

We now know why the tug NIPIGON was wearing those odd orange, white and chocolate brown colours when she was charging up and down Toronto Bay on trials on November 27. She has been taken over (only on charter, we believe, not an outright purchase) from McNamara Construction by the Balfour Beatty firm which, years ago, controlled the Russell Construction Company. Balfour Beatty currently is engaged in a construction project in the Bahamas and has taken NIPIGON there. Meanwhile, SOULANGES and ANGUS M., also hauled out of McNamara's boneyard at Whitby, remain on the north wall of Toronto's Pier 35, looking much the worse for their inactivity.

Toronto waterfront observers caught a strange sight on December 13, when an old wooden shed, sitting on a spud barge, was towed from the foot of York Street to Pier 51 at the Eastern Gap, by the tug LAC COMO. The 82-year-old building had served as the city terminus for the R.C.Y.C. tenders for many years, until the club moved to a new dock at Parliament Street. The shed was then used by tour boat operators until it had to be moved to make way for a driveway to a new condominium project. The historic building will be stored at Pier 51 for the winter and will be returned in the spring to a site near the foot of York, to become an information centre for Harbourfront Park. The old shed is all the more interesting in that it originally served as part of the Toronto Ferry Company's terminal at Bay St. It was not until the harbour redevelopment of the 1920s that it was moved, first to a site beside the Keating Channel, and then to the York Street location.

Another strange sight seen recently on Toronto Bay was the summer Island ferry WILLIAM INGLIS breaking ice whilst running to Ward's Island on the weekend of December 17-18. The carferry ONGIARA was tied up for engine work, so the INGLIS had to be pressed into service, despite the ice conditions. As far as we know, this was the first time that the 53-year-old INGLIS ever operated in ice and, despite her unsuitability for such service, she did a good job of keeping a track open between the city docks and Ward's Island.

It is no longer a secret. C.S.L.'s 1984-built PRAIRIE HARVEST will be converted to a self-unloader at Port Weller in the spring, as soon as the yard has finished the conversion of ALGOMARINE. She was the last straight-decker built for C.S.L. and her conversion has, no doubt, been sparked by the poor prospects for the grain trade.

The Misener ocean-laker SELKIRK SETTLER, now registered at Douglas, Isle of Man, was the last overseas departure from Duluth-Superior in 1988. She left on December 14, with 24,257 tonnes of spring wheat bound for Italy. At that time, the St. Lawrence canals were expected to close on December 22, and the Welland Canal on the 24th. As for the Yugoslav "ocean-lakers", OMISALJ and MALINSKA will be on one-year charters to Fednav in 1989, while PETKA, which carried a Misener stack in 1988, will trade in 1989 and 1990 in the Unitramp-Misener pool service.

On October 9, the tug KRISTEN LEE was towing the barge OLS-30 from Ludington to Bay City with a cargo of liquid calcium chloride. The barge began taking water whilst in Lake Huron north of Rogers City, and was intentionally put aground off 40 Mile Point, where it capsized, one end protruding from the water. There were obvious environmental concerns, and McAllister Towing was awarded a salvage contract. The wrecking barge McALLISTER 252 was sent to the scene, but it also grounded on December 3 after breaking free from its anchor cables at the wreck site. At last report, the mess remained...

A little item of interest previously escaped our notice. On November 21, the McKeil tug GLENBROOK was towing the spud barge SPIKE B. from Hamilton to Toronto when, two miles off Oakville, the barge capsized. It did not sink, but was towed, upside down back to Hamilton!

As an addendum to our December Marine News section, we noted that the U.S.S. CROAKER was upbound in the Seaway on November 19, bound for Buffalo in tow of OHIO and SUPERIOR. We neglected to mention that CROAKER is a submarine, built in 1943 at Groton, Connecticut, and until recently on display there. She will join the naval museum at Buffalo, since the Groton council balked at refurbishing costs.