Memo's of Betsie Bay

A History of Frankfort

by Charles M. Anderson

Ed Note:

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Dedication and Acknowledgements

I would like to respectfully dedicate “Memo’s of Betsie Bay” to my darling wife Selma of 56 happy years, without whose help and inspiration it wouldn’t have been possible to write this manuscript.

I must also gratefully acknowledge all the encouragement and interest I have always received from our dear children and grandchildren during the years it has taken to write “Isle of View” and “Memo’s of Betsie Bay”, as I must admit at times, we were ready to give up in disgust, and wondered if it was all worthwhile.

Our deep appreciation and thanks to Barbara and Herb Dow for their most generous contributions and help. We sincerely thank our dear daughter Janice and her husband Joe Vanderlaan for the many long hours they spent editing our book.

Our thanks also to Webb and Edna Fairchild for kindly loaning us many pictures. And also to Claude and Fern VerDuin, Lucy Frederickson Bower, and Jed Jaworski who were always there when we needed answers.

Preface

In our book "Memo's of Betsie Bay", we would like to try and relate to you some history of Frankfort, Michigan, its harbor, the early ships, the settlers, the Coast Guard Station, Ann Arbor Carferries, and the commercial fishing industry. While the history of the Ann Arbor Carferries has been very capably written earlier by Captain Arthur C. Frederickson and his wife Lucy, we wanted to share with you some of my father-in-law's, Captain Charles Frederickson's, true story of the sinking of the Ann Arbor #4, and of the perilous night Dad never liked to talk about … but he did tell me the story before he died.

I was a commercial fisherman at Frankfort for many years. I started out early with my father, Captain Charles Anderson, at the age of 14 years on his ship. I later got my license for all the Great Lakes and tributary waters. Later yet, I sailed a charter boat out of Ft. Pierce, Florida, during the winter months.

I felt I should tell this story before it's all forgotten, as I believe I, along with several others, are about the last of the commercial fishermen from Frankfort.

We have tried to gather a great amount of material and pictures from many sources, and have tried to make an honest effort to write what appeared to be most logical and correct. However, errors may have crept into the story. If such is found, we ask your pardon and kind indulgence.

We sincerely hope you will enjoy reading our efforts to portray some of the history of our little town Frankfort and its harbor. It has a way of creeping into your heart and somehow, for those who were born and raised here, it never lets you go. We always seem to some back to our dear old wonderful Frankfort.

It is truly "God's Country"!

Chapter 1
The Early Days

Father Marquette, the great Jesuit missionary, was one of the first white men to set foot on Frankfort soil. In May 1675, he came by canoe to the place then called *la rivière aux Bec-scies*… 'River of the Sawbills [ducks]'. He died there on May 18, 1675 and was buried near where the Coast Guard Station now stands. A monument in his memory now stands overlooking Lake Michigan and Betsie Bay. It was dedicated in August 1965. Others came later. Joseph Oliver came from the north and built a long cabin near the grave of Marquette. The Olivers and Rubiers were some of the earliest settlers in the Frankfort area. They were engaged in the commercial fish business for many years, also trapping.

The first sawmill was built at Herring Creek about 1850 by Harrison Averill. Later, it was moved to Frankfort. The first ship of any size that entered Frankfort Harbor was in the fall of 1854. It was the schooner "Navigator". Captain Snow was her master, on a run from Buffalo to Chicago for a cargo of corn. Late in November, she ran into a snow storm and rough seas outside of Frankfort. Captain Snow decided to beach her as she became unmanageable near the river or outlet from Betsie Bay. He was surprised when his ship got over the outer sand bar on a large sea and entered the Frankfort harbor into shelter of Betsie Bay. She was owned by George Tifft. She froze in the harbor for the winter and as spring came, they were unable to get her over the sand bar and out in the Lake again. Captain Snow spread the word about Betsie Bay as a safe and snug harbor, and soon afterwards purchases of land were made by investors from Detroit and Chicago.

This is the story of the steamer "Westmoreland", as told to me by Captain George Waters. Before his death, he had talked to Paul

Pelkey, who had been aboard when she sank. George Waters lived to be 97 years old.

The steamer Westmoreland, two years old, of 800 tons, left Chicago bound for Buffalo with a cargo of 350 barrels of brandy and wine, also $100,000 in gold coins and other provisions for a lumber camp. She ran into a northwest gale outside Frankfort in late November 1854. It was the same storm in which Captain Snow had brough his sail vessel over the sand bar and into Frankfort harbor.

The Westmoreland began to ice up and the sea kept building into a blizzard. The captain said, “We will try and take shelter in South Manitou harbor.” But the large sea and cold was too much for her. She began icing up and taking on water so fast the pumps could not keep up. Soon the fire in the boiler was put out, and she began to drift at the mercy of the wind and sea, drifting into the Platte Bay area. It was here that she sank. Out of a crew of 20 men, 3 were saved: Paul Pelkey the first mate, the engineer, and the woman cook. The three walked up the beach to Point Betsie and told of the sinking of the Westmoreland.

Paul Pelkey returned in 1872 as Captain of the tug “Ida Stevens” and announced that he had found the lost freighter. However, he was unable to identify his discovery and never brought up an ounce of gold or a drop of liquor to the surface. George Waters and Jack Brown searched the Platte Bay area the summer of 1942 and found nothing. Also, Harold Van Nieman with two divers from Grand Rapids searched the Platte Bay the summer of 1953 with no luck.

Shortly after 1854, surveyors came to Frankfort to lay plans to dredge a channel to Lake Michigan. They decided the southwest corner would be best. At that time, the outlet from Betsie Bay was on the northwest corner of the Bay, at the end of Main Street, or where the Motel Harbor Light stands now.

In the winter 1866, the Congress appropriated a bill of $90,000 for the construction of the piers. The work commenced the following year by the Hubbel and Whitwood Company. Soon afterward the lighthouse was built.

The piers were built out in Lake Michigan into a depth of about 18 feet of water. The walkway on the pier was 600 feet long. They were built from pine timbers one foot square and 18 to 20 feet in length with one-inch square steel bolts 2½ feet long, driven through them, and laid one on top of another. The cribs were 20 feet long and 12 feet in width. The center was filled with stone.

Figure 1 – Building the North Pier
Note: The center is filled with rock to give it the needed strength to withstand the winter storms and ice.

The south breakwater was built in 1929 by Grayling Engineering Company. Incidentally, they went bankrupt due to rough weather and hard luck on this job. The north breakwater was built by Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company in the summer of 1932. Part of the piers were then taken out, back to their present length. The walkway was built so that the lighthouse tender could go out and light the light on the end of the pier, as it was a kerosene-burning light at that time.

Figure 2 – The catwalk out to the light on North Pier. The lighthouse tender had to light it each night and see that it stayed lit all night. Then, come morning, it had to be extinguished.
Note: Carferries stuck in the ice, and some of the crew on the ice trying to free her sides. This photo was taken in February of 1918. Sometimes the ice was packed to the bottom of the lake.

Steamer "Petoskey", seen below, leaving Frankfort Harbor in 1890. She was built by Burger Shipyard in 1888 for Captain R.A. Seymour. She was 171 feet in length, with a 30-foot beam. She was built to carry passengers and freight at this time. She also carried mail between Chicago and some Michigan ports. Finally, after 46-years of faithful service her wooden hull began to rot. She was condemned to the bone yead in Sturgeon Bay and destroyed by fire, 1935.

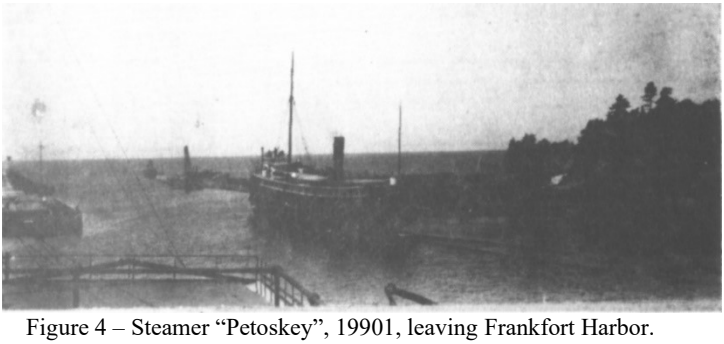

Figure 4 – Steamer "Petoskey", 19901, leaving Frankfort Harbor.

Figure 4 – A raft of logs coming down Betsie River, 1895. Note the men on the logs, each with a long pike pole. They were called “river rats”.

Figure 5 – A lumber camp at the north end of 7th Street near Crystal Lake, 1894

Figure 6 – A sleigh load of 38 logs. A very large load for one team of horses. Taken in 1896.

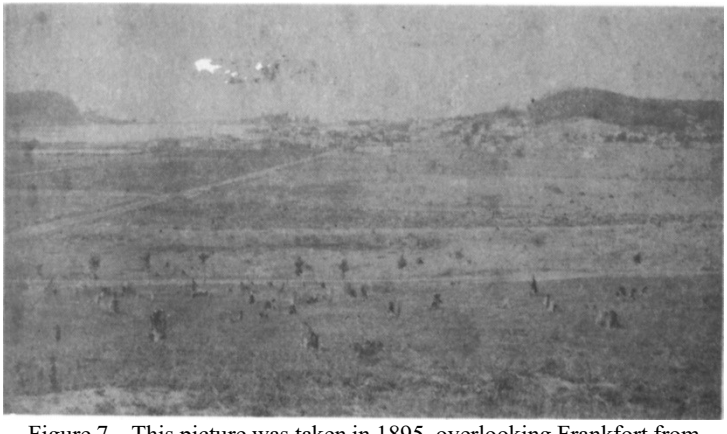

Figure 7 – This picture was taken in 1895, overlooking Frankfort from the east and looking west. Note the stacks of lumber on left, also several smoke stacks from lumber mills. The pine stumps are from the logging days.

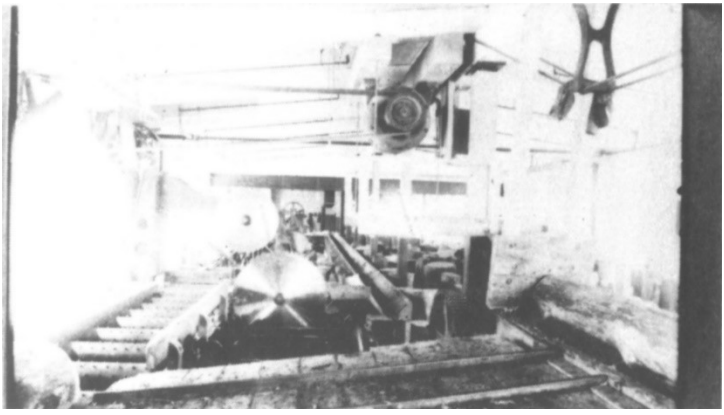

Figure 8 – The inside of Butler's sawmill. This was the last of the saw mills to operate in Frankfort. It was located at the end of 7th Street near Mineral Spring Park in 1908. For many years it sawed lumber for southern lake cities. The last years it was in service, I have been told by some of the old timers, it made wooden bowls and butcher blocks that were shipped mostly by railroad.

The great lumbering of 1860 to 1910 was a boon to Frankfort after the outlet to Lake Michigan and the piers were built. Several sawmills were built and sailing ships began to carry lumber to Chicago and other southern ports.

Figure 9 – During the late 1880s, Frankfort Harbor was a busy harbor with sailboats hauling lumber. It is said around the 1890s there were about 1,000 sailing vessels busy on the Great Lakes. Later, the steamboats began to take the place of sailing vessels.

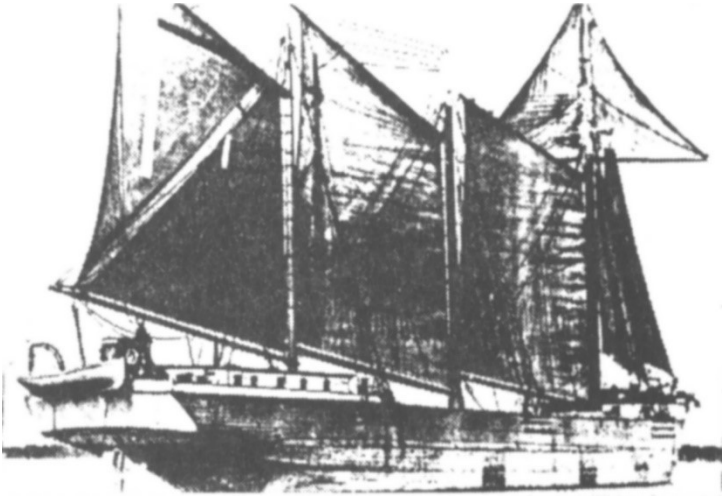

Figure 10 – Schooner “Our Son”. The last of the wind jammers. It foundered off Sheboygan, Wisconsin, September 26, 1930.

The last of the sail ships was the “Our Son”. Her master was Captain Fred Nelson. She was a windjammer named in memory of the captain’s first son, who was drowned shortly before her launching in Lorain, Ohio, in 1872. The windjammer foundered off Sheboygan, Wisconsin, September 26, 1930, with cargo of pulp wood bound for Muskegon, Michigan. A crew of seven was rescued by steamer “William Nelson”.

The schooner Our Son was owned by the House of David, a religious sect from St. Joseph, Michigan. They also owned High Island west of Beaver Island. They used the Our son to haul freight between High Island and St. Joseph. She was 55-years old when she succumbed in a Lake Michigan gale September 26, 1930.

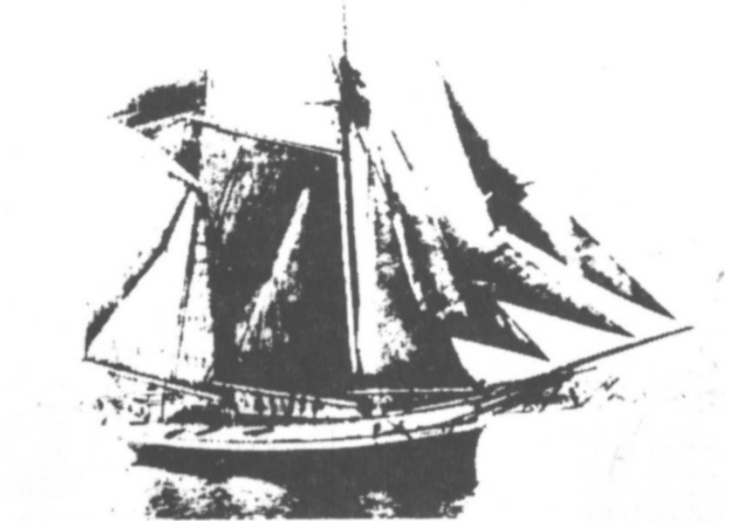

Figure 11 – The Schooner "Rosabelle" capsized with the loss of 11 lives October 30, 1921, in a Lake Michigan gale.

My father, Captain Charles Anderson, owned the "Mary E. Packard" and also the "Josephine Dresden" during the years of 1898 to 1908. He lost the Dresden west of North Manitou in a northwest gale. All hands were saved, but the Josephine Dresden was a total loss. She had broke in two. Later, he got the "J.S. Crouse", owned by John P. Reiss and my dad. They lost her in 1919, when she caught file leaving Glen Haven dock with a load of lumber bound for Sheboygan, Wisconsin. He then took over as Captain of the "M.H. Stuart" until his death in 1929.

Captain A.C. Frederickson and wife Lucy compiled a chart of lost ships and cargo in the Frankfort area. The fate of more than 200 ships, located within 200-miles of Frankfort, were obtained from old records, newspapers, and word-of-mouth from old timers who had witnessed many of the disasters. Some of these ships were lost as early as 1850. Shifting sands have covered the hulls of some of them, or ice and winds have shifted their location.

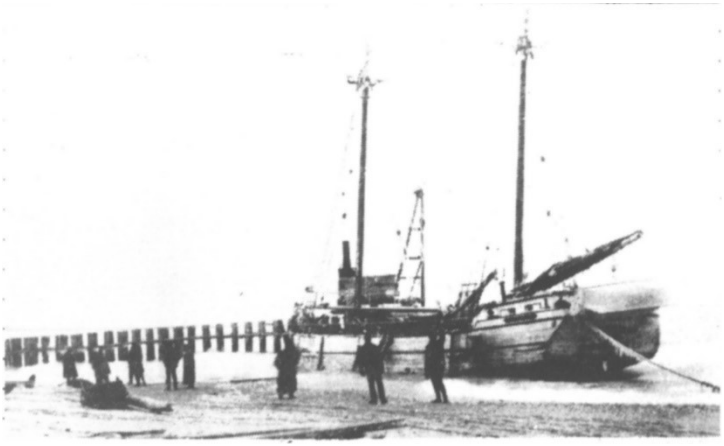

Figure 12 – The "Josephine Dresden" hard aground west of North Manitou Island. She was caught in a northwest gale November, 1908. All hands were saved, but the Dresden was a total loss. Wooden pins called frenciels were used to build sailing ships many years ago, instead of the iron fastenings.

Figure 13 – Sail vessel "Wanderer" leaving Frankfort Harbor in 1907. It was owned by Dan Seavy. He was considered a pirate on the lakes. I have been told he would stop in ports around the lake and steal items. Later she was sold to Captain Bannaster.

The steam barge "C.E. Redfern" was the last ship to be lost in the Frankfort area. Orin Angwal was her master. On September 19, 1937, in a northwest gale with a load of pulpwood bound for Muskegon, she was lost. The crew of 10 men were saved by the Ann Arbor Carferry No. 7. She sunk in 300-feet of water off Point Betsie.

