

January-February 1979

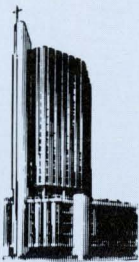
The LOOKOUT



SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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The Program of the Institute



Seamen's Church
Institute of
New York and
New Jersey
15 State Street
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Mariners'
International Center
(SCI)
Ports Newark/
Elizabeth, N.J.

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE
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The Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey, 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 300,000 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, educational, and special services for the mariner, including counseling and the help of five chaplains in emergency situations.

More than 3,500 ships with over 140,000 men aboard annually put in at Pts. Newark/Elizabeth, N.J., where time ashore is extremely limited.

Here in the very middle of the huge sprawling Pts. Newark/Elizabeth 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, designed and operated in a special way for the very special needs of the men. An outstanding feature is a soccer field (lighted by night) for games between ship teams.

Although 63% of the overall Institute budget is met by income from seamen and the public, the cost of special services comes from endowments and contributions. Contributions are tax-deductible.

from our seamen/reporter

William P. Mote

PLUTO, PLATO AND PLAYBOY

Times have changed. The days of whaling ship voyages of a month or even two years to cross the North Atlantic are now past. Still today, the seaman is faced with relatively long trips and with even longer delays at anchorages, often in Soviet or Near East and African ports. No launch service and curfews add to his problems. Only in port or along the coast, can TV fill off duty hours; and then, only if the systems are compatible with the ship's. Few ships carry movies; fewer still carry TV tape systems. Therefore, books remain the most common form of recreation at sea.

Tying-up magazines for the
SCI ship visitors to take to
vessels in port.



Today the seaman is usually a fairly well read person. A hundred years ago, he was lucky if he could read at all; and shipboard conditions, both living and working, were not conducive to reading. Today's reading at sea falls into three basic categories: work related reading, hobbies, and pleasure. Work related reading would include that necessary for advancement in rank or rate. The various maritime unions supply correspondence courses on a voluntary basis. Other courses are available from universities,

private study institutes and various religious groups. I've been with men studying everything from law and stock market brokerage through locksmithing. Work related reading also includes the union and industry newspapers and magazines; the professional reading that is necessary to keep one up-to-date with changes.

Hobby reading aboard ship covers any number of subjects. The amateur radio fan has OST and CQ Magazine, numerous model builder, car enthusiast, collector, and boating magazines can be found in the mess rooms. Some specialized subjects would include stocks/bonds, gambling and oriental rugs — these are usually hard back books that the hobbist lugs aboard.

Pleasure reading is the largest category. It is also the most diversified. A bit of looking around the ship brings to light subject matter from comic books to deep religious philosophy. The most popular general reading would be *Newsweek* and *Time*, local newspapers when available and regional magazines, too. Of course *Playboy* etc. are popular and, incidentally, good trade items in Eastern Bloc countries. *Readers Digest* and their condensed books are nearly always found on shipboard and widely read.

Adventure books are popular with detective, western and science fiction in the majority. The most often read sea adventure authors are: MacLean and

Innes, and many of John Masters' books on India turn up now and again. Hemingway, Ruark and Steinbeck are still in vogue but, sad to say, Conrad and Melville with their tedious writing (by modern standards) are not often seen. Since Von Daniken wrote *Chariots of the Gods?* and Berlitz began the Triangle series, these books have become popular at sea. Of course, all the current best sellers, both fiction and non-fiction, find their way to sea. A trip to a new country will usually produce a spate of related books. Personally, I've been trying to read over the past several years the books I should have read twenty years ago; concentrating on some of the old classics and histories.

Where does the seaman get his books? Obviously from ashore, whether he buys them at a general store just over the levee or a large book store "Down Town." But other major sources are the organizations that supply books and magazines to the ships. Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey supplies books and magazines to ships of any flag while the U.S. Merchant Marine Library Association services American flag vessels only. AMMLA has two ways of supplying reading material. Generally magazines and books are delivered to a vessel in bulk and are of various age and subjects. Unfortunately some fall into the "Nurse Nancy Goes to Paris" category and are relegated to use as paper weights etc. Much better are the new editions sent out by AMMLA'S "Betty S. Land Fund." These are current best sellers. *Trinity*, *The Director*, *The Crash of '79* and *The Gift of Chaos* are some of the recent issues. A sea-going equivalent of the Book-of-the-Month Club, these are sent monthly to our ships, via the Captains.

