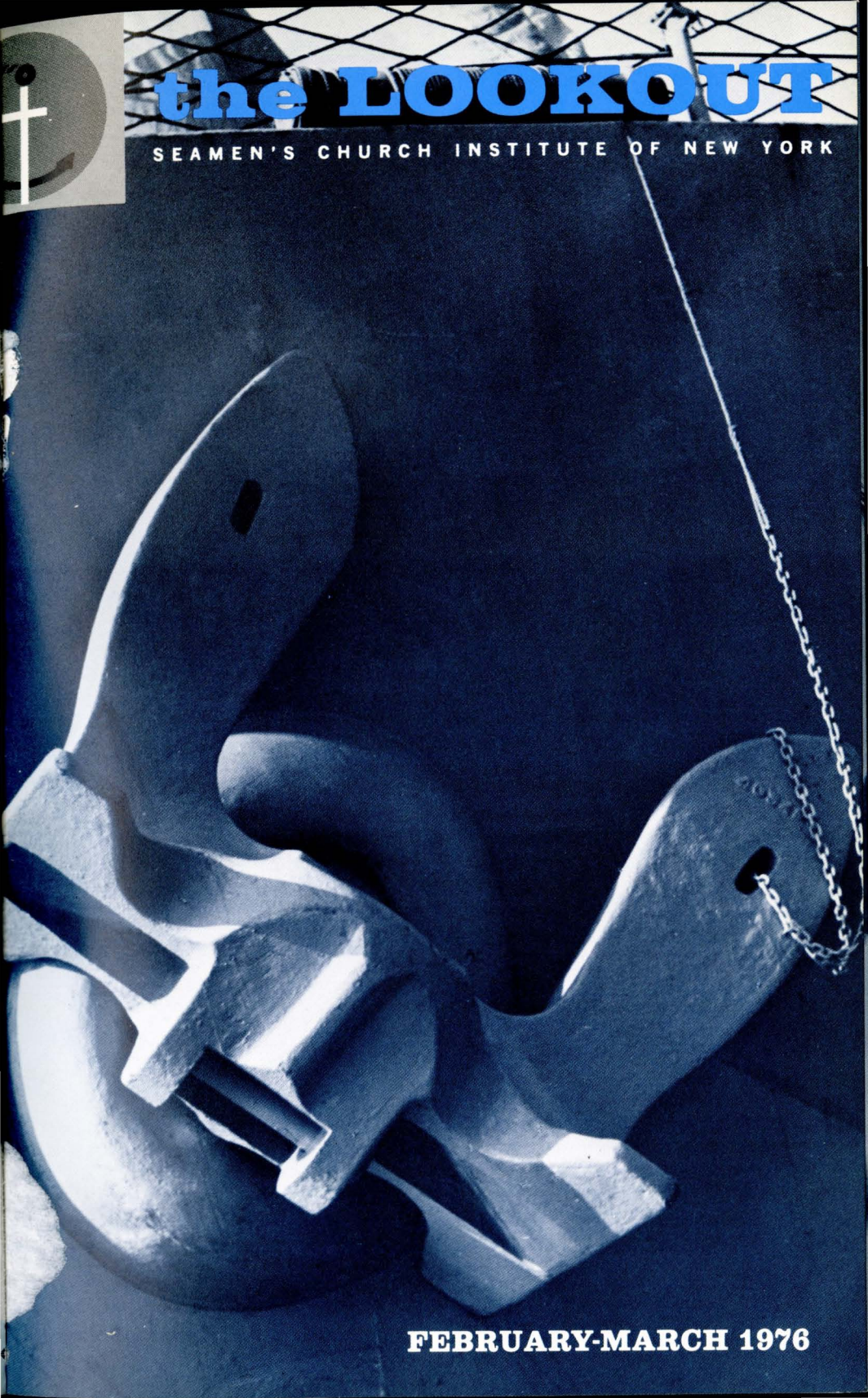




the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK



FEBRUARY-MARCH 1976

THE PROGRAM OF THE INSTITUTE

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

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

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

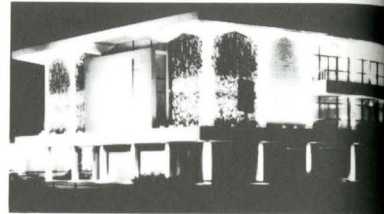
Each year 2,300 ships with 96,600 men aboard put in at Port Newark, where time ashore is extremely limited.

