

VILLAGE VIEW

ANDREA LEONARD

One of the most stirring events of the celebration marking the two centuries of American Independence in 1976 was Operation Sail when the parade of tall ships visited various ports on our northeastern seaboard.

The ships taking part at that time ranged from square-riggers and top-sail rigged craft to schooners, ketches and yawls; nothing else in the summer-long schedule of exercises appealed quite so surely to the imaginations of those who watched the stately progress of the tallest of the big sailing ships making their way into our harbors, through our own Cape Cod Canal, and up the Hudson River, gliding past the Statue of Liberty, and finally finding their berths at the piers of New York City.

For those who thrilled to the sight of those canvas-winged vessels, whose patriotism was renewed, as well as for those who missed the 1976 display, a repeat performance next year will offer another opportunity, for plans are now well under way for the Parade of Sail, 1980.

Thirty-five sail training ships from fourteen nations are already registered to participate in Op Sail '80 which is scheduled for Friday morning, May 30, and which will commemorate the 350th birthday of Boston, Cambridge, Watertown, Dorchester and other greater Boston communities.

The parade into the harbor is scheduled to begin at Deer Island Light and proceed at four knots through Boston Harbor and the Navy has been asked to authorize the U.S.S. Constitution to greet the visiting vessels and lead the procession to the New England Aquarium, firing a cannon every 60 seconds along the way.

The previous day, Thursday, May 29th, is the rendezvous date for the ships, and anchorage areas are being reserved now for the tall ships' arrivals.

The Coast Guard has been requested to close the harbor

to commercial traffic and to restrict the spectator fleet to assigned anchorages along the channel, as they did during Operation Sail exercises on July 10, 1976.

Once at their berths at the Army Base Pier, the visiting ships will be open to the public on most afternoons during the May 30th to June 4th period. More than 3,000 trainees will be manning the ships, and numerous activities and events are being planned for the weekend.

An Inshore Regatta will be held on the Charles River on Saturday, May 31st, and competitions are planned for windsurfing and sailboat races in the lower basin. On June 2nd, detachments from each ship will be invited to join the Ancient & Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts in a two-mile parade through downtown streets to Boston Common for exercises which have been conducted there on the first Monday in June since 1638.

Upon completion of the visit to Boston, at least eight of the tall ships will commence their Trans-Atlantic Race to Kristiansand, Norway. Those not participating in the race to Norway from Boston will be encouraged to visit various New England harbors before returning to their home ports.

Sixteen square-rigged ships are expected next year; seven of these visited Boston during Operation Sail in 1976. The four-masted topsail schooner **Juan Sebastian de Elcano** from Spain, the full-rigged ships **Dar Pormorza** from Poland and **Christian Radich** from Norway, the brig **Unicorn** from Tampa, the bark **Gloria** from Colombia, and the barkentine **Regina Maris** from Lewis Wharf in Boston, have already registered, and the popular Portuguese vessel **Sagres II** is expected to sign up soon.

Four other training vessels in addition to **Gloria** from Colombia are expected from South America. The bark **Guayas** (Ecuador), the barkentine **Esmeralda** (Chile), the full-rigged ship **Libertad** (Argentina), and the schooner **Captain Miranda** (Uruguay) will represent the southern continent of the western hemisphere.

Also registered for Operation Sail 1980 are the U.S. Coast Guard Academy bark **Eagle**, the German bark **Gorch Foch**, full-rigged ships **Danmark** from Denmark and **Rose** from Newport, and seven schooners, each with an over-all length in excess of a hundred feet. They are: **Sherman Zwicker** from Boothbay Harbor, **Roseway** from Camden, **Bill of Rights** from Newport, **Westward** from Woods Hole, **Tiki** from New London, and **Fair Seræ** from London, England.

Two topsail schooners, **Pride of Baltimore** (Baltimore) and **William H. Albury** (Coconut Grove) head a fleet of smaller schooners now registered including **Mary E.** from New London, **Voyager** from New Rochelle, **Tehani** from Centerport, **John Paul Jones** from South Norfolk, **Flying Fish** from Boston, and **Blue Maid** from Staatsburg.

The ketch **Great Escape** (Holland) and the yawl **Cotton Blossom IV** (Marblehead) are expected along with three sloops, **Christeen** (New London), **Good News** (Portsmouth), and **Selma II** (Shelter Island).

Registration for Op Sail '80 has not yet closed and it's still possible that training ships from five additional nations will join the fleet, as well as forty or more other sailing vessels from various United States ports.

Those of you who would like to plan on taking part in Boston's 350th birthday party next May might be well advised to make your arrangements at an early date. If Operation Sail '76 was any example of how popular this Parade of Sail will be, it is fair to say there'll be standing room only unless your reservations are nailed down months ahead of time.

If you enjoyed Operation Sail '76, you'll be equally delighted with Op Sail '80; and if you missed the earlier parade, next May you'll have a second chance to view these magnificent vessels.