

Two new fast ferries began service on the lakes this year. LAKE EXPRESS, making the crossing of Lake Michigan between Muskegon and Milwaukee, appears to have been a success, while SPIRIT OF ONTARIO 1, running on Lake Ontario between Rochester and Toronto, was not (partly because of high operating expenses and a huge initial debt load) and suspended operation right after Labour Day. Moves are now afoot to try to resurrect the Rochester service.

It gives us much pleasure to extend our thanks to all who have supported the Toronto Marine Historical Society during 2004. We include the members of the Executive Committee who have attended to the operation of the Society and chaired our entertainment meetings; the members who are our regular correspondents and contributors to "Scanner" and without whose help we could not produce this newsletter at all; those who answered our call for lay-up listings; those who delivered "Scanner" in their local areas, thus saving postage; those who contributed historical items for sale for the benefit of T.M.H.S. and those who bought them; those who put on entertainment programmes for us and those who attended them, and all the many who supported us with their continued memberships.

And now it is time to pass along to you those same words which we say every year at this time. Repetitive they may be, and even unimaginative, but they come from the heart and mean so very much. We can think of no better way to speak of the coming of Christmas and of our inevitable passage into a new year. We are saddened that several of our old friends no longer are here with us to make that passage, but we know that they have "crossed the bar" to a better place and await us there.

Many of our members are closely associated with the lake shipping industry. It is our hope that the 2004 navigation season was for them as pleasant, safe and profitable as possible. We wish for all of our sailors, vessel operators and historians the very best for 2005.

But now, as our memories of summertime fade away, as the skies and waters of our Great Lakes take on the grey pallor of winter and we work to secure the insulation that we hope will keep the nasty weather on the outside, as the winds rage and the blowing snows obscure the horizons, and as the "smoke" rises from the cold waters, the lake ships scurry to collect and deliver their last cargoes of the year before they seek the calm and safety of winter quarters in snug ports. We wish them all safe passage.

And to all of the members of our large chosen family, the Toronto Marine Historical Society, we take this opportunity to extend to all of you our very best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and for all possible Happiness in the New Year. Take care, dear friends, and may 2005 bring to us all an increased measure of love, warmth, security, good health and success in all of our endeavours.

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#### LAY-UP LISTINGS

**In the February issue**, we will present our annual listing of the ships laid up for the winter at the various lake and river ports. So as soon as the winter fleet is in at your local port, please jot down the names and send them to the editor. You may mail them to 100 Whitehall Road, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2C7, fax them to Jay Bascom at (416) 368-7054, or e-mail them to [jay.bascom@sympatico.ca](mailto:jay.bascom@sympatico.ca)

We will, as usual, include tugs, ferries, etc., but would ask that you identify them as such when listing them for us so that there will be no confusion.

**Please Note:** To allow for preparation time, we must receive your lists no later than **Sunday, January 20**. Thank you for your assistance.

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