



Reflections



Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



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Happenings at the Marsh

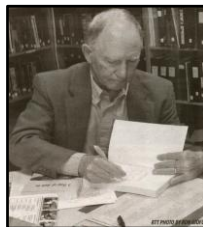


New Book Coming Soon

Things have been very busy here at the Marsh Collection the past few months. We are in the midst of creating some *NEW* publications which we anticipate releasing in the new-year, one of which is our 15th volume of "Soundings". "Soundings" is a compilation of marine-related news that appeared in the Amherstburg Echo. Volume 15 spans the years 1915-1919 and contains some interesting news, including the account of the "Black Friday" storm which occurred on October 27, 1916 and in which 50 lives and four ships were lost. Email us if you would like to be notified when the book is available or follow us on Facebook.

Book Signing

We were fortunate to have Patrick Livingston visit the Marsh Collection recently for a book signing and reading of his latest work "A Day on Bob-lo", which is available in our gift shop, along with his other book about Bob-lo "Summer Dreams". Over forty people came out for the event, and many stayed for the reading and enjoyed visiting with Patrick.



Local Fenian Raid Medal



A local collector brought in something worth taking a look at recently. It was a medal awarded to Ensign E.G. Park for his service during the Fenian Raids. Ernest G. Park held the position of postmaster of Amherstburg for nearly 49 years. He passed away in 1921.

The History of McGregor 1875-1900

In the early years of the Amherstburg Echo, there was a weekly column about McGregor. One of our dedicated and very knowledgeable volunteers has been diligently working on compiling not only those columns, but a timeline of activities and events in McGregor during its first 25 years. We're hoping to have it in book form by summer 2016. If you have early photos that we could include, please give us a call at (519) 736-9191 or email us at research@marshcollection.org.

What is the Marsh Collection Society?

Our mandate is to collect, preserve and encourage research into the heritage of Amherstburg and the lower Detroit River district.

This registered, non-profit organization was founded in 1983 by the late John and Helen Marsh, whose family published the Amherstburg Echo for over 80 years. Our funding comes from various foundations and private individual donations such as yours. A receipt for income tax purposes can be issued for any monetary donation of \$20 or more.

Just a Reminder

2015 will soon be a memory. If you are planning on making a donation to the Marsh Collection Society and require a receipt for income tax purposes, time is fleeting. We would love to hear from you in this regard.

Open
Tuesday - Friday
10 am - 4 pm
235 A Dalhousie Street, Amherstburg
(519) 736-9191

**CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS
DECEMBER 25 - JANUARY 4**



The Twelve Days of a Genealogy Christmas

On the twelfth day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me,
Twelve deeds and titles,
Eleven birth certificates,
Ten second cousins,
Nine tombstone photos,
Eight census searches,
Seven coats of arms,
Six GEDCOM files,
Five old wills,
Four death records,
Three French aunts,
Two old wills and,
One fully completed Family Tree!

Growing Up in the Burg

Winter Fun

by *Jeanne Deslippe*

As another winter creeps upon us, I find myself, as I do every year, reminiscing about the winters of my childhood. My memories tell me that winter lasted twice as long back in the 1950s and 60s, and had twice the amount of snow we are used to now. Back in the day, we kids played outside a lot; neither rain nor hail nor sleet nor snow could keep our moms from kicking us outside whether we wanted to go or not. There were only a couple of kids in my neighbourhood who didn't get thrown out the door to play in all weather, and there were days that I envied them, but those were the kids who grew into their teens not knowing how to skate, play hockey, swim, ride a bike, or fight. So... thanks, mom...I guess.

I remember a snowy winter night when I was seven years old, Christmas caroling with the Brownies and Girl Guides, in downtown Amherstburg. Fat snowflakes drifted down, the lights from the shops made the snow on the ground sparkle like so many jewels, and I thought everything looked simply beautiful...then I saw my dad's car going down the road in the distance whereupon I had some sort of existential panic attack, started to cry and wanted to go home. My sister Lynne told me to stop being a baby, and Susie Thrasher hugged me and gave me a nickel to get me to stop crying. I remember this incident every winter and I will always remember her for being kind to me.

