

As mentioned briefly last issue, the sale of the USS Great Lakes Fleet Inc. self-unloaders CALCITE II, MYRON C. TAYLOR and GEORGE A. SLOAN to the Lower Lakes Towing interests was completed on March 31st, thus ensuring the operating future of these three venerable vessels that might otherwise have faced nothing but the scrapyards. CALCITE II has been renamed (c) MAUMEE, for the river which serves as Toledo's port; the TAYLOR is now (b) CALUMET, for the Calumet River at Chicago, and the SLOAN is now (b) MISSISSAGI, apparently named in honour of the Mississagi Strait of northern Lake Huron. The three vessels were rechristened in triple ceremonies (the first such in memory) which took place at Sarnia on April 21st. CALUMET's sponsor was Donna Rohn, wife of the president of Grand River Navigation; MAUMEE was christened by Martha Pierson, the wife of Robert Pierson, and MISSISSAGI was sponsored by Judy Kehoe.

Following the ceremonies, the fitting out of the three motorships was completed, and they look great in Lower Lakes colours. MISSISSAGI is registered at Nanticoke, Ontario, and bears the Lower Lakes Towing Ltd. name on her bows. CALUMET and MAUMEE are registered at Cleveland, and the company name showing on their bows is Lower Lakes Transportation Inc. Interestingly, the first of the ships to enter service was the one whose future was most in doubt before the sale. MAUMEE departed Sarnia on April 28th, bound for Stoneport, and her first cargo took her to Saginaw, where she arrived on the morning of May 1st. She apparently suffered some sort of engine problem and had to be assisted to the Saginaw Rock Products dock by the tug KURT LUEDTKE, but MAUMEE was able to leave under her own power late the same day.

Another piece of joyous news for lake shipping observers concerns the Erie Navigation Company's barge canal motorship DAY PECKINPAUGH, (a) INTERWATERWAYS LINE INCORPORATED 101 (32), (b) I.L.I. 101 (36), (c) RICHARD J. BARNES (58). Built in 1921 and converted to a cement carrier in 1958, she last operated in 1994, and has been lying idle ever since at Erie, Pennsylvania. Most observers expected that she eventually would be sold for scrapping, as her cargo capacity was so limited that she could not operate economically anywhere other than on the barge canals for which she was built. However, an option to purchase the vessel has been exercised by a firm known as North River LLC., which intends to convert the PECKINPAUGH into a passenger boat with overnight accommodations for 50 guests in 24 staterooms on two decks. Plans are to operate the ship "to historic ports of call from the Finger Lakes, Hudson River and New York Harbor to the Chesapeake Bay and the Florida Keys", beginning in 2002. The first step in the process will be to tow the PECKINPAUGH from Erie to Buffalo, and then down the Erie Division of the New York State Barge Canals from Tonawanda to Waterford, N.Y., where she will be drydocked. The PECKINPAUGH name apparently will be retained.

More good news concerns the Essroc Canada Inc. cement-carrying barge METIS. She recently has served as a cement storage barge at Windsor, but over the night of April 20-21, she was towed down the Welland Canal en route to Hamilton. There she will be given a \$1.3 million refit by Heddle Marine. It is our understanding that upon completion of the refit, she will be returned to active service under the management of Upper Lakes Group Inc., which already operates STEPHEN B. ROMAN for Essroc. Towing the METIS will be the tug POINT CARROLL, which recently was acquired by McKeil Marine Ltd., and will be renamed (b) TONY MACKAY. The tug, formerly with Eastern Canada Towing Ltd., of Halifax, was built in 1973. It is reported that METIS will carry cement from Lake Ontario down the St. Lawrence River.

CSL LAURENTIAN, the Port Weller reconstruction of the self-unloading stem-winder LOUIS R. DESMARAIS, was floated off the drydock on April 7th, with the assistance of the tugs JAMES E. McGRATH and PROGRESS. After running trials on Lake Ontario, she finally was under way, late in the afternoon of April 9th, upbound to load a cargo of grain at Thunder Bay. Meanwhile, the old forebody of the DESMARAIS was towed away from the shipyard fit-out wall