

1972

Louis Dreyfus withdrew from the Mediterranean Liner trade, bringing to a close what had been a very important association, one that had begun in 1946 with Mr. Pierre Louis Dreyfus and his organization. The Company recognized Mr. Dreyfus' contributions by Resolution in the Minutes of their Annual Meeting.

Containerization was developing very rapidly, and Hapag-Lloyd introduced a weekly container service on the North Atlantic from Halifax. Fabre Line joined Hansa and operated a container service called Atlantica Line to the Mediterranean from Saint John. MSCL was also appointed to represent South Africa Maritime Line, operating a service from Saint John to South Africa.

Montreal Shipping, representative of the Dutch Nedlloyd shipping group, and long-standing agent for the L. Smit Co. deep-sea towage division, was asked to set up a Canadian venture for the jointly-owned company, Smit-Lloyd B.V. of Rotterdam. The motive prompting this venture was the Canadian National Energy Offshore Program, and its Canadian content requirements. Smit-Lloyd (Canada) Limited was formed, yet its many attempts to participate in the Government's offshore activities failed to produce any fruitful results.

Smit-Lloyd was drawn to Canadian offshore ventures, and invested significantly in Keen Industries Limited of Edmonton. MSCL was asked to take an interest, and did. Keen Industries' attraction was its ownership of a tug barge license for the McKenzie River, where B.C. Railway was conducting major construction work. Regretfully, the Railway suffered severe losses, and the venture was deemed unsuccessful.

1973

Hapag-Lloyd suspended the Halifax container service, but, with Ernst Russ of Hamburg, continued their joint semi-container service from the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River to North Europe.



1974

Montreal Shipping was one of the first Canadian agency companies to enter the computer age, with a purchase of a computer system that was used to integrate freight invoicing, manifesting, statistics and accounting for all the liner accounts represented.

MSCL was appointed agents for the North American West African Line (NAWAL), a consortium of Compagnie Maritime Belge, Compagnie Nantaise of Paris and Elder Dempster of the U.K. Ocean Group.

The Price Company was taken over by Abitibi Paper Co. of Toronto and became Abitibi-Price Inc. Montreal Shipping maintained its position as the managing operators of the newly-named Abitibi-Price Shipping Limited.

1975

Hapag-Lloyd resumed their full container service on the North Atlantic and included Halifax. This replaced the Europe-Canada Lakes service, which Hapag-Lloyd had operated with Ernst Russ. MSCL's involvement with break-bulk liner services came to a close as all regular services to Europe had become completely containerized.

1977

In September, thanks to James Thom's persistent efforts, MSCL were appointed as agents for MOL on the West Coast; and a Vancouver office was opened again. John S. Hodge was transferred from Montreal, and proved significant in the success of this venture.

On the East Coast, Atlantica Line terminated its Mediterranean service following the intense competition brought on by the start of the Italia Line service. MSCL had represented Italia Line previous to Atlantica Line, but at the time, the Line did not serve Canada, and MSCL's involvement was limited to a passenger service vessel to Halifax.

The introduction of containers caused the number of breakbulk tramp vessels calling Montreal to diminish. Strong rate competition resulted between the many agency companies. Montreal Shipping, with its large liner base, did not aggressively participate in the rate cutting; and consequently lost its place as a major player in the East Coast tramp port agency sector.

Fortunately, on the West Coast, Vancouver was expanding at a rapid pace. Through the Mitsui O.S.K. relationship, the Company received appointments as husbandry agents for Nissan Motor Car Carriers, Act Maritime and Tokyo Marine, all of them from Japan.

The loss of Atlantica line excluded Montreal Shipping, for the first time in its history, from the important Mediterranean trade. The Company ended the year representing only one conventional liner service, Scindia Line to India. All other lines were now containerized.

1979

At the previous year's Annual Meeting, Mr. Frank B. Peterson became Chairman of the Board, and Mr. James L. Thom was appointed President. Abitibi-Price acquired the Labrador Linerboard mill in Stephenville, which, through an agreement with the Newfoundland Government, was converted to producing newsprint, and created a second Newfoundland port for them.

1980

Responding to the 'Francisation' program, introduced in Quebec in order to help protect the French language, the name Montreal Shipping Company Limited was changed to Montreal Shipping Inc. MSI received its Francisation Certificate from the Quebec government in 1989.

1983

The Company became active in a new building project, acting on behalf of Consolidated-Bathurst for a specialized wood pulp carrier that was time-chartered and built in Travemunde, Germany. The 'BRIDGEWATER' was delivered the following year and transported woodpulp from New Brunswick to their Bridgewater mill in Ellesmere, U.K.

Concluding an effort begun in 1977, the Company secured the representation of the Peoples Republic of China; and managed their shipping activities to the Canadian West Coast through an appointment by the China Ocean Shipping Co. (COSCO) and the China National Chartering Corp. (SINOCHART).



Vancouver staff 1985

Motivated by an expanding tramp account base, the Company opened a new office in Prince Rupert. MSI became a true 'coast to coast' operation with eight offices from the far reaches of Newfoundland to British Columbia.

1984

Through a connection with Gulf and Eastern Steamship and Chartering Corp. of New York, the Company was introduced to Nigerian National Shipping Line, who had secured a contract with the Canadian Dairy Commission for the movement of

canned milk to Lagos. This base led MSI to solicit other general cargo, which added to the Traffic Department's excitement; already busy dealing with the Nigerian communication system, and their Government's volatility. When the milk contract expired in 1987, the service to Canada was discontinued.

1985



Toronto Staff, 1985

Abitibi-Price upgraded its fleet of vessels by introducing two purpose-built newsprint carriers, the 'ABITIBI CONCORD' and the 'ABITIBI MACADO'. Both were built in the Bremer Vulkan yards in Germany by Nusse Shipping of Hamburg, against a long-term charter.

Mr. Colin W. Webster, whose association with Montreal Shipping went back some 40 years, and who had acted as Director, passed away. His son,



Montreal Staff, 1985

Lorne Webster, subsequently joined the board, and continued to represent the Webster family interest in the Company.

1987

Two vessels were added to the Abitibi-Price fleet, the 'ABITIBI ORINOCO' and the 'ABITIBI CLAIRBORNE.' The new vessels were built in the same yard in Hamburg; a similar hull design with side door loading capability. The side door concept has proven to be a very valuable feature for loading during Newfoundland winters.

Australia-New Zealand Direct Line appointed Montreal Shipping as its Canadian agents. ANZDL operated a joint service with PAD Line, which called Vancouver for both breakbulk and container cargo. This portion of the Australasian service did not continue after ownership changes were made. ANZDL did maintain an excellent mini-landbridge service to and from Long Beach, California.



Port of Quebec in Winter

1988

Hapag-Lloyd appointed Montreal Shipping as agents for their Euro-Pacific Service from Western Canada and helped Vancouver office's continuing expansion. The office now represented Mitsui O.S.K., Delta Line, ELMA Line, Hapag-Lloyd and a growing number of Tramp accounts. The middle management team of Guy G. Bouchat, Michael H. Belmer, James G. Allan, Michael Van Straubenzee and Jean Paul Cormier put together a package to purchase the shares of Montreal Shipping from the existing shareholders in order to enable a smooth succession. The offer was accepted, and was implemented over a three-year period.