Most of the town kids grabbed their skates as they were being booted out the door, and headed to the outdoor rink at the town park. We would skate for hours, taking little breaks in the 'bunk house' - an old log cabin (in my memory) structure with benches on all sides and a small stove around which we took turns warming our toes before heading back out to play crack-the whip. Two older boys were the supervisors and it was a special privilege for little girls to have one of the supervisors take your hand and skate you around the rink a couple of times. When we were finally exhausted we still had to walk home. A ride? Please. Nobody got driven around in those days. I recall many an evening taking off my boots and not being able to feel my toes for quite a while. A cup of hot chocolate was always the perfect way to end the day.

I was a lucky kid because my dad made us an ice rink in the back yard many winters. After a long, late shift getting out the Christmas run at Calvert's, dad would eat his warmed up supper and go stand outside in the deep cold and water the rink for half an hour. So, in between trips to the town park, we could skate at home too, and many of the neighbourhood kids took advantage of our rink as well. Nowadays, watching our home movies of these days is a guaranteed belly laugh.

The "Music Box" Open Air Dance Floor

Some of you out there may remember the "MUSIC BOX" Open Air Dance Floor on Dalhousie Street. In 1946 a cement dance floor and bandstand were laid out near the former garbage dump. It opened in June, featuring Billy Jupp and his 15-piece band. It closed in 1947 when the property was sold to developer James Flynn but the dance floor and bandstand remained until it was dismantled in the mid 1950s. (This photo was taken circa 1952. As a term of reference, the Music Box was about where the Dollar Tree store is on the south side of Pickering.)



What brought this piece of Amherstburg history to mind was the recent Windsor Star obituary of Flight Lieutenant F/L WWII RCAF Veteran Richard William "Billy" Jupp who died on October 5, 2015 in Ottawa. Born on June 4th, 1922 in Windsor, "Billy" Jupp attended Prince Edward School. Later, as a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, "Bill" flew Halifax Bombers with the 415 Squadron during the Second World War. He also flew CF86 Sabres with 422 Squadron in Germany during the Cold War." Following WWII, Jupp formed his 15-piece band, which included his brothers Jack and Gordon Jupp, as well as other members who had served with the RCAF during the war. He later enjoyed a second career as a professional musician and well-loved high school music teacher.

Shipping the Detroit

The Facto

by Al Jackson

This is the story of an event that took place at Amherstburg on the lower Detroit River during the summer of 1957. Some readers may remember the incident as it brings back memories of how unpredictable things could be on the river in those days. The tale involves Capt. J. Earl McQueen, his recently-built yacht the SHELTYE and an old tramp steamer named FACTO.

Cap McQueen and his wife Patricia had been living aboard the SHELTYE for several months at the government dock while some finishing touches on the sixty-six foot yacht were being looked after. On July 17th, the SHELTYE was moved to a newly-built dock in front of the McQueen residence on Dalhousie Street. The custom-built yacht was capable of sleeping sixteen, including a four-man crew and McQueen's intention was to live aboard until they could take the yacht to Florida for the winter.

In the wee hours of Monday morning, September 23rd, an old saltwater vessel called the FACTO, up-bound in the Amherstburg channel, veered from its course and ran hard aground on the east channel bank. The after-end of the ship struck bottom first and then the strong current swung the bow to within 20 feet of the shore in front of Capt. Charlie Hackett's home. The Norwegian-owned steamer was en route to Muskegon, Michigan with 4,000 tons of pottery clay when the mishap occurred. The cause of the misadventure was not clear but it was believed that the pilot on the vessel became confused with the location of buoys that had been moved for dredging operations in that section of the river.

At four o'clock that morning, Cap McQueen's bedside phone rang and he was informed by the McQueen Marine office that a saltie had run aground outside the channel and was asking for tug assistance. When Cap asked about the location of the casualty, he

*The FACTO, aground, 1957
Marsh Collection photo*



was told he should look out his port-side window to answer his question. The bow of the 245-foot FACTO was a mere 50 feet north of the SHELTYE. During the morning, the tugs ATOMIC, PATRICIA McQUEEN, JOHN ROEN JR. and STEVE W tried for several hours to free the stranded saltie but a strong west wind was keeping the water level low so that salvage operations were ceased until the next morning. The McQueen tugs were then joined by the tugs SUPERIOR and MARYLAND of the Great Lakes Towing Co. Together they were able to release the FACTO from her strand and send her on her way.

