

SAVE  
SOS ONTARIO  
SHIPWRECKS

ISSN NO 1180-1972

Special Edition

# SOS NEWSLETTER

November 2007



## SOS NEWSLETTER

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The *SOS Newsletter* is published four times a year in February, May, August, November. This issue is published November, 2007.

The *SOS Newsletter* is published by *Save Ontario Shipwrecks (SOS)*, a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to furthering public knowledge and appreciation of Ontario's Marine Heritage.

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*Save Ontario Shipwrecks* gratefully acknowledges the support and financial assistance of the Ministry of Culture.

Deadline submission for next issue is January 1, 2008.

## The Editor

Thanks to the contributors of this issue. I would like to thank everyone for taking the time to help out with this issue.

In this issue, I have brought together a new coloured newsletter. My goal is to expand the newsletter and welcome articles from the members and the public for publication.

Have a great winter season.

*Jody Bulman*

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

# The View From The Bridge

By Brian Prince

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Welcome to the our first "SPECIAL EDITION" SOS newsletter. In the 26 years we have been producing this newsletter, this is the first ever full colour issue. We may do another colour issue next year based on content. So why this time??? We have 2 spectacular land plaques on the *Rothesay* and *Conestoga* that you can read about and visit. We have the sinking of a memorial stone for the *J.B King* in the centerfold. These two projects alone make it well worth doing a colour issue. We also have a report on Scuba in the Park. But wait... we still have even more!

The summer dive season is basically over for most of us. A few of us might be pushing the dive season to the bitter end. These might include local SOS buoy project directors and the Chapter people that help with the retrieval and storage of buoys. If you are one of these dedicated helpers, please remember to cancel your NOTSHIPs and inform the SOS Webmaster so it can be posted and logged. Buoys need to be drained of any water around the foam by standing them up against a corner for a week or so. If not, ice forms inside the plastic shell and compresses the foam. Then in the spring you have a buoy that will float lopsided. Buoy flashing lights need the magnet reinstalled for off season storage. This disconnects the battery to prevent excessive drainage damage during storage.

I am pleased to announce that we have 2 new members to the SOS Special Functions team. Scott Fuller, a previous SOS member, is back after a long absence to help with our SOS PowerPoint presentation. He recently donated some additional materials to our SOS Historical Document project that Steve Mombourquette is undertaking. Steve has asked his employer (accounting firm Scott, Rankin & Gardiner [www.srgg.com](http://www.srgg.com)) if he could use the office high-speed scanner to help SOS. We are pleased that they said yes and thank SR&G, Steve and Scott for joining the team.

I'd just like to be one of the first to say how proud and appreciative I am of the work that's been done around the province this year. Just to mention a few major ones... the attendance at the Outdoor Adventure Show, the display preparation by the Central region, Shipwrecks 2007 attendance, an extended display presentation at the London Museum of Ontario Archaeology, NAS courses in Montreal, Brockville and Goderich, Buoys out around the province, Scuba in the Park, Memorial Stone on the *J.B. King*, the Lost Villages documentary that SOS Ottawa sponsored, survey work on the Twisted Sisters and Muskie prop, and to wrap up a 2 year undertaking... the land plaques on the *Conestoga* and *Rothsay*. SOS was pleased to present the Directors Award and Honourary Membership to Joyce Hayward of Ohio this year. Few have committed a lifetime of effort for such a worthy cause.

To wrap up the season, it is time to recall what each chapter has accomplished and put it down in your chapters year end report. As well, project directors need to submit their project financial reports and treasurers need to roll up the books and create their chapter's year end financial report. These are straight forward and simple to complete. Detailed data will be returned to the chapter so that they can see how they contributed and fit in to the larger province wide picture. Revised from last year... newly updated Excel forms will be sent to chapter chairs in December. Having your books and projects in order now will simplify filling these out in January. Data will be reviewed by the board in the new year and your chapter reports will be published in the next Newsletter. 🏠

Thanks to all!

Brian Prince  
President@SaveOntarioShipwrecks.on.ca

# The History of the Iron Ore Trade Part 3

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

It was not until 1862 that any of the iron companies were sufficiently prosperous to justify the declaration of a dividend. Meanwhile they had joined in building a wooden deck dock with trestle work at Marquette. The dock had pockets to facilitate the loading of iron ore. This facility was a primitive structure, but it was nevertheless a forerunner of the present great docks, embodying the principles of loading through the spout from a pocket.

