

The Advocate, Thursday, August 13, 1981

Provincetown II runs aground

The Provincetown II, a spanking new ferry that runs between Provincetown and Boston each day, ran aground in Boston Harbor Sunday loaded with 600 passengers headed for Provincetown.

The Provincetown II, which replaced the Provincetown I this year, ran aground at about 10:10 a.m. on a shoal called Nixes Mate near the outer limits of Boston Harbor.

Thick fog had forced Captain Charles Marks to navigate the Provincetown II by radar and the buoy marking the shoals was not identified on the radar, Richard Nakashian said Monday. Nakashian is president of the Bay State-Spray and Provincetown Steamship Company, which owns the Provincetown II.

Marks, who has worked for the company since 1974, was going at a slow, cautious speed through the fog, Nakashian said, and there was little impact when the boat went aground.

None of the passengers aboard was injured and the boat was undamaged. In fact, the Provincetown II, with Marks at the helm, made its scheduled trip to Provincetown Monday, the day after the accident.

On Sunday, about 150 of the passengers chose to continue on to Provincetown, aboard the "Commonwealth," formerly the Provincetown I, arriving at about 5 p.m., some four hours behind schedule.

The "Commonwealth," now used as a Boston Harbor tour ship, and two other tour boats owned by the company, the "Bostonian" and the "George's Island," were pressed into service to get the passengers off the Provincetown II.

About 450 passengers chose to return to Boston aboard the boats rather than continue to Provincetown. The passengers received full refunds and a free ticket for a future shuttle ride.

Nakashian said the Coast Guard found no negligence by Marks in the incident. Running aground was "just one of those things that are probably unavoidable at one time or another," Nakashian said.



The "Provincetown II" at MacMillan Wharf - Oct. 1, 1981

Advocate photo by Curt Gilliat