

A two story white concrete slightly wind worn light house stood sitting amongst sharp jutting stones in a shallow coral reef approximately forty miles off the New Foundland Coast. It was here just barely a year ago that the tragic fatal sudden unexpected tropical squall claimed the life of once infamous Coast Guard lookout Jack Brennen.

Mr. Brennen's responsibilities were to contact the incoming ships and to warn them of the hidden treacherous coral reefs that were undetectable by the typical water depth detectors. Many a ship had perished amongst the unsuspecting reefs before the time of this wholesome light house, more affibly known as White Bear. Those who lived their lives by its virtues would meet there whenever circumstances of bussiness permitted. Many unrecorded tales passed between the men here at White Bear, but none could match those that were told, some by, but mostly about Mr. Jack Brennen.

Mr Brennen's life centered around adventure ever since the age of ten when his family was offered the coveted position to maintain the Light House. His Dad was a ship builder and his Mom a seamstress for a local dress manufacturing business..

It was the evening of July 12th 1981 and the outside temperature was 102 degrees F. in the shade. It was a humid day and few people were wandering about out in the scorching sun this day. The usual fishermen that would go out to catch crabs, flounder, bluefish and assorted other varieties were all milling around at The White Bear waiting for the current heat wave to break. Some were playing Gin Rummy, some looking over current issues of Boat Beautiful, and the rest tried to outdo one another in the telling of their past season's experiences.

Then it happened. No warnning, no gradual change in wind currents, no gradual tide build-up, and certainly there wasn't any weather forcast warnning on the radio. The time was 6:30 PM and every-one had just finished cleaning up after dinner. There was a thunder burst, louder than anyone ther had experienced since the Killer hurricane of '42. There was a blinding flash followed by what seemed to be an ocean of water pouring down.

Now these weren't men who just owned pleasure cruisers, but active working fishing vessels that they've toiled all their lives to obtain, and they represented their entire lively hoods. Without their boats they would be penniless.

They knew that it was necessary to tie them up

or this would be the last they would ever see of the only means of earning a living they had. For many of the men the boats were also their homes.

So these were the conditions that prompted these men to act instantaneously without question of danger to rescue their various assorted floating craft.

With the wind velocity changing from a calm 5 knots to a seldom occurring 90 miles per hour they never knew what hit them. The harbour was the docking place for about 150 yachts. Out of these 48 were to have been wrecked beyond recognition and 58 others to be either swept out to sea or sunk in unknown locations.

During this storm Mr. Jack Brennen was motoring fishermen out to their sailboats, yachts, stinkpots, and back to White Bear again. Several men were even blown right off the decks of their ships and Mr. Brennen being an olympic swimmer dove immediately in after them and pulled them out.

The squall persisted on mercilessly, boats that were already doubly and tripply secured were tearing away from their moorings. The owners again, going out to retie them down were pushing their lifelong toughened muscles to the limit.

It was a miracle that any boats at all escaped destruction and a bigger miracle still that no one was seriously hurt. No one at all, no one thanks to Mr. Jack.

The next morning the squall was gone. The weather itself gave no clue what so ever as to what happened the evening before. The quiet calm in the coral created harbour was nothing but one big floating forrest of debris with approximately 50 vessels in tact.

What happened to Mr. Jack Brennen? Well he passed away during the night in his sleep. He was 73.

The End