

In the April issue, we reported on the opening of the various lake and river canals for the 2005 season. Our information was correct except for the details relating to the St. Lawrence canals. In fact, the first vessel in the Seaway on opening day, March 25, was the upbound CANADIAN ENTERPRISE, bound for Gary, Indiana. First vessel downbound at St. Lambert was CEDARGLEN, on March 26, bound for Quebec City. The first salty through the Seaway was the tanker NORTH CHALLENGE on the 28th, in ballast for Sarnia, followed closely by the lumber carrier MENOMINEE, bound for Toledo.

In recent issues, we have reported the arrival of a number of former Canadian vessels at overseas scrapyards. We can now report that the 1966-built MICHALAKIS, (a) FUGAKU MARU (77), (b) FERBEC (05), latterly operated by Canada Steamship Lines in the St. Lawrence River titanium trade, was beached at Alang, India, on March 24. It was back on February 11th that she sailed from Montreal under her own power, bound for the breakers. Although a C.S.L. ship for almost thirty years, FERBEC never came to the Great Lakes as she was too broad (at 104 feet) to pass through the Seaway locks.

The ferries across Lake Michigan will begin their 2005 operations in mid-May. On May 12, the coal-burning steamer BADGER will start running on May 12 for Lake Michigan Carferry Service Inc. between Ludington and Manitowoc, after receiving more than \$100,000 in renovations to her passenger accommodations. She'll even have a special kennel area for pets. On May 14, LAKE EXPRESS will begin its high-speed service between Milwaukee and Muskegon, Lake Express LLC having invested some \$450,000 in stabilizers to attempt to deal with heavy weather, which caused delays and trip cancellations for the catamaran ferry in 2004.

It was reported on April 14 that shareholders in the U.S. and the Netherlands had approved the acquisition by the Mittal Steel Co. of the International Steel Group Inc. The former was controlled by Lakshmi Mittal, while the latter was the firm created in 2002 to acquire the bankrupt LTV Corp., and which subsequently acquired, amongst others, the bankrupt Bethlehem Steel Company. ISG thus acquired the former Bethlehem 1,000-foot lakers STEWART J. CORT and BURNS HARBOR. A few days after the acquisition approval had been announced, both the CORT and BURNS HARBOR went into temporary lay-up. We understand that this was due to the provisions of the Jones Act, which prohibit the operation of ships owned by foreign interests from trading between U.S. ports. We have yet to hear how the problem is being resolved.

On April 19th, the McKeil Marine tugs EVANS McKEIL and LAC COMO towed the barge SALTY DOG NO. 1 from Manistee, thus ending the connection between the fleet and the port. This was caused by the recent cessation of operations by General Chemical, for which McKeil hauled brine for close to a decade. SALTY DOG NO. 1 was not recently an active McKeil unit but had been serving as a dock extension at the Manistee brine facility. Nothing has been said as to what will happen to the barge now.

Meanwhile, there have been some changes in the McKeil fleet. The barge LAMBERT'S SPIRIT, (a) KTC 135 (04), has officially been re-registered as (c) ALOUETTE SPIRIT with a home port of Hamilton. In March, McKeil registered a U.S.-built barge named HANDY ANDY at Hamilton. The tug COLINETTE, once a pilot tug here at Toronto, has been transferred to Nadro Marine Services, Port Dover; she has been up on the dock at Nadro's plant for several years, undergoing a protracted rebuild. McKeil's barge THE PUGWASH now is owned by the Royal Bank of Canada, while the 1974-built tug BERT LONG has been sold by McKeil to 699300 B.C. Ltd., of Tuktoyaktuk.

On March 31, the 1954-built tug MARGARET ANN, (a) JOHN A. McGUIRE (87), (b) WILLIAM HOEY (i)(94), owned by Holly Marine Towing, Chicago, sank while towing two barges near the Hammond water intake crib in Lake Michigan south of Calumet Harbor. The Coast Guard attended and rescued the four crewmen. No explanation for the sinking has been made public.

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