

# The LOOKOUT

Sept.-Oct. 1981



# The LOOKOUT

Volume 72 Number 3

Sept.-Oct. 1981

© 1981 Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey

Editor's Note:

The future of the nation's ports and the vitality of its merchant marine in the 1980's will depend heavily on Federal government incentives and leadership. In this edition of *The Lookout*, we profile one of the Congressional leaders who will influence future legislation, Mario Biaggi (D-NY). The regulatory patterns in America — from the Washington to the Reagan administration are outlined. Lawrence G. "Larry" Mallon, Chief Counsel to the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries offers an insight into the legislative process; and Capitol Report speculates on the outlook for the Reagan Administration's maritime policies.

We also thank all the readers of *The Lookout* who answered our March questionnaire. So overwhelming was the response that we are now tabulating them and expect an interim report in the December edition.

Already it is clear that our readership is national in scope; ecumenical, with long-time supporters of the Institute with strong interests in the sea, seafarers and US maritime traditions. Our readers are well educated, well informed and convinced, as we are, that the Institute fulfills a genuine need for seafarers and the industry.

Balancing the diverse interests of our readership isn't easy. But we hope in the issues ahead to provide editorial materials — including news and features — which will meet these interests. Let us know what you think and rest assured that we appreciate your readership and support for the Institute.

Sincerely,

*Carlyle Windley*

Carlyle Windley  
Editor



2

**The Port of New York/New Jersey: A View from Capitol Hill**

US Representative Mario Biaggi (D-NY) comments on the Port Development Bill of 1981 and its impact on the port.



5

**George Washington To Ronald Reagan: 200 Years of Regulation**

A review of major regulatory trends which have affected the maritime industry.



7

**Inside SCI's Internship Program**



10

**Mermaid: Fact or Fiction?**



Cover: During a recent tour of the Port of New York/New Jersey with a representative of the People's Republic of China, Congressman Mario Biaggi granted an interview with Lookout representative, George Dooley. Photographer Raimondo Borea, took this picture (notice the Institute in the background) and the photo on page 3 at that time.

4 Legislative Labyrinth: An Interview with Lawrence G. Mallon

14 At SCI:

Finance Officer Named  
Port Packet for SCI/NJ  
Volunteers Make Ready for Christmas-at-Sea '81

15 Todd's Turnaround: Maritime Friends Honor John T. Gilbride

16 Recommended Reading

Editor: Carlyle Windley

Staff Writer: George S. Dooley

Production Assistant: Meryl Shapiro

The *Lookout* (ISSN.0024-6425), published quarterly (March, June, Sept.-Oct., December) by the Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey, 15 State Street, New York, N.Y. 10004, Telephone: (212) 269-2710. The Right Reverend Paul Moore, Jr., S.T.D., D.D., Honorary President / Anthony D. Marshall, President / The Rev. James R. Whittemore, Director. Mailed to all those who contribute \$5.00 or more annually to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Seamen's Church Institute of New York & New Jersey, New York, N.Y. 10004.



# THE PORT OF NEW YORK NEW JERSEY

## VIEW FROM CAPITOL HILL

For Congressman Mario Biaggi, a thirteen-year veteran of the US House of Representatives, fulfilling the economic potential of the New York/New Jersey port complex remains an unfulfilled dream.

"We forget too easily the importance of the port to the economic life of the city, to New Jersey and New York, and to the entire northeastern region," Biaggi said in a recent interview.

"We need to be reminded that the future of the port will affect our lives and our livelihoods. It is a basic resource for the region and the nation," he said. "Port Newark and Elizabeth is one success. We need more."

"America can no longer afford to be the only major industrial country without an integrated economic strategy that takes into account both the international and domestic implications of US trade and economic development policy," Biaggi argues. "This is not protectionism, but prudence."

As Vice Chairman of the powerful Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries of the US House of Representatives, Biaggi is positioned by his seniority to help US ports realize their potential. His port development and navigation improvement act of 1981 seeks to establish national policies for the authorization, promotion and financing — on a priority basis — the improvement of deep-draft commercial ports in the US; including New York.

"This bill is designed to break the OPEC stranglehold on the United States and its free world trading partners by permitting this nation to assume its natural dominant position as the primary producer of coal to world markets."

Biaggi sees the bill as a legislative keystone. He notes that over 100 million tons of US coal destined for the export market remained in the ground last year due to 'constraints' on US ports.

"The infrastructure of the port and its facilities has been allowed to deteriorate for too long. Too many other priorities have claimed our attention. The underpinnings of the port need strengthening — from dredging to environmental improvements, from shore facilities to improved planning and funding for port facilities. We need an efficient, competitive delivery system for exports."

With a constituency in New York's 10th Congressional District, Biaggi sees heightened public awareness of the economic importance of the port as a major need.

"A strong port means jobs, new businesses, new opportunities for the maritime and transportation industries, for shipbuilding and repair, for a fisheries industry, and for developing technical skills to serve global maritime commerce."

Tough-minded, articulate and highly knowledgeable on the port and its problems, Biaggi and his committee are determined to bring state, federal and local officials, interstate agencies as well as business, labor and the financial community to a consensus on the orderly development of the port.

"Too often organizations have sought to protect narrow interests and a declining share of the moribund port economy. We must invest and expand the port as a vital future contributor to the regional economy. Imagination and initiative are two keys."

Biaggi's legislation offers a 'fast track' for government authorization, funding and construction of federal navigation and mainten-

ance projects. The US must improve port capacity within the next three to five years, Biaggi argues, to facilitate the shift from oil to coal as a predominant fuel for US and European industry.

The Biaggi bill also authorizes ports to collect fees from users to reimburse agencies and ports for improvements and services. Both fast track approvals minimizing government delays and equitable port fees are essential to New York's port development. Biaggi, who served in New York City's Police Department for twenty-three years, earned the Medal of Honor, the city's highest award for valor, before being elected to Congress in 1968. He is highly optimistic about the support of the Reagan administration.

