam. Both steamers remained motionless for a moment, while all held their breath. Then the engines of the GILLETT began working, gradually drawing the ARMSTRONG back from the verge of disaster into the middle of the stream.



*High pressure engine of S. P. GILLETT. The boat was built at Jeffersonville in 1901. Hull 118.9 x 30 x 4.1. She also assisted in construction of old Lock 3 on the Ohio at Glen Osborne, PA in 1908. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.*

Once out of danger, the GILLETT faced up to the ARMSTRONG and towed her to the canal, where she remained until repaired. "That's the toughest task we've had since I have been in the business," was Capt. Gillooly's comment later. "I didn't think there was a chance of saving her from reaching the dam. If she had gone over she would have been reduced to kindling and we would have been lucky to have saved any of the crew."

## WIRELESS

Although Gillooly obtained telephone service on the station in 1911, he was not nearly so receptive of wireless telegraphy—radio—in 1912. After loss of the TITANIC at sea in April 1912, a congressman sponsored a bill to equip all lifesaving stations with radios to communicate with each other and with vessels in distress. Rivermen laughed at the idea as worthless to them. Only a single boat on the Ohio River, the QUEEN CITY, running from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, had a wireless radio, and it had never been used. Courteous enough not to mention that the radio aboard the TITANIC had not saved her from disaster, Gillooly still agreed with rivermen: "There would be absolutely no use for the wireless at our station. Our work is right around these Falls, and the lookout in the tower needs no wireless message to tell him when a boat is in danger. I hardly think any of the packet companies would be willing to equip their craft with the wireless. Even if a boat with a wireless outfit aboard should be in a dangerous position a few miles up or down the river, she could secure assistance from other sources long before we received the aerogram, manned the boats, and reached her side."



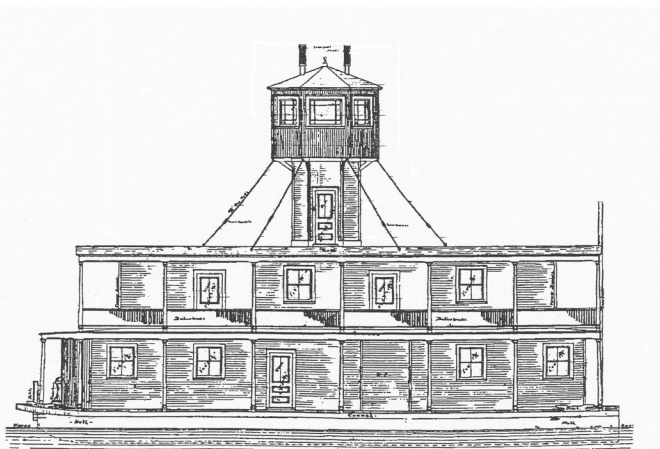
*Purser's Office on QUEEN CITY with Purser Ray McCay. Ensnconced somewhere in this floating business center amid keys, cash boxes, first aid supplies and ledgers, was the only wireless on the Ohio. Photo from Murphy Library.*

Gillooly suggested any bill for equipping the Life Saving Service with radios be amended to exclude the Louisville station from its provisions. Although coastal lifesaving stations and cutters of the Revenue Service obtained radio communications, Louisville and inland river lifeboats were not equipped with radios until after the 1937 flood severed their telephone services and graphically demonstrated the value of radio communications in emergencies.

## 1912 ICE

In late 1911 ice floes coming down the Ohio River formed a gorge upstream of Louisville. Suddenly it let go at one in the morning on January 2, 1912, sweeping five coal barges, a flat, and a coal digger for unloading the barges toward the lifesaving station and the Falls. Smashing into each other, one jumbled into the station and holed its hull. The situation was critical for a time, the weight of the coal barges and ice driving the station loose from its mooring and into the bank below. Two lines and one chain parted, and other chains holding the station quivered like violin strings and threatened to let go. But the chains held, saving the station from being carried downstream with the gorge and eaten up by the Falls.

The lifesavers began cutting off part of the coal barge extending inside the station's hull, while Capt. Gillooly assembled materials to make repairs. He purchased lumber and a half bale of oakum as caulking, and the crew built a temporary bulkhead around the holes in the hull. This held until the station was towed to drydock for repairs. During these repairs the lifesavers worked temporarily from coal docks on the Louisville levee.



Although Gillooly urged that the station be given a steel hull, steel-hulled boats were not immune from disaster. The Army engineers learned this in May 1912 when their steel-hull dredge LOUISVILLE, used to clear mud and debris from the canal, was caught by strong currents at the canal entrance and washed down into Kentucky Chute over the Falls. Gillooly sent Edward Farrell with a lifeboat crew to assist, and when Farrell reached the dredge—which had no propulsion system and was moved from place to place by towboats—he saw it would not be possible to send a towboat down the chute to move the dredge on account of strong currents and shallow water. At Farrell's suggestion, the dredge captain started moving farther down Kentucky Chute by pushing along with its dipper. In the toughest spots, the lifesavers ran lines to anchors on the rocks from the dredge's steam capstan, which then pulled it along while the dipper lifted its hull, and eventually they reached deeper water below the Falls. There, the canal towboat CHEROKEE (To407), formerly the MAJOR MACKENZIE, towed the dredge back up the canal. "This was a very nice and good piece of hard work in getting this dredge out of the predicament she was in," said Gillooly.

Edward Farrell became Louisville's Boatman No. 1, taking the position held by Gillooly before his promotion to Keeper. William Drazel, who joined the station in 1882, became Boatman No. 2, and the other four boatmen in 1912 were Edward McDonough, Owen Curley, John Needy, and John Williams. These seven men, wearing their number ranking on their sleeves, formed the station's permanent crew, but they were also supplemented by temporary hires such as Walter Farrell, son of Edward. These additional men served when members of the permanent crew were on liberty or became ill.

This crew was shocked in August 1912 when John Childers, age eighty, boarded the station to tell them he intended to jump into the river and drown himself. On his coat he had pinned a note which would help identify his body. Gillooly asked him why he came to notify the crew if he wished to commit suicide. Childers replied that no matter where he went on the levee, the station lookout in the tower constantly watched him, and so he begged the crew not to interfere. Seeing the man was out

of his mind, Gillooly summoned police who saw to the man's safekeeping.

When Capt. E. E. Chapman inspected the station and drilled the crew in September 1912, he witnessed them in action. John Williams sounded the alarm when a small boat with six children aboard was floating into the Falls toward the movable dam between Kentucky and Indian Chutes. Launching the lifeboat with stupendous speed, the lifesavers were soon alongside the small craft and towed it back to the station. The six children, ranging in age from eight to fourteen, had named their boat SEELBACH and were out merely for a pleasure trip. Capt. Chapman noted, "These little children would have gone through one of the openings in dam south of Indian Chute, and not one of them would have come out alive. It was sure death to them, but for crew from this station." Chapman estimated the value of the boat and property saved at six dollars.

Chapman brought along a repairman for the station's disabled motorboat. The repairman disassembled the engine, cleaned engine parts of carbon, changed out the bearings, installed new gaskets, and rewired its spark. After testing the repaired boat on the river, he left for Toledo and Capt. F. A. Lewis from the Revenue Cutter Service arrived to drill the station crew in their use of the power boat.

Interviewing Capt. Gillooly, a news reporter learned in 1913 the keeper was paid \$83.33 per month and the boatmen received \$65, scant pay for their hard lives and the hazards they encountered. "We are always on duty," said Gillooly, "and we scarcely get time to get acquainted with our families—those of us who have families, and most of us have... But we are not kicking. We know we are working for a grateful republic, and that probably we will be rewarded in the next world."

"Notwithstanding their long hours and isolation, the lifesaving crew is a jolly set," the reporter observed after touring the station. Noting the crew sorely missed Capt. Devan, the reporter asked Gillooly what the crew most needed. He promptly responded they needed a pension when they got too old to work, because none of them

could afford to retire without it. "Men don't always last as long as myself and Lieutenant Farrell. They get knocked out by the exposure. ... I expect I'm too tough to get knocked out myself, but I would like to see those who come after me provided for."

## 1913 FLOODS

One of Gillooly's greatest career exploits came when a major flood swept down the Ohio River and its tributaries in the winter of 1913, setting record crest levels that still stood in the 21st century. Flooding began in January and was severe near Cincinnati, where no lifesaving station existed. Responding to orders telegraphed on January 17 by Superintendent Kimball, Gillooly dispatched Edward Farrell with Ed McDonough, John Needy, and John Williams in charge of a fully equipped lifeboat on the five o'clock train to Covington, KY. The Superintendent was responding to a request for help from Covington's mayor, and there the lifesavers rescued or distributed food to fifty marooned families. Then, they answered a distress call from six miles upriver at Dayton, KY. They found the little town flooded and houses overturned. They rescued seventy-five people before returning to Louisville.



