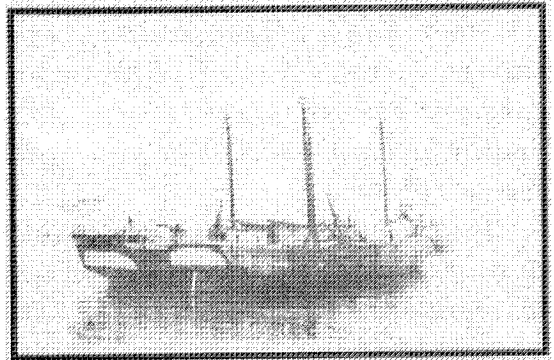


# Port Bruce/Malta (Baie du Dore)

## Pioneer Lakeside Settlements



### REFERENCES:

*Robertson's County of Bruce  
Pages 323-324*

*Bruce Township Tales and Trails  
Pages 72, 119, 136, 137, 147, 156.*

The schooner YANKEE (nearest the camera) was one of the vessels that called at ports such as Malta. In this picture, YANKEE, with JUPITER and LEADER is under tow by N. Mills.

*(Photo by Paisley Studio, Sarnia, courtesy of Ron Beaupre)*

## 1856 - 1862



In 1995 a plaque was placed  
by the  
Township of Bruce Historical Society  
with the assistance of the  
Ontario Heritage Foundation

## PORT BRUCE/MALTA

*In Bruce Township, Bruce County, two early villages, Port Bruce and Malta adjoined one another on the shore of Baie Du Dore, Lake Huron.*

*PORT BRUCE was surveyed in 1856 for George Butchart. The town plots consisted of Lots 30-33 (Lake Range) and Lots A & B Concession 6. One of the first settlers, Duncan Bannerman, was also the first merchant. George and Sarah Butchart operated a hotel. William and Margaret Turner had a tavern. John Lindsay had a sawmill. The population grew to 150.*

*MALTA was surveyed for Captain Alexander Murray McGregor. The plan was registered in Toronto on July 1, 1856. It consisted of Lots 34-39, Lake Range, Bruce Township.*

*A Union Port Office was established here in 1856, serving the two villages. The first Postmaster was William Chisholm. Alex Murray McGregor took over in 1856. Walter MacFarlane operated it in 1862. The first sawmill was operated by John and Gregor McGregor, brothers of Captain A. McGregor. It burned in 1858.*

*The 1861 Census lists the following: Carpenter - Wilbert Tinsdale, Cooper - John Chisholm, Miller - Alex McGregor, Storekeeper - Walter MacFarlane.*

*A warehouse that held 10,000 bushels of grain was also owned by Walter MacFarlane. The wharf was used*

*for shipping timber, hemlock bark (tanbark), lime from the nearby lime kilns, cedar posts, grain, fish and local cord-wood for the wood-burning ships. It was a thriving harbour! Here, the pioneers came ashore to establish new homes and farms. The population grew to 125.*

*The prosperity of the two villages and plans for the future disappeared with the disastrous swamp fire of July 4, 1862. Many fled in little boats out into Baie Du Dore, Lake Huron. Some remains of the wharf (under water) and a few foundations can still be seen. Families relocated inland. The first school was on Lot C, Concession 7. Later, a new site was Lot E, Concession 6. The school was S.S.#6. It served the community from the 1850's to 1964. It was sold for a residence and burned in 1982. One continual reminder of this vicinity, is the Port Bruce - Baie Du Dore Cemetery found on Part Lots D and E, Concession 7, Bruce Township. The first recorded burial is that of John Stewart, age 29, who died February 14, 1854. Since 1971, Bruce Township has been responsible for its maintenance. The original 5 acres was expanded in 1994, with additional land being donated by Canadian Agra.*

*From the crest of the hill, one can see a panoramic view of Lake Huron and the Bruce Nuclear Power Development. Today, the early settlers would be awed by the high technology and activity in this area, just a stone's throw from their once thriving lakeside villages.*