FREIGHTERS

THE BIMONTHLY PERIODICAL ON GREAT LAKES SHIPPING NEWS
EDITION #67 – JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SHIPWATCHER NEWS – EDITED BY BRENDAN FALKOWSKI – WWW.SHIPWATCHER-NEWS.COM

EDITOR'S PICK

SHORT ARTICLES ON HAPPENINGS AROUND THE LAKES

2022 SEASON IN REVIEW

JANUARY 16, 2023

While cargoes may not have been in for record books during the 2022 season, cruise ship visits definitely set the bar high in 2022. With visits from 8 cruise ships over the duration of the season, passengers from around the world came to visit and see the Great Lakes from spring to fall.

In 2022 we said farewell to many familiar vessels. The first to go was the *Manistee* when she departed Toledo under tow bound for the scrapyard in Port Colborne on March 30. Her Canadian fleetmate *Ojibway* joined her at the scrapyard on April 5, sailing under her own power. The former had been laid up since 2015 while the latter operated up until her final trip. The *S.T. Crapo* joined the former Lower Lakes-Grand River vessels in Port Colborne in early October having departed her home for over two decades of Green Bay, WI, under tow on September 29. Making way for new vessels as part of a fleet renewal program (see Algoma Tankers Shuffle), *Algoma Hansa* was sold overseas at the end of the 2022 season.

In the midst of these fleet transitions, the classic steamer *Philip R. Clarke* returned to service at the end of July after sitting out two seasons. Currently remaining in layup are the *Edward L. Ryerson, American Valor (Valo), McKee Sons, J.A.W. Iglehart, John Sherwin, Cason J. Callaway*, and *Roger Blough*. Damaged by a fire in early 2021, the *Blough* was towed to Conneaut, OH, in early November for continued layup.

A few new ships joined the ranks this past season. Canada Steamship Lines' *Nukumi* was welcomed early in the 2022 season. The purpose-designed self-unloader features a single-point loading system and diesel-electric propulsion. The USCGC *Alder's* former station of Duluth, MN, was taken up by USCGC *Spar* in March 2022. The one project that caught everyone's eye was the *Mark W. Barker*. Her construction began in 2019 and she entered service this past July, being officially christened in ceremonies at Cleveland, OH, on September 1, 2022.□

Algonorth on the Detroit River, August 26, 2021. Photo: Sam Hankinson

ALGOMA TANKER SHUFFLE

FEBRUARY 21, 2023

Algoma Central Corp. announced on December 22, 2022, that they acquired the two sistership tankers *Chantaco* and *Chiberta* for their domestic product tanker fleet. Both vessels were built in 2007. *Chantaco* laid up at Halifax, NS, at the end of the 2022 season, where she was renamed *Algotitan*. She will enter service for Algoma in the spring of 2023. *Chiberta*, since renamed *Algoberta*, is currently operating in Europe under management of partner Furetank AB and will enter Great Lakes service later in the season.

"These vessels are high quality additions to our product tanker fleet, and mark an important step in our ongoing fleet renewal journey which is expanding to include renewal within our tanker fleet," noted Gregg Ruhl, President and CEO of Algoma Central Corp.

Prior to the acquisition of the *Chantaco* and *Chiberta* Algoma purchased the 2010-built tanker *Birgit Knutsen*. She is currently operating internationally and is a sister ship to ➲the Algoma tanker *Algoterra*.

Wrapping up the Algoma Tanker shuffle for the time being was the transition of the *Algonorth* to Algoma-Furetank partnership Furebear. At the end of January *Algonorth* sailed to Denmark where she was refit and redressed in Furetank colors to begin service in the northern European product tanker trades. Ownership of the vessel was transferred to Furebear and Larsson Shipping, and she is managed by Furetank. *Algonorth* was built in 2008 and was owned and operated by Algoma from 2019 to 2023. □

WINTER WORK PREPARES SHIPS FOR UPCOMING SEASON

MARCH 11, 2023

The work never stops for the mighty ships that sail the Great Lakes. Once the cold weather sets in and the boats tie up, workers scramble to perform maintenance and projects to get the vessels ready to sail for the upcoming season. All sorts of projects were undertaken this winter.

In Superior, WI, the *American Mariner* was drydocked for repairs from a *[Continued in NEWS IN PHOTOS]*➲

SOURCES:

"ALGOMA CENTRAL CORPORATION ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF TWO PRODUCT TANKERS" Algoma Central Corp., 22 December 2022. Accessed 21 February 2023. https://www.algonet.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Algoma-Tankers-Vessel-Acquisitions-Press-Release.pdf

"Ashtabula/Defiance end Soo Locks Shipping Season". Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping News, 17 January, 2023. Accessed 21 February 2023. https://boatnerd.com/boatnerd-news-january-17-2023/

"Furetank and Algoma Central Corporation extend joint venture through tanker acquisition with Larsson Shipping". Furetank, 20 February 2023. Accessed 21 February 2023. https://www.mynewsdesk.com/furetank/pressreleases/furetank-and-algoma-central-corporation-extend-joint-venture-through-tanker-acquisition-with-larsson-shipping-3234699

