STURGEON PT. LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

ALCONA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FINAL REPORT - 1983 - LRP 511

Task No. 5D-9.2

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1983

This document was prepared in part
through financial assistance provided by
the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972
administered by the Office of Coastal Zone Management
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

ALCONA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

STURGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE RESTORATION PROJECT

VK1324.M5S7 1983

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MICHIGAN COASTAL MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM
1982-1983
YEAR-END REPORT

LRP-511

This document was prepared through a grant provided by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, administered by the Office of Coastal Zone Management (OCZM), National Oceanic and Admospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce via the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Land Resource Programs Division and in part, with funds from the Alcona County Historical Society.

REVIEW OF RESTORATION ACTIVITIES

The Alcona County Historical Society, with financial assistance from the Michigan Coastal Management Program, administered by the Land Resource Programs Division of the Department of Natural Resources, was able to complete several important restoration tasks at the Sturgeon Point Lighthouse property. These accomplishments have greatly enhanced the educational and interpretive opportunities offered to visitors of this historical maritime facility. The following narrative describes the specific tasks that have been undertaken during the last year as a result of this project and Coastal Program grant dollars.

The Marine Reading Room

The Alcona County Historical Society purchased the necessary lumber material and constructed a wooden bookcase in the Marine Reading Room. The bookcase is mounted on the wall, is nine feet long and contains three shelves. This shelving is being used to store books and other literature about the history of the development of the Great Lakes, a couple of small artifacts of local maritime significance and old photographs. It is expected that as the library material is enlarged, space on the bookcase will be used to house the additional books, thereby replacing these other items.

The Society also constructed a wooden reading table and benches of early design. The table is three feet wide and five feet long and is located in the center of the reading room. The benches are the same length as the table and have been stained and finished to match the bookcase.

Outdoor Historical Interpretive Displays

The Society poured six concrete slabs in various locations around the lighthouse and living quarters to be used to mount maritime artifacts donated by individuals and/or private corporations. The concrete slabs are six inches thick and have dimensions of six feet by six feet. They are situated on the perimeter of the grounds to the west and north of the living quarters. The wooden rudder from the vessel "Marine City" is mounted on one of these slabs directly behind (to the west) of the living quarters and can be easily observed by visitors either before entering the lighthouse structure or after exiting the building. The Historical Society also has in its possession a steam winch and mooring bits which will be mounted ~~on~~ two other slabs very soon. The remaining artifacts to be placed on display include an old anchor, an early radar housing unit, and a steam donkey engine.

Highway Signage

Six metal highway signs were purchased and installed at various key points along a state trunkline and county roads to direct traffic to the lighthouse site. The signs identify the Sturgeon Point Lighthouse and provides a directional arrow to allow interested travelers the opportunity to be guided to the site. The wording on the signs read: "Sturgeon Point Lighthouse Marine Museum". Two signs are situated along Highway US-23, directing northbound traffic from Harrisville to the lighthouse via Lake Shore Drive coming from the south. The second sign along US-23 is located just north of the US-23 and Alcona Road intersection, directing southbound traffic coming from the north to the lighthouse via Alcona Road. There is a third sign to direct traffic

from Alcona Road into Lake Shore Drive, thereby allowing this traffic to reach its destination from the north. There are two signs at the corner of Lake Shore Drive and Sturgeon Point Rd., one each for both north and southbound traffic. The last sign is located at the end of Sturgeon Point Road where it meets the shore of Lake Huron, directing visitors to the parking lot for the Sturgeon Point Lighthouse property.

The signs have white lettering on a blue background and are maintained by arrangement with the Alcona County Road Commission. The Road Commission removes the signs in the fall after the lighthouse closes for the season, stores them during the winter months and then puts them up again in the spring just prior to the reopening of the lighthouse.

Historic Photographic Display

Several historic maritime photographs have been mounted into plain dark wooden frames, representative of the type of frames used at the turn of the century, and hung at various locations in the living quarters of the lighthouse property.

Wood Shelving in "Fishing" and "Life Saving Service" Rooms

The Historical Society has acquired, by donation of a private individual, old ship's planking which is being used to construct wooden shelves in both the Fishing and Life Saving Service rooms. These rooms are located upstairs on the second level where restoration efforts are somewhat behind accomplishments completed on the main floor of the living quarters. These shelves will contain a variety of maritime artifacts, some of which have been donated by local residents and are original property of the lighthouse and life saving station from when it was active.

