

CAR-WASH, ANYONE?

Elsewhere in his issue, we have reported news concerning the Toronto Island passenger ferries TRILLIUM and THOMAS RENNIE.

For those not intimately familiar with the ferry service, we should note that, for many years, when the cold weather of autumn arrived, the double-deck ferries WILLIAM INGLIS (the former SHAMROCK [II] of 1935, and laid down originally as COLUMBINE), SAM McBRIDE (1939) and THOMAS RENNIE (1951), would have wooden bulkheads installed at the foot of their stairways to the upper (promenade) deck. These bulkheads, each of which was equipped with two doors, were fitted in order to keep the cold winds out of the main cabin.

This autumn, however, the three ferries began to sport bright blue curtains, made of heavy plastic, at the base of their stairways. These curtains were fastened across the top and down the sides, with clear plastic windows in them and a zippered opening down the middle. Considering that there are two sides to each stairway (separated by a bannister down the centre), passengers wishing to ascend to the promenade deck were forced to push aside one of the curtain flaps, duck through the small opening thus created, and dodge around the newel-post of the bannister. All of this would be no mean feat for a person carrying bags of groceries.

Island residents, no stranger to adversity or the vagaries of the ferry service, soon began to refer to an excursion to the upper deck as "a trip through the car-wash"!

It should be noted that, presiding over these festivities, were the namesakes of these three double-ended ferries. During the past summer, large framed photographs of Messrs. Inglis, McBride and Rennie were hung in the main cabins of the boats, each gentlemen appearing in the ship named for him. Inglis was the builder of the ferry which was renamed in his honour upon his death, McBride was an island resident and mayor of the City of Toronto, and Rennie was at one time chairman of the Toronto Transportation Commission (which, succeeded by the Toronto Transit Commission, operated the ferry service from 1927 until 1961).

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T.M.H.S. AND THE G.S.T.

Members who read the financial statement in our October issue and took to heart the message that an increase in membership fees will be inevitable next year, may have been wondering how we might be affected by the federal government's proposed Goods and Services (or, more popularly, "Gouge and Screw") Tax. One does not have to be a Liberal Senator to appreciate the far-reaching effects of the new tax which replace the former federal sales tax!

In the past, the Toronto Marine Historical Society has, as a non-profit historical association, enjoyed an exemption from paying both federal and provincial sales taxes on, for instance, printing services. Our Chief Purser has made enquiries of the appropriate federal authorities and, based upon the fact that the membership fees which we collect are used solely to pay for the publication of our members' newsletter and to provide facilities for our regular membership meetings, it would appear that we will not be required either to collect or pay the new G.S.T.

Thus, it would appear that only the inevitable forces of inflation and Canada Post, plus the vagaries of the international exchange rate, will be working against our treasury. It is, however, too early for us to estimate how large will be the fee increase for next season. Suffice it to say, however, that it undoubtedly will be substantial.

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