



NORTH STAR PORT

SUMMER 2020



BUILDING BOLLARDS
IN WEST DULUTH

PORTORAMA
PUTTS

CULBERTSON
COMMISSIONED

SEASON UPDATE

ROGERS WRAPS

48

YEARS ON THE DOCKS

A PUBLICATION OF THE



**Duluth Seaway
Port Authority**

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THE HARBOR LINE

I am looking ahead to September with a bit of non-COVID-19 sadness in my heart. Our September board meeting will be Commissioner Norm Voorhees' swan song. He has completed two six-year terms and is choosing to step off the board. Commissioner Voorhees has served since 2008, and from my first Duluth Seaway Port Authority board meeting in July 2014, I've been impressed with his perspective, engagement and willingness to ask tough questions, as well as his friendly, helpful attitude and unique skill set.

As I write this description, however, I realize that it is not unique to Commissioner Voorhees. Our seven-member board is replete with thoughtful, engaged members who each bring a different work history, knowledge base, and skill set to the group.

State statute dictates the structure of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority Board of Commissioners. Two commissioners are appointed by the governor, three by the Duluth City Council, and two by the St. Louis County Board of Commissioners. This structure, which generally results in broad representation and a good geographic mix, is reflective of our role within the state. Our port serves the economy of the state and the region, and we are located within the City of Duluth, which is where we focus our real estate assets. Board appointment duration is six years; commissioners can serve multiple terms. Commissioners meet monthly to set policy, approve contracts, and determine budgets. The board also hires the executive director and has general oversight of Port Authority operations. Note that the Duluth City Council revived the Port Authority in 1954 from an earlier incarnation with three city-appointed commissioners; this was expanded by state statute in 1955 to the current structure.

Since the founding of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, 61 individuals have served on our board. We have a physical reminder of this tally: in our lobby is a commissioner plaque with a brass name plate devoted to each member—62 engraved nameplates in all. Twenty-nine blank nameplates look to the future. Current Commissioner Yvonne Prettner Solon has two engraved plates: one representing her stint as a city appointee and, starting 19 years later, one commemorating her current term as a state appointee. Commissioner Prettner Solon is also one of six women who have served. The longest standing commissioner designation is shared by Bill Kron and Leonard I. Theobald, each of whom served 19 years (1957-1976 and 1992-2011, respectively).

I've had the pleasure to work with eleven different commissioners in my six years. Becky McMillan, our senior executive assistant and human resources coordinator, has worked with 32 commissioners since joining the Port Authority in 1984, and has served as administrative assistant at board meetings for the past 25 years. Her viewshed is longer than mine, so I reference her on this topic: the commissioners she's known have universally demonstrated a passion for, and an excitement to serve, the Duluth Seaway Port Authority and the port.

Our current board is no different. They are interested in the port and our operations, and they are fully engaged in their board duties. Also typical of historic boards, they represent a mixture of professions. The city's appointees are Mr. Voorhees, a retired market development representative for the Iron Workers Local 512, Rick Revoir, dean of the College of St. Scholastica's Stender School of Business, and Ray Klosowski, retired executive director of the Duluth Airport Authority as well as a brigadier general who commanded Duluth's 148th Fighter Wing and the Minnesota National Guard. Governor's appointees are Ms. Prettner Solon, a former lieutenant governor and state senator and a retired clinical psychologist, and Tony Sertich, president of the Northland Foundation and a former state representative and commissioner of the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board. Two sitting county commissioners represent St. Louis County: Patrick Boyle, a nurse practitioner, and Mike Jugovich, a former mayor of Chisholm, Minnesota, and retired steelworker. The insight and context provided by each commissioner transcend these brief job descriptions. The group also represents a mixture in terms of how they process information and make decisions. And like any good board, they don't always agree on an issue, but they are willing to discuss and explore respectfully and completely.

This board has served during a time of unprecedented growth and change for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority and the Clure Public Marine Terminal. They've been an integral part of that change, querying concepts and contracts and embracing new directions. Before Mr. Voorhees steps away from his board tenure, I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and all of the current board members for their time, commitment and caring.



Deb DeLuca, Port Director



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About North Star Port

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Stollenwerk tabbed for Fed advisory board

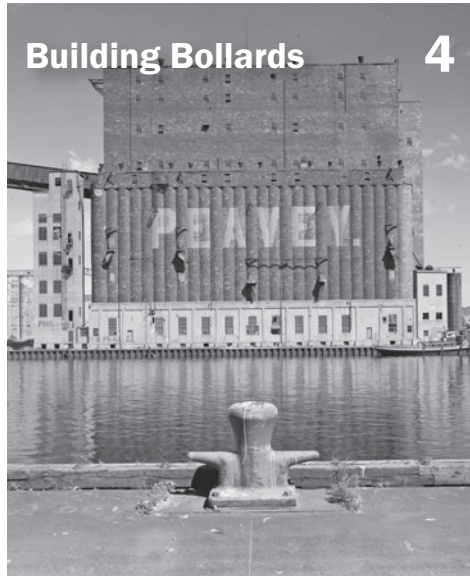


In June, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced appointees to the Great Lakes Advisory Board, a federal committee established to provide ongoing recommendations regarding the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the binational Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The appointees included Jeff Stollenwerk of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

The 14 selectees represent a broad range of business groups, environmental organizations, academia and local, state and tribal governments. Collectively, the group will work with the EPA on solutions for restoring and protecting the Great Lakes.

Inside your
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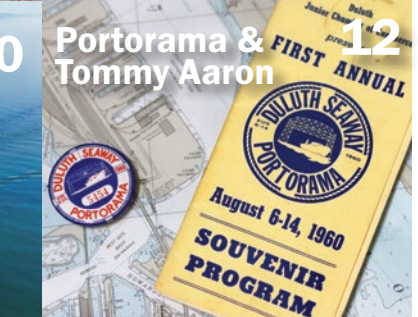
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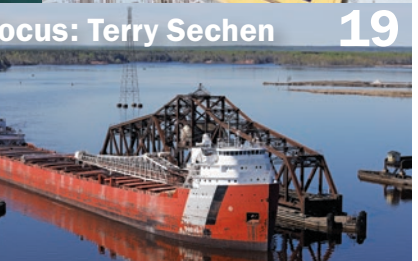
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On the covers

On the front:

Tim Rogers has been making the trek from his hilltop home to his dockworker duties for 48 years. This summer, he announced his retirement.