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

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



Seamen's Church
State and Pearl St
Manhattan



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

the LOOKOUT

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a mystery voyage?...on a freighter?

part 1 (of two parts)
by Sylvia S. Seaman

A mystery voyage? On a freighter? Well, to romanticize it a little, let's call it a voyage into the semi-known. On freighters, you don't know, with any exactitude, *where* you are going; you don't know *when* you are leaving; and you have only the vaguest information about when you are returning.

You receive forty-eight hours notice of sailing, but that may be preemptorily changed. When we boarded the ship at Port Newark, and unpacked, we were told that we wouldn't sail until the next day. I never thought I'd go to the Newark Airport for diversion. Although we knew that our ship was going in the general direction of the Panama Canal and down the west coast of South America, our definite itinerary, the ports of call was not vouchsafed to us until the second day out.



This casualness, this dilatoriness, and the general atmosphere of merely tolerating passengers, was exactly what my husband and I wanted. We have travelled extensively, usually on airplanes, but after Bill's operation recently, we were willing to take anything leisurely that left from a port we didn't have to fly to.

Before the cruise, the thought of being hermetically sealed-in for about a month in the company of only twelve passengers was a little forbidding.

"You won't even *like* the other ten," I warned Bill.

But there was so much comfort and relaxation, and so much assumption on the part of all that this *must* be made to work, that an ambience of tolerance and congeniality was generated. You may not find a permanent friend (you usually don't on a three-hundred passenger cruise ship either) but you find you cannot actively

dislike anybody in so amicable an atmosphere. After the first few days of exploratory conversation, everyone learned with whom to avoid discussions of controversial subjects, with whom to laugh at disagreements, with whom to debate judiciously, and on what topics New York and California should eschew debating with Middle America, under penalty of social excommunication.

Which brings me, delightedly, to our two priests who were on their way to a mining town in Peru. These clerics wouldn't have excommunicated anybody. Among our retired professionals, an engineer, a chemist, a school principal, and our younger passengers, they were the most urbane, the wittiest, the most vivacious, and by far, the most untiringly gregarious. As soon as they unpacked, they shed their clerical garb and suspended formal theology. Except for mass, which they celebrated in the dining room, "because," one explained, "it's symbolically appropriate. Reminds us of the last supper." Then he looked around ecumenically. "The Passover meal, you know."

Along with the rest of us, the priests hailed each delay as an unexpected bonus to their vacation. Ahead of them were three years of dedicated social service work patterned after the organizational abilities of the late Saul Olinsky. Interestingly, they were very conscious of their role in avoiding the zeal of the old missionaries who disrupted the social customs, myths and tribal beliefs of which they fanatically disapproved.

Not many people, these days, can boast that they went from New York to Philadelphia by ship. This enabled the wits to send post cards home. "Dear Family: Only two days out of New York Harbor and we've already made it as far as Philadelphia."



The casualness, at times, achieves the level of high art. One couple had made elaborate arrangements to be driven from Philadelphia by station wagon which accommodated all their luggage. They were delayed by traffic jams; and, breathless and apprehensive, just made the one p.m. sailing at Port Newark. Twenty-six hours later, we took off in desultory fashion for Philadelphia. With a whole day and night to spare in their home city, they rushed to a phone. "Guess where we are!"

In Baltimore, another exotic port, all the shops were closed because it was Sunday. Husbands spoke of their happiness. However, some of us managed to spend the time productively. *Last Tango in Paris* was playing.

