

# Americans—the Sheiks of Aberdeen

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — For many American oilmen working in the North Sea, Aberdeen is home now. "The Americans individually are almost invisible," says a city official, "but the business they bring in is highly visible."

By RONALD THOMSON  
Associated Press Writer  
ABERDEEN, Scotland (AP) — At the American Food Store in oil-happy Aberdeen, Scottish manager Hamilton Ross fretted over his dwindling stocks of tequila and tamales, bourbon and barbecue sauce. "Aye, it's strange fare for these parts," he said, "and I'm not sure I'd want to try some of it myself."  
"But what a business we're doing with the oil wives! They're besieging us for the stuff. We can't get enough American food."  
Between 3,000 and 4,000 Americans, mostly with the accents of Texas and Louisiana, are living in and around this gray granite city on Scotland's northeast coast — the jumping off port for U.S. oilmen working in the North Sea.  
Some 100 U.S. companies are among 240 firms involved in North Sea oil exploration. No one believes that the American Food Store, a locally owned enterprise in cramped premises tucked away in a side street, represents a fundamental switch

from a haggis to a chile culture in the Scottish Highlands. But thrifty Aberdonians know a good thing when they see it.  
"More than 90 per cent of our customers are American housewives who are used to stocking up the larder and think nothing of spending \$100 in one visit," said manager Ross. "One time the American wives came in on special excursion trains from other parts of the oil area, and they nearly cleaned us out."  
Before its oil rejuvenation over the past three years, Aberdeen, a city of 200,000, exuded a strong smell of fish from the trawler fleet which kept it going. Now the city booms on oil and fishing is nearly forgotten.  
"The Americans mix well, avoid setting up their own colonies and genuinely seem to enjoy living here," said John Hutton, development officer for the Northeast Scotland Development Authority.  
"Most are family men who belong to an international elite that submerges nationality. It doesn't matter whether you're American, French, Italian, Dutch or British — you're an oilman. It doesn't matter where you were born but where you've been — Saudi Arabia and Nigeria, Venezuela, Iran and Australia."  
"That's why you rarely see anyone walking in Aberdeen in a Stetson and cowboy boots," Hutton noted. "Anyone

dressed like that is probably a Scotaman pretending to be a Texan."  
The lion's share of North Sea oil reserves — 15 to 20 billion barrels compared with 370 billion in the Middle East — are in the British sector of the sea, within 150 miles of the coast. Norway, Denmark, West Germany and the Netherlands also border the North Sea and are exploring for oil.  
Oil strikes off the Scottish coast alone now number 20, and 15 of these wells — already in production — will have a peak output of 100,000 barrels a day from each well.  
Aberdeen retains its bleak, stone image but any evening the house is packed at the Star and Garter or the Murdie Mill or the Treetops or the North Sea Petroleum Country Club where many oilmen gather.  
With prosperity, however, there are problems.  
The Anglican Church recently charged that the oil boom has brought "schoolgirl prostitution, alcoholism and marital breakdowns."  
"The Americans are paying fabulous prices for houses," said taxi driver Stewart Scott. "What chance do our youngsters have?"  
Some oilmen have taken over furnished accommodation at \$250 a week.  
"There's no doubt that house prices have risen 75 per cent, on a par with London and the well-off counties around the capital," Hutton said. "But that's one of the measures of this oil shakeup."  
Four years ago a one-room apartment rented for \$10 or \$12 a week. But then Aberdeen was in the doldrums, with a low

wage economy, and more than 4,000 disillusioned workers were quitting the area every year.  
Today Union Street, the milelong main stem, throbs with traffic and the smart shops are full of well-dressed men and women.  
"I can remember many of the premises in Union Street boarded up and the place looked as if it was dying," said Tim Kenny, trade relations director at the Shell Company's spectacular new \$2.5 million building on a hill overlooking the city. "Huge investment by the oil interests is not only giving Aberdeen a shot in the arm, but a new life."  
The sear of prosperity cuts through all the city's layers. Unemployment is down from 5 to 1.4 per cent. Movie theaters are jammed, restaurants are bustling and small businessmen thrive. There are 3,000 dwellings under construction.  
"We call Americans the Sheiks of Aberdeen," said barman Frank Winner. "The money has been flowing ever since they started coming here in force."  
"We're dealing with companies who spent \$35,000 to fly a piece of equipment worth \$70 from Houston to Aberdeen. That's because it costs \$120,000 a day if an oil rig shuts down."  
Many Americans prefer to have their children educated along with Scottish children, but others pick the \$1,600-a-year American School, set up in an old convalescent hospital. Two hundred oilmen's children, aged 6 to 17, study there as if they were in Houston or Miami.  
"To tell you the truth," a teacher said, "they don't care whether they're in Aberdeen or Abu Dhabi."



