

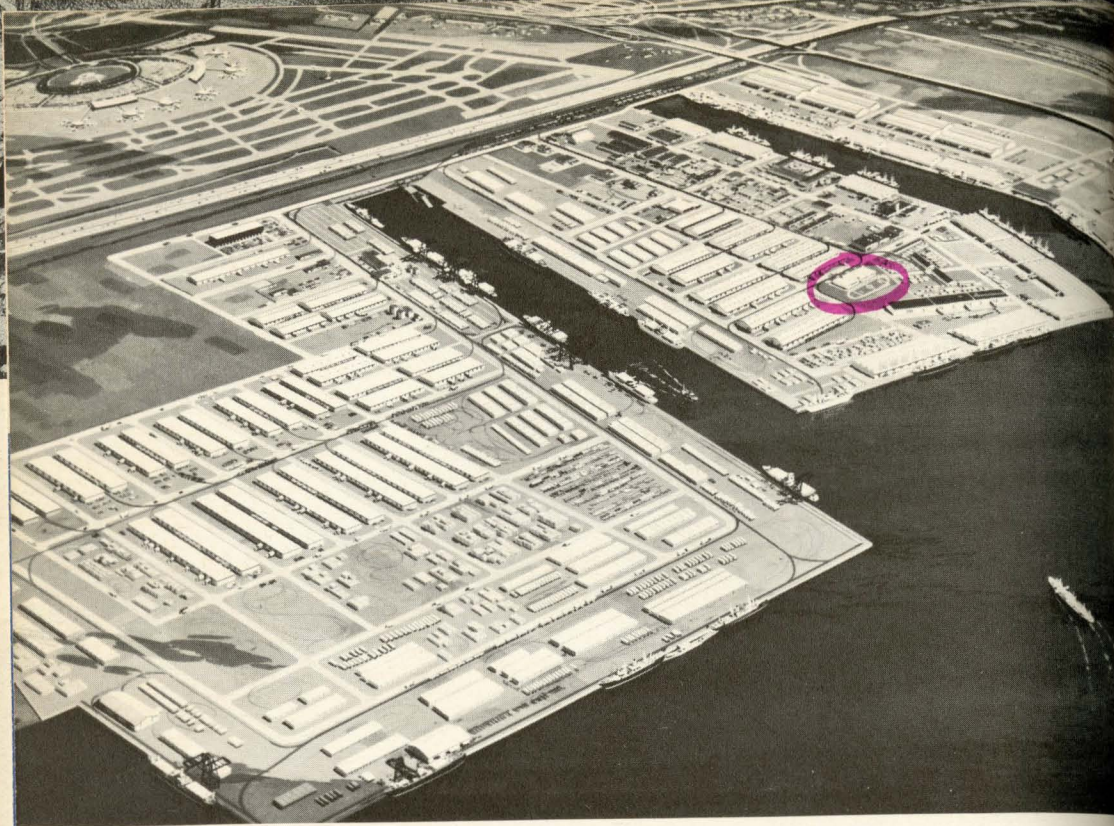


the LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

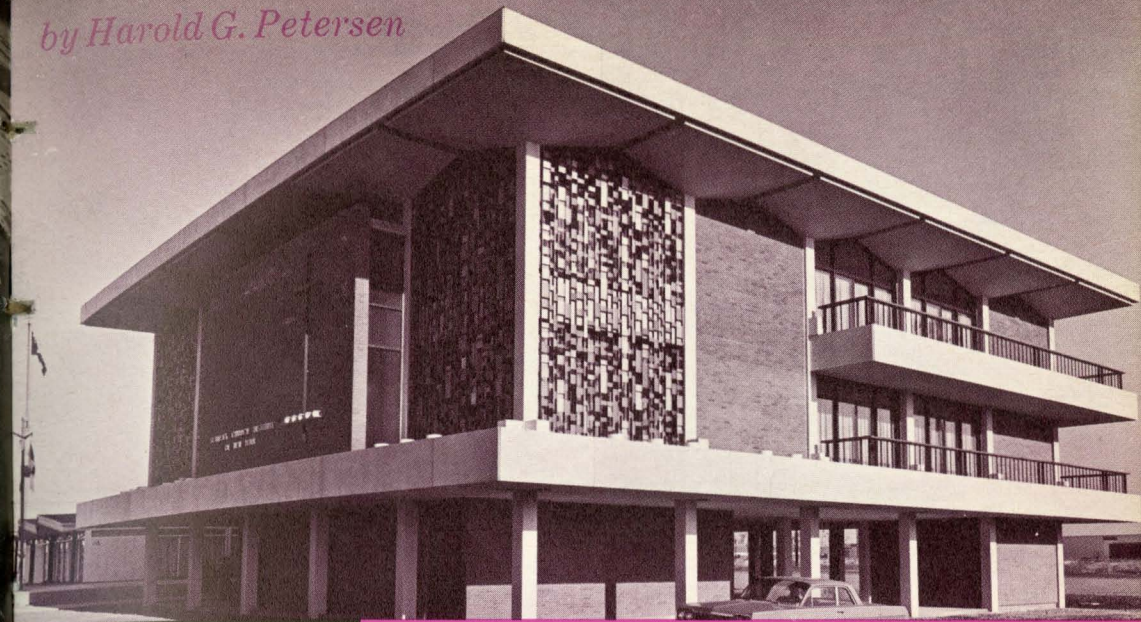


JANUARY 1969



Port Newark and Elizabethport complex and Newark Airport at upper left portion. Location of SCI's Mariners Center is indicated on Port Newark sector. Rendering shows both completed and projected installations.

by Harold G. Petersen



SCI MARINERS CENTER

Seamen's Oasis of Port Newark

the LOOKOUT

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COVER: Famed upper New York bay statue welcomes incoming freighters as they make a port turn to navigate the Kill van Kull channel which takes them to the Port Newark complex.

This year marks the ninth year of operation for SCI's Mariners Center, located at the corner of Export and Calcutta Streets in a huge acreage of flat lands off Newark Bay, New Jersey, the tract known as "Port Newark and Elizabethport Authority Marine Terminals."

Conventional freighters and the newer containerships are berthed hard by the Center and all about in the surrounding channels; diesel-engine-drawn trains weave in and around mountainous stacks of lumber and other raw materials, hauling palletized and mixed cargo of all kinds; jet planes from adjacent Newark Airport scream by incessantly.

Port Newark is the regular port of call for some 40 steamship lines from all over the world. It is the nation's premier port of entry for foreign cars; in 1967 it handled almost 227,000 imported automobiles, *nearly 90 per cent* of all foreign cars entering through

the bi-state harbor; figures compiled for the first nine months of 1968 showed that 161,100 foreign cars entered through the port.