Three significantly valuable artifacts have been located and acquired by the Historical Society and will be placed on display in the Life Saving Service Room. A gass hook, used by servicemen in the life saving boat to snag people from the water, mooring alongside a troubled vessel, or for shoving off from another boat, has been graciously donated for use in the lighthouse museum. This gass hook is approximately sixteen feet in length. An oar about 12 feet long and a steering oar 20 feet long, both orignally from a life saving vessel stationed at Sturgeon Point, have also been given to the Society for display in this room.

Miscellaneous Educational/Interpretive Activities

The Historical Society was also able to purchase approximately thirty books dealing with early Great Lakes pioneers, shipwrecks, lighthouses, and other Great Lakes maritime historical accounts. These books have been placed on the bookcase in the Marine Reading Room and are available for review by visitors to the lighthouse.

Additionally, a mural was painted on the wall at the foot of the stairs, showing an open door view into the base of the tower of the lighthouse, including the iron spiral staircase. The U.S. Coast Guard built a retaining wall to block entrance into the tower from the living quarters. However, this was the original passway used by the lightkeeper when going back and forth between the lighthouse tower and the living quarters. The artist's time to paint this mural was donated as a gift to the Historical Society.

LP

Alcona Historical Society

Sept. 3, 1983

Dear Mike,

Enclosed is information pertaining to Sturgeon Point Lighthouse grant. Projects as desribed are completed.

Could you match my info to fit your forms? I'm at a loss as how to answer, being that none of our work was contracted out.

We're going to England next week so I won't be available until Sept 27th or 28th.

Call Phyllis Bennett (Treasurer) if you need help. Phone 517-471-5207.

Sincerely,

"Bing"

ALCONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OURLY WORKSHEET FOR DNR COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, STURGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE MARINE MUSEUM

	Name	Post Office	Hours	Work Description
1/5	Floyd Benghauser	Black River	6	Framing pictures, educational display
1/6	Floyd Benghauser	Black River	8	Digging footings, putting in forms, pouring cement slabs
1/10	John Ashford	Harrisville	8	" " " " " " " "
1/10	Steve Ashford	Harrisville	8	" " " " " " " "
1/12	Mike Johnson	Harrisville	4	" " " " " " " "
1/14	Dave Ashford	Lincoln	3	Erecting rudder on slab
1/1	John Ashford	Harrisville	3	" " " "
1/1	Frank Tompkins	Black River	12	Transporting and erecting rudder
1/1	Floyd Benghauser	Black River	12	" " " "
	Total		64	@ $3.35/hr. $214.40

ALCONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MATERIALS PURCHASED FOR DNR COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, STURGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE RESTORATION PROJECT

e	Where purchased	Address	Material Description	Cost		
7	North Eastern Concrete	Harrisville, MI	Concrete for six slabs	$202	50	
2	Alcona Road Commission	Lincoln, MI	Highway marker signs	287	27	
4	K-Mart	Alpena, MI	Picture frams (6)	29	85	
6	K-Mart	Alpena, MI	Picture frames (10)	37	30	
1	Alpena Steel and Wire	Alpena, MI	Channel iron for mounting rudder on slabs	53	87	
5	Hillsdale Pub.	Hillsdale, MI	Books for Library	92	40	
3	Great Lakes Historical Soc.	Vermillion, OH	Books for Library	70	85	
			Total	$774	85	

ALCONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Educational Gifts and value, given to Sturgeon Point Lighthouse and Marine Museum, DNR Coastal Management Program

e	Description of Gift	Value		
	4' x 9' bookcase for library } Art Piper, Spruce	$150	00	
	3' x 5' trestle table and benches for library } Art Piper, Spruce	200	00	
	Books:			
	Alcona-The Lake Pioneers, Gauthier	3	75	
	First Hundred Years, Westcott, Bailey	2	50	
	American Practical Navigation, USN Hydrological Office	10	00	
	South Manitou Story, Crowner	5	00	
	Ladies of the Lake, Clary	24	95	
	1 Chart (framed), Beauford Wind Scale	5	00	
	1 Chart (framed), Weather Signals	5	00	
	TOTAL	$406	20	

National Gypsum Company
Cement Division

September 28, 1983

Alcona Historical Society's
Sturgeon Point Lighthouse Museum
c/o Mr. Floyd C. Benghauser
4028 Black River Road
Black River, MI 48721

Dear Sir:

The Vessel Department of National Gypsum has presented to the Sturgeon Point Lighthouse Museum a steam deck winch from one of our Great Lake's vessels and one set of ballards from the Steamer J. A. W. Iglehart. The value of these items as used equipment is $1,800.