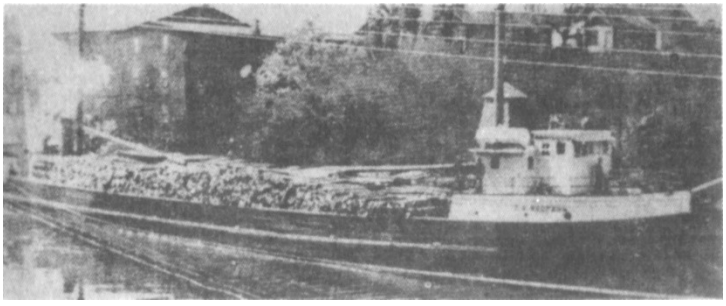

Figure 14 – The steam barge "C.E. Redfern" foundered off Point Betsie with a load of pulp wood, September 19, 1937, in 300-feet of water.

About 106-years ago, the schooner "J.H. Hartzell" sank in 16-feet of water south of Frankfort on October 16, 1880. She had left Lake Anse, Lake Superior on Monday October 11, 1880 with a cargo of iron ore for the Frankfort Furnace Company. She was skippered by William A. Jones. Her crew consisted of 6 men and also a woman cook named Lydia Hall, who had shipped out at Buffalo. The vessel had a good run with fair winds, arriving off Frankfort about 3 a.m. Saturday Morning. Her captain decided to wait until daylight before entering the Frankfort piers. The wind was southeast at 6 a.m., when suddenly the wind shifted to the southwest and blew a hard gale with squalls of hail and snow. The master ordered both anchors let go. She still continued to drift ashore. She came ashore a short distance south of the pier at Frankfort. Lydia Hall was the only crew member to perish. A full account can be seen in the Advisor, a community weekly, of October 15, 1984, and also in a book entitled "Heroes of the Storm".

After the channel to Betsie Bay was dredged, many steam boats along with sail vessels began to enter Frankfort Harbor. The passenger boats "Missouri", "Manitou", and "Puritan" all made stops at Frankfort with passengers and freight. On the south end of 4th Street was what was called the Michigan Transit Warehouse. People came here from Chicago and other cities to escape the summer heat. The ships all carried freight and other supplies to the Frankfort merchants. They also made stops at Muskegon,

Ludington, Glen Haven, Traverse City, Charlevoix, also Beaver Island and North and South Manitou Islands.

Figure 15 – The steamer "Missouri" in Frankfort Harbor unloading passengers and freight. This warehouse was located at the south end of 4th Street during years 1915 to 1927.

The Manitou was built in 1903 by Goodrich, and Ontario Company, by William Marlton for Dominion Fish Co. in Winnipeg, Canada. It was made of wood, with a length of 204-feet and a beam of 37-feet, and a draft of 9-feet. It was later used for passenger service between Chicago and many Michigan ports in 1933. She was sold to a company by the name of Isle Royal Transit Co. In 1946, she was taken to Sturgeon Bay and put in the bone yard.

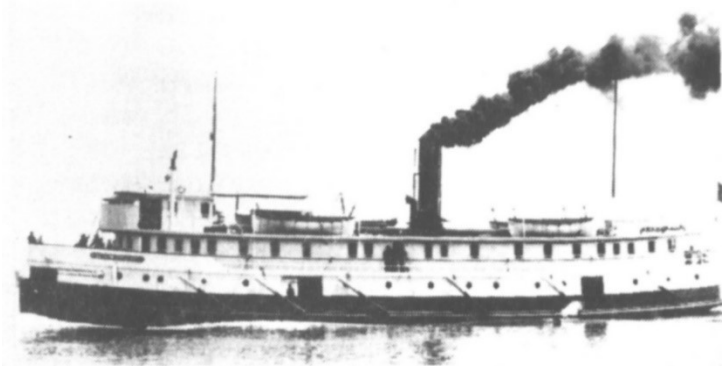

Figure 16 – Vessel “Manitou” owned by Muskegon Transit Co. in 1928.

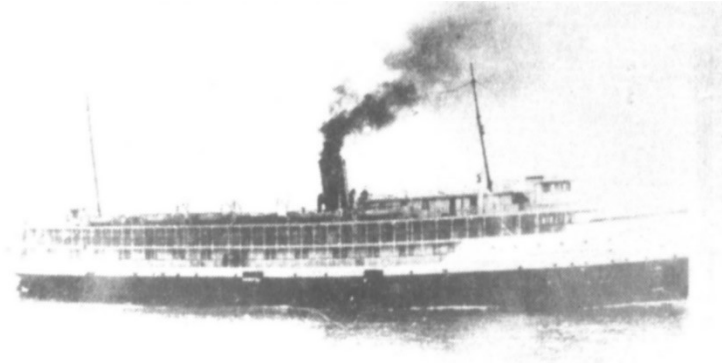

Figure 17 – Vessel “Puritan” built in 1887 at Benton Harbor, Michigan, by J. H. Randall for Graham and Norton.

The Puritan was made of wood construction, length 172-feet, beam 23-feet, and a draft of 18-feet, 8-inches, at a cost of $30,000. The “Manitou” and “Puritan” made regular runs to many Michigan ports, including Frankfort, until 1931. She was renamed the “George M. Cox” and was stranded during a dense fog at the west end of Isle Royale, Lake Superior.

On many return trips back to Chicago, in about 1900, many wild pigeons were caught and shipped to Chicago by way of the Manitou and the Puritan. Some were shipped in barrels packed in ice, other were shipped live in cages. I have been told that the wild pigeons came in such large flocks to South Manitou Island, they would break the limbs on trees, and blot out the sun as they flew

overhead. Fish and other farm produce were also shipped from the Islands.

By the late 1930s, Michigan had many well-built highways and people then came by car to travel up the shores of Lake Michigan to such cities as Frankfort, Charlevoix, and Petoskey. As a result of this, business fell off for the Manitou and Puritan steamship lines, and they were later sold.

Figure 18 – The Frankfort Life Saving Station was built in 1887 on the Elberta side of Betsie Bay.

Note the small square look-out tower on top of the station where the crew stood watches 24-hours a day. They also patrolled the beach south and north of Frankfort for 2½-miles. There was a clock they had to punch on a post on either end of the patrol. The last man towards morning would bring the punched card into the station, and also put another in its place. The following morning, the skipper would look it over to see if it was properly punched. If not, that man was not allowed to leave the station grounds for 30-days. At that time, there were eight men in the crew. Some of the first crew members were: Mr. Bedford – Captain, Sig Frey – No. 1, Lud Hendrickson – No. 2, and Mr. Gaul – No. 3. Later, Mr. Robinson became the captain, now called the Chief.

During the early 1930s, the Life Saving Service built a new station on the Frankfort side, and their equipment was then moved to the north side. Also, the Life Saving Station on the Elberta side was moved east about 500-feet. Later, this was used by the Ann Arbor Railroad Company for their office. In 1934, a large scow came with a two-apartment building from Milwaukee for the Chief and one other family to live in. It was then moved onto the lakeshore near the Coast Guard Station. The Life Saving Station was renamed the U.S. Coast Guard Station in 1915, and later the lighthouses and lightships were put under command of the U.S. Coast Guard. Albert Strauble was in charge of the Frankfort light and fog horn for many years, until the Coast Guard took over.

Figure 19 – The crew of the Life Saving Station in 1900, were from left to right, Charles Gaul, Chris Ness, Lud Hendrickson, Captain Miller, Ed Bedford, William Gulpen and Frank Jeffs.

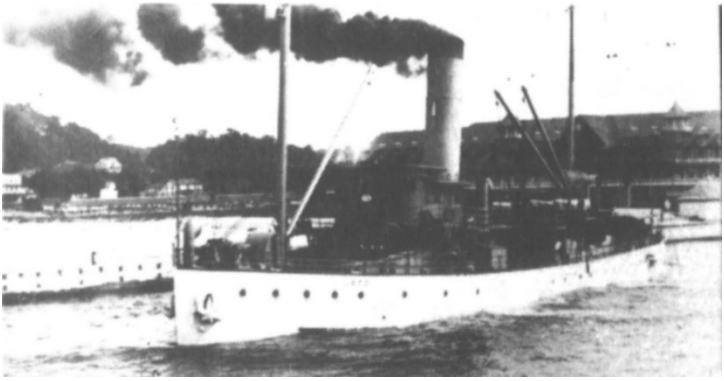

Figure 20 – Sand Sucker U.S.C.G. 1911 under the command of Captain Evans, leaving the Frankfort harbor with a load of bottom sand to be dumped in Lake Michigan a half-mile south of Frankfort.

Chapter 2
The Carferries

James M. Ashley founded the first Ann Arbor Railroad. He realized his dream with the departure of the first carferry from Elberta on November 24, 1892. By 1928, the Ann Arbor had a fleet of six boats in service, making over 3,000 trips a year across Lake Michigan to Manitowoc, Wisconsin, Kewanee, Wisconsin, Menominee, Michigan and Manistique, Michigan.

A very complete account of the history of the Ann Arbor carferries has been written by Captain A.C. Fredrickson and his wife Lucy. They can be seen at the Frankfort Library or for sale at the Horizon Book Store at Beulah, Michigan. Also, a complete history of the Ann Arbor Railroad has been written by Allen Blacklock of Elberta, Michigan. But there are also a few additions I would like to add.

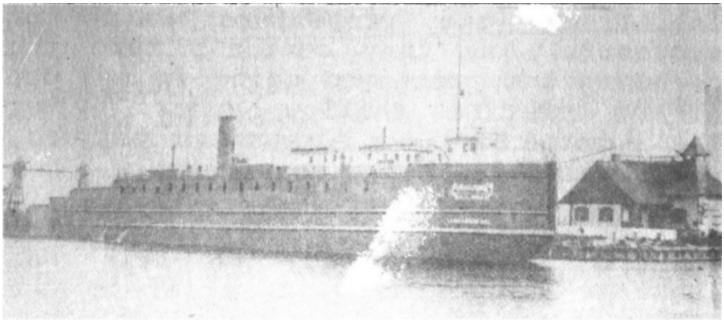

Figure 21 – The Ann Arbor No. 1 in Frankfort Harbor, 1893, loading for a trip across Lake Michigan. Note the windows instead of port holes.

The Ann Arbor Carferries 1 and 2 were built of wooden construction. The outside planking was 8-inches thick white oak, fastened onto frames 12x24-inches, making the ship's side a thickness of 3-feet, 2-inches. When these ships were placed in service, they went through conditions more severe than the steel

ships of later years. They were constantly striking the bottom leaving the Frankfort harbor, as with a strong south wind, the sea and currents would build a sand bar formation across the entrance to Frankfort piers. This would decrease with water depth at times to 12-feet. The draft of Steamer 1 and 2 was 12-feet forward, and 14-feet aft.

Many times, they laid out in-between the piers for 8 to 10-hours at a time, dredging their way out into deep water, and on out into Lake Michigan. Each of these ships were constructed to have a propeller in the bow for the breaking of ice. But the propellers were not successful, as they couldn't take the pounding they received going in and out of the sometimes-shallow harbor. After the removal of the forward propellers, their speed increased considerably.

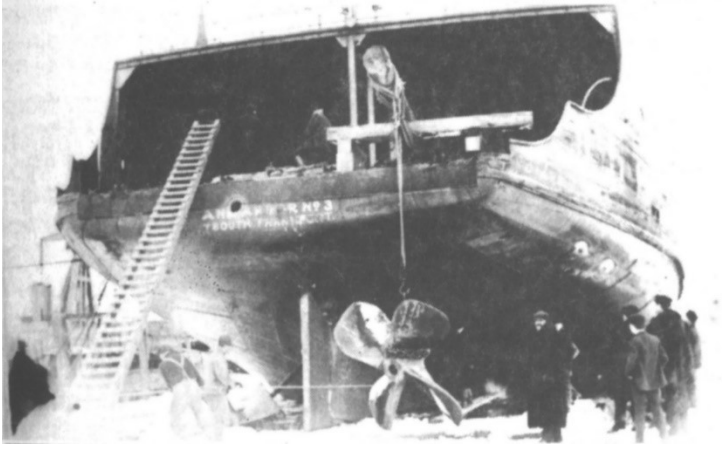

Figure 22 – Changing the propeller on the Ann Arbor No. 3 in the winter of 1914. Captain Robertson in fur coat. The ship's bow was filled with water so that the propellor and shaft were out of the water to be able to work on it.

At that time, there was no fog whistle on the piers. A bell was located on the end of the pier by the light. It was rung by the lighthouse keeper on watch at the time, if the weather was such he could get out to the light. As the saying goes, "Wooden ships and Iron men". At this time, the men stood six-hour watches; six-hours on and six-hours off. But one may be called out at any time, off

watch or not, in stormy weather and etc. These wooden carferries carried about 20 loaded boxcars of 30-tons each. The wages on the first carferries were $15.00 per month.

During the month of June, 1938, the larger and modern carferries carried 6,628 railcars across Lake Michigan. These cars carried such products as petroleum, coal and coke, grain, iron and steel, lumber and other merchandise.

Chapter 3
Sinking of Boat #4

On the night the Ann Arbor #4 sank at the south pier at Frankfort, the Master was Captain Charles Frederickson, my father-in-law. After the passing of his wife, he came to live with us. He was a grand old man. He told me his story about the sinking as we sat in our living room, snug and warm, looking west through the large window at the carferries.

This is the story of the Ann Arbor #4 as he related it to me after his retirement in 1938. On February 13, 1923, she had left Frankfort bound for Kewaunee, Wisconsin, about a 5-hour run in good weather. The wind was very light easterly. The harbor was calm with large snowflakes coming down, some the size of a quarter. The water was cold, the flakes would lay there and slowly melt. They cleared the piers at 8:15p.m. with a cargo of 17 cars of coal, 1 car-load of automobiles, and 1 car-load of salt. The barometer began to fall rapidly and a good swell was beginning to build from the west-northwest, a good indication there is wind behind it. Between 9:30 and 10:00 p.m., they felt a pressure on their ear drums and their voices began to echo inside their heads. As Captain Frederickson kept watching his barometer fall faster and faster, he knew the wind would soon be coming. He called the chief engineer, Morris Dahlgren, to speed up the engines and perhaps they could make the lee of the Wisconsin shore before it got too bad.

It began to get colder and colder. Shortly after 10:00 p.m., the wind and sea came, blowing a living gale of about 80-miles-per-hour. The sea began to build rapidly. Soon the waves were 20-feet high. The mercury began to fall and went down to 20-below zero, very low for out on Lake Michigan. Soon Boat #4 was being tossed about unmercifully, and cars of coal began to break loose. The car-load of new Buicks went over the stern and into Lake

Michigan, taking the old wooden sea gate with it. Two heavy cars of coal went partly over the stern and hung there. The cars were still there in the spring when she was raised.

The mate had some of the car-loads of coal dumped on the deck to prevent them from going over the stern too, and perhaps cause a big list in such large seas that she would probably turn over. One car-load of coal went off the track and one wheel went through the deck and came to rest on the release valve on the low-pressure cylinder, sliding up and down as she rolled. If this valve would have broken, the port engine would have been put out of commission and Boat #4 would have been lost, as the one engine would not be enough to give her steerage. Everyone worked hard all night to keep her afloat. At 1:00 a.m., the seas became so large and the wind blew so hard that Boat #4 could not face it any longer. Captain Frederickson decided to turn her around and head back to Frankfort. While coming around, she laid in the trough of the sea for 20-minutes before coming around and putting the sea behind her. In her crippled condition, it was a miracle that she made it. Everything was smashed to pieces. The firemen in the boiler room were working in water, and the pumps couldn't keep her dry. Slowly but surely, the water was gaining on the pumps. The crew started to realize it was only a matter of time.

About 5:00 a.m., Mack McKesson the purser, sent the S.O.S. (meaning 'save our ship'). About 6:30 a.m., he informed Captain Frederickson that a signal came back in very strong, and that they must be close to Frankfort. In the pilot house, they were also discussing this same question. The second mate, O.B. Olsen, said he believed they were heading on Point Betsie. Some thought they were south of the Frankfort piers. But the Captain said, "We will hold this course." With the steam from the water and also snowing, the visibility was very poor; about 40-feet.

On Valentine's Day, February 14th, at 7:00 a.m., just after daylight, they heard the fog horn. A most welcome sound. About the same time, the snow cleared up enough so that they could see the south pier dead ahead. What a welcome sight. Captain Frederickson ordered the wheel hard left to clear the south pier and put the ship into the pier entrance. But Boat #4 was almost

full of water by that time. The firemen were working in water up to their knees. She was now drawing 18-feet of water aft instead of the usual 13-feet. As the stern went down between two large seas, the rudder and both propellers struck bottom with such force that all were broken and she was at the mercy of the weather. The next large sea put her next to the south pier, and she began to list badly to the port. She settled to the bottom just inside the pier and filled up with water. There she rested, and the crew was saved. About 10-years later, the breakwater was built which made coming into the harbor much safer. At this time, we had no ship-to-shore phone or depth sounder, nor direction finders as we have today.

Figure 23 – The Ann Arbor Carferry "Boat No. 4", sunk against the south pier at Frankfort, February 1923.

By the good judgement of Captain Frederickson, the help of his gallant crew, and most importantly, the "Grace of God", Boat #4 lived to tell the tale, with no lives lost.

Chapter 4
The Carferry "Milwaukee"

The carferry "Milwaukee" was not so fortunate, as she sank with all her crew of 42 men in November, 1929. She was about 400-feet in length and a beam of about 48-feet. She also was caught in a northwest gale.

