

the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK



OCTOBER 1975

THE PROGRAM OF THE INSTITUTE

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York, an agency of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New York, is a unique organization devoted to the well-being and special interests of active merchant seamen.

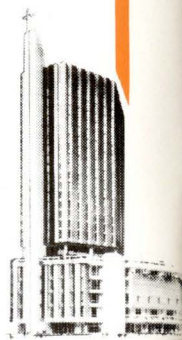
More than 753,000 such seamen of all nationalities, races and creeds come into the Port of New York every year. To many of them the Institute is their shore center in port and remains their polestar while they transit the distant oceans of the earth.

First established in 1834 as a floating chapel in New York harbor, the Institute offers a wide range of recreational and educational services for the mariner, including counseling and the help of five chaplains in emergency situations.

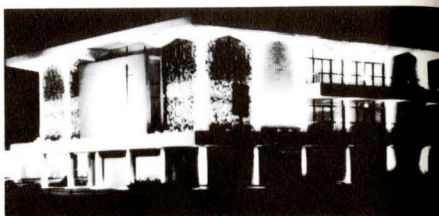
Each year 2,300 ships with 96,600 men aboard put in at Port Newark, where time ashore is extremely limited.

Here in the very middle of huge, sprawling Port Newark pulsing with activity of container-shipping, SCI has provided an oasis known as the Mariners International Center which offers seamen a recreational center especially constructed and designed, operated in a special way for the very special needs of the men. An outstanding feature is a soccer field (lighted at night) for games between ship teams.

Although 61% of the overall Institute budget is met by income from seamen and the public, the cost of special services comes from endowment and contributions. Contributions are tax deductible.



Seamen's Church Institute
State and Pearl Streets
Manhattan



Mariners International Center (SCI)
Export and Calcutta Streets
Port Newark, N.J.

the LOOKOUT

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The Rev. John M. Mulligan, D.D.
Director

Carlyle Windley
Editor

SEAMEN'S CHURCH
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
15 State Street, New York, N. Y. 10004
Telephone: 269-2710

The Right Reverend
Paul Moore, Jr., S.T.D., D.D.
Honorary President

John G. Winslow
President

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Volunteers hold annual
Spring Plant Sale
in Institute lobby



Beautiful Hands Are They That Do

by

Mrs. James W. Guthrie

EDITOR'S NOTE:

We are pleased to print the following article by Mrs. James W. Guthrie who, for more than fourteen years, has been a volunteer member of our Women's Council here at the Institute.

Not only does the story express the sentiments of so many other volunteers who help us carry on important aspects of our work; but we think that the article indirectly explains why we hold our volunteers in such esteem.

We feel fortunate indeed to have men and women like Mrs. Guthrie helping us in our work, for they truly care about those we serve, recognize the importance of "quality" when doing for others; and, most of all, understand that serving others is one of the finest and most personally rewarding expressions of the human spirit.

Women's Council volunteer Mrs. Nadine Krauss helps wrap "stocking stuffers" for SCI Christmas Boxes for seamen

I was brought up to *Do*. From childhood, my mother taught me cooking, handwork, knitting, sewing...all things girls should know and do.

When in High School, during World War I, we made shirts for French war orphans. So help me, they must have been denim they were so heavy, but they had to be laundered on rocks in the river. And we did knitting for the Red Cross. How many of you ladies remember taking your knitting everywhere, to church, and even to the movies, and no stitch-dropping?

Along came World War II and British War Relief, sweaters, helmets, socks to the hips for use on minesweepers. Our church was predominantly English, so mother had plenty of volunteers to help with the garments. Then we entered the war, and we all know the demands on our time and talents.

At this time, I was commuting to New York. The Red Cross office was near the station, so my stops were frequent. Few wished to make navy sweaters, size forty-two with long sleeves...so. But above and beyond the call of duty, they asked if my mother would hem diapers. People were willing to make layettes, but disliked hemming diapers, so very frequently, I hauled a load home. Of course my mother wasn't deliriously happy about it, but she wouldn't say no. Even in war time, babies did come along!