Port Newark is also the country's principal import and export center for frozen meat and the East Coast's leading lumber port. An average day will bring wine from California and Italy, bananas from South America, wool from Australia and Italy, mineral ores from Africa and India, electrical equipment, precision instruments and toys and housewares from Japan and Hong Kong, salt from the Bahamas, lumber from the West Coast, and pineapple from Hawaii.

The port of Newark shares with the adjacent Elizabethport Authority Marine Terminal the reputation of being "America's Container Capital." Six new vessel berths and about 66 acres of paved area are nearing completion at Port Newark to accommodate containership operations as well as

conventional break-bulk loading.

In this hard-driving, mammoth enclave is the *only* recreational oasis for the seamen — the modern, three-storied SCI structure which, in 1968, served 60,000 seafarers. By contrast, in 1961 the Port was considerably smaller and so was the modest one-story building erected there by SCI; it had but a small snack bar, dressing rooms for soccer players, showers, and, of course, the adjacent soccer field.

Since that time, and particularly since 1965 when the new, air-conditioned building became operative, great changes have taken place in the program and other services now available to the seamen at the Center.

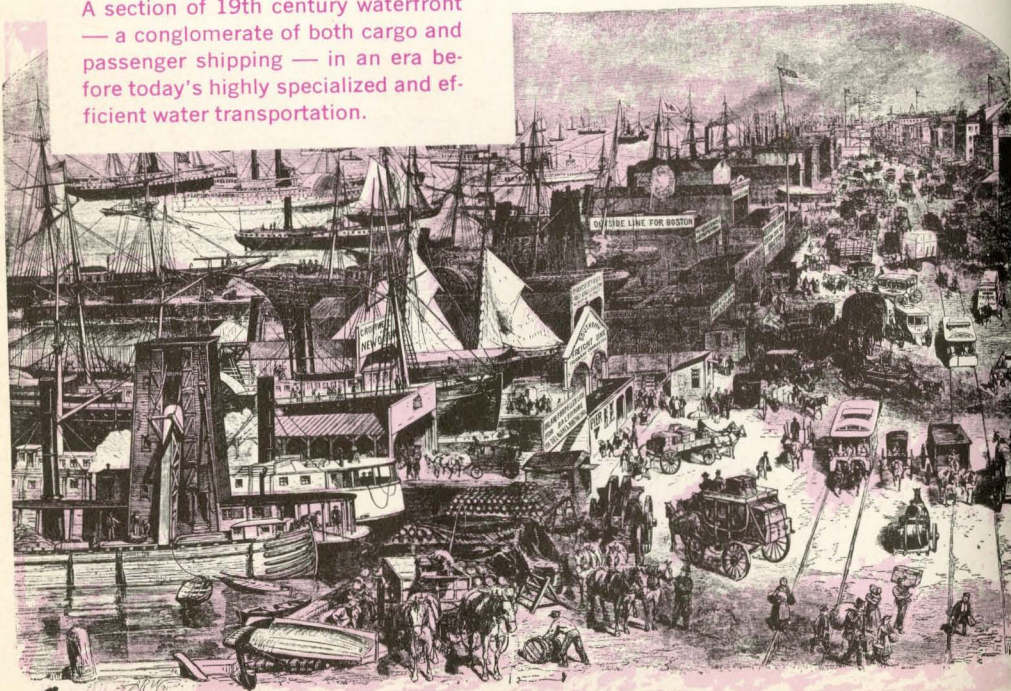
There are spacious areas in the building for games, dances, TV viewing; there are relaxing lounges, a library, the chapel, cozy corners for quiet conversation or letter-writing. Even an open fireplace.