I was a wheelsman on the steamer "Maritana" in that gale. We came out of Duluth, Minnesota with a load of grain bound for Cleveland, Ohio to lay up for the season. After leaving Duluth, 4:30 in the afternoon, we headed for Whitefish Point. The wind and sea began to pick up after midnight. It was blowing and snowing so hard, you could only see a very short distance. The seas were so large they came over the stern, ran full length and over the pilot house. She was about 42-feet in length. The forward hatch came loose and she began to take on water. During the night, no one could get out on deck, or get aft. It was that way for 30-hours. The forward crew had nothing to eat for that length of time.

We arrived at the Soo Locks drawing 21-feet of water forward, and 18-feet aft. The head cook, "One Finger Ole", said "If we make it to shore, I will quit and never sail again." He did quit, and I never have seen him on a ship after that. After doing repairs at the Soo, we got iced in for several days. We finally arrived in Cleveland, Ohio on the 16th of December.

Ships have been lost on the Great Lakes for many years, but the "big blow of 1913" in which 19 ships were driven ashore or vanished, was one of the worst. Six were driven ashore and twelve vanished completely. One was found floating upside down seven days after the storm on Lake Huron, November 20, 1913. It was the "Charles S. Price", a 524-foot steel steamer with a cargo of coal. All 28 people aboard perished. Between 200 and 300 people died during that storm.

Figure 24 – The Ann Arbor Carferries in 1922. The No's 3, 4, 5 and 6. Later in 1926 the Ann Arbor No. 7 was put in commission. In 1928 the carferry "Wabash" was built. All carried box cars and passengers.

Chapter 5
The Average Sailor

Manitowoc's Jimmy Dorey relives old sailing days, taken from the *Milwaukee Journal*. Dorey, 76, was part Irish for fighting, and part French for drinking, just like an average sailor of that day.

LAKE VETERAN RELIVES OLD DAYS

"I started sailing shortly after I got orders to leave school when I was in the eighth grade as I sat having breakfast in the Savoy Restaurant in Manitowoc. It was the teacher who gave the orders. She said, 'You're not here half the time, and when you are you don't know anything anyway.'"

So, Jimmy, then 14, hid his books under the boardwalk in front of his home, walked the three blocks to the docks of the Goodrich Ship, and boarded the then-famous passenger steamer "Chicago".

The Steward hired Jimmy as a bellboy without the knowledge of his father, Thames Dorey, who was Chief Engineer on the side-wheeler at the time. "My father asked, 'What are you doing here?' I said, 'I got a summer job here.' He said, 'Does your mother know you are here?' I said she did; but she didn't. We got to Chicago and dad helped me buy a uniform. It looked like one of those Phillip Morris uniforms. We walked three blocks to see my mother. She had the police out looking for me, they even dragged the river for my body. I was gone 3-days. She was glad to see me, and I have been steam-boating ever since."

He sailed for 4-years. He survived three horrifying storms, including the big one in 1913. He tended bar on the old whale back "Christopher Columbus" in 1915 and 1916 when it was carrying 3,000 tourists from Chicago to Milwaukee for $1.25 each. He made a host of friends: Starboard Tom Griffith, Humpy Gus, Sailor Ann of Milwaukee, Manistee Shorty, Checkboard Slim Kane, Portside Paddy, and Maggie the Foot.

Dorey was steward on several boats. He served liver and onions to the crew every morning for breakfast. That was a cheap way to feed the crew. When in Chicago, they made visits to the saloons; to Maggie the Foot's, then to Sailor Ann's at 224 Florida Street, which had steamboat pictures on one wall and railroad switch keys on the other to cater to the two occupations.

Jimmy had a star tattooed between his left thumb and forefinger. He said he woke up in a flophouse in Buenos Aires and there it was, "a tingling on my hand" he said. "The night before, I remember drinking rum and black beer with my mates at a waterfront tavern. Someone must have slipped me a Mickey Fin." He got himself out of bed, went down to the waterfront where his boat was docked. "Captain," he said, "I'm sorry that I didn't make it back last night." "Last night! the captain exclaimed. "Where have you been for the last two days?" His ship carried lumber to South America and brought back salted horsehides.

"We took on 500-barrels of flour at Montreal for delivery in Newfoundland. It took eight days to load the flour and six days to unload the flour. Newfoundland was dry at that time. We asked a newsboy where we could get a drink. 'I don't know.' he said, 'but my father came home drunk last night, tore off the door.' The newsboy also gave us the name of a grocer that was selling codfish for 5-cents a pound without, and 10-cents with. We said, 'What does that mean?' He said, 'Buy and find out.' We bought a codfish for 10-cents per pound and what was in its belly? A pint of rum."

Dorey said saltwater sailors called Lake Michigan a pond, but that was before they got seasick on the Lakes. He was in the big blow of 1913 on the "William A. Paine". They were out 48-hours in that blow. Left Buffalo at 12 o'clock noon for Sandusky, Ohio for a load of coal. At midnight, they got into the big blow. It blew 80-miles per hour. That was the blow the "Charles Price" turned over and floated upside down for 7-days. The captain ordered both anchors out and engines full speed ahead, and still she drifted backwards. When they got into Sandusky, most windows were broken and some of the cabins caved in. He was also on the Ann Arbor #4 when she settled on the bottom just inside the piers at Frankfort.

Chapter 6
The Hotel Fire

THE ROYAL FRONTENAC HOTEL

The Royal Frontenac Hotel was the pride of Frankfort while it was in operation, which was only for a short time; 1901 to 1912. It stood on what used to be a hill in the mouth of Betsie Bay, between the bay and Lake Michigan. It faced the lake in the mouth of Betsie River between where the U.S. Coast Guard and Harbor Lights Motel are now. It was also near the site where Father Marquette, the French missionary, 1637 - 1675, is buried.

Figure 25 – The Island, as it was called. A clump of trees on the west end of Betsie Bay had to be removed before the hotel could be built.

The royal Frontenac was three stories high and 500-feet in length. Colonnaded verandas swept around both sides and one end of the upper two floors. A wide concrete sidewalk completely encircled it.

Sixteen teams of horses leveled the hill by the river in a short time, with scrapers drawn by a team of horses and one man. The sand from the hill was put where the motel stands now. This was where the river used to go out into Lake Michigan before the piers were put in. When the hill was taken down, bones, believed to be human, along with a crucifix, were uncovered. This seemed to substantiate the theory that Father Marquette was buried there.

Figure 26 – Leveling of the hill 1900. It took 16 teams of horses and men, as they went around filling the scraper and then dumping the sand in the river.

After the hill was leveled off, the Ann Arbor Railroad immediately began construction of the Frontenac. During the summer, a wind storm of tremendous force blew down part of the partially constructed building, but it was redone and it opened in 1901. The Frontenac was one of the largest summer hotels in the nation at that time.

Because of the hotel, Frankfort became a summer mecca throughout the Midwest for those seeking cool summer breezes. There were no air conditioners at that time, but the cool breeze off Lake Michigan was a great relief from the hot cities. People came by steamboat from Chicago, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. They also came by train from Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Toledo. The site was easily accessible by boat or train. The long, covered depot was half a block north of the hotel.

Vacationers coming by rail would ride the “Ping Pong” in from Beulah. It was a small train that made the trip three times a day. During the off-season, it carried one passenger car. But during the summer, when the Frontenac was open, 12 filled cars would come into the depot. There were over 250 rooms, some say even more, at the hotel. Each room had two double beds. There

was electricity, plumbing, hot water, telephone, and also an elevator.

Figure 27 – The Royal Frontenac Hotel, built in 1901, burned January 1912, one of the most famous of the Midwest hotels during the early 1900s. The tree on the left is still standing 78-years later.

The hotel provided employment for between 100 to 150 students from Fisk University of Tennessee. They served as porters and waiters. For the guests, there were horseback riding lessons, swimming lessons, and boat excursions. A golf course consisting of nine holes was located at the east end of town where Pet Incorporated is now located, and it also extended across M-22 and up the hills. Ole Gunderson was manager of the golf course.

Figure 28 – The Royal Frontenac Hotel in 1920. The large crowds were waiting for the train to take them back to Detroit and Toledo.

The ground floor of the hotel held the laundry rooms, kitchen, cigar and candy store, also a large bar and game room. The game room contents were owned by a local businessman, Bill Rathbun.

Slot machines, not exactly legal, were allowed in certain northern Michigan summer hotels.

The Royal Frontenac burned on a cold January night. No one knows for certain what caused the fire in 1912, although it was rumored its owner, the Ann Arbor Railroad, was losing money. The exact location of where the fire started was unknown. Some thought it started near the center. Others thought separate fires started simultaneously at each end, coming together at the center. What happened afterwards became as famous locally as the hotel was regionally.

On January 12, 1912, the Frankfort High School girls had played a basketball game at the old armory building and a dance was in full swing in the Eagle's Hall in Elberta. Freight cars were being shuttled around in the railroad yard in Elberta. The night was clear and cold, with a light east wind, which perhaps saved Frankfort from being devoured by the flames. It started after midnight. Most people had turned in for the night. When a sound was heard that the hotel was on fire, Bill Rathbun rushed to the hotel to save his slot machines. He found the door unlocked, so he entered and took out his slot machines. Others followed. Men, women, and children rushed into the hotel, taking anything they could carry; chests of tea, bags of beans, ink, etc., until the flames barricaded their way.

It didn't take the railroad officials long to learn of the Frontenac's fire and the theft of its possessions. With a few days, a detective, accompanied by the Benzie County Sheriff, William K. Gates, were in town. People were questioned by the Sheriff and Justice of the Peace, and were told that if they would bring back what they had carted away, they would only be charged with petty larceny. The citizens readily cooperated, and the railroad retrieved most of its property. The Justice of the Peace fined all the offenders $9.10 each.

Burning of the Frontenac 1912
by Hugh Mitchel

Twas on the 12th of January
A cold and bitter night
Old Frankfort lay in silence
The Stars show clear and bright.
Then out shrieked the fire whistle
That shrill, unwelcome sound
The Frontenac had met her fate
And was burning to the ground.

Then our brave and dauntless firemen
They well knew what to do,
Art Sandow, he led No. 1
Frank Kelly No. 2
Then down the street like a cyclone
The firemen did fly
When brave Chief Collier cried "My boys,
we'll save her or we'll die."

The fire broke out furiously
And leaped up to the sky
She's gone, she's gone, was on the tongue
Of every passerby.
Then down came old Bill Rathbun
No braver in the town,
He said "I'll save my slot machines
Before the roof falls in."

Then springing like a tiger
On the door he rudely knocked,
But in turning on the door knob
He found it was not locked.
This was the starting of the game
Each one was on the bound,
And God helps him who helps himself
Was the old familiar sound.

Jake Kimball brought his buckskin down
And Geddas his span of bays,
There were rigs of all descriptions

Besides the Frankfort drays.
Each man and woman helped themselves
According to their means.
One man took a chest of tea
Another a bag of beans.

Another dragging a mattress down
Lake Michigan's cold shore,
His friend, he took a dresser
For he could take no more.
Some folks, they took so many things
Their conscience, they were haunted,
Ollie Bedford got a wheel barrow
It was just the thing he wanted.

All kinds of truck was gathered up
From among the awful ruins,
Mike Herban got a box of dates
Lyman Sites a lot of prunes,
The women all got souvenirs
Yes, every blessed one.
The way they laughed and chuckled
It seemed a lot of fun.

The people were now wandering home,
The fire was smoldering down
And sad it was to know they'd lost
The pride of Frankfort town.
Next day the sun shone brightly
On that sad fated scene
And it shown on the Royal Frontenac
Of the Little Isle So green.

But shortly after the plundering
The Ann Arbor detective came
And our strong and gallant Sheriff Stall
Went to meet the train.
They said they'd prosecute the thieves
And went looking up the names.
They marched down through our little town
Like Frank and Jesse James.

They took them from the business places
They took them from the slums
They got a lot of blooded stock

And also several bums.
They brought them to the Justice Court
Men, women, great and small
Before our noble Justice
And Prosecutor Paul

The Justice Court proceedings
At once, it did commence,
And they fined each of the victims
Nine dollars and ten cents.
But when they struck Elberta
To see what they could do,
They took a little larger bite
Than they could ever chew.

The took Con Comfort's only boy
And young Earl Mead, I think,
For taking some frozen vinegar
And a bottle of frozen ink.
Con said it was disgraceful
And a grave insult indeed
For the officers of Frankfort
So unlawfully to proceed.

The boys were brought before the Judge,
Don Comfort was on deck
But in looking over the statute,
The judge found his case a wreck.
The judge gave to each of them
An honorable discharge,
And the two Elberta town boys
Were again turned out at large.

But election soon will be at hand,
Shaking hands will soon begin
But they say that Paul will lose his job
If he don't get back their tin.

***

Chapter 7
Selecting the County Seat

When the state was young, one of the bitterest battles to decide where the county seat would be located was fought in Benzie County. When the county was formed by the state legislature in 1869, it was provided that the voters would select a county seat. Three sites were nominated: Frankfort, Benzonia, and a sparsely populated spot in Homestead Township near the southeastern tip of Crystal Lake. Beulah did not exist at that time. It was required that the winning site must receive a majority of the votes. Frankfort and Benzonia fought against each other. As a result, the vote was Homestead Township 237, Frankfort 194, Benzonia 75. Because there was no majority, a run-off election was held. In this vote, Frankfort won over Homestead 301 to 265.

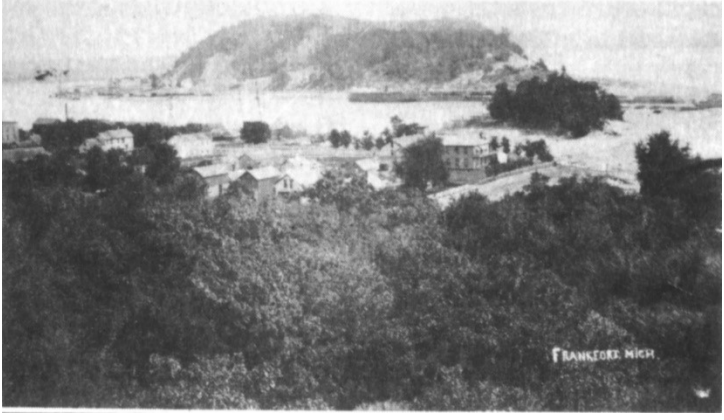

Figure 29 – A view of Frankfort from Hospital Hill in 1887. The building on the right was the Court House for two years before moving to Beulah.

The bitterness did not disappear. However, in 1872 the County Board of Supervisors decided to submit the question again to the voters. This time the contest was between Frankfort and an

isolated spot about a mile east of Benzonia. In that vote, the supervisors ruled that Frankfort lost. The results were questioned and both sides suggested illegalities, but the decision stood. A wooden county building was erected at the spot, located far from any business place.

In 1888, in that vicinity, Charles Bailey subdivided and plotted what he called Crystal City and Beulah View Resort. A year later, a railroad began serving the area. On the depot, the sign interchangeably said Crystal City, or Beulah. Later in 1899, the name Beulah was officially adopted. That is no longer an isolated area situated at the lower end of beautiful Crystal Lake. Now it is a very important tourist area with its shops, restaurants, motels and specialized services.

A few years ago, a modern building was erected to house our county needs. The County Court House was in Frankfort for 2 years on the west end of Main Street, about the years of 1896-1897, Later, it was moved to Beulah and the building was purchased by the Chambers family and made into a hotel called the Park Hotel. They operated it for many years. When they passed away, daughter Sarah got the hotel and the two boys, Butch and Jay received cash. Sarah stayed home and took care of the business, but the two boys had other ideas. They went to Chicago and lived it up. They stayed at the most expensive hotels, had maid and butler service. At that time transportation was by horse, so they rented a chariot and went many places. Consequently, they came home broke. Sarah took them in and gave them a job at the hotel. They never married. Sarah married later in life to Floyd Steed.

Bruce Crissman was the last owner of the hotel. It burned to a total loss in 1958. Much talk at that time was to rebuild a more modern hotel. Later, the federal government built a low-income housing building on that site overlooking Lake Michigan.

Chapter 8
Frankfort Downtown

In Figure 29, below, the following scenes are visible:

Steamer Petoskey leaving Frankfort Harbor, 1901, and the Lutz Flour Mill, the 3-story building on the left.

Bart Trowbridge came to Frankfort in 1907. He purchased the grist mill that had been built by Isaac Lutz. Bart also went into the coal and wood business, along with the gristmill on the south end of 4th Street. He passed away about 1930. Then the Luedtke Engineering Company purchased the building and also the dock from the Northern Michigan Transit Company.

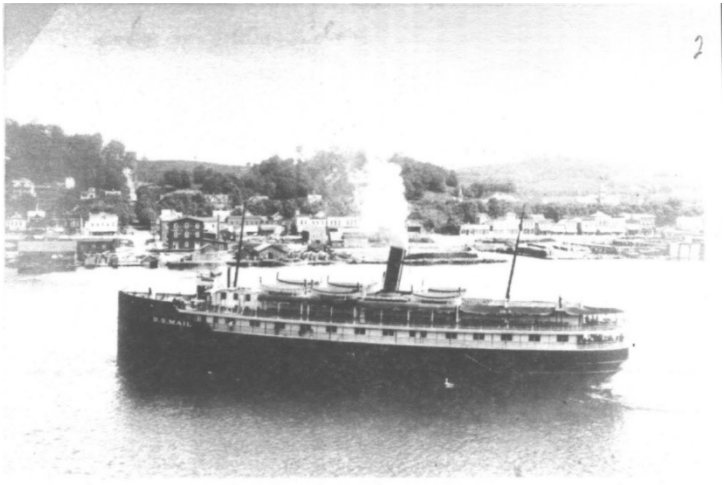

Figure 30 – Frankfort waterfront and harbor, with the steamer "Petoskey" heading toward Lake Michigan.

