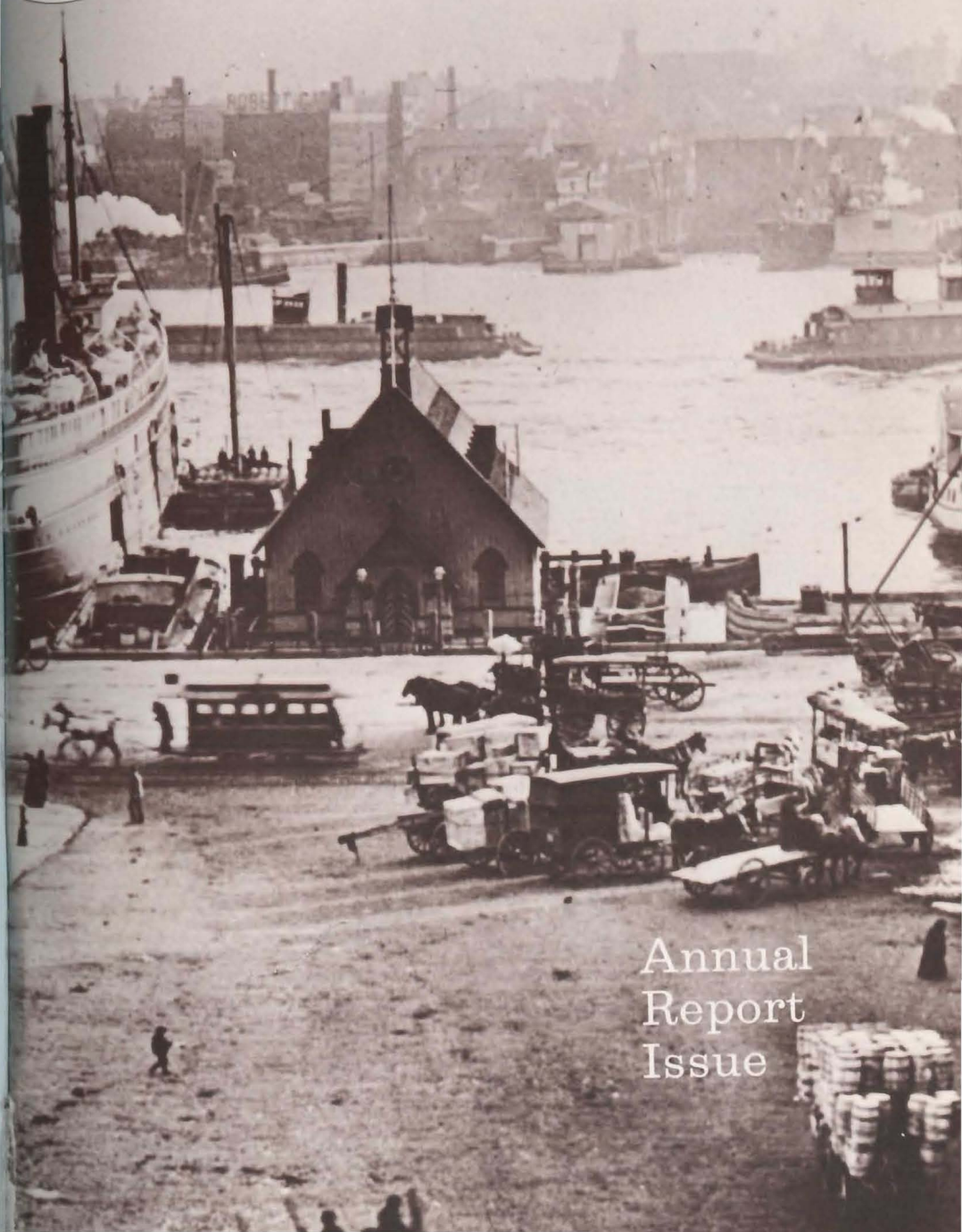




# the LOOKOUT

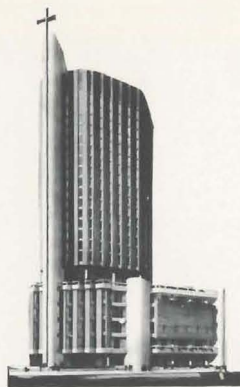
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

APRIL 1977



Annual  
Report  
Issue

# The Program of the Institute



Seamen's Church Institute  
15 State Street, N.Y.C.

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.

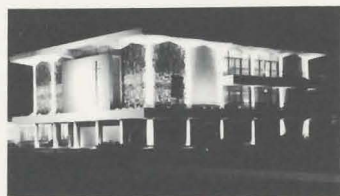
More than 350,000 such seamen of all nationalities, races and creeds come into the Port of New York every year. To many of them the Institute is their shore center in port and remains their polestar while they transit the distant oceans of the earth.

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.

More than 2,300 ships with over

96,600 men aboard put in at Port Newark annually, 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, designed and operated in a special way for the



Mariners International Center (SCI)  
Port Newark/Elizabeth, N.J.

very special needs of the men. An outstanding feature is a soccer field (lighted by night) for games between ship teams.

Although 60% 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.