Launched in 1921 the FACTO had been built to replace another vessel of the same name which had been torpedoed and sunk in the English Channel during World War I. During World War II she was in service along the coast of the U.K., the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean. She had been in numerous slow-moving convoys that had been targets for German subs and aircraft, but survived the war years without injury. After a very adventurous career, she was finally scrapped at Masnedo, Denmark in 1964.

On a sadder note, Cap McQueen never got to take his beloved SHELTYE to Florida that winter as he suddenly became ill on October 8th, 1957 and passed away in the early morning at Grace Hospital.

Yesterday's News

1915/16

December – A very unusual thing happened in the river opposite Amherstburg the other day when the water was low. A large steamer was plowing its way up the river when it ran into a school of white fish so thick that the steamer almost grounded. The blades of the propeller raised hob with the fish cutting them in two and killing many, which drifted up onto the Bois Blanc beach. Many people in Amherstburg secured a supply as they floated down the river.

January – Nearly twenty-five thousand dollars worth of hogs were delivered to the various Amherstburg dealers on Tuesday and were shipped out in the afternoon in thirteen carloads. It was one of the biggest hog deliveries in the history of the town.

February – Residents in the vicinity of the Canard complain that there is a good deal of petty thieving going on, particularly in the way of stealing chickens and other poultry, provisions, etc. One man lost half a beef he had dressed and hung up in his barn.

1925/26

December – Floating ice is proving to be a dangerous problem to those whose business it is to transport liquor by motor boat from export warehouses at Amherstburg across the lower Detroit River to Gibraltar, Monroe, Ecorse or other Michigan points.

January – Chateau la Danse, the new dance hall and cafeteria built by

George Sellars at Malden Center, was opened on Friday night last, and in spite of the storm a large number of guests gathered and spent a delightful evening. Detroit, Harrow, Olinda and Amherstburg contributed to the crowd.

February – Taking advantage of the fine sleighing here during the past week, many very happy sleigh riding parties were organized among the young people. It recalled the days of simple joys before the advent of the automobile.

1935/36

December – Abolition within the next year of unemployment relief camps in which 20,000 single, homeless Canadians are housed at the present time is the objective of the Dominion Government.

January – Dr. T James Park, ex-mayor, former Medical Officer of Health has passed away at his home on Dalhousie Street after an illness of seven weeks.

February – Peddlers and out-of-town salesmen were discussed at the regular meeting of the Amherstburg Businessmen's Association held in the Library auditorium on Monday night and it was decided that some attempt should be made to curb their activity in town.

1945/46

December – The northern entrance to the Town of Amherstburg on King's Highway No. 18 is being further beautified with the

construction of rock gardens on the eastern side of the street.

January – A committee headed by N.A. Marra and comprised of R.P. Jones, Roy Martin, and R.D. Wigle was appointed by the Amherstburg Chamber of Commerce, to make plans for an Old Boys' and Girls' Reunion to be held this coming summer. This event will mark the 150th anniversary of the founding of Amherstburg.

February – Captain C.R. Hackett has been elected as chairman of the reorganized Amherstburg High School Board which now includes the Townships of Anderdon and Malden as well as the Town of Amherstburg.

1955/56

December – There was a large crowd on the ice skating rink at the Town Park Wednesday afternoon when it opened for the first time this season. Caretaker Lee St. John took advantage of the cold spell and worked for several days to lay down the foundation.

January – The Trenton Syndicate is drilling a deep test well on the farm of Manly Gibb, Lot 53, Concession 5, Malden Township. The Syndicate is looking for oil and gas.

February – There was a healthy expansion of the telephone system during 1955 according to the Bell Telephone Company of Canada. During that period, 359 new telephones were added to the Redwood exchange.

1965/66

December – Mrs. Janet Botsford McBride retired from the Public School staff after a career of forty-one years of service dedicated to teaching in, for the most part, the kindergarten and primary department in the elementary school system.

