



High Adventure

A ROYAL RANGERS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS

SPRING 1975

ISLE OF THE SUN

THE SEA WITCH

MYSTERIOUS OKEEFENOKEE

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EDITOR:

Johnnie Barnes

MANAGING EDITOR:

Tom Sanders

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Paul Stanek

John Eller

Elton Bell

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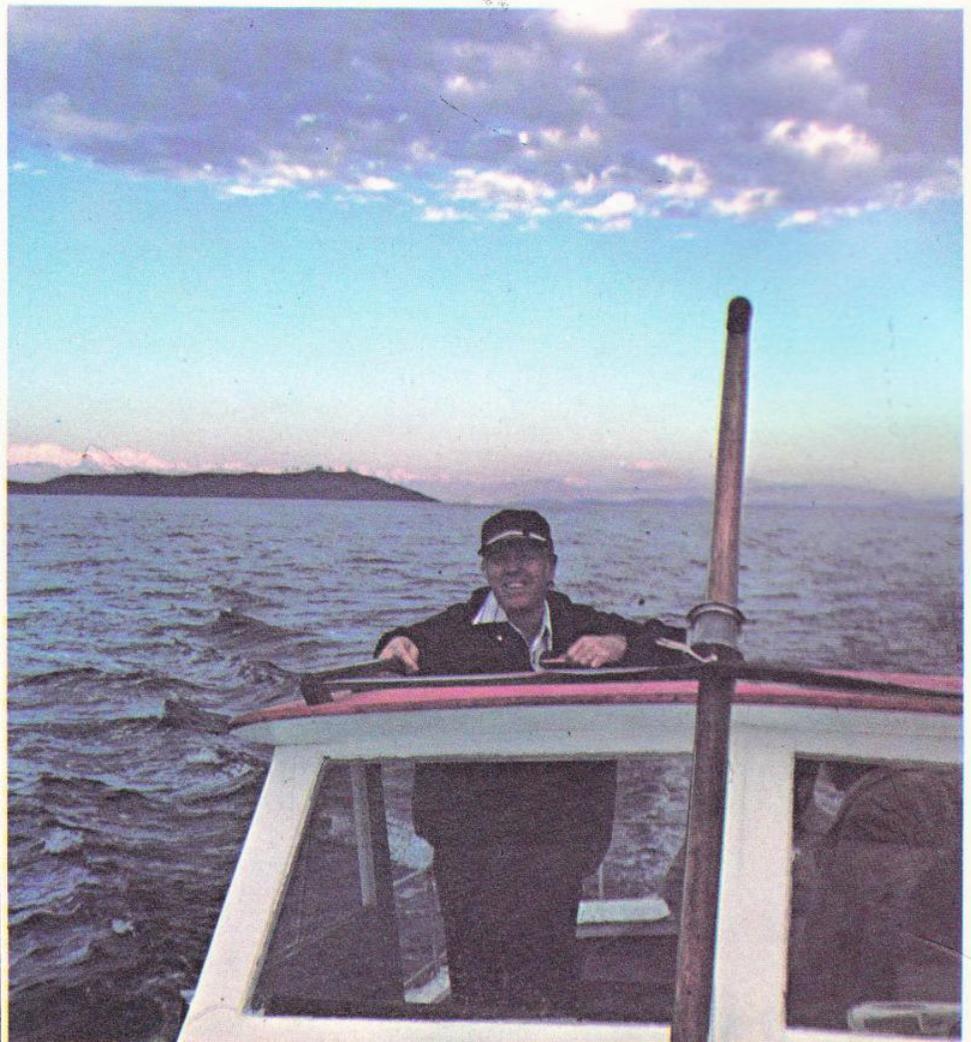
JOURNEY TO THE

ISLE OF THE SUN

By

JOHNNIE

BARNES



Lake Titicaca, cradled two and a half miles high in the towering Andes Mountains, is the legendary origin of the great Inca Empire. One legend says that the first Inca and his sister emerged from two islands in Lake Titicaca after their creation by the Sun God. These isolated islands were named the Islands of the Sun and the Moon.

The first Inca and his sister, Ocllo, (stated one legend) traveled the Andean highland with a golden staff searching for a spot to establish a city. They finally founded the city of Cuzco and began a dynasty that lasted twenty centuries, until it was conquered by the Spanish conquistadors. Their empire covered most of what is now Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador, and part of Chile and Argentina.

Some of the temples and fortresses such as Sacsahuaman in Cuzco were such enormous architectural achievements that many writers have stated that only black magic, giants, or extra-terrestrial beings could have placed the 150-ton stones into place. Some of these stones were cut so exact that not even a knife blade could pass between them—an achievement that still baffles scientists.

Their well organized social order, methodical system of keeping records, and architectural wonders made them one of the worlds greatest civilizations.