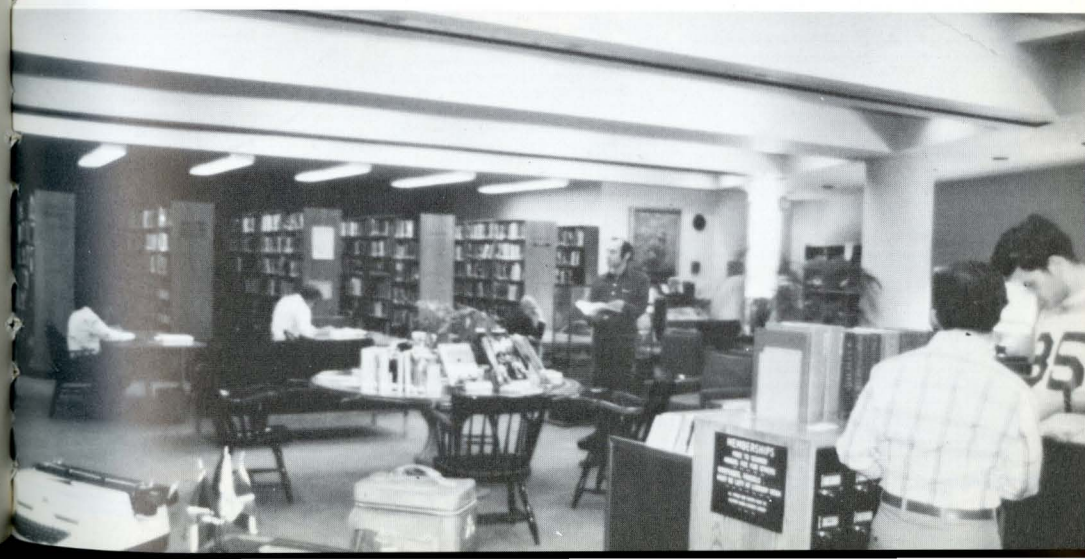
Norway and England, through the Seamen's Educational Service, supply books to their ships but these are Official Libraries and must be accounted for and swapped for new ones on a regular basis. The books in these collections are much like the AMMLA monthly selections. The SES Libraries always include a current Atlas, *The Bible*, and Dr. Hoe's *Spare Time At Sea* and *The Shoregoer's Guide to World Ports*, as well as current best selling novels and books of current interest to the U.K. Reader.

Occasionally someone aboard a ship tries to start a semi-official ship's library. On the *Flying A. Delaware*, Charlie Lindsey (Delaware City, Del.) set up a magazine subscription fund from the profits of the ship's coke machine. As the vessel was running coastwise, we had no trouble in receiving the magazines and keeping the machine stocked. The magazines were mostly sports oriented: fishing, hunting, golf and football as well as the news magazines. At one time we were receiving approximately twenty-five different magazines, some weekly, most monthly. On *Mount Washington*, Matt Noonan (Corpus Christi, Tex.) set up a library by taking up an initial collection of \$10 from each

person interested. Matt donated his time to go ashore and load up on the books and magazines selected and recommended by the subscribers. As we were on a run to the Arab Gulf around South Africa, there were gaps in obtaining the weeklies. That project died-out after a few months as non-subscribers demanded to use the books, and friction developed. Most of us who buy magazines or paper backs ashore toss them into the mess room when finished with them. I find that if the trip is long enough seamen will read *Anything!* I've been reduced to reading the list of Hong Kong Steamship Companies on an over-long voyage.

Ashore, the seaman has local libraries to use and the more specialized ones run by seamens clubs. "The Conrad Library" at Seamen's Church Institute is probably the finest seamen's library in the world. They have the best nautical reference section I've seen and plenty of general reading including current best sellers and magazines. They also have a fine record collection with language courses as well as music. The AMMLA has a

The Institute's Joseph Conrad Library



small library at their headquarters at the USS Office in the World Trade Center. This one is open to seamen who have subscribed to AMMLA aboard ship. The Deutsches Seemanns Haus in Hoboken, N.J., has somewhat of a unique library. The club was built in 1907 and many books were brought over from Germany for its library. These old volumes were printed in the late 1800's in the old German script. They also have a complete set of Balzac and the writings of Teddy Roosevelt. The clubs in Houston and Corpus Christi have open libraries where seamen can take books to the ships and/or bring ones to the library from the ships for exchange. The United Seamen's Service Centers around the world usually have a paperback swap service. The clubs sponsored by British organizations, both in the UK and world wide, generally have good libraries. The one in the Mariners' Club in Hamilton, Bermuda is especially nice. At the Royal Bombay Seamen's Society Club they have the bound english editions of Esquire magazine from 1946 through 1952. Just sitting in one of their huge leather chairs and reading the ads in these is a pleasant way to spend a hot Indian afternoon. The USSR "Interclubs" run by the Sea and River Workers Union, i.e. the Soviet state, deserve a mention. They have libraries filled with free copies of *Moscow News*, *Le Humanity*, *Red Star*

Daily and *The Worker* as well as other communist propaganda publications from variety of countries and in many languages. They also have hard back books on political subjects, modern Soviet authors and best of all, books by the pre-revolution authors: Dostoyevski, Tolstoy, Pushkin and Lermontov to name a few. Any seaman expressing an interest in these will find himself loaded down with a fine selection and a request to see that his shipmates have a chance to read them. The headache starts when trying to get them past the U.S. Customs Service.

This, then, is a brief survey of the reading habits of the Modern Seaman. There are never too many books and magazines aboard ship — there is always a need for more. Donations of books are always welcome: to Seamen's Church Institute and AMMLA, to your local seamen's club or directly to the gang on the tug boat that is tied up at the pier at the end of your street. They will certainly be appreciated and you will have the satisfaction of helping someone fill in the long off-watch hours. As for me ... it's now time to put this typewriter aside and settle back with a good book.

