

# S & D

# REFLECTOR

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of Pioneer Rivermen



Vol. 52, No. 4

Marietta, Ohio

December 2015

## A Cuban Adventure on the Isle of Pines 76th Annual S&D Meeting Lee Line Steamers - Part Four



## Front Cover

The Lee Line Steamer GEORGIA LEE (2320) at Louisville wharf in 1905. Built by Howard Shipyard in 1898, her three boilers supplied steam for engines 18's-8 ft. stroke on a hull 178 x 33 x 5. She took the place of ROWENA LEE in the Memphis-Cairo trade. Another picture of GEORGIA in less propitious times appears on page 26. We feature this glorious colorized version of a Detroit Publishing Company photo through the courtesy and artistic skill of our Canadian fan Don Walsh in Meaford, Ontario, and to highlight this issue's fourth and final chapter in the history of Memphis' noted Lee Line. Thanks again for your fine work, Don!



## Reflections from Our Readers

Capt. Bob Reynolds writes: "I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the article about steamboat inspectors [in the September issue.] I was struck by a number of things, but especially the monetary values put on some of the damages — just a pittance for broken shafts, blown cylinder heads, etc. It would seem to me that those are major catastrophes, but according to the article they were taken in stride. I had wanted to discuss that with you at Marietta, but as with so many things, we never got around to it. Looking forward to the December REFLECTOR, as we do every issue."

🔪 Bob's amazed reaction to some of those figures elicited a similar response from your editor. Perhaps some of our longtime S&D steamboat experts can shed some additional light on these "major catastrophes" and the cost of their repair or replacement. (Capt. Doc, Capt. Bill, Woody, Dale, Kenny, Jim, Frank, et. al. We hope you are reading this and taking note!)

Pat Welsh writes: "This bumper sticker is from 1941. I have a store poster for the same excursion sponsored by the American Legion: leave Lake City 8 p.m. — Stockholm 9 p.m. for 75¢. The CAPITOL

never stopped at Davenport after September 1939, but did tramp the Upper Mississippi in 1940 and 41. I have a newspaper ad of a 1940 CAPITOL excursion at Keokuk, a green PRESIDENT poster for Lake City for July 6, 1940 and a PRESIDENT poster for July 25, 1941 with a large likeness of the ADMIRAL! Capt. Bill Carroll told me the CAPITOL tramped through 1941, and the PRESIDENT through 1942. I look forward to seeing you in Marietta."

🔪 Pat has the editor's sincere appreciation for the gift of a full color 6 by 49½-inch cardboard auto bumper poster advertising a CAPITOL excursion at Lake City, MN on August 23 — year not specified. The posterboard has six brass grommets around its perimeter for affixing to auto bumpers with string. Pat says he picked it up along with several other posters at an antique shop in Stockholm, WI on the shores of Lake Pepin several years ago. We were astounded to discover that Streckfus boats ran excursions out of Lake City and Stockholm, as even the AVALON never ventured out on excursions from Lake Pepin ports. Also of interest was the stylized drawing of what appears to be the PRESIDENT used on this CAPITOL poster. This advertising gem appears below.



In the "When It Rains, It Pours Department," the photo of CAPITOL shown below also arrived from Capt. Dan Shrake in Savanna, IL — this within days after receiving Pat's auto bumper ad. The well-patronized New Orleans harbor excursions of the Streckfus sternwheeler each winter season were about to come to an end, as the photo was probably snapped in the early 40's, shortly before the boat was retired, to be replaced by the PRESIDENT after the War. Our thanks go out to Dan as well.



## S&D RENEWAL NOTICE FOR 2016

As 2015 comes to a close, it is time to once again renew your S&D REFLECTOR subscription. Cost of renewal for 2016 is \$35. 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, 2016** by mailing your payment to our secretary at the address below:

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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.

Dale Flick writes: "Rest assured I relish the continuing series on the Lee Line Steamers. There's pure gold in all of this for me, focusing on little known, subtle facts of steamboat business and operation. This is something I research more and more. The June issue text on the Lee Line nailed a number of facts on not only Lee Line operations but others like the Anchor Line in their approach/experimentation with meals on the boats being ala carte and pay-as-you-go. This was done more with steamboat lines then and continued later than most people think. Even the DELTA KING/DELTA QUEEN and other boats of the California Transportation Company did this. I also noted the cost and operation for handling of passenger luggage by the Lee Line. No doubt most of this is totally lost on those more interested in the "jolly old captains with a twinkle in the eye, rosy cheeks and dimples" that we hear of so often. It just wasn't that way."

‡ Dale has studied with great interest details  
*Reflections from Our Readers continued on page 33.*

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*Season's Greetings  
and Best Wishes for 2016  
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
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#### 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"

1  
9  
3  
9

America's Steam & Diesel  
Riverboat Magazine

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# S&D REFLECTOR

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of Pioneer Rivermen

Vol. 52, No. 4  
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Marietta, Ohio December 2015  
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The name of this publication comes from the *Fleetwood Reflector* published in 1869 aboard the packet FLEETWOOD. This quarterly was originated by Capt. Frederick Way, Jr. in 1964.

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

David Tschiggfrie, Editor  
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.

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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 subscribers enjoy all privileges except the REFLECTOR.

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## Getting Posted Up

### Celebrating 2015 and Looking Ahead to 2016

With 2015 almost in the books, it's perhaps a good time to look back over the past year and reflect on those inland river events which hold great interest for many in S&D. The purchase of the DELTA QUEEN and her movement to Houma to begin restoration efforts, coupled with the Delta Queen Steamboat Company's announcement of Kimmswick as their new headquarters and home port for the veteran sternwheeler were met with enthusiasm by her legions of avid friends and supporters. Determined efforts continue in recruiting constituents to urge their Representatives and Senators to support pending legislation to allow the boat to resume cruising.

At the same time, work also continues at a steady pace to completely restore and update the JULIA BELLE SWAIN at La Crosse, in hopes of having the steamboat ready sometime in late 2016 or early 2017 for active excursion service and onshore educational activities in conjunction with her 501 3(c) status as a not-for-profit corporation.

With a view toward the coming year, S&D will celebrate the 75th anniversary of Ohio River Museum in Marietta, with special activities scheduled for our annual meeting September 16-17th. 2016 also marks the 100th anniversary of the Howard-built ferryboat CITY OF BATON ROUGE, currently serving as landing barge, dormitory and wharfboat for the riverboat TWILIGHT in Le Claire, IA. Engines and paddlewheel fixtures from CBR continue to see active service on the JULIA BELLE SWAIN, and Capt. Kevin and Carrie Stier have plans for a CBR Centennial Celebration next spring.

There is indeed ample reason for celebration of what has already occurred and hopeful anticipation for what is to come as regards these events and others. In the same way, we too have cause for celebration of past accomplishments and anticipation of what is to come for the S&D organization and for the REFLECTOR. And as always, much of what lies ahead greatly depends on us and our efforts for S&D. 

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FRIDAY  
SEPTEMBER 16  
SATURDAY  
SEPTEMBER 17  
2016

FIVE ANNUAL  
MEETING



## Meet Our Contributors

**Capt. Clarke Hawley** (*A Cuban Adventure on the Isle of Pines, p. 7*) has been a lifelong S&D member and contributor to these pages from its first issues. Doc, who lives in New Orleans' French Quarter, retired from the NATCHEZ in 1995 as her first Captain, and has served variously as Mate, Captain, Pilot, Calliapist and Lecturer aboard the steamers AVALON, DELTA QUEEN, BELLE OF LOUISVILLE, MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, AMERICAN QUEEN, PRESIDENT, and gambling and harbor cruise boats in New Orleans. He continues to serenade residents of the Quarter as NATCHEZ calliapist on a semi-regular basis, and is one of the country's most sought-after speakers on Mississippi steamboating and excursion boating. Doc shares with us another of the many, many stories from his 64 year career on America's inland river passenger boats.

**James R. Lee Sr.** (*Lee Line Steamers - Part Four, p. 20*) shares this concluding chapter in the fascinating narrative of his family's history as Memphis' famous steamboat company, the Lee Line. Although Jim's website, [www.leelinesteamers.com](http://www.leelinesteamers.com) also contains a wealth of information about this famous packet line, we are pleased that he has chosen the REFLECTOR to publish his latest research into his family history.

### A Letter from Lee Woodruff

Dear S & D Members,

It is hard to believe that another year has gone by and S & D has just concluded its 76th year. In 2015 the Board of Governors met twice. Our first meeting was held in May in Shakertown, KY in conjunction with the Middle Ohio River Chapter meeting. We also held our annual meeting in September in Marietta. During both meetings we had our usual discussions and review of normal business activities. The major focus of our discussions, however, continued to be the declining level of membership.

Last year we made the following changes in an attempt to attract new and, hopefully, younger members to the organization.

1. We updated our website, available at <http://riverhistory.org>.
2. We enhanced our communication through Facebook.
3. We rebranded the S&D organization as "America's Steam and Diesel River Boat Magazine."
4. We provided for dues payment through PayPal.
5. We continued to encourage current members to promote the organization and recruit new member/subscribers.

These changes have not had the results we were hoping for. However, the board will continue to investigate other ways of addressing the membership level. From what I have heard, this is not a problem that is unique to S&D as several other organizations are facing these same issues.

As you know, our only means of revenue is membership dues and the membership level is beginning to affect the financials of the organization. Dues (subscriptions) are the only source of income for producing the REFLECTOR plus paying other required operating expenses. The board will continue to monitor this closely, but if the membership continues to decline we may have to make some changes going forward. The board is open to any suggestions you have pertaining to this.

Finally, with some good news concerning the W.P. SNYDER. Over the last several years the SNYDER has been renovated with new hull and updated exterior work. At our September board meeting, the Ohio Historical Connection announced that additional funds are now being provided to refurbish the interior. The goal is to make the boat look as close as possible to her appearance when she arrived in 1955. I encourage all of you to visit the Ohio River Museum and the newly renovated boat.

In closing, I wish all of you a great holiday season and hope to see you at the annual meeting next September.

Lee Woodruff  
Chairman, Board of Governors

# A Cuban Adventure on the Isle of Pines

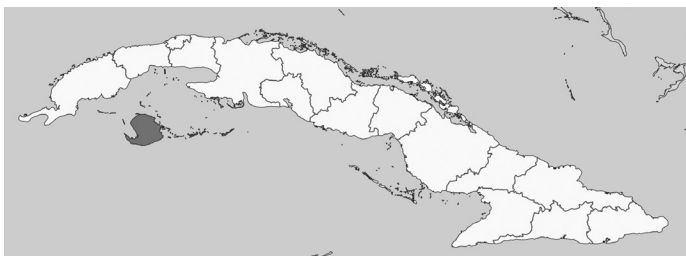
by Capt. Clarke Hawley

All the recent news of our ongoing reconciliation with Cuba brings to mind my 1959 visit to that island which ended when I, along with several other Americans, were literally kicked out by Fidel Castro.

The Steamer AVALON's 1958 season had been good. We had covered our usual route up and down seven inland rivers and had also tramped the Missouri as far as Kansas City. Not yet had we been seriously affected by the inroads of television and air conditioning that would soon cause serious declines in patronage, especially in the small towns of mid-America. The officers received an adequate bonus for finishing the season. I was included, although I was to spend the 1959 season on board the DELTA QUEEN.

Capt. Paul Underwood had offered me the job as Mate, which would increase my tonnage, looking ahead to an upcoming test for my Master's license. Capt. Ernie Wagner had approved and brokered this plan with my promise of returning to the AVALON as Mate and alternate Master.

In 1958, Mrs. Ernestine Baxter, longtime major AVALON stockholder, had joined the boat as Cashier with husband William Baxter as Chief Steward. They owned and were winter residents of a large sugar cane and grapefruit plantation on the Isle of Pines off the southern coast of Cuba. Knowing that I would be leaving the AVALON in October and joining the DELTA QUEEN in February 1959, the Baxters invited me to "winter" with them for three months on the Isle of Pines.



*The Isle of Pines is shaded on this map of Cuba. With an area of 850 sq. mi. and a population of 86,000, it lies directly south of Havana and is only 30 miles from the Cuban mainland.*

Their kind invitation was readily accepted and I returned to my parents' home in Charleston, WV to pack for my winter vacation. On November 1, 1958 we met at their Ft. Lauderdale home and sailed to Havana on a friend's yacht, staying at Havana's Hotel Nacional for three days before going on to the island. I was astonished to see that old Havana was so similar to New Orleans' French Quarter, which is more Spanish than French in design.

The Isle of Pines (Isla de Pinos) was an hour away from the mainland by car ferry. It was a truly insular place with many wealthy Cuban and American plantation owners, a setting right out of the movies. The Baxters nearest neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Vining Davis, past president of Alcoa. When he died in Florida in 1962, Davis was the fifth wealthiest man in America.

