

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

ADDRESS REPLY TO
COMMANDING OFFICER
LTS CAPE SARICHEF
REFER TO FILE

RESERVE
JUL 16 1956
U. S. COAST GUARD
Office CDR 17th CG District
10 July 1956
A7

From: Commanding Officer, LTS Cape Sarichef
To: Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District

Subj: Reproduction of History of Cape Sarichef

1. Enclosure 1 is a story of the base that was evidently written by one K. B. SMITH and reproduced in the Coast Guard Magazine in March 1951. This is the only copy of this story that could be found in the files of this unit. Since it is an item of interest to all hands and possibly higher authority on the public relations side, it is thought that copies should be made.
2. This unit has neither the stencils nor the yeoman to make the suggested reproductions. It is thus requested that the district make approximately fifty copies of the enclosure and send them, together with the stencil, to this unit.


G. K. GREINER, JR.

Encl: 1. "A Look At Loran Duty in Alaska"

Look At Loran Duty In Alaska

Would you like to see how one of the Coast Guard's modern Loran Stations shapes up? Stop a while and we'll take a good look at one of the Alaskan models.

Many old station logs, visitor registers, notes and drawings were found on the Cape Sarichef station grounds recently concerning the earliest light installation on the Cape. The men who found them will be a long time forgetting the interesting exploration conducted through their aged pages. Though they are written matter-of-factly the color clearly projects itself from the logs and let's the present day observer feel the hardships of life on the old station.

We would like to pass on to you a little of the old light's story and show something of how it compares with our present day up-to-date installation.

The original light, complete with keeper's dwellings and storehouses, is two hundred feet below it's modern counterpart on the shore. The land for the first station was reserved and surveyed for it's construction by the Thirteenth Lighthouse District in January 1901, the station itself completed and commissioned in 1904. The three years taken to complete this small light station does not seem suprising when we think of the inaccessibility of it's location to the sources of material in those days. The nearest source of necessities alone (food, clothing, etc.) was sixty five water miles away at Dutch Harbor. Once building materials did arrive the delivery was only half over. Putting lumber, roofing, cement, and other items necessary for the construction ashore was an arduous task through the ever pounding surf. Often the ships transporting material has to return to their ports without landing, thwarted by the sea and forced to wait out long storm spells. No material for the job was available on Unimak Island (it being as treeless as the bordering Pacific).

The original light was housed in a tower one hundred eighty five feet off the water (later destroyed by fire, August 1950, to facilitate observation of a new light built above and behind it). The light served general navigational purposes for shipping using Unimak Pass. All the early buildings of the light station were frame structures.

Little is said in the logs of the crew as it existed then. In 1920 total personnel consisted of three keepers. The keepers were appointed by the Thirteenth Lighthouse District, under whose jurisdiction Cape Sarichef fell. Though the roster was small it was sufficient to man the light and fog signal which were the only navigation services provided by Sarichef then.

The station was laid out along five hundred yards of beach, in a setting of loose, shifting volcanic sand. On both sides were rocky formations and slightly sloping boulder covered rises. Behind it rose a two hundred foot precipice. The surroundings seeming to focus the light's location on the sea, beamlike, were neutral yet distinctive enough to provide easy daytime observation from seaward.

The station then had three boats which were used to carry mail to

and supplies to and from, visiting ships. The boats were lowered into the water by means of a portable derrick and boom, mounted on the reef when needed. Supplies were hoisted from the boats with a gasoline hoist mounted on a tram and run out onto the reef from shore. The whole operation must have been very difficult for three men, to run the hoist, steer the boat safely into the water with the guys and once in the water to keep it from ripping itself apart on the surf battered rocks.

In the 1910's and 20's there was a very small amount of shipping using Unimak Pass during the winters so Sarichef and Scotch cap light's were discontinued from November 15th to March 20th of each winter season. During these off periods the lights were lit only a few days in the middle of each month when the mail boat was expected, and the keepers spent the remainder of the time trapping fox for a livelihood.

