

Day 4 (Wednesday) we awoke to overcast skies. Forecast called for a couple brief and scattered rain clouds in the area, with skies clearing by noon.

Today's plan was to take the larger boats, and head thru Lock #45 (Port Severn) out into Sturgeon Bay, then Severn Sound, and over to Midland Bay, docking at Midland, Ontario for lunch.

Marine radio weather channel was advising 6 to 9 knot winds from the North. The cold front was moving thru.

By 9:00AM, Captains were dockside preparing their boats. We took the five biggest boats and asked Capt. Ike if he'd lead the way across the open waters, as the big 26' Lyman would flatten the seas for the rest of us.

We all squeeze into the lock at Port Severn , making for a quick passage to the Big water.



We plotted a course to McNicoll harbor (just South of Midland), because there is an interesting vessel there I wanted everyone to see.

***Magie Mae* is dwarfed by the *SS Keewatin*, as we enter McNicoll harbor.**

The last of the Great Lakes cruise ships *She* rests here for visitors to tour and experience how travel was in a slower more gracious time in history.



Captain Rick from the SS Keewatin saw our beautiful *Woodies* approaching and walked down to the dock for a closer look. He apologized we had to view *Her* from the bad (un-restored) side. The Port side is totally restored and visitors enter on the shore side. The starboard side is “on the list” for repainting.



The interior beauty is really what caused ships like this to become obsolete and be removed from service. The decks, super structure and all the cabins are built of wood. Beautiful, dark rich mahogany and the decks are of teak. Because of this, they would burn. The exact fate of the *SS Noronic*. On September 14, 1949, while docked at Toronto, a fire started in a linen closet. Spreading quickly, the ship was a total loss within a few hours. A loss of 118 passengers (of over 500), made this one of the worse ship disasters of all times. New regulations and insurance costs then pretty much caused the demise of these beautiful ships, and ended an era we will never experience again.

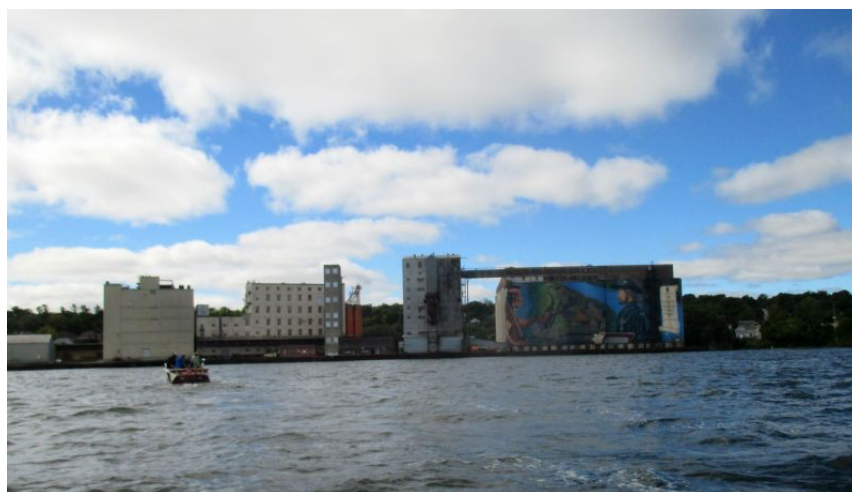
Port McNicoll was at the end of the Canadian Pacific Railways line. Trains would stop, passengers depart the train and board the *SS Keewatin*, which would take them to Thunder Bay (Lake Superior) and Western Canada. Few roads existed back then, and the cruise ships were the main source of connection for people and supplies to these rural locations.

Keeping to our schedule we left the protected waters of McNicoll harbor and entered Severn Bay, turned Northwest and managed the approximately three mile trip to Midland Bay in fine style.

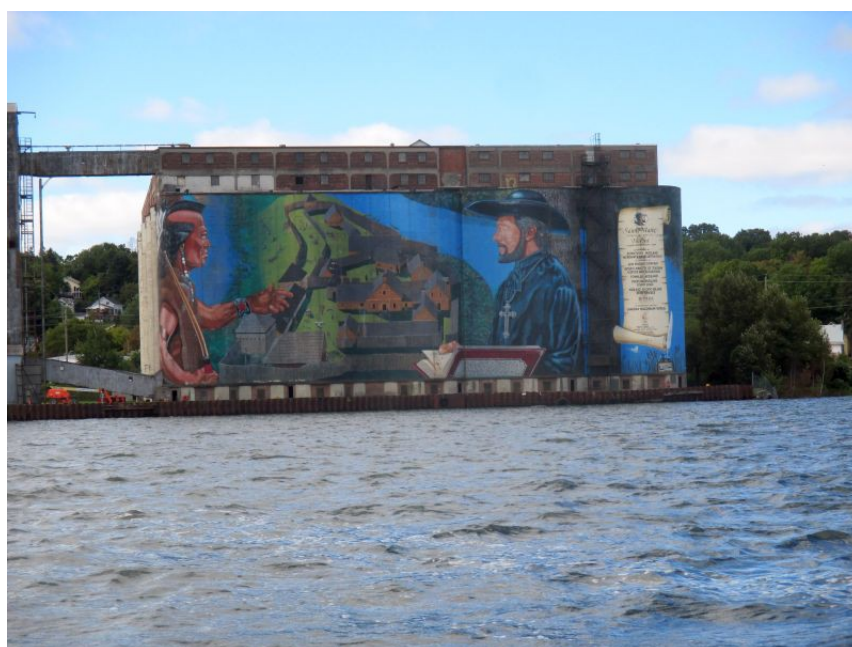
Last “cottage” leaving McNicoll harbor to Severn Bay. The boat at front dock was over 50' long.



