

The Wexford

(Last Sighting – Portion of a Painting by Captain Bud Robinson)

Search for the Vessel

By David Bannister



Fate and circumstances must have conspired to bring the *Wexford* to light in the summer of 2000.

In August of that year, Don Chalmers, a GBYC club member/retired Ford Talbotville line supervisor, spent quite a lot of time fishing out of Grand Bend on his 26' sailing Folk Boat, *Odysseus*. Don's boat is outfitted with GPS (the latest satellite navigation technology) and a fish finder to help him locate the ideal fishing grounds and the right depth for his downrigger.

As it happens, Don is also a diver and a long time friend of Bob Carey, who headed up the Goderich *Wexford* expedition. Through Bob, Don knew about the search for her and some of the history.

Early on the morning of August 15, 2000, Don was out on Lake Huron about 8 1/2 miles west north-west of Grand Bend, fish finder on, downrigger out at about 65' depth, slowly steaming along looking for salmon. The depth sounder showed 75' of smooth, flat bottom, typical for the area. Suddenly the fish finder showed a depth

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CPS



Please send me an e-mail if you would like to have a trained safety officer from the Goderich squadron of the Canadian Power & Sail Squadron check and validate the safety equipment on member's boats...it's a free, courtesy service offered by CPS. They generously will send as many officers as are necessary.

**Next Issue: Contributions
Deadline June 25, 2008**

[click to send by e-mail](#)

reduction to about 60', continuing for some distance, then back to 75'. Curious, Don backed *Odysseus* over the object and accidentally caught his fishing gear on it.

After retrieving his line, and making several passes over the site, Don determined that the object was at least 200' long, fairly wide, and really interesting. He thought of the *Wexford*. It looked like this could be a shipwreck. He might have caught "The Big One."

Don marked the location on his GPS for future reference and returned to shore. Later, he asked a long time fishing buddy and co-worker, Ron Haynes to come out to the site with him for a second opinion. Ron, also a diver, was uncertain about the underwater formation, but the two agreed to dive on the site as soon as calm conditions prevailed and they could get back out.

The day before Don and Ron were to go, August 25 when conditions were right for the dive, Don called Bob Carey and said, "I think I know where the *Wexford* is. "We're checking it out tomorrow. Do you want to come?"

Bob knew it wasn't the *Wexford*. It was common knowledge the ship was somewhere off the coast between Goderich and Bayfield. But a week's worth of work with a U.S. expert and side-scanning sonar had so far been a frustrating exercise, so why not? He agreed to come along and brought one of his *Wexford* expedition team members along with him.

As the dive team descended over the site, a ship which could only be the *Wexford* emerged out of the clear waters, 60' below. Its distinctive ocean-going profile, with the remnants of its centre deckhouse still evident, was like a signature for the ship, calling out for recognition at long last.

The divers were ecstatic, and although they were keen to view the wreck in its entirety, they couldn't wait to get the news to the topside world.

They headed back to shore, preparing for a *Wexford* champagne party in Goderich and notification of all proper authorities.

Notify the media!

After 87 years of waiting in silence, the *Wexford* was found. It was sitting upright in 75' of water, beautifully preserved.



A lifeboat davit still stands upright on her port side, with a block (pulley) delicately suspended from it. The lifeboat was missing, possibly launched in the dying moments of the packet freighter's 30-year existence. Her anchors are stowed in the hawse-pipes on her bow, ready for deployment to keep her off a lee shore, if needed. Her two bow windlasses still hold the anchor chain at ready, but are sinking under their own weight into the stem of the ship. The hold, likely full of grain as well as water when the ship went down, now holds only water.

Divers can swim the full length of two decks, thanks to the absence of bulkheads, which might have saved the *Wexford*, or merely prolonged her death.



Zebra mussels cover every exterior surface of the ship, but none are evident inside the holds. These crustaceans, foreign to the Great Lakes, cling to every man-made surface near them. Yet even as they threaten underwater structures, the mussels preserve them and provide clarity to the water that is beautiful as well as useful for underwater exploration.