The good ship S. S. Starr supplied the station with food and mail in the 20's and early 30's. No description of earlier supply vessels is found in the old logs, the only references made to them are entries such as "mail boat came today", or "Supply ship with monthly stores sighted due west at 1300. Unable to make landing due to surf conditions." We imagine the mail boats and supply ships mentioned were steam driven coal fueled vessels like the Starr.

In her time the Starr was Sarichef's and Scotch Cap's only link with the outside world so her arrival was eagerly anticipated. Log entries attest to the "close watch maintained" the middle of every month for her. This steam powered Santa Claus was sometimes forced to continue on her course without attempting landing due to the previously mentioned rough surf. Anxious for mail the keepers often launched a boat despite the pounding conditions of the surf, only to be in turn launched from the boat, necessitating rescue measures and making for wet and discouraged keepers.

The only visitors to Sarichef in those days were occasional trappers and lighthouse inspectors, these few and far between. The huge, musty old visitor register book records only fourteen visitors the entire year of 1905, sixteen the entire year of 1906, and only eleven the year of 1907 (nowadays we 'gripe' if we get only five planes a month).

The loneliness of the old station must have been depressing, and coupled with the ruggedness of living in these desolate parts we imagine rotation day was as happily anticipated then as it is now.

Cape Sarichef is located on the ^{NORTH} ~~south~~ western tip of Unimak Island and guards the western entrance to Unimak Pass. It serves, in conjunction with Scotch Cap Light Station, general navigational uses in negotiating the pass from the North Pacific to the Bering sea and vice versa. Scotch Cap is twenty miles distant, at the eastern entrance to Unimak Pass.

Cape Sarichef light (observed from seaward) appears as if it was erected before, instead of after, it's natural surroundings. Backed by rolling hills and steep slopes, green with grass in summer and white with snow in winter,* flanked by steep cliffs and rocky beaches, all seemingly centered on as if protecting, the light. Rising several miles behind Sarichef and over a mile high is a dormant volcano, Mount Pogrammi, 6500 feet of snow-crested magnificence. That Pogrammi once held the power to change the face of the land (and did so many times) is evidenced for miles around her.

One mile south of Sarichef is an old lava flow, or "bed", here there are ten square miles of grotesque rock formations, created by the violent forces present when millions of tons of boiling liquid rock raced headlong down steep slopes and into the equally determined icy masses of the Bering Sea. Some of the formations appear as petrified tree stumps, others as black ghosts moseying about nature's surrealistically formed graveyard, and others as anything the mind in full play can imagine. Deep crevices, bottomless to the observer and sharp precipices, dangerous to the amateur explorer, constitute the mass of the bed. On the shoreline the all-consuming black blood of the volcano met the sea while the artistic possibilities of nature saw hellish relief and formed a remarkable panorama of rugged beauty. Stateside the lava beds would undoubtedly be a tourist attraction comparable to the Carlsbad Caverns of New Mexico or the Grand Canyon of Arizona.

Unimak Island is the first and largest of the Aleutian Chain, being an "island" only by the grace of a very narrow (impassable) pass which adjoins it's northern tip and disconnects it from the Alaskan mainland technically if not practically. This shallow northern pass (called "False Pass" for obvious reasons) is only navigable by fish and very small boats. Unimak Pass at the southern end of the island is the northernmost (and so - shortest) route through the Aleutian chain available to shipping bound for far eastern and Bering Sea ports from Ketchikan, Anchorage, Prince Rupert, and other points in Alaska and Canada. The island has over twelve hundred miles of coastline, for the most part dominated by steep bluffs and interspersed stretches of lavic sand beach. Offshore reefs make much of the surrounding water turbulent as the swells smash over and through them racing shoreward. The island is bounded by the Bering Sea on the west-northwest, the north Pacific ocean on the east-southeast, Unimak Pass on the southwest and the aforementioned 'impassable' False Pass on the northeast. The shoreline is fairly straight with only moderate indentations. From the shoreline inland, to the peaks of the various dominating mountains, the terrain rises gradually over a series of boulderous hills, thence (almost perpendicularly in some parts) to the snowy summits which command the island.

