

## A marked occasion



Robb Lucas | Daily Press

A historical marker was dedicated Saturday in Thompson Township on the shore of Lake Michigan off U.S. 2. It commemorates the last port-of-call of the "Christmas Tree Ship."

### Christmas tree ship commemorated

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MANISTIQUE — A Michigan Historical Marker, commemorating the "Christmas Tree Ship" and Schoolcraft County's Thompson Township now stands on the shore of Lake Michigan off U.S. 2, west of Manistique. The marker was dedicated Saturday in a ceremony hosted by the Thompson Township Historical Advisory Committee.

The schooner Rouse Simmons, better known as the "Christmas Tree Ship," departed Thompson Harbor on Nov. 22, 1912, carrying a load of Michigan Christmas trees bound for Chicago. However, Capt. Herman Schuenemann encountered violent weather and his ship sank, Nov. 23 near the port of Two Rivers, Wis.

"It took us about two years, working with the Michigan Historical Center, to get this marker," said Thompson Township Clerk Laurie Jasmine.

The dedication ceremony featured a number of honored guests, including

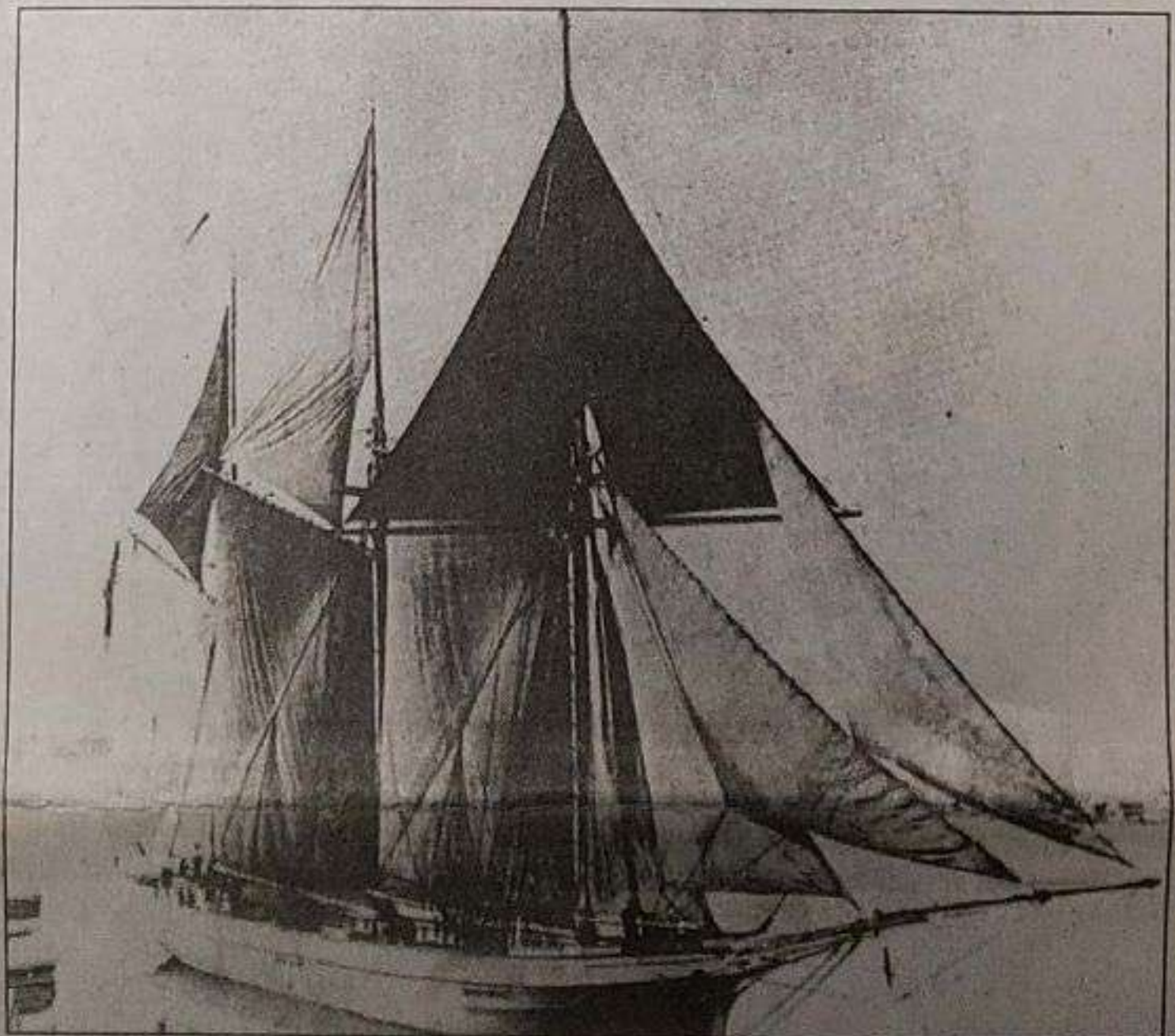


Photo courtesy of Thompson Historical Committee

This photo shows the schooner Rouse Simmons, also known as the "Christmas Tree Ship." The vessel sank while sailing to Chicago with a load of Christmas trees on Nov. 23, 1912.

William Ehling, grandson of Capt. Herman Schuenemann, and Kent Bellrichard, the diver who found the wreck of the Rouse Simmons in 1971.

On the back side of the marker, Thompson Township is honored as the last port-of-call for the Rouse Simmons.