

The Iroquois II, “The Cruiser:” 194? – 195?

The Conneaut Lake Navigation Company began its life in the early 1900s by reconfiguring old boats into something new. The Harshaws created the “new” Bessemer from the old Nickel Plate. Then they turned the single-deck Helena into a double-deck excursion boat. They even took one old boat, the Outing, and created two new boats from its proven design. From the early 1940s on, Paul Scofield, and then Conneaut Lake Cruises’ Lloyd Holland, proved to be just as adept at re-casting boats into different roles.



The Iroquois II was a large cabin cruiser altered to carry about 20 to 30 people. She sailed the Lake with music in the background – courtesy of a phonograph operated by any of Paul Scofield’s three daughters. To be sure, the loudspeaker had other uses. Some remember the high-volume and fre-

netic sounds of Spike Jones being played as a lure to draw customers down the steep hill from the Park. The Iroquois II was very camera-shy, so pick up any pictures you happen to find.

1947 image courtesy of Vera Bean.

Iroquois III “The Shoreline Cruise:” 1949 – 1972

This boat came to the Lake as war surplus from the Atlantic Coast. Modified for passenger tours of the Lake, her wide, flat bottom made for a fairly stable ride. She was just under 50 feet (15.4m) long and held about 50 passengers in relative comfort.



She was boarded from the Park dock via steps that led up and over her squared-off nose. She was the start of a long tradition of speaking tours of the Lake. While working for Scofield, future owner Lloyd Holland was noted for his interesting narration of the sites along the shore.

The plans for transforming the boat from a Higgins troop carrier to passenger service were drawn up in 1949 by the Venetian Ferry Corp. of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. She certainly enjoyed a much longer life as a civilian than she would have in the armed forces. Her blue and white hull, chugging exhaust, and flat, splashing bow eventually became fixtures at the Lake.

The Shoreline Cruise was a strange craft with less than perfect handling characteristics, but her pilots remember her with great affection. She was taken out of service in 1972 and purchased from Conneaut Lake Cruises for fishing charters along Florida’s Gulf Coast. Rumor has it that, in her first trip upon the ocean, her engine dropped through her rotted hull and she retired to the bottom. 1967? image courtesy of the Holland and Elliott families. The pilot could be Lloyd Holland.