Then the disaster training and dashing to school at the weirdest hours, for civilian defense practice raids. As secretary for Zone 9, we were responsible for about 25,000 people. After each "raid", reports, reports, reports.

Along here, there was an ecstatic marriage, but all too short.

Of course, there was the usual church involvement, Episcopal Churchwomen and Altar Guild. During the presidency



of the Episcopal Churchwomen, I felt we should extend the borders of our good works beyond our own parish. *During this period, we became active in the knitting activities of the Women's Council of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York. Both the knitting and our visits to the Institute's Christmas room, have brought all of us much happiness and pride of achievement. Our women, twenty-one in our group at present, do absolutely beautiful work, and with the gorgeous colors now supplied, it is indeed a joy to send in our finished garments.*

The urge for service was still present, but with the years, the idea of getting out each day didn't appeal to the old bones, but besides knitting for the Institute there was another chance to serve, at home, as long as I can keep my fingers supple — Braille transcribing. A course was offered by the Library of Congress, through the local Red Cross. Glory be, it was perfect! It was like learning a foreign language, plus shorthand. I was delighted. After completing the course, a requirement is a manuscript of thirty-five to fifty pages. With eighty as a passing mark and a two point penalty for errors, you certainly are careful doing

your own manuscript. I proudly passed and was certified. Then, one usually does a book for the Library of Congress, by way of seasoning.

While transcribing "*What The Great Religions Believe*" I learned of the Braille Book Bank in Midland Park. They transcribe books for college and post graduate students. After a book is transcribed, it is run, page by page, through a Thermoform machine, with a Brailon page, which duplicates the "dots" on the master copy, and the Brailon copy is bound, for use by the student. The master copy can be reproduced a number of times. Many volunteers are needed to do the reproducing, as a text book, in print, may develop between five and forty volumes in Braille.

I started typing title pages for these reproduced text books, so sighted people would know what they were handling, and typed about ten thousand. During



this period, the need was obvious for a record of books shipped to each student and state facility. This record revealed that we were servicing students in all states and many foreign countries, and the record proved very valuable, as well as permitting us to follow the progress of each student.

Occasionally, on a rush job, a book is taken apart, and each available transcriber is given a chapter. In a *History of the United States* I had the chapter on the Van Buren administration. I loved it!

Then there are urgent calls from the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired for text books for

elementary and high school students. Blind children, from kindergarten, now attend public schools and the Commission checks regularly on their progress. But their needs must be supplied promptly. A blind child cannot "catch up". The books must be ready. These are indeed a delight. Today, in a period of a year, each child requires between twelve to nineteen books. About May or June, when teachers receive book lists for the



September opening, we start pushing, knowing that the first week in September, the children will need enough books on each subject to get started.

This September, in our area, eighteen blind children entered school and there are twenty-one in the pre-school group, ready for entry in 1975. For fourteen years, we shall be needed, until they finish high school, and the New Jersey Commission does an excellent job.

At the moment, my chores are multiple, *Little House on the Prairie* for the Library of Congress, a reader for a fourth grader (I'm ahead of him just now) and a reader for a fifth grader (I have to keep hopping to keep up with her) — plus my work for seamen at the Institute.

My mother told the truth when she said, "Beautiful hands are they that do." She could have added, they also contribute to a contented heart.

kaleidoscope

Dr. John M. Mulligan, SCI director, participating in the September 15 New York ceremony and Mass honoring Mother Elizabeth Ann Seaton — the first native born American to be formally declared a Saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Mass was held at Castle Clinton in Battery Park and followed the official canonization held in Rome by Pope Paul VI.

The New York Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seaton is located next door to SCI at 8 State Street within Our Lady of the Rosary Church and is built on the site of the last house occupied by Elizabeth and William Seaton in New York.