*Downtown Cincinnati during January 1913 flooding.*

Gillooly in the meantime patrolled the flooded districts in Louisville, notably the low-lying old Point area downtown, where people were marooned in the second stories of their homes. When Farrell's detachment returned, they too cruised through the flooded areas, distributing relief supplies. In March ferocious floods destroyed much of Dayton, OH,

on the Miami River that forms Ohio's western boundary near Cincinnati. The Secretary of the Treasury and Superintendent Kimball on March 26 telegraphed orders to crews from Louisville and Cleveland to proceed with lifeboats to Dayton. Capt. Gillooly with a lifeboat and boatmen William Drazel, Owen Curley, and John Williams left Louisville at three in the morning on the train for Cincinnati and Dayton.

The Miami and its tributary Mad River had brought floods that bisected Dayton into sections that were cut off from each other by the flooding. Left without communications and bridges, bodies were washing downstream into great masses of wreckage. People in the city did not know what had happened to their families across town, and people outside could not get news of their Dayton relatives. Moreover, food was in short supply and no one could brave the floodwaters to purchase whatever food was available.



*Collapsed houses from flooding in Dayton, OH.*

With Gillooly and the Louisville team approaching, lifesavers from the Cleveland station entered the city from another sector. Trainloads of provisions were arriving at the cash register plant, so the Louisville crew went there and loaded their lifeboat with water and hundreds of rations. Gillooly launched the boat on the Miami Canal, went up to Mad River, thence down the Mad to the Miami and into the downtown area. Rowing through the debris between rooftops, they distributed emergency supplies to eight hundred desperate people as they passed. The following day the flood receded enough for the use of land transport, so with the thanks of town officials the lifesavers returned to Cincinnati and from there to Louisville.

Back at Louisville, Ed Farrell and the crew left behind had been extremely busy after the flood hit. In addition to his son Walter Farrell, John Needy, and John Popp, Farrell had recruited four temporary hires for work in the absence of Gillooly's crew. Some of their work was at the Point in Louisville, where the flood destroyed twenty-three homes and left others teetering precariously on their foundations. The county judge called for their help at Little Africa, a settlement in Jefferson County outside of Louisville, where the lifesavers rescued and moved families in danger of being drowned.

When Gillooly and his crew returned to Louisville, Owen Curley, who had been injured in the Dayton action, was granted leave to recover. Gillooly and crew joined the other lifesavers fighting heavy rains and high winds to tend to their homefolk. The winds rocked the houses downtown, already loosened from their foundations by the floods, and the crews rushed to save people from those houses. Owen Curley's home on Bullitt Street was partly submerged when the storm broke, and an old house behind his fell with a resounding crash. In response to the screams of women and children, Curley rose from his sickbed and, taking his young son to help, got into his boat and rescued the family, all fourteen of them, and took them to safety. In this melee, Curley also severely injured his right arm and hand and had to paddle out to find medical attention.

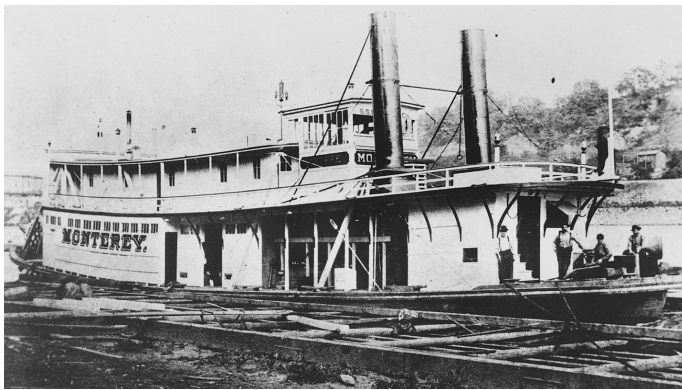
Dodging in and out of the wreckage, tossed by waves and currents, the lifesavers persisted with the rescues until the winds died and the waters subsided. After many long days and nights rescuing more than a thousand people in four different cities, the crews returned exhausted to their station for rest.

## MONTEREY

Three weeks after the flood mobilization, on April 25 lookout William Drazel sounded the alarm. He saw that the steamboat MONTEREY (T1864) towing the LOUCINDA (3573) was being carried away by the wind and strong current toward the Falls. The MONTEREY had a long ignoble career. Built in 1862, she had towed some of the first petroleum out of Oil City on the Allegheny River,

and worked around Pittsburgh until she overturned and sank in 1902. Acquired by the Monongahela River Combine, she went to Louisville to serve as a harborboat, helping move coal barges over the Falls. Just ninety-two feet long, the MONTEREY was pushing a boat nearly twice as large in the LOUCINDA. Crossing the river to deliver the big boat to Howard Yard for repairs, Capt. George Cole found his little MONTEREY was not equal to the task. Winds and powerful currents in midriver whirled them directly toward the Falls.

Lookout William Drazel saw where the boats were bound, and Capt. Gillooley and Edward Farrell took the lifeboats to help, but the two steamers were more than they could pull when rowing. They



**MONTEREY**, built 1862 at Pittsburgh, 92 x 18.8 x 3.4 with engines 11's, 4-foot stroke. After her early career on the Allegheny, she was rebuilt at Pittsburgh in 1883 and did towing on the Mon. Owned by the Combine in 1900 and was the harbor boat at Louisville at the time of her final sinking. Capt. Fred Way records that for some obscure reason rivermen dubbed her the "Monkey Wrench." Photo from Murphy Library.



**LOUCINDA**, under tow of **MONTEREY**, let go the lines as **MONTEREY** broke up and sank at the Big Eddy. Safely towed to the Canal by another harborboat, she survived the incident, but finally succumbed to the ice of January 1918 at Cincinnati. Built at Pt. Pleasant, WV in 1910, she measured 158 x 30 x 4.5, with engines 12's by 6-foot stroke. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.

boarded the steamers and Farrell helped Capt. Cole steer the two boats narrowly past a bridge pier, then through an opening in the movable dam between Kentucky and Indian Chutes, and finally over backbone reef to get into the Indian Chute channel. But the MONTEREY hit the rocks hard on the backbone, opening seams from stem to stern. Capt. Cole started the pumps, but gushing water gained on them quickly. When the boats swept into the Big Eddy, Capt. Cole and the crew abandoned ship, and the lifesavers helped them climb over to the LOUCINDA, where the lifesavers took charge. They chopped away the lines to the other boat, dropped anchors overboard to check the boat's headway, then ran a line to the Indiana bank to tie off and swing the helpless steamer to shore.

At the Big Eddy, the old MONTEREY careened over and when a big wave swept over her deck, she turned turtle. Her upper works floated off, dropping boilers and machinery into the whirlpool, and her hull drifted and sank to the bottom of the whirlpool, a total loss. Because of the depth of the Big Eddy, the company owning the boat did not attempt to recover her machinery or salvage the wreck. A harborboat ran lines to the LOUCINDA, however, bringing her up the canal to Jeffersonville for repairs, and under the new name ANDES, she continued service for years thereafter.

The following July, lookout Ed Farrell saw the Army Engineers Maneuverboat No. 2 in a nasty situation. The engineers had two maneuverboats for raising and lowering the Chanoine and Boule wickets of the movable dam across the head of the Falls. These boats had no propulsion machinery and were towed out to the dam, where the towboat left them. Using their capstans and crane, they dragged themselves along the dam as they hoisted or dropped the wickets. At several points along the dam were concrete abutments the boats had to pass. On July 10, 1913, the maneuverboat was anchored to a ringbolt in the concrete abutment when it suddenly snapped, releasing the boat to wash over the dam. Two of the crewmen, Harvey Kirk and Joe McCarty, were working at the wickets when the ringbolt let go, so they jumped onto the partly lowered wickets and clung to them for life. The lifesavers got to them before they fell into the river, pulled them into the lifeboat, then jumped over the dam and pursued the



maneuverboat down the chute. Aboard were its crew, Cornelius Hasselback, Will Miller, Emile Studer, Ed Daily, Frank Bailey, and John Mintz, who were awfully glad to see the lifesavers catch up with them as they spun down the chute. Getting a line on the maneuverboat, the lifesavers rowed hard to guide it past the rock outcroppings along the way and land it at the exit from the canal, where the engineer towboat retrieved it.

Another incident involving Army Engineer floating equipment occurred later that year when the U. S. Snagboat E. A. WOODRUFF (1639) attempted to ascend the Falls. Built under the management of Colonel William Merrill in 1874 at Covington, KY, her 226 by 48-foot hull had a "bootjack" design with two bows and a butting beam between to pry snags free from the river. As a workboat, she had a low flat deck, which helps explain what happened to her at the Falls on November 20, 1913.

As she tried to steam up Indian Chute, currents proved too strong for her engines. The pilot then changed course and attempted ascent through the Middle Chute over the dam, but at the dam the snagboat's head dived until two feet of water flowed down across the main deck and her starboard wheel hit the dam. Dropping back, she whistled for help, and the lifesavers sped to her. The snagboat was not sinking, so her captain asked the lifesavers to get a harborboat to help them up over the Falls. Returning to the levee, they notified the captain of the WASH GRAY (T2625) who promptly went to aid the WOODRUFF.