As we approach Midland harbor, the first landmark we see are the large grain silos on the mainland, and the beautiful murals.



a closer view – they must be 80 feet tall



We easily found transit slips to dock.

First stop for most, were the restrooms by the dock-masters office. Once again we were treated to some beautifully hand painted murals, each measuring about 15 x 7 feet .



Time to eat, again. Just a few steps from the pier we found the Boathouse Eatery. About half the group ate here, the rest wandered up to King St., and found some interesting local spots to explore, and have lunch.



After lunch we kind of hung around while some of the ladies headed for a few close by stores. Sitting just outside the Boathouse Eatery was this little boat. It almost looked to be a home-made project. Close examination revealed it was a real boat, built way back in 1914, in Long Island City, NY.

At 20 feet long, with a 6 foot beam. One can only wonder what it was used for before becoming a piece of lawn art for the restaurant.



Time to gather up the crew, re-board the boats and head back to Port Severn and Severn Lodge.

As we leave the docks, Tom Love guides his beautiful Shepard past the MV Prescott. Another historic vessel, restored and docked at Midland harbor.

Built in Sept. 1930, in Quebec, this 110 foot, 302 ton tug boat was built for the railroad, to move barges with rail cars around the Great Lakes. *She* was also used as an icebreaker when the need arose.



From 1930 to 1970 *Her* main duty was to move rail cars from Prescott, Ontario to Ogdensburg, NY. In 1989 a serious fire in *Her* galley, put *Her* out of service.

As the pictures show, the dark, overcast sky from the morning had moved on and it was a beautiful sunny day. The wind died down, and the seas flattened for our return run back to Port Severn.



Return trip under Hwy 400 bridges, just before the lock.



We're all in the lock, ready for the "lift"

After we exited the lock, two of the boats headed the five miles back to Severn Lodge. The two remaining, followed us a short distance to the Town Park, where we tied up. Our “driver” (Lou Smith) soon appeared, and transported the three boat Captains back to the lodge to get trucks and trailers, and return to launch ramp for boats and passengers.



Port Severn Town Park

The launch ramp, installed in 2016, is to the right of the dock. A wonderful ramp, it was perfect for the larger boats, and Free.

We all made it back in time for our 5PM annual trip meeting and cocktail party. The lodge provided a nice waterside room for us, and several large trays of shrimp, cheese, crackers, etc etc.

The subject of where to have the Fall Trip in 2017 came up. A discussion followed, and then a vote on the choices.

And the winner is.....

The Rideau system, Kingston to Ottawa. Randy and Heidi volunteered to handle the details.

Time for dinner.

Just before walking over to the lodge for dinner, I looked out the front window, and saw this boat idling by. The man in the back had a fishing rod and he was trolling. The Canadians know how enjoy life on the water.



Another wonderful dinner, followed by a large desert buffet. We will sleep well again tonight.

Day 5 (Thursday), Going home day.

Our last breakfast together for this trip. I announced again that Peter Breen had invited anyone who wanted stop by and visit his shop on our way South to the border, to stop in. A quick show of hands indicated we would have seven vehicles heading to Peter's.

With one stop for a couple vehicles to top up fuel tanks, we arrived safely, despite unusual directions and different GPS routings.

For the next two plus hours, we traveled from one building to another. It has been fifteen years since I was last at Peter's home and shop, and several new buildings have been added, and each is filled with *beautiful* boats and projects.

Located on a quiet rural road, with no sign out front, this *Mecca* for wooden boat lovers is not open to the public. We are so privileged to be invited.

Next to the driveway, this old boating couple greet you. My camera lens wouldn't let me capture the whole boat, and period vintage trailer...



You have to look closely, especially at the walls to appreciate the amazing collection of nautical history displayed. Each piece has it's own story.





The group listens to Peter's every word as he explains each step in the restoration of this beautiful launch

Special sign to be displayed on finish room door when needed...One best not enter that room today.





The beautiful V12 Liberty WW-I vintage airplane engine, converted for marine use.

The boat is *Heldena II*. Built in 1916, *She* has had an amazing Gold Cup racing career. Now residing on Lake Musoka, she was in the water the day before this picture.

***Heldena II* is the cover photo on Peter's new book.**

No visit to a boat shop is complete without a visit to “The Field of Dreams”. Outback in the dark corners of the buildings, and under the lean-to, you find the treasures awaiting restoration.

