

Great Lakes/Seaway Log

Long-sought Soo Lock project turns the corner from planning to construction

WITHIN THE 2002 ENERGY AND WATER Development Appropriations bill hammered out by a House-Senate conference committee and passed by the House Nov. 1 is the first construction money for a new large lock at the Soo. While the \$3 million allocated may seem meager in context of a \$225 million project, the move was hailed by many in the Great Lakes shipping industry as an important milestone.

"This was a very significant development," said Steve Thorp, transportation and sustainable development program manager for the Great Lakes Commission which has assumed the role of non-federal sponsor for the project on behalf of its eight-state membership. "It means that we have successfully moved this project from the study phase to the construction phase."

A new Poe-sized lock was authorized by Congress in 1986 but it has taken a decade and a half to resolve funding issues, particularly those relating to a required federal/local cost share formula. Under an agreement brokered by the Great Lakes Commission, the eight Great Lakes states will have 50 years to pay their 23.8 percent of the cost, or some \$53 million on the basis of a \$225 million total project cost. Each state's share is based on the volume of cargo moved through the locks that is shipped or received by its ports. At last report, three states have committed their shares, Michigan (\$14,071,334), Illinois (\$423,581) and Pennsylvania (\$388,238).

The project will convert two existing locks at the Soo, the obsolete Davis and Sabin locks, into a second large lock capable of handling the 1,000-foot bulk carriers that transport 70 percent of the cargo carried by U.S.-flag vessels within the Lakes.

According to W. Scott Parker, deputy district manager of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Detroit District office, the way is now clear for the Corps to award the first contract which will be to dewater the approach channels and work area. The funding will also be used to complete an economic reevaluation report and other preconstruction details. Work could start in 2002, with completion projected for the 2009 navigation season. Construction is not expected to create any disruption of vessel traffic through the locks.

"There has been some confusion about dual funding of planning money and construction money, but that is not really a problem," said Parker. "We can do all those things with the construction money. The key was the move to the construction column. That signifies a commitment to construct the project."

Said George Ryan, president of the Lake Carriers' Association, who has been lobbying forcefully for the new lock since the 1980s, "Funding of a new lock recognizes that this lock is a vital link in homeland security and is necessary to keep the Lakes shipping industry productive, an important factor in meeting the world competition."

Vessels

IT'S AN EARLY LAYUP season in the Great Lakes as economic doldrums work their way down the supply chain to the bulk transportation sector. Oglebay-Norton's *Buckeye* tied up at her winter berth in Toledo Nov. 4 and the Inland Lakes cement

carrier *Paul H. Townsend* came into the Milwaukee harbor for the season Nov. 2. Already at the wall on the U.S. side were two USS/GLF boats, *Arthur M. Anderson* and *Roger Blough* in Duluth/Superior. "It's just the general state of the economy," said Glen Nekvasil, communications vice

president for the Lake Carriers' Association in a *TOLEDO BLADE* report. "These aren't going to be the only early lay-ups. We expect to see more."

SOME INTERESTING OCEAN callers at Duluth-Superior recently included the British-flag *Sean Oceanic* on Oct. 30 which unloaded

a cargo of electrical transformers, according to J.A. Baumhofer. New to the port was the Antigua-flag bulker **Buccaneer** which loaded grain at Cargill Oct. 29. Other Seaway traffic at the Twin Ports included **Ziemia Chelminska** which delivered a steel cargo to the Port Terminal and then took on grain at Cargill. Canadian grain cargoes have been loaded on **Algoville** Oct. 25, **Canadian Provider** Oct. 30 and **Paterson** Nov. 1. **Quebecois** discharged at St. Lawrence Cement Nov. 3 and then loaded grain at Harvest States. **Mapleglen** loaded at Cargill Nov. 3 and the Dutch **Virginiaborg** called at General Mills Nov. 5. In the ore trade, **Columbia Star** made a rare call at the Burlington Northern ore dock Oct. 28.

HEAVY WEATHER moving through the Lakes Oct. 24 and 25 kept at least two vessels in the Duluth/Superior harbor after loading grain; the salty **Darya Ma** and **Canadian Mariner** both laid at anchor for the two days to wait out the gale force winds.