On the back:

The *Algoma Enterprise* loads petroleum coke under a starry sky at the Midwest Energy terminal in Superior, Wisconsin, on July 12, 2020. The ship arrived July 11 in Duluth, unloading salt at the C. Reiss dock before rendezvousing at Midwest Energy for her backhaul cargo.



Ethan Sorensen



Printed on 10% post-consumer waste paper.



BOLLARDS: Mooring the Twin Ports to the

BY ABBIE AMUNDSEN

Bollards, while not large in size, play a significant role in the harbor. Ships depend on them to hold fast the ropes that keep 100,000-ton behemoths secured at berth. Bollards withstand freezing winters, harsh storms, and the pull of massive vessels for years. While they are built to last, they aren't indestructible. A hard hit from a windblown ship took an original Clure Terminal bollard out of commission late last year after 60 seasons of service. This prompted the Duluth Seaway Port Authority to create a new bollard using a historic mold and make minor improvements to the design. This pictorial illustrates the process.

"Our bollards are made of cast steel and then filled with 750 pounds of concrete," said Dean Lembke, Duluth Seaway Port Authority facilities manager. "The final product ends up being 1,250 pounds. As long as they are properly protected, they can last a long time."

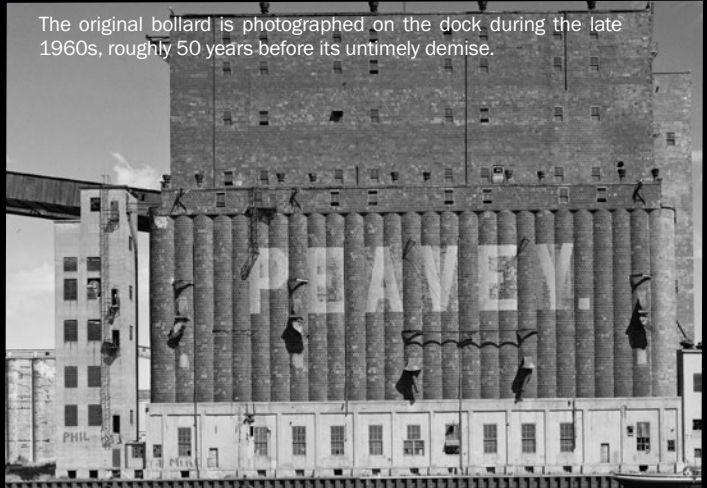
Making a bollard is a multistep process that begins with a mold. This particular project was an unusual undertaking for the Port Authority and ME Global Foundry in Gary-New Duluth, due to the partial mold that already existed for the bollards. This mold was from the original cast of the bollards in 1958, just prior to the St. Lawrence Seaway opening. The ME Global Duluth branch, which opened in 1976, was able to rebuild the second half of the mold and pair it with the original. It was the most recent of many collaborations between the Port Authority and ME Global.

"This was a unique situation because normally the customer doesn't hang onto the mold," said Mike Perpich, account manager at ME Global. "Usually, the foundry that produces the part keeps the mold. But in this case, the Port Authority had it. What they had though, was in pretty rough shape. We brought it to our guys in the pattern shop and they were able to do a restoration. Actually, it was more of a restoration-creation. We restored that pattern, the original partial mold, so we could use it, and then we created the second half of that pattern to fit our unique process."

The formation of the steel for the bollard happens at the ME Global facility, where metalworkers melt the steel before pouring it into the mold. Three large furnaces cook the metal until it becomes molten lava flowing at 3,100 degrees Fahrenheit. To work with these high temperatures, workers must wear multiple layers of protective gear.

(Right) Filling the molds with molten metal is a two-person job. One pours the metal into the molds while the other monitors the process and ensures a clean transfer from the ladle to the mold. This second person is referred to as the "hot topper."

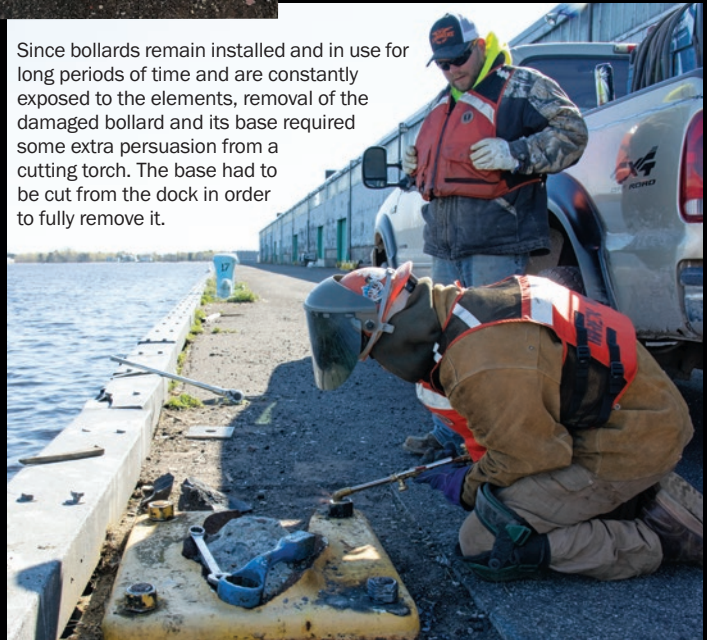
The original bollard is photographed on the dock during the late 1960s, roughly 50 years before its untimely demise.



An unfortunate collision on a gray and stormy day knocked venerable Bollard No. 16 out of service.



Since bollards remain installed and in use for long periods of time and are constantly exposed to the elements, removal of the damaged bollard and its base required some extra persuasion from a cutting torch. The base had to be cut from the dock in order to fully remove it.



past, present and future

An employee at the ME Global Foundry in Gary-New Duluth uses a wireless probe to check the temperature of molten metal at a pouring station to ensure that it is within the ideal range.



