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Website last updated: 04-18-2016



Club-A-Rama Week 20:



1962 Seaquarium, Miami, FL



This week's molded souvenir, the CAROLINA SNOWBALL from Seaquarium has, by far, the most fascinating, and historical story behind its origins than any other figure in the entire MOLDVILLE archive. Several books have been written about the capture of the only albino dolphin ever in captivity; a movie called *The Prince of Tides* includes the story of the white dolphin (albeit with a different ending); and even an episode of the TV Series

Flipper was based loosely on CAROLINA SNOWBALL and includes actual footage of her capture (and thus this week's video clip.) Now, 50 years later, few who drop a quarter in an operating Mold-A-Rama machine to get this dolphin figure know the story of CAROLINA SNOWBALL.

South Carolina is the only state that bans capturing marine mammals such as dolphins and whales and putting them on public display. The one responsible for that legacy? An albino dolphin named CAROLINA SNOWBALL! The story of CAROLINA SNOWBALL shows not how a single person can affect change - but rather how a single *animal* can inspire people to think differently about an ocean that's largely unseen.

Being a figure in honor of an albino dolphin, this week's mold was run, symbolically, with no pigment.



1964 SEAQUARIUM, Miami, FL



There is clearly something special about these mold machines, as we all know, especially when a person keeps the toy with them throughout their life, then knows exactly where it is when a person like myself asks for a photo of it 50 years later! This vintage CAROLINA SNOWBALL mold is *certified* to have been from the machine shown above 50 years ago! The memories of the MOLD-A-RAMA machine in the early 1960s is fresh in the mind of Mike Tobey, of North Palm Beach, FL, as he remembers the machine being right in front as you walked in the main building, just like shown above - for 25c of course! He says the thrill was watching the machinery start moving, the smell of the melting wax, and then phssh - out popped a mold of SNOWBALL! (Or Flipper in the other machine) and then you always had to wait a while for it to cool down. Great memories for Mike, and for us at MOLDVILLE where they are relived every week in the garage!



Mike remembers spending the most time at the Seaquarium around 1963, when he was 6 or 7 yrs old. He says that "Flipper was great, but Snowball was my favorite. She was beautiful and unique and highly intelligent. I remember they used to say that she was the 'real star' of the show."



The Seaquarium collecting boat used by Captain Gray to capture Snowball in Colleton County, SC.

For around 13 years or so an albino female bottlenose dolphin had been seen roaming the waters of Beaufort County, South Carolina. She became known by the local people as SNOWBALL because she was pure white when she broke the surface of the water, and was somewhat of a local celebrity. It was this celebrity, however, that would lead to her destiny.

Captain Bill Gray, known as THE pioneer in capturing sea life, even himself having discovered 63 new species of fish, tells the story of the capture of the white dolphin in his book *Friendly Porpoises*:

A couple years after the Miami Seaquarium had opened in 1955 and developed the world's foremost performing dolphin attraction, a young man came in to see me.

"Would you be interested in a white dolphin?" he asked.

After looking him over critically and deciding he might know what he was talking about, I said, "Yes, have you got one?"

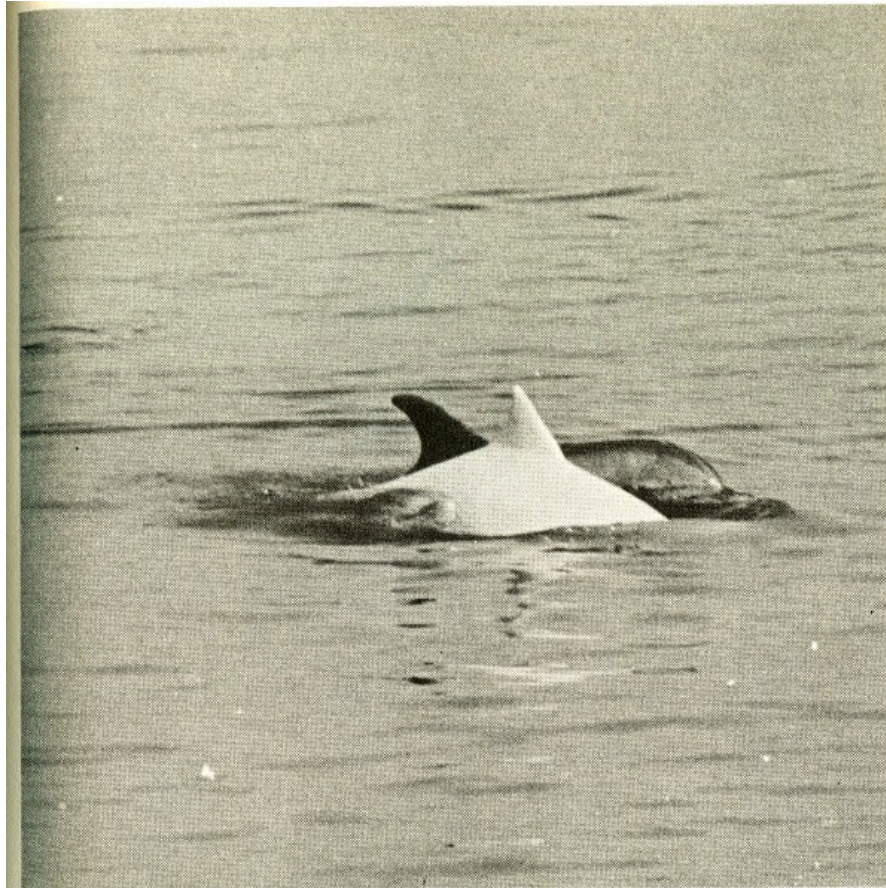
"No," said he, "but I know where there is one."

I thought it quite possible because I had actually seen one several years before that was pure white from its dorsal fin back to its tail. This was one of a large herd of normal dark grey-colored *Tursiops truncati* cruising off shore in the clear blue waters on the northeast side of the Bahamas. That was before dolphins came into vogue as leading attractions in aquariums. However, I have thought many times since of what a wonderful specimen it would be to exhibit. Anyway, I never saw it or any like it since.