The majority of the Unimak volcanoes are dormant or semi-dormant. The only active volcano on Unimak whose smoky emissions are constant and visible for and considerable distance, is Mount Shishaldin. Mount Shishaldin is a 9370 foot peak in the middle of the island. She is the highest of the Aleutian range present on Unimak and her lofty dignity makes her one of the most beautiful anywhere. Several miles to the east of Shishaldin are the Isanotski Peaks (called "Twin Peaks" locally), two 8120 foot twin sisters who stand gracefully by Shishaldin and share command of the island. Evidence of the once thriving state of the Unimak volcanoes is an abundant reminder that even a small eruption could mean catastrophe for the local residents.

Snow covers all the higher peaks (from 1500 feet up) the year around. Storms are frequent and often violent, approaching and departing without warning. Snowfalls make the higher ground impassable in the winter, and though the shoreline is comparatively free from this difficulty occasional blizzards make life on the coast sometimes miserable.

There are many streams on the island, all shallow, swift and icy cold, originated by snowfalls high up the mountain slopes. Since almost every road now in use intersects one or more of these streams they present hazards to driving not ordinarily encountered on stateside highways. Many a sailor has found himself at sea in a jeep while attempting to ford one of these icy fingers. The streams

provide the water supply for the two Coast Guard stations on Unimak. For recreational purposes they are useless, having very few fish and being too cold for swimming. The Unimak streams would be useful for irrigation if the weather permitted such a productive undertaking as farming, if adventurous farmers were willing to risk it and if the rock filled earth hereabout's were not so rock filled. For purposes other than water supply we see them only as obstructions, pretty but poison to driving. ✕

On the southern tip of Unimak Island is Cape Sarichef's partner in seeing shipping safely through this important passage, Scotch Cap Light Station. Manned the year around by only five men it provides besides the light, radio beacon service for aircraft and ships in the North Pacific - Bering Sea area. The station is built on a one hundred foot bluff overlooking the remains of the old installation. The original station was destroyed by earthquake and tidal wave in 1946, a tragedy which claimed the lives of the entire crew of five Coast Guardsmen. The Scotch Cap light serves shipping using Unimak Pass and in conjunction with Sarichef and Akun Head Light (across the pass on Akun Island) makes the otherwise dangerous pass negotiable at night as well as in the day. The station is very remote, however the importance of Scotch Cap Light more than compensates for the discomforts of isolation, and the men who man the station can well be proud of the job it performs.

Two modern one story structures comprise the main station, one housing the barracks, galley, engine room and radio beacon, the smaller of the two housing the light and fog signal and machinery necessary for their operation. It is compact and efficient, built on higher ground than it's fore-runner, overlooking the scene of the horrible nightlong destruction. It's new location will serve to thwart the rampages of tidal wave, should another strike.

Scotch Cap is supplied (as is Sarichef) by a bimonthly logistic flight from the Coast Guard Air Detachment at Kodiak. Heavy equipment and fuel is landed by ship once a year, and oftener if necessary. The only reliable (however slow) transportation to the airstrip is by tractor which shortcuts over small hills and beaches. The trip takes about two hours in good weather and when a plane is due Scotch Cap/ is notified by Sarichef of it's arrival time early enough to make the trip and meet the plane on landing.

Incidentally, the Sennett Point airstrip is probably the only one in the world whose control tower is ten miles distant. No facilities are available at the airstrip for communication with aircraft attempting landing, except Coast Guard aircraft, the latter being worked direct by means of a small transmitter-receiver at the field. All commercial aircraft are guided in with runway conditions, wind reports and advice on direction of approach from Sarichef, ten miles to the northwest. Sarichef receives it's information from Sennett Point via radio telephone. The procedure may sound odd but Sarichef serves as a very efficient control tower as long as communications hold up between the station and Sennett Point.

Reeve Aleutian Airways flies mail to Unimak and other islands in the chain once weekly. The arrival of the mail plane, needless to say, is the most avidly anticipated event of the week. On bad days when the mail plane is unable to land morale usually takes a coincident drop, mail being the only available line with home and the latest family news. Would you like to see some really

discouraged men? Come around Sarichef sometime when we have gone three weeks without mail. Coupled with the complete isolation a couple of mail-less weeks makes a hard pill to swallow and all hands concerned usually comment on such a happening with words to the effect of "your father's moustache" when mail is delayed.

