

was attempting to obtain her when, seemingly without warning, Blue Circle Cement sold her to Purvis Marine in October and she was towed to the Canadian Soo for scrapping. The preservation group is continuing its efforts to save the historic steamer. Another scrapping involves the dredge BV RAYNA, the former steam canaller CHARLES R. HUNTLEY.

The prospects of any new ships being built for lake trade continue to be poor and most shipyards are only doing repair work. Port Weller gave major refits to C.C.G.S. GRIFFON and H.M.C.S. HALIFAX. Marinette Marine built more U.S. Coast Guard buoy tenders and launched the first of three big double-ended ferries for New York's Staten Island service, and the affiliated Bay Shipbuilding at Sturgeon Bay received two major tank barge orders. Still to come from Marinette in the future will be the replacement for U.S.C.G. MACKINAW.

The Canadian National has acquired what remains of the former U.S. Steel fleet, while even closer operations will be coming for Algoma Central and Upper Lakes Shipping.

We are pleased to extend thanks to all who have supported the Toronto Marine Historical Society during 2003. We include the members of the Executive Committee who have attended to the operation of the Society and chaired the entertainment meetings; the members who are our regular correspondents and contributors to "Scanner" and without whose help we could not produce the newsletter at all; those who answered our call for lay-up lists; those who delivered "Scanner" in their local areas, thus saving us postage; those who contributed historical items for sale for the benefit of T.M.H.S. and those who bought them; those who put on entertainment programmes for us and those who attended them, and all the many who supported us with their continued membership.

And now it is time to pass along to you those same words which we say every year at this time. Repetitive they may be and even unimaginative, but they come from the heart and mean so very much. We can think of no better way to speak of the coming of Christmas and of our inevitable passage into a new year. We are saddened that several of our old friends no longer are here with us to make that passage, but we know that they have "crossed the bar" to a better place and await us there.

Many of our members are closely associated with the lake shipping industry. It is our hope that the 2003 navigation season was for them as pleasant, safe and profitable as possible. We wish for all of our sailors, vessel operators and historians the very best for 2004.

But now, as our memories of summertime fade away, as the skies and waters of our Great Lakes take on the grey pallor of winter and we work to secure the insulation that we hope will keep the nasty weather on the outside, as the winds rage and the blowing snows obscure the horizons, and as the "smoke" rises from the cold waters, the lake ships scurry to collect and deliver their last cargoes of the year before they seek the calm and safety of winter quarters in snug ports. We wish them all safe passage.

And to all of the members of our large chosen family, the Toronto Marine Historical Society, we take this opportunity to extend to all of you our very best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and for all possible happiness in the New Year. Take care, dear friends, and may 2004 bring to us all an increased measure of love, warmth, security, good health and success in all of our endeavours.

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NASTY WINTER WEATHER?

This is just a reminder that, in the event weather conditions may threaten one of our winter meetings, you may call Gordon Turner at 416-762-3130 on the day of the meeting to check as to whether the meeting will proceed.

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