Now this man insisted that he knew where there was a dolphin as "white as snow." My blood tingled a little as I questioned him and decided he was telling the truth.

He told me that his family operated a fleet of shrimp trawlers near Beaufort, South Carolina, and it was not unusual for this white dolphin, along with others, to come in by the shrimp boats tied up at the dock where they sorted the catch and threw the unwanted fish overboard. Here the dolphins got a free and easy meal and were often only a few feet from the boats. They were never molested and so had become quite tame. This all sounded very plausible, but since the Seaquarium is some five hundred miles away from Beaufort, it seemed too far to go on a wild-goose chase. I agreed that if he would have someone take a photo of the dolphin and send it to me I would bring our boats, crew, and dolphin nets and try to capture it. Also, if successful, we would pay him well for it. This all seemed to his satisfaction. He would write me and send the photo as soon as he returned home. After weeks turned into months with no response to my follow-up letter, I gave up home and eventually forgot about it.

About four years later, in 1961, my top assistant, Captain Emil Hanson, took a vacation trip along the eastern seaboard. We had obtained a new large-specimen collecting boat and were about to install some modern trawling machinery. Therefore, Emil, stopped at this important shrimp fisheries center near Frogmore, South Carolina, to gather information on the most practical shrimp-trawling gear. During his inspection of the various boats, he met a captain who mentioned the fact there was a white dolphin frequently seen in these local waters. Emil was much interested so Captain Sonny Gay then invited Emil to go out the next day and see for himself.



Snowball with her offspring often left the pack for a lengthy cruise by themselves.

When they arrived well out into St. Helena Sound, where several shrimpers were dragging their trawls, Captain Sonny spotted the white dolphin among many grey ones following the boats and picking up the unwanted fish which were shoveled overboard. When Sonny started the operation of picking up the trawl, the pack of dolphins knew it and immediately raced to the wake of the boat for the usual feast. The white one stood out from the others by contrast and often came within a few yards of the boat.

"There is no question," said Emil, "it is very definitely white." They saw it many times during the day. Captain Sonny told Emil that he had stopped in at the Miami Seaquarium three or four years previous and talked to a Captain Gray who was quite interested in securing it. However, he explained that, after talking to me, he noted the animal had changed its habit of coming up in the creek to the docks and stayed mostly out in the deep open sound. For this reason he had given up the idea of capturing it. This explained why I had heard no more from him.

Emil was thrilled and immediately began to consider how it could be captured. He spent a couple days more studying the situation and gathering all pertinent information as to the kind of gear and equipment that would be necessary if we decided to go after it.

When Emil returned home we discussed the possibility of capturing this creature. Now, catching dolphins in Florida waters was no problem for us. We also had nets and gear suitable for our south Florida waters. However, it was not at all practical for dolphin catching in St. Helena Sound.

The area of St. Helena Sound was made up of deep finger channels, twenty-five to forty-feet deep, running out to sea. Through these channels, where most of the trawling was conducted and the dolphins spent the greater part of their time, the current ran at five to six miles per hour. This condition made it impossible to use our eighteen-foot-deep dolphin net, which is practical for our normal use about our home area. In fact a net of any kind excepting a trawl would be most impractical under such conditions. Needless to say we decided to try it. Nothing could be more exciting and gratifying than to catch a real white dolphin.

After considerable preparations for this venture, in November, 1961, we cleared out the inlet at Miami and headed north. High winds and rough sea made it desirable to use the Inland Waterway after the first day out. We made the five-hundred-mile run in a week's time and arrived, filled with anticipation, in St. Helena Sound on a quiet and beautiful day.

The object of our mission was sighted well out in the sound and we followed her about all afternoon. Once she ventured into water shallow enough to warrant trying our net, but we did not do so because we were expecting a motion-picture camera crew to arrive by car the next day to film the entire operation and capture. After feasting our eyes on this beautiful white creature for hours, we headed in to the shrimp dock at Village Creek to await the arrival of our photographers.

The next day we cruised out into the sound with six pairs of eyes scanning the waters in search of Snowball and we located her about noon. Our excited photographers fell all over themselves in their efforts to snap photos. The water was smooth and we had no trouble following this gleaming mammal and they snapped some close-ups. We had seen a lot of Snowball by now and from observation had discovered she was a female. Our conclusion was based on the fact that there was a half-grown baby close to her side each time she rose for air. This proved to be more exciting as we hoped to capture both her and her off-spring. What a fabulous exhibit that would be if we could deliver them to the Seaquarium together!

During the next two weeks we were out at first daylight searching for Snowball, and if we found her, followed patiently, hoping she might stray into an area where we would have a chance of capture by running out net around her. We tried to establish the pattern of her cruising habits, but there were none. She would sometimes separate from the herd, and with her baby take off for a mile or two and then change direction completely.

St. Helena Sound is comprised of some one hundred square miles of water which is fed by dozens of large rivers, and she did not restrict herself to any particular areas. We located her sometimes many miles up in one of the inland tributaries, other times well out at the edge of the ocean. We even searched six days without finding her at all. During the two weeks we had made five attempts to get our net around her. The best chance we had seemed like a sure thing. She, with her baby and half dozen other grey dolphins, had pursued a school of fish over a shallow sandbar where the water was only twelve feet deep. We jockeyed into position to make the "strike," and the out-board motorboat carrying the end of the net failed to start at the right time. The success of this part of the operation is based on precision timing, so we missed our chance. By the time we were organized to try again, our quarry had vanished. A few days later she and her pack of half-dozen were found in a suitable location at slack tide where there was only ten feet of water.