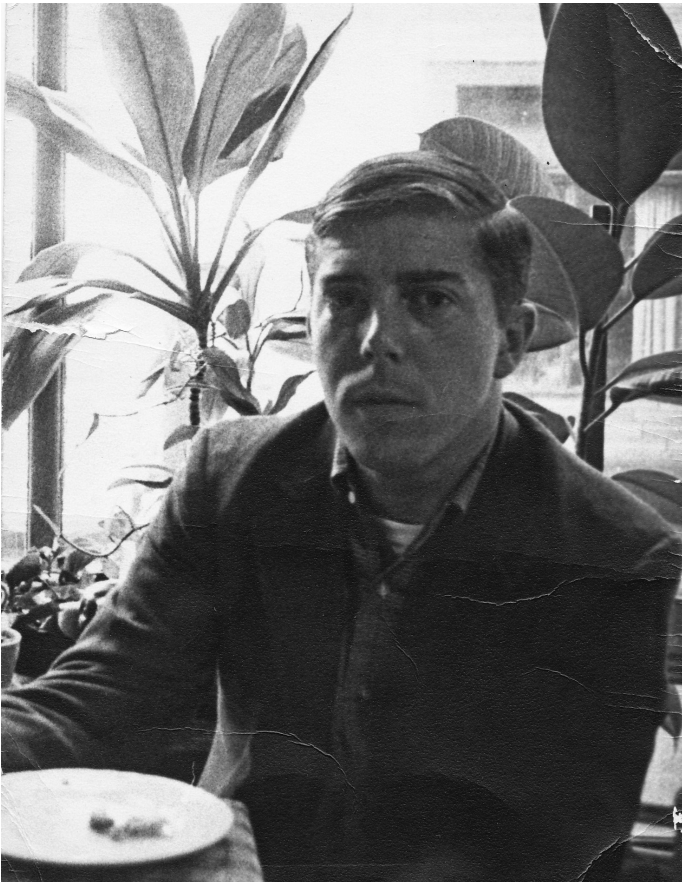
The island was tropical with huge palm trees, white sandy beaches, stately homes, country clubs, several distilleries that created rum, and lime trees that supplied the finishing touches for the rum drinks. One of the most notable and unusual features of the island was a black sand beach which stretched between the Baxter's and Davis's property. Prominently posted at the beach was a huge sign reading "¡Peligro! Caminar en el Agua." (Danger! Walk in the water.) The black sand retained the tropical heat, and attempting to cross the beach



*Amidst white sandy beaches, crystal waters and balmy breezes under the palms, Doc Hawley spent the winter of 1958-59 as guest of AVALON crewmates Ernestine and William Baxter.*

barefoot was like walking on hot blacktop. Despite local currents and tides, the boundaries of that beach never changed throughout the entire day. For most of the island's local workers, daily life was laboring on the plantations or at distilleries, with social life at local "clubs" (saloons). For plantation owners, social life meant long weekends in Havana and weekdays at country clubs on the island. Every Friday afternoon the Baxters drove to the ferry and made their exit to Havana and chose the legendary Hotel Nacional, famous in fact, fiction, novels and movies.

It was there on a dreary Sunday morning that a bearded Fidel Castro, decked out in his army fatigues, announced on television that Americans were no longer welcome and were ordered to leave the country. Americans employed at the airport and/or living on the Isle of Pines would have to leave in three days. Cubans presently living on the Isle of Pines would be expected to move to the mainland within one month. Finis. A hush fell over the dining room and all were stunned. The fifteen-cent cocktails were served at a faster pace and the bar was jammed.



*AVALON's young mate at the Baxter's plantation home.  
Photo courtesy of Capt. Doc Hawley.*

On Monday morning at 6 a.m., Mr. Baxter got in line at the American Embassy, and at 11 a.m. was informed that Castro planned to turn the island into a prison camp and only "certified residents" could stay. Three ferries were put into service to the island by Monday afternoon. When we arrived at the island on Monday evening, all employees and workers were on hand to assist in the move. Only a few personal possessions and some art work would fit into their station wagon. We left the next afternoon after a five-hour wait for the ferry. We bid a tearful farewell to the faithful employees who had no idea of what was to come.

After one last night at the Nacional, the Baxters took a cab to the airport. I drove their station wagon to be loaded aboard the sold-out BAHAMA STAR, and then met them at the airport for the 40-minute flight to Ft. Lauderdale where I spent one night before heading home to Charleston, still in a mild state of shock.

Slowly and carefully in a car whose speedometer had been disconnected, I drove through all the speed traps in north Florida and Georgia as the interstate highway system had not yet been completed in the deep South. After two weeks at Charleston, I went to Cincinnati via the C&O Railroad.

My reception on the DELTA QUEEN was a pleasant surprise as I had expected a cold shoulder from various "old timers." Capts. Paul and Harris Underwood were on hand, as well as two engineers and two firemen who had worked on the AVALON



*S.S. BAHAMA STAR provided transportation for the Baxter's few possessions that they were able to bring back to the United States.*



and who helped me become acquainted with other crew members and with the DELTA QUEEN. The most difficult thing to get used to was the boat's complete silence during locking and landing: no comforting and expected 'scape. I had already made all the locks and landings on the AVALON and was familiar with trees and fastenings, but how I missed those sounds of the engine exhaust.

I finished the 1959 season on the DELTA QUEEN, made my first Mardi Gras trip, received Master's license all gross tons, First Class Pilot's route for the 800 miles between Cincinnati and Helena, AR, and in 1960 returned to the AVALON for two more seasons before returning again in January 1962.

After 1962, I heard no more from the Baxters. Mail was returned "No longer at this address" (in Ft. Lauderdale), and I will always wonder if the loss of their Isle of Pines location and the AVALON's bankruptcy was just too much. 🕒

## STEAM CALLIOPE PLAYER

For EXCURSION STEAMER AVALON—must travel and live on boat. Must be EXPERIENCED on a STEAM CALLIOPE. Season starts March 13 from Cincinnati, Ohio, lasts thru middle of October. Must be sober and furnish excellent reference. Salary \$50.00 per week, including room and board. Contact

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*This want ad appeared in the February 23, 1959 issue of Billboard Magazine. With Doc working on the DELTA QUEEN, Ernie Meyer needed a replacement calliope player. Back in 1958, Mate Hawley was earning \$35/week for duties both as Mate and as calliopist. Unaware of this ad until it was shown to him by your Editor, Doc was flabbergasted that his keyboard replacement would receive a \$15 increase over what he had been making. He also chuckled at Meyer's requirement that the new crew member "must be sober." Editor's collection.*



*Crew of Steamer AVALON in the 1959 season. The individual standing two persons to the left of Capt. Ernie Wagner at the center of back row is Bill Baxter, Steward. His wife Ernestine (Tina) is fifth from left in middle row. She owned 200 shares of Class A stock in Steamer Avalon, Inc. valued at \$20,000, which made her the principal stockholder. Photo courtesy of Capt. Doc Hawley.*

# 76th Annual S&D Meeting

The bright, crisp Wednesday morning of September 16 found your editor in good company of Capt. Jim and Annie Blum en route from St. Louis to points east. It was the start of an annual motor trek to Marietta for this year's 76th convocation and celebration of all things S&D. The prerequisite first stop to complement travel mugs of fresh, steaming coffee that Annie had brewed for this crew was at Vandeventer Avenue's World's Fair Doughnut Shop, renowned for their apple fritters and blueberry doughnuts. Admirably provisioned for the journey, the next port of call was 100 miles ahead on Interstate 70 at the outskirts of Effingham, IL where we paused to pay our respects to the once proud excursion vessel **PRESIDENT**.

The sight is truly a devastating one, as the mortal remains lie rusting and forlorn in a weed lot, a sad reminder of the former deluxe Art Deco excursion steamer that was the flagship of the Streckfus fleet when she came out new in July 1933. All pretensions to reassemble the boat in some recognizable form for any productive use have long since been

abandoned, and it is bitterly ironic that the jumble of jagged pieces ravaged by acetylene torches lies directly across the road from a "recycling facility," which in this particular instance might perhaps be more aptly described as a scrap yard. For a dramatic glimpse of this great sidewheeler in much happier times, we commend to your viewing the front cover of our March 2011 issue.

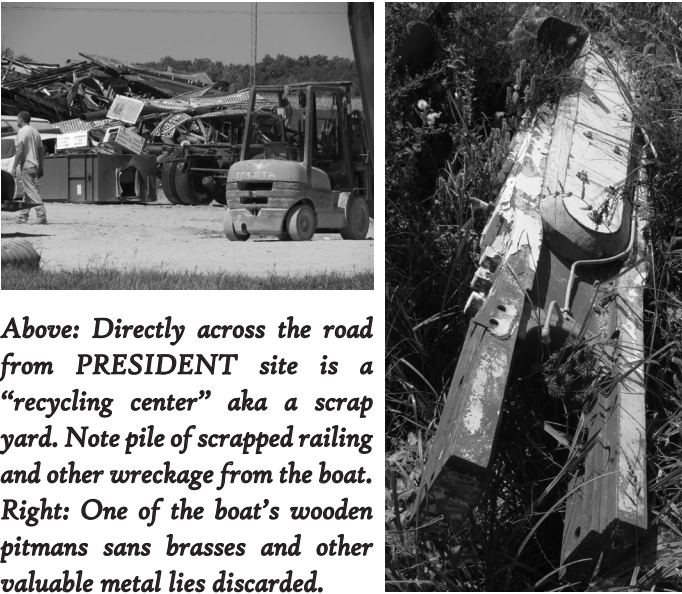


*Above: Remains of calliope after the original Nichol whistles were scavenged and the disembodied pilothouse in weed lot. Below: Severed bow section with capstan and bitts is the only recognizable piece of the steamer's hull which remains.*



*Paddlewheel crank and Charles Barnes' engines lie amid the wreckage in Effingham. All photos from Editor's collection.*



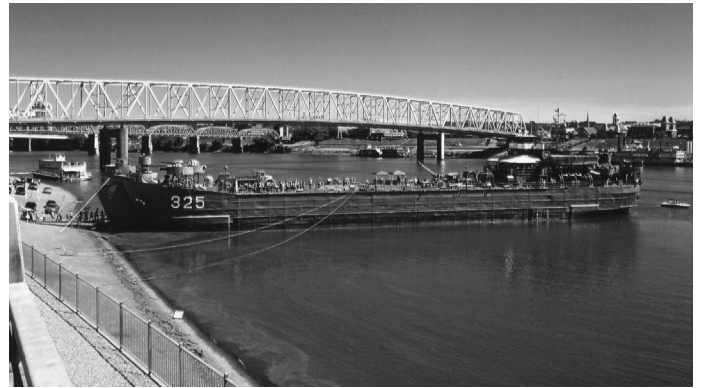


**Above:** Directly across the road from PRESIDENT site is a “recycling center” aka a scrap yard. Note pile of scrapped railing and other wreckage from the boat. **Right:** One of the boat’s wooden pitmans sans brasses and other valuable metal lies discarded.

Resuming the drive through southeastern Illinois and on through forested, rolling hills in southern Indiana brought us to Louisville later in the afternoon, where Interstate traffic whizzed by the veteran BELLE OF LOUISVILLE landed below at her 4th Street Wharf. Most of those drivers were probably unaware that before them lay a living piece of river history now in her amazing 101st year of continuous operation. Because of an impending dinner engagement with friends, we were unable to stop and convey proper regards to her crew, having instead to offer our greetings and salute in passing. An evening with S&D members Tom and Barbara McNamara in Cincinnati brought some further news of LSTs at that city’s Public Landing. Earlier this year Tom provided the REFLECTOR with a World War II-vintage photo showing LST 391 landed by the ISLAND QUEEN. He now shared some contemporary views of LST 325 taken that month during her visit from Evansville, where she is permanently based for public tours. This vessel was commissioned just two months earlier than her sister LST back in 1942, and like her, saw service in the Greek Navy after valiantly completing her tour of duty for this country.

After a restful night in the Queen City, the Upper Mississippi delegation headed on upriver toward the vicinity of Coney Island and made a landing at the riverfront in New Richmond to spend a few moments at Capt. Ernie Wagner’s Memorial. Directly across the street is S&D member Dave Vornholt’s Susanna’s Guest House. It was built in 1860 when the village was named Susanna, in

honor of the wife of Thomas Ashburn, the village founder. The original Victorian Italianate home has been lovingly preserved, with the Guest House providing modern amenities as well. Two of the accommodations offered at the hostelry may be of interest to our readers: the Capt. Hawley Suite and the Captain Wagner Room. Dave graciously conducted his unannounced guest on the 50-cent tour, and pointed out with pride the oil portrait of Big Cap that was a gift from Capt. Ernie and wife Rosa Lee to his parents Don and Lela back in the days when they were next-door neighbors in New Richmond.



**LST 325 landed at Cincinnati in September 2015. Seventy years earlier LST 391 had visited the QUEEN CITY as reported in our June issue. Photo courtesy of Tom McNamara.**



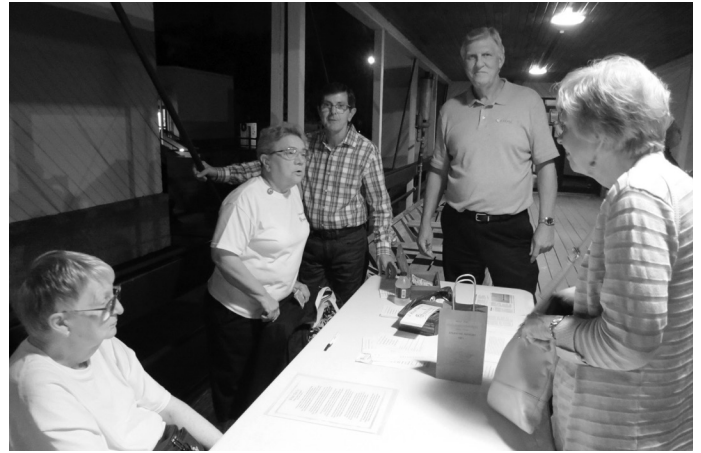
**Left:** Portrait of Capt. Ernie Wagner at Susanna’s Guest House in New Richmond. It was painted by Jack Smith in 1969 and presented to Don and Lela Vornholt. **Right:** The Vornholt’s son David greets visitors to the Capt. Hawley Suite amid photos and articles from Doc’s river career.

Arrival at the Lafayette Hotel late Thursday afternoon afforded an opportunity to greet some of the S&Ders, Board of Governor members, and officers who had already congregated for an informal gathering in advance of Friday and Saturday’s activities. Conspicuous by his absence from this impromptu assembly and from the

weekend activities — more than likely for the first time — was treasurer Dale Flick, recuperating at home in Cincinnati from recent surgery. [We are pleased to report that Dale's recovery now appears to be complete, as he and Laynie are enjoying a tour of France as this report is written.]

