



NAUTICOS

# Meridian Passages

Special Itasca Edition

March 7, 2017

Volume XIII, Number 18

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## Meridian Passages

Central Pacific Edition

M/V *Mermaid Vigilance*

Contact: Ops Center

Editor in Chief:

**Dave Jourdan**

Contributors:

**Spence King**

**Marika Lorraine**

**Sue Morris**

Director of

Photography:

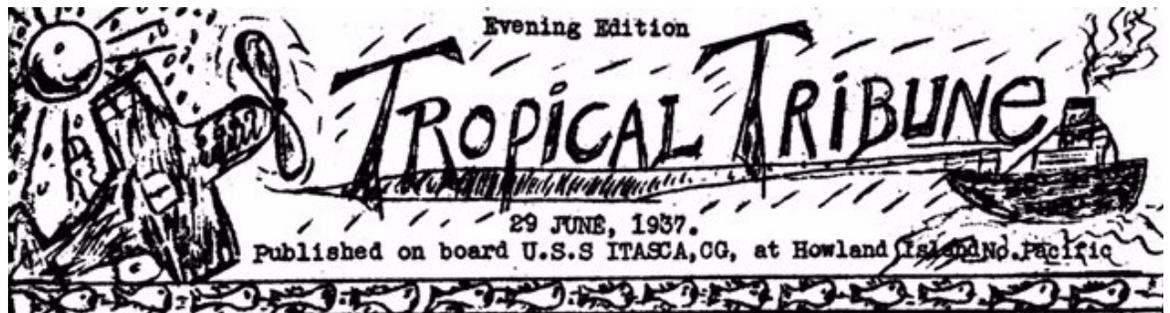
**Bill Mills**

Complaints:

**Cap'n Joe**

Layout:

**Bethany Jourdan**



**M**ermaid Vigilance was not the first vessel to have a daily newspaper. Meridian Passages was published on the R/V *Mount Mitchell* and an earlier incarnation on the R/V *Davidson* in previous Amelia search expeditions. But the tradition of a ship's newspaper goes way back. In fact, the Coast Guard Cutter *Itasca*, the vessel waiting for Amelia Earhart in July, 1937, published a paper with a hauntingly familiar theme. Reprinted here (with errors intact) is the June 29th, 1937 Evening Edition of the *Tropical Tribune*, from Howland Island, just days before the famous flyer disappeared. The tongue-in-cheek humor is made poignant by the retrospective knowledge that the special guest they are waiting for will never arrive. — editor.

## AMELIA EXPECTED TOMORROW

*Balta Bitchell's Column*

Miss Lotta Gall, Dean of Bassar, swank eastern college for women is credited for the script of welcoming musical pageant at Howland Island in anticipation of Ladybird Earhart. When questioned by a T.T scribe, she coyly admitted a primal urge to pioneer over dangerous air or water routes but her duties as dean prevented this chance of escape from a humdrum existence – however feeling the throes of composition stirring within her conceived and wrote the playlet recently published by the Pollywog paper. In a sudden burst of confidence she acknowledged that DONALD DUCK was the creator of the

musical scores and blushing admitted "that they were that way about each other."

**Sgt. Thacher, U.S.A. BATTLES MAN-EATING SHARK.** "No Fish Story"

3 pts. off Starboard Bow, *ITASCA*.

Early this afternoon Sgt. Thacher cast his line over the side using as a bait 2 pounds of raw meat and was very shortly rewarded with a terrific yank on his line. Thacher was pulled half way through [the] life chain before he was seized by quick witted Oscar Yoos and hauled back to safety. Slater Royal Police Chief saved the Sgt's haul by quickly tying the line around the capstan. The fish was so large and powerful and made such a noise pounding against the ship's sides that all the watch standers were awakened and hurried to the top sides. Steam was requested via bridge for the capstan to pull the fish in but was immediately belayed when Battling Perry, the " \_\_\_ where angels fear to tread" struck the huge monster of the deep squarely b-tween eyes with a 8 pound bivit\*. At this juncture of the proceedings James feinted [sic] and was dragged from the scene of conflict.

\* We don't know what the heck a "bivit" is. – M.P. ed.

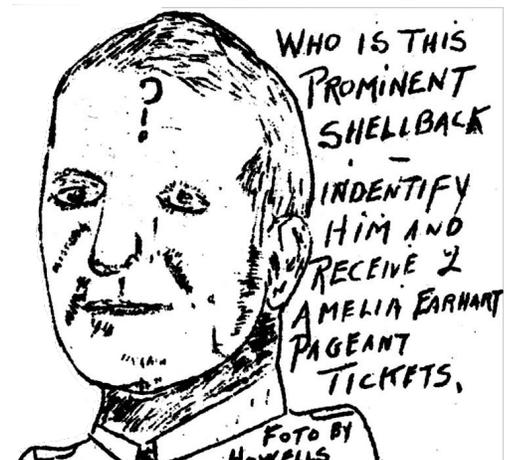
**Plan of the Day** March 7, 2017

**0900** SEA School, Alan, Ops. Ctr.

**1000** Daily Progress Meeting: Ops Ctr.

**1200** Surprise Abandon Ship Drill.

**TBD** REMUS recovery.



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**MISS EARHART TO BE INVITED TO DINE ON BOARD ITASCA AS GUEST OF COMMANDING OFFICER.**

If Miss. Earhart arrived tomorrow which we hope and pray that she will the T.T has learned that preparations have been made to wine and dine her on the ITASCA. This should be great news for some of us who will not be on hand to see her land at Howland. Perhaps the dear gracious lady will permit some of the Camera bugs to get a close-up. At least a fortunate few will secure the Earhart [sic] autograph. The editor of the sheet will seek official intervention to got [sic] the aviatrix to write here [sic] name on a strip of linotile, especially prepared for this purpose.



Mrs. Wallis Davey [sic] Jones in an exclusive interview while reclining under the shade of her beach umbrella at Howland Island says she has no intention of divorcing Davy. Says King Neptune is just good pal.

**SHELLBACKS TO OFFER** Miss Earhart Honorary membership in the "Ancient Order of the Deep" - A suitable Certificate is being made for her bearing the ship's seal.

**COMPLIMENTS OF SHIP'S SERVICE STORE**

Free candy and Cigars will be given away daily during the regular hours of issue to all hands and the Ship's Cook during the remainder of this cruise. REASON: We are all out of both items.

Signed: /s/Groves, Chief Dispenser  
Approved: Mr. Mellen

**REAL MERMAID VIGILANCE NEWS**

**Operations Summary:** REMUS had a late night service cycle that kept the deck team busy until the early morning hours. The AUV went back to the depths on its 11th sortie of the expedition. REMUS performance has been excellent in bringing back sonar and

Evening Edition  
**TROPICAL TRIBUNE**  
29 JUNE, 1937.  
Published on board U.S.S ITASCA, CG, at Howland Island, Pacific

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All rights reserved.  
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WHO IS THIS PROMINENT SHELLBACK - IDENTIFY HIM AND RECEIVE 2 AMELIA EARHART PAGEANT TICKETS.  
FOTO BY HOWELLS

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photographic imagery of geology and interesting contacts. A failed camera dome was replaced and problems with transponder floats are being managed, but the vehicle is doing its job.

Alan was welcomed aboard from S/V Sauvage on Saturday afternoon, in time to enjoy the

Sunday bar-b-cue and a busy afternoon & evening of REMUS operations. We are very glad to have him join the team!

**SURPRISE DRILL.** The scheduled surprise drill was again postponed. One of these days there is going to be a drill, and it for sure will be a surprise.