Only schooner could be loaded with iron ore directly from the new docks spouts because the steamers of the day were not yet adapted to the haulage of bulk cargos such as ore. They did not have hatches through their decks, but gangways through the sides after the manner of the package freighter some forty or fifty years later, and beyond. Iron ore shipments to be moved by these early freighters was spouted on the dock and then wheeled aboard in barrows through the gangways. Schooners therefore, pulled up on one side of the dock directly under the pockets and received their cargos directly, while steamers moored on the opposite side of the dock. This side of the dock was flat-surfaced and capable of handling all types of freight.


While putting of Iron ore aboard a schooner was a comparatively simple process even in those early days, getting it out again on the lower lakes was quite a different matter. The average cargo was about 300 tons and it took nearly four days to unload it. First of all, a staging had to be built in the vessels hold, upon which the cargo was shovelled, to be re-shovelled upon the deck and then loaded into wheelbarrows and wheeled to the dock. An improvement upon this practice was to unload by means of a block, tackle and horse. The firm of Bothwell & Morris, who oper-

ated the NYPANO dock in the Old River Bed at Cleveland, Ohio usually, employed about forty horses in the work of unloading a schooner. One day in the spring of 1867, J.D. Bothwell, who was watching a small engine lifting piles into the air preparatory to driving them into the riverbed, conceived the idea that an engine of somewhat similar design could also hoist iron ore from the hold of a vessel. He approached Robert Wallace, of Pankhurst & Company with the idea, and Wallace at once designed and built a little portable 6' x 12' engine fasted to the side of a boiler. It could be moved along the dock to any desired location. After the engine had been installed the first to come along was the bark *Massillon*. The little engine proved to be much more expeditious in it's work than the horses, unloading the bark in a single working day. The engine operated three strands of rope fall, hoisting from the hold of the boat three tubs of iron ore at a time. Orders were given immediately for nine of these little engines and they proved very profitable to the firm of Bothwell & Morris, as their contract with the railway was based upon a fixed percentage of the tonnage handled.

It was the usual practice at this time for schooners to be towed through the rivers, in which business a large number of found profitable employment. In the early 1860's, 93 per cent of the tonnage on the lakes was sail and less than t percent was steam. This led to the construction and operation of a large fleet of tugs on the Great Lakes. A total of about fifty tugs were employed in various Great Lakes ports. Among these vessels were a number of the most powerful and fastest tugs in the world at that time, some of them towing as many as eight to ten schooners in a single tow.

In the early 1870's steam superseded sail so rapidly that the necessity for tugs very rapidly decreased, until the necessity of them for towing purposes ceased to exist. This method of transportation may be said in general terms to have been the method of the 60's. It was superseded in the early 70's by the system of steamer and barge/barges. In 1869 appeared the forerunner of the

then-present type.

The steamer *R.J. Hackett* was built by Peck & Masters Shipyard at Cleveland, Ohio, during that year to carry ore from the Jackson Mine. As the term is now understood, she was the first bulk freighter to be built on the lakes. The *Hackett* was 225' in overall length and 32' in width. The engine was mounted in the after cabin. In 1870, the same shipyard produced the schooner *Forest City*, measuring 221' in overall length and 33'6" in width. This vessel was towed in iron ore service by the *Hackett*. This system of iron ore transportation by steamer and consort grew rapidly. In fact, it may be said to have been the prevailing practice for twenty years thereafter. In 1874, the steamer *V.H. Ketcham* was built at the David Lester Shipyard in Marine City, Michigan. Thousands gathered to see her launch on April 16th for this carrier twenty feet longer than anything afloat and was regarded as a "Monster" She was, in fact, far in advance of dock facilities, though she later became very profitable. The *Ketcham's* dimensions were: 242' in overall length, 41' in beam and 24' in moulded depth. 