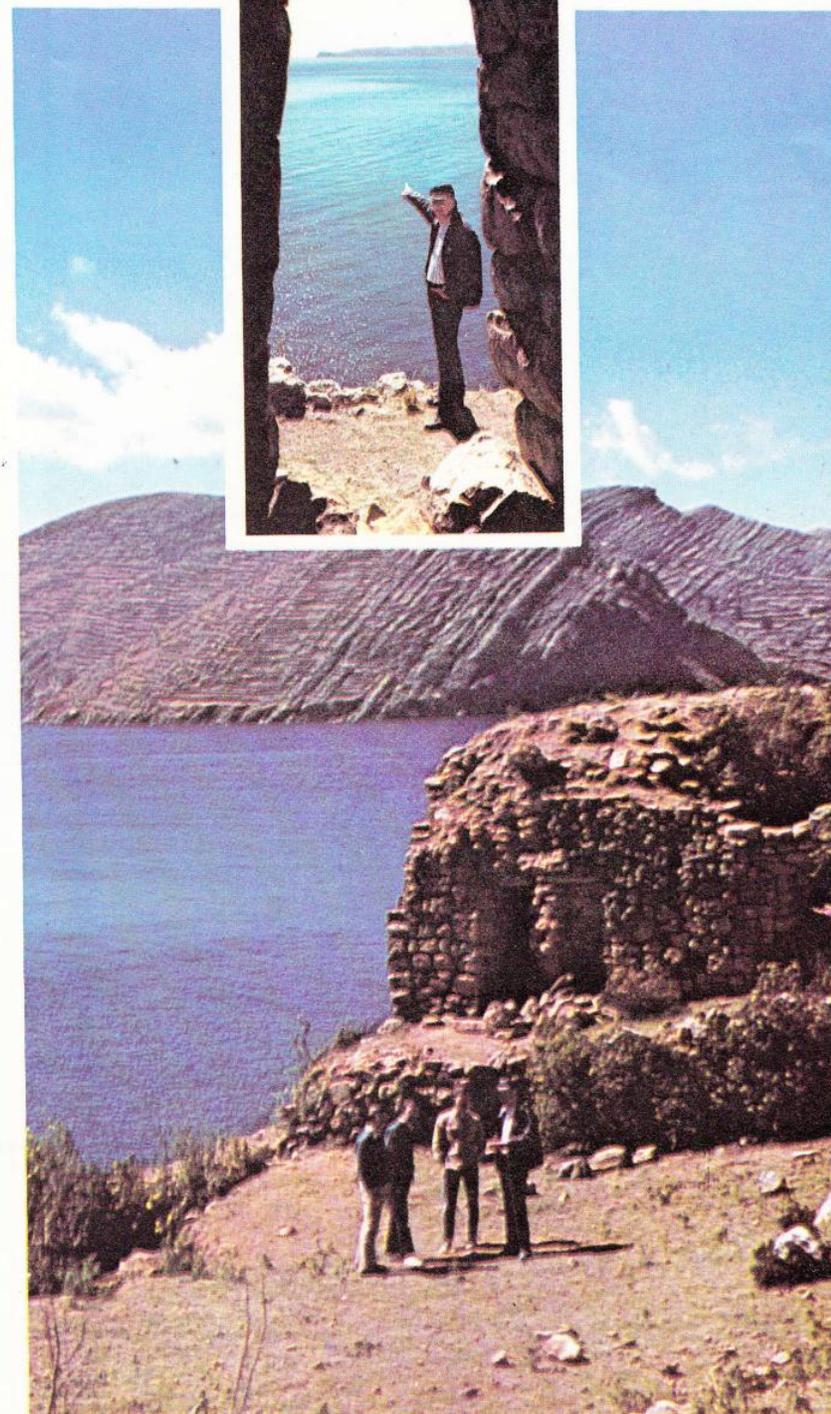
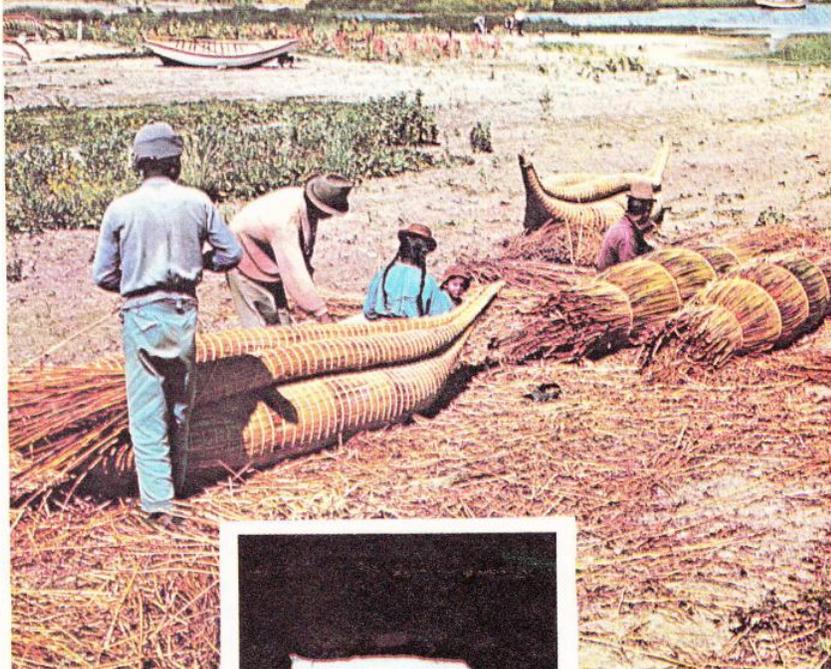
Two of the most sacred spots of this mammoth empire were the temples on the Isles of the Sun and the Moon. A religious pilgrimage to these hallowed spots became the highest of achievements for any individual.

In the eighteenth century the Inca civilization was virtually destroyed by the Spaniards and revamped into a new civilization. However, the two sacred islands of this vanished culture have remained almost untouched by modern civilization. The few people living there live much like their ancestors.

These two islands on Lake Titicaca became the object of a remarkable adventure for me in September of 1974. My companions were missionaries Bruno Frigoli, John Blakely, Jim Billings, D-Cap Gary Denbow and our Indian guide Katari.

Our adventure began when our plane landed in La Paz, Bolivia. This city in the sky is located at 14,000 feet elevation and is surrounded by a large plateau known as the alti plano. This dry, cold plateau is the land of the llama and the colorful Aymara Indian. Observing these interesting primitive people was an adventure within itself. Everywhere were poncho clad men wearing knitted caps and women with their derby-like hats and layers of wide wool skirts. These small sturdy people have adjusted to the thin air by developing lungs much larger than usual.

After waiting a brief period to adjust to the extreme altitude, we were off to Titicaca.



Our first stop was the ruins of Tiahuanaco. This temple with its huge precision cut stone and carved stone gods (who some writers believe look like astronauts in space suits) was once on the shore of Titicaca, but is now located a few miles from the lake.

How were these huge stones transported from the distant mountains? How did they bore deep precision holes through the granite stones without modern equipment? And what about those strange areas that resemble landing fields and rocket landing sights? These are puzzles that scientists wiser than I have failed to explain. One theory is that a race of ancient astronauts landed here and performed these feats. I could only look and wonder.

Arriving at the lake, the first thing that caught our attention was the balsa boats along the reed-lined shore. The natives here constructed boats from reeds, using the same methods and design as ancient Egypt. Some theorize that visitors from ancient Egypt came here centuries ago and taught the Inca this skill. Regardless of their history, these fishermen tending their nets in reed boats made a colorful sight.

Here we boarded our boat for a journey I'll never forget. Before us lay a constant panorama of clear blue water (the lake was more like an ocean than a lake), lofty snowcapped Andean peaks rising in the background like majestic temples and dark foreboding islands rising from the lake like ancient sentinels. An occasional sailboat with tattered sails, drifting like giant forgotten birds over the waves, and the distant horizon beckoned us onward to antiquity.

As we plowed across the lake, Bruno Frigoli who has lived in Bolivia for 25 years gave us a quick commentary. Lake Titicaca is the largest lake in South America and the highest navigable lake in the world. This 800 foot deep inland sea is about 169 miles long and lies at an elevation of about 14,000 feet. It is 69 miles wide with a shoreline of about 2,366 miles. Half of the lake lies in Bolivia, the other in Peru. We also discussed French explorer Jacques Cousteau's discovery of giant frogs in the depth of the lake, and the age-old legend of sea monsters. Many fishermen with nets catch huge trout, some weighing up to 30 pounds.

The lake is named after the famous swimming puma (wildcat) that lived on the rocky islands. The puma was also the symbol of power among the ancient Incas.

Brother Frigoli also explained that a Speed-the-Light boat just like we were using would soon be utilized along with Light-for-the-Lost literature to spread the gospel in the Lake Titicaca area. As he unburdened his heart concerning this area, almost untouched with the gospel of Christ, I was deeply moved by the unlimited opportunity for a great spiritual harvest.

From time to time, various waterfowl rose in the air and circled our boat. Several hours later we sighted our first goal, the Isle of the Moon; its barren dome rising out of the azure lake. Brother Frigoli informed us that the island had been closed to visitors for many years and was only recently opened. It seemed we were among the very few Americans to visit this site.

Beaching our boat at the only landing, we were greeted by the tiny group of inhabitants. We were informed that the temple ruins we wished to visit were on the other side of the island—that it was necessary to climb over the mountain to view them. Because of the high altitude, our progress up the serpentine path was slow.

Finally after a grueling climb, we reached the top. What a view! Behind us lying in the tiny harbor was our boat, while below us sleeping in the blazing sun were the temple ruins. Many of the walls were crumbled, but it was still impressive. As we examined one of the walls, we found stones just as they had been described—so methodically cut and set together that you could not insert the blade of a knife between them.

Here the Incas kept the sacrificial virgins who were later sacrificed to the Sun God. The sun was hot, but I shivered as I thought of the ancient rites performed here. Looking out across the lake at awesome snowcapped Mount Illimani, which has stood since creation in silent testimony of the majesty of God, I felt so grateful that I knew the true and living God.

After exploring the ruins and searching for artifacts, we headed back to the boat to continue our journey.