Primary discussion at next afternoon's Board of Governors meeting centered around the continuing drop in number of subscriber members, and what efforts, accommodations and future plans for the organization and publication of the REFLECTOR need to be acted upon to face this situation realistically and responsibly. Board chairman Lee Woodruff addresses some of these matters in his letter which appears on page 6. There were several positive highlights of the meeting as well. One was Capt. Bill Barr's report on the amazing success which the J. Mack Gamble Fund has had and continues to have in assisting efforts along the inland rivers at preservation and education about our nation's rivers, the lives of river people, and the boats that are part of this ongoing history. The other piece of welcome news was that the next phase in the restoration of W. P. SNYDER, JR. has been funded and is on track for final completion in the upcoming year.

Friday evening's Meet and Greet Session at Ohio River Museum saw many S&Ders enjoying the outstanding inland rivers collection that our organization owns and maintains, and which had just been appraised for insurance purposes to the tune of \$440,000. President Jeff Spear also reminded those present that next year S&D celebrates the 75th anniversary of the opening of ORM. Out in the lobby, the "River Treasures Sale Table" once again provided some classic volumes for purchase, courtesy of Woody Rutter. Your editor, along with an increasing number of fellow members each year, looks forward to this opportunity to supplement his personal library with sometimes unusual and hard-to-find river books. It has become a much-anticipated part of the weekend activities at the Museum. Unfortunately, as word of this sale becomes more widespread, competition to secure particular volumes could also become more intense! Another busy table was manned by longtime faithful DQ supporters Pat Carr and Carol Roth, who passionately invited and encouraged those stopping



*"Help Save the DQ" table staffed by Pat Carr and Carol Roth is visited by Vic Ganfield, Lee Woodruff and Sharon Fryant. Those "I Helped Save the DQ" buttons made a ubiquitous appearance throughout the weekend thanks to the efforts of these two stalwarts with able assistance from Ruth Guenther.*

by to become part of the legions of fans sporting the "I Helped Save the DQ" buttons, by making a contribution and by writing letters and emails of support to Senate and House legislators considering the upcoming bills to restore the beloved steamboat to active overnight passenger service once again.

Promptly at 9:00 on Saturday morning, chairman Lee Woodruff called the 76th annual business meeting to order in the Lafayette's Ballroom. Recognized for a special welcome were first-time attendees Steve and Cheryl Barrickman from Nashville. Lee then spoke to the topic which has occupied a majority of the Board's time and efforts at both of their meetings this year: our declining membership/subscriber numbers and possible remedies. Although efforts to reverse the trend continue in earnest, the most effective and self-evident means to stem this tide remains what it has always been: personal invitation — each member taking on the individual responsibility to actively recruit one new member. Secretary Sharon Reynolds reported that our present paid subscriptions number 439, down fifty from last year. Capt. Bill Judd did some follow-up on his own over the past few months with those who had not renewed their subscription, and found a variety of reasons ranging from forgetfulness to having to cut back on expenses to simply a loss of interest. As a point of reference, S&D had 801 paid members in 2007. Taylor Abbott shared some statistics about the demographics of those who have "Liked" us on

Facebook. We had 577 total “Likes” as of September 17, the largest number of respondents being in the 55-64 age group. S&D webpage articles which receive the greatest number of hits are those dealing with the current status and updates on the DELTA QUEEN, while those items related to history of boats and river people have the least activity. At its meeting, the Board had a discussion of what these statistics could mean for determining the content of future issues of the REFLECTOR.

Treasurer Dale Flick forwarded a detailed Financial Report to be distributed in his absence, showing a beginning balance on September 12, 2014 of \$12,024.87. Income for the past year amounted to \$18,596.16, with expenses totaling \$19,709.20, leaving an ending balance on September 18, 2015 of \$10,911.84. Dale also commented that S&D’s fixed yearly operating expenses amount to about \$6,000, not including publication costs for the REFLECTOR. He then provided a summary of ending balances for the past five years beginning in 2011 (\$15,404.16), which generally show a consistent decrease of from \$1000-\$3000 with each succeeding year. Despite the rather dismal picture painted by these declining figures, Lee reaffirmed that each of S&D’s officers and Board members are committed to maintaining the organization and its quarterly publication as long as possible, and will continue their efforts in that regard to the best of their ability.

Capt. Bill Barr, speaking as chairman of the J. Mack Gamble Fund trustees, reported that Mack’s original \$177,000 bequest was set up as a trust fund in 1976 by Capt. Tom Kenny, Johnny Zenn and himself, with assistance from advisors Capt. Fred Way and Woody Rutter. Since its inception, total grants of \$1,154,611.54 have been awarded. The current market value of the Fund is approximately \$483,000. This past year \$23,813.82 was available for providing grants, while requests amounting to \$9500 in excess of that total were received. Grants which were approved were: Cincinnati Museum for restoration of models, \$3000; Friends of the Museum to support its activities, \$7500; Ohio Valley River Museum for purchase of computers, \$4050.93; painting and repair of TELL CITY pilot house, \$4250; and Point Pleasant River Museum and Training Center, \$5000, for a grand total of \$23,800.93. Capt. Bill reminded attendees that the Gamble Fund is an open trust

and is eligible for contributions by individuals. He requested that this announcement appear in each future issue of the REFLECTOR.

A link to our Facebook page is now available on our website, [www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org), and Board member Michael Jones has responsibility for updating our website in concert with webmaster Brock Rogers, while Taylor Abbott continues to work with our Facebook page. An update by Ohio River Museum committee chair Bill Reynolds highlighted upcoming work to be done in the final phase of the SNYDER renovation. Fred Smith of Ohio History Connection had reported to the Board on Friday that \$1,531,000 was spent in Phase 1 for hull restoration and wheel rebuilding in 2010; \$958,000 in Phase 2 for selective plating replacement and exterior painting in 2014; and \$310,000 has been budgeted in 2015 for interior details and outfitting, roofing, general upgrades, and restoration of original interior painting and lighting. Bill put out a plea for any color photos of the boat’s interior to help in restoring her original paint scheme when she arrived in September 1955. The contract was expected to have been awarded this October, with all restoration work to be done at Marietta between November of this year and April 2016. At Friday’s Board meeting, Dave Baker and LeAnn Hendershot of Friends of the Museum talked about the process of long range planning for developing an interpretive plan and arranging exhibit displays on a rotating basis at ORM. Le Ann also spoke about the Museum’s program days from September 2014 through June 2015 which were developed especially for students. The August 1-2 Inland Waterways Festival on Museum grounds was another success, with 3000 visitors in attendance.

Annie Amantea Blum brought greetings from Mercantile Library in St. Louis, where curator Sean Visintainer continues to perform yeoman service, particularly in digitizing the Museum’s various collections. As always, Mercantile is most pleased and ready to offer research assistance. Patricia Van Skaik from the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County’s Inland Rivers Library reviewed this year’s exhibit “C’mon Along, Take a Riverboat Cruise” which ran through November 15. She detailed eight different additions to the Inland Library collection, and proudly described their



*Patricia Van Schaik gives the Inland Rivers Library report for the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. Photo courtesy of Brock Rogers.*

new Object Format Code, a librarian's shorthand reference card for easily locating any artifact in their vast collection.

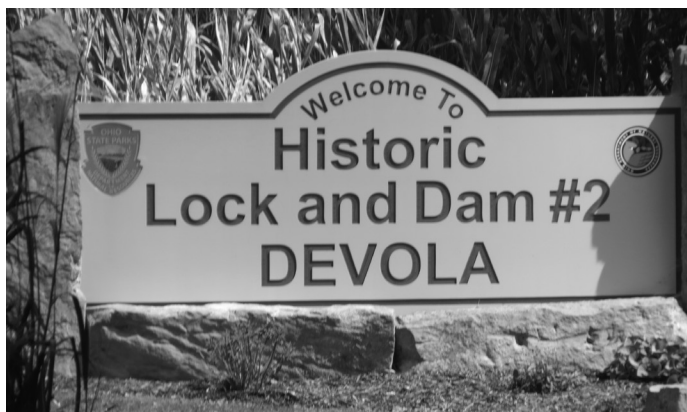
This year's activities of the O-K Chapter were reported by president Jim Bupp, who detailed their meeting with the Ohio River Museum Foundation at Pt. Pleasant and involvement in the Dragonboat Festival and Races as a fundraiser. MOR Chapter president Frank Prudent reported on that group's far-flung travels to Louisville in October 2014 for a cruise on the BELLE during her Centennial and program by Chief Kenny Howe; an April 2015 trip to Kentucky River's Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill; and their upcoming November meeting in Knoxville, TN. Catching his breath and giving the chapter's GPS a chance to catch up, Frank went on to mention that their May 2016 gathering will be at Madison, IN. Taylor Abbott expressed the gratitude of Ohio Valley River Museum in Clarington for funding their J. Mack Gamble Grant request for two new computers used to digitize and help preserve museum artifacts. They will also have an on-site exhibit at Hannibal Locks and Dam.

Vice president Vic Canfield announced that as of last January 4th, the BELLE OF LOUISVILLE's new CEO was Capt. John Boyle, formerly with the AMERICAN QUEEN. He replaced Linda Harris, who retired at the end of 2014. Vic also reported on the regularly scheduled drydocking of BELLE OF LOUISVILLE and NATCHEZ at the end of their current seasons. Your Editor provided an update about work recently completed on JULIA BELLE

SWAIN by Newt's Marine Service in Dubuque, and her transfer back to La Crosse this summer where additional interior and exterior work on bulkheads and cabins will commence. Major renovations to the hull, installation of new auxiliary propulsion, bow thruster, generators and boiler have all been completed, and a complete rebuild of the upper decks will soon be started. A photo display of these renovations appears on page 34. Another historic steamboat undergoing renovation was heralded by Ruth Guenther's announcement that pins and information for those wishing to support the DELTA QUEEN were available from Pat Carr, Barbara Hameister, Carol Roth or herself.

Nominations chair Barbara Hameister and committee member Ruth Guenther presented their report. Nominees for officers were: president, Jeff Spear; vice president, Vic Canfield; treasurer, Dale Flick; and secretary, Sharon Reynolds. Nominees for a three-year term on Board of Governors were Capt. Bill Judd, Tom Dunn, and Fred Rutter. There being no further nominations from the floor, a unanimous ballot was cast for these individuals. Those in attendance were asked to sign a Get Well card that was being circulated for Nancy Prater. In the absence of any further business, the meeting was declared adjourned at 10:20.

S&D members proceeded shortly after to the grounds of Ohio River Museum and the VALLEY GEM's landing just below the Washington Street Bridge to begin boarding for a three-hour noon luncheon cruise up the Muskingum. Upon arriving, your Editor was able to capture a shot of Woody and Bee Rutter in company of Annie Blum alongside the splendiferous TELL CITY pilothouse, gleaming with a fresh coat of paint in the late morning sun. Shortly after the boat's departure, some 70 or so guests enjoyed a buffet luncheon on the main deck as we headed upstream to historic Lock and Dam 2 at Devola (Devol's Lock and Dam). Our arrival for lockage occurred just as the last of the chocolate chip cookies were being dispatched, and so nearly all adjourned to the bow or upper deck to watch the proceedings. The lock chamber is 35 x 150 feet, with a normal lift between 13 and 15 feet according to Capt. Don Sandford, the boat's pilot. A system of 12 locks and 11 dams in the 91 miles between Dresden, OH and Marietta was completed by the State of Ohio



*Visitor welcome sign at Lock 2, part of the Muskingum River Water Trail. Muskingum River locks and dams were built by the state of Ohio in the 1840s. Editor's photo.*

in 1841. The Corps of Engineers assumed operation of these locks in 1887, until control reverted to the state of Ohio again in 1958 with the abandonment of commercial navigation on the river. The chamber of Lock 2, with its hand-cranked gates, was renovated in 2004-05 as part of the Muskingum River Water Trail. After locking back down on a beautiful early Fall afternoon, the decks of the VALLEY GEM were populated with groups gathered in every nook and cranny as S&D faithful caught up on the latest news, renewed old friendships, and basked in the sunny scenery along the Muskingum.

After an opportunity to do some spiffing up back at the Hotel, Saturday evening's Banquet and Program got underway at 6:30 in the Ballroom. We began the evening by circulating another Get Well card among the tables, inviting all present to inscribe their good wishes to our efficient, dynamic treasurer Dale Flick in his convalescence. Our customary bill of fare was ably prepared by the Lafayette's catering department and courteously served by the banquet staff. The after dinner program, billed as a Streckfus Extravaganza, was presented by the two Mercantile Library honorees Ann Amantea Blum and Tom Dunn, recipients of this year's James V. Swift Award for their landmark books on the history of the Streckfus Line and of the iconic St. Louis excursion steamer ADMIRAL. Annie and Tom each presented part of the story of this famous river family, with special emphasis on the ADMIRAL's seven decade history from 1940 to 2011. Their lively and heartfelt narrations were carefully interwoven and complemented each other quite well. Both speakers shared humorous and



*A Streckfus family portrait provides the background as Annie Blum shared some history of the legendary excursion boat dynasty during the evening program. Complemented by Tom Dunn's equally engaging commentary on the company's operations in St. Louis, the two speakers gave an informative and entertaining look at this noted river family and its iconoclastic flagship ADMIRAL. Brock Rogers photo.*

at times almost unbelievable personal stories and reminiscences of their many years' service with the company and boat. In addition, the vintage photos of people and vessels associated with the Streckfus family shown that evening included some images rarely seen by most river fans, and they added a special note of realism and historical perspective to the evening's program.

