



Known to the Huron as "Ouendaronk," to the French as "La Mer Douce" and to the British as Georgian Bay, the waters of the sixth Great Lake has had a profound effect upon those who have inhabited its shores. Midland was created in 1871 because of its lovely deep-water harbour and soon commercial fishermen, lumbermen and shipbuilders alike settled here and prospered in the community. Their products were transported from Midland to markets around the world. This shipping tradition had people with personalities to operate the many vessels that plied these waters. This walking tour of their homes briefly explores only a handful of the sailors, captains and shipowners that once called Midland their home.

*Please note that properties listed in this pamphlet are privately owned and are not accessible to the public without permission from the owner. Please respect their privacy.*

Cover sketch by John Weeks

Sketches by Mike Paterson



**1 Frederick John Burke - 435 Hugel Avenue**

Nicknamed "Tatey Bug" because of a speech difficulty when he was a child; he could not say his name, Teddy Burke. He was born in 1888 and died in 1940. His first command was the *Metamora* in 1907. He sailed the *Wahnapiatae* for Carl Beck, master of United Lumberman, and also sailed the steamers *Chamberlain*, *Jas. B. Eades* and *Ralph Budd*. The *Arlington* steamship was owned by Burke Towing and Salvage Company which was owned by the three Burke brothers. He went down with his steamer *Arlington*, in Lake Superior on April 30, 1940. Every member was saved except Captain Fred; his body was never recovered. Captain Fred stayed in the pilot house keeping the boat headed-up so the crew could

launch the lifeboat, but he stayed too long and before he could get to the lifeboat, the *Arlington* rolled over, saving his entire crew at the expense of his own life. The home he once resided in is reminiscent of Queen Anne style architecture, with a large, gable end on the front of the home. This home has several verandas and porches under the gables and eaves. An octagonal window is situated in the front end gable and a plaque commemorating Teddy Bug Burke is located at the front entrance. An interesting horse carriage is displayed on the west side of the home.

**2 David Joseph Burke - 423 Hugel Avenue**

Considered one of the best tug men on Georgian Bay, he was born in 1877 and died in 1941. It was said he died of a broken heart upon the death of his brother Fred. He sailed numerous vessels in his four-decade career on the Great Lakes, including the *Waubic*, *Minnie Hall*, *Cherokee*, *Superior*, *Susan C. Doty*, *Turner*, *Reginald* and *Charlton*. He worked for the *Victoria Harbour Lumber Company* and for *Penetang* lumber baron, Carl Beck, on the *Shawanaga*. He was also part owner of *Burke Towing and Salvage*. This home is similar to Edwardian Classicism style architecture, having a low, gabled roof line, siding and brick facade, numerous windows and stone foundation.

**3 D.L. White - 422 Hugel Avenue**

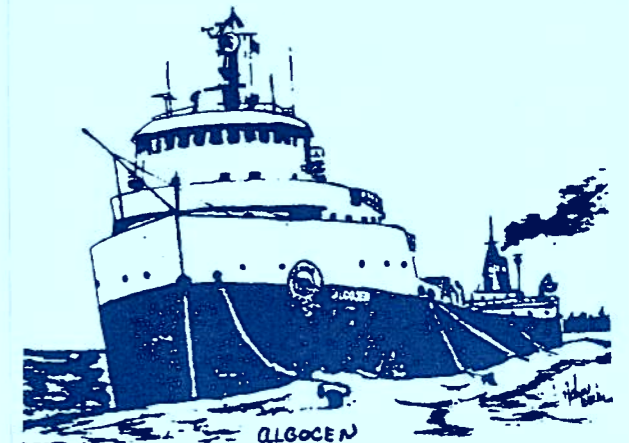
Douglas Leland White once resided in this one and one-half storey bungalow which is highlighted by the lattice-type porch posts and contrasting white siding with black roof and trim facade. D. White was born in 1858 in Albany, New York, and died in 1945. He was a partner of James Playfair from 1888 to 1937 and became Director of *Midland Coal Dock Company* in 1901. *White Loveland and Company* was the first mill at *Byng Inlet*. He lived for a time at "Edgehill" before he sold it to James Playfair. He was Mayor of Midland in 1904. After a fire, the home was rebuilt to resemble the original structure.

**4 John Bruce Hanly - 434 Hugel Avenue**

J.B. Hanly was born on November 5, 1865 and died April 22, 1937. He was the husband of *Eliza Adele Burke*, sister of the *Burke Captains*. He co-owned *Midland Engine Works* (founded 1901) with his brother, *Samuel "Bert" Hanly*, which produced the *Hanly Marine Engine*, a quality boat motor. He was president of the *Trent Waterway Association* c. 1928 and came to Midland in 1895 to open a machine and blacksmith shop. He contributed considerably to the prosperity of the Town and was *Harbour Master* for many years. His home was built by *William Hope* in 1897. Interesting architectural elements of the home include the decorative gable ends, gingerbread trim on the front porch and bay windows.

**5 Cec Clark - 258 Queen Street**

C. Clark was a life-long sailor and captain with the *Paterson Steamship Company* for many years. The Georgian style architecture of this home is highlighted by the stained glass window adjacent to the doorway and the crescent-shaped window and cedar shakes on the front gable end. This house was moved from its original location on *Yonge Street*.