Wm. P. MoteGatun Lock, Panama Canal Zone08/Sept.'78



VIVA VIVIAN

It was a cold, sunny December morning when we drove over to the Farrell Lines terminal in Brooklyn. Our purpose? To call on the *S.S. Export Builder* at the express invitation of one of its crew members.

Once at the terminal, we parked the van, and then made our way on foot along the busy docks to pier 11. On reaching the *Export Builder's* gangway, we were asked to wait until a Jeep, a twenty foot container and several skids of break bulk cargo were seemingly effortlessly lifted aboard by giant cranes located on deck.

Gilbert Rodriguez, our senior ship visitor, then preceded us aboard to check-in with the CO and to see if he could locate our "special" crew member. Soon, he yelled down for us to come

Merchant seafarer Vivian Hunter Garcia and SCI ship visitor Gilbert Rodriguez check the Institute's Christmas Boxes that will be used as gifts for seamen aboard the *Export Builder*.



aboard; and on our reaching the top of the gangway, there was no question that he had found the seafarer we sought.

There she was, all five feet, 3 inches of her, with eyes shining as brightly as the pink watchcap she was wearing. As she saw the brown cartons we had brought with us, her face beamed because she knew that her request had been fulfilled.

Gilbert made the introductions and soon Vivian Hunter Garcia had herded all of us to the crewmen's lounge while she tended to the stowing of the cartons. On returning to the lounge, she sat down and quickly recapped why she had decided to get in touch with us.

A year ago she had been aboard another vessel at sea on Christmas Day. And there had been no Christmas at all for "her boys". When the vessel finally made port she took some of her own money and obtained the makings for a party so at least they could welcome the New Year in eventhough they would be at sea somewhere between Savannah and New York.

This year, she made up her mind that regardless of what vessel she was on, her boys were going to have Christmas. Having heard during the year about the wonderful SCI Christmas boxes, she decided to call Mrs. Constance West — our Women's Council Director, when she learned, in Norfolk, that the *Export Builder* was going to be at sea on Christmas Day.

Thus it was that we delivered at her special request 49 Christmas boxes — known only to her and the skipper. She had even allowed for the two cadets who would be sailing with them on this trip. (What she didn't know was that one box had been especially prepared for her which included several items especially for seafaring ladies).

In talking with Vivian, we learned that she has been in the Merchant Marine since 1953; shipping out regularly except

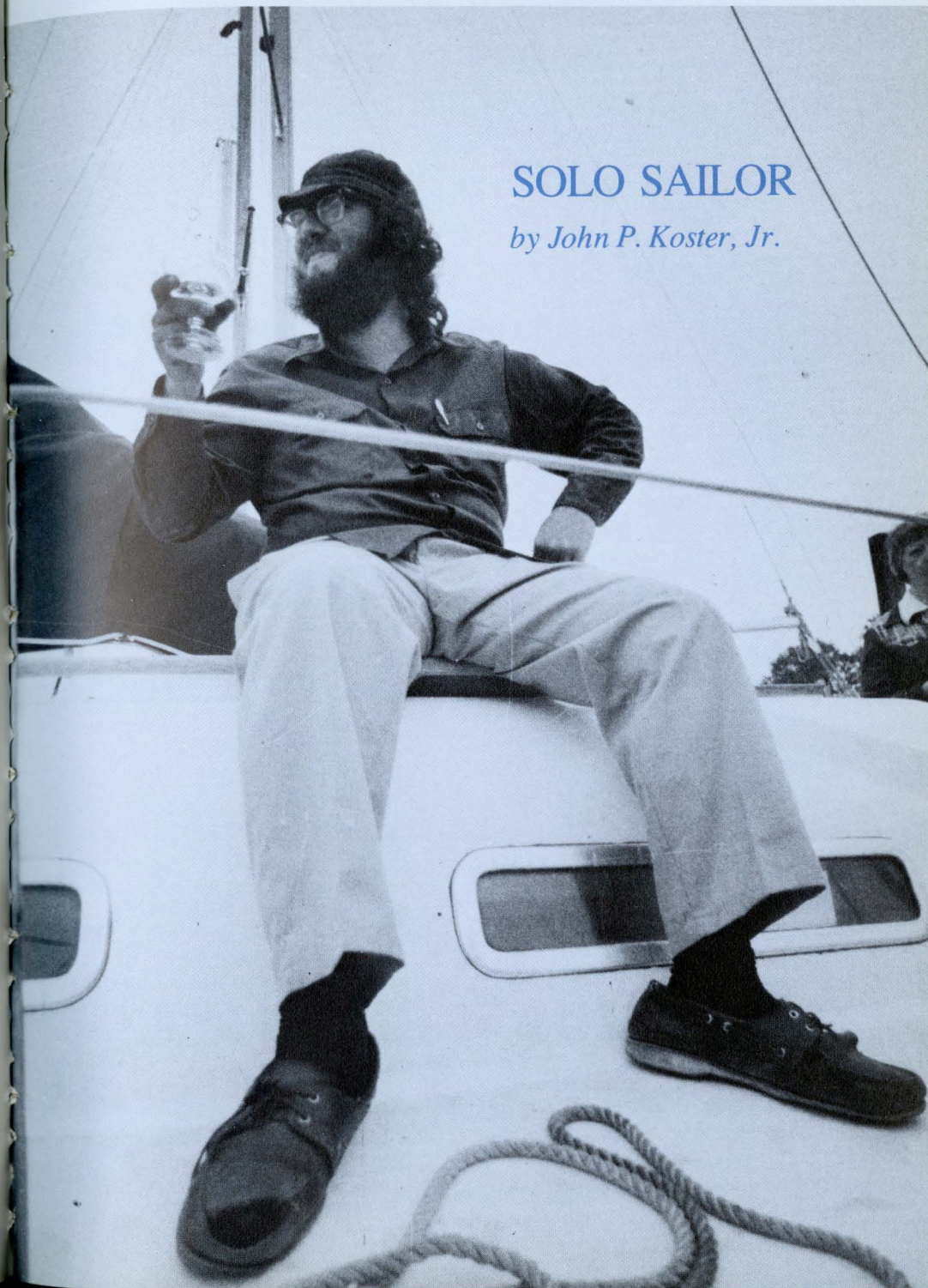
for several years during which her late husband, who was also a seaman, was ashore due to an injury from which he never recovered. During that time she worked as a sewing specialist and designer for *Ebony's* Fashion Fair.

