



Renewed Remembering:

The Newsletter of the Conneaut Area Historical Museum

Volume I

Issue 5

May 2023

Society Notes

The Conneaut Area Historical Society wants to thank you for your continued support. As always, new members are welcome.

You can call: 440-599-6011 with further questions or write to Conneaut Area Historical Society, P.O. Box 563, Conneaut Ohio, 44030. Our street address is: 518 Mill Street.

Please pick up a copy of this newsletter and share it with your friends. Or read your copy on our Conneaut Area Historical Society Website.

<https://capturingconneauthistory.com>

Jim Jones, President

Renewed Remembering and Renovation

Remembering” was the name of the original Conneaut Area Historical Society newsletter. Joan Barnett was the last editor, and with her death and the Covid pandemic the newsletter has not been published for a time. It seemed fitting to name this new version of the old newsletter “Renewed Remembering,” in honor of the former editors including Louise Legeza and Joan Barnett who edited and published the newsletter for so many years.

This last year featured a renovated Conneaut Historical Society, both inside and out. Volunteers cleaned, rearranged, and renovated inside exhibits and the frame-based picture feature is being reimagined as well as the collections and shelving being reorganized.

We continued to work through the winter on better organizing our collections, redoing our photo frame feature, and our over all efforts to make our Museum a pleasant and interesting place to visit. We open on Memorial Day Weekend and will be open until Labor Day on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from noon until five o’clock..

In This Issue:

- ♦ Sailing the Lakes with Conneaut Native Dave Beckwith.
- ♦ Our Patron Plan will benefit both Patrons and the Museum.
- ♦ Time Travel Tuesday, Voyaging the Great Lakes with David Beckwith
- ♦ Mary Lou Lardi, speaks about St. Mary’s Church on May 16 at the Conneaut Library .

Join Us in June and July:

June Time Travel Tuesday, Andy Pochatko. July Time Travel Tuesday: Meandering Through the Museum

Museum Officers

President: Jim Jones

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Kathy Warnes

Read About Conneaut and Ashtabula County People!

Tales (Some Tall) of Conneaut and Ashtabula County



Conneaut Area Historical Society

The Conneaut Area Historical Museum introduces its latest publication: *Tales (Some Tall) of Conneaut and Ashtabula County*. Yes, there are still some untold or just lightly touched. For example, did you know that Elizabeth Stiles of Ashtabula spied for President Abraham Lincoln and the Union during the Civil War? Read about her gallant and often tragic life.

Excerpts from the World War II diary of Conneaut native Bob Goldsmith tells his story of being shot down over Europe, taken prisoner by the Nazis, his experiences in a prisoner-of-war camp, and finally his return home to Conneaut.

Time Travel Tuesday presentations offered glimpses of movie theaters and pictures in Conneaut, and the story of the Astatic Corporation. The book includes stories about Conneaut landmarks like Tyler's Trough and the Fort Hill Archaeological dig. Bob Blickensderfer's story of the circus setting up on Mill Street across from his house during the Depression years is nostalgic reading and the story of Reverend Joseph Badger being treed by a bear on his way to lead a camp meeting and Conneaut and Kingsville lake Captain Leverett Goldsmith's sightings of sea serpents provide lighter reading. We are asking for a \$25.00 donation for our book, with all proceeds going to improve the Conneaut Area Historical Museum.

Sign Up for Our Patron Program

The Conneaut Area Historical museum is excited to announce a new Merchant Patron program which is available to any local business who desires to help our museum to function and improve. For \$50 per year (January to December) we will include your business name and phone number in all of the publications the museum produces, including a monthly newsletter, any future books the museum produces, and our website.

If interested, send your donation of \$50.00 to P.O. Box 563, Conneaut, Ohio 44030. We will include you in our list of great merchants and businesses in this area. Also, please check out our new website: capturingconneauthistory.com.

Needed! Museum Mentors!



We need Enthusiastic and Dedicated Volunteers to help us help the Conneaut Area Historical Museum realize its full historical potential. Lend us your willing hands, hearts, and minds to help our museum grow. Be a Museum Mentor!

We Need Gently Used Notebooks

If you have some gently used binders that you are willing to donate to a new home, please bring them to the museum or give them to a museum officer or steering committee member. We are in the process of organizing documents and pictures into collections and your notebooks will be welcome and well treated.

Time Travel Tuesdays

Voyaging the Great Lakes with Retired Lake Captain

David Beckwith

The Tuesday April 18 Time Travel Tuesday program at the Conneaut Public Library, featured retired Lake Captain David Beckwith telling an audience of approximately thirty people



about some of his experiences as a sailor on the Great Lakes. Dave worked his way up from deckhand to captain over his decades-long career, including stints with the Pittsburgh Steamship Company (later Great Lakes Steel) and Cleveland Tankers.