“Standing next to a ladle with the metal helmet, next to a 3,000-degree furnace pouring out a 2,200-degree ladle in the middle of summer, can get a little warm,” said Perpich. “The ambient temperature in the foundry during the summer is well over 90 degrees.”

After ME Global finished the creation process, Jeff Foster Trucking hauled the new bollards to the Clure Terminal. Then Wisconsin-based Wren Works began the installation. First, they had to remove the old bollard base, a process that required a cutting torch, then they fastened the new bollard in place. Next came welding of the bollard cap. This was a change from previous generations of bollard cap attachment, which involved only silicone placed around the cap to keep water out. Welding the cap is a subtle difference that will make the bollard less water-permeable, hopefully limiting future maintenance.

In total, the Port Authority and ME Global created three new-and-improved bollards, so replacements are available should another bollard sustain damage. As for the new bollard now standing tall alongside the Duluth Cargo Connect transit shed, it awaits only a fresh coat of paint before it is ready to answer duty’s call—hopefully for decades to come.



To create the other half of the mold, workers cut out each individual segment to replicate the profile of the original before gluing them together.



Extra zircon sand and resin from the core molding process is gathered after coming out of the mixing chamber. This mixture is warm to the touch until it cools and solidifies.



The 500-pound core is lowered carefully into the mold using a crane to prevent any damage during this delicate transition. Should the core not sit correctly, it could damage the mold and require re-molding.



An employee at the foundry glues together part of the mold core. The core is made of zircon sand and resin. This combination helps keep the bollard core hollow, which allows it to be filled with concrete later.



The new bollard has been primed and installed on the dock. Its bright yellow color makes it easy to spot along the dock wall.



Once the metal has cooled, which can take up to 72 hours, the bollard is put on a conveyor belt for the shot blast process. This removes any debris or stray bits of metal, creating a sleek finish.





While still awaiting a fresh coat of blue paint, the new bollard is fully functional and ready for use with incoming vessels. In the background, a warehouse wall displays greetings from ships and seafarers who tied to the bollard's predecessor.



The Gary-New Duluth foundry has long been a thriving industrial employer in the area. The company launched in Minneapolis in 1958 and became an international operation.



A bollard secures a vessel at berth. Multiple bollards are used in this process to ensure that the ship stays in place during the loading and unloading process and in the event of strong weather.

Rogers retires after 48 years on the docks

BY JAYSON HRON

Lake Superior's icy gusts weren't the only breezes buffeting Duluth's working waterfront in January 1991. The winds of change also blew, carrying with them a new operator at the Clure Public Marine Terminal. Milwaukee-based Meehan Seaway Service was out, replaced by Lake Superior Warehousing, a new company formed for the express purpose of bidding on a terminal operator's agreement with the Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

Backed by a 10-year contract—the longest term ever between the Port Authority and a terminal operator—Lake Superior Warehousing slammed promptly into a longshoremen's strike, souring the inauguration.

Duluthian Tim Rogers, a union longshoreman of almost 20 years, led the picketers. He became a union man in 1972, fresh from Denfeld High School, after hearing of hard work and good money available on the docks.

"My seniority number was 211 out of 225," Rogers said. "I signed up and went right to work."

In those days, union longshoremen could find themselves working at any of the numerous terminals that populated Rice's Point. Monday might be a grain loading assignment at General Mills; Tuesday could be hauling bags of powdered milk from trains to ships at the Clure Terminal. Every day was different, but in a sense, the same.

"It was always extremely hard work back then," said Rogers. "But I was a tough young kid and I kind of liked it, because when winter came and we got laid off, I just went to the YMCA and loved working out. Plus, there was an awe for the port, the ships and the facility."

As the years passed, Rogers climbed further and further up the seniority list. Eventually his experience and approachability made him a natural fit for a union leadership role, so he joined the International Longshoremen's Association executive board and rallied for the cause. In January 1991, that meant organizing and standing alongside his fellow union members on the Clure Terminal picket line. It became a pivotal foray.

"We thought the new operators, Lake Superior Warehousing, might not let anybody work at the terminal and might change everything," said Rogers.

Into the unknown

The Lake Superior Warehousing management included Tony Phillippi, Dennis Hallberg and the late Gary Nicholson, who would be the managing director. Hallberg and Nicholson met the strikers at the picket line, absorbing some verbal abuse from the crowd.

"The mindset was that this was our port, we'd been here

forever," said Rogers of the union stalwarts.

Eventually Rogers and Nicholson found themselves standing face to face. The new Lake Superior Warehousing boss asked Rogers why he wasn't swearing at him.

"I said, 'Well, I've been here for about 20 years, I've got a family to raise and I just want my job. If you're coming in here as an operator, I respect that, but I hope you'll respect that I've been here for 20 years and I want to work,'" recalled Rogers.

A day later, Nicholson offered Rogers a job. The union instructed its members to take a fair offer, so Rogers did, becoming the second of many union longshoremen who accepted the invitation from Lake Superior Warehousing.

"Gary said, 'You gave me respect; I'm going to give you respect,'" Rogers said. "It was a weird way to start a career with a company, meeting the new management and developing a friendship at the picket line, but he was an A-plus guy."

Rogers continued with the International Longshoremen's Association, serving as the charter union president while working for Lake Superior Warehousing.

"I was the union, Gary was the company, but we negotiated and worked things out well," recalled Rogers. "I said, 'Gary, I'm on the other side of the bench,' and he'd say, 'It's a circular bench, Tim. We're good.'"

Changing times, changing cargoes

Rogers witnessed a crossroads of cargo trends. In his first two decades as a longshoreman, the manifest was extremely long and varied. Powdered milk, coffee beans, peas, corn meal, rubber, twine, exotic automobiles, imported wine—it all arrived at the Clure Terminal.

"They literally built a fence in the warehouse all the way up to the ceiling to protect certain cargoes," said Rogers. "Not too many people were going to take a 50-pound bag of powdered milk, but the Italian wine was a different story."