This time all went as planned and we closed the quarter-mile net and had Snowball, baby, and five large, grey dolphins in the circle. As we pulled the net in, they discovered they were trapped and herded close together in the middle of the circle. We were desperately closing in the net from two net-boats, feeling that luck was with us at last. One of the men helping in my boat even asked what tank I would put her in at the Seaquarium. As the net was gradually being closed the whole lot went into a panic and charged head on into the webbing. Only fifty feet from me, Emil with two other crew members was in the other boat hauling in the net. Two very large bulls struck only six feet from my hands near the cork line on which I was pulling. They escaped and Snowball went through also. This time I was close enough to notice her pink eyes, but that was small consolation. After an hour or more of back-breaking hauling we got our net back on board. We had three ordinary dolphins in the net which we released. One my have been the baby.

After a few more discouraging attempts, we were convinced our only hope of capturing Snowball was to return home and build a special net, designed for these waters. After twenty-two days on the first hunt we tied up our boat and returned to Miami by auto. We immediately ordered the webbing, ropes, corks, and leads we required. However, this being the week before the Christmas season, our material was misplaced on a moor truck line between Baltimore and Miami, resulting in a two-week delay. After building the net, which took eight days, we loaded it on our large truck and returned to our boat and equipment at Village Creek. By this time the shrimping season was drawing to a close and the winter weather had set in. We were not too discouraged by this, however. We donned winter clothing and with our new net on board started out.

We found the change of weather hampered our chances considerably. The high winds, not experienced during our former efforts, kept the sound whipped into a mass of white caps. This made it very difficult to find the white dolphin even if she were close by. The shrimp trawlers were laid up so we could not depend on finding the dolphins following them for their free food as usual. The water temperature dropped below fifty degrees which caused most of the shrimp and fish to leave the sound. Nevertheless, we found Snowball several times but not in a position to make a set. She usually gave us the slip after we had followed in her wake for only a few minutes. Her dark baby was still with her. It appeared to be about a year old.

Our dogged persistence did not help much as general conditions became worse. We were forced to admit defeat. After talking with the local shrimp fishermen and taking their advice we made plans to return to Miami and to return the following June or July. At this time the weather conditions would be more suitable and the shrimp and fish would be back in the sound. We headed towards home on a six-day run with the only thing in our live-well being three sturgeon for our exhibit.



Collectors for Seaquarium, Captains Hanson and Gray, have a quick snack while searching water for Snowball.

We had found the fishermen of Village Creek helpful and friendly during both our sea-hunts, but we had not courted any publicity on the venture since the only sure thing about the capture was that it was not a sure thing, and we didn't want pictures of empty nets to be the result of our chase. But we had obtained a legal permit to collect fish and dolphins in South Carolina waters, and it became generally known by word of mouth that we were hunting for a white dolphin in St. Helena Sound.

We were therefore dismayed when we learned in April 1962 that a local law had been passed by the South Carolina legislature to make it illegal to capture dolphins in the waters of Beaufort County. This was a shock to us, but most of the local residents around St. Helena Sound were as much surprised to learn that they had a white dolphin living nearby as they were to learn of the law. South Carolina papers editorialized that the law was a great thing, and even proclaimed that the white dolphin was a great tourist attraction for the area.

This seemed perfectly ridiculous since I had cruised at one time five days from day light to dark around St. Helena Sound and its tributaries without spying her once. This beautiful white creature is known to have been in that area for the past ten to fifteen years, but I doubt if four-score tourists had ever seen her. In fact, very few besides the local fishermen had ever laid eyes on her. That is not what we consider to be a "tourist attraction" in Florida.

*The General Assembly had enacted "An act making it unlawful to net, trap, harpoon, lasso or molest genus *Delphinus* or genus *Tursiops* in the waters of Beaufort County." The white dolphin is genus *Tursiops truncatus*. Penalty for violating the law is a fine of not more than \$100 or imprisonment for not more than thirty days.*

The episode of the law-passing reminded me of an experience I had some years ago at West End, Grand Bahamas. There was a twelve timber, thirty-feet long, which had washed ashore during a hurricane some years before. It was well up on shore on the water side of the Kings Highway. We were in need of it to use in building temporary holding pen for live aquarium fishes. So, I sought out a local who lived nearby and asked him who it belonged to.

He thought awhile and said, "I don't expect it belongs to anybody until some one wants it, then everybody on the Island will claim it.

Emil and Burton Clark, general manager of the Seaquarium, and I discussed the legal situation. We had a legal permit to collect fishes and marine creatures in Carolina waters, which would allow us legally to net the dolphin in the waters of any county except the restricted county. We had followed the white dolphin for days on end in two other counties, so we agreed we should go back and try again in hope of finding her at the right time and tide outside the restricted area.

We felt the time was right in July so we left the Seaquarium and after a five hundred-mile run arrived in St. Helena Sound the night of June 19th. Next day we took up our usual patrol but did not see Snowball. Late next day we found her following the trawlers with a large pod. But she was in the restricted territory, and though we followed until dark she did not leave the area. We were used to this by now so were not dismayed. Over this area of several hundred square miles of water, whether in or out of the prohibited county line there were but few places where we could attempt to put our net around her. Hazards were very deep water, strong currents, snags, too many other dolphins with her. Most important element of all was the fact that if we

circled out net around her while she was with a large pod there would be a chance of drowning some of them before we could set them free. Snowball might be one of them.



"Yes," we all agreed. "It's white as snow!"

Excerpts from our log tell of that trip:

JULY 18, 1962: With boats and gear loaded on board we pulled out of our basin 5:20 A.M. Well out in the Gulf Stream we found it nice going. Off Ft. Pierce we were met by a large pod of spotted dolphins. They followed and played about our boat for half hour, sporting and leaping close to our prow as if to lead us merrily on our way. This produced some good movies and stills. About 6 P.M., thirty miles off Cape Canaveral we ran into a terrific black squall through which Captain Hanson could navigate from topside only by using a diving face mask to see ahead. This lasted a half hour and we continued on our northerly course through the night in moderate weather.

JULY 19, 1962: Daylight found us about sixty miles off the Georgia coast heading for Savannah lightship. We attracted a few more spotted dolphin escorts and also ran into a large herd of pilot whales. We raised the sea bouy off St. Helena Sound about dark and ran into a favorable anchorage up in Ashepoo River where we spent the night.