News in photos

Some of the latest news captured in photos

Scaffolding and safety lines are evidence of work onboard the *Herbert C. Jackson*. Photo: Brendan Falkowski

Winter work prepares ships for upcoming season

➲*[CONTINUED FROM EDITOR'S PICK]* grounding earlier this season while activity surrounds the *Lee A. Tregurtha* and the *Edward L. Ryerson* moored nearby. A number of vessels in Sturgeon Bay, WI, are in for repairs and work at Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, with projects ranging from hull surveys and painting to new construction. Interlake Steamship's *Herbert C. Jackson* and *Hon. James L. Oberstar* tied up in Detroit, MI, for repairs, with work in the cargo hold and engine room being carried out this winter.

In Hamilton, ON, the *Algoma Mariner* and *Radcliffe R. Latimer* had ballast water treatment systems installed onboard.

Many of the ships in the American Steamship, Grand River Navigation and Lower Lakes Towing fleets stayed the winter in Sarnia, ON, and Ashtabula, OH, where they run their own ship repair services to maintain their fleet. The first ship to depart this year's winter layup fleet was the *Dorothy Ann / Pathfinder* which left Toledo, OH, for Cleveland, OH, to run ore shuttles on February 26, 2023.

There's never a moment of rest for Great Lakes shipping and the important people that work hard to keep the system moving forward.□

(Clockwise from top left): *Edward L. Ryerson* and *Lee A. Tregurtha* bask under the moonlight in Superior, WI. Photo: David Schauer; Engine maintenance onboard *Herbert C. Jackson*. Photo: Brendan Falkowski; *Dorothy Ann* and *Paul R. Tregurtha* moored in Toledo, OH. Photo: Brendan Falkowski.; *Algoma Mariner* and *Radcliffe R. Latimer* undergoing ballast water treatment system installations in Hamilton, ON. Photo: Brendan Falkowski;

BREAKING THE ICE

KEEPING THE SHIPPING LANES OPEN DURING THE WINTER

USCGC *Mackinaw* breaking ice in the Straits of Mackinac, March 17, 2022. Photo: Isaac Pennock

Great Lakes shipping is put on ice in the winter months, which prompts the strategic deployment of icebreakers from the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guard fleets to ensure that commerce keeps flowing. Icebreaking on the Great Lakes typically begins around Christmas time, and runs through Easter. The exact duration of the icebreaking season varies with, well, ice. The powerful fleet of icebreakers can be away from their homeport for as many as 40 days. Although each vessel technically has its own homeport, ships are directed to assist across the lakes where they are needed. Last winter, duties of the Cleveland, OH-based USCGC *Neah Bay* took them as far as Duluth, MN.

Coast Guard icebreakers have several duties during the winter season, ranging from ship assists to flood mitigation. Winter icebreaking operations for the U.S. Coast Guard are concentrated into two primary areas of work – "Operation Taconite" covers the Straits of Mackinaw, St. Marys River, and Lake Superior, while Operation Coal Shovel includes the St. Clair, Detroit River, and Lake Erie systems.

Icebreaking operations on the U.S. side are primarily carried out by the six 140-foot Bay Class icebreaking tugs and the heavy icebreaker USCGC *Mackinaw*. The two Juniper class vessels (*Hollyhock* and *Spar*) were mainly designed for buoy-tending duties and are much more limited in icebreaking capabilities.

Icebreaking maneuvers are typically limited to daytime as sight is critical to track ice movements. Overnight, cutters will "hove-to" in stable ice, stopping with their stern to the wind and monitoring their position to make sure they do not drift towards hazardous waters. In risky locations like the St. Marys and St. Clair Rivers they will moor for the night. While deployed in icebreaking ops cutters like the *Neah Bay* will spend anywhere up to 4-5 days away from the dock. The power of an icebreaker comes from its ability to get on top of ice and break it with its weight. Most of the weight onboard comes from fuel stores,➲ which means the ship is constantly refueling to maintain enough weight.

Establishing a path through the ice is the primary concern for cutters, as a properly maintained track will ensure no vessels get stuck in transit. During the day the crew of a cutter conducts track maintenance and prepares for upcoming vessel passages. Ice officers - personnel in charge of dispatching vessels in the Coast Guard icebreaker fleet - in Sault Ste. Marie and Detroit, MI, plan out where capacity is needed and direct active icebreakers to locations where their assistance is necessary. Crew members stand a four-hour watch with eight hours off, though some watches may last much longer than others depending on conditions at hand. With three crewmembers on the bridge and two in the engine room nobody is without a job to do during ice operations.

When a ship gets stuck ice creates pressure on its hull which can cause significant damage to the vessel if not released. Freighters rely on icebreakers to relieve this pressure since they are not able to themselves. To free a ship, an icebreaker will build speed and pass by the stuck vessel at a safe distance. The cutter's wake helps to break the ice around the vessel, and it will sail passes around the stuck vessel until it is freed. Once the vessel is free the cutter will continue escorting the ship through the track.