At 75', the *Wexford* is a perfect depth for recreational diving. When conditions are clear,

there is a beautiful juxtaposition of colour, from the brilliant aqua blue-green of Lake Huron's water, to the gold-rust colours of the wreck's surviving surfaces.

The Present

By any measure, the *Wexford* is a beautiful wreck, or "marine heritage site," in the currently fashionable vernacular. It is clearly owned by The Ontario Government, Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, who have proved their claim to wrecks within Canadian/Ontario territorial waters through high-profile international court cases, most notably with the U.S. steamer "Atlantic" in Ontario's Lake Erie waters.

Peter Engelbert, The Ministry's Marine Heritage Archaeologist, has issued a license to the Goderich group to survey, map and catalogue the site. Until this is completed, and mooring buoys are installed at the site to prevent damage from anchors, he has requested that no diving tourism development take place. Peter has stated that the province has limited ability to prevent diving on the *Wexford*, and would expect divers to voluntarily practice good conservation. (It is illegal to tamper with the wreck or to remove artifacts.)

(Since this article was prepared, a formal survey of the wreck under the supervision and guidance of Peter Englebert has been completed. The site is now permanently marked with a large mooring buoy, provided in co-operation with the Canadian Coast Guard--who monitors the site while in the area. Low impact diving education has been encouraged to ensure that all sport recreation and heritage diving activity will not harm the wreck site in any way. As Don Chalmers, the wreck discoverer, has said many times, "Take only pictures; leave only bubbles!")

Credits: Click for original story that was copied with minor editorial changes.

Click for Survey Observations.

Upcoming Events:



Spring Series
#1
Sunday, June 1

Spring Series
#2
Sunday, June 8



Spring Series
#3
Sunday, June 15



Pig Roast
Saturday, June 28
Social 5:00 pm
Dinner 5:30 pm

Grand Bend 30
Saturday, June 21



Canada Day Party
Saturday, June 28



BOOM Sailing School

Acronym: BOOM... "Best-ever Ontario Optimist Mobile"

Tom Quigley is accepting applications for Grand Bend Yacht Club's Mobile Sailing School that takes place during the week of August 11-18 for children aged 8-14. The cost per child for the week, \$250, GST Exempt.



Sailing School Watercolour by David Bannister

To date, Tom has received fourteen applications. Please e-mail Tom if you desire more information about the school.

Bulletin Board



Guest and occasional member parking permits are available on pegs on the stairway landing in the clubhouse. The \$3.00 donation for each evening is an honour system. Please put your contribution in the slotted box provided and remember to return your permit.

David Bannister agreed to attend a Lambton Shores Council meeting in order to obtain more parking permits for the club. David and the Editor offered a limited amount of parking for club members if the number of permits are insufficient.

The London Power & Sail Squadron, division of CPS, gave a special invitation for GBYC members to attend a Pig Roast, Tuesday, June 17 at HMCS Prevost on Beecher Street, extra guests are welcome. \$20/person. Click to email Al Sargent or call 519-433-1736. The event starts at 6:00 p.m.



For Sale

Catalina 30 ... asking price (\$30,500 or so I've been told.) Please confirm with the seller: (USA-owned boat needs landing in the United States before bringing into Canada.) Bill Foy, inquiry phone # (810) 233-5429



Club Burgees \$25.00



Race Results

Preliminary Corrected Finishing Position for the Port Franks Race

Div I:	1) Summer Heat	PHRF126	14:00:25
	2) Respite	PHRF135	14:43:16
	3) Nautilus	PHRF 120?	14:40:55
Div II	Atacuaria	PHRF 180	15:22:35
Div III	Last Lady	PHRF 186	16:25:15
Div IV	Oasis	PHRF 231	DNF
	Zig Zag	PHRF ?	DNF
	Nessie	PHRF ?	16:5 1:01



The Race Committee issued a warning that penalties on boats, with non-renewed PHRF ratings (PHRF ?), commence June 15.

