

## Spanish monument awaits site choice

The Spanish-made Galician cross, intended to honor the four men who died in a plane crash during the 1980 Iditarod Sled Dog Race, has arrived in Anchorage.

The cross, standing more than 22 feet high, is inside a Totem Ocean Trailer Express van at the northern end of Tidewater Road.

It will remain there the rest of the week before being turned over to the Iditarod Trail Committee, according to a city spokesman.

Until the city decides where to put the cross, it will remain at the port.

The committee said last month that it thought the most likely resting place for the monument would be Mulcahy Park on 15th Avenue — the ceremonial beginning of the Iditarod.

The cross, or "cruceiro," is a traditional monument erected in Spain since the beginning of the Christian era to honor those who have their lost their lives while traveling.

It will serve as a memorial to one of Spain's most eminent naturalists and journalists, Dr. Rodriguez de la Fuente, and one of the

state's most famous pilots, Warren "Ace" Dodson.

Both men, along with two Spanish cameramen, were killed when Dodson's Cessna 185 spun out of control and crashed near the snow-bound village of Shaktoolik March 14, 1980.

The cross was a gift from the people of Spain and a Madrid-based newspaper, El Correo Gallego.

The Spanish newspaper covered the \$8,200 cost of transporting the monument from Spain to Seattle and then to Anchorage, as well as paying the sculptor's fee.



Michael Dinneen of The Times

### A LONG JOURNEY AHEAD

This collection of pipe is part of a Parker Drilling Co. North slope drilling rig that has been disassembled and is being loaded onto the ship Queendom Venture at the Port of An-

chorage for shipment to Ecuador. The 800-ton rig was taken apart at Prudhoe Bay, packed in 39 trucks and hauled to Anchorage down the Dalton Highway.

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Anchorage Daily News/Jim Lawrakis

A man in a fishing skiff tows the body of the whale into Ship Creek Wednesday evening.

## Ship makes an unexpected whale of a catch

A Sealand cargo ship hefted some unexpected baggage to the Port of Anchorage Wednesday morning.

The carcass of a 50-foot fin whale somehow attached itself to the hull of Sealand's 600-foot cargo ship Galveston early Wednesday as the vessel made its way north around Boulder Point, about 15 miles north of Kenai.

But according to those who spoke with the Galveston's captain, he apparently never

suspected that the ship's sudden loss of power while coming up the inlet was due to striking and dragging the deceased leviathan below the vessel's water line.

Port of Anchorage official Tyler Jones said the whale was not discovered by the ship's crew until they arrived in Anchorage about 9 a.m. As the ship began docking, the carcass broke away from the hull and currents carried it north into Knik Arm.

Jones said officials from the National Marine Fisheries Service chased the whale's bloated body up the Arm and caught up with it three miles north.

Fisheries spokesman Richard Marshall said field officials determined the whale was dead before being hit by the Sealand vessel. The carcass will be allowed to drift with currents until it beaches farther up the Arm where Fisheries biologists say it will

be allowed to decompose naturally.

What perplexes officials, however, is how the whale's tapered body was caught by the Galveston's hull and dragged all the way to port. Marshall suspects it was just a fluke incident.

"They must've just caught each other just right," Marshall said.

Jones said the whale could still be seen from Anchorage late Wednesday.

## Fisherman tows finback whale carcass away

by Carol Murkowski  
Times Writer

You could say it was a whale of a towing job, but the pun is too horrible to consider.

Instead, just note that fisherman Dave Ring obligingly stepped in where federal officials couldn't, and towed the carcass of a 50-foot finback whale out of the Port of Anchorage area Thursday.

The body of the whale, dragged into the port Wednesday by a Sea-Land Service Co. cargo ship, was hauled to Point McKenzie after lingering near shore around the mouth of Ship Creek.

The National Marine Fisheries Service, which has jurisdiction over whales in Alaska, has no money in its budget for towing whales.

"This isn't something that happens very often," fisheries enforcement agent Dan Stewart noted.

The whale, which apparently has been dead for several days, was struck by the Sea-Land vessel about 5:30 a.m. Wednesday. The captain and crew discovered it lodged on the bow after noticing a drop in speed.

When the ship began docking in Anchorage Wednesday afternoon, the whale's body broke away from the hull and currents carried it out of the port area and north up Knik Arm.

A boatload of scientists went out to examine the carcass, and determined it had been dead two to three days before being struck by the ship. They had hoped the whale's body would drift up Knik Arm and beach in an isolated spot, but instead it floated back to the Ship Creek area.

The finback whale is one of eight whales on the endangered species list, Stewart said. If it is beached, federal law bars anyone from taking any bones, baleen or

other hard parts of the whale. The meat would be too spoiled for human consumption.

Ring towed the whale to Point McKenzie "with some degree of difficulty," making 3½ miles in about two hours.

He did it, he says, because "I got hold of it in the first place to get it out of the Bootlegger's Cove area (where it had drifted after breaking away from the Sea-Land boat). I've been 31 years a fisherman, and people down there have been real nice to me all the years I've had my boats parked down there, and I thought it would be horrible for them if that whale went dry in that area."

