

longterm lay-up at Sturgeon Bay.

It was announced early in April that Groupe Ocean, of Quebec City, had acquired the assets and operations of Trois-Rivieres Remorqueurs Ltee. (Three Rivers Boatmen Ltd.), thus putting Groupe Ocean in control of tug services on the St. Lawrence River between Montreal and Quebec City with a fleet of 17 tugs. Groupe Ocean had, in previous years, acquired the fleets of McAllister Towing & Salvage, Quebec Tugs and Omnimar of Sorel. In a related story, it was learned that the Groupe Ocean's shipyard at Ile aux Coudres had been chosen by the Quebec provincial government to do a mid-life modernization of the Quebec City ferries ALPHONSE DESJARDINS and LOMER GOUIN, both of which are 214 feet in length and were built in 1971.

Another item coming from the Quebec area proves that they don't build warships the way they used to. In mid-April, the frigate H.M.C.S. VILLE DE QUEBEC was being docked at the Davie shipyard for an overhaul, and was being assisted by two tugs. She struck a concrete wall so heavily that her plating was torn for a distance of 35 metres - or 115 feet! That was some "heavy landing"!

The next of the Juniper-class Coast Guard buoy tenders, U.S.C.G. HICKORY, will be launched by Marinette Marine on May 11th. The two previous tenders of that class, OAK and CYPRESS, remain at the Marinette yard but will be delivered this season.

While one group wants to sink the former Straits ferry THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC as a dive site on Lake Michigan, another seems intent on putting yet another former passenger steamer out of her misery. For more than a decade, the sad remains of the former Buffalo - Crystal Beach steamer CANADIANA have languished in Ramey's Bend on the Welland Canal, the hopes of a Buffalo group to restore the ship having come to naught. Now the Grimsby Conservation Club has formulated plans to move CANADIANA to Grimsby, Ontario, (between Hamilton and St. Catharines) where she would be sunk as a fish reef and diving site in about 40 feet of water.

Another former passenger steamer may be moving once again. The former Grand Trunk carferry CITY OF MILWAUKEE, currently moored at Manistee, has not attracted as many visitors as was hoped when the ship was moved to Manistee from Elberta three years ago. The society that is preserving CITY OF MILWAUKEE hopes to find cheaper and more easily accessed moorings for the ship, either in Manistee or elsewhere. The vessel is not only a museum and community attraction, but also offers 35 rooms for bed-and-breakfast facilities.

The Detroit mail and pilot boat J. W. WESTCOTT II returned to service on April 9th after a winter of refurbishing following the October 23, 2001, accident that sank her and took the lives of her two crew members. In addition to other repairs and modifications, the WESTCOTT was fitted with a new Detroit Diesel engine. The first vessel serviced by the WESTCOTT in 2002 was PHILIP R. CLARKE.

Vessel operations on the Rouge River were substantially disrupted during the first half of April as a result of several large "spills" of oil into its waters. Although the source of the oil was being investigated, it was unclear whether the pollutants were released by shoreline industries or by weather events.

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CONTACTING YE ED?

If you have need to contact the Editor between now and early December, kindly send e-mail to jay.bascom@sympatico.ca or phone (416) 203-0815 to reach me at Gleneagles, the summer "cottage". Please do NOT leave messages at the city (winter) phone line. There is no answering machine at the Island, so if there is no answer, it means I am busy or not home. Try again later! Thanks.

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