

S&D

REFLECTOR

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of Pioneer Rivermen



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Marietta, Ohio

September 2018

HENDERSON - An Interurban Ferry
W. P. SNYDER, JR.'s Centennial (Part 2)
A Steamboat Family Story

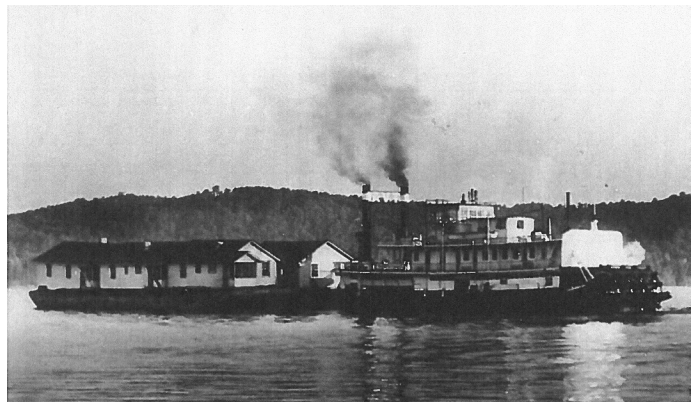
Front Cover

A steamy salute from the towboat W. P. SNYDER, JR.'s whistle as it echoes in the hills of the Ohio Valley is captured in our cover photo. This lone survivor of the Pool-type towboat, developed for clearing low bridges on the Monongahela River, is a testament to that piece of river history on the banks of the Muskingum at Marietta. The historic towboat celebrates her centennial this year, one of only a pair of Western Rivers sternwheelers to achieve that remarkable milestone. Part 2 of the boat's story begins on page 10 and continues on following her first years as W. H. CLINGERMAN. *Photo courtesy of Ohio River Museum.*

The next photo is captioned: 'Worker's houses used during the construction of Pickwick Landing Dam are being towed to the site of the Gilbertsville Dam in western Kentucky near Paducah. There they will be set up and workers on the dam will again occupy them. In this picture a fleet of barges containing six of the sixty houses to be moved pass through the navigation lock of the Pickwick Dam.'



Comments on the final view below include the observation: 'Six of the houses to be transported to their new lots are shown on a fleet of barges as the moving season is in full stride. The water route is a money saver.' Jeff's photos complement the ones appearing in our last issue which picture what is likely the same government housing under tow of the ARTHUR HIDER in March 1944 from Gallipolis to Uniontown.



Paul Thomas writes: "Let me introduce myself. I am a 40-year member of S&D and grandson of riverman Paul F. Thomas of the 26th Street Ferry Company at Huntington and of the ferryboat bearing his name. My father David F. Thomas was an engineer on the ferryboat. The engines from the boat are in the River Museum at Marietta and the pilot wheel is in Ohio History Connection's



Reflections from Our Readers

Jeff Wilkes writes: "Thought you might want copies of the attached pictures showing TVA moving houses from Pickwick Dam to Kentucky Dam."

🦉 Jeff very kindly forwarded the following AP photos with attached captions. The first is dated October 12, 1938 and states: 'Now that the Pickwick Landing is near completion, the TVA is moving an entire construction village 180 miles down the Tennessee River to the site of the new Gilbertsville Dam near Paducah, KY. The houses are loaded on barges powered by tugboats. Here's the tugboat HIWASSEE shoving off with six houses.'



display at Columbus. This ferry service between Huntington, WV and Bradrick, OH ended in 1948.

“In going through some of my father’s boat mementos I have discovered some correspondence from Fred Way and Jesse Hughes, including a picture of Lillian Hughes with my grandfather’s written note saying she was a hostess on GORDON C. GREENE. I am not sure of the date — maybe the early 40s. My grandfather and Jesse Hughes were good friends and would see each other on occasions when Jesse would be in the area (if I remember right he lived in Catlettsburg, KY.)

“At age 86, I am the last of the river people in our family and I thought this picture may be of some interest to the archives or to someone who knew the Hughes family. There may even be a story somewhere to go with the picture. I also have enjoyed the improved quality of the magazine and the articles. Should I find more river history, I will send it to you.”

👤 Paul has our thanks for sending along the fine portrait shown on page 30 of Capt. Jesse’s daughter Lillian aboard GCG. Dale Flick’s story in the June issue recounted that veteran tourist steamer’s days during WW II back in the 40s when this photo may have been taken. A listing of the various hostesses aboard the GORDON and her successor DELTA QUEEN would read like a veritable Who’s Who of notable women on the Western Rivers.

Shown below in this Murphy Library photo is the ferry owned and operated by Paul’s



Reflections from Our Readers continued on page 30.

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- » at least 300 dpi
- » .jpg, .tif, .png, or .bmp format
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Send to the Editor as an e-mail attachment

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

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America's Steam & Diesel
Riverboat Magazine

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S&D REFLECTOR

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of Pioneer Rivermen

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

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

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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.

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Getting Posted Up

A Celebration of S&D

This September issue of the REFLECTOR brings you part two of the story of Ohio River Museum's historic towboat W. P. SNYDER, JR., following her first twenty years service as W. H. CLINGERMAN. Of course, this account is timed to coincide with the centennial of the boat and her rechristening during our annual meeting in Marietta on Saturday, September 15. Bill Reynolds, Jeff Spear, and the staff at ORM have been busy these past months preparing a special photo exhibit to commemorate the event, and we just know that this display will knock your socks off. The SNYDER's centenary is only the second time a Western Rivers steamboat has reached this remarkable milestone. Four years ago, another James Rees-built sternwheeler, and also designed by the same marine architect Thomas Rees Tarn — the steamer IDLEWILD/AVALON/BELLE OF LOUISVILLE — observed a similar landmark. So it is with great pleasure that the officers and Board of S&D cordially invite you to be on hand to help celebrate this most special occasion.

Also inside this issue you will read about the ferryboat between Evansville, IN and Henderson, KY which chauffeured electric street railway cars (trolleys) across the Ohio in the early decades of the twentieth century. The publication of this story evolved over the past months as a result of a photo referred to your editor by one of our readers, and a follow-up request to another of our S&D faithful to supply details about the boat in that photo. Bill Judd's auto carrier story also generated enthusiastic response from readers, as did the picture of a locomotive in the background of the Rees Boatyard during the building of W. H. CLINGERMAN.

And finally, we are delighted to share another of Capt. Don Sanders' trips through the channels and backwaters of long-ago river memories as he recounts the story of Preacher and Harmonica Man in his poignant tale aboard the steamer AVALON. Once more your September REFLECTOR has brought together the various gifts, insights and recollections of our amazing S&D family as we share our common

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passion for Lighting Up the Past, Present, and Future of the Mississippi River System. This issue completes the first eight years this writer has served as your editor. Not an especially noteworthy event in the grand scheme of things, but still a remarkably enjoyable and gratifying experience because of you, our loyal readers and members. 🌟



Meet Our Contributors

Charles H. Bogart (*HENDERSON — An Interurban Ferry*, p. 7), an historian and respected river and rail author, has contributed to the REFLECTOR on many occasions. We are pleased that he has allowed us to share his writing about the ferry at Evansville-Henderson from his book *Yellow Sparks Over the Bluegrass*. We first profiled Charles in our March 2018 issue.

Bill Reynolds (*W. P. SNYDER, JR. Centennial — Part 2*, p. 10) is S&D's dynamic Ohio River Museum Chairman and moving force behind much of what makes ORM the outstanding place it is. You already read a bit of Bill's story of how he came to the SNYDER and the Museum in the June 2018 "Meet Our Contributors" column.

Capt. Don Sanders (*Robert and Rollie Mae Lollar: A Steamboat Family Story*, p. 20) has appeared in our magazine several times, and is a master story teller and longtime riverman. A photo of Don's sternwheel houseboat CLYDE. appears in John Fryant's Small Stacks column for June 2018. A biographical sketch of Capt. Sanders previously appeared in our September 2014 and September 2015 issues.

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S&D Meeting September 14-15

The 79th Annual Meeting of S&D will be headquartered at Lafayette Hotel in Marietta on September 14-15. This year our Friday evening Meet and Greet will take place aboard the VALLEY GEM during a Moonlite Excursion from 8:00-10:00, departing from the Marietta public landing opposite the Hotel. Tickets are \$18/person, and reservations need to be made by September 7 using the special order form enclosed with the June issue.

Our Annual Business Meeting will begin a half hour earlier than usual at 9:00 Saturday morning in the hotel's Sternwheel Room. Financial and membership reports, grants by the J. Mack Gamble Fund, and updates from Ohio River Museum, affiliated chapters, river museums and libraries, are all on the agenda. Nominations and elections for officers and three Board members will also take place. Nominations should be forwarded to Barbara Hameister or Ruth Guenther by September 7.

Immediately following the annual meeting, all are invited to Ohio River Museum and W.P. SNYDER, JR. for an 11:30 ceremony with Ohio History Connection celebrating the Centennial of the SNYDER. A special photo exhibit honoring the historic towboat will also be on display at the Museum. Following the rechristening of the SNYDER, a cold cut luncheon at \$14/person will be served aboard the VALLEY GEM's new Party Barge adjacent the Museum at 12:30. Luncheon reservations also need to be made on the reservation form. A steam traction engine will be on the grounds to allow us to blow several steamboat whistles, along with the possibility of hearing the Morecraft steam calliope owned by Amherst-Madison.

The Annual banquet begins at 6:30 at the Lafayette. Menu choices are prime rib, salmon and lemon chicken. Contact the hotel at 800-331-9396 or 740-373-5522 to make your banquet and hotel reservations. Our after dinner guest speaker is Capt. Clarke "Doc" Hawley, veteran of over fifty years aboard tourist and excursion steamboats. Doc's program promises to be most entertaining and informative, and one you will not want to miss. Come join us for a truly memorable weekend! 

