

# S&D REFLECTOR

Published by Sons and Daughters  
of Pioneer Rivermen



Vol. 51, No. 4

Marietta, Ohio

December 2014

## S&D's 75th Anniversary Meeting 1841-47 Western Rivers Steamboat Index Centennial Festival of Riverboats



## Front Cover

Steamer BELLE OF LOUISVILLE cruises upstream past assembled river towboats above her Fourth Street landing on the morning of Saturday, October 18, the 100th anniversary of her launch. Pictured at lower left is ACL's RONALD L. LOUGHMILLER, landed just below Marietta's W.P. SNYDER, JR. Outboard of the SNYDER is Amherst-Madison's vintage towboat J.S. LEWIS, which brought the historic pool towboat and the steam barge ANNA MARIE to Louisville from Point Pleasant. Also featured in this assembly of classic boats were Capt. Don Sander's sternwheel CLYDE, and Tom Schiffer's 1910 steam launch MISS BLUE. Both the BELLE and SNYDER were designed by Thomas Rees Tarn and built by James Rees and Sons Company in Pittsburgh. See feature story on page 24. *Photo courtesy of Sandra Farmer.*



## Reflections from Our Readers

Matt Dow writes: "After reading this month's REFLECTOR, I felt compelled to write. What a fantastic job all involved did! I could barely put it down and when I did, it was only to eat and sleep. Everyone involved have made the REFLECTORS of the past couple years an absolute pleasure to get in the mail. See you in Louisville in October, if not sooner at Marietta in September."

🔔 Matt has the thanks of both the editor and of all who contributed to the special BELLE Centennial issue for sending along his gracious comments. As reported in our S&D 75th Anniversary story, the Board of Governors gave approval for making fifty copies of the September issue available for sale in the BELLE's ticket office and gift shop. A quick check on the Thursday of Festival week disclosed that all but three of those copies had already been sold. We were advised that many of the boat's crew snagged one for their own reading before they were made available to the boat's visitors.

## S&D RENEWAL NOTICE FOR 2015

As 2014 comes to a close, it is time to once again renew your S&D subscription to the REFLECTOR. Cost of renewal for 2015 is \$35, a five dollar increase over previous years. You will receive your renewal notice in the mail after the Christmas holiday. Please complete your renewal and remit by no later than **February 15, 2015 by mailing your payment to our secretary at the address below:**

Mrs. Sharon Reynolds  
1002 Oakland Drive  
Paragould, AR 72450

You may also renew online by logging in at [www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org) and using PayPal®.

Because of increasing postage costs, renewals received after February 15 will require an additional \$2.50 for each back issue mailed with that year's subscription.

Bob Anton writes: "Hope you enjoy this piece. Can't remember where I got it. Keep up the good work."

🔔 Bob kindly forwarded a copy of the 24-page bound and printed S&D report for 1942, which shows a membership of 293. Also listed are the names and contributions of 72 donors to the new River Museum. Listed as honorary president was Capt. Mary B. Greene, with Capt. Frederick Way, Jr., president; Robert Thomas, vice president, Upper Ohio; C. W. Stoll, vice president, Lower Ohio; J. W. Zenn, secretary; and Harry Maddy, treasurer. Prior to the S&D REFLECTOR in 1964, the official publication of S&D had been *The Waterways Journal*. Today we likewise commend to our readers an invitation from that 1942 report: 'We cordially invite members of S&D to subscribe to *The Waterways Journal*, and thereby join the throng of river-minded folks who have adopted this novel magazine into their hearts and homes.'

## A Letter from Lee Woodruff

Dear S & D Members,

As we conclude the 75th anniversary year of S&D, I want to wish all of you a Happy Holiday and Prosperous New Year.

The Board of Governors held two meetings this year - in April at Covington, KY and in September at Marietta. Along with our normal business, a major focus of discussion has been our membership level and the board has discussed a variety of approaches to address this issue. After much discussion we decided to take the following action:

- We are rebranding the organization and the REFLECTOR as "America's Steam and Diesel River Boat Magazine." The publication will still be the S & D REFLECTOR and the legal name of the organization will remain the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen. The hope with this re-branding is that new members will no longer think they have to be a descendent of a river family to subscribe.

- We have created a new website with the goal of attracting new and younger members at [www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org). Please go to the website, register with a login and password and view the enhanced content.

- You can also renew your membership through the website by using PayPal®.

- The plan is to have updates on the website on a regular basis.

Also, I want to again ask for your assistance in promoting the organization and helping attract new members.

At each of the past several board meetings, the rising costs of mailing, printing, supplies, etc. has been discussed, resulting in the decision to increase the membership cost by \$5 to \$35. The board's goal is to continue to provide a first class magazine and continue our mission of promoting river history.

Other activities that the board has followed is exterior renovation of W.P. SNYDER, JR. and the increased activities of the Ohio River Museum

*Continued on page 5, bottom right column*

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Season's  
Greetings &  
Best Wishes  
for 2015

from the S&D REFLECTOR

### 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

*Send to the Editor as an e-mail attachment*

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

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9

America's Steam & Diesel  
Riverboat Magazine

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# S&D REFLECTOR

Published by Sons and Daughters  
of Pioneer Rivermen

Vol. 51 No. 4  
ISSN 1087-9803

Marietta, Ohio December 2014  
Post Office Permit #73, Marietta, OH

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

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

David Tschiggfrie, Editor  
2723 Shetland Court  
Dubuque, IA 52001  
reflector@comcast.net

## REFLECTOR BACK ISSUES AND INDICES

Copies of the current or prior years are available at \$8 each, postpaid for subscribers, and \$10 for all others.

Indices for five year increments of the quarterly, 1964 through 2003, are available for \$5 per volume. The 2004-08 index is available in CD format only for \$11 postpaid.

Orders should be sent to PO Box 352, Marietta, OH, 45750 for these items.

THE US POSTAL SERVICE DOES NOT FORWARD MEDIA MAIL! ADDRESS CHANGES - SEASONAL OR PERMANENT - REQUIRE TIMELY NOTICE TO THE SECRETARY TO ENSURE THAT YOU RECEIVE THE S&D REFLECTOR!

There are two classes of subscription - full and family. Full subscription 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 subscriptions enjoy all privileges except the REFLECTOR.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

FULL SUBSCRIPTION - \$35 each

FAMILY SUBSCRIPTIONS (spouses and children under 18) - \$1 for each additional name

Please list full names of family subscribers and remit to:

Sharon Reynolds  
1002 Oakland Drive  
Paragould, AR 72450

You may also subscribe online at [www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org)

## SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF PIONEER RIVERMEN

PO Box 352  
Marietta, OH 45750

[www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org)

### OFFICERS

Jeffrey L. Spear, President • Vic Canfield, Vice President  
Sharon Reynolds, Secretary • R. Dale Flick, Treasurer

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The only requirement for a subscription  
in S&D is an interest in river history!



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## Getting Posted Up

### What Grand Celebrations!

Within the short space of five weeks, river enthusiasts and those who work on the river celebrated two significant events connected to our nation's inland waterways. The weekend of September 12-13 marked seventy-five years in the life of S&D with a gala at Marietta and Clarington. It is both fitting and important that we celebrate landmark events, whether they occur in our personal lives or in our lives as a group or institution. Those celebrations give us cause to remember who we are, what our roots are, and what our future holds. As you read the feature story about S&D's 75th Annual Meeting, we hope you find yourself reflecting on those very thoughts. It was a wonderful gathering, and we would indeed be remiss if we didn't express our gratitude to those who planned and executed such a memorable meeting. To Jeff Spear, Taylor Abbott, Bill Reynolds, our Board of Governors and Officers, and to all who helped in any way, our sincere thanks for a job well done!

The BELLE's Centennial Celebration brought together so many people and events and boats to honor the venerable steamboat, but also to celebrate our common river heritage and those who have played a part in the story of this nation's rivers. The gathering of people from so many places along this country's waterways and the stories that were shared on land and on the river during those six days, were a living testament to the passion we all share. Of course, a celebration of this magnitude requires the work of hundreds and hundreds of people, and as a result we cannot begin to recognize individually or even know the names of all those who had a part in planning and carrying out this Festival so successfully. But to each of you, our heartfelt gratitude knows no bounds!

Although river people are a close knit family, their hearts and arms are open to all who share their love for the river and its boats. We do that as an S&D family, and we do that as a river community. We do that whenever we gather in celebration. And, boy, do we know how to throw a party! 🎉

## S&D REGIONAL CHAPTERS

Ohio - Kanawha Rivers Chapter  
*Jim Bupp, President*

Middle Ohio River Chapter  
*Frank X. Prudent, President*

Mississippi River Chapter  
*Capt. Tom Dunn, President*

## ADJUNCT ORGANIZATIONS

Ohio River Museum, Marietta, OH  
601 Front St • (740) 373-3750

Inland Rivers Library, Cincinnati, OH  
800 Vine St • (513) 369-6957

Blennerhassett Museum, Parkersburg, WV  
137 Juliana St • (304) 420-4800

*Weblinks available at [www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org)*

*Interested in subscribing to S&D? Go to*

***[www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org)***

*for your subscription form and more info.*

*Letter from Lee Woodruff, continued from page 3*  
in Marietta. Approximately \$800,000 was spent on the W.P. SNYDER renovation through the efforts of the Ohio History Connection. This was much needed and further renovation is being planned, depending upon funding. Also through the efforts of the Friends of the Museum in Marietta attendance and activities at the Ohio River Museum is increasing.

I want thank all of you for your continued interest in S&D. The board is open to any suggestion on how we can continue to make the organization an on-going success for future generations.

Lee Woodruff  
Chairman, Board of Governors



## Meet Our Contributors

**John White** (*1841-47 Western Rivers Steamboat Index, p. 14*) is well-known to the readers of these pages for his on-going contribution to documenting the earliest steamboats on the Mississippi River System. Jack's final installment of this major work will appear in our March 2015 issue.

**Eric Grubb** (*Reflections Aboard the J.S. LEWIS, p. 30*) grew up in Sewickley, PA, loves all things Ohio River and was the founder of the PortKY.com website. An airline pilot by trade, he holds a 50 GT Master credential, and last wrote about a trip aboard the J.S. LEWIS in our September 2013 issue. He shares his adventures aboard that classic towboat once again during her trip to the Centennial Festival of Riverboats in Louisville this past October.

**Capt. Don Sanders** (*Summer 1959 on the AVALON, p. 32*) made his initial appearance in the REFLECTOR in the September BELLE Centennial issue. We are pleased to share with you the conclusion of Capt. Don's reminiscences of his first river job as a teenage member of the deck crew on the tramp steamboat. It was our great pleasure to visit with Don aboard his sternwheel CLYDE. during the festivities in the Falls City.

**WAY'S PACKET DIRECTORY 1848-1994**

ISBN No. 0821411063

List price at \$39.95 plus \$5 shipping/handling

**WAY'S STEAM TOWBOAT DIRECTORY**

ISBN No. 0921409697

List price at \$39.95 plus \$5 shipping/handling

\*Note: any additional copies ordered ship for \$1 each

### CONTACT

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## W.P. SNYDER Travels 1000 Miles in 2014

With the completion of restoration work at Amherst Madison's Point Pleasant drydock, the W.P. SNYDER, JR. was returned to Marietta in May. Five months later, the veteran steamboat was once again in tow enroute to Louisville as reported on page 30. With these two trips, the boat traveled nearly 1,000 miles, the greatest distance she has covered in a single year since arriving on the Muskingum in 1955, and the farthest point away from her Marietta home thus far in her career. Our thanks to Vic Canfield for sending these photos which show her move back to ORM last spring.



**Above and below: SNYDER in drydock fleet and underway.**



**Below: S&D's Lee Woodruff and Vic Canfield present Capt. Charles Stone with plaque recognizing his efforts in restoring the SNYDER on May 8, 2014 at Lafayette Hotel.**



# S&D Celebrates Seventy-Fifth Anniversary September 12-13

On November 18, 1939, an enthusiastic group of river people gathered in the Riverview Room of the Lafayette Hotel in Marietta, OH to convene the first annual meeting of the newly chartered Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen. The weekend of September 12-13 this year saw the 75th gathering of a kindred group at Marietta to celebrate this special anniversary.

