

ake Winnepesaukee.



It's a post office which cruises 80 miles daily, twice around the lake, from June 15 to October 1. Its official name is the Winnepesaukee Railway Post Office—Lake Winnepesaukee being New Hampshire's large, central resort lake—and it operates on board the U.S. mail boat "Sophie C." "Sophie C" is a cheerfully unique mail boat which frequently takes on a load of tourist passengers for a sightseeing trip at the same time that it carries on business among the 272 habitable islands scattered over the face of the 72-square-mile lake. It is claimed to be the only such post office functioning on an inland body of water and it's been doing so since 1892, with formal status granted by Congress in 1916. It even has its own zip code: 03200.

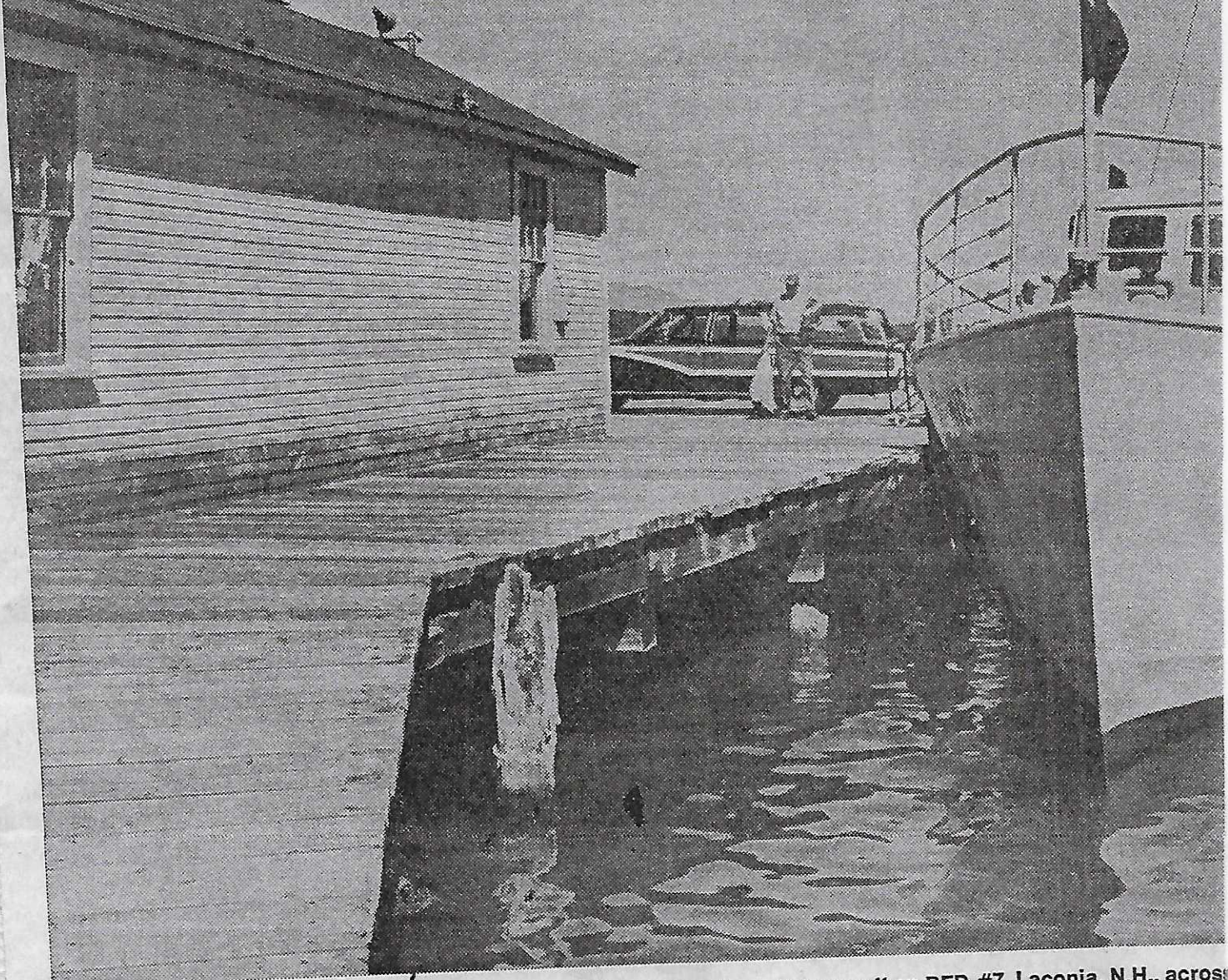
Postmaster Ed Lavalley, now 80 years old, has been running the office for 40 years. He says the job has always been intriguing to him. "You can't ever tell what you're going to see." In winter, Lavalley still goes out on the lake—over the frozen surface in a snowmobile, keeping an eye on the summer properties while their owners are away.