A few hours later we came upon the Isle of the Sun, one of the most sacred spots of the ancient Inca Empire. It was much larger than the Isle of the Moon, and contained several thousand inhabitants. A tingle of excitement ran through us. There it lay, a floating chronicle of antiquity waiting for our exploration.

We docked our boat at an ancient rock dock—no body knows how old—and quickly stepped ashore. The first sight that met us was a cascade of fresh clear water. Climbing up a number of ancient steps, we came to the source of the water—a spring named by the Incas as “The Water of Life.” Placing my hands under the plunging waters, I remarked, “Thank God! Because of dedicated missionaries, Speed-the-Light equipment, and Light-for-the-Lost literature, these descendants of the Incas will now find the source of the true water of life through Jesus Christ.”

After a brief exploration, we realized it was already late in the afternoon. Since there were no sleeping facilities on the island, and since it was dangerous to sleep on the boat, we decided to cross the lake to the nearest city of Copacabana and spend the night. We would return the next day for further exploration.

We were only a short distance from the island when the boat pilot shouted, "Here comes a storm." Out on the lake you could see the sudden storm bearing down upon us. These sudden squalls that churned waves to a height of six to nine feet were common on the lake. A few minutes later it struck with such force that the boat spun around like a cork on the water. Desperately we struggled back toward the island.

Trying to dock the boat in the wind and waves was extremely treacherous. As we approached the rock jetty, John Blakely leaped out of the boat onto the rocks and tried to secure the boat with a rope. But the winds were so strong he was yanked back into the water. Fortunately, he was unhurt but wet.

After a few exciting minutes, we were able to secure the boat and weather out the storm. The squall soon abated enough for us to continue, but the lake was still choppy and rough. As we battled through huge waves, the sun dropped behind the horizon and bathed the sky with a gorgeous sunset that evolved into an inky black night.

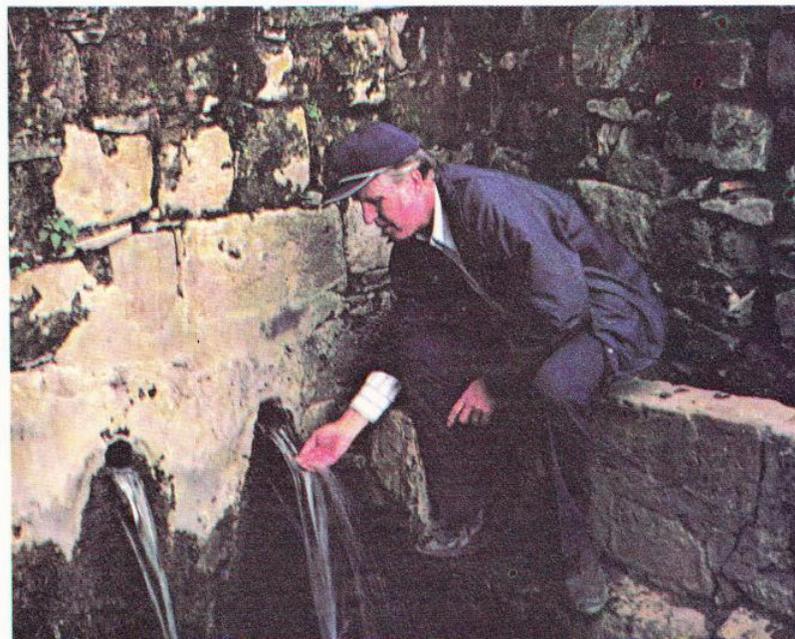
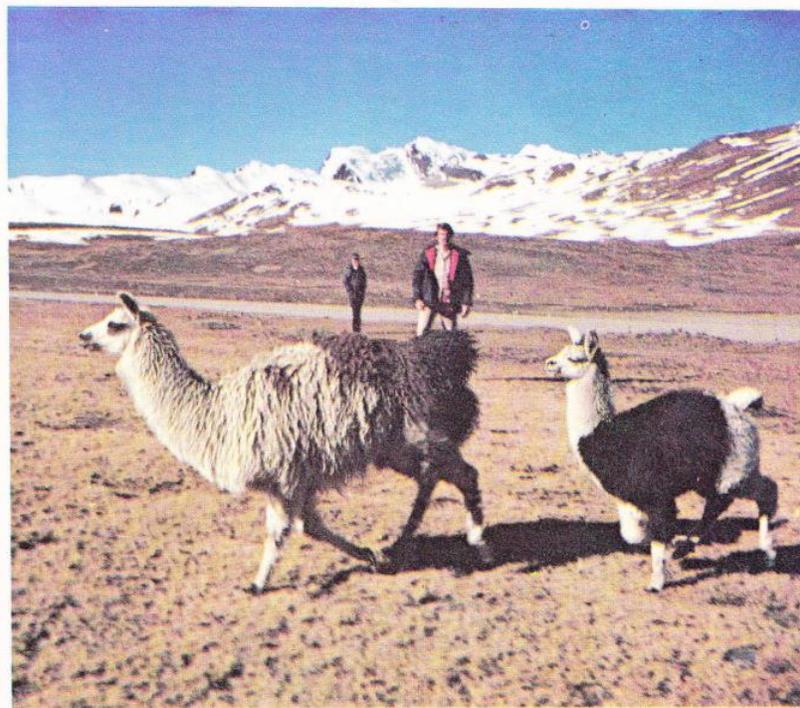
I was amazed hours later when our guide Katari piloted the boat into the dark harbor of Copacabana. The only light from this pre-Columbian village located on the tip of a mountainous peninsula was a few house lights on the hillside above the harbor. But Katari had traveled these waters for 15 years and he was right on target.

After a good night's sleep, under thick alpaca blankets so heavy you could hardly breathe, we climbed a steep hill to visit the world-famous Shrine of the Virgin of Copacabana. Then we headed back to the Isle of the Sun.

We spent the morning exploring the ruins of a palace and the surrounding area. As I stood on a hill looking out across the deep blue lake at the snowcapped Cordillera beyond, I could well understand how people with a limited knowledge would consider this a sacred place.

We have several Royal Ranger groups in Bolivia and missionary Bruno Frigoli assured us that one of the future projects would be to establish Royal Ranger groups in the Lake Titicaca area and perhaps on the Isle of the Sun itself. I was intrigued with the idea.

All too soon we boarded the boat for the trip back across the lake to crowded cities, jet planes, and modern civilization. However, our journey to the beautiful, intriguing lake on top of the world will remain in my memory as one of the greatest adventures in my lifetime. 



THE SAGA OF THE

SEA WITCH

by John Eller



It was a cold day in San Francisco. Fog rolled in from the bay in giant billows. The weather had been unseasonably cool that late Spring of 1851. A slight warming trend had only increased the overcast skies.

Several stately clipper ships stood at anchor in the harbor, flanked by an assortment of fishing and whaling vessels. Small craft had remained in port warned of choppy seas and possible high tide.

Through the mist, Kit could see the world-famous *Sea Witch*, queen clipper of her day, stately as the cathedrals of New York. A smile faded into a touch of homesickness as he remembered family and friends.

Kit Marshall was hardly fifteen when he ran away to sea and boarded ship as cabin boy. So eager he had been to leave home and its restrictions, he had forgotten to ask the destination of this voyage until they were already underway. But the talk aboard ship made him aware they were bound for the California Gold Rush.

The trip from New York had taken 103 days, fourteen days off the record set by *Flying Cloud*. But with light cargo and an average passenger list, the *Sea Witch* had achieved speeds near 18 knots.