Those attending this year's Annual Meeting were greeted by a large banner above the main entrance to the Lafayette Hotel announcing the historic gathering and prominently featuring the S&D logo. A Friday evening Meet and Greet opening session was held on the grounds of Ohio River Museum, where attendees viewed the fascinating Thornton Barrette steamboat photo exhibit. Guests also toured the recently renovated steam towboat W.P. SNYDER, JR., resplendent in her new coat of paint, the finishing touch in extensive and careful restoration work from pilothouse to hull carried out over the last four years. Music for the evening was provided by the bluegrass group Straightedge from Parkersburg, WV. Group member George Hausser's ballad "Good Old W.P. Snyder" was performed by the group.

The Muskingum River's flowing past the  
Campus Martius shore  
And a steamboat comes a-puffing round the  
bend.  
It's the W.P. Snyder with the tall stacks at the  
fore  
And a churning paddlewheel at the end.

*Chorus:* I'm a-going back, yes going back to that  
boat I love so well  
Where I'll stand in that pilot house again.  
On the W.P. Snyder with the tall stacks at the  
fore  
And the churning paddlewheel at the end.

Oh, they said in Marietta, sternwheelers would  
I find

Gathered round at the levee.  
It was just as Jeff Spear told me, there was  
plenty of that kind  
And the grand sight brought me to my knees.

*Chorus*

I can see the smoke a-rising from those tall  
stacks.  
It welcomes me and greets me on the breeze.  
It is then I'll start a-running, and I know I'll  
never stop  
Till I've landed on the foredeck on my knees.

*Chorus*

Saturday morning's 75th Annual business meeting was opened by Board of Governors chairman Lee Woodruff, who recognized longtime service of Board members Bill Barr and Bill Judd and of treasurer Dale Flick. Special words of appreciation were expressed for the tremendous dedication of Woody and Bee Rutter in serving the organization for over fifty years! Appropriately, Betty Elsey, guest of Jane Greene, was welcomed as a first-time attendee. Also introduced were Capt. Bill Dow, Saturday evening's after dinner speaker, and his son Capt. Matt Dow from Lake George, NY.

Treasurer Dale Flick reported that S&D began the year with a balance of \$15,021. Income for the year to date was \$19,670.62 and expenses to date totaled \$22,981.75, leaving a balance on hand on September 12th of \$12,024.87.

As is the case today with many historical societies and groups, reaching out to new, younger potential members presents a challenge. Fortunately, S&D was able to draw upon the insights and youthful energy of Board member Taylor Abbott to address this situation. After careful deliberation, S&D decided to begin marketing and branding itself as a magazine subscription in light of the popularity



*S&D attendees are welcomed to the Lafayette Hotel with a 75th Anniversary Banner on balcony. That banner would also do double duty aboard the W.P. SNYDER, JR. at Louisville a month later. Editor's photo.*



*Jim and Annie Blum visit with Dave Vornholt following Saturday's business meeting. Editor's photo.*



*Debbie and Bill Barr are joined by Jeff Spear, Ruth Guenther and Bill Reynolds in SNYDER's pilothouse during Friday night's gathering at Ohio River Museum. Editor's photo.*



*Annie Blum and Tom Dunn each autographed copies of their new books about the ADMIRAL. Editor's photo.*



*Saturday morning's 75th Annual Business Meeting convenes in the Lafayette's Ballroom. Brock Rogers photo.*



*Jim Karnath, Gary Frommelt, John Spear, Connie Frommelt, and Tom Dunn gather on the lawn of Sonja Taylor's home above Clarington prior to Saturday's luncheon. Editor's photo.*



of S&D's flagship publication, the quarterly S&D REFLECTOR. A longtime problem was finally resolved in that our organization's name has often been misinterpreted by potential members as requiring a direct family heritage connected to the river as a prerequisite to join S&D. Although that was never the case, the name often gave that impression. As a result, we have debuted a new website, [www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org), featuring the REFLECTOR, although the S&D name will be preserved as an important part of our heritage. Current and new subscribers will continue to receive all the benefits and privileges of S&D membership as part of their subscription. And in light of the times, new subscribers and those wishing to renew may now do so quickly and easily online using PayPal®.

Karen Hassel and Jack Deck from the Ohio Historical Connection (former Ohio State Historical Society) spoke of the most recent renovations and restorations made to the W.P. SNYDER, JR. The state organization has contributed nearly \$2½ million to this project over the past four years, and has just received another grant to complete the final phase of restoration. At an earlier meeting, OHC presented S&D with an award recognizing their 75th anniversary and commending their outstanding leadership and support of the state's efforts at preserving river history. It was announced that RiverWorks Discovery has finalized an agreement with Ohio Historical Connection to finance and insure the movement of the SNYDER to Louisville for an open house during the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE's Centennial Celebration October 14-19 as part of RiverWorks Discovery's "Century of Industrial History on the Rivers" exhibit. A request was made for volunteers to help staff the boat as guides during those six days, with advance training to be provided by Bill Reynolds.

A report from Patricia Van Skaik for the Inland Rivers Library at Cincinnati described their newest exhibit, "Scenic River Views: Towns along the Ohio" which is on display through November 2. Last year's exhibit, "Navigating the Rivers" had over 750 visitors, while a Roads Scholar group aboard the AMERICAN QUEEN saw a presentation and viewing of the Cincinnati Panorama and Inland Rivers Collection in July. Woody Rutter donated three new collections of steamboat memorabilia,

comprising 240 photos and a manuscript. Patricia was pleased to announce that a new "cage area" was recently completed, making it possible to more readily process materials in the library's collections and make them available. Annie Blum gave the Herman T. Pott Inland Library report. Curator Sean Visintainer has finished work on placing many digitized photographs online, including the Golden Eagle Club and Museum's collection. The newest digitized photos are from the Capt. Curran and Susie Streckfus collection. Work continues on organizing and indexing all of the material from Jimmy Swift, while work on the John Hartford material has been completed and the photos now have a finding aid to assist researchers.

The Middle Ohio River Chapter report of S&D given by president Frank Prudent highlighted their two previous meetings on November 13, 2013 at Seamen's Church Institute in Paducah and on April 14, 2014 at Cincinnati's Inland Rivers Library with a program on the history of the Licking River. The group will meet in Louisville on October 18 during the BELLE's Centennial with a program by Chief Engineer Kenny Howe. Their plans for 2015 include an April meeting in Shakertown, KY and an October meeting in Knoxville, TN. Jim Bupp of the Ohio-Kanawha Chapter reported on their October 2013 meeting with the Point Pleasant Museum Foundation as well as their March 2014 gathering. The O-K Chapter has also been active in raising funds for the shantyboat on ORM grounds and participating in riverbank cleanup. The group enjoyed a cruise on the BELLE OF CINCINNATI and sponsored a local dragon boat festival.

Bill Reynolds, chair of the Ohio River Museum Committee called attention to a fine article appearing in the June 2014 issue of *Wooden Boat Magazine* about the SNYDER, the new shantyboat at the Museum, the DELTA QUEEN, and the S&D organization. Handicap ramps have been completed to the shantyboat, making that exhibit more accessible. Funding was made possible by a grant from the Sisters of St. Joseph. He also reported that the Museum's 1884 Flood exhibit is on loan to Point Pleasant River Museum; the model of the steamer SUNSHINE, along with photograph and water pitcher from the boat are on loan to the Ohio Valley River Museum at Clarington; and the model

of the BUCKEYE STATE and photo of the WILD WAGONER have been loaned to Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. for a special exhibit about the life of Abraham Lincoln. An estimate for some minor work to maintain the TELL CITY pilothouse has also been received in the amount of \$4,250, and application to the J. Mack Gamble Fund to complete that work will be made in the coming year. Bill also reported 7,222 visitors at the Museum this year, an increase of 2300 over last year's attendance.

Capt. Bill Barr, chair of the J. Mack Gamble Fund trustees, reported that grants amounting to \$24,108.24 were awarded this year to Buffalo Bill Museum in LeClaire, IA (\$5,000); Friends of the Museum in Marietta (\$5,000); GEORGE M. VERITY River Museum in Keokuk, IA (\$1,600); the Point Pleasant River Museum (\$5,000); and LST 325 (\$7508.24). The Gamble Fund, since its inception in 1976, has awarded \$975,000 in grants to 501(3)c river organizations. Lee Woodruff reminded members that direct financial contributions in support of the Gamble Fund and the S&D organization are permitted by law and are most welcomed.

Secretary Sharon Reynold's report showed a membership roster of 694, which includes both individual and associate memberships. In view of rising costs, especially in postage and expenses related to publishing the REFLECTOR, the membership approved a modest increase to \$35 for a yearly subscription. REFLECTOR editor David Tschiggfrie was thanked for his good work on the special BELLE Centennial edition of the magazine, and was asked to relay the organization's appreciation to his wife Debbie for her "behind the scenes" support in making it possible for this monumental issue to go to press. Fifty copies of this issue will be made available for purchase on the MAYOR ANDREW BROADDUS, the BELLE's ticket office and gift shop, during the Centennial Festival of Riverboats.

Nominations chair Barbara Hameister presented the slate of candidates for 2014, and the following were elected: Jeff Spear, president; Vic Canfield, vice president; Dale Flick, treasurer; Sharon Reynolds, secretary; and Capt. Bob Reynolds, Michael Jones, and Taylor Abbot to a three year term on the Board of Governors. After a notably brief and efficient meeting, Chairman Lee

Woodruff called for adjournment so that the two busses could load for the luncheon and program upriver at Clarington, OH.

A catered luncheon was served on the beautiful grassy expanse of lawn high on a hillside overlooking the Ohio above Clarington at the home of Sonja Taylor, grandmother of Board member Taylor Abbott. Nearly 150 guests of S&D and the Ohio Valley River Museum enjoyed a gorgeous summer day with blue skies, bright sun, and perfect temperatures. A visit to the recently opened Ohio Valley River Museum at Clarington followed, and all were impressed with the quality and number of exhibits. An added bonus on the bus trip to and from the site was expert on-board narration. Aboard your author's bus, animated and informative narration was capably handled by Capt. Bill Barr concerning floods, dams, commercial traffic, and historic sights on the route. Some of those highlights included Hannibal Locks and Dam and the sites of old wicket Dams 15 and 16; Greenwood Farm at Newport, home of the Greene Family; Larry Geisler's home at Duffy, OH; and J. Mack Gamble's home at Clarington.


Saturday evening's banquet and program were held in the ballroom of the Lafayette Hotel. A special surprise of the evening was the commemorative 75th Anniversary champagne flute inscribed with S&D logo set at each place. The officers and Board led the group in toasting the organization at the start of the evening meal. Our guest speaker was Capt. Bill Dow of Lake George, NY, owner and operator of the Lake George Steamboat Company and the New Orleans Steamboat Company. Bill was introduced by his son Matt, known as Bubba by his friends. Matt is captain of the company's steam sternwheeler MINNE-HA-HA on Lake George, and is an accomplished calliapist as well. Capt. Bill gave his audience a fascinating overview of the history of Lake George and of the Lake George Steamboat Company, the oldest continuously operating steamboat company in the United States, chartered in 1817. They have operated fifteen different passenger vessels on the lake, eleven of which were steam powered. Bill's father, Capt. Wilbur Dow, acquired the company in 1945, and positioned the firm to maintain an active and thriving presence in the passenger trade to the present day. They

currently operate the MOHICAN and LAC DU SAINT SACREMENT along with the MINNE on the Lake. In 1972, Capt. Wilbur and son Bill expanded the company's operations to New Orleans, where they built and commissioned the steamer NATCHEZ to run in consort with the COTTON BLOSSOM and JOHN JAMES AUDUBON. Capt. Bill shared some of the details of the twists and turns encountered in the fascinating story about building the big sternwheeler down in Braithwaite, LA. And at the conclusion, with tongue in cheek, Capt. Dow observed that the NATCHEZ is "the last living piece of what you represent here in S&D . . . and there's not one da-~~ed~~ picture of her in the whole hotel!" We trust that the management of the Lafayette will take the captain's comment to heart!