## LAKE ONTARIO SHIPWRECKS



### Rothsasy Dive Notes

- Bring a light to see into the chain locker and hold.
- Prepare for a 1-2 knot current along the surface. There is a mild current at depth.
- Shore buoy marks the start of a 90 m. (300') line out to the wreck along the bottom. Follow the line and you arrive aft of the paddle wheels.
- Upperwork lies at approx. 6 m. (20') maximum depth is 9 m. (30').
- Best visibility is early and late in dive season, and varies from 5 m.-12m. (15'-40').
- The parser's safe is clearly visible and it is the item to be found. Once found, one can see what the demolition practice did to the entire wreck.
- Marine archaeology sites in Ontario are protected under Section 48 of the Ontario Heritage Act. It is illegal to alter or remove artifacts from the site. Any violations may be reported to law enforcement for investigation.



**Diver Down Flag**  
Please stay a minimum  
30m. (100') clear of flag.

# The Rothsasy

Launched February 2, 1868 at St. John, New Brunswick the **Rothsasy** is a 65 m. (178') long twin side-wheeler that initially sailed between Fredericton and St. John but was later relocated to service the Montreal to Prescott route where she was referred to as "*The Greyhound of the St. Lawrence*".

On the evening of the 12th of September, 1889 a serious collision occurred between **Rothsasy** and the tugboat **Myra** of Ogdensburg, New York. **Rothsasy** rammed **Myra** when there was a mix-up over passing signals.

**Myra** sank immediately and the lives of both her engineer and fireman were lost. The **Rothsasy** was damaged to such an extent that she had to be beached.

In 1901 a group from the Royal Military College in Kingston used the **Rothsasy** wreck for explosives practice which flattened her mid section, though stern and bow remain relatively intact.

Photo Credit:  
Historical Collections of the Great Lakes  
Vessels, Bowling Green State University.

The rope from about the mid still view the paddlewheel is firm with w **Rothsasy** a site has little enjoyable vis redscovered the Underwa has become most famous



Photo Credit:  
Dive site photos by

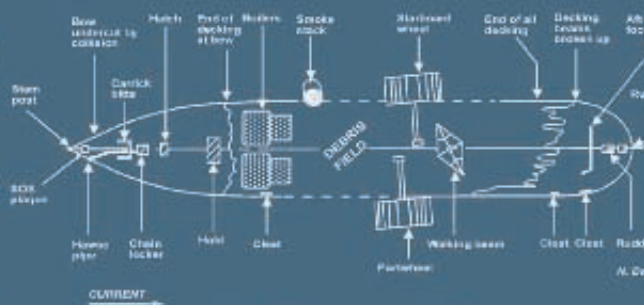
**Take Nothing But Pictures... Leave Nothing But Bubbles**  
*Ne prenez que des photos... ne laissez que des bulles*



y

GPS  
N 44 41.97'  
W 075 31.67'

...m shore meets **Rothesay**  
...dsection where you can  
...walking beam and  
...is outlined. The bottom here  
...eed growth between  
...nd the shore, however the  
...current and remains an  
...sit. The **Rothesay** was  
...d on September 25, 1964 by  
...ster Society of Ottawa and  
...one of Eastern Ontario's  
...shipwreck sites.



Tom Wilson



...bbles... and give our Past a Future!  
... et donnez un avenir au passé!

[www.SaveOntarioShipwrecks.on.ca](http://www.SaveOntarioShipwrecks.on.ca)

On Sunday September 30, 2007, S.O.S Quebec and its members completed one of their projects. In fact this was the first big project for the chapter. The chapter put a commemorative granite stone underwater beside the heritage site of the *J.B. King* shipwreck.

This project is like a dream. It all started when Nathalie Lasselin (SOS Quebec Chapter Chair) heard about Mr. Ev Snider and what was going on with pirate divers on various dive sites. A year ago Nathalie started doing some research about the story of the *J.B. King* and she soon realized it was an underwater graveyard. She heard that 13 bodies of the 30 men on board who perished on the *J.B. King*, were never recovered. Often divers don't know a lot about the story of the wrecks they dive and this site is a bit special because of the human remains. After some consideration, Nathalie decided on a granite stone instead of the usual cement block with a plastic plaque because it was more symbolic. We were lucky to have the support of Leeder Monuments in Gananoque who provided the stone with engraving at a special price. At the same time, I should mention ABUCS scuba who provided the transportation to the island and Dive TECH for the gas and lift barrel.

