

## 2nd Quarter 2019 Newsletter



## ICEBREAKER MACKINAW MARITIME MUSEUM

# USCGC MACKINAW WAGB 83

*"WE MOVE SHIPS WHEN NO ONE ELSE CAN"*

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### We're on the Web!

[www.themackinaw.org](http://www.themackinaw.org)

### IMMM Board of Directors

- William Shepler, President
- R.J. Fisher, Vice President
- Randy Powers, Treasurer
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- Chuck Scott, Director
- Tom Spaude, Director
- Bill Marvin, Director
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**SEMPER PARATUS**  
**SEMPER PARATUS**

## From the Desk of the Executive Director

### Welcome Spring!



Executive  
Director  
Lisa Pallagi

The calendar may say that Spring is here, but we still have so much snow. It has been a long winter, and we are all anxious to see green grass and open water!

It is a busy time as we are getting ready for our May 17<sup>th</sup> opening. I'm excited to unveil both new retail items and a heat/AC unit in the Ship's Store. Our big spring project is a lighting retro-fit project where we are replacing old, inefficient fluorescent bulbs with new, efficient LED bulbs. We are thrilled to open the 2019 season with a newly painted, bright shiny ship! If you have yet to see her sparkle, this is a great year to visit. We'll be adding a few new staff members and, hopefully, many more volunteers (hint, hint).

I look forward to welcoming all of you aboard this summer!

Semper Paratus! —Lisa

## A Look Back: Berthing Aboard WAGB-83

### Excerpts from "Icebreaker Mackinaw"

By Sandy Planisek

All enlisted personnel sleep below the main deck where there is no natural light. Fluorescent lights keep the halls and rooms well lit, but at night the lighting is reduced with the use of lights covered with powder blue shields. After your eyes adjust, these lights are surprisingly similar to morning sunshine.

Since crewmembers serve all types of shifts, people are coming and going at all hours and someone is sleeping almost all of the time. Talking is not allowed in berthing areas, and everyone is careful to be as quiet as possible.



Storage under the bed keeps things from flying about during heavy seas. These top bunks are about shoulder high, and there is no step for getting up. It takes practice to land in the upper bunk. Each bunk has a blue privacy curtain.

The bunks are made of steel plate and are two high. Evidently, in earlier and more crowded times, the bunks were canvas and three high. Even with the current configuration, you cannot sit up in bed.

The mattresses are thin but surprisingly comfortable. It turns out the sleeping surface is the top of an 8-inch high box. Most of this box is accessed by lifting the hinged sleeping surface. There is a prop that holds it up while you store or retrieve your stuff. In the center outside edge is a small drawer that you can open or close while lying in bed. Also, the bunk is not against the wall so things pushed against the wall fall down on your lower bunkmate. (Cont.. on page 6)

## ICEBREAKER MACKINAW MUSEUM SHIP

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## OUR MISSION STATEMENT



*"The Icebreaker Mackinaw Maritime Museum will collect, preserve, protect and interpret the rich maritime and marine history of the Straits of Mackinac and the Great Lakes. The Museum will feature the USCGC Mackinaw WAGB-83 and the important historical and present day contributions of the US Coast Guard on the Great Lakes. The Museum will present the unique maritime history, economy and ecology of the Straits of Mackinac, the Great Lakes and the State of Michigan through engaging and entertaining educational programming and interpretive exhibits."*

## OPERATION TACONITE—The 2019 Spring Breakout

*Excerpts from the report by the USCG Atlantic Area  
Department of Homeland Security*



Breaking out the ore dock at  
Two Harbors, MN

*Photo Credit:  
MKC Nicholas Mersch,  
USCGC Mackinaw (WLBB-30)*

The Coast Guard is responsible for conducting icebreaking operations to assist commercial vessel traffic in the connecting waterways of the United States. These include the connecting waters of the Great Lakes. Operation Taconite is the largest of these operations and is the largest domestic ice-breaking operation in the U.S. Shipping offers the only effective means of transporting the vast amounts of iron ore from the mines at the Head of the Lakes needed to meet the demands of steel mills in Lake Erie and Lake Michigan. Operation Taconite is primarily responsible for ensuring the successful transport of this cargo amid the harsh winter conditions of the northern Great Lakes.

