

to be such a short period of time. There are not many idle bottoms left anywhere on the lakes, but as long as scrap prices remain at elevated levels, the fleets will continue to dispose of marginal carriers in order to help maintain a reasonable financial position. It costs a great deal of money to keep idle vessels on the books these days.

As in 1988, the canals and bridges of the lakes and Seaway system functioned without untoward incident during 1989, although the Canadian Soo Lock remained closed to all traffic and the federal government appeared no closer to making a decision concerning the future of the lock. Unfortunately, the season was not as happy as it might have been for several lake vessels which were involved in serious accidents. Among the lakers which sustained damage were NANCY ORR GAUCHER, which was the victim of a fountain of asphalt at Hamilton, the ENERCHEM ASPHALT, which sustained severe damage in an engineroom fire, and BLACK BAY, which did a great deal of damage to her bottom when she grounded in the St. Mary's River. The most regrettable incident was the destruction by fire at Toledo of the venerable Sandusky ferry steamer G. A. BOECKLING, the victim of a mindless act of vandalism.

We lost several T.M.H.S. members during 1989, notable among them being longtime members Charlie Bridges and Bill Weighill. Both were strong supporters of the Society and seldom missed a meeting. We shall miss them.

Although the weather this autumn has been nasty and wet, with great swings in temperature, the summer featured beautiful weather in most of the lakes area. It was warm and sunny, and great for photography. If only there had been a few more ships about, it would have been perfect.

Many of our members are closely attached to the shipping industry, and it is our hope that the 1989 navigation season was for them as pleasant and safe as possible. We wish them all the best for 1990. Indeed, we hope that the coming year will be a very good one for all of our members and, of course, for the Toronto Marine Historical Society itself.

But now, as once again our memories of summertime fade, as the skies and waters of the Great Lakes take on that familiar grey of winter, as the blowing snows obscure the horizons, and as the haze rises from the cold waters, the lake ships are scurrying to collect and deliver their last cargoes of the year before heading for the calm and safety of winter quarters. We wish them all safe passage.

And to all of the many members of our steadily growing family, the Toronto Marine Historical Society, we take this opportunity to extend our very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and for all possible Happiness in the New Year. Take care, dear friends, and may 1990 bring to you all a full measure of love, health and success.

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#### WINTER WEATHER

The past two winters have been relatively easy ones for the Toronto and eastern Lake Ontario area, but if conditions in mid-November are any indication, we may be in for a difficult winter this year. It is always possible that weather might interfere with one of our regular meetings, and we should like our members, once again, to take note of arrangements for such situations. If inclemency of weather should hinder the holding of the January, February or March Meetings, it would be impossible for us to contact personally all those members who might (or might not) be planning to attend.

Accordingly, if conditions are such that cancellation would appear to be a consideration, Toronto area members may call Gordon Turner (762-3130) or the Bascoms (921-8436) for information, while Peninsula area residents may call David Bull (935-1601). Please do not call during the day, but only on the actual evening of the meeting, and only if conditions should make cancellation a real possibility.

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