A Conneaut native, David Beckwith discovered and respected the Great Lakes early and by the time he graduated from high school and considered ways to finance his college education, sailing the lakes seemed to be a logical choice. Lake Erie, the Great Lake at his doorstep provided an introduction to the other four Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Although he did say with a touch of humor that “the first few voyages through the St. Lawrence Seaway were magical, but after several voyages and a few more years, not so much.”

Relating his experiences sailor’s yarn style, Dave made the conditions and captains of the Great Lakes Steel fleet on the Great Lakes as real as a dropping an anchor or operating a Hulett. . He told his stories with humorous overtones and illustrated them with scrapbooks and a video.

Dave also wrote vividly about his Great Lakes career and the his fellow Conneaut mariners who shared his experiences on the lakes. This is one of Dave’s written versions of his story.

I started sailing to finance college. I attended school during the winter off season and returned to the boats in June, working until layup. I worked my way up the ranks from deck hand, deck watch, AB watchman, Wheelsman and Bosun'. In 1973, US Steel foresaw a future need for Deck officers due to the advent of vacation programs being instituted as the result of union negotiations. I was Bosun on the Richard V. Lindabury and got off the boat that summer to attend a school sponsored by The Company (U S Steel Great Lakes Fleet) and Masters, Mates, and Pilots Union in Cleveland. I completed the course, obtained my original License (for Mate and Pilot) reported to the Horace Johnson as 3rd Mate that October. I got my license before my Degree. That winter I returned to college and that finished up. Tying up loose ends. I also got married in 1974 and decided to continue sailing instead of pursuing a career utilizing a Liberal Arts Degree.

This was a period of big changes in the industry. One thousand footers replacing older boats. vacation times slowly becoming a reality and the end (Thank God) of attempts at year-round sailing. I went back and forth between US Steel and Cleveland Tankers. We were working seventy-five on/ 25 off. This was almost a semblance of normalcy compared to 9- and 10-month seasons with no time off.

Cleveland Tankers built three new product Tankers and got rid of all their old boats and a lot of the "Old Guard" crews that had a hard time adapting to the new EPA and environmental regulations. In the seventies there was heavy demand for the Tanker Trade. Many ports on all the lakes were thirsty for petroleum products. The Gemini was the largest US flagged tanker on the Lakes carrying 70, 000 BBls. In the mid-seventies all the boats were so busy it was often hard to get a relief for time off for the newly negotiated vacation program.

Then the changes started coming. Pipelines on Lake Superior and on Lake Michigan, and a couple fleets of competing Tug Barges started cutting into business. In the eighties there were more lost customers due to more tug barges, companies going out of business and competition from railroads. Gone were the days when there were more cargos for us than boats. Frequent layups resulted in seniority bumping from boat to boat. Often it took a lot more than 75 days to accrue enough time for a vacation. Instead, time was broken up by frequent short term and sometimes long term lay ups during the season. Yet somehow the job went on.

I got very familiar with the airports near the major ports. I seemed like we were laying up or fitting out every 2 weeks. One thing that eased the chaos was knowing I had made the right decision when I left US Steel. In the eighties we started getting relief 3rd Mates from US Steel. These guys were almost all ahead of me in seniority during my Pittsburg days. Many more of my old shipmates from Pittsburg ended up on the beach and never sailed again after the massive fleet reduction at US Steel.

Sailing was completely different now. Boom bust cycles were more frequent in the tanker business. The unlicensed crews were being reduced to save expenses. Regardless. I got my master's license and started sailing as Captain in 1985. The remainder of my career witnessed technological advancements, improving navigation and communication. Cargo handling remained pretty much the same, but regulations and compliance became a full-time job on top of the one you already had. After the Exxon Valdez there was a microscope on Tanker operations. Cargos were harder to find. Ashland Oil sold Cleveland Tankers to a Canadian Company, Enerchem, out of Montreal. That lasted a few years and then another Canadian Company, Algoma, took over.

Computers and Cell Phones ended the days when a Captain managed and ran his ship. Everything was micromanaged from ashore with email and cell phone calls. The boats were still being run like trucks since there were not enough cargos to keep the boats running steady. Turn off the key (Layup). 2 weeks later turn the Key back on (fit out). One day after making a dock, I finished with engines on the Chadburn and answered the cell phone that had been ringing constantly during the docking maneuver. I had been ignoring it for 20 minutes as I was busy getting the ship tied up. It was the supervisor in the Cleveland office wanting to quiz me why I paid to have the ship's garbage removed in Mackinaw City when it was cheaper to do this in Detroit.

