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The Newsletter of the **PROVINCIAL MARINE RE-ENACTMENT GROUP—HALIFAX SPECIAL**



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Fall 2009 EVENTS

Aug 1, 2 & 3, Heritage Weekend, Amherstburg, Ft Malden & PM Commissariat

Aug 8-9, Seige of Fort Erie, Fort Erie

Sept 6-7, Backus Mill, Port Rowan, ON

Sept 13-14, Backus-Page House, Wallacetown, ON

Sept 5-6, Fairfield, Thamesville, ON Also Fanshawe 1812, London, ON

27 Sept 09 HMCS Hunter reaffirms its Freedom of the City

Oct 3-5, Chatham

October 2-4, Fanshawe 1812, London, ON

Oct 24 09 Maidstone Bicentennial Museum celebrates "PIRATE DAY" for kids

MARINE SOUNDINGS is a quarterly newsletter of the PROVINCIAL MARINE RE-ENACTMENT GROUP of Amherstburg. It is put out in FEBRUARY, MAY, AUGUST and NOVEMBER Ideas, questions, articles are needed at the **beginning** of the month of publication. Note the change in our publication dates.

Marine Soundings

is published by the Provincial Marine Amherstburg, a Re-enactment Group.

Membership is 15 dollars a year, which includes the right to go in our encampments, train on our equipment, learn sailing on our vessels. It includes an insurance component and our quarterly newsletter. In addition we have many social events each year. In addition active re-enactors pay \$7.00 towards insurance.

If you are a member of a similar organization you may apply for just a subscription to our newsletter. At \$6.00 Canadian funds and \$6.00 US, we are simply looking to recover our costs.

The Executive for 2009 (Elections May 5th)

David May Sr.—President
Peter Rindlisbacher—Vice-President
Ellen Rindlisbacher—Treasurer
Secretary—Jenny Lajoie

Board Directors:

David May, Bob Ferguson, Peter Rindlisbacher, Ellen Rindlisbacher, Vern Coon, Jim Ouellette, Jane Teeple, Vicky Beaulieu

Committees (chairs highlighted) Some positions are vacant.

Newsletter: **George Marshall**, Carol Ferguson (membership matters) Members needed from each area

Education: C. Ferguson, Peter Rindlisbacher

Membership: **Jane Teeple**

Boats: Bob Ferguson, Vern Coon, P. Rindlisbacher

Events: **Marty Burnett**

Black Powder: **M. Burnett**, David May

Drill: **James Whyte**, Dale Kidd

Social: **vacant**

Promotions: **Jenny Lajoie**

Brick Campaign: **Carol Ferguson**, Bob Ferguson

Commissariat: **vacant**

Period Clothing: **Jane Teeple**, Elizabeth Kersey

Bingos: **Brenda Mayer**, E. Kersey

Our Sponsors and Supporting Organizations:

Essex Community Futures Development Corp.

Trillium Corporation

Windsor Charity Bingos

Royal Canadian Naval Association

Royal Canadian Navy

The Legion Branch 157 Amherstburg

The CAW Branch 200 *Computers for Kids*

Hbc (Hudson Bay Company) has helped us with a grant to celebrate some of our earliest settlers.



To submit articles, questions, ideas e-mail

gtmar@allstream.net

or contact our President David May

To Read articles in our newsletter on the web, visit

www.provincialmarine.org

To contact Marty Burnet, our events coordinator

Martyb17@hotmail.com

Halifax 250

We all have our own stories of how we arrived at Halifax. Some took an easy flight and some drove and others trailered the guns and boats that took part in this very historic event. Saturday was to be foggy with drizzle. We had a practice row in the morning to test the time for the official event. It was full of ambiance... Twenty longboats rowing thru the fog... No modern edifice in site. In the afternoon, the real thing; The Admiral and his Flag Officer and their Ladies safely aboard, we made fast time to the landing. Rafted three across, we disembarked and assembled above for the event. I scoffed at the drizzle until I took my hat off. The event finished, we made record time rowing back to HMCS Scotian for "Up Spirits".

On Sunday, we had a hearty row across the harbour. Did I mention that it is the second largest natural harbour in the world? We had lunch on the other side, then back in the boats for a sail. We beat up to near the harbour mouth for a salute to the Sailor's Memorial and scudded past the tall ships back to HMCS Scotian

Packing up is always more hectic than setting up. You're tired and have a long drive ahead (not if you flew). In all, a very nice tired!

Lt. David May



MARINE SOUNDINGS promotes the history of the Provincial Marine, most particularly in the War of 1812, and is available as part of the membership of the Provincial Marine. For members not on the web we mail their copies and send it to organizations at cost for \$ 6.00 CAD or US including postage and handling.
MARINE SOUNDINGS/AUGUST

Please submit contributions in the form of photos or articles, links to other groups that might interest members.