Whenever there is a delay, time is added at the company's expense. No one should embark on a freighter cruise unless he has ample time, has no calendar commitments, and isn't worried too neurotically about children and grandchildren who aren't sending letters to suggested ports of call. When news came that a 1900-foot cable had broken and that we'd be lolling around Charleston another day or two or three, waiting for a new cable to arrive from New York, a cheer went up. We spent so much time in Charleston's stores, museums and movie houses that someone wondered, "Will we be paying South Carolina income taxes?"

The cargo, we gradually found, began to fascinate us. We gained unexpected knowledge. Serendipity. We watched the loading... automobiles being hauled up by what looked like rope you'd use to tie a carton. Big containers, cargo concealed, transporting mysterious objects. We watched huge cranes and the deftness with which the burden is manipulated into just the desired position in the hold or onto the deck.

The passengers, most of whom never dreamed they'd be so absorbed watching a load of refrigerators being hauled, stood at the deck rails tense with kinetic interest. Suddenly, a huge load of cartons is borne aloft. We can read, very distinctly, "Johnny Walker, Black Label". The stress intensifies.

"I'd hate to see them drop that."
"Do we get a share in the cargo?"



As port after port slipped away with its deposits on and off the ship, we became more and more identified with the freight. Almost empathetic.

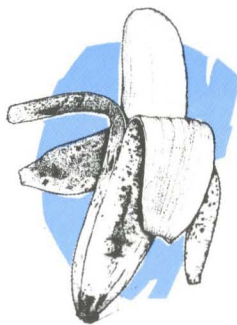
When a 120-ton generator was being loaded on, we all hung over the rail to watch every swerve of the cable to right or left; every sway of the huge monster was done with our hands and our intestines. The suspense of each movement was palpable Hitchcock. "If that generator falls down back into the hold," some prognosticator told us, "it'll make a hole in the ship that'll fill up with water in seconds."

Finally deposited safely in the hold, with the ship sinking with the weight, right under our feet, we breathed, rejoicing. Our interest in the generator became integrated into our lives.

"When will it be unloaded?"

"What other port has a crane strong enough to lift it?"

At Guayaquil, in Ecuador, we unloaded the several tons of Johnny Walker Black Label whiskey, and took on even more tons of green bananas. This may have been a gain of about ten tons, but from our point of view, no improvement. Loading whiskey was exhilarating; loading bananas was fattening.



On the way down the eastern seaboard, there were several days of uninterrupted sea and sky and clouds and passing ships. The lethargy became so soporific that no one went near anything so strenuous as shuffle board or ping-pong. The relaxation extended to reading in a deck chair. When that became too onerous, there was always the beguiling waves to watch. Contrary to visual evidence, the long white foam churning in the wake of the ship is not Tide or Fab.

Sitting in a deck chair watching the blue waves drifting by, you feel abstracted from the world, strangely iso-



Photo: Courtesy Sidney Moritz

lated, immune from care. Time is delectably suspended, with thought processes largely inert as you slough through hours of cloud and sky and ocean in all their summer hues. It's an estivation, an ultimate in function suspension; the body and mind coming to a vast slow-down.

All the books I planned to read, all the work I planned to do was pleurably forgotten. It didn't matter anyhow; I am not in that category of writers for whom publishers are waiting with bated breath and substantial advances.

Just about the time we were all in a semi-coma, a sort of cryonic suspension tomb, frozen for later reanimation, an invitation to the captain's cocktail party was slipped under our door.

Suddenly we were revitalized; brought back from Nirvana, and vied with each other in long dresses, festive pantsuits, and displays of costume jewelry. The men consulted each other and decided on formality. This meant ties. They said they felt strangled. Not too restricted, however from enjoying the abundant drinks provided, the succulent shrimps and the steward's luscious artistry on various shaped crackers.



On a freighter, there is no formal bar. You bring, or buy, inexpensively, your bottles of liquor from the purser (quart of vodka, \$2.00) and keep them in your own private locker in the lounge. A large bucket of ice is always available and limes and lemons are in the lounge refrigerator, which is always well-stocked with assorted sandwiches, juices, fruit, milk, soft drinks. Coffee and tea can be made from the ever boiling water on the electric grill. All the instant snackery makes for informal conviviality at all hours of the day or night — for the intrepid sunrise watchers to late night debauchers playing cards or doing jigsaw puzzles.

