OCEANOGRAPHY PROJECT

CAPTAIN JAMES FAUGHN

Project Coordinator: Robert A. Calvert
July 1976

CAPTAIN JAMES FAUGHN

Captain James Faughn first developed an interest in the sea when he joined the Navy in 1927 at the age of seventeen. He then pursued this interest in 1947 by going to work for the University of California War Research group of Point Loma. As an administrator for Marine Facilities, Faughn received ships from the Navy and converted them for research purposes. These ships were used then in the Marine Life Research Program, which was in its early stage at this time.

Among numerous voyages that Captain Faughn participated in (Northern Holiday, NAGA, LUSIAD, DODO), he was on a committee to organize the MIDPAC Expedition. Similarly, he was involved with the Indian Ocean Expedition. His general responsibilities in this capacity consisted of hopping from port to port before the ship's arrival to make arrangements with the local scientific organizations. Also, after the departure of the ship, Faughn had the task of clarifying any problem that may have been left in the port.

In mid 1950, Captain Faughn became the Technical Director of Scripps Institute of Oceanography. He, in essence, is a liaison between the director's office and the different departments of the institute. In this position today, he is able to go to sea occasionally, while still tending his duties in general administration. As Faughn states, "I was agreeable to staying as long as it was fun. So, for 27 years it was fun."

Lucille Gates, 1977

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION
HISTORY OF OCEANOGRAPHY

INTERVIEWEE: Captain James Faughn

INTERVIEWER: Robert A. Calvert

DATE: July 17, 1976

TIME: 10:00 AM

PLACE: Carlsbad, California

RC: Captain Faughn, what I need to know is how you became interested in the sea.

JF: Well, I became interested in the sea primarily when I was 17 years old and joined the Navy from Nebraska and was sent out to San Diego. And I spent a year in San Diego going through a service school, then three years in China followed by five years in the battle fleet in San Pedro and six years around San Diego-Honolulu on a radio-controlled destroyer, at which time World War II came along. Shortly after the beginning of World War II, I was retired on a physical from the Navy and joined the Merchant Marine as a licensed marine engineer and later the Army Transport Service as captain on tugboats in the southwest Pacific until after the war, then commenced law school in San Diego at the Balboa Law School. While attending school there in 1947, I ran into an old shipmate from the China station who was working at the University of California War Research group at Point Loma, which later became the Scripps' Marine Physical Lab at Naval Electronics Lab. He said that they had a temporary job for someone with my general background to work with them, getting some ships from the Navy and converting them for research use to start on the Marine Life Research Program which was to begin in 1949.

RC: What was the Marine Life Research Program to be?

JF: Well, it started out being a hunt for the missing sardine of California. But it's gone on now for what, 25, 26, 27 years and has gradually become a more comprehensive study of the marine life and general environment in the California current.

RC: And what sort of vessels were you given to convert?

JF: We had a choice of two vessels to begin with. One was an ex-Navy ATA class, which is a large sea-going tug, 143 foot, and which was eventually turned into what we called the Horizon. The other was an ex-YMS type, a wooden-hull type, obtained from the Navy up at Suisun Bay, California, and converted at Todd Shipyard up at San Pedro. This we named the Crest. The Horizon we converted ourself down here at San Diego. She was a steel hull, so it was

much simpler working on her than it was on the wooden vessel. Then in June, 1948, we had a Navy BUSHIPS contract that was running out that had around 80,000 dollars left in it. We had been looking at a purse-seiner up at Monterey Bay and San Francisco which was up for sale and which we thought might be converted for sort of inshore biological research primarily since the other ships were to be coastal from, say, Oregon to Cape San Lucas. So at the start of the Marine Life Research Program, we had the two ships, the Crest and the Horizon, working together with the Fish and Wildlife Service ship the Black Douglas and had the coast from Oregon to Cape San Lucas split up into three sections with each ship running one section, essentially, once in each month. And they would swap around from section to section so that one ship wasn't always working either north of Cape Mendocino or south towards Cape San Lucas.

RC: When the time comes to convert one of these ships, exactly what did you do to it?

