

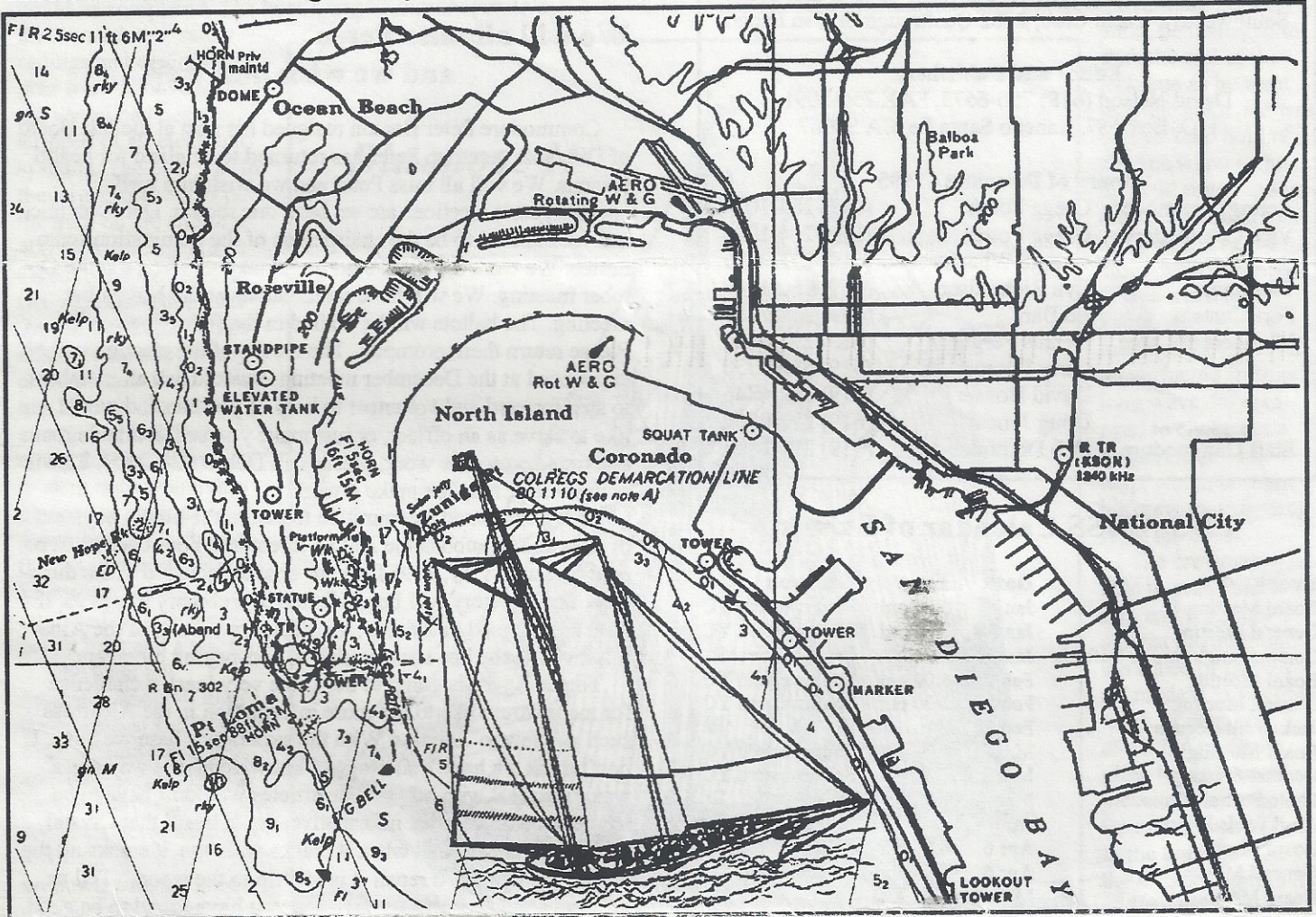
Albatross



Ancient Mariners Sailing Society

Volume 21, Number 11

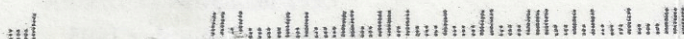
November 1995



Ancient Mariners Sailing Society
 Post Office Box 6484
 San Diego, California 92116



Debra Dominici
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Comanche



Albatross

Albatross is the official publication of
the Ancient Mariners Sailing Society.

