

His Financial and Personal Interests 1869-1937". This should be a very special programme about one of Canada's foremost shipping entrepreneurs of all time.

The ticket price is \$34.00 Canadian per person and, as usual, guests will be most welcome. Please send your early remittance to our Chief Purser and, when paying, kindly specify whether you would prefer a salmon or tenderloin steak dinner. Cheques should be payable to Toronto Marine Historical Society and addressed to William R. Wilson, 173 Glenrose Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1K7. Tickets will be held at the door for all those who have reserved.

Please note that space is limited and this will be a popular programme. We must confirm to the restaurant the number of persons attending AND their dinner choices, so reservations **accompanied by payment** must be received by Tuesday, May 6th. We regret that there can be no refunds after that date. Please plan to attend and reserve early for you and your party. The dinner meeting always is a high point of our season, and an evening enjoyed by all who attend. Won't you please join us? And remember that the dinner ticket price includes all taxes and gratuities - a great value in today's world!

In the **New Member Department**, we extend a hearty welcome to Roderick Morrison, of Amherstview, Ontario. We hope that you will enjoy your membership in the Toronto Marine Historical Society.

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MARINE NEWS

After an extremely harsh winter, the 2003 navigation season on the Great Lakes is under way. It has not been an easy transition, however, as ice conditions have been worse than have been seen in many years. Lakes Ontario and Michigan were the only ones with any substantial amount of open water, and conditions on Lake Erie and in the Straits of Mackinac were severe enough to create serious problems for traffic that did try to operate. As mentioned last issue, CAPT. RALPH TUCKER had to run a Sarnia-Amherstburg shuttle in the brine trade until she was able to get back to Manistee in March, and the tug RELIANCE and barge P.M.L. 9000 only managed to make two trips from the Soo to Trenton, Michigan, with steel coils before the St. Mary's River ice cut short the trial operation. And on February 28, the barge McASPHALT 401, in tow of JOHN SPENCE and carrying a cargo of carbon black, was holed by ice in the area of South East Shoal, Lake Erie, and was forced to put in at Port Stanley for repairs.

The first lake freighter to leave lay-up for the new season was Inland Lake Management Inc.'s cement-carrying steamer ALPENA, which departed winter quarters at Cleveland on March 1st. She required the assistance of C.C.G.S. SAMUEL RISLEY on Lake Erie and, in fact, ALPENA needed icebreaking assistance in various locations during the month of March, including at her namesake port, Alpena, Michigan, where the tug MANITOU from Port Huron broke ice for her.

With ice conditions so severe, arrangements were made for additional help to be brought into the lakes. The U.S. Coast Guard brought in the 140-foot MORRO BAY, while the Canadian Coast Guard called in the 322-foot PIERRE RADISSON. The latter was not only used to help clear the St. Lawrence canals but also was needed to fight the heavy ice in eastern Lake Erie. As well, the Groupe Ocean tugs LA PRAIRIE and OCEAN HERCULE were used to break ice in the St. Lambert and Cote Ste. Catherine areas.

Despite the ice conditions, the Soo Locks opened on schedule at 12:01 a.m., March 25th, but no commercial vessels passed through the canal that day. The first passage was made on the 26th, that being the downbound ROGER BLOUGH, which was closely followed by EDWIN H. GOTT, EDGAR B. SPEER and PRESQUE ISLE, all of which had loaded ore at Two Harbors. They were escorted down