

The late summer and early autumn revitalization of the grain trade has seen most of the idle Canadian straight-deckers return to service by the time of this report. The last of Toronto's "summer lay-ups", Upper Lakes Shipping's steamer SEAWAY QUEEN, fitted out late in September and departed via the Western Gap in the early evening hours of the 26th. The return of this handsome laker to active service is always a happy event for observers.

In the Mid-Summer issue, we mentioned the arrival of a Canadian warship at Port Weller Dry Docks for an extensive refit. Unfortunately, we mis-spelled her name. She is, in fact, H.M.C.S. ATHABASKAN, her name recalling an earlier Canadian warship lost under particularly tragic circumstances during World War Two. Most reports of her coming to the lakes have shown her name as ATHABASCAN. In any event, ATHABASKAN actually arrived at Port Weller during the afternoon of July 26th, but it was not until August 12th that she was placed on the dock.

A number of warships have been seen in lake waters this summer and, in addition to those mentioned in earlier reports, we should record the return to the lakes of the fast frigate U.S.S. FAHRION, on the U.S. Navy's summer recruitment "cruise". As well, a most unusual visitor to fresh water was the submarine H.M.C.S. OKANAGAN, which was upbound in the Seaway on August 26th, bound for Toronto, and which was downbound in the Seaway again on September 4th. OKANAGAN is one of only two submarines in Canada's naval fleet.

After a lengthy visit to the port of Hamilton, the WOLF RIVER finally has been moved to Thunder Bay, where she reportedly is to serve Gravel & Lake Services Ltd. in the lumber trade. WOLF RIVER (C.198025), is a lengthened former canaller, and was built in 1956 by Port Weller Dry Docks as (a) TECUMSEH (67) for Beaconsfield Steamships Ltd. Lengthened and deepened in 1960, she later served the Q & O fleet as (b) NEW YORK NEWS (III)(86), and Groupe Desgagnes as (c) STELLA DESGAGNES (93). She was sold Panamanian as (d) BEAM BEGINNER in 1993, but after an escapade in the ice, never left the lakes. She was sold to Gravel & Lake and brought back into Canadian registry in 1995, and was towed to Hamilton to be readied for a new life on Lake Superior. Some observers were wondering if she ever would see that lake, but late on the evening of August 31st, she was towed up through the Soo Canal by the tug PENINSULA. The tow had taken fuel during the day at the Government Wharf in the Canadian Soo. We understand that WOLF RIVER was to be drydocked at the Pascol shipyard in Thunder Bay on her arrival there.

One more former canaller has made the one-way trip to the scrapyard, but this one was a canaller "with a difference". She was the self-unloading sandsucker NIAGARA II (C.155286), a 182-foot former steamer built in 1930 at Haverton Hill-on-Tees, England, as (a) RIDEAULITE (47) for Imperial Oil Ltd. for service in the St. Lawrence Canals and on the Ottawa River. Later (b) IMPERIAL LACHINE (I)(54), she was converted to a sandsucker by the Toronto Dry Dock Company in 1954. Operated by a number of owners over the years as (c) NIAGARA (69), (d) W. M. EDINGTON (84), and (e) NIAGARA II, she was dieselized in 1972 and converted to a barge in 1990. Latterly owned by McKeil Marine Ltd., she recently was sold for scrapping at Port Maitland, and was towed up the Welland Canal, en route to the scrapyard, by GLENEVIS and LAC ERIE on August 13th. Her original steam engine remains on display outside the Marine Museum at Toronto.

Another historic McKeil vessel made a passage up the Welland Canal on August 18th. This was the floating drydock made from the hull of the 1911-built sandsucker C. W. CADWELL (C.138579), owned by McKeil since 1979. The CADWELL has been acquired by the Powell interests of Port Dover, who will continue to use her as a floating drydock. Accompanying the CADWELL on the tow to Port Dover was the small tug/workboat MANCO, which Powell reportedly will use as an office.