JF: Well, in the case of the Horizon, which was the tugboat, it was up at Seattle; and, of course, it was in the middle of the winter, at least March, when we got a hold of it in 1948. It had been sealed so everything inside of it was wringing wet. Our first job on that was to get it dried out and get the generators going and the boiler going so we could warm the place up, test out the engines and the electrical circuits and everything. Three of us were doing this work, which took about three weeks to get that much going. We called a crew from the old E. W. Scripps from San Diego to come up to Seattle, and we got her underway and ran a four-hour post-repair trial, so to speak, in the Sound and headed right down for San Diego. We got here all right, but it was sort of a hairy thing. First one thing would go wrong, then something else, but nothing we couldn't handle. The steering went out, for instance, and we shifted to emergency steering in the engine room. We had a second mate, Gus Brandle by name, who was an old sailing boat man for one thing, and he was sitting on a bucket turned upside down in the engine room with this little steering thing like a streetcar. We were rolling and pitching, and he was sliding back and forth and grumbling to himself about a mate being on watch down in the engine room instead of up on the bridge. But, anyway, we got the ship to San Diego. Prior to this, in November 1947, we went to Mare Island, where the Navy control for the other ship was from Suisun Bay, and signed a title "B" custody card for it and got a tug from San Francisco to haul it down to Stone's Yard in the Alameda Estuary. We left it there after having the shafts pulled out for inspection and the holes plugged up. It laid there for nearly a year while we worked on the Horizon down here. But in December, first of December, 1948, we brought it down from San Francisco and put it in the Todd Shipyard at Los Angeles, San Pedro. And in 30 days they had it converted to a research vessel (basically), at which time we brought it down to San Diego and got both ships ready for starting out in early '49 on the Marine Life Research Program.

RC: How many vessels did you convert all together?

JF: Well, we had the Crest and the Horizon and the Paolina-T, the purse-seiner, in '48, '49. And then in 1951, following the MIDPAC Expedition, we got another ship (the Spencer F. Baird), same as the Horizon, which had already been converted at one time and used in the Philippine islands by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries. It was out of commission up at Olympia, Washington. Much of the equipment on it had been removed, of course, and it had been turned back to the Maritime Commission. We got it and brought it down to San Diego, worked up its specifications for conversion, and put it in the Navy shipyard in San Diego, the old destroyer base, for conversion in 1952. Then there was a series of other ships,that I didn't have anything to do with,that were converted. Mr. Joe Sefton, a banker here in San Diego, had in 1948-49 converted an ex-Coast Guard vessel which he ran for a few years and finally in 1956 turned over to Scripps (the Orca). So, the fleet gradually built up to five ships and seven ships. We then had an offer for a vessel, the Stranger, which was an ex-yacht that was up at Long Beach; and the man that owned it had converted it for a yacht. It had actually been used down here at San Diego during the war for research purposes, but he had reconverted it. So he wanted to give it a good home and thought that going back to oceanographic research would be the proper way for the old lady to spend the rest of her days. So we brought it down to San Diego in 1955 and converted it for research. And later on I spent two years (1959-1961) with it in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. And then later we got one ship from the Fish and Wildlife Service, or the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries rather, at Calcofi at Honolulu, which was going out of commission because of budget problems. That was the Hugh M. Smith. We got it, I guess, in 1959. I had been on the Hugh Smith to make a survey at Eniwetok Island in the fall of 1956, following the atomic test out there and in preparation for tests they were running the next year. So I knew the vessel and had spent a couple of months on it. So we got it. In the meantime we got a hold of an ARS from San Diego, a larger ship, and converted it and called it the Argo. It made its first cruise in 1960-61 to the Indian Ocean and Australia. Then, when the Navy ships started coming out, we got the Thomas Washington (1965) which was one of the AGOR type ships, the AGOR-10, I think, and later (1969) the Melville. Earlier, the group at the Physiological Research Laboratory in San Diego was formed and was in the market for a very special kind of ship. Some of that group had been with me in the Stranger in the South China Sea in 1959, and we had discussed the possibility of a biological research laboratory vessel under Dr. Scholander,who was Director of the Physiological Research Laboratory. So we worked on plans for that. And finally, in 1964, NSF came up with enough money to start building it, at which time I was sent up to Tacoma, Washington, and spent the next year and a half as on-site representative while it was under construction.