A check of the guest register for the 75th Annual Meeting showed the following in attendance:

Taylor Abbott - Clarington, OH  
 Jan & Jim Armstrong - Pittsburgh, PA  
 Capt. Bill & Debbie Barr - So. Charleston, WV  
 Capt. Jim & Annie Blum - St. Louis, MO  
 Jim Bupp - Charleston, WV  
 Susan Burks - Shelbyville, KY  
 Victor Canfield - Covington, KY  
 Pat Carr - Macon, GA  
 Iris & Vernon Clifton - Bidwell, OH  
 Sharon Clifton - Gallipolis, OH  
 Carolyn Corbin - Gallipolis, OH  
 Capt. Bill Dow - Lake George, NY  
 Matt Dow - Lake George, NY  
 Tony & Louise Ellis - Circleville, OH  
 Kathy Farnsworth - Ellicott City, MD  
 Dale Flick - Cincinnati, OH  
 Connie & Gary Frommelt - St. Louis, MO  
 John & Sharon Fryant - Maineville, OH  
 Ben Gilbert - Tall Timbers, MD  
 Dan & Dorothy Goen - Indianapolis, IN  
 Bob Grubbs - Mailton, OH  
 Ruth Guenther - Ross, OH  
 Barbara Hameister - Blanchester, OH  
 Karen Hassel - Ohio History Connection  
 Dave Hawkins  
 Mike & Mary Herschler - Quincy, IL  
 Bill & Gayle Hindman - Cincinnati, OH  
 Robin Hixson - Vancouver, WA  
 Helena & Bob Isfort - Cincinnati, OH  
 Michael & Rita Jones - Cincinnati, OH

Charles Jordan - Covington, KY  
 Capt. Bill & Darlene Judd - New Richmond, OH  
 George Kane - Ohio History Connection  
 Jim Karnath - Westerville, OH  
 Lois Kidd - Manchester, OH  
 Jennifer Lemmon - Gallatin, TN  
 Kim McGraw - Marietta, OH  
 Tom & Kay Metzler - Greenwood, IN  
 Charles Montague III - Ashland, KY  
 D. Leo Moore - Belleville, WV  
 John & Gwenn Noftsgar - Spring Valley, OH  
 Jean Nuss - Marietta, OH  
 Frank Prudent - Covington, KY  
 Chase & Mary Putnam - Warren, PA  
 Bill Reynolds - Marietta, OH  
 Judy Reynolds - Reno, PA  
 Brock Rogers - Barnesville, OH  
 Carol Roth - Cincinnati, OH  
 William Rowe - Louisville, KY  
 Bee & Woody Rutter - Marietta, OH  
 Fred & Tammy Rutter - Lithopolis, OH  
 Jo Ann Schoen - Corydon, IN  
 Ed & Gayle Shearer - Seabrook, TX  
 Robin Simpson  
 Marga Smith - Springfield, OH  
 Jeffrey Spear - Marietta, OH  
 John Spear - Marietta, OH  
 Geraldine Swarts - Louisville, KY  
 John Teichmoeller - Ellicott City, MD  
 Ruth Thornitz - Newport, OH  
 David Tschiggfrie - Dubuque, IA  
 Patricia Van Skaik - Cincinnati, OH  
 David Vornholt - New Richmond, OH  
 John White - Oxford, OH  
 Lee Woodruff - Cincinnati, OH

At evening's end, S&D members individually expressed their gratitude to all who were involved for a well planned and executed event, a memorable anniversary meeting. With a boatload of treasured moments and old friendships renewed and new ones made, the organization looks forward to the future as it continues to "light up the past, present and future of the Mississippi River system." 

*Visit us online at*  
***www.riverhistory.org***  
*for more current events and up-to-date news.*  
***Like us on Facebook.***



*Frank Pollock provides musical accompaniment prior to the noon luncheon on the hilltop above Clarington. Editor's photo.*



*Taylor Abbott welcomes luncheon guests on behalf of his grandmother and family. Brock Rogers photo.*



*Bill Barr, Taylor Abbott and Bill Judd compare notes at Ohio Valley River Museum in Clarington. Editor's photo.*



*Michael Jones, Matt Dow and Barbara Hameister at center of photo are joined by other S&D faithful in viewing some of the many artifacts and exhibits in Clarington. Jim Blum photo.*



*Janet Witten of Ohio Valley River Museum shares information with your editor about the Witten family of steamboat pilots, five brothers whose careers date back to the time of the legendary speedster BUCKEYE STATE. Capt. Fred Way first wrote about the family in several of the 1968 issues of the REFLECTOR. Jim Blum photo.*



*A future S&D member checks out chart of commercial towing company stack insignia. Brock Rogers photo.*



Along with special exhibits about the DELTA QUEEN and renowned Clarington river historian and author J. Mack Gamble, visitors also learned about Clarington's boat building history, which included the packet LIBERTY, displayed as a model here. All photos this page courtesy of Brock Rogers.



Part of the banquet crowd assembled in the Ballroom. Many of those attending expressed special appreciation for the careful planning and surprises that awaited all who came this year.



Banquet setting included a 75th Anniversary champagne flute.



Matt Dow introduces the evening's after dinner speaker, his father, Capt. Bill Dow of Lake George, NY.



S&D Officers and Board lead the gathered guests in toasting the future of Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen.



Capt. Bill Dow kept his audience enthralled while sharing his family's steamboating experiences in NY and New Orleans.

# 1841-47 Western Rivers Steamboats (Part 1)

by John H. White, Jr.

This is the first installment of listings for the final decade of Western Rivers steamboats not catalogued by *Way's Packet Directory*. The entire collection of listings published in the S&D REFLECTOR include the years 1811-1847, and are intended to supplement Capt. Frederick Way's classical study which, as per his title, covered the years 1848-1994. However, as explained in the introduction to his book, Capt. Way included some boats dating before 1848 such as the BEN FRANKLIN (1826-27) as well as many boats of the early 1840s. Your author has tried to exclude those that he included so as not to duplicate his work. Yet, it is possible that a few have been included, although it was not my intention to do so. *Mea culpa*, as the late Spiro Agnew said to a Federal judge in 1973.

## A. M. PHILLIPS

SW packet, wh b. Wheeling, 1846. 215 tons. Cost \$24,000.

## A. W. VAN LEER

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1847. 160 tons. Her name was possibly A. W. VAN LIER. Snagged at Henderson, KY in 1850.

## AARON B. WARD

SW packet, wh b. Elizabeth, PA, 1848. 261 tons.

## ABRAHAM COX

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1842. 83 tons.

## ADELAIDE

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 87 tons. Off records in 1846.

## ADELAIDE

SW packet (?), wh b. ?, 1843.

## ADMIRAL

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 242 tons. In collision at Clarksville, AR in 1847.

## ADVANCE

SW packet, wh b. Shousetown, PA, 1843. 166 tons. Off records in 1859.

## AGNES

SW packet, wh b. Pearlinton, MS, 1842. 170 tons.

## AID

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 137 tons.

## ALABAMA NO. 2

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 289 tons. Off records in 1843.

## ALABAMA NO. 3

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 162 tons. Snagged at Covington, LA in February 1847.

## ALABAMA NO. 4

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1845. 250 tons. Off records in 1847.

## ALBATROSS

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1844. 298 tons.

## ALGONA

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1845. 240 tons. Burned at St. Louis in May 1849.

## ALGONQUIN

SW packet (?), wh b. ?, 1842.

## ALINE

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1844. 232 tons.

## ALQUIPPA

SW packet, wh b. ?. In 1843 collided with and sank new steamer WESTERN, with the loss of 2 children.

## ALTALANTIS

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1848. 234 tons. Name possibly ATALANTIS.

**AMARANTH**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 220 tons.

**AMBASSADOR**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 650 tons.  
Built by Hartshorn for \$34,000. Burned in 1847.

**AMERICAN**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1845. 118 tons. Off records after 1845.

**AMERICAN EAGLE**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1842. 400 tons.

**ANGELINA**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1846. 54 tons.

**ANNAWAN**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1842. 213 tons.

**ANNAWAN**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1842. 560 tons.  
Possibly same boat as previous listing. Off records in 1846.

**ARAMONTH**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1845. 234 tons.

**ARCADE**

SW packet, wh b. Buck Hill Bottom, OH, 1841. 133 tons.

**ARCHIE MASON**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1848. 32 tons.

**ARKANSAS MAIL**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 150 tons.  
Built by Gordon & Temple.

**ARKANSAS NO. 2**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 229 tons.  
Snagged at Lewisburg, AR in March 1844.

**ATLAS NO. 3**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1844. 135 tons.  
Collided with OTTER on September 14, 1846, but neither boat sustained much damage. Snagged at Clarksville, MO in March 1847.

**ATTACKAPAS**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 246 tons. Name possibly ATTAKAPAS or BELLE OF ATTAKAPAS.

**AUBURN**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 120 tons.  
Burned at Maysville, KY in April 1842.

**AURORA**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1846. 135 tons.

**BEAVER**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 44 tons. Burned on Lower Mississippi River in February 1844.

**BEAVER**

SW packet, wh b. Franklin, LA, 1848. 66 tons.

**BEE**

SW packet (?), wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1844. 14 tons.

**BELFAST**

SW packet, wh b. Freedom, PA, 1843. 96 tons.

**BELLE OF ARKANSAS**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 224 tons. Lost at New Orleans in August 1850.

**BELLE OF ATTAKAPAS**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 246 tons.  
Possibly same boat as ATTACKAPAS listed above. Off records in 1847.

**BELLE OF CLARKSVILLE**

SW packet, wh b. Smithland, KY, 1843. 250 tons. In collision at Memphis, December 1844.

**BELLE OF HATCHEE**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1846. 64 tons.  
Snagged above Helena, AR in July 1848.

**BELLE OF ILLINOIS**

SW packet, wh b. Freedom, PA, 1845. 78 tons. Snagged at Compte Island on Red River, December 1847.

**BELLE OF NASHVILLE**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1845. 124 tons. Off records in 1847.

**BELLE OF OUACHITA**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1843. 103 tons.

**BELLE OF PITTSBURG**

Sw packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1843. 163 tons.

**BELLE OF RED RIVER**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 246 tons.

**BELLE OF SYMMES**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1845. 66 tons.

**BELLE OF PORTSMOUTH**

SW packet, wh b. Portsmouth, OH, 1842. 80 tons.

**BELLE POULE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 157 tons. Snagged at Pickensville, AL in March 1846.

**BELMONT**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1841. 115 tons. Snagged at Coldwater State in April 1843.

**BELMONT**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 114 tons.

**BIG DIME**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1840s. 79 tons.

**BIG HATCHIE**

SW packet, wh. b.? Exploded one boiler while backing out from Harmon's Landing, 100 miles above St. Louis late in July 1845. The boiler propelled itself upward through the main cabin and staterooms. It pushed through the hurricane roof and fell into the river leaving the upper works of the steamer a shambles. Several were killed or injured. Her captain was Roswell R. Frisbee.

**BILLOW**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1845. 206 tons. Off records in 1846.

**BILLOW**

SW packet, wh b. Burlington, OH, 1846.

**BOB LETCHER**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 161 tons. Off records in 1845.

**BOIS DE'ARC**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 182 tons. Snagged at Bayou Plaquemine, LA in December 1847.

**BOLIVAR**

SW packet, wh b. Nashville, TN, 1846. 95 tons. Snagged in May 1849.

**BOREAS**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 156 tons. Burned at St. Louis in 1849.

**BOSTON**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1843. 137 tons.

**BOURBON**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 171 tons. Off records in 1851.

**BRAZIL**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 167 tons. 144' x 22' x 5'. Orrin Smith built her for the Galena trade. Off records in 1847.

**BRISTOL**

SW packet, wh b. Brownsville, PA, 1841. 149 tons. Off records in 1843.

**BROTHER JONATHAN**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 375 tons. Built by Gordon & Temple for \$24,000.

**BRUNSWICK**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1844. 294 tons. Stranded above Vicksburg in November 1848.

**BUCKEYE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1847. 309 tons.

**BUFFALO**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1847. 136 tons.

**BUNKER HILL**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 184?. 271 tons.

**BURKSVILLE**

SW packet, wh b. Cumberland River, 1843. 60 tons. Snagged at Clarksville, TN on February 29, 1844.

**C. CONNOR**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1845. 144 tons. Off records in 1848.

**CALEDONIA**



SW packet, wh b. Ripley, OH, 1841. 338 tons. Off records in 1847.

### **CAMEL**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 190 tons.

### **CAROLINA**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1844. 271 tons.

### **CAROLINE**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1841. 170 tons. Off records after 1841.

### **CAROLINE**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1841. 407 tons. Snagged at Plum Point, TN in August 1841.

### **CAROLINE**

SW packet, wh b. Appenover, IL, 1843. 158 tons.