The mailing address is:

P. O. Box 6484, San Diego, CA 92166.

AMSS — Ship-to-Ship VHF Common — Channel 68.

General meetings are the first Thursday of each month at:
Southwestern Yacht Club, 2702 Qualtrough St, San Diego.

Editor and Publisher:

David Nelson (619) 756-6673, FAX 756-5091

P.O. Box 187, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067

Board of Directors - 1995

Acting Commodore	Gregg Potter	(619) 264-1024
Vice Commodore	Gregg Potter	(619) 264-1024
Secretary	George Wheeler	(519) 271-8629
Treasurer	Lyn Richardson	(619) 260-1549
Port Captain	Ed Barr	(619) 224-7255
Members at Large	Dennis Ferguson	(619) 298-8636
	Larry Fossum	(619) 582-4338
	David Houser	(619) 294-4746
	Doug Jones	(619) 222-0865
Staff Commodore	Deb Dominici	(619) 226-Ahoy

1995 AMSS Calendar of Events

Event	Date	Time	Location
Board Meeting	Jan 5	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Jan 5	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Commodore's Cup & Raft-Up	Jan 14		R R R R
Board Meeting	Feb 2	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Feb 2	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Jack & Jill Regatta	Feb 18		R R R R
Board Meeting	Mar 2	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Mar 2	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Photo Portrait Cruise	Mar 18	1:00 pm	R R R R
April Fools Regatta	Apr 1-2		R R R R
Board Meeting	Apr 6	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Apr 6	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Board Meeting	May 4	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	May 4	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Wooden Boat Festival	May 6-7	9:30 am	R R R R
Yesteryear Regatta	May 27	11:00 am	R R R R
Board Meeting	Jun 1	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Jun 1	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Kettenburg Regatta	Jun 24	1:00 pm	R R R R
Board Meeting	Jul 6	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Jul 6	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Commodore's Ball	Aug 3	6:00 pm	R R R R
General Mtg. & Picnic	Aug 3	6:00 pm	R R R R
Gorilla Rock Cruise	Aug 5-6	12:00 pm	R R R R
Labor Day Cruise	Sep 2-3	11:00 pm	R R R R
Board Meeting	Sep 7	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Sep 7	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Board Meeting	Oct 4	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting	Oct 5	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Petticoat Race	Oct 21	1:00 pm	R R R R
Ironman Race	Oct 22	1:00 pm	R R R R
Board Meeting	Nov 1	6:00 pm	Southwestern YC
General Meeting (nominations)	Nov 2	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
Half Pint O'Rum Race	Dec 2	11:30 am	By Fiddlers Cove
General Meeting (elections)	Dec 7	7:30 pm	Southwestern YC
New Year's Raft-up	Dec 31	4:00 pm	La Playa Cove

From the Helm

We will all miss Peter and we wish him well...

Commodore Peter Benton resigned his post at the last Board of Directors meeting. Peter has returned to England for health reasons. We will all miss Peter and we wish him well.

This year's elections are set back one month. Deb Dominici has volunteered to be the chairperson of the nominations committee. We were to hold the nominations for officers at the October meeting. We will have nominations at the November meeting. The ballots will be mailed in the following week. Please return them promptly. The results of the election will be announced at the December meeting. I would ask all members to step forward and volunteer to help. If you can and would like to serve as an officer, or just make yourself available for one time committee work, please call Deb at 226-2409. This is your society, help me make it work.

I have appointed a committee to insure the timely payment of dues and to publish the AMSS directory. Your dues must be paid by January 31, 1996 for your boat to be included in the directory. The directory will be published by February 28, 1996. If dues are not paid in January, the February edition of the Albatross will be the last issue mailed to non-paying members.