RC: What sort of things do you look for when you are an on-site representative?

JF: For one thing, you know what the ship is supposed to be. There's a set of specifications; and you work with the shipyard and with the American Bureau of Shipping people, the Coast Guard, and the naval architect, in seeing that the ship, from scratch, grows and becomes what the specifications call for, together with all the minor changes that academic committees can dream up in a year and a half during the building of the ship. So in 1966, in February, that ship, the Alpha Helix, was commissioned; and we took her from the yard at Tacoma. We could avoid Washington sales tax (which would duplicate the California "use tax") by taking delivery of the ship three miles outside Washington, which we did. We took the ship out through the Straits of Juan de Fuca. And three miles west of Tatush Light we took over the ship officially from the builder and went back in and dropped off the yard people. We then spent two days, in a snowstorm, running some post-building trials and then brought it down to San Diego. And then in March, after a very short time in San Diego, we started off on the "Billabong" Expedition to Australia and the Great Barrier Reef in it. So that was the last conversion or building that I was involved in.

RC: That was your third major voyage, though. Is that right?

JF: Well, no, I had been on MIDPAC, Northern Holiday, NAGA, LUSIAD, and DODO. The first major voyage was in 1950.

RC: All right, now, that's MIDPAC.

JF: MIDPAC Expedition.

RC: Now you're in charge of organizing the MIDPAC Expedition. Isn't that correct?

JF: We had a committee in charge of organizing the expedition.

RC: Well, tell me what you do on a committee when you talk about organizing MIDPAC.

JF: Dr. Revelle and some of the other senior scientists at Scripps were interested in some of the background that had built up during World War II, including soundings about guyots, sea-mounts, and whatnot in the western Pacific. And we arranged with the Navy at N.E.L., who had two old APCER vessels there for research, to mount a combined Navy, Scripps Institution-University of California program through the western Pacific. So there were two ships involved, and they left here together headed down towards the equator and back up to Honolulu and then went west from Honolulu through what are now known as the MIDPAC-mountains range and over to Bikini. And we ran a seismic profile at Bikini and round Bikini, outside, and then down to Kwajalein, then came

back to Bikini; and part of the group left. Some of the geologists stayed on board. And we ran a program going north from Bikini till we got on what would be a great circle route to Cape Mendocino and started SOFAR tests, dropping bottle-cap bombs and other explosive charges ever so often en route to Cape Mendocino. And when we got some hundreds of miles west of Cape Mendocino, we ran into the western extension of the Mendocino Escarpment and made a quick survey of this feature, then on into San Diego. But all major programs, of course, are through committees of interested scientists and occasionally the director, who gets involved with the budget--or whoever else gets involved with the budget--and with the availability of the ship and funding for the ship or the programs that are involved. Much of the work, as far as getting long cruises together, nowadays is done by some of the graduate students who have been out on one or two cruises during their graduate studies and who are getting close to their graduation. And one of the requirements is (always hopefully) then, that they would take the responsibility of putting a cruise together, becoming the project officer for a long cruise--eight months, ten months, fourteen months, whatever--and getting scientists set up for each leg of the cruise or month by month from beginning to end. And then it's a case of putting together a program that somebody will support and eventually getting off on it.

RC: You schedule scientists to meet you at certain places, then, along the cruise, I take it. They fly out there and meet you there. Was it always done that way or was there a time when they stayed on the vessel from the beginning to the end, in effect?

JF: Well, only on some of our cruises. At least the MIDPAC Expedition lasted from July to October, and some of the people stayed on the whole time and some returned. We had a meteorological group, for instance, that got off at the end of the first leg in Honolulu. And some of the physical oceanographers got off in Bikini or Kwajalein, but some of the geologists stayed on for the whole cruise coming back. But, in general, cruises are run on sort of a month-by-month leg because between three and four weeks is about as long as a ship can stay at sea without needing fuel, water, and so forth. They do run a little longer than that on rare occasions, up to five or six weeks. I think six weeks is about the maximum. And there are not too many people that can stay at sea away from other duties that long. But there are times when the same groups stay on for more than one leg or come in on a later leg after serving on one leg. And sometimes this is to provide continuity in the direction they're going, in the area they want to work in, and sometimes to get the ship home after it has sailed over the Indian Ocean or the western Pacific or to South America.