January – The construction of the new Amherstburg Municipal Building is progressing rapidly and the structure should be ready for occupancy on the deadline date at the end of March.

February – Tenders have been called for a three-room addition on Stella Maris Separate School, corner of William and Balaclava Streets, Anderdon. Plans call for two new classrooms and a 40 x 50 foot gymnasium.

1975/76

December – Every pre-Christmas, Otto Nissen and James White of the Seaway Café, Dalhousie Street, make several hundred gingerbread houses. These have a ready sale to a wide range of customers, some from far points in the United States and Canada.

January – Sod turning ceremonies for the new Fort Malden Mall, Sandwich Street south, took place Thursday afternoon. Mayor H. Murray Smith wielded the spade.

February – Open house was held at the Amherstburg Animal Hospital Sunday. This modern facility is

owned and operated by Dr. Ron Chan, and is situated on the southwest corner of Sandwich and Gore.

1985/86

December – A business license granted at the town council meeting will allow Tal Atkinson to operate "Atkinson's Valu Mart" grocery store at 181 Sandwich street South (the old IGA property).

January – The local PeeWee Northstars travelled to Bowmanville to compete in a tournament against opposition from much larger centres. Again this year, the local lads captured their division in handy fashion.

February – Amherstburg PUC employees donated their labour to install new ball diamond lights at the Bill Wigle park.

1995/96

December – The owner of the Bingo Mecca is starting the preliminary work on building a new bingo hall on Alma Street.

January – This weekend the Evangelical Baptist Church of Amherstburg is celebrating their 25th year of worship in the building at King & Gore Streets.

February – As of Monday, Enviro-Tech Plastics were the new owners of the former Faucher Lumber property on Fort Street.

2005/06

December – The development of a new \$20 million retirement home project was announced at the beginning of last Monday night's council meeting.

January – Chief Roger Hillingworth was officially sworn in last Tuesday afternoon at the Amherstburg Police Station by Master Justice Saul Nosenchuk.

February – Shaun Gignac, an architecture student, has a design he created in a window of the David Whitney Building on Woodward Avenue in Detroit, during Superbowl week.

PHILIPS TELEVISION for 1966



MODEL C55 with UHF

Attractive all wood cabinet available in Swedish walnut finish. Canada's first two-year picture tube guarantee. Preset fine tuning automatically "remembers" initial fine tuning setting; constant adjustment is no longer necessary. Direct vision tube. UHF Channels 14 to 81 complete. Instant picture and sound, monitronic circuit stabilizer. On 4" x 6" front mounted speaker unit. Lighted channel indicator.

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Bricks-n-Beams

123 Gore Street

The original owner of the lot upon which 123 Gore sits was named John Bloom. In 1803, John Bloom sold his lot to Timothy Shay and through a series of sales, by 1840 it was owned by a James Alexander who is listed in the files as a "grocery keeper". In 1851, James Alexander petitioned the government to obtain the patent for his property.

One of the affidavits in support of his petition was dated 1851 and stated that the old frame house which had been on the lot for upwards of 20 years had recently been torn down and a new house built thereon. Two earlier affidavits dated in December of 1849 make no mention of a new house, so therefore it is likely that the one storey house that currently occupies the lot, was built in 1850.

The 1861 census notes that James Alexander, 70 years of age, was a Miller by trade and living in a one-storey frame house with his family. Also living in the house was his 36 year-old wife Mary and three children; Eliza, age six, James, age four and Mary, age one.



Marsh Collection photo, c. 1978

By 1904, it appears that James and Mary had passed away and their son James W., now a mechanic in Detroit, sold the property along with adjoining property to Clarence E. Smith, a Mariner.

Clarence Smith built a much larger home fronting onto Bathurst at the corner of Bathurst and Gore, but retained ownership of 123 Gore as well. By 1914, Clarence Smith had passed away and the home at 123 Gore was bequeathed to Clarence's daughter Blanche Smith.

In 1925 the home sold for \$110, and then again in 1937 for \$500. This little home has a very long history, but seems to have retained the 1850's original outline with few changes or modifications.

