

The Brotherhood of the Coast of Chile

It is difficult to describe in a few lines the history of the Brotherhood of the Coast and the history of the Santiago Table. There are so many small details that constitute the structure of an institution, that all of them could not fit in these few lines. Many were the contributions of each one of the Brothers, and therefore this is only a short summary of one of the few purely idealistic institutions remaining still on Earth. This tale only tries to inform the main facts that gave life to our Brotherhood and to the Santiago Table. Doubtless, the idea was born in a group of sail-navigators fans, and their wish to create a friendship among nautical sportsmen, considering the common interests that unify them.

In the Abordajes Nº 3 of February of 1954, Dr. Anselmo Hammer wrote: “Dr. Leng, in its physical maturity, had constructed in the Black Rock Island, near El Tabo beach, a friendly refuge for his family and her friends.

He already had the sea, with its white waves hitting the rocks, on the steps of his stone castle. At night, he heard the roars of the wind passing through the cliffs. At daybreak, he could hear the rain knocking on the glass of the windows.

Leng took a new step, likely because of the attraction that the spell of the ocean was producing on him: at 60 years old, on 1944, he took the course for yacht master, and he received his coastal pilot license, after passing the required tests.”

The first course was taught in Santiago on 1944, by the National Sport Club and Alfonso Leng and Raul Maceratta were part of the class. The headquarters of this club was located in Cathedral Street, in front of the church, and in charge was the Navy Lieutenant Teodoro Varas. Since 1947, the course was taught in the Engineering School of the University of Chile, with the endorsement of the sports center of the University, whose nautical branch was headed by Dr. Alfonso Leng.

Dr. Anselmo Hammer continues his story saying: “To have the diploma and not to sail it would have been like a paradox. This “sea wolf” started to sail small and big yachts in Algarrobo, the beach town closest to its summer house in the coast. 3 years ago he felt the urge to complete the creative curve of its existence with a new work, of great imaginative content and a wide human horizon: The Brotherhood of the Coast”

From the social gatherings generated after the courses in the capital, and the meetings in the Marine Alliance of Valparaiso (Liga Marítima de Valparaíso), Dr. Alfonso Leng, an eminent dentist, composer, and winner of the National Award in the Art category, proposed the following idea: To join together all the sail navigation fans in a group of friends. The idea had a slow but warm reception. Little by little, the idea started to grow up in the soul of these sacrificed yachting’s men surrounded by the wonderful scenery of the sea.

And during the dawn of April 4th of 1951 the idea was materialized, when the meeting that had started at 20:00 of the previous day culminated around the home table of Dr. Alfonso Leng. He

had summoned a group of yacht enthusiasts to commemorate the birth of Arturo Prat. The nautical sportsmen attending the meeting were: Dr. Anselmo Hammer, Raul Maceratta, Dr. Miguel Romero, Raul Molinare, Ruperto Vergara and Miguel de la Barra. They founded a brotherhood of friends that shortly would be called the Brotherhood of the Coast/Santiago Table, and with the goal of unite all the people who possess the ideal of nautical recreation. This brotherhood of friends, plus some guests, continued to meet in Santiago.

In its origins, as it is indicated in the Abordaje Nº 11 of October of 1954, the Brotherhood of the Coast was confined to the city of Santiago. Although, as was indicated previously, the first meeting was at Dr. Leng's home in April 4th 1951, and subsequent meetings were at the National Club Sport of Santiago, and at Dr. Anselmo Hammer's apartment, in the street Jose Ramon Gutierrez # 382-B, the name of this new institution only saw the light on August of 1951, when Dr. Hammer founded the National Club of Algarrobo, during a session-dinner to which partners of this Club, who practiced or wished to practice the yachting were invited.

On September of 1951, in one of these meeting-dinners in Algarrobo, during one of its short speech, the brother Anselmo Hammer called for the first time the assembly of friends, a NEW BROTHERHOOD of the COAST.

These modern brothers wanted to, as a romantic symbol, consider themselves as heirs of the old Brothers of the Coast, a brotherhood of sailors from the XVII century, that putting aside certain not so happy aspects regarding with piracy activities demonstrated authentic courage, camaraderie and adventurous spirit, as well as extremely great sea navigation skills.

