

Roaring Mike". The two became synonymous in Coast Guard history.

The two were law in Alaska. The ship was a floating court and CAPT Healy was the judge. They represented the federal government in the new wilderness territory. Criminals were brought to trial on deck. Law and order were maintained by the crew.

When gold was discovered, *Bear* deported troublemakers and transported federal prisoners.

Mail was delivered by the revenue cutter. Government agents and supplies were shipped in by *Bear*.

The ship was a floating hospital carrying surgeons and supplies to Alaska natives, prospectors, missionaries and whalers. The ship and crew saved tribes of Eskimos and Indians in 1914 when a world-wide flu epidemic attacked Alaskans especially hard.

Hunting grounds were saved from commercial exploitation and ecology was preserved.

Whiskey sales had nearly starved one Eskimo village to death. Villagers were drinking and not hunting or fishing to save their families. The Revenue Cutter *Corwin* called *Bear* in to help. CAPT Healy declared "war" on whalers, sealers and any others who ran whiskey into Alaska.

Fish and game were becoming scarce because of commercial interests. CAPT Healy was determined that *Bear* was going to save the Eskimos.

Living food comes to Alaska

The captain persuaded, harassed, cajoled, bull-dogged and finally won permission to tackle a food-supply program.

Bear headed for Siberia, in lethal icy weather. The crew rounded up herds of reindeer, brought them on board, and carried the animals to Alaska.

Eskimos learned to use the animals for many things. Reindeer became transportation and food. Hides became rope, clothing and shelter and bones were used for fuel.

Bear had saved an entire culture and the ship gained a reputation as being unstoppable. No ice pack had kept the ship from its duties and Alaskans began to expect the ship on a routine basis.

First ship north in winter

Whalers were not always so lucky. In 1897, a fleet of them were stuck near Point Barrow in the Bering Sea. The 275 stranded men were in danger of starvation.

Bear, with a new commanding officer, CAPT Francis Tuttle, set out to rescue them. This trip became known as the Overland Expedition.

The ship made it as far as Cape Vancouver before sending out its land team.

Leading a caravan of 438 reindeer (gathered as they went), a horde of dogs, and 18 sleds of food and supplies, 1st Lt. David H. Jarvis took Eskimo guides, a surgeon, and part of the *Bear* crew north over 1,500 miles of rough terrain during winter storms.

The ship slowly followed.

A grateful crew greeted the land caravan four months later. And not far behind, the masts of *Bear*, medical supplies, more food, medical attention and a way home had arrived.

Bear had done the impossible.

Bear makes South trip

Admiral Richard E. Byrd was looking for a vessel suitable to take along for his second Antarctic Expedition.

Bear wasn't busy at the time, so Admiral Byrd managed to steal the ship for \$1,050. After being refitted with diesel power and electricity, *Bear* was headed for cold waters again.

The ship had to make another rescue on its first trip. A pick-up ship, *Ruppert*, could not make it to Little America, so *Bear* had to finish the trip for them to recover scientists and explorers who had been there for 18 months.

Final service to the U.S.

A second Antarctic trip was all the cutter made. It was called to service to patrol Greenland when World War II broke out.

The first German ship captured by the U.S., *Buskoe*, a Norwegian trawler that sent weather and ship movement information to the Nazis, was towed to the U.S. by *Bear*.

In 1944, the ship was decommissioned from active service. It was mothballed in Massachusetts and put up for sale. A Canadian steamship company bought *Bear* to use as a sealing ship but the price of seal skins and oil dropped to a non-productive level before the ship was refitted.

Alfred M. Johnston of Villanova, Penn., bought *Bear* in 1963 and was going to make the ship a floating restaurant in Philadelphia. That was not the ship's end.

While preparing *Bear* for tow to Philadelphia, no one installed proper ballast in the ship.

The tow line parted during a storm along the northeast coast. Fruitless efforts to reestablish the tow left the ship to fend for itself without a crew. On March 19, 1963, *Bear* died in the North Atlantic.