The next year is going to be, at the very least, a challenge for me. I would like to see more information in the Albatross such as "how to" articles. With the experience base we have, I don't think we have a shortage of knowledge, but we need a way to share it with others. The articles wouldn't have to be long and technical, just informative, i.e. "I heard that Crystal Varnish is so hard that when it cracks with age, it cracks all the way to the wood. To repair it is to strip to the wood." Tell us about new products or services that you have found to be good or bad. No matter what you talk about, there is someone who can and will use the information, even if only to get the conversation going.

I would like to see the Society plan some cruises. I would also like Albatross articles on that subject, where to go and not to go. I have been to Mexico but I am still not real sure on how to clear Mexican Customs. If I head for the high seas, what equipment will and won't work? You don't have to address all the equipment and destinations, just what you feel comfortable writing about.

But most of all, I would like to hear from the membership as to what tack you would like the Society to take. Where do we go from here? What structure do the meetings take? What do we need more or less of?

My phone number is (619) 264-1024. I go to bed at 10 o'clock.

*At your service,
Gregg Potter
Acting Commodore*

Bad Luck, Good Seamanship

By Rod Latimer

On a recent late night voyage from Ensenada, our friend, Peter, nearly lost his life when he was pitched overboard from the rolling decks of a boat he was helping deliver to San Diego.

The trip had been organized to tow a vessel which had been in Ensenada for repairs back to San Diego where the repairs could be completed. The boat's engine was inoperative, the mast was down, safety railings and emergency gear were removed, and the vessel had been stripped of all electrical systems. The plan was for the larger towboat to put the hulk on the end of a 400 foot tow line after clearing the harbor with two men aboard to man the manual bilge pumps and be available for any emergencies. Before leaving, the crew installed emergency jack lines along the deck from bow to stern onto which they planned to hook their safety harnesses should the sea turn nasty. Each safety harness was equipped with an emergency light and a whistle.

The team left Ensenada about 4:30 in the afternoon and headed west, around Punta Salsapuedes, then northwest toward San Diego. At sunset, Peter lit the kerosene tow light at the stern, then sat down with his crewman to eat the snacks they brought along for the night. The interior of the hulk had been stripped

out, so there was little to sit on and no bunks to lie in. Each man had a sleeping bag laid out on the cabin sole and one napped while the other kept watch, changing each hour.

As the evening progressed, there was little to do. There was no moon. A high, thin, overcast did not trap the lights of the cities to the north, and it became very dark. Only the stern light of the towboat was visible ahead.

The sea began to rise as they cleared Punta Santa Maria, and by 9:00 that evening, the swells had reached a height of four to five feet. The combination of the large swells from the northwest and the speed of the tow, a steady five and a half knots, made the roll of the hulk very uncomfortable. It became very difficult for the crew to move around because of the lack of deck and handholds. Around 10:30 the two vessels were about five miles west of Punta Salsapuedes, cruising northward in rising seas but little wind. At that moment, Peter heard some gear

shifting on the after deck as the vessel took several heavy rolls. Fearing that spare lines and equipment might be sliding overboard at the stern, he quickly stepped out from the midships hatch onto the pitching deck and headed toward the stern. Behind him on the deck of the cabin lay his safety harness and lanyard, and along side of that lay his flashlight.

Feeling his way aft in the dark, Peter found that the stern light had broken loose from where he had secured it, and was sliding crazily around on the top of the stern hatch. He made his way to the hatch carefully and was just reaching for the lantern when another big roller hit the boat. The roll threw him off balance and catapulted him over the stern. Realizing his situation, he managed to grab the end of the jack line as he went over the stern. He was able to keep hold of the line when he hit the cold water and immediately found himself being dragged along behind the boat at five and a half knots, under water much of the time. After surfacing from one long wave, he managed to choke out a desperate call for help, which brought his crew mate bolting from the cabin.