JULY 20, 1962: Out early on the search which lasted all day. With six pair of eyes anxiously scanning the waters we saw no sign of Snowball. Many great swarms of dark-colored dolphin but no sign of the white one. Later, we talked to Sonny Gay on ship-to-ship telephone who was shrimp trawling. He informed us that he had seen Snowball nearly every day near the south side of the sound which was in the restricted area. At least that was encouraging. Anchored for the night in Edisto River.

JULY 21, 1962: Upped anchor 7:00 A.M. and continued the search as usual from north side of sound to the south and ran many miles up the rivers. We were warned, or reminded, not to touch any dolphin in the restricted county. After a full day's hunt through the waters of three different counties we ran into Rock Creek to ride out a bad line squall and spend the night. Again we had failed to find Snowball.

JULY 22, 1962: A full day of routine search without a trace of Snowball. However, we were boarded by another fisheries' agent who told us he had seen Snowball several days earlier in this area. While waiting and hoping she might show up again, we dragged trawl and caught a good quantity of assorted fishes along with enough shrimp for dinner. During this time, while all hands were on topside, I called for everyone's attention and said, "Let there be no doubt as to the success of this trip, we just can't miss." I then pulled a rabbit foot from my pocket and held it up for view.

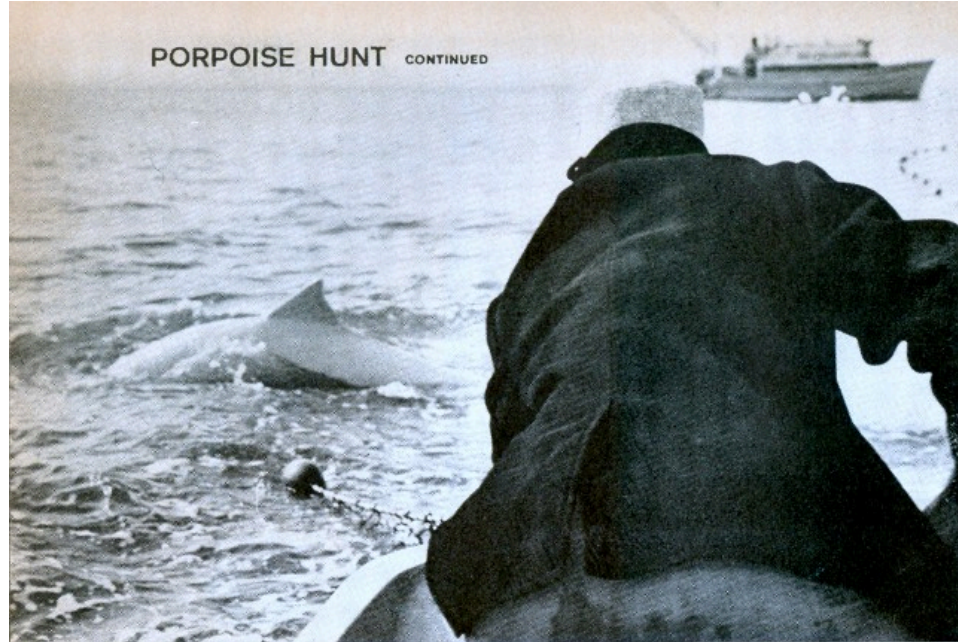
"Yes, that's just what we need - why didn't you bring it along before," remarked Emil, with a noticeable tinge of sarcasm. As dark came on - with no sign of our quarry - we ran into Rock Creek and anchored for the night.

JULY 23, 1962: Out early for a long day's search. We covered all the likely areas. Dolphins were abundant but no white one. Anchored in Morgan River for the night.

JULY 24, 1962: A very bad windy, grey day. High winds and black squalls made our efforts quite hopeless. Back to Rock Creek for the night.

JULY 25, 1962: Out on usual patrol. Shrimp trawler, "Miss Helen," called up on ship-to-ship radio and reported Snowball on south side of Pelican Banks. This was in restricted territory but we found her and followed her and her baby for three hours or more in hopes she would lead off to a place where we might try to put our net around her. She finally gave us the slip. We proceeded in to Gay's Dock where we took on fuel and supplies. Came out and anchored well up in Morgan River.

JULY 26, 1962: Our early and soon found Snowball and her baby in restricted area. Followed them about for three hours when they headed out across the sound into the adjoining county waters. In desperation we made a set even though conditions were not too favorable. We captured five dark-skinned dolphins and our photographers took some wanted action pictures; Snowball escaped.



Captain Gray closes the net on his quarry in a capture attempt, but this time the porpoise leaped away.

Before we could retrieve our net the swift current carried us into the mouth of Rock Creek, where it was severely torn because of snags. We had it back in good repair by midnight and ready to go again.

JULY 27, 1962: Out a short time when we spotted Snowball and her herd in Chehaw River. We patiently followed her about six miles up when she with baby and three others branched off into New Chehaw Creek. We thought we had a good chance and ran the net out around her and her mates. However, she and baby escaped but we captured the three others which we did not want. Before we could get our net in the incoming tide had increased to such force we were unable to retrieve the net. We held on until the tide slackened around midnight and because of the many snags it was badly torn.

JULY 29, 1962: Worked on repairing net all day.

JULY 30, 1962: A dark cloudy day. Started our usual patrol and located Snowball in Morgan River, restricted territory. She led us a merry chase up-stream, but we followed until late afternoon. A terrific squall drove us into a creek near Beaufort where we anchored for the night.

JULY 31, 1962: We spied Snowball well out in St. Helena Sound where she and her pack were following the shrimp trawlers picking up their fill of dead fish shoveled overboard from the catch. Snowball, with a half dozen others, having had all they could swallow evidently decided to take a cruise. We followed hopefully as they headed up into Ashepoo River and after six hours turned off into Fishing Creek. This is what we were hoping for as this was well away from the restricted area. Well up this creek they seemed to locate something they were interested in, perhaps a school of trout. Anyway, they huddled up in a small area close to the grassy shore. The water was the right depth, not too much tide, a couple hours of daylight left. Everything perfect. This was it.