On Friday afternoon, we picked up the stone at Leeder Monuments. Saturday, some of the members were there to bring the stone from St. Lawrence Park to Cockburn Island. Since it is 330 pounds, we used a hand truck to bring the stone to the bay facing the shipping channel. Once there, we dove on the site to mark where we were going to place the stone underwater. We choose a spot at 30 feet where the current is not too strong and where



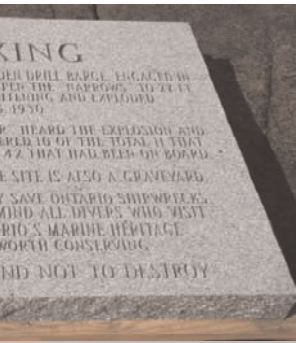
The 330 pound



The stone on its way down

divers can do a decompression stop if needed. The exact location was marked with a temporary line so we knew exactly where to transport the stone underwater.

The *J.B. King* site is an advanced dive with very twisted wreckage from 90 to 165 feet and the current is a significant challenge as well. Divers should not underestimate the skill level required to dive this site. Sunday was the big day. As well as the divers, we had the chance to have Mr. Snider with us. Ev Snider is the sole remaining survivor of the disaster. Ev was the captain of the *J.B King's* 30 foot work boat. His son Don came with him on that special day. We had another special guest, Deborah Dunleavy whose grandfather died on the King and his body was never recovered.



memorial Stone

Thanks to: Maxx, Simon, Dan, Mike, Jean François, Karine, Catherine, Olivia, Jocelyne, Marg, Brian, Yann and Mr. Ev Snider, his son Don, Deborah Dunleavy and her husband.



n to 30 feet being videoed

We hope divers will enjoy the history explained on the memorial stone and if you get a chance, you are welcome to brush the zebra mussels off the stone. 🚢



### Conestoga Facts

■ The COMCS TOGA registered 73 m. (239.7') in length, 11 m. (36.0') in the beam and 8m. (26.2') in depth. The depth of hold from tonnage deck to the ceiling uprights was 4.56. (15'). She drew a forward draft of 3.4m. (11.2') and a stern draft of 2.2m. (7.2'); Gross tonnage was 1,726 tons; net was 1,662 tons; and she had a 2,100 ton package freight capacity.

■ The CONESTOGA ran upright, bow into the current (approximately 1 knot) in a maximum depth 9-9 m. (30'-35'). Stability ranges from 1-6 m./2'-10'.

■ In the 1870's, the CONESTOGA had one blade of iron 4.2 m. (13') propeller broken off by a dynamite charge in an illegal attempt at salvage. This unique propeller, initially produced in 1876 by Swanif Manufacturing Company of Milwaukee, was of the finest quality.

■ The CONESTOGA was powered by a two-stage, scotch compound engine built in 1876 by Cuyahoga Iron Works of Cleveland. The engine developed 66 N.H.P. (normal horsepower) and could attain 5 knots with the 4.2m. (14') four bladed propeller. The single steel boiler, constructed in 1888 by the Lake Erie Boiler Works of Buffalo N.Y. was coal fired.

■ Marine archaeology sites in Ontario are protected under Section 46 of the Ontario Heritage Act. It is illegal to alter or remove artifacts from the site. Any violations may be reported to law enforcement for investigation.



**Diver Down Flag**  
Please stay a minimum  
30m. (100') clear of flag.

# The Conestoga



The **Conestoga**, a wooden-hulled, propeller-driven stream freighter, "fitted out in all proportions with care, strength and durability", was built for the Anchor Line by

Quayle & Son of Cleveland. Sister ship to the Delaware, she first launched on July 6, 1878.

The **Conestoga** had two decks, with the 'tween deck being enclosed by upward extensions of the hull sides. Entrance to the freight deck was gained through cargo ports spaced three to each side.

The hull was carvel built (planked), with a round counter and plumb stem typical of the period. There were two bulkheads, and an ornate, octagonal-shaped, "birdcage" pilothouse.

She carried one tall mast forward and her single, raked stack rose from a small house located far aft on the shelter deck where accommodations were also located.