The Coast Guard provides icebreaking assistance in U.S. waters where commercial ice-breaking resources are either unavailable or incapable of handling the difficult ice conditions. Under CAN/US agreement, Operation Taconite may also provide icebreaking in Canadian waters such as Georgian Bay or the port of Thunder Bay, Ontario.

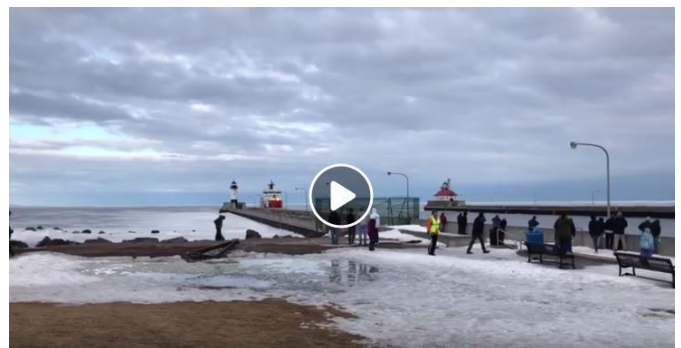
Critical waterways in Operation Taconite's area of responsibility include the Straits of Mackinac, Whitefish Bay, and the St. Marys River. Extreme weather conditions (cold, snow, and fog), narrow channels, relatively shallow waters, the Locks, and the large number of vessels transiting the St. Marys River make it a particularly challenging icebreaking environment. (Continued on page 5)



Locking Through: Opening the St. Marys River  
for the 2019 shipping season as seen from the  
deck of the USCGC Mackinaw (WLBB-30).

*Photo Credit: MKC Nicholas Mersch*

USCGC Mackinaw (WLBB-30) Opening Duluth Harbor  
*Video Credit: Jane Herrick, Duluth, MN*





## Join Us!

Over the past 13 years we have proven that the museum is an exciting and viable attraction for Mackinaw City and the area. Annually, we host over 20,000 tour guests. Our interactive Educational Tour Program has taught over 800 children knot-tying, safety aboard, communications and the history of the ship. And our Overnight Encampment Program allows the unique experience of sleeping aboard an actual USCG Icebreaker.

We need the support of those of you who, as do we, love the *Mackinaw*, to enable us to continue moving “full speed ahead” with these and other programs. Our membership program gives you an easy way to contribute to the museum and also enjoy some great perks. The levels of support and their associated benefits are listed below.

Our Business Sponsorship program gives you an easy way to contribute to the museum and also promote your business. For your \$100 tax-deductible donation, you will receive listing on our website’s “Sponsor” page, in our quarterly newsletters and aboard the ship. We will provide you with passes for 4 people to watch the 4th of July Fireworks aboard the ship, and your employees are always welcome to tour, free of charge.

### “Friends of the Mackinaw” Support Program Application

Annual Membership Level:

- ☐ \$50.00 Petty Officer   
 ☐ \$100.00 Chief Petty Officer   
 ☐ \$250.00 Chief Warrant Officer   
 ☐ \$500.00 Ensign  
☐ \$100.00 Business Sponsor   
☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ I would like to Volunteer (please contact me)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send to:  
IMMM  
PO Box 39  
Mackinaw City, MI 49701

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVU \_\_\_\_\_

We accept Visa, MasterCard & Discover

IMMM is a Non-Profit 501 (C) 3 Organization

2nd Quarter 2019

### IMMM Levels of Support and Benefits for “Friends of the Mackinaw”

Level	Amount	Inaugural Gift*	Admission Benefits
Petty Officer	\$ 50.00		Unlimited for member + 1 guest, per visit
Chief Petty Officer	\$ 100.00	Lapel Pin or Key Chain	Unlimited for member + 2 guests, per visit
Chief Warrant Officer	\$ 250.00	Icebreaker Mackinaw DVD	Unlimited for member + 3 guests, per visit
Ensign	\$ 500.00	Icebreaker Mackinaw Book	Unlimited for member + 4 guests, per visit

- Inaugural Gift will be presented for first-year membership ONLY unless level of support is increased.
- Cardholders will receive, in addition to the above listed benefits: a 10% discount on Ship’s Store retail items, e-mail receipt of our newsletter and notices of special events and invitation to watch 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks aboard the ship.

\*An equal value Inaugural Gift may be substituted due to availability.

