

Close Friends Relate 'True Story' of Mel West

(Editor's Note: The following background information on Morehead City's headstrong outboard motorboat adventurer was obtained from persons who knew him in Swansboro and Jacksonville. They requested that their names not be used).

By BOB SEYMOUR

Mel West was a man driven by obsession. Close friends of the motorboat adventurer at Jacksonville say that his only desire in life was to make an ocean crossing to Bermuda in an outboard motorboat. "Mel wasn't afraid to die," one of them said.

"He showed me the log of his first voyage, telling of his hunger and thirst. Never once did he mention being afraid. What Mel was afraid of was life," the friend added.

"All his life he had never considered himself to be a success. After getting out of the Army Mel never stayed at one job for a very long time. He worked for a couple

of radio stations before going to Jacksonville, where he worked at a radio station and tried to operate a restaurant.

"The name of the restaurant was Mel the Beachcomber's. It was a classy place with big sailing fish printed on the awning at the entrance. He went into the business with two partners but bought them out before the restaurant failed, another friend related.

Devoted to Trip

"When Mel finally made up his mind to go to Bermuda the first time, he devoted his time to nothing else. He felt that he was fully prepared to make the trip and I think he would have made it if he

See MEL WEST, Page 2



Melvin L. West prior to first trip

Small Home Burns Yesterday In Beaufort

Firemen Answer Four Alarms, in Freezing Weather, Since Monday

Beaufort firemen have answered four alarms since Monday. The fourth alarm, turned in at 7:30 a.m. yesterday, proved to be the worst fire.

A three-room house behind Ed Henry's home on Cedar Street burned. Mr. Henry's daughter Nancy Beard and three small children lived in the house, according to firemen.

Anyone having clothes they would like to give the stricken family is asked to call the fire department. Firemen will pick the clothes up.

Firemen said that when they got to the fire they found that two sections of hose and a nozzle for the hose on the pump truck had frozen solid in the fire station.

"You can throw a cat through the cracks in the doors of the fire station and the town tries to heat the place with a little oil stove," one of the firemen said, attempting to explain why the hose was frozen.

At 7 a.m. Wednesday a fire broke out at Luce Johnson's house, 607 Cedar St. Firemen got the blaze under control in less than an hour. The flames had broken out between the ceiling and the roof of the house.

At 4:20 p.m. Monday firemen were called to Cecelia Stanley's home on Pine Street. She had been under her house trying to thaw out water pipes and caught the sills on fire. There was practically no damage.

Tuesday afternoon the Beaufort rural truck went to Crab Point to take more water to a fire being fought by Morehead City firemen.

12-Degree Temperature Sets New Low for Carteret County



Calico Creek, above, drains into Newport River north of Morehead City. A solid sheet of ice, right above, stretches from shore to shore. The skiff, Miss Calico, sits tight in the ice. North River was almost frozen solid. Only pockets of black water showed through here and there.

A low of 12 degrees Tuesday was the coldest it has been here since the freeze of 1917-18, E. Stamey Davis, weather observer, has reported. No official records are available on that freeze of World War I days.

Temperatures in the forties yesterday seemed like a heat wave in comparison to the near zero weather Carteret has been experiencing since Sunday.

The thaw, which started as the mercury climbed to 39 Wednesday, caused many a bursted water pipe. Plumbers have been on the jump all week, thawing pipes and patching those that "busted out all over" when the water started flowing again of its own accord.

The icy winds stopped blowing Wednesday. Through the early part of the week, the intense cold seemed even more frigid because of the high winds. Some gusts on the outer banks were reported as high as 50 miles an hour.

Core Sound Freezes

Coast Guardsmen at the Core Sound station were ice-bound this week. Guy M. Styron, Beaufort RFD, reported that Core Sound had not been frozen since 1941. The ice prevented the Core Sound Coast Guardsmen from taking their boats into Atlantic for supplies.

Instead they had to go along the beach by jeep to Cape Lookout and then by boat to Harkers Island. James Hunnings, commanding officer at Fort Macon, said Wednesday that no boat had been able to go from the Core Sound station to Atlantic for three days.

Bookmobile Change

The weather prevented the bookmobile from making its usual Monday and Tuesday tour this week. Miss Dorothy Avery, director of the county library, says that the schedule announced for this week will be followed next week.

Moses Howard, Newport, called this week "the coldest time I've ever seen." Lots of others agreed with him.

R. M. Williams, county farm agent, says farmers believe the lasting intense cold has done lots of damage to newly-set cabbage plants.