A modest, soft spoken and gentle person, it took a little coaxing before she brought us a book in which were listed a number of her achievements. She was the first woman to receive a lifeboat endorsement by the Port of New York (a fact which she said was prompted by the sinking of the *Andrea Doria*). In addition, she also managed to complete studies at North Carolina Wesleyan College.

Except for visiting her elderly and much beloved parents, E.C. and Ethel Hunter of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, the sea and her work in the steward's department looking after "her boys" is both her life and her joy. Not that she lacks for other interests and things to do but this is what she likes to do most. She also has a particular liking for Farrell Lines, Inc. and the way the company runs its ships. When asked if she were to relive her life would she be a merchant seafarer again, she was quick to reply "Oh yes, I wouldn't take anything for all the people I've met and learned so much from. I love people, you know, so this is a good life for me."

We only add, that to meet Vivian is in itself a joy and we are pleased that we could help make Christmas a little brighter for her and her boys aboard the *Export Builder*.

Gainer at the launching of "Boodle's Ginny"



SOLO SAILOR

by John P. Koster, Jr.

Who's afraid of the Bermuda Triangle?

Plenty of people — but not Bob Gainer. He's already been logged as a Bermuda Triangle victim by the U.S. Coast Guard, the newspapers, television, and his own family.

Eleven days out of New York City on an attempt to sail around the world alone without touching land in 1976, Gainer sailed his 31-foot Chance 30-30 fiberglass boat into an autumn storm that sank a 590-foot motor ship with all 37 hands a few miles from his last reported position. When he failed to make radio contact at the appointed time and didn't respond to any messages sent to him, his family in Hillsdale, N.J., suspected the worst.

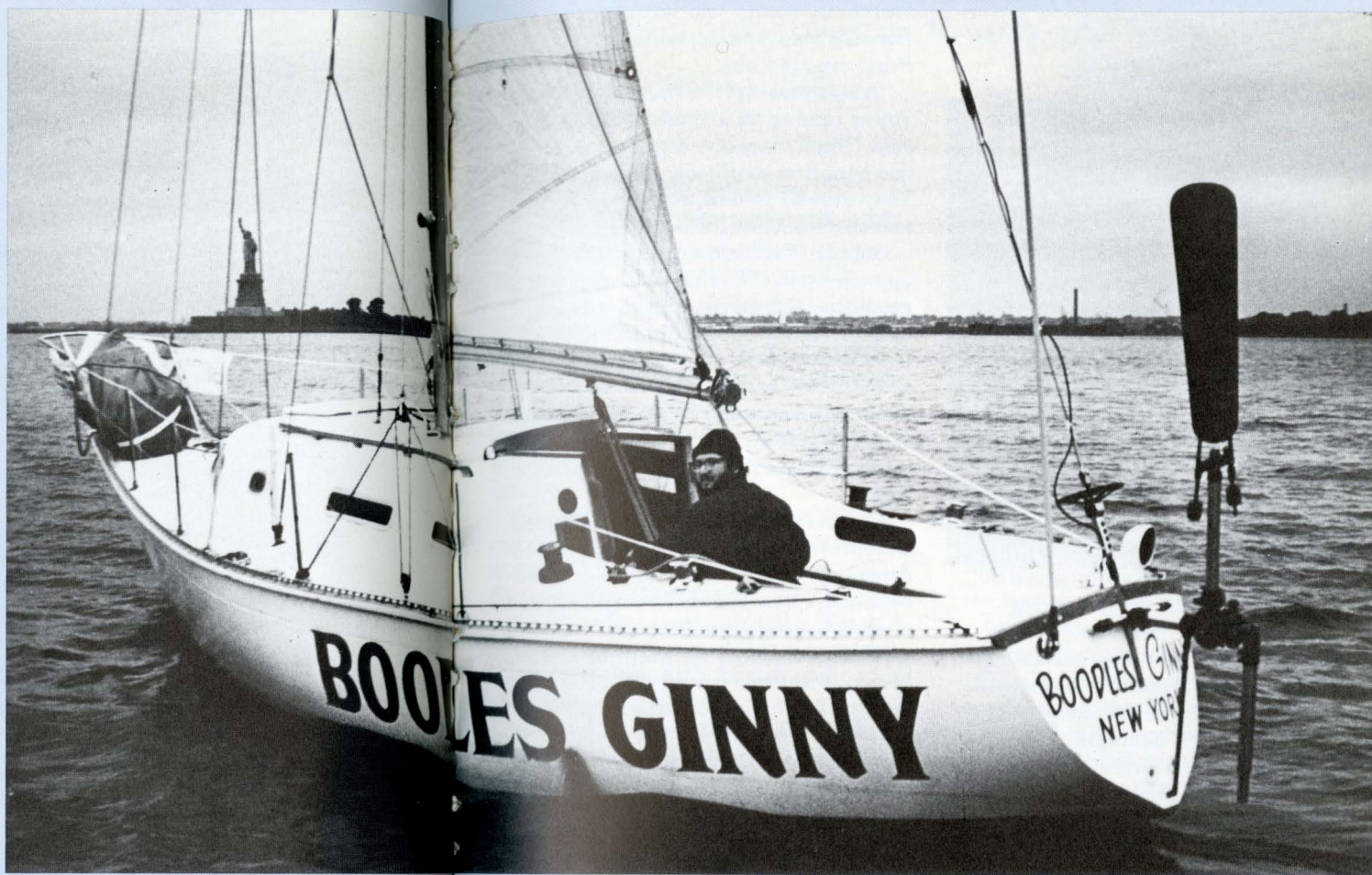
A few days after Gainer failed to make radio contact, the Coast Guard put out an all-points bulletin.