There is also — in sea-going parlance — what is known as a “Sloppe Chest,” a sort of seamen’s *boutique* or PX where a seaman may purchase the

Typical break-bulk cargo sling, an old method of loading and unloading a ship’s hold. Man on deck (above) controls winch and boom by a hand lever. This method of stowage is on the wane.



A section of 19th century waterfront — a conglomerate of both cargo and passenger shipping — in an era before today’s highly specialized and efficient water transportation.



The girls, met by Chaplain Hollas, arrive by bus at the Center . . .

little necessities and luxuries he needs and wants; maybe a jacket, underwear, denim trousers, socks, perchance a radio; a souvenir or trinket to send to his best girl or wife back home. If he has enough folding money in his jeans he can even purchase a wrist-watch at a modest price.

By far the biggest *Thing* at the Center is the more or less continuous series of soccer games — usually held in the evenings — on the regulation, flood-

lighted field adjacent to the Center. These hotly-contested encounters are between the crews of the ships which happen to be in port and are often arranged on extremely short notice.

Some of the crews provide their own playing gear, but most are supplied by SCI. The games are held from late spring into December — even later if the snow holds off.

The field itself is not turfed. It is hard and unresilient because grass will

. . . so let’s dance.





not grow in the salt-saturated soil which is but a few feet above sea level and consisting of sterile, recovered land-fill.

This does not deter the rugged seamen players, however, who check and buffet each other as lustily as if they were playing on one of the lush, cushiony playing fields of Eton or Harrow where, they say, England's battles were won; if an English seaman takes a "header" on the Center field he bounces promptly up to his feet without giving

the mishap a second thought, pausing only to brush a few pebbles out of his hair.

Though most of the teams are from foreign ships and the competition is intense, seldom, if ever, are there disagreements between opposing players. Good-natured "joshing" is the usual thing. It is not uncommon for a team which is "short" a player to borrow an extra player from its opponent's team — a lesson in international give-and-take.

When the 1968 figures are compiled, it would appear that around 200 games will have been played on the Center field as against 133 in 1967.

Because the seamen of the ships berthed in the huge area must work aboard their vessels during the day — with some exceptions — they must also sleep in the ships' living quarters. Hence, no overnight sleeping facilities exist in the Center and it is unlikely such accommodations will ever be needed.

Thus the Center is geared to an evening recreation program, principally, although a few men within walking distance of the Center may drift over from their ships, now and then, during the day, to read, for a cup of coffee, or a quiet game with some shipmate.

The attendance at the Center varies from day to day — depending on the number of ships in port — but it is in the evening that the Center usually bustles and swarms with hundreds of men, some picked up from outlying points by an SCI bus.

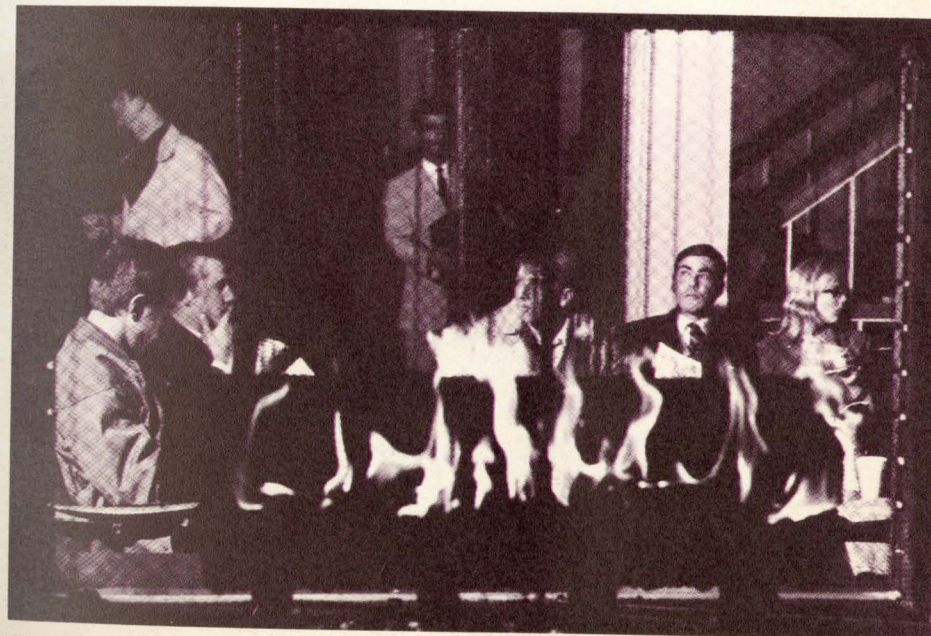
The bus is also used to transport men to the Institute on Manhattan — and return to Port Newark — for the regular Tuesday and Thursday evening



Members of a ship's (British) soccer team rest up inside building between game periods.