HENDERSON — An Interurban Ferry

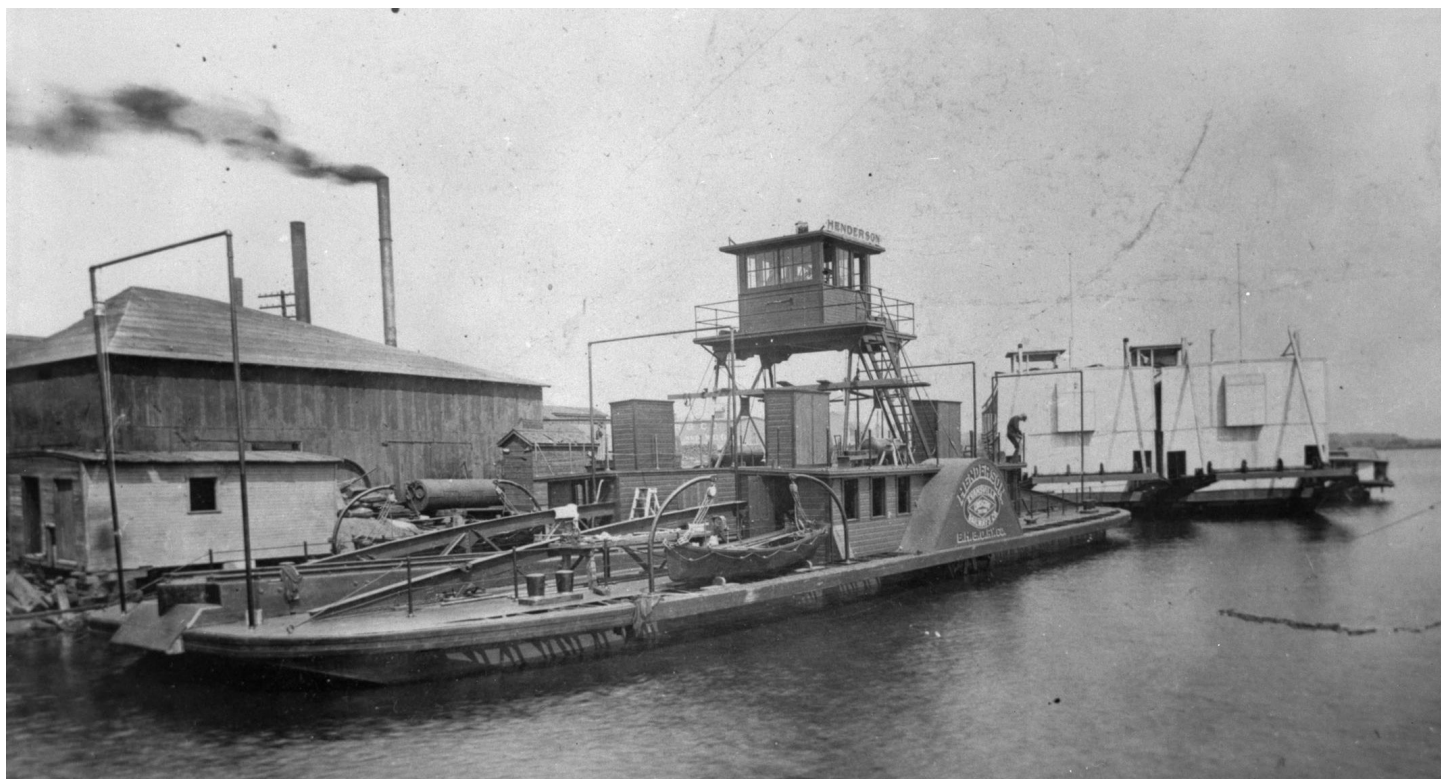
by Charles H. Bogart

At the start of the 20th century, Evansville saw itself growing to be a competitor with Louisville. Vanderburgh County, Indiana, for which Evansville was the county seat, had a population of 93,000 in 1900. The city was tied by the Louisville & Nashville Railroad (L&N) Bridge over the Ohio River with Henderson, KY and Nashville, TN. Foreseeing Evansville becoming a regional powerhouse in southwestern Indiana, her boosters began to build interurban lines radiating outward from the city center. By 1915, five interurban companies had built electric rail lines based in Evansville.

In 1900, Henderson County, KY had a population of 32,907 with over half living in the city of Henderson, which as befitting a city, had a streetcar system and a desire for an interurban system. Henderson saw itself becoming the premier city

in the Green River area. 1907 brought a proposal to build an interurban line running from Evansville to Henderson and from there west to Uniontown and east to Owensboro. The interurban line would cross the Ohio River by a bridge and tap the coalfields lying in and around Owensboro and Uniontown. Nothing became of this proposal or a number of other plans that proposed the same routes or added Madisonville or Dixon as additional destinations.

It was only in 1911 that the dream of an interurban line became a reality for Henderson with the formation of the Evansville, Henderson & Owensboro Railway Company (EH&O). EH&O leased 3 miles of former Illinois Central Railroad (IC) track that ran from Henderson to the Ohio River bank at Major. They also leased a little under 3 miles of IC track at McClain. The IC had built the track at McClain in 1889 to reach a car ferry



Sidewheel interurban ferry HENDERSON nears completion at Dubuque Boat & Boiler Company in 1912. Built for Evansville, Henderson & Owensboro Railway Company, her hull measured 120 x 25, with a draft of 3' 6". She was powered by two gasoline engines producing 120 hp. In the background are two sternwheel towboats under construction for the U.S. Corps of Engineers at Kansas City, MO, the LIEUTENANT GURNEY and LIEUTENANT AUGUSTIN. They were 138 x 24 x 5, and were joined shortly after by a third identical sister LIEUTENANT LEWIS. Photo from Editor's collection.

they operated for crossing the Ohio River. In 1904, the IC abandoned the ferry operation for track rights over the L&N Bridge between Henderson and Evansville. The running of EH&O's heavy interurban cars over the track of the city streetcar line necessitated replacing the light rail used by the streetcars with 80-pound rail.

At Major, on the south bank of the Ohio River, and at McClain, on the north bank of the Ohio River, the former IC ferry cradles were re-built to allow the interurban car to be placed on the transfer car ferry HENDERSON. The transfer ferry carried the interurban car back and forth across the Ohio River. The sidewheel HENDERSON had been built at Dubuque, IA by the Dubuque Boat and Boiler Company in 1912. She had a steel hull and was powered by two gasoline engines producing 120 hp. She was 120 feet long by 25 feet wide and could carry two interurban cars. She drew only 3 feet 6 inches of water. Her captain was R. S. Moats and her engineer was R. L. Duke.

Since HENDERSON operated in the days before the Ohio River was canalized, she had to operate in a river of extreme water levels. The river could, depending on rainfall, be overflowing its banks with a fast current or be so shallow that one could walk across the river. The result of these extreme water levels was that the ferry stage on both shores had to be flexible enough to compensate the ferry slip being 50 feet closer or farther from the shore at normal river stage. At times, however, river conditions were such that the interurban car could not be taken onboard HENDERSON; as a result, the interurban passengers became foot passengers for the crossing. It also needs to be remembered that once clear of the ferry cradle, the interurban car had to climb up the river bluff to the flood plain above.

EH&O made its first run on July 28, 1912. The interurban car was described by the *Henderson Gleaner* "as being 50 feet long and nine feet wide, painted an orange color, and has a seating capacity of 59 but will hold nearly twice this number. The car is finished in quarter oak and both interior and exterior elegant. The fixtures are the most modern. The car is equipped with comfortable cane seats." Fare was reported to be 35¢ one-way and 65¢ round trip. Cars left both Henderson and Evansville at 15

minutes past the hour, every other hour, from 7:15 a.m. to 11:15 p.m. It needs to be noted that while Evansville, Henderson & Owensboro Railway was the official name of the interurban line, it was always called the Evansville Railroad by the locals.

Apparently, the first through car between Henderson and Evansville ran on October 14, 1912. That Friday the late night interurban car derailed as it was exiting the boat onto the cradle, causing a scare, but the car stayed upright on the cradle. It was reported that the cradle had not lined up properly with HENDERSON and steps were being taken to correct the problem.

According to an EH&O employee timetable, the 10.9-mile trip between Evansville and Henderson took 44 minutes with the river crossing portion being accomplished in 12 minutes under normal river conditions. It was claimed that during the years the HENDERSON operated for EH&O, the Ohio River navigation season consisted of three periods. These periods were three months of the river being frozen, three months of being in flood, and six months of no water. EH&O was to experience all of these river conditions. The winter of 1917-18 was extremely cold and for weeks the Ohio River was frozen over from bank to bank. Once this ice began to melt there was the constant danger of ice flows hitting the HENDERSON. At one point, these ice floats destroyed both ferry cradles requiring them to be rebuilt. Then during periods of high water, all kinds of debris floated down the river ready to puncture the HENDERSON's hull or destroy her propulsion system. Heavy fog also took a toll on HENDERSON's schedule, so during heavy fog, bells were rung at each landing to guide the ferry to her landing point. While EH&O provided fast, convenient transportation between Henderson and Evansville, the service was not dependable. As noted, river conditions could cause delays or cancellation of service. The railroad ran less frequently but by using a bridge to cross the Ohio River, its schedule was dependable. During the winter of 1917-18, EH&O passenger service was interrupted for weeks by ice in the Ohio River.

Circa 1920, HENDERSON, while crossing the river with a freight motor and a passenger car carrying some 40 passengers, suffered an engine

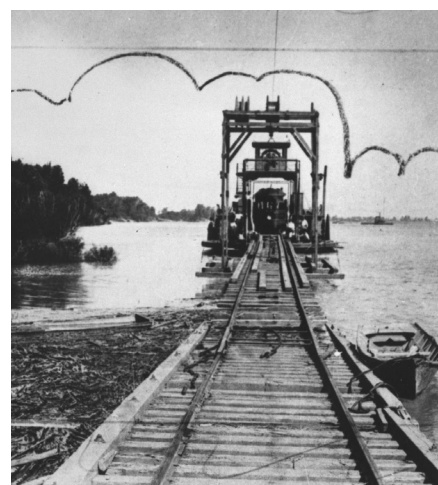
room casualty. The result was that HENDERSON began to drift down river. After five hours of floating on the river, some of the passengers began to complain of hunger. Captain Moats, to satisfy the hunger of the passengers, authorized commandeering some of the chickens being carried in the freight motor. These chickens had their necks wrung, feathers plucked, and internal organs pulled. The chickens were cooked on the deck of the ferry and eaten by the passengers and crew. Finally, Engineer Duke had the engines repaired and HENDERSON arrived at the far bank. The normal 12-minute trip across the Ohio River had lasted 10 hours. While HENDERSON was outfitted to carry two interurban cars, she generally only carried one. The exception was the twice-daily round trip of carrying a passenger coach and a freight motor across the river. The other exception was when an extra passenger car was laid on to carry riders to a special event in Evansville.

In 1919, EH&O [along with two other electric railways] were consolidated under the banner of Evansville & Ohio Valley Railway (E&OV). Upon starting operations, E&OV added two passenger-only ferries to its operations, which provided services from Indiana across the Ohio River into Kentucky. The Crescent Navigation Company operated the passenger ferry service using gasoline powered river launches. The passenger ferry service was provided between the E&OV terminal at Rockport, IN and Owensboro, and from the E&OV terminal at Grandview, IN to Cannelton, IN and Lewisport and Hawesville, KY. This passenger ferry service lasted until circa 1928. It was also

circa 1928 that the car floats at Butler and McClain were modified so that HENDERSON could carry automobiles and trucks. The carrying of autos and trucks soon became the main source of revenue for HENDERSON. The EH&O Line was never a moneymaker; just the cost of operating the transfer ferry far exceeded any business generated in the city of Henderson.