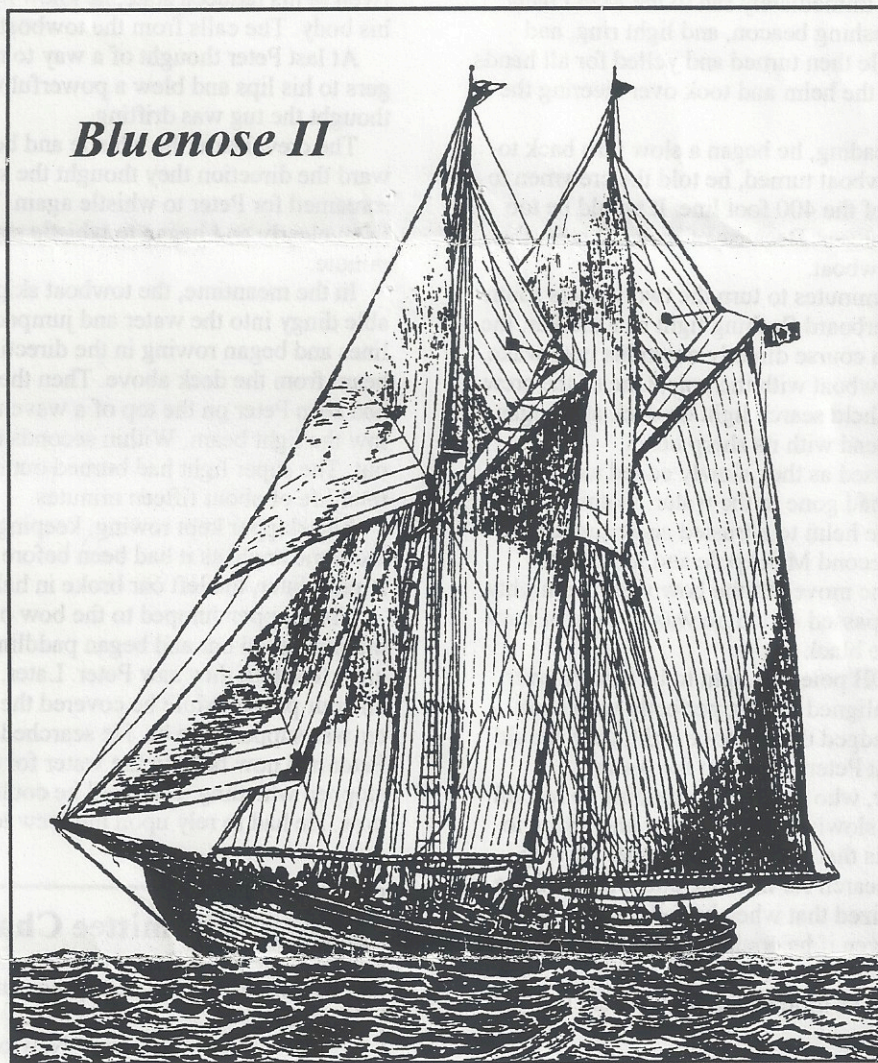
The crewman was able to grab Peter's arm and hold him against the hull, but the speed of the vessel made it impossible to lift or drag him aboard. After struggling for several minutes with no luck, Peter wrapped his arm in the line and sent the man forward to try and get the attention of the towboat to stop. The man rushed to the bow only to realize

when he got there that he had no flashlight, handheld radio, or signaling device. He began yelling at the top of his lungs at the ghostly light 400 feet away in the darkness.

The helmsman of the towboat could not hear the desperate calls to stop over the roar of the motor. Instead, he stood carefully watching the compass and occasionally checking the engine instruments. At this speed, he thought, they would be at the entrance to San Diego bay before dawn.

400 feet behind the towboat, Peter found he could no longer hold onto the jack line without running the risk of drowning. Each time the boat rolled toward him, Peter was fully submerged beneath the passing waves. The rolling put him under water about half the time, and he had grown too weak from overexertion.

Letting go of the line, he immediately stopped and floated quickly to the surface of the black sea in a moonless black



night, without a lifejacket, signaling device, or any emergency equipment or clothing with which to survive. Both vessels were out of sight in the large swells within a matter of moments.