Some seamen prefer to watch the dancing rather than dance themselves.



Relaxing and observing before one of the fireplaces.

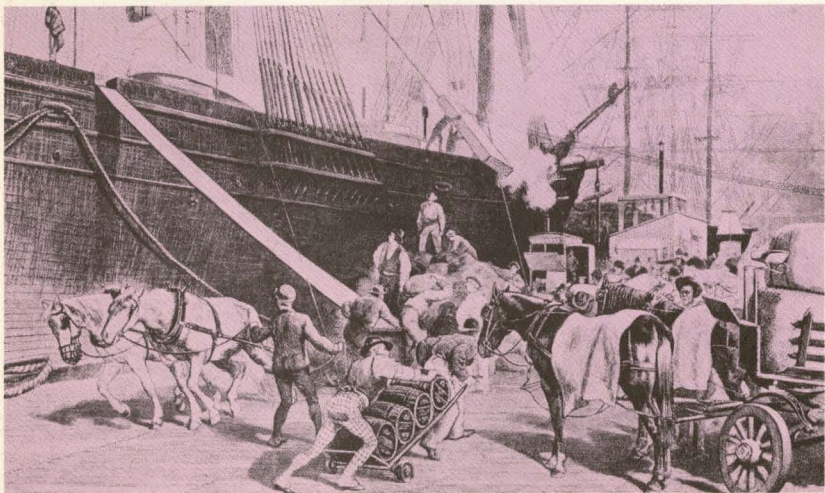


◀ Containers are stowed above decks on some vessels.



◀ On other vessels containers are stowed below decks.

◀ Some of the newest container ships have their own built-in gantry cranes which are adaptable for operation on either the port or starboard sides of the ship.



dances held in the Manhattan headquarters. Prior to the Yule holidays the vehicle transports many of the 10,000 Christmas gift packages to shipside. A very busy bus, indeed.

In the evenings the lights come on in the building and on the soccer field, the TV sets come on, and the hostesses (brought by and returned by the SCI bus) come on . . . very strong, as they say in show biz. The hostesses may be student nurses from Newark, Elizabeth or some other nearby city; they may be residents of women's hotels operated by social agencies or similar organizations.

What effect, if any, the burgeoning container development will have on the Center's program is being discussed by the SCI planners and the trend is closely watched.

As explained by a *New York Times* writer, container-shipping works in this fashion:

"The XYZ Manufacturing Company in Great Bend has a consignment ready for shipment to Düsseldorf, Germany. A steamship line serving North European ports is notified, and a traffic man in New York starts three containers from a Chicago pool toward the XYZ loading platform.

"When loaded and sealed, the containers move off by truck or rail to the Port of New York. The containers, or trailer-vans, are picked up at dockside by \$1-million shore-based cranes and deposited at the rate of one every three minutes into the cells of a container-ship.

"The 25-knot ship unloads its cargo with the same kind of equipment in Rotterdam or Hamburg, and it is sped on from there to the inland destination.

"The boxes have never been opened, they have been loaded aboard with a minimum of manpower, and at perhaps a tenth of the loading cost for conventional piece-by-piece cargo.

"The ship that carried them is the answer to the worried operator who has always complained in the past that

his costly freighter spent two-thirds of its time in port instead of at sea where the money is made.

"The S. S. Container can make twice as many voyages back and forth across the Atlantic as her conventional sister. She carries more cargo; under ideal circumstances she can unload and load and be off to sea in 36 to 48 hours instead of seven or eight days."

Certainly — like the law of gravity — containerization is here to stay. With it will come increased mechanization of all phases of ship operation, marine experts say, and, predictably, this will mean a general upgrading of shipboard skills all the way from an A. B. to the mates.

Chaplain G. B. Hollas, in charge of the Center, points out that because of containerization and the other ship-loading procedure known as roll-on-roll-off, time spent in port by seafarers is considerably less than required by the conventional break-bulk carriers.

This may mean, he speculates, that the Center may have to "customize" its transportation for individual ships to the Center and establish priorities for those seamen in greater need because of the brevity of their shore leave.

"The Institute's Board of Directors," commented the Rev. Dr. John M. Mulligan, "is also fully aware of the opportunities which changing conditions always present. They are now considering enlarging and expanding the Port's sports facilities.

