

## Salem councilor featured in 'Fatal Forecast,' a survival-at-sea thriller

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Salem -

On Saturday, Nov. 22, 1980, schoolteacher Maria Pavlis, of Lynn, fiancée of 30-year-old Fair Wind skipper Billy Garnos, made a special trip to Boston and bought her wedding gown at Priscilla's. Though she and Garnos had been engaged for only 11 days, she was deep in the joy of planning.

"I was going to do the whole experience," she remembers, "It was a very short time, but it was so right — we both knew."

Over in Peabody, the hometown of Fair Wind crewmember Ernie Hazard, one could catch a showing of "Private Benjamin," a comedy featuring a heroine who gained maturity by physical ordeal.

And for those Sagittarians celebrating their birthdays that fall weekend, syndicated newspaper psychic Jeane Dixon was advising, "Consider all options before making decisions."

That Friday, Nov. 21, 1980, the Fair Wind, owned by Beverly's Charlie Raymond, set out for some late-season lobster fishing in the waters of the Georges Bank with a four-man crew including captain William Garnos, of Beverly; Rob Thayer, 22, from Hamilton; 20-year old Dave Berry, Marblehead; and Ernie Hazard. Also setting a course for those rich fishing grounds were several other boats.

One was the Sea Star, owned by Bob Brown, known as a tough-as-nails captain long before the notorious demise of the Andrea Gail — the sword fishing boat lost in Sebastian Junger's bestselling book, "The Perfect Storm." Mike Sosnowski, a Salem city councilor who worked with Brown for three years, was deck boss.

The crew of the Sea Fever, captained by Brown's son, Peter, included Gary Brown, married and expecting his first child with wife Honour; Danvers' Richard "Sarge" Rowell; and 19-year old Brad Bowen from Connecticut. The Broadbill, captained by Grant Moore, was also headed to the bank.

Fishing near Georges Bank could be dangerous, and because of the distance from shore and the late season, which meant fewer ships on the seas, the crews and captains of these boats were careful to keep in touch with each other.

They all, in turn, relied on the official forecasts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service to plan the trip. Listening to those forecasts, they expected typical sea conditions for their journey, and thus were not alarmed or worried.

"There's been times when you just can't believe what you see out there — that's so wonderful, so amazing,"

said Sowsnowski of life at sea. "... And there's been the flipside ... there's been tragedy — where you see death ... on a scale that's unbelievable ... "

What the crews did not know that November weekend was that NOAA's forecast was seriously flawed due to damaged and missing weather buoys, and they were heading into a killer storm, one which would rise up swiftly and take them by surprise.

The storm would swallow boats and fling strong men into the ocean like so many rag dolls; push the limits of human endurance to unimagined boundaries; and put the National Weather Service itself on trial for issuing its "fatal forecast."

For families up and down the North Shore, this storm would sear enduring anguish and heartbreak into memory, engendering a sense of loss undimmed even after 27 years.

Yet, in the survival of crewman Ernie Hazard, who escaped the sinking of the Fair Wind — floating for days on a raft, exposed to howling wind, pummeled by rain and smashed by waves, nearly naked and totally alone, freezing until every inch of his skin was blue, yet determined to live, one also can cherish an awe-inspiring "miracle ending."

In his new book, "Fatal Forecast," author Michael Tougias brings the reader aboard to experience it all right alongside the crew — all the gut-wrenching, increasingly futile maneuvers up and over waves in 50-foot seas; and the stunning demise of the pitch-poled Fair Wind.

Terror attends the loss of the Sea Fever's Gary Brown, thrown by the storm's fury clear through the side of the boat and into the howling, churning waves. Indelible is the image of his stunned face and still body floating away from the desperate rescue efforts of his mates.

Tougias brings us through the harrowing tale deftly. And then, the miracle of Ernie Hazard's survival, enduring through determination and not a bit of luck, and triumphing simply by living to tell the tale despite all the sea could do.

And though Tougias centers his tale in "Fatal Forecast" on Hazard's ordeal and tough personality, each of the participants alive or lost, impresses the reader with shared characteristics: strength of character, fortitude, and utter respect for nature. There is heroism in each story, though none of them would ever call it that.

#### **'I must go down to the seas again ...'**

Without exception, Fishermen, boat owners, family and friends all used the word "respect" to describe what it takes working on the sea. And they consider the ocean irresistible. Fishermen, and those who loved them, don't question this much. As they often say, fishing is "in the blood."

Out at sea, character is quickly revealed — both in others and in oneself. One comes to bond with one's crewmates as family. There is no room for subterfuge or posing.

Herman Melville once put it this way: "At sea a fellow comes out. Salt water is like wine, in that respect." One either matures and endures, or takes up a different line of work. One develops that uncommon thing ... common sense.

Quiet courage, too. That, and lasting devotion to each other.

"I was getting engagement cards and sympathy cards at the same time...people were finding out about the engagement and didn't know...I mean, it was awful," remembers Pavlis.

Tougias, the author of more than 15 books, most of them about nature, feels that "Fatal Forecast" has a special resonance.