Brunch Pictures

as submitted by George Dutka

No one took a head count, but at one point people lined up from the clubhouse door almost to the bottom of the ramp. One hundred is not out-of-the ballpark. Members and guests enjoyed a wide variety of scrumptious food that Deb Hughes provided for the Commodore's Brunch on May 17th. The weather Gods sent sun for the mid-day Saturday function including the afternoon sail past, but delivered rain and cold, heavy airs for GBYC's Victoria Day Regatta events scheduled Sunday and Monday. The two days of races were postponed.



Clubhouse with flag-dressed boats



Randy Brown and Dale Hughes serving coffee laced with choices of two different liqueurs, cane sugar, whipped cream, or a pint of Guinness stout.

Pic of Deb on the terrace, dressed in her nautical, navy apron, before starting to serve the throngs of members and guests.



Smorgasbord Scrup-del-i-cious food... Nick Racette of Flushing, Mi, (Bill & Jane Foy's grandson) and Liam Quigley pictured adjacent to the hanging photographs.



Another shot of member's dressed boats.

Commodore's Message

May 2008



The Commodore's Brunch was held Saturday May 17th. The Weather God's were shining on us--we had a glorious day for joining family and friends together in food and fellowship to kick off the start of our boating season. Thanks to everyone who helped out

We have a tradition in our family of assigning symbols to our names. I was touched when our daughter assigned the Celtic symbol of a Triskele to our Grandson Lochlan. Its meaning is that of a special place where the air meets the land and the sea.

The Grand Bend Yacht Club, I believe, also represents such a place--where we gather together on land after being on the water, wind in our faces, taking part in the sport of boating.

The Sail Past went off without a hitch. It was very special for us as we had our Granddaughter Avalon on the water with us for the first time. It was great to see the boats sailing by, the water fights were a hoot, and we all had a good time. Thank you again for your participation.

For photos of the Commodore's Brunch--click to go to Flickr. Members were sent an e-mail invitation.

We held our first race of the season with the Port Franks race Saturday May 24th. We had boats for all four divisions and are looking forward to increasing the number of boats participating. The Spring Regatta the week before was cancelled due to inclement weather.

For those who helped out on workday--your contributions were much appreciated!

On another note--we are looking at safety at the Yacht Club this year and Randy Brown has volunteered to instruct us in some man overboard drills. I'm sure we have all wondered how we would handle such a situation, and actually having some experience with it will help us far better than any textbook description. If you could get back to us if you are interested in participating, that would be great. We will most likely tie it to a social event like a barbeque etc. We will get back to you with potential dates.

Sylvia Gozzard is attempting to set up a date for free Courtesy Safety Checks from the Power and Sail Squadron. Please let her know if you are interested. A Boating Safety Specialist will visit your boat and review with you your safety equipment. There are no penalties for missing or improper equipment and they are happy to provide advice on boating safety issues and skills for you.

We are also looking to make the Yacht Club safer and will be looking at installing a fire extinguisher and first aid station in the middle washroom.

Wishing you lots of fun and safe boating this year!

Deb Hughes
GBYC Commodore 2008



2008 GBYC Sail Past

Grand Bend News

Tourists vs. Residents vs. Businesses

EDA Collaborative Inc. presented its draft community plans for Lambton Shores at three separate meetings May 6-8, with some praising and others panning the progress.

The May 8th meeting, held in Grand Bend, involved discussion about how best to design sidewalks, roads, parking, bridges, trails and street fixtures. Few questioned the designs, which aimed to create a “sustainable countryside lifestyle,” with Grand Bend billed as an “attractive residential community,” “lakeside destination,” and site for “regional tourism.”

The following recommendations from EDA’s were considered: two pedestrian bridges over the river connecting the River Road area to the main core; more pedestrian crosswalks over Highway 21; a road connecting the Legion parking lot to Main Street East and a centre median on Main Street between Highway 21 and the health centre; shrinking Main Street to three lanes with parking on the south side only; redeveloping the former casino site with underground parking, retail on the main floor and residential on the second; and renewed intersection with paving stones and an overhead entrance welcome sign.