FROM THE PORT OF MONTREAL, René Beauchamp reports that on Nov. 6 the barge **ECRC 100**, under tow or being pushed by the tug **Florence McKeil** went aground shortly after leaving section 49 of the port. After several hours, it was refloated and moved to section M4 for inspection. Also in Montreal, on Nov. 7 the container ship **Canmar Supreme** reverted back to her previous name of **Panther Max** after having been on charter to Canada Maritime for only a few months.

AN OCEAN FREIGHTER that had traded in the Great Lakes has apparently sunk in the Arabian Sea. According to the October edition of "Marine News" published by the World Ship Society, the general cargo ship **Dana** was reported to be drifting in heavy seas off the Dhofar coast towards the Hallaniyat Islands on August 14. Fire had destroyed the accommodation and she was listing to starboard. A subsequent aerial search failed to locate the vessel and she is presumed to have sunk. The crew of 15 were rescued by a passing container vessel. This vessel, built under the name **Stepan Khalturin**, called at Great Lakes ports as far back as 1967.

ALSO IDENTIFIED in the "Marine News" were the names of several salties recently scrapped, which René Beauchamp notes had made trips in the Great Lakes:

Aeolos arrived at Aliaga, Turkey June 27. She transited the Seaway as **Fahrmannsand** in 1967. **Agios Vasilios** arrived at Alang, India August 3. She was in the Seaway as **Rimba Balau** in 1980 and as **Beta Luck** in 1995. **Alfarah I** arrived at Alang July 21. She was in the Seaway as **Zabrze** in 1969. **APJ Angad**, which was in the Seaway in 1979, arrived at an unknown location in India prior to August. **Dima** arrived in Mumbai, India July 12. She was in the Seaway as **Zapolyarnyy** in 1967. The

Freedom type **Glory** arrived in Alang July 19. She was in the Seaway as **Pozega** in 1982. The SD 14 type **Litsa** arrived in Aliaga August 6. She was in the Seaway as **Santa Teresa** in 1977. **Sena** arrived in Alang June 22. She was in the Seaway as **Hampton Lion** in 1984. The Wismar type **Weishan** arrived in Chittagong, Bangladesh March 29. She was in the Seaway as **Finntimber** in 1975 and as **Silver Faith** in 1991.

Casualties

FOR THE SECOND TIME in two weeks a ship arrester was struck and damaged in a Seaway lock. Terry Beahan reports that the downbound Cyprus-flagged salty **Vamond Wave** hit the arrester in the Iroquois Lock November 2 at about 10 a.m. St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. maintenance crews were dispatched from Montreal and arrived by the early afternoon to begin repairs. Seaway traffic was suspended 14 hours while a replacement boom was installed. The incident came only two weeks after the Panamanian-flag **N.S.T. Challenge** hit the arrester at the Snell Lock Oct. 21 causing a 16-hour halt in ship traffic.

Passenger Vessels and Ferries

THE LAKE MICHIGAN CARFERRY CO. plans a shorter season in 2002 after seeing its first decline in passengers this year since the cross-lake service was resumed in 1992. Company officials were quoted in news reports as saying that a combination of factors were responsible, including bad weather in the late season that forced cancellation of some crossings, and the Sept. 11 attacks which curtailed travel nationwide. This year the LMC's **Badger** operated between May 11 and October 28; next year's season will run from May 17 to October 14.

AN UNUSUAL TRANSIT of the Soo Locks was made Oct. 15 by the Georgian Bay ferry **Chi-Cheemaun**. John Vournakis reports that after dropping off some passengers at the Roberta Bondar Park in Soo, Ontario, the ferry locked through on her way to the Pascol drydock in Thunder Bay for a five-year survey.

Call about inserts in Great Lakes/Seaway Log

Great Lakes/Seaway Log

ISSN: 1067-4144

© 2001 HARBOR HOUSE PUBLISHERS, INC.
221 Water Street
Boyer City, Michigan 49712 USA

(231) 582-2814 FAX: (231) 582-3392
www.harborhouse.com/Log/log.html
harbor@harborhouse.com

Subscriptions \$32.00 per year
U.S. funds. Canadian and foreign
subscriptions add \$10.00
for additional postage. Editor:
David L. Knight. News from
contributors welcome, but
cannot be returned.

