



Daily News photo by Rob Stapleton

## Tanker leaves town

An oil tanker works its way out of Knik Arm Tuesday after a stop at the Port of Anchorage.

Monday, May 8, 1978, The Anchorage Times 23

# Visiting Coast Guard Ship Has History Of 'Firsts'

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Times staff writer Adele Locke traveled Sunday from Homer to Anchorage on the Coast Guard cutter Morgenthau. The ship has a history of firsts, including that of being the first to have women as officers and crew members. Recognizing that the ladies probably get the larger share of attention when the ship is in port, Mrs. Locke spent as much time as she could talking to the male crew members as well.

By ADELE LOCKE  
Times Staff Writer

A Coast Guard cutter cruise is an instruction session.

Watching the two top-ranking officers of the United States Coast Guard cutter Morgenthau bring the ship up Cook Inlet reveals maturity helping youth, wisdom giving experience.

Capt. George E. Walton calls Miami, Fla., home and sails from San Francisco, Calif., while his executive officer Cmdr. James K. Woodlee is from Portland, Ore.

More than 150 persons serve on board; the oldest is 47, several are 17 and the average crew age is around 20 or 21, Woodlee says.

Walton and Woodlee share a similar style. Neither is aggressive nor rough; both veil strength behind exteriors of manners.

After a turn in Cook Inlet near shoals unfamiliar to the helmsman, the captain suggested quietly to Ens. Ernie Fox from Chapel Hill, N.C., that he might try a lighter touch for a smoother turn.

During docking maneuvers at the Port of Anchorage another young ensign needed several tries to make the approach. Walton, who is recognized by his crew as a master of boat handling, stood patiently giving tactful instruction. "Watch how the ship moves rather than the bow," he suggested.

Woodlee's work varies from the operational responsibility of Walton. He acts as ship's personnel manager who sorts through the mental health of a ship 87-days at sea. Very approachable, the executive officer, or XO as he is known on board, Woodlee keeps his quarters' door open for men and the new women on board to discuss the mini-city's day-to-day problems.

Chosen as the first ship to have females as part of the crew, two officers from more than 450 women on active duty in the Coast Guard joined the crew in September. Following 10 days later were 10 enlisted women. All were volunteers, according to Woodlee.

Assignments and responsibilities do not vary from male counterparts. Maneuvering a docking vessel from the Homer small boat harbor to the mother ship was Debra Wilson from

San Jose, Calif. Her Coast Guard designation is BM3, and she has had the opportunity to discuss with Defense Secretary Brock Adams life for women aboard.

Her no-nonsense attitude toward her work has proved her to the men who are responsible for a ship's gut workings, the ship's chiefs.

BMC Ron Mealey, Napa, Calif., at first considered women on board without much enthusiasm. He has softened his attitude somewhat, "if a woman's approach to her work is professional." Mealey and STC James Wadsworth stress that any crewman has a responsibility not to "push the line, to test orders of management," or repercussions will follow no matter which gender.

Several chiefs thought of the women as houseguests who had overstayed their welcome, but if the woman played it "straight out" tensions were relaxing. Breach of decorum by male crewmen can be handled quickly and often with chiding. With the women, discipline ramifications can be worrisome, Mealey and Wadsworth pointed out.

Woodlee mentioned small irrita-

tions. The men had a hard time adjusting to a woman's voice coming over the intercom. But then, "In ship boardings, the surprise of that voice really startled the boarded crews."

Uniform specifications were not realistic for women who climbed ladders many times a day, when issue was two skirts and one pair of slacks. Slacks did not answer real problems, Woodlee added, since the original design had no pockets, no belt and a zipper inconveniently placed in the back.

Consistent with his teaching technique, Walton reminded his crew on the bridge of duties by asking rather than demanding.

Lt.j.g. Beverly Kelley, Bonita Springs, Fla., navigated over shallow shoals in Cook Inlet after two hours sleep the night before. Seas were rough in the Gulf of Alaska from Kodiak to Homer Saturday. Lt. Kelley later mentioned that it was hard, nerve-wracking and scary as a new officer, surrounded by guests on the bridge in new waters. Following the captain's lead, she remained calm under the strain.

With seven months of a mixed-

crew history, the Morgenthau has developed a routine with the "different complement" to handle the vessel which weighs more than 3,000 tons and can carry fuel to range in excess of 9,000 miles and food to last 60 days.

The Morgenthau personnel realize that tour on the ship is special. The ship has a history of firsts. Commissioned in 1969, she escorted the Queen Elizabeth II on her initial visit to the United States. She has attained the highest shakedown training score for a 378-foot cutter at naval training at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, became the first cutter of her size to serve from homeports on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and the first United States combatant vessel to have women permanently assigned as crew members.

