

# The Watermark



## The Sea Is Calling

My sailboat is in the water and the call of the sea is growing stronger every day. After all if you are going to live in a place named St. Andrews by the Sea then it only makes sense to enjoy all that the sea has to offer. Summertime is a great time for relaxing with your friends and family and I love taking them out on the water and frolicking with the wind, whales and seals in one of the most interesting bodies of water in the

world. As the tides rise and fall (the highest in the world (30-50') I often take time to contemplate on the ebb and flow of the Craft in my area and around the world. Lodges are like boats, they need constant maintenance, or they will rapidly deteriorate to a point where they cannot be saved. If they are not lead by an efficient master who is supported by a dedicated crew, the journey *Continued on Page 6*

### Bluenose

Canada's most famous ship and its Masonic connection.

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### Ben Franklin

250 years of postal history features Ben again.

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## Bluenose: Canada's Greatest Schooner



Many articles and books have been penned about Canada's most famous ship; *Bluenose*, but little has been documented about her Masonic connections. She was built in an era when the Grand Banks were fished by these sleek, fast schooners whose fate was soon to be replaced by mechanized fishing boats without sails and large crews.

It is difficult for Canadians today to comprehend how an entire nation became so pumped up about races between fishing vessels. But at the time these events were akin to the national sports fever that gripped our country during the original Canada vs. Russia hockey tournament in 1972! These were more than mere races; they were a matter of national pride.

Canada and in particular Nova Scotia had suffered terribly during WWI and Nova Scotia was still struggling to overcome the Halifax Explosion (the world's largest manmade explosion prior to the nuclear bomb!) and people longed for something to celebrate.

Due to her lingering fame, Bluenose is seldom thought of as anything other than a racing schooner, but the reality is she was primarily a working fishing vessel. Unlike racing yachts of today, her owners did not have corporate sponsors donating millions of dollars to keep her as just a racing boat; she had to fish to earn her keep!

Even as a fishing boat she was a champion. In 1923, Bluenose brought back 646,000 pounds of Cod in one haul, setting a record as the largest catch ever recorded in Lunenburg by a single ship in over 300 years.

Ironically, Bluenose would never have been built if it were not for the New York Yacht Club. In 1919 the editor of the Halifax Herald newspaper office; Senator William B. Dennis read an article about the high society yachting world "America's Cup Race" having to be postponed because of a twenty-three-mile-an-hour gale. To working Grand Banks fisherman the thought of cancelling a race because a little wind was laughable. No self-respecting Nova Scotia saltbank schooner captain would be intimidated by the prospect of setting out in such a light breeze. 2

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As a result of that article "The Halifax Herald North Atlantic Fisherman's International Competition" was born. And for several decades races between real working schooners with ordinary fisherman as crew instead of rich socialites, would thrill the world.

By 1919 the Grand Banks fishing schooners day were numbered. German U-boats in WWI destroyed one third of them, and the age of steam driven fishing boats had arrived. The price of salt cod was falling and the backbreaking work for low wages was combining to bring an end of the fishing schooner era.

For generations the "Bluenosers" and the "Yanks" had raced each other to the cod filled Grand Banks, so a formalized race to see who was really the best was just the ticket for this proud lot of eight-sailed schooners and their crews from Lunenburg and Gloucester, Massachusetts. Here was the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and courage and the glory of the fishing schooner fleets to the world.

On October 11, 1920 the big day arrived when Nova Scotia's *Delawana* faced the American *Esperanto* for the title. Much to the chagrin of the Canadians, the American schooner skippered by Nova Scotia-born Captain Marty Welch, won two out of three races. He then sailed back to the States with \$4,000 cash and the new trophy leaving behind a lot of Nova Scotian's on shore with their bruised pride. It didn't take long before plans were being made to build a new schooner that would reclaim the cup and restore Nova Scotia to its rightful claim and glory.



Before the ship was on the drawing board the search was on for a man to captain her to glory. It didn't take long.

Angus Walters (1881-1968) of Lunenburg had been the runner up in the elimination races to determine the Canadian entry for the first Fisherman's Race but he lost to *Delwana* because the topmast of the *Gilbert B. Walters* broke. At the age of 38 Walters was a highly respected schooner captain who began his life at sea working on his fathers fishing boat at

the age of fourteen. At the age of 23 he took command of his first schooner, the *Minnie M. Cook*, and three years later he launched his own boat, which he named after his sister *Muriel B. Walter*. Eight years later he sold her and bought the *Donald Silver* and then a larger boat the *Gilbert B. Walters* (both

boats were named after his sons). Walters agreed to the proposal for the new schooner to be named Bluenose but he wanted to be an owner and have the largest share in the vessel, so he would have the final word in her construction and management. The investors agreed and naval architect William Roué was hired to design her and build here at the yard of Smith & Rhuland in Lunenburg. The blue-black beauty was launched on March 26, 1921 and shortly afterwards she was hard at work fishing the cod because the rules of the Fisherman's Competition required all entrants to work at least one season in the fishery.

In October 1921 Bluenose entered and won the preliminary races and then met the American schooner *Elsie* to battle for the trophy. As the two raced around the 40-mile course in strong winds, *Elsie* skippered by the same Marty Welch who had won the first cup, lost her fore-topmast.