On September 7, 1927, a human error led to a head-on collision of an interurban car and a boxcar at Clay, IN, now part of Evansville. Because of the crash, the motorman and three passengers of Car #117 were killed and fifty passengers injured. This wreck wrote the end of the Henderson Line. The resulting legal suits forced E&OV into receivership. As a result of the receivership, E&OV temporarily suspended operations over the Henderson Line. Then on April 4, 1928, E&OV ceased all interurban rail service to the city of Henderson and began to use buses for the trip between Henderson and Evansville. This interstate bus service lasted until circa 1965.

With the demise of the EH&O Line, the transfer ferry HENDERSON was sold by E&OV to the Dixie Bee Line Ferry Company who then converted HENDERSON to carrying automobiles and trucks between Henderson and Evansville. In 1931, she was bought by the Kentucky Department of Highways who continued to use her as a ferry at Henderson until the new highway bridge (US 41) over the Ohio River opened on July 3, 1932. After this time, HENDERSON is undocumented, and it is thought she was broken up. 🕒



Left: Ferry HENDERSON with interurban car making the passage between Evansville, IN and Henderson, KY. **Right:** The street railway car about to roll onto the floating cradle. Note the huge pile of drift on the left. Both photos from Murphy Library.

W. P. SNYDER, JR.'s Centennial (Part 2)

By William Reynolds

For the next twenty years after W. H. CLINGERMAN (T2565) made her initial trip on November 23, 1918, she towed coal from the mines on the upper Monongahela to Carnegie's steel mill at Clairton, PA (Monongahela River Mile 21.5). She was partnered in this trade with her sister boat HOMESTEAD (T1122), built to the same plans a year later. In June 1930, the CLINGERMAN's hull had been widened to 32.3 feet to enable her to pass the Steamboat Inspection Service's stability test. Prior to that time, it was necessary to tow or travel with a barge alongside to enhance her stability. It is interesting to note that the Memphis ferry/day packet IDLEWILD, designed four years earlier by the same marine architect and also built at the Rees yard, had nearly the same hull length as the CLINGERMAN, but with a hull width about 7½ feet wider.

In May 1938, the boat was renamed J. L. PERRY (T1263) in honor of the president of Carnegie Steel, when she was sold to Carnegie-Illinois Steel

Company of Pittsburgh. This company had been formed in August 1935 by the merger of Illinois Steel, based in Chicago, with Carnegie Steel, headquartered in Pittsburgh. Together with her sister boat HOMESTEAD, she continued her coal towing trade on the Monongahela.

Yet a third name change lay in store for the boat on March 31, 1945, when the PERRY became the A-1 (T0001). The HOMESTEAD was also renamed A-2 at that same time. Neither the Murphy Library nor the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County have a photo of the A-1 in their vast collections. [Perhaps one of our readers can surface a rare copy of a photograph for publication in a future issue. Jeff, Jerry, Capt. Bill and others: are you taking note?-Ed.] The reason for this may lie in the fact that neither boat retained those names for even a half year, as they were sold to Crucible Fuel Company in August 1945 and given yet another name. Perhaps the only visible, physical evidence we have for the SNYDER's brief appearance



SNYDER in her early years as W. H. CLINGERMAN. Her hull was widened by 4 feet in 1930 to increase stability. Since the James Rees and Sons boatyard closed that year, it is uncertain whether the work was done there. Photo courtesy of Murphy Library.

under her new moniker is in the raised, welded letters A-1 which are still visible underneath the hull's black paint at the bow. In September of 1945, both boats received their final names: A-1 became W. P. SNYDER, JR. (T2587) and A-2 the W. H.

COLVIN, JR. (T2566). From 1945 to the fall of 1953, they towed coal from the Monongahela River mines to the Crucible Steel Mills at Midland, PA at Mile 36.5 on the Ohio River. After eight years in that run, the SNYDER was finally laid up on Sept. 23, 1953.



Above: CLINGERMAN after being renamed J. L. PERRY in 1938. This was the second of four names under which she towed. Her third name, A-1, lasted all of five months. Finally, as W. P. SNYDER, JR. she found her lasting identity by which she is still known seventy-three years later! **Below:** HOMESTEAD as W. H. COLVIN, JR. (1945-1953). This aerial view clearly shows the widened hull on both boats. Photos courtesy of Murphy Library, University of Wisconsin - La Crosse.



The SNYDER's first trip for Crucible Steel had been back on December 11, 1945. A few excerpts from the SNYDER's logbook in 1948 give a realistic glimpse of the work of a pool towboat in the coal run on the Monongahela.

Sept. 10 Tied at Monongahela 5¼ hours for repairs. Dp. down at 2:00 p.m. Arr. at Clairton 4:40 p.m. and left 1 load. Dp. down at 4:50 p.m. and arr. at McKeesport 5:55 p.m. Picked up 1 load. Dp. down at 6:50 p.m.

Sept. 11 Single lock at Emsworth. Five boats ahead. Lost time: 2 hours 35 minutes. Dp. Emsworth Lock 10:50 a.m. Arr. Midland 5:20 p.m. Coaled boat. Picked up 6 empties. Dp. Midland 7:05 p.m. W. A. Smith relieved Capt. Lovell Greenlee.

Sept. 12 Arr. Emsworth Lock 12:10 a.m. Lost 3 hours 35 minutes. Delivered 1 empty to McKeesport 7:55-8:00 a.m. Picked up 1 empty at Clairton 8:35-8:40 a.m. Arr. Crucible mine 5:55 p.m. Delivered empties, picked up 5 empties and dp. Crucible 7:55 p.m. Picked up 1 load at Emerald Mine 9:05-9:15 p.m.

Sept. 13 Landed at old Pike Mine abutment at 12:35 a.m. with broken bolt in journal cap. Made necessary repairs. Dp. 3:00 a.m. Lost time: 2½ hours. At or near Coal Center ferry, about 4:30 a.m., Str. SNYDER and Str. CHAS. R. COX had collision. Capt. Greenlee, on watch, reported answering passing signal and when danger signal was given, started to back full head. Could not kill headway enough and empty tow of the Str. COX collided with loaded tow of Str. SNYDER. Eighteen inch hole in one empty barge of the Str. COX. One timberhead bent slightly on loaded barge (U.S.S. #616) of Str. SNYDER. Delivered 1 load to Clairton

(#616) 11:25-11:40 a.m. Arr. Emsworth Lock 5:25 p.m. Seven boats ahead.

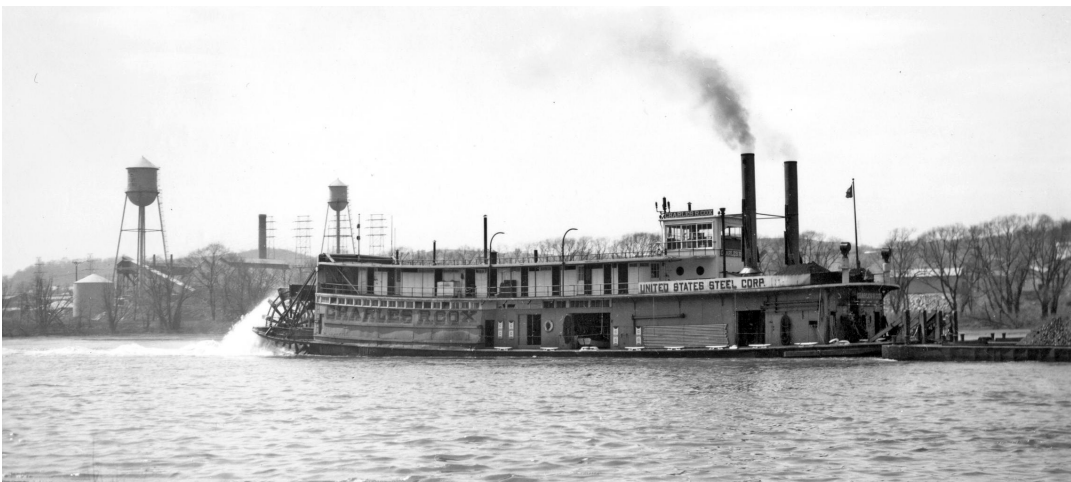
Sept. 14 Held regular weekly inspection. Checked steering gear, tiller line and indicator cord. Installed new indicator cord on port side. Checked bell rigging - pilot house to engine room. Tested emergency alarm bells and emergency whistle signal. Safety valve seals in place. Yawl, oars, etc. O.K. Tested fire hose on boiler deck. Dp. Emsworth Lock 2:10 a.m. Lost time: 8¼ hours. Ran slow in fog in Dashields pool. Lost 40 minutes. Tied up below Dashields Lock at 6:00 a.m. for fog. Lost 3½ hours. Arr. Midland 12:55 p.m. Dp. Midland with 6 empties at 2:10 p.m.

Sept. 15 Delivered 1 empty to McKeesport 3:05-3:10 a.m. Changed tows with m/v CRUCIBLE at McKeesport 3:20-3:55 a.m. Lost 4¾ hours at Lock #2. Arr. Midland 8:10 p.m. Delivered loads. Coaled boat. Waited 2 hours and 50 minutes for empty barge.

In addition to dealing with lock delays, fog, mechanical breakdowns, occasional navigation mishaps, and waiting for barges to be picked up, these logbook entries tell the story of a typical pool towboat as she picks up and drops off empties and loads in her daily run between Midland, PA and the mines on the Monongahela River. It was this trade for which the boat was built in 1918 and in which she ran continuously for over thirty-five years.

Following the SNYDER's layup in September 1953, discussions between Crucible Fuel Co. and Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen's president Capt. Fred Way, Jr. took place. In the summer of

1955, Crucible agreed to give the boat to Ohio Historical Society for permanent exhibit at S&D's River Museum in Marietta. Although the towboat had not been under steam for nearly two years since her layup, she was delivered under her own power from Brownsville, PA to Marietta during September 12-16, 1955, with a quarterboat in tow



Empty tow of Str. CHARLES R. COX (T0385) collided with SNYDER's single load on September 13, 1948 (no, it was not a Friday) as recorded in the logbook. Murphy Library photo.



Above: This handsome portrait of SNYDER on the Ohio River was snapped opposite the Point in the Golden Triangle of Pittsburgh, with Allegheny River to left and Monongahela to right. **Below:** SNYDER with tow of empties on the Monongahela, April 11, 1953, five months before she was laid up at Brownsville. Murphy Library photos.




and one hundred invited guests aboard. Overnight stops during the 228 mile trip were made en route at Pittsburgh; East Liverpool, OH; Wheeling, WV; and Beavertown, OH at Lock 16. Crew on her last trip were: Fred Way, Jr., master; Thomas E. Kenny and Lovell Greenlee, pilots; Eugene Kennedy, chief

engineer; George Ehringer, honorary chief and her first engineer; Harry Lampert, assistant engineer; Arch Dawson, fireman; William "Bill" Hudson, mate; Gertrude Watson, cook; Pauline Byers and Marie Guesman, maids; and Charles McShane, Wayne Watson and William N. Reed, deckhands.

