

The Genesee Beacon

News from the Charlotte Genesee Lighthouse



LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM • 70 Lighthouse Street • Rochester, New York 14612
(585) 621-6179 • www.geneseelighthouse.org

Open Mid-May thru Mid-October
Saturday and Sunday 1 pm to 5 pm
Special tours by appointment

Marine History by Tom Brewer

Coal from Charlotte

Of all the cargos shipped from docks on the Genesee River coal is the king. For almost 100 years, from the 1870's until 1970, coal from Pennsylvania was loaded onto ships and barges to be transported to ports on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. In some years over a million tons of coal was shipped in a year, from late March to early December.

The first coal dock was located where the ferry terminal is now. The firm of Bell, Lewis & Yates built a wood trestle in the early 1870's at this location where the coal was dumped from railroad cars into pockets under the trestle where wheelbarrows would be filled, pushed by men over planks and dumped into the holds of sailing ships.

In 1874 the firm of Roberts, Smith and Sawyer built a trestle on the west bank of the river about two miles up the river where Turning Point Park is now. This dock had the advantage that the coal went from pockets on the trestle down chutes directly into the ship.



About 1876 Bell, Lewis & Yates built a new dock also on the west side of the river about a mile north of the Roberts Coal Dock, the north side of the present turning basin. This dock was much larger than their old dock and the Roberts Dock and could dump coal directly into the ships. This became to be known as the Yates Dock.

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OFFICERS

President – Fred Amato
Vice President – Chris Franco
Secretary – Carol Riesenberger
Treasurer – Linda Taylor

TRUSTEES

Carol Coddling	Doug Moran
Richard Coddling	Sue Mosgrober
Betty Fetter	Marie Poinan
Evelyn Franco	Joe Riesenberger
Joe Genova	Liz Rush
Jack Kemp	John Schmitt
Mike May	

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Lighthouse Curator – Mike May
Curator Marine History- Fr. Jack Lee
Education-Carol Riesenberger
Garden – Carol Riesenberger
Gift Shop – Liz Rush & Evelyn Franco
Buildings and Grounds– Joe Riesenberger
Marine History – Tom Brewer
Membership-Chris Franco
OBPPC Rep.- Carol Riesenberger
Village History – John Kemp
Volunteers –Richard Coddling
Beacon Editor–Marie Poinan

UPCOMING EVENTS

Semi-annual meeting & picnic

Thursday, August 17th
Picnic at 6 p.m.
Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
Coast Guard Auxiliary
520 River Street

River Romance

(Closing weekend)
Sat. Oct 7 1pm-5pm
Sun Oct 8 1pm-5pm

Marine History meets the 2nd Saturday of the month at 10am
September 9, October 14

Village History meets the 3rd Saturday of the month at 10am
September 16, October 21

Village History by Jack Kemp

Annexation

On January 1st 1916, the village of Charlotte became a part of the city of Rochester through what is called annexation. It became the city's 23rd Ward. But just what was required to accomplish this momentous effect? Surprisingly little. Only three people could accomplish it and none had to be from Charlotte. They were Mayor Edgerton, Governor Whitman and one Senator or Assemblyman to introduce a bill to that effect.

Roland B. Woodward, secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, summarized the steps necessary. The Constitution of the State of New York required that the legislature provide for a public notice and opportunity for a public hearing in every city to which it relates before action thereon. A bill is then introduced by a

Senator or Assemblyman or both. If the bill is passed by both houses, it is immediately sent to the mayor for his approval. The mayor may sign it and return it for the Governor's approval. If he signs it, it becomes law.

Why would the people of Charlotte accept annexation, knowing that it would mean an increase in their taxes? There were many reasons but high on the list was the promise of better fire fighting equipment. Charlotte had been operating with a volunteer fire department that was lacking modern equipment and infrastructure. There were at least three cisterns for water supply around the town that sometimes dried up in hot summers

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Fred Amato



Hi Everyone! It has been several months since our last Genesee Beacon. Many things have been happening at the Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse Historical Society. We now have our own official website at www.geneseelighthouse.org. It is updated on a regular basis so that you are kept informed on what is happening at the Lighthouse and our society. Our e-mail address is: info@geneseelighthouse.org. Please send me your comments or questions at this address.

We recently started distributing our new tri-fold color brochure. It is being included with this mailing so you can all be aware of it. If you need more, please stop by the lighthouse and pick up a few to get them out into the community. We already have our brochure at the River Street Terminal in Charlotte, Pat's Coffee Shop at Charlotte Beach, and the LDR Char Pit on Lake Avenue near Beach Ave. They are also being distributed by the Greater Rochester Visitors Bureau and the Rochester Downtown Guides (the Guides walk within the City of Rochester giving

out information to visitors).

Both the website and the new brochure have been effective in getting people to visit the Lighthouse. This is evident by comments from the people who have signed our log book at the lighthouse. Website usage has increased from 88 visits in May to 294 visits in June. Please help us get the word out regarding the website address and let people know how they can benefit from the up-to-date information they will receive on our site.

