



Barges back in fashion

Robert Beatty, captain of the tug W.N. Twolan, and first mate George Ferguson, helped bring a barge loaded with cargo to Midland last month. The last time either man did that was in the late 1940s. In the in-

tervening years barges were out of fashion. The Twolan has left Midland but the barge is still at Maple Leaf Mills with a crack in its bottom.

Barging in 40 years later

Robert Beatty and George Ferguson helped bring a barge to Midland last week. It has been 40 years since either man came to Midland with a barge.

Beatty and Ferguson are the captain and first mate of McKeil Work Boats' tug W.N. Twolan. The 2,200 horsepower, twin screw, 105 foot tug brought a barge loaded with 1,300 tons of cargo loaded in Thunder Bay. Nine hundred tons, waferboard, was left here.

Beatty and Ferguson are veterans of Great Lakes shipping. In the late 1940s, when barges and tugs still were in widespread use, Beatty worked for the Pigeon Timber Company. Ferguson worked for Patterson Steamships of Thunder Bay, on the Altadoc, Bricoldoc, and

Quedoc.

Barges and tugs were superseded when the St. Lawrence Seaway opened. Barges and the tugs that move them are making a comeback in the United States, McKeil Work Boats owner Evans McKeil said. McKeil, based in Hamilton, owns 14 tugs

and a dozen barges.

The barge towed to Midland last week is his largest barge. The tug's home, until recently, was Churchill, Man., on James Bay.

Forty years ago barges carrying grain and lumber to Midland were pulled by steamships. The barges

had their own crews. Barges like the Erie-West, built in 1952, are unmanned because improved design makes a crew unnecessary. Anyway, the high cost of buying insurance to cover a crew on a barge would make manning a barge prohibitively expensive.

Gignac still in pre-trial

Lillian Gignac appeared in pre-trial assignment court last Friday, and will appear again in that court on Oct. 2.

Gignac is charged with arson in connection with

the St. Margaret's Church fire on Dec. 24, 1986, and for a fire which damaged a Midland house in November, 1986.

Since her arrest and assignment to the Pene-

ninguishene Mental Health Centre last January, she has appeared in pre-trial assignment court a number of times without a trial date being set.



Inspection tour

The new Salvation Army divisional commander for the Ontario North division, Major Boyd Goulding, left, visited the Midland Salvation Army Corps last week. Behind him and Lieutenant Norman Gar-

cia are the Midland Army Citadel, and the local Army Thrift Store. Not visible is Experience House, a year-old local Army project.

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Reeve wants a well

Elmvalle has one. Penetang has one. So why can't Port McNicoll have a town well, where citizens can fill up on fresh water?

That's the question Port Reeve John Moreau is asking these days. He wants to know if its feasible for his town to install a public well.

"If you don't like the water, if you get a bad day's water, you can go and fill up," the reeve said at last week's council meeting.

"You see them all the time by the side of the road there in Elmvalle," he added.

Port McNicoll's water delivery system is outdated and overworked. The province wants Port to be hooked up to Victoria Harbour, which has an almost-new water filtration system. That system is said to be large enough to handle the increased capacity Port McNicoll would add.

But Moreau wants a village well, despite official reports saying it's not financially feasible. "Who knows? Maybe we can fool the experts and put the whole town on wells," he said. The village currently gets its water from Georgian Bay.

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