

THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

The April Meeting was well attended and members enjoyed an interesting programme of photos presented by Don Evans. Featured were Toronto Island ferries, past and present, Lake Ontario passenger steamers, and other interesting subjects. Our thanks to Don for his efforts.

Also featured was the draw for the G.L.B.C. freighter trip, the results of which are reported elsewhere in this issue. As well, to benefit the Society's coffers, we continued selling publications and photographs from the McCannell Collection; this will continue over the next few meetings until all of the excess material has found new homes.

We hope readers will like our special 25th Anniversary cover on this issue. We have featured special covers on our 10th and 20th anniversaries, but we wanted this year's most significant milestone to be marked in a very special way in our newsletter. The drawing of the beloved Niagara sidewheel steamer CHICORA is from the pen of your Editor, while the cover layout is the work of Bas Headford, of Minett Photographic, longtime friend of T.M.H.S. and printer of our stationery, covers and photopages.

By the time you read these words, the Annual Dinner Meeting will have come and gone. We will have enjoyed a tasty JADRAN meal and Russ Brown's SEGWUN programme, and the Society will begin its "summer vacation". As usual, there will be no regular membership meetings until October.

Your Editor will take some time away from the typewriter, and there will be only one "Scanner" between May and October; the Mid-Summer issue will, as usual, appear in August. However, we will be collecting marine news throughout the summer, so please remember to let us know if something of interest happens in your area. We look forward to hearing from you. And we may see you at one of the boatwatching spots around the lakes during the summer!

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MARINE NEWS

Although shipping got off to an early start this year, the season did not begin well for the Canada Steamship Lines self-unloader HALIFAX, (a) FRANK-CLIFFE HALL (II)(88). Just before 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6th, HALIFAX was upbound in the lower St. Mary's River between Nine Mile and Six Mile Point. She had wintered at Thunder Bay, carried a cargo downbound, and was returning up light. Three crewmen were working in the tunnel below No. 1 cargo hold when there was a sudden explosion and fire. Two of the men were able to escape but one, a 42-year-old St. Catharines man, died as smoke filled the tunnel. The ship's crew quickly controlled the fire, but calls for assistance brought U.S.C.G. BRISTOL BAY and KATMAI BAY to the scene. HALIFAX was allowed to run full speed up Little Rapids Cut and the tugs AVENGER IV and MISSOURI helped her to moor at the Carbide Dock at the Michigan Soo, where she remained for two days while the incident was investigated. It was found that acetylene and oxygen tanks in the area, while emptied, were intact. Although the fire produced enough smoke that it could be seen on deck abaft the forward cabins, damage was restricted to the inside of the tunnel and about 35 feet of the conveyor belt. Apart from the fatality, the only other casualty was the Soo police chief, who tripped whilst climbing over a fence ashore!

The 1993 navigation season started off much like the autumn of 1992 for the Port of Toledo, Ohio. Readers will recall that, last November, wind and water conditions caught the Algoma Central straight-decker ALGONORTH, downbound from the Cargill elevator in the Maumee River, and swung her away from the draw of the Conrail swing bridge. Fortunately, that incident delayed rail traffic but caused little significant damage to ship or bridge. At about midnight on Friday, April 2, 1993, the ULS Corporation's straight-deck bulk carrier MONTREALAIS was doing exactly the same thing - leaving the Cargill elevator with a load of wheat - when flood currents in the river swung her out of position just as her bow was into the draw. The ship was freed by