

the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK



JUNE 1974

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.

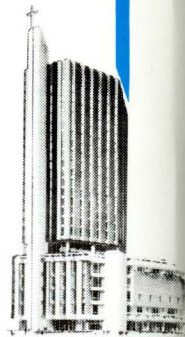
More than 753,000 such seamen of all nationalities, races and creeds come into the Port of New York every year. To many of them the Institute is their shore center in port and remains their polestar while they transit the distant oceans of the earth.

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.

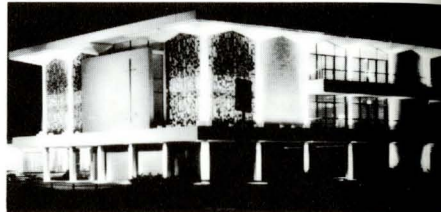
Each year 2,300 ships with 96,600 men aboard put in at Port Newark, where time ashore is extremely limited.

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 57% of the overall Institute budget is met by income from seamen and the public, the cost of the 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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Cover photo: Simpson Reef on the Oregon Coast
by Robert F. Campbell.

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From the James A. Farrell collection

The Tusitala under
full sail "with a bone
in her teeth"

TUSITALA

Teller of Tales

by Alfred L. Lomax

And what stories she could have told of her 65 years as a fine-lined cargo ship on the trade lanes to her final service as a training ship in World War II.

When R. Steele & Company launched the 3-masted, full-rigged, two-decked iron ship from their Greenock, Scotland yard in September 1883, they had no intimation that she would be one of the most admired squareriggers of her time and one of the last of her kind in the American merchant marine.

Like most newly-built ships her original name *Inverglass* was carried from her owners in the U.K. Australian trade until she was sold to the Sierra Line of Liverpool, England, and renamed *Sierra Lucena*. From 1904 to 1923 she sailed under Norwegian registry as the *Sophie* in the U.K. — East Coast of South America grain trade, and after that coal cargoes from Hampton Roads, Virginia to Scandinavian ports.

In the latter year, a writers' club calling themselves the "Three Hours-for-Lunch Club" filled with the romance of the sea, bought the graceful windship for \$10,000 and renamed her *Tusitala*, the Samoan name for Robert Louis Stevenson's, "Teller of Tales". The literary objectives of the club and Stevenson's reputation as a writer of sea stories made the name appropriate.



The *Tusitala* dropping the pilot off Sandy Hook

From the
James A. Farrell
collection.

The *Tusitala*'s entry into American registry was an occasion by the club for a celebration as recounted by Walter MacArthur in his "Last Days of Sail on the West Coast". "Mr. Mikkelsen, the mate, blew a whistle and the houseflag of the Three-Hours-for-Lunch Club broke out from the halliard, while the stars and stripes flew at the mizzen." Champagne was broken over the bell and letters from distinguished literary men and maritime personalities were read — Joseph Conrad, Christopher Morley, Felix Reisenberg.

The lofty aspirations of the club manifested at the rechristening were in contrast to the two unprofitable voyages which the ship made in the coal and iron trade and the Club decided to dispose of her.

In 1924, James A. Farrell, president of the United States Steel Corporation became enamored of the ship's graceful lines and stately bearing; bought her with the idea that she would be the symbol of America's merchant marine of the sailing ship era. Although the *Tusitala* was Mr. Farrell's personal property she flew the houseflag of the company's Argonaut Line and was placed on the intercoastal route carrying chemical fertilizers from the East Coast to Hawaii. Return cargoes of lumber and other cargo from Puget Sound ports went via the Panama Canal to the East Coast, an 82-day voyage.

Although she was essentially a cargo-carrier, Mr. Farrell kept her pearly-white hull and decks in spic-and-span condition so that she looked more like a private yacht than a commercial carrier. In fact, she was operated with little thought of profit; the *Tusitala* was truly Mr. Farrell's delightful hobby.

