

# THE LIGHTSHIP



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lakehuronlore@advnet.net

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Membership (annual) - \$12.00 (U.S.) \$18.00 (Can. funds)  
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our first Member's Slide Night of 2004 was held at the Port Huron Museum at 7 pm, Saturday, February 7th and was attended by 13 L.H.L. members & guests. The small audience was treated to an excellent assortment of slides. During the evening, they boarded a beautiful cruise ship and sailed to the South Pacific to visit some of the famous battle sites of the Japanese / American war including Iwo Jima, Truk Lagoon, Saipan, Pearl Harbor, etc. Following that historical trip, the audience traveled to Detroit where they witnessed the huge task of salvaging the sunken 440-foot British saltwater vessel *MONTROSE* following her July, 1962 collision in the Detroit River with a barge loaded with a cargo of cement clinker being pushed by the tug *B.H. BECKER*. The remainder of the evening was spent visiting many sites around the Great Lakes where the audience viewed a wide variety of lakers, tugs and saltys practicing their trade. Thanks go out to those who brought slides and treated us to a very enjoyable evening.

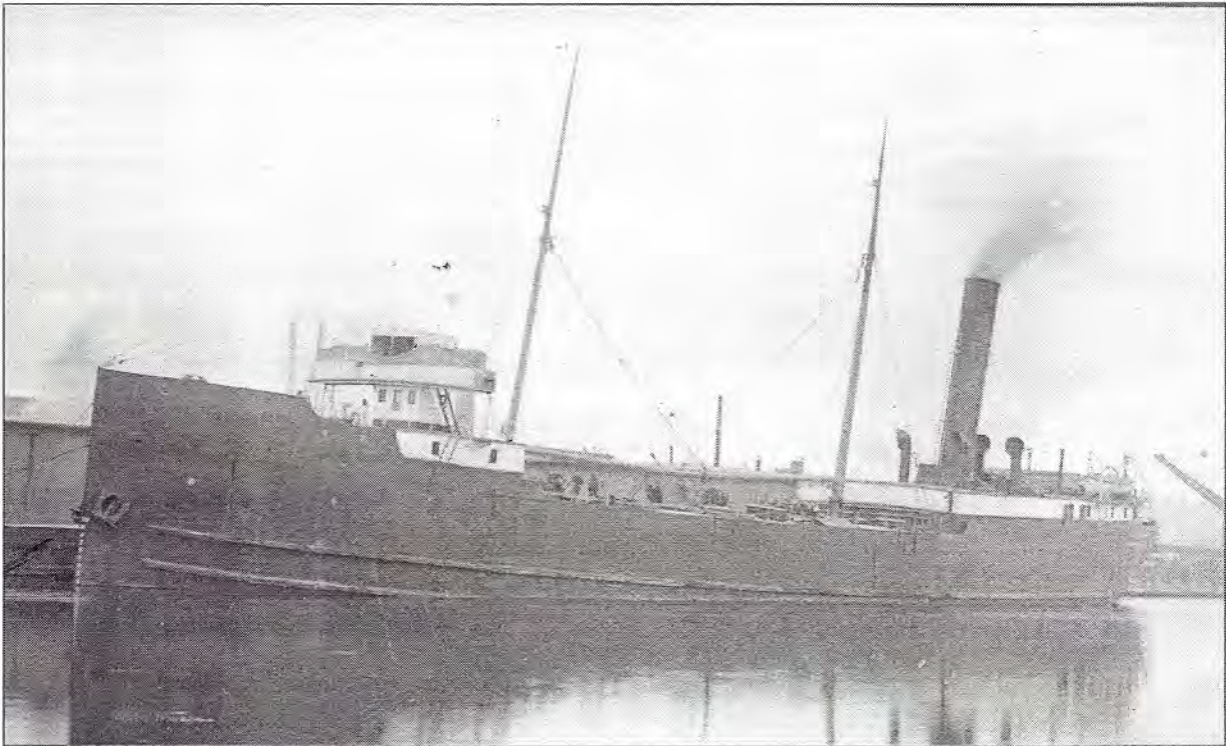
**Mark Your Calendar** - Our first Dinner Meeting of 2004, which will also be a joint meeting with our friends of the M.H.S. of Detroit, will be held at the Port Huron Museum on Saturday, April 3rd. The doors of the Museum will

