

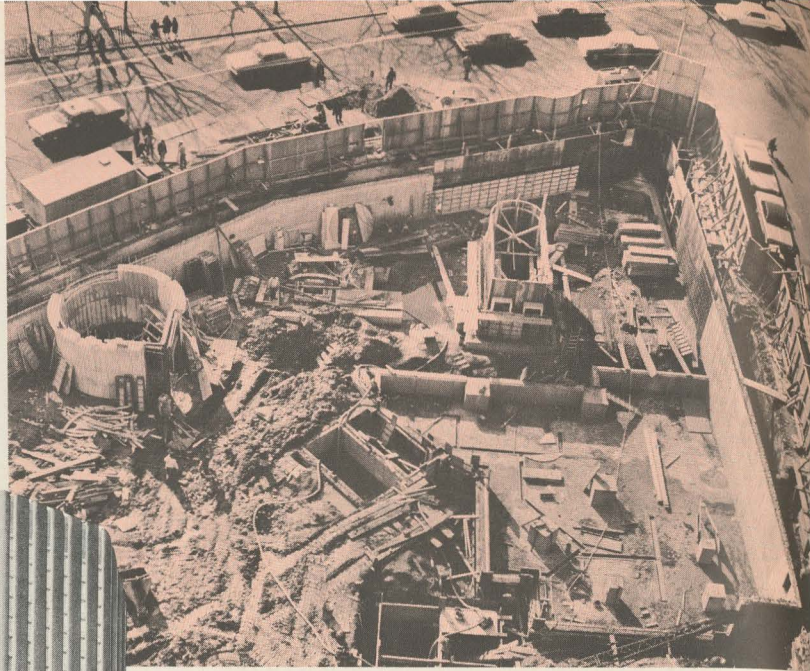


the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK



MAY 1967



This is the way the new State street SCI building project looked some weeks ago when the picture was taken from the roof of an adjoining building. Concrete work was almost complete and steel work was about to begin.



the LOOKOUT

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH
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COVER: Incoming waves beat a white froth against the rocks of the Sonoma coast section of California. Photo by Robert F. Campbell, 1269 Agadir Street, Concord, Calif.

Those admiring Mr. Campbell's seascape photos (May, July-August, September 1966 LOOKOUT covers) may obtain these prints at nominal prices by writing Mr. Campbell.

a recent press report claims that cats outnumber dogs as pets, that is, among the landlubbers in the United States. I am sure that cats by far outnumber any other kind of pets on the high seas. A cat or two can be found on almost every ship afloat.

In almost every sea narrative of past and present times there is mention of some unusual escapade of the ship's cat. There surely must be an affinity between the feline creatures and the sea, ships and seamen. As Nick Kenny, columnist, writes:

"These creatures seem to possess a

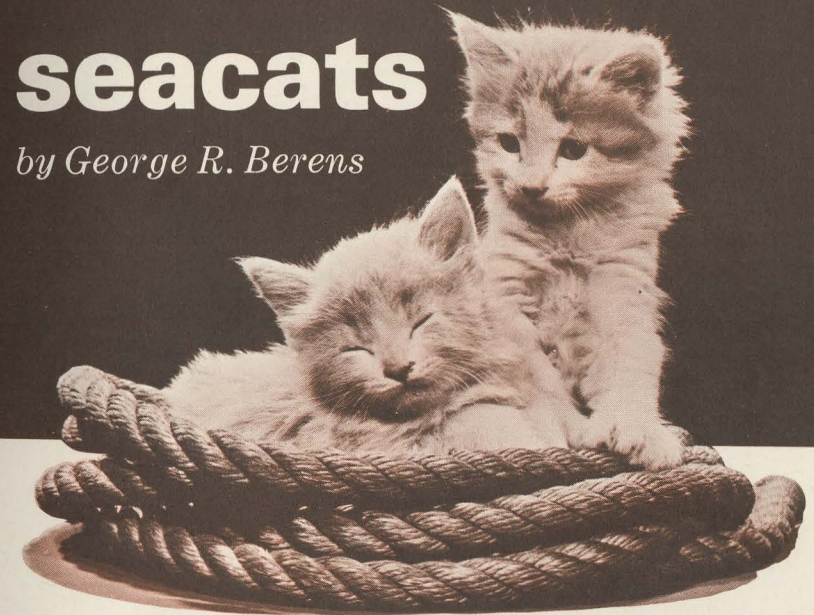
eyes were not yet open. Probably some crew member had visited some of the waterfront saloons — had perhaps acquired the kitten in one — returned aboard and, having deposited his acquisition in a safe place, had promptly turned in, overpowered by Guinness' stout.