I am looking forward to visiting your museum.

Sincerely,

Norman R. Martinson

Norman R. Martinson
Fleet Engineer

NRM:eo

Ford Avenue · Alpena, Michigan 49707 · 517 354-4171
Manufacturers of Allentown and Huron cements

Thanks

Alcona County Review

OFFICIAL ALCONA COUNTY SEAT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1877 HARRISVILLE, MICHIGAN 48740 EIGHT PAGES, PLUS FOUR PAGE TV GUIDE TUESDAY, MAY 31, 1983

THE STURGEON POINT LIGHTHOUSE was the scene of some pomp and ceremony Saturday as members of the Spruce VFW Post 6466 dedicated a new flagpole

Gheen photo

New

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will act as chair
with Kevin Sm
Kaye McGuire

Alcona Historical Society is busy

by Bonnie Benghauser

If you haven't noticed, things are happening at the lighthouse. We have had two boys from the Emergency Youth program assigned to work four days a week scraping walls, painting, repairing the chimney, etc.

Members of the community have donated time and items to complete the museum. David Gauthier donated his time to do the brickwork on the chimney. The boys, Beng, and Frank Tompkins built a cap for the chimney to keep the weather and the birds out.

Bill Hanson volunteered his time and equipment to mow the lawn until his machine broke down. Harold Lilly finished the project.

Jane Buhl donated a tub and wringer for the summer kitchen. The Donald Nuffers of Greenbush donated a washboard for the tub.

Art Piper made the benches for the library. The dining room and kitchen curtains were donated by the Black River Ladies Group, the library curtains by the Lester Langes. The Presbyterian Women's Association donated two new brooms to the cleaning closet.

Woody Moore and Chuck Fisher started painting the upstairs rooms this week. Ashford Builders donated their time laying forms and cements for the pads on the grounds for the outdoor displays, such as the rudder from the ship *Marine City* that burned just north of the lighthouse.

Richard Moehl of Ann Arbor donated notepaper, winter and summer scenes of the lighthouse he had taken, to the Historical Society to sell.

Elsewhere, the Harrisville Girls Scout Troop and their mothers, with Alexina LeClair, cleaned up the Bailey school and yard in May. It is open weekends or by appointment by calling the Wilfred Myers 736-8135.

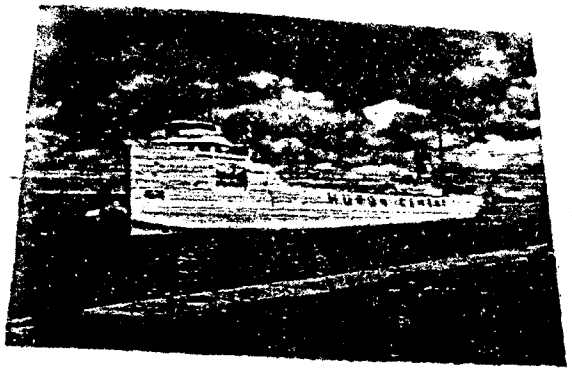
Tom and Diane Carroll donated a building in Harrisville to be used as a mini-museum eventually.

Bill Carr, Society president, called a board meeting in June, at which time Richard Thompson of Spruce, Tom Carroll of Harrisville, and Ray Koertge of Lincoln, were appointed to the expanded board of directors.

Barbara Tait is busy with preparations for the Strawberry Festival at Bailey School on July 3rd from 2-4 p.m. Put this date on your calendar to round out your Fourth of July weekend.