## Of Course, Donations Are Always Welcome!

We have an endowment fund through the Straits Area Community Foundation! [www.cfnem.org/sacf/](http://www.cfnem.org/sacf/)  
OR you can donate directly through our website: <https://www.themackinaw.org/product/donate/>

Your donation is tax-deductible.



## PLEASE PATRONIZE OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS

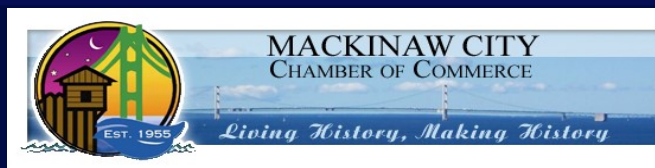
Alice's Kandy & Korn, Mackinaw City  
Citizens National Bank, Cheboygan  
Keyhole Bar & Grill, Mackinaw City  
Lamplighter Motel, Mackinaw City  
Mackinaw Mill Creek Camping, Mackinaw City  
Seaway Painting, Livonia  
Paws Fur Fun, Mackinaw City  
First Community Bank, Cheboygan  
East Lake Resort, Fibre  
Mackinaw City KOA, Mackinaw City  
Mitchell Graphics, Petoskey  
Wheeler Chevrolet-Buick, Cheboygan  
Audie's Restaurant, Mackinaw City  
Mama Mia's Pizza, Mackinaw City  
Calcite Credit Union, Cheboygan  
Seasons of Mackinaw, Mackinaw City  
Mackinaw Bakery, Mackinaw City  
Mark Mercer, D.D.S., St. Ignace  
Habitec Security, Charlevoix  
Plaunt Transportation, Cheboygan

Kilwin's Quality Chocolates & Confections, Petoskey  
Pizza Palace, Mackinaw City  
Teysen's Gift Shop, Mackinaw City  
Spray's Landscape Nursery & Garden Center, Cheboygan  
Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry, Mackinaw City  
Pancake Chef Restaurant, Mackinaw City  
Kokosing Industrial | Durocher Marine Div., Cheboygan  
Darrow Brothers Excavating, Mackinaw City  
Odawa Casino, Petoskey  
Tahquamenon Boat Service | Toonerville Trolley, Newberry  
Enchanted Knights, Mackinaw City  
Avery Color Studios, Gwinn  
Alexander's Plumbing and Heating, Carp Lake  
Know Your Ships, Ann Arbor  
Big Stone Bay Fishery, Mackinaw City  
Hunt's Mackinaw Pastie & Cookie Co., Mackinaw City  
Candy Corner | Windjammer Gifts, Mackinaw City  
Michigan Outdoor Advertising, Petoskey  
Dr. Roger Benter, Chiropractor

## BECOME A BUSINESS SPONSOR. JOIN TODAY!

**CALL FOR MORE INFO**  
(231) 436-9825

*Icebreaker Mackinaw Museum Ship is proud to partner with these wonderful Straits area business community organizations and their members!*



## JOIN OUR TEAM!

We still have a few staff/volunteer openings for the 2019 season, and one just might be perfect for you or someone that you know! The positions include docents/tour guides, ticket sellers and Ship's Store retail clerks.

Our season runs from mid-May until mid-October. We offer extremely flexible scheduling, both part and full-time positions, competitive wages, Ship's Store discounts, free admission for your family and much more!

Being a part of our crew is truly fun and rewarding! For more information please contact Lisa Pallagi at:  
[lisa@themackinaw.org](mailto:lisa@themackinaw.org).



## OPERATION TACONITE—2019 SPRING BBREAKOUT (Continued from page 2)



Aboard WLBB-30 at the Soo Locks  
Photo Credit: Lisa Pallagi

Sector Sault Sainte Marie usually has two icebreaking resources under their operational control: the 140' icebreaking tugs (WTGB's) CGC KATMAI BAY and CGC BISCAYNE BAY. However, ice conditions frequently require the marshalling of additional assets. As other Coast Guard resources (e.g., CGC MACKINAW, CGCs ALDER, HOLLYHOCK, and CGC MOBILE BAY along with other WTGB's) become necessary, Sector Sault requests them from Coast Guard Sector Detroit or the District Office (dpw-2) in Cleveland. We may also request Canadian icebreaker assistance through the Canadian Coast Guard. Along with the Canadian Coast Guard, key external relationships include the Army Corps of Engineers at the Sault Locks (for matters concerning vessel traffic management and river channel maintenance), and the large international consortium of Great Lakes ship operators (generally represented by the Lake Carriers' Association and the Canadian Ship-owners Association).

