

Iditarod Trail Committee gets long-awaited cross

By GREG GADBERRY
Daily News reporter

In a chilly building at the Port of Anchorage Tuesday, Iditarod Trail Committee representatives received a long-awaited gift: a 22-foot, 17,000-pound granite cross that waited almost three months at the port before being claimed.

Sent by a Spanish publisher, the monument commemorates the death of three Spanish journalists and an Alaskan pilot killed while filming the Anchorage-to-Nome sled dog race two years ago.

But getting the cross — and later getting it erected in Anchorage — has provided the race committee with a "comedy of errors," one official admitted.

The monument's long journey from Spain began almost two years ago, soon after three filmmakers from Television Espanol and Alaska Bush pilot Warren "Ace" Dodson were killed in a plane crash while filming the 1980 race.

According to Raine Hall, spokeswoman for the Iditarod Trail Committee, Feliciano Barrera, a Spanish newspaper publisher, raised the money to buy the granite monument.

Spanish custom calls for such a monument — called a Crucero — to be placed at the sight of a person's death, Hall said.

But race officials decided the crash location was too remote and instead planned to place the cross in Anchorage.

Before the monument could be delivered, however, the race committee also decided it had to be redesigned.

Originally, the cross was to contain a figure of the crucified Jesus, a feature vetoed by race officials in favor of an unadorned cross, Hall said.

While the donator of the monument agreed to the changes, a year passed before a second design was finished.

Finally completed, the cross was shipped from Spain in four bulky wooden crates that landed in Anchorage in mid-July.

Then the problems began.

Instead of being shipped to the Port of Anchorage, which would hold the cross for free, the monument was placed in the Totem Ocean Trailer Express yard, where it racked up almost \$3,500 worth of storage charges.

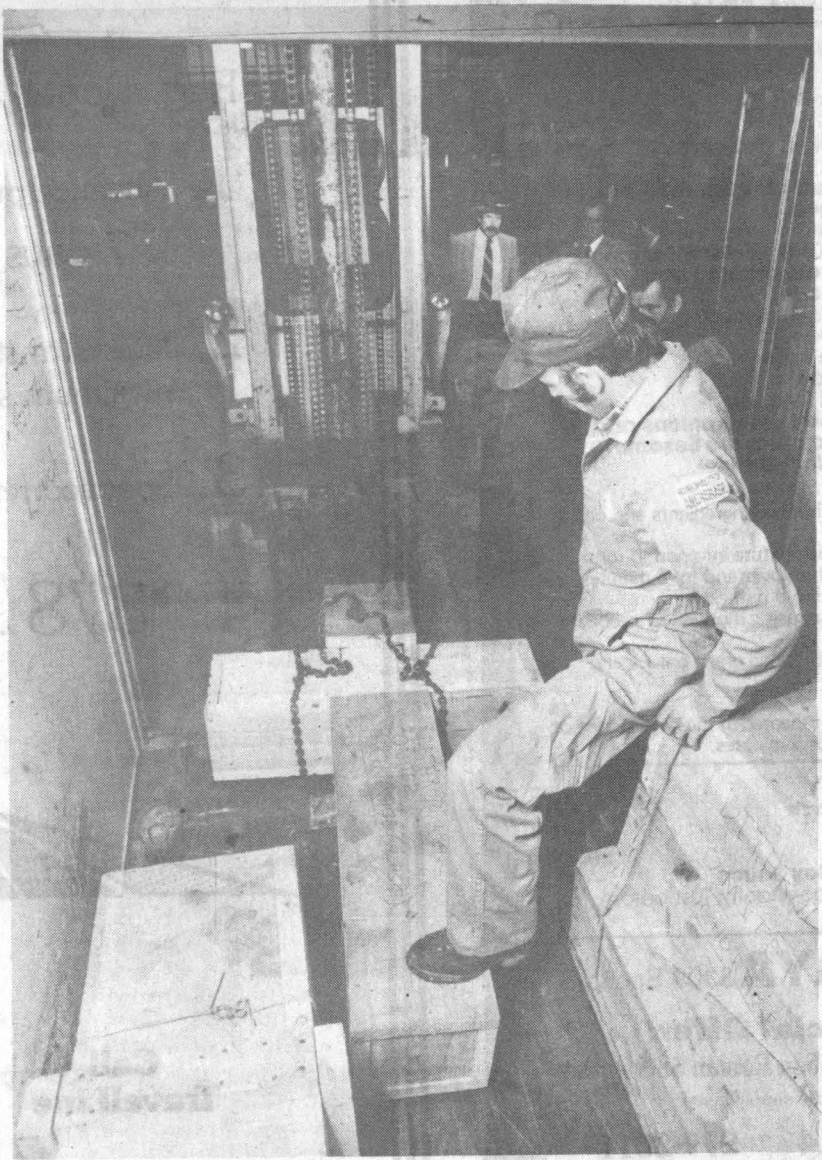
Iditarod officials, Hall said, didn't know the monument was in the wrong place until last week.

