

It has been reported that, during the summer months, scrapping operations began at Matane, Quebec, on one of the last surviving canallers. She was the BV RAYNA, (a) CHARLES R. HUNTLEY (93), which latterly was owned by BV Maritime Inc. Built in 1926 for the Eastern Steamship Company Limited, she later served the Upper Lakes & St. Lawrence Transportation Company Limited. McNamara Marine converted her to a sandsucker in 1961 and a few years later her steam propulsion was replaced by Harbourmaster outboard units. She passed through several other owners and last operated in 1994. She had been idle at Matane ever since.

One of the firms caught up in the steel industry troubles has been the EVTAC Mining Company, a producer of taconite pellets. EVTAC filed for bankruptcy on May 1st and produced its last pellets on May 14. Although there was another bidder, a U.S. Bankruptcy Court in St. Paul, Minnesota, ruled late in November that Cleveland-Cliffs Inc. and the Laiwu Steel Group (a Chinese steelmaker) should become the new owners of EVTAC. Cliffs and Laiwu are paying \$3 million for the firm, and are assuming \$40 in environmental liabilities. EVTAC, which will operate as United Taconite LLC, should be back in production by mid-December. The plant will provide taconite to Cliffs, which will sell much of the production to Laiwu.

In the last issue, we mentioned the difficulties encountered by Rouge Industries Inc. and its various affiliates, including the Rouge Steel Company. Rouge has signed an agreement to sell all of its assets to a Russian steel firm, OAO Severstal, for \$215 million, but many objections to the deal have been filed and a U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Wilmington, Delaware, is considering the objections. Most of the objections relate to the fact that the sale plan does not deal with funds owed to Rouge's creditors.

There have been some interesting ship movements in Toronto Harbour. On November 25, ALGOISLE was towed away from her berth at the old Texaco dock, just inside the Cherry Street Bridge over the Ship Channel, and was taken to a spot beyond the knuckle in Pier 52, on the east side of the Eastern Gap. Whether she will remain light or be loaded with storage sugar for the Redpath plant remains to be seen. Taking ALGOISLE's place at the former Texaco dock is the self-unloader ALGOBAY, which was moved away from her berth on the south wall of the Turning Basin where a gas-powered hydro generation plant is to be built. ALGOBAY has been idle since last December, while ALGOISLE last operated in 1999.

Meanwhile, on November 10 and 11, JOHN B. AIRD deposited a storage cargo of sugar into CANADIAN MARINER as she lay along the west face of Pier 35. And on November 27th, CANADIAN RANGER, which had been idle since December of 2000, arrived at Toronto with a cargo of sugar which she brought from Trois-Rivieres. At the time of this writing, she was moored along the end of the Redpath plant. It is said that she eventually will go to Hamilton for a re-fit to enable her to return to active service in 2004. Also on her way to Toronto at present is the BARGE LAVIOLETTE, the former CANADIAN EXPLORER, which has been used in recent years as a storage hull at Trois-Rivieres. However, tugs OCEAN HERCULE and OCEAN INTREPIDE encountered problems in controlling the barge, and she was put into Bickerdike Basin at Montreal, where some of the sugar cargo is to be off-loaded before the Seaway tow is begun. There has been no word as to when the tow may resume.

Closing dates have been announced for the St. Lawrence and Welland Canals. Weather conditions permitting, each will remain open to traffic until December 24th. The Seaway closing date may be extended to December 29 if weather permits and there is sufficient traffic demand, but no longer. Final closing dates and times will be announced no later than December 15. The Soo Locks will, as usual, close on January 15th.

At 2:00 p.m. on November 21st, the upbound Maltese ship KOPALNIA BORYNIA, bound for Thunder Bay, struck the arrestor boom and cable at the Iroquois Lock. Seaway traffic was delayed for 14 hours.