

## Bowdoin Will Have Berth In History After Brave Adventures In Arctic Seas

When Mac and Miriam MacMillan bring their Arctic schooner Bowdoin into her final berth at Mystic Seaport, Conn., June 27, the doughty little schooner will be sailing into her place of history—as she has long since sailed into the hearts of all who know her, according to Helen Henley in the Christian Science Monitor, who goes on to tell the intimate story of the MacMillans and the Bowdoin.

Through the generosity of her friends, including especially a group of Bowdoin College alumni, the Bowdoin will go as a gift to the Marine Historical Society at Mystic. The ship was named for the college which is Mac's alma mater.

At Mystic Seaport, which has been described as a folk museum of the Age of Sail and an authentic replica of a typical mid-century New England seafaring community, the Bowdoin will join the old whaler Charles W. Morgan, the coastal schooner Australia, and other historical craft. There she will be open to the public.

But where other ships may be termed typical, the Bowdoin is unique. She is, in fact, primarily a projection of the Arctic genius of the man who now is Rear Admiral Donald B. MacMillan (Ret.), his warm personality and his impeccable seamanship. The skipper and his ship cannot be thought of separately, and both have shared, with rare generosity, the peculiar riches that have been theirs to give.

### Polar Commuter

Mac has gone to the Arctic so many times that he has been called a polar commuter. He has contributed immeasurably to polar research, to better general understanding of Eskimos, and to the development of American youth.

For many summers, the Bowdoin has taken to Arctic waters a crew of about 13 made up mostly of prep school and college boys keen on scientific research. Each of the several times we have been privileged to join Mac and his wife Miriam aboard the Bowdoin to sail for the brief first lap of their northward course—from Boothbay Harbor, Maine, out to Monhegan Island, or to Christmas Cove, or to Camden—we have marveled at the willingness of

parents to allow their sons to sail off into hazardous adventure in such a tiny ship.

Only 88 feet long and 21 feet wide, the Bowdoin appears as a mere speck in the vastness of the Arctic where icebergs may crunch over many acres, and rise to the towering heights of mountains.

But we soon learned the solid reasons for their confidence. Mac knows the Arctic as probably no other man on earth today knows it. For most of his 84 years, his heart has been given to the frozen white land and the ice-blue waters at the top of the world.

### With Peary

Donald MacMillan was a member of Admiral Peary's successful expedition to the North Pole, 1908-09. In some 30 trips north, he has charted unknown waters and prepared a conversational Eskimo dictionary. During World War II, both Mac and the Bowdoin served the United States Navy. In 1949, he received the gold medal of the Chicago Geographical Society for his Arctic work.

And since 1921, when she was launched, through 26 expeditions logging 300,000 miles, the Bowdoin has been the key part of the MacMillan saga.

All that Mac had learned on six important Arctic expeditions in the 12 years previous to the building of the Bowdoin contributed to the perfection of this little two-masted auxiliary schooner. Her builders, Hodgson Bros., East Boothbay, Maine, made her bow spoon-shaped so she can rise up on a pan of ice and crush it under her forefoot, when lesser ships would themselves be caught and crushed.

She is double-planked and double-framed with native white oak from Maine, and sheathed against ice with a five-foot belt 1½ inches thick of Australian "iron" wood or greenheart, toughest wood known. She has a nose-piece of steel plate weighing 1,800 pounds bolted to the bow to aid in splitting icepans. She has bunks for 13. In every single minute detail, she was tailored for her Arctic job.

Some of the 250 or so boys and men who have shipped north with Mac on the Bowdoin have gone more than once. For nine voy-

ages, Miriam has been her husband's righthand man and the daring of the crew, not only taking her trick at the wheel or at KP, but also mothering any boy who needed it.

Letters that have poured in to the MacMillans at their home in Provincetown show that many of these boys and their parents regard their experience on the Bowdoin as much more than a summer's lark.

### More Perspective

"Many times I have caught myself reasoning with a more mature perspective than I had been able to muster previously," wrote an objective young crew member. "It was directly due to the trip I can assure you, and so I owe you more than mere thanks for a voyage. I owe gratitude for a new way of life."

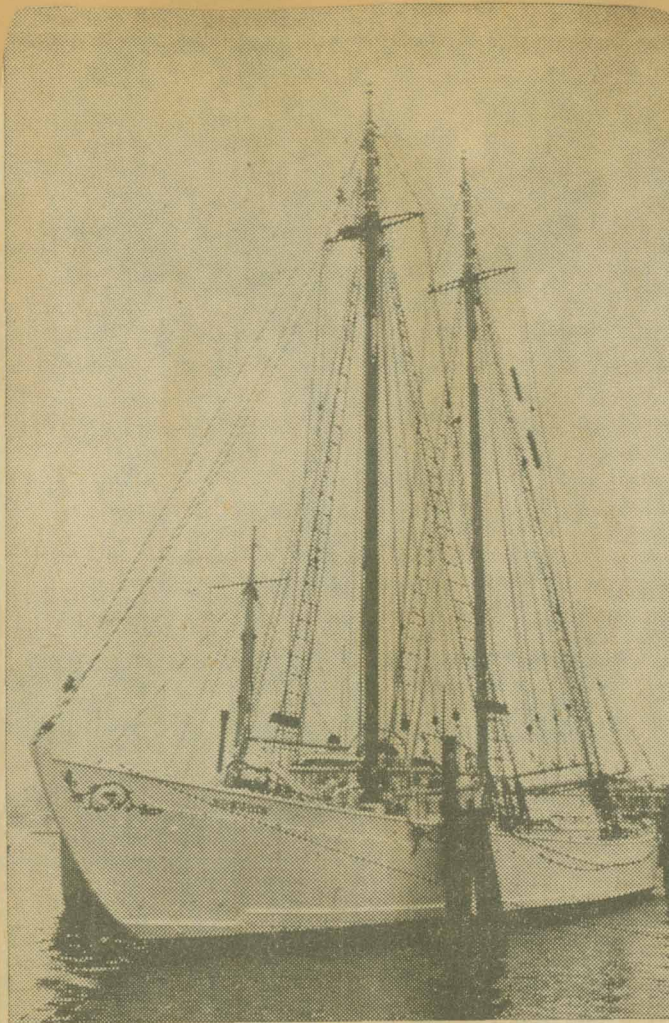
Many are rejoicing that the Bowdoin will find her permanent berth at Mystic Seaport, staunchly recording a vanished era. But thousands of miles northward, the Eskimos who always thronged aboard the Bowdoin with welcoming zeal and who felt, no less than their white friends, that the Bowdoin was their own, will sorrow that they will never again see their beloved white "bird".