Cadets of the Norwegian sailing vessel Christian Radich stand "at ease" while Mr. Derwood Hall, Manager of Marine Terminals in New Jersey for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, receives a commemorative award for his opening this year's International Sports Week at the Institute's Mariners International Center at Port Newark/Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Sponsored annually by the Norwegian Seamen's Service Agency and the Seamen's Church Institute, the soccer games and other events are organized and co-ordinated by the Norwegian service agency and held on the playing fields at the Institute's Mariners Center.

In addition to leading-off the week of competitive games for seamen, the young cadets of the Christian Radich also had time to join their adult Norwegian/American friends for refreshments and a few sets of table tennis in the Center's main reception hall. (Pictures of the field events themselves will be featured in the November issue of the Lookout.)



WHOPPING WHALES

by Arvesta Gardner

Part I (of two parts)

When the ship *Union* left Nantucket Island for the coast of Patagonia in mid-September 1807, Edmund Gardner held the position of Captain. This was his first command. He had been following the sea for six years, was not yet twenty-three years old, and had very recently been married. No doubt he felt some pride in his situation in life, but having grown up a devout Quaker he tried at all times to suppress any elation and to keep his spirit humble.

Records show that the *Union* like other whalers had been built for utility and not beauty—and she seems to have been lacking a full quota of men on this particular trip. However, in the eyes of the young captain, the vessel was part of a dream come true, and writing later in his journal he described their departure thus: "Nothing looked burdensome in our apparent hazardous enterprise."

But it was only the beginning of this enterprise, which proved uneventful. Within a few days, a tremendous gale blew up. With no abatement it went on hour after frightening hour until the bravest man on board must have wondered if there was the slightest chance of survival. Then, at ten o'clock on a night of howling winds and slashing rain there occurred one of the accidents most dreaded by whaler crews. In deepest darkness a collision was felt as something large and of great weight rammed

the ship. The blow was so intense that it hurled one officer to the head of a hatchway where he barely missed being flung downstairs. Crew members staggered to the deck from every station. The young captain dashed like a madman to the stern of the pitching ship. He leaned dangerously far over the rail and as he peered down from this position he could discern the outline of a large whale. It was quite clear that this was what had run into their vessel; the whale spouted twice and completely vanished into the black sea.

Captain Gardner knew they must determine quickly what might be the extent of the damage. Pumps were manned, and going below deck the captain and a

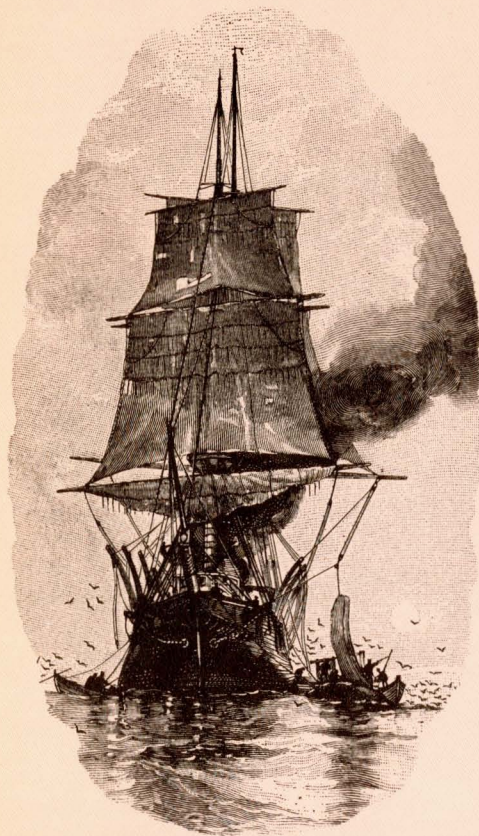


companion with a lantern moved material about as rapidly as it could be handled as they searched for the wound. What they found was a gash which was three by four feet in size where the timbers had been smashed. The sea flowed in freely; the location below the wales told Captain Gardner that the ship would inevitably fill and must as certainly sink.