As a 14-knot ship, a speed somewhat better than the World War II Liberty ships at 11 knots, she was acclaimed one of the most beautiful ships of her kind, but sadly, the last to furl her sails in Pacific Coast ports.

After five years of operations on the intercoastal route she was in lay-up for several years. When World War II shattered normal activity on the trade lanes, the *Tusitala* was loaned to the United States Maritime Commission . . . War Shipping Administration as a training ship. In this capacity she was stationed at St. Petersburg, Florida under the administration of the Coast Guard. Training facilities here were augmented by the full-rigged ship the *Joseph Conrad*. One can imagine the two oldtimers, now in snug harbor in their declining years, recalling the days when under full sail, they were the pride of their owners and objects of maritime beauty in their respective ports of call.

With the termination of the war, her services no longer needed, in 1948 she was consigned to a Mobile, Alabama breakup yard, where the ignominy of the cutting torch reduced her once shapely hull to material for the steel furnaces and rolling mills to be reincarnated as structural steel for a modern traveler on the world's trade lanes.

Tusitala dimensions (American Bureau of Shipping *Record*):

Length: 261 feet
Breadth: 39 feet
Net Tonnage: 1,624
Gross Tonnage: 1,748
Draft: 23 feet, 5 inches



THE CHANGING SCENE

"On The Waterfront"

by
*James Lorier,
2nd Officer*



Modern ship technology is causing as great a change in shipping as did the transition from sail to steam on waterborne commerce and the men involved. Consider the change in general commodity cargo loading.

Huge containers 20 and 40 feet long, as big as the semi-trailers on the highways are, for the most part, loaded and sealed far inland away from the ports. After being brought to the ship by rail, truck and barge and parked outside in huge yards covering acres of land, special wheeled vehicles straddle the ten-foot high containers and speed them to the ship's side under a big crane. These vehicles resemble two pairs of stilts with wheels on their bottoms. The crane is on tracks and moves along the dock and places the containers in the ship's hold and on the ship's deck mechanical hatch covers and, in the same movement, unloads a container. The crane operator sits several stories high and maneuvers the automatic hooks onto the container. These hooks work without being touched by human hands. Inside the ship, the containers are stacked in cells built for the purpose. On deck, the uniform size of the huge boxes makes securing them against movement at sea easy and quick. Some ships also have internal and external loading ramps for loading a cargo of autos, trucks and other wheeled vehicles.

The containers are stuffed with an unimaginable variety of commodities. Some are specially built to carry fluids in bulk. Others have their own individual refrigeration machinery that is "plugged in" to the ship's electric power outlet so the containers are kept at preset temperature. Each individual container is a sealed unit that cannot contaminate nor harm the adjacent unit and its contents.

It is all real progress in efficiency, but like any change, it adversely affects some people. In the past, longshore gangs each had more than 20 men in a gang. Ten men in the ship stowing cargo, a signal man, two winch drivers and about eight or ten men on the dock bringing the cargo from

the shed to the ship's side. Other workers unloaded trucks, box cars, barges of individual boxes, bags, crates and stored them on the pier to await another ship. There were cargo checkers, guards . . . a veritable swarm of shouting men, roaring vehicles, humming and chugging machinery. Clanking chains, pounding carpenters — truly a beehive of activity; now largely silenced. An ominous silence, not only for the idled men, but also for the whole community in which they lived.

The containership operations needed better rail and road access and huge open areas to park containers. Therefore, new piers were developed. Thus, ships dock in a different area and a whole neighborhood that catered to the seaman and dockworkers suffered — restaurants, bars, haberdashers, seamen's outfitters shops. A whole community that lived off the waterfront is having to adjust (and that isn't always easy.) Many once bustling piers are decaying in silence, idle, only a roost for sea gulls. Across the street from the docks boarded-up windows of stores and shops, no more flashing their neon signs beckoning the hungry waterfront workers and thirsty seafarers. No more tug and steamer whistles. Empty streets — like a ghost town of the western mining states. Shoreside workers moved away; schools and churches half empty.

