

SAVE  
SOS ONTARIO  
SHIPWRECKS

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# SOS NEWSLETTER

February 2008



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## SOS NEWSLETTER

February 2008 Issue

P.O. Box 2389  
Blenheim, Ontario  
N0P 1A0  
Fax 519 676-7058

<http://www.saveontario-shipwrecks.on.ca>

### Editor/Designer

Jody Bulman  
jbul@sympatico.ca

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Opinions expressed by contributors to the newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or the board of SOS.

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Deadline submission for next issue is April 1, 2008.

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## The Editor

I would like to thank the contributors for taking the time to help out with this issue. It's been a great year for the newsletter as we had the past issue in full colour. We hope that you enjoyed it.

I am looking forward to what awaits in '08 with the newsletter! Please forward more articles to update everyone on your chapter's involvement.

Have a great spring season.

*Jody Bulman*

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***The mission of Save Ontario Shipwrecks is the preservation and promotion of marine heritage through research, conservation and education.***

# The View From The Bridge

Happy New Year everyone. With the dive season fast approaching, we have to start talking to our buddies and pass on the heritage preservation message more than ever. Why? Because as much as we had made progress in the past, I fear we are starting to lose ground again. I've heard rumours of improper activities, but more importantly I've seen the impact on some sites. This means that it is many times worse than I've heard or seen, since I only have limited exposure. For example, if someone will move a 250 pound underwater cement heritage plaque on a site, would you worry that they'd do anything else destructive? I would, especially after restoring the plaque to the correct location. So it is not a question of IF anyone will do destructive activities, we know they are. The evidence there is to see. We need to do something about it. And I am calling on each one of you to please help.

So what do you do if you see people pushing the limits of acceptable behaviour on an underwater heritage site?

First, let's give examples of possible underwater heritage sites. These include: any site that is a shipwreck (or part thereof like an anchor); a dump (garbage, bottle cache or debris); an area where there are items from an accident or where a loss occurred (items that fell off a ship, canoe, train, truck or road, a wreck debris field - even if the wreck was raised); submerged structures (e.g., submerged properties, lost villages, old roads, bridges, locks, mines and dams); and remnants of human activities (e.g.: pottery, fish weirs, aboriginal hunting or harvest locations, ship building, historic docks, waterfront, anchorage, etc.). Any of the above that are more than 50 years old, exposed to the air, on the bottom lands of a watershed, buried or embedded on shore and/or on the bottom may qualify to be protected under the Heritage Act.

Second, let's give examples of inappropriate behaviour on a heritage site: disturbing the silt by any means (e.g., fanning, digging); moving artifacts or structural parts (by handling or poor

anchoring technique); and removing items from a site or any other act that leaves the site altered without a license to do so.

So what do you do? Please call Crime Stoppers (800-233-TIPS) or the OPP (888-310-1122). Take pictures and give details like names, places, and descriptions as best possible. People will not get in trouble for reporting possible contraventions... better to be safe and report it. Maybe the people in question have a valid license. Depending on the circumstances, you can talk with them or let the authorities handle the situation. I received email from someone this past summer that alleged all kinds of things that someone was supposedly wanting to do, but they did not want to report it to the authorities themselves (Crime Stoppers is anonymous). This sounds to me as if they were just trying to make trouble for someone who was likely innocent of any such allegation. Yes, there are these types too. Bottom line is... if you suspect something, you have a rightful duty to report it, not spread gossip about it, or worse do nothing!

So to wrap up, I'd like you all to seriously consider these points and keep your eyes and ears open. If you hear of something, talk to this person or these people and encourage them to do it right. Before a dive, talk to your buddies or club members and ensure that everyone is on the same page in regard to low impact diving on our heritage resources. After all, our kids and grand kids will be diving on these sites and I'm sure we'd all like them to see it as close as possible to the way we did. We know that mother nature will have an effect, but human impact is many more times devastating. Thanks for leading by example and spreading the word.