Before the ship got back to New York, "Whoopee," as he had been named, was a growing, healthy cat. He slept in my bunk in the fo'c'sle.

Fortunately our captain liked cats, so he never got chased off the bridge. He grew up quite at home on the ship, a

seacats

by George R. Berens



strange out-of-this-world quality that gives them a mysterious hold over mortals." Especially sea-faring mortals.

About thirty-nine years ago I was an A.B. on the *S.S. Colleda*. When the ship was in Dublin, Ireland, I came aboard one night after a run ashore and, sailor-like, headed for the mess-room for a little snack before turning in. While getting this snack I heard a faint crying which it took some time to locate.

A locker where chinaware was stowed was the source of this cry, a tiny kitten, but a few days old, for its

sleek, happy tomcat, adored by many of the crew and endured even by those he awoke on their watch below. For seamen to a man, are partial to cats. Many of them are even very sentimental about their purring friends.

Roland Barker, who sailed as Third Mate in America's last square-rigger, *Tusitala*, commanded by his father, tells of the ship's cat, "Timkens," which was the special pet of the Second Mate. "Timkens" fell overboard one day in mid-ocean. All hands were soon aroused.

The Second Mate prepared to jump

overboard to rescue his pet, but was stopped by the Captain. He then ran to the poop rail and tossed over a coil of line. Fortunately the ship was practically becalmed at the time, and the cat, crying piteously, was being washed slowly along the ship's side. Nevertheless, the Captain ordered a lifeboat to be launched.

Before this could be done the Second Mate had succeeded in maneuvering the rope's end close to the half-drowned cat who was able to grasp it with his claws. "Timkens" was hauled aboard, sea-soaked and bedraggled. The Second Mate said afterward; "God bless the Old Man; he would have put the boat over just to save my pussycat."

There are several instances recorded of ships being stopped at sea and boats launched to save cats.

The bigger the ship, the greater the number of cats aboard. This was proven once on the *Leviathan*, the largest commercial vessel ever to fly the American flag. Back in the Twenties, one of her officers brought his wife's cat aboard to take care of while his wife was away from home on a vacation. Shipboard life to this cat was new and strange. He was well-endowed with that noted feline quality curiosity, and he wandered all over the big liner.

On his tours he must have met some other tomcats, for several times he returned to his master's cabin exhibiting marks of his encounters. He was no match for the seagoing felines. Finally an order was issued to the Master-at-Arms, "Round up all the cats aboard."

At the end of the day there were fifty-four cats of all shapes, sizes and colors penned in an enclosure in "E" Deck square. There was a lot of meowing, growling, screeching, fighting and smooching going on. Cats who had never met before were getting acquainted with each other.

The muster of the *Leviathan's* feline crew had repercussions in the press when the big ship reached New York. It seems there was among the passen-



gers a gentleman who was president of the Anti-Pollution League. Possibly he was concerned about pollution of the Atlantic Ocean, for he told reporters that 292 cats had been rounded up on the ship and thrown overboard.

There were columns devoted to the incident in the principal New York newspapers, and many readers were "shocked" at such "inhumane" escapades aboard our largest ship. Some registered complaints, and it took a definite statement by Captain Moore, the *Leviathan's* staff captain to pacify them. Captain Moore stated: "No seaman would throw a cat overboard. If he did I'd throw him over after the cat."

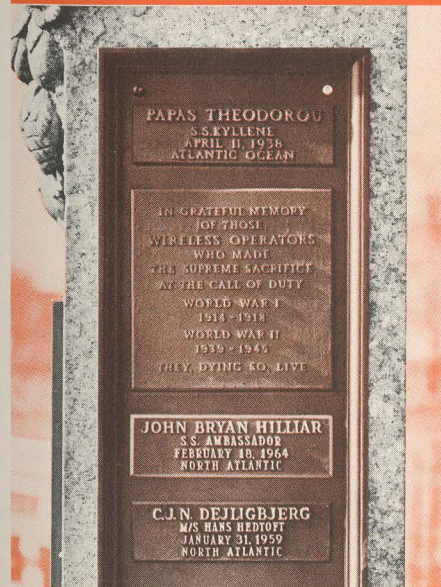
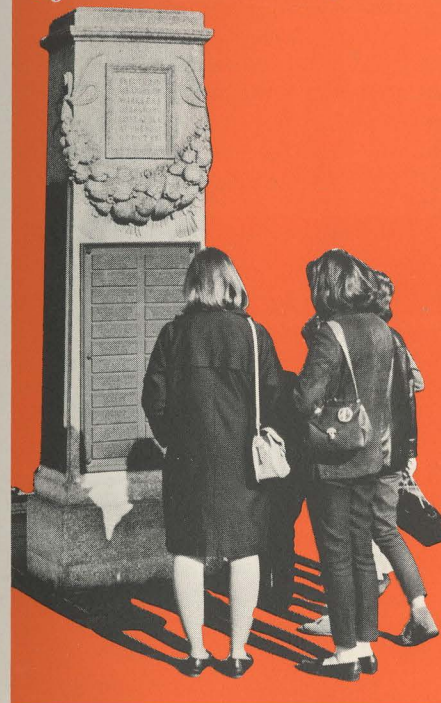
Someone on *The New York Times* staff must have been acquainted with seacats and seamen, for the following editorial appeared on September 14, 1926:

"Seafaring men are as superstitious as actors. A ship's cat is a lucky animal for it is supposed to bring good luck. It is well fed, snugly bedded, taught tricks and generally pampered. The ignorant landsman who would mistreat tabby on shipboard would find himself in trouble . . . In due time it will probably appear that one of the two or three pet cats on the ship died of over-eating, was given a proper sea burial and was so loudly mourned by the crew

(Continued on page 14)

monument to the courageous

by Patrick O'Keeffe



In a quiet, flag-stoned recess beside one of the walks in Battery Park, New York City, stands a monument dedicated to the memory of wireless operators who have perished at sea in the performance of duty.

It is a single white pilaster, with a loop of sea-shells and seaweed carved across the front. On three sides—north, south, and west—are bronze plaques and panels inscribed with the names of the men and ships it commemorates.

The memorial was proposed in 1912 by a New York newspaper to perpetuate the memory of Jack Phillips, the 26-year-old wireless operator who lost his life in the foundering of the White Star Liner *Titanic* during April of that same year. The proposal was warmly received, and a committee was formed to collect funds for carrying it out.

It was later suggested to the committee that the names of other wireless operators who had gone down with their ships be added to the monument.

When it was unveiled at an impressive ceremony on May 12, 1915, it bore the names of ten wireless operators who had lost their lives in waters about the American continent, two of them in Lake Michigan, and seven in the Pacific.

When Willa Cather was living in near-by Greenwich Village during the summer of 1915, she paid a visit to the monument. She was so moved by what she saw and read that she interrupted work on her latest novel to express her feelings in an article written for the "Sunday Magazine" of that day.

After describing the monument as one of the most attractive and most friendly commemorative works in New York, she wrote:

"These men all died in storm and terror; but their names are brought together here and abide in a pleasant place with cheerful companionship. The pleasant fountain, the seats, and the monolith in Battery Park bring together the names of men who never

(Continued on page 9)



Special Services

The fingers of a vagrant breeze idling down the Brooklyn cemetery slope lightly tugged the hem of the chaplain's vestments as he stood at the head of the plain grey casket by the open grave prepared to receive it.

The warm February sun of the late afternoon groped through the twisting branches of the nearby oak. Four groundskeepers stood silently by, waiting for the age-old Episcopal graveside service to begin. Only a far-off hum of automobiles swiftly traversing the distant highway intruded.

As in many similar services conducted in the cemetery by SCI chap-

lains over the years, there were no next-of-kin to mourn. No close friends. No one except the chaplain and an SCI social worker from the Department of Special Services; this Department had arranged the funeral. The social worker had known the deceased, a seaman in his seventies; had helped and guided him over the rough spots many times.

"All that the Father giveth me," the chaplain began, *"shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. He that raised up Jesus from the dead will also quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.*

"Wherefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh shall rest in hope.

"Thou shalt show me the path of life; in thy presence is the fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore."

When the rite was concluded, the chaplain and the social worker walked slowly to the car provided by the undertaker and entered it. It moved off slowly down the winding gravel road.

The waiting grounds-keepers approached the grave without haste; then, with the air of men with a job to do, began lowering the casket into the grave . . . dug from the red clay.

Another seaman to whom the Institute had given guidance and help during his active seafaring life had come to his final rest amidst his fellows . . . in the section of the cemetery reserved for seafarers and under SCI's surveillance . . . still.

The bonds between SCI and many seamen — those, especially, who have known the Institute's hospitality for many years — are strong. This is reflected in the fact that the wills of many of these men specify that SCI conduct their last rites and oversee their burials.

This obligation falls to SCI's Department of Special Services and brings with it a host of details which must be pursued.