Biaggi has worked with Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter and now Reagan. He believes that the Reagan administration is committed to a strong maritime industry and merchant marine — as a fourth arm of national defense policy.

The nation's ports, nor the maritime industry or the private sector should not, Biaggi believes, go it alone. He asserts that what is required is an 'unprecedented level of intergovernmental co-operation' to meet increased demand for additional capital investment in channel improvements, expansion of port facilities and extension of port-related services.

As a member of Congress, Biaggi's perspective is national. Yet, as a born and bred New Yorker, there is a natural empathy for its port — and special frustration at the erosion of its potential.

"New York's geographic position is unequalled for servicing European markets. But if we do not act quickly and responsibly other countries, including Canada, will outbid and outperform us," Biaggi argues.

"The coal crisis is a catalyst to accelerate improvements in ports and intermodal transportation. But cooperation between the Federal government and the states, acting through local seaports, is essential," Biaggi said.

"Local ports cannot assume the complete financial burden of maintaining and improving channels — as well as financing needed improvements on port facilities and services."

The United States, Biaggi notes, must confront the competitive realities of the 1980's. A strong merchant marine and port system are integral parts of national defense and basic elements in assuring sound economic growth.

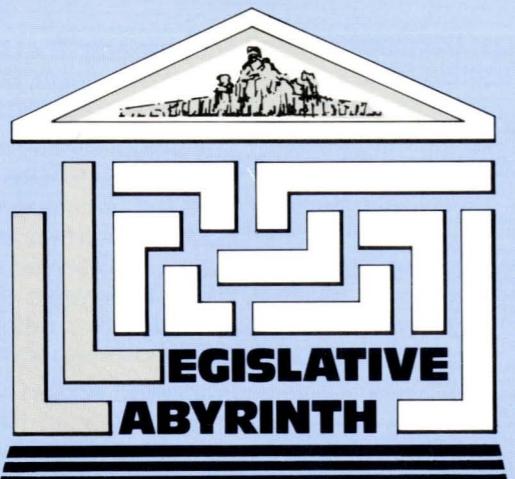
"America cannot be at the mercy of OPEC or dependent on oil as its only source of fuel. Nor can we allow a major element in our economic, financial and defense posture — our ports and harbors — to deteriorate. The US should be in a dominant, competitive position in the coal export market. At stake are not only jobs and ports, but the security of the nation in an era of protracted conflict."

In Biaggi's view, the US can no longer rely exclusively on foreign shipping which carries more than 97% of US oil and 98% of essential raw natural imports. Nor can we rely on blind luck as a basis for port development.

As he sees it: "Our ports and harbors, our coastal and inland waterways are resources essential to our economic growth and survival." ■



*Inspecting the ports of New York and New Jersey are Congressman Mario Biaggi (D-NY); Colonel Walter M. Smith Jr., District Engineer for the NY District of the Corps of Engineers and Mr. Fang Tian-Zhong, Chief Civil Engineer, Ministry of Commerce, People's Republic of China.*



**D**eveloping responsible legislation to assure maritime growth in the 1980's is a tough, challenging job. It demands expertise in law, finance, accounting, labor-management relations, maritime affairs and legislative relations. It also demands Congressional staffs who provide the technical expertise to Congress and its committees.

"The basic job of Congressional staffs are to provide services to Congressmen and the committees of Congress where legislation is drafted. Staff work is a basis for Congressional decision making and for assisting in the formation of responsible laws which work for the public," notes Lawrence G. Mallon.

Mallon is the key committee staffer assisting legislators in drafting the current Port Development and Navigation bill sponsored by Congressmen Walter B. Jones (D-NC) and Mario Biaggi (D-NY).

"Our approach has been to draft effective legislation to improve our ports and harbors, rather than an omnibus approach which would attempt to rectify every problem of the maritime industry," Mallon said.

Mr. Mallon (far right) and left to right) Messrs. Raymond, Ferris, Biaggi listen to testimony from New York City's Mayor, the Hon. Edward I. Koch during a recent Federal-State legislative port hearing held in New York.



"The legislation offers a solution to an especially urgent problem facing our ports," he notes. "And there is widespread support which we doubt would exist for a comprehensive bill which sought to rectify every industry problem."

Mallon, in fact, brings real expertise to his assignment. After serving for four years with the House Sub-Committee on Coast Guard and Navigation, Mallon joined the Maritime and Fisheries Committee where he serves as its chief counsel. A graduate of Georgetown University, he also holds a JD degree from Emery University and a LLM degree in maritime law from the University of Miami.

As he views it, the maritime industry during the 1980's should benefit from the Port Development bill. "There is substantial recognition of the relationship of the Port bill to our national and regional economies and

to the need for partnership between state and federal government — and the private sector.

"The bill provides a means of cutting through red-tape and delays in approvals. It should permit a turnaround in port development within three years in time to meet the world demand for coal exports — which have been the catalyst for the bill.