### **CAROLINE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1844. 271 tons.

### **CARRIER**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 132 tons.

### **CASPIAN**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1842. 318 tons. 183' x 28' 6" x 7'. She made her first appearance at the St. Louis public landing on the last day of January 1842. Her hull was built by Litherbury and Lockwood; her cabin by Johnson, Morton & Co.; and her engines by Shields, Vorhees & Co. Capt. S. Blood supervised the construction and was also part owner. Other sources cite her tonnage as 346, and state she could carry 450 tons of freight. She had four boilers. Six other investors joined Capt. Blood in buying shares in this sidewheeler. CASPIAN was snagged at Island No. 25, Mississippi River in December 1845.

### **CASSANDRA**

SW packet, wh b. Belle Vernon, PA, on Monongahela River, 1846. 65 tons.

### **CECILIA**

Stw packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 111 or 128 tons. 140' x 20' 9" x 4' 5". Off records in 1847.

### **CHALMETTO**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1846. 239 tons.

### **CHAMPION**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1843. 148 tons. Exploded boilers at New Orleans in April 1849.

### **CHAMPION**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 319 tons. Snagged at Cape Girardeau, MO in June 1847.

### **CHAMPLAIN**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 428 tons. Off records in 1848.

### **CHARLESTON**

SW packet, wh b. Elizabeth, PA, 1843. 133 tons. Snagged at Gibons Reach, AL in May 1848.

### **CHARLOTTE**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1842. 242 or 250 tons. Off records in 1844.

### **CHICAGO**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1842. 126 tons. In collision at Grafton, IL in March 1844.

### **CHIEF MAGISTRATE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 149 tons. Snagged at Island No. 65, Mississippi River in September 1841.

### **CHIEFTAN**

SW packet, wh b. Elizabeth, PA, 1847. 55 tons.

### **CHINA**

SW packet, wh b. Smithland, KY, 1844. 82 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **CICERO**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 107 tons.

### **CINCINNATI**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1845. 374 tons. She was built for Capt. Charles G. Pearce and lasted for only 3½ years. Her engines were transferred to BOSTONA.

### **CLARION**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 32 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **CLARION**

SW packet, wh b. Rock Island, IL, 1842. 217 tons.  
Burned at Guyandotte, VA in May 1845.

### **CLEOPATRA**

SW packet, wh b. Bedinger Mills, KY, 1841. 67 tons.  
Off records in 1849.

### **CLERMONT**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1843. 111 tons. She left St. Louis on July 7, 1846 and reached Yellowstone River in 37 days. During that trip, Indians also attacked the steamer GROS VENTRES.

### **COASTER**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 22 tons.

### **COASTER**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 50 tons.  
Possibly same boat as previous listing.

### **COLLIER**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 23 tons.

### **COLONEL WOODS**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 184?. First steamer on Platte River at Platte City, SD in 1843.

### **COLUMBIA**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1843. Commanded by Capt. Murdock.

### **COLUMBIANA**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 184?. In Missouri River trade until snagged on that river in fall 1845..

### **COLUMBUS**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 126 tons.

### **COMET**

SW packet, wh b. Evansville, IN, 1841. 27 tons.

### **CONCORDIA**

SW packet, wh b. Plaquemine, LA, 1846. 29 tons. Off records in 1851.

### **CONDOR NO. 2**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1847. 187 tons.

### **CONGRESS**

SW packet, wh b. Murraysville, VA, 1843. 334 tons.

Off records in 1846.

### **CONNECTICUT**

SW packet, wh b. Shousetown, PA, 1848. 248 tons.  
Stranded at President's Island near Memphis in October 1852.

### **CONQUEROR**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1847. 398 tons.  
Burned at New Orleans in May 1861.

### **CONSTITUTION**

SW packet, wh b. Wheeling, VA, 1848. 536 tons.  
Burned at Memphis in May 1850.

### **CONVOY**

SW packet, wh b. Big Muddy, IL, 1845. 700 tons.  
Burned at Natchez in March 1849.

### **CORNELIUS**

SW packet, wh b. Dog River, AL, 1847. 65 tons.

### **CORSAIR**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 193 tons.  
Snagged at Ste. Genevieve, MO in November 1844.

### **CORSAIR**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 150 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **COTE JOYEUSE**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1842. 142 tons. In collision at Big Cypress Bend, AR in August 1847.

### **CRESCENT**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 115 tons.  
Snagged at Tchula, LA in February 1842.

### **CRESCENT CITY**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 257 tons. She was snagged near Peach Tree, AL on the Alabama River on February 1, 1843, while carrying a load of 1500 cotton bales. Most of the cotton on board was saved, as well as \$27,000 in species (coin) carried in the office. Several passengers and crew on board were scalded when a steam line ruptured from the shock of hitting the snag.

### **CRESCENT CITY**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1841. 300 tons.

**CUMBERLAND VALLEY**

SW packet, wh b. Smithland, KY, 1842. 168 tons. Snagged at Kansas City, MO in September 1849.

**DECATUR**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 282 tons. Burned at Island No. 66, Mississippi River in March 1844.

**DELIA**

SW packet (?), wh b. ?, 184?

**DENMARK**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1842. 40 tons.

**DEWITT CLINTON**

SW packet, wh b. Elizabethtown, PA, 1847. 265 tons. Snagged at Memphis in January 1852.

**DIADEM**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 311 tons. Off records in 1846.

**DIAMOND**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1842. 308 tons. Off records in 1846.

**DIME**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 44 tons.

**DOUGLASS**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1841. 263 tons. Name possibly DOUGLAS. Exploded boilers May 16, 1842 near New Madrid, MO, claiming 17 lives.

**DOVE**

Sw packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1842. 167 tons.

**DOVE 2**

SW packet, wh b. Smithland, KY, 1843. 168 tons. Off records in 1846.

**E. D. KING**

SW packet, wh b. Marion, AL, 1848. 108 tons. Stranded at Mobile in April 1850.

**EDNA**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 183 tons. Left Caledonia on Missouri River with German emigrants when her flue collapsed, injuring 63. Exploded boilers

at Columbia, LA in June 1850.

**EDNA**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 213 tons.

**EDWIN HICKMAN**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 328 tons. Burned at Cairo, IL in October 1844.

**ELIZA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 206 tons. Snagged at Bird Island, MO in October 1842 claiming between 20-50 lives. She had on board a large cargo of lead bound for New Orleans.

**ELIZA**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1844. 321 tons.

**ELIZABETH**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 100 tons.

**EMILIE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 220 tons. Snagged at Washington, MO on Missouri River in April 1843.

**EMMA**

Sw packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 66 tons.

**EMMA**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1843. 118 tons.

**EMMA**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1844. 80 tons.

**EMPIRE**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1845. 446 tons.

**EMPIRE**

SW packet, wh b. Shousetown, PA, 1847. 87 tons. Off records in 1846.

**EMPRESS**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 205 tons. She was mentioned in a *Niles Register* article of September 14, 1844. In contemporary reports, it was observed that in the recent past, most boats made about six round trips from St. Louis to New Orleans per year. Now some boats such as the EMPRESS made thirteen round trips in eleven months. Most averaged nineteen days for repairs a year. Productivity and income had

thus greatly increased.

### **ENTERPRISE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1844. 106 tons.

### **ENTERPRISE NO. 3**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1844. 175 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **ETNA**

SW packet, wh b. McKeesport, PA, 1843. 49 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **EVANDA**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1842. 60 tons. Cost \$3500. Carried a crew of twelve.

### **EVELINE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 108 tons. Commanded by Capt. James P. Jack.

### **EXCHANGE**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1845. 75 tons.

### **EXPORT**

SW packet, wh b. Brownsville, PA, 1841. 86 tons. In collision with JO NICHOL at Rising Sun, IN on June 15, 1841 and sank at East Bend, 42 miles below Cincinnati.

### **FAME**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1842. 157 tons. Worn out in 1848.

### **FASHION**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 110 tons.

### **FAWN**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1843. 133 tons.

### **FLORENCE**

SW packet, wh b. Jeffersonville, IN, 1841. 145 tons. Worn out in 1846.

### **FRANKLAND**

SW packet, wh b. Knoxville, TN, 1845. 96 tons. Sold to foreign buyer in 1848.

### **FRANKLIN**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1844. 33 tons.

### **FRONTIER**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 109 tons. Stranded at Port Isabel, TX in June 1846.

### **GALENA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 135 tons. Off records in 1847.

### **GAZELLE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1844. 82 tons. Sank at Reynosa, Mexico in May 1847.

### **GENERAL BROOKE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 143 tons. Burned at St. Louis in May 1849.

### **GENERAL LA FAYETTE**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1847. 463 tons.

### **GENERAL PIKE**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 308 tons. Burned at Point Coupee, LA in April 1849.

### **GENERAL TAYLOR**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1844. 152 tons.

### **GENERAL WARREN**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 103 tons. Off records in 1847.

### **GEORGE M. BIBB**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1845. 45 tons. Renamed HERO.

### **GLIDE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 35 tons.

### **GODDESS OF LIBERTY**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 248 tons. An article in the April 29, 1843 *Niles Register* attributed to this steamer "the part of Noah's Ark on a trip to St. Louis. She was literally covered by passengers, horses, cattle, hogs, dogs, furniture and freight. There were upwards of 400 men, women and children on board. More than 60 horses and hogs were counted as were 1,040 chairs. Forty wagons and carriages were placed wherever room could be found for them. The same was true for 400 tons of miscellaneous freight. Some of the cargo was placed on a keel boat towed behind the mothership. A child was born during the passage,

and seven piglets and a calf were added to America's domestic livestock."

#### **GOV. MOREHEAD**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 1841. Most likely named for James T. Morehead, governor of Kentucky 1834-36 or possibly John M. Morehead, governor of North Carolina 1841-45.

#### **GOVERNOR YELL**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 104 tons. Lost at New Orleans in October 1843.

#### **GRACE DARLING**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 292 tons. Off records in 1847.

#### **GRAMPUS**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 80 tons.

#### **GRAMPUS**

SW packet, wh b. Rising Sun, IN, 1848.

#### **GREENWOOD**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1843. 198 tons.

#### **GUIDE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1843. 52 tons.

#### **GULNARE**

SW packet, wh b. ?, 184?. Collided with and sank the WESTWOOD above Helena, AR on September 8, 1844. Two deck passengers and one deckhand were lost.

#### **HARKAWAY**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 288 tons. Built by John Litherbury. Stranded at Donaldsonville, LA in January 1849.

#### **HARRY BLUFF**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1846. 96 tons.

#### **HARRY OF THE WEST**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 490 tons. While taking on wood thirty-five miles below Memphis in April 1843, the boat turned over part way on one side. One of her boilers exploded as a result because of a low water level on the opposite side. Seven people were killed or injured. The boat was said

to have been racing the first GREY EAGLE when this accident occurred.

#### **HATCHEE PLANTER**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1845. 125 tons.

#### **HATCHIE EAGLE**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1845. 116 tons.

#### **HECTOR**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1841. 246 tons. Burned at Island No. 74 on Mississippi River in November 1842.

#### **HELEN**

SW packet, wh b. Smithland, KY, 1843. 61 tons.

#### **HELEN**

SW packet, wh b. Linden, TN, 1843. 169 tons. Snagged at Satartia, MS in August 1846.

#### **HEMPSTEAD**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1844. 75 tons. Snagged at New Orleans in July 1848.

#### **HENRI**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1845. 56 tons. Off records after 1845.

#### **HENRY BRAY**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1843. 347 tons. Possibly HENRY BRY. Sank near Island No. 25 on Mississippi River on November 12, 1845.

#### **HENRY CLAY**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 310 tons. Off records in 1843.

#### **HERALD**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1843. 163 tons. Off records in 1848.

#### **HERCULES**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1845. 371 tons.

#### **HERSCHEL**

SW packet, wh b. Brownsville, PA, 1841. 84 tons.

#### **HIEVASSEE**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 101 tons.

**HOMOCHITTA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1847. 38 tons.

**HOPE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 26 tons.

**HOPE NO. 2**

SW packet, wh b. Shousetown, PA, 1848. 50 tons.  
Perhaps same vessel listed as Way 2662.

**HUGH L. WHITE**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1848. 67 tons.

**HUNTER**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1845. 96 tons.

**HUNTSMAN**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 95 tons.

**HUNTSVILLE**

SW packet, wh b. Smithland, KY, 1841. 138 tons.

**IDA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 61 tons.  
Collided with ALLEGHENY BELLE at Tarentum, PA  
in November 1843.

