

considering the state of the economy.

There was lots of shipyard activity for those few yards remaining in operation on the lakes, but most of it was damage repair work or regular survey and inspection jobs. Peterson Builders at Sturgeon Bay continued to turn out small U.S. Navy vessels, but the first major commercial hull in more than half a decade was started on October 4th, when Port Weller Dry Docks laid the keel for the new Pelee Island passenger and auto ferry. There still is no prospect of any imminent construction of cargo vessels for lake service.

The scrap market remained sluggish, and so there was no massive exodus of redundant vessels. The idle CANADOC finally was sent to Colombian breakers at Cartagena, and the venerable tug JAMES BATTLE went to Ramey's Bend, but there was no other scrapping activity apart from the dismantling of the fire-ravaged tanker JUPITER at Bay City. Even the long-idle and boomless self-unloader HOCHELAGA remained at her Toronto berth, as did the tanker CONGAR (III), while ELMGLEN (II) continued to languish at Sorel.

Perhaps the most unhappy feature of the 1991 navigation season was the string of major accidents which occurred during the spring. SILVER ISLE was gored by a salty on the St. Lawrence River; the tug PATRICIA B. McALLISTER foundered in the Gulf of St. Lawrence with the loss of all but one crewman; the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker GRIFFON sank the fishtug CAPTAIN K. on Lake Erie and killed all three men on the tug; BEECHGLEN broke her back whilst unloading corn at Cardinal; the Yugoslav salty MALINSKA suffered a severe grounding off Main Duck Island in Lake Ontario, and the tanker EASTERN SHELL had a major grounding, complete with cargo spill, on Georgian Bay. There were assorted "minor" accidents during the summer, and then during the autumn, McKeil Marine sustained the loss of its barge OGDENSBURG by stranding in the Strait of Belle Isle, while fire gutted the pilothouse of the tug STORMONT at Hamilton.

The only major canal blockages occurred in August, when the Spanish MAR CATERINA holed herself and dropped a quantity of asphalt into the Snell Lock, and in October, when the Polish ZIEMIA GNIEZNIENSKA struck the east wall at Welland Canal Lock Seven and disabled the upper gates for three days. No major disruptions of vessel traffic resulted from either incident.

A particularly sad development in the autumn of 1991 concerned the retirement and sale of the veteran Bob-Lo Island ferry steamers COLUMBIA and STE. CLAIRE, longtime favourites of marine historians and observers across North America, but particularly beloved by the populace of Detroit and environs. We hope they survive...

Many of our members are closely attached to the shipping industry, and it is our hope that the 1991 navigation season was for them as pleasant, safe and busy as possible under current conditions. We wish them all the best for 1992. 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 and for "Scanner".

But now, our memories of the long, hot summertime fade away. As the skies and waters of our Great Lakes take on that familiar grey pallor of winter, as the winds rage and 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 large and 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 1992 bring to you all a full measure of love, warmth, health and success.