The great port cities will probably redevelop and rehabilitate these areas but it will take a decade to once again give these areas a new usefulness and vitality. It is doubtful that they will ever again know the exuberant, raucous, vigorous activity of a lively waterfront filled with the voices of the well-paid waterfront workers, truck drivers and seamen with their pay from a long voyage in their pockets seeking some enjoyment. All living in exuberant, noisy abandon.

These waterfronts were a unique community. They bred much violence but also joyous camaraderie. A "here today, gone tomorrow" attitude of the seamen and their money drew its share of unscrupulous characters that preyed on



Editor's Note:

This is the first in a series of articles which Officer Lorier will be writing about changes



seamen. The intermittent work for short periods when a ship arrived for the waterfront workers was conducive to evil hiring practices and too often resulted in violence. Those waterfront societies of intense activities are dying. It wasn't all good nor all bad, but that way of life is becoming history. Somewhat like the neighborhood grocer, butcher, shoe store being replaced by a supermarket or shopping mall with no clerks, just a checkout counter. Efficient, but stark and impersonal. For me to go back to the piers and the waterfront neighborhood where the ships I sailed once docked is like a fisherman seeking his favorite trout stream only to find a dry ditch. Or a farmer seeking the field he once tilled finding instead, a cement clover leaf intersection for a superhighway.

Still the sea has its lure and there are those of us who prefer the life of the merchant seaman to that of some shoreside soul.

The seamen's lives are changing with the changes in technology. I will try to explain these changes and how the Seamen's Church Institute is working to ease the transitions going on today.



Seaman Receives Commendation on Retirement Date

At a special retirement ceremony, William L. Montcrief, AB (left) was presented a certificate of commendation by Admiral William M. Pugh for 31 years of exemplary service with the Military Sealift Command. Although seaman Montcrief will be retiring from one job, he still plans to stay with the sea, sailing with the NMO. During his years of service with the MSC, Mr. Montcrief has often stayed here at the Institute since his wife and home are in Providence, Rhode Island.



The gentlemen pictured above, eight of whom are New York City Police officers, received awards from the Life Saving Benevolent Association of New York for courage and resourcefulness in saving people from drowning during 1973.

The awards were recently presented here at SCI by David A. Floreen, president of the Life Saving Benevolent Association.

The Board of Managers of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York is pleased to announce the recent election of the following men to its board:

Mr. Blair Baldwin
 Mr. George Benjamin
 Mr. Robert Corbin
 Mr. Clifford B. O'Hara
 Mr. Christopher R.P. Rogers

kaleidoscope



Maundy Thursday is the traditional day of church visitation here at SCI.

This year the Institute was visited by newly elected Suffragan Bishop Harold Wright. In addition to preaching, Bishop Wright also confirmed Captain Ernest K. Petersen into the Episcopal Church. Chaplain William Haynsworth presented the candidate to the Bishop.

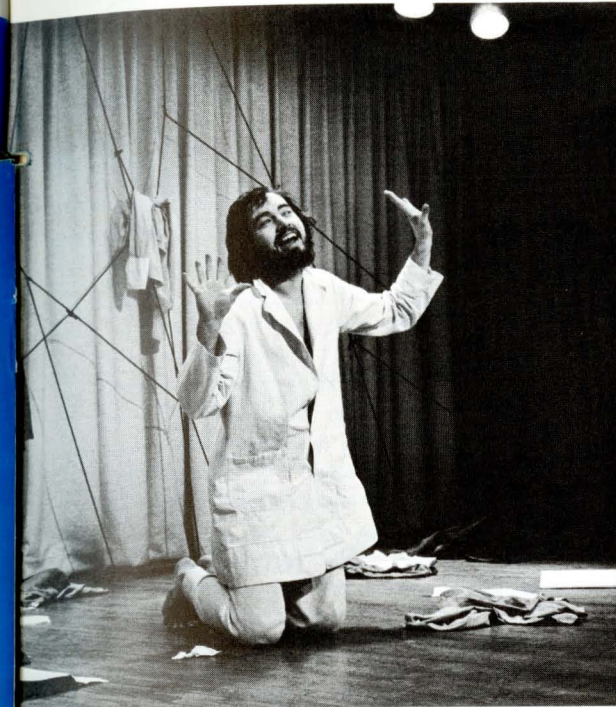


One of the youngest and newest members of the SCI family is 23 year-old Ken Branson. A native of California, Ken has joined the staff as a ship visitor where he is able to utilize his fluent Spanish and smattering of Chinese, Russian and Portuguese.