The captain of the vessel was young Ronald Smythe, a daring navigator with a mania for speed, driving both craft and crew to the limit of their strength. Everyone had welcomed the few days ashore for rest and recuperation.

Kit was becoming restless, the murky, fogbound day only adding to his anxiety. Suddenly, a shaft of sunlight broke through the haze, skipped across the bay, and vanished toward the open sea. His heart missed a beat as the promise of clearing offered some hope for departure.

The afternoon brought more sunshine and a crew making ready for the voyage. Barking commands was First Mate Barstow McNay, a tough old salt with the traditional black patch over his right eye, but minus the peg leg. He wore a rust colored beard marked by an occasional strand of grey.

"Get her shipshape and seaworthy, lads!" he cried.

All hands were on deck adjusting the heavy canvas sails on the three towering masts. The rigging was constructed of the finest chains and ropes supporting the masts, designed to extend and contract the sails. The braces, sheets, halyards and clew lines were all being secured under the watchful eye of Barstow. Precision knotcraft was required for this ship, built with the forward-raking bow for high speed instead of great cargo capacity.

"We'll be going at a good clip, my boy," Barstow nodded to Kit, "may even clip some time from the record!" he added, turning to go below.

"Yes, sir!" Kit responded, not yet accustomed to sailor jargon, but appreciative of the general good will he felt aboard.

Kit continued to observe, trying to be handy, as the expert hands of Manson Fingers, Hayes

Crandon, and Cotton Lassiter made quick the work. Across the deck toward the bow, Redford Wellington joined Nehemiah Smith with his chores. Nugget Frowley, a former prospector taken on for the return trip, was trying to look busy amidships.

The remainder of the crew, consisting of a half dozen sailors of fortune from half as many extractions, performed an assortment of lesser tasks aboard ship. Kit knew them only by their nicknames.

There was Gula, Mex and Gusto, the Latins; Mac and Tom Thumb, the Irishmen; and Hoot, the black. The Latins seemed mostly carefree, while the Irish were prone to temper tantrums. Tom Thumb was the fiercer of the two, so called because both thumbs had been lost in a sea battle of yesteryear.

"You ready, boy?" a deep voice inquired.

"Yes, sir!" replied Kit, his gaze fixed on the sails.

"She's beautiful as a terrace cloud," said Hoot, joining Kit in admiration, "but the proper response is 'Aye, aye,'" he added, joking. Hoot had been a real friend and usually sensitive to Kit's mood.

Footsteps were heard of someone walking heavily down the ramp toward the ship. Kit looked over portside to see a dozen or so blacks carrying boxes marked "ROCKS." The men carefully negotiated the gangplank and disappeared into the aft.

The captain seemed unconcerned about the operation, leaving supervision to the first mate. Captain Smythe stood erect at starboard, his back to the shoreline, spanning the bay with a spyglass.

Work continued in the ship's hold with Barstow in charge. Presently, the dock workers finished loading and gave the signal of "all clear." Embarkation had not come too soon for Kit, his heart pounding in his chest.

"Anchors aweigh!" sang out the captain in his shrill voice. Barstow, having joined the captain on the upper deck, looked toward Kit with a sort of mocking grin. Kit turned away quickly. He had great respect for the captain.

"Good design, good workmanship, and a good crew—that's what we have, Barstow!" remarked Captain Smythe, looking skyward and taking a deep breath.

"Aye, aye sir!" returned the first mate and lumbered below toward the stern.

The weather and wind accommodated the *Sea Witch* as she sailed southward through the cold Humboldt Current and "doubled the Horn," as seamen refer to the passage of the Cape via the Straits of Magellan.

Sailing northward along the eastern coast of South America, the winds became contrary, impeding the voyage and destroying all hope of a record passage for the vessel. The captain

spoke sharply to both the crew and the elements, but to no avail.

As they finally passed the West Indies, Kit became aware there was trouble aboard. While cleaning the hold late one afternoon, he overheard two members of the crew enter and begin counting boxes in hushed voices.

One carried a sharp instrument with which to examine the contents of a crate. They spoke in a low whisper, and since he had hidden from sight for fear, Kit was not sure just who it was. The first sounded like Nugget.

The other man grunted a response to an unintelligible remark and Kit could hear a light tapping as the wooden container was resealed. The men stole away as quietly as they came.

Kit remained in his crouched position until several long minutes had passed, then crept softly toward the door. As he turned the corner to break into a run, a pair of hands grabbed him from behind, gagging, blindfolding, and tying his wrists to his feet. Kit felt himself shoved aside into an uncomfortable angle.

Presently, the room was filled with voices all talking at once.

"Quiet, mates, quiet I say!"

It was Barstow calling their meeting to order! Quickly he outlined their plan for revolt. Kit listened in disbelief with his heart churning like a storm at sea. They were talking of robbery on the high seas! Mutiny! Piracy!

Kit was seeking adjustment to the sudden change of events when he heard Nugget's voice crackle with excitement.

"Gold, lads! We're rich!"

So it was *not* rocks in those crates after all! Kit had been told they were geological samples for the scientists back East. But it was California gold—thousands of dollars worth! And it was old Nugget who had somehow known and given the secret away!

"What happen to muchacho?" someone inquired.

Kit was suddenly back to the present again, this time breathing a prayer. The voice belonged to one of the Latins, probably Gula. A shuffling of feet was heard before the answer. Terror went through Kit like lightning as he feared the worst had come. After what seemed like an eternity, someone spoke.

"We'll take care of him later. Let's get on with it!" a voice demanded, relieving Kit for a moment. Most of the men liked Kit as cabin boy, and he found it hard to believe anyone really wished him harm.

The room had hardly cleared when Kit felt hands untying the rope and removing the gag and blindfold. It was Hoot!

"Sh-h-h!" he said, lifting a finger to his lips, "the ship's in trouble! We need your help on

deck!"

The pair crept stealthily toward the stairs, joining the captain and his loyal men. Kit's hand trembled as Hoot passed a large knife to him. He looked around to survey the situation. With the captain stood Hoot, Manson Fingers, Redford Wellington, and the two Irish. Standing amidships with weapons drawn were Barstow the First Mate, Hayes Crandon, Cotton Lassiter, Nehemiah Smith, Nugget Frowley, and the three Latins.

The odds favored the mutiny with eight against seven, and one of the latter a boy. Dusk was gathering, and the silence was broken only by the rise and fall of the ship's hull on the grey sea. Kit was glad no regular passengers had been taken for the return trip.

"What's this all about, Barstow?" The captain's voice quivered a little, but he still stood erect.

"Let your weapons speak, lads!" came the reply, and the melee was on. Fortunately, the few muskets aboard were in the hands of the captain, but all fought for a while with a mixture of knives and machetes.

The captain's men, though outnumbered, fought valiantly, particularly the Irish, and for a while were holding their own, notwithstanding a fierce struggle. The captain had distributed firearms, but had purposed not to use them unless absolutely necessary.

"Man overboard!" Kit yelled as he dived from starboard into the water below. The surprise diverted the attention of the buccaneers momentarily, and was a turning point in the conflict.

Drawing their firearms, the captain's men quickly subdued the buccaneers. A bouy was thrown down to Kit, and he was raised to the main deck.

"How dare you do such a risky thing!" the captain scolded.

Kit pretended to ignore his words, reasonably sure he was half joking.

"You've earned your keep today, my boy!" the captain continued, "now go below and get dried off!"

Weak, wet, and somewhat seasick, Kit sought the refuge of his bunk. The remainder of the voyage was generally uneventful and Kit felt relatively safe with the mutineers secured in a makeshift brig. His greatest distress was in the hardtack and salt pork.