Last winter, the USCGC Katmai Bay was assisting ships stuck in ice outside of Thunder Bay, ON. A plate on the northern end of the bay broke off, locking several freighters in the ice and pushing them towards a shoal. The ice built up immense pressure on one of the vessels, taking over 40 passes to break it free. As this situation indicates, ice floes can be very dangerous and may push vessels into hazardous waters.

"At the time in Thunder Bay, all I could think about was one day at a time," recalled LTJG Justin Kang of the *Neah Bay.*➲

➲"All the ships have their own schedule and demands they need to meet and we had to make sure to escort and assist as many ships as possible". The work of icebreakers to keep commerce moving in the Great Lakes region is not only critical regionally, but also has a global impact. According to Business Insider, the Great Lakes region would have the third largest economy in the world if it were its own country, with a GDP of $6 trillion. "Icebreaking may not seem as cool to the public compared to drug interdiction but it plays a pivotal role in keeping our world moving, Kang added."

On the return trip to Sault Ste. Marie the crew of the *Neah Bay* faced 7–10-foot seas. In the winter months the Great Lakes is unwelcoming to any vessel, and in seas like this topside icing becomes a hazard to the ship. As the temperature drops below freezing sea spray begins to freeze and accumulate on deck, adding additional weight. To address this problem the vessel will slow down and adjust course to allow for the deck crewmembers to go out on deck and break the ice off using hammers. Once the ice is cleared off the ship continues on its way until ice becomes a problem again. It's a "rinse and repeat" process. Wind chills are often into the negatives as well, but the Coast Guard icebreakers are built for the cold and are well designed for the conditions they face.

For LTJG Kang one of his most memorable experiences on the icebreaker is in one of the tightest spots on the Lakes, helping to escort the *Frontenac* through the Livingstone Channel onboard the *Neah Bay*. Frontenac was stuck traveling through the channel while icebreakers. USCGC *Neah Bay* first tried tackling the situation themselves, but after getting stuck a few times, they teamed up with the Canadian icebreaker *Samuel Risely* to get the job done. The *Risley* was off the port quarter of the *Frontenac* while the *Neah Bay* was off her starboard, just forward enough to allow ice to pass to the side of the Frontenac and leading her up the river.

"There are standard practices when it comes to ice breaking in certain scenarios and it's nice to have that common knowledge with our Canadian counterparts. Because of that, we can easily be on the same page when it comes to tackling tasks together," notes Kang. This is a prime example of the binational partnership between the United States and Canada to keep ships moving through the ice.

On the maintenance side, ships are prepared to stay in as reliable of operation as possible during icebreaking season. When there's a breakdown, the ship makes way to port and the crew get things back in working order as soon as possible. ➲

USCGC *Mackinaw* breaking ice in the West Neebish Channel. Photo: Roger LeLievre

USCGC *Neah Bay*, breaking ice in the Straits of Mackinac, March 6, 2020. Photo: Isaac Pennock

➲ During the summer months the crew performs preventative maintenance such as engine overhauls, painting, and more to ensure the ship is ready for ice season. The crew also conducts training and public affairs, including appearances at festivals and events across the Great Lakes ranging from the annual Coast Guard Festival in Grand Haven to escorting the Chicago-Mackinac and Bayview-Mackinac sailboat races. These events inform the public about the mission of the Coast Guard.