## the LOOKOUT

Vol. 68 No. 3

April 1977

SEAMEN'S CHURCH  
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004  
Telephone: (212) 269-2710

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

John G. Winslow  
President

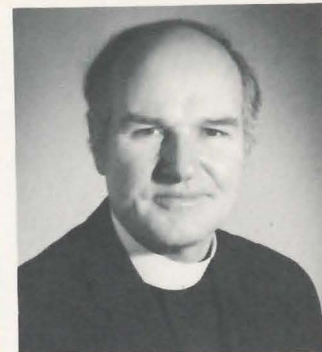
The Rev. James R. Whittemore  
Director

Carlyle Windley  
Editor

Published monthly with exception of July-August and February-March when bi-monthly. Contributions to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York of \$5.00 or more include a year's subscription to *The Lookout*. Single copies 50¢. Additional postage for Canada, Latin America, Spain, \$1.00; other foreign, \$3.00. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

The Second Floating Church of our Saviour  
for seamen 1870 - 1910, moored at the foot of  
Pike Street, East River, New York City

The Reverend James R. Whittemore  
Institute Director



Dear Friends:

Although I had thought that the transition from being rector of a large parish in Princeton, N.J. to that of Director of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York would be a difficult one, I am happy to report to you that it has not been so. My good friend, Dr. John Mulligan, our retiring Director, and a wonderful staff of devoted people have made it very easy. Furthermore, I have discovered that the work is not so different from that of the parish ministry.

There is the pastoral side — quite a different constituency to be sure — but a day of ship visiting on the Brooklyn waterfront with our senior ship visitor, Gilbert Rodriguez, made me realize how important this caring activity is.

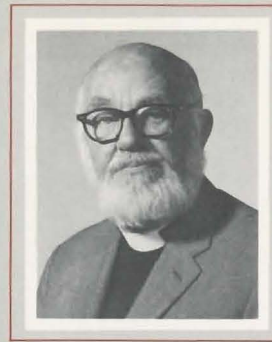
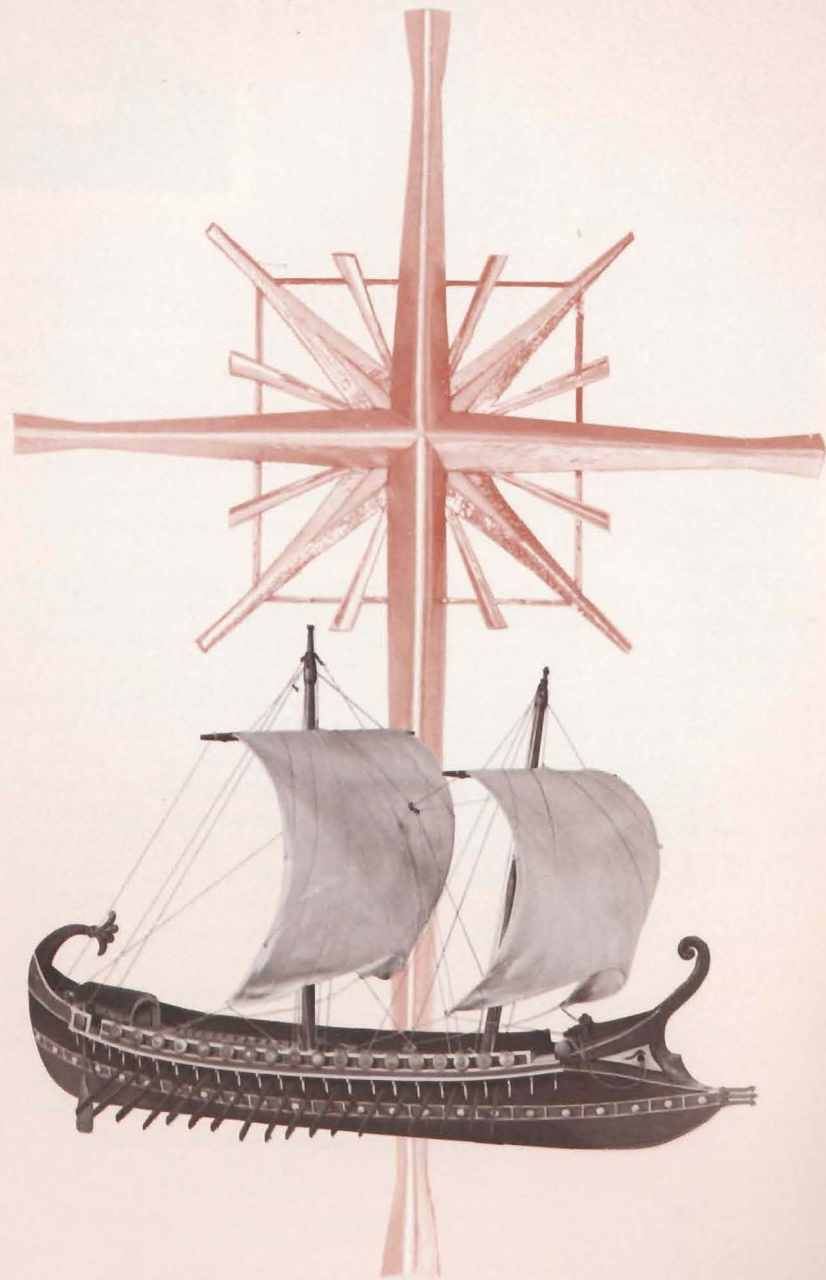
As in the old days of the Floating Chapel, we find the sustaining power of worship a vital part of our work. It was a special joy to celebrate the Eucharist on Ash Wednesday in the lovely Chapel of Our Saviour here in New York.

The opportunity to preach and speak is always present, and on several occasions I have tried to put the sinking of the *Argo Merchant* into a theological framework (the survivors were cared for here at the Institute). It seems to me that the rash of marine disasters of recent months raises to our conscience the real possibility of destroying this fragile earth that God has entrusted to our care. We need to develop the kind of international standards and controls which will help preserve for our own use and for those that come after, the fruits of the earth and the bounty of the sea. I believe the Institute can play a significant leadership role in all of this.

The Seamen's Church Institute of New York is an exciting place to be. I am convinced more than ever that this is one of the most important and significant missions of the Church of Christ to be found anywhere. We have come a long way from our First Floating Chapel on the East River, but the essential conviction of that day — that God is calling people to minister in His name to the seafaring community — is as true now as it was then.