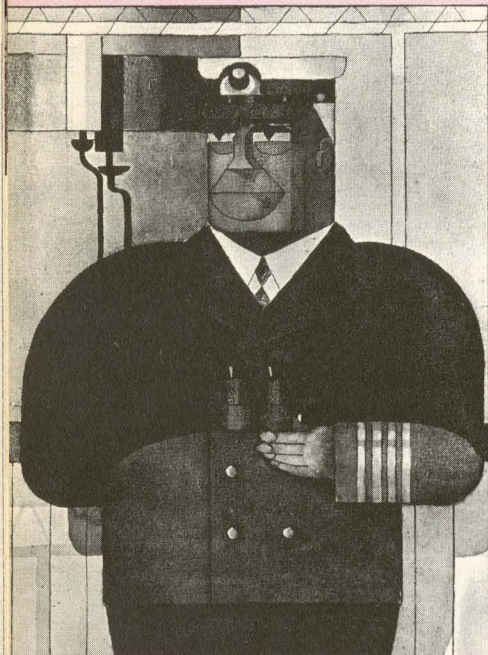
"Soccer is too vigorous for older seamen. So for them, particularly, games like shuffle-board, horse-shoe, tennis and bocci areas will probably be incorporated within the program."

Because of the growing number of young seamen, some special programs will be worked out for their particular interests, he added.

SCI will, unquestionably — as it has all during its 135 years' history — reshape itself from time to time to meet any new merchant marine conditions.

YES, WE HAVE BANANAS

By George R. Berens



The Captain — painting by George Franklin.

Banana boats are very smart ships. Compared with many other ocean steamships they are small, but they are sleek and trim. With their white hulls and superstructure they look like oversized yachts. They are kept very neat and clean. With a good turn of speed and comparatively short voyages, they are favorites with the seamen.

The *Beten* was one of the best, only a few months out of the builder's yard when I joined her as A.B. when a young man, around 1933. She belonged to one of the big fruit companies, and was modern in all respects. From New York she would carry general cargo for discharge in Havana, the Canal Zone, and Port Limon, Costa Rica. Port Limon was the shipment point for the produce of the extensive banana plantations extending inland over the plains to the mountains hazy in the distance.

There were accommodations aboard the *Beten* for about 150 passengers. She had a well-known captain, "Hurricane Harry", so named for his propensity for finding hurricanes. Or, perhaps, it was the hurricanes that found him.

The Caribbean area in which the *Beten* operated is one in which these tropical storms can be expected any time from June to November, and in his many years as master of banana boats, "Hurricane Harry" had managed to bring his ship through eleven of them. He had made three notable rescues, and in all he had brought his ship through safely with nothing but minor damage and some bruised and scared passengers.

A routine job of the *Beten's* "deck swabs" in New York was the painting

of the smokestack. As this job requires some skill, agility, and talent with the paint brush, the boatswain usually put five of his best men on it, and he gave the work as a "contract job."

That meant that when the stack was painted down to his satisfaction, the painters could "knock off" for the rest of the day. It was, of course, a popular job. I was one of the regular smokestack painters, and with a little extra effort I could usually complete my share by noon, and thus had a full half-day to roam the big city and spend my pay, which wasn't much in those days — when A.B.s were getting fifty dollars a month.

So, on a bright sunny morning, with the North River waters a-sparkle and the ferryboats and tugs looking really glamorous as they cruised between Manhattan and the Jersey shore, we rigged up our bosun's chairs, got our supply of paint, and went to work with a will even before the quartermaster had struck eight bells, and the ensign and houseflag were hoisted. Our ship was a smart vessel, run almost navy style; and the smokestack had to be glistening with fresh bright-colored paint, and brass whistle shining before the day was done.

It was pleasant hanging in the bosun's chair in the sunshine, and painting is agreeable work. We had to be careful, of course, not to let paint dribble from the brush and drop down on the white paintwork, varnish work, or scrubbed wooden decks below us. But we had been chosen for this job because we were considered especially skillful with the paint brush, and were *painters*, not "paint sloppers". So I was just mechanically wielding the brush and mentally planning what I would do when the job was finished when loud shouting from below awoke me from my reveries.

Thirty feet below was Captain "Hurricane Harry", all resplendent in a beautiful new white uniform, gold braid a-glitter, medal ribbons on his

chest, for there was to be some kind of a luncheon party for the "big shots" aboard that day; I saw that all the front of his snowy coat, and half-way down the white pants were streaks and dribbles of ugly black paint; and our captain, crimson of face, was shouting and screeching as he shook his raised fist at the men dangling on the smokestack.

Before the boatswain — attracted by the skipper's shouting — had arrived on the deck below, and started adding his own vocal effort, I realized what had caused this tumult. Someone had spilled black paint and the breeze had carried it forward so that it splattered down on the bridge deck just as "Hurricane Harry" had emerged in all his sartorial glory from his quarters.