The W. P. SNYDER, JR. was the last steamboat to lock through Lock 1 on the Muskingum River on the way to her permanent landing site. Lock 1 has since been removed. She tied up at the foot of Sacra Via in Marietta on the afternoon of Friday, September 16, along the shores of what would become her home for the following sixty-three years. Capt. Tom Kenny rang off her engines for the last time that day. During ceremonies the day before, William Penn Snyder, Jr., Crucible's Board Chairman and after whom the boat was named, officially presented the towboat to Ohio Historical Society (present-day Ohio History Connection), which was represented by their president.

The boat remained a popular attraction adjacent to S&D's River Museum over the next two decades, and was the "crown jewel" of the brand new Ohio River Museum at its opening in 1972 and in the years since. In 1970, the SNYDER was designated a National Historic Landmark. But inevitably, time, the river and the weather took their toll on the veteran sternwheeler. Although local efforts at ongoing maintenance were conducted each year, major work was needed to preserve the boat in top notch condition for future generations of visitors and historians alike. Fortunately, a combination of state and federal grants were secured to conduct a major restoration and preservation effort over a seven-year period. Phase 1 of this effort took place at McGinnis Shipyard at South Point, OH in 2010-2011 to the tune of \$1,526,364. Phase 2 followed at Amherst

Madison's Point Pleasant Shipyard in 2014 at a cost of \$958,000. And the final phase, which was just completed aboard the vessel at Ohio River Museum, came in at \$497,000. [All of these major renovations are documented in the December 2010, March 2011, March 2014, and June 2014 issues of the REFLECTOR -Ed.] As of this writing, the SNYDER now mirrors the closest and most accurate appearance to the day she first arrived at Marietta. Her new paddlewheel, renovated and replaced steel work, decking, and bulkheads, reglazed windows, complete rewiring and historical documentation aboard, along with interior furnishings, painting and decorations contemporary with her day, make her a page out of steamboat history come alive. Thanks to the efforts of her many fans and supporters, that plain, hard-working pool towboat still welcomes guests a century after she left the Rees Shipyard. 



The historic towboat was not the only vessel named for W. P. Snyder, Jr. Pictured here in her later days at Port Huron, MI is the S.S. WILLIAM P. SNYDER, JR., built for Shenango Furnace Co. in 1912. The ore carrier measured 617 x 64 x 33. She last operated in 1980 and was scrapped in 1988.



SNYDER in her heyday on the Mon. Her wheel was 21 feet in diameter, 29 feet long, her 14 buckets having a 36-inch dip. She turned an impressive wheel, but probably lifted a goodly amount of extra water in the process. Murphy Library photo.

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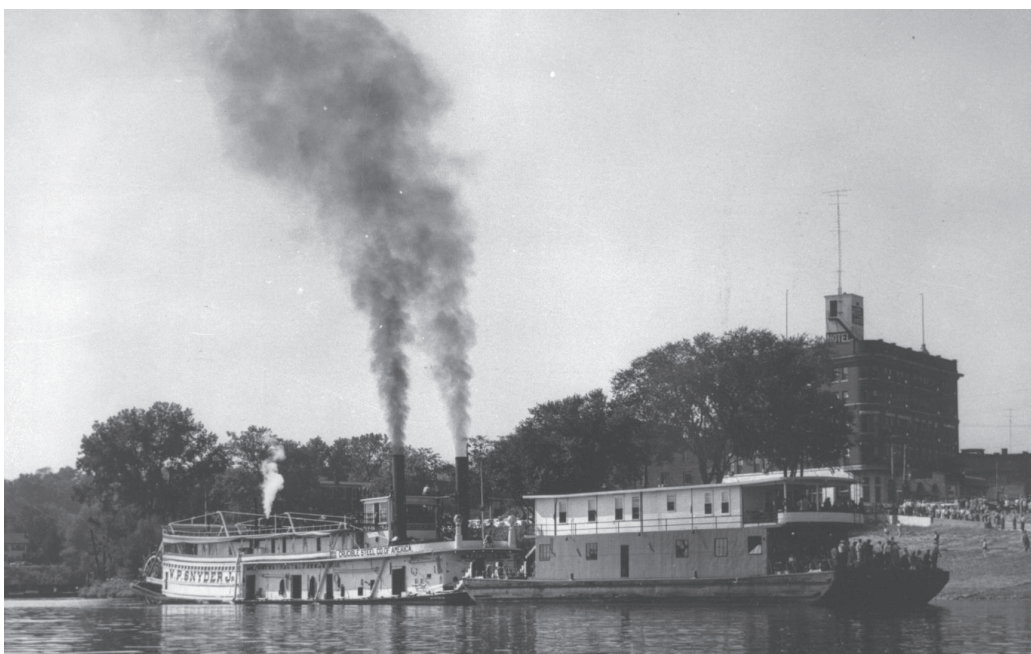
This ad for the Hotel Lafayette appeared in the 1955 Inland River Record. We include it here as many river people present for the ceremonies welcoming the SNYDER in 1955 were most likely guests of hotelkeeper Steve Hoag.



Top: SNYDER with quarterboat above Marietta on Thursday, September 15, 1955, the day before her final landing on the Muskingum. This view was snapped 63 years to the day before S&D's Annual Meeting takes place in 2018. Murphy Library photo. **Middle left:** Approaching riverfront at Marietta. ORM photo. **Middle right:** SNYDER maneuvering into shore above public landing. Murphy Library photo. **Bottom:** Boat and tow at public landing after the 228-mile trek from Brownsville. SNYDER made overnight layovers at Pittsburgh, East Liverpool, Wheeling, and Beavertown, OH (Mile 146 near Long Reach) above Lock 16. Murphy Library photo. These images remind us of the time Woody and Bee Rutter very kindly showed their color film taken during this voyage at an annual S&D meeting.

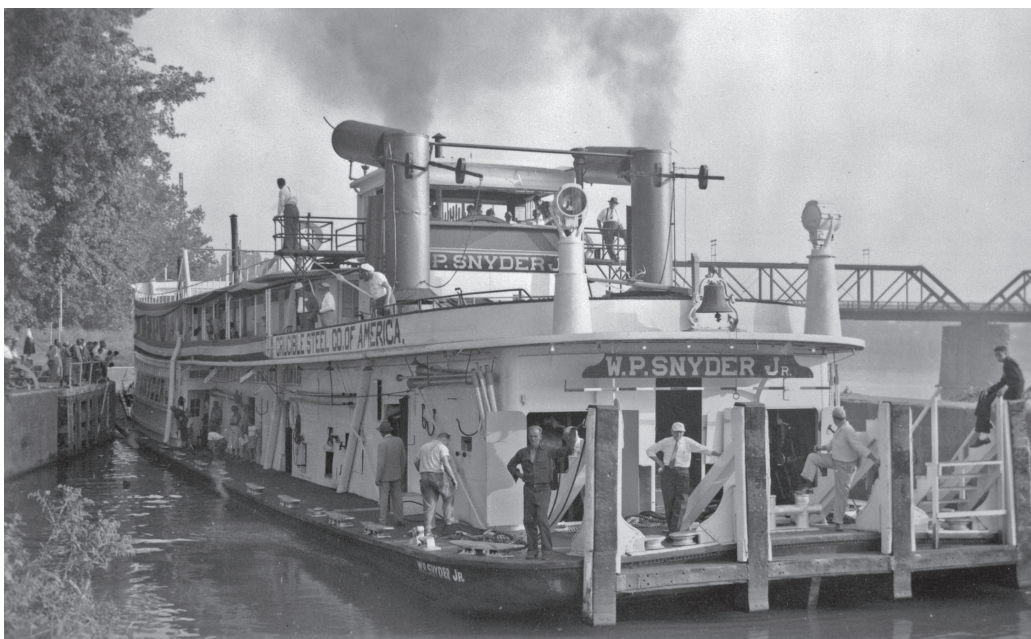


1. SNYDER's landing whistle as she approaches Marietta. 2. Capt. Bill Dugan playing the electric air-powered calliope on the roof behind pilothouse. 3. W.P. Snyder Jr. (on left), board chairman of Crucible Steel Company of America, presenting the boat to the president of Ohio Historical Society with S&D president Fred Way, Jr. holding painting of the towboat. Photos courtesy of Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.



Left: SNYDER approaches Marietta landing before heading up Muskingum River to left of photo, September 16. The Lafayette Hotel appears just above the quarterboat. Murphy Library photo.