Sincerely,

*James R. Whittemore*  
James R. Whittemore



The Reverend John M. Mulligan, D.D.  
Institute Director, 1960-1976

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR TO THE BOARD OF MANAGERS 1976

**T**HIS, my final annual report to you is approached — I must admit — with a very large measure of mixed feelings. After all these years I am sure you can fathom them as well as I. A year ago I announced to you my intention to retire from active service at the age of 65. I did this in part so that you as a Board would have ample time to find that person most qualified to be the next Director of this illustrious Institute. This you have done and I most heartily commend you on your selection. The Rev. James R. Whittemore has for the last nine years been the Rector of my parish, Trinity Church, Princeton, and during his tenure there I have seen him raise Trinity Church to the point where it is recognized as one of the leading parishes of the Episcopal Church in this country. Your selection of him as Director does great honor to Trinity Church but even more so to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York.

My retirement at age 65 was not mandatory. I could have remained on the bridge for several more years but it has always been my conviction that one should never overstay one's welcome. As I cast back over the last almost 17 years it is quite obvious to me that this is the right moment for a change of command. It is good Pauline theology that a man contributes whatever he has to give in a space of 14 years. At that point he should either move on or step down. I happen to agree with this and while I have not

designed my own life according to this time table, it has interestingly enough fallen out this way.

Several programs of the Institute which for some time have been in the experimental stage have obviously proven out and now stand ready to be implemented. The future is exciting and the prognosis is positive.

I delight now in paying tribute once again to the leadership given this august agency of the Church by our President, John G. Winslow, and by you, the Board of Managers. The one fact that this Institute, now in its 144th year, is the largest and most vigorous of its kind in the world today is evidence of your concern and stewardship. This Institute is looked to with respect in all quarters of the globe. Its membership in international bodies, sectarian and non-sectarian, is earnestly solicited. It is looked to as the mentor for agencies either initiating or seeking to strengthen programs in their ports for the benefit of seamen. Because so much of all this eventually comes back to policy which you as a Board set, this redounds to your credit.

I must also express to you my eternal gratitude for your forbearance over these years. I can truly say that in many cases your confidence surmounted your patience and peace and harmony have prevailed. But, as I have said before, no man — no matter where he has exercised his ministry, has had or could have had a more satisfying or rewarding term of service than have I.

A great deal of credit for that must go to my colleagues and associates. I would almost categorize them as the fellowship of saints. (Parenthetically, we have had some great times when some people would have said that they weren't all that saintly). However, their loyalty to this place, their devoted interest in the welfare of seamen, no matter what their station, their pursuit of and dedication to excellence I have never experienced in any other place. I could point to any number of instances and occasions, but one I shall never forget and will always cherish, is their effort during this Bicentennial Year and in particular the Fourth of July and the Op-Sail weekend. During that day they served over 5,000 full meals and more than 20,000 people were in and out of this building. Yet to any one less knowledgeable, this would have seemed to be a normal every-day occurrence. This type of performance just doesn't come off unless people have respect for each other and are willing

to play as a team. That is exactly what has made this agency what it is today. The output and productivity of the staff of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York is what has gained for it the respect and support of the community at large and the maritime industry the world over.

Other than the Bicentennial events what can we say of 1976? I think a good deal. Locally I believe the "coming of age" of the Friends of the Seamen's Church Institute is a major development. This group has come together from all segments of the industry and has provided a program and forum for pressing issues that has never been offered before. The two seminars staged this last year are ample proof. Commanding expert panelists in their fields and attended by representatives from all our four coasts, their proceedings were reported widely in both the general news media and the maritime press.

It also was a great satisfaction to me that at a dinner in New York in November over \$29,000 was realized to establish a chair of Maritime Studies in the Merchant Marine School in honor of the Rev. Dr. Archibald R. Mansfield. It was Dr. Mansfield who with his many, many years of devoted labor set the Institute on its path to eminence. Never has there been a more devoted and true friend to seamen. While the amount raised does not fully fund the chair, it does indicate that the Merchant Marine School, accredited by the New York State Education Department and whose courses are recommended for appropriate credit by degree granting institutions, is still a pioneering maritime educational institution. I sincerely hope that in the years to come people who appreciate its work and its quality will come forward and contribute of their means so that eventually the Mansfield Chair and perhaps others will be fully funded.

All other programs of the Institute grow apace as the statistics attached to this report will show. There are some statistics which will not readily be available to you unless you keep a scorecard.

The glamor and romance of the sea entralls us all. But, I do and will remind you that today it is still the most hazardous of all industrial occupations. Now that we are all more ecology minded, we are conscious of oil spills. Without compiling statistics for the year we can note that within recent weeks there have been at least ten disasters with a loss of

life and a substantial loss of ships and cargo. This is unconscionable. The merchant fleet is the life-line of the world. We must continue to press in every way available to us for proper safety standards adhered to by all governments. No one has the right to put another person's life in jeopardy. The Lord we worship came among us that we might have life and have it more abundantly. That means something *more* than a color TV and an automobile. We have seen too many instances in the past year of distress (and when we say "distress" we know what we are talking about) that under proper circumstances would not have come to us. We do not avoid them. We take care of them. We always have. We always will.

However, for 144 years this Institute has operated under a mandate that has been all encompassing — "Welcome the stranger within the gates. He is thy brother". The mandate is still in effect. As long as this agency exists, it will adhere to the divine mandate in every possible way. The Lord God will be served.

Now comes the change of command ceremony:

Now hear this!

The Rev. Dr. John M. Mulligan — Orders from Headquarters — Duty finished. — Report to Headquarters.

The Rev. James R. Whittemore — Report to Station — Assume Command.

Good Luck — Good Sailing — God Speed.