As the years went on, the scope of cargoes narrowed and the hard physical labor gave way to more mechanized cargo movement. Rogers' role changed, too, as he ascended



Longtime Lake Superior Warehousing foreman Tim Rogers displays a new bollard cap at the Clure Terminal. Rogers retired this summer after serving parts of five decades on the docks.

the ranks at Lake Superior Warehousing from laborer to foreman under Russ Wedin.

“Gary had faith in me,” said Rogers, who eventually succeeded Wedin as lead foreman.

The Clure Terminal strategy also changed. Nicholson hunted the world for new business for Duluth, and Rogers helped manage the new cargo arrangements on the fly. No longer moving pallets of small cargoes, the focus shifted instead to massive heavy-lift components, particularly those connected to the energy sector.

“It was a continuous puzzle every day,” said Rogers. “It’s amazing, like kids’ erector sets, except gigantic pieces. We’d send electrical houses to Greenland, oil derricks to Norway, giant hole-boring machines to build tunnels in the Twin Cities, reactors to Western Canada, wind cargo all over North America ... The ships would come and we’d have to figure out how to load it or unload it, strategically, because it had to be done in a certain sequence for the off-load or in a certain position for stability. So yeah, it was a challenge, but it was rewarding, especially when

you had that ship loaded and it was leaving the port and you went, ‘Whew. That was an accomplishment.’”

Rogers kept a keen eye on performance throughout the process,

charting load times, man hours and productivity rates. He and his colleagues never stopped chasing improved efficiency, but safety and security remained the top priority.

“It doesn’t matter how fast you loaded it if you loaded it wrong,” said Rogers.

Time flies

All those days, and some that stretched into night, are too numerous to count for Rogers now. They run together in a string of 48 good years on his hometown docks—a remarkable career the 66-year-old husband, father and grandfather closed in June with the announcement of his well-deserved retirement.

Lake Superior Warehousing and the Port Authority will miss him, but he’s going out on top after a record-breaking year of wind energy cargo arrivals.

“This year, seriously, is going to be a banner year,” said Rogers. “But I’m just one of the team. It’s time for the next person to step up.

“Jonathan (Lamb, president of Lake Superior Warehousing) asked me if I was sure I was ready (to retire). I said, ‘Come on. Forty-eight years? I think I’m ready.’”

With that said, Rogers has no plans to stop moving cargo. He recently acquired a seven-passenger SUV to haul his most precious load of all.

“Grandkids,” he said. “We’re going to load them up and just go do stuff every week.”



SEASON UPDATE

Some 7.2 million tons of cargo transit the Port of Duluth-Superior in a typical month of May, however May 2020 was anything but typical, with COVID-19 besieging North America. As manufacturing slowed and mills idled, iron ore and coal usage plummeted, leading to the Port of Duluth-Superior recording its lowest total float for the month of May in decades: 2.5 million tons.

It was historic, and not in a good way.

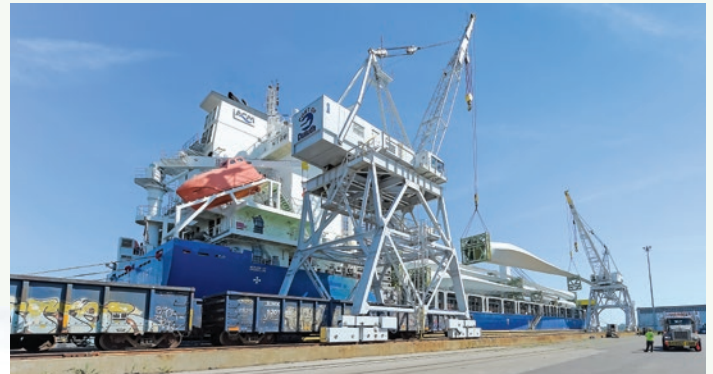
June brought incremental improvements, with total tonnage increasing almost 6 percent over May. Coal led the uptick, topping May's float by more than 376,000 tons. Limestone deliveries also climbed in June, with tonnage jumping 21 percent over May's final figure. Grain continued its early-season surge, finishing nearly 22 percent ahead of the five-season average and 6 percent ahead of the 2019 pace.

Despite those gains, total tonnage through June was down 29 percent compared to the 2019 pace and the five-season average.

July began on a more optimistic note, with Duluth Cargo Connect welcoming the season's first wind

energy cargo arrivals to the Clure Public Marine Terminal. At the same time, blast furnace utilization rates in the United States climbed slightly, offering a slice of optimism for iron ore interests. Minnesota mines, largely idled amidst the pandemic, followed with restart announcements, but shortly after that promising news, Duluth-based Key Lakes added three ships to the growing number of vessels pulled from the water due to diminished shipping demand.

Hope remains for a resurgence that could pull those Great Lakes ships back into service this season, but anything more than cautious optimism now seems unrealistic, as North America continues to grapple with the effects of COVID-19.



Bob Weitron



Gus Schauer

Thousand-foot Interlake Steamship Company fleetmates and sister ships, the *James R. Barker* and the *Mesabi Miner*, rest side by side in May for a crew change at the Midwest Energy coal terminal in Superior, Wisconsin.

Seasons of Yore

Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center



Built in 1900, the *Robert W.E. Bunsen* was among the ore-carrying departures from Duluth-Superior on Aug. 18, 1920. Early in her career, the vessel's home port was Duluth.

More prominent *Duluth Herald* headlines pushed it to Page 12, but the “ORE SHIPPING TO BE HEAVY” banner was no less a welcome sight to Duluthians one hundred years ago, on Aug. 18, 1920.

The previous August had been troubling in the Port of Duluth-Superior. A five-week coal dockers strike sunk tonnage totals, with eastern coal companies eventually embargoing shipment to Head of the Lakes docks. Without incoming coal, Minnesota's mines couldn't operate at full capacity. It was a stinging one-two punch to the Arrowhead Region.

One year later, the outlook was much improved. Coal supplies had returned to adequate levels, and state-owned Mesabi Range mines sent nearly 205,000 tons of iron ore to Lake Superior docks during the week of Aug. 9, 1920. Virginia's Mesaba Mountain mine led the way, delivering almost half of that total.

Good news from the steel industry created still more positive vibes. An unspecified mine-owning steel company requested 100,000 tons of additional ore beyond what its subsidiary mines could provide, according to the *Herald*.