Very often there are extensive complications which may mean a protracted period of correspondence or discussions between various parties and the Institute staff.

In a good many instances, a man who has not been to sea for many years dies and his case is referred to SCI. Perhaps his final illness exhausted his savings so that there is no money for his burial.

If SCI becomes involved in the burial of a seaman and if the deceased mariner was enrolled in "Social Security", the burial allowance helps to defray the cost of the undertaker, but if there are

additional costs, SCI pays them.

One of the plots used by SCI for burial of seamen is in the Evergreens Cemetery, Brooklyn, and known as the "Seamen's Section". It is owned by the U.S. government and supervised by the Sailors' Cemetery Association. Only seamen or seamwomen may be buried in this particular section.

SCI has sections in other New York metropolitan cemeteries — given to it by generous donors. One of these sections, set aside in 1852, is "Ocean View", located in Evergreens Cemetery and now closed to further burials.

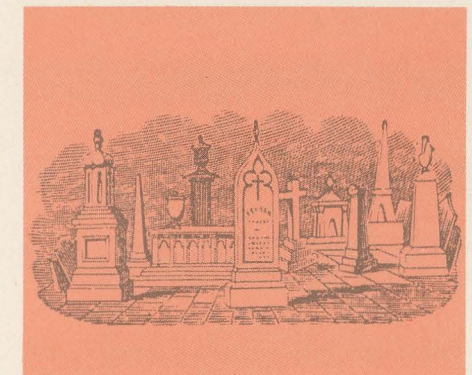
No one knows precisely how many years SCI has been quietly placing its seamen sons in their final resting place. Probably for over a century.

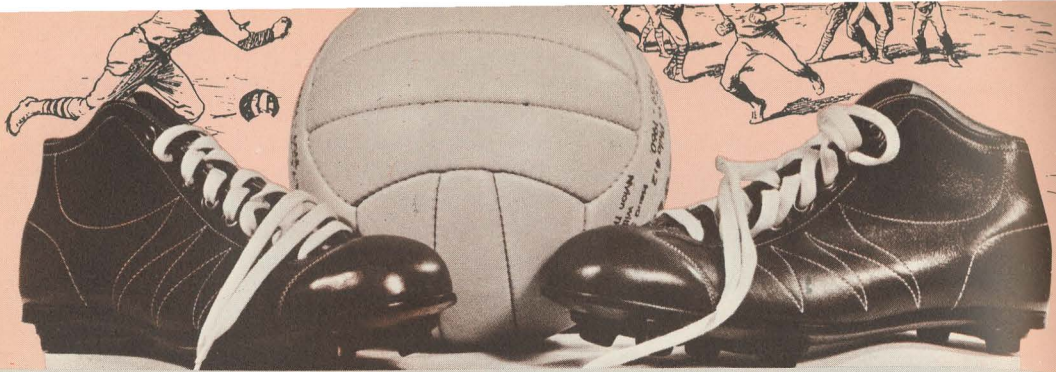
The earliest burial in an Institute plot was of John Miller on March 23, 1853, in Ocean View, and recorded by the Church of the Holy Comforter, North River Station Register.

Existing SCI records indicate 1,416 persons are interred in Institute plots. Of this number, 1,284 are at rest in the Ocean View section of Evergreens Cemetery, 127 in Cedar Grove Cemetery (Flushing, N.Y.), and six in Moravian Cemetery, Staten Island. Four of those buried in this latter cemetery are former Institute staff members, including the beloved Mrs. Janet Roper.

SCI chaplains have conducted 2,646 funeral services for seamen from 1848 to 1966.

—HGP





the name of the game is soccer

Soccer, originally a European sport, has become the Number One game actively sponsored by SCI in behalf of ships' teams visiting the ports of New York and Newark.

This sponsorship began nine years ago in the case of Manhattan SCI: five years ago at SCI Mariners International Center in the Port of Newark.

Soccer is a bruising contact sport, but especially welcome to seamen as a relief from the confinement of a ship.

SCI shipvisitors — the SCI ship soccer games are one of their major projects — say there have been remarkably few instances of flare-ups between players of competing teams despite the intense competition usually engendered during a contest.

It is more common, instead, for the winners and losers to share a late supper aboard one of the ships. Or there are instances where a ship's team may find itself short of players and will borrow players from its opponent's roster.

A portion of an early spring weekly log of Mariners Center read, for example:

"It was the first period for some time in which we had no severe storms, so six official soccer matches were ar-

ranged and played between teams from Italian, German, Greek, British and French vessels.