Respectfully submitted,

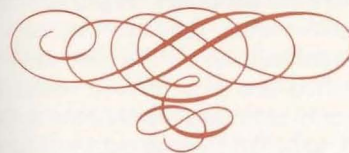
*John M. Mulligan*

John M. Mulligan

December 31, 1976



Report to the Board of Managers  
by  
The Reverend Miller M. Cragon, Jr.  
Director of Special Services



The President has asked me to prepare a survey of events of the past year as a supplement to the 1976 annual report of the Director. The material that follows is only a comment on some of our achievements and an attempt to give a bit of credit where I think credit is due.

Dr. Mulligan has highlighted the growth of the Friends of Seamen's Church Institute during 1976, the two seminars sponsored by them and the establishment of the Archibald Romaine Mansfield Chair of Maritime Studies. The significance of these seminars is that men from all sections of the wide-ranging maritime industry are able to come together in this Institute to share information of mutual value to us all. We provide a neutral but friendly environment where persons who are often antagonists can meet professionally and explore their differing views. The Friends brings the industry into a supporting posture toward the Institute which not only aids the Institute financially, but turns back out to strengthen the industry. This is of mutual benefit to all concerned.



George F. Avery of Stauffer Chemical Co. moderates afternoon session at Friends of SCI Mini-Landbridge Seminar

Maritime Day in May 1976 was of great significance in our life. The day began with an ecumenical service in our chapel in which the government, the unions and management participated together. This Institute is equally committed to all of them and thus

provided the appropriate location and situation. It marked a new level of cooperation, and we expect that it will become an annual part of the Maritime Day observance in the future.

The Institute's own relations with the management, government and labor components of the maritime industry has been uneven in the past, and we took some steps in 1976 to improve our relationship with the labor component. I made two trips across the Atlantic to help advance the progress that the International Transport Workers Federation is making toward a greater acceptance by the labor unions of the church related shoreside agencies and clubs. This is with the hope of their aid in securing future financial support, but there is a long journey to the fulfillment of this aim and much remains to be done. There are old suspicions to be lived down and such things take time. One example of the progress in lessening these suspicions was another trip of mine; this one by subway to a midtown hotel. I was asked to give the invocation at the opening of the National Maritime Union annual convention of delegates. This was a happy occasion for me and for them, and represented a noteworthy advance in our relationship with this major union.

Those of us who have taken Caribbean cruises or crossed to Europe on great passenger ships have little notion of what a cruel environment for work the sea is. It is uncontrollable and there is no escape until the weather and the seasons themselves abate. At SCI we regularly memorialize seafarers who have been lost at sea, and we regularly take into our building men who have been rescued from ships in distress. The crew of the *Argo Merchant* which ran aground off Nantucket was only the most recent example. These men are seldom a charge on the funds of the Institute, since their employers are generally responsible for their upkeep while they are with us.

But significantly, we are here to receive them and to meet their needs for shelter only because our ancestors in the faith thought the Church ought to have her agents doing this work. No amount of payment for services received could possibly create this Institute today if it were not already here doing its job. The seamen's unions are coming to recognize this and over the long run their concern for their members when they are ashore will take a positive form for all of us who are in this work of service.

One tends to want to note the new and the unusual in an annual survey, but it is

worthwhile noting, as well, several areas where the expected activity occurred as expected. The Womens Council once again called on the time and energy of hundreds of volunteers around the country, and put almost 10,000 special gift boxes with a \$20 value each on board ships that were at sea on Christmas Day. I keep in daily touch with this program; and its vitality and human concern is a delight to observe and a great credit to this organization. We have been doing this for so many years that we forget how much hard work and dedication goes into it each year.

The SCI Merchant Marine School continues to serve the industry at the dollars and cents level of professional competence. This means that the five hundred students who came here in 1976 to upgrade themselves may also improve their incomes. This school contributes directly to the improved professional income status of its students. This is in the great American tradition of education, but the connection between training and income is seldom seen with the directness it is seen here.

But there is a corporate side as well as the individual. Those of you in shipping management and maritime insurance know better than I that the best safety device on any ship is competent, well-trained crewmen who are sure of themselves and have proved their competence through experience and examination. The terrible disasters that have received so much recent publicity would have been greatly reduced if all of the ships' companies had had the level of training provided by our school.

This school was formally established about 1916 and no one individual deserves the credit for its level of excellence. But I must single out James Mills who has been the director of the school for the past ten years. He has selected most of the present faculty and produced the present organization of the

courses. He is retiring as soon as a successor can be selected and will be sorely missed.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Institute program continues to grow and to meet pressing educational needs for the shorebased personnel of this industry. 1977 is only the fifth year of this maritime transportation program, but it has grown to the point where nine courses are offered in the present semester and the only limit on their growth seems to be the number and size of our classrooms. Dedication and hard work have gone into this, and the program has brought the Institute, as a whole, a new dimension of fame and reputation.

The day-by-day backbone of Institute life is the ongoing provision of lodging and food for the thousands of men and women who enter our doors. For the transient seafarer this Institute provides a safe, congenial spot at a price far below a commercial hotel. The genial innkeeper is John Ryan who has been here long

Evening "study time" in the Conrad Library



Ship crew being checked in at hotel registration desk



Mr. James A. Mills, director SCI Merchant Marine School

enough to know a vast number of his customers by name and to deal with their individual personalities as the situation demands.

If the backbone of our work for seafarers is housing and feeding them, the arms and legs of the Institute are the ship visitors. Day after day on roughly 5,000 occasions each year they are out on the ships, greeting the men, making themselves available for any special needs the seamen have and informing them of the services available through the Institute. The ship visitors listen to them if they want to talk, assist them in communicating with their families, provide a playing field for their athletic competitions, and from time to time refer them to attorneys when there is a problem with the agents or owners. We are the helping hand the stranger needs in the basically inhospitable environment of waterfront New York.