At long last the sharp hull of the *Sea Witch* cut through the waves toward New York harbor.

"That *Sea Witch*—she's a great lady!" exclaimed Hoot with a slap on the back as they disembarked.

Kit nodded agreement, looking quickly over his opposite shoulder toward the ship. Tough old sailors must neither be sentimental nor predictable, but something in Kit's eye told Hoot that one voyage out only called for another.

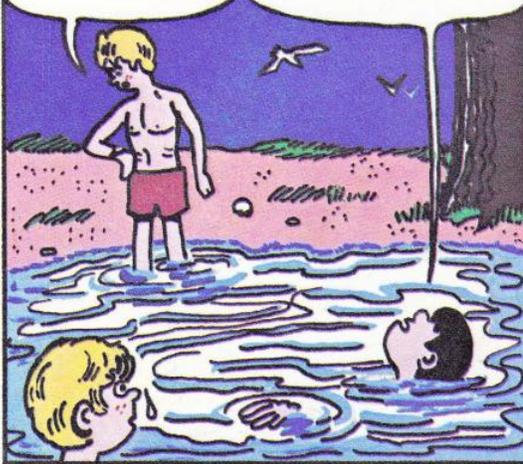
"Aye, aye, sir!" Kit yelled, laughing, as he broke into a run toward the city. 

THE TURNER TWINS



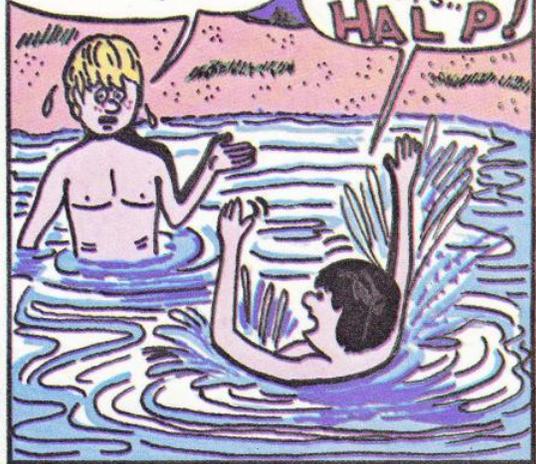
HEY, TAD! IT'S TIME WE LEFT FOR OUR OUTPOST MEETING!

AWW, STAY AND SWIM, YOU GUYS! WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO TO AN OL' MEETING



WE'RE LEARNING LIFE SAVING AND FIRST-AID AT OUR MEETINGS, FROGGY!

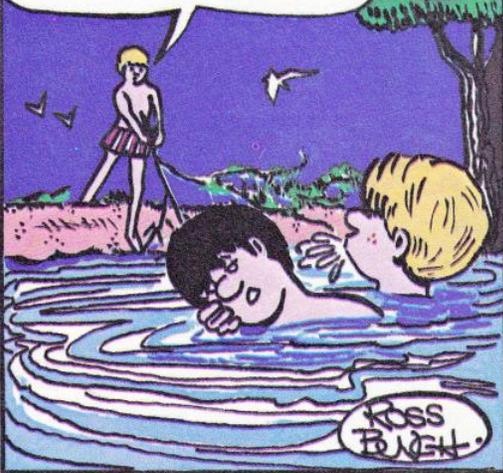
FIRST-AID? THAT SISSY STUFF? HA, HA, HA...
OOOPS... HALP!



HE MUST HAVE BACKED OFF INTO THAT HOLE BUT I'LL GET HIM!



TAD... GRAB A HOLD OF THIS BRANCH AND I'LL PULL YOU IN!



HE'S NOT BREATHING! I'LL BEGIN RESCUE BREATHING WITH HIM!



SPUT-SPUT- UHHH...
WHA' HAPPENED ??
WHO... WHO.... PULLED ME OUT OF TH' WATER ?

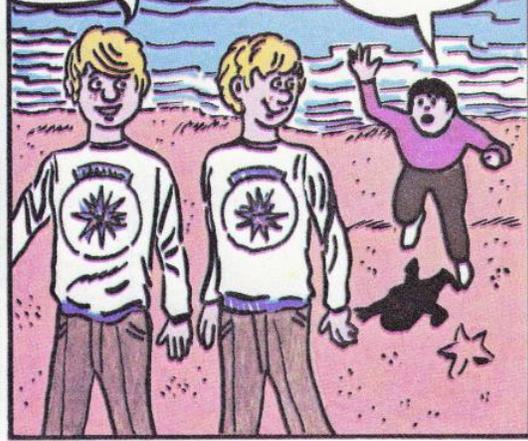


TAD RESCUED YOU FROM DROWNING FROGGY, AND I GAVE YOU ARTIFICIAL RESPERATION.. THINGS THAT WE LEARN ABOUT AT OUR MEETINGS!



WELL, SEE YOU LATER, FROGGY! WE HAVE MORE FIRST-AID TO LEARN!

HOLD UP I'M COMING WITH YOU!





EXPLORING THE

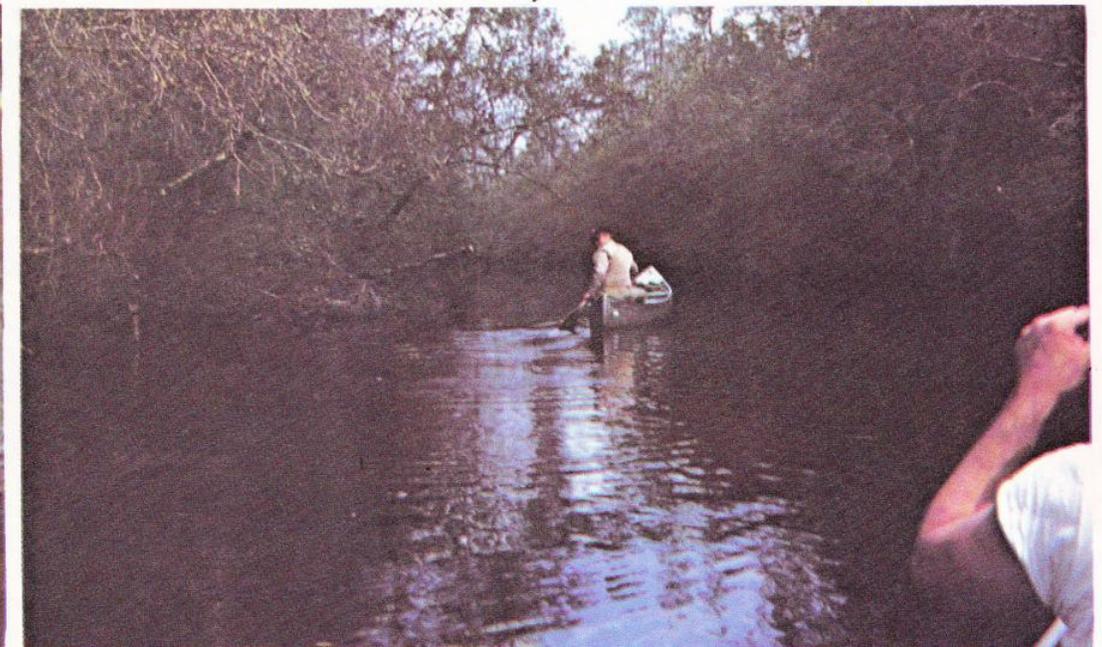
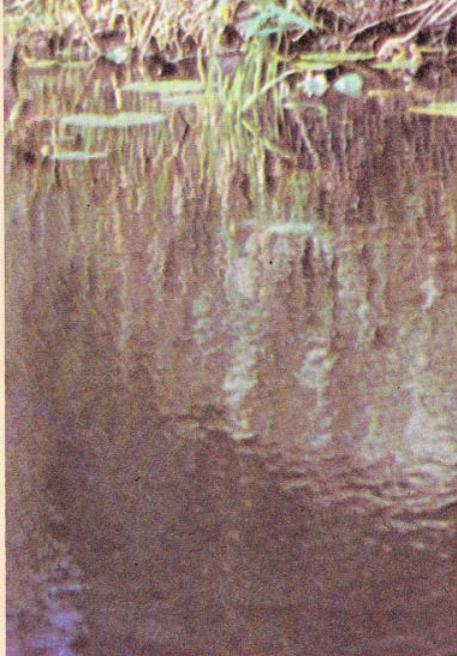
MYSTERIOUS OKEEFENOKEE