"Blue and white hull sloop, 31 feet, one person on board, unreported on aborted trans-world single-handed voyage since 2 October ... Vessels in vicinity keep a sharp look-out, assist if possible and advise Coast Guard, New York."

Days turned into weeks, and no sighting was reported. Gainer's sponsors — Seagram's Distilleries — his friends, and his family began to fear he was another Triangle victim.

GAINER LOST IN TRIANGLE read the headlines in the 23-year-old adventurer's hometown newspaper. The story said that he had vanished into the infamous Bermuda Triangle, where ships and aircraft frequently disappear, for reasons that scientists and seamen debate endlessly.

"I think ... I think we should admit to ourselves that he's gone," the sailor's father, Harold Gainer, said at a tearful family gathering. "I don't think any of us can stand much more of hoping that he's



Bob Gainer leaving New York Harbor before disappearance

still alive when we know he's almost certainly dead. He used to read all these great books about the sea, and I think that's what led him to try this. There ought to be a book that shows what happens to people who don't come back, who just disappear and are never seen again."

Gainer had encountered dreary weather from the day he set out. Endless overcast and drizzle rotted some of his provisions and made it impossible to sight the sun for navigation. Unable even to read because the clammy rain soaked

any paper exposed to daylight, he tested his equipment and hoped for better weather. Instead, he ran into the October 12 storm that sank the merchant ship *Sylvia Ossa* and caused havoc all along the coast.

Gainer's fiberglass boat was bigger than the 22-foot pre-fab sloop he had completed himself, which took him across the Atlantic in 1974, setting the record as the youngest person ever to sail across to England alone. But the new boat was a coastal cruiser he had bought from a friend, not really suited to a 293-day

voyage around the globe. The first storm damaged the wind vane and dislodged some of the plywood bulkheads he had improvised to strengthen the bow. The worst problem was the auxiliary gasoline motor, used to power his long-distance radio. The motor died after his October 13 radio message and refused to start again. Unknown to anyone on land, Gainer decided to cease transmitting except in emergencies to save his limited batteries.

For two weeks he sailed lethargically down the Atlantic coast and into the heart of the nefarious Bermuda Triangle,

Kapitan Kurt Zander of the *Hagen*

unaware that his family and the Coast Guard thought he was dead. He listened to cassette tapes until the tapes snapped, watched dolphins playing in his bow waves, and grew more and more bored. The mystique of the Triangle left him cold in the daytime. At night, it left him in a cold sweat. His sleep was plagued by weird, sinister dreams about singing mummies and other grotesque horrors.

On the 30th of October, the first serious mishap occurred. The sloop's headstay broke, leaving Gainer almost helpless in case of bad weather. That night, a feeble radio distress signal reached a Dutch ocean tugboat. Using his long-distance radio for the first time in 17 days, Gainer requested a tow to Puerto Rico.

Racing against time and another severe storm, a West German freighter, the *Hagen*, rushed to the scene, 600 miles west of San Juan. The storm beat the *Hagen* to the 31-foot-sailboat, which vanished from radar contact in the steep waves of a turbulent ocean. But Gainer and the Germans kept talking back and forth by radio. Unable to steer his own boat properly because of the broken rigging, and losing radio power, Gainer watched while pieces ripped out of *Boodle's Ginney*, his helpless vessel. At one point, he tried to fire a recognition flare — and 12 flares out of 12 failed to explode.