If you draw an imaginary line up the river from the Verrazano to the George Washington bridge, everything on the west is serviced by the ship visitors out of the Port Newark center and everything on the east out of 15 State Street. This particular arrangement was set up in 1976 to meet certain moves by the shipping companies and to improve our own lines of operation. The Port Newark staff sets out boldly to bring the men from the ships to the center and this is reflected in a great increase in the use of that facility and a tripling of the income in the past two years. We use three minibusses for this and they are on the go seven days a week over this vast area. Two of these busses were given to the Institute by the Florence and John Schumann Foundation with grants made in 1975 and 1976.

On the east side of the imaginary line there is better public transportation and therefore less need for us to provide the same kind of regular service to this building, but the ships are visited



regularly nevertheless.

I could go on and on in this description of our daily tasks, but I do want to emphasize the point that the tasks are daily. We can deal so well with the unusual when it arises because we are already here with the usual on a regular daily basis. We serve seafarers in the name of God and as an arm of the Episcopal Church. This is why there is a chapel in both of our buildings and why a priest is the director. There is no way to avoid the nature of our vocation and dedication. The chaplains conduct thousands of personal interviews each year and bring the work of christian priesthood directly to the individuals committed to our care. They are true and faithful servants, on duty every day and always accessible to the men and women of the sea.

We welcome the adventure of a new director and look forward to having his new vision for our work and new enthusiasm to inspire us. He can be sure of the loyalty of the staff and the continuation of our commitment to the work of this Institute under his watchful care.

M.M.C.

## Year Ended December 31, 1976

<b>Gross Income from Departments</b> .....		<b>\$1,860,620</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Salaries and Wages .....	\$1,170,344	
Employee Benefits .....	204,572	
Food and Merchandise .....	349,967	
Electric current, fuel, telephone service .....	389,158	
Supplies .....	108,657	
Insurance .....	37,085	
Publicity and printed matter, including "Lookout" .....	35,289	
Miscellaneous .....	11,953	
Women's Council - wool and gifts for Seamen .....	26,124	
Investment Counsel, legal and accounting fees .....	29,475	
Repairs and Maintenance .....	52,310	
Real Estate Taxes .....	67,284	
Interest .....	2,210	
	<u>\$2,484,428</u>	
<b>Religious and Personal Service Departments</b>		
Salaries, expenses and relief .....	235,446	
<b>Mariners International Center, Port Newark</b>		
Salaries, expenses .....	191,337	
<b>Merchant Marine School and Franklin D. Roosevelt Institute</b>		
Salaries, expenses .....	132,083	
<b>Department of Physical Education</b>		
Salaries, expenses .....	14,484	
<b>Joseph Conrad Library</b>		
Salaries, expenses .....	<u>39,435</u>	3,097,213
<b>Excess of expenditures over income from operated departments</b> .....		<b>(1,236,593)</b>
Less dividends, interest and income from endowments .....	331,622	
Credit Bureau recoveries .....	33,298	364,920
<b>Deficit from Institute operations</b> .....		<b>(871,673)</b>
<b>Contributions for general and specific purposes</b>		
Ways and Means Department and special items .....	173,327	
Women's Council .....	<u>28,973</u>	202,300
<b>Deficit from Operations</b> .....		<b>(669,373)</b>
Depreciation - 15 State Street Building .....		(198,855)
Furniture and Equipment .....		
Depreciation - Port Newark Building .....		( 23,048)
Furniture and Equipment .....		
<b>Deficit for year ended December 31, 1976</b> .....		<b>\$ (891,276)</b>

( ) Denotes red figures

The Condensed Statement of Operating Income and Expense for the year 1976 derived from the books and records is set forth above. Audited financial statements will be available at the Institute for inspection upon completion.

Respectfully,  
George D. Benjamin, Treasurer

OPERATING BUDGET  
\$3,097,213



FROM PUBLIC & SEAMEN 60%

GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS 7%

FROM ENDOWMENTS 12%

DEFICIT 21%

Operations for Seamen

Totally Subsidized

- Library
- Game Room
- Ship Visitation
- Religious Activities
- Missing Seamen Bureau

Partially Subsidized

- Baggage Room
- Credit Bureau
- Roosevelt Institute
- The Lookout
- International Seamen's Club
- Women's Council
- Gymnasium
- Mariners Intl. Center  
at Port Newark
- Merchant Marine School