Even after the mistake was discovered, the cross couldn't be moved until almost \$5,000 in storage and customs fees were paid.

After bailing out the cross, Hall and Iditarod president Bob Sept helped move it from a TOTE container into the port building Tuesday morning.

While the Municipality of Anchorage has proposed a site in the city's Buttress area for the cross, race officials still must find a way to build a base for the almost-six-ton monument.

Cathy Allen, an aide to Mayor Tony Knowles, estimated the base could cost as much as \$10,000, a sum the Iditarod Committee is trying to raise in donations.



Anchorage Daily News/Paul Brown

Workers unload the 17,000-pound cross at the port Tuesday.

The Anchorage Times Tuesday, September 21, 1982



Alice Puster of The Times

SPANISH CROSS UNVEILED

Workmen unload a memorial cross at the Port of Anchorage this morning, after customs fees were paid and the cross released. The cross is a gift from a Spanish newspaper publisher, honoring three Spanish journalists and Alaska Bush pilot Warren "Ace" Dodson, killed in a plane crash while filming the Iditarod. An Iditarod Trail Committee spokeswoman said the cross was

released from customs after the duty was paid by committee president Bob Sept from his personal funds. The spokeswoman said the group hopes the federal government eventually will waive the charge. The cross will stand near the Alaska Railroad terminal.

Anchorage Daily News

Friday, October 8, 1982

Teamsters threaten to strike Sea-Land

By STEVE SEPLOCHA
Daily News business editor

The quiet resumption of a cargo shipping agreement between Sea-Land Service and Anchorage Cold Storage has led to friction between the Teamsters union and Sea-Land and a threat by Teamster leader Jesse Carr to shut down the cargo carrier company.

Carr, Teamsters Local 959

secretary/treasurer, reportedly threatened last week to shut down Sea-Land's operations after a union member asked why the union had allowed the cargo arrangement to go unchallenged.

Since then, reliable sources close to both companies report that the union has filed a number of grievances with Sea-Land, apparently to prime itself to legally take

economic action against Sea-Land.

The background of the current friction goes back 15 months when the Teamsters struck Anchorage Cold Storage, a wholesaler and distributor of produce, meat, groceries, beer, wine and alcohol.

When the strike began, pickets also were set up at Sea-Land docks in Seattle because that company was de-

livering about 40 loads of containerized cargo to Anchorage Cold Storage a week.

Sea-Land then canceled its hauling arrangement with Anchorage Cold Storage and the latter company made alternative cargo arrangements that were also picketed by Teamsters.

The National Labor Relations Board at that point joined Anchorage Cold Stor-

age in an unfair labor practices complaint against the Teamsters on a charge of secondary boycotting.

That charge was upheld last week in Washington by an administrative law judge.

While all of this was happening, Sea-Land obtained an NLRB ruling that it was a neutral party in the Teamster-Anchorage Cold Storage feud and decided six weeks ago to

resume cargo service for Anchorage Cold Storage.

That service was resumed without formal challenge by the union and led to a series of events that reportedly began at a general Teamsters local meeting last Friday night.

The scenario provided by union members and others

See Back Page, TEAMSTERS

Teamsters Union threatens to shut down Sea-Land

Continued from Page A-1

close to the two companies involved was as follows:

A union member in the audience rose and complained to Carr about the lack of progress in settling the strike against Anchorage Cold Storage. The member further complained that the union had allowed Sea-Land to resume its cargo deal with Anchorage Cold Storage without challenge.

At that point Carr interrupted and said the union would do something about the cargo arrangement and announced that he would "shut down Sea-Land" along the

entire West Coast in a matter of days.

Since that time several grievances have been filed with Sea-Land on matters characterized as minor, technical and impossible to resolve.

The union also has notified the company that it may exercise its legal option to strike over these grievances.

This scenario was presented to an official of Sea-Land who admitted he had heard reports of the union meeting last week.

When asked if he had received a rash of grievances from the union, Jim Davis, Sea-Land's Alaska general

manager, said there is nothing unusual about "receiving hassles in this business although I have received increased attention from the union lately."

When asked if his company was preparing itself for a strike, Davis replied that "in this business you are always prepared for the expected or the unexpected."

Davis added that his company is neutral in the Teamster-Anchorage Cold Storage dispute and had no intention of again canceling its cargo arrangement with the company.

"If we fail to handle (Anchorage Cold Storage) we

could be looked upon as taking sides. We have done everything possible for over a year to stay neutral," he said.

Union officials were unavailable for comment.

Sea-Land has three ship arrivals a week at the Port of Anchorage. Arrivals Monday and Wednesday went unchallenged. The ship scheduled Saturday is the first that could be picketed according to the union contract.

Knowledgeable union and management sources feel that primary picketing against Sea-Land at the port would be illegal and would be found to be a thinly disguised secondary boycott.