by Paul Staneck

"OK fellows, let's move out. We have to hit the water early." The crew of Rangers, already under attack by what seemed like battalions of blood-thirsty mosquitoes intent on sucking our veins dry, scampered to ready for the trip. The mysterious Okeefenokee Swamp, with all its lurking dangers was waiting for us.

We carried our aluminum canoes to the Suwannee Entrance Canal, where we hastily launched them and burdened them with camping gear. Twenty yards off the landing lay an eight foot gator that appeared as if he were observing us for a full course meal.

Everyone was anxious to penetrate the dark jungles of the Okeefenokee, because of the many weird tales connected with it. How many were true we didn't know, but maybe we would find out shortly.



Everything was readied and the small crafts slid silently off into the black lagoon. The paddles dipped with enthusiasm, pushing the canoes over the glass-slick waters. Overhead rolling thunder clouds broke loose, dumping windblown rain onto a watersoaked crew. But hearty men pressed on; nothing was going to stop us. Patience paid off as the tropical rains subsided as quickly as they came, and the welcome sun began the drying process.

The small fleet of canoes broke formation when a bowman cried out, "Log ahead off beam!" Diverting our course slightly two feet from the floating debris, the buoyant log burst to life, with open jaws and fiery eyes. "A gator!" someone shouted. With hearts pounding the shocked Rangers strained back and arms retreating from the foe. The king of the swamp submerged into the marshy deep—for good we hoped. No longer would we attempt to encroach on his domain.

The eerie snake infested canal soon began to narrow. The foliage gradually became more dense, blotting out the sunlight overhead. The landscape took on the appearance of a jungle. We were engulfed in a new and beautiful mysterious land, bursting with all forms of wildlife. The white stately cranes and undescribable variations of birds winged their way through the light blue sky. The sun-bathing gators on every bend and lurking snakes of various colors gave us the feeling of awe and excitement. The vastness and beauty of the swamp filled every imagination. We were strangers in an unusual world.

When the sun reached its peak, the hungry crew prepared lunch. There was no place to cook except in the canoes on gas stoves. Lashing the crafts together, the cooks went promptly to their chores, while others fished or soaked in the scenery. After the crew had shoveled down the tasty dry freeze food, we again pushed off into the newfound world—deeper, deeper into the unknown.

Beyond the point of no return, we came upon a small, soggy island which was to be our home for the night. There was room for one pup tent and a campfire. The rest of the men would have to sleep in hammocks suspended above the water, or in the bottom of the canoes. The men quickly set up camp and emptied the canoes. Half of the crew tried their luck at fishing, while the rest remained behind preparing supper.

Darkness captured the day as new and wierd sounds closed in around us. It was the blackest black we had ever known. The breath of the unknown lurked and splashed just beyond. The screech of an occasional bird brought chills to each Ranger. Every eye strained in the darkness as we huddled around a warm, cheerful council fire. Laughter and songs brightened the night, and for a time every camper forgot about the surroundings in the warmth of Christian fellow-

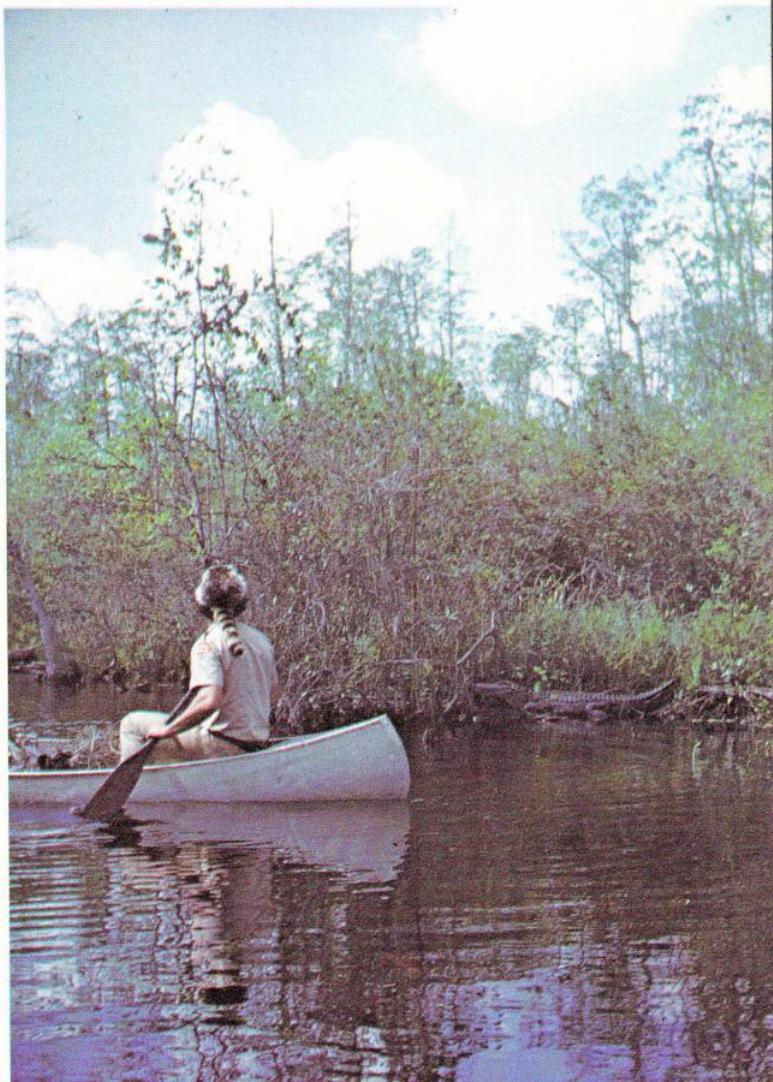
ship and fun. Exhausted from the day's excitement, we turned in for a long, sound sleep—so we thought.

Getting to bed was something else. Most of the Rangers had never slept in a hammock before, much less suspended over water. Some of the fellows climbed into their sleeping bags first, then into their hammock. To their surprise, several found themselves dangling or falling out. We laughed at each other until our ribs hurt. Some of the bedroll was lost to the water below. With persistence, the gallant men mastered the art of the hammock.

The quietness of the night was interrupted with screams and commotions ripping through the sleeping jungle. The night came alive with all sorts of sounds.

Terror struck when a couple of Rangers had to beat off some intruding red-eyed alligators with canoe paddles. "Help!" came the frantic plea. Nearly every man sprang to the battle. The struggle for supremacy was short, as the monsters were swallowed up into the night in retreat from the battle.