RC: In the '40's and '50's, when you were scheduling these vessels, was it possible to schedule more than one cruise at one time?

JF: Well, in the early days of the Marine Life Research Program, two

of the ships, the two larger ships that we had, the Crest and the Horizon, were more or less committed to the Marine Life Research Program. So, during 1949 until mid-1950, they were, together with the Black Douglas, running more or less monthly cruises off the coast in the Marine Life Research Program. Well, then the Horizon was pulled off for the MIDPAC Expedition and then rejoined in 1951. And then later it was pulled off again and sent on the Northern Holiday Expedition, at which time we went from San Diego up to Cape Mendocino and then ran out the Mendocino Escarpment to meet where we had come in on the MIDPAC Expedition and went north through the Gulf of Alaska over the various sea-mounts there to Kodiak, at which time I got off to come back to help put the Baird in commission, which we had just got from the maritime commission. Another skipper, Captain Ferris, brought the ship back from Kodiak to San Diego in Northern Holiday. But at that time, too, after the first two or three years on the Marine Life Research Program, it was decided that data was coming in so fast--so much faster than it could be worked up--that they should slow down getting of the data, that is, run the cruises with greater spacing so that they had a chance to get caught up with the data and then run it in a more systematic manner, where the data and the cruises were coming together, which is the working-up of the data.

RC: Now, in addition to MIDPAC, is the next major cruise to South China Sea?

JF: For me?

RC: For you.

JF: Well, I think so, except for Northern Holiday. I spent time in 1956 at Bikini-Eniwetok bomb test and then that fall went back again on a Calcofi boat, the Hugh Smith, to Eniwetok for some investigations out there to get data for the following years' tests. Then in 1959, in June, we left here on the Stranger for a two-year program which was a tripartite thing--the United States, Thailand, and South Vietnam--for a study of the marine resources of the Gulf of Thailand and of the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. That was under the U.S. foreign aid program. It's the only one of the kind we've ever run. I'm not sure that they want to run another, but that started out to be a preliminary two-year program in S.E. Asia which was to be picked up later by UNESCO, which didn't transpire because by the time that program was finished, the initial ten cruises--five in the Gulf and five in the South China Sea--UNESCO had got more interested, and so did many of our people, in the International Indian Ocean Expedition. So in 1960, then, we had just got the Argo in commission, and Bob Fisher took it off on a cruise down to Australia and then to the Indian Ocean--that's the beginning of the Indian Ocean Expedition. Then in 1962, we had the Argo and the Horizon both out in the Indian Ocean. And I spent that year running from port to port ahead of the ships, preparing or making arrange-

ments with local scientific organizations for meeting the ship or providing participants and making arrangements for ship agents and so forth. Then, when the ship came in, I'd stay in port till it had left and we had cleared up whatever problems they left in the port. And then I'd go to the next port.

RC: What sort of problems would they leave in port?

JF: Well, sometimes you leave a lot of gear in port or you leave people that have to get out--like, when we were in Ceylon, we had some foreign nationals, Indians and Pakistanis and so forth, to get back to their country. And the problem there was getting the Pakistanis back to Pakistan, because India wouldn't let them on a plane that was going to over-fly India or stop in India--things like that. And then, when the ships met in Cochin, India, one of the problems there was that a lot of the equipment that had been shipped to Cochin, to India, hadn't arrived by the time the ships were due to depart for Mauritius. The equipment had actually arrived in India and been sent to Madras and Bombay. But it got caught in customs in Madras and strangely enough, in some ways strange to us at the time, the various states in India are fairly independent of the central government; in fact, they don't like to be told what to do. Like customs, where their headquarters is in New Delhi.... I had been in New Delhi twice and arranged there to have things get through, but they still got caught up in Madras. Well, after the ships left Cochin, we got all the equipment over to Cochin; and we arranged with the Indian navy there to contact the ships. (They had just left two days before everything arrived.) The ships didn't want to come back and meet one of the Indian navy ships because it would cost them some time retracing their steps. So between there and their next port--well, they were going to Mauritius--I had to get the stuff back to Bombay, then from Bombay to Kenya, and from there to Mauritius. It finally arrived in time so that it didn't hold up the expedition, but it took a lot of jumping back and forth from one place to another to do it. We had all kinds of good luck with consuls and the embassies, and the leaders of or the senior people in the various Associations for the Advancement of Science in the countries. But somehow or other, getting things into or out of a country where you have to get an import license and an export license and things like this, gets a little sticky. Well, anyway, they wound up there and I jumped to Jakarta because the ship was eventually going to come around to Jakarta, and from there, I came back home. And in 1962, (LUSIAD Expedition) I picked up the Argo in Manila and had the use of it to do some more surveying in the South China Sea between Manila and Singapore. Then in 1964, (DODO Expedition) when it was coming back, I picked it up in Singapore and rode it to Manila doing some more, which was adding on to the surveys we had made in the South China Sea on the Stranger. So, that was the last, that until the work with the Alpha Helix for the marine biological group came up. I spent a year and a half up in the shipyard on the building of that, and the first year at Australia on it and then the next year, in 1967,