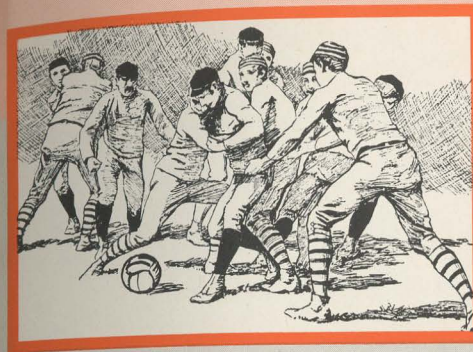
"In the Sunday game between a German and French ship, the German team had to be augmented with Greek and Pakistani seamen but, like the language of love, soccer transcends all racial barriers. After the game, both teams repaired to the French ship to enjoy each other's fellowship still more."

All details in connection with the scheduling, outfitting, transporting, etc., of the games are handled by Institute shipvisitors working under the Department of Special Services. The details are considerable. So are the costs — in terms of team bus transportation, uniforms and other equipment. Then there is the time spent by the six shipvisitors.

About 92 matches a year are played between ships of Port Newark. About 80 ships tied up in the Manhattan and Brooklyn docks during March to November play about 44 games.

Two fields are used, principally, the Red Hook stadium (near the Brooklyn piers) and SCI's own flood-lighted field adjacent to the Mariners Center in Port Newark.

An SCI-owned bus and some station-



wagons transport players from ships to the fields and return. The Institute provides around 70 sets of uniforms and 100 pairs of shoes for the teams each season. A few ships have their own players' equipment.

The uncertainty of ship arrivals and departures in the two ports makes game scheduling somewhat uncertain and hence a bit difficult for the SCI men; agreements have to be "flexible". Mostly it's a day-to-day matter. Sometimes games have to be cancelled on short notice — for various reasons.

Communication between the SCI men and the ships is sometimes a problem. Unlike deluxe passenger ships, there is no ship-to-shore telephone on merchantmen. So it is not unusual for SCI shipvisitors to be seen throwing balls containing messages aboard incoming freighters not yet docked.

An hour or so later an SCI station-wagon, loaded with clean uniforms and gear, may draw up alongside the tied-up vessel.

A game has been arranged for that same evening.

The opponents? Who cares? The game's the thing.

saw one another, but who possessed one common quality.

"Probably not one of them intended to be a hero. They were all young men, and went into wireless because it was a new and exciting business and appealed to the imagination. In a new form of service they found an old opportunity. They met it in such a way that, though this profession is less than a dozen years old, it already has a fine tradition."

The monument was in later years moved from its original site beside the old Barge Office to its present location, close by the Armed Services War Memorial, soon to be overlooked by the new Seamen's Church Institute building. The care and maintenance of the monument was assumed several years ago by the Veteran Wireless Operators Assn.

The Association also adds new bronze memorial plaques as occasion arises. The original ten names were cut into the granite, and can still be read where they have not been covered by panels replacing them. Over the years almost thirty names have been added, with a single plaque in memory of wireless operators who made the supreme sacrifice at the call of duty during both World Wars.

This year, plaques will be added in memory of Radio Officer Wilhelm Siemers who lost his life in the German training ship *Pamir* disaster of 1957, and Radio Officer Joachim Geissler, who went down with the German motor fishing vessel *München* off Greenland in 1963.

The Veteran Wireless Operators Association holds a memorial service each year at the monument. The 1967 service will take place at 12:30 p.m., on Friday, May 26. The Reverend William Haynsworth, chaplain of the Seamen's Church Institute and chaplain for the Association, will deliver the invocation. All who are or have been associated with ships and the sea are invited to attend.

We are a kaleidoscope of the waterfront

A look-in on the world's largest shore home for merchant seamen...



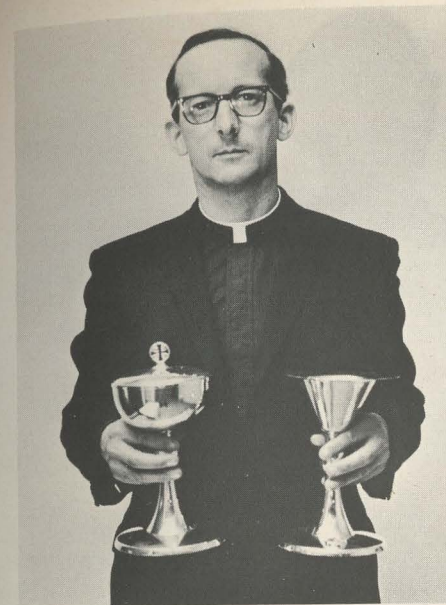
Ten policemen, four firemen, three apprentice harbor pilots, a captain, a waiter, and a sanitation man were honored recently by the Life Saving Benevolent Association of New York for heroism in rescuing persons from drowning.