Grand Bend resident Bob Sharen is not impressed, noting businesses are being left out of the equation. “Why spend money fixing the physical appearance of the street when it’s the physical appearance of the buildings on the street that’s most of the problem?”

Ward 1 councillor, John Dehondt, says “the market must drive change.”

“Fifty years ago there was a casino. Then (Grand Bend) became more youth oriented. With the aging of our population, there will be stores that cater to that clientele.”

Sharen thinks the change needs to be driven by town council. “Homes pay less tax but get more services. Why not address the issue of the extremely high commercial taxes and the ability to have a sustainable business when you’re paying that kind of money?”

Dehondt says giving the community a facelift is the first step, not the last.

“We can fix and change the things we can control. Step one is to develop a master plan. I think you’ll see a lot of it redeveloped



Artistic rendering of the two overhead bridges.

(Article copied from The Strip)



Proposed overhead opening bridge

Draft plan 2020-2030 made up by EDA Collaborative Inc. (Editor notes: Port Frank’s businesses strongly resisted and highly doubt EDA’s plans becoming reality--an opening bridge incurs truckloads of building expense for the village.)

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Grand Bend Burger Fest Weekend begins on Friday, June 13th and runs through Sunday, June 15th until 6:00 p.m. Included among the Village's festivities is a parachute jump scheduled on the main beach at 3:00 pm on Sunday. Upload the pdf brochure.

FireWorks are scheduled for Canada Day; the Chamber of Commerce as well as the radio station 104.9 have sponsored the event. Enter the "Best seats in the house" contest at 104.9 at the Beach. Watch for upcoming dates and details.

Starlite Drive In:

June 6 Dreamworks Animation *Kung Fu Panda*; **June 20** *Get Smart*; **June 27** Walt Disney Pictures and PIXAR presents *Wall*e*.

Huron County Playhouse ticket information: Tues., June 3, *My Fair Lady*;--Sat., June 21; Tues., June 24-Sat., July 12, *Sorry...I'm Canadian*.

For sail:

A Six-week Vacation

Written by Toronto Star reporter: Gary Butler, May 24, 2008
(Submitted by George Dutka)

Six weeks in the sun, on the sea. What's the catch? Peace of mind—a whole lot of it.

But you wonder, can you afford it? Long careers in the rat race have convinced many of us, erroneously, that we can't afford the time and we can't afford to vacation, period. But a number of experts would beg to differ—and you should, too.



Making time for a vacation is essential for personal well-being. Says Scott Schieman, a sociology professor at the University of Toronto, "some people can't afford not to take a vacation." He cites obvious mental-health benefits—stress reduction, general relaxation—which offer a subset of pluses: the ability to distance oneself from the hurricane of daily living and "put things back into perspective."

Rediscovering the pleasure of stress-free living is more difficult today than it has ever been before. "In some workplace cultures, there is pressure to work longer, harder, and all the time," says Schieman—emailing from, yes, his vacation.

This is one reason that more careerists take longer vacations. Two weeks make a decent start, but it's harder to let go of work. Six weeks is ample to "slow down to enjoy life," while allowing us to return to our jobs "having actually missed our routines."

There are, of course, innumerable ways to fill those six weeks. Many Canadians look towards international travel, notably destinations a good half-the-world away, say, Thailand and Egypt—renowned for affordability for the budget-conscious—and Japan, Australia and Hawaii for those whose bank accounts can tolerate extravagance. Regardless, these destinations are of the kind that takes a physical toll on travellers getting from points A to B, with days lost at either end simply by adjusting to climate and temporal shifts.

Cari Gray is a marketing manager with Butterfield & Robinson, the Toronto-based company that promotes active, luxurious international travel. The B&R motto perfectly embodies the idea of the six-week vacation: “Slow down and see the world.” Gray says that perhaps B&R’s most luxurious getaway is its 10-day, all-inclusive sailing trip in October along the Turquoise Coast. It starts in Istanbul, takes in more than a dozen ports of call and includes significant (but pleasurable) hiking components. Interestingly, this trip tends to be increasingly more boomer-populated. To wit: this year, for the first time ever, the luxury vacation is almost sold out as of mid-spring.

