

Sarnia's waterfront is at last free of what many locals considered a nasty eyesore, the barge SCURRY, (a) HUDSON TRANSPORT, which had been lying across the inner end of the elevator slip since her short career as a barge, owned by Bocadon Marine Transport Inc., Toronto, came to an end. This spring, SCURRY was acquired by purchasers, so far identified only as "Lawebod", of Lagos, Nigeria, who planned to use her in bunkering service there. Also purchased by the same parties was the Sandrin Brothers Limited tug TUSKER, which also has been idle at Sarnia during the last several seasons. A Nigerian crew arrived in April to fit out the two ships for their long ocean voyage. TUSKER was renamed BODE, while SCURRY became (c) REMI, and the pair departed Sarnia on May 9th. They were assisted on the downbound passage by Sandrin's other tug, GLENADA, and the trio passed through the U.S. section of the Seaway on May 13th. GLENADA left the tow at Montreal and was upbound in the canals again on the 15th, bound back to Sarnia.

It is a bit unusual for us to report a lake port opening this late, but the item is so interesting that we thought we should mention it. The first ship of 1992 to call at Ogdensburg, New York, arrived during the first week of May, and took out a cargo of 16,000 tons of marble chips consigned to South Chicago. What is so unusual is that the vessel involved was the USS Great Lakes Fleet Inc. self-unloading motorship GEORGE A. SLOAN, a ship which only very rarely ventures below Lake Erie.

Meanwhile, on June 26th, Sessler Wrecking, of Waterloo, New York, began demolition of the concrete silos of the 1909-built grain elevator on the Ogdensburg waterfront. In short order, the silos were levelled, and on July 29, the Sessler firm attempted to demolish the elevator's head house by means of controlled dynamite charges. Unfortunately for the wreckers, the 700 sticks of dynamite did their "thing", knocking the top off the solid structure by dropping it some eight feet, but the lower 80 feet of reinforced concrete simply rocked but did not fall or crumble. The remainder of the building, owned by the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority, was to be dispatched by means of bulldozer and wrecking ball.

In an unusual occurrence that so far has defied concrete explanation, the former U.S. Navy and St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation tug MENASHA now owned by John Fedak, of Ogdensburg, was found on August 10 to be sunk in 20 feet of water, 1,000 feet offshore from her Ogdensburg dock. Booms were placed around the wreck site to contain leaking fuel, but at last report, salvage plans were not firmed, nor had it been determined who had cast the tug adrift and caused her to sink.

An unusual cargo was brought into the lakes in June by the Fednav Group salty FEDERAL SAGUENAY. It was a load of copper concentrate produced at Irian Jaya, Indonesia, and was pipelined in slurry form 110 kilometres to the port of Amamapare, on the Arafuru Sea, where it was loaded aboard ship. FEDERAL SAGUENAY unloaded part of her strange cargo at Montreal, Quebec, and then proceeded to Ashland, Wisconsin, where the final 10,000 tons were discharged. The copper concentrate then was railed some 80 miles to the Copper Range Company's smelter at White Pine, Michigan. Of course, in days long gone, Michigan's Upper Peninsula was famous for its copper mines...

Having received approval from the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Board of Directors of the Eastern Upper Peninsula Transportation Authority vote on July 1st to proceed with the design of a new ferry planned for the St. Mary's River crossing from Mission Point to Sugar Island. By the time construction is set to begin, proposed changes in federal regulations should be in place which would make the ferry eligible for 80% federal funding and a 20% state funding match. The ferry will replace the 1946-built (and often-rebuilt) SUGAR ISLANDER, which reportedly will be transferred to the Neebish Island route when no longer needed on her present route. The Authority is going ahead with plans to remodel SUGAR ISLANDER's pilothouse this autumn, and also will give her machinery a thorough overhauling.