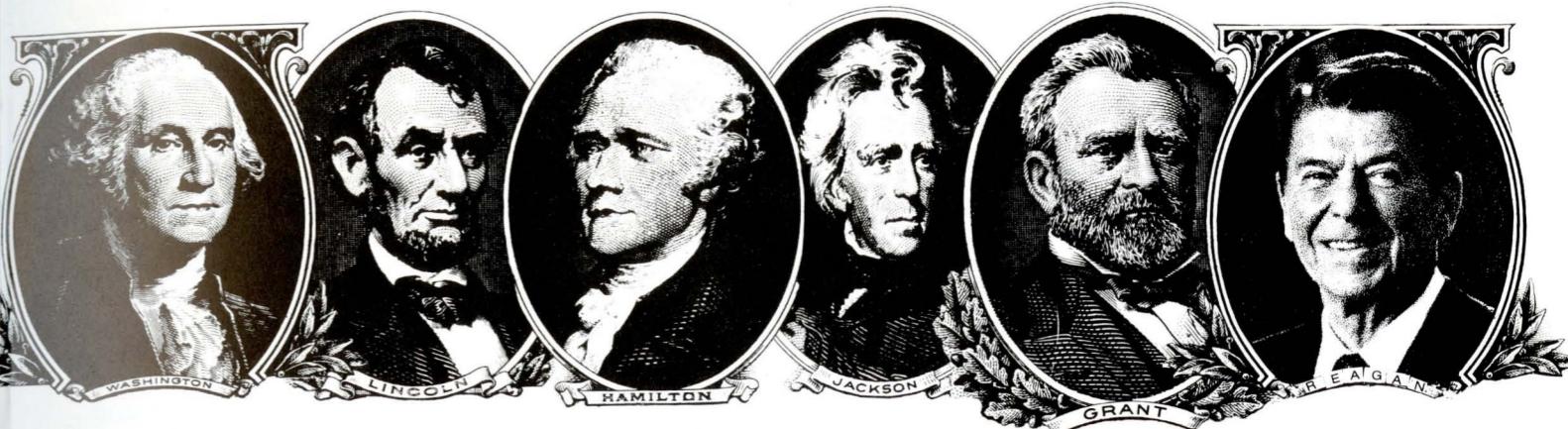
In the 1980's Mallon hopes for greater integration in the maritime industry and less single interest lobbying and legislation. "We have to write better laws, represent a broader constituency, and develop a sense of cooperation and partnership rather than an adversary relationship among elements in the industry." He argues that it is also important that "Congress exercise its oversight responsibility and evaluate carefully the economic effectiveness of legislation — old and new." ■

The United States, was not far behind Britain in its recognition of the importance of trade and maritime strength as a source of national power. In his second annual address to Congress in 1790, President Washington urged action "... as will render our commerce and agriculture less dependent on foreign bottoms."

One key was government aid. Between 1789 and 1828 over 50 statutes and commercial treaties were designed to promote and protect American shipping interests. Special tax incentives, cabotage laws, reciprocity agreements and government mail contracts as well as outright subsidies were used to expand and strengthen the merchant marine.

Accelerated production during the war however, produced over-capacity after the 1918 armistice. The Shipping Board, formed by the 1916 act, turned to Congress who passed the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, often referred to as the "Jones Act." The act created the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) and started a basic US policy toward the merchant marine.

## From Washington To Reagan:



## Two Centuries of Regulation

Recognition of the importance of a strong merchant marine isn't new. As early as 1616, Sir Walter Raleigh argued that "Whosoever commands the sea, commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world and consequently the world itself."

Raleigh's doctrine served Great Britain well. It assured British naval and maritime pre-eminence in the world's trade routes for centuries. "Britannia Ruled the Waves" and was rarely challenged by rival powers.

The United States, was not far behind Britain in its recognition of the importance of trade and maritime strength as a source of national power. In his second annual address to Congress in 1790, President Washington urged action "... as will render our commerce and agriculture less dependent on foreign bottoms."

One key was government aid. Between 1789 and 1828 over 50 statutes and commercial treaties were designed to promote and protect American shipping interests.

Special tax incentives, cabotage laws, reciprocity agreements and government mail contracts as well as outright subsidies were used to expand and strengthen the merchant marine.

After a brief boom during the Civil War the maritime industry languished. America's eyes turned to westward expansion. It became an age of railroads, not of ships. At least until Theodore Roosevelt and sharpening world trade rivalries focused attention on maritime potential.

By 1904 the Military Transportation Act was passed, linking needs of US flag ships and a strong merchant marine to national defense. The US took a new look at shipbuilding, technology, and trades important to a nation now a continental power surrounded by seas.

By 1914 and the beginning of World War I, the US faced new problems. The withdrawal of foreign flag ships caused pile-ups of American cargoes at US ports. This — and the anticipated entry of the US into the conflict — encouraged Congress to enact emergency legislation — the Comprehensive Shipping Act of 1916.

The Act stimulated an increase in construction and over 1,400 ocean-going merchant ships were built.

Accelerated production during the war however, produced over-capacity after the 1918 armistice. The Shipping Board, formed by the 1916 act, turned to Congress who passed the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, often referred to as the "Jones Act." The act created the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) and started a basic US policy toward the merchant marine.

"That it is necessary for the national defense and the proper growth of the foreign and domestic commerce that the United States shall have a merchant marine of the best equipped and most suitable types of vessels sufficient to carry the greater portion of its commerce and serve as a naval or military auxiliary in time of war or national emergency, ultimately to be owned and operated privately by citizens of the United States."

In the 1920's and 30's however, overcapacity remained a problem. So too did government transfer of ownership of the World War I ships to private sources. Ship building slowed. Foreign flag carriers produced new, more efficient vessels. US share of cargoes declined. By 1933 the US share had shrunk to one-third of the volume and value of US oceangoing foreign trade.

In 1933 Congress passed the Intercoastal Shipping Act to promote interstate trade. By 1934 President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a vigorous advocate of maritime strength, provided a direct subsidy program in the Merchant Marine Act of 1936.

(continued)

The act, a "Magna Carta" for American shipping, provided a workable basis for building a privately owned fleet of merchant vessels. High working and living standards for seamen and shipyard personnel were encouraged, as were shipping subsidies, loans, insurance, training and building programs.

The 1936 Act was introduced to allow US flag shipping to compete with foreign flag ships, and to provide competitive rates in essential trade routes. Shipyard modernization and new designs were stimulated. One result was that between 1939 and 1946, 4,976 ships totaling 37.8 million gross tons were constructed in American shipyards. A record yet to be matched. "All," Sir Winston Churchill noted, "was ruled by that harsh and despotic factor, shipping."

By 1946 however, the victorious US was confronted, as it had been in 1918, with excess war surplus vessels. A Merchant Ship Sales Act attempted to cope with the problem. But the need to develop both US and allied shipping capabilities for post-war economic recovery created conflicts. By the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, the competition from foreign flag shipping was strong enough to force US operators to lay-up vessels. Protection and preference rather than promotion of the American merchant marine became a dominant theme in legislation.