Finally, after 20 hours of storm and search, the weary solo sailor spotted the German ship, and, a moment later, the *Hagen* spotted him.

"A ship that size is a solid object when you're coming off a small boat," Gainer said. "I had a case of rubber legs, and I fell down the first step I took. I couldn't stand. They weren't used to people from yachts, and they thought I was dying."

Once he overcame a certain war-movie apprehension of Germans, Gainer had a good time aboard the *Hagen*, a Hapag-Lloyd freighter. The German captain, Kurt Zander, was able to save his sailboat and haul it back to Germany mounted in triumph on the freighter's deck. The crew split 10 percent of the boat's \$20,000 price for salvage prize money.

After a few weeks of knocking around Europe, the young mariner returned to America by jet, with plans for a new sail boat and a new round-the-world voyage already ticking inside his head. "I have to raise a lot of money for that," he admits. "To do it up right would cost \$200,000, and you start to cut corners from there."

To raise the funds, Gainer sold his first round-the-world contender sailboat, and started a business called Marine Associates offering maritime supplies, books, and advice by mail order to people who want to build their own boats. He also cooperated on a book about his adventures, *PRESUMED LOST*, (Popular Library, 1978) and took a semi-fulltime job working in a New Rochelle boatyard.

Between his business, his job, the book, and a little bit of luck, he hopes to be able to try again before he ages himself out of a chance to be the youngest circumnavigator.

"As for the fear of death, it's never a problem with me," he says cheerfully of his first try. "It's always the other guy that gets killed."

FROM "GAS" TO GRASS ... 1978 was a busy year in New York for the Coast Guard

U.S. Coast Guard personnel working to contain oil spill from the barge *Pennsylvania* - photos pages 13-14.

Rescues, oil spills, grounding, collisions, fisheries violations and drug busts all kept the Coast Guard in the limelight in New York during 1978.

Coast Guardsmen in the New York area responded to 7,816 distress calls during the period from October 1977 to October 1978. While search and rescue is the mission for which the Coast Guard is best known, the smallest of the five military services is charged with many other tasks as well.

One of the biggest of these is law enforcement and this duty was greatly magnified when the Fisheries Conservation Management Act (FCMA) went into effect in March 1977. The FCMA calls for the Coast Guard to patrol the fishing fleet, both foreign and domestic, out to 200 miles at sea, making sure that they are complying with the Act. The fisheries areas are constantly patrolled by both Coast Guard cutters and aircraft.

Under the power of the FCMA two Italian fishing vessels, the *Corrado Secondo* and the *Airone*, were seized by the Coast Guard in two days in early November.

Oil spills kept the Coast Guard in the news in 1978, too. One of the most publicized occurred when the barge *Pennsylvania* sank on July 31 at Rockaway, spilling oil that forced the closure of five beaches at the height of the bathing season. The combined cleanup efforts of the Coast Guard and federal, state, and city agencies made possible the reopening of the beaches a few days later. Twelve percent of all the oil spills reported in the United States happen in



the waters of New York harbor.

Collisions and groundings of ships became almost a routine occurrence in 1978. On the average, there are 95 such accidents in New York's harbor each year, and this year two groundings happened almost on the front doorstep of Gracie Mansion. Hopefully, 1979 will see many of these accidents prevented when New York's Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) goes into operation. Using a combination of radar, low-light television cameras, and computer technology, the Coast Guard will be keeping a round-the-clock watch on all vessel movements in the area. Men and machines will monitor vessel activities in order to prevent collisions and groundings in an effort to make the Port of New York a safer waterway.

Not all of the oil pollution in New York comes from ships. There has been a growing problem of underground oil seepage in the area. On September 2, the Coast Guard noticed oil seeping into Newtown Creek in the Greenpoint area

of Brooklyn. No source for the oil has yet been found but, to date, nearly \$180,000 has been spent to recover 50,000 gallons of the mixture of lead-free gasoline and heating oil from the ground.

Harking back to its role in the Prohibition era, the Coast Guard found itself more and more involved with halting traffic in illegal drugs along the Coast. As surveillance and seizures stepped up in southern waters, the shipments began moving farther north, establishing what was popularly known as "the Long Island Connection." Large merchant vessels, known as "mother ships," would discreetly drop off drugs to smaller, seemingly innocent pleasure craft and fishing vessels who would in turn ferry the drugs to shore.

Acting on an anonymous tip received on the evening of November 12, Coast Guard and other Federal and local officials netted the biggest drug haul in



women in the Coast Guard went a step farther when the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral John B. Hayes announced that all job specialties in the Coast Guard would be open to women.

During the period October 1977 to October 1978, the Coast Guard Air Station, Brooklyn sent their helicopters out on 560 search and rescue missions, as well as their daily flights looking out for oil pollution in the New York area. 1978 marked the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Air Station.