**IMPORTER**

SW packet, wh b. Murraysville, VA, 1842. 199 tons.  
Burned at Cincinnati in June 1845.

**INDEPENDENCE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1844. 273 tons.

**INDIA**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1842. 370 tons.

**IOLA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 84 tons.

**IOWA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 112 tons. Cost  
\$22,000. Snagged near Alton, IL in September 1845.

**IOWA**

SW packet, wh b. St. Louis, MO, 1845. 245 tons.  
Collided with DECLARATION and was sunk in  
October 1847.

**IRENE**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1843. 144 tons.

**IRENE**

SW packet, wh b. Burlington, OH, 1844. 76 tons. Lost  
at Mobile in April 1850.

**ISAAC EARNETT**

SW packet, wh b. Nashville, TN, 1845. 55 tons.

**ISAAC MARTIN**

SW packet, wh b. Bridgeport, PA, 1841. 66 tons.

**IZAACK WALTON**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 35 tons.

**J. E. ROBERTS**

SW packet, wh b. Grave Creek, VA, 1844. 118 tons.

**J. J. CRITTENDEN**

SW packet, wh b. Brownsville, PA, 1846. 224 tons.

**JAMES B. PORTER**

SW packet, wh b. Jeffersonville, IN, 1847. 62 tons.

**JAMES DICK**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1845. 272 tons.  
Burned at Nashville in May 1850.

**JAMES HEWITT**

SW packet, wh b. Shippingport, KY, 1843. 336 tons.  
Sank at Carondelet, MO in August 1851.

**JAMES MADISON**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 284 or 400  
tons. Built by Gordon & Temple for \$24,000. Off  
records in 1846.

**JAMES PITCHER**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1843. 116 tons.  
Snagged at Blue River, IN in September 1846.

**JAMES ROSS**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1842. 149 tons. Off  
records in 1847.

**JAMES WOOD**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 132 tons. In  
collision in January 1843.

**JANE**

SW packet, wh b. New Orleans, LA, 1844. 37 tons.

### **JASPER**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1842. 83 tons. Off records in 1844.

### **JIM**

SW packet, wh b. Kanawha, VA, 1843. 55 tons. Worn out in 1850.

### **JO DAVIESS**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1842. 259 tons. Off records in 1843.

### **JOE DAVIS**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 218 tons. Possibly JO DAVIESS listed above. Snagged at Plaquemine, LA in December 1843.

### **JOHN AULL**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 235 tons. Built by Burton Hazen. Off records in 1846.

### **JOHN DRENNON**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1846. 131 tons.

### **JOHN H. BILLS**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 135 tons.

### **JOHN J. HARDIN**

SW packet, wh b. Elizabeth, PA, 1845. 206 or 209 tons. Burned at St. Louis in March 1848.

### **JOHN MARSHALL**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1841. 202 tons.

### **JOHN O'FALLON**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1843. 221 tons. Off records in 1845.

### **JOHN PERRY**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 395 tons. Off records in 1844.

### **JOHN Q. ADAMS**

SW packet, wh b. Brownsville, PA, 1848. 189 tons.

### **JOHN W. RUSSELL**

SW packet, wh b. Nicholasville, KY, 1848. 138 tons. Worn out in 1852.

### **JOHN WESLEY**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1846. 133 tons.

### **JOSEPHINE**

SW packet, wh b. Brownsville, PA, 1844. 124 tons. She exploded boilers near Madison, IN on April 8, 1845. Part of her engine went through a stateroom and the hurricane roof before landing in the river. The passenger in the stateroom died the next day. This was reported in the April 19, 1845 *Niles Register*. However, the boat is also reported as snagged at Clarksville, TN in May 1850.

### **JUDGE MCLEAN**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1844. 138 tons. Worn out in 1850.

### **JULIA CHOUTEAU**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1842. 318 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **JUNIATA**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1841. 21 tons.

### **JUNIATA**

SW packet, wh b. Cincinnati, OH, 1842. 135 tons. Off records in 1846.

### **JUNIATA NO. 2**

SW packet, wh b. Pittsburgh, PA, 1847. 28 tons.

### **KATE AUBREY**

SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1844. 278 tons. Off records in 1845.

### **KATE MILLER**


SW packet, wh b. Louisville, KY, 1846. 84 tons.

### **KIAMICHA**

SW packet, wh b. Jeffersonville, IN, 1845. 129 tons.

### **KOUMA**

SW packet, wh b. New Albany, IN, 1848. 275 tons.

*The final installment of boats built 1841-47 will appear in our March 2015 issue, completing John White's indexing of Western Rivers steamers which predate Capt. Fred Way's comprehensive list from 1848-1994. A spreadsheet listing those steamboats printed above will also be posted on our website. - Ed. *

# Centennial Festival of Riverboats: A Photo Remembrance

The six days of Louisville's Centennial Festival of Riverboats this October carried with it such a boatload of images, sounds, and experiences that these pages cannot begin to capture in words even a small part of what went on. Choosing instead to let these photographic snippets paint a visual impression of the BELLE's Centennial October 14-19, we trust that you will sense some of the flavor and unbridled enthusiasm of that grand

celebration. Our apologies in advance for any omissions of events or individuals or moments that may have carried special meaning for those of you who were there and for those who weren't — there was just so much to see and do and so little time to take it all in, it seems. But it was truly a week to remember, and so we offer this photo album to give you at least a taste of it all, and hope that you will enjoy the sampler. 🕒



*BELLE's* rechristening on the afternoon of October 14 included presentations by Louisville's mayor Greg Fischer, Kentucky governor Steve Beshear, and officials of the U. S. Coast Guard and Waterfront Development Corporation. In these photos, National Rivers Hall of Fame president Corky Bickel presents Linda Harris of WDC and *BELLE* Capt. Mark Doty with commemorative plaque recognizing the boat's special place in America's river history. Both photos courtesy of Corky Bickel.



*Amherst Madison's* steam barge ANNA MARIE was part of the Industry exhibit moored upstream from the *BELLE's* 4th Street Landing, opposite Joe's Crab Shack. A corps of professors provided music for the event, including Capt. Doc Hawley, Travis Vasconcelos, Zach Morecraft, Matt Dow, Anthony Benedetto, your editor and son Jonathan shown above. Guests on the CLYDE had front row concert seats.



*BELLE* fireman Tom Coursen keeps boilers hot during Thursday night's race with SPIRIT OF PEORIA.





*SPIRIT OF PEORIA approaches landing after race. Lights of BELLE OF CINCINNATI appear off her bow on shore.*



*Guest calliapist Jonathan Tschiggfrie provides entertainment aboard SPIRIT OF PEORIA during her race with RIVER QUEEN in background. Turns out longtime friends Lee and Kathy Havlik, formerly on JULIA BELLE SWAIN, were aboard as crew, and arranged the gig for the afternoon trip.*



*Passengers view BELLE's 19th century engines on Friday morning breakfast cruise. During your editor's trips, Chiefs Dan Lewis and Steve Mattingly were kept busy answering questions about the Rees machinery.*



*Riverboat fleet landed above the Clark (2nd Street) Bridge included RtoL: RIVER QUEEN, BELLE OF CINCINNATI, ACL's towboat RONALD R. LOUGHMILLER, and Amherst Madison's J.S. LEWIS.*



*Capt. Kevin Mullen answers a question from visiting river fan while Capt. Mark Doty watches nearby. Officers and crew rotated daily among the boat's many trips.*



*BB Riverboats from Cincinnati offered several daily trips on BELLE OF CINCINNATI and RIVER QUEEN. The latter boat was once familiar in the Twin Cities area as HARRIET BISHOP, part of Capt. Bill Bowell's fleet.*



*BELLE returns from afternoon cruise with SNYDER and ANNA MARIE barge in foreground. BELLE and SNYDER were both Rees' built and designed by Thomas Rees Tarn. Photo courtesy of Jim Blum.*



*Part of working and interpretive crews aboard W.P. SNYDER, J.S. LEWIS, RONALD LOUGHMILLER, CLYDE., MISS BLUE, USCG's OSAGE, and BB Riverboats. Photo courtesy of Vic Canfield.*



*BELLE OF CINCINNATI returns from trip. Crowds in foreground are visitors to RiverWorks Discovery's onshore River Industry Display. Photo courtesy of Jim Blum.*



*Tom Schiffer's 1910 steam launch MISS BLUE, along with Capt. Don Sanders' sternwheel houseboat CLYDE. in the background, were special additions to the working river boats of commercial companies. Ohio River Museum's W.P. SNYDER, JR. made her longest trip away from Marietta since her retirement from active service in 1955. Photo courtesy of Tom Schiffer.*



*Capt. Steve Grossarth of J.S. LEWIS visits with Capt. Alan Bernstein of BB Riverboats. Alan's company serviced all the visiting excursion boats at the Festival. Photo by Jim Blum.*



*BELLE blows a salute in response to steam calliope's rendition of "Happy Birthday." Two other popular tunes played were "My Old Kentucky Home" and "Avalon." Jim Blum photo.*



*AMERICAN QUEEN arriving in Louisville the night of October 17 for the festivities. She landed upriver at Cox Park.*



*Getting a lesson in Steamboating 101 from dad Bob Reynolds is son Walt, while Keith Baylor audits the course in background. Walt is wearing a souvenir hat once sold aboard AVALON.*



*The Louisville event was also the occasion for a gathering of the Shrake family. In this portrait taken on Saturday morning's BELLE cruise, seated at the table (L to R) are Walter and Betty Shrake, daughter Sharon and her husband Capt. Bob Reynolds, their son Walt, and Sharon's brother David. Standing are the Reynold's older son Jeff and Sharon's younger brother Capt. Dan, a pilot for Artco. Represented here are Savanna, IL; Paragould, AR; and Boston, MA.*



*Frank Prudent, Chief Dan Lewis, and Vic Canfield join the Reynolds' during a trip with a group of 37 fans from Middle Ohio River chapter of S&D.*



*Also pictured on Saturday morning are (L to R) Capt. Mike Williams of DELTA QUEEN, Capt. Eric Dykman of JULIA BELLE SWAIN, and Capt. Carl Henry, formerly of the JBS and currently a pilot on SCOTT STEGBAUER.*



*Capt. Doc Hawley gives your editor and Capt. Joy Manthey a guided "inside" tour of the boat from her IDLEWILD days. Telltale splices in staircase railings, support beams hidden under enclosed columns, and tiller line extensions are some of the clues to her early years. Another family member, Capt. Troy Manthey, was pilot on BELLE OF CINCINNATI.*



*“Mark Twain” checks notes with Doc, while Michael Blaser to left completes a sale at booth displaying his fine steamboat artwork. Michael’s painting of the BELLE was featured on the official Centennial Festival of Riverboats apparel.*



*Capt. Hawley and Capt. Jim Blum with your editor prior to attending the special Centennial programs across the river at Jeffersonville’s Howard Steamboat Museum. Jim Blum photo.*



*“The Lady Was a Tramp,” Doc’s program of adventures on the tramp steamer AVALON, drew a record crowd at Howard Museum. This was 2014’s featured program in curator Keith Norrington’s River Rambling series. Jim Blum photo.*



*Matt Dow, Barbara Hameister, Frank Prudent and Capt. Don Sanders share smiles and stories at Howard Museum. Photo courtesy of Jim Blum.*



*John Fryant, Judy Patsch, Capt. Bob Reynolds, and Keith Norrington with guest speaker outside Howard mansion after program. Photo courtesy of Jim Blum.*



*Another special program highlighting Saturday’s Birthday Celebration for the BELLE was that of Chief Engineer Kenny Howe at O’Shea’s Irish Pub in Louisville. Kenny shared his memories with SØD’s MOR Chapter. A final offering was Sunday afternoon’s video presentation “Paddlin’ into the Past” by your editor and son at Howards. Jim Blum photo.*



*BELLE awaits boarding for her Birthday Firework cruise on Saturday night, October 18.*



*Capt. Mike Fitzgerald pilots on BELLE's Sunday morning cruise, last day of the celebration. Photo by Jim Blum.*



*Aglow with deck lights and festooned with bunting and balloons, the boat prepares to take up a front row center position for the pyrotechnic display at the city front.*



*AMERICAN QUEEN salutes the BELLE at Cox Park during the morning cruise. As AQ approaches her second decade, the BELLE begins her second century. Jim Blum photo.*



*SPRIT OF PEORIA paddles into position as fireworks light up the night sky. Each of the participating excursion boats maneuvered into place and took up a position around the outer perimeter of the fireworks barge.*



*After the Ball Is Over . . . With the last of the crowds headed home and six days of hectic activity at an end, the BELLE rests quietly at Fourth Street, her boilers cooling down and decks empty. This closing view was snapped from your editor's Galt House window at 6:30 on the drizzly morning of October 20, as interstate traffic whizzes by. What a grand ball it had been!*

# Reflections Aboard the J.S. LEWIS

by Eric Grubb

It was a cold and rainy Friday night, October 10 when I found myself staring at a slippery ladder on the wall of the lock chamber, counting twenty steps to the waterline. My mind raced, wondering how generations of river pilots survived without falling to their demise. Before I knew it, I was in the pilothouse of the J.S. LEWIS, having asked Capt. Steve Grossarth, "Permission to come aboard, sir?" I was about to live another dream, one made possible only by a unique combination of a river website, prior experience on the boat, a USCG license with a security credential, unbridled enthusiasm, and a gracious invitation to ride with the crew again.

