

The "Toronto Star" reported on April 8th that the firm of Price Waterhouse had been retained by the Quebec provincial government to attempt to find a buyer for the MIL Davie shipyard at Lauzon, Quebec. The "troubled" shipyard has depended in recent years on federal government naval contracts, with Canadian lake operators not building new hulls, and with Canadian shipyards generally not able to compete with shipbuilders in other countries. With the Canadian dollar at a low value, however, it was thought by the Quebec legislators that now might be a good time to get the MIL Davie shipyard off its books.

The spring has seen the return to service of the 1927-built Inland Lakes Transportation Inc. cement-carrying steamer S. T. CRAPO after she spent the winter at the Bay Shipbuilding yard at Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. The CRAPO, albeit still a steamer, will no longer emit clouds of coal smoke, however, because during the winter months she was converted to burn oil fuel. Accordingly, the lakes have lost their last coal-fired freighter. We are pleased, however, that the CRAPO has survived to enjoy more years of active service.

A surprise passage down the Welland Canal during early May was Captain John Letnik's restaurant ship NORMAC, which in recent years has been functioning at Cleveland, Ohio, having been taken there after her reconstruction following an altercation with the ferry steamer TRILLIUM. We thought that NORMAC had been successful at Cleveland, but greener pastures apparently have beckoned, and she is now installed in the harbour at Port Dalhousie. We had not thought that this "ugly duckling" would be returning to Canadian water, but we wish her well in her new surroundings. Captain John's, of course, operates the former Yugoslav cruise vessel JADRAN as a restaurant in the Yonge Street slip at Toronto.

The ranks of Toronto Harbour excursion/party boats have been thinning recently in consequence of the tough financial times that have plagued business for the last several years, and also because of the market having seen a glut of available "booze boats" on the bay. Not only had JAGUAR departed after the 1994 season, but more recently, Club Canamac Cruises sold its 118-foot, 1989-built STELLA BOREALIS to Windsor Cruise Lines, a firm controlled by Canamac. STELLA BOREALIS was in the midst of having a new enclosure built around her upper deck aft when the sale was completed, much as her fleetmate, AURORA BOREALIS, had received earlier. STELLA BOREALIS departed Toronto for Windsor on April 28th, and arrived at her new home port on May 2nd. It is interesting to note that Canamac has not surrendered its lease on STELLA's dock space on the pier at the foot of Yonge Street, just in case she is not successful at Windsor and is forced to return to Toronto.

The stripped hull of the 68-foot, 63-ton, former fishtug ERIE NO. 1 (C.158163), ex RENE PURVIS, and built in 1910 at Dunkirk, New York, as (a) DUNKIRK, remains on the bottom of the Leslie Street slip off the Toronto turning basin, where it sank in late March. Latterly owned by the Rogers interests, who operate the Toronto Drydock (the former MENIER CONSOL) and have a number of other interesting hulls moored in the immediate area, including SALVAGE PRINCE and the former U.S.C.G. SAUK, the ERIE NO. 1 was facing an uncertain future and has yet to be raised from the depths.

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AN ONTADOC FOLLOW-UP

We are pleased that our April Ship of the Month No. 220, a repeat visit to the venerable steamer ONTADOC (I) which had been featured as our third Ship of the Month back in 1969, has found favour with our members. We now have more information about her, but we lack space in this issue to present it. Watch for "ONTADOC Revisited" in a future issue.

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