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Seven Crewmen Rescued From Burning Ship Off Race Point By Coast Guard Helicopter

Provincetown witnessed the latest chapter in its long saga of sea rescues last Saturday morning as a Coast Guard helicopter picked seven Boston fishermen off their burning ship amid gale winds and deposited them safely ashore at Race Point. At about 3:30 a. m. the 83-ft. beam trawler, St. Anthony, had set storm warnings, when the crew and its course back to Boston as a result of captain, Bernardo Pennino of Everett, noticed smoke coming from the engine room. According to reports the crew tried to put out the fire with extinguishers but that it had grown out of control.

The vessel had been fishing about 35 miles off Cape Cod Light and were only five miles off Race Point when the fire began without apparent cause. The Captain said that the surf was too heavy to use the dories and that he hoped to reach Race Point before the engines gave out.

An alarm was sent out to the Coast Guard, alerting local personnel, the Provincetown Fire Department, Police and Rescue Squad. The helicopter and two amphibian planes were dispatched by the Boston Coast Guard Headquarters, and the cutter Acushnet also went to the scene, but the St. Anthony was by then too close to shore for the cutter to get in to it.

The helicopter, piloted by Lieutenant j.g. Joseph Tanguay of Beverly, arrived about 5:30 a. m. with Captain K. R. Goodwin and Aviation Mechanic John Williams also aboard. Lieutenant Tanguay maneuvered the helicopter about 100 feet over the boat, lowered a basket and retrieved one crew member, then lowered again and reeled in another, the capacity of the copter. He then took the men to shore, deposited them and went back out for two more. The entire rescue required four such trips, with the burning vessel lying about 100 feet off shore, one mile east of the old Peaked Hill Bar station. At 6:30, about five minutes after the last fisherman, Captain Pennino, had been recovered, some 4,000 gallons of fuel oil exploded aboard ship, blasting the middle and stern end.

The rescued men were then taken by two power wagons to the Race Point Station, some three miles away. There they were immediately stripped, wrapped in blankets, and supplied with hot coffee and breakfast. The six crewmen were identified as Saverio Sclafani, 23; Salvador Bono, 45; John Frontero, 28; Michael Ciulla, 53; Joseph Bono, 44, all of Everett, and Dominic

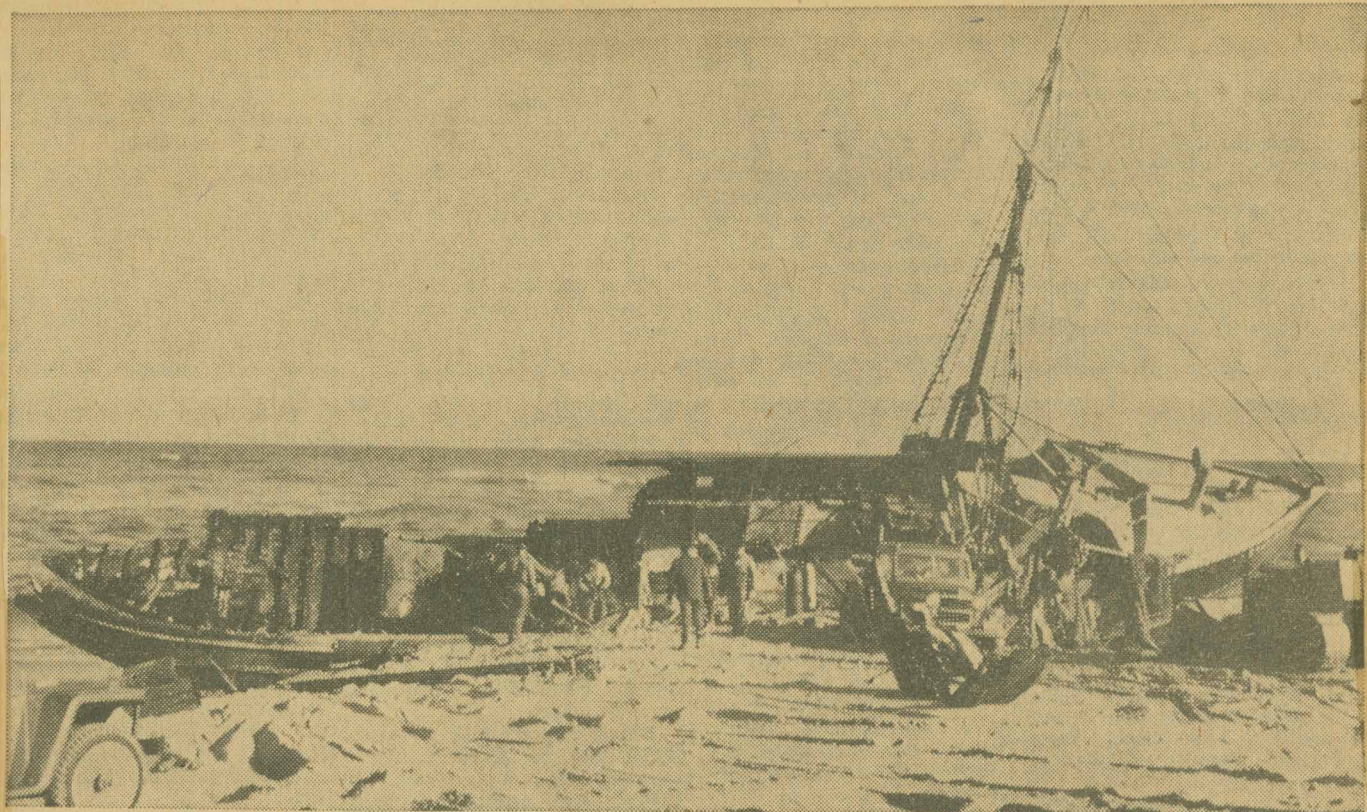
Valante, 61, of Revere. The men were given a medical checkup by Dr. Daniel H. Hiebert, but the only injury reported was a minor cut on the left knee of crewman Sclafani.

The captain and crew praised highly the quick work of the pilot and Coast Guard. "We owe our lives to that daring helicopter pilot," said Captain Pennino. "No matter how much you praise him it won't be enough. How he rescued us in that gale from a heeled-over burning ship being pounded by heavy surf was something. We can't praise him enough. I know we would not be here if it wasn't for him."

All members of the crew except the youngest were family men, with 42 children among them. The crew phoned home to reassure their families and returned home themselves by automobile that morning.

Provincetown Fire Department contingent was led by Chief Wilbur Cook and the Rescue Squad by Captain Joseph Dutra.

Salvage Starts on Charred Hulk of Trawler



A salvage crew is working on the burned remains of the 83-foot Boston trawler St. Anthony that burned and exploded early

Saturday off Peaked Hill Bar. Seven crewmen were rescued by Coast Guard from the burning ship.

(Staff Photo by Neil G. Nickerson)

1963 - Thursday, January 17, in Provincetown
JOHN F. NOONS, North Truro contractor, has purchased the hulk of the wrecked fishing vessel St. Anthony for salvage. He has bought the hulk from the insurance company that issued the policy on the 83-foot vessel, which went aground early Saturday morning off Race Point. Mr. Noons' men spent Monday recovering items that could be salvaged, including winches, mast, motor, shafts and propeller.