

In the March issue, we noted that the Welland Canal had opened for the 2000 season on March 27th, with the upbound passage in ballast of CSL NIAGARA. Too late for inclusion in that report came word that the St. Lawrence canals also opened the same day, the ceremonial first passage being made by ALGO-PORT, which was downbound in ballast to load ore at Port Cartier.

The Soo Locks opened for the season on March 25th, and opening day was a very busy one, despite the fact that only the Poe Lock was open to traffic. The first vessel through was the downbound PAUL R. TREGURTHA, but fifteen other ships passed through the canal on the first day. Amongst them were JOHN G. MUNSON, U.S.C.G. MACKINAW, EDGAR B. SPEER, STEWART J. CORT, OGLEBAY NORTON, CANADIAN TRANSPORT, WALTER J. MCCARTHY JR., PHILIP R. CLARKE, FRON-TENAC, CASON J. CALLAWAY, GEORGE A. STINSON, COLUMBIA STAR, MESABI MINER and EDWIN H. GOTT. The MacArthur Lock at the Soo opened for the season on April 10th.

The newest CSL self-unloader, RT. HON. PAUL J. MARTIN, being the mainbody built as the shipyard's Hull 78, added to the stern of the 1973-built H. M. GRIFFITH, was completed in far shorter time than was CSL NIAGARA last year. The MARTIN departed the shipyard on Friday, April 21st, and ran her trials overnight on Lake Ontario. She returned to the yard briefly on the 22nd, and then cleared upbound. We understand that she was bound for Superior to load ore.

On the same date that the MARTIN was christened, March 29th, Port Weller Dry Docks laid the keel for its Hull 79, being the next new hull for a CSL self-unloader reconstruction. It will be either for LOUIS R. DESMARAIS or for JEAN PARISIEN, it being unclear at present which will get the upgrade. It is said that during the 2000-2001 winter, the Port Weller shipyard also will play host to CSL's TADOUSSAC, which will receive major work, but not a new hull.

Meanwhile, the International Marine Salvage scrapyard on the east side of the outer harbour at Port Colborne is getting crowded. The dismantling of the old hull of J. W. MCGIFFIN has not yet been completed, and alongside it now is lying the sister-hull from H. M. GRIFFITH. Lying astern of these two is the as-yet-untouched TARANTAU.

The last word we had on the progress of the double-hulling work being done at Port Weller on the Algoma tanker ALGOEAST was that she was due to run her trials on April 25th. She should be in service by the time these pages appear in print.

Two of the newest series of FedNav ships passed up into the lakes early in the new navigation season. FEDERAL RIDEAU was upbound in the Seaway on March 31st, while FEDERAL ASahi passed upbound on April 2nd. As mentioned last issue, one of the new vessels will be named FEDERAL WELLAND, and she should be in service in September.

At long last, a buyer has been found for the former EnerChem Transport Inc. tanker ENERCHEM TRADER, which had been idle at Montreal and was not wanted as a part of the Algoma Tankers fleet after Algoma acquired the EnerChem fleet. ENERCHEM TRADER was the 1961-built former (a) J. EDOUARD SIMARD (67), (b) EDOUARD SIMARD (82), (c) LE CHENE NO. 1. She is now reported to have been sold to Panamanian buyers, who have renamed her (e) SILVERHEAD. We do not have a date for her departure from Montreal, but we assume that she has now headed for warmer climes.

Heading back to the lakes from those warmer climes is the Toronto excursion vessel EMPIRE SANDY. The sailing ship, and former tug, went to the Bahamas again last winter, but at last report had reached Boston on her return trip northward. She was due to arrive in Halifax on Saturday, May 6th. Her fleet-mate, WAYWARD PRINCESS, recently was drydocked at Toronto and came off the drydock (the former MENIER CONSOL) on April 29th.