Hanrath Fisheries was also on the waterfront, one of the oldest fisheries in Frankfort. The water tank can be seen up on the hill. Several times the tank ruptured, sending a river of water gushing down the hill onto main street. The bell tower on the school can

be seen back on the right, also the steeple of the Methodist and Congregational Churches.

The Yeazel Hotel on the corner of 3rd and Main Street burned in 1925. It was owned by Joe Winkler at this time. It was a total loss as it burned to the ground. In 1932, the Hotel East Shore was built on that corner, where it still stands now. It was renamed the Frankfort Hotel recently. It was remodeled and is now one of the finest in the north.

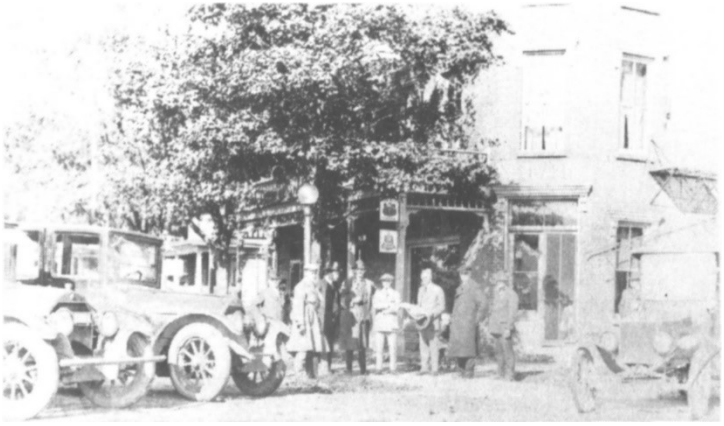

Figure 31- The Yeazel Hotel in 1923. Mr. Parvie, Art McDaniels, Henry Ford with hat in hand, Roy Collins, others unknown.

Figure 32 – The burning of the Yeazel Hotel in 1925.

The East Shore Hotel was the only hotel built during the year of 1932 in the United States. Mr. Park Herron owned it for many years. He came to Frankfort from Thompsonville.

Also, on the corner of 3rd and Main Street is the Garden Theater. It was built in the early 1920s by Custer Carland. The first few years it was a still picture. What the person had to say was flashed on the screen, so one had to read it. There was no sound. Mrs. Fairchild played the piano at the theater for many years. When something exciting was flashed on the screen, she played very loud, otherwise very soft. Carland put sound in the theater the fall of 1929. I came home to Frankfort the 17th of December, 1929, on the Ann Arbor Railroad passenger train. I had been away sailing on the steam ship "Maritana" for 9-months. I was told on the train that the theater had installed sound. What a pleasant surprise, as that was all the entertainment Frankfort had at that time. There were no bars, as the United States was dry at that time. Moonshine whiskey could be gotten if you knew the right people.

Simon Fredrickson lived on the hill south of Elberta. That was one place for booze. Dan Wilson, or Whiskey Dad as we called him, was another one who had booze. There were others also, but one had to know them in order to get the booze. About the year of 1932, one could buy whiskey. It was made legal again after being dry, as it was called during the years when it was illegal to have it. We did have dance halls. The White Owl, on the east side of Lower Herring Lake and Worlies Corners near Bear Lake. Bob Lockhart was sheriff at that time. Hank Lewis was undersheriff. They would say, "Be careful tonight boys." so we hid the booze in the woods near the dance hall. One had to be careful so no one saw you, as they would steal it. Then the fists would fly!

Henry Frick had the tailor shop near the theater. Frankfort had a carnival on July 4th, 1931, so Main Street was blocked off from 4th to 5th Street. Henry came home during the night; he had been lopping up some moonshine that was easily gotten. He forgot the carnival was in town. He got through two tents of dolls, plates and caramel-corn before coming to a stop. He spent the balance of the

night in jail. There were two cells in the basement under the City Hall at that time.

Many years ago, the city would put a 20-foot tree in the center of Main and 4th Street at Christmas time. It had many lights on it, also other trimmings. There was a manhole in the street so that the tree could be well secured in it. It was very pretty. Jim Griner came out of the pool hall, had been boozing it up with some friends, got off course and fell into the tree. He got tangled in the light wires and couldn't get out. Butch Forrester found him asleep, got him out of the tree. He also spent the night in jail, for Butch was the night cop in Frankfort for many years.

Chapter 9
Our Frankfort Heritage

Collins Drug Store

J.B. Collins started the first drug store in Frankfort in 1867 between 4th and 5th Streets near City Hall. In 1878, he purchased two lots on the northeast corner of Main Street and 4th Street, and constructed a building for a drug store. It was also large enough for the City to hold meetings, and it had a living quarters upstairs.

In 1900, J.B. Collins included his son Roy in the business. In 1901, Roy inherited the business. The store then became Rexall Drugs. In 1903, it became an agent for Wells Fargo (1903-1916) and American Railway Express (1920-1953). James Patterson and Glen Kenyon handled the drayage. Charles Didrickson was the clerk and pharmacist from 1914-1924. In 1925, Milford Porter replaced Charles Didrickson at Collins drug store. He married Grace Collins in 1929. Harley Herban was hired as clerk. In 1935, Roy Collins retired and Milford and Grace, both pharmacists, took over the store.

In 1940, the present store was built by Oswald Ness, with office space for a doctor's office. Dr. Fred Trautman first occupied this office. Later, Dr. Fred R. Thacker. At the present time, Dr. DeGuia has his business there. In 1954 Don Gullitt was hired as pharmacist. In 1960, the business was incorporated by Milford and Grace Porter, with Don and Ellie Gullett. They were honored by Squibb and Co. in 1971 for the on-millionth prescription. Don and Ellie Gullett purchased the business, Milford and Grace retired, and Harley Herban retired din 1975.

In 1976 the Collins Drug Store was 108-years old. Dee and Nancy Hewett are the present owners.

The *Benzonia Citizen* county paper was started by J.B. Walker in 1867 as a republican paper. It lasted only a few years. There were many owners during the years. In 1870, it was called the *Frankfort Express*, then owned by W. F. Cornell. After the building burned in 1881, it was then owned by Allen Brewer. In 1882, J.B. Collins Drug Store took over the paper.

In 1897, the *Benzie County Patriot* was founded by Fred Voiland on the site across the street from where it is at this time. In 1905, the paper sold for $1.00 per year. In 1922, the paper was purchased by Arthur P. Peterson, "Big Pete" as he was known by his many friends, also his charming wife, Helen. Gus Carlson was the printer from 1923 to 1972. Peter and John, sons of A.P. Peterson, took over the Patriot in 1945. John and wife Mary Lucy bought the paper in 1970, It was sold in 1972 to J.B. Publishing Co. of Manistee. The paper had been in the Peterson family for 50-years.

Luedtke Engineering Company

One of the oldest businesses in Frankfort started in 1930 by Elroy Luedtke. The "Duke", as he was called by his friends, came to Frankfort in 1928, along with his charming wife Lucille. I met the Duke in the fall of 1928. He was then with the Grayling Engineering Co., building the south breakwater.

He started the Luedtke Engineering Co. shortly after he came to Frankfort. He built his first scow on our fish dock at Waterfront and 3rd Street. He also had his office there for a short time. He was a very industrious person. About 1932, he bought the dock and building from Michigan Transit Co. at Waterfront and 4th Street, also the grist mill from Bart Trowbridge for his office. He expanded rapidly, and was very successful in his business. Also, he was very civic-minded. He was Mayor of Frankfort several times, and was instrumental in helping to get the hospital, high school, football and baseball field.

The Duke was very active until his death in 1968. After Mr. Luedtke's death, his sons Karl and Erich took over the business.

Bill Gettes had what was called a livery stable between 3rd and 4th Street on the south side. He had about 20 head of horses, also buggies. He would rent them out the same as cars are rented today. If you cared to rent a horse and buggy, you were taken to the barn below, picked out the horse, the horse was taken up, hitched to the buggy of your choice, and you were off down the dirt road. There were horse stables in Beulah, Empire, and Thompsonville. The horse could be rented for several days. If you needed to go to Empire, it would take 2-days for a trip like that.

Figure 33 – Horse and buggy was the only means of travel in 1901. This rig was rented from Bill Gettes, they are on their way to Crystal Lake on 7th Street.

In 1881, a local firm drilling for salt, struck this medicinal, mineral and artesian water at 2.000-deet. The original flow was 8,000-barrels daily. The water contains chloride of sodium and potassium sulphatus of lime, magnesium, soda and chlorides, as well as other trace minerals. It is said to be good for hang-overs. It's still going strong after 108-yeaars.

The cannon guarding the entrance to the Frankfort Harbor mouth was placed securely on a concrete foundation. No one seems to know when it was placed there, but it was somewhere around the year of 1900. Nor does anyone know who placed it there.

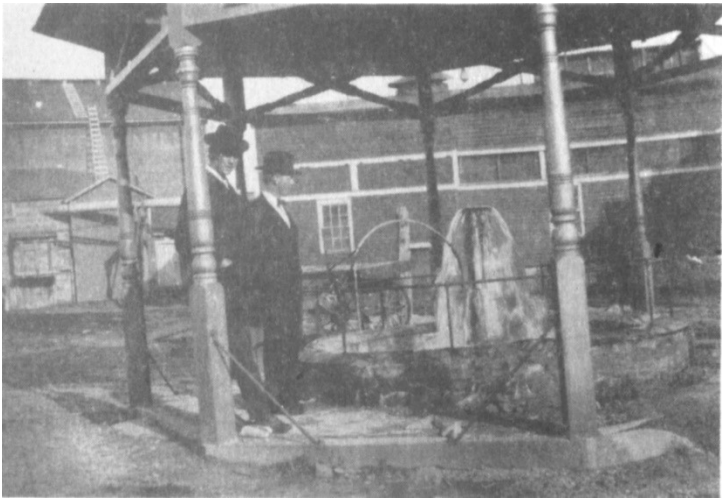

Figure 34 – Frankfort mineral spring and also Butlers Saw Mill. Pictured are Mr. Rosenbeck and Lorenzo Potter.

Figure 35 – The cannon on Frankfort's Main Street looking east, July 4, 1914, before Main Street was paved.

In the following picture, on the left, is Collins Drug Store on the corner of Main and 4th Street, now named Community Drug Store. Collins Drug Store is one of the oldest businesses in town. It was started in 1867. Also shown are: M.J. Hoppock Jewelers, B.W. Snider's newsstand, Kiefer Shoe Store, Collier Bros.

Hardware, Rathbun Pool Hall, Clark Benton, J.W. Lockhart Grocery, and Charley Hull's barber shop.

Figure 36 – Looking to the east down Frankfort's Main Street, about 1914.

Charly Hull used to come over to the Lockhart's grocery store between haircuts. One day while he was in there, a lady came in to collect for Red Cross. She asked who was the owner. Lockhart said, "That man." So, Charley walked over to the cash register and gave the lady five dollars. That was Lockhart's profit for the day at that time. She left very happy, as that was a lot of money. Lockhart told Charley to "Get out of my store, and don't come back." Charley laughed and told all his customers. That was a good one on old tight Lockhart.

In picture #37 below, can be seen the F.D. Stelzer Jewelry store, William Upton Hardware store, Lobb Drug store (now Didrickson), Eriksen's clothing store, Capron Novelty Shop, and Classen's store. On the south side of the street is the bank building, built in 1900, Masonic Hall, built in 1901, Upton Millinery, and the Benzie County Patriot, which has now moved across the street.

Figure 37 – Frankfort Main Street in the summer of 1925. Some of the cars at that time were the Overland, King, Ford, Oakland, and Essex.

Many of the older residents of Frankfort who have become accustomed to their beautiful little city, and many who have passed on, remembered when they went down to the Island, before the Royal Frontenac was built, and brought home all the wild grapes they could carry. They also bought baskets made by the Indians who camped there.

Blueberries grew wild in the woods, and the Indians would pick and sell them to the folks that came there. They also remembered coasting down the dangerously-steep Heffern Hill, also called Craned Hill, where today our perfectly equipped modern hospital is situated.

The first hospital in Frankfort was started by Adelle Haldeman, who was a Registered Nurse (R.N.). Adelle set aside several rooms in her home as a hospital in early 1930s. Her home was situated across the street from where our hospital is at this time. She later married Roy Oliver. Our very dear friend, Ena Kraft Jackson, started a hospital on Forest and 6th Street in her mother's home. This was called the Anna Markham Memorial Hospital in 1940. I was admitted to Anna Markham Hospital in 1944, and I must say I received excellent care.

Later, Frankfort saw the need for a larger hospital. Much talk went on in town before a site was chosen. There were two main sites considered. One place was on the hill east of town, and the other was on the hill north of town. This was the site that was chosen. Rose Smith worked at this hospital for many years before

she retired. She was a dedicated employee and helped make it a success.

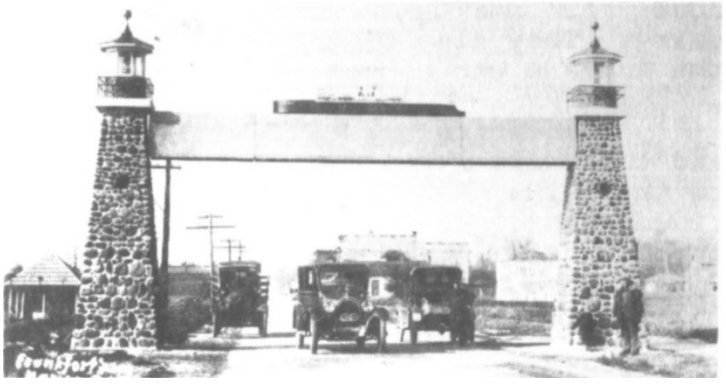

Figure 38 – The original Gateway. Located at Main Street and 7th Street, looking west toward the mineral spring on left. It was built in 1926. It was later moved to Highway 115 on the hill east of town overlooking Frankfort.

Figure 39 – The current Gateway, after it was moved to the east hill on M-115.

The building on the right below, was called the Bee Hive. It is where school was started in Frankfort. Charley and Watner Fairchild attended school here. Also in the picture is the Wiltsie house, the John Mauseth, and Don Mills houses, and Butler Mill on Betsie Bay.

Figure 40 – This picture was taken in 1969. It shows the corner of Leelanau and 6th Street before the school was built.

The worst sleet storm to ever hit Frankfort was in February, 1923. It tore down light and telephone lines so we had no communications outside of Frankfort for several days. Forest and Leelenau Avenues were blocked off due to fallen trees and tree limbs for several days. Frankfort was a sheet of ice, and there was little or no travel except by foot, and then with ice cleats. Telephone and Consumer Power and Light employees worked for many days to restore power to our area.

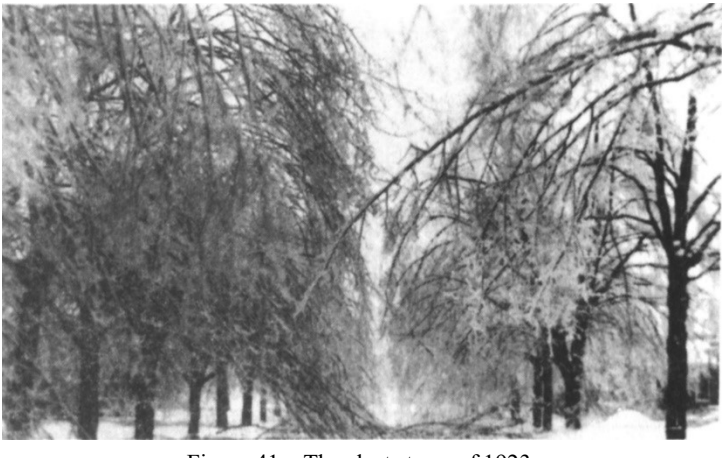

Figure 41 – The sleet storm of 1923.

The location of the switchboard of the Frankfort area phone system was located above the State Saving Bank at the corner of Main and 4th Street. It had to be monitored 24-hours a day. Mayme Williams, Mrs. George Vogel and Doris Mead were operators during the 1920s, or until a more modern system was put in. With the old system, one would call the operator and ask her to connect you with the party you cared to talk to. They were the first to know the gossip around Frankfort.

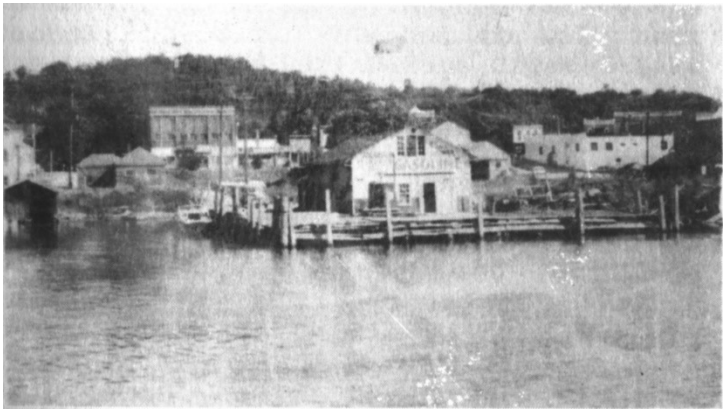

Figure 42 – The Anderson fish dock.