Here's to a great upcoming dive season. Hope to see you at the Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show - Feb 22-24, 2008 in SCUBA WORLD. BONUS: use the 2 for 1 coupon in this issue.

*By Brian Prince, SOS President*

# Membership Year End Report

Membership count was down for 2007 from 2006 by 29. Let's all get out there and talk up "Save Ontario Shipwrecks" and get more members. Also many of you received renewal forms with your last newsletter or notification of renewal with your electronic notification of newsletter. Please fill them out and send them to me. Also remember that I also handle "Ontario Underwater Council" memberships and insurance, but remember also that "OUC" membership and insurance can only be renewed for one year at a time because of insurance regulations.

The following is a breakdown of our 2007 membership:

- Individual Memberships 145
- Institutional Memberships 10
- Family Memberships - Bill 34
- Family Memberships - No Bill 45
- Corporate Memberships 0
- Complimentary Memberships 14
- Honorary Memberships 1
- Lifetime Memberships 2
- Free Memberships 1
- Total 251

*Respectfully submitted by Bernie Roy, SOS Membership Director*

## Windsor Chapter 2007 Season

During the 2007 season, the Windsor chapter had 4 dinner meetings. On top of our usual weekly diving on shipwrecks, we also searched for targets using Dave Trotter's side scan images. We have found several good debris fields and will check these sites in the spring. Buoys were deployed on both the *Lycoming* and the *Colonial* wreck in the past spring and removed them in the fall. In the 2008 season, we plan to be working closely with the ErieQuest Marine Heritage Area in Leamington off Point Pelee, and help them deploy and maintain buoys in their area.

*Respectfully submitted by Roy Pickering, SOS Windsor*

# The Burt Barnes

The *Burt Barnes* (image below - Kincardine Ont. in 1906) was built in 1882, USA official # 3193, and was 96' x 25' x 7', 134 gross tons, 127 net tons. This was typical of the thousands of 2-, 3- and 4-masted schooners that plied the Great Lakes in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were the bulk carriers of the day, delivering cargoes to support a growing economy. Their remains tell us much of the people who relied on and sailed them.

The three masted schooner was built by Green S. Rand at Manitowoc Wisconsin, built for John Waite Barnes (1840-1902) and named after his first son and second child Burt Barnes (1872-1947) who grew up to become a famous artist. In



1896 she was sold to Oliver Oberg also of Manitowoc. In 1899 she was sold to E.T. Torrison also of Manitowoc, then to Canadian interests in May 1904, official # C150489, to the Graham Brothers of Kincardine. They used her to carry lumber from the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin areas to ports along the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers. In the 1920's she was dismasted and made it to Kincardine Ont. for repairs. She was later sold to James Swift of the Swift Coal Company of Kingston on Lake Ontario in 1924 and used in the coal trade.

She was one of the last of her kind to sail the Great Lakes. Other schooners of stately comparison are the *City of Sheboygan*, *George A. Marsh*, *William Jamieson*, *Lyman M. Davis*, *Aloha*, *Annie Falconer*, and *City of St. Louis*. Ships grew old from relent-

less pounding, were weakened, overstressed, over loaded and in poor repair - thus these ships became floating deathtraps. Ships of this era died a hard and bitter death many times taking with them the crew and sometimes family who were aboard - usually too poor to suffer a kinder fate.

The *Burt Barnes* sank in a storm on September 2, 1926, 10-12 miles SE of Picton near the Duck Islands of Lake Ontario. She was bound from Big Sodus NY to Picton Ont. over loaded with coal. With a sudden change in winds, her foremast came crashing down as she began a tack to a new course, then the main mast crashed to the deck and took out the mizzen which landed on the yawl boat. The crew pumped water all day, but abandoned her at 4pm in a quickly patched up yawl boat and came to shore at Braddock's Point (12 miles West of Rochester NY) 12 hours later. She was under the command of Captain Patrick McManus.