Actually, many career professionals, boomers in particular, are turning to sailing as not just a vacation getaway but also a general hobby. This trend perhaps stems from a number of convenience factors: transportation (the boat or ship can be its own starting point and terminus), accommodation (it can also become your living quarters) and a kind of Zen state achievable only once you’re adrift. Escaping the land, in a way, is tantamount to escaping the stress-full ‘real world.’

It’s what avid sailor Jay Hansen calls “purity of detachment.”

Hansen, a Canadian based in Milford, Conn., is the executive vice-president of North Sails, a manufacturer of high-end sails. He is a staunch proponent of sailing “for rest and relaxation, but at the same time, for incredible invigoration.”

Hansen is also eager to dispel two “myths about the sport—that it’s elitist and that it’s expensive—because that simply does not have to be the case.” In other words, it certainly has been the case, and will continue to be. There’s a reason that a single main sail for a small boat in the America’s Cup competition tends to cost the better part of \$75,000 (CAN).

But as Hansen points out, “these days, a nice used sailboat can be purchased for the price of an inexpensive new car.” Translation: either side of \$15,000 will float your boat; if you can afford a second car, then basically you can afford a small sailboat. The boat will last much longer, Hansen promises: “fibreglass simply does not wear out.”

Mind you, a pivotal component of personal sailing budgets involves two problems: harbouring and the price of sails themselves. Many GTA cottage-country enthusiasts will have the first problem solved by virtue of their real-estate situation. As for the second, the Mississauga office of Hansen’s company has made significant strides in terms of producing affordable high-quality sails. North Sails’ greatest breakthrough came last July, when its unique-to-Canada 3Dr machine became operational.

Resembling a G-force test chamber for astronauts, the 3Dr machine is, visually, pure fun and, practically, a giant loom that can operate non-stop. It fabricates sails of varying sizes and “very favourable comparison to anything that flies in the America’s Cup,” says Hansen, who also proudly cites an average price of less than \$3,000.

And Hansen knows his America’s Cup. For the past four years, his company’s sails have been chosen to outfit the race competitors almost 100 per cent. In 2007, of the 11 participating syndicates, only one did not use a North Sails product.

They placed last.
[Click for article source](#)

Videos and Pics

Boating bloopers!

Christening gone wrong:

Oopsy...ship that had a smoke stack and the bridge operator who was drunk and lowered the bridge after the ship received clearance to go under it.

Amazing Tugboat meets bridge...different ending than the Dutch boat that lost its stack.

Boat that folds to 4" flat from Port-A-Boat...comes in 8'10 & 12' lengths. Hmm, fascinating-looking boat—wouldn't take up hardly any room on the deck. Ontario Portable Boats, Mitchell, ON carries them, but very pricey \$1,899.00 new plus tax. I did see one advertisement in BC for \$900 that was three years old. Nice and sturdy. Ten-year warranty—never needs painting and very light-weight! I'm impressed.

Enormous Offshore Wind Farms

Shipwrecks in Mauritania, (part of Sahara Desert)

Photoshop Theme

"Wrong Turn"



"Captain, we have a serious navigation problem!"



"Drat...should have turned to starboard rather than port!"



"Rock on dude, this is so much funnn ..."



"Oh, oh!"

Lots more photoshop themes that you might be interested in viewing...most are hilarious.

The Larder



Greek Souvlaki and Watermelon Salad

(Serves 6 • Prep time: 10 minutes
Total Time: 30 minutes)

Ingredients:

- Box of Extra Lean Pork Souvlaki (6 skewers)
- 1 cup Citrus Honey Poppysseed Vinaigrette
- 1/2 small seedless watermelon
- 1 package (312 g) Mixed Baby Greens
- 5 oz (150 g) Greek Feta cheese, crumbled into chunks (about 3/4 cup/175mL)
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) pine nuts, toasted
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tub (227 g) Compliments Tzatziki Yogurt & Cucumber Dip



- Preheat BBQ, lightly oil and grill souvlaki according to package directions, brushing with 1/4 cup (60 mL) vinaigrette during last few minutes of cooking to glaze and caramelize slightly.
- Cut watermelon into cubes; measure 5 cups (1.25 L).
- Spread mixed greens over large platter. Scatter watermelon, feta cheese and pine nuts over greens. Drizzle with remaining 3/4 cup (175 mL) of vinaigrette. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Top with souvlaki. Serve with tzatziki for dipping.