Several minutes after Peter slipped away, the skipper of the towboat came on deck to make his rounds and check on his new helmsman. Climbing the rear-facing ladder from the warm cabin below, he heard, then saw, the frantic crewman on the hulk as he stepped onto the deck. Realizing immediately there was an emergency on the other boat, he raced to the helm and slammed the throttle closed. As the noise of the engine died away, the skipper managed to understand that someone was overboard on the tow. He immediately ran to the Man Overboard emergency pole, flashing beacon, and light ring, and threw them into the sea. He then turned and yelled for all hands on deck as he ran back to the helm and took over steering the quickly slowing vessel.

Noting the compass heading, he began a slow turn back toward the south. As the towboat turned, he told the crewmen to leave the hulk at the end of the 400 foot line. It would be too dangerous to have it any closer. Because of the high seas, the hulk might overrun the towboat.

It took more than five minutes to turn the two vessels southward. Using the Man Overboard flashing light as a marker, the skipper swung slowly to a course directly down his own wake, taking care to align the towboat with the pole. One of the crewmen brought a large handheld search light on deck and began sweeping the darkness ahead with its sharp beam.

Five more minutes passed as they slowly edged toward where they judged Peter had gone in the water. Nothing was seen. The skipper gave the helm to a trusted and experienced crewman and ordered a second MOB pole and light to be thrown into the water as he moved to the bow with the mighty light. Five more minutes passed and there was no sign of anything on the surface of the black sea.

He ordered a third MOB pole and light to be thrown over and noted that the lights aligned almost perfectly with each other. Now, if they had judged the distance right, they should be very near the point that Peter went into the water.

In the meantime, Peter, who was now beginning to feel all of his 60-plus years, was slowly treading water and trying to get a glimpse of any lights that would tell him that his shipmates were returning to search for him. He could see nothing. At the same time, he realized that when he fell into the water, he had lost his glasses. Even if he could make out a light, he couldn't judge the distance, or even what the light was. He tried to keep calm and use as little energy as possible to keep himself afloat.

Aboard the towboat, the crew strained to hear or see anything. They began yelling at the top of their lungs to their friend, but as each minute passed, they knew the chances of finding him were growing less and less. Another five minutes passed. Almost twenty-five minutes had now passed since Peter had gone into the sea.

The skipper ordered the towboat stopped and the engine shut down to listen for any sound from the darkness. The crew began screaming Peter's name into the blackness in hopes that he could hear them.

Almost at the same instant that the engine stopped, Peter heard the towboat. A few seconds later, he heard the screams from the crew faintly across the swells. He could not yell back. His vocal cords were full of saltwater and he could barely get out a horse cough. He tried to swim toward the sound, but his arms and legs, now numb from the cold, refused to work. He was reduced to weakly treading water. He could feel the strength ebbing from his limbs as the cold penetrated his body. Even in his reduced state, he knew hypothermia had taken over his body. The calls from the towboat continued.

At last Peter thought of a way to make noise. He put his fingers to his lips and blew a powerful whistle toward where he thought the tug was drifting.

The crew heard the whistle and began pointing the light toward the direction they thought the sound came from. They screamed for Peter to whistle again. This time, Peter heard them clearly and began to whistle strongly two or three times a minute.

In the meantime, the towboat skipper had dropped an inflatable dingy into the water and jumped aboard. He cast off the lines and began rowing in the direction of the search light beam from the deck above. Then the crew screamed that they had seen Peter on the top of a wave and told the skipper to follow the light beam. Within seconds the beam suddenly went out. The super light had burned out its only filament. It had a total life of about fifteen minutes.

The skipper kept rowing, keeping the tug in sight at about the same angle as it had been before the light went out. Three strokes later, the left oar broke in half with a sharp crack.