be opened at 6:00 pm and the dinner, prepared by the Museum Guild, will be served at 6:30 pm. The cost is \$13.00 (US funds) per person with checks or money orders made payable to Lake Huron Lore Marine Society and must be received, along with the enclosed yellow reservation slip, by the closing date of Wednesday, March 31st. The evening's entertainment program, entitled *The Stranded Whales*, will be presented by fellow Lake Huron Lore member and Director, Gareth McNabb of Lexington, MI. The program will describe and illustrate the colorful lives that befell the unusual whaleback steamers. As usual, a raffle will be held providing our guests with a chance to win some interesting nautical prizes. Please join us for an entertaining and enjoyable evening.

**Mark Your Calendar** – The 2004 excursion on the *HAMMOND BAY*, owned and operated by L.H.L. members David and George Lee, will be a three-hour narrated cruise on the St. Clair River north to Stag Island and return on Saturday, August 14th, 2004 from 10 am until 1 pm. We will depart from the Leeland Gardens dock, located two miles south of the Sombra ferry dock, at 10 am. A light lunch will be provided. No alcohol is permitted on board or in the dock area. Cost of the excursion is \$19.00 (U.S. funds) or \$25.00 (Canadian funds). Reservations may be made directly to Hammond Bay River Cruises, Box 502, Marine City, MI, 48039 or RR#1 Port Lambton, ON, N0P 2B0 or phone (519) 892-3973. A map to the dock will be mailed upon request. U.S. residents are asked to please bring their identification for returning to the United States. Early reservations are recommended as we are limited to the boat's capacity of forty people.

**New Members** – L.H.L. wishes to welcome aboard Joan Hettinger of East China, MI, Matt & Gerri Augugliaro of Smiths Creek, MI and Suzanne Richardson of Port Huron.

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\*\*\* NAME THIS SHIP \*\*\*



\* Photo taken in 1911 in Owen Sound, ON – T. Doyon Collection \*

\* See answer on Pg. 6 \*

## The 1984 Ice Follies

By Jay N. Bascom

*This article appeared in the May, 1984 issue of the Toronto Marine Historical Society's newsletter, **The Scanner**. The article, borrowed with the permission of its author, Jay Bascom, Editor of **The Scanner**, provides an excellent account of the first few weeks of the 1984 sailing season. Thanks go out to L.H.L. member Cy Hudson for suggesting and arranging the use of this article.*

This spring has produced what undoubtedly must be the most interesting few weeks that lake area boat-watchers have experienced in years, while at the same time causing no end of frustration and expense for vessel operators and for the Coast Guards of Canada and the United States. The event has become known to many as the "St. Clair River Ice Capades", although perhaps the term "Ice Follies" might be more appropriate. The whole problem began back in early April when a considerable amount of brash ice began to push down into the St. Clair River from the lower end of Lake Huron, pushed along by strong northerly winds. The ice began to jam the lower stretches of the river and it caused severe difficulties in the area between Willow Point and the Salt Dock at St. Clair, Michigan. All available icebreakers were sent to the area, and at one time the C.C.G.S. *DES GROSEILLIERS* and *GRIFFON*, together with U.S.C.G. *MACKINAW*, *KATMAI BAY*, *BISCAYNE BAY*, *BRISTOL BAY* and *NEAH BAY*, as well as several privately-owned tugs, were all working to keep traffic moving. The ice piled up to such an extent that, in some places, it was seven to ten feet in depth and it virtually halted all traffic. The problems really came to a head on what has become known as "Black Friday", April 13th, when eighteen vessels became trapped in a 1-1/2 km. (approximately 1 mile) section of the river. Amongst the ships involved in that "blockade" were the lakers *NICOLET*, *FRONTENAC*, *ALGOSOO*, *CANADIAN PIONEER*, *THOROLD*, *KINSMAN INDEPENDENT*, *MURRAY BAY*, *BEAVERCLIFFE HALL*, *LAKETON*, *BUFFALO* and *YANKCANUCK*, as well as an assortment of salt-water vessels.