Check us out online at
www.harborhouse.com



THE DIMINUTIVE FERRY *Neebish Islander* survived a hectic week in early October. The *SAULTEVENING NEWS'* Jack Storey reported that the ferry, which normally sees its pace slowing down at that point of the season, was pressed into action to transport trucks bearing 3,600 tons of asphalt from the mainland to Neebish Island for a major road project. On one day alone, she made 64 round trips in a 12-hour period.

Related Commerce

CLEVELAND-CLIFFS INC. has agreed to acquire 45 percent interest in the Tilden iron ore mine in the Michigan Upper Peninsula from Algoma Steel's Cannelton Iron Ore Company. Cliffs already has a 40 percent stake in the mine, so it will now be the majority owner with an 85 percent stake. According to a report in the *WALL STREET JOURNAL*, Cliffs will also assume Cannelton's share of Tilden's debts estimated at \$15 million to \$20 million. The Tilden deal will increase Cleveland-Cliffs' share in Tilden's production from 3.1 million tons to 6.6 million. The Tilden mine has a capacity of 7.8 million tons. In addition Cliffs will supply taconite pellets purchased by Algoma for a 15-year period, a volume expected to be 3 million to 3.5 million tons annually. Taconite produced at the Tilden mine is loaded for shipment by lakers at Escanaba.

LTV STEEL and the United Steelworkers Union have officially agreed to close the West Side Mill in Cleveland. Rich Fennessy notes that the mill had been placed in idle status in June pending discussions between the two parties, but that no one ever really expected the mill to reopen. The closing will be permanent. At one time in the last decade, the mill was home to two blast furnaces and one basic oxygen furnace.

A NEW CUSTOMER for waterborne, low-sulphur coal could be emerging. Tondy Energy Systems has proposed a \$400 million cogeneration plant to be built on Manistee Lake in Filer City. The firm already operates a 55 megawatt generating station that burns a combination of tire chips, wood waste and coal. The new facility would be a 255 megawatt plant and burn only coal.

Underwater News

A TENTH UNDERWATER PRESERVE within Michigan waters would be created off the state's Lake Huron coastline under a recently announced proposal. State Rep. Dale Sheltrown of West Branch and Thomas Ferguson, director of Michigan's Sunrise Side Travel Association, would like to designate the area off Iosco and Alcona counties as a state bottomlands preserve to generate more interest in sport diving in northeast Michigan. One of the

more popular wrecks that would be included in the preserve is that of *Goshawk* about four miles off Tawas Point. The schooner converted to a barge sank in 50 feet of water in 1920 while carrying a load of salt between Port Huron and Duluth.

Museums and Restorations

THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION has awarded a C\$220,000 grant to the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston, Ont. in support of the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Centre Project. The grant will be directed to three aspects of the project, the creation of the Gordon C. Leitch Discovery Centre, the renovation of the museum's library and archives through the creation of the Gordon C. Shaw Study Centre, and the funding of two new positions, a museum services manager and a part-time curator.

THE GREAT LAKES SHIPWRECK MUSEUM at Whitefish Point is extending its season this year. Normally the museum closes for the season Oct. 15, but because it has been so busy this year, it will stay open on weekends through Sunday, Dec. 2. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Media

SOUTHPORT VIDEO, producer of 15 documentaries on Great Lakes shipwrecks, has released a new work, "Shipwrecks of Lake Michigan (1912-1958)." The one-hour VHS format program tells the stories of eight prominent Lake Michigan wrecks: *Rouse Simmons*, 1912, *Eastland*, 1915, *Lakeland*, 1924, *Milwaukee*, 1929, *Wisconsin*, 1929, *Senator*, 1929, *Prins Wilhelm V*, 1954, and *Carl D. Bradley*, 1958. The stories are recalled by Great Lakes maritime authorities and illustrated with rare photographs, paintings and newspaper headlines, as well as underwater footage. The video can be ordered from Southport Video, 4609 74th Place, Kenosha, WI 53142, 800-642-9860. Cost is \$39.95 plus \$6.95 for shipping and handling. Wisconsin residents add 5.5 percent sales tax.