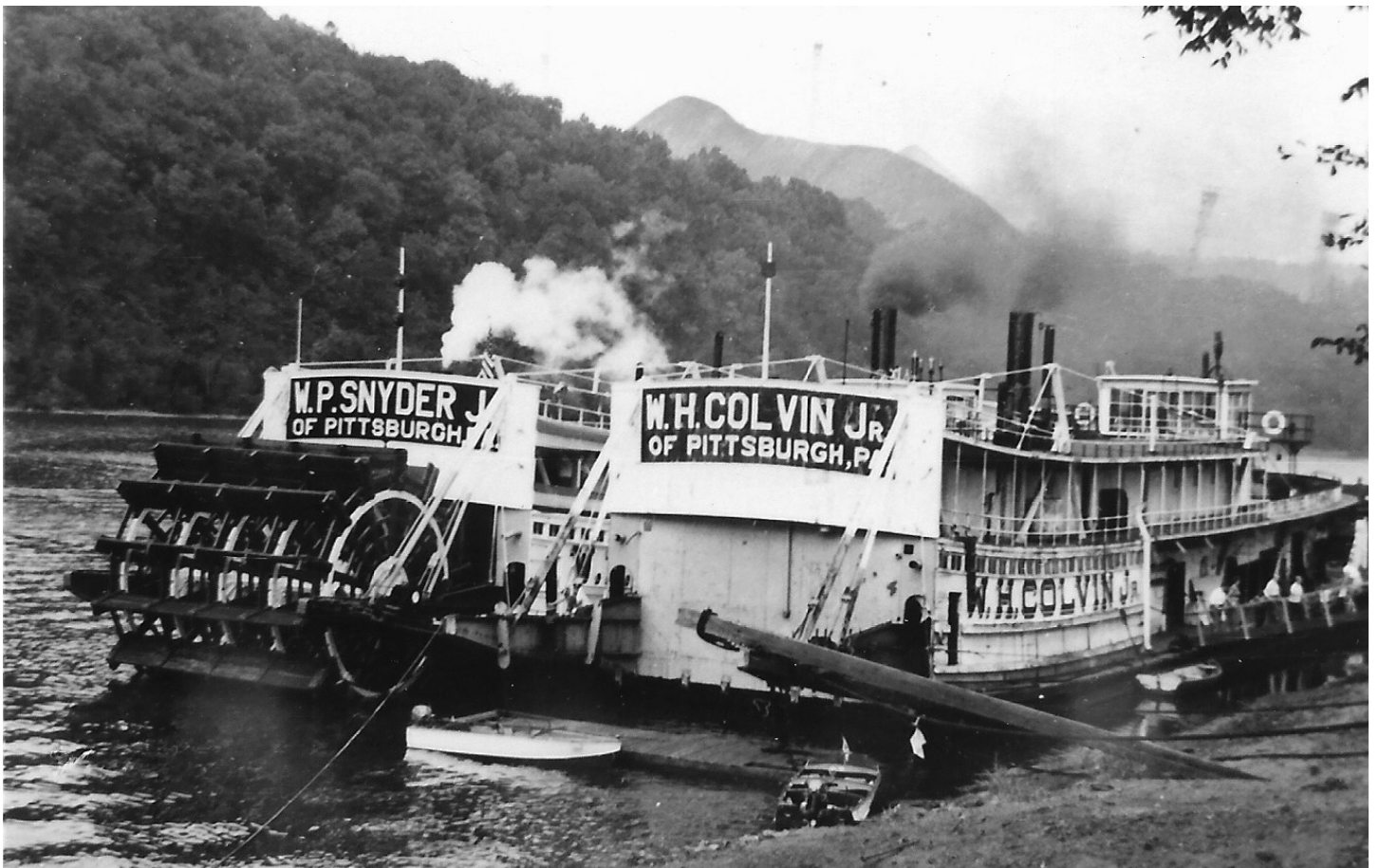
Bottom: Entering Muskingum River Lock 1. The gates on these locks were hand-operated. A system of 12 locks and 11 dams on the Muskingum were constructed by the state of Ohio in 1841. Their operation was turned over to the Army Corps of Engineers in 1887, who maintained control until 1958 when the state of Ohio once again took them over with the abandonment of commercial navigation on the river. Most of the locks were 36 x 184. The SNYDER measured 32.3 x 175 overall, so it was a very tight fit. Lock 1 was removed prior to the completion of the new high lift lock and dam at Belleville in 1968. ORM photo.



Top opposite page: Another view of SNYDER being maneuvered into position in Lock 1 on the final leg of trip to her permanent docking site opposite Ohio River Museum.

Bottom opposite page: W. P. Snyder, Jr. of Crucible Steel, the president of Ohio Historical Society, and Capt. Fred Way, Jr. on SNYDER's bridge at welcoming ceremony. Both photos from ORM.





Opposite page top: SNYDER's crew on her final trip to Marietta pose for this formal portrait, probably taken at Pittsburgh on September 12. Fourth from left is Capt. Fred Way, Jr., master on the trip. Longtime S&D members may be able to assist us in identifying others in this photograph. A full listing of the crew appears at the bottom of page 13.

Opposite page bottom: In this poignant view snapped at Brownsville, the SNYDER has raised steam and is about to depart on her last voyage. She is landed alongside her sister, the former HOMESTEAD. These two boats towed for both Carnegie Steel and Crucible Steel for thirty-five years before being laid up in September 1953. Both photos courtesy of Ohio River Museum.

Top right: This John Vize photo pictures SNYDER in McGinnis Shipyard drydock at South Point, OH in 2011. She was undergoing Phase 1 of a major renovation, totaling \$1.5 million, and sports her new paddlewheel. All three phases of the boat's renovation rang up at just under \$3 million, a testament to the cost of maintenance and renovation of a vintage steamboat. Those also involved with repairs and upgrades to the DELTA QUEEN and JULIA BELLE SWAIN are no strangers to this stark reality either.

Middle right: Vic Canfield captured this view of the SNYDER passing Cincinnati in tow of J. S. LEWIS on her return to Marietta following participation in BELLE OF LOUISVILLE's Centennial celebration in October 2014.

Bottom right: Sandra Farmer's dramatic shot of the BELLE and SNYDER together at Louisville. Both are James Rees and Sons-built vessels, both designed by famed marine architect Thomas Rees Tarn, and both noted for their exceptional longevity.



Robert and Rollie Mae Lollar: A Steamboat Family Story

by Capt. Don Sanders

The Mississippi River has brought a host of visitors to the front door of the city of Natchez, MS. Great men and women with names like John Jay Audubon, Jenny Lynn, and Mark Twain have climbed the steep incline to the top of the bluff as have hordes of the humble. But none of the countless wanderers washed ashore have been more unusual than the steamboat load of four-hundred eighty-five Girl Scouts that landed there on the excursion steamer AVALON on a sultry summer day in 1961. The story behind the landing was recounted in a first-hand account written by Jim Swartzwelder of Pittsburgh, and printed in the June 1990 edition of the S&D REFLECTOR, a quarterly selection of river recollections edited by Captain Frederick Way, Jr., who, years ago, bought the steamboat BETSY ANN, then owned by the Rufus Learned family of Natchez.

The young ladies in green had boarded the AVALON in Memphis for the beginning of a dream steamboat adventure to the Crescent City of New Orleans. After stops in Greenville and Vicksburg, the paddlewheel boat rounded-to above the Natchez Highway Bridge and shoved her nose into the sand at the foot of Silver Street. The girls, accompanied by fifteen adult staff and two registered nurses, paraded up the hill to begin the day that included a luncheon at the City Auditorium and tours of Stanton Hall, Rosalie, and Bontura historic houses. An evening meal at Tops Grill and prearranged church services completed a day they would never forget.

The AVALON — which still operates today on the Ohio River, fifty-seven years later and in its one-hundred fourth year as the BELLE OF



Officers and crew of steamer AVALON gathered on ballroom deck in 1959. Robert “Preacher” Lollar is fourth from right in back row. Officers that season included Capt. Ernest Wagner, Master (center of back row); Louie Rudd, Mate (3rd to left of Capt. Wagner); E. P. Hall, Purser (to Capt. Wagner’s right); and Urbie Williams, Chief Engineer (to Hall’s right). Ed Smith, (5th from right in front row) and Charles “Bubba” Chinn (9th from left in 2nd row) were Preacher’s shipmates as Firemen, both of whom joined him on the DELTA QUEEN when the AVALON ceased operation in 1962. Photo from Editor’s collection.

LOUISVILLE — laid dozing below the towering loess bluffs. The last of the authentic Mississippi River steamboats must have looked like a floating wedding cake. Mr. Swartzwelder recalls this moment: “During this respite, a number of local negro youngsters, attracted by the novelty of a steamboat, got the attention of the boat’s amiable black cook, Mrs. Rollie Lollar, who loaded up a tray of sandwiches and sweets, and toted the banquet ashore to the willing guests. Doubtlessly, today, there are African American ladies and gentlemen residing in Natchez who recall this delightful party of steamboat food served by an authentic steamboat cook by the riverside.”

At that moment, I was 800 miles away, miserable, and languishing at a summer job I had taken and regretted. During the two previous summers, I was “decking” on the AVALON, but that summer, the last year the AVALON ran as a

tramp excursion boat, I caved in to parental pressure and found a “respectable” job ashore, making more money riding herd on a lawless pack of eight-year-olds on the city-run playground.

Mrs. Lollar’s husband, Robert, was my friend and shipmate. We worked together during the summer of 1959 and the last half of 1960 when I stayed on the boat instead of returning to college at the end of the summer. We finished the excursion boat season together on the upper Ohio River, as already, word was going ‘round the fo’c’sle that the AVALON was chartered to a thousand Senior Girl Scouts next season.

Robert Lollar was better known on the river as “Preacher.” When I met him that first year, I was seventeen and he was eighty-two, perhaps more, though probably not less. He was short but hard-muscled from a lifetime of steamboat chores.



Left: Memphis from AVALON’s pilot house as she prepares to land and embark the first contingent of Girl Scouts for New Orleans in June 1961. A week later, a second group boarded for the return trip to Memphis. **Below left:** The AVALON landed alongside SPRAGUE at Vicksburg on the downbound trip. **Below right:** At Greenville, school busses met the boat to take the Scouts on their field trip. The next stop was at Natchez, where Mrs. Lollar prepared a “steamboat feast” for spectators on shore. Jim Swartzwelder photos from Editor’s collection.



His skin, like dark Spanish leather, complimented a pair of bright shining eyes, and his hair was tight, tiny ringlets of cotton. His thick, white mustache sparkled with an amber jewel or two from the generous quid of Kentucky Plug chewing tobacco always present within his jaw.

Preacher never learned to read or write, yet he would sign his name “Robert Lollar” with a bold flourish. He memorized a litany of Bible verses taught to him by Captain Thomas G. Ryman, the celebrated Nashville steamboat tycoon noted for his evangelistic zeal and as the builder of the Union Gospel Tabernacle, later renamed Ryman Auditorium, original home of the country music variety show “The Grand Ole Opry.” Captain Ryman recognized the worth in a young Robert Lollar and elevated him to positions of trust and responsibility on his steamboats which always tied to shore, nearest the closest church, on Sundays. If a boat found itself “out in the bushes” come a Sunday, then the services were held on the boat. Robert, with his Bible-quoting talents, soon found himself conducting services on the bow for the black members of the crew, and he became their “preacher.” The name stuck and followed him to the end of his long days.

Preacher was the striker, or oiler, in the engine room on the AVALON, a position usually reserved for a younger man apprenticed to become a licensed engineer. In his younger days, he tended the fires under boilers making steam for the boats that roared like dragons on the water. In days long ago, when steamboat fires were fueled by coal, Preacher was a coal fireman of renown. Firing a steamboat with coal was an art that few could master, and a good coal fireman was as valuable to the riverboat as was the engineer, or even the pilot. Years after the last of the coal-fired boats converted to oil, Robert Lollar was still respected as a fireman who had excelled at



the art of laying a hotbed of embers that kept the steam lines hissing and the safety valve dancing.

In his last years, when Preacher was still working on a steamboat at more than ninety years of age polishing brass on the DELTA QUEEN, he was featured in a story in a Cincinnati newspaper. It was a complimentary story complete with a couple of photographs. The article portrayed Robert Lollar as he was then, a ninety-year-old man keeping the DELTA QUEEN's bright-work looking better than it had ever looked before, or since. Those of us who personally knew the elder steamboatman were proud of his newspaper

publicity, but also we knew that shining brass was his retirement job and a way he could keep himself on the river aboard a steamboat where he belonged. We saw Robert Lollar as the best coal fireman still alive on the river. He knew we understood, and he wore that understanding with great satisfaction.