Calmly he spoke to his mate, telling him in language which today sounds quite stilted that it was "useless to be frightened," but necessary to "pursue a straightforward course to save the ship's company and ourselves." In two hours all hands were off, shivering in three small boats. (Later one of the small boats was abandoned because of the difficulty of

keeping three together in the mountainous waves.) The crew mournfully watched the mother vessel as it rolled and, at one in the morning, turned over. There was an especially pathetic moment when the captain heard his dog cry as the ship started to sink. The pet had been with him on a previous voyage, and the realization that in the excitement of the crew's escape by night no one had thought to rescue the helpless creature gave its owner an extra twinge of sorrow. Objects began to wash out from the stricken vessel and the men pushed away to a safer spot, and at daylight began to make sails for each small boat from the ship's main royal.

In complete faith, the young Captain set his course for the Azores Islands, later writing that it was "fully impressed" on



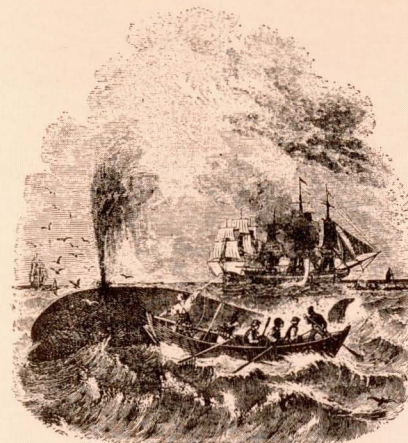
his mind that they would be "favored" to reach them. It is hard to believe that Captain Gardner, being a seaman from early youth, *never* swore, but at least in the written accounts which he has left he tended rather to make frequent reference to "Providence," and to speak of his reliance on religious faith. During that first miserable day in the boats, a schooner appeared on the horizon. For all too short a while hope displaced despair in the thoughts of the crew; but the violent wind

kept the castaways at too great a distance to be noticed. The captain in describing this wrote that, during one night,

"It rained powerfully; the lightning ran down in streams around us, and a more dismal night was never experienced by any of us and 'tis doubtful if any of the survivors have seen a more dismal night since. In the midst of all this terrific scene, the boat in which I was in, shipped a sea, filling the boat half full of water; each man with a bucket threw out the water till free...through a long dark and dismal night, none could build on longer time of life than five or ten minutes."

It is universally acknowledged that drinking water is the lifeline to survival and even sanity when men are shipwrecked. This rather quickly became a problem to the sailors from the *Union* because, through a miscalculation at the time, it had become necessary to lighten the boats and somehow too much water had been thrown out. Ugly remarks were soon going around, then complaints became threats, and the usually self-assured young Captain was, at the very least, uncomfortable as he was pressed to distribute larger portions or give it out more frequently. Again leaning on faith, he promised that when land should be sighted more of *all* provisions would be distributed. When that day came Edmund Gardner kept his word, but wisely he still maintained a reserve for the time when they should actually *step on shore*.

The crew from the *Union* had tossed, and prayed, and agonized on the open sea for eight bleak days before their ordeal was ended and "Providence" blessed them. Sure enough, the land they wearily



climbed onto was the Azores, and through some miracle not one human life had been lost.

The small boats which "chased" the whale were frequently the victims of attacks. An appalling number of them were totally destroyed, but it was rare that the larger vessels (or the mother ships) were lost in this manner. There is reference to the catastrophe involving the *Union* in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. In a chapter which includes details of some accidents caused by whales, he wrote:

"The ship *Union*, also of Nantucket, was in the year 1807 totally lost off the Azores by a similar onset, but the authentic particulars of this catas-

trophe I have never chanced to encounter, though from the whalehunters I have now and then heard casual allusions to it."