Three young sea scouts check out the gift counter while visiting the Institute. Mrs. Sheldon, gift shop manager, is demonstrating how ship models are built inside glass bottles.

kaleidoscope



Actor Powers Booth in the midst of his one-man performance of *Alto Falante*, a play presented at SCI during the noon-hour for one week. The play was sponsored by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and was a first in a series of mid-day presentations known as "Sandwich Theatre" — an effort to present "new" theatre to the working community and seamen during the lunch hour. The audience bought sandwiches, etc. prior to performance time so they could enjoy the play while having lunch.



Chaplain William Hallen (3rd from left) of the American Seamen's Friend Society presents a grant from the Society to the Institute for use in the operation of SCI's Joseph Conrad Library. Accepting on behalf of the Institute were Dr. John M. Mulligan (far left), Douglas Whiddon, librarian and Chaplain Miller Cragon. The Society also made a discretionary grant to the Institute to be used for assistance to distressed seamen.

As noted in previous editions of the Lookout, our evening adult education courses in maritime transportation have met with an enthusiastic response from the shipping industry. For the first time both management and experienced line personnel are able to get an in-depth, practical up-dating and comprehensive view of what is happening in the industry. Each course is taught by a working professional in the field.

The following letter is typical of the numerous written responses we have received regarding the program and its instructors.

"I wish to take this opportunity to comment on the educational courses presently being offered at your fine Institute.

"To date, I have successfully completed three courses.

**Modern Ocean Transportation
Intermodal Transportation/
Containerization & Pricing
Instructor: Edward Norberg**

What can I say — the man is incredible. I have never met anyone so knowledgeable about every aspect of the vast transportation industry, who could take a subject with so many areas, streamline it into a twelve week package, and still make me believe I

invented it. Apart from his exceptional knowledge and teaching abilities, you find a man who is never too busy to take extra time to go over something you couldn't quite catch the first time around. Don't let this one get away.

"Which brings me to another miracle worker.

**EDP Techniques for
the Transportation Industry
Instructor: Gerald Walker**

"I was going to drop out — after the second class. That's how much confidence I had that I was going to know all about bits and bytes and modems. His constant reassurance that it would all fall into place was a source of amusement to me. Well, he did it, and I am grateful.

"I sincerely hope you will continue this fine educational program. I can assure you, I intend to take full advantage.

Sincerely,
A.L.P.

With such letter writing ability plus all that newly-acquired knowledge, it is no wonder that the letter's author was recently promoted to a new job assignment. Such good news is always a source of satisfaction to all concerned.

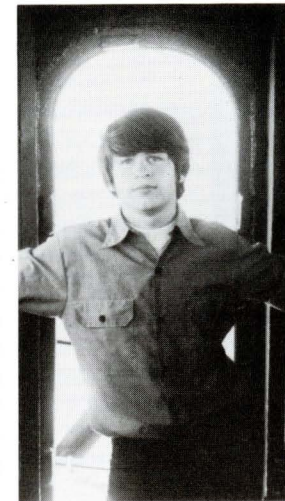
by
Michael Vitt

To go to sea . . . That phrase has often entered into so many boyhood thoughts and dreams. How many hours have been spent plotting with landlocked friends to hitchhike to some nearby seaport and to stow away aboard some tramp steamer that would cruise to the sunny Caribbean or perhaps to the crossroads of the romantic Far East?