By tacit agreement, or perhaps by default or lack of social graces, we didn't treat each other to drinks. Our locker keys were available at all times. We had "bar power". This arrangement precluded all the mental computerization of who owed whom and what.



The lounge is a collective room containing television, writing decks, chess and checker sets, a fairly good library collection, and easy chairs for reading and conversation. A smaller salon at the other end of our living quarters was a monastic retreat for isolation, meditation and general anti-social pursuits. Although at the beginning of the trip everyone exclaimed appreciatively at the possibilities of this privacy, life gradually became so communal, in its gratifying aspects, that this lounge was left to its own lonely devices.



"Too warm in there."

"Too far away."

Unlike luxury passenger cruises, there is no orchestra, no entertainment, no dancing, and when far enough from shore, no television. The short wave radio receiver, very elaborate with dials and numbers, with lights and switches, tuned in with so many overlapping stations, in English and Spanish, that we couldn't decipher the news from the music from the soap operas. After a while, you forgot about the news; somehow, it didn't seem to matter.

Gradually, we found ourselves talking a great deal, really exchanging ideas with time to probe; to analyze. So Victorian were we, so old-fashioned, engaging evening after evening in a lost art — anachronistic conversation.

As the days proceed, the group takes on a familial aura, but only in its more benign aspects. You can talk, or not talk, read, or gaze at the sea, each one respecting the great gift of privacy. It's a comfortable atmosphere, without obligations. Individual silences bear no hostility or resentment.

Even the evenings when a movie is shown, are intimate and cozy. After dinner, you gather in the lounge, a few officers drop in, you have a snack or a drink,

you arrange your chairs and your remarks as though visiting in someone's living room. The movies are usually current, like *Cabaret*. (Better than someone's living room where you'd be looking at slides of their recent trip to Yellowstone.)

We had the opportunity of getting to know the ship's officers who drop into the lounge for a chat, a book, or a game of chess. Most of the young men, some just out of engineering school, some apprentices still ungraduated from maritime school, were so handsome that one wondered whether pulchritude was the prime entrance requirement. All, we found, were motivated as in the old romances, by the lure of the sea.

The lure of the sea, too, is still viable. The steward, the purser, the captain's wife, and the radio operator have stories to tell that vie with Conrad and Stevenson. Although the tales of derring-do are in a contemporary context, they are no less adventuresome. Their eyes still hold visions of far places, of strange, unvisited lands, perhaps, even of erotic princesses with tresses and coffers of gold. Still turbulent in the young men is the venturesome spirit, a yearning to invade untrodden ways even in our shrinking well-explored world.

During the long, irresponsible days, often shuffleboard and ping-pong lost their allure. Walking around the deck counting fifteen or twenty allotment times began to appear futile. It's not like walking down Fifth Avenue and looking into shop windows. Lolling in a deck chair watching the horizon tilt seemed just as productive.

After dinner, there was always the sunset in the rich maturation of its colors while the air fluttered coquettishly between the sea and the sky. At night, a 50,000 watt moon pasted up against a dark ceiling dome looked so artificial no stage designer would have tolerated it.



Our indolence, fortunately, was sanctioned by popular view. On a deck chair, just holding an unread book on your lap, you could float, disembodied, lowering to the point of "unfunction."

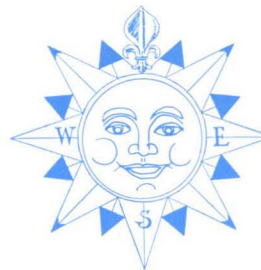
When our steward announced that on the next day, we'd be swimming and picnicking in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, we didn't know if we'd have the gusto to walk down the gangplank.

The day at a palm-studded beach with swimming, barbecued lunch and elaborate dinner was arranged by the purser and steward. Now we felt like luxury-cruise passengers, although ordinarily we were the most insignificant commodity that the ship carried. We lived in great luxury... spacious, well-air-conditioned cabins, large windows, two huge closets, two easy chairs, dresser, numerous lamps, coffee table and a dining room with excellent food.