Nominally Self-Supporting

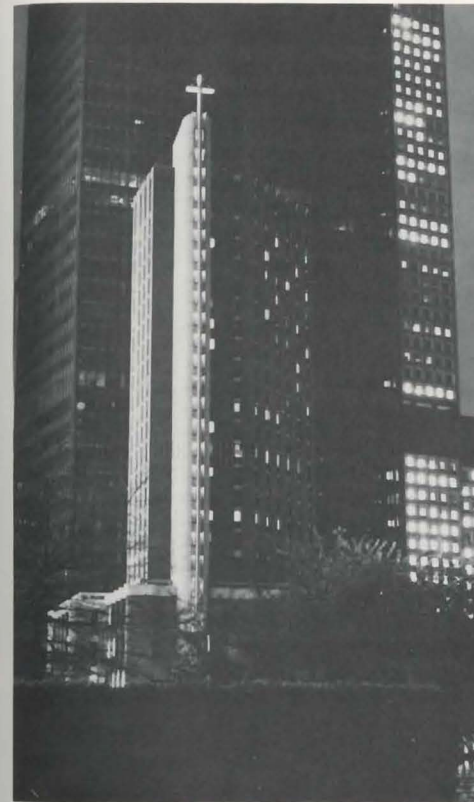
- Hotel
- Food Services

15 STATE STREET, N.Y.C.

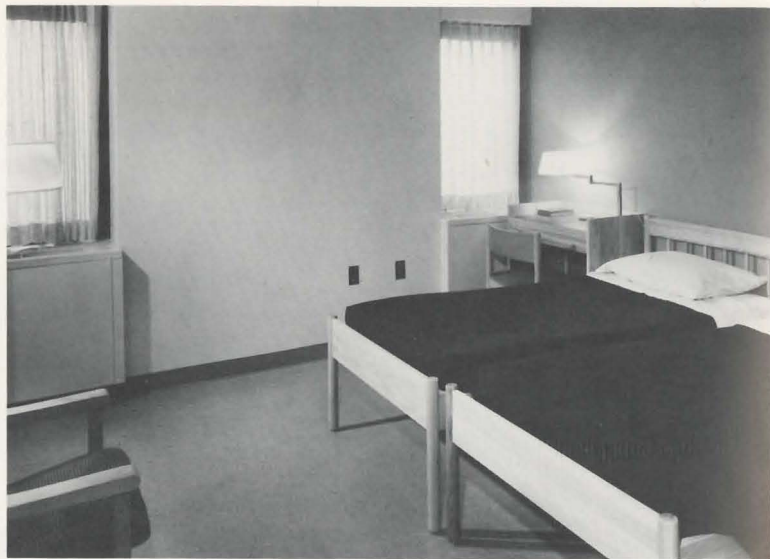
1,862 American and foreign ships visited and welcomed.

10,378 Seamen, representing 41 foreign nations, entertained in the International Seamen's Club.

126 Services held in the Chapel.







**103,484** Books and magazines distributed aboard ships in the greater Port of New York - New Jersey.

**9,718** Pieces of luggage stored in SCI Baggage Room.

**460,229** Restaurant meals served.

**23,960** People attended exhibits, concerts and Bicentennial events.

**17,944** Visits to the Physical Education facilities.

**9,894** Christmas Gift Boxes placed aboard ships. (5774 New York; 4120 Port Newark).

**2,493** Pastoral interviews.



**82,500** Hotel Rooms occupied.

**502** Seamen enrolled in SCI's Merchant Marine School (Deck 404; Engine 98) plus MARAD radar 501, recertification 354.

**643** Seamen, shorebased maritime personnel and other community members enrolled in Roosevelt Institute evening adult education classes; and Friends of SCI seminars.

**38,753** People used the Conrad Library.

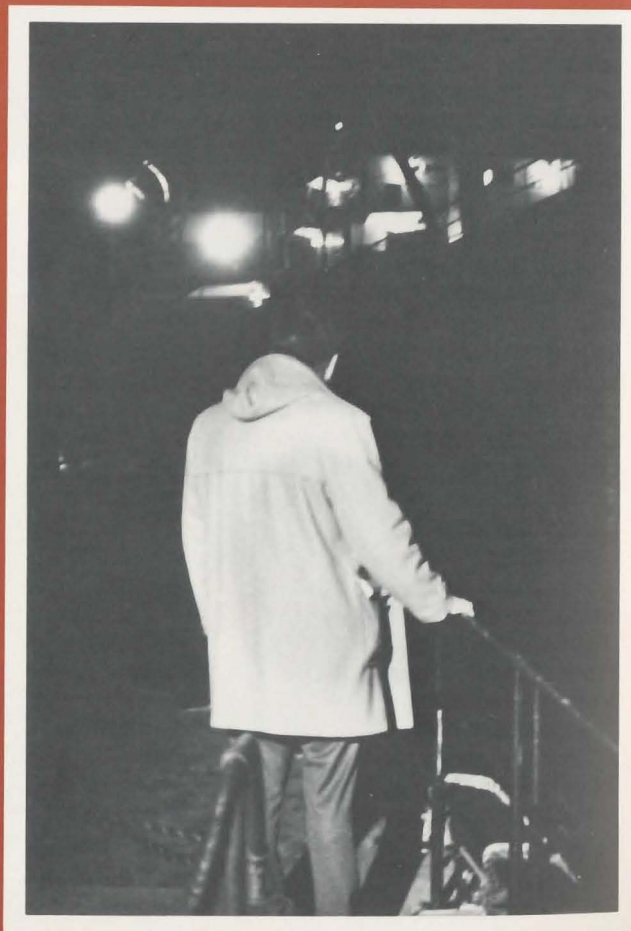
## Summary of Services - 1976

### PORT NEWARK/ELIZABETH, N.J.

**2,304** Seamen used playing field; 66 official soccer matches plus track, field competitions and baseball.



- 2,803 American and foreign ships visited, including U.S. and foreign tanker ships.
- 131 Religious services held in the Center.
- 22,803 Seamen used the Center.
- 12,199 Letters and Postcards mailed for seamen.
- 84 Pastoral interviews.
- 783 Attended dances.
- 714 Overseas telephone calls.



Seamen's Church Institute of New York, 15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004  
 The Reverend James R. Whittemore, Director

*The Seamen's Church Institute of New York  
 gratefully acknowledges  
 the legacies and memorials left in its support  
 during 1976 in memory of  
 the following persons*

**MEMORIALS**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Nils Andersen                             | Louise Link                                      |
| Commodore John W. Anderson                | Alec Main  |
| Rev. Robert F. Beattie                    | Paul Meiswinkel                                  |
| Christopher Beeson                        | Alice K. Rennie                                  |
| Brenda R. Belli                           | George W. Rogers                                 |
| Einar A. Buhl                             | Jennie W. Rush                                   |
| Rear Adm. Hubert W. Chanler,<br>USN, Ret. | Alexandra Reid Sanford                           |
| Allen J. Cokefair                         | Herbert L. Satterlee                             |
| Earle J. Davis                            | Ethel E. Sherman                                 |
| John Robert Douthitt                      | Jane Simpson                                     |
| Robert M. Dunton                          | Donald L. Smith                                  |
| Alf C. Ebbesen                            | Edward J. Snyder                                 |
| Kendall Emerson                           | Capt. Harry Spencer                              |
| Capt. Cornelis J.P. Garnier               | Samuel Stretch                                   |
| Maude A. Glover                           | Melvin C. Terry                                  |
| Rev. Joseph D. Huntley                    | Harold Thompson BM 1/USN and<br>Lucy E. Thompson |
| Mr. & Mrs. Anton Johnson                  | Elizabeth L. Tierney                             |
| Mr. & Mrs. Edward W. Johnson              | Sister Virginia O.S.A.                           |
| Bartlett Braxton Jones                    | John D. Wheeler                                  |
| Mrs. Leland Jordan                        | Daniel D. Whyte                                  |
| Miss M. Dorothy Kane                      | Stanley Wilson                                   |
| Marie Kimberly                            | Whitney Woodruff, M.D.                           |
| Mr. & Mrs. Frank A. Linder                |  |