I confess I was no exception to planning my own escape from the drudgery of schoolwork and chores. I planned to trade the irksome enchainment of work for the adventure and excitement that life at sea afforded. My hours were often devoted to pleasantly wiling away the time, dreaming of my "first command" which was naturally to be, the biggest, the best and the swiftest vessel of all the world's merchant fleets. The world would never again experience the kind of captain I was going to be. I was to be the most fair-minded, efficient and famous of captains — a cross between a Tom Sawyer of the seas and an old line New Bedford whaling captain with the fame of a Hollywood star. I planned to ship out and then, when safely away from shore, to let my parents know of my whereabouts. These were only innocent dreams. I know that my parents would never consent to my going to sea. "Too dangerous" or they would mumble something about the "perils of ports". I never expected even to see the ocean, much less sail upon it. Little did I know . . .

For my sixteenth birthday, my gift was an opportunity to ship out aboard the *R/V Neap Tide*, an old Tidewater Marine ves-

Summer at Sea



"There is witchery in the sea, its songs and stories, and in the mere sight of a ship, and the sailor's dress . . . the very creaking of a block . . . and many are the boys, in every seaport, who are drawn away, as by an almost irresistible attraction, from their work and schools, and hang about the decks and yards of vessels, with a fondness which, it is plain, will have its way."

Richard Henry Dana
"Two Years Before the Mast"
1840

Summer Seaman Mike

sel converted from oil exploitation to salvage, research work and towing by a company based in St. Thomas. My reaction to the proposal was slightly more than predictable. I finished the school year with a sense of tense expectation.

While on the beach in St. Thomas waiting for the *Neap Tide* to come into port from a recent job on the Saba Banks, I did some sightseeing. Still, I couldn't take my mind off the anticipation of being a real "sailor". The afternoon the ship steamed into St. Thomas was nearly unbearable. Time seemed to pass like the molasses the islanders used in their rum. Finally, the small boat came to the quay where I was standing and it was then that I was ferried into the world of the sea. All the way out to the *Neap Tide*, I couldn't speak: I was too overwhelmed with the moment. When I stepped on the deck, I came to realize that I hadn't answered the captain's questions that he'd asked me on the way out to the ship! I hurriedly told him what he needed to know, then set out to explore the length and the breadth of the vessel; and most of all to find my bunk.

The captain, meanwhile, had taken the small boat back into St. Thomas to obtain

had been in the Sea Scouts. However, such knots as the Carrick bend, the midshipman's hitch and the trucker's hitch became part of my knowledge about the art of tying and lashing. The back splice was no longer an exercise but an important part of the work aboard the ship.

Sometimes during a lull, in the course of everyday work, the crewmembers told me stories about their own first times at sea or some of the adventures they had experienced during their trips from port to port. They made a game out of telling me how rough it was in their time or about their amorous adventures. Several of the crew were water-logged romeos and it was then that the first rule of sailors' stories came to mind: the shorter a port turn-a-round, the taller the stories. Most of the tales were true and several of them would be good fun to repeat on a Halloween night.

Before the *Neap Tide* reached Port of Spain in Trinidad, my first brush with a large foreign city, the same amorous adventurers carefully coached me on the more lurid side of the "cultural" events that the city offered. However, when we steamed into the port and when I was given a liberty, I disappointed them. I went to a local library after seeing some sights.

Later that evening, I went to see the Captain who told me that a company order had come in for me to go back to the States as the work was going to exceed my time allowed. My disappointment was abated when he said the company invited me back the next summer.

I had gotten to know a Korean sailor off a large tuna fishing vessel. Despite the language barrier, we became friends. Just before I left we traded my old tennis hat for one of his company's visor-billed caps. I then realized the truth in the statement that sailors have friends the world over.

I haven't forgotten the past summer and its lessons. I remember leaving the moored ship already planning to go back to the work, the traditions and brotherhood of the sea.

don't forget July 4th in Old New York — it will be a BLAST!