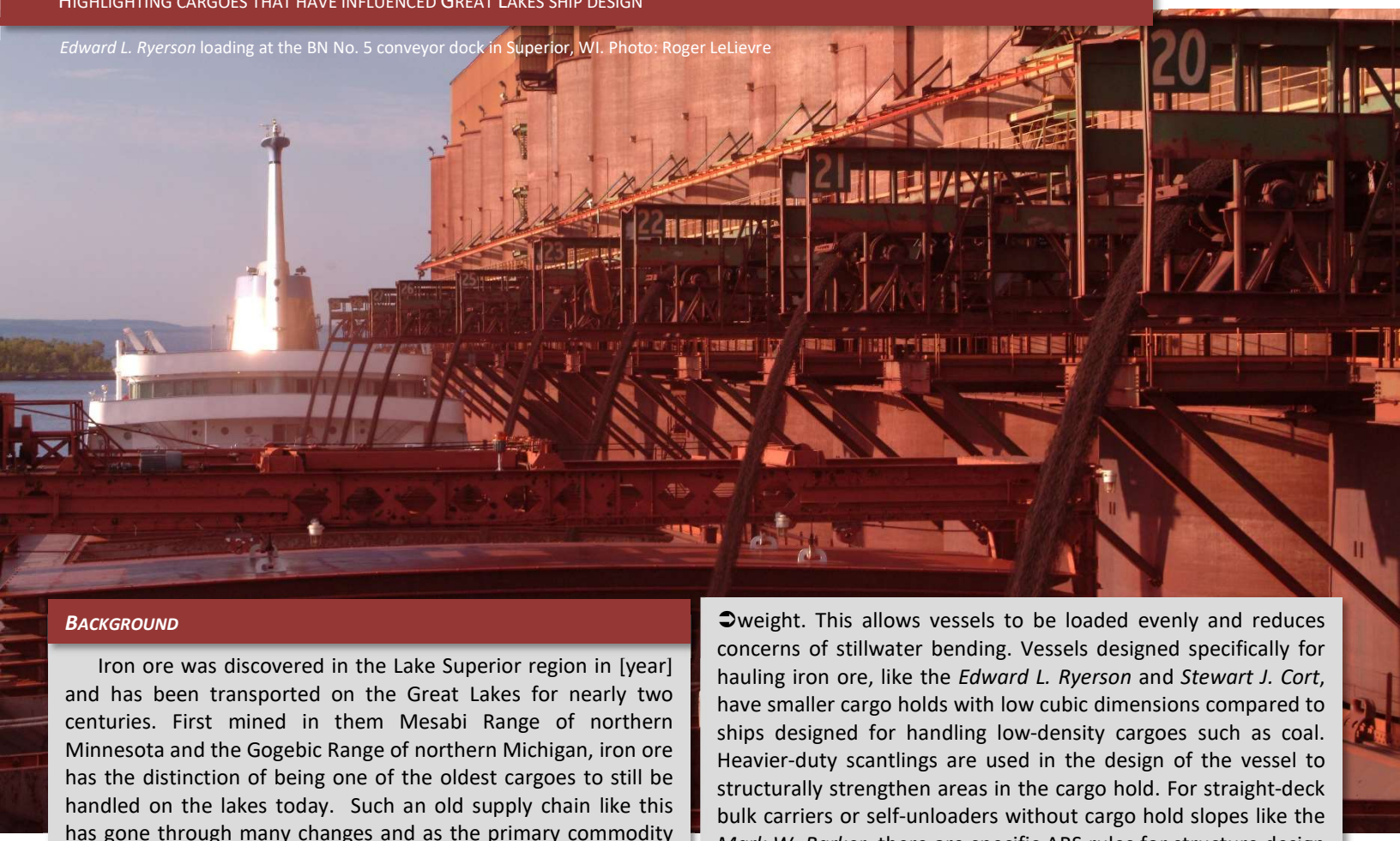
The challenges faced by the Coast Guard sailors aren't always ice or assisting mariners in need of help. With a quick and steady turnover rate, there are always new crewmembers coming in with varying levels of experience. "Everybody is learning," said BMC Joshua DeHaan of the *Neah Bay*. "Driving in the ice, operating in different ice situations have different challenges for maneuvering. Every situation is different, so we have to adapt to each situation." The crews try to take time to practice when they are able to so everyone is as prepared as possible. The Bay class tugs are designed with berthing for 21 crewmembers, but currently only sail with 17. Inadequate crewing is a fleetwide issue right now, making flexibility a challenge and adding complications when it comes to long days on the water.

Despite these obstacles Coast Guard crews work to break the ice that tries to put the brakes on Great Lakes shipping. Just as their motto 'Semper Paratus' states, they are always ready to face the challenges of weather and ice to ensure commerce keeps moving.□

Special thanks to US Coast Guard District 9 Public Affairs, as well as BMC Joshua DeHaan and LTJG Justin Kang aboard the USCGC *Neah Bay*.

Designed with the Cargo in Mind – Iron Ore

Highlighting cargoes that have influenced Great Lakes ship design



Edward L. Ryerson loading at the BN No. 5 conveyor dock in Superior, WI. Photo: Roger LeLievre

Background

Iron ore was discovered in the Lake Superior region in [year] and has been transported on the Great Lakes for nearly two centuries. First mined in them Mesabi Range of northern Minnesota and the Gogebic Range of northern Michigan, iron ore has the distinction of being one of the oldest cargoes to still be handled on the lakes today. Such an old supply chain like this has gone through many changes and as the primary commodity on the Great Lakes, it has played a major part in the design of the ships to sail the Great Lakes for decades.