We ran in close to shore and as Captain Hanson gave the signal the net began to run out. We were all elated as this was the best chance we had ever had. It looked like a sure thing this time. But- by the time the net was on-third out, it became tangled fast around a cleat. We had to stop headway to clear it. By that time, about one and a half minutes, our quarry sized up the situation and took off for parts unknown. We could not find her again that day.

AUGUST 1, 1962: A nice day in the making as we pulled out from our favorite anchorage in Rock Creek. On our way through the river Emil and I were on look-out from the topside. I felt the rabbit foot in my pocket and pulled it out. Showing it to Emil I said, "Guess my charmed rabbit foot failed us." Emil replied, "Looks that way. Perhaps it's the wrong foot." Said I, "I don't know which foot it is except I am sure it is the wrong one." Then I threw it as far out in the river as I could. Emil responded by saying, "It's going to take more than rabbits feet to out-smart or out-luck the ghost we are after."

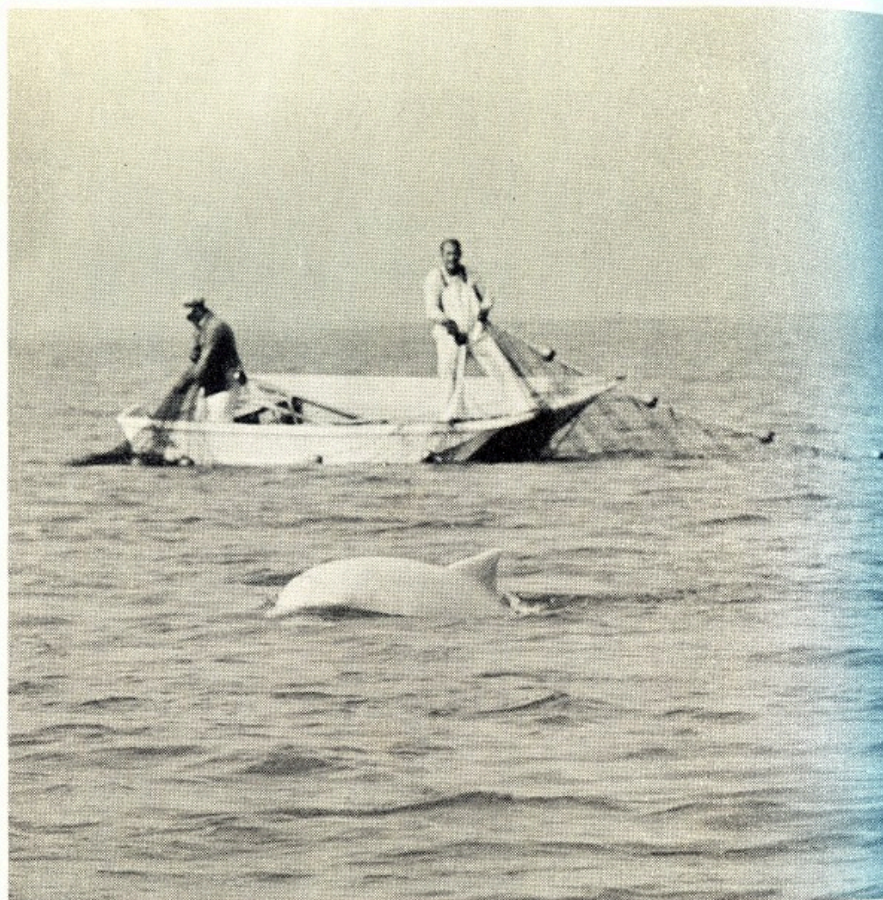
While on our regular search we were informed by one of our shrimp-trawling friends that Snowball was over on the south side following the trawlers. We ran over but did not locate her. She no doubt had her fill

and was off on another cruise.

AUGUST 2, 1962: We found her with the shrimpers in the same restricted waters. After we had followed her about for three hours a severe squall came and all boats were forced to go in. At the shrimp docks we took on fuel and provisions. About 3:00 P.M. the storm broke and we went out and continued our search until dark - without results. Anchored again 8:00 P.M. in Rock Creek.

AUGUST 3, 1962: Out early on our regular beat. The weather was favorable but we could not find Snowball. During the late morning we picked up some conversation among the shrimpers on their radiophones and they said she was following the shrimp boats. We ran across the sound and found her on the south side well out in the sound. By this time we were all becoming quite desperate. We followed her until she finally split off from the pack, and when Snowball and her baby strayed over a shoal spot, we tried to net them. This was another "almost."

Soon after we had our net back on board a speed boat manned by a couple of uniformed officers hailed us in order to board our craft. One wore the uniform and insignia of the State Fish and Wildlife Service and the other that of the State Highway Patrol. With them were two newspaper men and a photographer. They looked as if they meant business. When asked what they wanted, they replied that they wanted to talk to us and to make a routine inspection - so we welcomed them aboard. After they snooped about our boat from stem to stern we sensed that they were disappointed not to find what they had expected. Of course, we were aware of the fact that we were being constantly watched by the authorities from shore and other boats through binoculars. We concluded the reason for the surprise visit was due to the fact that they saw us put out our net, even though well outside the uncertain county boundary line. Anyway they found nothing illegal about our boat or operations so they went on their way. We continued our routine patrol without sighting Snowball again. We anchored for the night in Edisto River.



This time Chet yelled, "It's in the bag!"

AUGUST 4, 1962: We noticed shrimpers dragging about the mouth of the Edisto River and saw a great number of dolphins in their wake. As we came closer we spied Snowball and her baby among them. This was an area where our net would fish top and bottom and we were within our legal rights to fish. We followed until all conditions seemed just right and Captain Hanson yelled "Let it go."

As he was about to close the circle with Snowball and baby inside he stopped the boat and yelled again, "Get the net back!"