If you live in the Manhattan area and want to avoid the beach scene on July 4th, gather the clan, journey into Lower Manhattan and join in the festivities of July 4th in Old New York.

From 1:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. on the 4th, there will be continuous events at numerous sites from South Street Seaport to Battery Park. There will be square dancing, banner bees, all sorts of entertainment, walking tours of Old New York, bands, a parade down Broadway and hopefully, fireworks over the Battery to list just a few of the day's activities.

Naturally, SCI exhibit areas will be open for the day, as will our cafeteria, with loads of 4th of July food.

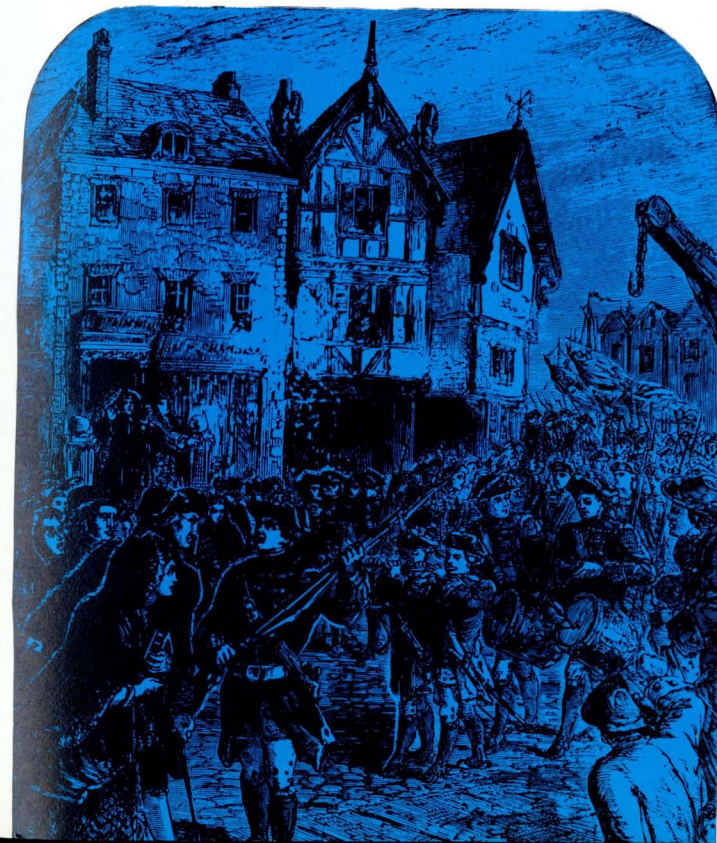
In fact, to start the day off, come early, see our ship models, have lunch and then on to the festivities.

We guarantee you'll have a unique and fun-filled holiday. So we hope to see you on Thursday, July 4th, in Old New York.

Oops!

On page 15 of last month's May issue of the Lookout, we ran a brief article on three new tugboats being built for McAllister Brothers, Inc.

The first line of copy read "Elevating power houses are a unique feature . . ." The line should have read "Elevating pilot houses . . ." That's unique enough for us. Those elevated power houses were a bit incredible, we admit. Sorry folks.



clearance from Customs and to report to the home office. The rest of us took the ship over to the other side of the harbor to provision and water it. By the time the captain came back with the clearance from Customs, the *Neap Tide* was ready to go out again. Later that night, the vessel slipped its lines and quietly steamed out of the harbor. After the island could no longer be seen easily in the darkness, I went down below to sleep. At about four in the morning a gruff voice told me to turn to. Rubbing the sleep from my eyes, I quickly dressed and followed the shape the voice belonged to up to the deck. The light revealed the mate who had some work to accomplish and since this was my first trip . . .