It was all welcome by Great Lakes shipping companies, with a brisk procession of vessels arriving light for ore in the Port of Duluth-Superior. No fewer than 10 such ships arrived Aug. 18, 1920, a day which also included 16 ore-boat departures. But all of that considerable activity, while certainly exciting and profitable, was mere agate type compared to the day's front-page headline:

“WOMEN OF U.S. GRANTED FULL SUFFRAGE”



Bob Weilton

The *BBC Swift* arrived July 2 under Duluth's Aerial Lift Bridge, becoming the port's first 2020 wind energy cargo arrival.



Bob Weilton

Arriving later in July, the *BBC Mekong* carried a load of wind turbine components to the Clure Terminal.

PORTORAMA PUTTS HELPED SPRING AARON

BY JAYSON HRON

The St. Lawrence Seaway opened to great fanfare in Duluth, with festivities peppering the calendar throughout the spring and summer of 1959. Thousands flocked to the waterfront, welcoming overseas arrivals and their often-exotic cargoes to Mid-America's new world port. That buoyant maritime momentum spilled into 1960 as the community cemented its seaport status. Total tonnage jumped 36 percent and Duluth's never-to-be-surpassed population of 106,884 erupted into a delirious 10-day celebration known as Portorama.

Eager to join the fun, visitors streamed into the city, some arriving on special trains chartered for the occasion from Minneapolis and St. Paul. Duluth Mayor Clifford Mork deemed his "a city on the go," and indeed it was, with industry humming and business bustling amidst a dizzying festival of events.

The staggering Portorama itinerary included concerts, moonlight harbor cruises, waterfront terminal tours, regattas, go-kart races, ballgames, art showings at the University of Minnesota Duluth, dog shows, fireworks, dances, a Miss Seaway pageant, the International Folk Festival, youth sports competitions, a sand castle contest, an endurance swimming race along Park Point, industrial and brew-

ery tours, stock car races, 10-cent children's movies, fashion shows, air power demonstrations, canoe races and an outdoor barbeque at the Clure Public Marine Terminal. But that's not all. It was only a slice of the Portorama schedule.

Budding stars also mingled among the Portorama revelers, including a 23-year-old golfer from Georgia who hitchhiked to tournaments more often than he flew. But for Portorama—and the 1960 Western Amateur Championship—Tommy Aaron splurged on a flight.

A mostly self-taught two-time champion of the Southeastern Conference, Aaron was destined for golf's pinnacle. He climbed the foothills of that journey in Duluth, at Northland Country Club, amidst the spectacle of Portorama.

"It was a pretty tough walk," remembered Aaron. "Especially when you're playing 36-hole matches."

Portorama's sporting side

Exactly 60 years ago, one of the nation's most prestigious and grueling amateur golf events, the Western Amateur, came to Duluth as Portorama's sporting headliner. Hundreds of spectators lined the Donald Ross-renovated fairways and greens at Northland Country Club to watch an eclectic mix of the nation's best amateur players. Aaron



Tommy Aaron

(Left) Jack Nicklaus, who won the 1972 Masters Tournament, presents the green jacket to Tommy Aaron after the latter captured his second PGA Tour victory and only major title on April 9, 1973. Aaron finished the 1973 Masters Tournament one stroke better than J.C. Snead and two strokes ahead of Nicklaus.

TO STARDOM

was assuredly in that class, having been selected to the 1959 Walker Cup contingent, along with 19-year-old Jack Nicklaus and seven more American amateur standouts.

Nicklaus and Aaron shared a similar history of playing multiple sports in high school, but unlike the Golden Bear, Aaron's youthful golf experiences in Gainesville, Georgia, were a bit more hardscrabble.

"When I was seven or eight, I'd hear my father and his friends talk about Ben Hogan, Sam Snead, Porky Oliver, Lloyd Mangrum, and from an early age, I knew that I'd like to play professional golf," recalled Aaron. "But I grew up in a very non-golf town. There was no golf atmosphere, no golf tradition and the high school I went to never had a golf team."

His home course was a derelict nine-hole track. Lake Lanier gradually swallowed it in 1956.

"After that, I'd go out behind an old cotton mill to this open field and practice, because there wasn't anyplace else," said Aaron. "I'd hit balls out over the open area, then I'd hit 'em back. Kids today probably wouldn't do that, but that's OK. I wanted to get better at golf and play professionally, so that's what I did."

At 16, his homespun swing took him some 270 miles south to play in a regional amateur tournament at Thomasville, Georgia. Unfortunately, when the tournament ended, he had no way to get home.

"I went out alongside the highway, with my thumb out and my little set of clubs in my golf bag, trying to hitchhike home," said Aaron. "I didn't think anything of it. There was no fear for your life or anything. Kids wouldn't do that today, either, and I wouldn't suggest that they do it, but back then, you could hitchhike."

His vagabond golfing ways continued even after he arrived at the University of Florida in the 1950s. Aaron helped the Gators win a conference championship in 1956, then he hit the summer amateur scene again, bouncing from tour-



The 1960 Portorama featured a dizzying array of events throughout Duluth and its working waterfront, among them harbor cruises on the *Flame* excursion boat. This craft was part of a 1960s business operation that later became the Vista Fleet.

Lyman Nylander

nament to tournament on a shoestring budget. Overnight trains, rollaway beds in a Bethlehem Steel fishing cabin—quaint in retrospect, but it wasn't glamorous at the time.

After two individual conference titles at Florida (1957, 1958), a second-place finish at the 1958 U.S. Amateur Championship in San Francisco and his 1959 Walker Cup experience in Scotland, Aaron was hunting a breakthrough at the 1960 Western Amateur. His lodging for the weeklong expedition came courtesy of Gene Smith, an expat North Carolinian stationed at the Air Force base in Duluth.

"He was a friend of a college teammate," said Aaron. "He invited me to stay with him and his wife in their one-bedroom apartment. It was a short distance from the country club, so I'd walk over and play my matches, then go back to the club with Gene and his wife for the evening functions. I slept on the sofa in their living room. I did a lot of different things in terms of travel back then because I just didn't have the financial wherewithal. I did the best I could to get to the big tournaments and play in them."