As always, the weekend came to a close much too quickly, with a wealth of new memories taking their place alongside the treasures which have been preserved from gatherings past. President Jeff Spear concluded the 76th Meeting of S&D with an invitation to return to Marietta on September 16-17, 2016, for our celebration of the 75th anniversary of Ohio River Museum. See you then! 🕒

Those signing the Guest Register at this year's 76th Annual Meeting were:

Abbott, Taylor – Clarington, OH  
 Anderson, Kirstin – Ashland, KY  
 Baker, David – Marietta, OH  
 Barr, Capt. Bill – So. Charleston, WV  
 Barrickman, Cheryl & Steve – Nashville, TN  
 Best, Ellen – Marietta, OH  
 Blum, Capt. Jim & Annie – St. Louis, MO  
 Brown, Ellie & Mike – Arnold, MD  
 Bupp, Jim – Charleston, WV

Burks, Susan – Shelbyville, KY  
 Canfield, Victor – Covington, KY  
 Carpenter, Walter – St. Marys, WV  
 Carr, Pat – Macon, GA  
 Chenue, Rosemary – Wilder, KY  
 Corbin, Carolyn – Reno, PA  
 Dunn, Bill – Marietta, OH  
 Dunn, Tom – St. Louis, MO  
 Fryant, Sharon & John – Maineville, OH  
 Goen, Dan & Dorothy – Martinsville, IN  
 Golovin, Phillip & Karoline – Powell, OH  
 Guenther, Ruth – Ross, OH  
 Hamann, Bill & Cindy – Cincinnati, OH  
 Hameister, Barbara – Blanchester, OH  
 Hendershot, LeAnn – Marietta, OH  
 Hindman, Gayle & Bill – Cincinnati, OH  
 Isfort, Helena & Bob – Cincinnati, OH  
 Jones, Michael & Rita – Cincinnati, OH  
 Jordan, Charles – Charleston, SC  
 Judd, Capt. Bill – New Richmond, OH  
 Kidd, Lois – Manchester, OH

Manthey, Joy Mary  
 McCabe, Frederick – Hannibal, OH  
 Metzler, Kay & Tom – Greenwood, IN  
 Montague III, Charles – Ashland, KY  
 Oglesby, Alexandra – Eighty Four, PA  
 Patterson, Liz – Mt. Clemens, MI  
 Prudent, Frank – Charleston, SC  
 Reynolds, Capt. Bob & Sharon – Paragould, AR  
 Reynolds, Judy – Reno, PA  
 Reynolds, William – Marietta, OH  
 Rogers, Brock – Barnesville, OH  
 Roth, Carol – Cincinnati, OH  
 Rutter, Bee & Woody – Marietta, OH  
 Rutter, Fred & Tammy – Lithopolis, OH  
 Smith, Fred – Ohio History Connection  
 Spear, Jeffrey – Marietta, OH  
 Swarts, Geraldine – Louisville, KY  
 Tschiggfrie, David – Dubuque, IA  
 Washenko, Mike – Mt. Clemens, MI  
 Woodruff, Lee – Cincinnati, OH  
 Yost, Jean – Cutler, OH



*Ellie Carroll Brown, Tom Dunn, Capt. Jim Blum, Mike Brown and Capt. Joy Manthey pose for the camera after Saturday morning's business meeting.*



*Bill Reynolds visits with Capt. Don Sandford in VALLEY GEM pilothouse en route to Lock 2 on Muskingum. Photo courtesy of Brock Rogers.*



*Newly renovated W.P. SNYDER awaits visitors at ORM.*



*VALLEY GEM is lowered about 13 feet on return to Marietta.*

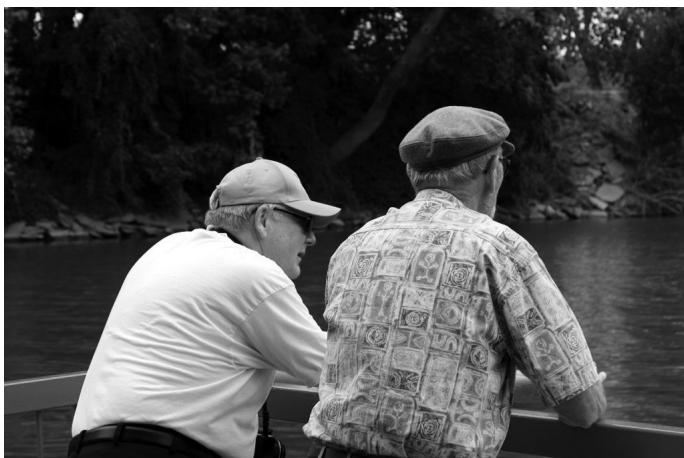




*A delicious cold buffet luncheon was served to guests on the main deck of VALLEY GEM. Arrival at Lock 2 occurred just as the last chocolate chip cookie disappeared from the tray.*



*Among the sightseers and those armed with cameras as VALLEY GEM locks down at Devol's Lock are Bob Reynolds, Ellie Brown, Dick Rutter, Tom Dunn, and Dan Goen.*



*Bill Hindman and your editor deep in discussion on the bow.*

*Interested in becoming an S&D subscriber?  
Visit us at  
[www.riverhistory.org](http://www.riverhistory.org)  
for your membership form and more info.*



*Sharon and Bob Reynolds enjoy the warm, sunny fall afternoon on the upper deck, where catching up on the latest news with longtime friends was the order of the day.*



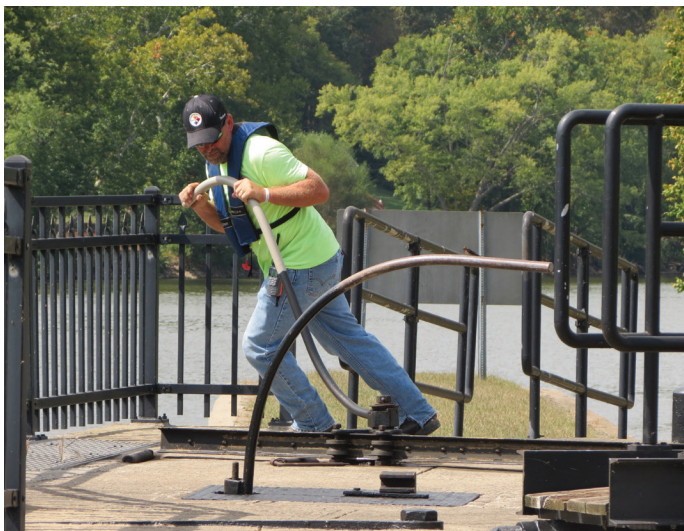
*Woody Rutter and Tom Dunn take in the passing scenery while sharing conversation on a lazy Saturday afternoon.*



*Part of Saturday evening's banquet gathering in the Lafayette Ballroom at the start of the after dinner program, A Streckfus Extravaganza. Along with the slides and expert commentary provided by Annie Blum and Tom Dunn, a life preserver from the ADMIRAL was displayed, and a live tape recording of the boat's steam calliope was played. All photos by Brock Rogers.*



**Left top to bottom:** Capt. Bill Barr visits with two Marietta College graduates and extends an invite to join S&D; Woody and Bee are greeted by Annie Blum alongside TELL CITY pilothouse; VALLEY GEM enters Lock 2. **Right top to bottom** Webmaster and photographer Brock Rogers; Tammy and Fred Rutter; Capt. Don Sandford guides VALLEY GEM into lock.



**Top to bottom:** Lockman hand cranks gates at Devol's Lock; Annie Blum shares some personal remembrances of her years on board the ADMIRAL; Charles Jordan, Bob Reynolds, Jeff Spear and Frank Prudent in conference on VALLEY GEM.

**Top to bottom:** Tom Dunn recalls some wild adventures on the ADMIRAL; S&D officers and Board chairman pose with painting of NATCHEZ at Lafayette Hotel in deference to Capt. Bill Dow (see December 2014 REFLECTOR, p. 11); After luncheon reveries on top deck of VALLEY GEM. Bottom photos on these two pages by Brock Rogers. All others by editor

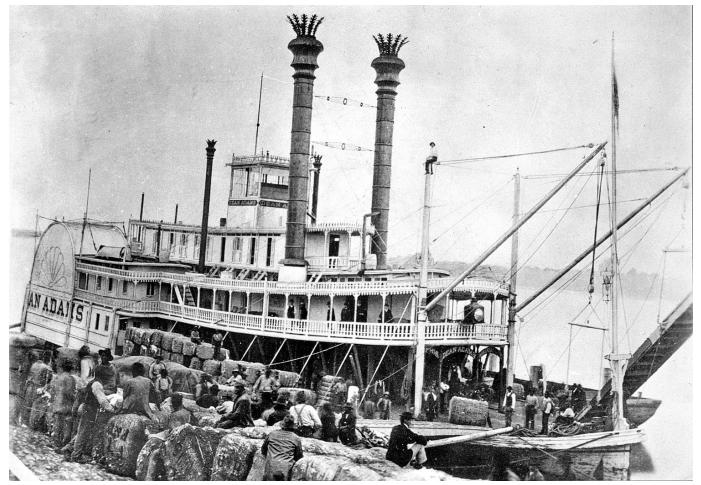
# Lee Line Steamers (Part Four)

by James R. Lee Sr.

The JAMES LEE was able to wear the coveted horns won from Anchor Line's CITY OF PROVIDENCE but for a few months due to the new KATE ADAMS beating JIM LEE's Helena to Memphis time with a record of 5 hours 18 ½ minutes and an extra distance of three miles. Capt. Tippitt noted: "No history of the Lee Line would be complete without a record of the friendly rivalry between the Rees's and the Lee's during the life time of Capt. James Lee Sr. The following message was sent to the KATE ADAMS: 'Begotten by the same sire and foaled by the same dame, and as an evidence to the pride I have in exhibition of your record, I take pleasure in presenting you these testimonials of speed which I have worn with pride to myself and honor to our mutual ancestors. Hoping that they may always be retained in the family, I am your affectionate brother. Steamer James Lee.' From KATE ADAMS to her brother JAMES LEE: 'I accept this beautiful and much coveted token of brotherly love and emblem of speed in the same generous spirit in which it is given. I promise you that it shall remain as an heirloom in the family, and if my son DEAN proves himself worthy of his family, I shall give them to him. Steamer Kate Adams.' "



**KATE ADAMS (3215), the first of three sidewheelers of that name, was built under contract to James Rees & Sons in 1882 for Major John Adams and named for his wife. Her engines, 24's with 9-ft. stroke were powered by five boilers on a hull 250 x 37 x 8. The hull originally intended for the KATE was sold to Lee Line to become JAMES LEE. Capt. Way comments that the two sidewheelers were alike in many respects. Photo from Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.**

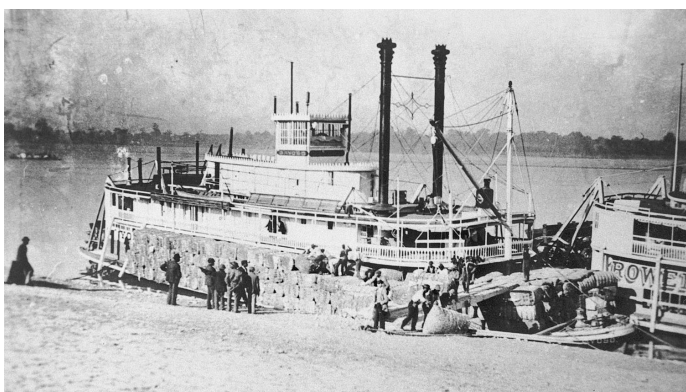


**DEAN ADAMS (1478) built at Sewickley 1880 for Arkansas City-Vicksburg trade for Major Adams, 190 x 29 x 6 with engines 17's-7 ft. After his IDLEWILD burned in 1881, she ran Memphis-Arkansas City. When KATE ADAMS was built, DEAN was sold to Lee Line. Murphy Library photo.**

The *Memphis Appeal* of March 18, 1883: "As soon as the KATE ADAMS made her landing, Capt. Lloyd Whitlow of the JAMES LEE accompanied by her chief clerk Arthur Brown, took the elegant set of horns which the LEE has worn since her famous run, and carried them over to the KATE ADAMS – delivering them to Capt. Mark Cheek." Three days later the *Memphis Ledger* reported: "Capt. James Lee Jr. was approached yesterday with the question: 'Will the JIM LEE run against the KATE ADAMS' time, Captain?' [He replied,] 'No, I reckon not; but you can't always sometimes tell, you know – there's no dependence to be put in what a boat is going to do. Frequently, every now and then, but I expect not once in a while and then when I come to think it over, she might slip off unbeknown-like, and if she does I wouldn't be surprised if it wouldn't be difficult to find a time piece that would keep up with her.' And then he said, 'They must remain in the family: there's nothing like keeping the valuables in the family.' "

On May 1, 1883 the JIM LEE went to Paducah where she would be rebuilt into a new boat. The *Memphis Ledger* reported on July 27 that "the JAMES LEE has returned from Paducah. She has new and

larger engines and her rake especially at the stern has been changed and made more full.” The next day the *Appeal* added, “Capt. James Lee Jr. admitted changes were made in JIM LEE, but will not admit to her receiving new and larger engines. It’s said she will soon be after ‘dem’ horns again.” Later news accounts reported the JIM LEE did indeed receive new cylinders 6 ½ inches larger than her original ones, her wheel diameters were enlarged, her buckets made wider, and new electric lights were installed for night time loading. The steamers GAYOSO, CHICKASAW and IDA LEE were also named by Capt. Tippitt as Lee Line boats that year.



*Of the additional three boats named by Capt. Tippitt in the Lee Line fleet of 1883, only the GAYOSO (2210) shown above, appears in library photo collections. This Brownsville sternwheeler was built that year, 127 x 28 for Memphis-St. Francis River run. The 1883 CHICKASAW (1010) was a 185 x 38 x 6 sternwheeler and IDA LEE (2712) was a 110 x 22.5 x 3 sternwheeler built 1880. Murphy Library photo.*

The *Memphis Avalanche* carried a story describing an accident to the LEE in July 1884. “The Str. JAMES LEE ran head-on into the bluff bank at Rowley’s Station last night shortly after leaving when the tiller line broke. A number of her chains holding up the guards snapped, stages and booms were broken and the gallow frame on one side was badly damaged. One rouster was killed and several injured. Capt. Claggett was in command, Capt. Stack being off. The pilots on the JIM are Wes Owen and R.E. Sutton. She will have to go on the docks at Paducah for repairs. The KATE ADAMS was close behind her at the time of the accident and took her freight and passenger trip.” From reading through Capt. Tippitt’s history of Lee Line, the Paducah Marine Ways was a frequent destination for Lee Line boats in need of repair. (Later in his writing, Tippitt reported that the Lee Line owned an interest in the Paducah Marine Ways. With

multiple boats to fill in for damaged boats, the Lee Line had a definite advantage over smaller packet companies in the Memphis trade. Also, the Lee Line was quick to charter steamers and form alliances with other steamboat companies as well as with railroads. Capt. Tippitt reported on a Congressional hearing around 1918 that a major railroad held a hidden interest in the Lee Line.