"But I'd still like to feel," yearned one of the passengers, "that I was at least as important as a shipment of toilet brushes." *(to be continued)*



...from the



LOG

During the period December 7, 1975 — January 3, 1976, SCI ship visitors called one or more times on 338 vessels in the greater Port of New York.

At our Mariners International Center in Port Newark/Elizabeth, 1,856 seamen used the facilities during the evening hours. Seventy-eight seamen attended the Christmas service in the Chapel and all telephones were busy with seamen making overseas calls to wish their loved ones Merry Christmas.

At 15 State Street, a tree trimming evening was a great success with coffee and cake being served by the "Night Watch", a volunteer group of ladies who do a variety of good things for the Institute.

More than 200 seamen attended the Christmas Dance and buffet (whose bounty allowed for double and triple servings for most.)

The New Year's Eve Dance at 15 State Street was equally successful; the buffet equally plentiful; and the volunteer hostesses especially attractive in their formal gowns. Midnight brought a special Institute greeting to the seamen from Mrs. Gladys Cabrera, club director, who wished them health, happiness and peace for the New Year; and the band played on as 1976 was welcomed in with a rousing cheer.



The Slope Chest at SCI's Mariner's International Center. Here seamen can buy quality work clothes and personal items at modest costs.

This is particularly important for the many seamen who are often berthed at this busy containerport for only a brief stay and, therefore, have little time to shop for their personal needs.



This year we were particularly pleased that the Chinese Maritime Club elected to have its annual Christmas party here at the Institute.

The club was founded sixteen years ago by the Orient Overseas Company and today has more than 160 members; all of whom work in New York for Chinese shipping companies.

The Club's program director, Mr. Richard Wang of Orient Overseas, is a valued friend of the Institute and it was his capable and imaginative supervision which made the holiday party such a success.

In addition, he also played Santa Claus for the evening's children's hour; and from the picture below, he was obviously quite convincing.



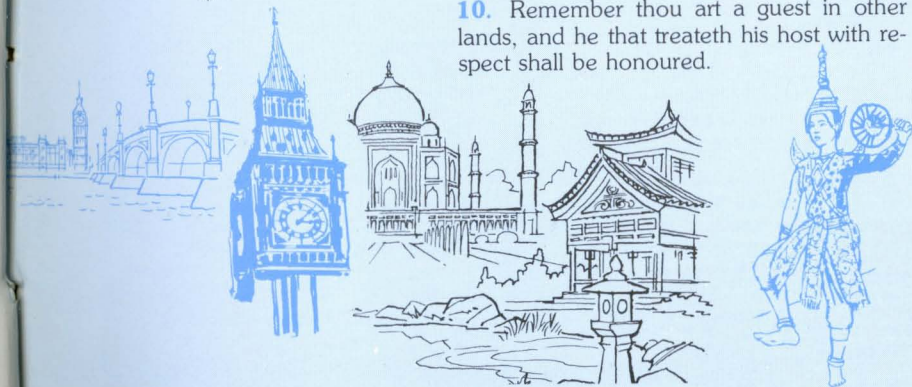
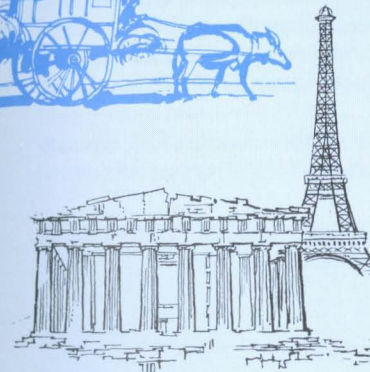
Ten Commandments for Going Ashore:



Although the following "commandments" were printed for vacationing personnel of the venerable Bank Line Limited, we think these points are worth remembering by anyone who travels, be he seaman or not.

