

Waterfront Whiffs

Coastguard Or No Coastguard, That Is the Question — 55 Men Working At Dry Dock

It seemed like a safe and simple proposition, one certain to be productive of enlightening comment on a serious regional matter of current interest. It turned out to be a bit of a nightmare reminiscent of "Allen's Alley." All the whimsy of Mrs. Nussbaum, Falstaff and the rest were packed into the series of wharfside interviews.

The question was an innocent one—merely as request for opinions from fishermen and other wharfside folk on the desirability of establishing a coast-guard service for the safety of lives and shipping on the north coast. Some of the replies were as explosive as a March southeaster.

Nothing controversial in the question, thought the ingenuous waterfront scribe as he strolled along the wharves, now and then making a gesture of dodging a swinging cargo net.

Nothing controversial—merely a direct question met by direct answers by forthright men of the sea. "A coastguard service? Yah, by Yiminy we need a coast-guard service, right in the middle of Hecate Strait where it's dangerous. We should write a letter to Harry Archibald. You can quote me, too."

That was the way it might have been but wasn't.

In the first place, there was that matter of quoting. It just isn't done, it seems, if you expect to get an answer on the

wharfside. First, you swear yourself to protect the anonymity of those who are about to impart opinions. This pact is sealed with a knuckle-crunching handclasp that makes the reportorial pencil more useful as a splint than a writing instrument. The interview has begun. "Coastguard? Why would you want the ships?"

"Why - uh - why, the coast-guard?"

"It don't make sense. Fishermen should man the ships. They know the coast. And they are too busy fishing."

He had something there, but the argument had its weakness, too. There are such things as aircraft, and besides, fishermen are sometimes busy dying in storm-swept waters.

"If the water is that rough, sonny," he said in a voice that clearly terminated the discussion, "aircraft can't do any good. Only another fishing boat can help. Fishermen are the only men foolish enough to be out in that kind of weather and they are their own best coastguard."

A hundred feet along the government dock a man was casting a professional eye at the Azurite as she swept by. Obviously, this man knew the sea.

"Coastguard?" he replied somewhat vacantly. "I haven't given it much thought. I come from Prince George."

Except for the Hillside chugging diesel smoke from her exhaust as she idled along the pilings, the Atlin wharf was deserted. Let others interview the gulls on the guard rail, the oil wharves are bursting with intelligent opinion.

A visit to the Cow Bay floats, enroute to the oil wharves, brought contact with a man tinkering on the deck of a gill-netter. This is a type of boat that often gets into distress.

The preliminaries over, the fatal question was put. Coast-guard.

"It would cost a lot of money to do it properly," he replied, "but I think it would be worth it. I feel embarrassed for Canada when American boats or planes have to come over here to rescue Canadians in Canadian waters. It would give the navy something to do."

He said that he had fished on the B.C. coast for 25 years and that he was a Canadian, even though he had been born south of the border.

There are more things dispensed at oil wharves than oil. Fueling depots are the maritime equivalent of barbershops, focal points of ships and men, and exchanges for information and opinion, much of it salty.

At one company wharf, a trolling boat operator had bought a tank full of gas. The dock attendant's conversation was free.

"The trouble with a lot of guys," he said as he dragged up the hose line, "is that they over-power their boats. They put in engines big enough to drive boats twice the size. And what happens. They shake the hull to pieces in a couple of years. Burn too much gas, too."

"This seemed like a good time to bring up the matter of coast-guard service. The dock man was all for it, especially on the dangerous north coast. On land, there were highway patrols where they are needed, so why shouldn't those who go to sea in small boats have similar protection? Isolated communities needed the protection of emergency aircraft service too, he said.

"The fisherman agreed to this but then he said something that some how had the ring of a ghostly echo.

"We sure need a coastguard for some of the fishermen on this coast. I know lots of boats that are old and unseaworthy. Now me, I can take that boat of mine anywhere in any kind of weather..."

LADIES' BOWLS CLEAN SWEEPS

A. Pierce and T. Dell Have High Individual Honors

Three clean sweep victories by Rosa Lee's, Lucky Strikes and Orange marked this week's play in the Ladies' Bowling League. Results were:

Rosa Lee 3, Miller Bay 0
Lucky Strikes 3, Comets 0
Orange 3, Manson's 0
Sweet Sixteen 2, Coasters 1
Cosmos 2, Moose 1
Westview 2, Scubys 1
Big Sisters 2, Sluvers 1
Savoy Swingers 2, Toilers 1
Annettes 2, Bankers 1
Watts & Nickerson 2, Variety 1.

High single score for the week was 284 by A. Pierce of Watts & Nickerson while T. Dell of Manson's had the high average of 226 with three-game aggregate of 679.