## Together

Diane Ignashev, an American who lives in Chicago, embraces her husband, Sergei, Sunday night after he arrived from the Soviet Union at Kennedy Airport in New York. They were married last July in Moscow. She was forced to leave shortly afterward, and he was not given permission to leave until December. (AP)



## Eyes for cash

Herbert and Jean Gibboney stand outside their home near Grass Valley, Calif. Mr. Gibboney, who has had several heart attacks and is unable to work, advertised in a local newspaper that he is willing to sell one of his eyes for \$35,000 to pay for medical bills and another operation for his wife. (AP)

## Offered to sell his eye

GRASS VALLEY, Calif. (AP) — Herbert Gibboney placed a newspaper ad last week offering to sell one of his eyes for \$35,000 so his wife could have an operation.  
The offer is now canceled. Pioneer Community Hospital in Placerville and two doctors offered their services free after reading news accounts of Gibboney's plight this weekend.  
Gibboney, 58, said he placed the ad because, "it isn't pleasant to watch your wife suffer and realize you can't do a thing about it."  
His 54-year-old wife, Jean, was admitted to the hospital Saturday. Administrator Gary Jones said tests were being made to determine exactly what needs to be done for her jaw, eaten away by tumors.  
One bone graft two years ago failed to take, but it cost the couple \$20,000 and wiped out their savings from the sale of a cocktail lounge in the Los Angeles suburb of Reseda.

"She's damn sick," said Dr. John Mathewson, an internist who examined her at the hospital. "She has been sick for several weeks, and I don't know why she was not admitted to a hospital before."  
Mathewson and Dr. Howard Graham, a surgeon, donated their services.  
Gibboney said his medical insurance was canceled after he suffered a heart attack. Unable to work fulltime, he says his income is a \$210 monthly Social Security check.  
"He's a stiff-necked man," said Jones. "They may qualify for Medi-Cal, but he doesn't want handouts, at least that kind."  
Mrs. Gibboney was relieved her husband will not have to go through with the offer. "I was shocked," she said of her husband's offer. "Of course, I wouldn't want him to do it, but he's a stubborn man."  
The ad resulted in dozens of calls to their one-room house near this Northern California town, but none from anyone wanting to buy an eye.

## Women no longer railroad call girls

ST. PAUL (AP) — Women on the nation's longest railroad are winning both new jobs and such new titles as brakewoman, switchtender and carperson.  
But while some titles are new, most of the job-jargon used in railroading remains intact.  
Kyla Rowland, Burlington Northern switchtender, also is called, along with her switchtender counterparts, a "cinder cruncher" or a "snaka." Cindy Burrow, a new brakewoman, is also a "groundhog" and "pinhead." Donna Boland, a carperson, is also a "car toad."  
In the world of railroading, a switchtender turns yard switches that guide trains or cars onto the proper tracks. A brakeman, who no longer sets brakes, looks out for malfunctions. He (or she) also serves as a flagman or flagperson during unscheduled stops, warning any oncoming trains. A carman repairs freight and passenger cars.  
Other jobs women may aspire to are locomotive engineer (hog-head) and

switchtender (yard geese). Or they may opt for the more feminine-sounding "parlor maid" (rear flagman on a freight train) or the idea of being an "ornament" (stationmaster.) A stationmaster designates tracks for arriving and departing passenger trains.  
But railroading has changed greatly since the days when few working men owned telephones. Up until World War II, railroads employed boys to notify train and engine crewmen personally of their next work assignments. Often this involved a trip to the railroader's home, hotel or even pool hall. (Today many railroaders carry radio-activated devices which emit a tone signal to notify the wearer to telephone the railroad's crew dispatcher.)  
But as young men were drafted into military service, or promoted to better railroad jobs during World War II, it became necessary to hire young women to seek out and notify crewmen.  
Naturally, they were known as call girls.