One farmer told Mr. Williams that he was going to forget about a cabbage crop and put his now-planted cabbage land in Irish potatoes. Other farmers expect to hang on, hope for a good cabbage crop and make some money, since the price will probably be fairly good due to general truck crop damage along the eastern seaboard.

Potato demonstration work that was supposed to be started this week has been deferred until this coming Tuesday because of the cold. Howard Garris and Henry Covington, agriculture specialists from Raleigh, will be here, Mr. Williams said, to get the project started.

Meetings Cancelled

Some meetings were cancelled due to the cold. Although many schools closed upstate, Carteret schools operated as usual.

Due to ice, ferryboat operations on the outer banks stopped. The only travel possible between Ocracoke Island and the mainland was by air. The mail boat, which usually runs between Ocracoke and Atlantic, could not get out of its Silver Lake mooring at Ocracoke because of the ice.

Boats Break Loose

Ice breaking up in the channel in Newport River and along the shore caused shrimp boats to break loose from their moorings this week. The boats belonged to John Weeks, Henry D. Smith, Roland Buck, Stanley Buck, Stanley Earl Buck, Winfield Buck, J. A. Smith and Tom Watson, all of the Crab Point area.

Mr. Weeks reported yesterday that all of the boats have been recovered but they're damaged.

He said it was impossible to anchor a boat with a rope because the ice cut the rope right in two. He said chains were the only thing that could hold an anchor and boat together in ice.

The temperature went down to 22 early yesterday morning but had climbed back to 29 by 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Davis, weather observer, said that weather should get warmer this weekend, but some showers may fall Saturday. Temperatures and wind direction Monday through Wednesday follow:

	Max.	Min.	Wind
Monday	32	14	WNW
Tuesday	27	12	WNW
Wednesday	39	17	WNW

Agents Meet
Farm agents of six counties, including Carteret, will meet today in Beaufort County. They will be taken on a tour of poultry enterprises.

Chilula Goes To Italian Ship's Rescue Tuesday

The Coast Guard cutter, Chilula, based at Morehead City, was still searching yesterday for the body of one crewman from the Italian freighter which sank 120 miles east of Cape Lookout Tuesday.

Twenty-seven crewmen from the freighter, Bonitas, were tossed into the gray waters when their lifeboat capsized. Five were rescued, but 22 drowned. Bodies of 21 were recovered. The Chilula was looking yesterday for the 22nd.

The Bonitas sent out its first distress signal at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday. It was picked up by a commercial ship and relayed to the Coast Guard.

The Bonitas said then that her holds were leaking and she was in immediate danger of sinking.

The ship actually went to the bottom early Wednesday. It was bound from Brazil to Baltimore with a cargo of manganese. The vessel's home port was Genoa. She was of 5,635 gross tons and 447 feet long.

In addition to the Chilula, the destroyer escort Hartley and three merchant ships went to the rescue of the Bonitas.

Searching for survivors Wednesday were the freighter, President Adams, five merchant ships, the Chilula, three Navy destroyer escorts, two Marine Corps planes and a Coast Guard plane.

The five men saved were the ship's master, Capt. Enazin Marini, fireman Giovanni Barbaro, deck boy Alfredo Contessi, chief officer Albo Cardillo and machinist Giuseppe Valenti.

Drawbridge Breakdown Delays Motor Traffic

The Morehead City drawbridge across Newport River was hung up for half an hour Wednesday morning, from 7:55 a.m. to 8:25 a.m. Motor traffic was blocked.

David Nelson, bridge tender, said that the power failed due to a short. He believed the short was brought on by extreme cold.

People were delayed getting to work and teachers were held up on their way to school. Mr. Nelson made the bridge repairs himself.

Judge Hears 10 Cases Monday

Only 11 cases were on the docket for Morehead City recorder's court Monday. Ten cases were tried and one, with Elizabeth Gray as defendant, was continued.

Wayland Sheafe was defendant in two cases. He was ordered to pay costs and honor a \$20 check he had given to Roy B. Winstead. In a second case he was found not guilty of stealing a portable radio.

William Guthrie drew a 60-day road sentence for public drunkenness. It was his fourth conviction within a year.

Mack Lane Davis was fined \$25 and costs for driving with an expired license. Judge Herbert Phillips explained that the \$25 would be returned if Davis got a license within a prescribed time.

Russell E. Willis Sr., also charged with driving with an expired license, showed that he had a new one and was taxed court costs.

Lydia Bratcher was fined \$15 and costs for public drunkenness. Willie J. Nolan and William James Griffin were charged costs. Nolan was fined for driving with expired out-of-state plates. Griffin had to pay for allowing an unlicensed minor to drive his car.