Individual scoring:

ROSA LEE'S—
Z. Hedley 174 258 182
E. Morse 166 174 176
S. Ramsay 142 152 141
M. Postak 189 283 156
I. Ramsay 201 181 215
Handicap 1 1 1
Total 873 1049 871

MILLER BAY—
P. Peterson 206 193 166
P. Roberts 131 174 130

SHORT SPORT

With the defeat of Quebec's all-French-Canadian foursome by British Columbia on the ninth and final draw in the Dominion curling championships Thursday night, it was the first time the title had gone to the west coast in the nineteen years of the event. The victory was all the sweeter for Trail's quartet as only last year they were runners-up to Jimmy Welsh's Winnipeggers.

Playing an inspired game Thursday night, Gaston Amyot's Quebec rink tied the score on the twelfth end and forced the bitterly fought contest into an extra frame, only to lose on d'Amour's final rock.

Before Thursday's play Manitoba had appeared headed for her twelfth victory in the nineteen years of Canadian curling championship play Wednesday by defeating Theo d'Amour's powerful Trail (British Columbia) quartet 9 to 8 in a thrilling contest which was not decided until the final rock. The win left George Sangster's rink at that time the only undefeated aggregation in the 'spiel. That was the first and only loss for British Columbia.

SCHEDULE OF BASKETBALL

March 6—Savoy vs. Brownwoods, Merchants vs. Morzan's High School vs. Gyros.

March 9—Co-op vs. Savoy, Fashion vs. Port Edward, 65 Taxi vs. High School, Sweet 16 vs. High School.

March 13—Brownwoods vs. Co-op, Bo-Me-Hi vs. Morzan's, 65 Taxi vs. Stone's, Peoples vs. High School (Saturday).

March 16—Savoy vs. Co-op, 16 vs. High School.

VARIETY	L. Kristiansson 151 114 95	L. Lykegaard 197 191 174
WATTS & NICKERSON	A. Pierce 284 180 170	E. Moxley 181 160 190
	T. Armstrong 157 128 126	L. McLatchie 154 155 161
	V. Wrathall 160 152 114	Handicap 22 22 22
	Total 858 797 783	

ANNUAL OVERHAUL OF C.G.S. ALBERNI

Annual overhaul of the light-house tender Alberni, which has been under way since last month, is nearing completion at the local dry dock, being the major job now in progress at the yard. Work on fishing vessels in preparation for the coming season is also being carried out and considerable spring activity is anticipated. The plant, which at the height of wartime ship construction had a payroll of some 2,500, is now employing about fifty-five men.

TO VISIT THE BEHRING SEA

To visit the Behring Sea to fish for king crabs and bottom fish, the experimental vessel Pacific Explorer will sail shortly from Astoria, Oregon, for the north. The ship will be operated by the Pacific Exploration Co. of Seattle and is now being given an overhauling at the Todd Yards in Seattle. She will be equipped with a crab canny, filletting lines for dressing bottom fish and storage space for 3,500 tons.

F. W. FLETCHER, A RETIRED CONTRACTOR FROM LETHBRIDGE (ALTA.), IS VISITING THE NORTH COAST AND SOUTHEAST ALASKA TOWNS. HE IS SAID TO BE LOOKING OVER THE FISHING BOAT SITUATION WITH A VIEW TO POSSIBLY BUYING A VESSEL.

DELAYED BY A CONTINUATION OF STORMY WEATHER WHICH HELD HER FOR SEVERAL HOURS AT BELLA BELLA BEFORE SHE WAS ABLE TO HEAD OUT INTO HECATE STRAITS FOR THE CROSSING TO THE ISLANDS, UNION STEAMER CASSIAR, CAPT. ALEX McLENNAN, IS DUE IN PORT TOMORROW MORNING FROM VANCOUVER VIA THE SOUTH END OF THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS BEHIND SCHEDULE. THE VESSEL WILL LEAVE LATER IN THE DAY FOR MASSETT INLET POINTS WHEN SHE WILL RETURN HERE MONDAY SOUTHBOUND OVER THE SAME ROUTE. THE CASSIAR, AFTER THIS VOYAGE, WILL BE WITHDRAWN FROM SERVICE FOR AN EXTENSIVE OVERHAUL AND WILL BE REPLACED ON THE ISLAND RUN BY THE CARDENA WHOSE PLACE ON THE VANCOUVER-BELLA COOLA-OCEAN FALLS-PRINCE RUPERT ROUTE WILL BE TAKEN BY THE CATALA.

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BLOWERS	Montison 129 204 225	Keaves 119 115 109
	Houston 98 131 81	Hinton 161 178 132
	Calderoni 141 211 121	Handicap 71 71 71
	Total 714 929 838	

BLONDIE — Postscript!



I SMELL SOMETHING BURNING

CAUGHT IT JUST IN TIME

BLONDIE! YOUR STEW NEEDS MORE GARLIC!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT ALL THESE WIVES WOULD DO WITHOUT ME

—Dagwood Turns Over a New Leaf.




MY CONSCIENCE HAS BEEN BOTHERING ME— I'M GOING TO HELP YOU WASH THE DISHES

AFTER ALL, THERE'S NO REASON WHY I SHOULD SIT IN THERE DOING NOTHING WHILE YOU'RE OUT HERE WORKING


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By Chic Young



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