

Passing up the Welland Canal on Sunday, April 16th, was the former McKeil excursion vessel GARDEN CITY, which has been idle at Hamilton since her return from the east coast several years ago. She has been sold to Port Dover area operators who reportedly will run her on excursions in the Point Pelee area. We wonder if this may have some connection to a report which appeared in a Toronto newspaper on April 26th, stating that day-long excursions to the World Biosphere Reserve on Long Point would be operated out of Port Dover, twice a week, commencing on June 1st.

Of the vessels that spent the past winter in Toronto Harbour, four returned to service this spring. STEPHEN B. ROMAN and ENGLISH RIVER resumed their normal runs in the cement trade, while the straight-deck bulkers ALGOCEN and MONTREALAIS also were commissioned. Continuing to lie idle, however, are SEAWAY QUEEN, CANADIAN MARINER, CANADIAN TRADER and CANADIAN VENTURE. Somewhat unexpectedly, they were joined on April 13th by CANADIAN RANGER, which wintered at Hamilton and was towed over to Toronto by the McKeil tug JOHN SPENCE, assisted on arrival by LAC COMO.

A fixture on the Toronto waterfront for many years was the Toronto Harbour Commission's wooden-hulled "yacht" HARRY G. KIMBER, built by the J. J. Taylor yard at Toronto in 1961. Used for special excursions and, latterly, charters, the KIMBER has been acquired by Toronto Tours, which operates the tour vessels SHIPSANDS and MISS KIM SIMPSON. She was replanked over the winter and her gasoline engines were replaced by diesels, and her new owner has renamed her (b) NEW BEGINNINGS. We assume that she will now be painted blue with white trim, like her fleetmates.

It would appear that there may be hydrofoil ferry service across Lake Ontario again in 2000. During the late winter, SEA FLIGHT I and SEA FLIGHT II were put in the water and moved around to the west side of the Yonge Street slip, where LAKE RUNNER used to dock. SEA FLIGHT I made trips on April 29th and 30th, but we have yet to see a schedule for operations of the hydrofoils.

Other news of Toronto Harbour denizens includes the PIONEER QUEEN being hauled out by the Atlas shoreside crane at the Polson Street slip for lengthening, but so far the work has not taken place because of a labour dispute involving welders. Meanwhile, the tug GLENMONT, latterly owned by Capt. John Jones, was acquired earlier this year by Mac Makarchuk and John Whinney. Looking very sad after years of idleness, the tug was hauled from the water near the Essroc cement elevator, and it is said that she is to be lengthened.

This summer, we will see a return to the Great Lakes of the cruise ships LE LEVANT, c. COLUMBUS and SEABOURN PRIDE, the latter again coming up only as far as Toronto. But the prospects for the 2001 season are impressive indeed. It is said that Delta Queen Coastal Cruises, an affiliate of the Delta Queen Steamboat Company, will have its first 226-passenger ship, now being built by Atlantic Marine at Jacksonville, Florida, on the lakes for a twelve-week season.

More definite, however, are plans by Great Lakes Cruises Inc., of Waukesha, Wisconsin, to market three, four and seven night cruises aboard the Golden Sun Cruises' ARCADIA, (a) VICENTE PUCHOL, (b) ARCADIA, (c) ANGELINA LAURO (II), which was built in 1968 as a passenger and auto ferry by Union Naval de Levante S.A., of Valencia, Spain. She was converted to a cruise ship in 1990. She is 361 feet in length and 53 feet in the beam, and Lloyd's shows her tonnage as 5113. Her first lake cruise will depart Toronto for Detroit on June 12, 2001, but further trips, of which there will be 23, will sail from Windsor and terminate at Detroit. The final trip of the season will depart from Windsor and take passengers all the way to Freeport in the Bahamas. We understand that it also will be possible to make the entry trip all the way from Piraeus, Greece, to Toronto via a circuitous route around the British Isles and northern Europe. ARCADIA's fares look to be reasonable.