up the Amazon with it. Then, after that, well, the last trip I made was on the Thomas Washington from here to South America. Well, we stopped at Pitcairn Island and went into Tahiti with a biological group and then picked up a marine geologist, John Moody, and a group in Tahiti. From there we went south about 55 degrees south, I guess, and up into Valparaiso, Chile, where John left. We then picked up a marine biological group there and worked out of Valparaiso into Antofagasta, then out of Antofagasta into Callao, Peru, where I left the ship. That was the last cruise I was on. I participated in the first five months of the cruise which lasted for one and a half years--total.

RC: When you set up a ship, so to speak, would you be responsible for making sure there are enough stores? How large would your crew be? What kind of technical problems like this would you face?

JF: Well, initially I was marine superintendent, or one of two marine superintendents. I was marine superintendent, engineering, responsible for engineering and whatnot, and setting up the office, originally the marine superintendent's office, in Point Loma. And then we had a marine superintendent named Clem Stose, for hull. Clem finally relieved me and took the job on altogether, after the MIDPAC Expedition, when I went into the director's office. But there I had overall responsibility for seeing that it was done. But, of course, the university has purchasing agents; and, when we set up the marine superintendent's office at Point Loma, we eventually hired a ship's cook, or port steward, and storekeeper and secretary and, you know, it finally filled up. Now it's quite an operation, of course. So Marine Facilities, then, really has the responsibility for the ship and for putting on board and securing on board scientific equipment. But the scientists themselves have the responsibility for getting the scientific gear down to the ship, testing it out, and operating it when it's at sea, and for providing their own, or at least providing orders for their own, supplies and things. On a long cruise, some things are left on board, some of the scientific gear, while the ship goes on. The scientists come back with data and samples. Some samples, like rock samples, they usually leave aboard. In general, it's a whole-institution job--from the director's office to the scientific part to the Marine Facilities group--that gets a ship on its way and takes care of it for whatever number of months it's gone and until it gets back.

RC: When did you decide to go to the director's office?

JF: Following MIDPAC, when Dr. Revelle, Roger, was taking up the associate director's job at Scripps. Dr. Eckert was trying to get out from under the directorship. And they needed additional assistance in the director's office so John Isaacs was put in as Assistant to the Director for Research. I was put in as Technical Administrator for the institution, which eventually turned into the Assistant Director's job which Jeff Frautschy has, except that, in my time, it was a much simpler job than it is now.

RC: Well, as Technical Director, what did you do?

JF: I worked on budgets, on ship cruise plans, personnel--sort of a director's office business thing. Actually, we had a business manager, and we had an accountant, accounting office, and a personnel office; but I was liaison between the director's office and the different departments: personnel, accounting, and business are statewide institutions. So, there was a problem of them complying with the statewide regulations and programs and at the same time making them fit into what Scripps needed. And now, of course, it's even more complicated. But one thing Revelle managed to do before he left Scripps was to get what he called a "Magna Carta," or a certain amount of autonomy that provided direct contact with Berkeley. When I first went there and for a few years after, Scripps was the Department of Oceanography under UCLA. What Revelle managed to do was to get the Scripps Institution recognized as a separate department, a separate institution. And it started on the College of Science and Engineering, which is now Revelle College and which was the forerunner of the UCSD.