Just as he was about to close the net he had noticed a dozen or more large dolphins had come to the surface within the circle. Realizing that if so many dolphins became tangled in our net we might only have a slim chance of capturing the only two we wanted alive, we retrieved the net and made ready to start all over again. Some hours later we found her again in the same area and followed in readiness until she with her baby split off from the herd. This time we circled the pair successfully. At this point we anchored the mother ship and from two small boats began to tighten the circle of net. When Snowball realized the net was closing in she charged full speed and struck it. She floundered about until she became tangled. This was what we expected and hoped for. We lost no time in getting to her and rolling her into the boat. We delivered her promptly aboard the mother ship and placed her tied down on a sponge rubber mattress. Then we hastened back to the net

where the baby was still struggling to get free. We rescued baby and hurried back to place the baby alongside his mother. It was a boy. Some hearty whoops and yells from all hands relieved the greatly built-up tension. We roped in our net and headed for the open sea. We rounded the sea buoy at 3:00 P.M. and headed south.

We had placed Snowball and her boy in a special rubber tank on deck, and they seemed to be taking it very well. There was a constant watch to make sure they did not become excited or disturbed and possibly drown. The weather was fortunately moderate. After a fifty-eight-hour run we pulled into our basin at the Seaquarium the next night at 9:00 P.M. The tension around the Seaquarium had been building up ever since we radioed in that we were on the way back with our prize.

We pulled into the basin amid a blast of flash lights and flares and were greeted by a large gathering of television cameramen, photographers, newspaper writers, our families, and a great many friends, waiting there to congratulate us on our achievement. We were certainly all greatly relieved when we carried Snowball and her baby boy over to the new special pool which was to be their home. As they were released in their new home they both seemed to be quite content and we were all very happy.

It is quite possible that the percentage of albino births among mammals is about the same as among land animals or humans. However, an albino dolphin, born in its natural element, would have but a slight chance for survival because of the outstanding color contrast of its mother and other dark-skinned members of its clan. The flashy white body would stand out as a ready target for all predators.

The fact that Carolina Snowball is known to have lived her life in the murky, dark waters of St. Helena Sound and its tributaries where large vicious sharks are rare is a sound reason why she lived in this favorable and quite isolated environment.



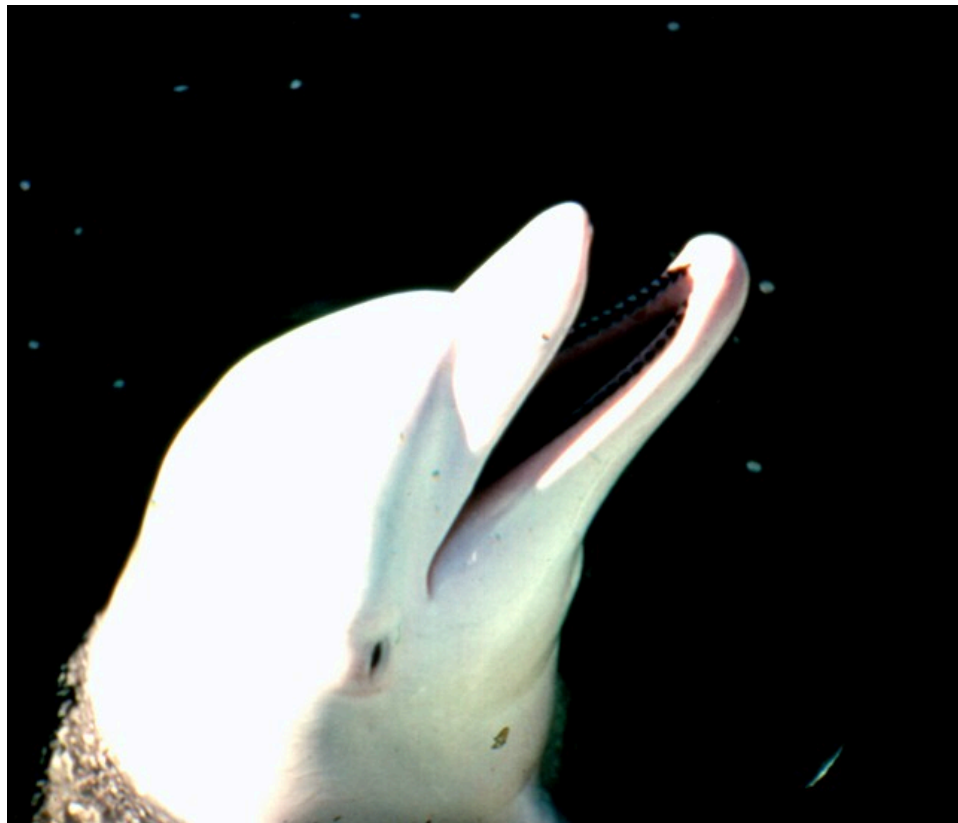
At last the prize was captured. (Larry Whitt)

LIFE Magazine noted that **sixteen times** CAROLINA SNOWBALL escaped the collectors' wide-flung net. But on the 17th cast, CAROLINA SNOWBALL was finally captured, legally, in St. Helena Sound in Colleton County, SC, and brought to Miami where she enjoyed the admiration of millions and millions of fans who came to see her.