In that meeting, the brother Hammer solemnly proposed that Dr. Leng were named Captain of the Brotherhood. The proposal was welcomed with great enjoyment by the assistants. He requested for himself the humble position of Foreman, demonstrating the immense spirit of greatness that animated the founders of the Institution.

At that time, the brother Hammer was the head of a magazine of the National Sport Club denominated "ACTION", in which he discussed the activities of the Brotherhood of the Coast. This magazine was distributed to all the newly founded Yachts Clubs throughout the country. From the city of Tome arrived a letter requesting more information about this new institution. This detail almost meaningless motivated the board of the Brotherhood to found seats in other cities. These seats would be called TABLES, and the respective chairs called Lieutenant.

The brother Anselmo Hammer, inspired humanist, philanthropist and polyglot, introduced in one of the first meetings, called Zafarrancho, a declaration of principles, respect, friendship and love called "OCTALOGO" with a comprehensible marine inspiration, in November 7 of 1951 at the Spanish Center of Santiago. This Octólogo constitutes a philosophical ideal of life that, in synthesis, establishes: Respect, friendship, hospitality, brotherhood, modesty, generosity, tolerance and love to the sea.

It was agreed that the "OCTALOGO" must be accepted by each entering brother in a solemn ritual at the time of joining the Brothers of the Coast of the world.

On January 15 of 1952, Dr. Leng traveled to Valparaíso, to the launching of the first pirate boat of the Yacht Club of the University of Chile, donated by Eugene Müller. There he had the opportunity to establish contact with the gentlemen Juan Kisvarday, Commander Ramon Pinochet, Captain Carlos Zorzi, Dr Federico Ankelen, Lieutenant Eduardo Allen, Ismó Suazo and others, according to the article in the Abordaje N ° 11 of October of 1954. This was first stone for the creation of a second Table of the brotherhood, this time in Valparaíso.

When the brother Leng returned to Santiago, he communicated the enthusiasm from the people of Valparaíso, and their embrace of the idea of the Brotherhood of the Coast. He decided to name Captain Zorzi as Veedor or Prosecutor of the Table. One week later, the Foreman brother Anselmo Hammer went to the port of Valparaíso to meet with all of them, but only contacted Mr. Kisvarday, that at the time was the President of the Yacht Federation. By order of Captain Leng, he appointed Mr. Kisvarday as Lieutenant of the Valparaíso's Table, incorporating him as member of the Brotherhood.

Later, on February 1st of 1952, the first Zafarrancho of the Valparaíso's Table was celebrated. This important occasion was a good reason for the presence of the founders of the Brotherhood.

It is interesting to note that, the Yachting Amateur Federation of Chile was born of the necessity to unite the Yacht Clubs of the Chilean coast and a majority of its founders and first leaders were Brothers of the Coast. A testimony of this fact can be found in the first record of the Yachting Amateur Federation of Chile signed in Valparaíso, and conserved until today in the current Chilean Yacht Federation.

On the February of 1952, the Foreman brother Hammer accompanied by the brother Maceratta, attended as special representatives from the Club Nautico Deportivo Nacional, from Algarrobo, to the First National Yacht race, organized by the Yacht Club of Valdivia, the oldest club of Chile, founded on July 13 of 1912 and chaired by the well-known yachtsman brother Otto Stolzembach. Immediately, the brothers Hammer and Maceratta took advantage of the occasion, and they presented the Brotherhood of the Coast to the yachtsmen and sea sports fans.

These were the first steps of the consolidation of the third Table, the Table of Valdivia, on February 13 of 1952. Lieutenant Brother Carlos Hilker was named chair of the table. On the same month and year, and only a couple of days later, the fourth Table was founded. On February 15 the Concepcion-Talcahuano table was born, and was chaired by lieutenant brother Felix Musante. It followed the Punta Arenas Table in March of 1952 chaired by the Lieutenant Brother Alexander Gutiérrez. Later, the Coquimbo Table on September 24 of 1952 chaired by the Lieutenant Brother Enrique Bun and the Iquique Table on October 14 of the same year chaired by the Lieutenant Brother Reynaldo Bennett, were founded.

This was the Brotherhood of the Coast at the first of November of 1952.

Meanwhile, on April 1st of 1952, when the activities of the Santiago Table were reinitiated, the Captain Brother Leng proposed that the duration of the position of Captain or Lieutenant of each Table could not exceed one year. The Brother Hammer was chosen in that Zafarrancho as Captain of the Santiago Table. Also, in that Zafarrancho, it was agreed the creation of one superior authority called "Council of the Fifteen", for being fifteen the number of representatives from the different Tables present at that moment.

