

some yacht is scheduled to be decommissioned in 1997. BRITANNIA was in port for eight days, departing on April 22nd.

"Privatization" seems to be all the rage these days, as various levels of government face budgetary cut-backs and are looking for ways to get the private sector to take over the providing of costly public services. The Toronto Harbour Commission, which has been embroiled in municipal debate over the future and the funding of the Toronto Island Airport (now called Toronto City Centre) which it operates, recently advertised for private bids for the operation of the ferry service to the airport across the Western Gap. The ferry service, which provides the only public access to the airport, and utilizes the ferries MAPLE CITY and WINDMILL POINT, reportedly took a loss of \$900,000 during 1995. Not surprisingly, the Commission received no replies to its request for bids!

J. W. Purvis Marine Ltd. reportedly will have two of its tugs operating away from the company's home base at the Soo during 1996. ANGLIAN LADY already is towing the barge McASPHALT 401 on the lower lakes, a job she started last year, and now it is said that W. I. SCOTT PURVIS will spend her season pushing a stone barge out of Marblehead on Lake Erie.

A belated report indicates that the end of the road finally came in the autumn of 1995 for the former U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredge MARKHAM. The 317-foot dredge, built in 1960 at Avondale, Louisiana, was long operated by the Buffalo District of the Engineers. With the disposal of Corps dredges and privatization of dredging work on the lakes, MARKHAM was transferred in 1989 to the Texas National Guard, and later she was taken to Hythe, England. She was transferred to the Wilmington District of the Engineers in 1992, and held in reserve pending disposal. In 1994, she was transferred to the North Carolina Marine Fisheries and was stripped of equipment and any possible contaminants in preparation for sinking as an artificial reef. At 1:40 p.m. on October 20, 1995, 212 pounds of C-4 plastic explosives were detonated aboard MARKHAM, and the dredge sank in just over three minutes, coming to rest on her port side in 78 feet of water, 18 miles southeast of Masonboro Inlet, North Carolina.

At long last, the Club Canamac Cruises group, which operates the excursion boats AURORA BOREALIS and STELLA BOREALIS (the former at Toronto and the latter at Windsor), has concluded purchase of the idle Lake Ontario hydrofoils SUNRISE I and SUNRISE II. The two hydrofoils, one lying at Toronto and the other at Port Weller, will be taken to Windsor later this spring, where they will be operated by Jackpot Express Lines to bring passengers to the casino at Windsor.

It would appear that the reconstruction of the Canadian lock at Sault Ste. Marie will advance from the design phase to construction this summer. Design of the new smaller lock to be built within the existing structure has been approved, and tenders were to be called during the spring. The federal and provincial governments will share the \$10-\$12 million construction cost, while the lock, once opened, will be operated by the city, with 75 percent of the operating cost provided by the provincial and federal authorities. User fees will help fund the project. The new lock, shorter, deeper and shallower than the old stone chamber, will only be able to handle recreational vessels, and also, presumably, the local excursion and tour boats.

The scrapping of the former Parrish & Heimbecker steamer BEECHGLEN, (a) CHARLES M. SCHWAB (bow and mid-section) (75), (b) PIERSON DAUGHTERS (82), has been under way this spring at Port Maitland, Ontario. It is reported that all of the vessel's stern cabins were gone by April 17, 1996. BEECHGLEN was towed to the Port Maitland scrapyard during the summer of 1994, but has been lying untouched while the breakers attended to other work.