*Snagboat E.A. WOODRUFF was lengthened at Cincinnati Marine Ways in 1885, and worked the entire length of the Ohio River. After her retirement in the 1920s, she was owned by Capt. Gordon Greene and then L&C Packet Co. as a wharfboat. Dismantled in 1940. Photo from Murphy Library.*

Although life aboard the Louisville station could get monotonous, novel situations often enlivened the lifesavers' work. The Jefferson County sheriff once came to the station to ask Gillooly for help. The Keeper went with the sheriff about twenty-five miles from the river to help locate two murder weapons, a hatchet and large knife, that were hidden in a well and in a small creek. And in November 1913, Dr. C. V. Guthrie came to the station for help. He and his wife, their friends Offutt Cakin and Mr. & Mrs. Stribling of Huntington, WV, were headed south in their cruising yacht ELIZABETH, planning to descend the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers and follow the coast to winter on Indian River in Florida. Forewarned, Dr. Guthrie feared he could not safely steer down Indian Chute, but he could find no Falls pilot. The last Falls pilot, Capt. Dan Varble, had died in 1912. Capt. Gillooly selected lifesaver Charles Graff, who was going on liberty for the day, to help Dr. Guthrie, arranging for the crewman to safely pilot the yacht over the Falls.

## QUEEN CITY

The magnificent packet QUEEN CITY (4615) was also bound south to the New Orleans Mardi Gras when she reached Louisville in 1914. As mentioned earlier, she was at that time the only boat on the Ohio that had a wireless radio aboard, as she was a deluxe steamer that catered to wealthy patrons of Pittsburgh. Every stateroom had an outside door, electric lights, and every convenience of a hotel. Her forward cabin was in the shape of a crescent, fitted with glass doors and windows, giving passengers full views of the panorama as the boat passed along the river. And her spacious promenade decks reminded passengers of the antebellum days of floating palaces.

The boat's officers had spent many years on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, and her pilots were the Connors boys of New Albany: Walter and Stuart, sons of Captain Wes Connors, famous pilot of the ROBERT E. LEE. The Connors brothers had piloted the QUEEN CITY on her previous annual excursions to the Mardi Gras, warm respites from the Ohio Valley winters. Capt. William Lepper was in charge when the packet reached Louisville on February 17, 1914, with 297 passengers and crew aboard.



*Louisville Lifesaving Station with packet QUEEN CITY landed upstream at L&C Packet Co. wharfboat, foot of Third Street.  
Photo from Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.*

Coming downriver, the weather was cold and the river so heavy with ice that the packet ran slow bell to Louisville, where she arrived at one thirty in the morning in a light fog. Gaily decorated with flags, she had a holiday crowd that had been aboard for three days. The boat's orchestra played during meals and for dancing, entertainment supplemented during the voyage with masked balls and vaudeville acts. Three newlywed couples were among the passengers, and the list included several millionaires of Pittsburgh and Cincinnati. That night, passengers were sitting by the stove in the cabin to see the Falls, and a few were dancing. Most slumbered in their berths as the steamer turned to land at the Fourth Street wharf.

Stuart Conners was on watch in the pilothouse when the current caught the QUEEN CITY broadside and drove her downriver past the wharf and on toward the Falls. A nightmare followed with the boat and passengers headed to destruction. The steamer's hull struck the concrete dam about five feet below the waterline and stove it in, where it

lodged with several feet of her bow hanging over the dam, ready to drop into the Falls below. The jar of the collision awakened the passengers, and general confusion ensued as they rushed to the deck and cabin in their nightclothes while the crew handed them lifebelts.

Capt. Lepper blew five short whistle blasts, but even before the signal, lookout William Drazel saw the danger and had sounded the alarm. Capt. Gillyooly led both lifeboats with the entire station crew through the ice floes to come alongside the packet. The first lifeboat arrived before the steamer hit the rocks and the second arrived moments later, both before the captain could sound the distress signal.

Gillyooly boarded and strode into the cabin with the excited, confused passengers, and calmly told them the lifesavers would take them ashore and all would be saved. Knowing the boat might slide over the Falls at any moment, he ordered his crew to worry about people first and possessions later. Some

<b>AL TELEGRAPH - COMMERCIAL CABLES</b>	
RECEIVED AT POSTAL TELEGRAPH BUILDING 1345 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE WASHINGTON, D. C. TELEPHONES MAIN 6800-6801	CLARENCE H. MACKAY, PRESIDENT. <b>TELEGRAM</b>
The Postal Telegraph-Cable Company (Incorporated) transmits and delivers this message subject to the terms and conditions printed on the back of this blank.	
DELIVERY No. <u>117</u>	

16W-569

DESIGN PATENT No. 40529

230am br 33 Collect Govt 447pm

Louisville Ky Feb 19-14

S I Kimball Gen Supt Life Savings Service

Washington DC

Queen City Sank head falls one thirty morning 17 rescued two hundred and five  
steamer will probably be total loss.

Gillooly.

*Copy to Mr. Masam 2/20/1914.*

10. Supposed cause of wreck .....	10. <i>Wind &amp; Current</i>
11. Number of lives saved .....	11. <i>190</i>
12. Number of lives lost .....	12. <i>None</i>
13. State minutely extent and nature of services rendered .....	13. <i>The steamer Queen City, in trying to land at city wharf, was caught by the current and wind on her head, was swung out and carried down to abutment on S. side of city chute, where she hit and sunk in about 10 ft of water in strong current</i>

DATE OF REPORT:

*Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 1914*

*John F. Gillooly*

Keeper.

[Ed. 8-11-79-1,000.]

**John Gillooly's telegram to the Superintendent of Life Saving Service in Washington reporting the accident to QUEEN CITY on February 18, 1914. Courtesy of Leland Johnson.**

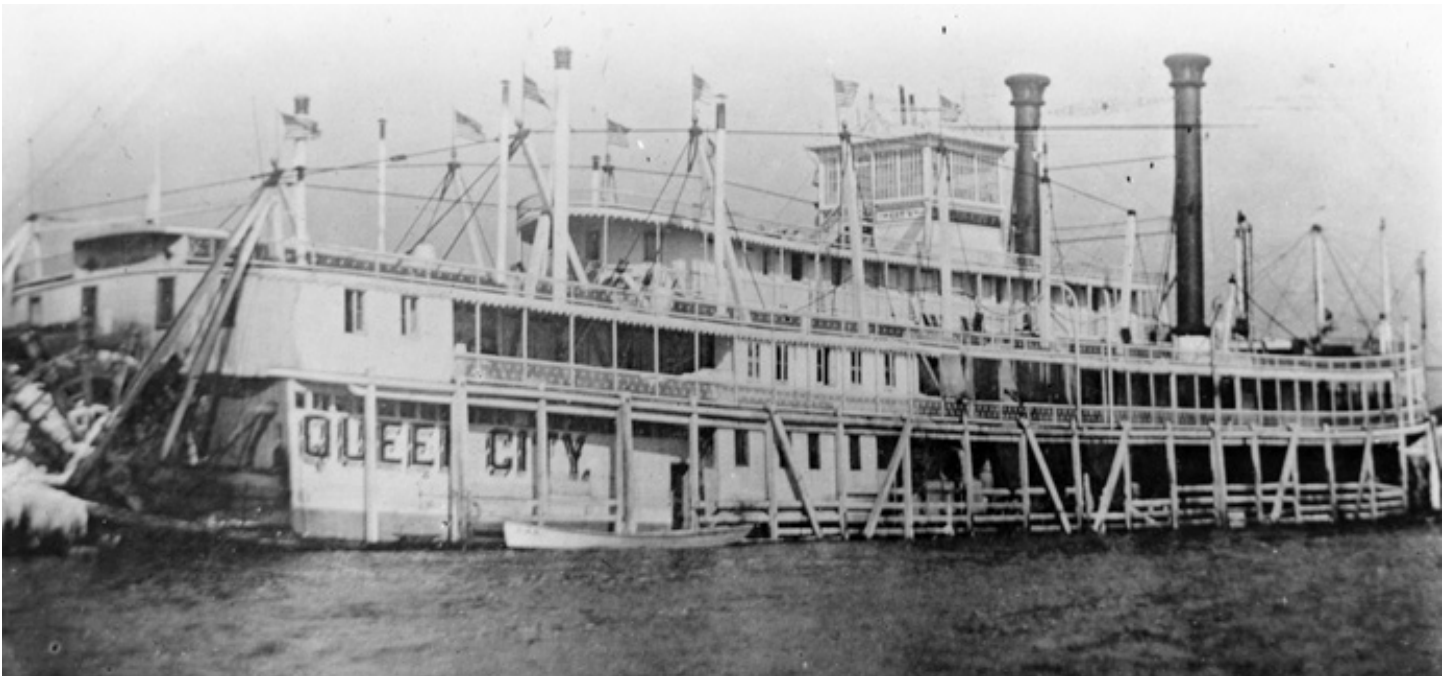
heavy sleepers had to be pulled from their beds in night clothes and led in stunned bewilderment to safety. Gillooly also ordered his crew to lower and man the steamer's yawl to transport passengers. Ordering male passengers to back off from the boats, Gillooly commanded that women and children would be the first evacuated. Later he admitted that he feared steam lines could have ruptured if the steamer settled lower in the water, but he kept his fears to himself rather than cause panic. All women willing to leave without their escorts were taken ashore first, and then the wives who remained with their husbands were also taken to safety. The men followed in order.