Let's get back to Scotch Cap. On the station is a copy of the station log for the month of April, 1946. This is no ordinary account of daily events; it is a veritable account of eleven days of earthquake and almost constant tremors accompanied by an all-consuming tidal wave, which completely wiped out Scotch Cap Light Station along with it's crew..

The station had stood long to protect shipping on the sea but when the tidal wave struck there was nothing and no one to return the favor and now keep it from the sea itself. Traveling at over 100 miles per hour hundreds of thousands of tons of water swept swiftly over the beach unannounced and ripped through the station; crushing buildings like match boxes under the blows of a hammer, dashing human property and human life itself to hopeless pieces, and finally coming to an abrupt and turbulent halt against the cliffs. This suddenly emancipated violence from a usually serene, sometimes foreboding but always beautiful stretch of the North Pacific was terrifying in it's suddenness along.

At the time of the Scotch Cap disaster there was a smaller (officially separate) station used for direction finding, above and behind it on the bluff, whose height alone saved it from the horrible fate suffered by the light station. It was here that the now locally famous log was kept, kept by the officer in charge, who, even as he wrote the first accounts of the earthquakes, didn't know that could he see through the blackness of the night and storm he would observe as gruesome a scene of destruction as has ever taken place. The old log records well the first frantic night of the tragedy and the nightlong fight of the D/F station crew to reach higher ground with blankets, food and whatever important papers and equipment could be carried. The only indication the D/F station personnel had of the light station's fate during the long and trying hours of the first night was the ominous absence of the usually brilliant beam of the light. Not one of the men pictured the completeness of the light station's destruction though the fierceness of the storm gave a clue to possible loss of the station.

Some of the water did come over the bluff but not enough to do serious damage. The bluff was over one hundred feet higher than the normal waterline which gives the tidal wave itself a height of over one hundred feet. The imagination must be stretched almost beyond reason to picture a single wave with that towering stature but once pictured it makes the havoc wrought to the light station easily believable.

The D/F station log account of the first hours of the series of quakes and accompanying savage seas is - in it's official simplicity - a tense account of natural forces at their ugliest:

"0130: Severe earthquake felt. Building rocked severely. Objects shaken from locker shelves. Duration Approximately 30-40 seconds. Building creaked and groaned but no apparent damage. Weather clear, calm."

"0157: Second severe quake felt. Shorter in duration but harder

than at 0130.....again no apparent damage although buildings shook severely."

"0218: Heard terrific roaring of the sea followed by huge sea immediately. Top of the wave rose above the cliff back of Scotch Cap light station ((the observers position was a little higher than the edge of this cliff)), and struck D/F station causing considerable damage. Crew ordered to high ground. Can't make radio contact so broadcast following message: "PP NMJ NNA NNF NND TIDAL WAVE MAY HAVE TO ABANDON THIS PLACE X BELIEVE NNHK ((Scotch Cap)) LOST INT R INT R K K K ". ((Operator found later that receiving antenna had been blown away)).

"0245: Scotch Cap believed lost, light extinguished and horn silent."

"0300: Gathering emergency stores and clothing to DP building. Called crew back (as sea is apparently abating) to get more clothing and canned goods. Emergency lights rigged and carrying clothing and supplies to DP building."

"0345: Sea seems to be moderating. Still no wind but clouding up. Heavy roaring from ocean but seems to be quieting. Light Station total loss all hands."

"0346: Tremor."

"0551: Made radio contact with NNA passed wave information."

"0700: Went to Light Station, debris strewn all over place. Piece of human intestine found on hill."

"0725: Plane approached from eastward and circled over station, unable to make radio contact."

"0800: Various tremors."

"1200: Plane circled place blinked "Do you need help?" answered negative and made radio contact with him. Crew still moving blankets etc. to DP building."

"1800: Few slight tremors. Sea normal. Lookouts posted to watch sea during night and to sound alarm if ocean heard roaring again. All hands have been awake for 24 hours, working on emergency measures."

