

Ships Lifeboats A Handbook For The Board Of Trade Examination For Certificates In Lifeboat Efficiency

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the fire extinguisher the airline safety card the lifeboat until september 11 2001 most americans paid homage to these appurtenances of disaster with a sidelong glance if at all but john stilgoe has been thinking about lifeboats ever since he listened with his father as the kitchen radio announced that the liner lakonia had caught fire and sunk in the atlantic it was christmas 1963 and airline travel and cold war paranoia had made the images of an ocean liner s distress the air force dropping supplies in the dark a freighter collecting survivors from lifeboats seem like echoes of a bygone era but stilgoe already a passionate reader and an aficionado of small boat navigation began to delve into accounts of other disasters at sea what he found was a trunkful of hair raising stories of shipwreck salvation seamanship brilliant and inept noble sacrifice insanity cannibalism courage and cravenness even scandal in nonfiction accounts and in the works of conrad melville and tomlinson fear and survival animate and degrade human nature in the microcosm of an open boat as in society at large how lifeboats are made rigged and captained stilgoe discovered and how accounts of their use or misuse are put down says much about the culture and circumstances from which they are launched in the hands of a skillful historian such as stilgoe the lifeboat becomes a symbol of human optimism of engineering ingenuity of bureaucratic regulation of fear and frailty woven through lifeboat are good old fashioned yarns thrilling tales of adventure that will quicken the pulse of readers who have enjoyed the novels of patrick o brian crabwalk by g nter grass or works of nonfiction such as the perfect storm and in the heart of the sea but stilgoe whose other works have plumbed suburban culture locomotives and the shore is ultimately after bigger fish through the humble much ignored lifeboat its design and navigation and the stories of its ultimate purpose he has found a peculiar lens on roughly the past two centuries of human history particularly the war tossed technology driven history of man and the sea

on september 17 1940 the ss city of benares was sailing in the north atlantic with more than four hundred people on board including ninety children on their way to canada to escape the blitz they were considered lucky leaving wwii behind and heading for peace quiet and security at a little after ten o clock that night a german submarine torpedoed the benares the ship sank in half an hour in a gale that sent several of her lifeboats pitching to the cold sea the passengers were more than six hundred miles from land three hundred miles from the nearest rescue vessel none of them had a reasonable hope of survival but in the wake of tragedy and horror the city of benares would also prove herself a mother of miracles exceptional feats of courage and endurance took shape in the hours and days that followed the attack the children in particular exhibiting what one naval officer later called courage beyond praise based on firsthand accounts from the child survivors and other passengers including the author s great uncle miracles on the water is a vivid retelling of one of the greatest hidden wartime dramas

the congressional record is the official record of the proceedings and debates of the united states congress it is published daily when congress is in session the congressional record began publication in 1873 debates for sessions prior to 1873 are recorded in the debates and proceedings in the congress of the united states 1789 1824 the register of debates in congress 1824 1837 and the congressional globe 1833 1873

includes annual report

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