

Once again, our February issue will include the listings of ships laid up at our lake and river ports, not only to preserve the record but also so our members may travel to distant ports to see the boats wintering there if so desired. So once your local port has welcomed its winter fleet, please drop us a note as soon as possible to identify all lay-ups there. You may write to the Editor at the address shown on the cover, you may phone evenings to (416) 921-8436, or e-mail jay.bascom@sympatico.ca

In addition to major commercial ships, we will include tugs, ferries and large dredges/barges. Please include them in your lists but be sure to note what kind of vessel is being named to avoid confusion at our end.

Thank you for helping with this annual project. Please ensure that your lists reach us **no later than January 23rd**, as any subsequent reports will have to wait until the March issue, and by then spring will almost be here!

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MARINE NEWS

In the December issue, we reported the acquisition by Canada Steamship Lines Inc. of the Fednav-chartered FRASER, the deal being made by way of a re-purchase of the ship by Fednav from her Tokyo owner and the subsequent "flipping" of the ship from Fednav to CSL. As indicated, the vessel was renamed (e) SPRUCEGLEN (ii), and she came into the lakes with a cargo of sugar, arriving at the Redpath plant, Toronto, on December 18th. She was unloaded in short order and then went to winter quarters on the west face of Pier 51. We stand to be corrected, but as far as we know, this is the first time that one of the former Misener "ocean-lakers" has ever wintered in the Great Lakes. There apparently is much work that CSL intends to do to refurbish SPRUCEGLEN, and we imagine that much of that work will be done during the winter months. SPRUCEGLEN's new port of registry is Montreal.

With the acquisition of FRASER announced, there was much speculation amongst shipping observers as to whether a similar deal would be consummated for Fednav's sistership charter MACKENZIE, and word was not long in coming, Canada Steamship Lines Inc. announcing on December 23rd that it had acquired the 1983-built MACKENZIE, (a) CANADA MARQUIS (91), (b) FEDERAL RICHELIEU (91), (c) FEDERAL MACKENZIE (01). The deal was accomplished in the same manner as in the case of FRASER. And for the MACKENZIE, CSL has revived yet another of the old P & H Shipping names, as she becomes (e) BIRCHGLEN (ii). Unlike SPRUCEGLEN, however, BIRCHGLEN is not wintering in the lakes. We suspect, however, that she soon will arrive at a Canadian port for the necessary work. Despite worries that the acquisition of these ships might spell the end for one or more of CSL's straight-deck bulkers, all were named in the MACKENZIE acquisition announcement, with no mention of any retirements being imminent. We surely will find out in the spring.

Last issue, we mentioned that the Marinette-built tug OCEAN RELIANCE and her BayShip-built barge 550-3 made their way down the canals in late November on their way to Tacoma, Washington. We had not thought that the second tug/barge pair, COASTAL RELIANCE and 550-4, would be finished in time to leave the lakes before the closing of the canals, but in fact they were. The tug and barge cleared the Seaway on December 15th, bound for San Francisco to enter service for the same Tacoma owners, Vessel Management Systems.

Despite the extremely cold weather that was experienced in early December, which caused water temperatures in the canals to be well below normal, the St. Lawrence Canals and the Welland Canal were able to close without difficulty and all salt-water ships were able to clear the system. The last commercial vessels to transit the Welland Canal cleared on Christmas morning, CSL LAURENTIEN downbound, and PETITE FORTE with the barge ST. MARYS CEMENT III upbound. The St. Lawrence Canals closed late on December 26th with the downbound passage of CSL LAURENTIEN. The last saltie to leave the system was