

ary 7th, 1955. One of the tugs was out of service with mechanical problems, and the remaining three were unable to maintain their runs on schedule. A large and increasingly cold and hostile crowd bound for work in the city waited at the Hanlan's Point dock, watching tug after tug not stop because of capacity crowds already aboard coming down the lagoon from the Filtration Plant. Finally the H. J. DIXON stopped, with space left for only about a dozen persons, but 125 people pushed aboard and refused to get off when ordered by the captain to do so. In response to the distress signal sounded on the DIXON's melodious chimed whistle, not only the Harbour Police but also the Island police department arrived and attempted to restore order. The over-capacity passengers finally were persuaded to debark, and other tugs took them to the city for their day's business, but most of them were so irate that they pushed their way through the city dock turnstiles without paying at all. Faced with much adverse publicity over the incident, the T.T.C. reconsidered its position and eventually retracted the fare increase, at least for the duration of that winter.

Then, in 1957, came an opportunity for Toronto Dry Dock to make considerable money without having to rely solely on its usual tug operations. A television series was to be filmed on Toronto Bay and Harold Dixon obtained a contract for two of his tugs to be used in the filming. J. C. STEWART was one of them, and the other was the wooden-hulled H.J.D. NO. 1 (C.152501). The latter had been built in 1925 at Port Stanley, Ontario, as the steam fishtug (a) FINGLO for the Eastside Fish Company, but before completion had been taken over by the Finlay Fish and Storage Company Ltd. She was the largest fishtug ever built at Port Stanley. In 1941, Toronto Dry Dock acquired her and renamed her, but before long, she was badly damaged by fire. Rebuilt at the Toronto Dry Dock yard with a new steel main cabin and her pilothouse on the upper deck, she then was 84.0 x 20.8 x 8.0; she was 67 Gross and 33 Net Tons. Her only problem was that her wooden hull precluded operation in ice.

The STEWART and H.J.D. NO. 1 were to be used in the making of the half-hour situation comedy series "The Adventures of Tugboat Annie" produced by Normandie Productions, a Canadian subsidiary of Television Programs of America, in association with Associated Rediffusion of the United Kingdom. The series was shown locally by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and was pre-sold for sponsorship by Lever Brothers Limited.

Tugboat Annie was the brainchild of Canadian writer Norman Reilly Raine, who wrote 75 such stories, the first of which appeared in "The Saturday Evening Post" on July 11, 1931. They featured "Tugboat Annie" Brennan, the gruff but heart-of-gold skipper of the fictitious Seattle tugboat NARCISSUS of the Deep Sea Towing & Salvage Company, and her chief rival, Captain Horatio Bullwinkle of the tug SALAMANDER. Other tugs in the "fleet" were the DAFFODIL, ASPHODEL and PANSY. A character named Big Sam was Annie Brennan's chief engineer.

Annie first came to "life" in a 1933 M-G-M film starring the famous Canadian-born actress Marie Dressler (who passed away the next year) and the highly-renowned Wallace Beery. Also appearing in that film were Robert Young and Maureen O'Sullivan. Another Tugboat Annie film made in 1940 starred Marjorie Rambeau and Alan Hale (the latter of "Gilligan's Island" fame) and featured Ronald Reagan and Jane Wyman. Yet another film, which appeared in 1945, starred Jane Darwell and Edgar Kennedy.

Starring in the Toronto-filmed television series were Minerva Urecal (in real life Mrs. Max Holtzer, whose stage surname was concocted from her birthplace of Eureka, California) and Walter Sande. From an interview of Ms Urecal that appeared in the "Kingston Whig Standard" on May 1, 1959, we know that 39 episodes of the series had then been made. We suspect that few if any more were completed, as the series was less than a roaring success and most sources show only 1958 as its air date. We understand, however, that the filming cast and crew did quite a bit of roaring in one of the downtown Toronto taverns!