

[Page 32 - A Visit with Capt. George Dolomont](#)ISSUE : [Issue 15](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1976/12/1

So we went up with this fellow, one of the owners. She was getting bad* But the only thing I was worrying about, the god- darned wind was going down, see. And I ' was praying it would blow up. So I said to the fellow, "Stand up, sir, can't see much in a chair." He looked. I said, "That's where we've got to dock." Couldn't see her at all. Every time the sea would roll in she'd roll right over the wharf. "Now you can explain to them in Baddeck why the Shenacadie is staying at the wharf." I told him we were going back be? cause it would soon be dark. I decided I'd give him the benifit • and I swung right into it and it was rolling up • hard a- port and I give the engine room a couple of rings • Give it to her. Oh. I'll never forget it. "Captain," he said, "can she talce it?" "I don't know. She's out here and she's got to go back. She's got to take it. And you're not through with it yet." And I gave the wheel to a fellow who couldn't steer. Wellj before we got into- Grass Cove everytime she'd go down she'd roll right to the top. VWell, if I didn't frighten the life out of that old fellow. But often times we went to the wharf in Iona and fired the heaving line ashore and put the lock-bag on the end of the heaving line and if the sea didn't wash the fellow off the wharf • hauled a- shore the lock-bag. That's the important part. You don't mind the baggage mail. The lock-bag • that's all you're bonded for. Several times we went to Grand Narrows if we couldn't get to Iona. Mostly we'd go on back if we found it bad. Several times we went through. They'd open the bridge. See the trouble is • they cut that out be? cause we'd be going through there when it wasn't fit, especially at night. We come down • went up there one time • Emanuel Ongo was there • my uncle. This is the Blue Hill. Capt. Burke was the skipper. I was mate. We couldn't go to Iona. But we had two schoolteachers • that's all were aboard. Now they didn't know the difference. And here's how close we come. We're going up but we're not going through the draw. We're keeping over towards Grand Narrows and we're going to make a big swing towards Iona • all around just a little bit the windward of the bridge • then haul away to it • right do m through the lake, pass Iona on your port. I said, "I'm going to tell the two ladies to go up on the top deck • they won't know the difference" • and you take the heaving line because if we struck that bridge this thing won't last not 5 minutes. Just beyond the bridge and not coming up very much • won't come up because the wind is so damned much, and the tide is against you there. I went to the engine room. "Give her the God? damned works • fire the two machines down and get out of the engine room," He did and jumped out of the engine room. But Emanuel was just after pumping his boilers full of water. Vhen you do that • cripes, the water's ahead of your steam. Sometimes in a case of that kind, she'll blow the top off your cylinders. But we made Iona anyhow. Uptown they were saying, if you want to know why the skipper's standing, go down and take a trip with him. I was on the Shenacadie for 15 years. I was on her last trip, tied her up. We'd often leave Baddeck and see nothing till Iona. Thick of white fog on the lakes, down below the mountains. Some? times for weeks. But you're carrying mail and the mail's got to go through. Sometimes they'd criticize me;"Skipper, you went out in a storm." vfell, I wouldn't tolerate it at all. Just quit.



Once we had four sisters from Holy Redeemer coming over, near drowned them. I can't help it. The sea is there. She's got to go through it. We've got to make the trips and she's got to take it. Just have a job to do. We went up. It was blowing, pretty dirty. Our thanks to James MacDonald and Donnell Beaton of Baddeck, Mrs, Robinson of Englishtown and Capt, John Parker of North Sydney for their photographs of lakeboats. Edited & Published by Ronald Caplan with the help of Bonnie Thompson DECEMBER 1976 THE SECOND COLLECTORS' EDITION of Cape Breton's magazine Cape Breton's MAGAZINE WRECK COVE CAPE BRETON NOVA SCOTIA .Send me 'The Second Collectors' Edition, issues 7 thru 12 (\$4,50) I and / or NAME , , , Send a 1976-issue (\$5,00, Foreign \$6.00) 'Vil' 12-issue (\$9.00, Foreign \$11.00) subscription to Cape Breton's Magazine. Begin subscription with 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 Enclosed is a C' check Qmoney order for . GIFT FROM: