

mittance to our Chief Purser and, when paying, please specify whether you would prefer a fish or chicken dinner. (All dinners include appetizers and dessert.) Please send your reservation to William R. Wilson, 173 Glenrose Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1K7. Tickets will be held at the door for all who have reserved.

Please Note: We must confirm the number that will attend and also their choice of dinner, so reservations, accompanied by payment and dinner choice, must be received by Tuesday, May 16th. We regret that there can be no refunds after that date. Please reserve early to ensure that there will be space for you and your party. We look forward to seeing you there for an evening of good food, good company and an excellent entertainment programme.

In the New Member Department, a hearty welcome goes out to Austin Murphy, of Toronto, to Donald Keays, of Montreal, and to the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.

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MARINE NEWS

The relatively mild winter which we experienced in the Great Lakes area this year allowed the 1995 navigation season to commence early and with very little difficulty. The Welland Canal was officially opened on Friday, March 24th, with the upbound sailing of CANADIAN OLYMPIC, bound from Hamilton to Detroit with a cargo of furnace flux. The ceremonial top hat was presented to Capt. Austin Peckford as the self-unloader passed through Lock 3.

The Soo Locks saw their first commercial passage just a few minutes after midnight on Saturday, March 25, as the 1,000-foot Interlake self-unloader JAMES R. BARKER passed upbound through the Poe Lock. More than a dozen ships either locked through or were in the vicinity of the canal on the first day of operation. The West Neebish Channel, usually the last part of the lower St. Mary's River to be broken out, was cleared by U.S.C.G. MACKINAW on March 19, and on the 20th, the big breaker, accompanied by U.S.C.G. KATMAI BAY and BISCAYNE BAY locked up and began work in the upper river. Finding little ice there, MACKINAW moved on to work in the Duluth area, leaving the 140-foot tugs to do any additional work necessary in the Soo area.

The 1995 winter lay-up was one of the shortest on record for the little auto and passenger ferry NEEBISH ISLANDER, which crosses the head of the West Neebish Channel's Rock Cut between Barbeau, Michigan, and Neebish Island. The ferry was not forced out of service by ice until February 10th, and she was back in service again on March 16th. The 1995 season will be the last for the 1950-built NEEBISH ISLANDER, (a) LILLIFRED (56), for the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority will replace her this summer with the SUGAR ISLANDER, which will move downriver as soon as her replacement, the SUGAR ISLANDER II, now under construction at Escanaba, is ready for service on the route across Little Rapids Cut. The keel for the new ferry was laid by Basic Marine during January, and she should be running in June or July.

The 1994 season saw the vessels of the Oglebay Norton Company running under peculiar colours after a reorganization of the fleet saw the disappearance of the long-familiar Columbia Transportation Division of the company. The old Columbia star and 'C' disappeared from the boats' stacks, which were left red but with a yellow band. On the bows appeared the new four-pointed "star" or stylized compass design incorporating the letters 'ON'. The start of the 1995 season has seen the addition of this same red-and-white emblem to the yellow band on the ships' stacks, and all accounts we have received indicate that it looks very good. There have been other changes in the Oglebay Norton fleet, in that the River-class self-unloaders WILLIAM R. ROESCH and PAUL THAYER have been renamed (b) DAVID Z. NORTON (III) and EARL W. OGLEBAY, respectively. These names have great historical interest and we are pleased to see their reappearance on the lakes. The last vessel to be named DAVID Z.