David May
 President
 Provincial Marine Amherstburg
mrdavemay@sympatico.ca

Please contribute to our new website. Google "Provincial Marine" to find our website. To go directly use:
www.provincialmarine.org

Coming 1812 Events for 2009

Aug 1, 2 & 3, Heritage Weekend, Amherstburg, Ft Malden & PM Commissariat

Aug 8-9, Seige of Fort Erie, Fort Erie

Sept 6-7, Backus Mill, Port Rowan, ON

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Halifax—1749-2009

Halifax is much changed in 2009 since I first visited it in 1956. Halifax, founded 260 years ago by British General Edward Cornwallis, is a very historic place, having served as a colonial capital, as a bastion for British sea power and as the gathering place for the great convoys of the Allies that allowed us to win the war. When I visited it in 1956, it had a grayness to it common to many Canadian cities. This has

gradually changed and now it sparkles. Cruise ships make it a regular stop; **it's cool, nice for walking, and it's safe.**



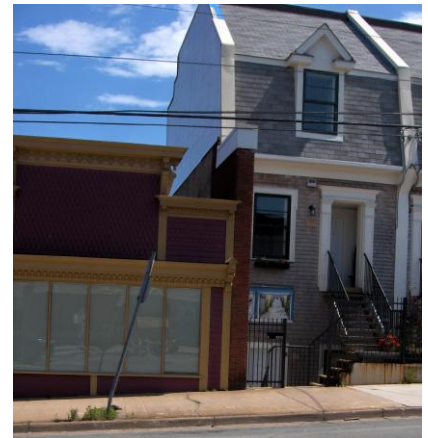
It has grown slowly until recently so a lot of its historic architecture is still visible. The round St George's Church, mentioned in the last newsletter, is still there in spite of a fire in the 1990s.

Brunswick Street, full of so many historic buildings, has lost some of them, but there are still enough to preserve the historic flavour.

Halifax has come to appreciate the charm of its Georgian and Victorian architecture. Where they have torn down some worn out and perhaps badly wired and insulated buildings, they are taking care to do in filling with units that don't clash with their neighbours. Pictured above is an



apartment building with a little of the flavour of the town. I don't like the long outside stairs.



The unit above looks so much part of the neighbourhood you have to look twice. They are also taking care to remind us of their history. Statues of Samuel Cunard and Mr Alexander Keith (pictured at left with two descendants) help to remind us. Samuel Cunard brought us safe passage across the Atlantic, and Alexander Keith created India Pale Ale, the first I ever drank and still the best.

Cunard is depicted standing by



the famous ship's telegraph, which made safe communications

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between the command position and the noisy engine room possible. Above is another important figure, Alexander Keith,

with two ladies who claim descent from him. The motto "Taking the Time" has to do with the importance of doing the brewing job properly. They advertised a tour and I suppose one was available. They really hoped you would examine the shops occupying the ground floor of the building. There were all sorts of touristy items available like crepes, home-baked breads and jewelry in silver and semiprecious stones. There was good value for your money in all these stores.



I have visited Halifax so often over a long period of time, and it kept getting better. In the sixties it had some very seedy areas by the harbour,

and you didn't spend long there, let me tell you! But both the Federal and the Provincial governments have spent money redeveloping the water's edge, and so now that's the place to be.

Also they've always taken pride in their wooden houses, and painted them up the way they were intended to be. Some of them really shine, as you can see in these on the famous Brunswick Street.



There's another phenomenon that I remarked on and that is multiple dwellings with separate entrances. That's the way they like to live here. And these homes do fit in!

The result is that Halifax is a jewel of a place to visit, as



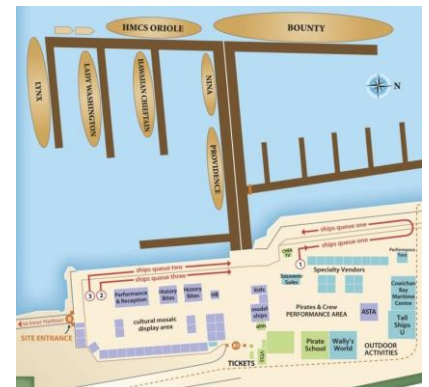
interesting in its own way as Quebec City. It's not to be compared with Toronto or Montreal, which are much bigger and can sustain longer visits. For comparison, let's look at Victoria's tall ship event last year. I saved the map so that we could do a comparison. I count

just seven large tall ships. A nice event but not in the same league at all!

Now I can't say I approve of the small ships replacing the Destroyers and Frigates of the 70s and 80s. They're slow. Many freighter and fishing boats might outspeed them. However, each one is tied up at a jetty with a warehouse ready to supply it. Hence they can be underway in a shorter time. And the naval presence does look impressive.

So Halifax has become a destination for cruise ships. And I've always seen some in when I visit. But think why. You can walk the streets and not worry, and there are not too many places where you can say that today. And the list gets shorter and shorter.

So people can go to exotic destinations and be confined to some small bazaar area, or they can come to Canada.





2009 marks a very important anniversary in the history of astronomy and navigation—the first recorded use of the telescope for astronomical purposes.