In the early years of Save Ontario Shipwrecks, the *Burt Barnes* was selected to be the flagship of SOS. A photo of the *Burt Barnes* was given to SOS founder Rick Jackson as a wedding present. It is now recognized everywhere as an official logo and symbolic of SOS. It serves to remind everyone of the preservation ethic.

*Compiled by: Brian Prince with data from Lorne Joyce, Jim Hopkins, David Swayze - Ships and Shipwrecks of Manitowoc, HCGL BGSU, Manitowoc Historical Society, Ancestry of Burt Barnes a Genealogical Record, Great Lakes Ships We Remember, SOS Newsletter 1983.*

## 100 Years Ago

The barge *T.G. Lester* had plied the Great Lakes for 40 years, first as a graceful three masted schooner with a carrying capacity of 400,000 board feet of lumber and now on the morning of March 30, 1908, she was tied up at the foot of 12th Street at Detroit serving as a humble barge. There was an irony to this phase of her life; she was part of the construction of the new railway tunnel from

In 1891 the Grand Trunk Railway finished construction of its railway tunnel between Port Huron Michigan and Sarnia, connecting its operations in the U.S. with those in Canada. A competitor of the Grand Trunk, the Canadian Southern Railway with its train ferries crossing the Detroit River at Windsor soon found itself at a disadvantage. This fact was highlighted by the decrease in revenue as shippers directed cargo through the quicker Port Huron - Sarnia border crossing, thus the Canadian Southern began to investigate the possibility of constructing a rail tunnel of its own at Windsor.

However it was not until August of 1905 that the Detroit River Tunnel Corporation was formed and in October 1906, construction on the Detroit Windsor Tunnel began. What at the time was known as the Michigan Central Railway Tunnel opened for service on July 26, 1910 and is still in use today.

The *T.G Lester* was serving as a work platform and storage area for the tunnel corporation, her old hull being nicked by the passing ice flows of the spring break-up when with one worker on board the hull was punctured and the old barge settled to the bottom of the river, her only



Windsor Detroit Train Tunnel 1912

“crew member” escaping. No effort was made to recover the Lester and her final enrolment was surrendered at Detroit on June 24, 1908 and was endorsed abandoned. It is believed the hull was covered over with fill when the dock area was expanded years later.

The *T.G. Lester* (U.S. 59196) was built by T.G. Lester along with his brother Ellery at East Saginaw Michigan and was launched in 1868. Measuring 113' x 26' x 8.5' when launched, the ship was rebuilt at Port Huron in 1883 when it was lengthened by 25'.

*Respectfully submitted by Jim Hopkins, SOS Manitoulin*



# The History of the Iron Ore Trade Part 4

A multi-part series from an article that appeared in the 1910 Annual Report of the Lake Carriers Association.

As previously noted, the draft of iron ore vessels was regulated by the depth of water in the locks at Sault Ste Marie. By 1870 vessels drawing 13 feet and upward of water could enter a few of the more important ports, such as Buffalo, New York, Cleveland, Ohio and Chicago, Illinois. The demand became general for a depth of 16 feet throughout the Great Lakes system. The initiative to accomplish this was taken at the St. Mary's Falls Canal by a project to increase its depth from 12 feet to 16 feet by building a new lock that would be 515 feet long and 80 feet wide, overcoming the difference of level of 18 feet between lakes Superior and Huron by a single lift. The original locks were tandem, having a lift of 9 feet each. The new lock was completed in 1881, but the 16-foot channel in the river was not completed until 1884. Meanwhile, the principal harbours had been put in readiness and a fleet of large vessels built to take advantage of the new allowable draft. Iron ore shipments had increased from 278,796 gross tons in 1866 to 2,518,693 gross tons in 1884. The number of vessels had increased but slightly, but the gross register tonnage had increased about 50 percent. The freight rate on iron ore, which had fluctuated from \$3.00 to \$6.00 per gross ton in 1866, had fallen to \$1.35 per gross ton in 1884.

