



I am sure by now that most of you know of the passing of Captain Jack Cork. His watch ended unexpectedly on October 8 in War Memorial Hospital in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Jack's health had been declining for several years. He had issues but seemed to be dealing well with them. Recently a fall at home put him in the hospital with a fractured pelvis and a fractured vertebra. He was in Tender Care for rehabilitation from the fall.

I had visited him there a couple times, once with John Wellington and once with Mary Ann, he seemed to be doing better. A bout with internal bleeding sent him back to the hospital where he ultimately passed away. I never heard exactly what finally got him.

Jack was born in Oak Park, Illinois on February 11, 1935 and spent most of his life in Sault Ste. Marie. He entered the Coast Guard and was stationed aboard the Tamarack in 1955 at the Soo and pretty much made that home from then on.

Jack was a Police Officer for a while, drove a fuel truck, operated several food businesses in the Soo and finally had the snack bars on the Famous Soo Locks Tour Boats. This led him to be a narrator on the boats and finally became Captain. Capt. Jack worked on the tour boats for fifty years.

Captain Jack got involved with Upper Great Lakes Captains Association not too long after it started in the Straits. He and his best friend, Charlie Lampman, became very involved with it and Jack later served as its' President for nearly 23 years. He spent many hours with Charlie organizing and planning the Industry Days. Through theirs and a lot of efforts by others the Industry Days has become an important event for professional mariners throughout the Great Lakes.

Jack was also a member and President of the International Ship Masters Association Twin Soo Lodge 22 ultimately served as Grand Lodge President of ISMA in 1998. His affiliation with ISMA and attending the Blessing of the Fleet in Detroit caused Jack and Charlie to put together a Blessing of the Fleet that took place in the Soo for many years.

Jack's involvement with the marine industry is renowned. He is known all over the Lakes for his involvement in the trade. His efforts have caused hundreds of mariners to become more professional and safety conscious.

There was a memorial gathering aboard Jack's tour boat the Levoyager. Many of his family attended along with many from the maritime industry. The ten ISMA members performed a very touching ceremony that would have made Jack proud I am sure. A man with a powerful presence that dedicated his life to the maritime industry, he will be missed.

Captain Bob Schallip