* * *

1. Though shalt not expect to find things as thou hast them at home, for thou hast left home to find things different.
2. Thou shalt not take anything TOO seriously for a care-free mind is the beginning of a fine holiday.
3. Thou shalt not let other tourists get on thy nerves for thou art paying good money to enjoy thyself.
4. Remember to take only half the clothes thou thinketh thou needeth — and twice the money.
5. Know at all times where thy passport is, for a person without a passport is a person without a country.
6. Remember that if we had been expected to stay in one place, we would have been created with roots.
7. Thou shalt not worry, for he that worrieth have no pleasure, few things are ever fatal.
8. When in Rome, thou shalt be prepared to do somewhat as the Romans do.
9. Thou shalt not judge the people of a country by the one person who hast given thee trouble.
10. Remember thou art a guest in other lands, and he that treateth his host with respect shall be honoured.



Reprinted courtesy of the Bank Line House Magazine

here's why
you should plan
now to
join us for

Starting July 3, 1976 New York City will be staging Salute '76, the City's largest outdoor festival and the nation's biggest Sea Parade in history.

Highlights of the five day event include:

1. Operation Sail. . .

- The largest gathering of "tall" and square-rigged ships in 150 years consisting of
- 225 sailing ships with 13 to 17 of the world's last remaining "tall" ships: (more than 200 feet in length), including the 370-foot Spanish four-masted topsail schooner, "Juan Sebastian de Elcano"
- an all-female crew sailing the British vessel, "Sir Winston Churchill"
- military and civilian cadets plus hundreds of career merchant seamen from dozens of foreign countries and the U.S.

How the International Navy Review looked in New York's upper harbor in 1893.



From a painting by Fred S. Cozzens

SALUTE

"76

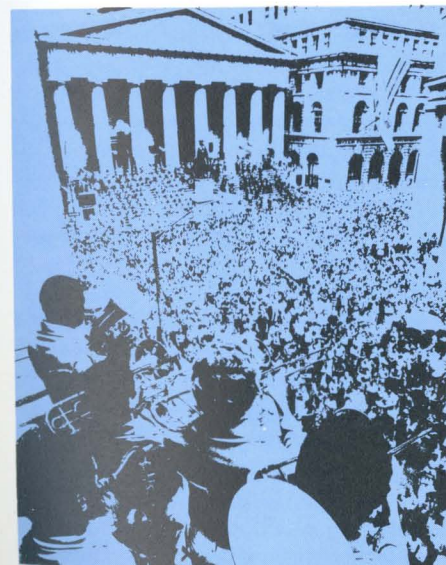
July 3-8
in
New York City

2. 4th International Naval Review (INR). . .

- hosted by the United States Navy this is the first INR in New York City since 1893 and will be composed of
- 50 vessels, comprising ¼ million tons of steel, anchored from the Narrows to the George Washington Bridge, including the
- first visit in this decade of an aircraft carrier to New York City

3. JULY 4th in Old New York. . .

- July 4th eve, the first Fifth Avenue evening parade in 25 years
- an all-day July 4th festival in Downtown Manhattan comprised of parades, concerts, walking tours, theatre, children's events, historic pageants, civic ceremonies and religious services — continuous from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. plus
- more than 25 of New York's largest ethnic groups participating in this Lower Manhattan festival and
- five free evening outdoor concerts on July 4th culminating in a dazzling and colossal fireworks display shot from barges surrounding the Statue of Liberty