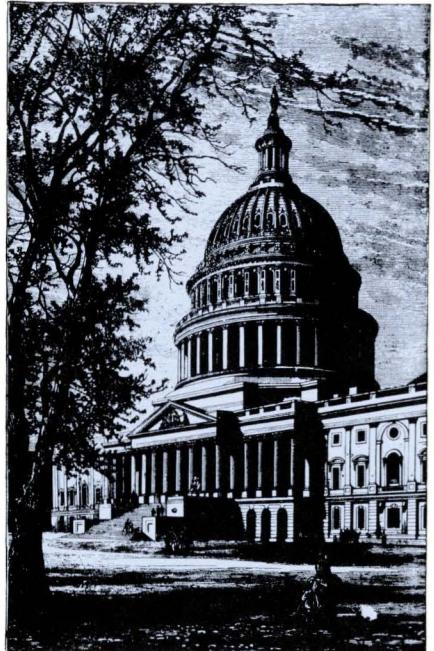
Since 1951 a succession of laws and regulatory decisions have grappled with the problem of building a strong merchant marine, including the Merchant Marine Act of 1970. Yet the weaknesses of the US merchant marine have persisted despite government subsidy and regulation, despite brief booms during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, despite two centuries of protection and promotion, despite the growth of vigorous, well managed foreign fleets, despite expansion of world trade

and despite technological changes which should logically have benefited the US flag.

What of the 1980s? While the promotional policies of the Reagan administration have yet to be defined in detail, the relationship between the strength of the maritime industry to the national economy and defense seems a solid foundation.

The Reagan policy makers, however, face far greater challenges than Washington. Port development, environmental, regulatory, legislative and intermodal questions will have to be answered as will the responsibilities of the public and private sectors for the industry's future. As well, US maritime policy will be heavily influenced by the interdependence of a global economy, shortages of resources and sharpened US and Soviet rivalries. ■

## Capitol Report



Insiders speculate that the Reagan Administration's maritime policy will not be completed until mid—1982. The reasons: Difficulty developing consensus among business, labor and government; division over key issues such as maritime subsidies; financing of port development, regional needs, and the role of the Federal government itself. To regulate—or not to regulate—may be the key question... Newly appointed Department of Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis—who gained national prominence during the air traffic controllers' strike—has absorbed the Maritime Administration into his department, and will be delivering policies and programs coordinated with other transportation modes... At least thirteen port improvement bills have been drafted by Congress, most of them split over the question of funding and 'fast track' approvals for construction, operation and maintenance by government or the private sector... Maritime labor organizations are finding resistance among many members of Congress who have tradi-

tionally supported them. The reasons: The Reagan administration can—as it did with the July tax-cut vote—appeal to a broader constituency and override special interests. Seemingly, the Reagan objective is a profitable, strong maritime industry linked to the national interest, not exclusively organized labor... There is a strong belief that existing maritime policy has simply not worked and that business, labor and government will have to cut through the pork barrel issues and special interests if the industry is to compete in the 1980's in global markets. Compromises will be made to be sure. But many industry leaders and legislators sense that the time—and the Reagan administration—is right for making overdue changes in taxation, subsidies and regulation policies. ■

## Inside SCI's Internship Program

by Jan A. Maas

"You never know what to expect," Ann Lammers told a friend as they drove through Port Newark on the way to visit the first ship of the day. "The crew may be all asleep, or working, or on leave. But usually there's someone to talk to."

Lammers is one of three seminary students who spent the summer working as interns with the Seamen's Church Institute. Today her job was visiting ships in Ports Newark and Elizabeth, delivering magazines and spreading the word about the Institute's Port Newark Seamen's Center. Part of the job, too, was seeing if any of the crew were sick, or if any kind of grievance existed. She was alert for signs of wage disputes, safety violations or other issues that affected the lives of the seafarers. And in general, she was just ready to talk with anyone who wanted to tell her of his life at sea. "In some cases," she said, "the only thing you can do is offer your time."

Her first stop today was the Hapag-Lloyd ship, *Dusseldorf Express*, which was busy unloading containers. In fluent German, she spoke to the deck officer and found that, sure enough, the crew was all busy. The officer was busy too, and couldn't talk.

Could she leave some magazines in the lounges, then? Of course, he said, and escorted her into a tiny elevator and up two levels to the officers' dining room where she met the captain.

Lammers told him about the Port Newark seamen's club, the soccer field, the store, and the transportation that could be arranged to take crewmembers to New York. The captain indicated, politely, that since they were in port such a short time, they could not make use of the services. This was the way it was with containerships.