**6 George Chew - 251 Queen Street**

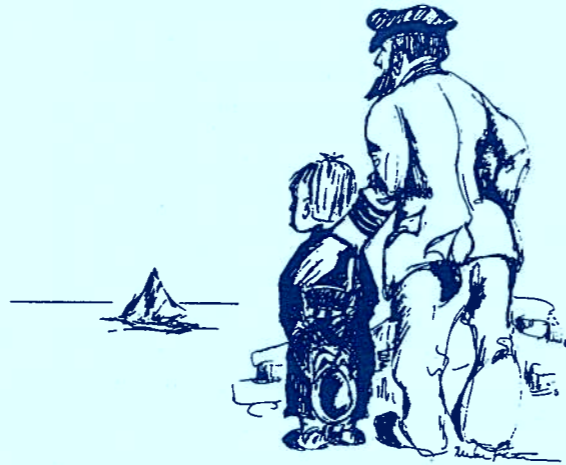
G. Chew once resided in this home which is accentuated by its wrap-around porch, pressed glass gable ends and stone retaining wall along the property frontage. He was born in England in 1845. He owned a flour and shingle mill in 1866 as well as owning a grist mill with Thomas Chew from 1876 to 1880, known as the Chew Brothers Mill. He established the George Chew and Sons lumber manufacturing company in 1900.

**7 Edward Francis Burke - 236 Manly Street**

Ed sailed the large tugs Minitaga and Metamora for James Playfair as well as the ship Mount Stephen and the lumber hooker, Chamberlain. Born on July 13, 1873 in Penetanguishene, he moved to Midland in the fall of 1879 and died in 1958. He became Captain at age 19 and officially received his Captain's papers at 21. He lived at 216 Manly Street which he built in 1903 during the first year of his marriage. He was the last male in the Burke lineage, but the name is perpetuated as a second name by three generations of Burke-Smiths. His grandfather, David Burke, was a sergeant in the British army and was transferred to Penetanguishene where he was the last Commanding Officer at the military garrison. Ed Burke was manager of Burke Towing and Salvage Co. which was owned by the three brothers, being one of the principal salvage companies in this part of the Great Lakes in the early decades of this century.

**8 Manly Chew - Corner of Charles and Bay Street**

M. Chew was the son of George Chew and born August 11, 1874. He was a Member of Parliament and Town Council. He and his father owned the Chew and Son Mill and he also purchased a mill with E. Letherby in 1900. Shipping magnate J. Playfair bought this mansion from him and later deeded it to the Town for a hospital. The home is now St. Andrew's Manor.



**9 James Playfair - Huronia Park/Edgehill Drive**

J. Playfair was born on July 8, 1860, in a village called St. Andrew's By The Sea in Scotland. He came to Midland in 1883 at 23 years of age and made his fortune in the shipping and lumber business. One of Midland's most prominent citizens, he owned 50 to 60 vessels. He enjoyed his ships and used to stand on the second floor balcony of his home with a megaphone so that he could talk to his Captains entering the Harbour. He wanted to be cremated and his ashes spread over the water where his beloved fleet sailed. No name in Canada was more closely linked to lumbering and shipping as was Playfair's. In 1886, he formed a lumbering business partnership with D.L. White and in 1900 began the Midland Navigation Company with the St. Andrew, later adding the Midland Queen which was one of the first vessels sunk by a German submarine in the English Channel during World War I. They also owned Midland King, Midland Prince, Emperor and Empress of Midland. Playfair began what is now a Midland tradition. In order to create a competitive element in his fleet, he offered a black, silk top hat to the first ship into the Harbour each season. Today, his own black, silk hat is ceremoniously given to the skipper of the first commercial ship into Midland Harbour. His home was once situated on the lands now known as

Huronia Park overlooking Georgian Bay.

J. Playfair died in 1937 at his home and upon the death of Mrs. Playfair the estate was willed to the Town. Their home became the site of Midland's first museum for 20 years until its demolition in 1967.

**10 William A. Lavigne - 298 Manly Street**

W.A. Lavigne was skipper of the Gleneagles, one of the largest vessels on the Great Lakes since 1927. He was given his first command in 1909 on the Midland Queen, was captain of the Gleniffer and Glenshee and commanded the Lemoyne on its maiden voyage. The Lemoyne was at one time the largest ship on the Great Lakes. The home he once resided in has interesting Edwardian colonettes on the front porch and an inset second storey balcony. He was killed in 1931 in Thunder Bay when the auto he was riding in was struck by a train.

**11 A. Lavigne - 302 Manly Street**

A. Lavigne was a noted tug skipper and barge captain and brother of W.A. Lavigne. This home has a stained glass fanlight above the living room window, an L-shaped front porch and a cut stone retaining wall on the south side of the property.

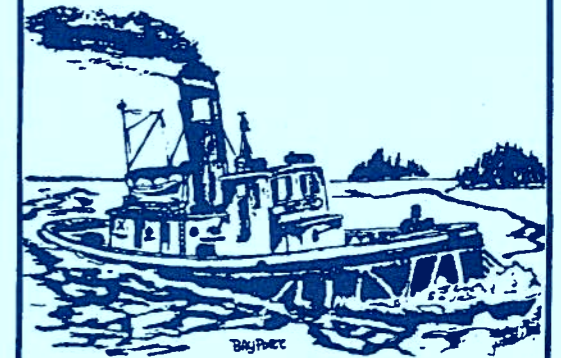
**12 Archie A. Hudson - 401 Elizabeth Street**

A.A. Hudson sailed Glenlyon and many other ships for J. Playfair. He also formed and managed Northwest Steamships for J. Playfair. He and his brother D'Alton took over the company in the 1930's. This home is accentuated by the white stucco facade and contrasting black gingerbread trim and roof.

For further information please contact:

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Midland's  
Marine  
Heritage:  
A Walking Tour



Local Architectural  
Conservation Advisory  
Committee