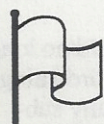
The skipper jumped to the bow of the inflatable with the remaining good oar and began paddling toward the point the crew told him they saw Peter. Later, he said that it seemed like an hour passed while he covered the last 100 feet to where Peter was supposed to be. He searched frantically in the darkness. Peter had now been in the water for over 35 minutes. Peter had stopped whistling. It was all he could do to keep treading water now. He had to rely upon the crew to find him. He could do no

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Committee Chairpersons

Membership	Larry Fossum	(619) 582-4338
Handicap	Bill Clark	(619) 542-1229
	Jerry Newton	(619) 222-1281
	Doug Jones	(619) 222-0865
Race	Randy & Carolyn	Pager Number
Cruising	Williamson	(800) 715-0762
	-Vacant-	
Trophies	Jim Keitges	(619) 485-8711
Historical	Deb Dominici	(619) 226-Ahoy
Public Relations	Gregg Potter	(619) 264-1024
By-laws	Diana Watson	(619) 287-9066
Data Processing	Bob Hendrickson &	(619) 486-4186
T-shirt Sales	Allen Niebrugge	
	Bob Hendrickson &	(619) 486-4186
Swap Meets	Allen Niebrugge	

Board meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at the Southwestern Yacht Club at 6:00 pm., just prior to the general meeting.



November Meeting Thursday the 2nd at 7:30 pm.

**Nominations Will Be Held For
Next Year's Board Of Directors
— Meet Our New Commodore —**

Petticoat & Ironman Regattas

Just a short note about the races last weekend. The wind blew and the sun came out Saturday when everyone finished the Petticoat Regatta (just in time for the raft-up).

Sally dragged her anchor because the anchor was set squarely in the middle of an under-inflated tire at the bottom of La Playa. The reason the raft-up dragged was plain to see once the anchor was brought up. The tire had no treads!

The Ironman Race was indeed held on one of those truly beautiful Southern California days. El Aire was first to start and Freedom was last. However, soon Freedom walked away from the others and won the race.

Thanks to everyone who participated and hopefully we will see more participants next year. Thanks to Sally for being committee boat for the Petticoat and Comanche for being the start boat for the Ironman Race.

Doug Jones
Race Chairman

Petticoat Regatta Results

Boat Name	Owner	Rating	October 21, 1995	
			Elapsed Time	Corrected Time
1 Comanche	Dominici	115*	1:56:16	1:56:16
2 Freedom	Watson	145	2:07:45	2:02:22
3 Feather	Morris	205	2:24:07	2:07:59
4 Whisper (Hullabaloo)**	Rae	205	2:24:08	2:08:00
5 Valentine	Davidson	150	2:16:24	2:10:08
6 El Aire	Callow	205	2:28:24	2:12:16

*Five seconds added to handicap because of using Spinnaker

**Application for membership in process.

Ironman Regatta Results

Boat Name	Owner	Rating	October 22, 1995	
			Elapsed Time	Corrected Time
1 Freedom	Latimer	145	1:40:24	1:40:24
2 El Aire	Callow	205	2:17:00	2:09:30
3 Malabar Star	V. Koepsel	220	2:35:55	2:26:32

Proposed Slate Of

Board Of Directors For 1996

The following individuals have accepted nominations for the following positions.

Gregg Potter	Commodore
George Wheeler	Vice Commodore
Deb Dominici	Secretary
Lyn Richardson	Treasurer
Doug Jones	Port Captain
Larry Fossum	Member At Large
David Houser	Member At Large
Howard Dentz	Member At Large
Jim Sutter	Member At Large
Gary Newton	Member At Large
Bob Hendrickson	Member At Large

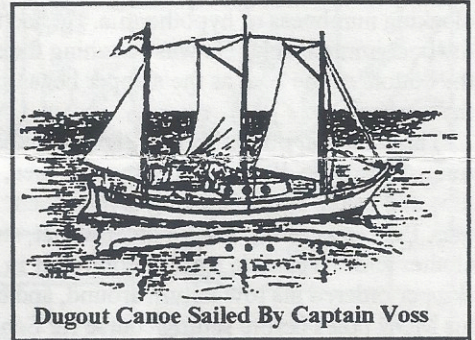
Motions will be taken from the floor at the November general meeting. The requirements for nomination to hold office in the AMSS are that the nominee be a flag member that has not served on the board of directors for more than three years in succession. ☼



PORT SIDE

This is the final excerpt from the words of sea-going wisdom of Captain John Claus Voss in his book, The Venturesome Voyages of Captain Voss.

