

Please Note: We must confirm to the restaurant the number of persons who will attend and also their dinner choices, so reservations, accompanied by payment and meal selection, must be received by Tuesday, May 6th. We regret that there can be no refunds after that date, and that tickets will not be sold at the door. Please plan to attend and reserve early to ensure that there will be space available for you and your party.

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In the New Member Department, a hearty welcome goes out to Samuel Cummings, of Ada, Michigan. We are pleased to have you with us as a member of the Toronto Marine Historical Society.

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MARINE NEWS

Navigation on Lake Ontario opened on March 18th, when STEPHEN B. ROMAN cleared Toronto lay-up, arriving the following morning at Picton. The Essroc motorvessel loaded for Toronto and was back to her Cherry Street dock on the 21st, winning the award as first commercial vessel into Toronto for 1997.

Reports on the proposed cross-Lake Erie ferry carferry service of Inland Ocean Lines were coming frequently during February. Responding to Erieau village council's concerns about transport trucks clogging the village and its limited road access, the company's president stated that trucks would not be permitted on the ferry, seemingly a direct contradiction of the original plans to offer the ferry as a short route to Ontario for trucks coming out of the U.S. In another development, Inland Ocean Lines put up a display illustrating its plans and included in it the description of a second boat, the Lake Michigan steamer CITY OF MIDLAND 41, which the company hopes to add to LAKE KING's runs, the second boat staying overnight in Cleveland. This is the first mention so far of another boat being involved, and as far as we know, no definite plans for the acquisition of CITY OF MIDLAND 41 have been announced.

Backing off from the Ontario government's earlier announcement that the residents of Pelee Island would have to fund themselves the operation of the ferries JIIMAAN and PELEE ISLANDER after January 1, 1998, the Transportation Minister retreated during March after receiving a very hostile reaction to the planned de-funding. Following a meeting with a delegation of local politicians, the minister was quoted as saying: "Obviously these people are going to qualify to get funds" (from a new provincial contingency fund which will allow municipalities to dip into a \$1.8 billion restructuring fund to cover shortfall in operating costs).

Last issue, we commented upon the proposed cross-border Lake Superior tug-barge service, for which a pilot project is planned to begin in 1998. Press reports mentioned the possible involvement of four barges, and we surmised that the former Norfolk-Southern carfloats MANITOWOC, WINDSOR and ROANOKE might be involved. They might indeed, and we now believe that the fourth potential candidate could be the former C & O St. Clair River carfloat PERE MARQUETTE 10. The barges, handled by former Navy Cherokee-class tugs, would operate in the lumber trade.

Petro-Nav Inc., the new firm which hopes to acquire the last remaining tankers from the fleet of the defunct Socanav Inc., is owned 51% by Groupe Desgagnes, and 49% by Richard P. Carson, who formerly was executive vice-president of Enerchem Transport Inc. The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce hopes to sell the remaining tankers during 1997, but no decision on the actual disposition has yet been made. Interestingly, a recent press report indicated that four tankers were to be sold, whereas we understood that only LE CHENE NO. 1, L'ORME NO. 1 and LE SAULE NO. 1 were involved. We believe the fourth boat may be W. M. VACY ASH which, although operating overseas, appeared still to be in the Socanav fleet and not otherwise sold.