The free, *Inspired by Compliments* booklet, containing this recipe is available at the LCBO



Flag Cake

(Serves 12 • Prep Time: 15 minutes, Total Time: 2 h 15 minutes)

LINE bottom of 13 x 9 inch baking pan with 1 pkg. (298g) sliced pound cake.

DISSOLVE 2 pkg. (85 g each) Jell-O Strawberry Jelly Powder in 2 cups boiling water; add 3 cups ice cubes and stir until slightly thickened about 3 to 5 minutes. Remove any unmelted ice cubes. Stir in 2 cups crushed or sliced strawberries. Spread over cake slices. Chill 10 minutes.

SPREAD 2 cups of thawed Cool Whip Whipped Topping on top of jelly mixture. Chill for 2 hours. Garnish with additional strawberries arranged to resemble the Canadian Flag.

Tip: You can also quick-set the jelly with frozen fruit. Just dissolve jelly powder in 2 cups of boiling water then stir in 2 cups frozen fruit and 1 cup ice cubes.

A Place in the Mind

By Sylvia Gozzard

The way my mind recalls this picture is with dark, navy-blue rollers with white caps on the Atlantic and serene, soft, blue-green, turquoise on the Caribbean side. It is indelibly etched for instant retrieval in my mind's eye.



Its origin was standing on the Glass Window Bridge, (Eleuthera Island, Bahamas) which was one-car wide, at the approximate centre of that picture.

Images are masters against the confines of verbal/written language. I found it fascinating that my imagination added details to the 'reality' of finding that picture a couple of days ago. It caused me to retouch it somewhat to try to capture what it saw. My feeble efforts were rejected.

Let me take you by the hand and join me on my bridge.

Close your eyes and imagine:

On the left, an endless stream of dark, navy-blue rollers with exploding white caps as far as the eye sees. Accompanying it is the sound of fury. Cymbals clash, and the bass drum beats out an ominous array of sounds. The salt spray stings my cheeks and body, and waters my eyes and hair. It tastes salty and is accompanied with an odor of seaweed, fish, and plant life. It imparts the feeling of excitement—of mountains to conquer and boundless skies with no known end.

On the right, a sea of tranquility, it's a soft green-blue turquoise. It laps gently at the shore and conveys a type of pickling flavour by some mysterious force. The scene fills my nostrils with images of playful seahorses and laughing dolphins. The seashells lay in abundance to be collected or just envied for their uniqueness and range of how many there are—each perfect in its symmetry. The palms with their greenery, cast shade on the almost blinding white sands—they invite me to come and sit under them. All is peaceful and soothing for my soul.

We are one with these two seas, separated only by a sliver of man's engineering. The ground beneath is my foundation—it is my centering point.

That picture has over the years given me a place to go to gather myself and to know what forces are within and which come from outside.

The mind is a marvellous thing—it gives up so few of its secrets that can be shared with another human being. The connection that artists try to evoke for us is done through great books, poetry, music, painting, writing, and a myriad of other art forms. An artist would perhaps use curves and circles with soft tints for the Caribbean. Perhaps vertical and horizontal lines using rich darks for the Atlantic?

It is quite possible my mind depicts it that way and doesn't need words at all. The challenge for visual artists and writers is to somehow transfer those images unto canvas and written language. Skilled artisans are fortunate in having the tools and more admirable if they trained themselves to convey it.

I hope you find your bridge or have enjoyed my vain attempt to share mine with you.

Greetings



Have a Great



Canada Day