The Smith's sofa proved a boon to Aaron's golf. Every stage of the Western Amateur was a gauntlet and the former Gator chomped through the qualifying days, securing a spot in the Round of 16. There he topped Edwin Hopkins Jr., a former Masters participant, 3 and 2. Friday's quarterfinal pitted Aaron against Thomas Hoak, a former Iowa State

University golf captain. Aaron dispatched him 4 and 3, setting up a semifinal Saturday—the opening day of Portorama—against San Diego’s Phil Rodgers, a former NCAA national champion who would go on to six PGA Tour victories and a second-place finish at the 1963 Open Championship.

Aaron jumped out to an early two-hole lead in the Saturday showdown and finished the morning round with a tournament-best 4-under-par 67. Despite the surge, he carried only a one-hole lead into the afternoon round. After 27 holes, the match was all even, but Rodgers’ driver turned erratic and Aaron took control.

“Rodgers twice had 1-up leads that were wiped out by Aaron’s consistent accuracy,” wrote *Duluth News-Tribune* Sports Editor Arno Goethel, a Duluth Denfeld graduate who became an esteemed regional and national sportswriter. “Aaron’s card showed eight birdies, 24 pars and a lone bogey.”

Aaron finished with a 5 and 3 triumph.

“It was a big thing for me to beat him, because of his reputation,” said Aaron. “He was probably the top amateur player in the country at that time.”

The match-play win was Aaron’s second in three years against Rodgers, the first coming at the 1958 National Amateur. Aaron’s most recent conquest set up a championship Sunday showdown with 47-year-old Bob Cochran.

The finale was the fifth straight day of scheduled 36-hole matches. Billed as a bout of youth versus experience, Cochran’s sage golfing mind was certainly willing, but his aging spine was weak after already battling through 164 mostly painful holes.

The championship clash ended in only 70 minutes, with Cochran conceding on the sixth fairway, unable to continue despite being all even with Aaron.

“He took a swing and more or less collapsed in pain,” Aaron said of his opponent. “He said, ‘That’s it. I can’t play.’ It was a very strange way for the tournament to end, but I was aware that he wasn’t doing very well physically because of his back. He was struggling with it through every match he played.”

With that, Aaron won the Western Amateur, and celebrated with the Smiths.

“It was a very, very memorable week for me and I have fond memories of playing and winning at Northland,” he said. “We had a great time.”

Postscript

Portorama, sponsored by the Duluth Junior Chamber of Commerce, continued throughout the decade as the city’s biggest summer festival and a celebration of Seaway shipping.

Aaron also continued, achieving his childhood aspirations by joining the PGA Tour shortly after his Portorama triumph. As a professional, he didn’t win often, but his consistency kept him comfortably high on the money list; from 1961 through 1973, he never finished out of the top 60.

After Duluth, Aaron’s hitchhiking days and sofa-sleeping nights were behind him. His total golf earnings eventually exceeded \$3.6 million.

His career, however, was forever defined by one magic Monday in April 1973, when Aaron shot a final-round 68 to rally from four strokes back and win the Masters in his home state. Finishing at 5 under par, Aaron topped J.C. Snead by a stroke and a trio of players, including Nicklaus, his old Walker Cup teammate, by two strokes. In so doing, he became the first native Georgian to win the Masters since 1948.

“The pressure that last day is incredible,” said Aaron, now 83 years old. “You can’t describe to someone the pressure at the Masters on that last day. There’s electricity bouncing through those pines, and it was very, very rewarding to win.”

In all, Aaron posted five top-10 finishes at the Masters, including his victory. In 2000, he became the oldest player to make the cut at Augusta National. He played his final professional tournament—the Senior PGA Championship—in 2006.

Aaron retired to the relative anonymity of Gainesville, near the lake that covers his childhood golf course. Aspiring players there no longer need to practice behind the city’s old cotton mill. Now they can choose from three golf courses and multiple golf teams.

As for tradition, Gainesville has it now, thanks to an octogenarian with a green jacket who once made Duluth his port of call.



Port Appoints Sales Director

Alan T. Johnson, a native of Duluth, has been appointed director of international sales and marketing for the Seaway Port Authority of Duluth. He will be responsible for all traffic moving through the new container facility being developed at the Clure Public Marine Terminal.

Johnson has been associated with the Soo Line Railroad for 20 years and in 1972 became manager of intermodal sales for the Soo Line in Minneapolis. He is a graduate of Duluth Business University and has completed courses in traffic and related subjects at schools of advanced traffic.

Duluth Port Director C. Thomas Burke said Johnson brings to the port 20 years of "top level experience in the

TWIN PORTS TONNAGE RANKS 8TH IN NATION

Duluth-Superior ranks eighth among U. S. ports on the basis of total tonnage figures for 1973, the latest compilation, according to the American Association of Port Authorities. Also on the Great Lakes, Chicago ranks ninth.

transportation industry," adding "our position as the Great Lakes' first full-service container port will be well served" by the addition of Johnson to the staff.



Johnson

Alan T. Johnson, 85, formerly of Duluth, died May 30, 2020, in Peoria, Arizona. Johnson served as director of international marketing for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority from 1975 through 1987, playing a key role in development of new business for the Clure Public Marine Terminal and the Twin Ports.

A 1953 graduate of Duluth Central High School, Johnson married his high school sweetheart, MaryAnn Jannetta, in 1957. He served with his hometown wing of the Minnesota Air National Guard and graduated from Duluth Business University.

Johnson spent the early portion of his working career with the Soo Line Railroad, moving to Spokane, Washington, Cleveland, Ohio, Chicago, Illinois, and then Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1972, he became manager of intermodal sales for the Soo Line in Minneapolis.

The allure of home and the Port Authority brought Johnson back to Duluth in 1975, when he was hired to lead international sales and marketing.

During the ensuing 12 years, Johnson was a catalyst in the evolution of container shipping and many other initiatives at the Clure Terminal, including what was then the heaviest cargo lift ever completed at a Great Lakesport. In 1987, he moved east to the Port of Green Bay, Wisconsin, where he was named port director and remained in that role until his retirement in 1995. After retiring, Johnson relocated to the warmer climes of Arizona.