During the night, intense cold and thick mist formed ice on the boats and oars. Besides adding weight to the oars, ice on the oar locks made rowing difficult and ice on the handles prevented a firm grip. Between their runs, the lifesavers spent the night breaking ice off their equipment. By five in the morning they had made twenty-five trips to shore and back, moving 209 people to safety. Then they started moving the passengers' trunks and baggage to the station. Edward Farrell searched all the staterooms, putting any personal items found into pillow slips and marking the room number for later identification. He broke open jammed doors and in one room found L. H. Granger and his wife still sound asleep.

After four hours, all passengers were ashore, where the lifesavers gave them dry clothing and called taxis to take them to the Galt House, Seelbach, and other hotels for the remainder of the night. The following

day, they removed the passengers' luggage and towed 7,000 board-feet of lumber to the packet for the repairs. The railroad offered to transport the passengers to New Orleans to see Rex, if they preferred to take rail rather than travel on the STEEL CITY (5187), sister boat to the QUEEN CITY, which the packet company brought from Cincinnati for the purpose. Later that day, the lifesavers, breaking their way through ice, also took off the forty-four officers and crew who had spent the night aboard the wrecked boat.

Because some cabin boys had been fired earlier for drunkenness, rumors circulated that the pilots



**QUEEN CITY** sunk at Falls of Ohio on February 18, 1914. Intense cold the previous night made rescue operations difficult and dangerous. Note the mass of ice frozen inside the wheel and hanging from the fantail. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse

had been drinking at the time of the accident, but when the passengers met the following evening, Capt. Gillooly assured them that the Conners boys were teetotalers. At this meeting William Hopkins of Cincinnati, whose sister and daughter had been rescued from the sinking boat, proposed a resolution thanking the lifesavers for their heroism and urging passengers to communicate with their congressmen in support of a pending bill to merge the Revenue Cutter and Lifesaving Services into a new U. S. Coast Guard. The passengers also collected donations totaling \$5,000 to present to the lifesavers, but Capt. Gillooly firmly refused the gift. He did ask the passengers, however, to use their influence to assure that the Louisville station would become part of the Coast Guard. Indeed, he remained convinced the remainder of his life that the passengers' petitions affected the decision of Congress.

The harborboat TRANSIT delivered barges to the wreck to remove property and freight in case the boat broke up, and the lifesavers made another thirty trips to the steamer, taking divers, carpenters, laborers, and materials to build bulkheads around holes in her hull. The Army Engineers sent their canal dredges LOUISVILLE and CASEY to use their pumps for removing water from the hull. They also raised the movable dam at the head of

Kentucky Chute to slow the current and deepen the water at the wreck. When the boat floated off the dam at last, the harborboats towed her back to the wharf on March 1. After repairs, the QUEEN CITY went back into service and later resumed her annual Mardi Gras excursions, running the last of those splendid trips in 1930. Described by Capt. Fred Way as the "ultimate of Ohio River packets," this grand steamer ended operations in 1933. With her ornamentations stripped, she was converted into a wharfboat at Pittsburgh where she burned in 1940. Her roof bell ended up on the DELTA QUEEN in 1947 and continues in service to this day.

In addition to more than 200 people rescued from the QUEEN CITY, Capt. Gillooly valued the baggage saved at \$30,000, the steambot at \$40,000, and her freight at \$167,000. At the other end of the scale, he soon after added another \$26 to the station's total value of property saved in 1914, when the lookout saw a hog scuttle into the river near the ferry landing and start swimming with the current toward the Falls. The lifesavers caught the hog, towed him to shore, and returned him to the stockdriver who lost him.

These and other exploits by the lifesavers made their station an extremely popular tourist destination in the next few years. They enjoyed frequent

educational visits by classes from the Louisville and Jefferson County schools and conducted practice lifeboat launches for their entertainment. Even the newly organized Boy Scout troops came visiting with their scoutmasters to learn what it took to become lifesavers, to "Be Prepared."


Capt. Gillooly's last crew in the Life Saving Service at Louisville included Boatman No. 1 Edward Farrell, No. 2 William Drazel, No. 3 Owen Curley, No. 4 John Needy, No. 5 John Williams, No. 6 Charles Graff, and No. 7 John Munz. Munz joined the crew in May 1914 to replace Ed McDonough, who resigned because of physical disability. Walter Farrell, son of Edward, and Gilbert Drazel, son of William, formed the temporary backup crew when the regulars were absent for liberty or illness.

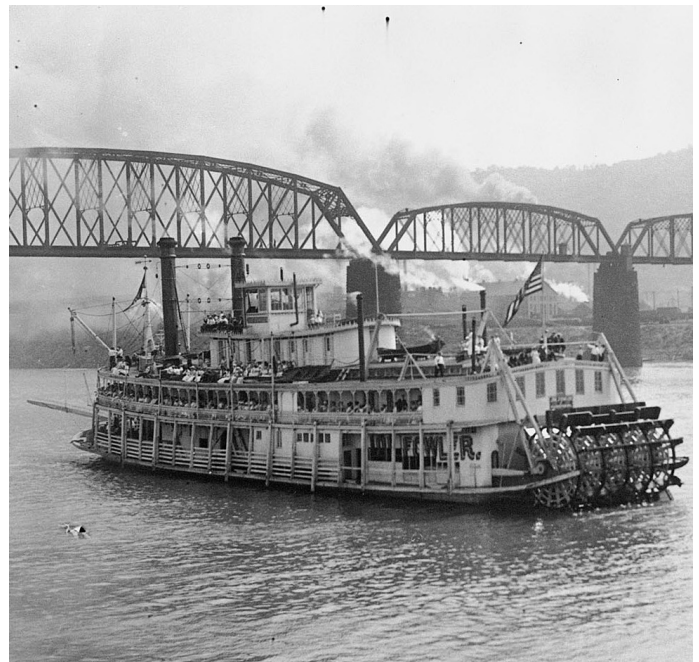
## JOE FOWLER

The last major steamboat rescue by the Louisville station as part of the Life Saving Service, in addition to rescues of small craft, involved the JOE FOWLER (3013). Capt. William Lepper ran summer river excursions from Louisville with the boat. Lepper had commanded the QUEEN CITY when she wrecked the previous February. On July 14, 1914, lookout Owen Curley gave the alarm for the FOWLER, which had blown a distress signal when five miles distant from the station. To reach her more quickly, Capt. Gillooly started the station's motorboat and had it tow a lifeboat to the steamer. When Gillooly and his crew arrived, they were told there was nothing the matter; the captain was merely saluting people at a fishing camp as they passed. In his log of the incident, Gillooly wrote, "Keeper gave the pilot some advice in regards to blowing a distress signal with about 600 people aboard, which was liable to cause a panic." No doubt his language to Capt. Lepper was more vivid than his notation.

Later that summer, another distress signal from the JOE FOWLER was heard by the station lookout. Gillooly did not hesitate, setting aside any thought that it might be another cry of wolf. He dispatched two lifeboats to the rescue, and when they first arrived at the steamer, the lifesavers learned a crewman had fallen into the river while trying to

repair her paddlewheel. Edward Farrell immediately jumped overboard and dived down into ten feet of water, found the body, and brought it to the surface. Taking the man to shore, the lifesavers started resuscitation, and when clearing his throat with a probing sponge found it full of blood. For twenty minutes they tried manually to revive him without success, so the other crew brought over a pulmotor the station had acquired. Using this mechanical device, the lifesavers forced oxygen into his lungs, rhythmically inflating and deflating them, but still the crewman did not respond. Sadly, they took his body to the station for the coroner's examination.

In Capt. Jack Gillooly, the Ohio River had a new hero, known far beyond the confines of Kentucky. Even the Secretary of the Treasury gushed effusively about the heroism shown by Louisville's Keeper and lifesavers during the 1913 Dayton flood and the 1914 QUEEN CITY wreck. Petitions from influential survivors of these disasters who supported the continuation of the lifesaving station at Louisville were sent to the Treasury Department office and the desk of Sumner Kimball, as well as those of their congressmen. There was no doubt in 1914 that the Louisville lifesavers would continue to watch and rescue at the Falls of the Ohio, but it was not yet apparent which agency in Washington would manage the station. 



*JOE FOWLER put in an appearance in our June issue when making her famous Pittsburgh-St. Paul cruise, a month prior to her ill-timed whistle salute to a fishing camp at Louisville. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.*

# MINNE-HA-HA's New Calliope

by Matt Dow

Since the 1970's, the MINNE-HA-HA's steam calliope has serenaded passers-by, taking them back to an era when the sounds of a calliope meant the impending arrival of a showboat or excursion vessel. For many isolated towns along the inland rivers of America, these vessels were the main source of entertainment, an escape from the monotony of daily life and a chance to do something exciting. For many visitors to the Lake George area, memories of summertime include hearing the melodic strains of the calliope waft over the village.