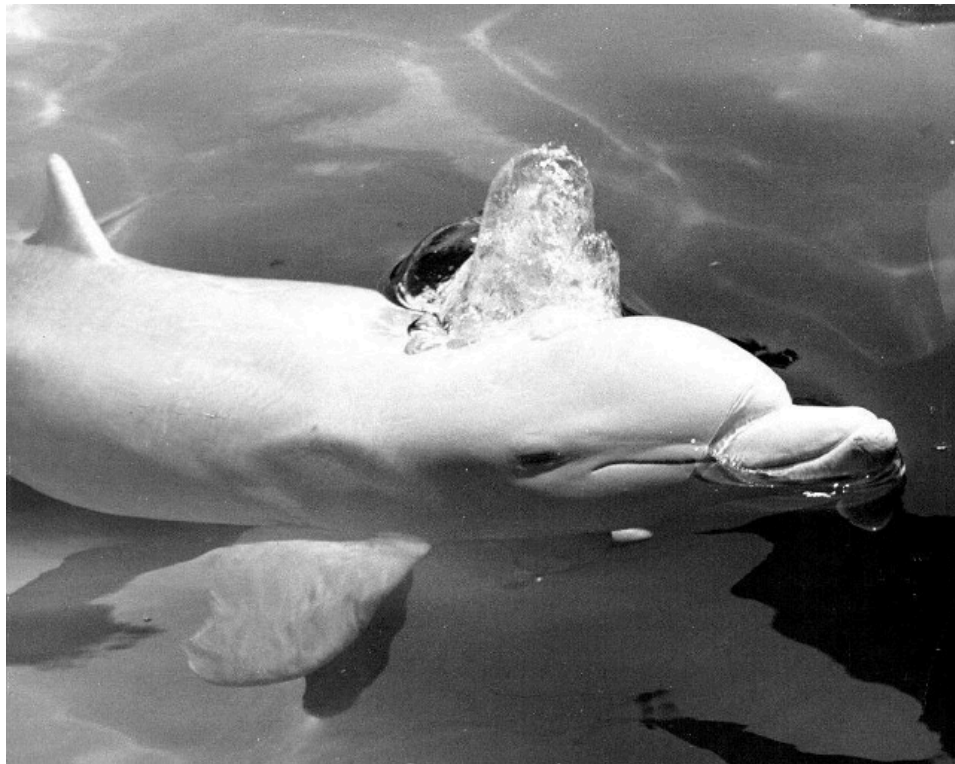
Miami Herald August 7, 1962

In all, it had taken Captain Gray **FIFTY-EIGHT DAYS of actual pursuit** over the course of nine months to capture the albino dolphin - and it was his last expedition. Her baby boy, captured along with CAROLINA SNOWBALL, was named SONNY BOY in honor of Captain Sonny Gay, the South Carolina fisherman who first told Captain Gray about Snowball.



Notice how CAROLINA SNOWBALL's teeth are jet black! Her trainer was Adolph Frohn, and she was the Miami Seaquarium's star attraction, drawing millions of people from around the world to see and admire her.

The outrage in South Carolina (LIFE Magazine called it jealousy) caused by SNOWBALL's capture, albeit totally legal, led to expansion of Beaufort County's law into a statewide ban a few years later. And despite efforts to repeal the law on several occasions, South Carolina remains the only state that bans the capture of dolphins.



Carolina Snowball Gaining Fame In Miami Seaquarium

Carolina Snowball rapidly is becoming the most famous porpoise in history.

And, while promoting the 600-pound albino from the waters of Beaufort County, Miami Seaquarium is giving full credit to her South Carolina origin.

Besides listing Beaufort County in advertising brochures, the Seaquarium bills the lady as "The World's Only White Porpoise," under the name Carolina Snowball, one of several the aquatic lady was known by. And, the only such name with "Carolina" in it.

Carolina Snowball (alias Snow White, Peaches, Whitey, etc.) is ensconced in a 60,000-gallon pool of clear, filtered water, a far cry from her native blue St. Helena Sound habitat.

There is no reason why the Seaquarium should not choose such a catchy name, but part of the credit might be an attempt at mollifying aroused hackles around Beaufort, where Carolina Snowball literally was considered a natural resource, citizen, and a rare asset.

So rare an asset that the Sea-

quarium had to wait until she wandered across the sound into Colleton County waters to net her last August—there was a law against it in Beaufort County.

For the tourist, there are other advantages to the move—thousands may see her daily without recourse to a boat.

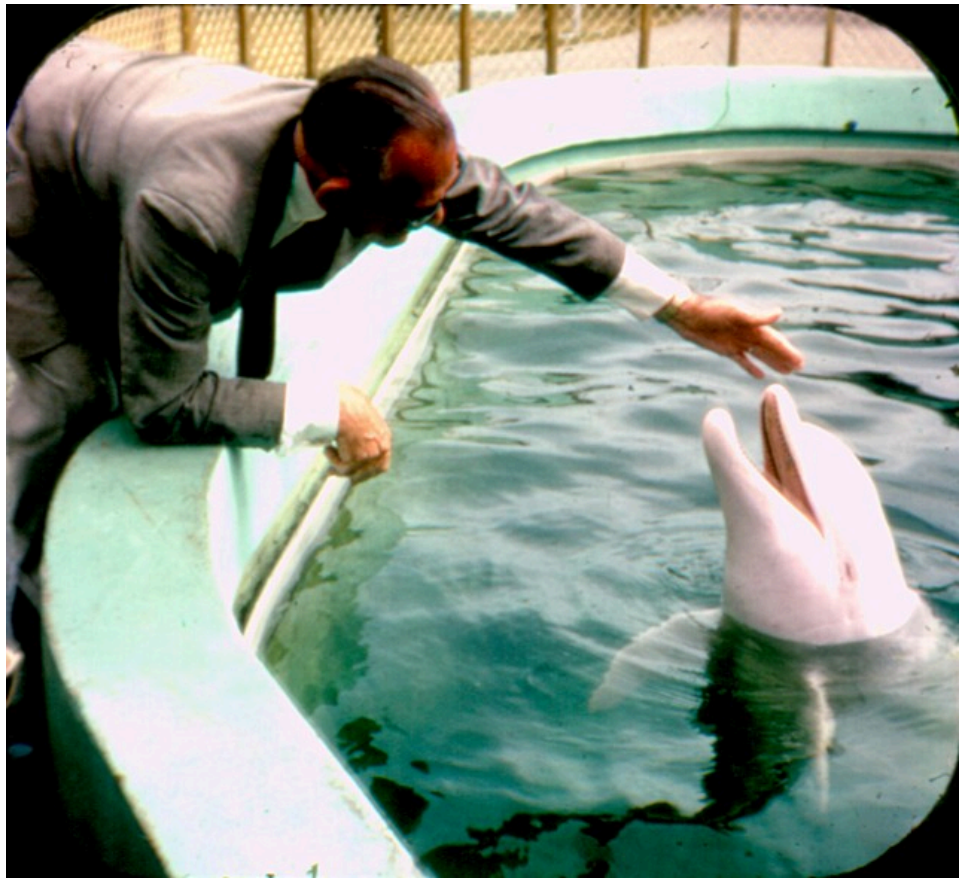
For Carolina Snowball, it means protection from hunger, predators, disease or accident.