Now and then, a younger member of the AVALON's crew subjected Preacher to some light teasing and horseplay. Typically, they were newcomers who felt a need to attract attention to themselves by harassing an old man, but Preacher always got the upper hand and the teasers became the butt of the rest of the crew's jokes for being so foolish. A good steamboat crew is like a family, often better. When a new prospect does not fit in, the veterans make life so miserable that the greenhorn is usually seen “going up the hill” with his suitcase in hand at the next landing. A replacement soon comes aboard to face his own rite of passage.

One example of steamboat flesh who was especially disliked, and resisted all persuasion to quit, actually seemed to delight in the notoriety that he had acquired. Most of the crew that summer were regulars who had already secured their niche

in the steamboat pecking order, and so it was good to have someone around to take the brunt of the jokes and teasing that is always a part of crew life on any vessel. With so many people living so closely together, combined with the stress of working seven days a week with no time off, teasing and practical jokes became a safety valve for the emotional steam generated by the human fires on board.

This fellow constantly carried a fancy harmonica he was attempting to learn to play, but he had yet to exorcise the gremlins that resided deep within the instrument. He soon discovered that he could return, in spades, the harassment his shipmates directed his way by blowing on his devilish device within earshot of the crewmates he targeted for revenge.

Once, he actually careened far out a window behind the hot dog stand, his duty station on the boiler deck, and began blowing notes nearly as loud and shrill as those emanating from the steam calliope on the roof. Directly below, on the bow, in the path of the auditory assault, a knot of deckhands clustered about the capstan discussing the critical subject that young deckhands always talk about when they are on the river: girls — girls that they have met and girls they are yet to meet. This intrusion upon such a meaningful discussion

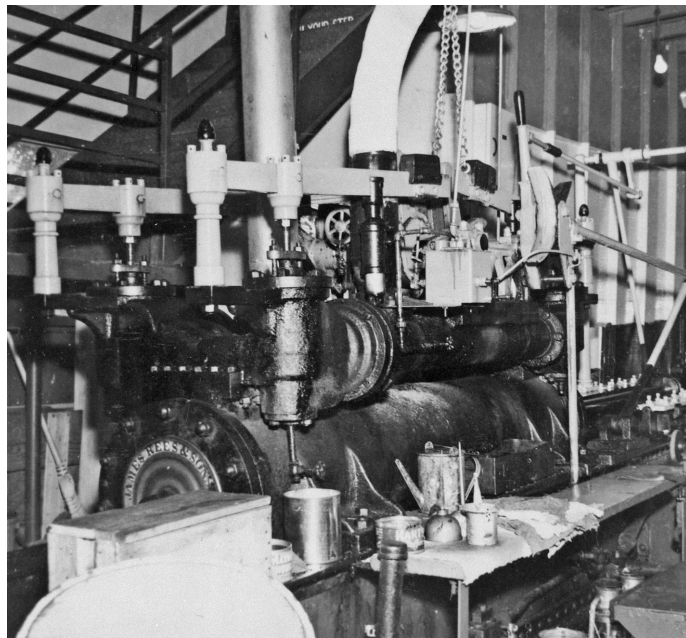
was encountered with rage, but the victims could not wage a frontal assault upon the offender who was safely at his place of business behind the snack bar on the deck above. Besides, the excursion boat was happily underway filled with a load of paying passengers, so a disturbance among crew members was unlikely.

A few loose items, however, were found lying about that were thrown with such a vengeance they caused the “harmonica man” to duck back inside the protective wall of the AVALON’s forward bulkhead. As a final gesture of defiance, the Plutonian musician thrust his arm back out the opening and held up his offensive instrument in a victorious salute. That “harmonica from hell” became an implement slated for destruction, but the demise of the hated appliance came by chance from an unexpected source.

Preacher was padding along the main deck in his “little old man shuffle” early one afternoon, headed to the firebox located forward towards the bow. He had just come on watch at noon, only a few minutes before, and his first assignment was to obtain samples of boiler feed-water for the Chief Engineer who analyzed the specimens at his cubby-hole laboratory alongside the high-pressure steam engine on the port side.



AVALON’s fire box or boiler room. At the time of this story, she was oil-fired, and the fireman always kept a watchful eye to make sure “she didn’t smoke too much.” Preacher was adept at firing with coal, starting on the river at age 14. He fired on the CAPITOL when she came out in 1920, and on IDLEWILD in her pre-AVALON days. Murphy Library photo.

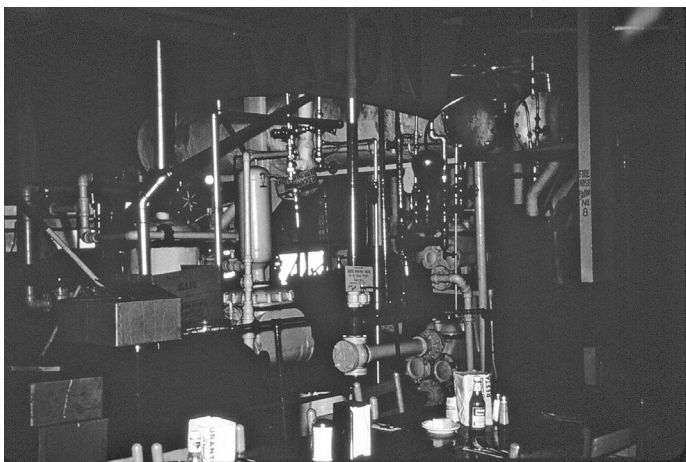


AVALON’s starboard engine. Preacher was striker or oiler on the boat. Tools of the trade rest alongside the cylinder timber in foreground. From Murphy Library, UW - La Crosse.

The open deck space forward of the engine room was known as the Deck Room. In this expanse were five wooden picnic tables around which were seated members of the crew eating lunch. I had just stepped out the door of my tiny room, the last one aft on the larboard side, and there Preacher and I met. He stopped a moment to talk but seemed somewhat hard to understand, and I saw that his mouth was stuffed with an extra-generous, juicy wad of his beloved Kentucky Plug chewing tobacco.

As we engaged in a mutual conversation, Harmonica Man strode up and joined our circle. He tried a note or two on his infamous musical device and failed, but then proceeded to begin beating the thing wildly against the palm of his open hand as though the blows would somehow rearrange the euphonious generating capacity of the maddening mouth organ. Both Preacher and I were intently watching this display, and the sound of the harmonica beating against the fellow's hand created a flesh-against-wood-and-metal sound that caused most of our boatmates to look up from their plates, and they, too, stared at the least-liked crew member on board. None of us, especially Harmonica Man himself, could have imagined in the wildest, most far-fetching realms of our imagination, the spectacle about to explode before us.

"Here, gimme dat harp!" a deep basso voice demanded. A dark, calloused hand shot out and



Deck room just forward of the engines and aft of the boilers. Crew ate their meals in this area adjacent the cookhouse on starboard side. A paper napkin dispenser and condiments are visible on one of the wooden picnic tables. It was here that Preacher dumbfounded the crew with his musical talent, much to their delight and to the everlasting chagrin of one mightily humbled crewman. Photo courtesy of Murphy Library.

snatched the musical instrument from the startled youth. The lightning speed of the abduction left the boy dazed and confused as he stood there watching in amazement while his beloved Marine Band harmonica departed from his possession for the first time since he was on the boat. Now it was in the powerful hands of the old man whose yellowed fingernails looked like ancient, mellowed ivory piano keys.

Everyone in the deck room watched transfixed as Preacher brought the harp to his lips. They opened, and the harmonica went entirely inside his mouth alongside the tight plug of juicy Kentucky burley. A pause of only a moment passed, but it seemed as though it lasted forever. During that brief respite, none of us watching knew what he intended to do with the boy's harmonica. While we waited in stunned silence, the old boatman was positioning the instrument deep within his mouth for the most significant moment of the harp's existence. Robert's mouth opened only a slit, just enough for the holes in the contraption to find air. And as the first blast of air passed over the tiny reeds, a sound, the likes of which had never been heard before on that old steamboat, began to fill the deck room with the most incredible music.

An old English piece called "The Fox and Hounds," a tune familiar long-ago in the hills and mountains and along the rivers and valleys of this land, came to life again, played by a musical master none of us knew had possessed such an extraordinary talent. From deep within the old man's jaws came the cry of the hounds as they chased the sly, red fox from his hiding place in a hole among the stones of an ancient hand-laid wall in a gently rolling Bluegrass meadow. Over the hills and through thickets and briars the crafty fox led the pack. A horn! A hunting horn sounded, as more hunters on horseback join in the melee. Back and forth the fox led the howling and baying hounds. The trumpet sounded louder and louder! The whole affair reached a marvelous crescendo, and then the excitement of the chase faded as the hunting party pursued the wily rascal further and further. Slowly the sounds of the pursuit died away and were gone.

Everyone in the deck room stood transfixed. Even the mighty Captain Wagner, skipper of the

AVALON, was at a loss for words. Then, with his thumb and forefinger, Preacher slowly extracted the glowing harp from beneath his amber stained lips. The instrument ran with a golden fluid from the plant that grows among the same rolling hills where the fox and hounds had just led the red-coated riders to the call of the brass hunting horn.

With a quick flick of his wrist, Preacher slung the worst of the amber off the harp and offered it back to its dumbfounded owner who stood wide-eyed and limp before him. The younger man opened his right hand and held it up to the old man. Without looking, Preacher placed the instrument onto the dazed fellow's palm no differently than he would have laid it on a table. At that instant, the deck room erupted into an uproarious approval for the preacher-man's musical performance, but the old boatman's only reaction was a slight smile. Though Preacher was aware that the entire crew in the deckroom had been thoroughly entertained, he had only intended a demonstration for the Harmonica Man himself, proving to him that his harp was capable of producing musical manifestations in the hands of a talented performer. The main deck was in an uproar, but Preacher merely gave a shrug of his powerful shoulders. He seemed to be unconcerned that pandemonium reigned, and he said quietly to me, "Gotta get ma water samples ... Will 'ya write a letter to Rollie Mae fo' me, later?" Then Robert Lollar turned and resumed his journey down the guard toward the Boiler Room as though he had never stopped.

Lost in a stupor, Harmonica Man began a slow trek across the deck room toward his own room on the starboard side, the harmonica still resting on his upturned palm where Preacher had placed it. As he trudged past the crew, his shoulders slumped, he was oblivious to the taunts and laughter hurled his way. The harmonica was never seen again and the poor fellow remained silent, in a mild state of shock for the next few days he was on the boat. The former harmonica owner left the AVALON so quietly that no one knew he was gone until Jackie-the-deckhand looked up and saw the forlorn fellow as he crested the top of the hill with his suitcase in tow.