By 6 a.m. Saturday morning, the J.S. LEWIS was idling past Richmond, OH. She was on her way to Louisville's Centennial Festival of Riverboats, and we had to slow for a pre-arranged photo-op in downtown Cincinnati. The W.P. SNYDER, JR. was staged alongside to the starboard rear. Also in tow was a crane barge commonly used for concert bands, the workboat BUS BROWN "just in case," and at the starboard head, the whistle flat ANNA MARIE. It was a sight to behold, with Amherst Madison helping to move Ohio River Museum's W.P. SNYDER, JR. to the event.

Passing through the bridges at 8 a.m., we were somewhat underwhelmed at our reception. There were some people with cameras here and there, but we didn't see any news crews. Facebook later confirmed that the faithful followers were there indeed, with pictures and news coverage from roads, bridges and hillsides as we passed though.

The LEWIS, with SNYDER in tow, deserved even better, we thought. With a smartphone, laptop and internet card in hand, we cranked-up the social media machine and got some interest going for our arrival at Louisville. RiverWorks Discovery was running "A Century of Commerce: A River Industry Display" at the Louisville waterfront, and "Cookie" Jackie Anderson helped by feeding them Facebook updates, as well.

Capt. Grossarth finished his evening watch with a trip through Markland Lock, Mile 532. With everything hanging off to starboard, there was a tendency for the LEWIS to crab through the water while pushing. This was exacerbated by the SNYDER's sternwheel, which was stationary and acting as a brake off that side. Asked if it could freewheel, the captain replied, "Probably not without disconnecting the pistons." Entering the lock chamber, it took a masterful combination of one engine in forward gear, one astern, and split rudders to keep the tow moving parallel to the lock walls with only 15 feet to either side. The deckhands, "Homer" and "Homer," called off distances from their radios.



*Capt. Steve Grossarth and William Kurnot in LEWIS' pilothouse. All photos courtesy of Eric Grubb.*

Capt. Willy Kurnot must have been a little bored overnight, as he spooled the engines a little to 300 RPM and made great time. Just past Eighteen Mile Island, the sun was barely cresting when we woke up Sunset Village at Charlestown, IN with Capt. Steve's legendary horn blast. We later passed Prospect, KY, and Twelve and Six Mile Islands, arriving at Jeffboat just before 10 a.m.

Our efforts worked, as we found the town of Arctic Springs and Jeffersonville, IN standing on their decks waving upon our arrival. George Burch, with his salvaged mermaids from the MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, returned our whistle blast with one of his own. Not to be outdone, the J.S. LEWIS and W.P. SNYDER, JR. returned with bells and then another long whistle. What a great welcome!

Positioned at the Louisville waterfront, the



*Part of the fleet at River Industry Display exhibit in Louisville. L to R: CLYDE., W.P. SNYDER, JR., J.S. LEWIS, steam barge ANNA MARIE, and BUS BROWN.*

LEWIS and SNYDER were open for tours. There is so much to tell about the great birthday event. There was Capt. Don Sanders' Rafter CLYDE. II next to the ANNA MARIE, and people gathered to hear the calliope. Aboard the LEWIS, Capt. Steve assigned crew members strategic positions, and I greeted people at the base of the pilot house. Living in Louisville for the past twenty years, it was an honor to be working for the event, especially on such a fine vessel. Since I had written about the towboat, the good captain let me be his relief on the pilothouse tour.

I really enjoyed my "turn at the helm," explaining to people the differences between 1918 and 1931 and 1958 technology. Many commented on the condition of the LEWIS, which was immaculate with its polished fixtures and sparkling decks. "Sure looks better than that old Maytag we just saw," was one of my favorite comments. Capt. Steve is known for keeping the brass spotless, and one crew member commented, "We're a little worried about him, as we keep finding little bottles of Brasso hidden in every compartment."

We had frequent bottlenecks, as guests lingered for the best views of the races between the two BELLEs, two QUEENs and two SPIRITs. Some people knew more than we did, intent on showing their friends the "underwater sonar," which I always thought was the radar. As the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE raced the BELLE OF CINCINNATI, you could see the twin returns on the scope passing the Kennedy Bridge. One guy

pointed out to his friend, "See on the fish finder how you can watch the fish moving."

Most of our guests were fun. Besides the general public, we met event leaders and the crews from most of the other boats. There were retired captains that came to say "hi," as well as engineers from other old boats who came looking for spare parts. Where else can you find a part for a 1950's carbon arc light? Capt. Tom Schiffer from the steam vessel MISS BLUE carried a color copy of the September S&D REFLECTOR, and had quite a collection of signatures from all the friends he visited.



A few of the kids were a little out of control on the first day. So Capt. Steve went old-school and fixed them with a warning at the entry stairs. The parents all laughed, and it was easy to tell which kids knew how to read by the looks in their young eyes.

There were so many great things to see and hear. Some of the bands were pretty good, and then there was the SPIRIT OF PEORIA going by with everybody wearing historic fashion. On the calliope, there was Capt. Doc Hawley playing the "Delta Queen Waltz." Travis Vasconcelos played the keyboard on the ANNA MARIE like nobody else! My favorite scene was listening to the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE go by as she played "Happy Birthday (to me!)" and Stephen Foster's "My Old Kentucky Home."

After returning the SNYDER to Point Pleasant, the J.S. LEWIS and crew returned safely to Charleston's Port Amherst. With all that took place at the Festival, I'll be forever appreciative to have been part of such a great river event. 🍷

# Summer 1959 on the Steamer AVALON (Part 2)

by Capt. Don Sanders

*In our September issue, former AVALON officers and crew shared their memories of the steamboat. Don Sanders was a 17-year old from Covington, KY who had signed on for the summer. At the conclusion of the first part of Don's story, we left him in the AVALON's rescue boat hung up on a stump in the backwaters of Hannibal, MO, as the steamer's whistle blew her impatient 15-minute signal before departing on the afternoon excursion. With Capt. Wagner's stern warning still ringing in his ears to have the boat back in time so that the AVALON could legally make her trip, we pick up the story. - Ed.*

I was about to jump overboard and attempt to dislodge the boat, when some unexplainable miracle happened, and as soon as the boat and stump separated, I sped toward the AVALON as fast as I could row. Waiting on the fantail was Harry Ricoh, Jackie Armstrong, and Dirty Shirt Harold, sent there by the Captain to help stow the little boat so that Wagner could get the big one underway. As we secured the rescue boat, Jackie wore a broad grin, and he was delighted to assure me, "Cap'n Wagner really mad at you."

Before Larry cooked on the AVALON, he was a horse-jockey. Neatly decked out in his cook's uniform wearing a white t-shirt and matching pants with a black belt and shoes, Larry cut a fine figure in the cookhouse. Not only did he shove three tasty meals through the small opening in the sliding screen that kept the flies at bay from around the stove, he also washed his own dishes, pots, and pans although a paid position was reserved for a scullery lackey. Instead, Larry convinced the Captain he could do both jobs if paid for both. This arrangement worked to the satisfaction of both the cook and the steamboat company until the harsh chemicals, used without the protection of rubber gloves, ate into his skin and he had to quit the steamboat and spend his time commuting between his dermatologist and the lawyer's office. The memory lingers of waking

on a cool morning on the Upper Mississippi River, where the aromas of Larry's strong coffee brewing and frying bacon blended with those of engine oil and musky, river air as the AVALON plowed her way up, or down, the waterway. Looking out the deck room windows across a river miles-wide but only a few feet deep outside the channel buoys, the clatter of the engines running on full cutoff gave a lad the feeling that life could get no better. The passing years have not tarnished, nor diminished, those visions. When Larry left, Blackie's wife filled in and the quality of the culinary arts badly diminished, much to the unabashed complaints of the crew who remembered the tasty meals the little jockey served. Everyone wished that Larry would be waiting at the next landing to resume his station in the galley. What I still consider as real steamboat cooking is a tasty serving or two of fried chicken, white beans, and turnip greens. After many years, I asked Captain Doc Hawley why this memorable combination of tastes was so frequently on the cookhouse menu. Doc answered with just one word..."Cheap."

Guarding the mouth of the Illinois River is the town of Grafton. Although Grafton was a stop anticipated by the crew each year, no excursion trips took place from there. Instead, the AVALON shoved in at a park above town, and an annual ritual holiday for the crew was hosted by Walter Wilson, a Grafton garage-owner and friend of the boat and the Captain. Walt furnished large quantities of fresh Illinois River catfish while the AVALON supplied the rest of the picnic trimmings, including the deep-fat fryer, sodas, cases of Burger Beer, and all the labor to make the frolic happen. A softball game followed the meal, also a tradition, with the crew choosing amongst themselves to form two teams. After the holiday ended, everyone cleaned up the remains of the picnic and wearily trudged back to the boat. Soon the AVALON backed out as her great whistle blew a rumbling salute to Mr. Wilson who stood waving from the bank as the steamboat turned its nose northward and began her summer run up the Illinois.

Hardin, IL, with its green highway lift-bridge was our first stop after we left Grafton. Then upriver we steamed past mile after mile of farmland, under the railroad lift-bridge near the tiny village of



Pearl, and past Meredosia to Beardstown where the Sangamon River, Lincoln's river, meets the Illinois. At Pekin, the AVALON landed below a row of fat, bulging grain elevators. But after the headline and springs were run out and made fast, no one wanted to go down-river toward the high grass to catch the stern line. Captain Wagner was calling for a deckhand, but no one moved. "Ain't gonna catch me out there with them rats," Jackie mumbled with a determined look. "What rats?" I asked. "Whole dang' river bank's full of them dam' rats ... bigger'n dogs," he answered. And sure enough, huge brown rats as big as small dogs were bending the high-grass as they scurried about in the excitement and noise of the steamboat that so unexpectedly disrupted their contented lives residing in the shadow of the endless bounty of the grain elevators. Cap was growling down for someone to "catch the sternline before the stern drifted out," and weighing Wagner's displeasure against a riverbank full of slow, fat rats, I chose the rats and waded among them and pulled the sternline through the grass toward a tree to make it fast. The rats, I figured, were too well-nourished to be of serious concern. With their gleaming coats of shiny brown fur, they looked more like house pets than wild creatures of the riverbank, and once I got a hold of the line, it lightened as Jackie and Bobby were behind me pulling on the heavy manila rope. Still, once it got dark, I had to handle the line alone, as the grumbling returned, "... ain't gonna catch me out there in the dark with them rats."

Dirty Shirt Harold was from Pekin, and several Donelson family visitors rode the afternoon trip. Harold was proud to show off the AVALON to the home folks, and he especially enjoyed introducing them to Capt. Wagner who shook everyone's hand and extended a home-like invitation to all to eat supper with the crew. The Donelsons enjoyed the fried chicken, white beans, greens, and cornbread, and after several helpings, they left the table satisfied and full.

The Mate, Red Wilke, finagled some time ashore during the last ride at Pekin and was not at the landing when the boat returned. After all the passengers were ashore and the lines pulled aboard, Red was still nowhere around. The whistle blew for departure as the AVALON backed out without him aboard and headed north for Peoria.

