

Also removed from the drydock at Port Weller on the same day as NORMAN McLEOD was the McKeil tank barge LE VENT which was being refitted for service carrying aviation fuel. We did not say much about LE VENT during the time she was lying idle at Hamilton, so we should give her particulars. This barge was built in 1969 by Boelwerf in Belgium, and she is 379.8 x 63.3 x 24.9, 5649 Gross Tons and 3281 Net. She is now registered at Hamilton under official number 822797. McKeil appears to have created yet another corporate entity to own LE VENT, as she was registered on January 17, 2001, to the Voyageur Marine Tanker Corp., Hamilton. After LE VENT, her hull painted primer orange, came off the drydock on November 24th, she was put alongside the fit-out wall for her conversion work to be completed. We do not believe a particular tug has yet been announced as the one that will go into LE VENT's notch.

A former lake tanker now serving on salt water was renamed recently. She is the former LEON SIMARD, built by Marine Industries Ltd. at Sorel in 1974 for Branch Lines, and she later served Socanav Inc. as L'ORME NO. 1, which name she took in 1982. Latterly named TRADEWIND OCEAN, she was renamed AMARA on July 9th. She currently is owned by Offshore Energy Resources (Integrated Oil & Gas, managers) and is registered in Nigeria.

When last we spoke, last issue, of the former Bob-Lo ferry steamer STE. CLAIRE (built in 1910), she was still on the drydock at Toledo Shiprepair, her hull repairs having been completed but adverse weather preventing her removal from the drydock she had entered on September 11th. She finally was towed out of the drydock on November 6th and was moved to the Torco Lake-front Docks, Toledo, where work was to begin immediately on the restoration of her wooden superstructure. As yet, her new owner, Diane Evon, of Cleveland, has not announced to what use the preserved STE. CLAIRE will be put. Meanwhile, STE. CLAIRE's former Bob-Lo running mate, the 1902-built COLUMBIA owned by the Steamer Columbia Foundation, Detroit, continues to moulder away in idleness at Ecorse. Both steamers last operated in 1991.

In the November issue, we commented upon the large amount of shipbuilding business currently on the books of the Manitowoc Marine Group. The company announced on November 26th that it has been awarded options for its Marinette Marine division to construct two additional seagoing buoy tenders of the "Juniper class", the work worth some \$60 million. These tenders will be numbers 15 and 16 in the series and are scheduled to be delivered in April and September of 2004. It is said that one of these vessels may be stationed on the lakes, and if so, she would be the first vessel of this class or the "Keeper class", built at Marinette, to serve on the lakes. Manitowoc/Marinette is now the largest supplier of new ships and shiprepair to the U.S. Coast Guard.

It is only slowly that information is being gleaned as to what will remain of the operations of American Classic Voyages after its financial difficulties are sorted out. As of now, we do know that the Delta Queen Steamboat Company will, with its old management restored, attempt to operate DELTA QUEEN and MISSISSIPPI QUEEN in 2002. Unfortunately for "wannabe" lake travellers, the operations of Delta Queen Coastal Voyages ended with AMCV's Chapter 11 filing. Delivery of CAPE COD LIGHT was refused, and CAPE MAY LIGHT was returned to her Jacksonville, Florida, builders at the completion of the trip she was on when the Chapter 11 filing was made. What is not generally known is that CAPE MAY LIGHT's master, Capt. Chuck Beverly, was killed in an accident aboard his ship during the trip back to Jacksonville.

As in October, the last few days of November brought wild weather to the lakes and sent ships to safe ports and anchorages. There was much shoreline damage in the Duluth area and washed ashore were timbers from a breakwall that predated the 1871 construction of the present entrance canal.