

Provincetown Advocate, Thursday, June 14, 1973



When the passenger boat 'Provincetown' arrived here Saturday, the crowds turned out to greet it. The only problem was that nobody could figure out how to get off the ship. The tide was too high to attach the boat's unloading ramp to its normal exit. Here captain Richard Nakasian (in striped t-shirt and sunglasses) and Harbormaster Pidge Carter (in white hat) try to figure out what to do.

New Boston-To-Provincetown Boat Service Inaugurated Saturday With Maiden Voyage

After nearly six years, Boston-to-Provincetown passenger boat service resumed Saturday afternoon when the M V Provincetown tied up to MacMillan Wharf, ending her three-and-a-half hour maiden voyage to the accompaniment of cheers, applause, and the clanging of the Town Crier's bell.

The 370 passengers, their faces reddened by the sun that shone above them throughout the trip, crowded the upper deck of the 135-foot ship, waving at the

townspeople and fellow tourists who greeted their arrival.

For most of the ship-board visitors, it was the first trip in several years to Provincetown. Many said they had ridden on earlier boats but had stopped coming to the end of the Cape after service was discontinued in 1968.

The journey to Provincetown was uneventful for them, as captain Richard Nakasian had mostly clear skies and calm waters. Only as the boat came within sight of Long Point did the

wind begin to pick up out of the southwest, the sky grow hazy, and the sea choppy.

Coming back from Provincetown to Boston was a different story, however, as the passenger boat ran head-on into a thunderstorm complete with flashing lightning and heavy rain.

"We rode right through the storm," said Grace Carey, an employee of the Bay State Spray and Provincetown Steamship Company, who was on the Provincetown's maiden voyage. "She rode beautifully. There

wasn't any seasickness at all."

On Sunday the passenger boat made its second round-trip, carrying about 175 passengers from Boston. Coming back from Provincetown Sunday afternoon, the boat picked up an additional 50 to 75 passengers who had come over the day before, and spent the night on the Cape.

The overnights were able to use their return trip section of their round-trip ticket without having to spend any extra money. They were not, however, permitted to make a reservation

to return Sunday evening, and had to take their chances on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Provincetown will continue to make just weekend trips until Monday, June 25, when it will switch to a daily schedule. The daily trips will run throughout the summer until Labor Day, when the boat will move back to a weekend schedule for September and October.

For most of the passengers on the maiden voyage the trip began before 9 a.m. when they gathered on the ancient Long Wharf in Boston, right next to the city's new Aquarium.

The passengers carried very little baggage—shoulder bags, handbags, and the like—and several pushed bicycles in front of them (a total of 19 bikes at two dollars apiece for the round-trip were loaded on board).

Several of the travellers were young, wore summer clothing, and spent most of the trip taking off much what they had on and applying liberal doses of suntan lotion. (A platform of the upper deck where the life rafts were stored appeared to be the most popular spot for sunbathing.)

The majority of the passengers seemed to be middle-aged and older, however.

At 9:15, the Provincetown's entrance ramp was attached to the wharf by crew members (all

of whom wore red-and-white striped shirts given to them by the captain, who also wore one), and the passengers began to file aboard.

On the upper decks, in the meantime, captain Nakasian, his crew, and historian Edward Rowe Snow, who usually works for Nakasian as a narrator on his Boston Harbor excursion tours (Nakasian operates three smaller excursion boats as well as the Provincetown—all in Boston Harbor and its immediate vicinity) were entertaining other passengers with stories about the Harbor and past trips.

Snow, in particular, seemed to be in a festive mood. Carrying a large movie camera, the white-haired writer dashed from the wheelhouse to the deck and back, shooting pictures, signing tickets and maps, telling stories, and constantly asking for some one named Marie Henson who, Snow claimed, had made more Boston-to-Provincetown trips than anyone alive.

At approximately 9:45 a.m., the boat left Long Wharf.

It steamed past Boston's inner harbor, headed south along the coast by Governor's Island, Deer Island Light, Fort Stan-dish, Boston Light and then east by Minot's Ledge Light.