I began playing the calliope when I was 13 years old. As my love for this purely American instrument grew, so did my opinion that the calliope on the MINNE needed serious attention. The first calliope aboard the boat was one of three built by the Frisbie Engine and Machine Company of Cincinnati, OH. To this day, older employees at the Company still talk fondly about 'the aurora effect.' In 1993, through an unfortunate series of events, this calliope was replaced with a smaller instrument originally built by Ernest J. Wilde in the 1960's. Since its installation, the instrument had been neglected. In 2009, I did my best to make it look good by painting the manifold and polishing the whistles, but there was nothing I could do about its horrific tonal quality.

In the summer of 2011, I got the okay from my father, Bill, to go ahead and find a new calliope. For our new instrument, I went to Dave Morecraft of Peru, IN, who has built and restored calliopes since 1978. He constructs them to the specifications of Thomas J. Nichol, arguably the best calliope builder in the history of the instrument. Nichol's instruments were renowned for their craftsmanship and lovely sound. Having played Mr. Morecraft's instruments before, picking him to build our new instrument was the obvious decision.

Installation of the calliope occurred during the week before Memorial Day, 2012. Dave came over



*Jess Coen of Frisbie Engine & Machine in Cincinnati points out special features of original calliope built for Lake George Steamboat Co.'s MINNE-HA-HA in summer of 1974. Frisbie had just completed another identical instrument for the steamer NATCHEZ in New Orleans. Editor's collection.*

from Peru with his son, Zach, to lead the charge. Anthony Benedetto, a friend and fellow calliope player from New York City, also came to assist in putting it together. Assisted by Henk Overbeek, the Company's expert welder, it took the four of us three days to take apart the old calliope, assemble the new one, and re-do the wiring running from the instrument to the keyboard located in the pilothouse. First steam up on the instrument occurred on Friday, May 25th, and the first song played was "It's Been A Long, Long Time." Over the weekend, we all got to play a little, and we even had the honor of being serenaded by Marilyn Buehler, the calliope player on the MINNE from back when the 'Frisbie' was still onboard.

In my opinion, this was a project that needed to be done. My grandfather, Wilbur, loved the calliope, and I owed it to him to put only the best instrument on the boat. It was a lot of hard work, but the end result is something I know he would be proud of. The MINNE now has a new voice, one that she will have for a long time to come. 🎵





*Manifold for new Morecraft calliope after its positioning on roof of MINNE-HA-HA during the week prior to Memorial Day. Solenoids and valves were placed soon afterwards.*



*Steam is turned on for the first time on May 25, as the sweet, mellow tones echo in the environs of Lake George once again. Of course, as always, beauty is in the ear of the beholder.*



*Dave Morecraft and Anthony Benedetto install copper whistles on solenoid valves. The dimensions and design of the whistles are accurate Thomas J. Nichol reproductions.*



*The crew poses for a formal portrait . L-R: Dave Morecraft, designer and builder; Anthony Benedetto, calliope enthusiast from New York City; Zach Morecraft, Dave's son and calliapist; and Matt Dow, calliapist and author of this article.*



*The new 32-note calliope installed on the MINNE-HA-HA replaced two earlier instruments: the original built by Frisbie Engine & Machine Co. and a second one built by Ernest Wilde.*



*"It's Been a Long, Long Time" since these haunting sounds have been heard, and equally appropriate, the first tune played on the new calliope. All photos this page courtesy of Matt Dow.*

# The First Days of the Grande Dame of the Mississippi River

By Travis C. Vasconcelos



*Steamer AMERICAN QUEEN at Oak Alley. All photos courtesy of Travis Vasconcelos.*

Before you can start to understand this story, you have to know what caused it to happen. The AMERICAN QUEEN was laid up in November 2008 due to poor management and a failed attempt to reinvent the American River cruise industry. Had the former management paid attention to successes of the past operation, followed the proven methods of operation, and not ignored the history of the companies who had run her, this story would be much different. However, because they did none of those things, a new day has come to the river and this is how it began as viewed through the eyes of one of the onboard Riverlorians.

In the years prior to my meeting up with her again, the AMERICAN QUEEN had been laid up for over three and a half years. Her exterior was in horrific shape due to a dark blue paint job which had severely faded. Mold was taking a hard bite out of the remaining steamboat white paint on her exterior bulkheads. The interior had been well taken care of with plastic over the carpeting, exterior doors sealed, and dehumidifiers working to preserve the

antiquities which create her breathtakingly ornate interiors. The new Great American Steamboat Company took possession of their flagship on the 4th of August 2011. The first order of business was to get her to a shipyard and prepare her to start operating again.

The boat was initially moved to the Bollinger yard in Sulpher, LA. There the paddlewheel was removed and taken apart, her boiler rebuilt, steam engines and generators taken down and rebuilt and superstructure cleaned, primed and repainted a proper steamboat white. In early January 2012 the boat was moved under her own power into the Gulf of Mexico and repositioned at her Bollinger Yard birthplace in Amelia, LA for her 5-year hull inspection and underwater work. While there she received extensions to her flanking rudders. This work has increased her handling abilities greatly, according to her pilots. While in dry dock her new homeport of Memphis, TN was lettered on her stern jockey bar. With a clean bill of health she was refloated and set out for the Gulf again, this time to

return to her natural waters, the Mississippi River. Upon arrival in New Orleans she was taken to the Perry Street Wharf (another Bollinger facility) where the vessel's new crew came aboard to get her ready for guests to walk her decks.

I came to the boat in late February and was surprised to see all the work that had already been completed. Knowing the boat was to sail in just a month and a half, I was also surprised at all the work that still needed to be done. No boat comes out of layup looking perfect. As the first passenger boards, the last of the finishing touches are finally put forth, and not till then is she complete.

When I arrived at the boat the crew had just finished rebuilding the paddlewheel. Her deck crew, working non-stop for almost a week, had accomplished this herculean task. This was no small task as 40 tons of lumber, 10 tons of framework, 6,000 bolts and nuts, and 200 gallons of red paint were used to accomplish this. I was also told by one of our deck crew that about \$1,000 worth of tools had ended up at the bottom of the Mississippi River in the process!



*Our brand new sternwheel. Together with newly extended flanking and monkey rudders, the boat's handling and speed have reportedly improved. AQ measures 418 x 89 with 8½ foot draft. She carries 436 passengers and 160 crew.*

But the boat's interiors, staterooms, crew rooms, crew mess, outer deck spaces, pilot house wiring, wing bridge wiring and controls, steam whistle, calliope, boiler, and many of the other things needed in order for her to function were not present or even operational. I began to wonder if all of this would come together by the time our first guests arrived.

The shipyard crew worked along with our steamboat crew on the boat, non-stop, 24-hours a day to make sure the QUEEN was ready for her royal guests. Visitors with specific experience came to the boat from all points of the globe. Europeans from Rolls Royce worked on her azimuthing drives, preparing these amazing technological units. Others worked on her pilothouse electronics, and even David Morecraft came from Peru, IN to work on the calliope he built for her 18 years ago.

Our team of Riverlorians, Mary Charlton, Jerry Hay and myself, began the task of making the Chart Room ready for our guests. We worked in the Chart Room from 7am until 6pm daily, breaking only for a half hour at lunch. Occasionally this was interrupted by training classes we attended or practicing the safety drills necessary for the day when we would welcome passengers back onboard. We removed the stained glass windows in the skylight trunk in the Chart Room for cleaning. Prior to that time, none of us Riverlorians knew that these spectacular colored windows were manufactured by Tiffany Stained Glass, Ltd. in Chicago, IL. What a treat to find such a storied name on these beautiful windows.



*Builder's plate on stained glass windows in the Chart Room.*

We inventoried the library, planned activities for the guests, cleaned out the storage closet, built replacement file cabinets, ordered replacement binoculars, trained for new responsibilities, wrote hand outs for our guests, and researched histories of many of the ports of call for our onboard newspaper, "River Times." We were so busy that when we had a chance to walk the decks of the boat, there was always something new and exciting to see on which the rest of our fellow crew had been hard at work.



*Jerry Hay cleaning the window frames after the Tiffany stained glass was removed.*

On the 1st of April the deck crew painted the bow decking red for the first time in over 5 years. The old grey paint disappeared and another sign emerged of her rebirth as the last true overnight Mississippi River steamboat.



*New traditional steamboat red deck enamel going on the bow.*

After spending a month working and watching the boat awake from her long rest, we finally got a chance to see the fruit of our labors. On the 2nd of April we took the boat on a test run. Mary, Jerry, and I were on the roof cheering when the boat started to come to life after her lines were let go. "Overnight Steamboating is back" I heard someone shout, although I can't remember who (perhaps it was me?) The moment was so poignant I have to admit I forget some of the details. We took the boat about 6 miles upstream and then opened her up as we came down the river to make a first attempt at our new Poydras Street landing at New Orleans' famed Riverwalk Mall. Although there were a few

problems landing that first time, we learned valuable lessons which have made subsequent landings much more successful!

On the 3rd of April we got our new bow and stage spanner signage, visible signs of the future rebirth of the boat. Later in the evening I walked out on the landing to get pictures showing the beautiful growth of our vessel.