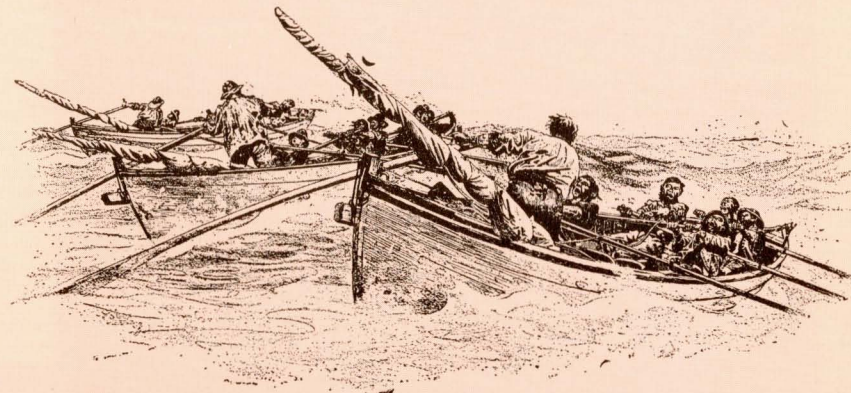
The dramatic case of the *Essex*, sunk by a whale in 1820, has been described in a narrative by Owen Chase, the chief mate at the time of the catastrophe. Melville quotes at some length from Chase's report, as one can learn from reading Melville's book. * Quite recently a reference appearing in a maritime magazine speaks of the *Essex* as "one of three whaling ships authentically recorded as sunk by whales."

Such reliable statements demonstrate that Edmund Gardner's story scarcely deals with any run-of-the-mill accident, but sheds light on a most extraordinary occurrence.

A vastly more unfortunate experience awaited Edmund Gardner, with results which completely changed his life.

**Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville. (Chap. XLIV ed. pub. Dodd, Mead and Company, N.Y. 1942)

(To be continued in November issue)



About the Famous Australian White Whale "Pelorus Jack"

(From a letter of April 26, 1957 written by Herston Frankland to Walter E. Kelley)

Pelorus Jack was a whale — supposedly white, but he was a mottled gray color. First of all, there were two "white" whales, about 20 to 25 feet long which were well known in Pelorus Sound away back in the 1870's. One of them disappeared — presumably dead, and about the middle 1890's when there developed a fair amount of small steamer traffic through the French Pass, (to save about 70 miles around D'Urville Island in the open Tasman Sea,) this single white whale met the steamers coming through the Pass from the North (the Pelorus Sound side). Jack stayed with the ships for a couple of miles or so and played around the stern of the boat from side to side.

The French Pass is about 2 miles long and a half mile wide — the tide reached a maximum of about 6 knots, running over flat, rocky ledges with a well-defined deep channel on the east side, where there is a lighthouse. I was an officer on the "Penguin" and the "Rotoiiti" which ran through the Pass four times a week on the way from Pictou to Nelson. The lighthouse keeper had a beautiful blonde daughter with blue eyes, who invariably waved to us as we scooted by at about 20 knots about 200 feet from the lighthouse. We never could figure out any satisfactory way to date the daughter — although many schemes were considered and much thought was given to the intriguing problem!

I saw Pelorus Jack about 30 or 40 times as I was on that run for about three months. An order from the "Governor of the Council" was issued about 1901 to preserve Jack from any kind of molestation. True, a drunk took a shot at him about 1903 and he was arrested and fined 20 pounds. Jack died about 1912 but no one knows whether he was killed or died from old age.

As for "guiding the ship through the Pass" — that's pure bunk — it was really a rapids at the ebb tide — only one ship that I know of ever — the "Rotorna" a forerunner of the "Penguin" — grounded on the rock shelf in the Pass but got off on the next high tide. The ship that Jack would *not* come out to meet was the "Waihora" and not the "Penguin" — it was thought that the "Waihora's" propeller clipped him as he had a gash on his back about 2 feet long and we thought he recognized the beat of that ship's propeller just as a dog will recognize the sound of his master's car engine.