Two defendants, charged with speeding, forfeited their bonds. They were Hazel B. Small and Pasquale "Pat" Marino.

Two Embezzlement Cases Set for March Court Term

Two cases scheduled for trial during the criminal term of superior court, March 31-April 4, involve prominent Morehead City residents.

H. Earle Mobley, former owner of Mobley Buick Co. and now disc jockey for a local radio station, is docketed for trial March 31 on an embezzlement count. Also charged with embezzlement is Bruce L. Goodwin, Morehead City real estate developer and insurance agent. The Goodwin case is docketed for April 3.

Mobley's case is the first one on the criminal calendar. He was scheduled for trial during the last criminal term but his lawyer got the case continued when Mobley went to the hospital just before the term opened. Goodwin's case is slated for the fourth day of the week-long term.

Goodwin is charged by Wilfred Ray Lewis of accepting \$1,150 of Lewis's money as down payment for a house and then converting it to Goodwin's own use. The grand jury returned a true bill on the case in November 1956.

The court docket was set up Monday and released Monday afternoon by the clerk of superior court, A. H. James.

Grand Jury Cases

Cases against 10 defendants will go before the grand jury. The de-

Historical Review Reports on 1957 Centennial Issue

The North Carolina Historical Review, in its January 1958 issue mentions that the Carteret County News-Times published a special edition Aug. 13, 1957 in observance of the Morehead City Centennial.

The item mentioned the types of articles in the edition and stated that it was dedicated to F. C. Salisbury, Morehead City, local historian.

Also reported in the review was the October meeting of the Carteret Historical Society. At that time officers were elected, with Mr. Salisbury as president.

The review mentioned too that Mr. Salisbury was among the winners of historical awards given in December 1957 by the North Carolina Society of County and Local Historians.

Deadline Tomorrow

All commercial fishermen must have their 1958 boat licenses by tomorrow. Fishermen who do not have their 1958 tags by then will be subject to prosecution.

Wins Public Speaking Contest



Photo by Bob Seymour

Anne Herbert receives a \$25 savings bond from American Legion post commander Joe DuBois. Anne, a freshman at Morehead City High School, won first place in a Legion speaking contest at the school Tuesday. She represented Morehead City at the district contest in Jacksonville last night. Bill Menden, left, was runner up and Virgil Burr, second from left, was third in the contest. Judges were Mr. DuBois, Floyd Chadwick Sr. and Bob Seymour.

Wilmington Bares Iron Fist Again in Port Rate Inquiry

Students to Aid In Heart Drive

Mrs. Bryan Loftin, chairman of the Junior Woman's Clubs Heart Fund drive, Beaufort, announced that high school students who will assist in the drive Sunday afternoon will meet at Guthrie-Jones drug store at 2.

Junior Woman's Club members will take them by car to the neighborhoods where they will make collections. After the house-to-house canvass has been made, the club will treat the students to hot chocolate at the drug store.

Students in the following organizations will assist with the drive, according to Mrs. Loftin: Future Homemakers of America, Debating Club, Library Club, Varsity Club, Tri-Hi-Y.

H-Y, Four-H, Prayer Group, Future Teachers of America, Beta Club, and home economics students.

Plastic heart containers have been placed in business houses throughout town. Persons may also place their contributions in them.

Trees Moved

Large trees along Cedar Street, Beaufort, which will be the new highway 70 through town, are being moved. Public utility poles will be moved soon. Grading operations were under way yesterday.

Beaufort Chamber Announces Holiday Schedule for 1958

Members of the Beaufort Chamber of Commerce will observe the same holidays this year that they did in 1957. Chamber president Ronald Earl Mason announced the following results of balloting by chamber members:

Thirty-eight ballots were sent out and 22 were returned. Seven voted for Easter Monday, 19 for July Fourth, 17 for Labor Day, 21 for Thanksgiving, 22 for Christmas, 22 for the day after Christmas, eight for the second day after Christmas, and 19 for New Year's Day, 1959.

Since a simple majority determines the holidays, all the days listed except Easter Monday and the second day after Christmas will be observed as holidays.

Tide Table

Tides at the Beaufort Bar		
HIGH	Friday, Feb. 21	LOW
10:00 a.m.		3:53 a.m.
10:25 p.m.		4:13 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 22		
10:33 a.m.		4:28 a.m.
10:58 p.m.		4:39 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 23		
11:04 a.m.		4:57 a.m.
11:30 p.m.		5:00 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 24		
11:37 a.m.		5:26 a.m.
		5:23 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 25		
12:04 a.m.		6:03 a.m.
12:15 p.m.		5:57 p.m.

See RATE INQUIRIES, Page 2