This picture, about 1937, shows the Garden Theater. The water tank is on the hill. On the right is the Anderson fish dock. On the left is the Frankfort area water works. This brick building housed the pumps with an electric motor and also a gasoline engine for auxiliary power, should the electric power be shut down for some reason. There was a large reservoir with seven flowing wells. The large cement tank always had about 12-feet of water in it, which was ready to be pumped into the tank on the hill, which then flowed by gravity to all parts of Frankfort. This building has been taken down and the reservoir filled in now. New wells have been drilled near 7th Street and M-22 and a new, more modern, pump station was put in. We think Frankfort has the coolest and best tasting water in the state.

Chapter 10
Crystal Lake

Crystal Lake is about one-and-a-quarter-miles north of Frankfort. It is one of the most beautiful lakes in the State of Michigan. It is about 8-miles long and 2-mile in width, with a depth of 180-feet. I have been told by some of the old timers that Crystal Lake once was named Cap Lake. The beaches at one time were under water, as the water was 6 or 7-feet higher than at this time. The water used to come up to the bluffs, so said Ivor Peterson, George Waters, and George Slyfield. One had to walk near the top of the bluff before Crystal Lake was lowered 6-feet. Wave action generated from the wind carried sand and stone to the channel, and eventually closed off Crystal Lake from Lake Michigan.

In 1873, a channel 100-feet wide and less than a mile long was dug from Crystal Lake to Betsie River, lowering the lake 6-feet. It was thought that cord wood could be brought across Crystal Lake by boat and transported down the river to the charcoal iron furnaces in south Frankfort. About a hundred cords of 4-foot wood was used per day to keep the iron furnaces going there. It kept 225 men busy just getting the wood to the furnaces.

When the last shovelful of sand from the new channel was removed, the lake began to lose her natural beauty First a small stream, later a larger and larger stream of water began to move out of Crystal Lake. Within a short time, the water became an uncontrollable current, and the roar could be heard for 5-miles away. The lake continued to fall for 2-weeks until the lake reached the level it is at at this time, and the channel soon became a stream not deep enough to float a boat.

The once beautiful Crystal Lake was quickly stripped of her beauty. For a long time, there were barren beaches – in some areas, for 500-feet. In other places, the beach was very narrow. Soon

trees began to grow on the beaches, and Cristal Lake began to take on her beauty once more.

The Western Union began to set poles for a telegraph line from Frankfort to Traverse City, using the wide unobstructed beaches. The Southern Railroad also used the wide beaches for a right-of-way and by 1889, trains began to operate where the water used to be.

Later, a dam was constructed at the outlet to control the water level and it remains there today. Crystal City began to grow, and homes began to spring up on the east end of the lake. Soon it was called Beulah. It is now the hub of the county. Restaurants, churches, and shops were built there, and visitors from all over the country started to come there to vacation and spend their summers.

Chapter 11
Commercial Fishing

The oldest business in Frankfort was the commercial fishing business. It was started by Joseph Oliver and also the Rubiers. They started fishing on what was called the Island, near where the Coast Guard Station is now located. Later, in about 1870, others came and engaged in the fishing business. The Olivers, Rubiers, Rodals, and Olsens fished with sail boats and lifted nets by hand. Then, about 1872, after the Frankfort piers were put in, steam tugs began to come to Frankfort.

Henry Robertson and also the Fairchilds had steam tugs. They also would tow sail vessels into the harbor to load lumber and then tow them back out into the lake after they were loaded.

Henry Robertson had a small package and passenger steamer called the "John D. Dewar". He made a daily trip to Manistee, Onekema, Arcadia, and Frankfort. Captain Robertson was also President of the State Savings Bank from 1924 until his death in 1927. His dock was near the southwest corner of what is now the City Marina, where the charter boats tie up. Also, Bob Cooper had his net building and his tug, the "Lillian C." there. She was steam, 55-feet in length. Cooper was a good fisherman, making the long runs to South and North Manitou. He sold the Lillian C. during the early 30s and went in business with Art Rubier, as Art Rubier's dad had passed away. Rubier had a small gasoline boat of 28-feet and had to have help. The Rubiers had a railroad passenger car for a net building, a little southwest of where the Senior Citizens building is today.

Custer Carland had his ice and coal business between 7th and 9th Streets. The ice was cut with a handsaw from the Betsie Bay. Sometimes the ice was 2-foot thick, cut in blocks 3-foot square. Carland had an ice house about 70-feet by 40-feet that was filled to the top with ice during February. The ice was put in tiers, 12-

blocks high, with sawdust from maple and birch packed on the bottom, sides, and top. Two feet of sawdust was used to keep the ice from melting during the hot summer months.

Henry Groesser came to Frankfort about 1938. He built a net building and living quarters on the Darland Dock. His boat was of gasoline power, 36-feet in length. He came from Traverse City. He was an industrious person, and with the help of his family he continued to fish many years. The name of his boat was the "Kingfish".

Captain Charles Fredrickson, and his brother Axel, took leave-of-absence from the carferries to begin fishing. They also had a small building on Carland's dock. The name of their boat was "Swallow". It was 28-feet in length. They fished for a year, and then went back to the carferries.

Figure 43 – The fish tug "Hazel C", owned by Captain Chapin in 1929, lifting nets west of South Manitou Island

Captain Chapin also had his net building, and tied up his boat, the "Hazel C.", on the east side of the slip where the charter boats are now. His tug was 55-feet in length, and 13-feet beam. It was steam. He had a crew of three men: an engineer, and two deck hands. Chapin also fished around the North and South Manitou. Whitefish and trout were the main fish that were mostly sought after. Captain Chapin passed away in 1930. His son Jack took over the fishing business after the death of his father. Jack married Bernice Rupright shortly after the death of his father, and they had a house built south of the railroad tracks, near the Frankfort Furniture store. The house later burned to the ground, a total loss.

Jack Chapin was also a good fisherman and hard worker, making the long trips to the North and South Manitou Islands. Later, he began drinking heavily and he neglected the fishing business. The crew on the Hazel C was Jack Chapin, Master, Axel Olson, Chief Engineer; Bill Ellis and Fred Floyd were the deck hands.

I recall in February, 1937, two fish tugs were stuck in the ice inside the breakwater; the tug "Margaret" and the "Gotland". Jack called Axel Olson to steam up the boiler and then they would go to help the two boats into their docks. My brother Haakon and John Steele went with him to help. They left the dock about 7:00 p.m. and worked through the heavy ice out past the piers. It was 1:00 a.m. when the Hazel C passed the two fish boats stuck in the ice, and went on out into the lake. They took a course for Point Betsie, then on to Glen Haven, arriving there about 4:00 a.m., where they tied up to the dock.

Haakon and John Steele were very perturbed that Jack did not stop to help the boats stuck in the ice, as he had supposedly set out to do. Jack was going to set chub nets west of South Manitou in the morning (that was the reason for going on to Glen Haven). After he found out Haakon and John would not go with him, he called his wife Bernice by land phone to bring Bill Ellis and Fred Floyd, and 24 bottles of beer to Glen Haven, Bernice got to Glen Haven about 8:00 a.m., then took Haakon and John back to Frankfort. Needless to say, they were very happy to get home.

Jack, with the tug Hazel C, took a course between the North and South Manitou Islands. The weather was clear with light easterly winds. There were some ice fields in the lake there also. He arrived west of South Manitou Island and started setting the chub nets in 45 to 60-fathoms of water. The thin ice held some of the nets from going to the bottom of the lake. Then the ice began to move out into the lake, taking some of the nets with it. Jack then took a course for Point Betsie and onto Frankfort. The two boats that were stuck in the ice had made their way into their dock, as the easterly wind moved some of the ice out into the lake. The lake froze over that winter of 1937. No fish tugs got out of Frankfort until sometime in April.

Chapter 12
Betsie Bay Fishermen

Captain Robert Cooper purchased the fishing business from Mrs. Chapin, and Jack went sailing on one of the lower lakes – more about Jack later. The fish rig was in very poor condition. Cooper worked hard, but couldn't make a success of it. Ed Olson had his fish business on the west side of the slip, where some of the charter boats tie up at this time near 5th Street.

Ed Olson had the steam tug "Comet", about 55-feet in length and 13-feet beam. The Comet had a cabin forward over the net lifter, with open deck on either side, then a net house aft. She ran about 9-miles per hour. Olson also fished around South Manitou some, but mostly in the Platte Bay and the Empire hole. Captain Ed Olson, and his son Ole, later went into the fishing business. The Comet became in need of repairs on her hull, the boiler, and steam engine, so they put her in the mud on the east end of the city marina.

Then, Ed Olson bought the "Grace" from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was 55-feet in length and 13-feet beam, with a Kahlenberg diesel engine of 100-horespower. Her speed was about 10½ miles per hour. Ed passed away shortly after they got the Grace.

Ole took over the fish business after the death of his father, making the long runs to the South and North Manitou Islands during the summer months. During the winter months, he would fish closer to Frankfort, like in Empire Bay, Platt Bay, and also north of Point Betsie. About 1935, Ole had the "Buddy O." built at Johnson Boat Works at Sturgeon Bay. He also began to sell his fish locally, both fresh and smoked. He had Ragnar Strom sail the Buddy O. and John Hansen sail the Grace for him, so he could stay on shore and take care of his fish business. The Buddy O. was 42-feet in length, and 12-feet in beam, with a 30-horsepower

Kahlenberg engine, with a speed of 9-miles per hour in calm weather.

The two boats did not work out too well. There was a problem of drying the nets, and also repairing enough for the next day's fishing trip. The Buddy O. was sold to a party in South Haven, Michigan, and continued in the commercial fishing business. The Olsons were very successful in the fish business.

The Hanrath Fishery was south of Luedtke Engineering Company. Henry Hanrath came from Germany in the early 1900s. He had the fishing boat "Rhine". He had set nets southwest of South Manitou just before Christmas. It began to blow fierce from the southwest and they took shelter in the harbor of South Manitou. After laying windbound there for two days, they started out for Frankfort. With the wind still blowing from southwest, the small boat was tossed about by the high seas. They couldn't make very good time. Arriving at the Frankfort pier during the night of Christmas Eve, a high wave tossed the small boat upon the pier and it was broken up. They had a crew of four: Julius Dorey, Charley Kibby, Gus Strauble, and Henry Hanrath (owner of the tug). Only two of the bodies, along with the fish and nets, were washed ashore. They were given a proper burial.

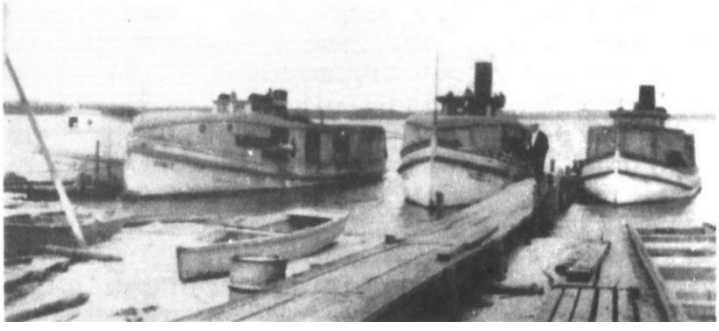

Figure 44 – The "Hazel C." owned by Captain Chapin; the "Frances C." owned by Captain Louis Rodal and sons Otto and Ludwig, the "Comet" owned by Olson Fisherie,s and the "Nellie H." owned by John Hanrath, were windbound in the shelter South Manitou Island.

John Hanrath also fished from the dock south of Luedtke. His four sons worked with him in the fishing business until he passed away. He owned the "Nellie H." and later, the "Grace H.", which

was built in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She was 50-feet in length and 12-feet in beam.

Rodal Fisheries were at Waterfront and 3rd Streets. Louis Rodal fished with a sail boat for many years. Later, he became the owner of the steam tug "Frances C.". His two sons, Otto and Ludwig, went into business with him. They had the steel tug "Jean R." built in Manitowoc about 1932. The steam engine and boiler were taken from the Frances C. and put in the Jean R.

The Jean R. got stuck in the ice during February, 1935. The wind had started in the south and continued to increase all day, shifting to the southwest. During the day, Olsen with the tug "Grace", crossed the lake taking shelter in Sturgeon Bay. Jack Chapin with the tug "Hazel C.", took shelter in South Manitou Harbor. Rodal and Hanrath tried to get into Frankfort Harbor, but the ice was too much for them. They got stuck. The wind during the night shifted to the northwest, blowing a gale with snow squalls. The ice began to move and the Jean R. started to hit the breakwater and take on water. With the help of the Coast Guard, the crew, Otto and Ludwig, and Pete Troan, got off. After that, Pete moved his family to the west coast of California, near San Diego, where he fished on a tuna boat for many years.

The crew from the Jean R. has a difficult time getting ashore. The breakwater was covered with high icebergs. They tied themselves together about 10-feet apart and began the task of walking off the slippery ice. Many times they would slip and fall. During the night, the Jean R. sank about 50-feet off the north breakwater.

The Grace H. drifted with the ice flow and got stuck fast about 4-miles south of Frankfort and 1-mile offshore. After the storm, Captain Fisher from the Frankfort Coast Guard Station, called me about 12:05 p.m. and asked if I would go with Bob Lockhart (he was John Hanrath's son-in-law), and himself to walk out to the Grace H. with some provisions.

We left the shore about 1:30 p.m. The first ¾-mile was frozen ice and we made good time until we got to ice chunks that were heaving in the swells from the lake. It was bitter cold – 10 degrees above zero. The going was slow. We had a line tied to our waist,

should one of us fall between the heaving ice. We reached the Grace H. about 3:00 p.m. We found Captain John Hanrath (owner) and his three sons, John Jr., Walter, and Henry, tired but well. We left the food. We didn't stay long as we had to get off the ice before dark. During the night, the wind shifted to the northeast and freed the Grace H. and they docked the next day.

In the spring along in May, Luedtke Engineering Company raised the stern of the Jean R. and slowly towed it to their dock where she was raised, put on the dock and repaired. She went back in service the following year. Several years later, she was taken to Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, where a new Kahlenberg diesel engine was installed.

Figure 45 – The last of the commercial fish businesses in Frankfort was burned down by the Luedtke Engineering Company. The dock and building were purchased by the Luedtke Engineering Company from the Rodals in 1975.

Iverson and Anderson had their first dock and net house on 2nd Street and Waterfront, near the Villa Marine. They had a gasoline-powered boat "Alf". Iverson had two sons, Ivar and Alf. They fished some with their father.

Figure 46 – The “Maggie Lutz” built in 1873.The first steam fish tug on Lake Michigan, owned by Albert Fairchild.

Figure 47 – The “Rough Rider” owned by Fairchild Fisheries, out for a Sunday excursion. At this time, nets were pulled by hand.

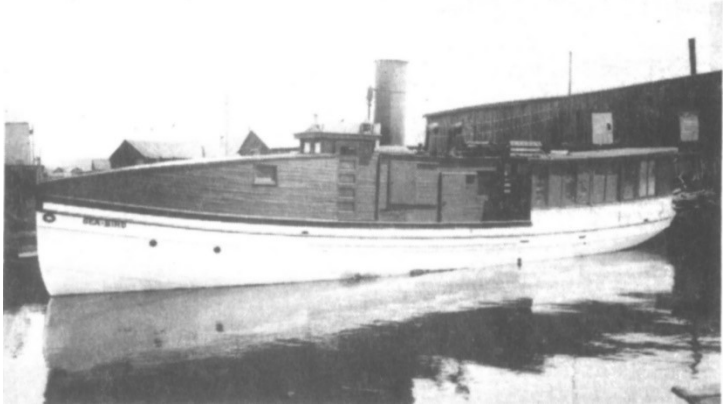

Figure 48 – The steam tug “seabird”, owned by Fairchild, one of the first to install a net lifter for the fishing of gill nets

Iverson and Anderson had the 42-foot "Margaret" built in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, in 1935. It was built of white oak and powered with a 45-horsepower Kahlenberg engine. Several years later, Iverson died suddenly. The boats and nets were sold. Luedtke Engineering Company bought the docks.

Jacobson and Bohnow had their dock also on 2nd Street and Waterfront. Their net house was built from 2x4s, 40' x 24'. The name of their boat was the "Gotland". She was about 30-feet in length, and 8-feet in beam, powered with a gasoline motor.

Morris Pete was working on the Gotland with Bill and Johnny Jacobson. Pete fell overboard in the West Platt Bay. They tried to get him, but he disappeared before the Gotland could get back to him. It was January, 1930, and it was cold. Lots of north wind at the time. In April, Mr. Strauble, keeper of the lighthouse, walked out to check the light and fog horn in the morning. At that time, there was a catwalk from the shore to the light at the end of the pier. He saw a yellow object on the bottom of the lake. It was the body of Pete. Some said he came home.

The fall of 1938, at the closing of the trout season, Bill and Johnny didn't have enough net reel room, so we let them use some of ours. It was cold and raining in November when they got their work done. Johnny said to Bill, "Go to the liquor store and get a pint of whiskey." At that time, a pint of "Snug Harbor" was 67¢. We got together the 67¢ and Bill went up and got it. When he got back, he took a drink and went to hand it to Johnny. Bill let go of the bottle before Johnny got a hold of it. It fell and broke. Johnny called Bill many names I had never heard of in English, Norwegian, and some in Swedish! Needless to say, we all went home disappointed.