At this point I knew my career was ending. I retired in 2001. The next 3 years I collected my pension and filled in relief work with Grand River Navigation on self-unloaders and the Lake Guardian (research Vessel). Every generation witnessed changes in the maritime industry. I witnessed my share between 1964 and 2004.

Captain David Beckwith



Arthur

Anderson

George Hulett and his Huletts: Conneaut's Hometown Heroes



George Hulett Has an Idea

Conneaut native George Hulett, who many people considered a rather eccentric inventor-type person, had an idea. Instead of droves of dock workers loading and unloading iron ore and other commodities, why couldn't a machine be used to do the unloading and save labor, time, and costs? True, some companies used primitive loading and unloading machines, but they did not seem to be completely effective. It would take him some years of hardship and setbacks, but he persevered and invented until his name and machine became household words.

George Hulett was born on September 26, 1846 in Conneaut, Ohio. His family moved to Cleveland when he was twelve years old, and he graduated from the Humiston Institute in 1864. After his graduation, he moved to Unionville, Ohio and operated a general store until he returned to Cleveland in 1881, where he and his brother, William, went into business together until George left in 1890.

In 1890, George explored the possibilities of the coal and iron ore handling industry and by the late 1890s he worked at the firm of Webster, Camp & Lane of Akron, Ohio. His company manufactured heavy equipment, including the new prototype of coal dumper for loading lake boats that George had invented. George continued his experiments and created his Hulett ore unloader in 1898. In 1899, George enjoyed the honor of seeing the first Hulett unloader, 1,500 tons strong, being used on the docks in his hometown of Conneaut.

George Hulett served as manager of the Ore and Coal Handling Department of Webster, Camp & Lane until the company went bankrupt about 1903. After the bankruptcy, Samuel Wellman of Cleveland, a prominent mechanical engineer acquired George's patents. The Wellman Engineering Company and its successors, the Wellman-Seaver-Morgan Company and the McDowell-Wellman Company built most of the Hulett unloaders.

In 1918, George Hulett left Wellman retiring to Florida. He died January 12, 1923 in Daytona, Florida.

Huletts Dot the Horizon

In 1898, George Hulett saw his dream of a machine to efficiently and economically unload iron ore from lake freighters become a reality, when the first Hulett ore unloader was patented and produced. But he had a little help from Andrew Carnegie.

At this point in time, Andrew Carnegie had built a steel empire in America and his power and money extended throughout Ashtabula County and regional Ohio and Pennsylvania. Industry legend has it that when Carnegie heard that Webster, Camp & Lane Company in Akron had built a Hulett unloader at the Conneaut Dock at its own expense. George Hulett and his friends had convinced Andrew Carnegie to try the new idea, but Carnegie had his conditions. He said if the new machine worked he would buy it, but if it did not work Webster, Camp & Lane would have to get rid of it at their own expense.

In 1898, the Hulett was tested at Conneaut and it passed with flying colors. Andrew Carnegie bought it for \$40,000 and ordered two more.

Operational in 1899, at first glance, the Hulett did not appear to be much of an improvement from the unloaders it was designed to replace. A large and cumbersome machine, it weighed 950 tons and measured 88 feet high and 36 feet wide at its base. The Hulett's main girder was 134 feet long and extended over five loading tracks. The digging leg was attached to a 94 foot long walking beam and the bucket was attached to a 58 foot long digging leg.

The Hulett operator entered the cargo hold of the vessel with the digging leg and bucket and controlled all operations of the digging device. People involved with Hulett operation agreed that it required about five years to train an efficient Hulett operator.



Despite its drawbacks, the Hulett proved its worth. It could dig 17 tons of ore from a vessel in fifty seconds. It was steam powered and did not require the expensive cables that other machines needed to operate.

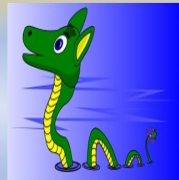
By 1901, five Huletts operated on the Conneaut docks. In 1905, Lorain had five Hulettes and by 1908, the Superior dock in Ashtabula employed Huletts. Altogether, 80 Hulett unloading machines were built between 1898 and 1960. In 1960, the last Huletts were built at Lorain, Ohio.

The Hulett era ended in the early 1980s when the steel industry began extensively using self unloaders for iron ore. By 1999, Cleveland had four Huletts, but they were not being used. The Ashtabula Huletts were scraped in the early 1980s. By 1992, five idle Huletts languished on the Conneaut docks.