Commendations with decorations and cash awards were presented to the twenty heroes by Miles F. York, Association president, in ceremonies at the Seamen's Church Institute.

The Life Saving Benevolent Association was incorporated in 1849 under a special act of the New York Legislature to help save lives on ships in distress off American coasts. Although much of the Association's original work is now being done by the Coast Guard, the Association continues to recognize courage and resourcefulness in rescuing persons from drowning.

The American-flag tankship of Humble Oil & Refining Company, the *Esso Lexington*, received the Ship Safety Achievement Citation of Merit, jointly conferred by the Marine Section of the National Safety Council and the American Merchant Marine Institute, at an April ceremony in New York.

The basis for the honor was laid March 14, 1966, when the big tanker was southbound off the Florida Coast, 17 miles northwest of West End, Grand Bahama Island, and rescued the survivor of a small private aircraft, which had become lost and run out of gas, crashed into the sea off the ship's starboard bow, sinking almost at once.



Memorials

SCI's Port Newark Mariners Center has been presented with memorials for its chapel. One is of eucharistic vessels used in Holy Communion; the Ciborium, Chalice and Paten. Chaplain G. B. Hollas of the Center exhibits the vessels (picture).

These are in memory of the late Grace Mitchell of Upper Montclair, N. J., who was a member of the Women's Council of SCI, and were presented by surviving members of the family and friends.

Another memorial gift was that of an offering plate and candle lighter by Mrs. Minnie O'Connell, a member of the Women's Council, in memory of her husband, the late Captain Benjamin Daniel O'Connell.

Both memorials have been dedicated; the eucharistic vessels during Easter services when they were used for the first time.

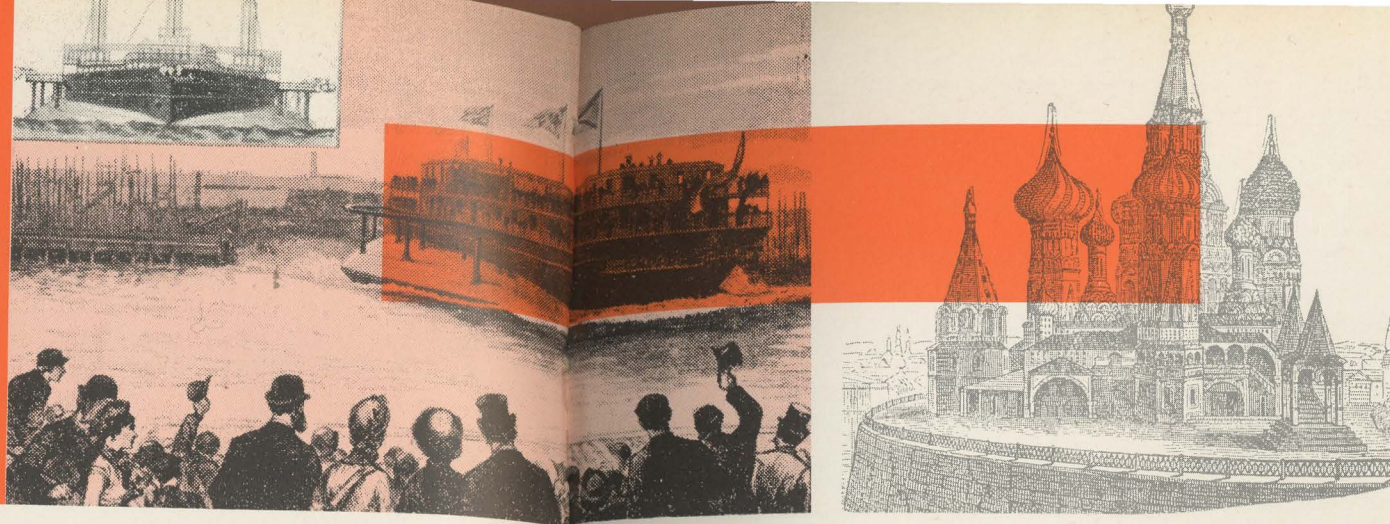
Russell T. Dodworth (center) is first student in the SCI Marine School to receive certification for completion of the new course in the gyrocompass, a sophisticated navigational instrument. Making presentation of certificate was the Rev. John M. Mulligan (left) and Capt. Charles F. Caines, instructor. The course is made possible through gyrocompass equipment from the Sperry Piedmont Company and a grant from the Maritime Administration.