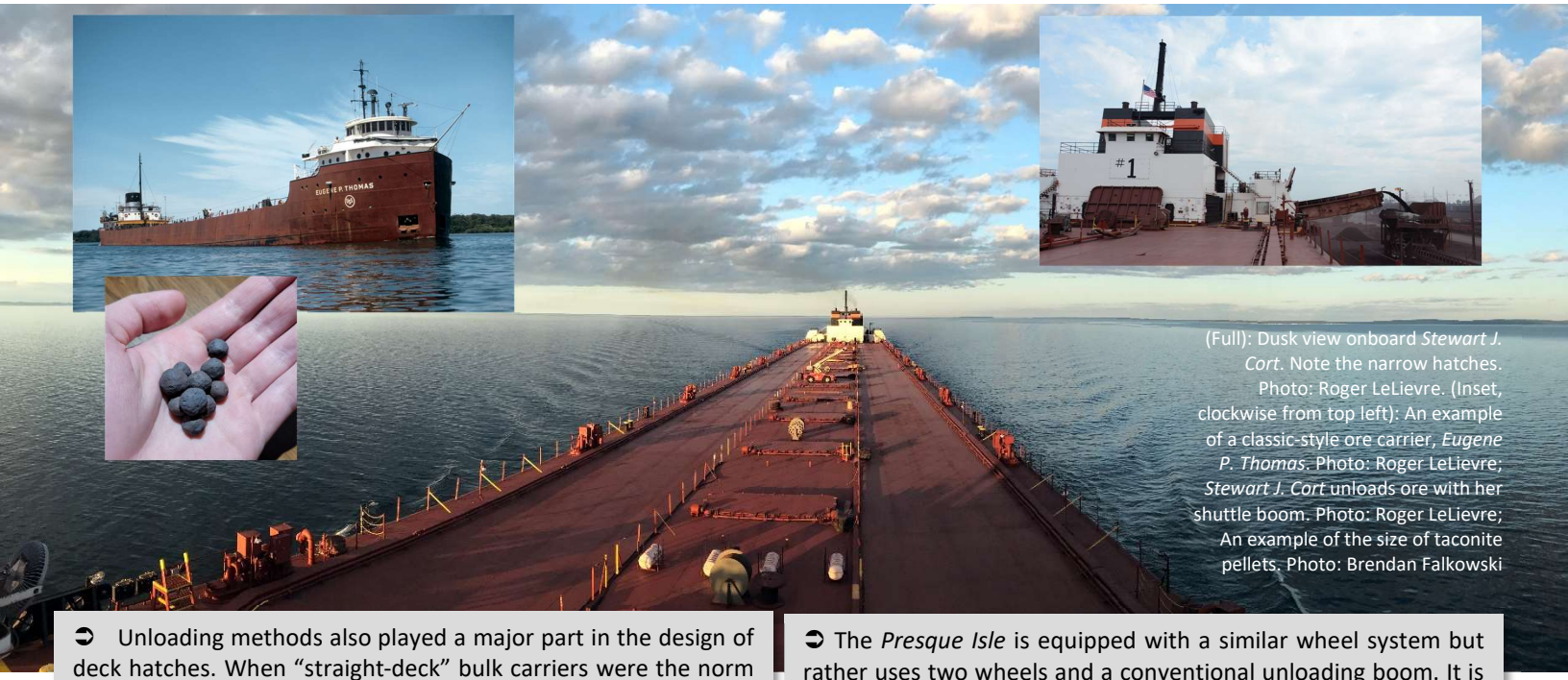
Ore cargoes originally transported on the Great Lakes consisted of raw iron ore, in the form it was extracted from the ground. Following World War II, the rich deposits of iron ore were heavily depleted. This acerated the process that steel companies and mining outfits had already started, which was to search for alternative ways to extract and transport raw materials from the iron range. While the rich raw iron deposits were depleted, deposits of lower-grade iron ore were heavily plentiful throughout the region. In order to be usable, the lower-grade iron ore had to be processed into a more refined product for steel mills to use. It was during this time period that the process of taconite pelletization was developed. During this process, low-grade iron ore is crushed and rich iron ore is extracted and mixed with clay and limestone to make marble-sized pellets. Taconite pellets proved to be very successful, being first produced and shipped in 1950 and now make up almost the entirety of iron ore shipped on the Great Lakes. Taconite pellets also hold much less moisture than raw iron ore, allowing them to be shipped during the colder months of the shipping season.

Cargo Hold

Compared to other common bulk cargoes on the Great Lakes, iron ore and taconite pellets are relatively high-density cargoes. Iron ore does not typically fill up an entire cargo hold due to its➲weight. This allows vessels to be loaded evenly and reduces concerns of stillwater bending. Vessels designed specifically for hauling iron ore, like the *Edward L. Ryerson* and *Stewart J. Cort*, have smaller cargo holds with low cubic dimensions compared to ships designed for handling low-density cargoes such as coal. Heavier-duty scantlings are used in the design of the vessel to structurally strengthen areas in the cargo hold. For straight-deck bulk carriers or self-unloaders without cargo hold slopes like the *Mark W. Barker*, there are specific ABS rules for structure design onboard vessels that carry cargo directly on the tank top. Additionally, Iron ore boats typically have larger than normal ballast tanks due to the smaller cargo hold size.

