



WHERE THE 2003 SLIPS ARE  
 COMING IN OCTOBER SLIPS 2004  
 Comprehensive Guide To Marinas On The West Coast



Sunday, September 21, 2003

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## Sailing Singalong Book Has It All

Thursday, September 18, 2003

By Carol L. Allen

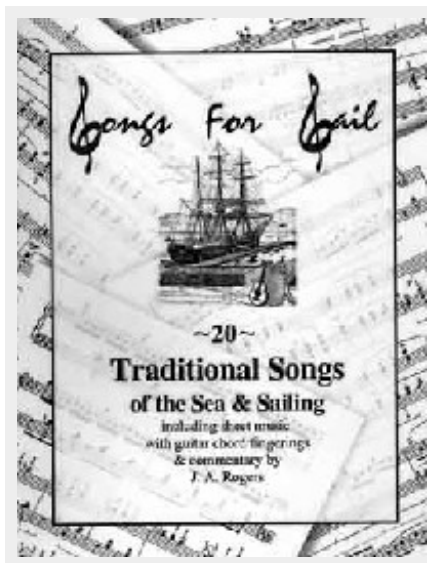
Most boaters are familiar with at least the titles and tunes of classic seafaring songs. But sometimes the lyrics allude them, or the melodies are not complete in their minds.



However, probably of equal interest to sea folk are the stories behind the old mariners' favorites.

Enter "Songs for Sail" by J.A. Rogers.

His spiral-bound (easy to prop up while playing) book includes 20 traditional songs of the sea and sailing - with sheet music, complete lyrics, guitar-chord fingerings, and commentary for each shanty.



For example, one of the best-known songs of the sea is "Blow the Man Down."

It comes from the days before steam power when mariners used work songs for coordinating and lightening their work - as well as for just passing the time.

The work song used aboard sailing ships for raising anchors, hoisting and lowering sails - among other sailing tasks - was called a "shanty" (also "chanty"). The term was derived from the word "chant," the early form of church songs.

As in church songs, a leader (the shantyman) sang the verse, and the congregation (crew) joined in the refrain.

"Blow the Man Down" originated among early American immigrants from Europe and Africa. It was used as a halyard shanty when hoisting sail.

"Blow" refers to knocking a man down, not to the wind as it might seem; many early 1800s commercial sailors were ruled by the fist.

Referred to in this collection's version of "Blow the Man Down" is the Black Ball Line, a cargo and passenger line that sailed between North America and Europe twice a month.

Besides "Blow the Man Down," Roberts' collection of 20 shanties includes the following:

- "The Eddystone Light"

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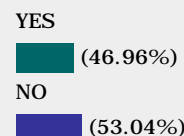
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- "Fifteen Men On a Dead Man's Chest"
- "Sloop John B"
- "A Life On the Ocean Wave"
- "Jack Was A Sailor"
- "Rio Grande"
- "Farewell To Tarwathie"
- "Santy Ano"
- "Whiskey For My Johnny"
- "Here's To The Grog"
- "Drunken Sailor"
- "The Girl I Left Behind Me"
- "The Golden Vanity"
- "The Mermaid"
- "The Chivalrous Shark"
- "A-Roving"
- "The Coasts of High Barbary"
- "Henry Martin"
- "Eternal Father"

Published by J.A. Rogers himself, the book is an extension of a lifestyle. After graduating from UCLA in 1967 with the intention of starting a music career, Rogers' plans were interrupted by the Vietnam war. He served in the 101st Airborne division at Hue.

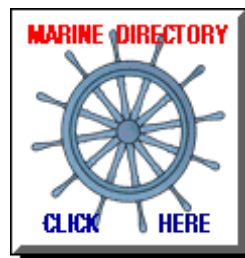
After the war, Rogers went to Hollywood to work in the entertainment industry. However, a cruising dream was becoming more and more urgent and attainable to him.

In 1973, he built and launched a 35-foot sailboat and lived aboard it at Marina del Rey while planning to cruise through the Panama Canal and into the Caribbean.

Thirty years later, Rogers has sailed thousands of miles and written six books about his experiences.

For more information about his "Songs for Sail" and other works, visit [jarogers.com](http://jarogers.com) or e-mail [jim@jarogers.com](mailto:jim@jarogers.com)

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