In 1882 a departure from the use of wood as a shipbuilding material was made by the construction of the steamer Onoko at the Globe Iron Works in Cleveland, Ohio. That vessel was made of iron. The Onoko measured 302'6" in overall length, 38'6" in breadth and 24'8" in moulded depth. For a time it was the largest dead-weight carrier on the lakes and was the first metal bulk freighter constructed on the Great Lakes. The first steel bulk freighter made its appearance on the lakes in 1886. This steamer was the Spokane, which was built for the Wilson Transit Company at the yard of the Globe Iron Works, Cleveland Ohio. This steamer was 324' in overall

length, 38' in beam and 24' in moulded depth.

It was not until 1888 that iron ore became the leading article of freight on the great Lakes. During that year, 5,063,877 gross tons were moved. The growth in vessel tonnage had been steady though cautious. When the 16-foot channel was first projected, the tonnage varied from 600 to 1,000 tons net register, with a carrying capacity about twice the registered tonnage. When the 16-foot channel became available in 1881, the tonnage had grown from 1,500 to 1,900 net register, with a carrying capacity about double that, the increase in size being most marked in steam vessels.

In construction features the type of vessel had practically varied from the design of the Hacket and Forest City, except that they were somewhat larger. In 1889, however, the first of a new type appeared, known as the whaleback. These vessels were commonly called "pigs," which when they were fully laden, they greatly resembled. This design of vessel was conceived by Alexander McDougall of Duluth, Minnesota. The first such craft was called the No. 101 when launched. It was 198' overall length, 25' in beam and 18' in moulded depth. This class of carrier created quite a furor for the time being and many thought the type would revolutionise the type of bulk freighter on the lakes because within three years some 30 of them were built. The vessels were normally operated in fleets, that is, one steamer towed one or more barges. The whalebacks were economical to construct and were great carriers, but experience proved that their advantages did not surmount their disadvantages and this type of vessel was gradually discarded in the iron ore trade. One by one, and sometimes in groups, these vessels largely disappeared, with only about a half a dozen left on the lakes in 1910. It has been the history of lake practice that an improvement is no sooner completed than it is found to be totally inadequate to the demands of commerce. The 16-foot channel was no sooner completed when it was realised that it could not permanently care for the growth of lake shipping. Steps were immediately taken to establish a draft of 20 feet.

The construction of a new lock at Sault Ste Marie was undertaken under the direction of General Orlando M Poe and a new

channel was opened through the system of small lakes and straits known as the St Mary's River, saving 11 miles in distance and practicable for night navigation. In fact, the extent of the improvements in the connecting channels of the lakes is not generally realised. Between Lakes Superior and Huron the aggregate length of new or deepened channels of the lakes is approximately 25 miles. Between Lakes Huron and Erie it is about 23 miles. The commerce of the lakes, therefore passes through artificial waterways of 48 miles. This is 12 miles greater than the length or restricted waterway to be made at the Panama Canal. The new lock known as the Poe lock was built upon the site of the original locks completed in 1855. The Poe was opened to traffic in 1896.

As indicating the influence of this gateway into lake Superior upon vessel construction, it may be noted that more than half the tonnage of bulk freighter built in 1896 exceeded 2,000 tons net register. Six years before, not a single vessel of this tonnage was in service, the mean dimensions of freighters even as late as 1894 being under 300 feet.

*Submitted by Jim Hopkins, SOS Manitoulin*

## Kingston Museum Relocates Icebreaker

After expressing serious concern for the safety of one of its most important artifacts earlier this year, the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes recently relocated the former Canadian icebreaker *Alexander Henry*.

This spring, officials of the Kingston, Ont.-based museum announced that they were delaying the opening of the seasonal bed & breakfast aboard the icebreaker until July this year. Those officials said the Henry could not be opened for the season until the 210-foot vessel was moved to a site that would offer better protection from damage by wind and waves.

