

WINTER LAY-UP LISTINGS

We remind readers that we will feature winter lay-up listings for the various lake and river ports in our February issue. That means that we need YOU to go to your local port(s) right away to make up a list of the boats wintering there. Please be accurate with the names and check all ships present. (It makes our job more difficult when we get reports of the same ship wintering at two or even three different ports!) If your list includes ferries, tugs, etc., please be sure to label them as such. We need your list AT THE VERY LATEST during the week of January 20th in order to make the February issue. Later reports will have to wait for our follow-up in the March issue.

Please mail your lists to the Editor at 100 Whitehall Road, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2C7 (please do not use the Island address), or you may phone us at (416) 921-8436 (EVENINGS ONLY, please - no daytime calls except on weekends). Or you may fax the Editor at his office - (416) 361-2872. If you fax, please do NOT address the fax to T.M.H.S., but rather to J. N. BASCOM - CLAIMS DEPT. to ensure that it reaches him and does not confuse anybody else.

We thank you for your assistance with this important annual project.

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MORE OF GALE STAPLES

Our Ship of the Month No. 224, featured in our November issue, was the 1888-built WILLIAM B. MORLEY, (b) CALEDONIA, (c) GALE STAPLES. We were able to present five pages of history of this wooden steamer, but readers will recall that we had almost again as many questions about the ship as we had answers! Of course, there was method to our madness in choosing GALE STAPLES for a feature. Not only had a member requested such a feature many years ago but we also hoped that by asking questions, we would stimulate members to dig up additional details about the ship.

As usual, our readers have not disappointed us, and it presently looks as if we will have enough material to present a large second instalment of the STAPLES feature in either the February or March issue. We thank all those who have responded to our enquiries and would ask the rest of you to be patient. GALE STAPLES will be steaming your way again in the very near future!

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IS IT CHICAGO BELLE?

Readers will recall our feature, in the October issue, concerning the little passenger steamer CHICAGO BELLE, which later sailed as WIARTON BELLE. Our Ship of the Month No. 223 was prepared for us by Executive Committee member Capt. Gerry Ouderkirk, and presented more material about this obscure and relatively short-lived vessel than we would have thought possible. It also featured two photos of WIARTON BELLE which came to us through the courtesy of longtime T.M.H.S. member C. Patrick Labadie, of Duluth.

It will be remembered that we had questions about the early years of the steamer when she was running out of Chicago, and that we did not have a picture of her under her original name. Well, thanks once again to Pat Labadie, we may have found one! Pat has turned up a photograph from the collection of the Chicago Historical Society which would appear to show CHICAGO BELLE during the autumn of 1871 at Chicago, and if this actually is what we see in the photo, this is indeed a rare glimpse into the past.

Most of the topside details of the little steamer in the Chicago photo seem to match the boat we see in the WIARTON BELLE views, and especially the rather unusual lower cabin windows (many of which latterly were boarded up), and the placement and mounting of the lifeboats. It may be an optical illusion, but the boat in the Chicago photo seems a bit shorter than WIARTON BELLE. If this is the case, there many have been a lengthening of the steamer of which we previously have not been aware, and this might account for