"During my travels, principally in small vessels, I have, perhaps, met and exchanged views with more yachtsmen than the average man afloat. I have found that the majority, although fully capable of sailing a small boat on an inland lagoon or other landlocked waters, also like to know something about the peculiarities of the high seas and how to overcome the danger of breaking wind waves. As stated in my narrative, I have sailed in and managed sailing vessels of different sizes, from the tiny "Tilikum" up to a ship carrying nearly three thousand tons of cargo. This has offered me an excellent opportunity to study breaking seas under all weather conditions, of which I have tried to take the best advantage.



Dugout Canoe Sailed By Captain Voss

The knowledge thus obtained in my long sea-faring career has condensed into certain rules which, I have reason to hope, may prove of practical value to a wider circle. And I trust that these explanations and instructions will not alone be interesting and useful to yachtsmen, but also may serve as hints to young officers and even masters of ships, when in danger looms ahead.

Waves — Speed and Height

The speed of waves I have estimated in the open ocean during various gales when they had attained full growth, as follows: When hove to under a sea anchor with a hundred and fifty feet of anchor rope out and when just on the top of a large wave, the sea-anchor float which was fastened with fifteen feet of line would appear at a distance a little less than half-way to the top of the next wave. By allowing for the angle in which the anchor rope inclined I ascertained an approximate total distance from crest to crest of three hundred feet. Under the same conditions I have measured the speed of the waves by marking the difference of time between two succeeding seas when their crests passed the boat. The interval was seven seconds on the average. In basing the calculation on the above figures an average speed of twenty-five and one-third nautical miles per hour is obtained.

The height of waves I have ascertained on large vessels. I chose a position in the rigging just high enough so that the tops of the large waves would appear a little below a line between my eyes and the horizon. The exact distance known to me. While hove to in the ship "Prussia" during a heavy gale in the South Pacific I found in this way the height of the waves from trough to crest to amount to nearly forty feet. In this connection I may mention that in books and newspaper reports from time to time statements appear recording the height of waves encountered at sixty and even seventy feet!"

The J.C. Voss book, The Venturesome Voyages of Captain Voss is available from F.E. Grubb, Librarian, Maritime Museum of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C., for \$11.00 US, payable to the museum.

Edward S. Barr
Port Captain

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more. His strength was ebbing fast. It was very difficult to keep his head above the water any more, and he was becoming sleepy, a sure sign that he was losing the battle to stay afloat.

Suddenly, as a steep swell passed beneath them, the two men saw each other no more than five feet apart. The skipper lunged out to grab Peter as the waterlogged sailor slipped beneath the waves. "Peter's head was below the water and all I could see was him blowing bubbles," was the skipper's comment later. "He was nearly gone when he reached out for my hand and I grabbed it."

The skipper pulled mightily on his arm and Peter tumbled aboard the dingy. He lay half-conscious in the bottom of the boat, his wet clothes making a small lake on the rubber deck. There was no time to lose. Clearly Peter was deeply in the cloaking numbness of hypothermia. He had to be moved to the towboat immediately. He was coughing the sea water up into the bottom of the boat as the skipper began paddling toward the towboat.

The crew had pulled another light from below and now trained in on the dingy. Seeing the two men, they started the engine and began slowly moving toward them. Within five minutes, Peter was safely aboard the towboat, stripped of his wet clothes and wrapped in a down comforter in a warm bunk. The skipper ordered his tow to turn around, and began picking up his MOB poles before setting course for San Diego. With luck, he thought, they could still make it into the bay by midmorning.

The Boy Scout marching song, "Be Prepared" still rings true, but one of the most useless things in the world is safety equipment that isn't used. Aboard our boat no one goes on deck at night without their harness being on and hooked to the boat, and each harness has a whistle and light attached. Some folks think it's silly, but they need only ask Peter what's really stupid. ❀

Half Pint O' Rum Race

December 2, 1995

The Half Pint O' Rum race begins off the beach southeast of the Naval sailing club along the bay side of the Silver Strand. The skipper's meeting is held on the beach where the course is given out. An entry fee of at least a half pint of rum is required. Note: This is the only race of the year where your handicap may depend on the quantity and quality of your entry fee. The race committee has great latitude in assessing penalties as well as time awards for exceptional seamanship or costumes.

