

Feared drowned 23/4/55 in Pacific

Mr W. A. (Sandy) Wilson, co-owner of the noted transtasman race cutter Leda, is believed to have been drowned when the yacht Suomi was rammed by a freighter between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Private cable advice of this was received in Auckland from his wife, Mrs Erica Wilson, who is in San Francisco.

Mr and Mrs Wilson and a crew of three, which included his brother, Mr C. G. Wilson, of Tauranga, the co-owner, left Auckland on April 28, 1953, in Leda on a 7000 miles cruise which took them to Fiji, Tonga, Tahiti, Honolulu and finally to San Francisco.

Mrs C. G. Wilson and her three young children sailed as far as Suva and later returned to New Zealand.

Mr C. G. Wilson and two crew members, Messrs Peter Lawrence and David Woolf, also came home after a short stay in San Francisco but Mr and Mrs W. A. Wilson remained in the States with Leda.

Latest news from San Francisco was that Mr Wilson was working on television and later intended going on to England with his wife.

A most enthusiastic yachtsman, Mr Wilson was also an authority on all aspects of the sport and the informative, well-written reports and articles he wrote while a member of the sports department of the Auckland Star were very widely read.

Behind the construction of the beautifully finished and equipped yacht Leda, first across the finishing line at Sydney in the 1951 transtasman ocean race, is a remarkable story of the grit, application and skill of the Wilson brothers.

Mr Wilson, who was educated at Nelson College, served in the Middle East and Italy with an artillery unit. While in Trieste he took an active part in rowing and yachting.

He joined the literary staff of the Auckland Star early in 1946 and shortly after transferred to the sports department, where he remained until near the end of 1952.

A competent, experienced journalist, Mr Wilson wrote prolifically on yachting during the summer months, and in the winter was well known as a Rugby League reporter.

Ship Seized After Collision

AUCKLANDER DROWNED

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Los Angeles

The Swedish motor ship Parramatta which was in a collision with the yawl Suomi off the Californian coast on Thursday, was seized on Sunday by United States marshals.

Five men on board the yawl were drowned in the collision. One of them was Mr W. A. Wilson, a former Auckland journalist.

The seizure of the Parramatta, which had been preparing to sail for Australia, came after the filing in the Federal District Court of damage claims against the vessel and her owner for the Transatlantic Steamship Company of Gotenborg, Sweden.

The claims, as libels under Admiralty law, sought £272,000 for the death of Henry Meiggs, owner of the yawl, and £18,000 for loss of the Suomi.

The libel for Meiggs' death was filed on behalf of his brother, Mr Beauford Meiggs, of San Francisco.

The State Mortgage Company, which Henry Meiggs had headed, sued for loss of the yawl.

A Coast Guard inquiry into the collision was adjourned pending the arrival of an official of the Transatlantic Company, from Gotenborg.

TAURANGA MAN MISSING

Yawl In Collision Off California

NEW YORK, April 22.

Mr W. A. (Sandy) Wilson, a resident of Tauranga, is missing after the collision of the freighter Parramatta and the yawl Suomi off the California coast yesterday. The collision occurred off Port Arguello while the Parramatta was on its way from San Francisco to Los Angeles harbour to load for Australian ports.

Mr Wilson was said to have been the navigator of the Suomi. There was uncertainty whether five or six men were aboard the Suomi.

The body of a man, not immediately identified, was recovered from the ocean yesterday, some hours after the Parramatta reported the

NO NEWSPAPERS ON ANZAC DAY

Newspapers will not be published anywhere in New Zealand on Anzac Day.

For the convenience of advertisers small classified advertisements placed through the door of the Bay of Plenty Times office tomorrow and Monday will be accepted for Tuesday's paper.

collision by radio.

A search for possible survivors was continuing today but the coast guard feared that all lives had been lost.

Mr Wilson, who was well known in Auckland and Tauranga yachting circles, was co-owner, with his brother, Mr C. G. Wilson, of Tauranga, of the 54-foot cutter Leda, which the brothers sailed to California from Tauranga in 1953.

The Wilsons built the Leda in a Northcote backyard and sailed her into fastest time in the 1951 Tasman yacht race. In 1953 they took the Leda on a Pacific cruise, accompanied by their wives, Mr D. Woolf, of Tauranga, and the three children of Mr and Mrs C. G. Wilson. Mrs C. G. Wilson and the children left the Leda at Fiji after two months' cruising, the remainder of the party continuing to California.

Mr C. G. Wilson and Mr Woolf returned to Tauranga in January, 1954, Mr Sandy Wilson and his wife remaining in San Francisco where it was intended to sell the Leda. Mr Wilson was waiting there for the Los Angeles-Honolulu yacht race in which he intended to navigate the Leda. His wife is still in San Francisco.