The ship whose crew members come from all 50 states, Canada, Mexico and the Philippines, arrived in Anchorage Sunday evening. The officers and crew hosted an open house today and will again greet visitors from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday.

Anchorage Daily News, Wednesday, May 24, 1978

# Municipality cuts strikers' benefits

By SUZAN NIGHTINGALE  
Daily News Staff Writer

More than 600 striking municipal employees got a letter from City Hall Tuesday that union officials say may constitute an unfair labor practice.

Sent to striking Anchorage Municipal Employees Association members, the letter from employee relations director Fred Jones says medical benefits, workmen's compensation and non-work disability insurance "ceased as of the time you went on strike," and directs the employees to turn in "all keys, property, vehicles, supplies and equipment of the municipality, and your municipal I.D. card. Instructions will be issued concerning collection of your final check at a later date. . ."

AMEA President Ray Nelson termed the three-page letter "a scare tactic that's part of the stock and trade of someone who's trying to bust a union," and said union attorneys are

## Municipality seeks restraining order, Page 2.

examining the letter to see if it constitutes an unfair labor practice.

Nelson said AMEA members would gladly turn over municipal property such as keys and any outstanding equipment during the strike, but not their employee identification cards. "We're still municipal employees and they have no right to intimidate we're not. We feel this is a tactic, that this will be used to make our people feel they are going to be terminated. Anything they are entitled to we're more than glad to oblige them, but our legal rights won't be trampled."

Nelson also criticized the letter's claims about halted disability benefits for strikers. "Our people pay for that stuff and they can't cancel that." He added that the employees' medical benefits have a 30-day grace period and that the

administration "can't just cancel that and say it doesn't exist."

THE LETTER, dated May 22 but mailed Friday, also tells employees, "If you wish to work you have a legal right to do so. The municipality will not take disciplinary action against you if you work. The municipality also will not allow, permit or condone any retaliatory action against you while you work whether before, during or after a strike."

Nelson claimed that the AMEA general membership can vote to fine members who cross picket lines. Although failure to pay such a fine can't cost a municipal employee his job, Nelson said such fines are legal debts.

THE LETTER tells employees, "You have the right to strike. However, the municipality also has the right to replace you."

Nelson called the letter "a propaganda weapon to further scare employees," but said its effect was to "just make them madder."

Sunday, May 14, 1978, The Anchorage Times A-5

## Between Us

By Robert B. Atwood



THE 1978 CONTRACT for dredging silt from the ship channel for the Port of Anchorage was announced last week. It is the eighth time that dredging has had to be done to keep the ships moving.

The City Dock holds a special position in the esteem of Anchorage residents because it has done so much for them. They built it as a city of Anchorage project under conditions that made it questionable whether it would ever be successful as a viable economic operation.

But even more significantly, it was built despite opposition from the Alaska Railroad, the Department of the Interior, the Army Engineer Corps, the Air Force, the Army and all the might that Uncle Sam's bureaus could bring to bear.

The dock came into being because the people of Anchorage were determined to make their city a port city that could have the advantage of ocean-going transportation. It liberated the community from its position as a captive customer of the Alaska Railroad, and told the Secretary of the Interior that even though he was "Czar" of Alaska he could not completely squelch Anchorage.

The facility was completed in 1960 and stood idle for many months because the Alaska Steamship Co. refused to bring ships here. The steamship line had a deal with the railroad under which all steamships went no further than Seward.

When the 1964 earthquake occurred, the little City Dock in Anchorage turned out to be the only waterfront facility in all Western Alaska that could handle steamships. The other two docks, at Seward and Valdez, were wiped out. Thus the people of Anchorage, in their zeal to be an ocean port, built the facility that saved all the people of the Railbelt from supply problems after the earthquake.

The dock has prospered since. It has been expanded several times. It still is a favorite in the hearts and minds of local citizens, especially those who lived here in the days when there was no dock.

THOSE OLDTIMERS also sometimes wonder what would have happened if their total program for Knik Arm development had become a reality. The City Dock was only one part of it.

The total program involved building a causeway across Knik Arm somewhere north of the City Dock area. Many benefits would have accrued from that causeway.

It would have enabled the Alaska Railroad to shorten its route to Fairbanks and also eliminate its costly bridges and trestles across the flood plains of the Matanuska and Knik Rivers.

The causeway would have made it possible for electric power to be brought to Anchorage from the other side of the inlet without submerged cables, such as the ones that have proved so costly and troublesome to Chugach Electric Association.

It would have opened up the great Susitna Valley to orderly development as a bedroom for Anchorage. It might have avoided some of the unusually high values on real estate by making a larger land area available.

The causeway would have speeded the improvement of the highway system north from Anchorage. For lack of it, the new highway has had to be improved from Anchorage to the Eklutna Flats and bridges built to cross the rivers.

