

[Page 48 - The Sinking of the Patrick Morris - One Sailor's Day](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 74](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1999/6/1

seven-thirty. Well, I was just cooking breakfast. But I know when the sea hit the stern of the ship, what they call the docking bridge, I know that (door) went in under water. The water came right up to the galley door where I was peeling potatoes there. But we never ever thought that the sea had power enough to put that big door in. But I'm telling you, she got some power. The captain, you know, he was a nice man. He was a man that you could get into a good argument with. And we couldn't have had a better crew in the world than what we had. That's from the officers right down, right to the last man aboard of her. They knew what job he had. They were all the same. (Well trained?) They had to be. If they weren't well trained, holy cow, who knows what would have happened to us. I mean, if something happens like that and you don't know what to do.... You've got fire and boat drill. You're on (the ship) two weeks, you have fire and boat drill. This week you might have it on a Monday or a Tuesday, or whatever the captain wanted --and you'd have it. You go through your fire drill first. After that's over you go to your boats, blow the whistle, and have your boat drill. The men were in the boats, and fellers would lower the boats down and take them back. Oh yeah, holy cow. If you didn't know what your job was you were out of luck. But everybody knew

**MACLEOD LORWAY FINANCIAL GROUP** providing a full range of insurance and financial services across Eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island

**SYDNEY MacLeod Lonway Ins.** 215 Charlotte St. 539-6666

**NORTH SYDNEY Island Ins.** 310 Commercial St. 794-4333

**BADDECK Island Ins.** Chebucto Pl. 295-3262

**GLACE BAY MacKenzie Ins.** 1 Sampson St. 849-4585

**PORT HAWKESBURY McKillop & Johnson Ins.** 228 Reeves St. 625-0177

**Guysborough Guysborough Ins.** Chedabucto Pl. 533-2005

**MACLEOD LORWAY FINANCIAL GROUP • Keeping Your Future Bright!** what their job was, and everybody knew where they were going. What we were trying to do was get two boats out, but it was impossible. I mean, once you took the list (once the Patrick Morris was over on its side) you were lucky to get one boat out. (How long before the list was noticeable?) The minute that door was gone. One sea hit that door and took it out, and there was another sea right behind it. That filled her. I'd say the third sea • the third sea she took the list. And when she started to go, holy cow, she was gone. That was the end of it. I mean, once he said the door was out, that was the end of her right there. It was just like taking the wall out of this building here. (The door couldn't be closed again?) No. That was lying flat on the deck. Well, I can't say because I didn't see it. But I'd say the door come on through the stern of her and went out. Come right off. Gone. We could hear noise, but that could have been the boxcars rolling out. We don't know. But she made an awful lot of noise. But what we thought, like a big cave-in (a hole in the sea) when she turned over • we thought we were going to get (caught in) the suction from that and take us back to the ship. That would have been the end of us right there. But when we were far enough away, the suction didn't have any? thing to do with it. Now, we're in the boat and no ship in sight. What do you do? An awful experience. (Did they have time to get a Mayday off?) Oh, yeah, the skipper got the Mayday



(sent). If they never got a Mayday out they would never have known we were going down. I got to give him (the captain) credit for that. They claimed he was one of the best swimmers in Newfoundland. She lost a lot of Bunker C, you know, that's the oil she burned. We were asking the undertaker down here, but he said, "There was no water in his YOUR COMPLETE INTERIOR DECORATING CENTRE • Mr. Paint "-td. "Drop in for personalized, friendly service." • Free Computer Matching Service • NOW CARRYING Mo/ter Choice Wallpaper book NouR LIBRARY brushes & PAINTING ACCESSORIES Complete line of BENJAMIN MOORE PRODUCTS (residential • commercial • industrial) Moored PAINTS 367 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY, N.S. BIP 1K2 • 539-3422 OFF THE DOCK iffish FRESH SEAFOOD Is your dish... ...then this is the place! • We pack for travel • Live & cooked lobster, year-round • Fresh halibut • Fresh haddock, salmon • Scallops • Homemade fishcakes MUCH MORE! 1071 King's Rd., Sydney River (same bldg. as King's Convenience) 564-5541