**LEGACIES**

- |                           |                 |                      |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Rosa Anderson             | George G. Moore | Otto Sussman         |
| Louise Dolson             | Edith Newcomb   | Jean R. Vis          |
| Charles E. Dunlap         | Howland Pell    | Mildred C. Werner    |
| Ethel A. Hart             | Sybil Shugg     | Charles L. Wetherbee |
| Theodore Tallent Malleson | Frieda Sieb     |                      |

*"What a man does for himself dies with him.  
 What he does for others lives on forever."*

Officers and Members  
of the Board of Managers  
of the  
Seamen's Church Institute  
of New York

Honorary President  
The Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr., S.T.D., D.D.

Chairman of the Board  
Franklin E. Vilas

President  
John G. Winslow

Secretary  
Alfred Lee Loomis III

Treasurer  
George D. Benjamin

Ass't. Secretary & Ass't. Treasurer  
Blair F. Baldwin

Counsel  
Ralph K. Smith, Jr.

Clerical Vice Presidents  
The Rev. Frederick Burgess  
The Rev. Miller M. Cragon, Jr.  
The Rev. James H. Cupit, Jr.  
The Rev. John M. Mulligan, D.D.  
The Rev. Robert Ray Parks, D.D.  
The Rev. James R. Whittemore  
The Rev. Donald R. Woodward

Lay Vice Presidents  
Arthur Z. Gray  
Henry C.B. Lindh  
Richard J. Olds  
Ralph K. Smith, Jr.  
R. Thornton Wilson, Jr.

Members

Charles W. Bowring, Jr.	Peter F.F. Kissel	Christopher R.P. Rodgers
E. Virgil Conway	Clifford D. Mallory, Jr.	Charles E. Saltzman
Robert E. Corbin	Monroe Maltby	John Jay Schieffelin
Charles B. Delafield	Amb. Anthony D. Marshall	Allen E. Schumacher
Gordon Fearey	Thomas L. McLane	W. Stevens Sheppard
F. Richards Ford	Clarence F. Michalis	Charles G. Thompson
Seth B. French, Jr.	John A. Morris	Benjamin H. Trask ( <i>hon.</i> )
Edward J. Heine	John P. Nicholson	Alexander O. Vietor
Leonard D. Henry	Clifford B. O'Hara	Kenneth Volk
Amb. John P. Humes	Hugh E. Paine, Jr.	Alexander H. Whitman
Niels W. Johnsen	Walter B. Potts	Clifford Wise
	Robert A. Robinson	

Seamen's Church Institute of New York . 15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004  
Telephone: (212) 269-2710  
The Rev. James R. Whittemore, director

## SANTA'S HO-HO-HO HEARD BY 10,000 AT SEA LAST CHRISTMAS

Seamen's Church Institute Volunteers Knitted Garments and Packed Gift Boxes All Year for Delivery on Ships

### As others see us

The following article on the SCI Women's Council appeared in the January '77 issue of the NMU - Pilot ... the official organ of the National Maritime Union of America - AFL-CIO.

We thank Mr. Samuel Thompson, NMU Director of Publications and Public Relations for permission to reprint the article and accompanying photos.

Some 10,000 sailors of many nationalities who were at sea this past Christmas knew that someone, somewhere, had remembered them when they received gift packages with personally signed greeting cards prepared by the almost 3,000 volunteers of the Women's Council of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York.

The gifts, put aboard the ships earlier and hidden until Christmas Eve by Chief Stewards, were highly practical, containing such year-round reminders of the volunteers' concern for seamen as hand-made sweaters or knit woolen watch caps and scarves or two pairs of heavy socks.

Each seaman also received writing paper and envelopes in his Christmas package, a pen, a map of the world, a comb, a sewing kit, shoe laces and a soap dish. Plus, of course, the personal Christmas card which, judging by letters the Institute has received over the years, many seamen appreciate most of all.

Three tons of the finest wool and hundreds of thousands of hours of careful work by about 2,500 volunteer knitters from Alaska to Puerto Rico and all but three states go into the principal gifts in the packages, according to Mrs. Constance West, Director of the Women's Council.

"The volunteers buy the wool from us at the wholesale price, specifying the colors they want," Mrs. West said. "We mail the wool to them early in the year and



Rae Keer (left) shows Edna Peterson, volunteer, how to pack the smaller individual boxes which each seaman received on Christmas Eve at sea.



Two NMU members, Basel K. Adams (left) and Hilton Vanright (right) help Nora Wilking and Mrs. Constance West, Director of the Women's Council of the Seamen's Church Institute, sort some of the 20,000 handmade watch caps, sweaters, scarves and socks that were distributed to crews of many nationalities who were at sea this past Christmas.

Chaplain Miller Cragon of the Seamen's Church Institute moves packing box for Rae Keer, who is in charge of the Institute's Christmas Room where some 500 volunteers work year-round to prepare the Christmas presents for crews at sea during the holidays.



pretty soon the finished garments flow back to us. Years ago, black and gray were the only colors, but now we find that a flaming red watch cap picks up the spirits of a seaman, as it would any other person's."