The boats anchor off the beach with sails down and the skipper (not his/her representative) rows (or swims) ashore for the skipper's meeting. Around noon a horn goes off and the skipper's row out to the boats. Only when he/she is aboard can the crew begin to hoist sail and sail off anchor (no motors). After sailing the course, the finish is on the sandy beach across from Silvergate YC on Shelter Island. The skipper or his representative must row ashore with his/her own cup, find the race committee and the rum keg and drink a mug of rum. Only then is she or he finished.

The raft-up in La Playa following the race is usually the best of the year, where crews reflect on the race (tell lies) and the remainder of the keg disappears into some of the finest rum drinks to be found. The race is open to Ancient Mariner member boats. For more information contact: AMSS, P.O. Box 6484, San Diego, CA 92166, Attention: Doug Jones, Race Committee Chairman 619-222-0865. ❀

Commodore Benton Resigns Post And Returns to England

At the October Board of Directors meeting held at the Southwestern Yacht Club, Peter Benton resigned his position as Commodore of the Ancient Mariners Sailing Society. His resignation was effective at the close of the October general meeting. Commodore Benton resigned his post and returned to England for health reasons. Dave Nelson will be liquidating Classic Lines Inventory for him.

Vice Commodore Gregg Potter will be Acting Commodore until January 1, 1996. ❀

AMSS CLASSIFIEDS

— FREE Classified Ads —

Classified ads are FREE to all AMSS Members. Contact David Nelson by the 20th at 756-6673 with your ad copy to get your classified ad in the next issue. It's that easy!

— 10' LOA Dingy For Sale —

Fiberglass 10 foot LOA dingy for sale. Good condition. Includes oars. \$300 - Call Dave at (619) 756-6673.

— Folk Boat For Sale —

25' LOA, 7' Beam, Sloop *Yadin* built in Sweden in 1961, Mahogany lapstrake on Oak Frames. Six Sails, two anchors etc. Looks Good! Attracts attention on the Bay. Must see. Asking \$4,000. Call David at (619) 574-1040.

— Wanted, Small Outboard Motor —

Looking for small "long-shaft" (20 inch or greater) outboard motor. Prefer 10 hp. or greater but will consider smaller. Call Dave at (619) 756-6673.

— Famous Race Winner For Sale —

12' LOA Gaff Sloop, *Dingus*. Great condition, complete with galvanized trailer. \$2,500 - Call Chris (619) 224-2733.

— Spacious Gracious Lady For Sale —

Classic 1959 Angleman Gaff Ketch, "Sea Witch," many time winner of the Yesteryear Regatta. 35 LOD, 48' overall, 13' beam, built in LA. Refurbished in 1986 with NEW Masts, Sails, Yanmar 44 hp. engine, and large stainless fuel and water tanks. Hull refastened in 1994. Many innovative features including new light and airy interior design, storage galore, and larger forward stateroom.

All cruising electronics, Autohelm below-deck autopilot, Furuno digital radar, GPS, speedlog, impulse depth sounder, VHF and generator. Modern galley includes microwave, refrigerator, 4 burner stove, oven and broiler. Hot and cold pressurized water. Other modern amenities include a 13" 12 volt TV and VCR. She is built for cruising, comfort, safety and convenience and makes a great liveaboard. *Sea Witch* also has a newly rebuilt 9' fiberglass sailing dingy on davits called *The Sandwich*. Asking \$72,500. Call Jack at 543-0442.

— Classic Lines BLOW OUT SALE —

Classic Lines, Marine Wholesalers is BLOWING OUT everything in stock. Peter Benton returned to England for health reasons. Call Dave at 756-6673 or 226-1484 and arrange a time to come by and see lots of **GOOD STUFF** at 1227 Scott Street, Point Loma.