Instead of taking advantage of his foes bad fortune, Captain Walters doused his own balloon, to give his opponent a fighting chance but Bluenose still finished thirteen minutes ahead. In the second race, Bluenose won with a three-mile lead. Instantly the good news was transmitted by radio across the Canada and overnight, the Bluenose and her crew became national heroes. Bluenose went on to win every Fisherman's cup she ever raced and made history in her last race in 1938 when faced the *Gertrude L. Thebaud* for a best of five races. By 1938 the old girl was looking her age and not expected to win. With the series tied 2-2, and with a slight lead over her rival Bluenose's topsail halyard snapped as they rounded the last marker. The crew replaced the line and Walters pleaded with her to win one more time. Just like a Hollywood script, Bluenose responded to her Captains plea and she crossed the finish line in a record breaking average speed of 14.15 knots. Setting a record for a canvased vessel, recording the fastest pace ever recorded over a fixed course by in the history of sailing!

The Masonic connection to this iconic vessel is practically unknown but nearly every person involved in her journey from concept to champion were Freemasons!

Three of the four owners; Captain Angus Walters, E. Fenwick Zwicker and his brother Arthur H. Fenwick were members of Unity Lodge No.4 in Lunenburg. According to his granddaughter Joan Roué, William J. Roué the naval architect who designed Bluenose was a member of a lodge in Dartmouth and many of the men in the Lunenburg shipyard that built her along with many of her crew were Freemasons as well.

Other known members of the Craft mostly from Unity Lodge # 4 in Lunenburg who helped build or sail Bluenose include:

- Arthur Corkum
- Harold Corkum
- Lawrence Allen
- George Myra
- Bordon Anderson
- Tom Black
- Perry Conrad
- Matthew Mitchell
- Merrill Tanner
- Ellesworth Greek
- Maurice Zinc
- Danny Mosher

Bluenose has her place in philately and coin collection as well. She has graced the reverse side of the Canadian dime since 1937 (except 1967 and 2001) and Canada Post has issued four stamps related to her. The original 1929 stamp is considered by many to be one of best-designed stamps ever. The stamp (No. 158) was part of the King George V "Scroll Issue" and includes C1, the airmail stamp). Very few people are aware of the fact that the designer Herman Herbert Schwartz took some liberty and actually depicted Bluenose twice on the stamp! For the images of her, Schwartz used two different photographs of Bluenose taken by W.R. MacAskill in 1922 or 1923 racing off Halifax Harbour.



*Bluenose continued*

In 1982 a 60-cent stamp bearing a reproduction of the original 1929 stamp was issued to commemorate the International Philatelic Youth Exhibition. This stamp was designed by the prolific stamp designer, Stuart Bradley Ash who is a member of Lodge in Ontario.



In 1988 a lithographed 37¢ commemorative stamp (Specialized 1228) was issued to celebrate the accomplishments of Bluenose skipper/owner Angus Walters.

Her designer self-taught naval architect William James Roué (1879-1970) was recognized on a stamp in 1998. Roué had never designed a sailing schooner before he was commissioned for Bluenose. During WWII he invented a sectional landing barge that could be dismantled and reassembled aboard ship to transport men and supplies to shore. Over \$29 million worth of barges were produced during the war and by the end of his long career he had designed over 200 vessels. In 1955 he and Captain Walters were inducted into the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame. You can learn more about William James Roué at: <http://www.wjrroue.ca>



There is no doubt that Bluenose was the greatest racing schooner of her day, but the fact is she would never have existed or succeeded had it not been for several Nova Scotian Freemasons who were her heart and soul!

## Benjamin Franklin On Another Canadian Stamp



Brother Benjamin Franklin has been featured on another Canadian stamp. Canada Post will be releasing this stamp on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 to commemorate 250 Years of Postal History. Benjamin Franklin was the Postmaster of Philadelphia when he was promoted in 1763 to the position of joint deputy postmaster general for the British colonies. As a result Franklin opened Canada's first post office in Halifax linking the Atlantic colonies with Britain.

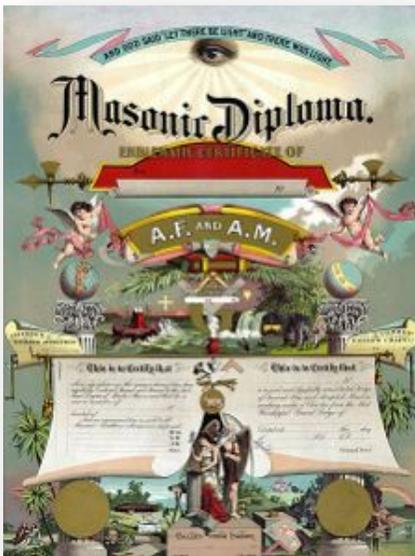
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This is the second time Ben Franklin has been depicted on a Canadian stamp. In 1976 he was featured on a joint issue between Canada and the United States.



In 2006 Canada Post issued a commemorative envelope in celebration of his 300<sup>th</sup> birthday.

*Sea Calling Cont...* will be fraught with the rocks and storms that will take her down. If a ship's owner's only motivation is to run her back and forth without regard for her future, the crew will become complacent and settle into mediocrity. Whereas if she weathers the rough seas, storms and hazards with the intent of overcoming obstacles in order to see what is beyond the horizon, her life will have meaning and her crew will grow from the new experiences. What kind of ship are you aboard? Summer is a great time to contemplate that question. I'll see you in the fall.



## Masonic Diploma?

I thought I would toss this one out. Why would any legitimate member of the Craft purchase a fake certificate of membership? As we all know every recognized Masonic jurisdiction issues its own to members who have completed their Master Mason degree. I for one would be very suspicious of someone trying to pass himself off as a brother in good standing with one of these!



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