Since 1985, the *Alexander Henry* has been moored at a 100-year-old wharf on the east side of the Marine Museum's waterfront site. The dock has deteriorated significantly over the years. Adding to the sense of urgency about moving the vessel was the fact that the icebreaker could only be moved when Lake Ontario is at its highest in mid-June. Each year, the bed & breakfast aboard the *Alexander Henry* reportedly will generate about \$100,000 in revenue for the Marine Museum or about 20% of its total operating revenues. In early June, the Kingston City Council approved the spending of \$175,000 to review, repair and build new bollards for the 1889 dry dock that is alongside the museum. The bollards would allow the Marine Museum to move the *Alexander Henry* from the eastside wharf to the more protected waters of the dry dock. After the City Council's action, museum officials said that the ship had to be moved by June 15, or there would be insufficient water for the *Henry* to pass over the lip leading into the dry dock.

Such a move, however, first needed approval by Public Works Canada since the federal government owns the dry dock and the rest of the waterfront site on which the Marine Museum is located. For the past 30 years, the federal government has leased the site to the museum for \$1 per year.

On June 8, Public Works Canada gave permission to the Marine Museum to move *Alexander Henry* into the dry dock and volunteers completed the move one week later on the morning of Friday, June 15. In related news, city and federal officials are still in negotiations over the future of the Marine Museum's waterfront site (see January-February 2007 issue). The museum's 30-year lease expires at the end of this November, and the federal government has offered to sell the site to the City of Kingston for \$1. City officials, however, want some assurance from federal officials that they will address the estimated \$6 to \$8 million in improvements that are needed over the next ten years to return the east and west wharfs and dry dock to a serviceable condition.

Earlier this year, the City of Kingston allocated \$195,000 to determine how much work is needed to return the wharfs and dry dock to serviceable condition. The cost just to stabilise the structures

was estimated to be over \$770,000. At this point, federal officials say they are not responsible for future costs of maintaining the docks and wharfs, and point out that they have funded over \$1 million in remediation work at the site over the past 30 years.

*Reprinted from: July-August 2007 issue of the Assn. for Great Lakes Maritime History Newsletter*

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# Looking Back at 2007 With Ottawa

During the past year, the Ottawa Chapter Committee of Save Ontario Shipwrecks has undertaken various activities to further the very important mission of the organisation. We held six meetings including the AGM in 2007, one of which was a barbecue hosted by one of the chapter members.

In the spring of 2007, the chapter donated \$1000 to support the production of a documentary film of the lost villages in the St. Lawrence River. The movie opened to sold out viewings and is being distributed on DVD. In recognition of the donation, Save Ontario Shipwrecks' logo features prominently in the closing credits.

The Twisted Sisters survey project lead by Nancy Binnie completed several days of survey work. This year, charter operators were used rather than the various boats used in the past. Logistically, this simplified things significantly. At the same time, it addressed some of the requirements of conducting dives covered by the liability insurance policy the organisation has arranged with the Underwater Council of Ontario.

Outreach was another important activity of the chapter. The chapter was invited to attend Heritage Riverfest, a heritage event at Pinhey's Point celebrating the 150th anniversary of the naming of the city of Ottawa as the capital of Canada. We had the opportunity to give a presentation to people attending the event and Nancy Binnie talked about the history of the two ships being recorded by the Twisted Sisters project and the importance of Ontario's maritime heritage. The eastern Ontario display was set up and manned by a number of chapter members who talked to visitors attending the event.

Interpretive plaques were placed at the shore entry points for the wrecks of the Rothesay and Conestoga in the St. Lawrence River. Marg Barker lead this project, which saw the creation of two

separate plaques, one for each wreck. These full-colour plaques include the history of the wrecks, site maps and other information useful to divers visiting the sites. Made of a UV-resistant phenolic material, these plaques are virtually indestructible and will promote Save Ontario Shipwrecks for years to come.

The plaques were installed on permanent bases fixed in concrete footings constructed on one of the wettest days in October by a team of volunteers from the chapter. Donations of concrete and the rental of a power auger ensured the successful installation of the pedestals.