Rollie Mae Lollar did not cook on the AVALON during the two seasons that I was a crewmate with

her husband. She was at home in Cincinnati as the matriarch of a large family. One day, a month or so after Preacher and I first met, he asked me if I would write a letter to his wife for him. The past month had, apparently, given him sufficient time to decide whether I was trustworthy enough to shoulder the responsibility of such an intrusion into the personal lives of the Lollar family. Apparently, I had passed whatever test the old gentleman had given me, and I understood that by becoming his scribe, I was accorded an honor few were given.

His words to his wife were simple and straightforward. He always began by asking, "How are the kids?" I imagined that their children must be grown, or perhaps Preacher was referring to his grandchildren or great-grandchildren. I never found out. They were simply "the kids" in each letter which read about the same as every other letter. In my immature seventeen-year-old mind, I felt his letters needed spicing up a bit, so I threw in a few "I love you's," or a "my heart yearns for you," now and then. But after several letters with too many syrupy embellishments, I became fearful that Mrs. Lollar would realize someone was tampering with her husband's transcriptions. So I returned to writing his letters as he dictated; especially in light of the fact that we were heading toward our home port, Cincinnati, where I faced the reality of meeting Mrs. Lollar in the flesh.

The AVALON tied up at her usual place below the Greene Line Steamers wharfboat on the ancient cobblestone levee after we landed one crisp autumn day near the end of the season. The Cincinnati waterfront still looked much like it did when hundreds of tall-stacked steamboats nosed in and out, loading and unloading passengers and freight. The levee was once the core of life in the Queen City, but now the cobblestone grade was a silent parking lot for the thousands of automobiles belonging to office workers in tall buildings uptown. Where once the grand steam palaces lay shoulder-to-shoulder for a mile or more along the Ohio River shore, our shabby, doddering excursion boat was the only steamboat there.

Two ancient wharfboats, relics of bygone times, remained as skeletal reminders of days filled with the blasts of hundreds of boat whistles, the shouts

of sweating roustabouts, and the sizzle of live steam coursing through open cylinder cocks. There on the cobblestone levee, the phantom crack of the drayman's whips resounded as they cursed their straining teams to haul overloaded wagons to the top of the steep incline. Those ghostly reverberations hung like whispers as the AVALON lay tied to the iron mooring rings embedded in the granite-paved levee. At times those whispers could still be heard when a warm zephyr played through the willows that grew at the end of the sleeping landing.

Family members of the crew were waiting on the riverbank when we arrived. Mine had come aboard the day before at Madison, IN and spent the day with me, so I did not expect them here until later, but I knew that Rollie Mae and "the kids" would be waiting to see the old man. A deep pang of guilt overcame me for embellishing Preacher's letters, and I prayed that somehow I could avoid meeting Mrs. Lollar for fear of the resentment that I imagined she harbored for me.

Captain Wagner had sent me on an errand to the boiler room, and as I stepped out of the fire box, I was looking down at the brightly-painted deck when a powerful hand grabbed my shoulder and spun me around. I stood face-to-face with Robert Lollar. His deep voice broadcast my worst fears. "Here," he said, "I want you to meet my wife, Rollie." He spoke with his mouth half-full of fresh chew and told his wife that I was the one who had written his letters for him.

Rollie Mae Lollar was apparently much younger than her husband, but still, she must have been at least sixty years of age. Her eyes were bright, warm, and friendly. She was, as my grandmother would have said, "fleshy," or a bit "stout." Mrs. Lollar was a steamboat cook of preeminence who obviously enjoyed sampling the fruits of her labor. She held out her hand to me, and I took it. Her handshake was firm and sincere, and as she pumped my arm up and down, I looked deep into her brown eyes, and I felt right about what I saw. We became friends then and there, and she never made any comment about the way I had transcribed her husband's letters.

Rollie and Robert were apparently in love with one another, and as the photograph I took of

them together on the bow of the DELTA QUEEN sometime around 1967 shows, they had a great deal of affection toward each other that they were not afraid to display in public. Thinking back over those many years now, perhaps I just may have thrown a little bit of pepper into their love life ... but no, the fire was there all along, and it needed no help from a boy like me.

Time has an abysmal condition of becoming slippery like cylinder oil. The interval between the day I first met Rollie Mae Lollar on the deck of the AVALON and now, has grown to almost sixty years. The Lollars have since departed this life decades ago. Writing in the S&D REFLECTOR, Jim Swartzwelder believed there were "gentry and ladies residing in Natchez ... who recall this delightful party." Who, now, among the elder citizens of Old Natchez, twenty-eight years after Jim's story was published, remembers that day in 1961 when the AVALON discharged five-hundred Girl Scouts at their city's front door? Does anyone still recall when Mrs. Rollie Mae Lollar, according to the Swartzwelder article, "loaded up a tray of sandwiches and sweets" and "toted the banquet ashore" for the children playing on the riverbank? Surely, someone must be left who remembers. 🕒



Robert and Rollie Mae Lollar. Courtesy of Capt. Don Sanders.

Railway Connections Identified in Rees Boatyard Photo

On page 10 of our June issue, we published a photo of the hull of W. H. CLINGERMAN (later the W. P. SNYDER, JR.) under construction at the Allegheny River boatyard of James Rees and Sons at Pittsburgh in 1918. Visible in the photo was a steam locomotive with box cars on track atop a trestle next to the yard. We wondered whether “our eagle-eyed rail fans can help with identification of the engine.” Within days, we received the following reply and photo from Mr. Walter “Irv” Shrake of Savanna, IL, who, incidentally, is the father of our most able and amiable S&D secretary Sharon Reynolds.


“Here are a few thoughts about the steam locomotive on page 10. According to rail maps of the Pittsburgh area as shown in the *Steam Powered Videos Comprehensive Railroad Atlas* of the area, the only railroad serving along the Allegheny River where the James Rees boatyard was situated was the Pennsylvania Railroad, back when they proudly claimed to be ‘The Standard Railroad of the World.’

“During three different times in 1910-13, 1913-14 and 1913 they bought a total of two hundred thirty-nine 0-6-0 steam switch engines. Each may have had minor changes, but they were all basic 0-6-0 switch engines with a sloped tender. The sloped tender helped the engineer see the switch crews working behind him when they were in a spot like that track

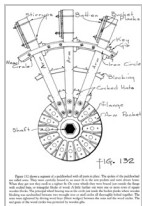
above the boat yard.

“The Pennsylvania also had some even smaller 0-4-0 switch engines, but I think they would have been too small for the boat yard runs. The Chicago, Milwaukee and Puget Sound box car behind the locomotive was a subsidiary of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (my old employer) and they were absorbed into the parent company as your article attests. The other car is too faint to identify which railroad it belonged to.

“The west coast line provided lumber from forests around Tacoma and the Milwaukee would have gotten a line haul from the Pacific coast all the way to Chicago before turning the car over to the PRR. It probably contained lumber and a door in the end would allow long items such as lumber to be inserted into the boxcar where the side doors would be too narrow.

“Included is a photo of a typical PRR 0-6-0 steam switch engine like the one at the boat yard. Surprisingly and disappointedly, Google provided limited info on the boatyard and not enough to flesh out any story about them. This info may be too skimpy to add to the cutline, but it was interesting to see that boxcar with my company forerunner name so visible.” 





Small Stacks

Trailerable Towboats

by John Fryant

In the summer of 2017 at the Inland Waterways Festival in Marietta, our four intrepid RC model riverboat operators were asked several times by youngsters if they could operate the models. Many were refused due to the complexity and risk of damage to those delicate, fragile creations when operated by inexperienced “pilots.”

What was needed was a simple model riverboat that kids could easily operate without the owner having to fear for any damage taking place. That provided the inspiration for modeling a small “kid proof” towboat. The result is the subject of this column.

Truckable or trailerable towboats are just that: actual towboats small enough to be transported to and from job sites on flatbed semi-trailers. They are somewhat like a much bigger model but capable of being operated by one or two-man crews. There are probably very few of them that look exactly alike, and many are no doubt built to their owner’s requirements or specifications.

The boat your author chose to model is based on a set of plans for a 1/20th scale 30-foot trailerable single screw boat. After modifying things a bit, the resulting model with hull dimensions of 20 feet by 8 feet was built to a scale of 1” = 1’, or “dollhouse scale.” The main reason for this was to utilize easy-to-obtain dollhouse figures for the crew.

The hull is built of 1/16” model aircraft plywood and is powered with a 12-volt electric motor turning a single 2-inch diameter four blade prop. The pilothouse came out a bit taller than the one shown in the plan, but still looks okay. This was made entirely from 1/16” clear acrylic Plexiglas™ which comes with removable paper covering to protect the surfaces. The window areas were penciled off inside and out, and the window outlines carefully cut through the paper. The rest of the paper covering

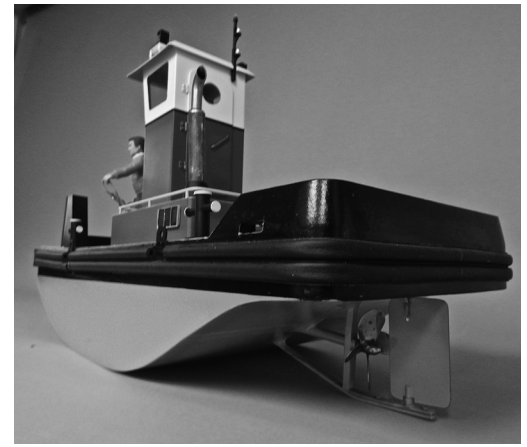
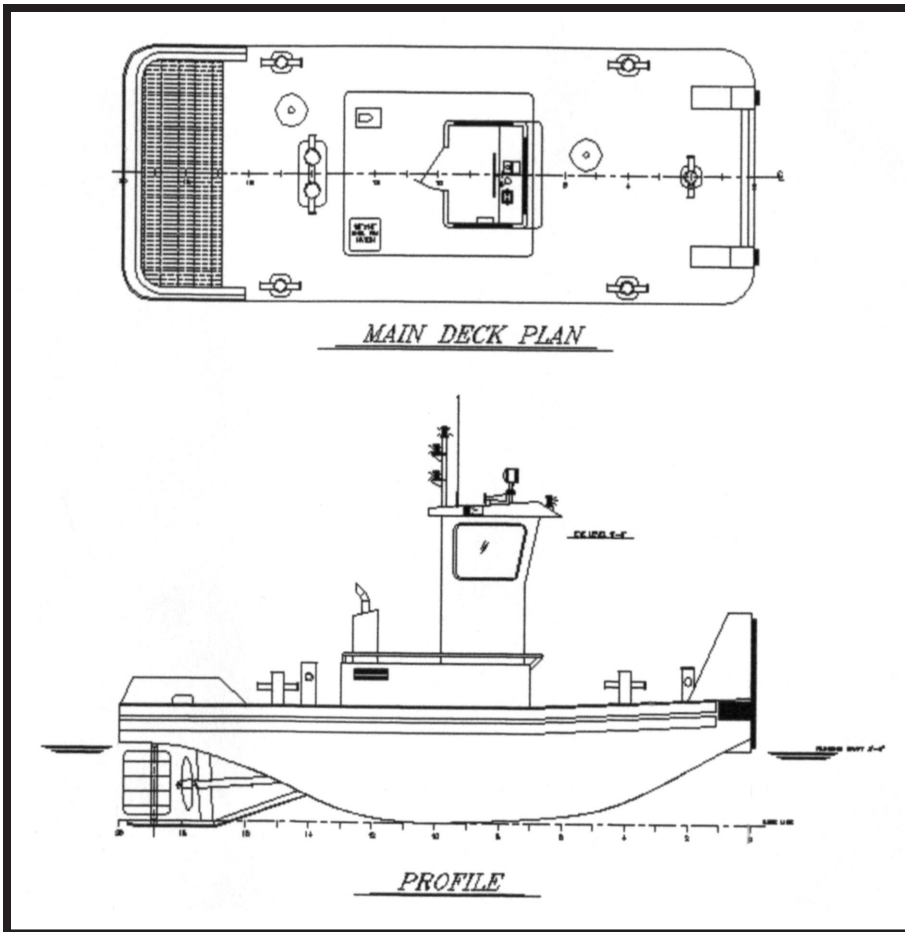
was removed and the entire structure was spray painted white. When dry, removal of the masking paper revealed clear, finished windows. Voila!

