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CAPE HORN & PATAGONIA

CAPE HORN

There are few places in the world in which man feels as vulnerable and surrounded by a mystic aura of spirituality as Cape Horn. Its location between two oceans at 55°56' South latitude and 67°19' West longitude, along with the intensity of the climatic phenomena that occur there, make its passage a unique and incomparable experience.

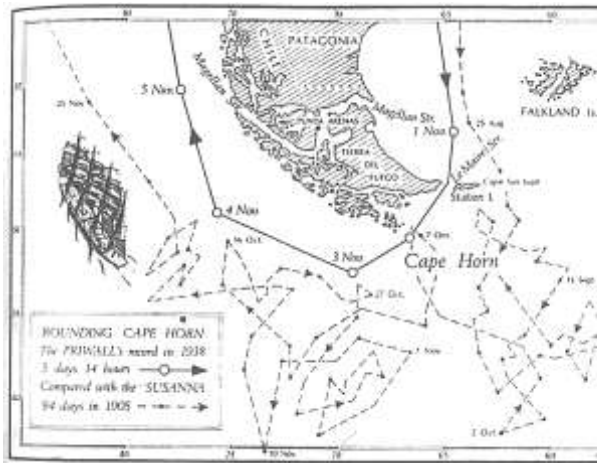
Entire books have been written about the difficulties that the sailing ships of yesteryear had in traveling around Cape Horn. The extraordinary feats and countless dramas that took place there can be illustrated by three pieces of information:

European eyes first laid their eyes on Cape Horn at the beginning of the XVII century. In the small port of Höorn, the French merchant Isaac Le Maire and the sailors Guillermo Cornelio and Juan Schouten signed the constitution of the Southern Company and outfitted two ships: the 360-ton *Endracht* (Unity) and the 110-ton Höorn, which sailed from Texel, Netherlands on June 14th, 1615.

On January 24th, 1616 they crossed the strait which they called Le Maire and gave the name of Statenlant (Land of the States) to the island they sighted to the east. They called it "Land" believing it to be a peninsula of Terra Australis Incognita, and "of the States" in honor of the provinces in the Netherlands that were fighting for their independence (Holland, Zeeland, Friesland, Utrecht, Drenthe, Gelderland and Groningen). Five days later, on January 29th, 1616, they rounded the cape that they named Höorn, thus opening a new route between the Atlantic and the Pacific. They sailed through the Pacific with no clear idea of their course until they arrived at Java and the Moluccas. Here they were captured by another Dutch expedition commanded by Admiral Spielberg of the East India Company, which possessed exclusive rights to the only passage known until that moment. They were indicted for breaking the law governing the crossing of the Strait of Magellan, and argued in their defense that they had used a new passage. The jury was shocked and did not believe them since, supposedly that to the south of the Strait lay Terra Incognita, an impassable continent. They were found guilty in the first instance and were sent back to Holland on the *Zeeland*, the ship on which Jacobo Le Maire died two weeks later at high sea.

It is estimated that between the XVI and the XX centuries more than 800 ships were lost in the stormy waters of Cape Horn, burying no fewer than 10,000 men of all walks of life and nationalities at sea.

The fastest known passage around Cape Horn was made by the *Priwall* in five days in 1938, while the inverse record is held by the sailing ship *Susana*, which took 94 days in 1905!



Records for rounding Cape Horn



Discovery of the famous passage, 1616

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CAPE HORNERS

The Association was founded in 1937 in Saint-Malo, France by a group of French captains whose first members were experienced seamen that had lived the experience of sailing around Cape Horn in command of the old merchant ships. Due to the passing of the majority of its members, the *Amicale* decided to put an end to the international entity, which was replaced by supporting organizations inspired by the same spirit of adventure.

The insignia or symbol of the *Amicale Internationale* shows the head of a white albatross on a blue background that surrounds a red circle with white letters and the name of the institution. The albatross holds a diamond or hook-shaped device in its beak.



Insignia of the Chilean Association of Cape Horners



Cape Horn Monument

This symbol is inspired by an old tradition of the sailors of yesteryear: they used to capture these immense birds to play with them, simulating a kite. To do this, they tied a piece of salted pork to a hook, which was lowered down to the surface of the ocean on a light rigging line. When the albatross took the bait, the hook would lodge in the curve of the bird's beak. With the line tight, the bird could not escape and the sailors would play with it from the ship until it was landed on the deck, after which it was released. No sailor was willing to kill an albatross, since superstition had it that these beautiful and wandering birds embodied the spirits of sailors lost at sea.

THE CAPE HORN MONUMENT

The Cape Horn Monument was solemnly inaugurated on December 5th, 1992. It was erected as an initiative of the Chilean chapter of the *Cofradía de los Capitanes del Cabo de Hornos* "Cap Horniers" (Chilean Association of Cape Horners), in memory of the seamen from every nation who perished in the battle against of nature's inclemency in the southern seas around the legendary Cape Horn.

This seven-meter-high monument consists of two independent pieces each made of five steel plates, and is the work of the Chilean sculptor José Balcells Eyquem. The plans and construction were carried out by the Chilean Navy under the basic premise that the structure would have to withstand gusting winds of up to 200 kilometers per hour (124 mph). The construction took more than a month, between October and November 1992.

On the road leading to the sculpture, two concrete structures were built that support marble slabs. The monument's dedication is found on one of them, and the other displays the beautiful poem by Sara Vial, a writer from Valparaíso:

"I am the albatross that awaits you at the end of the earth.

I am the forgotten soul of the dead sailors who sailed around

Cape Horn from all the seas of the world.

But they did not die in the furious waves, today they fly on my wings,

towards eternity, in the last crevice of the Antarctic winds"

EXPEDITION TEAM



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