In looking below I noticed that a pot half-full of black paint lashed with rope yarn below my bosun's chair was tilted, its bottom resting against a stay projecting from the smokestack; drops of paint were dripping from it. Quickly I pushed the paintpot away from the stay so that it hung level. Realizing now where the paint that had splattered our captain had come from, I industriously resumed my painting of the red band on the stack, trying to appear quite unconcerned.

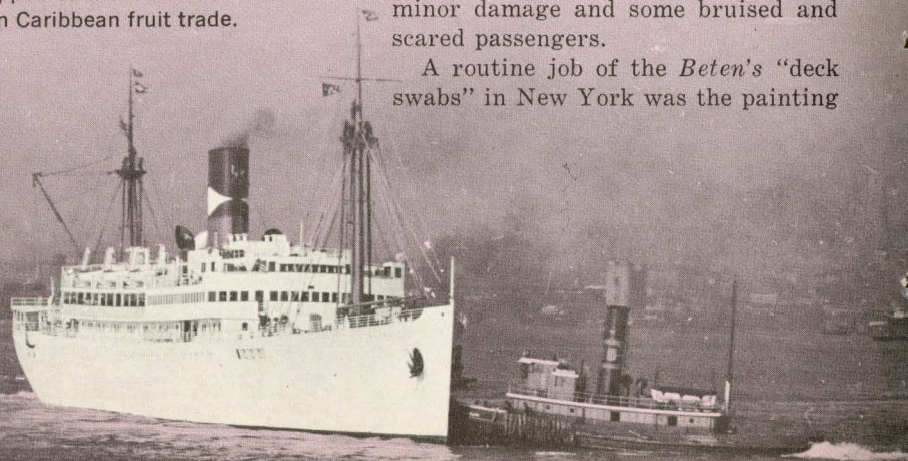
"Bosun, find out who dropped that paint," the Captain shouted.

Three of the men were still painting on the black top, and, naturally, the boatswain figured it must be one of them. But none would admit to it, and there was no evidence to point to the culprit. "Hurricane Harry" had now quieted but his manner was ominous, like the center of the violent storms he was named for.

"Come up here, bosun," he said.

There was a ten minute conference between the two of them, but their voices were pitched too low to reach us high on the smokestack. When the job was finished, and we went down to put our gear away, the boatswain said, "Listen, you guys, the Old Man's real

The *Beten* as she appeared when active in the South American Caribbean fruit trade.



mad. One of you spilled that paint so you'd better, whoever it was, admit it, and let's get this squared away."

No one would confess to the awful deed. We didn't know then that the Captain had told him to send the guilty man to him, or else he — the boatswain — would be fired.

The boatswain did not want to lose his job, for he really loved the *Beten*, and besides he had a beautiful little racket going.

Bananas were, of course, plentiful on that ship. We used to get eggs only on Sunday, and steak, or something resembling a steak, about once a month. But bananas we could have any time, as many as we wanted. (Ever since I left the *Beten* I have had no relish for them.) Our boatswain took advantage of this surplus to do a little smuggling.

In those days the Depression and Prohibition reigned. Jobs and alcoholic beverages were at a premium. In Port Limon there was a potent liquor available that seamen called "monkey rum" — probably because a few "shots" made them feel like very happy, playful monkeys, and, incidentally, act like monkeys.

The boatswain would buy a supply of this rum at a very low price. He developed a very skillful method of hiding several bottles of rum in between two slit stems of bananas, which were carefully spliced together again. Unless these stems were examined very closely and very carefully no one would suspect that they were anything but ordinary stems of green bananas, thousands of which were carried from Port Limon to New York.

In New York the bananas were discharged by conveyor belt. Many local dealers would be down on the pier with trucks to take away the fruit. One of these went in for a little bootlegging on the side, and our boatswain had things arranged with him.

Bananas with the rum hidden in them were marked with a dab of red paint. When they were placed on the

conveyor belt the boatswain would signal his customer who would be ready with his truck to receive them. As bananas are handled very gently to prevent bruising, there was little risk of breakage, and the rum brought a very nice profit.

Shortly before payoff time on the paint-day, the deck gang was knocked off. When they were all aft in the crew quarters the boatswain came down.

"Now, men, listen to me," he began. "The Old Man demands that the guy that dropped the paint on him pay for a new uniform. That's eighteen bucks. So, as the lug that dropped that paint won't admit it, I'll tell you what we'll do. Nobody wants to lose their job, right? Okay, being a good-hearted slob, I'll put up nine bucks myself, and you guys put up the rest. I'll want a buck apiece from each of youse as soon as payoff. Okay?"

The only answer was a few grunts, but as soon as each man was paid off he went to the boatswain and handed over a dollar. (One of the crew had made a quick trip to the pier gate before payoff. There were at least seventy guys out there waiting to take a job should anyone quit or get fired.) Times were tough for seamen as well as landlubbers.

