

It is reported that the Neptune's Nimrods Dive Club, of Green Bay, Wisconsin, is seeking Wisconsin state approval of a plan to sink the former Mackinac passenger and auto ferry THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC in Lake Michigan as a fish habitat and dive attraction. Built at River Rouge in 1928, the steam ferry ran for the State of Michigan until 1957, and then for Straits Transit Inc., but in 1968 became a storage vessel at the shipyard at Sturgeon Bay. With the wooden portions of her superstructure stripped off, the hull presently is lying derelict at Kewaunee.

In the Mid-Summer issue, we mentioned the strike which affected the Pelee Island ferry service this past summer. Unfortunately, we included UPPER CANADA as part of the fleet that includes JIIMAAN and PELEE ISLANDER. Nobody noticed! In fact, UPPER CANADA is back-up to SANDY GRAHAM on the Georgian Bay service to Christian Island.

Speaking of ferries in strange places, July 2nd saw the downbound passage in the Welland Canal of the 100' x 40' passenger and auto ferry AAZHAAWE, recently completed as Hull 134 of Hike Metal Ltd., Erieau. She was heading down in preparation to enter the Trent-Severn waterway, on delivery to Ontario's Lake Simcoe, where she now is running the service between Virginia Beach and Georgina Island.

\$110 million in funding has been approved by the U.S. Senate to build a replacement for the famed, 1944-built U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker MACKINAW. The new vessel, a combined icebreaker and buoy tender, is expected to be ready for service by 2006.

In mid-June, the Toronto Fire Department closed its old marine fire station which was located adjacent to the city ferry docks, and moved the home base of the fire tug WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE to a new station west of the foot of Rees Street. The old dock was very difficult for shoreside fire crews to reach when needed, resulting in delays in getting the MACKENZIE off to any emergency. Since the relocation of the fire station, the ferry service's engineering department has taken over the old marine firehall, and the workboat P&P 1 has been moored in the MACKENZIE's old slip.

A rather mysterious collision occurred on western Lake Erie at 1:29 a.m. on Monday, September 25th. The Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker and buoy tender GRIFFON was anchored northeast of the Pelee Passage Light, at the western entrance to Pelee Passage, during the course of performing maintenance on the light. She was struck on the port bow by the C.S.L. self-unloader ATLANTIC HURON, (a) PRAIRIE HARVEST (89), (b) ATLANTIC HURON (94), (c) MELVIN H. BAKER II (97), built 1984 at Collingwood, which at the time was downbound with grain for Halifax. The GRIFFON suffered a gash 20 feet long and two feet wide above the waterline on the port bow, and she was taken first to Amherstburg, and then to Sarnia, where repairs were to be put in hand. The Coast Guard was to assign SAMUEL RISLEY to take GRIFFON's place while the latter was being repaired. ATLANTIC HURON apparently was allowed to proceed on her way without any immediate repairs. As yet, there has been no public explanation as to how this accident came to happen.

When we reported in the Mid-Summer issue on the pairing of the tug INVINCIBLE with the barge MCKEE SONS, now under charter to Lower Lakes Towing, the vessels had not yet entered service. The refurbishing of MCKEE SONS was still under way at Sarnia. INVINCIBLE and MCKEE SONS finally began operation when they cleared Sarnia on September 4th.

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Once again, we are out of space for Marine News. We'll try to catch up in the November issue.

Also, watch the November issue for a follow-up, including some rare photos, of last issue's feature on BEAVERTON and EDMONTON.

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