The Council was formed by a board of 6 directive members that, in a provisory decision, were chosen between the presents. The following brothers were elected: Commander in Chief Alonso Leng; Corregidor Walter Weschke; First Pilot Rene Burguecio; Escribano Raul Molinare; General Commissioner Anselmo Hammer; Veedor Carlos Zorzi.

The Council, by disposition of the first "Ordenanzas" dated October 12 of 1952 (its elaboration took six months), welcomed in its board nine consultative members chosen randomly using the national identification number among existing Active and Honorary Table leaders at that time. These Advisors were: Brothers Juan Kisvarday, from Valparaiso; Carlos Hilker, from Valdivia; Felix Musante, from Concepcion - Talcahuano; Charles Muñoz, from Santiago; Reynaldo Bennet, from Iquique; Heriberto Erlwein, from Santiago; Calixto Roger, from London; and Otto Stolzembach, from Valdivia. These advisors and the six brothers who had been named provisory formed what was called "the Council of the Fifteen".

This "Council of the Fifteen" met for the first time in Valparaiso, on February 20 of 1953 and agreed, among other agreements, one goal that would have great importance: to extend the ideals of the Brotherhood of the Coast of Chile to other countries. To manage this issue was named a brother of great enthusiasm and dynamism: Brother Anselmo Hammer, the new General Commissioner of the Council.

This inspiring founder combined his human qualities as medical doctor, a clear sense of friendship, and an unbreakable modesty. He also dominated several languages and had great literary aptitude; he was Director of the Marine Alliance (Liga Marítima) and Secretary of the Yachting Amateur Federation of Chile.

Regarding Brother Hammer, we can say unmistakably that he had three passions in his life: its family, medicine, and the Brotherhood of the Coast. The first circulars were made personally by him, in an old mimeograph at the Marine Alliance in Valparaiso. These circulars were translated to English, French and Italian, and were the first messages sent outside. They were sent to almost all the yachts clubs of Europe and America, and also to some foreign nautical magazines. To find names and foreign addresses of Yachts Clubs and magazines must have been a titanic work, and only a man with the disposition of the Brother Hammer would have been able to do such work.

Just a short time later, on December of 1953, "Abordajes" the first publication of the Brotherhood of the Coast was born. The birth came from the symbiotic work of two brothers: Anselmo Hammer and Mario Torres Labraña. They found faithful collaboration from the brothers: Carlos Pinedo, Ariel Ferrada, Federico Karl and Alfonso Rojas. In its beginnings, this publication was printed from an old "Multigraph Record" mimeograph from the Marine Alliance of Chile, written in single piece of paper that was exhibited in the board at the Yachts Club of Valparaiso, the actual Yacht Club of Chile. Later, the first bulletin containing several pages of Abordajes was distributed between the brothers, with an edition of 300 units.

The Brotherhood of the Coast had a great influence in the beginnings of the yachting activity in Chile. Therefore, we can point out that in November of 1950, when the Yachting Amateur Federation of Chile was created in the city of Valparaiso, its first board was constituted by: President Brother Juan Kisvarday; Vice-president Brother Ramon Pinochet; Secretary Mr. Renzo Tomasello; Treasurer Brother Arturo Steel; Director Brother Renato Sukno.

The Brothers of the Coast also were leaders of the yachts clubs of that time. From the 15 Yacht Clubs existing in 1953, eleven were chair by members of the Brotherhood of the Coast.

The Brotherhood of the Coast kept growing in Chile, and it is important to note that on 1962 there were Tables in the following cities: Arica, Iquique, Tocopilla, Antofagasta, Taltal, Coquimbo, la Serena, Ovalle, Valparaiso, Santiago, Angol, Conception - Talcahuano, Valdivia, Puerto Montt and Punta Arenas.

On 1967 were added to the previous ones: Copiapó-Caldera, Castro and Ancud. On 1969, Quintero; on 1977, Easter Island; on 1979, Williams Port; on 1980, San Antonio; on 1991 Constitution; on 1993, Calbuco; on 1996 Villarrica; on January 1997, the Antarctic Table, and finally on 2009 Guanaqueros.