When I went to the boatswain to give him my dollar somehow the picture of the tilted paint pot dripping black paint could not be banished from my mind.

So when the boatswain put his hand out to receive my contribution to the fund to pacify "Hurricane Harry" I said, "Listen, Bose, I'm going to give you nine bucks, not one. I don't want to see you holding the bag."

The boatswain appeared stunned. He took the proffered cash and didn't say a word until I turned to leave. Then he said, "By gosh, Slim, I'd never a' dreamed it was you."

All this was over thirty-five years ago. I haven't decided yet who got the best of the deal—the boatswain, "Hurricane Harry", or me.

A close-up of work on Churchill bust figurehead. Note plasticine model and photograph mounted behind to assist in the carving.

FIGUREHEAD CARVING FOR FUN

By Dane John

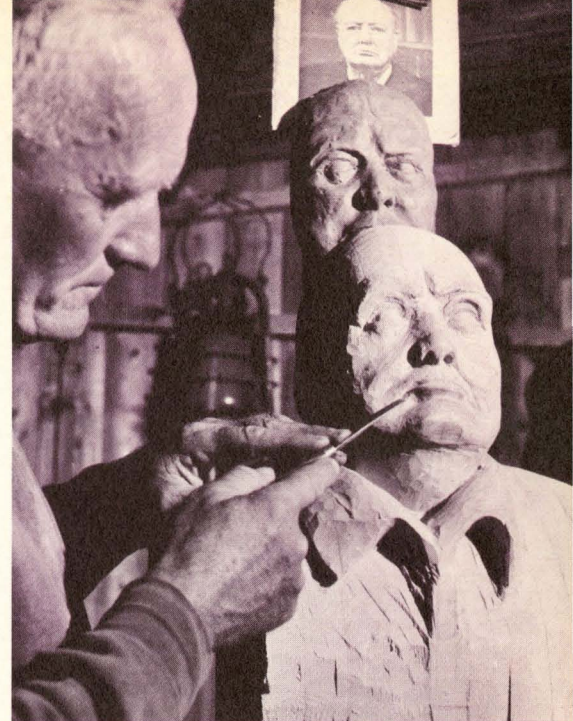
Charles Moore is one of the few remaining men in the world who carves ships' figureheads as a hobby. And now his hobby has become almost a commercial venture.

His skill has become so well recognized that he was commissioned some time ago by an east coast maritime museum to carve an exact replica of the seven-foot figurehead that belonged to the famous frigate, the *U. S. Chesapeake*.

An Englishman, and 61 years of age, his interest in ships' figureheads goes back some forty years when as a young man he admired them as an almost forgotten art form quite different from sculpture. He has become known as an authority on figureheads and their design features.

After the last war, Mr. Moore sold his small firm in London, manufacturing ships' clocks and barometers under the brand name of "Celeste", deciding to escape from the "rat race."

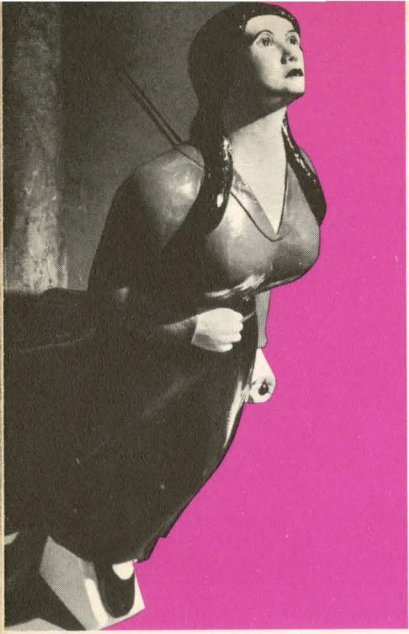
Before beginning the actual carving of a replica figurehead, Mr. Moore studies drawings and photographs of



the original figurehead, noting any peculiarities in the design. Then he prepares scale drawings in detail of the front and side. Following these, he makes a plasticine likeness of the figurehead to assist him during the carving. This plasticine replica and a photograph of the figurehead is then set up in his workshop immediately behind the floor column holding the wood to be carved.

He usually uses yellow pine wood and as it is no longer easily available in lengths suitable for carving from the solid, it is purchased in the largest available sections as boards.

The use of this type of raw material allows a method of working which differs from the conventional sculpture or wood carving using a solid mass. The front view drawing is divided vertically into 1" or 1¼" widths, according to the thickness of the boards being used. By extending the contour planes on to the side view drawing, the appropriate shape of each individual portion can be ascertained. After the shape of each segment is transferred,



An angle view of the replica figurehead of the British clipper *Sally* of 1865.

the shapes are cut, using a jigsaw attachment in a portable electric drill.

