

Fairmiles, launched October 1942

Corvettes, fairmiles built

More than just a depot

At one time Midland early in the 1940's. just a depot for lake electrical contractor and freighters and small recalled the Fairmiles pleasure craft.

During World War Two, made two Midland firms were manoeuverable and actively involved in the designed to draw little construction of warships. In the early war years, Midland Boat Works - equipped with depth the ships had to supply located where Downer's charges, meaning barrels Yacht Haven now stands of dynamite, with Anti

- manufactured small Submarine Detection wooden submarine Equipment and 35 chasers and later on were millimetre anti-aircraft involved in the construction of

Midland Ship Yards - on upon an enemy subthe property now owned marine "would dump the by Indusmin - small charge and run.' steel corvettes were

businessman Ed Walker manufactured at other was involved with the boat electrical wiring duties at Penetanguishene, Honey Midland Boat Works. Walker, who began his electrical business in Midland after coming from Guelph in 1935, remembers the boat works turning out "Fairmile Sub Chasers"

A log home on the river

An ancient log homestead on the banks of the Coldwater River has become a mecca for students of local history. lovers of antiques and arts and crafts en-

Built in 1830, the Woodrow homestead was restored as a Centennial project by a group of Coldwater citizens Located south of Coldwater just west of Highway 12, the old home houses a collection of artifacts and museum pieces, including a large wooden tool chest with George Borland's name inscribed on it.

Borland has an interesting connection with the Woodrow family, One hundred years ago, Catherine Woodrow fell in love with Borland. That family objected to the marriage, so Katherine and George eloped. She slipped through the kitchen window, and together they fled down the Coldwater river by

On display at the Woodrow homestead is Geographical Astronomical and Historical Home Knowledge Atlas of 1889. Loaned by Amborse Swaile, it reports that in 1889 the population of Coldwater was 450 Penetanguishene boasted a total of 2,000 residents while Midland straggled

along with only 1,800. Each year Coldwater Canadiana holds a variety of homespun events at the Woodrow homestead. A favourite is the sauerkraut meal, served in the stone floored kitchen. The cabbage is ground in an authentic old fashioned

A special attraction in the old kitchen is the open fireplace. Many local ahndicraft groups use the homestead for a meeting place, and the fireplace sheds a generous warmth over the gathering. Page 10

Walker helped the were about 112 feet long, wood,

The subchasers worked them

in groups and, recalls Next door, at the Walker, when they came Six subchasers were

built in Midland with Long time Midland similar ships being Harbour, Orillia, Sarnia, Toronto and Mimico.

electrical contractor metal object entered its when the Boat Works minesweepers.

made of wood, but were constructed much more Midland, and in the other magnetic mines before negatively. steel warships and cargo

mined area

with heavy oak ribs and thick planking, measured 145 feet long and about 22 feet wide. Walker remembers about 40 tons of steel spikes being used in the construction of the The subchasers were sweepers, and because their own source of power, they used a box car load full of wet cell batteries with about one and three quarter tons of water and acid to charge

> were built to sweep magnetic mines the steel spikes, chains, anchors and other metal objects needed on the ship were wrapped in coils to offset the magnetic field that would set off the mine.

Magnetic mines, tells Walker, worked on the principle of having a magnetic needle fixed on Walker became the the north pole. If a foreign magnetic field and pulled the needle in its direction and away from the pole,

The sweepers were also the mine would explode. Behind each minesweeper trailed two long coils, floated on the chasers. The surface by a layer of cork. the National minesweepers built in At the end of each cable was attached an elec-Ontario centres, were trode, one charged designed to activate positively and the other were about 1200 man

One cable was slightly

both reached a distance of The boats were built about a quarter mile. The

magnetic field created by the trailing electrodes would set off the mines with the boats safely out of the way. The minesweepers worked in flotillas with the captain of each ship coordinating the charges

those of the ships on either side. Both the subchasers and the minesweepers were built for the Royal Canadian Navy but were Because the vessels never used by the Canadian forces. Upon completion they were leased to the Soviet Navy and were sailed out of

on his electrodes with

Russian crews. Subsequently, instructions on all electrical panels in the ships were engraved in English and Russian, remembers Walker.

Midland harbour by

Only one minesweeper was ever completed in Midland. A second, finished following the war, was re-built with another three inches of hard wood and no sweeping gear for use in the Canadian arctic by Hydrographic Depart-

Walker estimates there hours devoted to the minesweepers by his



Shipbuilding in Midland spanned about half a century - from 1901 to 1957

Shipbuilding in Midland Navigation Company in spanned about half a 1901. They had ships built century. According to the in Scotland and Sixth Great Lake,' James setting up the Great Playfair and D.L. White Lakes Transportation founded the Midland Company in 1912.

book 'Georgian Bay, The Collingwood before

Company, which became the Midland Shipbuilding Company in 1916. Later in 1925, he unified

In 1910, Playfair was his shipping concerns into launching the Cloverdale, after World War Two, one of the founders of the the Great Lakes on April 5, 1960. Midland Drydock Navigation Company and Lines in 1926.

This photo shows the then sold the whole outfit April 5, 1950 launching of to Canada Steamship The Cloverdale, one of the This photo shows the freighters launched here shipbuilding in Midland.

Happy Boating 1976 Season!



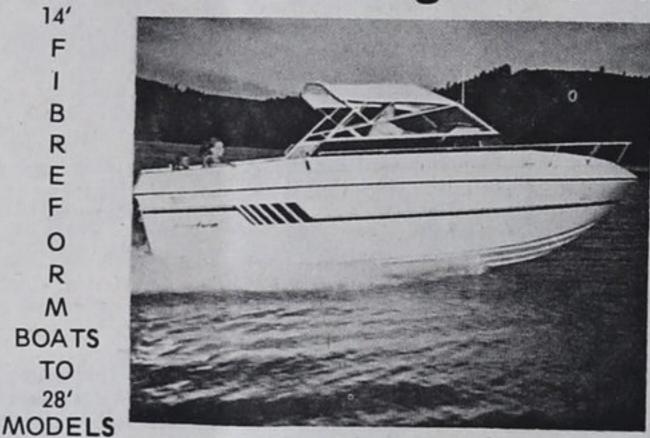
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