

In the February issue, we will be running our annual listing of the vessels laid up at the various lake and river ports. But in order to compile this valuable record for posterity, we need the assistance of ALL of our members who have access to the ports or to fleet information. Many lake ports already have their full complement of lay-ups, while others will not receive their last lay-ups until after the Soo Locks close.

If you have not already done so, please prepare a list of the ships wintering at your local ports and send it to us as soon as possible. We need to have your submissions by January 25th at the latest. You may write to us at the address shown on the front page of "Scanner". You may phone the Editor at home (evenings only, please) at (416) 921-8436. Or you may fax to the Editor at his office (please make sure my name is clearly showing, as many people use this business machine) at (416) 368-7054.

Please do NOT assume that someone ELSE from your area will send us a list. We need YOURS, and we need it as soon as possible. Thank you.

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MARINE NEWS

The City of Toronto was determined to have one of the most impressive New Year's celebrations in the world, and so the annual party was moved from Nathan Phillips Square (at City Hall) to the waterfront, and Queen's Quay was closed to traffic and taken over by hundreds of thousands of revellers, the festivities being centred at the pier between the foot of Yonge Street and the Redpath Sugar plant. As the seconds were counted down to midnight, rockets were fired from the C.N. Tower and progressed up the pillars until the stroke of 12:00, when a final burst shot up from above the restaurant level. Then a spectacular 17-minute fireworks display, complete with simulcast music, took place all the way from Jarvis Street to Rees Street, the rockets being sent up in unison from four lake freighters anchored in single file across the harbour, while searchlights blazed from various locations along the inner shore of the Toronto Islands. The ships used for the fireworks extravaganza were Upper Lakes Shipping's CANADIAN TRADER, CANADIAN VENTURE, SEAWAY QUEEN and CANADIAN MARINER, anchored in that order from east to west. The TRADER and VENTURE were loaded with storage sugar for Redpath's, while SEAWAY QUEEN and the MARINER already had been unloaded. The freighters were returned to their winter berths by McKeil tugs following the spectacular event. This certainly was one of the most inventive uses for lake ships we ever have witnessed, the rockets being launched from mortars set into large sandboxes placed at various locations on the ships' decks.

The Welland Canal closed for the 1999 season on Christmas Eve. The last salt-water ship to clear the system, passing through Dec. 23, was MILLENIUM MAJESTIC. She was not the last saltie to pass down at the Soo, however, as she was followed there, about an hour later on December 21st, by LADY HAMILTON, which reached the Welland before the MILLENIUM MAJESTIC. In this centennial year of the Algoma Central Corporation, it was only fitting that not only did an Algoma ship open the Welland Canal, but that another one closed it. The final Welland passage of 1999 was made by the downbound ALGOGULF.

After lying idle in the Keating Channel during 1999, the former Shaker Cruise Lines cross-lake ferry LAKE RUNNER has left the lakes, bound for a new career on the west coast of Canada. We had heard that she was going to leave the lakes via the Illinois Waterway and the Mississippi River, but such proved not to be the case. Classed as a private yacht for the trip, LAKE RUNNER cleared Toronto on December 11th, stopped briefly at Port Dalhousie, and then headed off down Lake Ontario and the Seaway. She was at Halifax shortly before the end of the year.

Also clearing Toronto on December 11th was ALISON LAKE, the Rogers excursion sailing vessel fashioned, during the course of a lengthy conversion, from