After cutting, the pieces are glued together to form a laminated solid approximating the shape required. From now on carving proceeds in the normal manner.

The average time taken by Mr. Moore to plan and carve a figurehead depends on whether all the design details required are easily available, as research is time-consuming, but it usually takes between three to five weeks. Also, some figureheads are simple in design, whereas others have more difficult characteristics to reproduce.

In August, 1966, as a variation from replicas of original figureheads Mr. Moore completed a small bust figurehead of the late Sir Winston Churchill. Examination of this shows that it deliberately flouts the usual figurehead convention by having ears. Figureheads normally, but not always, feature women and men, sirens, mermaids, etc., with long flowing hair that covers the ears, for two reasons:

Firstly, protruding ears are liable to be damaged easily on a jutting fig-

urehead and secondly, it is more difficult to carve an accurate likeness of an ear than of hair. Similarly, because individual fingers can be broken off figureheads, hands are carved more solidly together, or with the hand clenched holding a flower, a fold of clothing, etc.

The shape of the figurehead was also governed by the requirement of the traditional wide shoulder and bust section which tapered back to blend with the bow of the vessel; it was also designed so that there were no areas that would retain water.

Today, figureheads are rarely if ever used upon commercial vessels or sailing craft, but Mr. Moore feels that the time is ripe for their revival and there is no reason why a variation of figureheads cannot be used on yachts and similar craft that are bare and monotonously alike.

As his skill has become known, Mr. Moore has received commissions for special figureheads. He has orders for several at the present time, including reproductions for the *Cutty Sark*, lying at Greenwich; a "mermaid" figurehead; a replica of a figurehead female with a face mask, of the *HMS Espiegle*, the last British warship to carry one, commissioned by a retired British Naval officer.

Recently he completed a replica of the figurehead of the British clipper *Sally* of 1865 for an antique shop.

Mr. Moore, who at present still only carves figureheads for his own enjoyment as a pastime, selling only to anyone who requires them, is now seriously considering his hobby as a commercial proposition to meet the increasing demand for his skill.

Red Letter Day

We have all heard the expression, "Red Letter Day." It usually connotes something pleasant or memorable which has happened to us; a birthday, perhaps, an anniversary of some beloved event or a tribute.

Historically, the phrase, "red letter day," derives from the custom of hand-lettering and illuminating the very early Bibles. The names of the most important saints were lettered in red.

If you have a red letter day in your life—and we all do—Seamen's Church Institute of New York suggests a way in which the "day" may be memorialized . . . in perpetuity.

It asks you to consider an endowment gift of ten thousand dollars to the Institute.

The annual income from this amount approximates the daily deficit sustained by the Institute in its operations, currently \$500.00 for each 24-hour day. Thus your gift pays for one day of the Institute's daily deficit expense and this day — designated by you — becomes your Red Letter Day. This is the essence.

The benevolence creates, for the donor, an *Endowed Red Letter Day Memorial*; a single, exclusive page, appropriately engrossed with the names of the principals, dates, data, etc., as directed by the donor, is then included within a very special object known as the *Book of Remembrance*. This revered *Book* rests in an honored and protected space within the Institute chapel.

Ten such Memorials are now inscribed within the *Book*. Hence three hundred and fifty-five pages remain for

memorializations . . . a page for each day of the year.

Each year . . . in perpetuity . . . on the anniversary date of the event cited on a particular page of the *Book of Remembrance*, the person or persons memorialized are included in the special prayers of the Institute chaplain during the religious services held in the Institute chapel. The *Book* remains open, for the *Day*, at the page of the event cited.

What better way in which to honor some departed loved one whose memory is cherished?

Why does the Institute "lose" \$500.00 each day — the sum representing the difference between its daily operating cost and its earned and special income?

The explanation is simple: It is because most of the various Institute services to seafarers are given without compensation; only the hotel and food services "pay their own way"—as the expression goes — out of the Institute's total operations. A perusal of the Annual Report makes this abundantly clear.

The Institute, its Board of Managers, its founders, its Charter, have mandated that ministry to seafarers means a *total* ministry to the whole seaman — with all that *total* implies.

Functioning within this concept and context, then, it is likely the Institute will continue to incur an annual deficit until an Institute endowment of sizeable proportions is achieved. The *Endowed Red Letter Day Memorial* plan is a way toward such an achievement.

Some persons may prefer to "build up" the sum of ten thousand dollars with the Institute over a period of time. This is acceptable within the Red Letter Memorial plan and should probably be discussed with your attorney from several viewpoints, tax deductibility being one.

If this plan as outlined interests you, write the director of the Institute, the Rev. John M. Mulligan, D.D.

Address Correction Requested



TROPIC MORNING

Quick-fired from a black smooth-bore,
Dawn is a shell burst panic bright
Against the waterline of night,
While struggling darkness drowns once more
In the rush and roar of liquid light.

Sanford Sternlicht