

As readers will recall, Lower Lakes Towing's 1953-built self-unloader SAGINAW spent last winter in the North Slip at Sarnia, where her original steam turbine propulsion machinery was removed and replaced with new and more efficient and economical diesel power. The ship's old stack was put back in place after the engine installation, and on June 12 she cleared the North Slip, dropped down to the Imperial Oil bunkers dock for a drink of fuel, and then headed upbound for Marquette to load ore for the Algoma Steel plant at the Soo.

In recent years, the BARGE LAVIOLETTE, made in 2001 from the hull of CANADIAN EXPLORER with the stern cut off, and owned by Distribution Grands Lacs/St-Laurent Ltee., a Division of Upper Lakes Group Inc., has been used for grain storage at Trois Rivieres, Quebec. But earlier this year she was sold to Costa Rican buyers for use as spoils dump barge in the upcoming Panama Canal enlargement project. The barge departed Trois-Rivieres on May 28 in tow of the ULS tug COMMODORE STRAITS, assisted as far as Les Escoumins by RADIUM YELLOWKNIFE. The tow was bound first for Progreso, Mexico, and then on to Puerto Limon, Costa Rica. It has been suggested that COMMODORE STRAITS, on her return trip to Canada, will bring along a heavy lift ship to be refitted to carry steel products on the lakes, but we have no formal confirmation of this yet.

Another May departure was Algoma Central's long-idle ALGOBAY which, at Hamilton during the latter part of her lay-up, had her unloading boom removed and much steel strengthening added to her hull for the long tow to China where she will receive a new bow and cargo section. ALGOBAY cleared Hamilton on May 13 with tug VIGILANT 1 on the bow and COMMODORE STRAITS on the stern. These tugs took her as far as Montreal, and from there she departed for China in tow of the Greek tug HELLAS on May 24. Another tug, the SIMOON, took over the tow in the Mediterranean and by July 17 the tow was reported at the south end of the Suez Canal.

In our last two issues, we commented upon the acquisition by the Algoma Central Corporation of three 729-foot salties from Viken Shipping AS, of Norway. There was some talk at that time about the names Algoma would be giving the ships, but as they now have been renamed and painted in Algoma livery, we can confirm the new names. DAVIKEN is now (c) ALGOMA DISCOVERY, while GOVIKEN is (c) ALGOMA GUARDIAN and SANDVIKEN carries the name ALGOMA SPIRIT.

The spring saw another renaming within the Algoma Central fleet. On June 3, in ceremonies held below Lock 1 at Port Weller, the 1967-built bulker ALGOVILLE, (a) SENNEVILLE (94), was rechristened (c) TIM S. DOOL in honour of the company's former president and chief executive officer who retired on April 30 after 31 years with Algoma. The ship's sponsor was Ellen Dool, wife of Tim Dool. The Saint John-built ALGOVILLE has been much updated over the years. In 1996, her hull was widened by three feet at Port Weller, and much more recently she received new diesel engines installed at Hamilton.

On June 13, the U.S. Maritime Administration confirmed that the passenger vessels CAPE MAY LIGHT and CAPE COD LIGHT had been sold for \$9m apiece via International Shipping Partners to Bahamas-based Clipper Group. The two vessels were built for American Classic Voyages for \$42m each with MARAD-guaranteed funding but only the MAY was completed. She traded into the lakes in the summer of 2001 and was the next ship downbound in the Welland Canal behind WINDOC when the latter was severely damaged by the premature lowering of the Allanburg Bridge on August 11. The COD was never completed and both vessels have been lying at Jacksonville, Florida, ever since the post-9/11 collapse of American Classic (and the MAY's captain was killed in an accident which occurred during lay-up). It will cost Clipper about \$10m to upgrade the ships, and International Shipping Partners will manage and charter out the pair, which must remain under U.S. registry for at least three years. The ships are to be renamed CLIPPER DISCOVERER and CLIPPER VOYAGER, and we may well see them back in the Great Lakes.

Scrapping of the venerable 1929-built Lower Lakes self-unloader CALUMET (ii) was begun at Port Colborne by International Marine Salvage during May. Meanwhile, the IMS-owned former railroad carfloat barge ROANOKE was used, with cranes on deck, to assist in the removal of the unloading legs on the west side of the former "Government House" grain elevator in the Port, which now is owned by Goderich Elevator. We would assume that ROANOKE eventually will be cut up by IMS.

One ship that escaped from the IMS scrapyard, at least temporarily, was the canaller D. C. EVEREST. Unofficially renamed K. R. ELLIOT, she was towed down the Welland Canal on June 24 en route to Toronto where, anchored in Humber Bay, she served as a fireworks platform for the four-night (including Canada Day) Festival of Fire. After the event, tugs M. R. KANE, RADIUM YELLOWKNIFE and CHARLIE E. returned her to the Port Colborne scrapyard.