

*The Rouse Simmons*

“I am delighted that Captain Herman Schuenemann and his ship the Rouse Simmons are both remembered and honored by the thoughtful people of Thompson, Michigan ninety-four years after his tragic death.”

Dr. William E. Ehling  
Grandson of the Christmas Tree Ship Captain

“Knowing my great-grandfather as I have come to, he would have been overwhelmed by all this attention. The purpose of the Christmas Tree Ship was not for the glory and recognition but for his true belief that no house should be without a Christmas Tree. I am blessed to be his great-granddaughter and honored that his traditions are still being carried on.

Barbara Ehling  
Great-Granddaughter of Captain Herman Schuenemann

“Thanks for all who are keeping the spirit of the Schuenemann family and the Rouse Simmons alive and continuing on.”

Jim Brotz Family  
Mr. Brotz restored the wheel of the Rouse Simmons on display at the Rogers Street Fishing Museum, Two Rivers, Wisconsin.



*Restored Wheel*

“Sometimes history gets a life of its own; this has been true for the story of the Rouse Simmons, commonly known as the Christmas Tree Ship. During a violent Lake Michigan storm, and what some might call bad luck, this schooner gained its place in history.

Since being involved with the original movie, created to memorialize the final voyage of the Christmas Tree Ship, it's been apparent to me that the real story is about all the years of success Captain Herman Schuenemann had delivering Thompson trees to Chicago. He created a tradition.

Hopefully, in the future, visitors to this Marker will remember the story of Thompson's role in making so many Chicago Christmas' a joyous event.

Dr. Thomas L. Nolan, Jr. EdD.



*Thompson Docks*

“Over one hundred years have passed since Captain Herman Schuenemann, skipper of Lake Michigan's legendary Christmas Tree ship, was first welcomed into the port communities of Thompson and Manistique, Michigan.

Today, the fine folks from both of these communities are gathered together to erect a permanent marker honoring Thompson as the Last Port of Call for the Rouse Simmons, and also to pay tribute to Captain Santa's yearly voyages to this place he called home every autumn. Here, the captain harvested both evergreens and friendships.

Congratulations to everyone from the “great, wooded north” who has worked tirelessly to keep the history of the Christmas Tree Ship ever green. I applaud your efforts!”

Rochelle M. Pennington, Author  
The Historic Christmas Tree Ship, A True Story of Faith, Hope and Love



“The Christmas tree ship, *Rouse Simmons*, and her captain and crew represent a significant era in Great Lakes maritime history and comprise one of many great local stories contained in the holdings of the National Archives. I join our Great Lakes Regional Archives staff in congratulating the people of Thompson, Michigan, as they commemorate their town’s connection to maritime history, as this legendary vessel’s final port-of-call.”

Allen Weinstein  
Archivist of the United States



*View of Thompson 1890's*



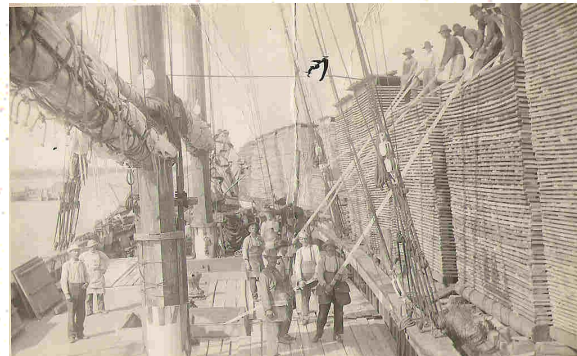
*Thompson Lumber Mill*

“Thank you for the info, but not sure I can attend. At the age of 82, long trips are not for me, but I will be with you all in spirit. You have done a great job in getting this off the ground. “

My Best to you all,  
Alex  
Florence “Alex” Meron, Author  
*Thompson Michigan and The People Who Lived It*

“Congratulations to you, Laurie, and all the nice folk of Thompson/Manistique on putting the Historical Marker in place. We are not able to come, but want you to know you are in our thoughts. We have given shows and talks to hundreds of folks from here to the U.P. and we always include the Christmas Tree Ship story and the tenacity of Thompson in our small town history accounts.”

Best Wishes,  
Gene Scott, Livonia Historical Society  
Author, *Michigan Shadow Towns*



*Lumber to be Loaded—Thompson docks*

“I dove on the Christmas ship last week, stood on the deck and touched the trees. It was a great experience.”

Carl Behrend, Author  
*The Legend of the Christmas Tree Ship*



*Corner of Manistique Avenue & Main Street—Thompson, MI*