A major, but lesser-known duty of the Coast Guard is to inspect all foreign vessels that enter U.S. waters. Each year, there are over 7,500 commercial vessels entering the Port of New York-New Jersey, two-thirds of them of foreign registry.

In September a 627-foot Greek cargo ship, the *Thermopylae*, suffered a tragedy when the 22-month old daughter of the captain died and his wife, another daughter and 29 crewmembers became ill after inhaling a deadly pesticide that leaked from improperly sealed electrical cable boxes. The Coast Guard cutter *Dallas* escorted the ship into an anchorage off Sandy Hook where repairs were made.

During the summer of 1978, a series of open houses were held at Governors Island, the heart of the Coast Guard in the New York area. Visitors toured

historic buildings dating back to the 17th century, as well as modern Coast Guard cutters and schools. Band concerts and mock Revolutionary War battles were also staged. Another series of open houses is scheduled for the spring and summer of 1979.

With winter upon us again, Coast Guard tugs will again be breaking ice on the Hudson River shortly. Three 110-foot tugboats stationed at Governors Island have icebreaking capabilities and once the ice season begins, usually in late January, they will be plying the Hudson, keeping it open for shipping the year round.

Looking forward to 1979, Captain James Fleishell, Captain of the Port of New York said, "We're going to see enhanced activity on the part of the Coast Guard in the area of oil pollution and further investigation and prosecution of oil seepage cases which present a real threat to the environment. We will continue culling and identifying those

less-than-responsible foreign flag vessels which offer the potential to pollute our waters.

"As more hazardous materials are being introduced, we are gearing up with federal, state, and local agencies to form contingency plans to deal with potentially dangerous situations that might arise.

"With the introduction of the Vessel Traffic Service we will be able to greatly improve our supervision of port activity. At the same time, VTS will help increase the economy of New York City through the prevention of losses.

"The Coast Guard," he added, "hasn't given up on New York City and is, in fact, increasing its activities here. We are a regulatory agency whose ultimate purpose is to enhance the safety of port operations and facilitate the movement of commerce. At the same time, we are a deliverer of services whose purpose is to implement and aid the regulations."



Employee representatives, union officials and SCI executives gather for the signing of a new three year contract between the Institute and the Hotel, Motel and Club Employees, Union Local No. 6 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union.

Mutually agreed upon after extensive negotiation, the contract falls within current government recommended wage/price guidelines.

New York history when they seized the 65-foot "Terry's Dream" along with four large trucks and two vans. The trawler and trucks held 738 bales of Columbian marijuana weighing over 29 tons and approximately ten million quaalude tablets.

Always in the forefront on Women's Rights, in 1977 the Coast Guard became the first of the services to allow women to go to sea. In 1978, the expanding role of



THE GALLANT LADIES OF NEW YORK HARBOR

Part II of III Parts

As part of the Corps of Engineers' responsibility, an environmental impact study was made to assess the biology of the large flora or productive marshland, surrounding the area of the project.

"It doesn't look like much now, but when we clean off the debris, it will be a nice place for people to visit and examine flora and fauna. In fact, we found canvasback ducks in this marsh and an assortment of benthic life that we want to preserve," Dr. Simeon Hook said, pointing out over a verdant marshland and nearby flats. A bulldozer was working on one section of the marsh clearing away rotted timbers from an abandoned barge.

"Construction began this morning.

Officially yesterday, but just yesterday and today it started," Dr. Hook explained, showing me along the project site to where two wooden vessels lay buried in the mud.

"As part of our environmental impact study, we do a cultural resources evaluation to determine the impact the project has on any cultural or historical resources. This is where the work involving the ships comes in," Dr. Hook continued. Throughout our long discussions, Hook impressed me as a sincere, dedicated man, with a quiet enthusiasm for the project that couldn't help but spill over into his professional and business-like approach.

"We commissioned an overall study, an archaeological study of the area. Every

vessel and derelict was marked and located. The original contractor, Larrabee and Kardis of Princeton, used side scan sonar to do a read-out of the wrecks underwater. They made 11 recommendations. Ninety-eight percent of the vessels were of no value. They were mostly post-World War II barges.

Larrabee recommended Throckmorton as the best one to evaluate the recommendations and identify the ships. So when I heard Throckmorton was passing through New York, I got to see him, eventually." Simeon Hook smiled, then went on. "You know, some of these eminent scientists have no conception of time. If something takes an extra week or extra month, then they go ahead and take it. Well I had a hard time getting him, but when I finally corralled Pete, he was very interested in the project. He was not affiliated with any organization then, so we let the contract to the South Street Seaport. Through the Seaport, Throckmorton and Norman Brouwer came out and they went through the 11 wreck recommendations, narrowing them to 3 derelict vessels above water and 4 underwater. Throckmorton made 4 dives and found no value or significance to the underwater wrecks. They were pilings mostly. So now we've proceeded to work on the above-water wrecks." Dr. Hook paused, looking toward the parking lot for Throckmorton who was to have joined us at 8:30. He flashed that same smile on the promptitude of scientists, and continued telling me about the project.