The engineers of that day said that the causeway would have to

have some sort of spillway or a series of culverts to allow the fresh water from the Matanuska, Knik and other rivers and creeks to flow into Knik Arm.

The flow of that water could be directed to form a current that would scour the ship channel and prevent silting, they said. It was hoped this would make it unnecessary to have an annual dredging operation as we have had for the past eight years.

There were other amazing benefits that were projected for the full development of Knik Arm.

The engineers said the causeway would convert the Knik Arm area to the north into a big, freshwater lake suitable for sail boats and other recreational activities. Like Lake Mead at Boulder Dam.

And even more fascinating, the engineers predicted that the causeway would prove an effective dam in preventing ice cakes from getting into Knik Arm to the south. Thus the water in front of Anchorage and the City Dock would be free and clear of ice all year around. Like a big mill pond.

This may sound fantastic, but the engineers explained that the Knik Arm ice is composed of fresh water and it forms in the tributaries feeding into the arm.

These many benefits were mighty attractive to the residents of Anchorage who, in the 1950s, were still recovering from the dislocations and bruises of World War II. It was still a small town looking for a future, and the only future the people could see was one that would open up the country to create opportunities that would attract more people to come here to live.

BEFORE STATEHOOD the big decisions were made in Washington, and with the causeway project the decision was no. Anchorage took on the port project because it was considered essential and, financially, the city could carry the load through bond issues.

It was nip and tuck whether the a \$2 million general obligation bond issue would be approved because nobody could guarantee that the dock would generate any money to pay off the debt. The city fathers announced publicly before the election that if the bonds are issued, it might be necessary to raise the property taxes to pay them off.

In the face of such a threat, the people approved the bonds. Then the city arranged for an additional \$6 million in revenue bonds. To sell those bonds took some fancy footwork because the only indication there would be revenue to pay them off was in the form of projections from engineers on what the dock could do if it got the business.

It took a long time to force Alaska Steamship Co. to bring its ships here and many peculiar things happened along the route. The brief report of these events is that local shippers forced it to happen, despite the opposition of Uncle Sam and all his agencies.

The dock has now become an integral and inseparable part of the community. Indeed, it has always been an asset to all of Western Alaska even though it was only the handful of people living in the city limits of Anchorage who underwrote it.

Robert B. Atwood is editor and publisher of the Anchorage Times and a 40-year reporter on the Alaskan scene.

Alaska From The Inside

For your files: 20-78 May 17, 1978

## PORT OF ANCHORAGE EXPANSION EXPECTED TO BEGIN SOON:

Bids opened yesterday for terminal 3 expansion at the Port of Anchorage are scheduled for review by the Municipal Assembly next Tuesday. The contract could be awarded the next day, May 24. Construction is expected to begin within 30 days with completion set for November 1. The work will be done in joint-venture with Totem Ocean Trailer Express who will be building the trestles. The project, including a mooring dolphin and two trestles, will facilitate moving TOTE vessels to terminal 3, freeing terminal 1 and the petroleum dock for other traffic. Twice a week, when TOTE vessels are in port, these two docks are tied up by the large TOTE ships. Meanwhile, S.S. Mullen has begun installing an alternate petroleum header system to provide safer berthing. The 60-day project is financed by a \$500,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration.

The Anchorage Times, Monday, May 22, 1978

## Freight Firms, Employees Agree

Two major ocean freight companies late Friday reached an out-of-court agreement with the striking Anchorage Municipal Employees Association on picketing by strikers at the Port of Anchorage, attorneys said today.

Sea-Land and Totem Ocean Trailer Service (Tote) filed a complaint Friday in Anchorage Superior Court seeking an injunction to stop strikers from picketing gates at the port reserved by Sea-Land and Tote. The complaint also alleged that the municipal association was trying to entangle Sea-Land and Tote in their labor dispute with the municipality.

The 606-member association has been on strike against the municipality since last Monday.

In the complaint, the companies contended the picketers might dis-

rupt transportation of goods to Alaska markets.

Attorneys for the freight companies and the association said today the complaint was settled in judge's chambers without court action.

Tote attorney Gary Zipkin said the dispute involved the hiring of private security guards at the port by the two companies. Sea-Land and Tote agreed to stop using the private security guards and the association agreed to stop picketing the reserved gates, Zipkin said.

Fred Dichter, attorney for the association, would say only that the companies did not get an injunction they had sought. "Everybody met in chambers, agreed that the injunction was not necessary," he said.

"I'd rather you get any statement (about the nature of the agreement) from them," Dichter said.

Zipkin termed the settlement an "amicable agreement."

"We are satisfied at this point that the problem is resolved," he said.