"The steamboat waits for no one" was the steadfast law, for the AVALON had a schedule to be kept, and the boat came first before anyone or anything that might prevent it from sticking to the timetable made in Cincinnati at the beginning of the season, months before. Red Wilke was a good steamboat mate. I liked working for him, and he appreciated my enthusiasm for the deck. But Red had a mean streak, especially after he found a passenger who was liberal about secretly sharing a bottle. Capt. Wagner had a strict rule about alcohol on his boat other than what he, himself, occasionally doled-out after a long, hard day's work. That was when Cap opened the beer box for no more than two Burgers apiece, and the crew had all the free food they could eat. The more Red drank, the redder his face became until it went from a rosy glow to a sullen, mean glare that signaled the crew to tread lightly around him. A favorite trick of his was to carry a roll of dimes in his right pants pocket. During the rides, Mate Wilke joined the other watchmen patrolling the passenger decks, and nothing delighted him more than dealing with a belligerent rider. Pretending to become friendly with the trouble-maker, Red's heavy right hand slipped into his trouser pocket and wrapped tightly around the roll of dimes, while his left arm slipped around the culprit's shoulders in a fallacious gesture of friendship. But, just as soon as the trouble-maker relaxed, Red's fist flew out of his pocket, and reinforced with the metal roll of coins, he cold-cocked the belligerent, who, when he woke, was roasting in the tiny gorilla-cage jail in the sweltering space behind the engines. Mate Wilke was waiting at the landing when the AVALON landed at Peoria. He apparently met someone in a bar and decided to take the night off. That was to be expected on an excursion boat that promised no time off from the beginning to the end of the long season. Peoria was an excursion boat's town. The afternoon trips were filled with the usual crowds of mothers talking to other moms while their kids chased around the deck, and the Moonlight rides were those where memories were made that would be recalled well into the future. Between trips, after the cleanup was done, most of the crew slipped ashore to the closest bar or to the Greyhound bus station in search of love. As usual, my free time was spent rowing the wooden johnboat while enjoying the wide waters of Peoria Lake. Sometimes Harry Ricoh would ride and we would practice as a team,

with me at the oars while he steered. Mostly, the rescue boat was all mine, and that suited me fine. Though we played Peoria for several days, I was excited to get further up the Illinois and imagined seeing Chicago, or at least the outskirts of the Windy City off on the horizon. So when the last line was aboard and the stage centered on the bow with the boat pointed north, I anticipated more steamboat adventures ahead.

The further up the Illinois the AVALON went, and the closer it got to Chicago, the dirtier, darker, and more fetid the river turned, tainted by the waste spilling down the Chicago Sanitation Canal and into the water we were paddling through. Below the Starved Rock Lock and Dam, grimy soap suds, three to four-feet deep, built up below the dam caused by the agitation of the falling water. By the time the boat got above Ottawa, crew showers ceased as the water coming from the shower heads and sinks, and that sloshing around in the toilet bowls, became pitch-black and overpoweringly repugnant. The only house water filtration aboard the AVALON were a couple of sand filters that originally came from the steamer GORDON C. GREENE when that overnight packet ceased running after the DELTA QUEEN was bought and replaced it in the overnight passenger-carrying trade. The bulk of the runoff from the metropolis upriver overpowered the boat's primitive filtration system that usually did a passing job of diluting muddy river water into a light-tan tea with a splash of chlorine bleach thrown in to make a show of killing bacteria coliform colonies. By the time the AVALON headed back south, the crew smelled worse than the foul river water.

Passing Ottawa, a tiny sternwheeler, the HUCKLEBERRY, a twin of Captain Fred Way's LADY GRACE, followed us down the river for a ways. Both the LADY and the HUCK were built on thirty-foot, wooden Weaver Skiff hulls – the largest such hulls built by Mr. Boone Weaver, the legendary small-boat builder from Racine, OH. Twenty years later, I would buy and restore my own Weaver Skiff and name it the FLYING FISH. It is still the record holder for a boat of that type rowed, both up and back, on the Great Kanawha River from the Charleston Capitol Street Bridge to the Chuck Yeager Bridge, exactly five miles each

way. But for then, I delighted in the sight of another mini-sternwheeler other than our MARJESS back home.

The AVALON had no designated head deckhand, although Captain Wagner called Shorty Robinson his head man. On the bow, Shorty handled the steam-powered capstan, but he had no supervisory authority over the rest of the hands. Shorty had been, some said, a cook on the steam towboat SAM CRAIG when it was owned and operated by the O. F. Shearer & Sons and towed sweet West Virginia coal to Cincinnati. Shorty was what would be called now-a-days, mentally-challenged, but the descriptive comments made in 1959 about his affliction were not so kind. Shorty hailed from Point Pleasant, WV in the heart of coal country. As he had no living family, he lived in the county home during the AVALON's off season. Cap made sure Shorty's modest wages were tucked securely away in Mr. Hall's safe in the purser's office – less some walk-around-money for his Camel cigarettes, one of which was constantly hanging from the little capstan-man's lip, or for an occasional beer sipped at a river town dive. At the end of the season, Shorty was given a bus ticket back to West Virginia where a bunk and three meals a day awaited. He earned his keep by sweeping floors and doing whatever else he was capable of doing at the poorhouse set aside for the impecunious of Mason County. Each spring, about a week before the excursion season began again, a bus ticket and a small sum of cash arrived by mail, and Shorty was put on the bus to Cincinnati where he rejoined the AVALON and worked and lived aboard the steamboat until the end of the year, and the cycle repeated itself. Shorty guarded the capstan, the powerful machine that tightened the mooring lines, as though he had title to it, and woe be the one who grabbed onto a line wrapped around it. Shorty was the butt of many mean pranks committed out of sight of the Captain. A favorite was to encourage a new man to get astride the capstan and take hold a line. The next thing the newbie was conscious of was finding himself face-down on the steel deck where Shorty had put him, using either his fist or a handy, oak toggle bar. I was spared that initiation, thanks to Ricoh, who warned me about Shorty and the capstan soon after I joined the deck gang. Jackie, though, repeatedly, encouraged me to work

the steam-powered machine, but I refused to take the bait.

The chain of command within the deck department was clear: the Captain, Mate, and deckhands, with no other intermediaries. But among the crew, a certain unspoken hierarchy or pecking order existed that was defined by the position of the man on the headline as it was being hauled ashore. Whenever the AVALON landed along the riverbank, the stage was swung out towards the landing and the heavy hawser lines were arranged so that the headline was the first ashore, followed by the spring line and lastly, the stern line. The man holding the eye of the headline, and standing nearest the forward, outboard end or head of the stage, was regarded by his shipmates as the most ascendant man on the deck crew. His job was to leap off the boat at the proper moment when the stage was over the ground, and start dragging the manila rope to the closest tree or fitting. The second man stood inboard of the stage spreader bar where the bridle yoke connected the hoist cable to the center of the stage. At this position, closer to the boat, the number-two man's weight kept the stage from tipping over and throwing both the men into the river, or worse. A third man might be standing on the heel of the stage where it rested on the deck, to provide an additional counter-balance. As soon as the first man, the one holding the eye, jumped off the stage, the second deckhand tossed his section of the line into the river and followed him off. Once ashore, the second man dropped back several feet and grabbed onto the line again, and helped pull it up the hill. Depending on the distance the headline had to run, a third man may or may not have helped his comrades with it. Instead, he might have stayed on the bow, or he could have gone ashore to secure the spring and stern lines. My position was the number-two man, right behind Jackie who commanded the eye.

Jackie Armstrong was short compared to my six feet, but he was stocky and muscular in contrast to my skinny frame. We both, possibly, weighed the same. Jackie boasted of his prowess in the boxing ring where he claimed several victories before finding himself kissing the canvas the last time he fought as an amateur fighter. Jackie had most of the unlicensed crew buffaloed and believing he

was a man to be reckoned with, especially those in the steward's department who held Jackie in nearly the same light that shone on the recently-crowned World's Heavyweight Champion of the World that June, Ingemar Johansson. A year before I had graduated from high school and joined the AVALON crew, the bones in my right hand were shattered in a football injury, and after major orthopedic surgery, a pin was inserted into my hand that remains to this day. So when it came to using my dukes, I was a defenseless, one-handed, underweight, skinny kid. Jackie had a speech impediment, but his bravado never kept him from getting up on the ballroom stage on crew talent night and belting out the words of a popular tune of 1959, "Lonely Boy", while trying to mimic the heart-throbbing style of pop artist Paul Anka. But when Jackie crooned the tune, he sounded more like: "Whone-wee boy, Whone-wee boy... Whon-wee an' bwu-oo..." Soon after I was standing behind Jackie on the headline, he started muttering in low tones that only I could hear, "I gonn'a git yo' an' wip you azz ." And it was not long before others divulged that the ex-fighter was boasting among the crew of "whipping me and running me off the boat." Even Dirty Shirt Harold said Jackie was "bragging behind my back."

On an especially beautiful August afternoon, somewhere on the Illinois below Peoria, the AVALON was playing a country town hidden from the river by a tall grove of trees situated between the river and the earthen levee that made the steamboat seem far-removed from civilization. With Jackie on the eye of the headline and me standing a few feet behind him, he seemed especially aggravated and threatening that day, and the bad blood between us boiled over as the crowded boat nudged into shore. Mothers with bored and impatient children lined the upper portside railing, watching, while Capt. Wagner stood inside the plywood, box-like structure above them that served as the bridge wing, then located on the hurricane roof, one deck down from the pilothouse. All eyes were on us, the two deckhands standing out on the protruding stage, as it crossed over the shore and above a patch of wet sand. As soon as the distance between the gangway and the beach closed, Jackie leaped into space holding tightly onto the braided eye, but instead of turning loose the line as I should have, I waited until he was

suspended between the stage and the earth and gave a strong pull back toward the boat until Jackie's feet went straight-out and he became parallel with the ground ... then I turned the line free. With a loud thump Jackie hit the ground as everyone aboard the AVALON watched. After the initial surprise, and seeing the man getting himself off the riverbank, the passengers began laughing loudly as Jackie and I both turned to look at the guffawing crowd. Jackie was embarrassed, but as soon as he saw Capt. Wagner laughing too, he was mortified. We both recovered and grabbed the line and hauled it to a big cottonwood several feet ashore. After a round-turn was made around the tree, and a half-hitch was bent onto the standing part, a bight was pulled through the eye and toggled with a stout, white-oak wooden bar. Jackie was furious and hissed after we secured the line and watched the grass cordage as Shorty's capstan pulled it tight to make sure the toggle-bar held, "I gonna' get yer azz...I gonna' get yer azz afta' da las' ride."

The crew was abuzz with anticipation and excitement knowing that they were going to see Jackie whip me after the last ride that night. He was strutting around the deck like the cock-of-the-walk. As soon as the last passengers were ashore that night and the AVALON backed out and headed downstream, the splash boards were put into place. I lingered on the bow straightening lines and all, but what occupied my mind most was wondering if Jackie was actually going to start a fight once the deck lights were extinguished and the Mate went upstairs. Sliding the heavy port door closed, I stepped inside the boat and turned right to go my room, when I heard the loud, blustering bravado of my adversary boasting to a crowd of supporters out of sight on the starboard side, past the boiler room where the cabin boys bunked. "I gonna' whip hiz azz..." At that moment I had to make one of the most critical decisions of my young life. Was I going to slink into my room and eventually be run off the boat, or was I going to face Jackie Armstrong, the former Golden Gloves boxer, no matter the consequences? With only a moment's worth of contemplation, I turned toward the source of the crowing.

I appeared so suddenly in the crowd, they were as surprised as Jackie when I came into their

midst. Now it was time for a showdown, but I had no idea how I, a seventeen-year-old with just one hand, was going to stand up to an older, trained, and experienced prize-fighter. Quickly regaining his composure, Jackie raised his dukes in a classic boxing stance, but before he could strike the first blow, out of sheer animal instinct I rushed him and threw my arms around his neck and locked his head into a death grip ... and began beating his skull into the steel bulkhead until his skin split and the blood ran down onto the deck.

"Stop that fighting! Stop now," screamed Red Wilke, the Mate. "You're both fired!" Jackie's supporters guided their crestfallen hero to the head to patch him up, while I went up top to the stern, overlooking the paddlewheel. A full moon illuminated the water falling off the churning wheel, making it look like fresh milk. The extraordinary beauty of the scene made my circumstances all the more regrettable, and I cried like a child for the loss of the world that gave me more happiness than I had even known in my short lifetime. For tomorrow, at the next landing, I had to leave the AVALON and return home in disgrace.