"Two of the wrecks are watermelon barges. Not because they carried watermelons, but because they are shaped like them. They were made in the 1850's and reconstructed from another type of vessel. The third ship is the *Newton*, a World War I wooden cargo steamer, used as a Navy training vessel. The *Newton* is the last of its class of



vessel existing," Dr. Hook said, still peering around for the missing archaeologists, apparently delayed, reading the petroglyphs scrawled in the Holland Tunnel.

Finally we were joined by Throckmorton and Abrams and began to explore the possible history of the vessels marked for study, and the countless others in adjacent areas that might be of importance.

There is no real documentation of the three vessels. Plans have been made to have draftsmen begin making drawings, to get some idea of what the ships looked like in their day. With this documentation, there will be a permanent record of the ships before they are removed.

An interesting event helped to mold the fate of the Liberty Island Marshlands. In 1916, an explosion shook the entire area with the sabotage of a munitions depot by a German spy. The Black Tom explosion and subsequent fire destroyed many vessels along the shore and created the marshland which is now part of the State Park area. Corps of Engineer experts have called in Navy demolition consultants, since it is believed that some of the sunken vessels may still contain unexploded ammunition. The likelihood is that in 60 years any munitions would have disintegrated, but as a precaution, the Corps of Engineers has alerted the contractor to use caution if any bombs are dug up.

Old ships may not be the only thing scientists will locate in New York Harbor. More than one story of buried pirate loot and sunken treasure ships has been traded about since archaeologists have begun diving in the harbor. Fact is, the notorious Captain William Kidd was once hired to protect New York Harbor from pirates. His ship, the *Adventure Galley*, was so successful, Captain Kidd decided to go into the pirate business for himself. Folklore has it that some of Captain Kidd's pirate treasure lies in the Hudson River off Peekskill, 'thar for the findin'.

Other maritime records reveal the fact that the *Hussar*, a 28-gun British frigate laden with \$4 million in silver, the payroll for British troops in the New World, fighting the rebellious Americans, sank off Hell Gate on November 23, 1780. Parts of the *Hussar* were found in 1811, but no one has yet succeeded in locating her treasure. Rumors that the renewed interest in New York's nautical past will spur new ventures to turn up gold doubloons, guilders and Spanish gold, are so far only talk. Yet there is plenty of history

beneath the fouled, murky waters in the countless bays, lagoons and back canals off New York Harbor.

"It's not really that bad diving in here," Peter Throckmorton said, as we drove back along the Craven Point Marine Base dock in a shaky old Rambler Dr. Abrams borrowed. "You can't see, so you can't see. It's enough to feel around," he added.

I noted that the principal concern of a diver would be not to get any of the water in his mouth. Throckmorton laughed.

"Yeah, and get plenty of Gamma Globulin," he said lightly.

The dank waters of the harbor had their unsettling effect. In fact when Throckmorton was preparing a publicity stunt staged for newspaper reporters scheduled to photograph him jumping into the harbor off a boat, in a symbolic first dive over the submerged wrecks, he wanted everything to go just right.

In order not to disappoint the reporters, Throckmorton carefully pre-positioned artifacts underwater beforehand so that they could appear on the surface with something camera-pleasing. The trouble was, the water was so dank and murky when he dove down in full view of a dozen press photographers, that Throckmorton couldn't even find what he had bunked out. As a consequence, and not to be upstaged, he located some other junk and hoisted it aboard the reporters' launch anyway.

A beneficial side effect of the pollution of the harbor is the fact that the teredo worm, a small mollusk that bores into the submerged woods of a ship's planking, cannot live there. As a consequence, the hulls underwater have been preserved almost intact.

(to be continued)

Grandma's Scrap Book

Within her little attic,
She found a book just right
To harbor all her keepsakes,
Fond mem'ry to incite.
A poem that she valued;
A cake perhaps to bake;
A wedding invitation,
Just kept for old times' sake.
She covered it with clippings,
And went her quiet way,
Unknowing that in heaven,
A voice had cried, "Belay!"
"You've got that log I cherished
A hundred years or more;
A history of my vessel,
From the time it left the shore.
The numerous statistics
That shipping can entail.
From the storms that swept her gunnel,
To the spouting of a whale.
Why under all your drivel,
Is a saga of the sea.
Ye gods and little fishes,
It's downright blasphemy!"

Hazel B. Rasmussen

King Kong's Bathtub?

Workmen were cleaning the 1½-mile-long Chesterfield Canal near Retford in Nottinghamshire, England, and found a heavy iron chain on the bottom of the canal. Naturally, the workers picked up the chain.

A short time later, pleasure craft were left stranded along the length of the canal and the workmen were left holding the plug.

The plug? No one knew about it. Not the workers. Not the British Waterways Board. It seems records of the canal were destroyed during World War II and the

plug was easily forgotten.

The Waterways Board dredging team were on a routine maintenance program for the canal when they pulled the plug. The canal water drained into the nearby River Idle.

The Board was glad to find the plug. About a week was needed to build a new plug to put the canal back in operation. Why would the Board be happy? The canal had been leaking for years.

The above was sent to us by Scott Weeden of Houston, Texas. We don't think he sent us a tall Texas tale.

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