*New signage on the the bow of the boat.*

April 4th dawned with newfound energy rushing through the decks as we prepared for another trial run and landing at New Orleans. This time the boat was more prepared than ever before. We found out what she could really do when she made over 15 mph downbound on the Mississippi River. She did everything exactly as the Pilothouse and Engine Room crew wanted! The United States Coast Guard were completely satisfied that we were ready and able to start carrying passengers. They were impressed with our display of ability and knowledge as they granted us our Certificate of Inspection, the seal of approval only the USCG can give. We stayed overnight at the Poydras Street landing and were saluted by the Str. NATCHEZ as she came by that evening. The next afternoon Debbie Fagnano fired up the NATCHEZ calliope and played "Do You Know What it Means to Miss New Orleans" and "I Ain't Down Yet" as she passed us on her afternoon cruise.

Our first overnight guests came aboard that evening. We did not go out for a cruise as this was just a shake down, a trial run for our housekeeping crew. As we left Poydras Street to return to the





*Steamer NATCHEZ salutes AMERICAN QUEEN on her calliope during her afternoon harbor cruise on April 5th.*

Perry Street Wharf the next morning, cruise ships were loading for cruises out into the Gulf of Mexico ahead of us and we felt as if we were ready to do the same, albeit up river. We had tasted success with our first guests and were ready for more! Those final 3 days at Perry Street saw the last rush of repairs, the last of the new paint, and the last of our time at the yard, for we had completed the work to make her ready to take passengers back on the river. We were ready to fire up the boilers, warm up the engines, roll our proud new paddlewheel, blow the steam whistle and play the calliope to bring overnight steamboating back to the Mississippi River again.

On the 10th of April we had our first overnight trial run up to Oak Alley Plantation and back. This was a very successful run for the AMERICAN QUEEN and her new steamboat crew. As with any new business, we learned a lot from this experience. We caught a glimpse of what our new careers had in store for us. We experienced that first moment of pride as we received those approving smiles and accolades from our guests. But most of all, we gained a new understanding of our place in history as the crew of the new Grande Dame of the Mississippi, the steamer AMERICAN QUEEN. 🎵

*Special thanks to the Great American Steamboat Co.*

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## **In Upcoming Issues:**

*Final Chapter of Falls Heroes: Louisville's Lifesavers*

*Building the ALBATROSS*

*CLYDE.'s Journey from UMR to the Ohio*

*Log of the JULIA BELLE SWAIN: 1927-28*

*JULIA BELLE SWAIN Model Nears Completion*



## Two Queens of the River Meet in New Orleans

Capt. Bert Suarez sends us these photos of the first meeting of the AMERICAN QUEEN and the newly-constructed QUEEN OF THE MISSISSIPPI in New Orleans harbor on the evening of June 9th. 📍



*In this view, the AQ is dropping down below town to catch her first glimpse of the QOTM.*



*Distance between the two passenger boats closes as they are in sight of each other for the first time.*



*The two reigning queens of overnight passenger vessels in Bert's final shot. He observes, "Wow! Sure would hate to be the deckhand lettering that long name on ring buoys!"*

## Pilothouse & MQ Bell Dedicated at HSM

June 9th also marked the dedication of the roof bell from the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN and newly constructed pilothouse on the grounds of Howard Steamboat Museum in Jeffersonville. The 2:00 ceremony was presided over by curator Keith Norrington, who made introductions and gave the history of the bell. Board member Roger Fisher presented ceremonial PH keys to Jeffersonville deputy mayor Rick Lovan and the Prentice Family, for whom the pilothouse is named. Rosemary Prentice was a longtime advocate for Jeffersonville and Clark County preservation, and a veteran HSM Board member. Derek Paprocki and Associates built the pilothouse, based on the 1878 Howard-built J.M. WHITE. Its side windows are not replicas, but come from the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE. Pilotwheel and single-barrel whistle are also authentic, although the identity of the boats from which they came is not known. HSM Administrator Yvonne Knight gave the first official whistle toot.



The MQ bell, donated by Boland Marine, was delivered on the AQ, arriving May 2nd. ACL and Jeffboat arranged for the bell's renovation and transport to the Museum, using a crane barge, the operation well-documented on YouTube. A new bell stand was fabricated by George Childers and his crew in consultation with Keith and Kenny Howe. Capt. Bill and Becky Ray provided music for the event. Mark Knoy, CEO and President of ACL, rang the bell for the first time. Cast by Buckeye Bell Foundry (Van Duzen & Tift) in 1874 for Holy Cross Monastery in Cincinnati, it is inscribed "TO THE MISSISSIPPI QUEEN FROM THE PEOPLE OF CINCINNATI 1976." 📍



**MISSISSIPPI QUEEN** bell in front of **ROSEMARY** pilothouse at **HSM**. Photos courtesy of Keith Norrington.

## Riverboat TWILIGHT Rechristened May 26th

An open house and rechristening ceremony was held at Trone's Landing in LeClaire, IA, home port of the Riverboat TWILIGHT, from 2:00 to 5:00 on the afternoon of May 26th. This year marked the 25th anniversary of the boat's operation, and owners Capt. Kevin and Carrie Stier welcomed river friends and former passengers as guests. The elegant vessel was designed by Capt. Dennis Trone and built at LeeVac Shipyard in Jennings, LA in 1986, specifically to accommodate two-day cruises with overnight stays at riverport hotels. After operating the popular vessel in the Le Claire - Chestnut Mountain (Galena, IL) run, Capt. Trone expanded operation further upriver to Dubuque, and eventually sold the boat to the Stiers in 2005. Kevin and Carrie have continued this fine tradition of UMR cruising.

Capt. Kevin welcomed guests and introduced Le Claire Mayor Robert Scannell and the Rev. Mike Blitgen, who gave the blessing. The Rechristening Ceremony was presided over by Carrie Stier. Special guest of honor was Capt. Harry Alsmann, longtime friend and supporter of the boat. With the words, "We re-christen the TWILIGHT in memory of our mentor and benefactor, Capt. Dennis Trone, and of our family, friends and faithful customers from the past 25 years," Capt. Alsmann broke the champagne bottle over the boat's forward railing. 🍾



**Capt. Kevin Stier** welcomes guests to the ceremony, as the crowd watches from wharfboat **CITY OF BATON ROUGE**.



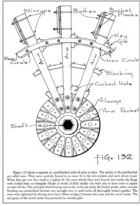
**Capt. Harry Alsmann** breaks champagne bottle on boat's bow.



**Mrs. Libby Trone** serenades the crowd on the boat's calliope.



**TWILIGHT** proudly celebrates 25 years of cruising on UMR.

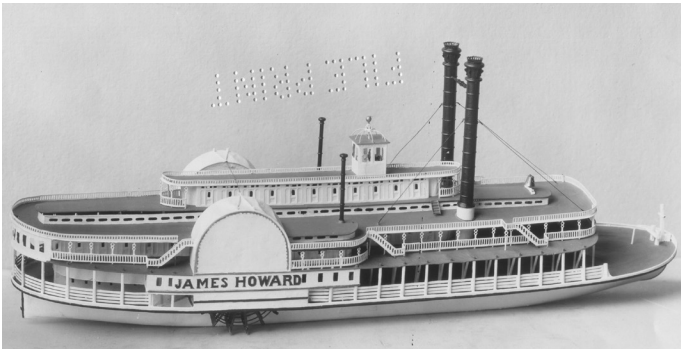


## Small Stacks

### Old Steamboat Models: Questions and Mysteries

by John Fryant

The Smithsonian Institution's watercraft collection once included two Western Rivers sidewheeler models, the 1892 GREY EAGLE and the 1871 JAMES HOWARD. I have several photos of both models. The second edition of *The National Watercraft Collection Catalog* published in 1976 states that the JAMES HOWARD model was "given by Howard Shipyard and Dry-dock Corp., Jeffersonville, IN." No date is listed. A note on the back of one of the photos says that the model was 42 inches long and the scale was 1/8 inch to the foot.



**JAMES HOWARD** model displayed at Smithsonian. HOWARD and GREY EAGLE photos from their collection.

Way's Packet Directory lists no fewer than nine steamboats named GREY EAGLE, the Smithsonian's model pictured above right being the last one, built by Howard's in 1892. The catalog listing states: "The model was made in the (Smithsonian) museum from plans not now in the museum files. It was built to float and was intended to be self propelled, but was never completed." A note on the back of the photo reports that the model was restored by the Division of Engineering shop in May 1937 and that it was transferred to the Merseyside County Museum in Liverpool, England. I believe that both of these models were transferred to that museum, although I don't have the date.

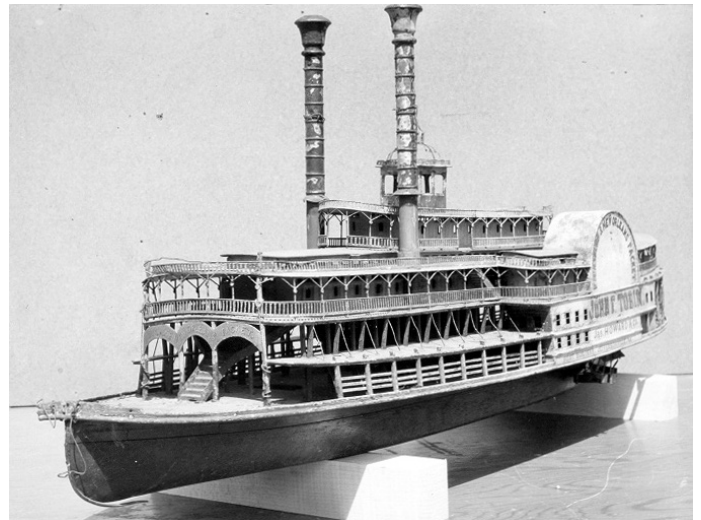
Did the plans for the GREY EAGLE model come from the Howards? Was the JAMES HOWARD model built at the Howard Yard? I'm not sure, but am guessing at this point that it was *not* built there. Read on.