The authorities were unable to close off the river to all vessel traffic, but did restrict the river to ships with at least 3,000 h.p. and forced them to proceed in convoys so that the icebreakers could assist them more readily than by expending energy on individual ships. Even so, traffic moved very slowly indeed, and there were several groundings and many near-collisions. At one time, at least fourteen ships were anchored in Lake Huron, downbound, while almost seventy were anchored below Detroit awaiting their turn at the upbound passage. The ice-jam finally broke over the weekend of April 28 / 29, when warm temperatures and strong southerly winds (which kept further ice from pouring down into the river) allowed the breakers to get the ice moving down into Lake St. Clair.

In the meantime however, the jam cost shippers incredible sums of money as their vessels lay at anchor for days on end. At Thunder Bay, a glut of railroad grain cars developed, for few if any ships were arriving to load grain, and the elevators were full. At the other end of the Seaway, numerous salties were waiting to load grain but could not do so because the grain was not moving down the lakes. Residents along the St. Clair River were deprived of cross-river ferry services, for the ferries could not operate in the heavy ice. *DALDEAN*, the ferry which runs between Sombra and Marine City, very nearly came to grief on April 7th, when a rise on the river level caused her to float up over the side of her slip, and a subsequent fall in the river level brought her down on top of a pile. Only a great deal of effort rescued the ferry from this precarious position.

Not only did the ice-jams create considerable interest amongst observers, but they caused the roads on both sides of the river to be packed with auto traffic as everyone came to the river for a look. Bars along the river reported doing a land-office business! And some interesting phenomena were observed along the river, most of them due to extreme high or low water levels, both caused by ice-jams. The connecting Sydenham River was at one stage the lowest ever recorded while, on April 7th, the St. Clair River reached its highest stage in sixty years, putting four feet of water in the Sheriff's office at St. Clair, MI and then dropping to one of its lowest levels ever. At one stage, the "rapids" in the Huron Cut (under the Bluewater Bridge) virtually stopped, with almost no movement of water through that narrow channel. Each and every person who either observed the ice blockade or was caught in it will remember the event for many years to come, and lake mariners will most certainly be hoping that never again will there be a recurrence of the conditions seen this April.

Twenty Years Ago  
The 1983 / 84 Winter Lay-up List for Ports in Our Area

By Cy Hudson & Fred Miller

**Ecorse, MI**

*PAUL H. CARNAHAN* – Scrapped in Taiwan in 1986.

*S.T. CRAPO* – Last operated in 1996 and is now in use as a transfer / storage barge in Green Bay, WI.

*LEON FALK JR.* – Scrapped in Spain in 1985.

*GEORGE M. HUMPHREY* – Scrapped in Taiwan in 1986.

*RICHARD J. REISS (2)* – Last operated in 2001. Presently in lay-up at Erie, PA and reported to be sold to Grand River Navigation.

*GEORGE A. STINSON* – Went into lay-up at Superior, WI on May 20, 2003. Went back into service later in the year and could be renamed in 2004.

*JOSEPH H. THOMPSON* – Converted to a self-unloading barge in 1991 and is still in service.

**Dearborn, MI**

*ERNEST R. BREECH* – Renamed *KINSMAN INDEPENDENT (3)*. Presently in lay-up at Buffalo, NY.

*BENSON FORD (2)* – Renamed *US 265808* in 1985 and scrapped at Ramey's Bend, ON in 1986.

*HENRY FORD II* – Renamed *SAMUEL MATHER (7)* in 1989 and scrapped at Port Maitland, ON in 1994.

*WILLIAM CLAY FORD (1)* - Renamed *US 266029* in 1985. Hull was scrapped at Port Maitland, ON in 1987. The wheelhouse was salvaged and put on display at Dossin Museum on Belle Isle.

**Detroit, MI**

*COLUMBIA (2)* – In lay-up at Ecorse, MI. Last operated September 2, 1991.

*JOHN DYKSTRA (2)* – This ship was the former *BENSON FORD (1)* and was renamed *JOHN DYKSTRA (2)* in the winter of 1982 / 83, then laid up at a Detroit River Dock where her engine was removed with the intention of the ship being converted into a barge. This plan was cancelled and the *DYKSTRA* never sailed under her new name. In December, 1984, she was towed to Cleveland, OH and, in 1986, her entire forward superstructure was removed for use as a summer home on Lake Erie's South Bass Island. The *DYKSTRA*'s hull was later towed to Ramey's Bend, arriving there in July, 1986 to be scrapped.