Johnson was quick to make friends and make people feel welcome. He cited family vacations and fishing trips with friends among his cherished memories. While working in Cleveland, he also volunteered as a Boy Scout leader and was proud to have mentored two future Eagle Scouts.

Johnson was preceded in death by his first wife in 1993 and his second wife, Dori Tanis, in 2004. He is survived by his children: Sheri Johnson of Peoria, Arizona; Denise (William) Wise of Duluth; Todd (Heidi) Johnson and their children in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota; and by several nieces, a nephew, and many friends, including those who worked with him at the Port Authority.

Jack Soetebier, 92, died April 21, 2020, in Duluth. A veteran of the United States Army during the Korean War, Soetebier owned Duluth's Patty Cake Bakery for more than 40 years and was a longtime member of the Duluth-Superior Maritime Club, née Propeller Club.

In addition to his membership with the Maritime Club, Soetebier was an avid pilot, scuba diver, sailor, and all-around adventurer.

He was a member of the Duluth Keel Club, Apostle Islands Yacht Club, and the Duluth Power Squadron, where

he served as commodore. He was also among the founders of the Trans Superior International Yacht Race, sailing in the event five times and once winning his class. He also won several local regattas. In addition to all this, Soetebier was a past president and 52-year member of Duluth Rotary Club 25.

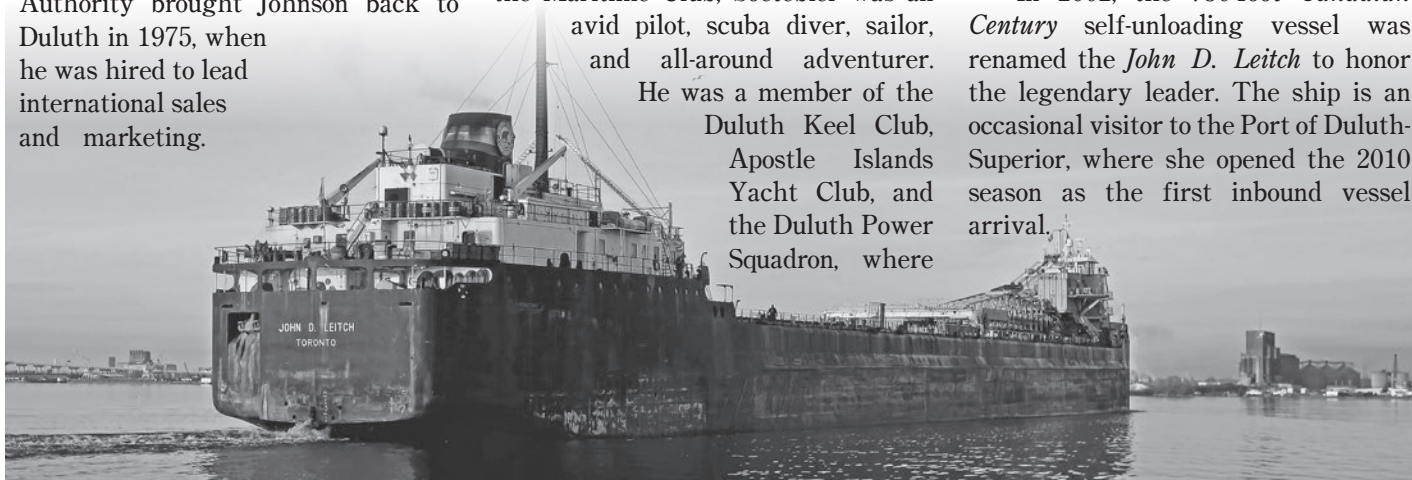
Soetebier is survived by his wife of 69 years, Virginia Mattson Soetebier, along with their daughters and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

John D. Leitch, 99, died May 12, 2020, in Toronto, Ontario. He attended Appleby College in Ontario and subsequently enlisted in the Canadian Navy, serving six years as a frigate navigator in the North Atlantic Ocean.

In 1941, Leitch married Peggy Cartwright, daughter of Chief Justice John Robert Cartwright and his wife Jessie. The Leitchs had two daughters, Jill Bain and Jean Vander Ploeg. Leitch would eventually take over as president of Northland Shipping Company, which his father founded in 1932 with a single vessel. In the years to come, it grew into one of the largest Great Lakes shipping companies in Canada.

As chairman of Upper Lakes Group Inc., as the company was later named, Leitch introduced innovative ship designs and pioneered the development of large vessels with self-unloading capability. His activities in the industry helped maintain and develop merchant shipping in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway.

In 2002, the 730-foot *Canadian Century* self-unloading vessel was renamed the *John D. Leitch* to honor the legendary leader. The ship is an occasional visitor to the Port of Duluth-Superior, where she opened the 2010 season as the first inbound vessel arrival.



John Heino

Coast Guard Cutter *Edgar Culbertson* commissioned into service

On June 11, the United States Coast Guard commissioned into service the 154-foot cutter *Edgar Culbertson* in Galveston, Texas, its home port. The new vessel has a close tie to the Port of Duluth-Superior. Its namesake, Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Edgar A. Culbertson, posthumously earned the Coast Guard medal, the highest peacetime recognition of heroism, after he died April 30, 1967, while trying to rescue three teenage brothers swept from the Duluth Ship Canal pier in a storm. Culbertson also was swept over the side by a huge wave, and though he had been tied to two other guardsmen, Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Richard R. Callahan and Fireman Ronald C. Prei, who also volunteered in the rescue attempt, Culbertson perished. All three were awarded the Coast Guard medal. The teenage brothers, Eric, Nathan and Arthur Halverson, were never recovered. Culbertson's friend, Captain Tom Mackay, a now-retired Vista Fleet captain, spearheaded placement of a bronze memorial plaque to him and the boys on Duluth's north pier.

The new cutter crew's primary missions will be living marine resources, search and rescue and other law enforcement along 900 miles of coastline for the Coast



Charles "Skip" Bowen presents a plaque to Cristin Alpert, the vessel's sponsor and daughter of the vessel's namesake, at Sector Field Office Galveston, Texas, June 11, 2020.