Unveiling ceremonies held at both sites were attended by members of the council of the Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal, including Mayor Larry Dishaw, and by John Ward, chair of the English Speaking Committee of the Canadian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites. Following the ceremonies, we have received permission to place more interpretive plaques on other sites between Cardinal and Prescott. One site tentatively identified is the wreck of the Wee Hawk in the old lock chamber just upstream of the Conestoga.

### **Looking ahead to 2008**

As can be seen from the financial report, the chapter committee used the bulk of its funds supporting these projects. Consequently, activities in 2008 will need to be scaled back to more fiscally manageable levels. The majority of the chapter's funds have come from NAS I and II courses in the past, but with the loss of the provincial marine archaeologist, the possibility of running a NAS I course this year is uncertain. Other sources of funding, such as Trilium Fund grants for the new plaque projects, need to be explored. Ideally, this should be coordinated through the Board so that other chapter committees can benefit from the funding.

*Respectfully submitted by Gordon Dewis, SOS Ottawa*

# Webmasters Year End Report 2007

The SOS website was maintained throughout the year with content provided primarily by Email. Events, Buoys and Home-Page topics were updated on a more regular basis than other pages such as Previous SOS News, Membership form, OUC Insurance and Newsletter pages.

According to the attached report generated by the placement of code in each of the web pages, the website had for the year Jan 1, to Dec 31, 2007:

Visits	12,218
Page Views	37,235
Pages/Visit	3.05
Bounce Rate	50.05%
Avg Time on site	00:02:01
New Visits	73.88%

The website has grown over the past years to the following in size and scope:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Size (in KB)</b>
Files	1038	470,824
Pictures	723	120,260
Unlinked files	433	431,019
Linked files	605	39,805
Recently Added files	17	1,124
Hyperlinks	2373	
External hyperlinks	474	
Internal hyperlinks	1899	

The large array of unlinked files (not navigable from the home page) is the SOS Private area of the website that has a lot of SOS artwork. The largest files are the Marine Heritage database (12MB) and the Baby Jane video (294MB) that are not currently available online.



In late 2007, SOS registered additional URL's to make our site more visible and prevent sister rogue sites. These included SaveOntarioShipwrecks.COM, .ORG, SaveOurShipwrecks .CA, .COM, .ORG, DiveToPreserve .COM, .CA. A redirect explanation sub-web was setup for SaveOurShipwrecks. The Google keyword statistics supports that this was a positive addition to implement. Statistics code was added to the DiveToPreserve web site in early January 2008.

Plans for the coming year of 2008 include: continual updates, unloading all the data from the Marine Heritage Database and generating HTML files. Less context searchable, but more world accessible. This will allow all of our data to be Google searched and not hidden in a "DEEP WEB" as it could be if we were able to get ACCESS to work or ported to a server side SQL database.

*Respectfully submitted by Brian Prince, SOS Webmaster*

## Port Dover 2007 Season

Jim Murphy purchased an Imagenx sidescan in the spring of 2007 to do extensive side-scanning in the Eastern basin of Lake Erie for wreck sites and geological anomalies. After testing it off Port Dover Harbour, it will be used in an upcoming season. A Klien 502 wet paper machine was purchased to use as well as a laptop for Imagenx recording.

The chapter is still involved with the Port Dover Marine Museum and the local Board of Trade. A display in the Port Dover Board of Trade office shows past history of Port Dover SOS since inception in 1994. Using a Lake Erie chart, it indicates actual wreck sites and type of vessels including sketches of ships done by Ian Morgan.