*LANSDOWNE* – (restaurant) Now in Buffalo also being used as a restaurant.

*STE. CLAIRE* – Last operated Sept. 2, 1991 and was partially restored in Toledo, then was towed to Lorain, OH in September, 2003 by the G-tug *ILLINOIS* for further restoration.

*J.A.W. IGLEHART* – Still in service.

**Ojibway, ON**

*ALGOSOO (2)* – Still in service.

*LOUIS R. DESMARAIS* – Rebuilt with a new forebody in 2001 and renamed *CSL LAURENTIEN*.

*FORT CHAMBLY* – Towed to Aliaga, Turkey and scrapped in 1989.

*MANITOULIN* – Last operated in December, 2000 and scrapped in Aliaga, Turkey in 2002.

*J.W. McGIFFIN* – Rebuilt with a new forebody in 1999 and renamed *CSL NIAGARA*.

**Windsor, ON**

*SILVERDALE* – Scrapped in Windsor in 1984.

**Port Huron, MI**

*KINSMAN ENTERPRISE (1)* (Bean-boat) Scrapped in Aliaga, Turkey in 1989.

*BADGER STATE* – Scrapped in Manitowoc, WI in 1988 / 89.

**Sarnia / Point Edward, ON**

*AGAWA CANYON* – Still in service.

*ALGOBAY* – Renamed *ATLANTIC TRADER* in 1994. Renamed *ALGOBAY* again in 1997. Was idle in Toronto in 2003.

*CANADIAN AMBASSADOR* – Renamed *AMBASSADOR* in 1987 with Republic of Vanuatu registry. Renamed *ALGOSEA (2)* in July, 2000. Renamed *AMBASSADOR* again in January, 2001. Still in service.

*CANADIAN ENTERPRISE* – Still in service.

*CANADIAN MARINER* – In lay-up at Toronto reportedly being converted to a barge.

*CANADIAN OLYMPIC* – Still in service.

*RED WING* – Scrapped in Taiwan in 1987.

*EASTERN SHELL* – Renamed *COLON TRADER* in 1992 and went into off-lakes service.

#### **Goderich, ON**

*BEECHGLEN* – Scrapped in Port Maitland, ON in 1994.

*OAKGLEN* (1) – Scrapped in Aliaga, Turkey in 1988.

*SPRUCEGLEN* (1) – Scrapped in Thunder Bay in 1985 / 86.

*WILLOWGLEN* – Last operated in 1992. Presently used as a grain storage hull in Goderich, ON.

#### **Collingwood, ON**

*LAWREDOC* (2) – Sold for off-lakes use in 1984 & renamed *CONTOY* (Mexico registry).

*PRAIRIE HARVEST* – Under construction. Launched on October 18, 1983 and sailed on her maiden voyage on April 6, 1984. Renamed *ATLANTIC HURON* in 1989. Renamed *MELVIN H. BAKER II* in 1994. Renamed *ATLANTIC HURON* again in 1997 and is still in service.

#### **Owen Sound, ON**

*ALGOWAY* – Still in service.

*BIRCHGLEN* (1) – Scraped in Point Edward, Nova Scotia in 1988.

*CHI-CHEEMAUN* – Still in service.

*CLARENVILLE* – (restaurant) Destroyed by fire in 1989. The remains were disposed of in 1990.

*JOHN O. McKELLAR* (2) – Renamed *ELMGLEN* (2) in 1984. Tied up in Sorel, Quebec in June, 1990. The vessel was towed to Quebec City in April, 1996 where she was scrapped to deck-level. Towed to Norfolk, VA in the fall of 2000 to be converted to a floating drydock.

#### **Port McNicol, ON**

*CAROL LAKE* – Renamed *ALGOCAPE* (1) in 1987. Renamed *MAPLEGLEN* (2) in 1994. Scrapped in Aliaga, Turkey in 2003.

*JOHN A. FRANCE* (2) – Renamed *ALGORIVER* in 1994. Last operated in 2000. Scrapped in Aliaga, Turkey in 2002 along with the *CANADIAN VOYAGER (BLACK BAY)*.

*J.N. McWATTERS* – Renamed *SCOTT MISENER* (4) in 1991. Renamed the *ALGOGULF* (1) in 1994. Presently being scrapped at Port Colborne, ON.