## Whether it will live

LIBBY, Mont. (AP) — The world's largest living larch tree, standing more than 100 feet high on a tree farm near here, is in trouble.  
A windstorm blew off the tree's big sucker-limb top last summer, leaving it almost devoid of a crown. Now with its top gone, the tree's life may soon be over, unless it can grow a new crown by spring, according to forester John McBride.  
"We will know this spring whether it is going to live or die," said McBride, "but my guess is that it won't last through 1975." He added that "trees seldom die of old age. There's always some factor such as disease, insects, wind, drought or high water table that causes death."  
The ancient tree, located on St. Regis Paper Co.'s Wolf Creek tree farm, is listed as the largest of its kind by the American

Forestry Assn.  
It was last measured as 92.5 inches in diameter and 110 feet in height. Its exact age is unknown, since it is hollow, and the original top had been broken off approximately 100 years ago.  
Western larches reach their greatest development in northern Idaho and western Montana. Because of their strong, durable wood, they are especially useful for poles, saw timber, plywood, particle-board and paper.  
The larch is one of the few deciduous cone-bearing needle trees in this country. Each fall the needles turn a golden yellow and fall to the ground with the early snows, leaving the tree to await renewal in the spring.  
If the old tree does not recover, its bole, or trunk, will be left on the tree farm as a monument to past glory.

## Women get same benefits

NEW YORK (AP) — Beginning June 1, women in New York State will be able to buy the same insurance policies with the same benefits as men.  
State Insurance Superintendent Benjamin R. Schenck announced Sunday the adoption of a new Insurance Department regulation making it illegal for insurance companies licensed in New York State to refuse to issue or renew or to cancel a policy because of a person's sex.  
The department said the new regulation does not prohibit rate differences based on sex as long as the differences are based on "objective and valid statistical data."  
Schenck said the department would be reviewing the data used by insurance companies to determine such rate variations. He said this study should be completed by

the end of the year.  
The department conducted a public hearing in December on complaints of sex discrimination in insurance companies' underwriting practices.  
The hearing produced evidence of such objectionable practices as insurance companies' refusing to sell policies to women, offering women policies with less generous benefits than those offered to men, requiring women to submit to medical examinations while not requiring men to do so, and denying to women policy options available to men, such as the right to guaranteed renewal.  
The department noted that the new regulation does not mandate the inclusion of maternity benefits in basic health insurance policies for women.

## At wit's end 25 plus 2 makes 27 total

By ERMA BOMBECK

My friend, Marilyn, and I have just lost a combined total of 27 pounds.  
Don't write and ask how we did it. I'll tell you. It took us two months of discipline, dedication, and terminal famine.  
But frankly, it was worth it. We have more energy, we look better and I can't tell you what it's done for our appetites.  
As I was saying the other day, "I can hardly wait for hot weather so I can cross my legs. It's something I've always wanted to do."  
"I know," said Marilyn, "I just threw away all my panty hose for a woman 72" or over."  
"The question now is how far do we want to go with it."  
"What do you mean?" asked Marilyn.  
"Right now, we are borderline sex symbols. A few pounds could tilt us either way. Do we want truck drivers whistling at us like springer spaniels when we walk down the street? Do we? Marilyn? I'm talking to you."  
"I'm thinking."  
"Do we want to have our husbands decorate us with gowns and furs and wear us on their arms like a Timex watch? And be at a table in a restaurant and have drinks sent to the table from a tall blonde stranger at the bar? Are these questions getting too hard for you, Marilyn?"  
"Give me a minute."  
"Do we want to go through life being alienated by women because we wear a size



"eight dress? And have their husbands surround us at parties? What kind of life would it be to wear a bathing suit without a floor-length towel? To turn in a 24-hour girdle with eight hours left on it?"  
"I suppose we'd have to get used to panting phone calls, door-to-door salesmen asking if our mothers were at home, and husbands crazy out of their minds with jealousy," mused Marilyn.  
"But most of all, Marilyn," I said, "and consider this carefully, we would never see gravy again."  
Marilyn shook her head slowly, "I didn't lose 25 pounds to stop living."  
"How many times to I have to tell you," I snarled, "that it sounds better to say we've lost a combined total of 27 pounds!"