The MacMillans' decision to part with their ship, although tinged with sadness, is happyfied by the knowledge that at Mystic the schooner will go on in the active business of being useful by presenting a living page from history. As Miriam puts it:

"Now so many thousands through the years will go aboard to admire and be inspired by the little ship that sailed so many times to the top of the world before days of planes, icebreakers, and modern-equipped vessels in Arctic regions."

Mac sees the ship's role in similar light. At Mystic, he muses, "visitors may walk her decks, go below and see where and how we lived beneath Arctic snows; visualize us a happy group, although far from home and 'frozen in' once for 11 months. Although extremely cold winds howled above and drifting snows whirled madly by, we were snug and warm below decks."

"Bowdoin remembers it all," Mac says, "and will be glad to entertain and do what she can to make all comfortable aboard. She knows she is not going out of our life. She is still ours in a way, for we may visit her at any time, go below to our quarters, sleep in our bunks, light up the galley



(Cape Cod Standard-Times Photo)  
Admiral Donald B. MacMillan's schooner Bowdoin, here moored in Falmouth Harbor, will be enshrined this Summer at the marine museum at Mystic, Conn. The Arctic explorer's craft was launched in 1921, and is being overhauled at Cape Cod Marine Service, Inc., of Falmouth.

stove, put on the coffee pot, plug in on music from home as we did night after night, and imagine that we are again at sea bound north, or returning home following a long trip with Monhegan again in sight and friends who thought enough of us to come out to sea to welcome us back."

And when the Bowdoin sails from Falmouth, Mass., for her new home June 27, says Mac, "Miriam will be beside me at the wheel just as she has been during the last nine trips. She's never failed to take her trick at the wheel even in the toughest weather. Many who have sailed with us will be there that day, too. And we hope you'll put a circle around June 27 and be there, too. You're a real part of Bowdoin, Helen."

I'd rather hear that from Mac than to be knighted by royalty.

said, "so there's no hurry about getting under way early in the morning." He said that similar short trips will be made the next three days, for overnight calls at Newport and Fishers Island and the final run into Mystic, Conn., where the Bowdoin will be enshrined in the Marine Museum.

Admiral MacMillan paused for a brief interview in the midst of overseeing last minute tie-downs on deck, engine room tuneups and rigging adjustments. The 88-foot auxiliary knockabout schooner was a beehive of activity as veteran crewmembers from Arctic voyages and artisans of Cape Cod Marine Service Inc. labored side by side to prepare the historic vessel for an historic final voyage.

### Old Comrades

The admiral said that "scores of old comrades" from his 26 Arctic forays have written asking to accompany him on the cruise to Mystic.

"The Bowdoin sleeps only 14," he said "and we will be full up on each leg of the journey. The way I've had to arrange it we will have a large turnover in personnel at every port of call. That way, more of the fellows will have their chance for a last cruise."

Mrs. MacMillan will be with her husband along the entire route. She accompanied him on nine of his trailblazing polar explorations. Many members of the press also are expected to go along on the various legs of the trip, debarking for the night in each port.

Admiral MacMillan said that the president of Bowdoin College will join the party at Fishers Island for the last leg into Mystic.

Plans for the compass swinging shakedown cruise yesterday or today were discontinued by the admiral. Noting the poor visibility and equally poor forecast for today, he said, "We may very well skip that part of it. Everything seems to be in proper working order."

### Near Land

A crewman added that the Bowdoin "won't get out of sight of land anyway."

That the Bowdoin will live in the memory of former crew members is attested by some of the letters received by Admiral and Mrs. MacMillan.

Another interesting sidelight, along with the permanent and lasting friendships made among the former crewmembers, is the fact that romance has begun through contacts made by the crewmembers, and two weddings Saturday will keep at least eight from the Mystic Seaport rites.

Saturday will be Bowdoin Day at Cape Elizabeth, Me., as well as Mystic, Conn., for the marriage of Ian White, former crewmember, to Florence Hildreth, sister of a former crewmember, will take place.

### Former Governor

This will keep him away from Mystic, as well as Dr. Peter

CAPE COD STANDARD-TIMES,

TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 1959

## Bowdoin Set For Last Trip

### Departure Slated For Tomorrow

FALMOUTH, June 23—Noon tomorrow has been set tentatively by Rear Admiral Donald B. MacMillan as the departure time of the schooner Bowdoin, on the first leg of its last voyage.

"It's about a four or five hour run to New Bedford," the Admiral