Appended to the log later: "Heard news broadcast that tidal wave causing much damage. Many places being evacuated. CGC Cedar and CGC Clover proceeding Scotch Cap to assist. Man at D/F station talking to man at Scotch Cap when first tremor felt, man at Scotch Cap said that deck was raised. Whether crew had attempted to evacuate and were caught by wave or were trapped inside is not known(CO's personal belief is that crew of Scotch Cap was still in building). Five men lost (total personnel) at Scotch Cap Light Station." Page 5

For eleven consecutive days the log recorded tremors and quakes of varying degrees. Twenty miles northwest at Cape Sarichef tremors were felt and buildings shook intermittently.

First news of the horror encountered at Scotch Cap was received by Sarichef on the radio and recorded in the station log shortly after other

entries which give some indication of the frustration and concern felt by Sarichef's personnel for the safety of Scotch Cap. "Unable to make radio contact with Scotch Cap", repeated several times at successively shorter intervals shows that the officer in charge at Sarichef suspected trouble. The frequency of the entries attesting to the impossibility of radio contact, interspersed with entries describing successive earth tremors, projects despairing concern for Sarichef's sister station vividly.

The day following the tidal wave the remains of the light station were combed for possible recovery of important papers. The log relates, after details of a day long search: "Nothing found." Days later several bodies were recovered on different parts of the shoreline and except for teeth for the most part remaining intact and rings refusing to budge from fingers would have been unidentifiable.

Because of the importance of Scotch Cap to navigation through Unimak Pass an emergency light was rigged during the crisis and the station later completely rebuilt on higher ground.

To lose one's life by tragedy such as struck Scotch Cap is not ordinarily considered heroic, nor are awards forthcoming in circumstances such as this. Those five men's awards came from the hearts of sailors who had so many times used their light and thanked the Lord that it was there to make life safer in this corner of the sea. Personally, we take our hats off to anyone who must make such a supreme sacrifice in so thankless, monotonous and lonely a job.

The majority of Unimak's population consists of bears and foxes. With unconflicting interests the two groups live totally at peace with one another, and except for a few regrettable incidents, at peace with man. Unimak Island is a game preserve thickly populated with the huge Alaskan Brownie's and the red type foxes, the latter characterized by their grizzled red fur, bushy white-tipped tails and intelligent faces, the former by their size, stealth and power. Numerous instances of unexpected contact between the personnel at Sarichef and the bears have proved humorous.

The Alaskan Brownies are the largest in the world and have been known to tip the scales at 1500 or 1600 pounds and tower nine feet. We've yet to lure one to the station and weigh him in but the source is authoritative. Their strength is amazing - one jittery observer reported seeing a Brownie pick up a cow in it's forepaws, rise on his hind legs man-fashion and forthwith wade a stream with the cow held high and dry. Their tracks average from eight to sixteen inches in diameter, preceded on hillsides by deep slashes in the earth where knife-like claws took grip.

It is quite disconcerting to find the earth pocked with bear tracks in areas where the station personnel must go, in the black of the night. Or to suddenly find yourself vis a vis with 1200 pounds of uncompromising Brownie while rounding a sharp turn in a mountainside road. The only way out is back up the road, which move necessitates picking the jeep up in your arms and turning it around, or through the bear. The commanding officer of Sarichef found himself with the privilege of making such a choice on morning. Quickly summing the touchy situation up, he decided to use a little animal psychology and stare the bear down - a commendable decision (yours truly would have hit high gear evacuating the scene). If you can picture 190 pounds of man attempting

to stare down 1200 pounds (or thereabout's) of fierce Brownie you've caught some of the humor of the scene. Wait! It worked! Several minutes of indecision slowly changed to apprehension, then headlong flight. The bear made a dive for the edge of the road and disappeared over the cliff. The meeting saw the birth of station order number nine, which in part says: "When faced suddenly by a bear do not show fear." Under such conditions the proved method is to stand your ground and give the bear your most fearless eye while in your quivering heart hoping he doesn't take it as an invitation to do combat. What happens if he doesn't turn tail? We can find no account of such a decision under similar circumstances so assume that all human participants in such instances are now residents of the happy hunting ground. Personally, we avoid them like the plague - and for good reason - they've been clocked near the station at 35 miles per hour and lose little of this speed on steep slopes.