**Take Nothing But Pictures... Leave Nothing But Bu**  
*Ne prenez que des photos... ne laissez que des bulles.*

# oga

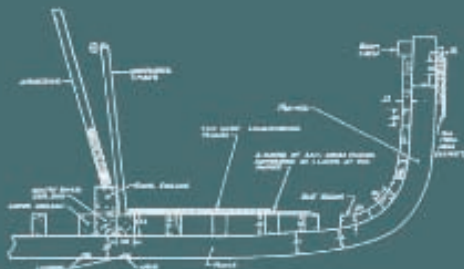
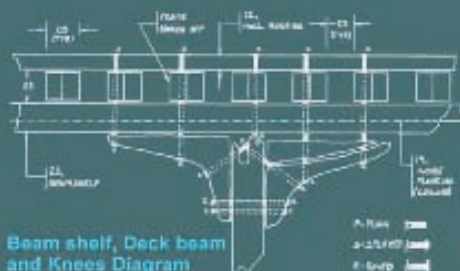
GPS  
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 W 075 23.58'

After 44 years of trouble-free service, the *Conestoga's* sailing days came to an abrupt end on May 21, 1922. During the night, while she was secured alongside Lock 27 in the Galop Canal at Cardinal, she mysteriously burst into flames. The crew immediately set to battle the blaze, but authorities, fearing she may sink and block the canal, decided to flush the steamer from the lock. She floated downstream where she ran aground in her present location. The upper portion of her people engine protrudes above the water, marking the site. Loss was estimated at \$200,000.00, although her cargo of 30,000 bushels of wheat was salvaged.

The rudder is clearly visible underwater, hanging just off the outside of stern.



**Photo Credits:**  
 This Site: Photos by Michael Smith  
 History: Photos by Helen and Gordon  
 at the Great Lakes Center,  
 Bowling Green State University



*... and give our Past a Future!*  
*... et donnez un avenir au passé!*

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# Land Plaque Project

By Marg Barker

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In July 2003, SOS Ottawa unveiled its first land plaque in Braeside Ontario at the land access to the small logging tug known as the *Red Pine Bay* wreck. In 2006 members of SOS Ottawa approved a budget to place two more land plaques at the land access to the *Rothesay* and the *Conestoga*.

These two wrecks were chosen because of the high profile they have with divers from central and eastern Ontario as well as western Quebec. Both sites are shore dives suitable for open water divers and many advanced open water courses use these sites for the night dives. It is estimated that at least 1,500 divers visit each of these wreck on an annual basis.

Non-divers visit both of these sites as well. It is rare to visit the *Conestoga* and not see someone taking a stroll to the end of the point. The plaques will provide these people with an insight to what we as divers see all the time.

With the approvals of two different municipalities required, the timeline for the plaques was to have them unveiled in the summer of 2007. I was able to track down the “right people” in the Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal and the United Counties of Leeds-Grenville and received permission to proceed. With the approvals in place, we hired a graphic artist to prepare the artwork and manage the production of the plaques with a Montreal firm. Multiple requests were sent for pictures of the wrecks both above and below water. Many online hours were spent tracking down possible sources for pictures and graphics as well.

Not many people will know that in 1986 SOS Ottawa published a survey of the *Conestoga*. Some of the drawings from that survey were used on the *Conestoga* plaque. The *Rothesay* has not been surveyed so drawings were more difficult to come by.

The *Red Pine Bay* plaque is constructed of phenolic-fused material that has weathered extremely well. The two new plaques are the same material. A work crew of volunteers dug the holes and placed the steel bases in cement footings on October 6, 2007. Although the day was rainy and cold, with a rental power auger, both footings were installed the same day.



At the *Rothesay* site, Gordon Dewis, Steve Mombourquette, Brian Prince and Bruce Mitchell. Photo by Marg Barker

The plaques were unveiled at a small ceremony on October 20, 2007. Special guests included, Larry Dishaw, Mayor of the Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal, and Councillors Hugh Cameron and Pat Sayeau and John Ward Vice President of *ICOMOS Canada*.

In any large project like this, it is a team of people that make it happen. Thanks to SOS Ottawa for the funding. Thanks to Annie Dalton of *Design Network*, *Folia Industries*, Brian Prince and the SOS Ottawa members who have volunteered as work crews. 🏠




From left to right Gordon Dewis, Mayor Larry Dishaw, Marg Barker, Councilors Hugh Cameron and Pat Sayeau, Brian Prince at the site of the *Conestoga* plaque. Photo by Lucy Prince.