Dube Family Photos

We recently received a collection of photos related to the Dube family from Malden. Stop in to see the rest!



Earl Dube



Children of Ada & Andrew Dube



Kay and Garfield Dube

Amherstburg Resident a Key Figure in the Underground Railroad

by Doris Gaspar

John Hatfield was a biracial man born in Pennsylvania. By the 1830's Hatfield was living in Cincinnati where he worked as a Barber on steamboats that travelled between New Orleans and Cincinnati. Hatfield also worked in conjunction with Levi Coffin, the unofficial President of the Underground Railroad, assisting fugitive slaves to travel north to freedom on the Kentucky-Ohio route. Hatfield's occupation as a Barber allowed him to obtain crucial information about posses and bounty hunters in pursuit of slaves. Even though John Hatfield exposed himself and his family to grave personal consequences by harbouring fugitive slaves he remained dedicated to this cause.

One of Hatfield's more memorable undertakings involved aiding a party of twenty-eight fugitives who had been brought across the Ohio River by John Fairfield. (John Fairfield was a white Virginian opposed to slavery whose daring exploits have largely been ignored by historians.) It was early morning before the slaves arrived on Ohio soil, wet and muddy from their ride in overloaded, leaky skiffs. Fairfield knew that entering Cincinnati with this large party would immediately alert people to their presence so he hid them in ravines on the outskirts of Cincinnati and went to John Hatfield for assistance. John Hatfield met with Levi Coffin who devised a plan to have the fugitives disguised as mourners in a funeral procession.

Food and blankets were provided by Hatfield's wife Frances, his daughter Sarah and their neighbours. John Hatfield took the provisions to where the slaves were hiding and advised them of the plan. Other Blacks arrived with buggies and the two coaches which had been hired for the "funeral". A funeral procession was formed which proceeded to the Methodist Episcopal burying ground in Cumminsville. John Hatfield rode ahead of the slowly moving procession to advise the local "conductor" of the Underground Railroad that a large party of fugitives would be arriving shortly. The fugitives left the procession at the cemetery and hastened to the nearby "station" where they received clean clothing and shelter. They were then forwarded from station to station through Indiana and Michigan eventually crossing into Canada at Detroit.

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, John Hatfield also moved to Canada fearing that his freedom would be in peril if he remained in the U.S. It is not possible to pinpoint the exact date of John Hatfield's arrival in Amherstburg. By Deed dated July 16, 1853 John Hatfield, then a resident of the Town of Amherstburg bought the property now known as 294 George Street. Hatfield's occupation was noted as a Confectioner on the Deed. Interestingly, in 1854 John Hatfield also rented the house of George Crawford which was located at 217 George Street.

George Crawford's wife, Laura Virginia Crawford had been born a slave in Covington, Kentucky. When just 15 years old she escaped from slavery and settled in Amherstburg. It has been said that Laura was mentioned in the book "Reminiscences of Levi Coffin". George Crawford was of Cherokee Indian descent from Franklin, Kentucky. When quite young, he moved to Detroit Michigan and relocated to Amherstburg in the late 1840's. George Crawford was a Master Carpenter and it is believed that he assisted in the building of The First Baptist Church at 232 George Street.

On August 7, 1855 John Hatfield, then described as an Innkeeper and his wife sold their property at 294 George Street. The house owned by John Hatfield at 294 George Street was subsequently replaced by a different house. After the sale of their Amherstburg property, the whereabouts of John Hatfield and his wife Frances are unknown. In 1854 John Hatfield's daughter Sarah had married Abraham Chandler in Wayne County Michigan and the 1861 Census noted Abraham and Sarah Chandler living in Colchester. By 1863 Sarah had moved to Michigan and the 1870 US Census indicated that she was then living in Bangor Bay, Michigan with her young family as well as Minnie Chandler aged 63 years who may have been her mother-in-law. (Abraham Chandler was not noted on the 1870 Census.) It has been suggested by a contributor to Ancestry.ca that John Hatfield may have gone to Australia but this supposition is based solely on the fact that an American named John Hatfield of a similar age died there in 1861.

Then & Now - Corner Dalhousie and Richmond



1968



2015