Of Capt. James Lee Jr.’s judicial work, the July 27, 1884 *Memphis Appeal* observed: “Capt. James Lee Jr. is now presiding as Judge of the Police Court during the absence of Police Judge Hadden, and Capt. Lee can’t shake his identity as a mariner. He walks into the courtroom casting scrutinizing glances at the walls, ceiling, and then floor, apparently to see if the scrubbers have got the cabin in good shape. He then walks up to the judge’s desk and scans the docket with an air of an old skipper examining the register and manifest. After satisfying himself as to the ‘character of the trip,’ he seats himself and sings out, ‘All ready, let’r go,’ in a tone that would cause a mate to kill half a dozen rousters who didn’t grab the head line with due promptitude, and make the pilot snatch three or four spokes out of the wheel and snap the bell-cord in two. When he gets through with the day docket he calls for the ‘second watch’ and scrutinizes the countenance of the violators with penetrating glances. When a fellow is charged with resisting an officer, he tries him for mutiny on board ship. You can bet your life there’s old-fashioned marine discipline on board when the cap’n is on deck.”

In 1885 the Lee Line was operated under three separate companies. The JAMES LEE was owned by the Memphis & Friars Point Packet Co., E.T. Claggett master and Platt Rhodes clerk, with Stacker Lee as her enrolled master. The Memphis & Osceola Packet Co. operated the COAHOMA with Capt. J.H. Cooper and J.W. Smithers, clerk. The St. Francis River Transportation Co. of which the Lees owned 50%, operated the RENE MACREADY. James Lee Jr. was the superintendent of the three lines.

Steamboat owners reduced wages paid on Memphis steamboats when the Anchor Line cut wages on all their boats on August 1, 1885. The *St. Louis Ledger* reported that railroads carried

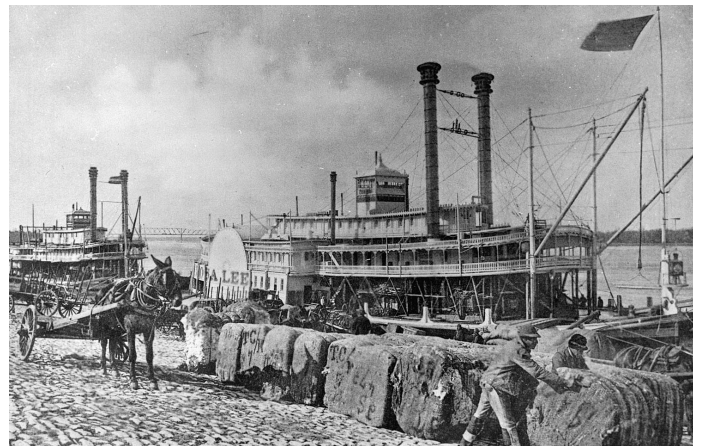
cotton from Delta and Vicksburg to New Orleans during the previous season for 45¢ a bale, whereas steamboats received 75¢ per bale. Even at this price there was little profit left for the boats. As an interesting aside, the Anchor Line was a leader in setting wages during hard economic times. When Anchor Line cut wages for rousters and pilots, Memphis river operators soon followed suit. Also, Anchor Line forced Memphis boat owners to install screens on passenger cabins when they installed screens. The Anchor Line, according to Capt. Tippitt, upset Memphis boat owners when they put porters on salary rather than being compensated solely from passenger tips. Memphis boat owners thought porters would not work as fast loading and unloading passenger baggage if they were not motivated by hustling tips, since time was money and the sooner they could get passengers on and off the boat the sooner the steamer would be on to the next landing. Anchor Line had also established the "Restaurant Plan" on their boats. This was rejected by Memphis boat owners who were proud of their lavish dinner tables and did not want to charge extra for meals. Capt. James Lee Jr. tried to make the change to the Restaurant Plan but was told in no uncertain terms by his father that his plan was not going to happen.

On May 24, 1886 the *Memphis Ledger* reported: "The DEAN ADAMS, a Lee Line boat which arrived about 11 o'clock Saturday night the 22nd, was a total loss, on fire at her landing near the foot of Monroe Street between midnight and 1 o'clock this morning. Fire broke out in the barber shop near mid ship in room No. 11, an alarm was sounded without delay, but so quickly did the fire spread that soon the entire cabin was ablaze. The fire department arrived, but the hull burnt to the water's edge and slowly began to sink. The KATE ADAMS, lying just above, was saved by a constant stream of water from the fire department. The RENE MCCREADY, just below, was cut loose and she floated down to within 3 miles of the foot of Presidents Island, dragging her anchor. She was brought back this morning by CHICKASAW. The GAYOSO, also lying below, was cut adrift. The DEAN ADAMS was built in Pittsburg in July 1880 and was bought two years ago by Capt. Lee and was insured for \$10,000, just 2/3 of her value. The crew lost all their clothing." The *Ledger* further reported

on June 12 that "the Lee's settled with the insurance company, taking \$8,900 in cash and the old hull on which the boilers were not damaged, but the engines were ruined. The hull of the DEAN ADAMS was towed to Fort Pickering (north of Memphis) for dismantling."

That same month Capt. Milt Harry started a rate war. The *Appeal* observed: "War has been declared since Capt. Milt Harry got the mail contract away from the CHICKASAW by taking it for nothing (agreeing to carry mail at no charge for one year). The Lee's have also broken off friendly relations with Milt Harry over the mail contract." The Memphis papers further reported that "two boats to White River in one day is money in a shipper's pocket. The ALBERTA NO. 3 and Capt. Milt Harry's FREDDIE ROBINSON continue their cut-rate war. This hurts the Lee's and Adam's in the trade between here and all points south."

In June of the following year, Capt. James Lee Sr. rode aboard the company's new ROSA LEE as guest of Capt. Henry Cooper. This was his first trip on the ROSA LEE, and he was surprised and pleased with the new steamer. Although the veteran looked the picture of health, his age and weight compelled him to roll himself around in a comfortable chair. Shortly after, Mr. Robert E. Lee was due in from Paducah with the JAMES LEE in whose cabin were displayed oil paintings of Capt. James Lee Sr., James Lee Jr. and Capt. Stacker Lee, all pronounced "very fine portraits." That July, Capt. Stacker Lee was reported to be in charge of the office on the Lee Line wharfboat with assistance from young Robert



**ROSA LEE (4827) was built 1887 at Paducah with engines 32's - 7 ft. from FRANK PARGOUD on a hull 225 x 36 x 7. She burned at Memphis 5 years later. Murphy Library photo.**

E. Lee, while Capt. James Lee Jr. was keeping busy with his law practice and banking, while also expressing an interest in railroads.

Yellow Fever once again was raging in Memphis during September 1887, resulting in very little steamboat business being conducted due to the rigid quarantine in the city. During one of several 1880's Yellow Fever out-breaks, Capt. Stacker Lee was reported to have contracted the fever. This, as well as hard living, likely led to his early death on April 30, 1890. [See the June 1968 REFLECTOR article, "Who Was Stacker Lee?" - Ed.]

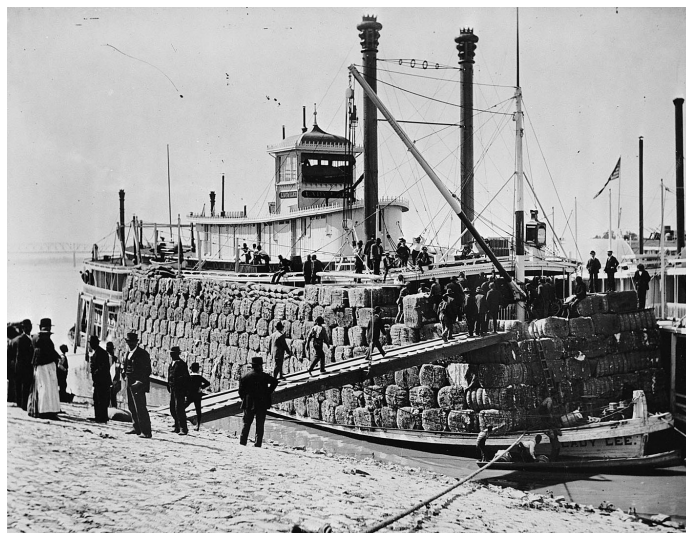
The November 12 *Memphis Ledger* carried news of the struggle to corner whatever business remained in the highly competitive packet trade. "A dispatch from Cincinnati says the Anchor Line has notified the Lee Line that they are interfering with their business and unless they quit, they will put a boat in the Helena trade. The Lee's must withdraw their boat or else." This warning followed the Lee Line's decision to branch out by entering COAHOMA in the New Madrid trade, and going after the business in the upper bends with the RENE MCCREADY making daily runs to Fulton, MO. Adding further pressure on the Anchor Line, Capt. Tippitt quoted reports that "the Ohio River boats, the Lee's, and others have taken the trade between here (Memphis) and Cairo from the Anchor Line." The *Ledger* on November 27 said: "Capt. James Lee Jr. has returned from a business trip to St. Louis. The differences, fight, or whatever else it may be called between the Lee Line, the Anchor Line and Capt. W.P. Hall, in reference to the trade between here and Point Pleasant, is about settled. The Anchor Line will run their boats taking freight at the regular rates and the Lee Line will withdraw the COAHOMA. It is understood they will purchase the GAYOSO from Capt. Hall as soon as his new boat comes out. It is probable that peace and plenty will from now on reign in the upper coast trade." Capt. Tippitt noted that this was the only time on record where the Lee's backed down from a fight. On December 11, 1887 the GAYOSO was turned over to the Lee's when Capt. Hall's new RUTH arrived in Memphis from Paducah.

Christmas Eve 1888 found the KATE ADAMS being destroyed by fire. Capt. Tippitt reported the

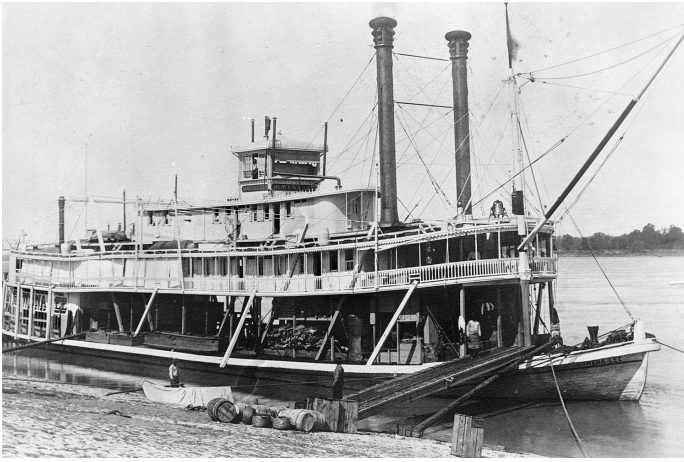
KATE had made 601 consecutive trips between Memphis and Arkansas City, a run of 200 miles each way. The Adams Line then chartered the COAHOMA from Lee Line to replace the KATE in that Arkansas City run.

The spring of 1889 found rate wars raging everywhere. In the St. Louis and Cape Girardeau trade, Anchor Line's CHEROKEE, the Tennessee River Line, and local Eagle Packet Co. out of St. Louis had all joined the fray. An item in May 15's *Memphis Ledger* further reported that "the Lee Line now controls the bulk of the local packet trade out of this port (Memphis)." As of that date, the RUTH also became a Lee Line boat. She was jointly owned by John J. Darragh, local inspector, and Robert E. Lee. Sept. 6 found the new LADY LEE en route to Memphis from the Howard Shipyard at Jeffersonville. The LADY LEE was named after the daughter of Georgia Lee Phillips and Capt. Sam Phillips. I suspect their daughter was named after the wife of Gen. Robert E. Lee who was also named Lady Lee, according to information from a description of another steamer LADY LEE pictured in the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse archive. The LADY LEE cost \$27,000 and ran in the Walnut Bend trade.

The year 1890 began with a set-to over corn. According to Capt. Tippitt, while coming up



**LADY LEE (3338) was a Howard-built sternwheeler 166 x 35 x 6 and carried the whistle from the former Lee Line COAHOMA. According to Capt. Way, she and the ROWENA LEE were built about the same time and were of identical size. When she sank in 1895, she was replaced by the RUTH (4880). Murphy Library photo.**



**ROWENA LEE (4856) was built by Howards in 1890, the year after they completed the near identical LADY LEE of same size. She carried the whistle from Lee Line's RUTH, which would later be transferred to the second JAMES LEE and then to the second HARRY LEE. Murphy Library photo.**

from Polk's Landing, the LADY LEE made a stop to take on some corn for which she had signed a bill of lading. The CUMBERLAND, a short distance behind her, also landed alongside the LADY LEE, and claimed the corn on the strength of a transportation order in their possession. The officers of the CUMBERLAND, seeing the corn ready for shipment in their sacks, ripped them open, took their sacks and left the corn lying on the ground. Neither boat got the corn and things were squally for a while. These two boats never ran the same trade peacefully, and there was not a large extent of brotherly love between the owners Neff and Lee. Capt. Tippitt closed his report of the disputed shipment with this comment: "The corn is still on the bank." The *Ledger* of February 25 said: "The Lee's have the JAMES LEE in front of the CUMBERLAND, the LADY LEE running with her, and the GAYOSO 'skip-jumping' landings with the LADY LEE. There is no chance for the CUMBERLAND to get away with two boats on her tail. The fight nears a showdown and waxes hot."