Odds and Ends

FUNDING FOR THE DREDGING of two important channels in the Great Lakes navigation system was included in the 2002 Energy and Water Appropriations bill approved by the House of Representatives Nov. 1. Some \$18.4 million was designated for dredging in the St. Mary's River and \$804,000 for the Keweenaw Waterway. An additional \$1 million was added in a House-Senate conference for dredging at Little Rapids on the St. Mary's.

A \$167,000 GRANT has been awarded to the Transportation and Logistics Research Center in the University

of Wisconsin-Superior's Department of Business and Economics to lead a year-long study on the potential of establishing intermodal service at the port of Duluth-Superior. The research project will include teams from the Urban Transportation Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Tioga Group Inc., a major intermodal consulting company. The study will focus on current and future intermodal freight volumes, flows, and shipper's requirements. The teams will look at the potential to establish a marine intermodal service and examine other terminal models that may have applicability to this area. The majority of the funding for the research has been awarded through the Midwest Regional University Transportation Center (MRUTC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a consortium of eight universities representing Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio, Minnesota, Michigan, and Indiana.

Follow Up

HUMAN ERROR appears to be emerging as the probable cause for the August 11 accident in which a Welland Canal lift-bridge sheared off the pilot house and stack of the Paterson bulker *Windoc*, starting a fire that destroyed the crew's quarters. The *TORONTO STAR* reported that investigators from the Transportation Safety Board of Canada have determined the Allanburg bridge was operating normally before it dropped onto *Windoc* and caused more than C\$10 million damage. Investigators have also determined that the vessel, which was downbound with grain for Montreal, was proceeding normally through the canal when the bridge descended on her.

Captain Gary Kassbaum, the safety board's senior

regional investigator for the Great Lakes area says "human performance factors" are the focus of inquiries. He described the human factor as "very significant" in the investigation. The board is preparing a draft report on the accident, which will go to those involved in the crash for further input before its public release. The 47-year-old operator of the lift-bridge, whose name has not been released, was put on paid leave immediately after the accident and complained he was suffering stress. He has since returned to work but has been reassigned other duties along the canal. The bridge remains closed to vehicular traffic as it undergoes C\$800,000 in repairs. It was tentatively scheduled to reopen Nov. 19.

According to the *STAR*, Kassbaum wouldn't say the focus of the investigation centers around the bridge operator and his actions. "That wouldn't be fair," he said. "There are checks and balances involved before a person would get themselves into that situation... it can be a larger item." Kassbaum couldn't say when the final report will be released, but said investigators are still doing analytical work in relation to the crash. He said they've taken "elaborate measurements" to check the sight lines from the bridge and have also checked lighting on the bridge and communication between vessels and bridges. Investigators have interviewed about 30 people.

Meanwhile, *Windoc* has been sold by the insurance underwriters who acquired the vessel after settling a claim from her owners, N.M. Paterson and Sons Ltd.. Paterson then bought the vessel back last week for less than C\$1 million. The firm has not yet announced any plans for the vessel which was still in Hamilton at last report, possibly awaiting a tow to Toronto.

Great Lakes/Seaway Log

Please enter my subscription

- Check Enclosed
- Bill Me
- Send information on bulk subscription rates for my organization.
- Send information on your other Great Lakes publications.
- New Subscription
- Renewal Subscription

3 years \$86 **2 years** \$59 **1 year** \$32

*Canada & overseas add \$10.00 per year for additional postage.
All accounts payable in U.S. Funds on U.S. dollar account.*

MASTERCARD VISA AMERICAN EXPRESS

CREDIT CARD NUMBER

MONTH YEAR
EXP. DATE

NAME

FIRM

ADDRESS

CITY STATE/PROVINCE ZIP/POSTAL CODE

E-MAIL

SIGNATURE