

Earlier in the year, it had been announced by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications that free passage would no longer be provided on the ferry service operated between Kingston and Wolfe Island by the ferry WOLFE ISLANDER III. The imposition of ferry tolls was deemed by the Ontario government to be necessary to reduce the operating deficit of the heavily-travelled route, but Wolfe Island's residents took the issue to court. They received support from Cape Vincent, New York, businesses and residents because of their link to Kingston via Wolfe Island. The islanders' position was vindicated in early June when Madame Justice Helen MacLeod of the Ontario Court agreed, ruling that the Ontario legislature would have to approve a change to the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act, which guarantees free access to the province's highways (of which the ferry crossing forms a part), before tolls could be imposed. Accordingly, the June 6 effective date for the ferry tolls was postponed, pending appeal of the judgment or, in the alternative, legislative amendment to the Act.

In the May issue, we commented upon the April 13th accident in which the unloading boom of the Erie Sand Steamship Company's Maritime-class motorship RICHARD REISS collapsed into the Grand River and partially onto the shore while the ship was unloading stone at the Osborne Materials dock at Fairport, Ohio. The REISS had one of the booms with minimal upper trusswork that were fitted on a few ships in the 1960s in an effort to save weight, and it would seem that strength was saved as well! In any event, the fallen boom was cut up into sections on the dock, and the REISS sailed on April 16 for Port Weller Dry Docks. There, she was fitted with the more substantial "traditional-style" boom that was removed a number of years ago from the retired steamer HOCHELAGA when Canada Steamship Lines briefly considered converting the straight-decker WINNIPEG to a self-unloader. As that conversion never took place, the boom was still reposing at the shipyard when the REISS suffered her misfortune. It duly was installed aboard RICHARD REISS, and the vessel was ready to depart the shipyard on Friday, May 13. Her owner would not, however, let the ship sail on such an inauspicious date, just as she had the middle initial 'J' removed from her name to avoid the ill fortune reputed to follow a vessel with thirteen letters in its name, and thus she did not return to service until the early morning hours of May 14th.

Traffic on the St. Lawrence Seaway was shut down for two and a half days in late July as a result of damage sustained to one of the diagonal trusses on one of the lower gates at the Snell Lock in the U.S. section of the waterway. The damage occurred late on Saturday, July 23rd, and traffic was suspended at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, July 25th, so that repairs could be put in hand. Although it originally had been anticipated that the canal would be closed until the morning of the 28th, operation of the lock actually resumed at 12:20 p.m., on Wednesday, the 27th.

The cement-carrying barge CLARKSON CARRIER, which is pushed by the Wakeham tug PETITE FORTE, has a new name in 1994. The 1980-built barge is now operating as ST. MARYS CEMENT III. Although we have no confirmation of a change of ownership, we imagine that the name change indicates that the barge which previously was owned by the St. Lawrence Cement Company Inc. is now controlled by the St. Marys Cement Company, of Toronto.

Because the grain trade remained relatively strong this summer, albeit with some unusual movement patterns (such as grain taken from Thunder Bay into Duluth), there have been few summer lay-ups at Toronto. SAGUENAY and CANADIAN HUNTER have remained idle at the port, as has, of course, the long-idle tanker CONGAR. WINDOC was here until she went back into service in mid-July. ALGOISLE went into lay-up at Toronto on July 28th, ENERCHEM ASPHALT laid up (alongside CANADIAN HUNTER) on August 13, and SEAWAY QUEEN laid up on the south side of the Leslie Street slip on August 16th. Most recent summers have seen far more dog-days lay-ups, so maybe the shipping business really is looking up at last.

\* \* \* \* \*