

It finally was announced late in August that Canada Steamship Lines will be proceeding with the refurbishing of the 1977-built, self-unloading stemwinder JEAN PARISIEN at Port Weller Dry Docks. This is good news not only for C.S.L. but also for the shipyard which recently had to lay off a number of its employees. The PARISIEN had been lying at the Port Weller fit-out wall since late in 2003, while C.S.L. contemplated her future. The work, which will cost some \$30 million, will not only include the fitting of a new forebody, but also will involve upgrades to the electrical system and the covering of the unloading boom for dust abatement. A new flat tanktop will be fitted to give the ship better handling capability for non-free-flowing cargoes, such as coal. The ship should be ready to re-enter service by June of 2005, but as yet no rename has been mentioned. JEAN PARISIEN is the last of the C.S.L. 1970s-built bluff-bowed stemwinders to be rebuilt.

On June 4, 2004, Algoma Tankers Ltd. took delivery of the new \$42 million, 488-foot tanker ALGOSCOTIA (ii), built by the Jiangnan Shipyard at Shanghai, China. The new tanker arrived at Halifax for the first time on August 13 and tied up at Pier 26. Meanwhile, the day previous, the 1969-built ALGOFAX, (a) IMPERIAL BEDFORD (97), was moved from her anchorage and moored at Halifax Pier 31, with her name, port of registry and stack markings obliterated. She was sold on an "as is" basis for U.S. \$250 per ton for scrapping in India. The ship, re-registered in the Republic of Georgia for her trip to the breakers, departed Halifax on August 14.

Since then, it has been reported that the 1974-built ALGOSAR, (a) IMPERIAL ST. CLAIR (97), also has been sold for overseas scrapping. ALGOSAR has been in operation on the east coast. A third Algoma tanker reportedly sold for overseas scrapping is the 1972-built ALGOCATALYST, (a) JON RAMSOY (74), (b) DOAN TRANSPORT (80), (c) ENERCHEM CATALYST (99), which recently has been laid up at Sorel, Quebec. All of these scrap sales will leave the Algoma Tankers fleet with three owned vessels, the new ALGOSCOTIA plus the 1977-built double-hulled ALGOEAST, (a) TEXACO BRAVE (ii)(86), (b) LE BRAVE (97), (c) IMPERIAL ST. LAWRENCE (ii)(97), and the single-hulled and confined to the lakes, 1969-built ALGONOVA, (a) TEXACO CHIEF (ii)(87), (b) A. G. FARQUHARSON (98). In addition, on charter from the partially-owned Cleveland Tankers (1991) Inc., is the 1987-built tanker GEMINI.

Another former Algoma tanker reportedly has been sold for overseas scrapping. She is the McKeil Marine Ltd. 1966-built tanker CAPT. RALPH TUCKER, (a) IMPERIAL ACADIA (97), (b) ALGOSCOTIA (i)(01), (c) RALPH TUCKER (01). McKeil used her to haul brine until earlier this year, when she was laid up at Hamilton, with McKeil preferring to use tug/barge combinations on the brine runs. The TUCKER, however, reportedly was to be kept for winter service, when barges are less handy, and so her sale for scrapping comes as a distinct surprise. With the scrapping of the TUCKER, along with ALGOFAX and ALGOSAR, will disappear all of the tankers built at Port Weller in the 1960s and 1970s for Imperial Oil Limited. Who would have guessed that they would be gone so quickly?

It should be known soon whether the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy will be able to proceed with plans to restore the 102-year-old former Boblo steamer COLUMBIA as part of its riverfront rehabilitation. On August 9th, the Gaelic tugs PATRICIA HOEY and CAROLYN HOEY towed the COLUMBIA some 1,000 feet from her River Rouge lay-up berth to the Nicholson drydock where, on the 10th, she was lifted from the water for inspection as part of the restoration feasibility study. The vessel's hull and triple expansion steam engine seem in generally good condition, while her boilers "need work" and her wooden superstructure is much deteriorated after being in lay-up since 1991. Some corporate donours have been lined up to help finance the restoration, but the project must remain on hold pending the outcome of the survey when the cost to restore the famous and much loved steamer will be known. We sincerely hope that the COLUMBIA project will be a "go".