The model was named in honor of the little sternwheel gas boat which once pushed the showboat MAJESTIC. One of these models can be detailed to the builder’s satisfaction. The ATTABOY II has dummy lights and horn with the deck fittings built from materials on hand. The hull is protected on all sides with half-round rubber strips available from auto parts stores. The fronts of the tow knees are surfaced with neoprene rubber strips. Neoprene is available from computer stores as it is widely used for mouse pads.

The source of the plans on which the model was built is RC Groups. Their large website, www.rcgroups.com, is devoted to forums on radio controlled models of all types. Although leaning heavily towards aircraft, it includes a section on model boating. This is further subdivided into categories for particular boating interests. The first one listed is called “Dock Talk” and the first sublisting under this is called “Springer Class Boats.” Bring up this subject and you will see many, many ideas for building one of these little towboats. They are called “springers” because many of the modelers install door stop springs on the tow knees so they can have contests pushing rubber balls around and other such fun (?) activities.



Above: The ATTABOY II model in operation. Deckhand is a modified dollhouse figure. There is a pilot also, but he doesn’t have his license yet. All photos courtesy of John Fryant.



Above left: Plan found on RCGroups website on which the model is based. Also available is a full-size plan sheet for a similar 1/20th scale model with a “springer” hull. Copies of this plan are available from the author for \$10 and your mailing address. Payment covers printing and mailing costs only - John assures our readers there is no profit on his part in making these plans available. **Above right:** Views of the finished model. With ballast, motor and batteries aboard it weighs in at 8½ pounds.

Point Pleasant River Museum Damaged in Fire

The REFLECTOR recently received word via a WSAZ-TV press release in Huntington, WV that the Point Pleasant River Museum was damaged by fire on July 1. The fire broke out around 2:30 p.m. that Sunday in the attic of the structure. No injuries were reported. Fire marshals suspect the fire was accidental. Investigators stated that the roof was burned off, and there was significant water and smoke damage. The deputy fire marshal says the museum is not a total loss, although the damage may be in the millions. No estimates were yet available.

Community members in Point Pleasant rallied and came together after the fire. “The firefighters were still fighting the blaze, water was coming through from where they were spraying the roof, and the folks were coming in the door and taking things off the walls,” said Executive Director Jack Fowler. Community members and museum workers

were able to save nearly 60 percent of the historic items in the museum. Point Pleasant Fire Chief J. R. Spencer said there were 50 to 75 community members at the museum while firefighters were battling the blaze. “It’s sad and it’s a big setback. You get quite an attachment to the exhibit and the families they represent,” Fowler said.

Mr. Fowler told the *Point Pleasant Gazette-Mail* on July 29 that he’s very confident the museum will be back, though he said the building still needed to be checked to make sure it’s sound. He said he thinks it will be possible to rebuild in the same spot. The museum opened in 2003 and focuses on river life and commercial enterprise on the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers. No one was injured in the fire and Fowler said the blaze is believed to have been caused by an electrical issue in the attic. He said many exhibits have been or can be salvaged. 🕒

Reflections from Our Readers continued from page 3.

grandfather PAUL F. THOMAS (4407). Built in Madison in 1934, she measured 107 x 30 x 4 and carried one boiler and the high pressure engines from the former ferry OWEVA. In 1939 Capt. Thomas also purchased the towboat CLAIRMONT from Billy Bryant of showboat fame, put a new steel hull under her, and with the PAUL F. THOMAS ran her in the ferry business as ROSEMARY (4844) until 1943.



Lillian Hughes, hostess aboard GORDON C. GREENE, from a photograph courtesy of Paul Thomas.

Charles Bogart writes: “Concerning the cover of the June issue, I did not see this exact moment in time as captured by this picture taken from the Central Bridge between Newport and Cincinnati, but I did see both the DELTA QUEEN and ISLAND QUEEN tied up at the Public Landing as depicted in this photo. If the dates in the captions are correct, I saw the two on Sunday, August 3, 1947. I was six years old at this time.

“We lived on Oak Street in Newport and my father’s mother lived on Mulberry Street in the Over-the-Rhine area of Cincinnati. Every other week on Sunday we would walk — we had no car — from our house to 7th and Washington and catch the Number 11, Ft. Thomas streetcar, which crossed into Cincinnati over the Central Bridge to the CN&C’s Dixie Terminal at 4th and Walnut.

“Crossing the Ohio River by the Central Bridge was something I always looked forward to. One never knew what one would see moving on the river or tied up to the river bank. If only I had had a camera, but as my Mother would tell me, only rich people could afford cameras. Anyway, I remember seeing this big boat tied up at the Greene Line wharfboat just below the ISLAND QUEEN. On asking my Dad about this ‘new boat’, he told me it was the DELTA QUEEN and she had come from California and was going to offer river cruises for rich people. Thus, we never rode the DELTA QUEEN. However, I did get to ride the ISLAND QUEEN twice in 1947: once for Catholic School Day at Coney Island and the other time on the outing to the park with Stag Sportsman Club of Newport, of which my Father and Grandfather were members.

“I was just at my 60th high school class reunion (Newport Catholic). We got talking about Catholic School Day at Coney Island and all agreed that the ride to and from Coney on the ISLAND QUEEN when we were in first grade was much more fun than going to and returning from there by Green Line bus as in later years.”

† Charles’s recollection of the day he first saw the DQ, and of his two excursions aboard ISLAND QUEEN that same year, was but one of several responses your editor received from those who still recall that long-ago image. We thank him for sharing his memories, and we add this further comment from one of our regular correspondents to the “Reflections” column.

Tom McNamara writes: “The copy of the June S&D has arrived. Wow! Greatest issue ever. The cover is superb with IQ, DQ, OMAR and two Greene Line boats — and, oh yes, the Suspension Bridge — all in one. Good as it gets. Of course I’m pleased that it validated my memory of the gray DQ

when I was five years old. Odd, how one thing like that will stick in your mind, as I don't remember anything else about that day which we must have spent at Coney Island. Given your dates of July 27th to August 8th for the DQ layover, I suspect that Sunday, August 3 was the day as I think our outing was likely on a Sunday.

Moving on, I sure hope you have motivated Charles Bogart to write something about the trolley ferry operation. That would be interesting. The feature by Capt. Bill Judd on Autos by Boat was very informative. I knew cars got shipped that way, but not in such huge quantities and for so many years."

‡ The REFLECTOR is delighted that this photo brought back some memories obscured by too many passing years. We are also happy to fulfill Tom's hope for a piece by Charles Bogart about the Evansville-Henderson interurban ferry operation. Thanks to Charles's most generous and kind permission, he has allowed us to share with you some excerpts that we have chosen from that chapter in his book *Yellow Sparks Over the Bluegrass*. We refer you to page 7. And yet another response to that mention of the HENDERSON ferry appears below.

Tom Way writes: "The latest REFLECTOR is amazing! I knew some of these things about new cars on the river, but not that this car delivery by steamboat had ever involved the SPRAGUE! Who was paying the coal bill for that? Included is something I downloaded some years ago from a Yahoo railroad group. No identity on the boat, but alleged to be at St. Louis.

"I have had a long term interest in steam sidewheel transfer boats. While not yet ready for publication, I have also been looking into the HENDERSON. Attached is a view I have of the boat while still at Dubuque which includes two unfinished sternwheelers. My impression was that this view had been in the REFLECTOR once before, but perhaps not. There actually is a steam transfer connection with the HENDERSON.

"The Illinois Central operated many different transfer boats about five miles above Evansville before getting rights to use the L&N Bridge at

Henderson in 1904. DEKOVEN was the last boat at Evansville and then moved to Paducah. The Evansville, Henderson and Owensboro Railway was organized in 1912 and bought the rights to use the old IC tracks and inclines. The location is also interesting because both sides of the river here are in the state of Kentucky. What appears as the Indiana shore is actually an old island with the back channel side pretty much dried up, but still considered the state line.

"I have arcane interests in how these ferries actually operated. Steam railroads adjusted the cradle position as the river level changed by pulling it with the locomotives that were loading and unloading the boat. An interurban obviously had electricity available. Perhaps they had extra DC motors of the same type the cars used and ran a winch arrangement. HENDERSON seems to have provision for an overhead wire for the trolley, but would also need a connection to power it up. The car also needs power while crossing the cradle. Did the cars carry batteries to keep the lights on inside the car as they crossed the river after dark? Lots of questions."

Capt. Bill Judd writes: "Well, here are two more stories. I sent along a whole lot of photos to go with each story, so feel free to use what you want. As you know, Fred McCabe just died and he had over 70,000 photos. Dan Owen had the biggest collection, McCabe was second, and I am third with just over 45,000 according to the late Dan Owen. Darlene says it will make a good bonfire. The leg is finally getting better and I am out of the boot at last. S&D lucked out as I got these two done and am pretty well along on two more."

Back Cover

Two views of the USE snagboat/towboat CHARLES H. WEST (T0381). At top, she is landed above an empty auto barge at St. Louis, date unknown, but likely after decommissioning in 1958. This photo was provided by Tom Way (see letter at left). Below, she appears at Nashville immediately after her construction in 1934 by Nashville Bridge Co. for the U.S. Engineers at Vicksburg. *Bottom photo from Murphy Library.*