*JOHN E.F. MISENER* (2) – Scrapped in Cartagena, Colombia in 1986.

#### **Midland, ON**

*SIR JAMES DUNN* – Scrapped in Aliaga, Turkey in 1989.

*CCGS MONTMORENCY* – Scrapped in Lunenburg, N.S. in 1996.

*MONTREALAIS* – Still in service.

*QUEBECOIS* – Still in service.

*V.W. SCULLY* – Renamed *ALGOSOUND* in 1987. Presently docked in Montreal pending an overseas scrap-tow in the Spring.

#### **Tiffin, ON**

*A.S. GLOSSBRENNER* – Renamed *ALGOSTEEL* (2) in 1990 and is still in service.

*LAKE MANITOBA* – Renamed *ALGOMARINE* in 1987. Converted to a self-unloader in 1989. Still in service.

#### **Bay City, MI**

*AMOCO ILLINOIS* – Scrapped in Windsor, ON in 1985 / 86.

*AMOCO WISCONSIN* – Scrapped in Windsor, ON in 1986 / 87.

#### **Alpena, MI**

*LEWIS J. HARRIMAN* – Last operated in April, 1980. Was used as a cement storage vessel at Green Bay, WI until sold for demolition in 2003 to Purvis Marine Ltd. of Sault Ste. Marie, ON. She was towed to the Purvis West Dock and arrived on October 27, 2003 to await scrapping in 2004.

*The Authors would like to thank Skip Gillham and Roger LeLievre for their assistance with our article. We also welcome any additional information from our readers to the Lay-up List.*

# Bluewater Passages

By Dick Wicklund

## G.A. TOMLINSON (2)

On April 17, 1976, the 1907-built *G.A. TOMLINSON (2)* was upbound at Port Huron. Her original name was *D.O. MILLS*, and ran mostly for Interlake S/S Company. She was part of a series of Lakers built at 556.9 feet in length.

In the 1913 Storm, she stranded off Harbor Beach. She was one of the survivors of the Storm and would survive proudly herself for over six more decades. In 1960, the *MILLS* was converted to a self-unloader and renamed for the Tomlinson fleet. Columbia S/S Company would be her final owner.

In December, 1979, the *TOMLINSON* finished her seventy-second year of service. She then proudly sailed to the scrap yard under her own power, as if saying "I have served, and survived!" The *TOMLINSON* was a proud old Great Laker!



\* Steamer *G. A. TOMLINSON (2)* upbound at Port Huron – Dick Wicklund Photo \*

## Answer to Name This Ship (Pg.3)

***GLENELLAH*** (C112205) Built in 1905 as Hull # 183 at Dundee, Scotland by Caledon Shipbuilding & Engineering Company. Overall Dimensions: 250'-0" length x 43'-3" width x 23'-6" height. G.T. - 2,272 tons. Owned by Union S/S Co., Ltd. of Hamilton, Ont. from 1905 to 1908. Ownership of the vessel was changed to Inland Lines Ltd. in 1908. The ship became the first "Glen" boat of the famous James Playfair fleet when he and his associates acquired control of the company in 1910. The *GLENELLAH* was purchased by Canada Steamship Lines in 1914. She was taken for service during World War One and sailed the East Coast and North Atlantic from 1915 to 1918. Renamed *CALGARIAN (2)* in 1926. Sold for scrap to Steel Company of Canada, Ltd. in 1960 and scrapped in Hamilton, Ont. during winter of 1960 / 61.

# BLUEWATER AREA SHIPWRECKS

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*By Skip Gillham*

## WESTMOUNT

*WESTMOUNT* was involved in an unusual three-ship collision near the mouth of the St. Clair River on May 15, 1963. The ship had just unloaded iron ore at Port Colborne and was returning upbound in ballast when the accident occurred. The other two ships were the American self-unloader *ROGERS CITY* and the West German freighter *LOBIVIA*. Fortunately, damage was light.

*WESTMOUNT* had been Hull 48 at the Collingwood shipyard and the 550 foot long by 58 foot, 3 inch wide bulk carrier was launched on May 4, 1917.

She soon joined the Montreal Transportation Company and operated on their behalf until Canada Steamship Lines acquired their vessels in 1920.

