Finding Aid to the Frank J. Sommer Photographs, 1904-1965

This description was produced by the Historic Documents Department of San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.

Historic Documents Department
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
National Park Service
Third Floor, Building E, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123
Phone: 415-561-7030
Fax: 415-556-3540
Contact Information at: www.nps.gov/safr/historyculture/researchcontact.htm
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2007
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Collection Number: P05-005

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
Historic Documents Department
San Francisco, California

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San Francisco, CA 94123
Phone: 415-561-7030
Fax: 415-556-3540
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Processed by:
Charles Miller
Date Completed:
2/28/2005

Encoded by:
San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park,
Historic Documents Department

Summary
Title: Frank J. Sommer photographs,
Date: 1904-1965
Collection No: P05-005
Creator: Sommer, J. Frank
San Francisco Maritime Museum
Extent: 8 items.
Repository: San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (Calif.)
Historic Documents Department
Building E, Fort Mason
San Francisco, California 94123
Abstract: The collection consists of 8 photographs depicting and related to the sea life of Capt. Frank J. Sommer.
Physical Location: Historic Documents Department
Language: In English.

Indexing Terms
The following are indexing terms related to the description of this collection.
Sommer, J. Frank
Kortum, Karl
Mary Horlock (built 1919; steamship: British)
Group portraits
Sailors
Rescues
Crew portraits
Filipinos portraits

Access Information
Access
This collection is open for research.

Access Information
Condition Restrictions
There are no restrictions based on the condition of this material. However, you should be aware that access to collection material is always at the discretion of NPS curatorial staff if the condition warrants restricting the access and handling of the collection items at any time.

Conditions of Use
Use
The San Francisco Maritime NHP possesses physical property rights through ownership of the materials. However, copyright may reside with the individual or corporate body responsible for the creation of the materials, or with their heirs. It is the user's responsibility to respect the provisions of the copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code). Permission to reproduce or publish from this collection must be secured by the user from the copyright holders.

Preferred Citation
[Item title or description including date]. Frank J. Sommer photographs, P05-005. [Location within collection organization identified by container number, series number, file unit number, or item number]. Historic Documents Department, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park.

Processing/Project Information
Processing and Cataloging
Processed by Charles Miller and completed 2/28/2005. ANCS+ Catalog No. SAFR 20643.
The collection is cataloged in the National Park Service (NPS) Automated National Catalog System (ANCS+). A portion of the ANCS+ catalog record can be viewed on the NPS Museum Collections on the Web Catalog by searching on the catalog number 20643 at http://www.museum.nps.gov/safr/page.htm. Do not include the acronym "SAFR" in the search.

Administrative Information
History
Biography
Francis (Frank) J. Sommer was born in Germany on March 19, 1881. He came to America aboard the four-masted bark ALSTERDAM around 1900, and decided to stay and became a naturalized citizen. He served aboard the STAR OF ALASKA as a seaman in 1904 when she was wrecked in the Sitkinak Strait in Alaska.
Mr. Sommer served in the Coast Guard at the Point Reyes Coast Guard station as a surfman for a while after being aboard the STAR OF ALASKA, and joined the United States Navy. Starting as a petty officer, and rising in rank to lieutenant, he served aboard the Navy ships VICKSBURG, BRUTUS, NEWPORT NEWS and GLACIER. While serving as captain of NEWPORT NEWS, he was placed on inactive duty on June 30, 1922.
On January 26, 1924, Mr. Sommer was serving as first officer aboard the President Line ship PRESIDENT TAFT, when he participated in the rescue of the crew of MARY HORLOCK (built 1919; steamship: British), in a typhoon 700 miles off the coast of Japan. He later served in the U.S. Engineers at Mare Island, starting as pilot and eventually attaining the rank of chief pilot. He narrated an oral history at San Francisco Maritime Museum, interviewed by Karl Kortum and Al Harmon on April 15, 1965. Mr. Sommer died in Vallejo, CA on March 15, 1969.

Custodial History
The collection was generated by the San Francisco Maritime Museum in the process of compiling an oral history interview of Frank J. Sommer. The items were donated on or around April 15, 1965, at the time of the oral history interview.

Acquisition
Accession number SAFR-00001.

Administrative Information
Scope and Content
The collection consists of 8 photographs depicting and related to the sea life of Capt. Frank J. Sommer.
The images depict Frank J. Sommer at age 22 in San Francisco in 1904; Sommer and six Filipino seamen who participated in the rescue of crew members of the MARY HORLOCK (built 1919; steamship: British), off the coast of Japan, January 26, 1924; and Frank J. Sommer and Karl Kortum meeting together on April 15, 1965.
An oral history interview (call number: Tape, A5) and transcript (call number: P, VM, 6.5, B356) are on file at San Francisco Maritime Museum. A two page excerpt from his oral history, dealing with the rescue of crew of the steamship MARY HORLOCK by PRESIDENT TAFT in 1924; and a copy of newspaper article written by S. Miller Holland, regarding the rescue of the crew of MARY HORLOCK, are located in the accession folder.

**Arrangement**
The photographs are arranged chronologically.