

The work on the repowering of VOYAGEUR INDEPENDENT continues at Hamilton, and at the time of this writing, the old name had been painted off the ship's bows and the new name was to be applied. As yet, there is no indication as to when the vessel will enter service, although the owner's intent still is that she will be operative this autumn.

On September 7th, the Purvis tug AVENGER IV, assisted by the local tug MENASHA, towed TEAKGLEN away from the Government Wharf at Sarnia, where she had been lying since her tow from Goderich on July 29. MENASHA left the tow after it was safely out into Lake Huron. AVENGER IV was assisted with the tow in the St. Mary's River by her fleetmate W. I. SCOTT PURVIS, and AVENGER IV arrived with TEAKGLEN at Thunder Bay on September 11th. The former Paterson, C.S.L. and Goderich Elevators straight-deck bulker later was put on the Pascol drydock, apparently to be refurbished for a return to service. It is known that the motorship was acquired by Wayne Elliott, proprietor of International Marine Salvage Company, Port Colborne, but little is known about her future operations.

The other former Goderich storage barge, WILLOWGLEN, which had been towed to Hamilton in early August, set out again on September 8th in tow of TONY McKAY and PROGRESS. She was downbound in the Seaway on the 11th. The McKAY took WILLOWGLEN all the way to the east coast where she was turned over to a salt water tug for the tow to the far east.

It was announced on September 6th that Rand Acquisition Corporation had entered into a "definitive agreement" to acquire Lower Lakes Towing Ltd. and Grand River Navigation Company Inc. An investment banking concern, NatCity Investments Inc., was acting as financial advisor to Lower Lakes in the transaction. Rand, through a new subsidiary, is to acquire all of the stock of Lower Lakes and Grand River for \$53.73 million, less the amount of indebtedness to be refinanced at the closing of the acquisition. It is said that the management of Lower Lakes and Grand River will remain unchanged following the purchase, and that Scott Bravener, president and CEO of Lower Lakes, will be appointed to the board of Rand. The deal would appear to be a method of Lower Lakes obtaining additional financing, for the fleet has in recent years spent a great deal of money acquiring additional vessels and doing refurbishment work on them.

In our last issue, we reported the departure from the lakes of SPIRIT OF AMERICA, the last of three double-ended ferries built by Marinette Marine for the Staten Island ferry service at New York. We now are able to report that SPIRIT OF AMERICA arrived safely at New York on September 15th.

Early in the month of September, the United States Coast Guard's new ice-breaking cutter MACKINAW departed Marinette Marine for an extended period of sea trials. Reportedly, she has been functioning very well and according to specifications. Meanwhile, the U.S. House of Representatives has unanimously voted to approve the Coast Guard Authorization Bill which includes a provision that the old MACKINAW, once retired in 2006, be transferred to local governments for use as a maritime museum. The bill is expected to be considered in the Senate within the next two months. This means that the way will be cleared for the old MACKINAW to become a museum at her longtime home port of Cheboygan, Michigan, which has been seeking to acquire the famous icebreaker ever since it was announced that she would be replaced and withdrawn from service.

Despite an apparently successful summer of operation, Bay Ferries has twice reduced the operating schedule of SPIRIT OF ONTARIO 1 on the Rochester - Toronto service since late August. On August 29th, two round trips per week were cut from the schedule. Then, effective September 22, the schedule was reduced to five round trips per week - one per day every day except Tuesday and Thursday. Originally, it had been intended that service each day of the week would be maintained until the end of October. This means that at the present time, it no longer is possible to take a morning departure from Toronto and return later the same day, thus practically eliminating the day excursion trade.

With a four-boat service no longer needed after the introduction of the autumn ferry schedule on September 6, the Toronto Island ferry THOMAS RENNIE was sent off to the Toronto Drydock where she spent the latter part of September undergoing survey and inspection. The RENNIE had suffered a collision with her city dock back in the spring, but no serious damage was suffered at that time.