

Meanwhile, Diane Evon and John Belko, of Cleveland, current owners and restorers of COLUMBIA's 1910-built former BobLo running mate, STE. CLAIRE, had hoped to raise enough money to have their vessel towed from Lorain to Wyandotte for the city's July 1-18 fireworks and Street Art Fair, but insufficient money was raised and it was deemed more suitable to continue with the excursion steamer's restoration.

Great Lakes Associates Inc., of Rocky River, Ohio, has continued to operate the 1925-built self-unloader JOSEPH H. FRANTZ under charter from Oglebay Norton Marine Services and she has been very active during 2004, carrying all sorts of cargoes. However, the last two straight-deckers operated by the "Kinsman Fleet" also have been in the news during 2004. The last U.S.-flag straight-decker on the lakes, KINSMAN INDEPENDENT (iii), (a) CHARLES L. HUTCHINSON (ii)(62), (b) ERNEST R. BREECH (88), built in 1952 and last operated in 2002, remains in lay-up at Buffalo, although it was announced in May that the United States Maritime Administration had approved an application by the Minch Transit Co., Rocky River, to sell the steamer to McKeil Boat Works Limited, of Hamilton. It is unclear what McKeil intends to do with the vessel, but speculation is that she will be used as a storage hull.

Meanwhile, on August 19, an accident occurred aboard KINSMAN ENTERPRISE (ii) (a) HARRY COULBY (ii)(89), which last operated in 1995. The ENTERPRISE was lying at the International Marine Salvage yard in the outer harbour at Port Colborne, where only a cut-down portion of her bow remains. A 21-year-old man was working in the steamer's forward chain locker when he stepped on a chain link and caused some 300 feet of chain to slip from a pile and pin him up to his neck. Local emergency response crews were unable to free him, and the Buffalo Fire Department Heavy Rescue Team was called. After five hours of work, the Buffalo crew freed the man and he was airlifted to Hamilton General Hospital where he was treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

Since 1996, the 1976-built tug JACKLYN M., (a) ANDREW MARTIN (90), (b) ROBERT L. TORRES (94), has been pushing the cement barge INTEGRITY. Both vessels are owned by the Lafarge Corp. and operated by Andrie, Inc., of Muskegon, Michigan. Late this spring, however, JACKLYN M. was renamed (d) G. L. OSTRANDER, the new name honouring Gary L. Ostrander, a Lafarge executive member who took his retirement in March.

After lying idle for many years at Thunder Bay, the barge M.A.C. GAGNE was sold this spring for scrapping in the far east. The 730-foot ship, built in 1964 for Canada Steamship Lines as (a) SAGUENAY (ii)(98), last operated in 1992. Subsequently acquired by Pierre Gagne Contracting Ltd., she was taken to Thunder Bay to assist in an environmental clean-up, but she never saw any other service, and her forward cabins were removed. M.A.C. GAGNE departed Thunder Bay via the Mission River during the evening of May 21st in tow of DOUG McKEIL, assisted on the stern by Point Valour. The tow arrived at the Canadian Soo on the 22nd, and was downbound in the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers on May 26, assisted on the stern by the G-tug WYOMING. The tow was in the Welland Canal on May 28. M.A.C. GAGNE departed Montreal in tow for Bangladesh on June 7 in tow of the deep-sea tug SIMOON. We have no report of her arrival at the breakers' yard.

There has been one other tow of a lake bulk carrier for overseas scrapping this year, and it is the former Algoma Central steam turbine powered ALGOSOUND, (a) DON-DE-DIEU (67), (b) V. W. SCULLY (87), built in 1965 for the Papachristidis fleet, her bow section by G. T. Davie & Sons Ltd. at Lauzon, and her stern by Canadian Vickers Ltd. at Montreal. She served Pickands Mather's Labrador Steamship Company from 1967 until 1971 when she joined the Algoma Central fleet. ALGOSOUND was sold too late in the 2003 season to make the overseas tow that year, and so she remained at Montreal over the winter. She departed Montreal late on June 2nd in tow of the Ukrainian deep-sea tug AKHTIAR, bound for India.