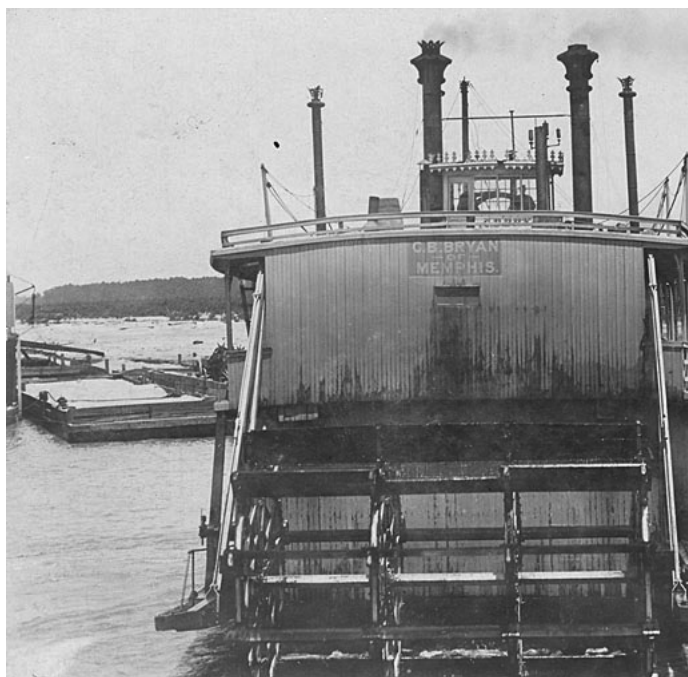
By January 1892, the Anchor Line was laying off most of its pilots and cutting wages 25%. Lee Line followed the Anchor Line with like pay cuts. On January 26, the JAMES LEE was taken several miles upriver from Memphis to Hopefield Point on the Arkansas side and laid up due to poor business. Capt. Tippitt also stated that Anchor Line had sent out no boats from St. Louis during the previous 3 months. *Way's Packet Directory* recorded the

JAMES LEE was retired in 1894. Actually, she was destroyed by arson in 1893, as recorded in these detailed accounts from two local papers about the fire that destroyed her.

From the *Memphis Appeal* of Oct. 4, 1893: "The JAMES LEE was burned last night at her mooring at Hopefield Bend, just 3 1/2 miles above the City on the Arkansas shore. The fire occurred shortly before 11 o'clock, its origin a mystery. She had been out of service for a year on account of the dull times. During this period she has lain in the bend. Capt. Peters Lee and Mr. Lowe, steamboat agent, secured the tug of the Pittsburg Coal Co., and ran up to the scene. On arrival there was nothing but a mass of roaring flames. The GAYOSO, tied up just above the JAMES LEE, was not damaged. The JAMES LEE, a four boiler boat, was built at Pittsburg by James Rees & Sons in 1878 at a cost of \$60,000 by Capt. James Lee Sr., for whom the boat was named. Her first commander, then Capt. S. Stacker Lee, was in command and he made several record runs with her. She was always in the Friars Point trade going down one day and up the next."

The story in the *Commercial Appeal* went a bit further: "The JAMES LEE took fire last night at 10:30 and burned to the waters' edge. The fire was of incendiary origin, no doubt organized and set by a bunch of fire bugs operating on the river. For several months it has been laid up and was just put into condition to return to operation. Our reporter was returning from the fire at 2:15 this morning in a skiff when a blaze of flame shot across the river side of the deck of the C.B. BRYAN. We were within 100 yards of the scene and hastened to the burning boat. As we approached, an oil can wrapped in a sack and an empty skiff was passed. The boat man, Wm. T. Thompson, was left to secure the skiff and oil can. On the BRYAN, watchmen T.A. Murray, J.S. Gillespie and Vic Johnson were sitting on the head of the boat when they heard a crash in the deck room and immediately flames arose. They went to work and quickly extinguished the flames. Our reporter, on approaching the scene of the burning JIM LEE, found the GAYOSO a short distance above. Approaching her, he was stopped by two men on the GAYOSO who threatened to shoot him if he came any closer. No information about the JAMES LEE could be secured from them."



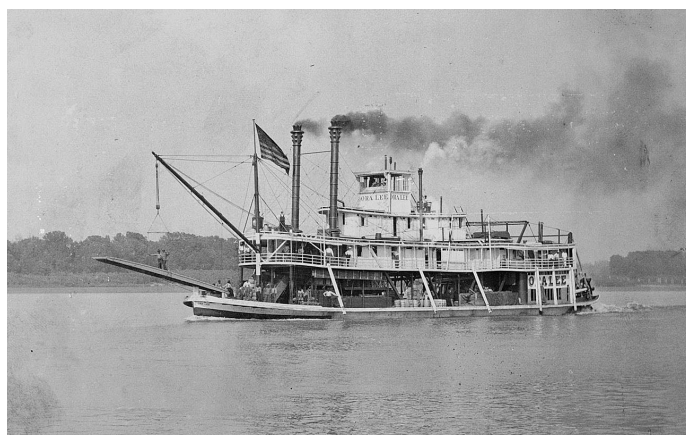


**C.B. BRYAN (0750) was another potential victim of the arsonist who destroyed the laid up JAMES LEE on the night of October 3, 1893. Fortunately, alert crew aboard the BRYAN extinguished the flames in time. Murphy Library photo.**

The next day this story appeared. "It is now thought that Joe Williams, a ferryman who has been a habitué of the river front and whose body was found under the wheel of the BRYAN, is the fire bug. His sister stated that he left home Tuesday night with a can of gasoline or coal oil. The skiff found was rented by him at Golden Gate earlier in the evening. The watchmen on the JAMES LEE, Dennie Thomas and W. Jones, state the fire broke out on the shore side. The only fire on the boat was on the other side in the cook house, and they discovered the blaze too late to save the boat. She was insured for \$25,000. The MARY ANN was moored just above the JAMES LEE and burned at the same time. She was valued at \$1500, not insured, and was owned by the Lee Line and used in Upper St. Francis River as a feeder boat and during low water."

My father and uncle related the story of their father S. Rees Lee waking his father James Lee Jr. with the news of the burning of these boats. Great grandfather told him that "there was nothing he could do about it," rolled over and went back to sleep; which sounded like a man who knew the soundness of the insurance company that wrote the policy as well as exactly where he could put his hands on the policy.

Additional losses for the Lee Line occurred during this time as well. On July 6, 1895 the LADY LEE sank while backing out from the landing at Island 40 following the discharge of saw mill machinery. Attempts were made to salvage the boat but only the machinery and cabin fixtures were saved. Sadly, six lives were lost including a long time Lee Line employee. Capt. Tippitt noted that "the Lee Line has been very unfortunate in their steamboat property in the last years. In the summer of 1881 the OSCEOLA BELLE burned at the Memphis wharf. In the summer of 1886 the DEAN ADAMS burned at the wharf. And in 1893 the ROSA LEE went up in smoke at that same wharf. In 1894 the once great JAMES LEE and MARY ANN went the same route at Hopefield. The sinking of the LADY LEE leaves the Line with but three boats, ORA LEE, ROWENA LEE and CHICKASAW. They have chartered the RUTH for the Osceola trade."



**ORA LEE (4318) shown above was used in short trades from Memphis. Built by Howards in 1891 for Lee Line, she measured 140 x 32 x 4.4. Sold in 1900 to White River trade and name changed to ORLANDO. Another of the many Lee Line charters was RUTH (4880), pictured below, built for Capt. W.P. Hall at Paducah in 1888. Her hull measured 160 x 31.5 x 5. She filled in for the LADY LEE in 1895 when that steamer burned. Both photos from Murphy Library, U. W. - La Crosse**



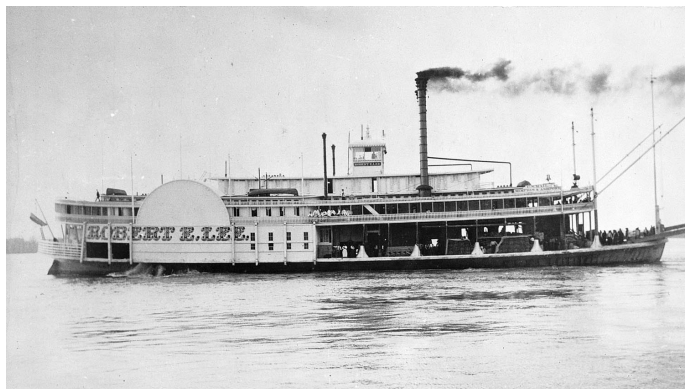
Over the years, Capt. James Lee Jr. invested river profits in businesses other than steamboats. Around 1884 he purchased a controlling interest in the Bohlen-Huse Machine and Lake Ice Co. (founded 1850) which later was renamed Bohlen-Huse Ice and Coal Company and became the largest ice and coal company in Memphis. He also acquired an interest in the Little Rock Ice Co. Later in 1886 or early 1887, he purchased the failing C. H. Karr Marine Supply business and changed the name to Lee Brothers. Lee Brothers, in addition to stocking all manner of steamboat supplies, also sold railroad supplies. My great uncle Bayliss Lee managed this part of the family business which became the sole supplier to the Lee Line for all routine maintenance items. James Lee Jr. owned a number of income-producing properties in Memphis. The book *Diary of an Old Lawyer - Scenes Behind the Curtain*, published in 1895, noted that Capt. Lee had a fondness for corner lots. The family also owned the mineral rights to several large tracts of land in the Birmingham, AL area which contained coal deposits.

On May 27, 1886 a massive tornado swept St. Louis and East St. Louis, destroying the two Anchor Line steamers ARKANSAS CITY and CITY OF CAIRO, and badly damaging the CITY OF MONROE. Confirmed deaths reached 255, with perhaps as many as 400 fatalities. The same year the BLUFF CITY was destroyed by fire and in 1897 the BELLE MEMPHIS was snagged, proving a total loss. Coupled with the sinking of the CITY OF HICKMAN in 1896, the end of the Anchor Line was near at hand. Following that company's liquidation, the Lee Line, which had previously run no farther upriver than Cairo, entered the St. Louis trade as well as the Ohio River and Tennessee River trades.

During 1897-8, Howard Shipyard built the ROBERT E. LEE, the second JAMES LEE and the GEORGIA LEE. The PETERS LEE, BAYLISS LEE and REES LEE were all built at Howard in 1899. This famous yard also built the ROWENA LEE in 1900 and the STACKER LEE in 1902. The ROWENA LEE was intended to compete with the St. Louis and Tennessee River Packet Co. in addition to the REES LEE, which entered the Tennessee River trade and started a rate war. April 1900 saw a negotiated mutually-beneficial truce



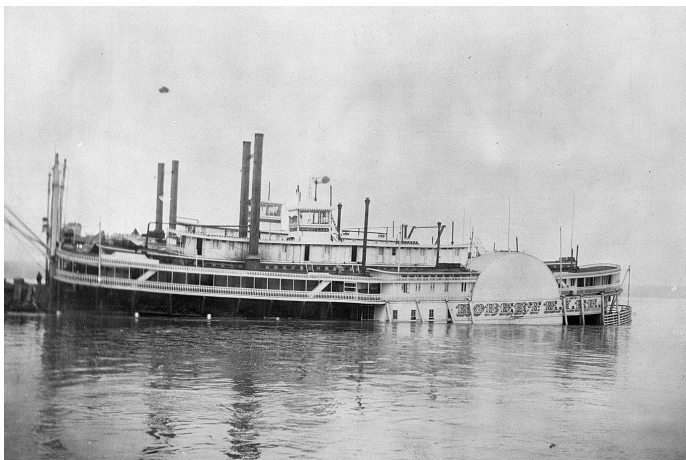
*The second JAMES LEE (2934) when brand new at Howard Shipyard in 1898. Built for \$27,000, she carried engines 24's-8 ft. stroke on a hull 230 x 43 x 7. She ran Memphis-Friar's Point with Capt. John Darragh. Capt. Way comments: "This was a handsome boat, consistently successful, and outlived her usefulness as a packet." She was converted into an excursion boat in 1917 and renamed DE SOTO. Murphy Library photo.*



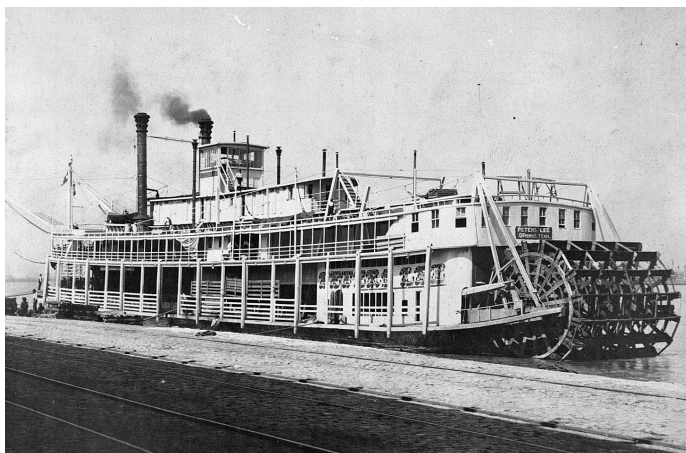
*ROBERT E. LEE (4779) was built for Lee Line at Howards in 1898. She measured 238 x 38 x 5, and unlike the two predecessors named ROB'T. E. LEE who were named in honor of the Confederate general, she was named for Capt. Robert E. Lee, son of Capt. James Lee Jr. Murphy Library photo.*



*GEORGIA LEE, pictured on our front cover, appears in this unfortunate view in May 1909 at Paducah Marine Ways. She was being hauled out for repairs when the marineway chains gave way and she took a run for the river and sank offshore. Photo courtesy of James Lee Sr.*



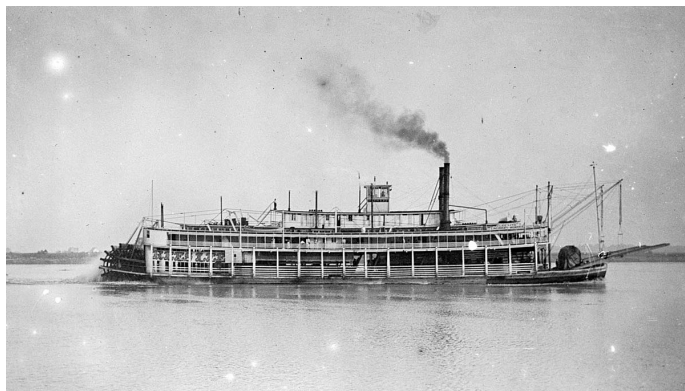
**ROBERT E. LEE** sunk on December 22, 1904 opposite Craighead Point about 30 miles upstream from Memphis. As the river was rising at the time, the steamer broke up and was a total loss. Photo from Murphy Library, U W - La Crosse.