The "Penguin" was wrecked on Tom's Rock in Cook Strait in a dense fog—about 70 miles from the Pass. I know, because I was there.

We wish to thank Mr. Kelley of Bronxville, New York for allowing us to print the above extract from a letter written to him by his long-time friend, Mr. Frankland.

★ JOSEPH CONRAD LIBRARY ★

NEW NAUTICAL NAME-BOARD GIVEN TO LIBRARY

SCI librarian Douglas Whiddon and his visiting nephew Breck Whiddon of Savannah, Georgia admire the name-board recently installed above the entrance to the Institute's Joseph Conrad Library.

A gift from Mr. and Mrs. Frederick R. Lack of Southport, Connecticut, this handsome plaque was hand carved by Willard Shepard, ship's carver at Mystic Seaport.

It is an excellent example of a form of traditional ship carving and we know that Mr. Joseph Conrad himself (with his eagle eye) would have been pleased. It certainly is a constant source of admiration from seamen and visitors here at the Institute and we thank Mr. and Mrs. Lack (and Mr. Shepard).



REMEMBER HER?



That's right. It's beautiful Theda Bara as she appeared in the now classic film "Cleopatra" and she's helping to bring "the movies" to Lower Manhattan.

Miss Bara will be but one of a host of stars featured in **The Love Goddesses**, a study of movie heroines, playing here at the Institute, November 11 at 6:00 P.M.

NEW FILM CLUB

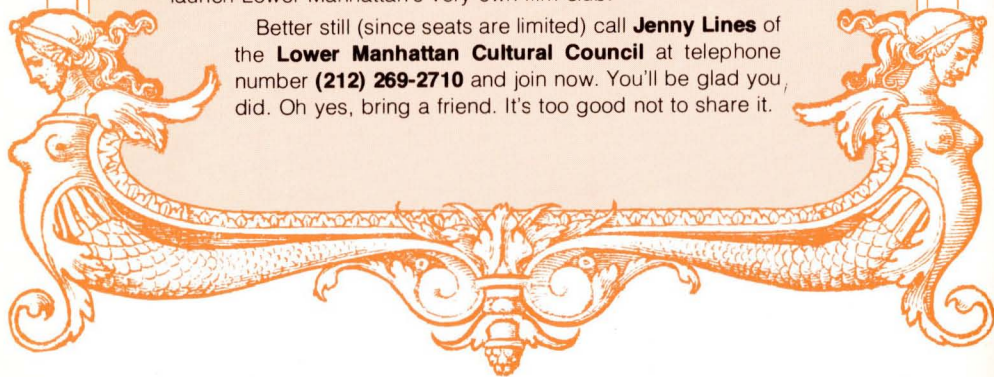
The movie is just one of an exciting series of films which will be shown here each Tuesday at 6:00 P.M. by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's new *Downtown Film Club*.

Leading off its first series of ten films is **Jazz On A Summer's Day** on October 14. The program also includes Joseph Losey's **The Servant**; the Czechoslovakian Academy Award winner **Closely Watched Trains**; the French thriller **The Wages Of Fear**; and one of Fritz Lang's silent thrillers **Dr. Mabuse, King Of Crime**; **The Cranes Are Flying**, one of the most acclaimed Soviet films of all time; Rossellini's historic drama **The Rise of Louis XIV**; the brilliant and bizarre Yugoslavian movie **Love Affair, Or The Case of the Missing Switchboard Operator**; and Mel Brooks' **The Producers** with which he made his directorial debut.