Johnny Jacobson used to get to drinking heavy. I recall one nice morning as we were preparing to go fishing. Bill Bohnow came over and said, "We can't go fishing today. Look at that old so-of-a-gun; drunk again." There sat Johnny on a fish box. He had been drinking all night and could hardly see. We went out in our boat and lifted our nets, and set nets back.

Johnny Jacobson and Herman Kado went to Manistee to get some booze. Benzie County was dry at that time, but it was legal

in Manistee. They got five gallons. They were doing a little nipping on the way home. A farmer's cattle were crossing the road near Arcadia. Johnny said to Herman, "Watch me make her jump." The bumper hit the cow in the hind end and broke its leg. The framer saw what happened and got in his car and followed them to Frankfort.

Herman was sitting in the back seat. It was a 1928 Ford sedan. When Johnny came over the railroad tracks to the dock he was coming pretty fast. The track was rough and raised Herman and the booze off the seat. He got out of the car and said to Johnny, "Take it easy Captain, you have our lives in your hands." The farmer followed them out onto the dock. There was a little fuss, but they paid the farmer $25.00 and then they sold the cow to the butcher in Elberta.

Herman Kado was living in our net house at the time. That fall, he went up to Lake Superior to help his son take his fish tug and equipment to St. Joe, Michigan for the winter. They stopped in St. Ignace for fuel, and then left to be home in St. Joe for Christmas. They got caught in a southwest storm. It was very cold. Ice formed on their cabin and nothing was ever found of them.

Herman Kado used to be in the fishing business. He used to tell his crew, "Keep the money in the pocket boys, the bills won't run away." How true. I was told he was like Dan Seway, moved from one port to another to pick up whatever he could put his hands on and take with him.

There were many ways of fishing, but the two most commonly used methods for commercial fishing were with either the gill net, or the pound net. Which net you would use depended on the location you were going to set your nets, and what fish you were trying to catch. Both types are shown below.

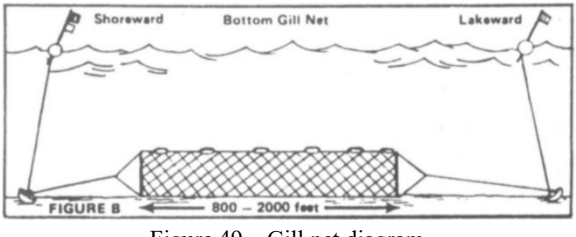

Figure 49 – Gill net diagram.

Gill nets are one of the different methods used in the commercial fishing business. Leads on the bottom line to take the net to the bottom of the lake, and corks on the top to hold the net upright, like a fence, and markers, or buoys, going to the surface.

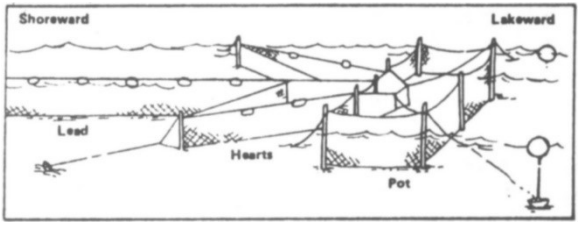

Figure 50 – Pound net diagram.

Pound nets are another method of commercial fishing. They are generally used to trapping whitefish. They are heart-shaped nets to funnel fish into the pot, or trap, of the net. The pot is supported by large wooden stakes driven in the lake bottom. The lead-in is the aquatic version of a farmer's fence and it stretches from surface to bottom and runs from the pot net toward shore.

The Fairchilds also fished out of Frankfort. They had the steam tug "Sea Bird". They also had the "Maggie Lutz", built in 1873. It was the first steam fish tug on Lake Michigan. It was owned by Albert Fairchild and sold in 1918. The Fairchilds also had the "Rough Rider" and a ferry boat to take passengers to and from Frankfort and Elberta.

Later on, Captain George Waters also had a ferry to take people from Frankfort to Elberta. He also took passengers on trips out into Lake Michigan. He lived to be 97-years old. We let him live in our net house for several years. He also conducted his business on our dock. He often said to me, "If my boat is gone, tell the Coast Guard to pick up the boat, I have gone over the side with a stone on my leg." That is the way he would like to have gone, but he broke his hip and was taken to the hospital and died there.

Perry Knight hauled the fish entrails to his farm in the country, then plowed them under. It made good fertilizer. His horse was balky often times. The horse would stop on the railroad tracks, and often times he would back up when he got on the tracks. Usually,

Perry would be getting the fish entrails late in the afternoon, at about the time the train would be coming to Frankfort. At times, it was a heavy load for the horse to pull over the tracks, going up about 5-feet. Some said turn him around and let him face the wagon, then let him back up. But that didn't work. So, he was put back of the wagon headed out and a fire was built under him. He took off for home in a hurry, and fish entrails spilled on Main Street as he went around the corners. After that, he always hurried over the railroad tracks.

There were other fishing businesses in Frankfort at times. Olaf Ness and Ted Rodal, also Bernie Sykes, had a small steam tug, the "Sea Bird".

Chapter 13
The Anderson Fish Company

My dad started the Anderson Fish Company in about 1924. He bought the dock from Ivar Peterson. It had a large warehouse on it. He used to lay the "M. H. Stuart" on the west side of the slip, heading north. The dock was where the Jacobson Marina is at this time. The buildings have now been taken down and the slip was dredged to 11-feet of water. Slips were then put in to accommodate more boats at the marina.

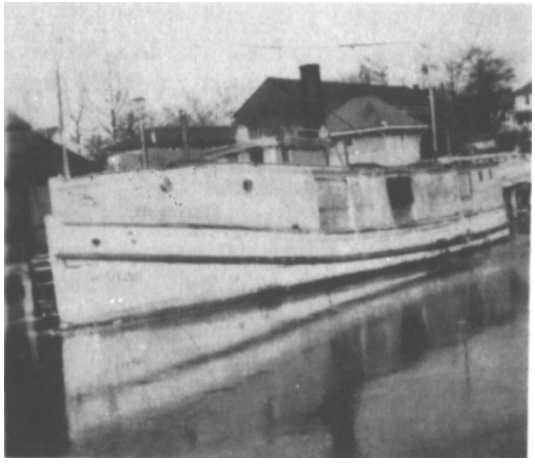

Figure 51 – The steam fishing tug "grayling". It was 65-feet in length and a gross of 70-tons. It was owned by Anderson Fish Company.

Dad was Master of the M.H. Stuart. I sailed with him. We hauled mostly lumber, logs, cement, etc. to many ports on the lakes. He also had the "Grayling", a steam tug. We fished with hook and lines after laying up the Stuart in the fall, usually in late November. We fished hooks for trout all winter until the first of April. Hook fishing and gill net fishing did not go together, so dad made the long runs up to the Manitou Islands and also to the

middle grounds, which is 48-fathoms on top and 90 to 100-fathoms all the way around it. It is about due west of Point Betsie and 12-miles out. On one of our fishing trips up to North Manitou we landed a 48-pound trout. The Hanraths also caught a 48-pound trout, the two largest trout ever brought into the Frankfort harbor.

During the years of 1900 until the 1920s, most of the fish tugs were of steam power and used coal in their boilers. Each fish tug had a railroad track to their coal shed. They would get coal by the carload, usually from 52 to55-tons per car. Dick Strauble usually unloaded the coal by the shovel. He would unload a car in a day, from daylight to dark for 25¢ per ton. He would make $13.75 for the day's work. That was good wages at that time. After the car was unloaded, he would head for Carl Muelhman's for a few drinks, now Baker's bar. There he would meet his friends, Ross Huck, Sam Arneson, and others.

Dad passed away in 1929. The steam tug Grayling was sold to settle his estate. Steam tugs at that time were getting to be a thing of the past. She was sold to a party in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. My brother Haakon and I bought the dock from his estate and we went into the fishing business. We bought the "Avis", a 36-foot gasoline-powered fishing boat, from Emil Nelson in Ellison Bay, Wisconsin. She was very old and leaked badly. We came across the lake from Sturgeon Bay at night in a heavy fog. We steered by lantern to see the compass. At 7:00 a.m., we stopped the engine to pick up the sound of Point Betsie and Frankfort. We were about 3-miles out from shore. We could hear Point Betsie on our port side and Frankfort's horn was about straight ahead. We had made our first trip.

We fished with the Avis for three years. I think we pumped most of Betsie Bay through her. We would pump her dry at 6:00 p.m., then I would get up at night at 1:00 a.m. and walk the six blocks, and pump her out again. Then, I was the first one down in the morning, at about 7:00 a.m., to do it again. And this was in the cold winter.

In the winter of 1937, we had the 49-foot "Janice A." built in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin by Johnson Boat Works. She had a 12-foot beam and a 36-horsepower Kahlenberg diesel engine. After

we had the Janice A. built, we could again make the long trips to the North and South Manitou Islands, winter and summer. During the summer months, we would leave the dock at 4:00 a.m., as it was a 4½ to 5-hour run for the Janice A. She was slow, making 9-miles per hour in good weather. We would lift 24 boxes of nets and also set back 24 boxes of nets. One box of nets was about 2,000-feet. We usually arrived back in Frankfort 8:30 to 10:30 at night. We would pack the fish in ice, 100 lbs. to the box. A good lift of fish on such trips would be from 1,500 pounds to 1 ton of whitefish and trout during the spring, and during the summer months, perhaps 400 to 500 lbs. of trout, sometimes less as the fish at that time swam high in the water over our nets.

I recall some of the trips back from South Manitou. It would take us 5-hours to come from the South Manitou light to Frankfort, 28½-miles in rough seas. On one trip back from fishing in Glen Haven Bay, we sailed with a light northeast wind. It was about 8:30 p.m., and it was dark when we ran up on a large iceberg. Haakon and John Steele were cleaning fish up forward. The sudden stop shifted everything forward, boxes of fish nets and all. We tried to back off, but no luck. We took the fish and nets to the stern to get the weight back aft, but she still held fast to the ice. We worked with ice spuds to try to free her sides. After trying to free her for several hours, she finally backed off. It had started to snow and visibility was poor now. I again put the Janice A. on a course for Point Betsie and arrived safely at our dock in Frankfort at 12:30 a.m.

There was a closed season on lake trout from October 10th until November 10th at that time. I recall having the Janice A. loaded with nets and the other provisions, such as coal for heat, canned things, such as soup, crackers, canned meat, potatoes, etc. and a full tank of fuel. We would leave the dock at Frankfort around 9:30 p.m. so as to arrive at the fishing grounds southwest of South Manitou at midnight. Sometimes the going was rough. It would be snowing and cold. We would set our nets, then go into South Manitou Harbor for the balance of the night. We would try and sleep in a net box that was empty of nets. We would pull

anchor before daylight and head out to the nets that were set at midnight to lift them for the day's catch.

In October 1943, we lifted our nets and had a ton of nice trout. The barometer started to go down fast. I knew from my sailing experience the weather looked bad. I said to the crew, John Anderson, Ragnor Strom, and Bill Bohnow, "We will not set back our nets, we'll try to go back to Frankfort." It didn't look good. It had started to blow from the south, then shifted to the southwest. It blew hard as the Janice A. struggled in the large seas with her small engine and load of nets and fish. We kept on a course for Point Betsie until 2:30 p.m. The Janice A. was not making any headway, so I said to the crew, "With the barometer going down and a very good chance of the wind going to the northwest before morning, we will go into Glen Haven, tie up to the dock and call Frankfort by land line." as at that time, no one had ship-to-shore phones.

We got into Glen Haven, but could not tie up to the dock as the dock was then in such bad shape. I then put the Janice A. on a course for South Manitou and the shelter of its harbor. The wind kept building up and the seas were getting larger. After clearing Sleeping Bear Point, we had rough going. About 20-minutes from South Manitou, a large sea broke in a door and we took on a lot of water. I immediately headed the Janice A. up into the wind until the crew had the door repaired.

We arrived in the shelter of South Manitou about dark. We went to anchor about 10:00 p.m. Then the wind shifted to the northwest and the Janice a. came up on a large wave and parted the anchor chain. We started to drift out of the harbor. After that, we carried two anchors and two chains with us. We had but one anchor then, so we had to run the engine all night, drifting out of the harbor, then running back into the shelter. We kept that up all night until 4:00 p.m. the next day, when the wind shifted back to the north. Then we took a course for Point Betsie and back to Frankfort.

It was 10-above zero and snowing on the way from South Manitou. We finally arrived in Frankfort at 7:00 p.m. after a very rough trip. We also had others equally as bad over the years. The

Janice A. was slow and of no comfort. On one of our trips back from North Manitou, we ran out of diesel fuel between Point Betsie and Frankfort. We always carried 20-gallons of engine oil, 10-gallons of gasoline for the light plant motor, and 5-gallons of kerosene. We put this all into the fuel tank, started the engine and got back to Frankfort safely.

During the winter of 1943, we bought the "Evelyn S." and sold the Janice A. to a party in Milwaukee. The Evelyn S. was 52-feet in length with a 13-foot beam, and with a 100 horsepower Kahlenberg diesel engine, and a running speed of 10-miles per hour. She had a 6-foot draft and much more comfort for the long runs to the Manitou Islands. The Evelyn S. was built with Wisconsin White Oak, 2-inch planking with ribs 4x4-inches, spaced 4-inches apart up forward until midship, then spaced 6-inches apart, with heavy iron over the hull. She was built for the breaking of ice. This allowed us many times to get to our nets during the winter months. We were often called upon by the U.S. Coast Guard to help a fish tug through the ice inside the breakwater, to get them clear so the carferries could get into their dock.

During February of 1945, the Coast Guard called me by phone at 12.00 a.m. There was a fishing tug stuck in the ice at North Manitou Island. I inquired if the tug was in danger and was informed "not at this time." John Quinlin was Chief of the Frankfort Coast Guard Station at the time. I asked him to call headquarters at Cleveland because I could not get a crew and go to North Manitou Island for any less than $150.00. If the fishing tug was in danger, we would have left immediately. Headquarters said they had no funds for that kind of help available. They would send their ice breaker the "Mackinac" to North Manitou from Sheboygan, Wisconsin to help them through the ice. By the time the Mackinac arrived, the wind had shifted and the fishing tug had freed herself.

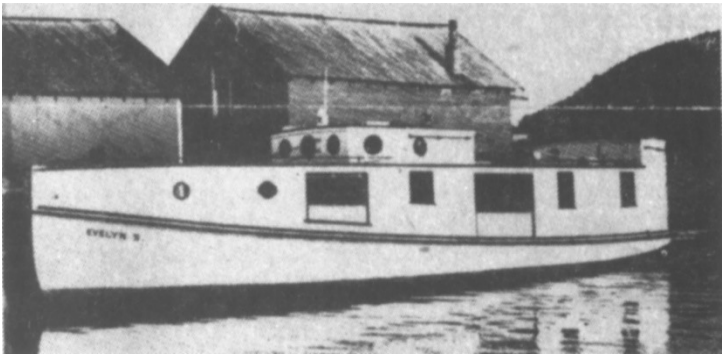

Figure 52 – The "Evelyn S."

The 62-foot Evelyn S., owned by Anderson Fish Company of Frankfort, Michigan. The boat is equipped with a new Bludworth depth recorder, 90-horsepower Kahlenberg diesel, Columbian rope, Ederer netting, and Crossley net lifter.

The following is an article about the installation of the depth recorder on the Evelyn S.:

> "The Anderson Fish Company of Frankfort recently installed a Bludworth depth recorder in their 52-foot tug Evelyn S. This is believed to be the first depth recorder in use on the Great Lakes. It is operated by radar, and had oscillators on both sides of the boat. It is expected to be a valuable aid in fishing by indicating lake depths. The Anderson firm has been operating out of Frankfort since 1931, and is owned by Charlie and Haakon Anderson, the latter of who is at present in the U.S. Navy."

The Evelyn S. always took us back to Frankfort. Never did we seek shelter from bad weather, or to the harbor in South Manitou. She was heavy, of about 50 gross tons. I especially recall on one of our trips back from the fishing grounds west of South Manitou. We had lifted our nets for chubs. It was cold in January, and the wind came out of the south. We did set the nets back, as we usually did. As we started for Frankfort it began to get cold. Ice began to form on the cabin. We made good time for the first hour, and got into the shelter of Platte Bay. By that time, the wind had shifted to the southwest and kept getting colder. By the time we were almost up to Point Betsie, it was blowing hard and began to snow. We had to tie down the fish boxes and net boxed to keep them from

sifting around. The Evelyn S. made good time in the heavy seas. We had to check the engine down to 9-miles per hour from Point Betsie to Frankfort because of the blow. But the Evelyn S. struggled on.

The seas were now coming on our starboard bow, generally three large seas, then several smaller ones. Occasionally, we would have to head her up into the sea, then back down again on course to Frankfort. As we approached the Frankfort breakwater, the carferry "Wabash" changed course and headed his ship to the south to let us come in first. Peter Rokstad was Captain at the time. He was a personal friend of mine for many years. After we got tied up to our dock, the Frankfort Coast Guard told us the wind was blowing 40 to 42-knots, with gusts up to 47 to 55. At that time, we had no communication with any land station.

At another time, we had headed into a northwest wind and sea going up to the Island. It was cold and ice had formed on the cabin, the cabin railing, etc., on the way to the Island, and also back to Frankfort. Everything was covered with ice. The Evelyn S. began to get very heavy with ice. She began to get slow to come back after rolling in the heavy sea. It was almost impossible to see out the pilot house windows. But we made it back alright. We found a way to fix that before our next trip out. She had a ½-inch pipe railing around the cabin. So, we made many 3/8-inch holes in the pipe, and ran a 3/8-inch tubing up to the pilot house windows, and connected the pipe to the engine so as to run hot water around the cabin that melted the ice. We never had that problem again.