Quite a number of bears make the Sarichef station area their playground. Their favorite spot is the quonset hut at the old lighthouse, two hundred feet below us on the shore. This quonset hut was the food storehouse for the original station.

In and about the storehouse are dozens of cans of what was once food, smashed flat and looking like so many large coins in their perfectly compressed ruin. In the front of the storehouse is a huge opening such as might be made by a truck whose driver forgot the door was on the other end of the building. This opening serves as the bears doorway, a provision they made themselves with brute strength and searing claws. The sickening mess beyond the opening provides frightful testimony to the destruction of which our "pets" are capable. Squashed boxes of salt, squished cans of beans, corn, tomatoes or what have you, and unrecognizable pools of slop cover the floor. The walls are splattered in such a manner as would do credit to a child of five whose natural habitat is a jam factory. In their drunken pleasure they have destroyed everything in sight within the storehouse but the overpowering stench of rotting food still brings them miles every night to poke among the ruin.

One night four bored men decided to take a look at the Brownies in action and photograph them. Armed with flash cameras and a sense of adventure they set out for the storehouse in the station jeep. They came down the mountain road and into the old station grounds without seeing any sign of a bear, drove up to one of the huts and climbed out to have a closer look. On rounding the corner of the hut nearest the storehouse they found themselves with the rare opportunity of seeing a bear perfectly at ease, unaware that he was being watched while sampling stolen stuffs. The bear had been huddled over his morsel but suddenly he raised his head spotlighting the men with meaningful green eyes. The men gazed back fascinated by his size for a moment; then as feet turned cold and spines tingled raced headlong for the jeep. The action taken in this case was a direct violation of station order number nine but since the retreat was obviously unpremeditated no penalty was forthcoming other than hearty laughter.

Unimak Loran Transmitting Station is one of three such stations in the Aleutian Islands. The others are on Adak and Attu Islands, halfway down and at the end of the chain respectively. Adak is the "master" station, Attu and Unimak the "slaves". This "chain" of Loran stations provides the North Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea areas with continuous loran service. The loran signals emanating from these stations are used primarily by aircraft positioning at intervals between Japan and Alaska and between Alaska and the States. We say "primarily" by aircraft only because there are more aircraft than ships in this area. The signals are just as useful for ships positioning in the waters below them.

Another navigational aid maintained at Sarichef is the radio beacon, keyed continuously day and night, used by aircraft and shipping alike for direction finding purposes. The steady "DAH DAH DAH DAH" of the beacon has unnerved many a man forced to listen to it day in and day out but simultaneously proved a godsend to lost airmen and sailors many times.

Still other services of the station are the light and fog signal. Both are used mainly by shipping negotiating Unimak Pass.

Sarichef is the only Coast Guard Station in the Unimak area equipped to maintain direct communication with the command centers of rescue activity, and so, is called upon often to act as a link between these rescue services and distress cases.

The present complement of Sarichef is one officer and fourteen enlisted men, all specially skilled to keep a 1,500,000 dollar loran station in continuous and efficient operation. The small number of personnel manning the station is typical of Coast Guard methods whereby a small number of men are used for maintenance, each well trained in several phases of the overall operation instead of a mob of men each trained in one job whose activities must be closely coordinated by a higher authority.

Living accommodations are comfortable, probably the most comfortable anywhere for servicemen. There are two main buildings on the station, one houses the barracks, garage, engine room, food storerooms and office. The other contains the loran transmitter room, timer room, electronic workshop and radio room. The remainder of the station is composed of auxiliary huts and storehouses; the radio beacon and light-fog signals building, the electronic storehouse, carpenter shop, oversized quonset for tractor and truck storage and a small quonset for storing building materials and station records.