*Respectfully submitted by Jim Murphy SOS Windsor*

# Members Forum

Re: Knapps Roller Boat (SOS Newsletter August 2007)

*Recent SOS newsletters have suggested her as archaeologically significant. What would one find if the site was excavated?*

*Her interior has been gutted. Gone are engines, boilers, machinery and the inner non-rotating tube. Added was a 90 feet addition to the bow with the appearance of a huge scoop. Another 50 feet was added to the stern with a small blade rudder. On top is a small pilot house and mast. On each side the flange paddle was enlarged into a rubbing strake. The second very short life as a tow barge was over. It was as great a failure as a roller boat.*

*Over the years the abandoned derelicts above water upper half was gone to anyone who wanted scrap metal. By the 1920's little was left. Only the lower portion of the outer curved plating and frames remained.*

*Would anyone want to view the remaining lower arc of a circle that was just a slip of marine failure?*

*In the late 1940's while walking the bottom of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie for World War II Commonwealth Air Training, I passed a galvanized pail filled with concrete and a piece of line tied to the pail. That failed anchor was about as interesting.*

Lorne Joyce

## Events - Not To Be Missed

**Feb 22-25** Outdoor Adventure Show - Toronto

**April 12** SOS Annual General Meeting - Kingston

Guest speakers:

Jonathon Moore - Kingston's Naval and Military Cultural Landscape.

Joseph Zarzynski - 1758 Land Tortoise Radeau Shipwreck

# Regional and Committee Representatives

## **President / Eastern Region Representative/ Webmaster**

Brian Prince\*  
137 King Street East  
Brockville, Ont. K6V 1C1 (613) 342-3900  
president@SaveOntarioShipwrecks.on.ca

## **Vice President / Ethics Chairperson**

Jonathan Ferguson\*  
1911-730 Dovercourt Road  
Toronto, Ont. M6H 2W9 (416) 536-1247  
jonathanferguson@hotmail.com

## **Secretary / Treasurer / Quartermaster**

Margaret Barker\*  
103 MacDougall  
Kingston, Ont. K7N 0A1 (613) 384-8049  
margaret.barker@sympatico.ca

## **Membership Director**

Bernie Roy  
18 Ada Cres.  
R.R. # 2  
Tobermory, Ont. N0H 2R0 (519) 596-2607  
membership@SaveOntarioShipwrecks.on.ca

## **Central Region Representative / OUC Insurance Chairperson**

David Taylor\*  
15 Dalewood Cres.  
Hamilton, Ont. L8S 4B5 (905) 526-9026  
taylordw@mcmaster.ca

## **SOS Hamilton**

Walt Irie  
169 Victoria Street  
Ingersoll, Ont. N5C 2N2 (519) 425-4449  
wirie@sympatico.ca

## **SOS Huron Shores**

Krissy Nickle\*  
PO Box 924  
Granton, Ont. N0M 1V0 (519) 225-2472  
krissy@nickle.ca

## **SOS Manitoulin / Past President / Northern Region Representative**

Jim Hopkins\*  
38 Shames Cres.  
Espanola, Ont. P5E 1B9 (705) 869-3532  
jjhop@onlink.net

## **SOS Ottawa / Bylaw Committee Chairperson**

Gordon Dewis\*  
609-45 Holland Avenue  
Ottawa, Ont. K1Y 4S3 (613) 482-1075  
gordon.dewis@gmail.com

## **SOS Port Dover**

Jim Murphy  
Box 299  
Port Dover, Ont. N0A 1N0 (519) 583-2884  
murphybuck001@sympatico.ca

## **SOS Quebec**

Nathalie Lasselin  
6380 de Bordeaux  
Montreal, Que. H2G 2R8 (514) 276-9020  
sosquebec@pixnat.com

## **SOS Sarnia**

John Charest  
1150 Afton Drive Suite #108  
Sarnia, Ont. N7S 5B8 (519) 381-9627  
christmasdesignsarnia@yahoo.ca

## **SOS Thousand Islands**

Douglas Miller  
544 Lower Oak Leaf Road  
Athens, Ont. K0E 1B0 (613) 924-9068  
douglas.miller@explornet.com

## **SOS Toronto**

Bryan Thomas  
trainer@scubajunkies.ca

## **SOS Windsor**

Roy Pickering  
1230 Mariners Road, Box 39  
Erieau, Ont. N0P 1N0 (519) 676-2136  
rjequip@on.aibn.com

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