Remember the Poison Center

The Western Michigan Poison Center wants to alert the public about the possibility of arsenic poisoning from some types of ant poisons. The two products most often involved in cases treated by WMPC are Terro Ant Killer by Senoret



STEAMER [illegible] J. [illegible]

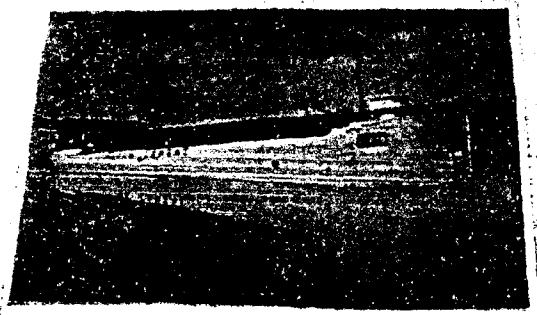
The second ship of the Burns fleet was designed and built by Burns as a [illegible] bulk cement carrier. The ship, christened the [illegible] for the [illegible] President and Sales Manager, was launched at the [illegible] on September 5, 1923.

The new vessel incorporated all the improvements in unloading equipment which had been developed during the years of the Mitchell's operation. This powerful ship, [illegible] was 240 feet with a beam of 38 feet registered a carrying capacity of [illegible] barrels which was more than twice that of the Mitchell.

The Boardman, which was later renamed in honor of Mr. Lewis J. Harrison, continues in uninterrupted operation from her date of launch until the early 1960's. By this time her tonnage had been replaced by larger vessels and she, too, surpassed the role of [illegible] by capacity.

In this status, she served as the principal floating storage ship in supplying cement for the Upper Peninsula portion of the Interstate-75 Freeway and later the Ice Lock installations at the Soo.

She continues to serve in a fully operational stand-by status and is at present providing supplemental storage for the distribution plant in Saginaw, Michigan.

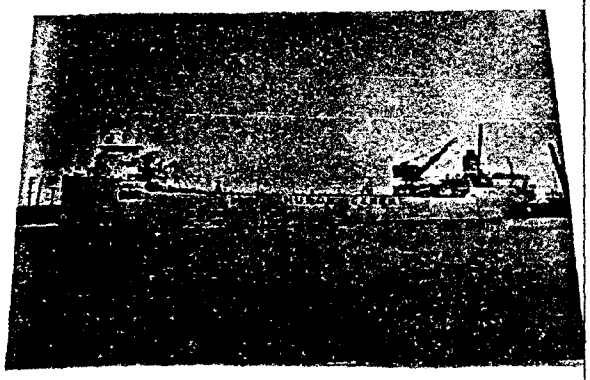


STEAMER J. N. FORD

The sixth vessel to be acquired by Burns was the former E. N. Collins. The Collins, which was later to become the J. N. Ford in honor of Burns's first President, was obtained from the Ulmann Transit Company of Cleveland, Ohio and converted in 1929. The conversion, like the Ford before her, was completed in the yards of the Christy Corporation in Sturgeon Bay.

The Ford, unfortunately, here were to remain than Burns ever had plans to convert, as the old fleet carrier was also built at the cost of the machinery and is just approaching the end of her life as a self-propelled vessel.

Fortunately, however, the attributes she continue or her hull to serviceability adaptable to the barge concept and she, too, could function effectively as an unmanned self-unloading [illegible].



