

The canals were relatively free of major accident during the 1993 season, at least up until the time of this writing, and we hope that such remains the case throughout the remainder of the year. That does not mean, however, that the canals are not troubled, and we continue to worry about the future of our Canadian waterways.

The Canadian lock at Sault Ste. Marie remains closed to traffic, and although there seems the possibility that the new Canadian federal government may assist in the task of returning it to service, any such operation will be of a much more "small craft" nature than in the lock's "glory years". And even the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority is crying the blues, as economic conditions have reduced traffic (and hence revenues as well) significantly. The major multi-year restoration programme for the Welland Ship Canal was completed last year, and that is indeed fortunate, because the Seaway has voiced grave doubts about its ability to survive without the major infusion of big dollars, and with governments reeling under massive debt loads and budget deficits, there seems to be no ready source of funds visible on the horizon.

There were few really major accidents to report during the 1993 season, apart from the usual strandings and collisions with lock fender booms, although the loss of the tug DUKE LUEDTKE and a Coast Guardsman who was aboard her when she sank in September on Lake Erie was a particularly unfortunate misadventure.

The scrap market remained poor and so there was little scrapping activity. IRVIN L. CLYMER was sent to a Duluth scrapyards, and the long-idle C.S.L. vessels HOCHELAGA and FORT ST. LOUIS were dispatched to Colombian breakers, but although it was rumoured that certain idle U.S. lakers might be towed out late in the season, there had been no movement by the time we penned these words.

And, speaking of words, it now is time for us to pass along to you certain words which may seem to be repetitive and, perhaps, unimaginative, although in reality they are nothing of the sort, because they come straight from the heart, and are trotted out again simply because they have come to mean so much and because we can think of no better way to speak of the coming of Christmas and the passage into a new and, dare we hope, a better year. So here goes...

Many of our members are closely attached to the shipping industry, and it is our hope that the 1993 navigation season was for them as pleasant, safe and busy as possible under the current conditions. Despite uncertainty over the future, we wish them all the best for 1994. 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, as our memories of the long, hot and dreamy summertime fade away, as the skies and waters of our Great Lakes take on that familiar grey pallor of winter and we ascend ladders to secure the storm windows that will keep the nasty weather on the outside, 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 they are forced to head 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 and renewing family, the Toronto Marine Historical Society, we take this opportunity to extend to all of you our very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and for all possible Happiness in the New Year. Take care, dear friends, and may 1994 bring to us all a full measure of love, warmth, good health and success.