



## News Release

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### It Looks Like S.S. Keewatin Will NOT Be Part Of Ontario's Re-Opening!

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The charity that restored S.S. Keewatin and has operated her as an historical attraction for the last seven seasons announced today that it did not expect to re-open the ship to visitors in 2021.

"We are still fenced-out" said Wayne Coombes, President of The RJ and Diane Peterson Keewatin Foundation, popularly known as Friends of Keewatin. "We offered to request that our volunteers resume conducting tours of the ship in return for performing the maintenance necessary to prevent her deterioration, but her owner, Skyline Investments Inc. did not even bother to acknowledge receipt of the offer, let alone reply to it."

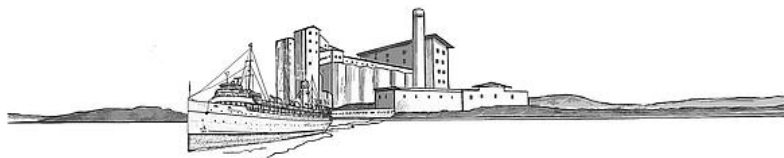
"This is a blow to tourism in the region." said Coombes. "KEEWATIN is a top-ranked attraction, awarded the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for the last four seasons, and boasting a Google Reviews rating of 4.6 out-of-5. We understand KEEWATIN ranks among cruise ship passengers' most requested attractions and has the highest satisfaction level reported in post visit surveys conducted by cruise ship companies."

"We're concerned about her condition" said Fred Addis, Friends of Keewatin's Curator. "When Skyline fenced us out a year ago, they interrupted needed repairs to the upper deck at the bow, which had only been started. The seals around structures and doorways had been removed for replacement leaving the ship in the worst possible situation. The bow has undoubtedly been leaking through last year's rains, winter's snow and ice, and this spring's numerous thunderstorms, into the rooms below. Ships like KEEWATIN always needed continuous, knowledgeable attention... and at 114 years of age, as the only survivor, she certainly deserves it now!"

"I said at the time that the excuse offered by Skyline for fencing us out... concern about COVID-19... was disingenuous, but clearly it has been shown now to have been ridiculous, as is any claim to be acting in the best interests of the ship." said Coombes. "Equally, that a public company would choose to renege on its contractual commitments, its public promises to a community, and its moral obligations to volunteers seems inexplicable."

"We're saddened to be prevented for another year from showing visitors the remarkable treasure KEEWATIN is, and telling the story of the CPR Upper Lake Service and life in the unique town of Port McNicoll at the time. Instead, we'll spend our summer telling visitors what is going on... and trying to figure-out why."

For more information, contact [info@sskeewatin.com](mailto:info@sskeewatin.com)



**S.S. Keewatin • operated by The RJ and Diane Peterson Keewatin Foundation • "Friends of Keewatin"**  
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