**PETERS LEE** (4463), another Howard-built sternwheeler with engines 18's-8 ft. stroke on a 220 x 42 x 7 hull. Built to run Memphis-St. Louis, she entered Cincinnati-Memphis trade in April 1904 when BONANZA quit. Murphy Library photo.



**BAYLISS LEE** (0461) was built in 1899 with a 190 x 38 x 5.8 hull for Paducah and Waterloo trade on the Tennessee. When still very new, she was bought by Capt. E.W.B. Nowland of Memphis who renamed her DELTA (as shown above) and ran her Memphis-Vicksburg. Photo from Murphy Library.



**REES LEE** (4708), built at Howards in 1899 for the Lees, was 220 x 38 x 5 and was completed at the same time that the shipyard was building BAYLISS and ROWENA LEE. Photo from Murphy Library, U. of Wisc. - La Crosse.



**STACKER LEE** (5174) came out in 1902 with engines 18's-8 ft. stroke powered by three boilers on a hull 225.5 x 45 x 6.5. Ran St. Louis-Memphis. Courtney Ellis, a Lee Line engineer, recalled a sign over the crew's table which warned "No Steamboating at Meals." Murphy Library photo.

arranged between the two companies. This history is well documented by Frank Teuton's *Steamboat Days on the Tennessee River: A History of the St. Louis and Tennessee River Packet Co.* The ascent of the Eagle Packet Line as well as the continued presence of Capt. Milt Harry added to competitive pressures, but did not stop the Lee Line from competing for business out of St. Louis and up the Ohio River. Capt. Milt Harry added to labor unrest when he hired two pilots for the princely sum of \$125 per month, the highest wages paid in the St. Louis trade. Immediately pilots for other lines demanded the same. "The 'Boys' all love Milt," according to Capt. Tippitt, who found the story in the September 14, 1898 *Memphis Scimitar*.

In early 1900, Capt. Tippitt reported that Lee

Line sold its interest in the Paducah Marine Ways because of their disagreement with the Massengales, who were also part owners of the Ways. However, Lee Line continued to patronize the Paducah Ways. While being pulled out of the river at Paducah in May 1909, the GEORGIA LEE broke her chains and slid into the river, sinking. My great Uncle Peters, while on a world tour, rushed back from Sri Lanka to oversee the repairs to his prized GEORGIA LEE. Numerous pictures document the stages of recovery of the GEORGIA LEE. Capt. Tippitt noted the Lee Line brought suit against the Marine Ways to recover the salvage and repair cost.

His company history for 1904 had observed: "The steamboat is no longer the prime mover of freight and people in the valley of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The railroads have taken over practically all of the passenger business and most of the freight business. Even in the movement of bulk freight, railroads are cutting in. There is one exception and that is coal." He further noted that "with the decline of the importance of the steamboat, there was also a marked decline in news concerning the boats and the men who operated them."

Capt. James Lee Jr. died on February 13, 1905. His estate was complex with the ownership of steamboats, river landings, commercial real estate and various other business interests. The Memphis probate court allowed the estate to operate so as to best provide for Capt. Lee's beneficiaries, as well as deal with a disgruntled heir. His estate was finally brought to a conclusion around 1934. The Lee Line reincorporated as a New Jersey Corporation in 1910. Walter Evans Edge, the husband of Lady Lee Phillips, became President of Lee Line and Walter Teagle, the husband of my great aunt Rowena Lee Teagle, became Vice President. Walter Teagle was also the President of Standard Oil of New Jersey and Walter Edge was a newspaper publisher, ambassador, and governor of New Jersey. My grandfather Shelby Rees Lee became superintendent of Lee Line. Together he and his older brothers G. Peters Lee and Bayliss Lee managed the freight and excursion business. Peters Lee formed the St. Louis and Memphis Transportation Co. in 1916, which combined the FERD HEROLD and GEORGIA LEE. From Capt. Tippitt's day-to-day reporting of company activities, the Lee Line shortened its

routes south of Memphis and concentrated on the St. Louis and Ohio River trades. Other boats used by the Lee Line and later river operations involving G. Peters Lee were the HARRY LEE, ECLIPSE, DIXIE, VERNE SWAIN and the CORONA.

As river traffic declined further in the mid 1920s, the remaining Lee Line operations and the Delta Line (VERNE SWAIN and the second KATE ADAMS) were consolidated with the Valley Line. My great uncles R. E. Lee and Bayliss Lee took back notes for the family assets sold to the Valley Line. Interestingly, the notes were to be paid back in gold coin, which was not uncommon prior to FDR outlawing the ownership of gold along with the abrogation of gold-denominated contracts. The operations of the Valley Line were not sufficient to service the debt held by Capt. Tom Rees, Capt. Robert E. Lee and Bayliss Lee. Against the advice of his brother Robert E. Lee, Peters Lee purchased the HARRY LEE and other former Lee Line property at the Marshal and Receivers Sale of Steamboat Property on March 9 and 10, 1926. Prior to Peters Lee joining the Lee Line, he was sent away to college in Toronto so as to remove him from the influence of the river. This effort proved futile, since he always spent his holiday time on a Lee Line boat. Peters Lee must have loved the name Majestic since he owned the Majestic Hotel and Majestic Pool Hall, as well as renaming the second REES LEE (ex-SS BROWN) as the excursion steamer MAJESTIC. He also owned several ferry boats prior to his passing on January 4, 1933. With the liquidation of the Lee Line/Valley Line, sixty years of an iconic family business in Memphis came to an end. James Lee Sr. and the Lee Line had survived the Panic of 1857,

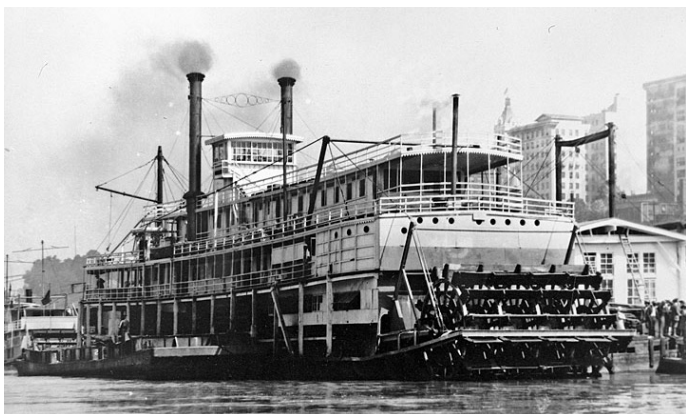


Lee Line Steamers letterhead, courtesy of James R. Lee, Sr.

the Civil War, the Panics of 1873, 1878 and 1888 as well as the Panics of 1890 and 1907. It would take the demise of the packet business on America's rivers to bring down the final curtain on this legendary chapter in Western Rivers steamboating. 🕒



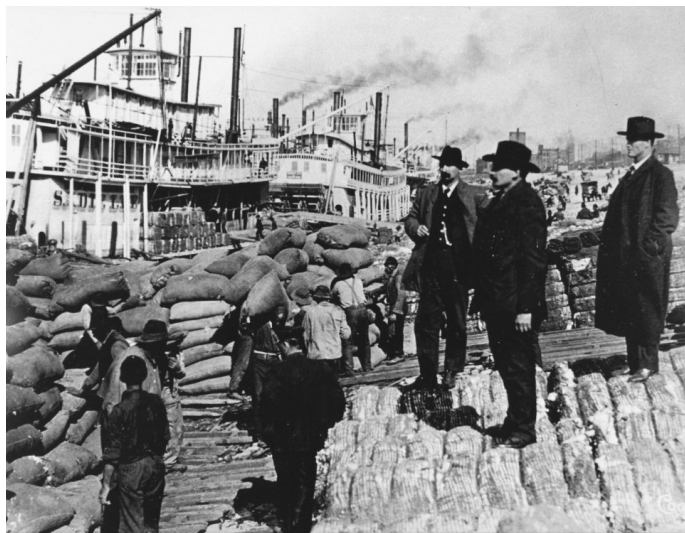
*Lee Line's excursion steamer MAJESTIC (3712), rebuilt from former S.S. BROWN and second REES LEE in 1915 by Capt. Peters Lee and Walter Wisherd. Murphy Library photo.*



*HARRY LEE (2541) was built at St. Louis in 1915 for Lee Line's Memphis-Helena-Friar's Point trade. 175.5 x 36 x 6.7. Last owned by Valley Line at Memphis who sold her in June 1924 to Sherburne Transportation Co. Murphy Library photo.*



*Intriguing shot of mascot on board STACKER LEE at feeding time. We are ascribing the most charitable interpretation to this view, assuming that Mr. Rabbit was not aboard for other reasons. Photo from Murphy Library, UW - La Crosse.*



*The three men standing on the cotton bales are most likely Shelby Rees Lee, my grandfather, Robert E. Lee and perhaps their brother James Lee III. The SADIE LEE is to their right and HARRY LEE is landed above the SADIE. This picture most likely was taken sometime after 1901 when my grandfather began working for Lee Line. James R. Lee Jr. photo.*



*Robert E. Lee is the gentleman on the left. Seated is Bayliss Lee. Standing on the right is Lady Lee Phillips Edge. Robert E. Lee ran the Lee Line for quite a number of years. Bayliss Lee managed Lee Brothers, the sole supplier to the Lee Line for all items used on the families steamboats. Lady Lee Phillips Edge was the daughter of their sister Sadie (Sally) Lee Phillips. Photo courtesy of James R. Lee Sr.*

# Covington Steamboats

by Victor J. Canfield

Covington was a center for the operation of steamboats. One of Covington's most successful businessmen, Amos Shinkle (1818-92), began his ascent to wealth in the steamboat trade. Shinkle's first steamboat was the MARY COLE, which ferried passengers round-trip to and from Cole's Garden, an amusement and picnic grove on the Licking River. Later, in 1850-51, Shinkle built the CHAMPION for the same purpose. About the same time, Oliver P. Shinkle, Amos's youngest brother, moved to Covington and began his career as a boat captain. Other Shinkle steamboats proudly bore the CHAMPION name. During the Civil War, Amos Shinkle sold the CHAMPION 3 and CHAMPION 5 to the federal government for use by Union troops. Later, he began to build and operate steamboats to transport coal, a business move that made him a millionaire. The Shinkle family either built or purchased a number of steamboats for their company in the late 19th century, including VINCENT SHINKLE (620 tons, built 1874), GOLDEN CROWN (261 x 41, built 1877) and GOLDEN RULE (261 by 41, built 1877).

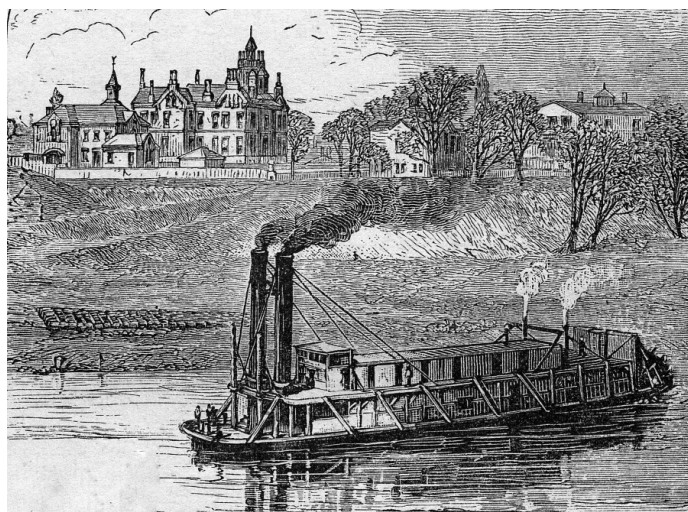
Shinkle's neighbor, Commodore Frederick A. Laidley (1841-1931), owned and operated steamboats too. Laidley was best known as general manager and treasurer of the Louisville & Cincinnati Packet

Company (also known as the White Collar Line). Laidley's beautiful home at 404 E. Second Street in Covington still stands, a testimony to the money that could be made in the steamboat trade. The two premiere boats of the White Collar Line were CITY OF CINCINNATI (300 x 38 x 6, licensed to carry 1,500 passengers) and CITY OF LOUISVILLE (301 x 42.7 x 7; licensed to carry 1,500 passengers). The CITY OF LOUISVILLE set a record run upriver from Louisville to Cincinnati in April 1894 — nine hours and forty-two minutes. In 1910, Laidley and business partner Lee Howell of Evansville, IN purchased the Louisville & Nashville Packet Company.



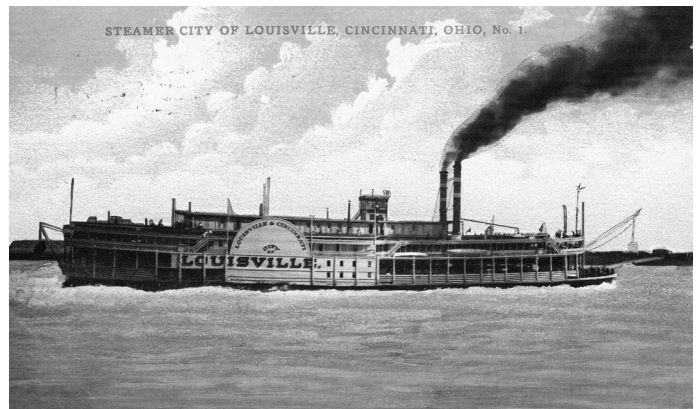
**Above:** Commodore Frederick Laidley home on East 2nd Street in Covington. Photograph by Dave Ivory, 2014.