This galvanized steel hydro-plane was found by Peter at this year's Clayton show. No maker's name could be found and it had both a way to mount either an outboard on the stern, or a small inboard motor (shaft tube was already installed). Our education continues.



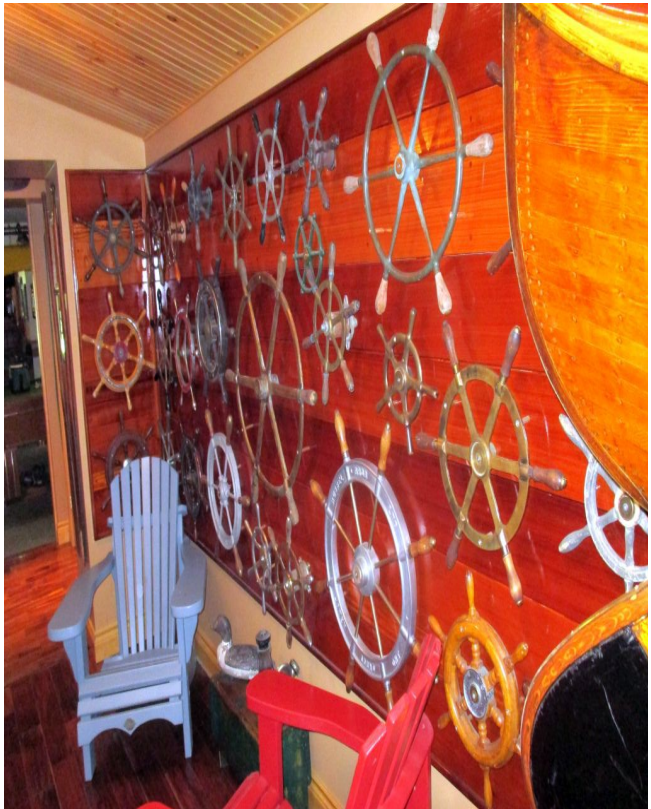
Peter (Center) talks to Tom Love as we view a new race boat being built by son Jeffery (2nd from left), for some lucky customer.



Normally I do not show many pictures taken inside a private home, but I will share just a few within Peter's. His canoe collection is probably the best assortment of historical and rare canoes in Canada. What a pure pleasure to view and learn the history of these historic and important crafts.



One fifth of the canoe room.



Another wall in the canoe/reading room



Peter's office....

Truly the birthplace of some very special boats and projects.

I've only scratched the surface of this amazing shop, but space and time have run out.

As we all stood outside, near the unique propeller garden.....

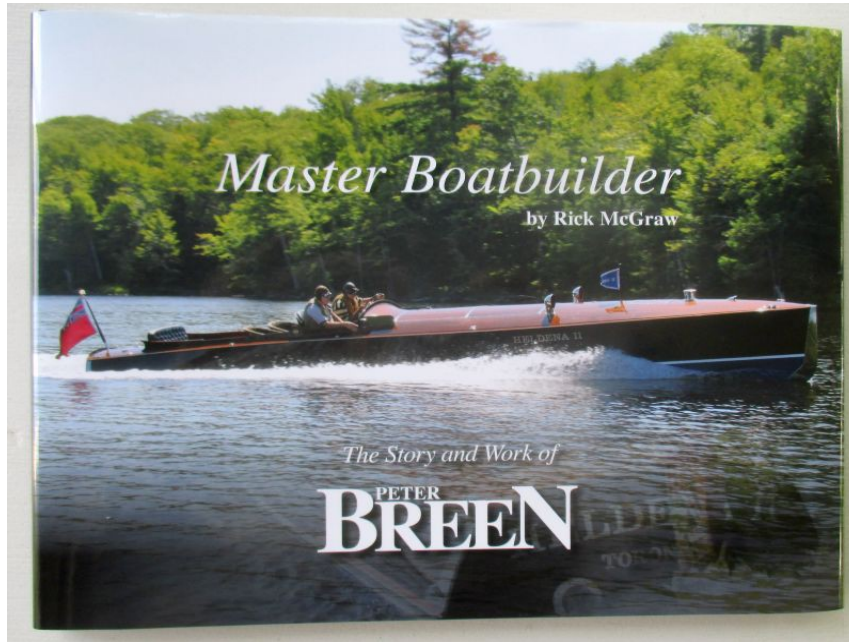


We were in for one more amazing treat.

As we were saying our “Good-byes” and Thank you's to Peter, son Jeffrey appeared with a stack of their new book, and presented each couple with their own copy.

Autographed by father and son, This book will always have a very special place in my library.

Such a generous and special gift.



Jeffrey Breen's latest build, running the Trent Severn river....



***Good-bye Trent Severn
Till we return***



In summary, another round of *Thanks* to all the WCCB, Inc members, Niagara Chapter members, and our new guests from Maryland, Connecticut and other areas. This years trip was a success because of this great group of boaters.

Thank you all

Some interesting web sites related to our trip:

www.breenboats.com/index.html

www.severnlodge.on.ca

www.sskeewatin.com

**Big Chute Marine Railway:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Chute_Marine_Railway**

www.trentsevern.com/index.php/waterway-index