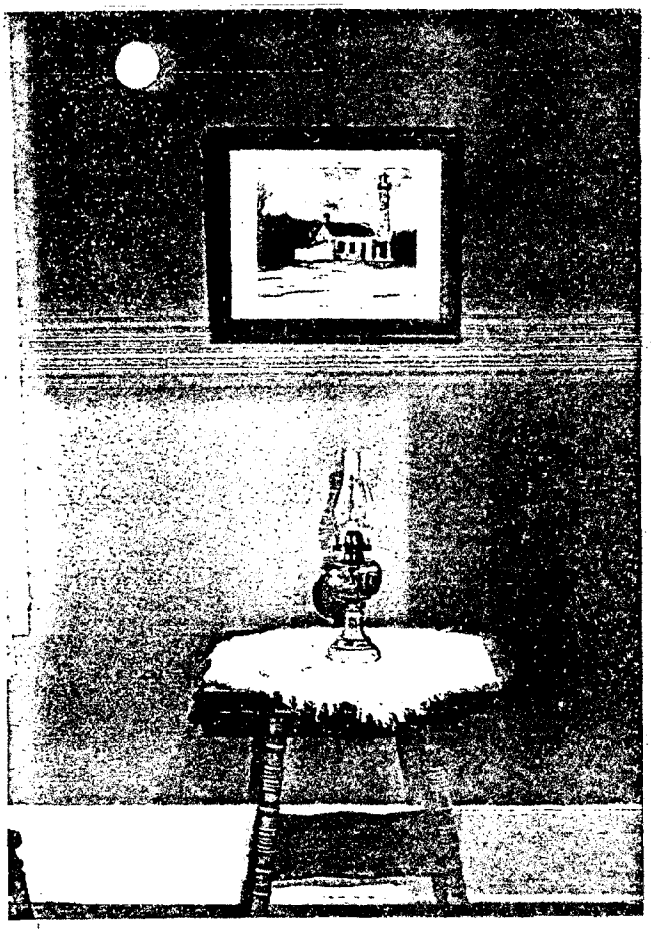
STEAMER E. N. FORD

The Steamer Presque Isle, a bulk ore carrier, was purchased in 1955 and renamed for Board Chairman, Henry M. Ford. The conversion to a self-unloading bulk cement carrier with capacity for 19,000 barrels was performed by the Christy Corporation of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin in 1956.

Following the christening on July 4, 1956, the E. N. Ford served in a fully active capacity until recently being shifted to a marginal, short season operation.

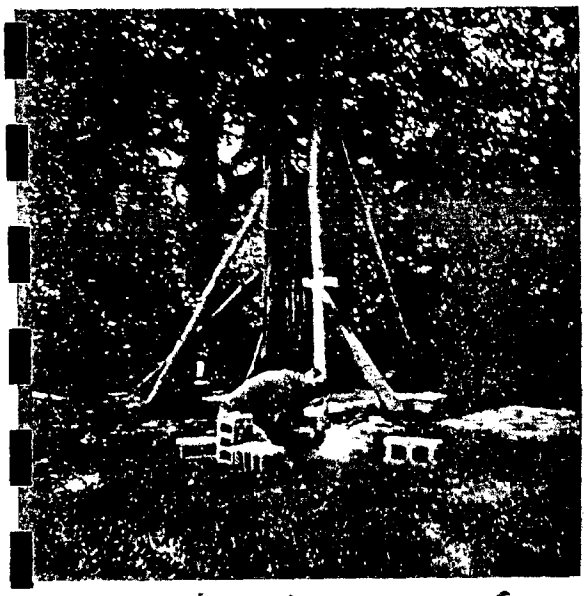
Built in 1898, the Steamer E. N. Ford has nearly reached the end of her economic life and, therefore, represents the weakest link in the Burns fleet. Ever increasing repair costs coupled with the fact approaching need for substantial capital outlays strongly suggest that it would be prudent to terminate her operation as a self-propelled vessel in the very near future.

Conversely, with hatches, boilers and engine equipment removed, she could continue to serve at a satisfactory economic level for many years as an unmanned self-unloading barge.



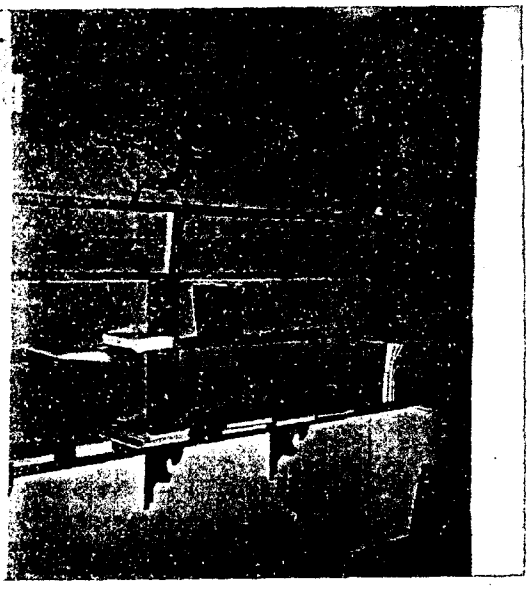
TURGEON POINT
LIGHTHOUSE
ARINE MUSEUM

STURGEON POINT
LIGHTHOUSE
MARINE MUSEUM



Welding braces for ladder on slab #1

2 of 6 cement slabs.



Library shelves.

Library table and benches

Alcona Rd and Shore Rd. Going Nor.

US 23 and Alcona Rd.

Corner Point Rd and Shore Rd.

Point Rd near light House

NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER LIBRARY
3 6668 14103 5271