Based upon the current MOA the Soo Locks open on 25 March. Due to the significant area of icebreaking responsibility (all four critical waterways typically require dedicated icebreaker support), this is our busiest time of the icebreaking season. We typically employ at least five cutters during Spring Breakout: 1-2 WTGB's in the Straits of Mackinac, 1-2 WTGB's in the Lower St. Mary's River (below the locks) CGC Mackinaw in the Upper St. Mary's River and Whitefish Bay. Additionally, Canadian icebreaker assistance is common during this phase. Although they do not work directly "for" Operation Taconite, routine communication with the Canadian Operations Center ensures the effective coordination of operations and logistics.

Approximately 10 days prior to the opening, the Coast Guard prepares the tracks in the St. Mary's River. 2-4 days prior to opening, CGC MACKINAW locks through to the upper St. Mary's River and Whitefish Bay/Lake Superior to prepare tracks. Anticipating the first harbor transits of the season, CGC ALDER also begins breaking out Duluth/Superior harbor before the locks open. Soon after the Locks open (prior to the first downbound transit) we break open West Neebish Channel. This breaks the ice bridge between Neebish Island and the mainland thus requiring the islanders to use a ferry. It is necessary to break the ice bridge because the West Neebish Channel is safer for downbound transits of heavily laden vessels and has a greater navigable depth allowing more cargo to be carried.

Ice conditions in the St. Mary's River and Whitefish Bay vary widely. In Whitefish Bay it is not uncommon to have ice 5 feet thick while at the same time in several places on the river there is open water due to the current.



USCGC Mackinaw (WLBB-30) breaking ice near Whitefish Point, MI.

Video Credit: Bruce Beeker on the Mesabi Miner



Aboard WLBB-30  
Photo Credit: Lisa Pallagi

An important aspect of spring ice-breaking operations is "ice management." We try to influence the flow of ice to facilitate navigation. In some areas, it is beneficial to maintain "ice dams" to hold back ice flow. In other areas such as the lower river, we try to "flush" the ice out into Lake Huron. The success of this type of work is highly dependent on wind and current conditions. However as the weather warms up, the ice begins to deteriorate. This presents potentially dangerous situations in Whitefish Bay and the Straits of Mackinac.

When the wind picks up, large plates of ice (sometimes miles across) can break off and start moving. These plates are dangerous both to commercial shipping and icebreakers. If a vessel becomes beset in a moving plate, we may have very little time to free the vessel before the plate takes the vessel aground. Weather and winds have an important influence on the success of icebreaking efforts and determine how long the icebreaking season lasts. As the ice diminishes, we begin releasing icebreakers. When the ice no longer poses a threat to navigation, Operation Taconite is secured.

ICEBREAKER MACKINAW MUSEUM SHIP  
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MACKINAW CITY, MI 49701



## A Look Back: Berthing Aboard WAGB-83 (Continued from Page 1)

Storage per person also includes one hanging locker where your dress uniform can be stored. There are a few hooks around the room, and boots, shoes, etc. are tucked under the bed. The beds can be stowed during rough seas by tilting them up and hooking them against the ceiling.

The room certainly needed ventilation since the thermometer read 82 degrees most of the time while I was there. This made the top bunks very uncomfortable and not a place for claustrophobics. The nice thing is, however, the floor is nice and warm, like walking on the beach. To cool off, you can put your hand on a fastener in the wall. It connects directly to the hull and was refreshingly cold during icebreaking season.

I had a chance to see into one of the higher ranked enlisted men's spaces and saw some personalization. One bunk, for instance, had a tiny television. People had books and some had music earphones. The berthing areas were uncomfortable enough to be used exclusively for sleeping.

All of the bathrooms (called heads) are at the forward end of the space. You have to step through 2 hatches, around a stairwell and past a storage area to find the bathrooms. They're decorated in stainless steel and vinyl. Efficiency outweighs beauty.

### Interested in "Roughing It"?

Talk to us about the "Sleep Aboard" opportunities available to Scout troops or other civic organizations. For more information, contact:

[Lisa@themackinaw.org](mailto:Lisa@themackinaw.org)



The toilet doors are locked in rough seas. The red sign over the sink says, "Your mother does not work here. Clean up after yourself."