"I guess with this book I feel like something special is happening. Just everything seems to have fallen into place. I'm getting letters from readers. They say what I would expect on a couple of points. I call them the three "I's" — "incredible," "intense," — but then they go on to say, "inspirational."

And Sosnowski speaks of inspiration, too; when asked why he continues to fish despite danger and travail, he pauses, then says quietly in his solid way,

"There was probably a handful of times when the sea was calm, flat like glass — but the one time I remember everyplace I looked there was activity ... there were fish jumping, here were porpoise playing, there were whales breaching, there was all kinds of things — it was just a fabulous sight," Sosnowski said. "To me if I want to be close to God I go out in the woods or I go out on the ocean ... that's me ... that's what it's all about."

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Author Michael Tougias will present slide show based on his new book, "Fatal Forecast" at the Marblehead Library on Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.

# Jim and Maggi Dalton

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## ABOUT JIM & MAGGI

Jim and Maggi Dalton perform music of popular/vernacular, folk and cultivated traditions, covering time periods from the Middle Ages to the present, focusing largely on American, Celtic and British Isles repertoire. They specialize in music of the 19th and 20th centuries. Instrumentation: mostly plucked strings and voices.

Concerts and programs contain commentary designed to place the music performed in historical context for the audience. Programs reflect the continual and ongoing research in which the two delight. They also perform original songs and compositions.

Jim and Maggi have released two recordings to date, and have designed a full spectrum of programs which they present nationwide. They have been featured often on radio and television. (PBS, ABC, NBC, CBS affiliates, Cable Networks; NPR stations, NewsRadio, interview programs across the USA; feature stories in newspapers and magazines, i.e., *The Philadelphia Inquirer & Courier-Post*) They have performed at nationally-known venues (i.e., Colonial Williamsburg, Seneca Falls, the Harriet Beecher Stowe House) and countless local and regional venues nationwide.

They have served as artists-in-residence at various colleges, public history sites, community and educational centers, presenting series addressing American history and other topics in the humanities, using music as the core of each session.

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"engaging, scholarly, delightful, warm, intelligent, flexible, humorous, talented, versatile, enthusiastic, personable, joyful ..."



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descriptions of our programs, classes,  
and concerts ~

Multi-instrumentalist *Jim Dalton* is an educator, conductor and award-winning composer and arranger.

As a performer, he specializes in historical and ethnic playing styles on a variety of plucked string instruments including guitar, mandolin, banjo, mandocello, Renaissance lute, bouzouki etc.

He also plays piano, organ, recorder and tin whistle.

In addition to duo performances with his wife, soprano and guitarist Maggi Smith-Dalton he maintains an active career as a freelance musician -- playing in chamber music ensembles, jazz and world music groups and in opera/theater and symphony orchestras.

He is a member of the New England Mandolin Ensemble.

His compositions have been performed across the U.S. and Canada and in Europe.

His choral composition, "The Rocky Road to Dublin," won first prize in the 1997 Toronto Camerata Competition. Two of his pieces for carillon have been published in anthologies by Fenwick Parva and the Friends of the Albany Carillon.

His composition for solo mandolin, "Gifts of the Bard," is published by Wolfhead Music.

His works are available through these publishers and Singing String Music Publications.

Jim is on the faculty of The Boston Conservatory, teaching music theory, ear training and world music courses for both the Music Theory and Music Education Departments. He has written articles for Blues Revue Magazine and is the author of *Mandolin for Beginners*, published by Workshop Arts, Inc./Alfred Publishing.

He is a frequent guest lecturer on topics such as composition, choral arranging and Irish traditional music. In the 2004-2005 year Jim received a MACRO research grant (Univ. of Wisconsin) to study and analyze palindromic compositions in concert music repertoire and presented this work at the 2005 Macro Musician's Workshop in Madison, WI.

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Singer and musician, independent scholar, author and educator, *Maggi Smith-Dalton* has sung as a soloist with choirs and choruses both here and abroad, acted and sung in professional theater productions and produced/participated/performed in radio and television projects and programs.

She is a frequent guest lecturer -- on the integration of humanities and the arts, on folklore, and on American music and history, to name a few topics.

She has given lecture/demonstration programs at the college level (i.e., The New England Conservatory, The Boston Conservatory) and in numerous professional-development courses for educators and teachers at all grade levels.

Maggi enjoys an active performing career, which, after eleven years of work in cabaret, musical theater, and nightclub singing, has included more than two decades of concert performance nationwide and abroad, in partnership with her husband and as a soloist with choirs and in concert.

In addition, she authored a prize-winning short story and writes often for newspapers and magazines (including history and cultural/arts/educational feature articles, and a regular history column for the *Salem Gazette*).

Maggi's work in mainstream media included producing a cable TV series and programming and hosting musical theater, arts interview, and classical music shows for NPR public radio, commercial, and community stations.

A former Chairperson of the Haverhill Cultural Council, Maggi served as Musical Theater Director at Hill House (a community Arts Center) in Boston's Beacon Hill; as Director of "Adventures in Art," a summer arts program; and as a director of children's choirs.

With a background in teaching multiply-handicapped children, Maggi continues interest in and study of music therapy. She is working on a children's book; and is always working on a variety of writing projects.