



North Carolina Shark Attacks Project

Note: The following article describes the shark attacks to the crew of the *Tzeny Chandris* that occurred in November of 1937 off Cape Hatteras in Dare County. The first article appeared in the *Dallas Morning News*, November 15, 1937. The second article is from the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, November 16, 1937.

Water Infested With Sharks.

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NORFOLK, Va., Nov. 14.—Lieut. Richard Burke, who piloted a Coast Guard amphibian plane over the Cape Hatteras area in which the Greek freighter *Tzeny Chandris* sank Saturday, Sunday described how two survivors of the disaster were rescued literally from the jaws of sharks.

"We had been flying over the scene about two hours when we saw five dead bodies floating about," Burke said. "Then we saw two of the crew. They were wearing life preservers. One waved at us feebly. The other was bobbing up and down and kicking his feet.

"He seemed to have a lot of pep. Then we were horrified to see sharks about fifteen feet away from these men and headed straight toward them. The man with all the pep seemed to sense his danger and it looked to us like he might be kicking at the sharks to keep them away.

"Everywhere we looked there were sharks—and more sharks. We immediately dropped smoke bombs and zoomed about over the men to call the attention of the Coast Guard cutter *Mendota* to their location. We also hoped to frighten the sharks. We had about decided to take a chance and land in an attempt to rescue the men when the *Mendota* put over a small boat and took them aboard.

"It was a horrible and gruesome sight. I don't know how many of the missing were eaten by the sharks. I didn't see anyone eaten but a navy pilot who also flew over the scene told me that he saw sharks tearing apart bodies of the dead who were floating near the spot where the ship went down."

Grim Fight for Life Related By Survivors of Freighter

NORFOLK, (P)—Parched-throated sailors, snatched from death by the Coast Guard cutter *Mendota* after their Greek freighter, *Tzeny Chandris*, went down off Cape Hatteras, brought back aboard the rescue ship yesterday stories of a dramatic fight for life against the odds of shark-infested waters, stormy seas and conditions that drove one man insane.

A bright red gash across the nose of Captain George Coufopoulos, master of the little vessel which plunged Saturday to the bottom of the Atlantic with the loss of seven lives, bore testimony to the harrowing struggle for survival.

The wound was inflicted by the teeth of a fellow seaman, driven mad by 32 hours of exposure in the open sea, clinging to a bit of wreckage while awaiting long-hoped-for rescuers, the captain said. The crazed seaman died before Coast Guardsmen arrived to pick up the last 15 survivors of the crew of 28.

Commander Henry Coyle, master of the *Mendota*, who said he had never seen "anything like this" in his 27 years as a Coast Guardsman, relayed a graphic story told by the rescued of one man being pulled bodily through his life belt by a shark after the freighter went under—its lifeboats smashed or swept away.

Sharks Nip Ankles

Joseph Corrie, 49-year-old Englishman, who said he was the last to step from the doomed vessel into the mountainous waves and the last to be picked up of those adrift, told of sharks darting at his ankles and of successfully scaring them away with a stick.

Konstantinos Balaskas, third engineer, who like his Greek fellows spoke through interpreters, recited another chapter in the stirring drama. Balaskas said the S. O. S., which crackled through to Coast Guardsmen shortly before daybreak Saturday, was sent only after he stood over the radio operator with a knife and a threat to kill him unless the distress call went out.

The operator failed to send the S. O. S. through a misunderstanding of the captain's order, the master said.

Head Wedged In Auto Window, Child Strangles

Joanne Russell, 5-year-old daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Carl P. Russell, 4100 Monument Avenue, slipped with her head wedged in the partly lowered window glass of a car parked in front of her home and strangled to death yesterday morning.

She was pronounced dead at the Retreat for the Sick Hospital. Dr. J. H. Scherer, coroner, said her death was due to strangulation.

The child, playing alone, apparently stepped upon the left door hinge of the car in order to put her head through the narrow opening in the window. It is supposed her feet slipped, leaving her dangling by her neck.

Motorists passing along the busy street either did not notice the predicament of the child, whose body was hanging toward the center of the thoroughfare, or supposed she was playing. A feeble pulse was noticeable when she was found by her mother.

Appointed during the summer regional director for the east of the National Park Service, Dr. Russell came to Richmond and entered on actual field duty at the local headquarters November 1. He formerly was in charge of the wild life division at Washington.

Funeral services will be held at Christian's Funeral Home, Park Avenue and Boulevard, at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. The body will be taken to Washington for cre-