The third model is of the sidewheeler JOHN F. TOBIN. I saw this model in 1990 or 91 when it was

owned by the late Bert Fenn. He told me that the model was built for Capt. John W. Tobin, intended for one or more of his children. It is now owned by S&D member Allen Hess.



**GREY EAGLE** model also displayed at Smithsonian. Do both of these sidewheelers still take up residence in Liverpool, England? Perhaps one of our readers can supply the answer.



**Model of JOHN F. TOBIN**, built for Capt. Tobin by W. C. Jones, and now in Allen Hess' collection. John Fryant photo.

Allen sent some interesting correspondence between James Howard and a model builder regarding the cost of this model. He obtained this from the Howard collection at Lily Library in Bloomington, IN. The model builder was Mr. W. C. Jones, of Quincy, IL. Jones had been contacted by the Howards for a price quote to build a model of the brand new J. M. WHITE. The prices quoted are amusing by today's standards. Also note that Mr. Jones evidently built models in his "spare time," as he indicates in the correspondence that he was with the Galvanized Iron and Tin Co. in Quincy. The firm's name would not indicate that it was involved with

model building. More interesting is that the model does not appear to be a replica of the J.M. WHITE. It has a covered freight deck and the pilothouse has a simulated

Quincy Ills July 1st 1878

Mepis Howard & Co

Jeffersonville Ind  
Will build

Model of "J M White", for \$160 00, unless very much more elaborate, than ordinary Stms. Would want \$20 00 in advance to pay expenses to Paducah. Would also want Photograph of the Boat. Think I would build about 1 in. to 6 ft or say divide 321 by 6 making the length 53 in To build the Boat would require new dies to I do not want more than the job is worth but if very elaborate, would want say \$175 00 I would refer Capt Tobin to Capt J N Pepper, who I noticed a short time since, was in command of the "pargoud". I built the model "Thompson Dean" for Capt P for \$100 00. Could get the work out in 6 to 8 weeks. Am in the Galid [galvanized] Iron & Tin at Main & 10th

and would have to leave my business for a few days.

Truly Yours  
W C Jones  
Main & 10th

July 8th 8

Mr. W C Jones Quincy, Ill  
Dr Sir

Your favor of the 1st just received. Capt Tobin is rather disappointed at your figure - Says he cant stand that much - You say you made on of the "Thompson Dean" for Capt Pepper for \$100. Why do you want So much more for the "White"? We Suggested to him to have the model made - but did not think it would cost so much - Of course if one is made we would want the best one you ever made - And to show the Boat just as She is. Please explain why your figures are so high. And see if you cant do a great deal better. We are very anxious to have the Boat made, And hope it can be arranged. The White will be at Paducah or Cairo for a month or So yet.

Truly Yours  
Howard Co

Quincy Ills July 10,/78

Mepis Howard & Co

Yours of the 10th recd

The cost to get up Model would be about as follows.

To Paducah & Ret	21.00	
" 4 days time @ 2.50	10.00	
" Wood		2.00
" Tin & Solder & Coal	4.00	
" Stencil Copper	5.00	
" New Dies	7.00	
" 30 days @ 2.75		82.50
" Painting	18.00	
		\$149.50

This is as good as I can do. Would not want to see the "White", until the work (outside) with the chimneys was all up. Will give a correct Model, if it is possible and give the best job I can do.

Truly Yours  
W C Jones

**Correspondence between model builder W.C. Jones of Quincy, IL and the Howard Shipyards about the proposed J.M. WHITE model.**

"dome." There are also different "puddins" atop the stacks than those on the WHITE. All of this is somewhat surprising as the wording in the letter of July 8 indicates that the model should "show the Boat just as she is." Evidently Alan Bates' expression "There's a bit of a slip 'tween the pen and the ship" could also apply to a model.

The TOBIN model has a carved wooden hull and wooden decks. The bulkheads, railings, wheels and stacks are mostly metal - probably sheet copper and brass. The skylight roof, texas and pilothouse are removable, as are the stacks. The model was in very dirty condition when I saw it, but Allen has since cleaned it up.

Were there any model builders actually employed in that profession by the Howard Shipyard? Probably not. Common sense indicates that a family-owned shipyard like the

Howards wouldn't have employed a full-time model maker. Although there may have been craftsmen who worked there in other trades and built models "on the side," it appears from the correspondence that any models constructed for the Howards were "contracted out."

And what of the model maker W.C. Jones? According to the July 1, 1878 letter, he states that he also built a model of the THOMPSON DEAN for Capt. J.N. Pepper. What other models might he have built? Evidently the Howards knew of Mr. Jones' model building abilities as they had sent him an inquiry about building a model prior to his written response of July 1.

The last photo below also shows some "mystery models." The flag-decorated buggy was in a 1913 Centennial parade in New Albany, IN. Mounted on the buggy's roof is a large model of the packet OLIVE BRANCH. Suspended from the rear of the buggy is a model of the towboat E.T. SLIDER. A large model of a rowing skiff hangs from the buggy's left side. As of this date, the builder/s of these models remain a mystery to me. Could W. C. Jones have built any or all of them? Perhaps some research into the 1913 New Albany Centennial or about Mr. Jones himself would reveal some additional information about the models he built.

Realizing that no one is going to lose any sleep over any of these questions, they do point out some good advice to present-day model builders: Put your name and date of completion somewhere on your creation as well as for whom the model was built. To quote a phrase from one of John Hartford's songs - "When your grandchildren's children have children"- some future researcher will thank you.



**Wagon in New Albany's 1913 Centennial parade with OLIVE BRANCH and E.T. SLIDER. Courtesy of Keith Norrington.**





## The Newer Faces of S&D

### Dave Morecraft


One day in the early 1970s a youngster from Peru, IN happened by chance to hear a few tunes being played on the DELTA QUEEN's calliope at the riverfront in Cincinnati, and "that sound just stuck in my head," says Dave Morecraft. This first encounter with an original Nichol instrument must have made a deep impression on him, for today he is America's premier builder and restorer of old-timey steam calliopes. By 1976, the high school student had landed a job as back-up calliope player and chief engineer for the old MAJESTIC showboat instrument owned by Indiana University in Indianapolis, the last calliope built by the famed Thomas Nichol Company.

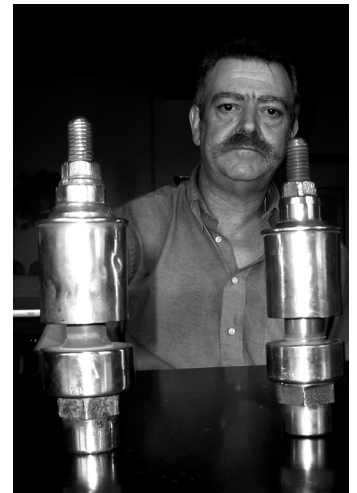
Dave developed his skill in machining and metal working at his job back in Peru. In fact, last year he was surprised to see the fancy metal towel racks that he fabricated for use in staterooms aboard the AMERICAN QUEEN still in place and in excellent condition. With his passion for the calliope, his musical ability and his machining skill, it was not surprising that as early as the late 70's Dave "just wanted to build one for myself." And with that, a 29-year career was launched. Using the Sparks' circus calliope in the Circus World Museum collection, Dave was able to make authentic and precise patterns to develop accurate scaling for



the whistles based on the old Nichol instrument. After two years work, his first Nichol replica was completed, which he placed in Circus Wagon #44 along with a small boiler. Under the name Indiana Steam Music Co. (patterned after Joshua Stoddard's pioneering 1855 American Steam Music Co.) it bore the serial number 30-001 (30 whistles, the first production number). In 1994 Dave sold his first creation to Nelson Jones for placement on the steam barge ANNA MARIE, shown in the photo below left during the 2010 S&D meeting with Dave at the keyboard.

After completing #44, as Dave calls her, he built a set of whistles for the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE in 1986-87; whistles and Nichol-style manifold for the Dutch steamer SUCCES in 1992; his personal replacement for old #44 in 1994; a 37-note calliope for the AMERICAN QUEEN in 1995; an instrument for the diesel-powered sternwheeler FRONTIER on Lake Ashi in Japan in 1996, whose calliope is powered by the steam boiler from the cooker used in the boat's kitchen; and a replacement for the MINNE-HA-HA in 2012.

