

MARINE NEWS

A serious grounding occurred in the Straits of Mackinac on Sunday, November 27th, when unusually strong winds raked the area. In fact, winds were recorded at 81 m.p.h. on the Mackinac Bridge, and the span was closed to traffic for six and a half hours, its longest closure ever. The marine casualty was the 335-foot Andrie Inc. barge A-410, which broke loose from her tug, Andrie's JOHN PURVES, and stranded on the north shore of Bois Blanc Island. At the time of the accident, the barge was loaded with some 41,000 barrels of asphalt, and it was not until late on November 30th that the process of pumping the asphalt into another barge could begin. The crew had allowed the asphalt to cool after the grounding to prevent a spill, and it had to be heated to 220° F. before it could be pumped. Even then, efforts were hampered by cooling cause by ruptures in the barge's outside skin (A-410 is double-hulled). It was a week after the grounding before the lightered barge could be considered ready for attempts to pull her free, but fortunately the accident did not result in any environmental damage.

Another unfortunate accident occurred on Wednesday, November 9th, when the 52-foot tug JASON A. KADINGER, owned by Kadinger Marine Service Inc., of Milwaukee, sank in Lake Michigan, some seven miles off Ft. Sheridan, Wisconsin. The U.S. Coast Guard at Milwaukee received a distress call from the tug, and a helicopter dispatched from Glenview Naval Air Station was able to rescue the tug's master and two crew members, who were in the water, clinging to their sinking tug.

Another accident of note occurred on the morning of Thursday, November 24th, when the Russian salty FASTOV struck the Shell Oil fuel dock at Corunna, Ontario, below Sarnia, and knocked a section of the dock into the St. Clair River. The vessel reportedly was not intending to fuel at the Shell dock, but simply lost steerageway and eventually hit the dock. After the accident, the ship went to anchor on the U.S. side of the river, and then after a few hours resumed her voyage to Green Bay, Wisconsin, where the U.S. Coast Guard boarded the ship to conduct an investigation of the incident. Although damage to the Shell dock was estimated at approximately \$500,000 there was no environmental damage, as the dock's fuel lines were not ruptured.

In previous issues, we have made comment on the fact that the former Lake Ontario passenger vessels MACASSA BAY and GARDEN CITY are being used on the east coast in connection with the Hibernia oil drilling project. There seems to be considerable confusion about the role of the two passenger boats, and thanks to member M. B. Mackay, of Halifax, we are able to clarify the situation. Much was made in the press all over Canada when, on November 14th, the Hibernia GBS (gravity base structure, or platform) was pulled out of its drydock building berth at Bull Arm, Newfoundland, and anchored in deeper water in Mosquito Cove, on Trinity Bay. There, work will continue on the massive structure until it finally is completed during 1997. Construction materials will be taken to the structure by a fleet of tugs and workboats, but workers and other passengers will need other transportation, and it is for that service that GARDEN CITY and MACASSA BAY have been chartered. As reported earlier, GARDEN CITY made the trip eastward during the autumn, after completion of her summer excursion service, but MACASSA BAY was already on salt water, having spent the summer of 1994 operating on the ferry service between Cheticamp, Nova Scotia, and Les Iles de la Madeleine.

Back when it was suggested that there would be a major passenger cruise service in the Great Lakes during 1994 (something that never happened, unfortunately), it was also said that in 1995, the lakes would see a visit from the Hapag-Lloyd passenger vessel BREMEN. Recent word, however, is that BREMEN's visit has been cancelled - no reason given. However, one passenger vessel that will be on the lakes in 1995 will be NANTUCKET CLIPPER, which will make a "Great Lakes Odyssey" that sold out immediately upon being offered to former Clipper passengers. She will sail from Quebec City on July