Today, Hulett accessory parts and documents reside in the Conneaut Area Historical Museum while the Hulett itself rests outside gathering weather waiting for resources to bring it inside to preserve it as an important part of Great Lakes History.



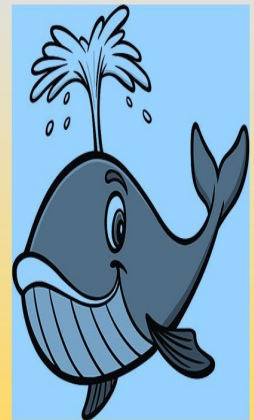
Captain Quiggley's
Quest and Conneaut
Sea Serpent Squiggly
Wiggly



Captain Quentin Quiggley dropped anchor
splashing
With Lake Erie waves jumping and dashing,
He guided his sailing ship Nevermore,
To Conneaut harbor on Lake Erie shore.



The sun glared hot, and the Captain sighed,
"Oh me,
I must find my snack of popcorn and iced tea."
When the anchor rested shaking in the sand,
Captain Quentin Quiggley prepared to land.



He ran down the gangplank hoppity hop,
And he fell into Lake Erie kerplop!
Up he arose spluttering and shouting,
Gushing water like a whale spouting.

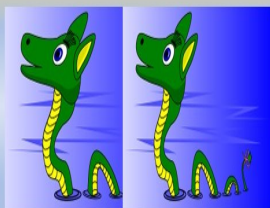
Peering through the foamy lake wave tops,
Peering through the water curtain drops,
No whale! The captain spotted HIM,
A sea serpent green with yellow trim!



"I see a sea serpent!" the Captain cried,
"I'll find me a safe place where I can hide!"
Three seagulls screeched and flew around in
rings,
"Captain Quiggley" you are seeing things!



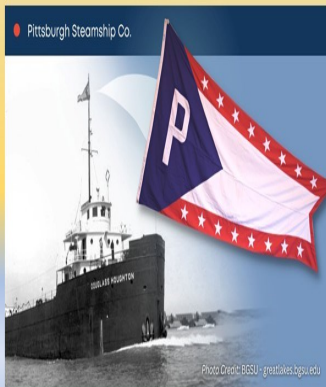
The captain buttoned the buttons on his vest,
He folded his pea coat over his chest,
He peered through his glasses over his nose,
The sea serpent had two heads and ten toes,
Brave Captain Quiggley buried his head in the
sand,
"I can't see you, catch me if you can!"



From his seat on the sandy Conneaut beach,
Captain Quiggley sat just out of reach
From the launching party on the steamer
Lafayette,
"I won't look, I'll make you go away yet!"



He watched the launching of the steamer,
He listened to the plans of steel dreamers,
To build a fleet to carry iron ore
Shipping thousands of tons or even more.



From the iron mines of Lake Superior
To the Pittsburgh steel mills interiors.
The captain decided to haul some ore,
Back and forth on his sailing ship Nevermore,



Squiggly Wiggly could act like a tug,
When the wind was just calm enough to hug
Captain Quiggley felt giggly and giddy
“I’ll name my sea serpent Squiggly Wiggly!”



He will be mascot on my sailing ship,
He will sail with me on every trip,
Squiggly Wiggly can swim alongside and fill in,
When Nevermore sails can’t find any wind!”



Squiggly Wiggly had a mind of his own,

He wanted to choose the place he called home.

Twitching his two tails and four cheeks,

Squiggly Wiggly swam clear up Conneaut Creek.

"Come back here Squiggly," the captain cried,

"I'll find you, you have no place to hide!"

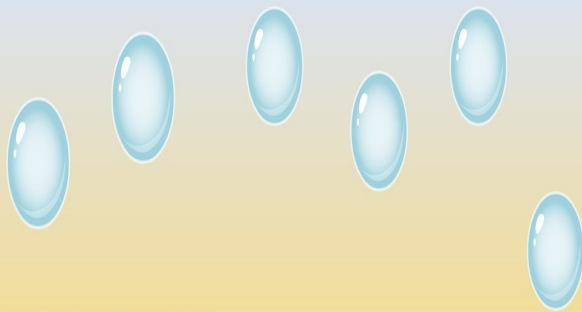
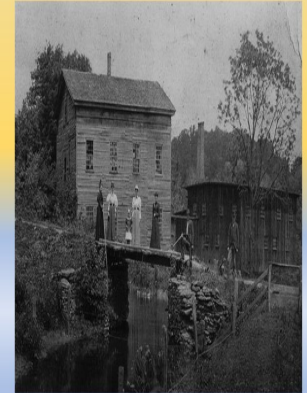


Squiggly Wiggly flipped his fourteen fins,

The captain grabbed a life ring and swam after him,

Squiggly swam so fast though the captain tried to follow,

He didn't catch up until Tinker's Hollow.