The depth recorder was a great time-saver. Before we got it, we would have to stop and sound the water quite often as we set our nets. In chub fishing, the nets were set from 65 to 80-fathoms of water (480-feet).

In the fall of 1947, we installed a direction finder, and also a ship-to-shore and a ship-to-ship phone on the Evelyn S. The direction finder was great in fog and also in snowstorms. We could put a fix on Frankfort, Point Betsie, and Sturgeon Bay, and know exactly where we were, and could also call the Coast Guard and other ships with the phone.

Many times, we were called upon to go to South Manitou Harbor and take a disabled sail boat to Sturgeon Bay to the ship yard. We always did that on a Saturday night so as to be back Monday morning to go fishing. We pulled one boat off the beach that was quite high and dry. She went up there in a northeaster. The Evelyn S. had great pulling power. She had a 42x48-inch wheel (propeller).

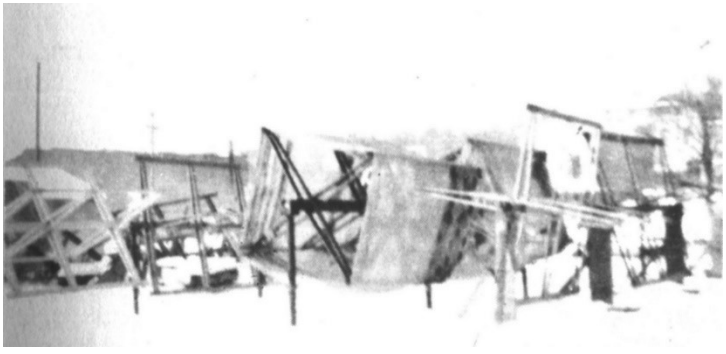

Figure 53 – Reel yard of the Anderson Fish Dock with nets drying on the reels in winter of 1947.

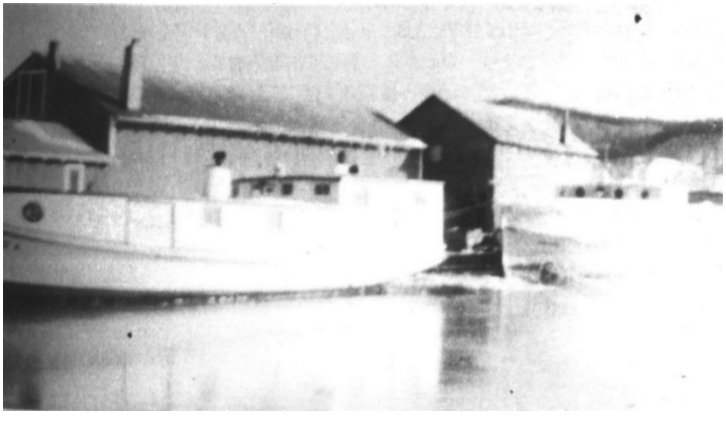

Figure 54 – The "Janice A." and "Evelyn S." moored at Anderson Fish Dock in 1942.

We were called upon to go to Charlevoix to pick up a 42-foot sailboat that had lost her mast. We left Frankfort at 9:00 p.m. Saturday, and we got to Charlevoix at daylight. Sunday morning

early, we left with her for Sturgeon Bay, then turned back to Frankfort to pick up the nets and crew, and to go to the fishing grounds. We also carried cherries off North Manitou and brought them to Frankfort to the canning factory. We also did that on the weekends.

The Evelyn S. was built in 1941. She is now resting at the museum in South Haven, Michigan.

Chapter 14
The Crew Were All Norwegians

Our crew on the "Avis" was Haakon (my brother), John Steele, and myself, and Andrew Anderson on shore. On the "Janice A." the crew was the same, but for shore hands to repair nets and get them ready for the next trip, Bill Bohnow and Harry Dobson were with us for many years. I must tell this story:

Harry Dobson raised chickens, and one day when airplanes were very few, one flew over the net house. Bill Bohnow went out to see it, and Harry said to Bill when he came back in, "Why do you go out to see that for?" Bill said, "Well, if it was a flock of chickens, you would be the first one out to see them!"

Our crew on the Evelyn S. was brother Haakon (except those years he was in the Navy), Ragnar Strom was engineer during those years, also Glenn Blacken and Ole Mick Olson. Ole was very humorous. He would say, "Yah, that fellow he got money and property in the bank." Or, if someone would like a donation for something, he would say, "Yah, that fellow got it, but he won't give it." He worked on the Ann Arbor carferries at times before there were many cars. Some of the crew would have a small boat and row across the bay to get to the Frankfort side. Captain Larson would come across with him occasionally. One trip when Ole was unlocking the chain from his boat, Captain Larson said "That's where the lock from the paint locker went." Ole said, "Dammit Captain! Don't you suppose that company made more than one lock?"

Ole Olsen worked as a wheelsman on the Ann Arbor #7. At one time she was called the "Norwegian Navy", later she was renamed the "Viking". Ole Glarum was First mate. One day he fired Ole Olsen. Ole Glarum went home while the boat was unloading and then loading. Later, when they got out in the Lake, Glarum went on his watch in the pilot house and Ole Mick Olson

was at the wheel, steering the boat. Glarum said to him, "I fired you." Ole said, "Yes, I know, but I like it here. I'll tell you when I want to quit." Ole was a very witty, intelligent person. His wife used to take in boarders. Ole had been hitting the bottle pretty hard that day. She came in with a bowl of gravy and set it down in front of Ole. He took his spoon and ate the gravy and said to his wife, "My Momma; that was good soup!"

John Chesney made fish boxes in the building where the Firestone store is now, Main and 8th Street. He would get basswood logs and saw them up into 3/8-inch boards, and make boxes for 50¢ per box. I recall on a stormy winter day, several of us were in his office where it was nice and warm. He used the slabs from the logs to heat his building in the winter months. He said to Captain Jack Chapin, "Jack, would you like to buy that pile of sawdust for $5.00?" Jack said, "What the hell would I do with it?" So, John goes over and pulled a gallon of moonshine whiskey out of it. At that time, Benzie County was dry. No alcohol could be sold. If you had any moonshine (as it was called), it had to be kept under cover.

John Chesney married one of the Hensey girls. He was much older than she. They had one boy. After John Chesney died, Wash Crawford made boxes near 3rd and Waterfront Street. Crawford was also in the taxi business.

I recall going to his office to order boxes in February. I couldn't find him. I looked in the bed and there he was, with all his clothes on; boots, overcoat, cap and all. He was under several blankets, no heat in the place. It was about 10-degrees above zero. Later, Jim Wyers took over the taxi business.

Chapter 15
The Fishing Decline

The fishing business began to decline during the 1940s due to many factors. Some to over-fishing, but the greatest decline in the trout fishing was due to some of the predators that ate the eggs from the spawning beds, such a fish ducks. They could go down to a depth of 120-feet of water and eat the spawn of the trout. They lived on the spawning beds all winter. Also, the crab, the sucker, the Menominee, and Burbot all lived on the eggs until April, when they would hatch. The weather had a lot to do with it also. A lot of rough seas in the lake would cover the eggs with silt, so that when April came, there were little or no eggs left to hatch. Each female had between 20,000 and 40,000 eggs.

Many times, at our meetings of the Michigan Fish Producers' Association in the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City, usually in February, we would ask Dr. Vanosteen from the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and also Fred Westerman of the Michigan Conservation Department, to let us give them the spawn from the trout for raising in the hatchery. This would be after the closed season on the trout was over. There were always a few late spawners. They could take the spawn to the hatchery to raise them. Then, when they were small fry, as they are called, they could be put back on the spawning beds, or they could be planted back in the lake. They always refused, saying they had no money for that type of thing; besides, it won't work.

In 1938, we finally got the go-ahead to save the spawn. It had to be a ratio of seven females and at least one male; more males if we got them as the trout were mostly females. The eggs were taken from the female and put in a shallow pan, then the melt from the male was put over the eggs and they were put in a 25-gallon barrel. The water in the barrel had to be changed every half hour until the eggs were put in the hatching stream. We put John Steel in charge

of taking the spawn and also caring for it. We had a 94% hatch of the eggs.

The eggs were then taken to the Harrietta Hatchery about the middle of November. They were in the hatchery process about 4-months.

On the second day after hatching, the fry, or small trout, were then put in 5-gallon cans, about 500 trout to the can, and taken back to Frankfort. Then they were put aboard the local fish tug for planting back. The tugs used for these planting were Olsen, with the Grace, Henrath with the Grace H., Rodals with the Jean R., and the Andersons with the Janice A. We all went to different spawning reefs where we knew the trout spawned. The Janice A. always took them to the Sleeping Bear Reef, south of South Manitou Island. That was in April of 1938. Each boat planted 60,000 or more small trout that were still on the egg.

The 3rd day, they lost the egg sack and then they were on their own. During that same shipment, we got Glen Kenyon or "Happy", as he was called, to take seven cans, or about 3,599 of them, to Crystal Lake. We put them in at 7th Street beach.

From that first planting, we had the best trout fishing we ever had in the years 1942 through 1945. The year of 1944, we caught and shipped to market 105,000 lbs. of trout. That proved to us that the predators were eating the trout spawn. Also, during those same years, trout fishing improved a lot in Crystal Lake. Before we put them in Crystal Lake, if someone caught a trout in Crystal it was put in the local paper who caught it and where. It was the same in Crystal Lake, the suckers, crab and others ate the spawn so there wasn't anything to hatch in the spring.

Then in 1943, we began to get many Lamphrey eels attached to the lake trout. The trout would have open sores where the Lamphrey with their circular rasping teeth would open the skin and begin sucking the blood from the trout. They gained entry to the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence Seaway system. I recall during November of 1942 we had lifted nets northwest of North Manitou Island. We had a good lift of trout, about a ton, and also about ten whitefish. It was closed season on whitefish, and we were supposed to turn them over to the Conservation Officer, or

return them back to the lake. It was late, about 9:00 p.m., when we got tied up to the dock in Frankfort. We were busy packing the days catch of trout in ice. All of a sudden in comes Rex Joslin, the Game Warden. He said to me, “Have you got any whitefish?” I said, “Yes, in that box.” It was dark and he had no light in the trunk of his car. My brother John and Henry Nielsen were just coming down to fuel up the boat, so we could go fishing the next day. Joslin’s car was parked in their way. They saw what was going on. Joslin was taking the whitefish out to his car two at a time. As fast as he put them in, John and Henry were taking them out. As soon as Joslin shut the trunk of his car and left, John and Henry came in laughing and told us what they had done. We all had a good laugh. We often wondered what Joslin said to himself when he opened his trunk and found only two whitefish after he had put in ten fish.

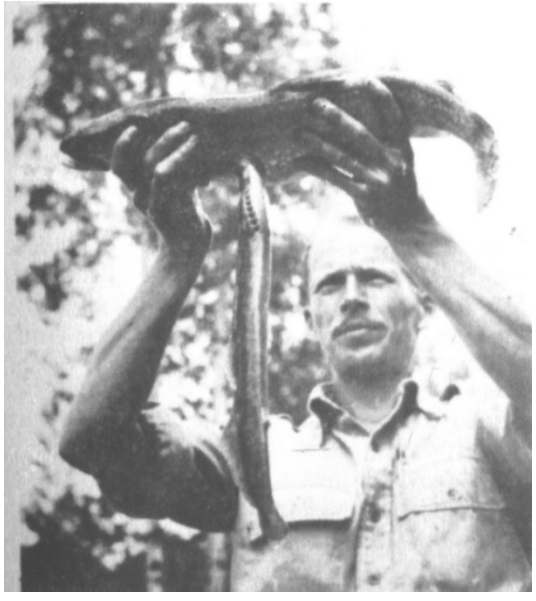

Figure 55 – Lamphrey Eel attached to a trout, shown by Dr. Vernon Applegate. Sometimes, there were several on a fish.

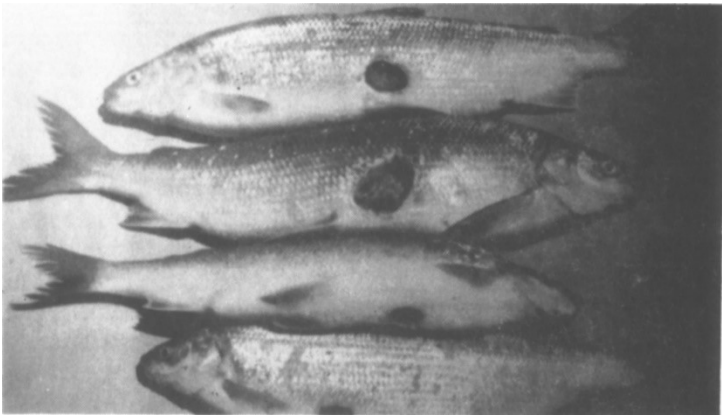

Figure 56 – Whitefish with scars from the Lamphrey eel.

We began to see sores on the trout during the late 30s. During the early 40s we began to get most of the trout with the marks from the Lamphrey. We also began to get some trout that had been killed by the parasites that would drift into our nets. Usually they were large ones, 15-20 lbs., that had been rotting on the lake bottom.

The trout fishing began to decrease rapidly. In four years, it didn't pay us to fish for them anymore. We then began to fish chubs. Everyone started to fish chubs, so the price went down to 8¢ to 10¢ per pound. We were soon forced to suspend our fishing operation and lay up the Evelyn S. and pay off our crew of six men.

The Department of Conservation didn't think the Lamphrey would be much of a problem. Several times I sent specimens of trout with Lamphrey on them to their office in Lansing to show them how the Lamphrey was killing the lake trout. After the trout were gone, the Lamphrey began to attach to the Burbot and other specimens. When they were all gone from the lake, the Department of Conservation began to work to eradicate the Lamphrey eel.

They tried with many different lampricide or poisons. Many different chemicals were used to destroy the Lamphrey before the chemical *TFM-3 Tri-fluoro 4 nitro-m cresol* was used and found to kill the young eels, and save most of the fish in the stream. The

Platte River was one of the rivers the Lamphrey spawned in. After the Lamphrey egg hatches the larvae, it will move from the spawning nest to burrow into the silt and sand. They will live as larva for more than three years. They burrow into the silt, so that just their heads are poking out of the silt, headed up-stream, and feed on whatever is available.

After three years or more, they will have reached a length of about six inches. Then they will come out of the silt and transform into the parasite adults, and migrate out into the lake to start their life as a predator. After 18-months, they will have reached a length of 22 to 30-inches and will again come up the rivers and spawn. Yet another cycle begins. After they have spawned, they will die, like the salmon.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Lamphrey eel put us out of business. I feel sure there was not a lake trout left in Lake Michigan. None were left to reproduce. The trout that was eventually re-planted, mostly came from Canada. They were a more shallow-water trout that the trout that was in the lake before. The old trout never came up to the breakwater or into the piers. We caught them in from 180-feet to 300-feet of water, except at spawning time, when they would come in on the rocky reefs.

It was unbelievable that the trout could be gone so soon. In 1947, we set a gang of 10 boxes of trout nets just northwest of North Manitou Island. It was November 10th, opening day of the trout season. The nets were out for two days. The mesh sizes were 5 to 6-inches. Where usually we would get from 2,000 to 3,000 lbs. of trout, this time we got less than 75 lbs. of trout and 150 lbs. of lawyers or burbot. The trout were gone, and the few we got were all marked by the Lamphrey eel.

That same year I was elected President of the Michigan Fish Producers Association. At that time, we had a membership of 800, all owners of commercial fisheries in the State of Michigan. With the help of my good friend and also Secretary and Treasurer of our association, Claude VerDuin, we invited our Governor to our meeting at the Park Place Hotel. During our meeting, the Honorable “Soapy” Williams had lunch with us. At the meeting, he informed us that he would do what he could to help our

situation. In the fall of 1951, the Wisconsin Conservation Department patrol boat "Barney Devine" set out to check the results of an experiment by that department to determine the status of trout in Lake Michigan. The results of those experiments were described as "The trout are gone."

Figure 57 – Officers of the Michigan Fish Producers' Association. Seated, left to right, are Walter Bailey, First Vice President, Charles Anderson, President, Ernest Brown, Second Vice President. Standing is Claude VerDuin, Executive Secretary.

A gang of eight boxes of trout nets were set by Leland Lafond. Net sizes of 4¾ to 5½-inches mesh were set about 30-miles east of Milwaukee. The nets were set October 29, 1951, and lifted three days later. The total catch consisted of one adult trout, about 2 pounds, one immature trout, 126 lbs. of lawyers or burbot, and 190 lbs. of bloaters. This same gang of nets set on this same reef in 1944 would have produce 4,000 pounds of trout.

When the first gang of nets were lifted, a second gang of the same length was set on another reef some 41-miles east of Milwaukee. This reef was always noted for its abundance of lake trout during the fall. When this gang was lifted two days later, there was not a single trout taken. There were 125 lb. of lawyers and 60 lbs. of bloaters in the nets. Milwaukee fishermen who set nets on this reef before 1945 always planned on approximately 5,000 pounds of trout to the lift immediately prior to the closed season, and also after the season opened.

Thomas Wirth of Sturgeon Bay Research Station made the two trips on the lake when the nets were lifted so that he could take biological notes on the catch. Lester Sharon of Delafield also went along to take any available spawn, but he didn't have to do any work.