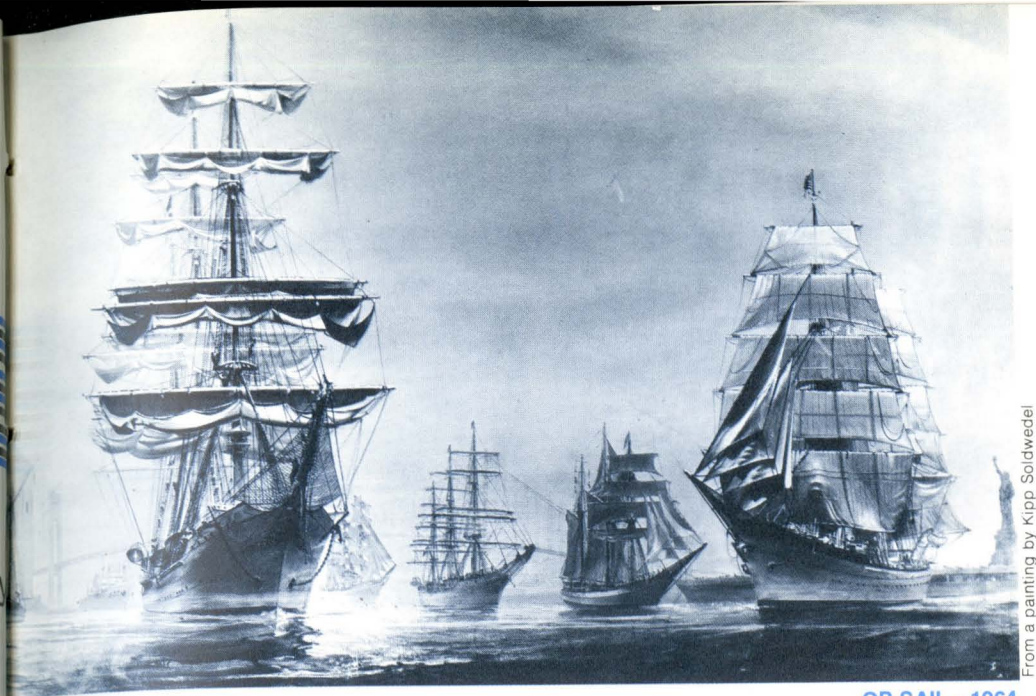


As one of the founding members of July 4th In Old New York, the Institute is most anxious that all our friends know about this once in a life-time event. It is destined to be one of the great historic celebrations of our time and we hope you can join us — especially on July 4th.

If you would like a more detailed schedule of events please write us at 15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004 or call (212) 269-2710.

If you think you're going to need hotel accommodations make reservations soon, as the City's visitor's bureau advises us that hotels are already receiving firm bookings.

One event at last year's July 4th in Old New York Festival



From a painting by Kipp Soldwedel

OP SAIL - 1964

THE ROARING 20's

by Fred Stout

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Last July, we inquired for one of our readers if the term "Roaring Twenties" was of nautical origin.

Since that time, we've received numerous replies; all of which said that the term was most likely, not only "not nautical," but that probably no one really knew why the term "Roaring Twenties" came about.

Mr. Fred Stout's reply was an especially plausible speculation, and we thought you might enjoy reading his thoughts on the matter.

* * *

To answer the query in the July-August 1975 *Lookout* concerning the meaning of the term, "The Roaring Twenties," may one who lived through that turbulent period offer a few impressions.

For one thing, the caption has nothing to do with the sea or nautical matters.

Furthermore, it is unknown to me who coined the phrase, "The Roaring Twenties," anymore than is the author of the title, "The Gay Nineties," which has persisted likewise through the years despite the Age of the Robber Barons, Gigantic Trusts, the Depression of 1893, Coxey's March of the Unemployed to Washington, the disastrous, crippling national strikes, and the Spanish American War

of 1898 — all very disturbing events, and anything but "gay".

But to dredge up in the mind the decade of the twenties, it must be remembered that it was the let down and aftermath of World War I. No doubt, Sinclair Lewis caught some of the flavor of the era in his book, *Babbit*, (a Nobel Prize Winner), later followed by *Elmer Gantry*, *Main Street*, and *Dodsworth*. Nan Brittan brought out, *The President's Daughter* though at a later date it was repudiated.

In the twenties, Broadway had reached its zenith with musical comedies, the glorifying of the American girl in the Ziegfeld Follies with an assist from Earl Carroll. "Abie's Irish Rose" is a play that still holds the record for one of the longest plays to run on Broadway. To be sure, there were some serious plays such as "The Fool," and John Barrymore in "Hamlet".

