

Toronto harbour lost a longtime "denizen" when, on November 28, ALGOBAY was towed away from the berth at the old Texaco dock on the north side of the Ship Channel that she had occupied for almost five years. She was taken to Pier 10 in Hamilton where she will stay until her stern is joined to a new forebody which will be built for her by the Chengxi Shipyard Co. Ltd. at Jiangyin, China. To be treated likewise is ALGOBAY's fleetmate ALGOPORT. Contrary to the report contained in our December issue, however, the joining of old parts to new will be done in China. ALGOBAY is expected back in service in December of 2009, and ALGOPORT by September of 2010.

The first major step has been taken in efforts to restore the Sarnia excursion vessel DUC d'ORLEANS to her original condition as the 1943-built Fairmile Q105. Having been moved into the North Slip, the wooden-hulled DUC was lifted from the water by crane on December 9 and placed on a special cradle. There, over the next two years, she will be returned to her original configuration and, it is hoped, be able to participate in the 100th anniversary celebrations of the Royal Canadian Navy in 2010. If she can be made operative, she will be the last remaining operative vessel from Canada's World War Two navy fleet. The restoration of the Sarnia-built Fairmile is being done by a group called Friends of the Q105.

Entering the St. Lawrence Seaway upbound on December 21 was a most unusual tow, consisting of the deck barge ATL 2701, being towed by the big tugs OCEAN DELTA and OCEAN HERCULE. Not only is the barge notable because she is former and infamous IRVING WHALE, but also because she came into the lakes with a very high cargo of pipe racks, loaded at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and destined for the new gas-powered hydro generating station being built on the south side of the Toronto turning basin, next to the old Hearn plant. The tow had to battle heavy ice in the canals, and the two tugs left the barge at Prescott and returned down-river. The barge was later picked up at Prescott by the McKeil tugs EVANS McKEIL and TONY McKAY, which brought her into Toronto on December 26.

A nasty accident occurred in the Maumee River at Toledo on the evening of December 14. The Algoma Central straight-decker ALGONORTH was departing the Midwest Terminal with a cargo of grain for Port Cartier. Somehow, her stern came in contact with the wharf and 3,300 gallons of diesel fuel spilled into the river. The river was closed to vessel traffic until about noon the following day, while the spill was cleaned up. Most of the fuel evaporated from the water surface. The damage to the ship was not severe, and the only injury was to a crewman on the salty FEDERAL PIONEER, moored nearby, when the wash from ALGONORTH's screw caused that vessel to part a mooring line. He was lucky and sustained only an arm fracture.

On December 10, the Canadian registry of the 1971-built CECILIA DESGAGNES, of Transport Desgagnes Inc., was closed. The vessel, (a) CARL GORTHON (81), (b) FEDERAL PIONEER (ii)(85) was acquired by Desgagnes in 1985. The ship was sold to Panamanian interests and departed Montreal as (d) MASTER JOY.

On December 23, 2007, Robert Scott Pierson suddenly passed away, in his 71st year, in hospital at Hamilton. Born in New York City in 1936, he was a member of the Misener family, and for a number of years was active in Misener Transportation. In latter years, he was much involved with the Lower Lakes Towing / Grand River Navigation organization. But he will be remembered best for the Soo River Company, which he formed in 1975 and ran until business conditions put an end to the operation in 1982. Soo River had a very interesting fleet of historic and handsome steamers, which were much admired by shipping enthusiasts around the lakes.

An apparently hitherto-unnoticed addition to the marine scenery at Port Colborne is the former Detroit River carfloat barge ROANOKE, which arrived around November 18 and was put beside the "Government House" elevator. It is to be assumed that she is there for eventual scrapping by International Marine Salvage. The vessel was built in 1930 as the Pere Marquette Lake Michigan carferry steamer CITY OF FLINT 32, and was cut down to a barge in 1970. She last operated in 1994 for, we believe, the Norfolk Southern. Latterly she has been lying idle at Toledo, owned by Maritime Investing LLC, of Gladstone, Michigan.

It would appear than another artificial reef may be added for the enjoyment of divers. A plan has been developed by the Eastern Ontario Artificial Reef Association to sink the Royal Canadian Navy Restigouche-class destroyer escort TERRA NOVA in the 1,000 Islands area near Gananoque, hopefully by late 2009. TERRA NOVA was built in 1959, was refitted in 1968 and 1984, and served in the Gulf War of 1991. She was required from active duty in 1997. She had visited the lakes on several occasions when in operation.