It is only when the garments are mailed into the Seamen's Church Institute that the second group of volunteers can go into action. They are the women and a handful of men who regularly volunteer to sort the gifts and stuff them into individual packages, then assemble many boxes into large ones that can be put aboard ships for safekeeping until Christmas.

"For the past Christmas, we had about 500 volunteers working in what we call our Christmas Center," Mrs. West said. "Some of these come in large groups that rent busses to bring them in from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Upper New York and Connecticut. Gussie's Girls, a group of retired Metropolitan Life Insurance Company workers, have been coming to work here every week since 1967."

Mrs. West thinks the Christmas package program for seamen is, "like all good things," a two-way street. Many of

the seamen write letters telling of the awful lonesomeness of Christmas at sea and how the packages gave them some sense of being cared about and remembered.

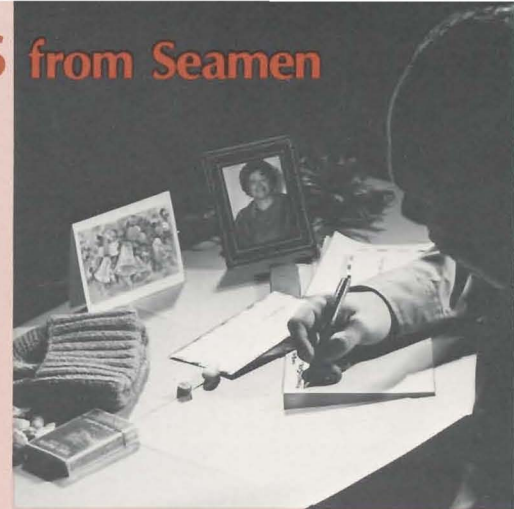
"But the volunteers often are benefited, too," Mrs. West said. "For many who are retired, the program provides both a sense of accomplishment and a sense of belonging. Some infirm elderly volunteers, who no longer can knit or do much of anything physical find a sense of purpose in simply unraveling old knit goods so the wool can be used again."

Born during World War I, the Christmas program had a religious thrust, but, as it became worldwide and dealt with seamen of many nations and faiths, its leaders decided to make the package purely into symbols of friendship.

"Our volunteers have had plenty of proof that the ecumenical spirit works," concluded Mrs. West. "They have seen many cards and letters in foreign languages and in broken English, saying essentially the same thing: 'How wonderful it is that you would be so kind to me, for I am not a Christian nor an American.'"

## LETTERS from Seamen

*In response to 1976's mammoth Christmas Box effort (actual number of boxes totaled 9,894) the Women's Council received hundreds of letters from seamen all over the world. We think the following three letters typify the spirit in which the current Christmas gesture was made and received. No wonder Operation Christmas Box means so much to all involved; and the Institute thanks all its volunteers for their love and concern for their maritime brother ... the merchant seaman.*



January 1, 1977  
USNS Rigel

Thank you very much for your kindness in sending me the Christmas Box. I am cargo yeoman on this ship and sometimes have to work 10 to 16 hours straight below decks in the cold storage lockers. It is 0° down there so you can be sure I'll get plenty of usage for your hat and scarf.

Hope to stop at your A+ establishment the next time I'm in New York.

\*\*\*

Christmas Day  
December 25, 1976

*My Dear Ladies:*

While sitting here and wondering how you look like, I am very grateful of the gifts you sent me. Not only because of the very nice presents but most parts because of knowing that there are people who still care about their fellow people. This is the most nice feeling these days a man can have. Not the food, nor the gifts, just knowing that there are other people who care for me. And special, I think about the sweater and cap you knitted, because I remember old times at home when my mother knitted these kind of things for me.

My dear ladies, though I do not know you, I love you, because you are people Jesus liked so much just by bringing a little love into the world. May God Bless You.

February 9, 1977  
At Sea  
SS EXPORT AGENT

*Dear Ladies:*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much for your thoughtfulness in putting a Christmas gift aboard our vessel for each crew member. I know that it sure gave me a lift on Christmas Day when I opened mine. A family man such as myself feels especially alone at that time of the year, and I usually plan to spend the holidays at home, but it isn't always possible.

I would also like to say that the Seamen's Church Institute itself is a God-send to seamen of all types. It is a place to go for temporary residence between ships, a place to go for help of all kinds and for myself, a safe place for my family and myself to stay in New York when they visit me between trips or see me off on a long voyage. My wife and I have stayed at some expensive hotels in New York, but nowhere did we find the feeling of safety and peace of mind that we found under the cross at 15 State Street.

Thanks again for the gift and for helping all of us tolerate this difficult way of life we have chosen.

Seamen's Church Institute of N.Y.

15 State Street  
New York N.Y. 10004

Address Correction Requested

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID  
AT NEW YORK, N. Y.



**Lest We Forget . . .** *The following excerpt is from a sermon delivered on shipboard just before landing (348 years ago) by John Winthrop, first leader of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.*

“Now the onely way to avoyde this shipwracke and to provide for our posterity is to followe the Counsell of Micah, to doe justly, to love mercy, to walke humbly with our God. For this end, wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affection, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meeknes, gentlenes, patience and liberallity, wee must delight in each other, make others Conditions our owne, rejoyce together, mourne together, labour and suffer together soe the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us as his owne people and will commaund a blessing upon us in all our wayes. . .

“But if our heartes shall turne away soe that wee will not obey, but shall be seduced and worship . . . other Gods, our pleasures, and proffitts, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, wee shall surely perishe out of the good Land whether wee passe over this vast Sea to possesse it;

Therefore lett us choose life,  
that wee, and our Seede,  
may live; by obeyeing his  
voyce, and cleaveing to him,  
for hee is our life, and  
our prosperity.”

*We thank Mrs. E.F. Beyer of Norwalk, Conn. for sending us the above excerpt.*