A gyrocompass class examines the intricate core unit of the compass which has been removed from its housing and mounted on a wooden frame. Capt. Caines (right) demonstrates the compass mechanism.

The Czar's Folly

by John Walker



Shaped like a flying saucer, built in a Scottish shipyard for the Czar of Russia, and designed by an admiral with the unlikely name of Popoff. That is the story of the *Livadia*, one of the most extravagant ships ever built by Fairfield's of Glasgow.

Admiral Popoff, one of the most famous Russian architects of the late nineteenth century, had built Floating Forts of circular design, which were noted for their unusual steadiness even in rough waters. Because of the success of the *Popoffskas*, as they were called, the Czar Alexander II ordered him in 1880 to design a steam yacht, based on the same principles.

While Popoff was designing the ship, model experiments were being carried out in Copenhagen, and Fairfield's carried their own experiments on Loch Lomond. Because of her shape Popoff foresaw his ship as a prototype of ships, in which seasickness would be unknown.

This controversial ship of almost 12,000 tons, which was 235 feet in length and 153 feet broad, was the nearest approach to a ship being as broad as she was long. She had three funnels running athwart and five masts — two forward, two aft, and one in the middle.

The contract to build the ship was

accepted by the chief of the firm, Sir William Pearce, who saw in this squat, revolutionary-shaped vessel a great challenge. As well as the construction challenge, there was also a stipulation from the Czar that he was not obliged to accept the ship if she could not reach a speed of 14 knots during her trials. It was doubted by many if a ship of this design would be able to sail at all.

In broad outline, the *Livadia* consisted of a turbo-shaped structure, with a yacht-like superstructure, in which were housed the Imperial apartments and the accommodation for the suite and the crew. In constructing the turbot-shaped portion, an oval-shaped vessel 190 feet long and 120 feet broad, with a double bottom and vertical sides about 15 feet in height, was first laid down. This substructure into which the propelling machinery, stores, coal bunkers, boilers, etc., were fitted, made up the ship proper.

The extravagance of her design was equalled by the extravagance of her fittings. The furniture and decorations alone cost £500,000. The magnificent Imperial apartments and the yacht proper were fitted on the top-structure. Some idea of its sumptuous luxury can be had from the description of the upper deck, which was graced with a rose garden complete with illuminated fountain.

The Czar, perhaps foreseeing the future turn of events in Russia, demanded that the ship be made completely invulnerable from all kinds of attack. Round the ship, on the outside of the oval structure, there was a belting 15 feet broad, which was divided into thirty-eight water-tight cells. This was designed not only for shape, but also for protection in case of attack. Two thicknesses of plate would have to be penetrated before the main skin was reached.

On the day of the launch, 7th July, 1880, the North and South banks of the River Clyde were lined by interested spectators. Many had come to cheer, but most were merely curious to see if the "freak" ship would ever take to the water.

The ship was named by the Duchess of Hamilton, who also acted as host to the now familiar Admiral Popoff, who had come to see his "brain child" start her sailing life. Although His Imperial Majesty could not be present, he was represented by the Grand Duke Alexis, who amused the Scottish spectators by paying tribute to Glasgow, "the centre of the intelligence of England".

After her fitting-out, she silenced the critics and surprised the cynics by reaching almost 16 knots, which was two higher than the guarantee demanded.

Not long after her trials, she left the Clyde for the Black Sea, and was soon put to the test. She ran into a furious gale in the Bay of Biscay, encountering waves some 25 feet high. Popoff was justified. It was reported that in transverse rolling, the greatest angle of heel on each side was 3.5 degrees.

Unfortunately, the Czar was not to enjoy the luxury and comfort of his floating palace. A year later, in 1881, he was assassinated by a bomb, and probably never boarded his ship.

With the death of her imperial owner, the *Livadia's* sailing life was short and shadowy. After her maiden voyage she made one trip from Odessa to Sebastopol, where she lay for years. There are conflicting reports about her fate. It was reported at one time she became an improvised coal-carrier. Then in 1912 she was to be broken up, but in 1924 she had still not been demolished. Two years later she was still lying at Sebastopol, though it was reported at the time that she was to be dismantled.

Nothing more was heard of her. In contrast to her controversial appearance, this monument to the wealth of imperial Russia disappeared mysteriously, unheralded, her fate undiscovered.

(Condensed from *Ashore and Afloat*)

(Continued from page 4)

that observers thought only a hundred funerals could justify such wails.”