## Dear Abby

### Half of a dinner for four

George and I arrived promptly. They live in a lovely new home, nicely furnished. She served a cocktail, then ushered us into the dining room where the table was beautifully set — for two.  
I couldn't believe my eyes, so I asked: "Aren't you people eating, too?" She said: "Oh, no, we always eat 5 and are in bed by 10."  
She served my husband and me while her husband sat in the other room. I've never felt so uncomfortable in all my life.

After dinner, we all had an after-dinner drink and talked. I kept my eye on my watch, remembering their 10 o'clock curfew.  
At 9:30 we said our goodbyes, thanking them for the lovely evening.  
My question: Should I return the dinner invitation, and knowing they eat at 8, should I specify that time? And if so, should I serve them separately and have a late lunch ourselves? Or should we all eat together?  
DUMB ME:  
DEAR DUMB: Reciprocate with a 6 o'clock dinner. Eat together, and be sure you don't forget their 10 o'clock curfew. After you reciprocate, you should know whether you and your husband have enough in common with this couple to want to see them again.  
DEAR ABBY: Can anyone possibly have too many friends? We are both near 80, and have a big house because we raised a big family. We dearly love to have our children and grandchildren come back to visit, and we'd be lonesome if they didn't, but our relatives bring their friends, and our friends bring their relatives and I'm lucky if I get a chance to change the sheets before another crowd appears.  
We have a good garden but I have to give away the surplus because all this company never gives me a chance to can.  
We do love them, Abby, but I am dreadfully tired from all that marketing, housekeeping and cooking. Is there a tactful way to slow down their visits without stopping them completely?  
TIRED IN VERMONT  
DEAR TIRED: Your problem isn't the number of guests you have, it's the number of non-contributing guests. Tell them you dearly love their visits, but they will all have

to pitch in and help with the marketing, cooking and housekeeping. And anyone who's there during canning season can expect to help with the canning, too!  
"DEAR ABBY: This is in reply to "TORN" who resisted accepting her husband's 12-year-old son into the second-time-around family. (His real mother didn't want him because he was a problem.)  
Although I've never been asked to accept a stepson, I've been a foster mother, and have taken several "problem" adolescent "sons" into my home to mingle with my own teen-agers. It can work out well for everyone, but it takes a lot of love, love, and more love.  
I mean the kind of love that makes a boy know that he is a worthwhile person — not just a problem kid who had come to be "reformed" by us. We are even more patient with a foster child because we realize that he's been through a lot of unhappiness for his young years. (Otherwise why would he be a home?) But we let him know that we think he's got the stuff to overcome the problems of his past.  
You can bet there is always plenty of jealousy and in-fighting among the children, but we apply the same rules to our "new" sons as we apply to our own. When foster children gain confidence and security it does wonders for their behavior.  
I hope "TORN" reads this, and opens up her heart to her problem stepson.  
BEEN THERE IN GEORGIA  
DEAR BEEN: So do I. You're a real Georgia peach!



## Beautiful hair is soft

A harmonious combination of soft waves and curls with accent on form and texture creates a total flow of softness. This soft styling by the National Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association will be favored by those who wear hair in shorter lengths.

**24-Hr. SYRACUSE AIRPORT LIMOUSINE SERVICE**  
Available from Auburn and Vicinity  
To Customers of Adams Travel Agency  
• Pick up and Delivery Service  
• Fully Insured  
• Reasonable Rates  
**ADAMS AIRPORT SERVICE**  
Denny Adams, Operator  
253-4412 or 252-7758

**ADVERTISMENT**  
**LOSE WEIGHT OR MONEY BACK**  
New clinical tests completed at a major university hospital prove that the ODRINEX Plan will help you lose excess weight quickly.  
ODRINEX contains an amazing hunger tamer that suppresses the appetite. Enjoy three good meals a day as the tiny ODRINEX tablet automatically helps you eat less without being hungry. With fewer calories, your weight goes down. Safe taken as directed — will not make you nervous. Look better, feel better as you start slimming down today with ODRINEX. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back.  
**AT LEADING DRUG STORES**  
(C) FOX PHARMACEUTICAL INC. 1975