The victors returned to bed. But how can you sleep after driving alligators from your bed. Everyone tried resting with one eye open until sleep overtook each one. Our consciousness became as the night, dark and peaceful.





Twisting and turning in his hammock, the crew commander heard a deep growl next to him. He froze in place like a hunting dog on point at a covey of quail. Had the alligators returned for revenge? Or was it some other fiendish monster of the swamp ready to devour us. In a split second the commander's imagination ran wild. Fear gripped him. "What am I going to do? Should I yell and warn the others, and take the chance of startling the beast? How could I fight the monster, zipped up in a mummy bag? Dare I move," thought the commander.

He composed himself long enough to decide a plan of action. He would yell to warn the others and take the chance of being mauled by the creature. With every fiber of strength, the commander opened his mouth for a great shout. Nothing came out. He tried again but to no avail. He was speechless! Unable to make a sound or to get out of the hammock, the commander decided to play dead and to wait it out. The pots and pans banged for what seemed an eternity as the intruder ransacked the cooking area. In a few minutes the thing gave up and disappeared in the darkness. "God surely must have frozen my voice to protect the camp from harm," the commander concluded.

Finally the morning sun peaked over the horizon of a new day. The silent, mysterious world came to life once more. The fog slowly lifted from the sparkling waters to unveil a breathtaking, picturesque swamp.

Arising blurry eyed and pain racked from the hammocks, the Rangers prepared a good solid breakfast of bacon and eggs over a crackling fire. Afterward the canoes and the "Swamp Rats"—so we called ourselves—were underway, winding and turning through tight passageways where only one canoe at a time could pass.

The maneuvering was hard. At times we would have to lie down in the canoe to avoid thick overhanging brush. Perspiration from the heat and humidity soaked our clothes.

"Watch out!" yelled a Ranger. "A snake!" Just inches above the bowman's head was a two-foot green snake. The bowman barely cleared the snake but the sternman was headed straight toward it. The sternman back-watered while the bowman paddled forward to get away from the reptile. Finally the sternman passed under the snake with a great relief. "That's too close for comfort!" sighed the canoest.

The fleet of canoes slowly edged their way into a lagoon of stumps, underwater swamp grass and lily pads. The trail was becoming more intriguing. Five-foot seven-inch, two-hundred-eight-pound Ranger Joe was casually enjoying the scenery, when all of a sudden a twenty-seven inch black, slimy creature jumped out of the water and in between his legs. Fear streaked up and down Ranger Joe's spine. He jumped to his feet, hysterically waving his arms and doing the "jitterbug" in the canoe. "Woo Woo Woo!" cried the fear infested companion.

The canoe bounced up and down, side to side as Ranger Joe tiptoed about his newfound visitor. Gaining his composure, he noted it was not a water moccasin, but a long black Jack Fish. The rest of the crew, once they saw what it was, laughed and poked fun at Ranger Joe's bravery. But he didn't think it was a bit funny.

The rest of the morning went without mishap. After lunch was prepared in the canoes, we started the last leg of the trip.

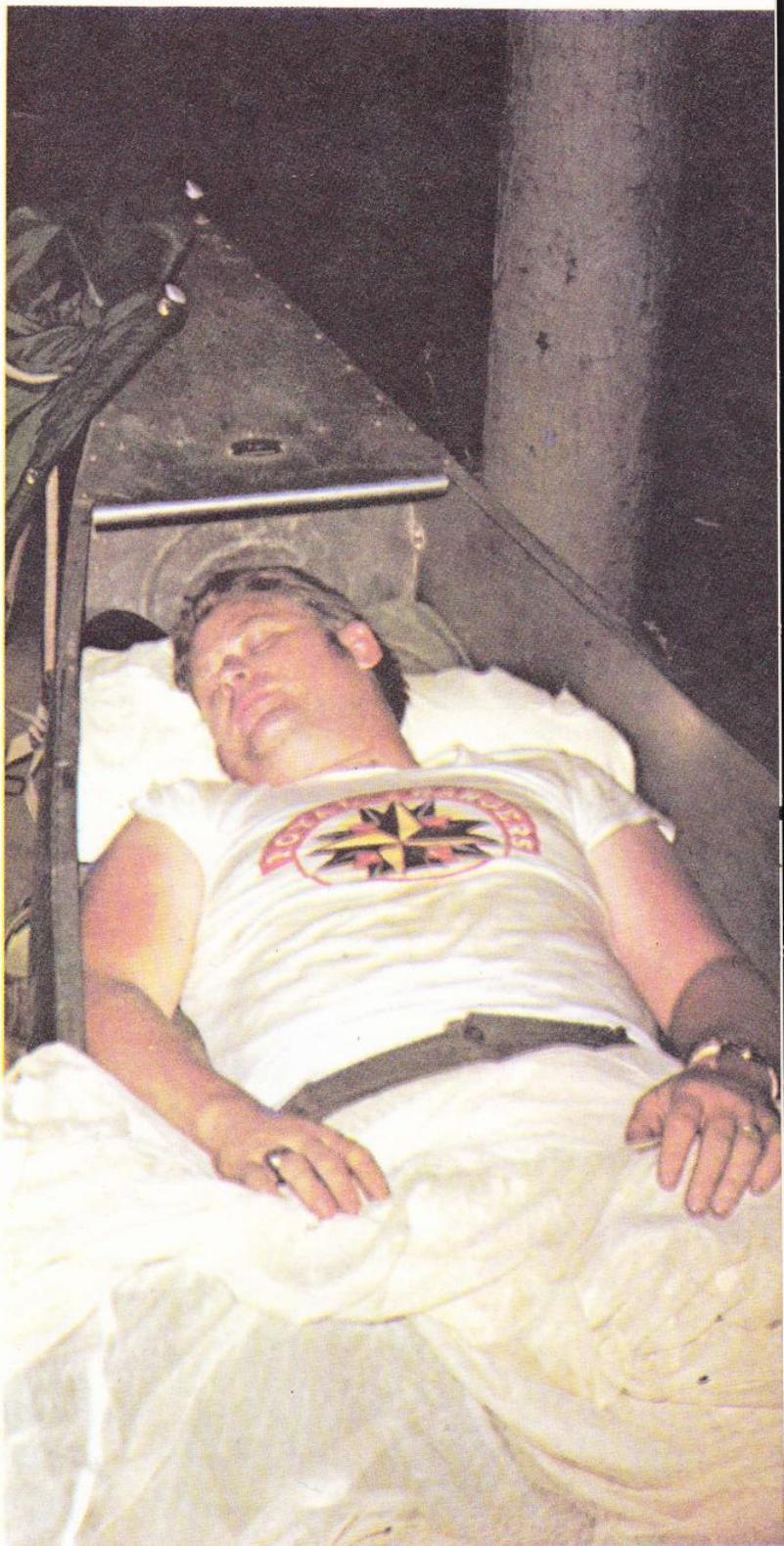
One brave soul requested to take the point so the crew commander consented. A few minutes later, the "brave soul" let out a blood curdling scream, "Back, back! O My Lord, back!" Upon turning a bend, the point canoe cornered a seven-foot alligator. The giant reptile had nowhere to retreat, so it surged forward with snapping teeth and whirling tail. The leading canoe splashed in retreat with all human effort, the green dynamo in hot pursuit. It came right to the edge of the canoe, then dove beneath the silver craft leaving the sailors wet by its tidal wave. The snakey beast disappeared beneath the whirling stream. We sat motionless for a moment wondering if it would surface and attack again. Satisfied the battle was over, the startled men sighed with deep relief and thankfulness.