Commenting on the quality of his calliopes, Dave observed that "in 100 years, mine will still be playing." His words reflect a single-minded dedication to the preservation of this uniquely American instrument. When asked about his hopes for the preservation of the steam calliope performance style, he is equally enthusiastic. Dave's own son Zach is an up-and-coming calliopist in his own right. With pride, Dave also points to other young people like Matt Dow, Jonathan Tschiggfrie, and Anthony Benedetto, and mentions two youngsters whose imaginations have been captured by the instrument and music on YouTube. During our visit in 2008, Dave placed one of his whistles alongside one from a Nichol calliope, and asked us to select the original. We close this profile by inviting our readers to do the same. Hint: it ain't as easy as you think! 





*Reflections from Our Readers - continued from page 3*

Engineer's license, but wanted to hold off getting it for a while so my dad would stay here longer,' he says, smiling. 'But that didn't work.'

"The other father-son pair working side-by-side on the NATCHEZ are Scott Vieages Sr., 62, and Scotty Jr., 35. 'Scott Sr. is great to have on board,' Steve Nicoulin says. 'His knowledge of the NATCHEZ goes beyond any of us.' Scott Sr., chief engineer on the boat, has been there since the very beginning. He helped build the NATCHEZ, doing ship fitting and welding at Bergeron Shipyard in Plaquemines Parish in the early 70's. 'We started in late '73 and it was christened in April 1975.' Scotty Jr. has been working on the NATCHEZ for nearly 19 years. He started working in the food and beverage department and was manager for six years before the hurricane. After the storm he went back on the NATCHEZ in the engineering department and works as an oiler in the engineroom and enjoys talking to tourists from 'all over the world' who come down to see it in action. As far as working closely with his dad, he grins and says it's 'not bad.' 'He knows the boat inside and out,' Scott Jr. says."

‡ Doc has our thanks for forwarding this clipping. Accompanying the article was a fine photo picturing the three father-son teams.

Lloyd Warner writes: "I have been a member for over twenty years and enjoy most all of the articles in the REFLECTOR. As a model builder, I am always looking for more information about how steamboats were built. You have on your Board of Governors a great promoter of building models and supplying information on plans and articles. I would like to suggest that you approach John Fryant to write an article for every issue of the REFLECTOR. I know that I am not alone in wanting to see more about modeling of these great steamboats."

‡ Lloyd is director of the Nautical Research Guild, and we assured him that John has no intention of giving up his Small Stacks column in the foreseeable future! As John has several other writing obligations in addition to the REFLECTOR, we are pleased that he continues to share his expertise with us on a regular basis.

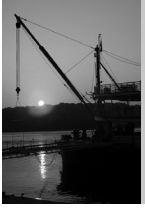
## SPRAGUE at Howard Shipyards

A few years ago, your editor was perusing the Howard Steamboat Museum collection of Capt. Jim Howard's photos, and was surprised to find these two views of the Combine towboat SPRAGUE at the shipyard. Why was she there, we wondered.

The answer came this past July, while sitting in the cabin of the TWILIGHT enroute from Dubuque to LeClaire with Capt. Dan Shrake and Bob Anton of Peoria. Capt. Kevin Stier had brought along some recent acquisitions of 1905 and 1906 issues of *The Waterways Journal* for reading material on the trip, and there on page 5 of the September 9, 1905 "Jeffersonville Notes" column we read: "The big SPRAGUE is still undergoing repairs at Jeffersonville. She is having built for her use two enormous pumps which can be used equally well either as circulating or vacuum pumps. She will also have an extra 10-inch inlet for her circulating pump wells. Louis Schaaf of New Albany is her chief engineer and Lorain Carter of Jeffersonville is his assistant." 🕒



*Big Mama waits for installation of two pumps at Howards.*



## Final Crossings

### James L. Baird

James Baird, 69, died June 6, 2012 at his home in Miami Heights (Clevés), OH. Jim was a plumber by trade, and was a longtime member of S&D. He was the husband of Sue Ann Samad Baird and the late Virginia Lowe Baird, and is survived by seven children, 15 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. A memorial service was held June 9th at Zion United Methodist Church in Clevés.

*Thank you to Barb Hameister for providing obituary information for Jim.*

### Rita A. Bates

Rita Aschbacher Bates, 90, devoted wife of Alan Bates, died July 23, 2012 at the home of her daughter Barbara Koehler in Louisville. Miss Rita was a retired accountant for Sears and was a member of S&D and the German American Club. She also belonged to the American Turners, a family association which encouraged its members to be physically and mentally active.



**Rita christening the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE on October 11, 1962.**

Rita is survived by her children Patricia Cooley, Lawrence Bates, Catherine Atcher, and Barbara Koehler; eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Her cremated remains were interred

alongside those of Alan at Cave Hill Cemetery on July 28. On Sept. 23rd, a 7:30 a.m. Mass will be said in her honor at our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Louisville.

It was only this past June 2nd that Rita and her family joined with many friends to celebrate Alan's life during an afternoon memorial gathering aboard the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE. Keith Norrington sends us a photo of Rita that afternoon and has our thanks for providing this obituary information.

### Michele Ann Goen

Michele Goen, 58, of Indianapolis, IN died on May 13, 2012 following a lengthy illness. She worked in accounting her entire career, most recently for English Excavating Co. Michele and her husband Dan were devoted members of S&D, and very active in S&D's MOR Chapter. Known for her great kindness, patience, good humor and a ready smile, Michele also served as MOR Chapter secretary. She is survived by her husband Dan, three siblings and 4 nieces and nephews. In light of Michele's special affection for the Point Pleasant River Museum, Dan has asked that memorials in her honor be sent there. On June 2nd, a group of Michele's river friends scattered flowers into the paddlewheel of the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE on her afternoon cruise in memory and celebration of Michele's life.

*Our thanks to Barb Hameister for her fine memorial tribute and photo of Dan and Michele.*



**Dan and Michele Goen at New York's Lake Chautauqua meeting of MOR Chapter on October 11, 2008.**

## William J. Shive

William Shive, 92, of Belleville, IL passed away May 11, 2012. Mr. Shive was former owner of Sterling Steel Casting Co. in Sauget, IL. He served as a Navy lieutenant in World War II. Bill was a member of First United Presbyterian Church, and held memberships in many professional and historical organizations. He served as president of St. Clair County (IL) Historical Society, Golden Eagle River Museum and Mississippi Chapter of S&D. A charter member of American Canal Society, he also belonged to the Midwest Riverboat Buffs and the National Museum of Transportation in St. Louis. Bill is survived by one daughter, three sons and six grandchildren. Graveside services were held on May 18 at Walnut Hill Cemetery in Belleville.

## Friends Gather to Remember Alan Bates

Vicky Nugent, granddaughter of Alan Bates, and Alan's daughter Catherine welcomed guests and friends aboard the BELLE from 4:00 to 6:30 the afternoon of June 2 in a Celebration of Life Party for Capt. Bates. In addition to reading excerpts from Alan's writings, a collection of photos, scrapbooks and other memorabilia were on display at the table by the guest book. Veteran riverman and lifelong friend Capt. George McBride shared a tribute, which included the classic story of bringing the EDENBORN boats to Louisville from Louisiana in 1941. The band Grand Slam provided music for the full house gathered in the boat's boiler deck ballroom.

Many former BELLE officers and crew were in attendance, along with scores of friends from the river community who came to pay their tribute as well. Space here does not allow us to share the names of all who came to participate in what Alan himself decribed as "a grand final party after I die in which my friends can get together and swap lies about me for one last time." The party was exactly what Alan envisioned! The accompanying photo pictures Rita with Travis Vasconcelos and Yvonne Knight during the memorial festivities. 📍



### Back Cover

Capt. Dan Shrake has our thanks for sending along this dandy shot of the Vicksburg riverfront. ANNIE RUSSELL (0297) was a private steam yacht built in 1902 by Iowa Iron Works at Dubuque, 125 x 25 x 4.5, her engines 10's with a 4-ft. stroke. The money behind this custom-built craft belonged to Russell Gardener of St. Louis, manufacturer of buggies pre-turn of the century. Mr. Gardener had the foresight to see the future of the horseless carriage, and soon began constructing Chevrolet bodies along with his wagons. By 1915 all Chevrolet bodies were assembled in St. Louis and he controlled the Chevrolet trade west of the Mississippi, eventually selling out to General Motors. ANNIE RUSSELL was sold in 1911 to Kansas City-Missouri River Navigation Co. and converted into the single-stack towboat ADVANCE.

ALICE B. MILLER (0152) was built in 1904 in Jeffersonville as FRANK B. HAYNE, 130.4 x 27 x 4, for John P. Parker of Monroe, LA who placed her in the Ouachita River trade. Renamed ALICE B. MILLER when acquired in 1908 by C. J. Miller of Vicksburg, she ran on Yazoo and Sunflower Rivers. Consequently we can place the date of this photo between 1908 and 1910.

Laundry has been hung out to dry on the MILLER's boiler deck rails and from the overheads. And perhaps that's the Gardeners lounging beneath the awning at the stern of the RUSSELL. The boats are at the foot of Clay Street, with the spire of St. Paul's Catholic Church prominent on the skyline. The church was built in 1849, survived the ravages of the Civil War, but was leveled by a tornado in 1953.