I have also been attending, with other members of our society, various Greater Rochester Visitors Association (GRVA) meetings. I want to make sure the tourist industry is aware of what we have to offer visitors to our wonderful Charlotte Community and City of Rochester.

We recently had a very successful time at the Harbor Carousel Festival at Ontario Beach Park on June 23rd, 24th and 25th. We displayed one of our informational displays, handed out our new brochure, talked to people about the lighthouse and had our newest model of the Ontario No. 2 which raised many questions and comments from the people that stopped at our booth. We met a person who once lived in our lighthouse while serving in the Coast Guard. We also talked to a person whose great-great grandfather was named William Carroll, the man who built the tower in 1822. I want to personally thank Marie Poinan, Jack Kemp, Dee Mastro and of course my wife, Patricia for all the hours they spent working the booth. At the same time we also had our lighthouse open to the public and I want to thank Rich Coddling

and Liz Rush for making sure we had enough people to staff the lighthouse that weekend.

I want to take this moment to thank Bruce H. Barclay of Chili for donating a scale model of the Ontario No. 2 that shows the ship, train cars on the track and how passengers and coal cars were loaded onto the ship. The entire model is 35.5" x 12.5" x 9". This model created a lot of conversation at our display booth during the Harbor Carousel Festival at Ontario Beach Park.

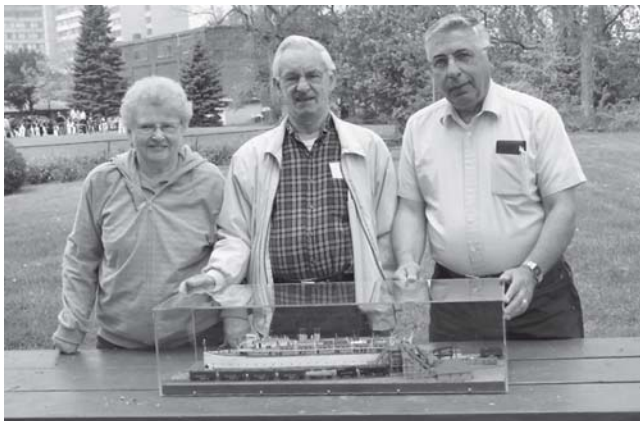
Lastly, I have asked Mike May to head up a committee to look into how we can better utilize our garage and make it into a something we can really call our LIGHTHOUSE ANNEX. Your ideas regarding the use of this building would be appreciated.

Our newsletters are sent out four times a year and I would like to communicate with you more often to keep you up to date on current issues. If you want to get updates in between newsletters please send me your e-mail address at info@geneseelighthouse.org and I will place you on my e-mail distribution list.

Thank you again for being a member.

- Fred

**Please check out our
new website for all
the latest news...
www.geneseelighthouse.org**



Left to right: Audrey & Bruce Barclay & Fred Amato

Bruce Barclay has been building models since he was 12 years old. He has always been fascinated by American military history and has built Civil War dioramas, trains and armored vehicles. After reading the book *Coal to Canada* by Ted Rafuse, he embarked on his project of building Ontario No. 2, the ship he took a trip on over 60 years ago.

Bruce offered to donate the model to the lighthouse. The ship is encased in plexiglass and is light enough to be portable. The model was at the Lighthouse booth during the Harbor festival and will probably be making more "voyages" out into the community.

Thank you, Bruce, for such a wonderfully detailed model that is a welcome addition to our collection. The model is on display in our transportation room. A pamphlet detailing the history of the car ferries is available for sale in our gift shop.

WISH LIST:

Every season, we try to assemble a list of items that would make life a little easier for our members who work on our Village and Marine History collections. What follows is a "wish list" of items that someone might be willing to donate. All donations are tax deductible and the Society will provide the donor with a letter of receipt.

- Software program- Microsoft Office Professional - min. 2000 Version, with key and legal documentation
- Hard Disk Drive of at least 120 GB to install into our existing computer
- Blank CD's for storage of lighthouse history and photos
- Computer/copy paper, 8.5" x 11"
- Laminating machine (ex. Xyron) for letter-size paper
- Photo Paper for computer printer
- Acid-free card stock 8.5" x 11"
- Acid-free sheet protectors- 8.5" x 11" paper
- Sturdy 2" 3" or 4" binders

**The Historical Society
thanks the following for
their donations:**

In memory of

Emmett R. Carey,
*member of Coast Guard
Auxiliary, Flotilla 4-2*

Voyager Boat Sales
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Sippel
Jean Guy & Marilyn Roy
Ms. Kathleen Mead
Mike & Gail Morgan
USCG Auxiliary 4-2
USCG Auxiliary Division 4
Marilyn Ferland
Colin & Jean Williams
Elaine Carter

Marine History

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*Barge "KEYBAR" at the Coal Trestle taken circa 1928
Note the 3 men on coal car on trestle. The man in the center is breaking up the coal with a bar so that it will slide down the chute.
Photo copied from the Lighthouse Village History Collection*

Both the Roberts and Yates docks were served by sidings off the Charlotte branch of the New York Central (NYC). In the 1880's the Roberts coal dock burned and was not rebuilt.