Loading and Unloading

Infrastructure for loading iron ore and taconite pellets onto freighters has remained largely the same for over a century, with the exception of the introduction of conveyor loaders in the 1950's. Conventional gravity ore docks have pockets store ore dumped by train cars. The pockets then feed chutes along the side of the dock that dump cargo into the holds of the awaiting ship. Gravity docks were a primary constraint on the design of ore carriers for a long time, as cargo hatches on the deck of the vessel had to be wide enough for the chutes to dump cargo into the hold. Even super ships, such as the 105' wide *Roger Blough* and *Presque Isle*, were designed with wide cargo hatches and a shallower hull depth to be able to load under gravity docks. Conveyor docks have fewer restrictions on the vessels being loaded. They use a similar system to gravity docks, but instead of using chutes to dump cargo into the holds of a ship they use extendable conveyor booms. The type of vessels that frequent conveyor docks such as the *Stewart J. Cort, Edwin H. Gott*, and *Edgar B. Speer*, have very small cargo hatches for loading cargo. With their small cargo holds and hatches designed for loading at specific docks, these vessels are designed to pull up to the dock and load their cargo with relatively little additional work. ➲



(Full): Dusk view onboard *Stewart J. Cort*. Note the narrow hatches. Photo: Roger LeLievre. (Inset, clockwise from top left): An example of a classic-style ore carrier, *Eugene P. Thomas*. Photo: Roger LeLievre; *Stewart J. Cort* unloads ore with her shuttle boom. Photo: Roger LeLievre; An example of the size of taconite pellets. Photo: Brendan Falkowski

➲ Unloading methods also played a major part in the design of deck hatches. When "straight-deck" bulk carriers were the norm for ore cargoes iron ore was unloaded using shoreside equipment, typically cranes or Hulett unloaders. Hulett unloaders consisted of a bucket at the end of a mechanical arm. The arm reached into the ship's cargo hold and scooped cargo out, dumping directly into train cares onshore. Hatches had to be large enough for Huletts to be able to reach in without causing damage to the vessel.

Development of Self-Unloading Systems

Ships capable of unloading cargo without assistance from shoreside equipment were first developed for the stone trade and later to serve coal markets. Taconite pellets opened the door for self-unloaders to enter the ore trade as earlier vessels were not able to handle heavy-weight materials like raw iron ore. Due to their small and relatively-uniform size taconite is easily handled by self-unloaders. This capability further led to the "boom" in self-unloading technology on Great Lakes ships throughout the 1970's.

Several unloading systems were developed to specifically handle taconite pellets. The *Roger Blough* was constructed with the first shuttle-type boom on the Great Lakes. Rather than using a long conventional boom on deck, she was designed with short boom running the width of the vessel. The system is housed in the stern of the vessel and it slides out of its compartment to unload directly into a hopper at specific ports. This design was primarily influenced by labor unions manning the docks, which placed limitations on the length of the self-unloading boom carried onboard the ships utilizing the dock facilities. A total of four ships were built with similar unloading boom arrangements, those being the *Stewart J. Cort*, *Edwin H. Gott*, and *Edgar B. Speer*. The shuttle booms were very limited in versatility as only a few ports had dockside hoppers to accommodate them.

The self-unloading systems were further diversified in their elevators, meaning the systems that bring cargo from the hold to the boom on deck. The *Stewart J. Cort* and *Presque Isle* – the first two 1,000-Footers – were designed with rotary-type elevator systems. Onboard the *Cort* the cargo hold belt runs cargo to the aft end of the vessel and wraps around a large rotating wheel that has small buckets to bring cargo to her shuttle boom. ➲

➲ The *Presque Isle* is equipped with a similar wheel system but rather uses two wheels and a conventional unloading boom. It is interesting to note no other vessels were built with rotary elevators afterwards. A few years later, Canadian engineering firm Stephens-Adamson revolutionized self-unloading systems not only for iron ore carriers but for all self-unloaders. Their design for the original C-Loop elevator system utilized two conveyor belts layered on top of each other in the shape of a "C" to pinch cargo between them and transport it to the unloading boom on deck. This system made its debut onboard the *J.W. McGiffin* and has been used on nearly every self-unloader conversion project and nearly every new construction since. Its popularity and success have proven that it is one of the most efficient and versatile designs for handling cargoes like iron ore.

As the tonnage demands for iron ore were so great, companies needed to upgrade their older vessels with the latest technology to service their customers. Many 1950s-era vessels were converted into self-unloaders during the 1970s and 1980s, most optimized for serving the iron ore trade.

Future Cargoes

Looking to the future, cargoes such as Hot-Briquetted Iron (HBI) and Direct-Reduced Iron (DRI) may be more commonly carried by ships on the Great Lakes. HBI is similar to handling taconite, though it is considerably larger. Its size may limit the ability for this commodity to be moved on standard self-unloaders. DRI is a challenging cargo to handle as it reacts with air and water to produce heat and hydrogen. If the hydrogen builds up in the hold it could potentially become highly flammable. Special systems are in development to maintain a low enough hydrogen concentration and therefore mitigate risk when handling DRI. While these cargoes may take a bigger role in the greater stage of Great Lakes shipping, taconite is here to stay as it is the raw material used to make HBI, DRI, and steel.