Guard's Eighth District, from Carrabelle, Florida, to Brownsville, Texas. The commissioning ceremony was streamed on Facebook, so friends and family could watch, as well as the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Unit-Duluth.

Culbertson's daughter, Cristin Culbertson-Alpert, attended the ceremony and is the vessel's sponsor.



The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Edgar Culbertson* line the ship and bring her to life during the commissioning ceremony at Sector Field Office Galveston, Texas, June 11, 2020.

Seaway gains *Guardian* in Empire State

A new maritime asset sailed into Massena, New York, this summer as the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC) welcomed a \$24 million ice-class tugboat to its facilities. The Louisiana-built *Seaway Guardian* replaces *Robinson Bay*, a venerable vessel that served the Seaway since its opening in 1959.

The new tugboat boasts almost three times more horsepower and towing strength compared to the *Robinson Bay*, making it a significant upgrade, though not yet the sentimental equivalent of its long-tenured predecessor.

“While the *Robinson Bay* has served the Seaway admirably for over six decades, the SLSDC welcomes the arrival of the new *Seaway Guardian*,” said SLSDC Deputy Administrator Craig H. Middlebrook. “As the ‘fresh

face’ on the Seaway, its superior performance specifications and enhanced capabilities will provide tremendous support to our operations.”

In addition to added capability in buoy-hauling, ice-breaking and fire-fighting, the *Seaway Guardian* also

emits less carbon than the current *Robinson Bay* tugboat, according to the SLSDC.

The *Seaway Guardian* began sea trials in June. She will be fully operational for the 2021 Seaway navigation season.



Gary Croot

SLSDC names new associate administrator

The St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation announced in late June that Gary Croot would assume the position of associate administrator at its Massena, New York, facilities in July. Croot replaced Thomas Lavigne, who retired after 40 years at the SLSDC.

Prior to joining the SLSDC, Croot served in the U.S. Coast Guard, including a stint as commanding officer of the Marine Safety Unit in Duluth from 2005-08. He retired from the Coast Guard in 2011 and went into international consultancy.

Stewart receives Teaching Excellence Award

Dr. Richard Stewart, University of Wisconsin-Superior professor of transportation and logistics management, was recently named a recipient of the UW-System's 2020 Teaching Excellence Award. It represents the UW System's highest recognition for faculty and instructional academic staff. Stewart is the first from UW-Superior to receive the award.

Stewart joined UW-Superior in 1999 to create a transportation and logistics management major. Drawing on his extensive experience in the military and private business, at sea and on shore, he built it into an acclaimed program.

Prior to UWS, Stewart was a ship captain and fleet manager, and professor at the United States Merchant Marine Academy for 13 years, during which he led its marine transportation department. In a memorable moment at the 2019 Twin Ports Freight Showcase hosted at UWS,

Craig Thompson, Wisconsin secretary of transportation, referred to Stewart as “the Vince Lombardi of the transportation industry.”

In addition to serving as a professor, Dr. Stewart is director of the Transportation and Logistics Research Center and co-director of the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute. He is also a member of the Duluth-Superior Maritime Club.

Doubling up on the award haul, Stewart also received the UW-Superior Community Engagement Award, which recognizes employees for collaborating on projects that have a positive social impact and support opportunities for research and student learning.



Dr. Richard Stewart

Track tuneup

Over a span of years, it's possible for railroad track to deviate from the proper gauge. A pair of track crossings from the Canadian Pacific railroad yard to Duluth's Clure Terminal suffered exactly that fate, necessitating repairs in June 2020. The Duluth Seaway Port Authority worked with North Shore Track to rebuild the crossing sections at the proper gauge with new ties and reinstalled concrete crossing panels. In the photo at right, this repair process is visible. Below, the completed crossing stands smooth and ready.



Dean Lembke



Jayson Hron

Masked smiles for the camera

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration teamed up this spring with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Association of Port Authorities to secure more than 1.5 million reusable cloth masks for maritime facilities throughout the nation. A portion of those masks—some 5,000 of them—arrived at the Duluth Seaway Port Authority's doorstep in late June. Kate Ferguson, the Port Authority's director of trade and business development, led the distribution effort at terminals throughout the Port of Duluth-Superior. She is pictured here delivering masks to David Sobczak, right, who manages the CRH cement terminal on Rice's Point.

The masks are being distributed for use by essential personnel, including those working at seaports, inland ports, marine terminals, tug and barge lines, vessel pilot groups, dredging operations, supply chain logistics companies and others. They are part of FEMA's efforts to limit spread of the COVID-19.



IN FOCUS: Terry Sechen

Our In Focus series profiles the photographers whose images bring the port's working waterfront to life.

How did you first get into photography, specifically the shipping scene?

I fell in love with ships and the Great Lakes shipping industry back in 1976 when I was 11 years old. My maritime photography started about the same time. Boat-watching and picture-taking kept me busy as a young man and out of trouble. Now that I'm an old man, it still keeps me out of trouble!

What draws you to Great Lakes shipping and the working waterfront for images?

The beauty of the harbor and the vessels, especially during the early mornings or late afternoons of our precious nice days.

Do you have a personal connection to the Lake from growing up in the region or visiting?

I consider the Duluth-Superior Harbor to be my second home. I have always lived about 60 miles away and make roughly 90 trips per season to see the boats.

Are most of your shots planned or spontaneous?

Most of my photography is planned out in advance. I don't have that incredible creativity that many of my boat-watching friends have, so I'm not as spontaneous as I wish I was.

Do you know immediately when you get a great one?

Yes, when the lighting and scenery look just right, you kind of know it's going to be good. With today's digital cameras, you find out in a hurry. I used to shoot lots of slides. With slide film, you had to be very precise and really never knew what you had until they came back from the lab.

What other interesting aspects of your work or life would you like to share?

I used to be a sports photographer (basketball) years ago. I would like to try that again someday, maybe when I retire from my job in agriculture.



Terry Sechen



Photos by Terry Sechen



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