RC: Was this move into the director's office, in effect, a mid-change in career for you? I'm saying, did you have experience in this sort of thing before?

JF: Well, in general administration?

RC: Yes.

JF: One of the things one learns in some respects in the Navy is general administration. And, of course, in late '47, '48, '49, and till mid'50, when we started the MIDPAC Expedition, I was administrator for the Marine Facilities. So I knew the budget system pretty well and was pretty well acquainted with most of the scientists and the director and the associate director. And we decided at the time that there was more need in the director's office than there was for two marine superintendents at Point Loma. Ships had got in commission and had spent their first couple of seasons working, and everything was settling down out there. And the university was anticipating making Revelle director from associate director, but he had the problem that he had been gone for some time during the war. He just needed assistance, maybe more assistance than he got. It was interesting. I liked general administration as long as it was still possible to go to sea occasionally, because that was my first love anyway. When I went to Scripps, I had an engineer's license and later I got a master's license while I was there, so I wanted to keep the license active. I still have it. I was agreeable to staying as long as it was fun. So, for 27 years it was fun.

RC: Now, you had been in the Navy almost 20 years before that, had you not?

JF: 15 years. (1927 - 1942)

RC: 15 years before that. When I checked, I counted up around 40 years, in effect, at sea that you had been on.

JF: A good deal of the time. You see, I wasn't married when I was in the Navy so I lived on board all the time.

RC: Did you notice any tremendous changes in Scripps while you were there? Any particular changes that seem to be startling?

JF: No, I don't think that I would call any of the changes startling. There was the periodic building program; Scripps grew in size; and the University of California at San Diego got started. And as we got more buildings on the campus, we brought people in from Point Loma, gave up some of the old barracks buildings that the Navy had let us use out there, and brought in some of the people from the Marine Physical Lab. And they built the Physiological Research Lab (PRL) in conjunction with the Brain Research Institute at UCLA that was part-way funded by two groups and is still run, more or less, by two groups. I think the Brain Research Institute owns the upper floor, and Scripps owns the rest of it. IGPP was built, was started, and now the Marine Biology Lab is being built and the NORPAC Building is being built. The library is being built. But these were gradual changes. In general, up till two years ago, it seemed like the changes were coming along pretty rapidly. Of course, when budgets were cut tighter and tighter the past few years, it slowed down somewhat but not too much. Of course, the ships are always a very large part of the Scripps' budgets; but they have managed, as a matter of policy, to never give up all of the smaller ships in the event that they eventually have to cut back or for some reason or another lose ship funding or get a greatly reduced ship funding--they still have some ships that they can operate on reduced budgets or with state support. It has been a very enjoyable experience for me.

Table 1. Historical list of SIO ships

Name	Years in service*	Year built	Year acquired	Number major recon-versions	Owner-ship	Materials conditions at disposal
1. Loma	3		1904			sunk
2. Alexander Agassiz	11		1907		UC	?
3. Scripps	11		1926		UC	?
4. E. W. Scripps	21		1936	1	UC	Poor
5. Crest	8	1944	1948	1	Navy	Poor
6. Paolina-T	17	1943	1948	2	Navy	Poor
7. Horizon	18	1944	1948	3	UC	-
8. Spencer F. Baird	14	1944	1951	2	Mar.Ad.	Fair
9. Stranger	10**	1938	1955	1	UC	Fair
10. Orca	6	1925	1956	1	UC	Poor
11. T-441	11***	1955	1955	1	Army	-
12. Hugh M. Smith	4	1943	1959	1	BCF	Fair
13. Argo	7	1944	1959	1	Navy	-
14. Alexander Agassiz	5	1944	1961	2	UC	-
15. Oconostota	4	1944	1962	2	Navy	-
16. Ellen B. Scripps	1	1965	1965	0	UC	-
17. Thomas Washington	1	1965	1965	0	Navy	-
18. Alpha Helix	1	1966	1966	0	NSF	-
19. MELVILLE		1969	1969	0	NAVY	—

* Not exact - the ships were not put in service as soon as received nor disposed of immediately after use stopped.

** Not in service the last year.

*** Not in service from mid 1965