Since the early years of shipping on the Great Lakes iron ore has proven to be a major and influential cargo and has had major impact on the design of Great Lakes ships, a trait it will surely carry into the future.□

Special thanks to the naval architects who provided their time and resources to help me write this article. Thank you to Travis Martin, Fred Koller, and Nicholas Posh from Bay Engineering, and Nick Hunter from NETSCo – Brendan Falkowski

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

Hon. James L. Oberstar at Sault Ste. Marie, MI, June 7, 2022. Photo: Brendan Falkowski

In 1957 the Shenango Furnace Co. of Pittsburgh, PA, announced a contract let to American Shipbuilding Co. (AmShip) to construct a new freighter at their Toledo, OH, shipyard. Construction of AmShip Toledo's Hull #193 began shortly after. She was the last in a series of three similar sister ships, her older sisters being the *George M. Humphrey {2}* of 1954 and *John Sherwin {2}* of 1958. Shenango's new vessel was built at a cost of approximately $8 million dollars and measured in at 710' long, 75' wide, and 37'06'' from keel to spar deck with a capacity of 25,400 tons. She was powered by a 9350 SHP General Electric cross-compound steam turbine with a pair of Babcock & Wilcox oil-fired water tube boilers. The new ship was launched on November 22, 1959, and christened *Shenango II* on Cleveland's lakefront on May 14, 1959, and entered service two days later.

In her early years the *Shenango II* set several grain cargo records. The first was set on May 9, 1965, when she loaded 689,000 bushels of wheat at Chicago, IL. Later that same year she loaded a record load of 910,340 bushels of oats at Duluth, MN, for a winter storage load at Buffalo, NY.

By the 1967 season Shenango Furnace Co.'s marine division was nearing its end and the *Shenango II* became excess tonnage. On March 1, 1967, *Shenango II* and her fleetmate *William P. Snyder Jr.* were sold to Interlake Steamship Co. *Shenango II* was renamed *Charles M. Beeghly* prior to entering service that season.

In early 1972 the *Beeghly* was sent to Fraser Shipyards in Superior, WI, to be lengthened by 96'. She was placed in drydock and cut in half amidship. The stern was floated out of drydock and the new 96' midsection addition was floated in, and all three sections lined up and the drydock drained. The hull was welded together and strengthened and the *Beeghly* returned to service as the third largest ship on the Great Lakes. With her new midbody the *Beeghly* was now 806' long with a capacity of 32,500 tons.

The very next season the *Charles M. Beeghly* set an iron ore record on July 28, 1973, loading 31,015 tons of ore at Taconite Harbor, MN, for delivery to Lorain, OH. While sailing through ice on the St. Marys River on January 26, 1978, the *Beeghly* ran➲

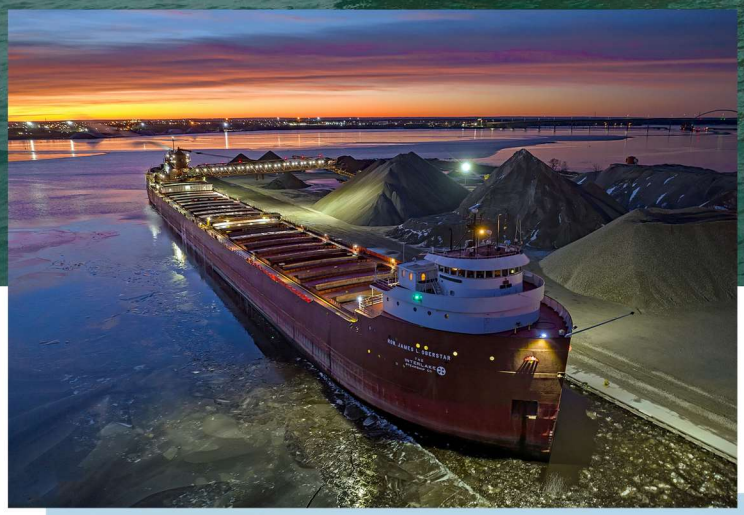
Shenango II, St. Marys River, 1960's. Photo: Tom Manse

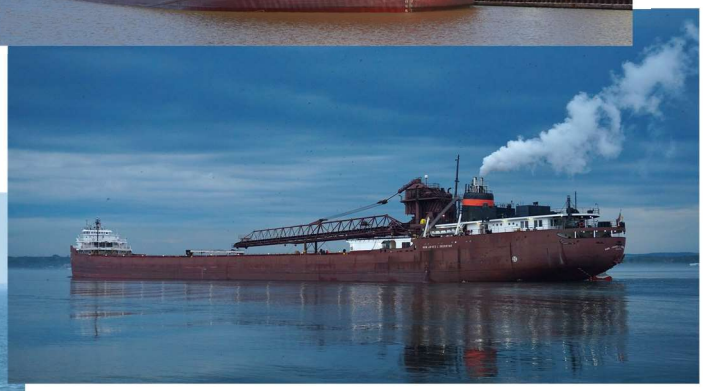
Charles M. Beeghly, St. Marys River, 1994. Photo: Roger LeLievre

➲ aground. After being freed she was escorted through the river by the Coast Guard before heading to Superior, WI, for repairs.