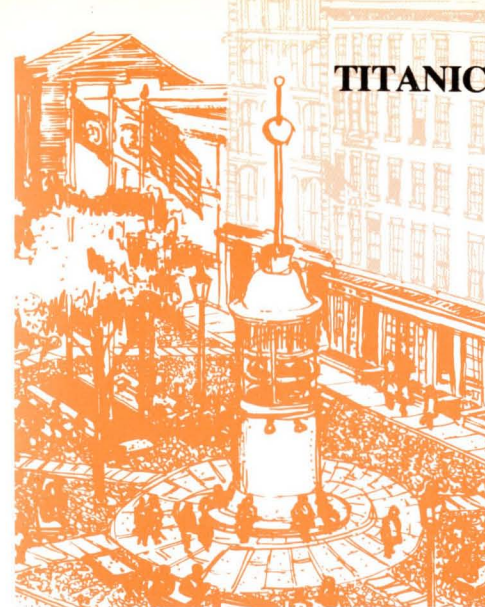
Thanks to funding assistance by the New York State Council on the Arts, **subscriptions are only \$10 for the full series of ten or \$1.50 per showing at the door.**

At these prices for those films it's a bargain not to be missed. So come on down October 14, have dinner in our restaurant or cafeteria and then help launch Lower Manhattan's very own film club.

Better still (since seats are limited) call **Jenny Lines** of the **Lower Manhattan Cultural Council** at telephone number **(212) 269-2710** and join now. You'll be glad you did. Oh yes, bring a friend. It's too good not to share it.



TITANIC MEMORIAL LIGHTHOUSE A LANDMARK AGAIN ... THANKS TO EXXON



The Lighthouse as planned in the new Seaport Park

When in 1968, the Institute moved from 25 South Street to its present 15 State Street location, it was concerned that SCI's famous Titanic Memorial Lighthouse be preserved. Thus, it helped to arrange for the Memorial Lighthouse to be given to the then, fledgling South Street Seaport Museum.

Now thanks to the Exxon Corporation, the lighthouse will once again stand as one of the city's distinctive commemorative landmarks — this time at the entrance to the bustling and rapidly developing South Street Seaport.

As part of its Bicentennial program, the Exxon Corporation recently announced a \$200,000 gift to the Seaport for the construction of a park at its entrance.

A major feature of the park will be the Titanic Memorial Lighthouse which was dedicated in 1913 at the Institute at 25 South Street as a monument to those who died on the ocean liner *Titanic*.

The lighthouse, which will be fully restored, will be mounted on a concrete foundation and will stand 22 feet from the ground to the top of the pole which holds the memorial's famous time ball. From 1913 until 1967 the lighthouse's beacon and time ball were visible 10 miles out to sea. Each day at precisely



...and atop SCI at 25 South Street

noon the ball would slide down the pole and mariners within sight would set their chronometers by it.

In addition to the lighthouse, the park's plans call for a flagstone and Belgian block plaza, with benches and trees. The walkways will be bordered by appropriately styled lamp posts.

As Anthony Newman, an executive of the South Street Seaport museum observed, "The Titanic Memorial, when positioned atop the old Seamen's Church Institute building, served both a functional and symbolic role. In the Memorial's new and permanent location at the South Street Seaport Museum's park, it will serve both these roles, in new, but no less significant ways, by continuing to memorialize the heroism of those lost with the *Titanic* and by serving as a unique and highly visible welcome to the excitement and history of South Street Seaport."

We agree.



THE GARDENER



He thought of the sea when spring winds blew,
He who had never seen the tide
Toss its frothy mane: who never knew
The sandy shallows where inlets glide.

His dream was the tang of salty spray
And the arc of the gulls' ascent and dip,
Yet never, as years rolled day by day,
Did he pace the deck of a wave-tossed ship.

He worked in a sheltered garden, where
The song of the birds was his morning hymn,
His flowers were tended with loving care,
And he kept his small Eden neat and trim.

A land-locked horizon met his eyes —
How was it, then, that his heart knew well
The spume of billows against the skies,
Was attune to the ocean's surge and swell?

by Kay Wissinger

