

At Port Weller, the work on the mid-life reconstruction of C.S.L.'s 1977-built stemwinder JEAN PARISIEN has been proceeding on schedule. On October 29th, the old forebody of the ship was towed from the drydock by the tugs PROGRESS, VAC and SEAHOUND. The old hull section was moored at the shipyard's fit-out wall pending better weather for the tow to the International Marine Salvage scrapyard at Port Colborne.

Two idle Canadian lakers returned to service recently. CANADIAN RANGER departed Port Weller Dry Docks on October 6 following the completion of a major refurbishing. Pulled from the drydock by tugs PROGRESS and GLENEVIS, she headed upbound for Duluth. One day later, ALGONTARIO operated under her own power for the first time since April of 1999, leaving the Pascol shipyard at Thunder Bay for trials. After loading grain at three elevators, ALGONTARIO departed Thunder Bay for Montreal during the evening of October 10th. Meanwhile, on the U.S. side, Oglebay Norton's BUCKEYE, which had been idle since 2002, returned to service, clearing Toledo on September 30th.

Last issue, we reported the sinking at Toronto, on September 22, of the excursion vessel GALACTICA 001. She finally was raised from the Jarvis Street slip on October 8 by McKeil equipment, which included the tug PROGRESS and barges THE HENRY T. and PITTS CARILLON. As yet, no cause for the sinking has been made public. We do, however, have better information on her history, courtesy Capt. Gerry Ouderkirk. She was built as SNOWFARI in 1957 by Mathieson Boat Works at Goderich, the last boat built by that firm. She became (b) MONITER III in 1970 and was chartered to the Ministry of the Environment. She sank at Owen Sound and was raised and renamed (c) RECOVERY in 1976. She was sold to Joseph Jagelka in 1983 and, although not registered to him, operated unofficially as GYPSY TANGO in the Toronto charter trade. She officially became (d) GALACTICA 001 in 1986, and Galactica 001 Enterprises Ltd. in 1987. She was rebuilt at Toronto in 1988. Idle from 2001 to 2004, she was recertified 13 days before she sank. She did one charter, tied up, and then went to the bottom overnight.

Downbound in the St. Clair River on October 11 was the tug COMMODORE STRAITS towing four covered grain barges and assisted, surprisingly, by the tug SALVAGE MONARCH from Goderich. The barges were fetched from the Chicago area and are to be used for grain storage at Trois-Rivieres. We understand that the tugs returned up the lakes in late October for at least two more barges.

Bound for the Heddle Marine yard at Hamilton for modifications and her five-year survey and inspection was the auto and passenger ferry WOLFE ISLANDER III, which cleared Kingston for Hamilton on October 4. While she is absent from her regular route, the Amherst Island ferry FRONTENAC II has replaced her on the Wolfe Island service, while the Glenora-Adolphustown ferry THE QUINTE LOYALIST has swung over to the Amherst Island route.

On October 4, after departing Sarnia, upbound light for Meldrum Bay, the Lower Lakes Towing self-unloader MISSISSAGI lost power in the Huron Cut and was pushed by the current toward the Port Huron shore. Her hooks were dropped and the ship was stopped just a foot off the seawall below the Blue Water Bridges. There was no damage and, once power was restored, MISSISSAGI proceeded and went to anchor in lower Lake Huron while the situation was assessed.

A recent newcomer to the lakes is the excursion vessel DETROIT PRINCESS, which was upbound in the Seaway early in October and put in to Charlotte, New York, on October 8 due to inclement weather. Built in 1993, the 222-foot ship previously was a casino boat for Harrah's Entertainment at Lake Charles, Louisiana, but will be used in the excursion trade at Detroit following a refit at the shipyard at Toledo. The ship is to be moored initially at the Hart Plaza, and later will be moved to a new facility being built near the Renaissance Center by the Detroit Wayne County Port Authority. Detroit Princess LLC plans to operate the ship year-round, despite winter inclemency.