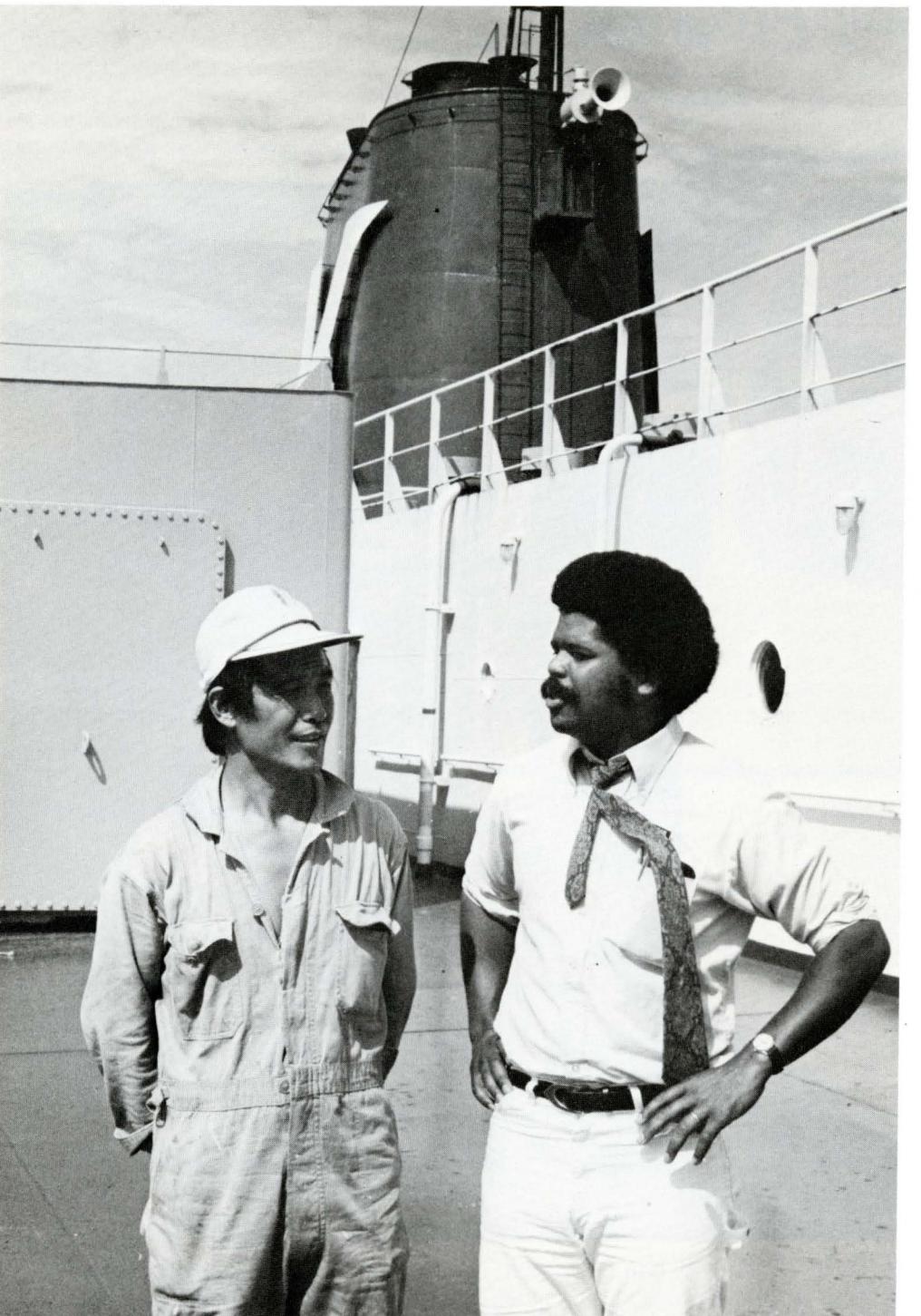
Lammers asked about the crew, and conditions aboard ship. "Everything is fine," he said. They talked some more: about the effects of containerization, the state of the industry, and the captain's family. Lammers left feeling the captain was a little lonely, but too proud to admit it. "Perhaps if I had more time..." she said as she went down the gangplank.



Ann Lammers packing magazines in van.

Meanwhile, in another part of the port, Douglas McArthur was aboard an Icelandic ship, *Godafoss*, hearing about a tragedy at sea. The vessel's sister ship, *Hofsokull*, had broken down near port and while she was being towed, a fouled line had crushed and severed a young crewman's arm. The man and his arm had both been rushed to Cabrini Hospital in New

(continued)



Above: Douglas McArthur with Japanese crewman of European Highway.

At right:  
Dorsey McConnell  
showing seamen how to  
get to New York (taken  
at SCI/NJ, Pt. Newark).

York, and an operation had restored the limb. Could someone visit the sick man? McArthur promised he'd arrange for a visit.

The third intern, Dorsey McConnell, having spent a half-hour aboard the Kuwaiti ship *Al Fujairah*, a vessel with Scottish of-

ficers and a Filipino crew; was now aboard the *Edita*, a Norwegian-owned ship, sailing under a Panamanian flag, with German officers and a Filipino crew. McConnell is fluent in Spanish and French, but was having trouble understanding a Filipino who seemed to want to go to New York. Was there a way to get to the city? McConnell explained about the YMCA tour that could be arranged for groups. But the man seemed to want to go now, on his own. There was a bus from Newark Airport, McConnell suggested, or the PATH train, if the man could get to Newark. Well, the man would think about it, but could he hitch a ride back to the Seamen's Center? McConnell had planned to go on to some other ships, but agreed to take the man to the club. Besides, there was an officer from the *Al Fujairah* who had wanted to hitch a ride, too, and another officer had asked McConnell to check out the price of CB radios in the area. McConnell decided to round up anyone who wanted a ride, and by the time he was headed back to the club his van was carrying three Scotsmen and two Filipinos from *Al Fujairah*, two Filipinos from the *Edita* and the vessel's German first mate and his wife. They all ended up taking taxis to the Newark PATH station, and McConnell headed back to the docks.

The seminarian-interns spend most of their days in situations like these; talking to men who are essentially strangers, making them feel welcome in a port that is all too often cold and impersonal, giving them help in times of trouble.

SCI director James R. Whittemore sees the intern program as an extension of the Institute's basic ministry of outreach to seafarers. It also provides a way that the Institute can lead the church — through an educational process with its seminarians — to a new understanding of ministry to the workplace.

"The church is very good at ministering to people in their homelife and through programs to aid victims in society," he says, "but we don't carry this through to people's working lives. In this program, we are trying to expose theological students to a whole realm of ministry that seminaries do not normally educate people for."



The program was funded jointly by the Seamen's Church Institute and the congregation of Trinity Church in Lower Manhattan. It called on the students to contact seamen, not only through ship visits, but through visits to the Public Health Service Hospital on Staten Island and in the Institute's New York Seamen's Club. The interns' work was supervised by Paul Chapman of the SCI staff and at the end of their summer, they each completed a major project of theological reflection on their experiences.

Collectively, the interns brought some complementary attitudes and skills to the ministry.

Lammers, 36, a divorced mother with two daughters, is a third year student at General Theological Seminary, the Episcopal Church's school in New York City. She used her own life story, with its ups and downs, in conversation with seamen who might be reluctant to talk with a woman. "If I share something of myself with them," she says, "they know they can talk to me and I will understand."

McArthur, 30 is a Methodist student at Union Seminary, New York. Married, with a seven-year old son, he has worked as a social worker at a neighborhood center in Utica, New York, and as program director at a Methodist community center in Japan, where he dealt primarily with American servicemen and with Japanese affected by the US military presence. "I'm particularly interested in counseling persons with crises stemming from culture shock, and alienation from family and self," he says.

