

MARINE NEWS

The autumn of 1994 saw the return to the Canadian Soo of a vessel that formerly was based there, but has not visited the port for 18 years. The 290-foot A. B. McLean barge G.L.B. NO. 1 foundered on August 1st, 1976, in Lake Huron off Rockport, Michigan. Her owner was able to lift the barge and took her up to Bruce Mines, Ontario, where she was abandoned in a bottom-up position. Purvis Marine, which purchased the remains of the defunct McLean fleet in July, managed to refloat the barge but could not right her where she lay. The tug W. I. SCOTT PURVIS took the barge in tow, and still upside down, she arrived at the Soo's Government Wharf on November 13th. The next day, she was moved up to the former McLean Export Dock in the upper harbour, which now is owned by Algoma Steel. The barge eventually will be righted and then sunk in position for future use by Purvis Marine as a dock facility.

Last issue, we mentioned the reactivation by Purvis Marine of two former A. B. McLean tugs that had not been expected to see further service. Both tugs have been painted in Purvis livery, and the McLEAN was on the Twin City Dry Dock & Marine drydock at the Michigan Soo during October. On November 2nd, the McLEAN came off the drydock after her refurbishing, and MISEFORD took her place.

After a year in which efforts to keep the United States Coast Guard icebreaker MACKINAW in service seemed to achieve only so-so results, and conflicting reports about the future of the vessel seemed to be forthcoming at regular intervals, we are indeed pleased to receive a November 4th press report that confirms that MACKINAW will remain in service through 1998. The announcement of the continued operation of the venerable icebreaker was made by Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Robert Kramek, and ended speculation that the Coast Guard would not make funding available for the MACKINAW's operation after 1995. At the time of Kramek's announcement, MACKINAW was in the shipyard at Sturgeon Bay, undergoing repairs. Her continued operation will please lake shippers who, after a winter and spring of very heavy ice conditions, were very anxious to see the MACKINAW retained.

One of the vessels that has "shaken out" of the acquisition of the former GLBC boats by the Algoma Central and ULS fleets has been the 1963-built steamer BAIE ST. PAUL, which had not operated in several years and which apparently will be one of the boats which ULS will sell to accommodate its expanded fleet of straight-deckers. Earlier in the year, whilst lying idle at Hamilton, her stack was painted all black, and her new name CANADIAN PATHFINDER was painted on the bow, but only in roughly-stencilled letters. On November 15th, she made a surprise arrival at Toronto under tow, first being placed along the east wall of the Eastern Gap. She was used there for some movie filming, and on November 25th she was moved northward and secured alongside the idle ULS steamer CANADIAN HUNTER, which also is said to be destined for the scrapyard. Both HUNTER and PATHFINDER have had numerous pieces of operational equipment removed.

On October 5th, the directors of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority formally awarded the contract for the construction of the new Sugar Island ferry to Basic Marine, of Escanaba, which put forward the lowest bid at \$1,518,000. The Basic bid won out over higher bids submitted by Marinette Marine, Fraser Shipyards Inc. and Peterson Builders Inc., and with more than \$2,000,000 received in grants, there will be some \$500,000 left over for dock reconstruction, provided that there are no cost over-runs on the ferry. It is hoped that the new ferry will be ready for operation in May of 1995.

Last issue, we mentioned the October 10th grounding of ROGER BLOUGH in the Detroit River near Zug Island. In fact, she was not refloated on the 11th. It took the efforts of four barges to lighter taconite from the BLOUGH, and a total of eight tugs pulling on her before ROGER BLOUGH was refloated on October 12th.