In 1889 the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railway (BR&P) built a line to Charlotte and purchased the property where the Roberts Dock had been. They shipped coal over the Yates Dock using the NYC tracks to reach the dock.

A new approach was taken to coal shipping by the BR&P. The BR&P built a ferry slip on the old Roberts Dock property and the Grand Truck Railway in Canada built a slip at Cobourg, Ontario. In November of 1907, the Ontario No. 1 sailed from Charlotte with 28 cars of coal. In 1915 the Ontario No. 2 was added.

By 1909 the BR&P was in need of a new coal dock. The old Yates Dock was having trouble loading the new larger steam ships and in addition the BR&P was paying a high price for the use of the NYC tracks to reach the Yates Dock. In 1911, the BR&P put into operation the most substantial coal dock on Lake Ontario. It was built near the ferry slip and was constructed almost entirely of

steel.

The BR&P suffered heavily from the depression and in 1932 was absorbed by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (B&O). World War II brought increase tonnage to the coal dock and ferries. Canada needed coal for its part of the war effort. After the war the demand for coal decreased as customers switched to oil, gas or Lake Erie Coal. In 1950 the car ferry service was discontinued.

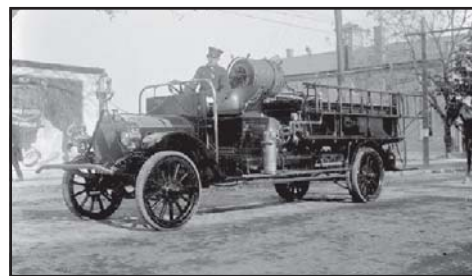
In 1970 the tonnage of coal dropped to the point that the B&O could not justify the operation of the coal dock any longer. In November 1970 the last ship carrying coal left Charlotte. The following year the trestle was dismantled. All that is left are the concrete foundations in Turning Point Park. Some of the railroad right of way for the coal dock is now part of the Genesee River Trail.

ANNEXATION

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or froze in winter. Fires were frequent and constant in Charlotte.

After the annexation of Charlotte, the city immediately built a new brick firehouse on Stutson Street and provided a new truck. Later, water lines were extended.



New Combination truck with new firehouse in background.

Photo taken by Albert Stone and part of the Lighthouse's Village History Collection, courtesy of the RMSC.

Charlotte Genesee Lighthouse
70 Lighthouse Street
Rochester, New York 14612

NON-PROFIT Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT # 777
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

DATED MATERIAL: PLEASE DELIVERY BY JULY 31

****PLEASE NOTE THE EXPIRATION DATE THAT APPEARS AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR MAILING LABEL****
IF THE DATE IS HIGHLIGHTED, YOUR ANNUAL DUES ARE NOW PAYABLE

We do appreciate your membership. Your paid dues will keep you on our mailing list, and you won't miss out on the next issue of THE GENESEE BEACON. Please take a moment to look at the mailing label.

**WHEN YOU ARE DONE ENJOYING THIS ISSUE,
PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND, SO THAT SOMEONE ELSE CAN ALSO ENJOY THIS COPY**

Membership

The Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse Historical Society invites you to join its membership. Your application will be received with sincere appreciation.

New member Renewal

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____

HOME PHONE: _____

WORK PHONE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen/Student | \$ 8.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Curator | \$500-999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$15.00 | Receive a FREE framed LH photo | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lighthouse Keeper | \$1000 & up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | \$30-49 | Receive a FREE framed LH t-shirt, sweatshirt, and framed photo | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | \$50-99 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$25-49 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$100-499 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$50 & up |
| Receive a FREE LH t-shirt | | Receive written recognition in the Beacon for one year (4 issues) | |
| Receive a FREE LH sweatshirt | | | |

Please feel free to send in this form to volunteer, even if your dues are not payable.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We are constantly looking for new volunteers to staff the museum, maintain our buildings and grounds and join our Village History and Marine History Research groups. If you would like to be called to participate in any volunteer activities, please check any of the boxes below. This will give our volunteer coordinators an idea of what Your interests are and/or what you might be interested in doing.

- Museum Guide / Tower Guide
- Gift Shop
- Building Maintenance
- Grounds upkeep
- Finance Committee
- Historical research
- School Groups / Tours
- Computer / Audio-Visual
- Public relations
- General Office
- Programs
- Publications

**The Charlotte-Genesee Lighthouse Museum is located off Lake Avenue, directly behind Holy Cross Catholic Church.
For more info call: (585) 621-6179.**