McConnell, 27, is a former actor, carpenter, and managing editor with a New York publishing firm. Married and now in his second year at General Seminary, he is interested in entering an industrial ministry after his schooling and says that work with seamen provides good training for this field.

McArthur is climbing the very steep gangplank of the Japanese ship *European Highway*. The ship has just off-loaded a cargo of automobiles and is riding high. He enters the officers' dining room, spots the captain among a group seated at a work table, bows from the waist and, in fluent Japanese, begins to explain about the Seamen's Center. The captain cuts him short and tells him the ship is due to sail in 10 minutes. McArthur leaves his magazines and hurries down the gangplank.

Lammers has had a more leisurely afternoon. She spent over an hour conversing with the first mate of the *Atlantic Champagne*, a French ship. It was Bastille Day and she was treated to a beer, talk of literature, theology and linguistics, as well as the current state of the maritime industry. The mate, whom she had met before, has invited her to have lunch aboard his ship the next time he's in port.

Driving away from the ship and the port, Lammers reflects on how the work has stretched her vision of ministry. "I like going from the one-on-one personal counseling, to the adversary position as an advocate for the human rights of the seamen. This is what the church should be doing." ■

Father Maas is the editor of the Episcopal New Yorker, the newspaper of the Diocese of New York.

# Mermaids & Mermen: THE FABLE & THE FACTS

*He mounted on his berry-brown steed,  
And merry, merry rode he on,  
Till he came to the wall o'stream,  
And there he saw the mermaiden.*

— Ballad of Clark Colven

by Anand Khurana

The logbook of the frigate *Hopewell* had a most unusual entry by her skipper, famous navigator and explorer, Henry Hudson. The yellowed pages evoke one of man's greatest mysteries which still holds with suspense — and scientific curiosity.

As the ship churned its way through the icy waters near Novaya Zemlya island off Baffin Bay near the North Pole, the crew was startled by the lookout: "Strange object off starboard, ho!" rang the voice of Thomas Hilles. The *Hopewell*'s logbook takes up the narration.

"As the lookout yelled, some of the company rushed to the deck and strained their eyes on the frothy waves. Rising above them, a mermaid was making her way towards the island. In no time, she was alongside the ship looking earnestly at the men. Then lo! One more came up and joined her companion. From the navel upward their backs and breast were like a woman's, as they say that saw them, their bodies as big as one of ours. Their skin shone white with long, black hair hanging down their shoulders. Then, as an enormous wave cascaded over them, they dived with a smooth toss of their bodies but in going, down, the men saw their tails were alike a porpoise and speckled like a mackerel."

If the sailors had been able to see a bit more or if the sea had been less choppy perhaps one of the greatest mysteries of the sea would have been solved — the riddle of mermaids and mermen.

Man has still not been able to unlock the wonders of the world of the seas. Although the underwater is being constantly explored, most observations about it are still vague and haphazard. But as John Napier, the eminent British anthropologist, puts it: "Yesterday's myths are today's scientific discoveries." However, today hasn't still dawned for the puzzle of merfolk — half-human, half-fish — of mythology and folklore.

Ever since the earliest known appearance of a mermaid, depicted in Luristan (Persian) statuettes and amulets dating back to 1500-1000 BC, mermaids have been conceived as a creature having a bipartite, distended fishtail. Belief, distrust, superstition, inspiration and even plagiarism has enveloped the mystery. In Greek mythology, we come across Tritons

(continued)

# Flying Angel's Michael Chin at Institute

- half-man, half-fish — who pursued Nereids or sea nymphs. They were on Corinthian coins. Later came the charming, erotic Sirens, a manifestation of the mermaids.

With the spread of Christianity it was expected that the mermaids would disappear. On the contrary. The belief in the sea-creatures' existence culminated in the Middle Ages. They were rendered in fresco paintings, carvings and motifs in numerous churches all over Europe and as figure-heads on ships. The mermaid symbolized carnal temptations and the irresistible power of sin. If she were shown holding a fish in a firm grasp, this meant that a Christian soul had succumbed to her charms. She also figured as a tavern sign, and undoubtedly, the most famous sign sported was the Mermaid Tavern in Bread Street, Cheapside, England, established in 1603 and patronized by Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Carew and other famous literary figures.

Around the seventeenth century, natural scientists began to doubt the existence of mermaids, but due to their limited research resources within the field of marine biology, they could not quite deny their presence. In 1723, Frederick IV, King of Denmark, set up a committee to do away with the myth, but this did not prevent Erik Pontoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, from writing 15 foolscaps in his Norwegian Natural History in defense of mermaids.

Even the rationalists of the 18th century did not abandon the belief. The superstition flourished. There are numerous eyewitness descriptions on record which give credit to the existence of these sea creatures and have thus enhanced the myth. As the mermaid was considered to possess clairvoyant powers it was important to be on good terms with her. It was believed to be extremely hazardous to do harm to her as her appearance heralded an omen of disaster or tempest. Her lilting song presaged shipwreck. Another interesting attribute was her strong erotic urge. There are numerous tales of mermaids having seduced fishermen and sailors to live with them. But this probably took root as an illusion of a ship's crew hallucinated by hardships, starvation, excessive drinking and privation.

In the early twentieth century, considered as an epoch-making period in the annals of art history, the mermaid experienced a revival. Motifs featuring the mermaid were wide business all over Europe. Then the legend culminated in the famous representation of the lovely 'Little Mermaid' created in bronze by the Danish sculptor, Edvard Eriksen, and erected at Copenhagen harbour shore. For the last 68 years, the life-size statue, based on fairytale writer Christian Anderson's 'The Little Mermaid', has become a landmark of Denmark.

In literary history, mermaids have been a consistent theme both in the great works and in more popular literature. Homer described them as 'goddesses of the sea.' Plinius implicitly believed in their existence. The mermaid has played a significant role in the early Romantic ballads and Celtic folk tradition. There are reports of several clans in Scotland who maintain to have descended from the merfolk.