During the 1950s, and after the trout were gone from Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, research began with chemicals headed by Director James Moffett and Dr. Vernon Applegate. Also, weirs and traps were tried with some success, but they were too costly. So, a poison chemical was thought to be the only way to destroy them. Dr. Vernon Applegate had put six years into the investigation of some six-thousand chemicals before the chemical *3-Bromo 4-Nitorphenol* was found successful, at a cost of $1,600 a pound.

Two chemicals became targets for possible use, one developed by Dow Chemical, and another by a German chemical firm. These two substances reached the point where they could be had in sufficient quantity and at a reasonable price. In the spring of 1958, Dow Chemical Company made them available in sufficient quantities to begin treating the stream and destroying the Lamphrey.

Fish tugs became very cheap, especially the small and older ones, and nets were of no use. We did sell about fifty boxes of nets to be used on Lake Superior. The rest of about 150 boxes we burned up and sold the lead.

We sold the Evelyn S. in 1952 after trying to fish chubs and whitefish for several years. There was no way a business like we had could continue to operate with six men on the payroll. The smaller outfits of father and son with a small boat and low expense could just make it fishing chubs. We sole the Evelyn S. to a party in Muskegon. She was used for towing for a few years. Now she is in the museum in South Haven. She was a good boat, and always took us back to Frankfort.

When I started the engine to take her to her new home in Muskegon, it was a very sad day for me. Yes, I shed a tear as I watched her head south for Muskegon. It was like losing a dear old friend.

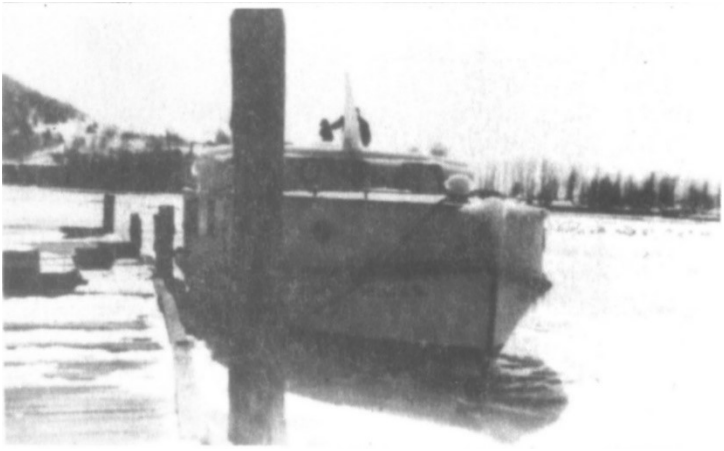

Figure 58 – The Evelyn S. in ice at the Anderson Fish Company dock.

Chapter 16
The Study of Chubs

In the 1930s, an extensive study of Lake Michigan chubs by the United States Bureau of Commercial Fisheries was conducted. The investigation was conducted aboard the research vessel "Fulmar" with a crew of scientists under the supervision of Dr. John Van Oosten. A small laboratory was located just aft of the pilot house, and the crew's quarters were below decks. She was constructed so as to have a net lifter up forward, and facilities for measuring, weighing, and taking scale samples from the fish. Later, the research vessel "Grayling" and the "Disco", which are still in action on Lake Michigan, and also the vessel "Steel Head", which is doing research work on the Lake Trout, participated.

Figure 59 – The "Fulmer". A converted naval vessel used in research of Chubs in the early 1930s on Lake Michigan.

The Coho salmon was planted in Platte River in 1965, and they adapted to fresh water very well. They were introduced into

Lake Michigan to control the alewife, which, like the Sea Lamphrey, came into the Great Lakes by the way of the St. Lawrence Waterway. The alewife multiplied very rapidly. The first one we caught was west of South Manitou Island, June of 1946. It was a strange-looking fish. We had been lifting chub nets west of South Manitou Island. No one around Frankfort had seen a fish like it, so I sent it to the Department of Conservation to have it identified. We got word back that it was an alewife. It was the first caught in Lake Michigan. There had been one caught in Lake Huron the year before.

The also adapted to the fresh water very well. After several years, they began to die and drift upon the beach, making a very bad odor. They became a nuisance and had to be raked up and buried. That was one of the main reasons for planting the Coho salmon in Lake Michigan. The salmon always came back to where they were released to spawn. So, in the fall of 1967, they began to come back to Platte River after feeding on the alewife for 18-months. During September of 1967, we began getting Coho of 14 to 16 lbs. Every one that had a boat of any size began to fish for them. Any bait seemed to work very well.

The first several years after, I recall going out fishing with my brother Thames. You would no more than get your bait in the water and you would have a fish, trolling perhaps 25-feet behind the boat on the surface. Those we caught weighed 14-16 lbs. The news soon spread and people came from all parts of Michigan to fish them. Everyone in Frankfort soon had all the fish they needed. The fish kept going north toward Platte Bay, then up the river to spawn. Platte Bay is about 10-miles north of Frankfort. By the time the news got down state, the fish were already in Platte Bay. They would stop feeding in mid-September and grow a round frizzle on their nose. Also, they would turn a much darker color. This must be nature's way to help them up the miles of stream to the spawning beds, as they swam over rocks and logs to get there.

Chapter 17
Local Disasters

On September 7, 1967, the town was overrun with fishermen with all kinds of boats, canoes … practically anything that would float. Before the Coho were planted, Frankfort was a peaceful and quiet town after the summer people left on Labor Day. The weather that morning was a light southeast wind, but getting stronger very rapidly. By 10:30 a.m., it was blowing hard, shifting more to the southwest. But the boats were still leaving Frankfort for Platte Bay. When the boats got around Point Betsie, the lake was quite calm in the lee of the land. The wind then shifted to the southwest and blew 35-40 knots, making very large seas.

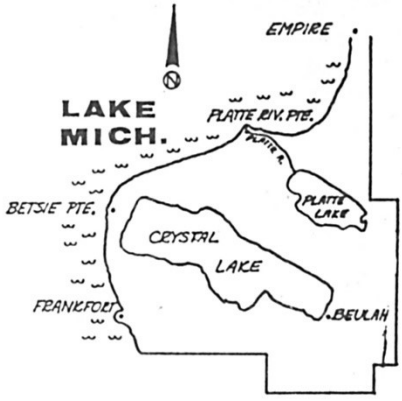

Figure 60 – map of the area of the fishing disaster, showing Point Betsie.

Some of the boats began to come back to Frankfort, but after rounding Point Betsie, they found the going too much for their small boats. Many tried to beach their boats, but seven were drowned and thousands of dollars' worth of boats and fishing gear was lost when they could not make it to the beach. A pole with seven lights on it was placed on the hill near the breakwater in

Elberta in memory of the seven, and was lit each night as a cross. But the lights would go out, or were shot out, so after several years it was discontinued.

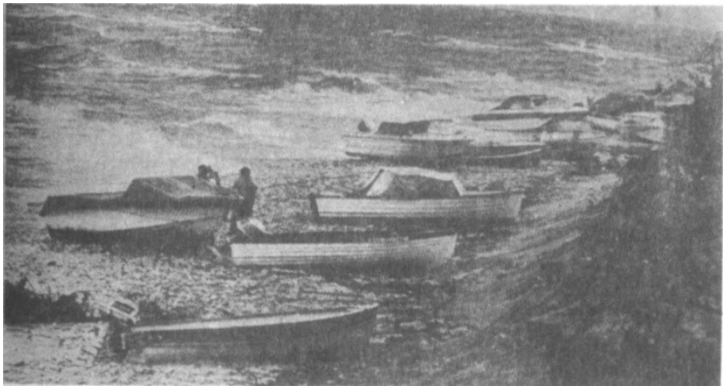

Figure 61 – Beached Coho boats on the shore, September 7, 1967.

More than 100 boats were dashed to pieces on the beach between Frankfort and Platte Bay, and many people were treated by our small hospital for exposure and broken bones that day.

The Frankfort Coast Guard had the southwest storm warning hoisted at 8:00 a.m. that morning, warning the fishermen of the coming storm. Sunday, the wind had shifted to the northwest, and no boats left Frankfort. On Monday morning at midnight, boats and house trailers were all over town. They were parked on the post office lawn, and tents were put up on the school lawn. The streets were filled with all kinds of vehicles, so the Coho fever was on again.

The merchants had a very busy weekend and fishing tackle became impossible to buy locally for a short time. At that time, Frankfort had no launching ramp, so cars lined up for six blocks waiting their turn to launch their boats from the one-boat-at-a-time launching ramp that was provided them. There was many an argument at the launching ramp, and also out in the lake, as fish lines got crossed with another boat's lines.

Frankfort had a modern launching ramp put in by the Department of Natural Resources and the City of Frankfort the following year, so that eight boats at a time could be launched.

When the Coho salmon program was started by the Michigan Department of Conservation, with eggs shipped in from the west coast of the United States, it was thought by the experts to be a partial answer to the multiple fish problems of the Great Lakes. It is highly doubtful that even the experts thought they would grow and survive in such numbers, and that this part of the State of Michigan would become, almost overnight, the hottest fishing spot in the entire nation. These fish grew almost a pound a month during the first few years in Lake Michigan.

There were several other tragedies, I recall, in Frankfort. One was the drowning of Helmer Ericksen and Dale Robertson, two fine young men both in their late 20s. Dale was married to Adelle Gunderson. They went duck hunting in a small boat in late October out on Platte Lake. As they did not come home at dark, a search party went to look for them. They were found the next day, where the river comes into the lake, with about one-foot of water over them. Somehow, their boat filled up with water. The bottom at this point was very muddy. They kept slowly sinking deeper into the bottomless bottom of the lake. Some of the people that live in that vicinity had heard gun shots after 8:00 p.m. that night, but didn't think anything like that would happen. When they were found, just the top of their heads could be seen through the muddy water. Bill Olsen and Ted Rodal found them standing upright in the boat that was sunk deep in the mud. Both men were drowned. They were taken to Watson Funeral Home between 7th Street and James Street.

They had both been very active in sports. Helmer worked with his brother Einar in the clothing store, and Dale worked at the Olsen Gas Station. We were all very saddened by this accident, as we all knew each other in Frankfort. It was like a large family. This happened in about 1938.

Another tragedy was the drowning of three young men; Bus Morrell, Bill Crawford, and Dick Weir, during November 1947. They had been out at night spearing Whitefish, which was legal to do at that time of year. It was cold, with freezing ice along the shore as they started out with their small boat for the fishing grounds. It was about 10:00 p.m. at night. They saw a deer

swimming in the lake with their spearing lights. Deer season was also open then. In trying to get this deer into the boat, they took on water and the boat sank with all of them. They were all young men with families in the vicinity of where M-22 leaves Crystal Lake and goes north toward Empire.

Betty Adams was shot in her home in 1933. She was also called "the dog woman", as she kept 7 to 8 dogs and lived on the west end of the airport road. She had been in the bootlegging business for several years during prohibition, selling beer. She had been shot through the head with a lead ball. The Sheriff said the bullet had come from a shotgun not far from the house. Frank Salzwedal had been seen in the vicinity, but his mother took the blame to clear her son. He had used a single barrel shotgun. He had made a round lead ball in a hole he had made in a potato, the size to fit in a shotgun shell. He then took the small shot out of the shell and put in the round ball he had made in the potato, leaving the powder and cap in the shell. Then he put back the paper cap on the end of the shell. It was used about the same as a rifle, only much more powerful. Tom Higgins was also questioned, as he was a frequent visitor, along with many others. But Sheriff Crawford had seen Salzwedal cross the road walking that way the night of the shooting. Mrs. Adams was sitting at her kitchen table as he shot her through the window. Salzwedal later confessed and was sent to prison in Marquette, Michigan.

An Airplane Tragedy:

The morning of June 22, 1933, Charles Rennie, Vice President of Rennie Oil Co. of Traverse City, having urgent business in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, chartered a plane owned and piloted by James Gillette. Mrs. Charles Rennie accompanied her husband, along with George Keller from Frankfort.

The plane was a Stinson monoplane, equipped with pontoons for landing on water. They left Traverse City about 10:00 a.m. on a course for Kewaunee, Wisconsin. They were sighted a few minutes after 10:00 a.m. over Frankfort. Lake Michigan was very foggy that morning, and also very calm. It was a clear and beautiful day over land. After getting over the water, Jim Gillett,

the pilot, decided to set the plane down on the water and taxi back to the shore and wait for the fog to clear up.

They were about twenty-miles out from shore in about 700-feet of water. The lake being calm and very foggy, it was impossible to clearly the lake. He misjudged the distance and the plane struck the water with such force it broke the pontoons. The plane floated for a few hours, so that they had time enough to rig a raft from the gas tank, or anything else that would float. The men placed Mrs. Rennie onto the raft. Having stripped down to their underwear, they tried to swim and push the raft toward shore.

They soon got exhausted and cold. Keller was the first to lose his grip and disappear under the water. Jim Gillette slipped away a few hours later. It was Friday morning before Mr. Rennie said goodbye to his wife and disappeared in the cold blue water. None were ever to be seen again, as in the depth of cold water, a body very seldom will ever surface.

Mrs. Rennie laid over the gas tank until she was sighted by the wheelsman, Art Johnson, of the Ann Arbor carferry "No. 7". She was on her way to Kewaunee, Wisconsin that Friday evening.

At 7:15 p.m., he noticed a floating object off the starboard bow. Third officer, Peter Strom, looked through the ship's glasses, stopped the boat and called Captain Alex Larson. He had a life boat lowered and Mrs. Rennie was taken off the raft and into the Ann Arbor No. 7, where she was suffering from shock and exposure, but was able to tell what had happened. She was given a warm berth and made as comfortable as possible by the hostess after being on the raft for 33-hours. Boat No. 7 went on her way to Kewaunee, then back to Frankfort where Mrs. Rennie was met by relatives and friends.

My first encounter with the Rennies was in the fall of October 1948. Pete Rennie asked me to take two men from our crew off the Evelyn S. and go to New Orleans to bring a ship there up the Mississippi to Michigan for him. We had temporarily laid up the Evelyn S. due to the low prices for chubs and the lack of trout and Whitefish at that time, due mainly to the Lamphrey eel. We took the afternoon train from Thompsonville to Chicago, then another train to New Orleans. It was hot there at Kaiser's shipyard, where

the ship laid. She was 110-feet in length, with a 24-foot beam. She had been used during the war as a crash-landing ship. The living quarters and pilot house were air conditioned. She had two large diesels for power. I took her out on Lake Pontchartrain to see how sell she performed. Then we had her fitted out for the long trip up the Mississippi River.

We were out two days when I got word from Pete Rennie that he had sold her to a party in Mexico for hauling shrimp. We were close to Norco, Louisiana, where we laid her up and made our way back home, after having had a little experience on the mighty Mississippi.

Chapter 18
Good Memories

Frankfort had its good times as well as the bad. These were some that happened during my time. There was a time during the 20s and 30s when most of the merchants lived on the west side of town. There was a feeling of superiority. But, during the 40s, or war years, that disappeared, and we became one large family. We all seemed to know each other by first name, and could walk down the street and say "Good Morning" to everyone we met. It was a wonderful feeling to be part of such a large family.

Betsie Bay and Frankfort are nestled between Elberta bluffs on the south, and Hospital bluff to the north. As you drive into town, under the marine gateway and look over the town, what a wonderful feeling it is to be back home again.

While I was the manager at Jacobson's Marina, a very unusual incident occurred to me that I would like to share with you. While working on the pump-out station on the south end of the dock on a beautiful September morning, a young sea gull lit on the dock about five feet from me. I glanced up and noticed it was standing on one foot, and the other was up by its beak. I walked over and picked the sea gull up, and found it had a fish lure with a hook through his beak, and also through the web of the right foot. I had difficulty getting the hook out of its beak, but the sea gull was very patient during the time it took me to get the fish hooks out. After releasing the sea gull onto a piling, it sat there for several minutes; long enough to say "Thank you for saving my life." For several days it kept coming back. We fed it bread until it got strength enough to fly away and be on his own.

Closing Thought

In closing, may I add that I sincerely hope everyone will enjoy reading *Memo's of Betsie Bay* as much as I have enjoyed sharing all these past memories, some happy, and others sad, with all of you … about life in "God's Country".

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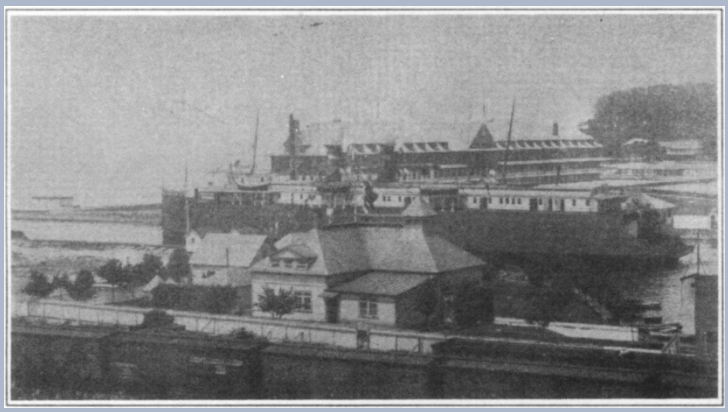

THE COVERS: *(Above) – Photo taken of Betsie Bay circa 1902 or 1903, showing the Frontenac Hotel in the background with one of the Ann Arbor Carferries in front of it.*
(Front Cover) – Sailing ships on Betsie Bay circa 1904 with the Frankfort Milling Co. on the left.