The Times man thus did justice to the well-publicized case of the cats, but he sadly underestimated the *Leviathan's* feline population.

Many items have been published concerning cats that have traveled long distances to regain their homes or owners. A big tabby tomcat that boarded an American freighter in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, probably holds the record.

He came aboard full speed one morning, leaping over the rail and into the open cargo hatch.

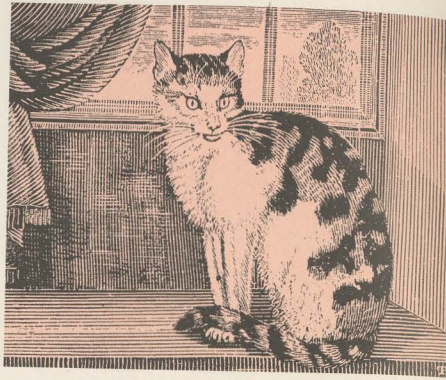
At noontime when work stopped for the midday meal, the stevedore supervisor went down there with a sack, but that cat was so wary he could not be caught and was still aboard when we left port.

Food and water were placed in the 'tweendeck for him, and probably there were mice in the cargo stowed there to offer nourishment for tabby. We called in at several ports on the African coast, and many times the cat was seen, but he could not be caught. Whenever we approached him, he would scamper up on the cargo and hide in some space where no one could get to him.

One day one of our engineers reported that he had heard the cat crying loudly near a locked access door to the cargo space. I went down with a dish of food, unlocked the door and, sure enough, there was our tabby. He was hungry all right, but still as wary as ever.

We couldn't get near him, and after he had gobbled up all the food, he scurried back over the cargo to his hiding place. We were steaming north in the Mozambique Channel then, and it was hot. In those cargo holds it was over 100 degrees, and tabby must have been suffering. But he stayed right there and would not allow anyone to catch him.

About a month after leaving Port Elizabeth we arrived in Mombasa, after steaming over two thousand miles. Soon after we had secured in berth, I went to my room. As I entered I was startled to see a strange cat



there; a big, ginger female with a long tail. She was sniffing around here and there as a cat will when searching for something and soon marched nonchalantly out of the room, tail erect.

Along the passage she went, entering any room where the door was open. Our feline visitor was certainly looking over the ship with care. Busy with my duties, I forgot all about the strange cat until over an hour later when the seaman on watch at the gangway called to me: "Come look at this, Mate."

Down the accommodation ladder to the dockside, very sedately, strolled two cats, our tabby that had travelled all the way from Port Elizabeth and the strange cat I had seen in my cabin. I am sure that she had come aboard to meet him. Probably his home port was Mombasa.

He had stowed away on some ship, as seacats often do, made a long trip down the coast and back and now had returned home.

How did "Ginger" know he was aboard our ship?

Don't ask me.



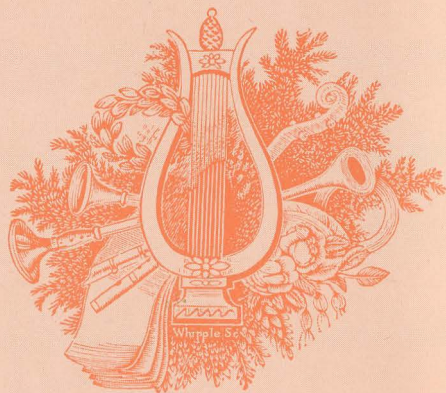
Pictures taken from roof of SCI building in mid-April reveal scale of land-clearing and excavating in area directly to west. Picture at right shows the intersection of Water Street and Coenties Slip.



AEOLIAN HARP BY THE SEA

There is a harp that is fingered by wind
and the song of its strings is a wind song . . .
a gull's high cry and a sea's lament
for a ghost ship of driftwood
with the sailors still in the rigging
and the seaweed green in their hair.
Trembling, the hard strings vibrate
under fantasy fingers that tune them
in salt-mist air to a mermaid's scale
and a silvered moon is the spotlight
there on the sea-combed sand
where ocean's relentless ebb and flow
is echoed in the wind's own surging tides
and a harp that is played in the night.

Elizabeth Searle Lamb



POINT OF ORBIT

Gloriously the sun descends the sky,
its final rocket flare
branding a star upon the eye
that now into its radiance can stare.
With majesty endowed
traveling a path to magnify
the luminous energies of air,
it casts a glowing crescent
that dims and fades, becomes the arc of night,
widening, lowering for a moment
an eyelid closing on sight.

Katharyn Wolcott