Powered by a 2,000 horsepower triple expansion engine and three, coal-fired, scotch boilers, *WESTMOUNT* was among the largest and most powerful Canadian lakers of that era. She hauled the usual grain, coal and ore cargos but later had slats installed between the hatches for the transportation of new automobiles on upbound trips.

*WESTMOUNT* was the then largest ship to use the new Welland Canal when it transited for the first time on July 3, 1931. She also brought the second grain cargo, a total of 422,000 bushels, on arrival at the Robin Hood Mill at Humberstone, Ont. on August 11, 1940.

Lake Erie was clogged with ice on April, 1959 and *WESTMOUNT* was proceeding through a channel behind the *GLENEAGLES* when the latter came to an abrupt stop. The trailing *WESTMOUNT* kept coming and rammed her stern. Both freighters required repairs.

*WESTMOUNT* tied up at Kingston at the end of the 1966 season and was sold for scrap the following year. She went down the Seaway between the tugs *GRAEME STEWART* and *HELEN M. MCALLISTER* on August 5, 1967 and proceeded overseas with the steamer *COALFAX* under tow of the Polish tug *KORAL*. The trio reached Santander, Spain on August 30 and the two old lakers were broken up.



\* Steamer *WESTMOUNT* in the Welland Canal – Alf King Photo \*

*Skip Gillham has written many excellent Great Lakes Shipping books which include books of Canadian Ship Yards, Shipping Companies as well as books with chapters focusing on individual ships. These books make excellent gifts and can be purchased from Skip Gillham, P.O. Box 443, Vineland, ON, Canada, L0R 2C0.*

# SALTY SPOTLIGHT



By D.R. (Doug) Schilz  
([saltydug@yahoo.com](mailto:saltydug@yahoo.com))

## M/S OLYMPIC MENTOR

Built in 1984 by Nippon Kokan K.K., Shimizu, Japan; as Hull # 414.  
Length: 599'-9", Breadth: 75'-11", Depth: 48'-7".  
GRT 17,700, M. Bulk Carrier  
Main Engine - 9,900 bhp Sulzer

Your editor, Terry Doyon, has always expressed an interest in the Olympic fleet of ships, so I would like to dedicate this article to him.

The ships of the Olympic fleet have long been visitors to the Lakes since the 1960's, when a fleet of 11 ships, also built by Nippon Kokan, sailed on the Lakes. Between 1984 and 86, another group of ships, totaling 6 in all, were built. These handy-sized ships have since made regular appearances on the Lakes. They usually are on charter to Fednav of Montreal.

*OLYMPIC MENTOR* was launched in 1984 as the *CALLIROE PATRONICOLA* although I'm not sure that she actually did sail under that name. That same year she was renamed *PATRICIA R* and made her Lakes debut. She was owned by Mirastar Maritime Panama S.A, registered in Panama and made her last inland voyage under that name in 1988.

She was renamed *OLYMPIC MENTOR* the same year and was still owned by the same company with her registry still Panama. She made her first trip to the Lakes in 1990 bound for Hamilton with steel and an outbound voyage with a cargo of wheat. She was re-registered to Greece in 1992.

Her voyages have not always been trouble-free. She grounded in Lac St. Louis on Dec. 25, 1995 while bound for Montreal to top off her Italy-bound cargo of potash that she loaded in Thunder Bay. She was re-floated on Dec. 27 after unloading some of her cargo into *CECILIA DESGAGNES* and *P.S. BARGE NO. 1*. She was noted as the last salty to clear the Seaway that year on Dec. 28. In 1998 she was again re-flagged to Panama. In 2000, while bound for Ashtabula, Ohio, she lost power below the Iroquois Locks causing a delay in traffic for approximately 12 hours.

The *OLYMPIC MENTOR* and her sister ships were all built with the same specifications of some of the Fednav fleet of ships, those being *FEDERAL POLARIS*, *FEDERAL FUJI* and *FEDERAL AGNO*. The only visible difference being the type of geared cranes on her decks. These ships, like the Fednav ships, have been well maintained and I am sure will survive well beyond the average 20-year lifespan of a salt-water ship.



\* *OLYMPIC MENTOR* \*

Downbound below Lock # 4 in  
the Welland Canal on Sept. 12, 1995

Terry Doyon Photo