

2001. The year 2000 is, in fact, the hundredth and last of the old century, which began on January 1st, 1901.

Was 1999 a year of centenary importance? It certainly was for Canada's largest inland marine transportation company, as the Algoma Central Corporation celebrated the 100th anniversary of its founding. Not only were there all sorts of special observations of this notable event, but as well Algoma celebrated with the acquisition of the EnerChem tanker operations. We wish Algoma Central well in the years to come.

The lake fleets activated most of their vessels this year, although the Canadian grain trade hit the summer doldrums very early and some of the straight-deckers did not run at all until autumn. The U.S. fleets had most of their boats running through the season, but one which was not fitted out in the spring, the American Steamship Company's handsome self-unloading steamer JOHN J. BOLAND, got a major extension on her life when she was acquired by Lower Lakes Towing, for which she will join the older CUYAHOGA in Canadian service. Renamed (b) SAGINAW after another Great Lakes river which is important to the company's operations, the former BOLAND should enter service for her new owner before the end of the current season, after a refit at Sarnia. We wish her well, and many years of profitable service in Lower Lakes' distinctive livery.

Salt water ships again traded into the lakes in large numbers, and many of them called at Toronto. Not only did they arrive here with steel products and sugar, but an increasing trade was the bringing in of cement clinkers, dumped on the pier on the east side of the Eastern Gap amid great clouds of dust. Even greater clouds were created when front-end loaders shovelled the clinkers into open trucks. Only one deep-sea line service called regularly at Toronto. Not many lakera call here these days, but STEPHEN B. ROMAN and ENGLISH RIVER frequently brought bulk cement to the Essroc and Lafarge terminals, respectively, while CUYAHOGA and a variety of Algoma Central self-unloaders brought in enough road salt to rust out every car in the Greater Toronto area!

But enjoy the shipping while ye may, for if the politicians get their way, and if the city wins its bid for the 2008 Olympic Games, the entire eastern port area will be turned into a sports and housing complex, while the Ship Channel and Turning Basin will become a regatta course. Whatever happened to the concept of harbours being used by ships? And from whence do these nimble brains think that commerce comes? And why can they not see, as did the early promoters of Harbourfront Park (before their ideas were perverted by political idealism) that people and ships can co-exist and benefit each other, and well as filling municipal coffers? And once the shipping facilities are all gone and the Olympic flame has been extinguished (if, indeed, it ever is lit here), what then do we do with all the sports venues and athletes' housing? Of course! We give it all over to private operators and to the accommodation of the homeless, who need decent housing and jobs now rather than second-hand sports facilities a decade from now.. How far-sighted our officials are...

Lake shipyards remained busy during 1999, but most of the work involved routine repairs and inspections. The Marinette Marine Corp. has continued to churn out new Coast Guard tenders for salt water service, and Port Weller Dry Docks returned to new construction, the only large yard on the lakes to do so. In 1999, Port Weller completed the new CSL NIAGARA, using the old stern from the J. W. McGIFFIN joined to an entirely new midbody and bow. Work is now well underway on the new hull for C.S.L.'s H. M. GRIFFITH, and it will be joined to the old stern during the coming winter.

The only major shipbreaking efforts that were ongoing during 1999 involved the dismantling in the Port Colborne outer harbour of the old hull of J. W. McGIFFIN. The same breakers now have taken delivery of C.S.L.'s retired