**Below:** Steamer CITY OF LOUISVILLE, owned by Laidley's Louisville & Cincinnati Packet Company, ca. 1911. Post card view courtesy of Paul. A. Tenkotte.



*Steamboat along the Licking River. In the background can be seen Amos Shinkle's palatial home on East 2nd Street. From Illustrated Cincinnati by D. J. Kenny, ©1875. All photos courtesy of Vic Canfield.*

There were other Covington residents who owned and operated steamboats, including James Hatfield (1865-1938), founder of Hatfield Coal who resided at Madison Avenue and Pike Street. With its affiliated companies Hickey Transportation and the Hatfield-Campbell Creek Line, Hatfield operated such famous steamboats as the ELLEN HATFIELD, the HENRY C. YEISER JR., the J.T. HATFIELD,



the JULIUS FLEISCHMANN, and the W.C. MITCHELL. Another coal dealer, A. Montgomery & Company at 3rd and Main Streets, operated boats, including one named after an influential Covington resident, WILLIAM ERNST (1878).

Famous rivermen were born in Kentucky, including Cassius Bell Sandford (1808-71) of Covington; Kenton County-born Capt. William Starke Leathers (1807-52) and his more famous brother, Thomas P. Leathers (1816-96), captain of the NATCHEZ; and John W. Cannon, captain of the ROB'T. E. LEE. Cassius Bell Sandford, son of Northern Kentucky pioneer Gen. Thomas Sandford (1762-1808), served as mayor of Covington and married Frances Leathers, sister of Thomas P. and William S. Leathers. Cassius Sandford and William S. Leathers were partners in two steamboats named PRINCESS.

The Leathers family was originally from Baden in Germany, and settled in Virginia. Receiving an old land grant of 1,250 acres in Northern Kentucky, they purchased hundreds of additional acres in Kenton County, owning much of present-day Fort Mitchell, Lakeside Park, and Crestview Hills. William S. and Thomas P. Leathers were the sons of Col. John White Leathers (1782-1840), who served in the War of 1812 and had purchased much of the family's land along the Covington and Lexington Turnpike (now Dixie Highway) outside Covington. Capt. Thomas Leathers moved to Natchez, MS, before the Civil War. Nonetheless, he retained ties to his Northern Kentucky roots. For example, in July 1892, he and five other business partners (Frank P. Helm, F.C. Leathers, T.P. Leathers, Jr., John L. Sanford, and George Winchester) incorporated the New Orleans and Vicksburg Packet and Navigation Company, with headquarters in Covington. According to the Articles of Incorporation at the Kenton County Courthouse in Covington, "The business of said company shall be the building, buying, selling, and outrigging of steamboats, and other vessels and watercraft; carrying passengers and freight of all kinds by such boats, vessels and watercraft, and the buying and selling of all manner of freight in cargoes or otherwise."

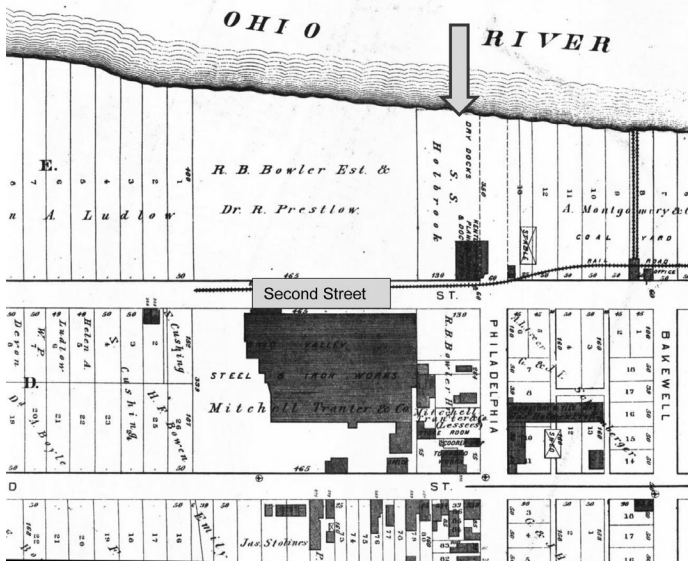
From our modern perspective, steamboats evoke a sense of graceful travel at a slower pace. But, to

people of the time, steamboats were cutting-edge, a fast, efficient, and inexpensive manner to move cargo and passengers. Steamboat owners and pilots could not resist the temptation to race their boats. Perhaps the most celebrated steamboat race of the 19th century was between Capt. John W. Cannon's ROB'T. E. LEE and Capt. Thomas P. Leathers's NATCHEZ (VI). In 1870, the two steamboats raced one another between New Orleans and St. Louis. One of Capt. Cannon's pilots aboard the victorious LEE was Covington-native James Pell, who lived to the age of 87, dying in Covington in 1916.


Covington had several boatyards in the decades of the 19th century. In 1853, A.J. Alexander & Company was a lumber business, located at the corner of 2nd Street and Scott Boulevard (formerly Scott Street). In that year, Alexander launched a steamboat that was designed to operate between Cincinnati and New Orleans. In the same year, he built and launched the sailing ship SALEM, which sailed down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to the Gulf of Mexico, into the Atlantic, and on to New York City. From there, the SALEM voyaged to Valparaiso, Chile. By the late 19th century, the foot of Scott Boulevard became home of the City Wharf, and of the Covington Dock Company, which repaired "all kinds of river craft."

During the late 1870s, another boatyard was located along the Ohio River at the corner of 2nd and Philadelphia Streets. Called the Covington Dock Yard of the Kentucky Saw and Planing Mill, an example of its handiwork included the KENTON, a ferryboat that operated for the Main Street Ferry between Covington and Cincinnati. In 1881, Commodore Sam Coffin purchased the Covington Dock Yard. In the early 1880s, under his guidance, the yard continued to build barges and steamboats, including the HANDY 2 (139 x 25, built 1883).

Nearby, the Covington Iron Works on West 4th Street built the hull of the snagboat E.A. WOODRUFF in 1874 (lengthened in 1885 by Cincinnati Marine Ways to 226 x 48 x 7.6). And later, the Covington Machine Works constructed the QUEEN OF ST. JOHNS (192.5 x 36.3 x 7.4, built 1885). Currently, Carlisle and Bray Enterprises, operating a fleet of towboats, has headquarters in Covington's RiverCenter.



**This 1877 Covington Atlas shows the Covington Dock Yard at the end of Philadelphia Street. From City Atlas of Covington, Kentucky by G. M. Hopkins, ©1877.**

The city of Covington, KY is celebrating its Bicentennial in 2015. To commemorate the long association of steamboating with that historic river town, our S&D Vice President Vic Canfield kindly allowed us to reprint his research published in chapter 13 of the book *Gateway City: Covington, Kentucky, 1815-2015*, ©2015 by Clerisy Press. Vic advises us that this volume is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and at other booksellers. Vic has the thanks of the REFLECTOR for sharing this history with our readers. 

## 2016 River Calendars Available



The 2016 Delta Queen Calendar has been printed and is available for immediate shipment. Photos in this year's calendar were taken between 1998 and 2008. The price of the calendar remains \$15 plus \$3 shipping for those calendars that need to be mailed.

Reduced shipping is available for multiple orders shipped to the same address.

**Mailing address for DQ Calendars is:**

**John Weise**  
 5552 Dry Ridge Road  
 Cincinnati, OH 45252  
 Phone: 513-385-2381

## 2016 Calendar



## Sternwheel Towboats

Back by popular demand, the 2016 Sternwheel Towboat Calendar features 13 early photos printed on heavy card stock, suitable for framing. This calendar is our best yet, with higher quality images and added color throughout, along with each boat's history.

The boats featured for 2016 include: LEONE, HUB, CLAIRE, EVELYN, COMET, B. D. RAIKE, CLYDE, CINDY, PARAGON, BURNETT, VICTOR, RES-Q, CLARENCE, MILDRED M.

Calendar Price is \$15.95 plus \$4.50 shipping. Add \$1 shipping for each additional calendar.

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## Contributions to S&D and J. Mack Gamble Fund

S&D subscribers are invited to consider making a financial contribution to S&D or to the Gamble Fund. Federal law allows such contributions to 501 3(c) organizations. Thank you for considering this opportunity. Contact treasurer Dale Flick for further information.



## DQ Announces New Kimmswick HQ

After spending six years at Chattanooga as a dockside hotel, the Delta Queen Steamboat Company announced on September 10 that the legendary steamboat's new corporate headquarters will be located just south of St. Louis in Kimmswick, MO. The small river town with a population less than 200 has also been selected as the steamer's new home port. Philip Stang, Kimmswick's mayor, observed that "the DELTA QUEEN will not only develop a greater awareness of Kimmswick as a historical destination, but will re-establish the city as an important American riverboat district as it was in the late 19th century." Cornel Martin, president and CEO of DQSC said, "We are thrilled to designate the port of Kimmswick as the new homeport for the DELTA QUEEN and look forward to returning the city to the important American riverboat town it once was. The DELTA QUEEN is the last authentic overnight steamboat in America and the city of Kimmswick and Jefferson County are a fitting home as they perfectly represent the history and nostalgia of America's steamboat era."

It is expected that the DELTA QUEEN will begin and end a number of her cruises each year in Kimmswick as she visits more than 80 other riverports in the United States. Officials of the company hope to have the steamboat back in service in 2016, but must first secure a congressional exemption to allow her to return to overnight cruising. Those interested in seeing the iconic sternwheeler cruise again should contact their U.S. Representative and Senator to urge their support of House Bill 1248 and Senate Bill 1717. 🗳️



L-R: Leah Ann and Randy Ingram, DQSC CEO Cornel Martin, and Kimmswick Mayor Phil Stang at ceremony.



Leah Ann Ingram and Cornel Martin slice the DQ smokestack cake at welcome reception.



Future corporate headquarters of Delta Queen Steamboat Co. All photos courtesy of Carol Roth.

**Reflections from Our Readers continued from page 3**  
on packet line business operations both in the chapters of the Lee Line history and in his own story of steamboat agents Irwin and Foster in pre-Civil War Cincinnati from a previous issue. As our treasurer has so often commented, steamboating was first and foremost a business!

Bob Anton writes: "Hope you can use these. Bob Burtnett collected them when he wrote for the *Chillicothe (IL) Bulletin* for years. Great issue of the REFLECTOR. Keep up the good work."

🗳️ The day after Labor Day the U.S. Postal Service delivered a 7-pound box from Bob. Inside, neatly arranged in hand-written alphabetically tabbed sections, were Mr. Burtnett's extensive collection of Old Boat Columns from *The Waterways Journal* covering February 1952 through December 1975. A tremendous thank you to Bob Anton for his thoughtful generosity.

# Steamer JBS Update

As reported in the March issue this year, the steamer JULIA BELLE SWAIN was pulled out of the water at Dubuque last fall and winter for major hull and mechanical improvements. She remained on drydock through spring and in early summer was returned to La Crosse. Several S&Ders visited Dubuque via tourist/excursion boats, hoping that a glimpse of the JBS would be part of their shore stop.

Among the first to visit were Jerry and Lenore Sutphin, passengers and guest lecturer aboard the AMERICAN QUEEN on her St. Paul cruise in July. Jerry presented his well-illustrated and researched program on the Upper Mississippi and tributary rivers for the Road Scholars program. The group, hosted by tour director Charlene Corris, were treated to tours of the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium and of the Murphy Library in La Crosse during the cruise. Unfortunately, when Jerry was in Dubuque, the JBS was not.

Next to visit were Travis Vasconcelos and Matt "Bubba" Dow, who missed seeing her by several days when they arrived on the TWILIGHT in early August. A week later, Barb Hameister, Carol Roth, Pat Carr and Suzann Martinez also arrived on the TWILIGHT, again with no steamboat in sight.

Your editor and son decided to pay a visit at La Crosse in late October to check out progress for themselves. We were not ready for the shock that awaited us, as the boat was completely stripped of cabin bulkheads and railings, pilothouse and smokestacks. While on an escorted tour by Capt. Eric Dykman, photos of the latest work were snapped and are shown on these pages. 📷



*m/v THOMAS KENNEDY tows JBS to La Crosse in July.*



*On Brennan Marine drydock in Black River at La Crosse.*



*A major surprise awaited when the engine builder's name was uncovered on a steam line: Gillett, Eaton & Squire. We were unaware that a Mr. Squire had ever been part of the firm. Also on the steam line was the date of manufacture of her engines: Nov. 22, 1910. Intrigued by this discovery, a full story of this famous Lake City engine builder will appear in a future REFLECTOR. Previous 3 photos courtesy of Capt. Carl Henry.*



*Capt. Eric and your editor stand on wide open boiler deck.*



*New main steam line and valves have been installed.*



*Dillon Connor, project director Barry Blomquist, and Eric Dykman pause to smile for the REFLECTOR's camera.*



*Sans cabin bulkheads and overheads, the "open air" texas deck.*



*Left: Old boiler removed from hold sits on shore. Right: With cylinder head removed from starboard engine, piston head is readily visible. These are patented Gillett & Eaton slide valve engines 12's-5 ft. built for CITY OF BATON ROUGE.*



*Cabin deck looking forward. A hydraulic lift for passengers will be installed to provide access to the main deck.*



*Sternwheel was removed from the boat at Brennan Marine two years ago. Shaft and cranks are original from CITY OF BATON ROUGE. This wheel was built by DBBCo. in 1970.*



## **Back Cover**

W. P. SNYDER, JR. and TELL CITY pilothouse adjacent to Ohio River Museum come into view from the deck of VALLEY GEM. This sight greeted S&Ders as their luncheon cruise through Lock 2 on Muskingum River neared its end on the afternoon of Saturday, September 19. Photo from Editor's collection.



W.P. SNYDER JR.

CRUCIBLE STEEL CO. OF AMERICA.

W.P. SNYDER JR.