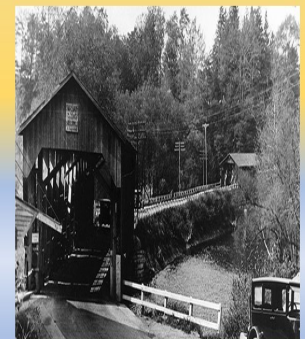
Silas Tinker waved as they swam by on the double,

Squiggly Wiggly blew him Creek water bubbles,

Then Squiggly turned into a bend in the Creek,
And he and the captain played hide and seek,



They ducked under the bridge on Creek Road,
Upsetting a farmer and his wagon load,
Of corn to grind at the mill and the dam,
Near the double bridges at Farnham.



The farmer stood up shouting in dismay,
Watching the creek carry his corn away,
“Dang it! Now look what you’ve done!”
he cried,
“It’s so hot my floating corn will be
fried!”



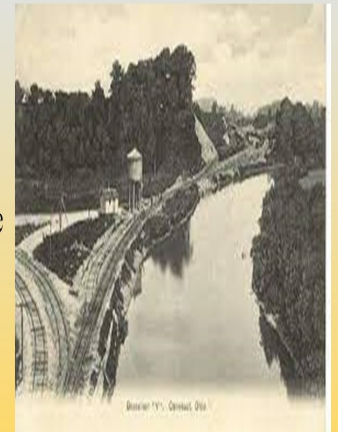
The farmer grabbed the floating sack,
The captain and serpent swam on their backs
Swimming short strokes and swimming laps long
Following the corn as it floated along,



Then they stopped in mid swimming stroke in
shock,
The kernels of corn had begun to pop!
Squiggly open his two mouths car ferry wide,
Shoveling steaming popcorn inside,
He gobbled popcorn from Broad to Mill Street,
Following popcorn waves on Conneaut Creek!



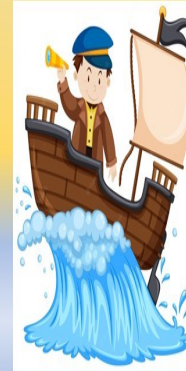
They followed Conneaut Creek popcorn to the
lake,
Then Captain Quiggley made a big mistake,
He swallowed the very last piece of popcorn,
Squiggly’s front head drooped and his face
sagged forlorn,
“I have to find popcorn! I eat it by the ton!”
Each of his eyes searched the harbor horizon.



Squiggly quickly swam into Lake Erie,
 Seeking popcorn until all his eyes grew bleary,
 The captain swam after him huffing and
 hollering,
 "No matter where you swim, I will be
 following,"

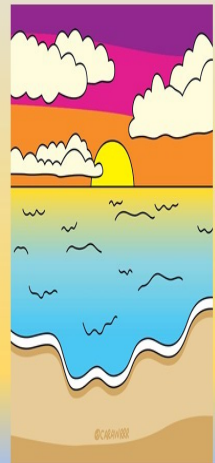


"You ate the last popcorn. You've had your
 day."
 Then Squiggly turned his back and swam away.
 The captain searched weeks in Port Conneaut,
 Some sailors helped him, and some did not,



He searched by Creek Road Bridge and Harbor Street
 He found walleye and muskie in Conneaut Creek,
 He searched every Hulett one by one,
 Even as they loaded ore by the ton.

"By George, he could hide in Hulett's the
 captain swore,
 Hulett's could unload popcorn instead of iron
 ore,
 By George," the Captain finally groaned,
 "I'll tow you Nevermore so we can go home."



Lake Erie legend still surrounds Sea Serpent

Squiggly,

He still swims and hides from Captain Quiggley

On Conneaut Harbor nights when the wild gulls
cry,

When Hulett's cast skeleton shadows on the sky,



Squiggly's endless search broadcasts his quest,

He wants history for the Hulett's at its best,

In Conneaut Harbor Squiggly swims forlorn,

Searching for Hulett's rescue and his lost
popcorn!



Conneaut Area Historical Society Museum

Membership Application



Single \$10.00_____ Couple \$15.00_____

Family \$20.00_____ Patron \$50.00_____

Name_____ Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip Code_____

Phone Number_____

Would you be willing to volunteer at the Museum during the summer months or help us with winter projects?

We are open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m., starting on Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day.

What day or time is best for you?

Thank you for your membership.

P.O. Box 563

Conneaut, Ohio 44030

Website: <https://capturingconneauthistory.com/>