## Wanted By Scott Fuller

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*Save Ontario Shipwrecks* has launched yet another project to preserve and protect SOS history! With the passage of time and the “retirement” of former SOS members, there is a risk of loss of SOS materials so this new SOS project is now seeking past editions of SOS Historical Documents such as SOS Newsletters, SOS publications, SOS photographs, SOS correspondence and any SOS newspaper articles or clippings.


SOS would like to acquire these by donation (or on loan), to scan them into an SOS Archive and then provide access to that archive via live-link on the SOS website and additionally create a set of SOS archival CD's..! Perhaps some of these are secretly hiding in a basement-box, silently- slumbering in a file cabinet, or quietly passing time on a bookcase shelf somewhere in your home?. Your first step is search them out...the second step...to list the ones discovered and the third step is to send your list in an email to [Brian.Prince@sympatico.ca](mailto:Brian.Prince@sympatico.ca) and [s\\_j\\_mombo @ hotmail.com](mailto:s_j_mombo@hotmail.com). 



# Busy at The Islands

By D.Miller and E. McKenzie

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It has been a busy summer for the 1000 Islands Chapter with highlights being the installation of the SOS buoys in May, our regular Thursday night SOS dive hosted by "Under Where? Dive Charters", a NAS 1 course and culminating with Scuba in the Park on September 8th. The chapter would like to thank Deb Brooks for all of her hard work organizing the NAS 1 course and Erika Laanela for instructing. Scuba in the Park was a success and all participants seemed to enjoy the day. For those who missed it, the day included a \$10 dive on the historic *Lillie Parsons*, booths including SOS stores and several scuba related vendors, a scuba swap, re-breather tryouts and great food and music in the Beer Garden. We also gave away over \$4,000 in scuba related door prizes donated by our sponsors. Funds raised from this event will help to pay for a land based plaque intended to educate the general public about the marine heritage in the immediate Brockville area. We would like to thank all of the volunteers as well as all organizations that sponsored the event. 

## SOS Member Sponsors and Community Sponsors:

*Dive Tech Training Centre*  
*Under Where? Dive Charters*  
*Sea N' Sky Scuba / Seaway Vision*  
*Charters*

*Dive Brockville Adventure Centre*  
*Thousand Island Pleasure Diving*

### *Community Sponsors:*

*Rockport Dive Centre*

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*Colt Creek Diving*

*Warren Miller of Silent Diving*  
*Systems*

*Kanata Dive Supply*

*Somethin' Fishy*

*Sea N' Sky Scuba / Seaway Vision*  
*Charters*

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*Scuba & Sea*

*Kelsey's Restaurant*

*Caiger's Restaurant*

*Days Inn Brockville*

*Travelodge Brockville*

*Travel Source Network- Bob*  
*Milton*

*City of Brockville*

*Robertson House Catering*

*Shiver Me Timbers (The Band)*

# Ships Store By Gordon Dewis

---

One of Save Ontario Shipwreck's source of funds to advance our mission, goals and projects is the sales of items from Ships' Stores. Over the last couple of years, many new items have been added to the inventory and an online store has been established to make it easier to support SOS. Shown below are some of the most popular items such as the dive slates and shirts.

**Dive Site Map:** \$9.95/each.



**Dive slates:** *Conestoga, Rothesay, Lillie Parsons, Robert Gaskin, Henry C. Daryaw, Muscallonge, Kinghorn and Keystorm.*

Individually: \$9.95/each.

Set of 8: \$72/set.

Expansion set (*Kinghorn and Keystorm*): \$19/set.



**Shirts:** Men's and Women's \$40.00/shirt.

Various sizes and colour combinations available.

Contact Quartermaster for availability.



**Books:** *Freshwater Heritage: A History of Sail on the Great Lakes, 1670-1918.* \$34.95/each.



## Payment options:

By mail:

Cheque payable to "Save Ontario Shipwrecks Quartermaster".

Online:

**<http://quartermaster.saveontarioshipwrecks.on.ca>**

Using credit cards and PayPal.

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