Recent discoveries reveal that it was the Chinese sailing huge junks that mapped most of the known world in 1421-1423. Our famous Western navigators such as Magellan and Columbus were relying on charts that came from Chinese explorations. When they sailed along certain latitudes they were expecting to find certain things and they did. This is not to say they were not heroic men, just not the discoverers they have been made out to be. We were many centuries behind the Chinese. But certain

developments in Europe --- chiefly in instruments suddenly pushed us ahead of them and brought us into the modern era, and it happened around 1609.



Now Europeans had been grinding lenses out of primitive glass (greenish hued from the presence of iron impurities) for some centuries. If you had trouble reading you visited his shop or stand at a fair and by trial and error found a pair that suited. **See the top engraving.** The story goes that children playing with some lenses discovered they acted to create a telescopic effect. The Dutch lens-maker realized what they had discovered and invented a telescope. But it was Galileo, in Italy, who turned his still primitive instrument towards the heavens and discovered mountains on the moon, sunspots on the sun, and satellites circling Jupiter. He published *The Starry Messenger*, which publicized his discoveries to all of Europe. Galileo was fortunate to combine a talent for working with instrument makers, a good understanding of theory, and an

ability to communicate. (*Galileo's scope left*)



Now almost immediately people recognized there were problems with these refractive scopes. There were coloured fringes surrounding the images. The shorter the scope, the more intense was the effect. So all these early scopes were very long. **Picture three** shows an early astronomer Helvetius using a very long thin scope supported by a large T-square. Often the bend of the scopes rendered them useless. Sir Isaac Newton was an early experimenter with scopes. He became convinced that the edges of the lenses were acting as miniature prisms. The best way to build a telescope was to build a mirror to concentrate the

light. So working on this problem led to the discovery that the sun's light is white and that a prism breaks it into colours. Those prism colours could be put back together to produce white light. Like Galileo, Newton had a talent for working with instrument workers and he came up with the very simple, elegant design that is still the basis for millions of scopes today. At first there were problems with both types of telescopes. Glass quality had to improve, and a way of lessening the divergence of the different colours of light found before refractive scopes could be reliable. For the Newtonian scope, the problem was finding a metal surface that would not tarnish. Speculum metal, a mixture of copper and tin, would tarnish readily and then the scope might need to be reground. Now in those times with much clearer air and less pollution, they took to using silver which very rarely tarnished in those days. Adding a small refractive scope to the Davis quadrant or sextant made the instrument much more useful.

Telescopes made taking the longitude much easier. The observatory of Paris kept very accurate records on the four Galilean satellites. Comparing the local time of an occultation of one of these satellites with the known time of the same occurrence in Paris would give one the longitude west or east of Paris.



Provincial Marine

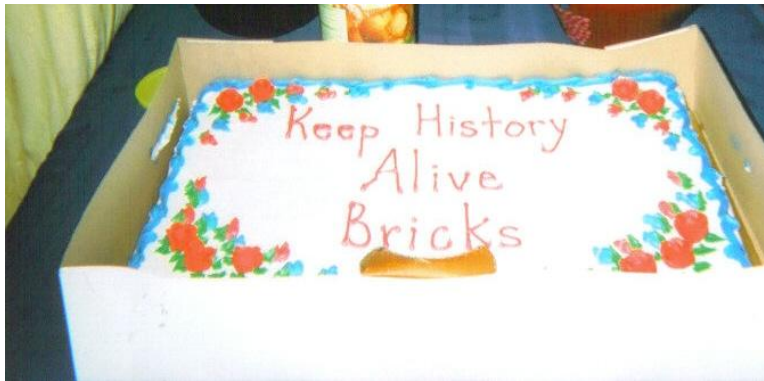


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Essex Community Futures Development Corporation, The Ontario Trillium Foundation

Brick Dedication and Canoe Dedication

By George T. Marshall



There was a sizable turn out at our brick dedication, and many people stayed for cake and the canoe dedication. Jim Ouellette performed a sweet grass ceremony to dedicate the canoe.

At the brick

dedication, Courtney Meloche sang a song "Memories" and Linda Betrand recited her poem "When I say their name". The names of all the newly commemorated individuals were spoken. Approximately 150 people attended the Brick dedication with about 50 going back to the Commissariat for the canoe dedication.



Jim Ouellette was dressed in native dress for the sweet grass ceremony. The canoe is a twenty-four foot long canoe and very stable. Jim seen here talking with Shaymus the story teller. David May in the background

Home Coming Weekend

By Peter Rindlisbacher, Vice-President of the Provincial Marine

"On August 15th, the Provincial Marine again carried escaped slaves across the Detroit River, in the 4th year of what has become an annual event. There were fewer re-enactors aboard this time, but MP Jeff Watson again assisted in rowing the refugees to freedom. No shoreside vignettes were performed, except for joyous greeting at the landing place for the new arrivals, before they joined in the Heritage Homecoming parade. Negotiations continue to acquire the Elliott Landing property for heritage use."

Cheers,

Pete

Provincial Marine Photo Page

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Essex CFDC, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, Windsor Charity Bingos, and Hbc

THE PIAZZA AT BISHOP'S LANDING

Only here.