At the end of the 1980 season *Charles M. Beeghly* returned to Fraser Shipyards again for another major conversion, this time for the installation of a self-unloading system. New sloped sections were installed in the cargo hold to feed cargo to a single hold belt. The hold belt fed a loop belt elevator system installed just forward of the after deckhouse with a 250' deck boom. She returned to service in April 1981 only to return to Superior to layup in November due to an economic downturn. It is interesting to note that this happened to be the same economic downturn that sidelined her sister *John Sherwin*, from which she has never returned to service. *Charles M. Beeghly* returned to work in April 1984 but ran into trouble on her first voyage back in service. Ice and currents drover her stern into the breakwall in Superior, WI, delaying her return until May 14. ➲

Hon. James L. Oberstar upbound on the Detroit River, September 20, 2021. Photo: Sam Hankinson





(Clockwise from top left): Unloading in Duluth, MN, November 2022. Photo: David Schauer; Unloading at Superior, WI, August 2019. Photo: Isaac Pennock; On the St. Marys River, May 2017. Photo: Jack Hurt; Downbound on Lake St. Clair, September 2020. Photo: Logan Vasicek

➲*Charles M. Beeghly* had the honor of loading the last cargo out of Taconite Harbor, MN, on August 21, 2001. Her crew was honored with Chamber of Shipping America's Jones F. Devlin Award on June 10, 2004 for achieving 1,398 days without a lost-time accident.

In February 2007 the new name *James L. Oberstar* was painted on her hull with intentions of renaming the vessel in honor of U.S. Senator James L. Oberstar. At the request of Sen. Oberstar, the renaming did not follow through and the name *Charles M. Beeghly* was reapplied to the hull.

The *Beeghly*'s career as a steamer ended on November 25, 2008, when she laid up for the winter at Bay Shipbuilding in Sturgeon Bay, WI, to be repowered with a new diesel engine. Over the winter her old steam turbine was removed and a pair of Rolls-Royce Bergen B32:40L6P diesel engines with a combined horsepower of 8158 BHP. *Charles M. Beeghly* returned to service on June 19, 2009, as a motor vessel. ➲

➲*Charles M. Beeghly* was officially renamed *Hon. James L. Oberstar* prior to entering service for the 2011 season. She was rechristened on May 4, 2011 by Jean Oberstar, wife of Sen. James Oberstar.

Over winter layup in early 2015 the *Oberstar* was fitted with new diesel exhaust scrubbers at Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding in Sturgeon Bay, WI. The scrubbers remove pollutants from the engine emissions, making a plume of steam the only thing that comes from her stack. *Hon. James L. Oberstar* continues to be an active vessel in the Interlake Steamship Co. fleet and serving the iron ore and stone trades. ◘

Sources

Falkowski, Brendan. "Shenango II". Shipwatcher News Great Lakes Ships. 19 August 2020. Accessed 19 February 2023. https://greatlakesships.wordpress.com/shenango-ii/

"M/V Honorable James L. Oberstar". Interlake Steamship Company. N.d. Accessed 19 February 2023. http://www.interlake-steamship.com/our-fleet/m-v-honorable-james-l.-oberstar/

Wharton, George. "Hon. James L. Oberstar". Great Lakes & Seaway Shipping Online. N.d. Accessed 19 February 2023. http://boatnerd.com/pictures/fleet/JamesLOberstar.htm

BRENDAN FALKOWSKI is a Great Lakes ship enthusiast who shares his passion for the freighters through his newsletter and research. Brendan is a graduate of Bath High School, and is attending University of Michigan's College of Engineering this fall to study Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering. Brendan is an avid musician, and is a member of the trumpet section in the Michigan Marching Band. He also is a competitive sailor, most recently helping to found the Bath High School Sailing Team. He enjoys sailing and spending time with his friends and family. ◘

SHIPWATCHER NEWS GREAT LAKES SHIPS

www.greatlakesships.wordpress.com

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SPONSORS OF SHIPWATCHER NEWS

Support Shipwatcher News at www.shipwatcher-news.com/support/

Special thanks to the sponsors of Shipwatcher News:

BOSUN SPONSORS

Slo-Mo-Sean Charter Fishing

BOSUN SPONSORS

Allen Salyer

David & Gus Schauer

Susan Wolfe

MATE SPONSORS

John & Kay DeCarli

International Shipmasters Association Toledo Lodge 9

ENGINEER SPONSORS

Jack Baker

Jerry & Dee Dee Heck

Tom & Donna Heck

Bob & Mary Schroeder

Bud Siudara

CAPTAIN SPONSORS

Algoma Central Corp.

Bay Engineering, Inc.

EMS-Tech Inc.

Ross & Debbie Falkowski

Lauren Heck

Martha Heck & Richard Wilson

Interlake Maritime Services

Know Your Ships

NETSCo., Inc.

Port City Marine Services

Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry

Jerry Siudara & Lisa Lemans

VanEnkevort Tug & Barge

Subscribe for free at: www.shipwatcher-news.com/subscribe/

Visit on the web at: www.shipwatcher-news.com

©2023 Brendan Falkowski

Cover Photo: USCGC *Mobile Bay* [WTGB-103] breaking ice in the Straits of Mackinac, March 25, 2022. Photo: Isaac Pennock