The next morning, Jackie and I sat across from each other at the wooden picnic table in the deck room, picking at our breakfast. He wore a Band-Aid on the head that had seen worse beatings in the ring than the one it took the previous night. We were at peace with one another, but we were both glum because we had lost our jobs. Jackie Armstrong loved the AVALON as much as I did. When the rest of the boys jumped up from the table and ran upstairs to clean the decks, we sat there without talking when Red Wilke came up to us and asked, "Why ain't you two so-and-so's up top sweeping?" Jackie remained quiet, but I spoke up, "Don't you remember, Red, you fired us last night?" "Awww... get yourselves going, and get upstairs," the Mate barked. Neither of us needed any further persuasion. We jumped up from the table and, skipping steps, grabbed a pair of brooms and were soon sweeping away alongside our chums. Nothing more was said between Jackie and me, nor did retribution come from Capt. Wagner who had little tolerance for crewmen fighting on his boat. Either Red did not tell the Captain, or if he did, the Skipper decided that scores had been resolved or as he prized both his loyal hands, Cap

allowed the argument to remain settled. I will never know. For the remainder of my first summer on the AVALON, differences between the little boxer and me had diffused, and we worked together as a team. Sometimes I was on the eye of the headline, and at other times, Jackie was. Some thirty years later, Jackie was working in the kitchen of the MIKE FINK floating restaurant on the Covington riverfront, and hearing I was living close by, he telephoned, and we met and enjoyed some pleasant hours together, remembering our days on the "Steamer AVALON," as he always called our steamboat. Jackie Armstrong, after all these years, remains one of my favorite characters from my many years on the river, and I often wonder if he is still around. He was, after all, one of the best hands who decked on the AVALON.

Capt. Tom Craig came aboard the AVALON somewhere on the lower end of the Illinois River, possibly at Hardin, and the buzz about the boat was no longer of the fight, but about the Missouri River that was but a couple days away. Captain Craig, a sizable man dressed in a blue and white seersucker suit with the britches held up by suspenders, wore thick, horn-rimmed glasses and a bow tie. He looked more like a country preacher or a county judge than a steamboat pilot. Though Tom Craig was licensed "everywhere," he held a fierce reputation as a specialist in handling boats and barges on the cantankerous river that lay ahead. Boldly printed on his business card was his motto, "Wherever Water Flows, Tom Craig Goes." He intentionally came aboard the AVALON several days early so he could post-up on the ever-changing Missouri, and spent this time reading channel reports and going over his river charts from the last time he was on the wild river. Capt. Craig favored sitting at a small table placed in the breezeway at the top of the stairs coming from the concession stands where I questioned him about what lay ahead. Perhaps my jaw dropped when Cap'n Tom recalled the time the lead barge on a tow dove beneath the Missouri River where the current of the legendary stream grabbed the ill-fated barge in such a way that it suddenly rose up and flipped end-over-end. "And that's the might of the Missouri River, young man," Captain Craig concluded with a smile.

Before the AVALON entered the Missouri,

all the pallets holding the various mooring lines, kept on the bow, were removed and carried inside the boat. Orders came from the Captain that the heavy sliding doors separating the bow from the interior of the main deck were to be kept closed, and absolutely no one was to be beyond the doors whenever the boat was underway. Leroy Battoe, one of Capt. Wagner's most-trusted veterans, and the only unlicensed white boy he took with him to the DELTA QUEEN in 1962, explained that the reasoning behind removing the line pallets was due to strange swells that arose in the river and swept over the bow, tsunami-like, as the boat plowed deep into the wave, sweeping away everything in its path. The Missouri took on a mystery quite different than the rivers we had already sailed on that summer, and the enigma of it all stirred visions of a wilderness waterway untamed and unchanged since time began. On all the other rivers, I enjoyed rowing the wooden johnboat, but on the Missouri, even that pastime was forbidden, and of course, swimming, another leisure-time activity, was taboo. The Missouri was a river to contend with, and all preparations to prevent a calamity were embraced. As the AVALON shoved its bow into the feral stream, the boat became firmly gripped within the river's grasp. Jackie, Joe, Bobbie, Harry, and I watched and marveled at the river disgorging the runoff from a half million square miles of land that is the Missouri River drainage system.

Further up the Missouri, the AVALON slowed and shoved into the bank. Hearing the heavy doors slide open on their brass tracks, I hurried to the bow and joined the Mate and my crew assembled there. "What going on," I wondered aloud. "Cap'n Wagner wants a Channel Report," someone answered. I hung back in the crowd of eager deckhands ready to jump ashore and run up the steep, dirt bank to a nearby mailbox that held individualized reports of the river's ever-changing conditions. The bow was nosed-in about three feet from the bank that rose high above, until the top of the embankment was as high as the windows of the concession stands. As one of the boys was about to leap the chasm between the boat and bow, the deep, booming voice of Capt. Wagner, standing inside the bridge box on the next deck above, where he could see all of us below, commanded, "No! Get Don over there." So, as fast as I could snake my way through the crowd,

I leaped ashore at a run as the ground beneath me collapsed into multiple avalanches while my legs churned, seeking the traction to fight my way up the crumbling escarpment. My plight must have been peculiar to watch as I scrambled up the hill. Soon I heard laughter from the crew, but not, it seemed, in a mocking sort of way. I was just fun to watch, struggling as I was. Big Cap, meanwhile, was urging me on and shouting: "Hurry up ... Can't hold this boat all day." Even I sensed the humor in it all as I fumbled through the stack of Channel Reports inside the county-style mail box, the kind with the red flag on top. "Take anyone!" bellowed Wagner, "Get on back, an' hurry up!" So I did, but by the time I scrambled back down to the boat, the ferocious current of the river had ripped away the ground that, minutes before, I had valiantly fought so hard to conquer. A long aluminum extension ladder was stretched across the ever-increasing distance from the boat to the shore, and I carefully crossed on all-fours as the Captain, above me, continued proclaiming the urgency of the situation. Inside the pilothouse, minutes later, as I handed the Skipper the envelope from the Corps of Engineers, he gave me that hard look, as only he could do, and asked, "What took you so long?" ... and, pausing, laughed so hard the window sash rattled. Heading below, I felt aglow with the satisfaction that Big Cap had singled me out from the eager crowd to fetch the Channel Report. It was an honor to be selected.

The mysterious swells that arose from the Missouri occasionally washed over the front deck as predicted, and did no damage, but left samples of alluvium from distant reaches of the far-ranging river. The astonishing speed of the current was such that on a two-hour ride, the AVALON fought its way upstream for an hour and a half, but flew back to the departure site in a fraction of the time. And there was no guarantee the boat could tie at the same place it had earlier boarded passengers. In the period of a couple of hours, the landing place, on occasion, silted over and became too shallow for the AVALON to get close enough for the stage to reach dry ground. The steamboat was then forced to find another site close by where the impatient pilgrims could get ashore. Though an estimated 17,200 dams are in the Missouri River Basin, most of which are small, local irrigation structures on side-streams,

the first dam to regulate the depth of the river is above Sioux City, some 760 miles upstream from the mouth of the river. But without locks, it marks the head of navigation. The Missouri's channel, guaranteed by the government to a depth of nine feet from the Mississippi River upward, is maintained with wing dams, dikes, and weirs; man-made structures that direct the powerful current of the "Mighty Mo" in such ways that the Army Engineers see fit to keep the river open to navigation. But in 1959, steam-powered sidewheel dredges were still assisting the wooded dikes and wing dams to keep the channel open. Like graceful, over-sized white swans floating serenely upon the muddy stream with plumes of steam seeping from all the right places, the MERIWETHER LEWIS, WILLIAM CLARK, and WILLIAM S. MITCHELL were like ghosts from the lost Golden Age of Steam. One evening, as the AVALON passed close enough to the LEWIS that the shouts of dredge men came across the water over the hissing of steam and the clamor and banging of machinery associated with such a large scale operation, I watched and stared intently in wonder at a sight I would never see again, for the summer was fast coming to a close, and soon I would be leaving the steamboat in Jefferson City and heading home to start the fall college semester. But until then, I still had a few more days to live the life of a steamboatman and savor the marvels of the amazing Missouri River, and so I delighted in each remaining moment.

Where, exactly, the AVALON landed, somewhere on the left-descending shore, I cannot recall. It was just a bank landing at the end of a country road that meandered inland to Missouri Route 94, which paralleled the shore and connected Mokane and Tebbetts or Portland and Bluffton to the state capital at Jeff City. Standing alone on that desolate beach was one cottonwood tree stout enough to hold the steamboat in the powerful Missouri River current. It was my turn to hold the eye of the headline with Jackie and Bobbie close behind as we leaped ashore, dragging the heavy line with us. But when we got close to the cottonwood tree, an angry junkyard-dog sprang from within the cool shade beneath the tree. Only the stout log chain that bound it there prevented the canine from mauling the three of us. The links of the chain were so tightly secured together that only welding them

would have bonded them more firmly than did the weight of that snarling animal. We hesitated just outside the safe boundary the chain provided, and I looked back at the Captain standing inside the bridge wing where he was assessing our situation. With a shrug, I made a gesture asking for his guidance, and he immediately shot back, "You ain't going to let that little dog stop you, are you?" Without a second's hesitation I turned, and like the Civil War soldiers I'd read about who waded into hailstorms of lead and iron with their heads down and shoulders cocked, I turned and went unhesitatingly into the dog's circle of fire and made the headline fast. By the time my partners dislodged the determined beast off me with several heavy blows from a nearby fallen limb, I was soundly dog-bit, but never for a moment did I hesitate once the Captain roused me onward by speculating, loudly, if I was allowing some little dog to stand between me and my objective. The skin, somehow, was unbroken, but though the pain of the dog-bites made my eyes water, I remained stoic about the whole affair though I can still feel that dog's teeth all these years later.

The summer came to an end for me a couple of days later when the AVALON tied up at Jefferson City and my first steamboat days were over. The heavy foot locker was packed with all my plunder except for the beautiful, engraved Elgin watch Grandmother had so lovingly given me for graduation. Someone had pilfered my property and kept the watch. I was stupid for taking it with me, as it should have been a lifetime companion. Sadly I made my way around the boat and said my goodbyes before I stopped to see Mr. Hall at the purser's office to collect my summer's worth of wages he kept in the safe. Inside the paper envelope was two hundred dollars and so many cents for ten weeks of work at nineteen dollars and change, a week. I thanked him and started toward the stairs leading down to the bow when Capt. Wagner came around from above to meet me. Cap and I stood there pumping hands, and as I turned to leave, he handed me two twenty dollar bills. "Here ... I'm paying your way home." The next thing I knew, I was on the Greyhound bus crossing the bridge over the Missouri River, heading for St. Louis. A couple of girls about my age or older, were flirting with a boy in the seat across from them as I turned and looked out the window and saw the AVALON tied at the bank where I

left her. She looked quiet and deserted and so tiny through the bus window from the lofty perch high on the bridge. Desperately, I wanted to tell someone all about the dozing steamboat, if only they would look and wonder aloud about what they were seeing. But no one noticed. Following the warnings of Ed Smith, from St. Louis himself, I stayed inside the bus station there instead of wandering outside in the rough neighborhood, while I impatiently waited for the Cincinnati bus.

My folks were in the backyard looking at Mother's flowers when I casually came upon them lugging the heavy locker. Mom was but a few days from birthing my only sister, and she and Dad were more than surprised to see me arriving unannounced, but looking tan and fit after my first steamboat summer. The next summer we would go through the same battle to keep me off the AVALON. Dad even found me a job on a third rate construction gang, but I took my first, and only, paycheck and invested in a ticket for a 24-hour bus ride to La Crosse, WI where the AVALON waited. Captain Wagner did not know I was coming, but as soon as he saw me walking across the dance floor, and I asked for my job back, he announced, "You'll always have a job with me." I stayed with him the entire 1960 season and saw a steamy New Orleans for the first time, and we were in Pittsburgh the night the Pirates won the World Series in a historic game that any Pittsburgh fan, no matter the age, knows about in explicit detail. Regrettably, I caved in to parental pressures the third year, the last year the AVALON would run, and missed, perhaps, the most talked about year in AVALON history. But nothing could have been more exciting than my first summer on the steamboat. Fifty-five years later, the summer of 1959 on the Steamer AVALON remains as vivid and exciting as I can recall living it. 🌀

## Back Cover

After-luncheon gathering of S&D members attending 75th Annual Meeting accompanied by guests from Ohio Valley River Museum on Saturday, Sept. 13 at the Clarington, OH home of Sonja Taylor, grandmother of Board member Taylor Abbott. A picture-perfect day and a good time was had by all! *Photo courtesy of Brock Rogers.*