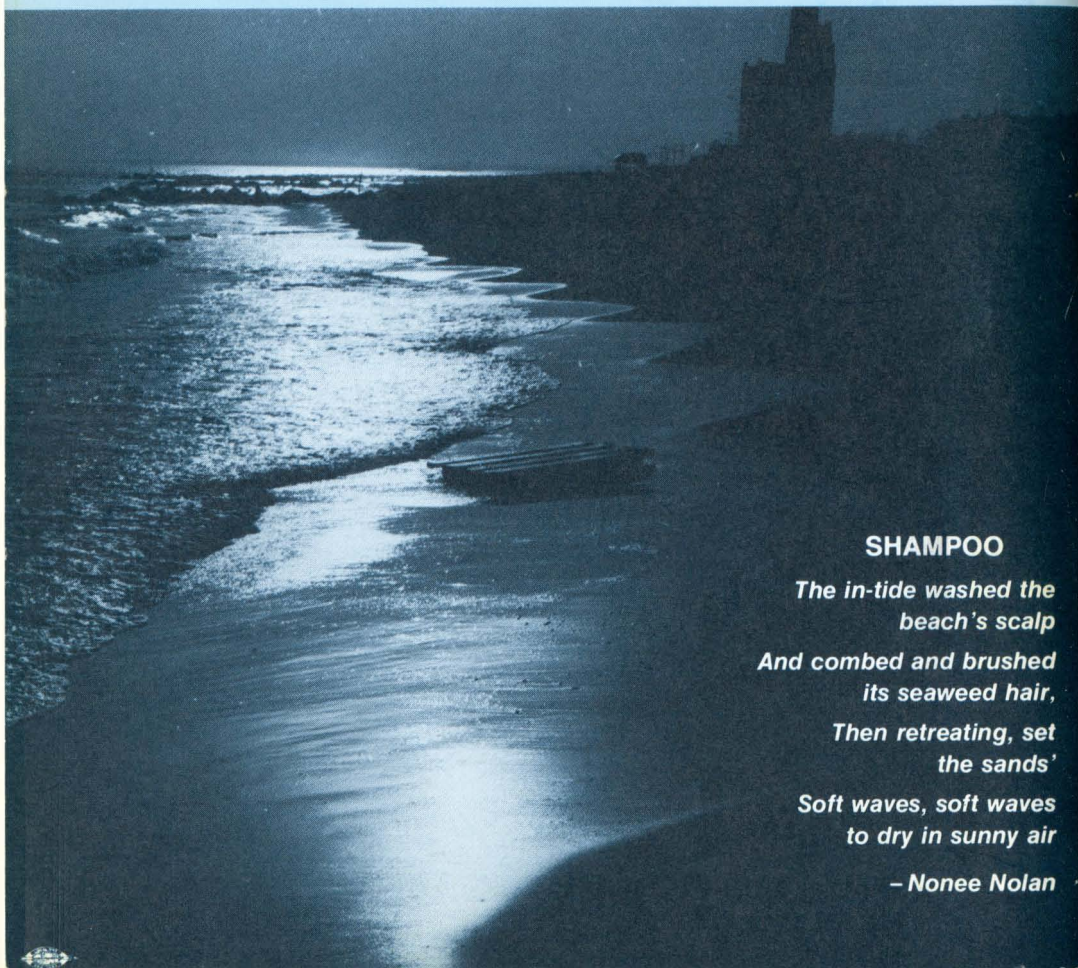
By the time eight o'clock arrived that morning, one very green seaman was bending over the rail. My stomach had been following the motion of the waves all night: up and down; up and down. When breakfast was called, I didn't answer the cooks. Yet revenge had its day because I later noticed one of those "real Oldtimers" bending over the side.

Life was harder than I expected, but I grew used to the sudden work calls in the middle of the night. The rest of the crew were my instructors in the arts of knotwork and splicing. I had known a little about knotwork and some splicing since I

Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y.
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New York, N. Y. 10004

Address Correction Requested

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AT NEW YORK, N. Y.



SHAMPOO

*The in-tide washed the
beach's scalp
And combed and brushed
its seaweed hair,
Then retreating, set
the sands'
Soft waves, soft waves
to dry in sunny air
- Nonee Nolan*