

In our October issue, we mentioned that the self-unloading boom was to be removed from the 41-year-old Canada Steamship Lines steamer HOCHELAGA, and that it would be placed aboard WINNIPEG when she is converted to a self-unloader at Port Weller during the coming winter. On October 16, McKeil tugs hauled HOCHELAGA away from her longtime berth on the south wall of Toronto's Leslie Street slip (off the turning basin), and took her to the south side of Pier 35 at Polson Street. There, her boom was lifted off by the Toronto Harbour Commission's heavy-lift, shear-legged crane "Atlas" on October 22nd. That same evening, HOCHELAGA was returned to her lay-up berth by the tugs GLENSIDE and LAC COMO, there to await an eventual scrap tow overseas.

An unusual autumn lay-up at Toronto this year has been the Enerchem Transport Inc. asphalt-tanker ENERCHEM ASPHALT, (a) O T MARINE (80), (b) ASFAMARINE (88). She entered port on October 11th and, after unloading a cargo down in the ship channel, she proceeded on the following day to the wharf near the foot of Sherbourne Street, where she laid up. Since then, it has been observed that maintenance and repair work has been being done aboard the ship, but she was still lying idle as October drew to an end. During the month of September, ENERCHEM ASPHALT had experienced generator problems whilst in port at Halifax.

Another of the tankers of Enerchem Transport Inc. will be helping to keep Port Weller Dry Docks busy during the coming winter. The 1969-built ENERCHEM FUSION, (a) CHEMICAL TRANSPORT (86), was the recipient of severe damage in a grounding incident which took place during the summer in the Saguenay River. We understand that the motortanker was abandoned to the underwriters and then was repurchased by Enerchem Transport. She has remained idle for the rest of the season, but will be moved to Port Weller, where permanent repairs will be put in hand during the winter months.

In recent years, the fleet of McKeil Marine Ltd., formerly of Winona and now of Hamilton, has rapidly expanded with the acquisition of a variety of tugs, barges, etc. One of the new tugs is EVANS McKEIL, the former BARBARA ANN, which was acquired during 1989. On October 21st, EVANS McKEIL arrived at Toronto towing the barge WITTRANSPORT II (the former CAPE TRANSPORT of the Hall fleet), which was brought over from Hamilton and spent several days servicing the Cuban salty SIBANIMAR as she lay along the outer wall at the Redpath Sugar plant. WITTRANSPORT II is now painted a dark blue, while her deck gear and piping is grey. Earlier, back on July 15th, EVANS McKEIL had been downbound in the Welland Canal with the fire-damaged tug PRESCOTONT, a 60-year-old veteran which most recently had operated on the Detroit River for the Windsor Detroit Barge Line Inc. We must assume that the McKeils are intending to rebuild PRESCOTONT and operate her. It is interesting to note that McKeil Marine also owns the big deck barge OGDENSBURG, which also was built in 1930 and was specially designed to be towed by PRESCOTONT in the Canadian Pacific carferry service between Prescott and Ogdensburg, so it would seem that the two partners now are reunited under common ownership.

The Upper Lakes Towing Company Inc. tug/barge combination of JOSEPH H. THOMPSON JR. and JOSEPH H. THOMPSON entered service about the middle of October, the barge's first load being a cargo of stone. The barge is now fitted with her self-unloading equipment, with the boom mounted aft. Much of her equipment was moved over from Upper Lakes' venerable self-unloading barge BUCKEYE (II), (a) LEONARD B. MILLER (37), (b) CHARLES W. GALLOWAY (58), (c) ROBERT C. NORTON (I)(74). The THOMPSON was intended to operate with her forward cabins intact and the tug controlled from the pilothouse of the barge, and first photos of her with her new unloading gear show her with her cabins still in place. However, in order to conform with certain Coast Guard classification requirements, the THOMPSON now has been stripped of her cabins and will be navigated from the pilothouse of the tug.