Romanticism was responsible for introducing the mermaid into Danish and German literature. Works of Goethe and Heine have the mermaid as one of the focal characters. Even Shakespeare was so taken in by her that he alluded to her in his *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*:

*Thou rememb'rest,  
Since once I sat upon a promontory,  
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back,  
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,  
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,  
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,  
To hear the sea-maid's music.*

Probably the most familiar motif of folktale and ballad is the merman forsaken by his human wife, widely popularized by Mathew Arnold's poem 'The Forsaken Mermaid.' There is also reference to mermen in the Arabian Nights. In Greek mythology, mermaids inhabited an island surrounded by sharp, jutting rocks and sang so enchantingly that all who heard them were drawn near their doom. Jason and the Argonauts were saved from them by the music of Orpheus whose songs were lovelier.

Nearer our time, a strange half-fish, half-human creature was shot dead on the

sand dunes off the Egyptian coast in 1973. The extraordinary figure had the head and torso of a fish while the lower portion culminated in a pair of shapely legs. Was the creature really a mermaid?

"Perhaps," says undersea explorer, Jacques Cousteau. He thinks that it's possible for a man to live like a fish — in theory, at least. The system would involve extensive surgery altering the person to what Cousteau calls, a *Homo Acquaticus*. Artificial kidneys would be fitted by which oxygen could be re-absorbed directly from a fluid. A system of chemicals, gas and batteries would allow the diver to live exactly like a fish for relatively long periods without any ill effects despite changes in pressure.

By the time the twentieth century arrived, most of the undersea fables set down by early natural historians had been discredited. Yet the merfolks' existence was frequently vouched for by seemingly unimpeachable witnesses. The *Times of London* of September 8, 1909, published an account of a sighting of such a creature. During a walk along the shore of Sandside Bay, William Munro, a schoolmaster, caught sight of a figure resembling a naked human female sitting on a rock combing her hair which flowed down her shoulders. This mermaid, according to Munro, was seen by many others besides himself, at less than a distance of twenty meters. Among the astonished spectators was a Miss MacKay, who described the creature's face as "round, plump and of a bright pink hue."

Faked mermen have always been a money-spinner for showmen and excellent specimens have been exhibited. The City Museum of Modena, Italy, has such a curio which it bought for 25,000 dollars but which is nothing more than a clever combination of the torso of a monkey stitched to the tail of a fish. Similarly, a Japanese merman purportedly captured in Tokyo Bay is in reality a product of the same combination.

Fable and legend, mythology and folklore have kept the mystery of mermaids — and mermen — alive. Science may one day be able to sift facts from fiction and uncover the truth. Until then the mermaids and mermen are assured of a place as one of mankind's more persistent myths. ■



**“... to every nation and tribe, language and people ...”**



Top: Michael Chin with Indian radio officer of "Imperial."

Above:  
The Flying Angel is the official symbol of The Missions to Seamen — the Church of England's principal worldwide agency for seafarers. The Angel was first used on the Missions to Seamen's original house flag in 1858.

The presence of Michael Chin at the Seamen's Church Institute this year has given a much needed boost to the Institute's work with Asian seafarers, according to SCI director James R. Whittemore.

Chin, an Anglican priest of Chinese descent, is in New York on a year's study leave from Missions to Seamen of Melbourne, Australia. With almost 10 years experience as a chaplain with Missions to Seamen, Chin says he feels right at home on the ships and docks in the ports of New York and New Jersey. "I'd rather visit ships than spend my days in an office," he says.

Born in Malaysia and educated in Singapore, London and Melbourne, Chin is well versed in Asian languages. A native speaker of the Hakka and Cantonese dialects of Chinese, he is also qualified to teach the Mandarin dialect and is proficient in the Hokien dialect. He is also proficient in Malay and Indonesian and is working on Japanese.

Chin's background and knowledge of languages opens up a whole new area of mission for SCI, Whittemore says. "With an increasing number of Asians going to sea, Michael's ministry is invaluable to us." The chaplain who is staying at SCI/NY with his wife Mei, is to return home in early November; and the Institute will miss him," Whittemore says.

Chin is especially interested in helping seamen understand their legal and human rights, and says he sometimes discovers abuses such as improper wages, unreasonable working conditions and inadequate medical care.

Last June, after visiting a ship of Liberian registry, with Taiwanese officers and a Hong Kong Chinese crew, Chin was contacted by one of the crew who had a problem. The man told him he was being sent back to Hong Kong because he had a sore in his throat that a doctor had suspected of being cancer.

"The man was naturally troubled," Chin recalls. "He didn't want to be sent home just because of a bare possibility, and besides, he wanted to know what was wrong with him. He was also worried that if he were sent back he might not get the proper treatment. On top of all that, there had been a problem about his wages and he doubted that the discrepancies could be settled once he left. He suspected the chief officer really wanted to be rid of him."

Chin spent a total of 36 hours looking into the case, contacting the captain and chief officer, the ship owner, the company's doctor who had examined the seaman, and the Liberian consul. Along the way he met with hostility and suspicion. The shipowner accused him of interfering where he had no business.

Finally, Chin told the captain that the Seamen's Church Institute was prepared to take legal action on behalf of the seaman. "The master apologized for the owner's remarks," Chin says, "and said that a solution would be possible — if we kept the matter 'among us Chinese.'"

Chin negotiated with the captain and arranged for a second medical opinion at the US Public Health Service Hospital. "In the end the man's 'suspected cancer' turned out to be 'a harmless exostosis,'" Chin reports. "And when I returned him to his ship I also said goodbye to a very proud, happy and 'uplifted' crew." ■

J.A. Maas

## Todd's Turnaround

### New Finance Officer Named

Arthur Bottinger is the newly appointed Director of Finance and Controller for the Institute.

Prior to joining SCI, he was the Deputy Director of Finance for Phoenix House Foundation, Inc., NYC.

A summa cum laude graduate of CW Post College, he also holds a MS degree in Management Science.