Hollywood was then regarded more or less as the citadel of a modern version of Sodom and Gomorrhah. In that period, Al Jolson appearing in "The Jazz Singer" introduced the first talking movie. Such stars as Charlie Chaplin and Will Rogers were at their height. Clara Bow, the "It Girl," was the sex symbol of the period. In baseball, Babe Ruth was the Sultan of Swat; and Jack Dempsey was the idol of the ring.

In judiciary matters, The Scopes Monkey Trial occurred with its reverberations echoing down to the present day. But, by far, in court actions, the Sacco-Vanzetti case surpasses all others thus far in the twentieth century. These two men after



score of persons is yet an unsolved mystery with the shrapnel scars still to be seen in the wall of the Morgan Bank building.

The Twenties was the age of The Flapper, bobbed hair, the use of lipstick, and ladies indulging in smoking cigarettes. The tabloids made their appearance and banner headlines carried the latest exploits of the Peaches—Daddy Browning affair.

The Charleston was one of the ubiquitous dances of the day. Daring young ladies would check their corsets in dressing rooms before the dances. Common, too, was the lonely wayside automobile parking spots for "necking parties".

All classes of persons, from dishwashers to college presidents, bought stocks largely on a margin basis. Like the Dutch Tulipmania of earlier times, the bubble burst and millions lost their homes, property and possessions in the Stock Exchange Crash of 1929. This Crash ushered in the Depression of the Thirties. The country failed to keep cool with Coolidge.

If, from this brief kaleidoscopic picture, one may deduce a "Roaring Twenties" attitude, that, of course is one's right.

languishing about ten years in prison were eventually executed despite years of world wide debate and public appeal.

The twenties noted the introduction of the radio crystal sets. The Model T Ford, "Tin Lizzies" were a common sight everywhere. Women won the right to vote. The Englishmen, Brown and Alcock, were the first to fly the Atlantic, followed by Lindbergh's epic flight as well as that of Admiral Byrd.

Despite these positive forces taking place, a number of negative conditions unfortunately appeared. This period witnessed a let down of moral values that seem tame now. There were the failures of Prohibition, the speakeasies, the hip flask; the rise of the mobsters such as Al Capone, and the night clubs with their Good Time Charlies. The nation was rocked with the Tea Pot Dome Scandal in President Warren G. Harding's cabinet. The Wall Street bombing which killed a

Fred Stout
New York City

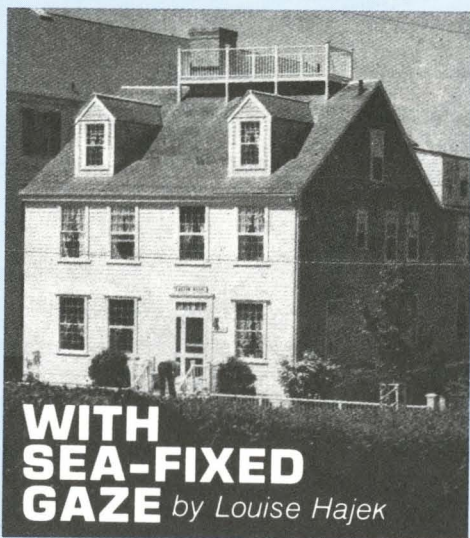
Seamen's Church Institute of N. Y.

15 State Street

New York, N. Y. 10004

Address Correction Requested

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



**“Lost, lost at sea,” the cry a stinging whip.
She would not cringe, vowing her stalwart man
Was safe upon the bridge of his stout ship
And would return according to his plan.
The wind blew silken, skies were diamond-clear
While over the horizon great ships loomed
But still not his. To friends she spoke no fear
Nor listened to the muted “Doomed, all doomed.”
At last withdrawing from the curious town,
She built a parapet across her place
Where she could watch alone, need not look down
At anxious neighbor, meet a pitying face.
Unalterably the season's cycle turned.
With bitter pride she walked her chosen way
Through nascent green, bright gold, and scarlet burned
To ash. This was her ritual each day.
Now long estranged from family and friend,
Aloof from small concerns and gentle talk,
Her brittle spirit broke, it could not bend —
With sea-fixed gaze she trods her widow's walk.**