The men have rooms, two men to a room. Washing evades the labor of old days, part of the station equipment being a modern automatic washer and dryer. Movies are shown nightly in the large day room. The day room is well furnished with comfortable leather couches and chairs while the floor sports a rug as thick as a shipboard mattress. The day room also serves as library, reading room, meeting room and place of general relaxation. A good phonograph and dozens of the latest records are available in the room while one corner sports a radio for the comfort of those desiring to keep up with their favorite programs. Separate reading lamps line the edge of the room, giving an overall cozy effect and providing excellent direct lighting for study.

The dining room ("chow hall" if you insist) is an extension of the day room. Here the men congregate at 1700 every evening to enjoy a sumptuous meal and exchange the latest scuttlebutt of different departments constituting the station. The evening meal, an ordinary occurrence at most stations, is a Special Event at Sarichef. All hands stand until the commanding officer is seated then seat themselves expectantly and begin recounting the daily events - while reaching for the latest delicacy conjured in the cooks mind. Such delicacy presented herewith to make a hard day complete. The evening meal provides an escape from the usual monotony of isolated duty.

Sarichef has only one cook. Messcooking is done by teams of two men (six teams) who rotate daily. On Sunday the cook gets a well deserved rest and the mess team drawing duty on that day takes over the cooking chores. Here we meet the unexpected cooking abilities of electronic technicians, carpenters and

racist mates. Each man's "cook day" is, suprisingly enough, looked forward to by all hands. Each man is thus given a fair opportunity to exercise his talents on the range and be commended or cursed according to the results. If a tyro fails to produce a delectable meal he forfeits his right to gripe about the chow at any time, since references to his own shortcomings serve as an effective reminder that he "should talk". The chow at Sarichef is better than at most stateside stations and on the whole excellent.

Morale at an isolated station such as this is an important factor since efficiency is directly related to the serenity of a man's mind. Morale at Sarichef is good though occasional instances such as delayed mail planes (I knew we'd get back to them sometime) and long stretches of savage weather leave their marks, causing knees to bang the chins of long faces.

Amateur photography is the mainstay for recreation, pool and plain of "bull" sessions running a close second. On weekends long hikes through the hills and along the shore provide boredom abating treats. Boredom is far and away the worst enemy of loran crews.

The most looked-forward-to day at any loran station is "rotation day", Sarichef no exception. Loran stations are considered the most unenviable duty in the service, their isolation being the most obnoxious factor. We've all heard one or more of the numerous jokes circulating in the service about how one becomes apt to acquire crosseyes on loran duty, or how at best an ex-loran man is a shaking example of prolonged hermitage. After spending some time on one of these stations it is obvious that all such stories saw origin in stateside bull sessions. The loss of a single marble has yet to be reported from Sarichef.

The reactions to isolated duty will always be apprehensive and humorous but the men who have served on isolated stations will never recount them as anything other than what they are - good duty stations, lacking some of the pleasures of stateside duty perhaps but nevertheless a far cry from the usual lonely pictures painted of the. Come on out and see for yourself, we'll be glad to have you aboard.

Cape Sarichef DCS - 0
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

ADDRESS REPLY TO
COMMANDING OFFICER
LORSTA, CAPE SARICHEF
REFER TO FILE

15 October 1956
A7

From: Commanding Officer, LORSTA, Cape Sarichef, Unimak Is.
To: Commander, 17th Coast Guard District

Subj: Reproduction of History of Cape Sarichef

Ref: (a) Sarichef ltr. dtd. 10 July 56 (File A7)

1. Reference (a) requested that a number of copies of the enclosure, a story of the base, be made by the district and returned to this unit.
2. It is requested that this unit be advised of any action contemplated.

[Signature]
G.K. GREINER, JR.

Cape Sarichef

FILE

dpi
22 October 1956
A7

From: Commander, Seventeenth Coast Guard District
To: Commanding Officer, LORSTA, Cape Sarichef, Unimak Is.

Subj: Reproduction of History of Cape Sarichef

Ref: (a) CO, LORSTA, Cape Sarichef ltr. dtd. 15 October 1956 (A7)

1. Forwarded herewith are six (6) copies of subject history for your use.
The ditto masters are being retained by this office.

G. H. MILLER
Chief of Staff