Top Left

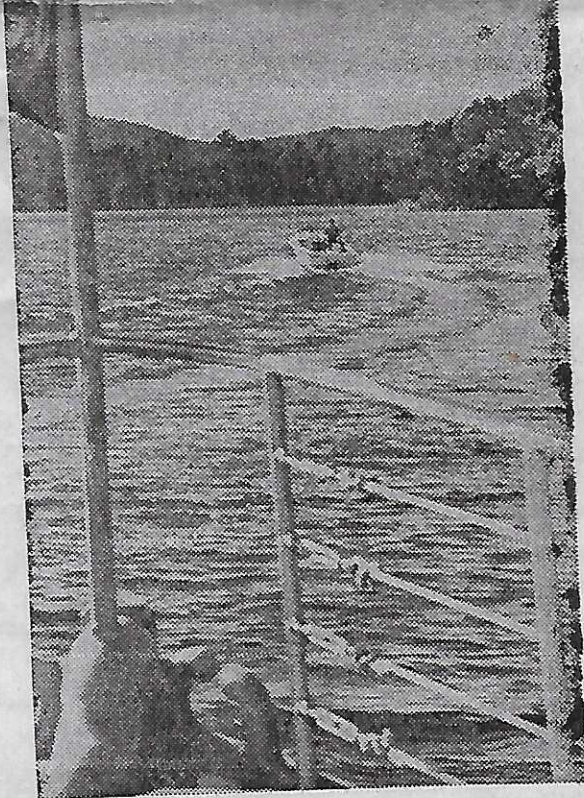
# POST OFFICE

MOUNT WASHINGTON  
M/V SOPHIE C. & M/V DORISE  
U.S. MAIL BOAT  
DOCKS HERE



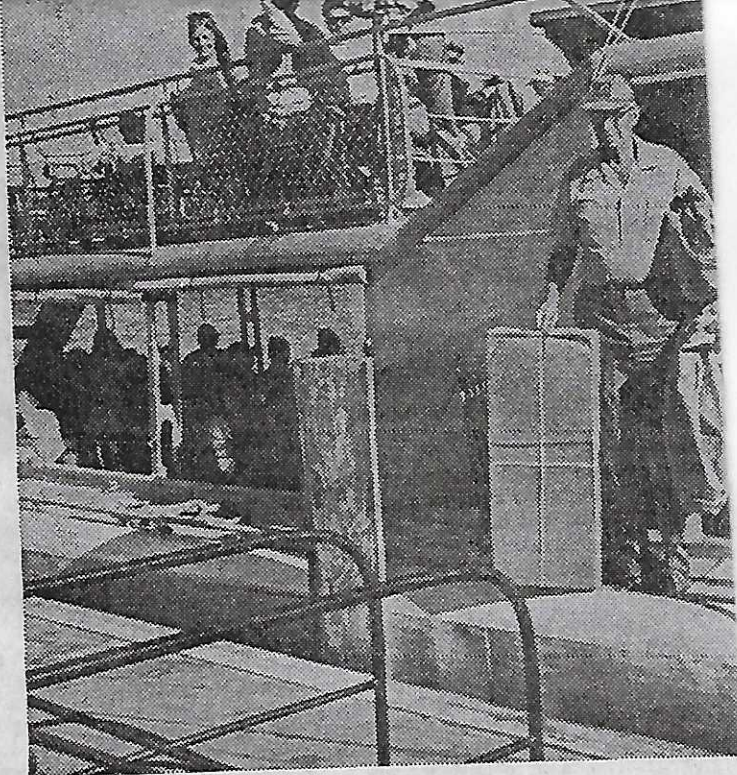
Post office and mail boat, Sophie C waits at the dock ready to go off on RFD #7, Laconia, N.H., across





View of lake from floating post office.

Bottom  
Left



Sightseers taking cruise on Sophie C watch



Mail boxes around lake get twice daily visit.



Postmaster is welcomed at many



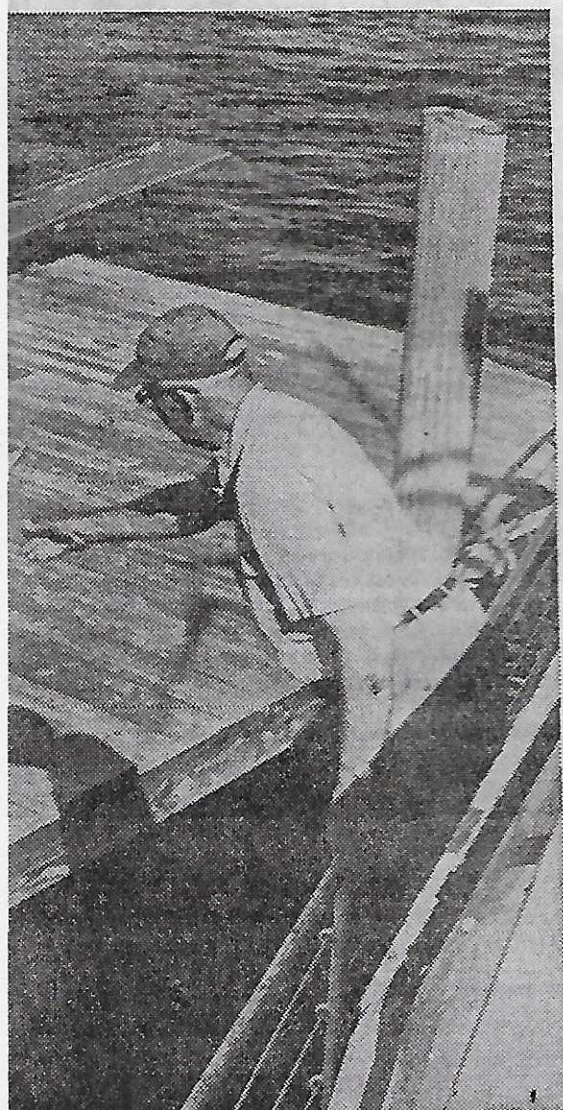


Postmaster Lavalley at work.  
PO

*Bottom Right*



There's mail to sort—and a wheel to watch!



Landings stages: stops include 12 islands.



Summer residents' mail comes 6 days a week.