

DETROIT LODGE NO. 7
INTERNATIONAL SHIPMASTERS' ASSOCIATION
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

October 31, 2000

TO: Members of Detroit Lodge No. 7

On November 12, 2000 the 25th annual "Edmund Fitzgerald Memorial Service" will be held at Mariners' Church in Detroit. A copy of the official Mariners' Church invitation previously mailed to all lodge members is enclosed on the off-chance that some of our new lodge members may not have received one.

A lengthy article about the 25th anniversary of the sinking of the *Edmund Fitzgerald* appeared in the Sunday edition of the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* of October 29, 2000. The feature story mentioned lodge member Rev. Richard Ingalls and Mariners' Church, and also featured a photo of lodge members attending the 13th anniversary service some 12 years ago. Members Jim O'Hara, Bob Benkert (now deceased), Ron Ingram and Morgan Howell (also now deceased) can be clearly seen in the photo.

The passing of longtime member Morgan Howell on August 15, 2000 resulted in numerous obituaries in newspapers around the Great Lakes. I have included copies of obituaries that appeared in the August 17th editions of the *Detroit News*, *Detroit Free Press* and *Port Huron Times-Herald*. The Howell family was very pleased that uniformed members of the I.S.M.A. served as pall-bearers at Morgan's funeral in Brantford, Ontario. Pat Owens deserves the thanks of the lodge for handling the arrangements for uniformed pall-bearers.

I have the sad duty to report the passing of another of our senior lodge members. Captain James A. VanBuskirk (Pennant Number 9627) passed away on September 10, 2000 at his home in Texas after a long battle with diabetes. Born in Marine City, Michigan on August 15, 1928, Captain VanBuskirk had a career on the ocean and Great Lakes that spanned some 41 years, the last 31-1/2 served with the Ford Motor Company fleet. He retired in the mid-1980's off the *S/S Ernest R. Breech* where he served many years as Master. He originally joined the Shipmasters in 1954 as a member of Port Huron Lodge No. 2, transferring to Detroit Lodge No. 7 in 1960. Following his retirement from the Great Lakes, Capt. VanBuskirk spent his very busy retirement years operating a fruit grove down in Texas. Capt. VanBuskirk married his wife Ione on July 18, 1970, and they had recently celebrated their 30th anniversary down in Texas. Condolences may be sent to the family c/o his wife Ione at 14681 Maple Drive, Harlingen, Texas 78552. The family recommends donations to the National Diabetes Foundation. I would like to thank the family for providing the lodge with a copy of an obituary that appeared in their local Texas newspaper and also a copy of the eulogy given at the funeral service.

The St. Clair and Detroit Rivers Operations Working Group met on October 4, 2000 at the Belle Isle Coast Guard Station. The official minutes of the meeting have not yet been received, but the proposed meeting agenda is enclosed. Anyone with particular questions about agenda items discussed should contact Pat Owens (810-364-8374), who represented the lodge at the meeting. The official minutes will be distributed to the lodge at a later date.

The first lodge meeting of the winter season is tentatively scheduled for Monday, December 4 at Dossin museum preceded by the usual noon luncheon. The full lodge meeting schedule and annual dues notice will be mailed out to the membership in about two weeks.

Fraternally yours,

Paul M. Jagenow

Secretary-Treasurer