He attempted to tow it out to sea, but the tide was against him, and he beached it near Ship Creek until the tide turned. When the National Marine Fisheries Services came looking for a way to tow it out of the port, he volunteered.

Ring says he put a weight on a line, circled the whale, and made a rope loop around its tail.

"It towed reasonably well," he said.

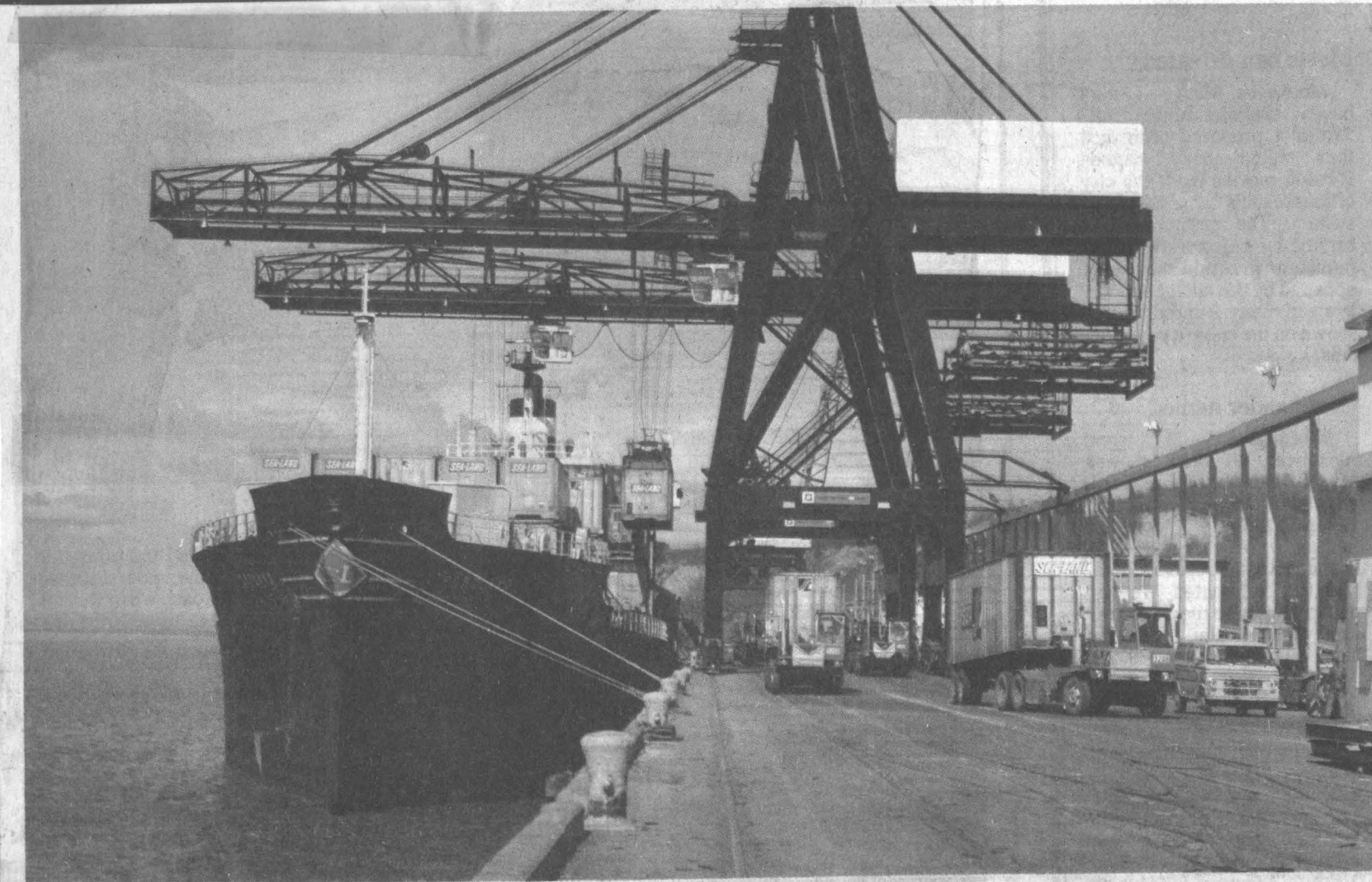
"He's (Ring) one of those private citizens who should get patted on the back for doing an effort that saves the public a lot of hassle," Stewart said.

The whale is now tied on Ring's property on Point McKenzie.

"If it stays there to decay and decompose, it's not going to concern me very much, and nobody else's property is involved," Ring said.

"I think it's a reasonably good place for it."

If the site is unsuitable for the fisheries agency, Ring said, he will tow the whale elsewhere; otherwise, he will let the 32.3 foot tide Aug. 19 carry it the whale up on the beach for permanent resting place.



Ludwig Loeb of The Times

### CARGO FOR ALASKANS

On a sunny day, the Port of Anchorage bustles with activity as ships come and go with their variety of cargos from far-off cit-

ies. Here, lines of trucks wait for their loads of cargo to be offloaded from the Sea-Land container ship "Portland."