



# SHIPWRECK JOURNAL

Journal of the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society

Fall 2014 / Winter 2015 Volume 32 No. 3/4

Run For  
The Light page 5

**"WHISPERS OF THE NORTH"**

## The GORDON LIGHTFOOT TRIBUTE

*"The Legend Lives On..."*

[www.lightfoottribute.com](http://www.lightfoottribute.com)

### Special Benefit for the Shipwreck Society on the *Edmund Fitzgerald* 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Monday, November 9, 7:30 pm  
Fine Arts Center  
Lake Superior State University

Eight years into a project that began as a benefit to help the Cheboygan Opera House, Mike Fornes is more enthusiastic than ever about playing the role of Gordon Lightfoot in a show that will benefit the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum. His 7:30 p.m. performance of "The Gordon Lightfoot Tribute" on Monday, Nov. 9 will recreate the Lightfoot concert experience

one day before the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the sinking of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*.

"It is our privilege to perform in the LSSU Performing Arts Center to help this wonderful cause," Fornes said. "The Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society and the museum have done so much to preserve the maritime heritage of our area, especially of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*.

There are many projects on the drawing board at the museum and we want to put on a show to raise money for them. We feel that we owe a lot to the song, 'The Wreck of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*,' and we want to assist the museum in what they do for the surviving family members who travel to Whitefish Point to remember their lost loved ones."

Fornes and his band, "Whispers of the North" have become staples of the annual Nov. 10 bell-ringing ceremony for the *Fitzgerald* crew at the museum. The band's bookings also include a steady schedule of theater concerts, casinos, county fairs, group tour and convention work adding to solo shows by Fornes that include

performances in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Florida and Ohio with plans to continually expand.

"This is my retirement job, so I have more time to work on marketing. This year alone we have played the Calumet Theatre, the Braumart Theatre in Iron Mountain, the Ramsdell Theatre in Manistee, the Northport Community Arts Center and beautiful outdoor amphitheaters in Minnesota and Wisconsin," said Fornes.

– Continued on p. 2

### ~Also in this Issue~

RV *Boyd's* mission on  
the wrecked steamer *HB Smith*



Navy Radio Building



Morale Among Lighthouse Keepers



Annual Appeal coming in November

...and more!

# Shipwreck Society Benefit Concert

—Continued from cover

“We appeared at the Blueberry Festival in Paradise and are booked at the Cheboygan Opera House and the Crooked Tree Arts Center in Petoskey. We’re looking forward to performing in the Sault. It’s really fun to play when you know practically everyone in the house. We really feed off that energy.”

Of course, the show is more than just Mike playing the part of Gord. The other four members of Whispers of the North also play the roles of Lightfoot’s band members using authentic instruments and effects. The show’s lighting and background set are identical to those experienced at a Lightfoot concert. Frequent trips to see Lightfoot on tour and gain technical and musical advice have resulted in approval from the Canadian icon

and his band members, who have each played key roles in assisting Fornes and his group.

“This project has come a long way since 2008. We’ve worked very hard at authenticating each instrument’s role and sound in the music,” Mike explained. “The songs are the best they’ve ever been right now. Anyone who hasn’t seen us since the beginning, or in the past few years, will immediately see how hard we’ve worked on our presentation. The instrumentation is very, very close to hearing Gordon Lightfoot live. We want

audiences to feel they’ve experienced the next best thing, and maybe for a moment be immersed enough in the music that we can create that illusion for them. We continually add new songs to keep the concerts fresh and new.”

Cheboygan’s George Krawczyk, an original band member, will play the show’s keyboard score. Mike Freymuth, of Gaylord, plays lead acoustic and electric guitar. Jack Boyd, a native of Waterford, is on bass guitar and Cadillac’s Matt Wohlfeill plays drums and percussion.

General admission tickets for the Gordon Lightfoot Tribute are \$20 each. Patron tickets are available for this fundraiser at \$100 each. Patron tickets allow each holder to receive a print of *Fitzgerald’s Final Storm* as well as preferred seating, Row F with extended legroom, at the concert in the LSSU Fine Arts Center, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Tickets are

available from the LSSU Box Office; at the Weather Bureau Building in Locks Park, Sault Ste. Marie; at the Shipwreck Coast Museum Store, Whitefish Point, through October 31; online at [www.shipwreckmuseum.com](http://www.shipwreckmuseum.com); or by calling the Society office at 800-635-1742.



*Fitzgerald’s Final Storm* by artist Arthur Anderson  
— gift to the Shipwreck Society, 2006