His professional credentials include extensive experience as controller/business manager and financial analyst for corporate planning for a number of major companies. ■

### Introducing the Port Packet

The Seamen's Church Institute's "Port Packet" is a new quarterly tabloid designed to reach the 120,000 seamen from all nations annually entering the northern New Jersey port complex. The illustrated eight page newspaper is the first community paper for seafarers and shorebased port personnel — especially those in Port Newark/Elizabeth, the world's largest containership port. The "Port Packet" will assist SCI's ship visiting program as well as provide advice to seamen entering the port. The newspaper is a first in SCI's 147-year history. ■

### Calling All Volunteers

Christmas-at-Sea gets into full swing on October 26 when the Christmas Room officially opens for the packing season. From then into December, volunteers are needed weekdays to help prepare the gift boxes for seafarers who will be at sea on Christmas Day. The goal this year is 10,000 boxes. If the knitted goods keep arriving and we have your help, we will make it.

Groups of five or more persons should call ahead so we can schedule the workload. Just call Rae Keer or Robin Pearse at 212/269-2710. ■



January 28, 1975. For Todd Shipyards Corporation, one of the nation's leading shipbuilding and repair companies, a day of crisis. And for its Chairman, John T. 'Jack' Gilbride, a challenge to the survival of his 59-year-old company.

Hurt by unpredictable and unprecedent ed inflation on fixed price contracts, sky rocketing costs of material and labor, delivery delays, OPEC and quality control problems, Todd faced a year-end deficit of \$43 million.

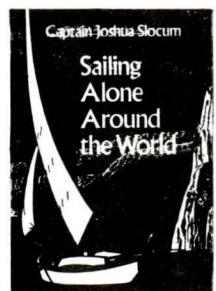
To a less determined and skilled management, the answer might have been bankruptcy. But to Todd's Gilbride and his team more was at stake, including a half century of tradition and expertise in shipbuilding operations: essentials to the US economy and defense.

By 1980, Todd, under Gilbride's leadership, had achieved a virtual turnaround of the company. Rather than collapse the company, management had accepted the challenge to put Todd back on its feet, restoring investor confidence and bringing profitability to Todd. In fact, 1980 year-end results dwarfed anything in Todd's history, including wartime construction booms. The backlog of business exceeded \$1.3 billion, net sales exceeded \$507 million, and net income exceeded \$19 million. With such a record, it entered the ranks of the Fortune 500.

Its turnaround complete, Todd as the nation's largest independent shipbuilding company, faces the 1980's strong, vigorous competitor. The organization and 'Jack' Gilbride, both at age 65, are avoiding 'bigness for bigness sake' and concentrating newly freed assets on what Todd does best as a corporation: "Shipbuilding, ship repair and conversion ... a business we know thoroughly and are well-equipped to perform."

This past June, The Maritime Friends of Seamen's Church Institute honored Jack at its Annual Gala Dinner presenting him its award for outstanding corporate and civic leadership. ■

1 Todd Annual Report, 1979.



(A Classic Revisited)

SAILING ALONE AROUND THE WORLD,  
by Captain Joshua Slocum, Dover Publications, New York, NY. Paperback, 294 pages, illustrated, \$3.50 in USA. ISBN 0-486-20326-3.

On April 24, 1895, an intrepid seaman, Joshua Slocum, sailed from Boston in his 37-foot yawl, *the Spray*. Three years and 46,000 miles later *the Spray* and Captain Slocum entered Newport, RI. The vessel and its captain had become the first to circumnavigate the globe alone.

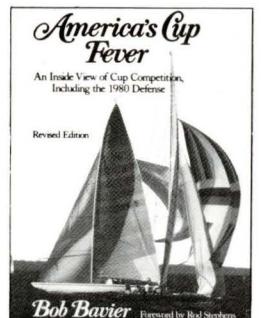
SAILING ALONE AROUND THE WORLD, is Captain Slocum's modest story of his epic solo voyage and a classic in the literature of the sea and seamanship.

Braving severe storms, isolation and privation as well as attacks by pirates and savages, Slocum's survival is a testimony to the will and fortitude of a man who "studied with diligence Neptune's laws."

Slocum's voyage and his book, first published in 1900, did not bring him great fame or wealth. But it did bring him profound satisfaction at mastering the sea.

He offered this advice to future mariners: "To succeed, however, in anything at all one should go understandingly about his work and be prepared for every emergency."

Captain Slocum defied experts who said it could not be done, winning a place in maritime history and American literature. ■



AMERICA'S CUP FEVER: An Inside View of Cup Competition including the 1980 Defense, by Bob Bavier with forward by Rod Stephens. Ziff-Davis Publishing, New York, N.Y. Hardcover, 352 pages with 80 photographs. \$16.95. ISBN 0-07-120155-6.

Some call it a hobby or a sport. Others call it an obsession. For millions of yachting enthusiasts the America's Cup is the Super Bowl and Olympics of yachting — all in one.

In AMERICA'S CUP FEVER, by Bob Bavier, helmsman, journalist, and member of the America's Cup Selection Committee, the story of the America's Cup races comes alive. Including the 1980 races at Newport.

It's a story of legends — helmsmen Mosbacher, Hood, Flicker, Turner and Conner; and the designers and crews who have fought to defend racing's most cherished prize against all challengers.

Bavier's book is as interesting to novices as it is to experts, offering insights into the men, machines, money, mysteries — and a little of the madness — which grips participants and fans.

The races, now 111 years old, keep alive America's maritime tradition. Bavier's book will help keep enthusiasm for yachting at a fever pitch. ■

*Photo Credits*  
 Pg 3: Raimondo Borea  
 for SCI  
 Pg 4: Faye Argentine for  
 SCI  
 Pg 5: Photo of President  
 Reagan: The White  
 House  
 Pgs 7, 8, 9, 13: Jan A.  
 Maas  
 Pg 15: Raimondo Borea  
 for SCI

Seamen's Church Institute of NY and NJ  
15 State Street  
New York, N.Y. 10004  
Address Correction Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
NEW YORK, N.Y.  
PERMIT No. 8036