The weary band of men pushed on with all skill and strength. "Land ahead," yelled another Ranger. There before us was the treeline of the edge of the swamp. We knew there was about an hour of toil left.

As we swung into the last river span leading to Stephen Foster National Park, we ran headon into a steady wind. It blew with such force that we stood dead still at times while paddling with full effort. Our backs and shoulders strained against the load. The wind drove some of the canoes off course, but the men fought back, gaining on the onrushing wind.

The "Swamp Rats" finally entered the Steven Foster Canal. With parched throats and giant appetite, we had arrived, conquering the mysterious Okeefenokee.

A sun-beaten crew loaded the gear and canoes for the voyage home, leaving behind what we hoped was a new friend. Turning for a last glimpse of the swamp, it was as though the mysterious Okeefenokee whispered, "Come again my hearty crew and we will see who is victor the next time." 



TIRE GAMES ON CAMPSITE

by Elton Bell

TIRE SPRINT: Racers line up with forward edge of tires at the starting line. On signal they push tires forward and propel them with hands until they cross finish line.

ROLL FOR DISTANCE: For this contest each player rolls his tire separately and is entitled to run to gain speed and momentum, but must then stop at the foul line while the tire rolls forward by itself. Stepping over line disqualifies player.

ROLL FOR ACCURACY: Same as above, except tire is now rolled at a target of two sticks set 3 or 4 feet apart and approximately 20 feet away.

MOVING TARGET: Players take turns rolling tire parallel to other players 15 to 20 feet away who try to throw balls, beanbags, and broomsticks through the tire as it rolls by.

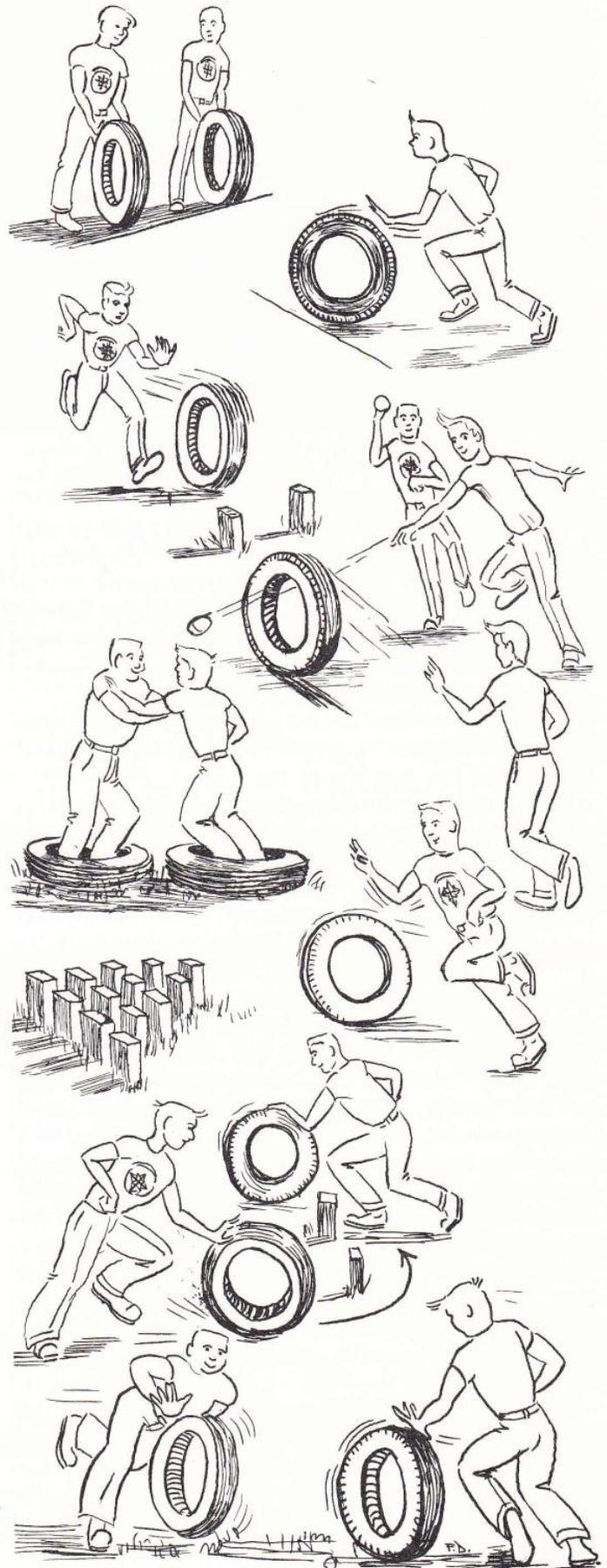
TIRE WRESTLING: Place two tires touching each other on the ground. A contestant stands in each one. On signal they wrestle, each trying to push or throw his opponent out of his tire. The first one to cause the other to fall or step out of his tire yet remains on his feet and in his own tire, is the winner.

TIRE BOWLING: Use discarded tires in place of balls, with milk cartons, tin cans, or detergent containers for pins. Arrange "alley" on the ground with the bowling line 20 or 30 feet from the "pins." Each bowler rolls two tires.

Score as in bowling.

TIRE ROLLING RELAY: Form teams and give the first player of each team a tire. Place a stake or chair opposite each team on the turning line. At the signal the first player rolls the tire to the turning line, rolls it around the stake, and back to the next player who repeats the action.

TIRE TAG: Each player has a tire that he rolls as he runs. "It" must roll his tire with him as he attempts to tag players. A player is safe if he can balance astride his upright tire while resting both feet on it. This, of course, is an uncertain position to hold and the upsets are many. When a player is tagged he becomes "it."



SHIPWRECK

By Russ Jones



A ship was wrecked off the coast of England in the days before there were airplanes and modern ways of rescuing those stranded at sea.

A lifeboat was launched and the crew set out to sea. Darkness came on but the people on the coast lit fires so the sailors might be guided to shore by the flames. After a while, those on the shore saw the lifeboat returning. When it reached the shore, it was learned that one man had been left clinging to the mast of the wrecked ship.

"Why did you not save him?" asked a man by the name of Holden.

"We were exhausted," said the captain. "We thought it better to try to get here with ourselves and those we have rescued. We would all have perished if we had remained another five minutes trying to save one man."

"But will you go back?"

"No," he answered. The storm was too severe and they were too weak.

Holden knelt on the beach and prayed that God would put it into the hearts of some of the men to go with him to rescue the one man. When he had finished praying, six men volunteered to go with him.

As they were ready to start, John Holden's mother came down to the beach and threw her arms around his neck.

"John, you must not go," she said. "You know your father was drowned at sea and it has been just two years since your brother William left. We have never heard a word from him since. What will I do if you perish?"

"Mother," he said, "God has put it on my heart to go and if I perish, He will take care of you."

Away he went determined to rescue the man who was perishing at sea. Fighting through the winds and waves they finally reached the distressed man who had almost given up hope.

As John Holden reached out his hand to pull the man on board the boat, he discovered that the man was his own brother William. With tears streaming down his cheeks, John embraced his brother and cried aloud, "Thank God, I didn't listen to others, but listened to the voice of God."

We can learn two lessons from this story. First of all, it is vital that we listen to the voice of God's Holy Spirit. Only eternity will reveal the importance of obeying Him. Someone's future in this life and in life to come may well depend upon your obedience.

Second, the incident reminds us so graphically how Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father and endured the storm of persecution, suffering, and death on a cross to save those doomed on the sea of life. How great was His courage and love. 

HIGH ADVENTURE