For South Carolina—and Beaufort—it means another addition to a long list of firsts—or so the Seaquarium bills it.

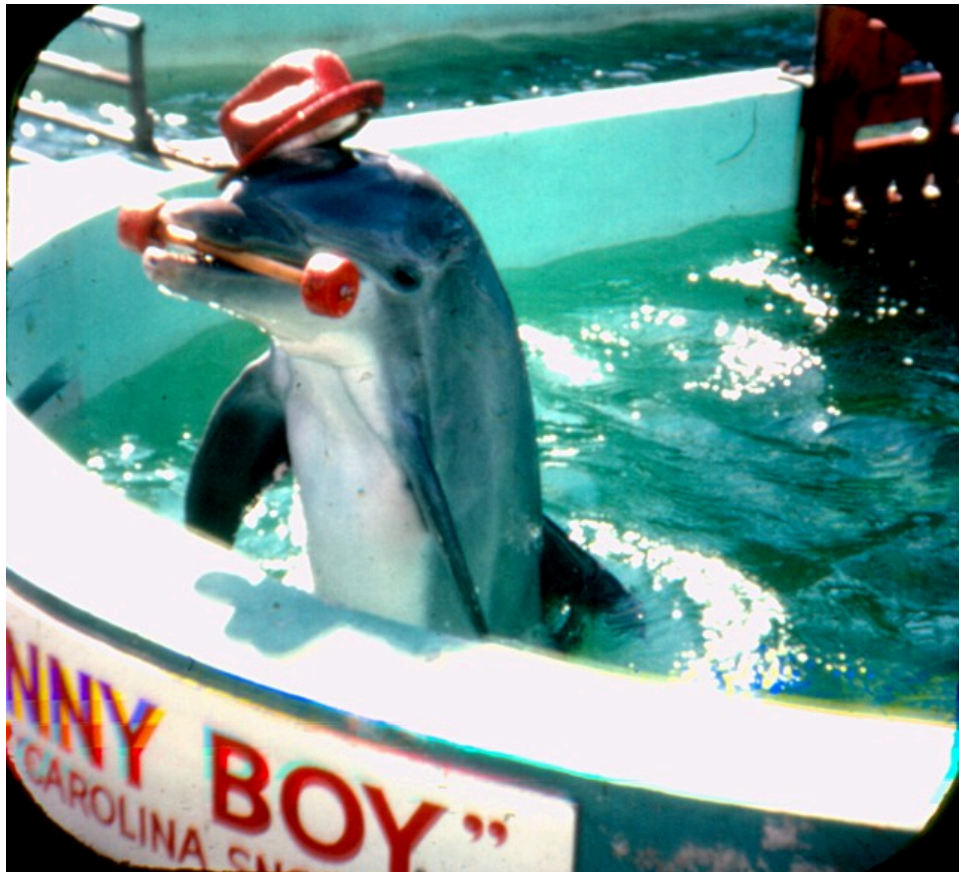
(Advertisement)

The News and Courier, Feb. 13, 1963





Capt. Bill Gray and Snowball exchange greetings.



This is SONNY BOY, the baby boy captured along with CAROLINA SNOWBALL on August 4, 1962. SONNY BOY was named after the South Carolina shrimp boat captain, Capt. Sonny Gay, who first told Capt. Bill Gray about Snowball in 1957.

Carolina Snowball's Future Home At Seaquarium

Our Carolina Snowball Getting A New Pool Home

Construction will start Monday on a new home — with picture windows — for Carolina Snowball, the white bottle-nose porpoise at the Miami Seaquarium.

The new home will be two pools 35 and 20 feet in diameter, with banks of large windows through which spectators can view the porpoise underwater.

Snowball's son, Sonny Boy, will live in the smaller pool. He is a normally gray porpoise.

"The new pool will allow us

to continue Snowball's training in an unusual way," Burton Clark, general manager of the Seaquarium, said today.

"People will swim in the water with her regularly throughout the day and we hope that she soon will be giving the swimmers a ride," Clark said.

"It will also allow certain scientific observations to be made which are not now possible in her windowless home."

Clark also said that the Seaquarium plans to breed Carolina Snowball and Sonny Boy when the latter is mature. He now is four years old.

"The chance of getting a white baby from the usual gray is small," Clark said. "We are told by experts on albinism that this trait is a simple Mendelian recessive."

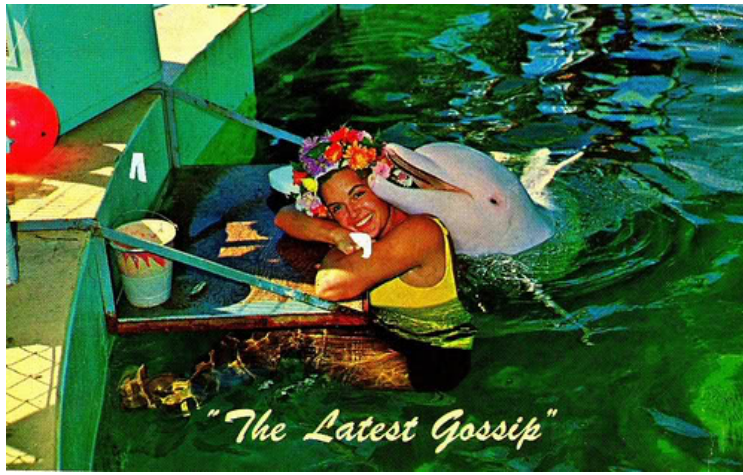
"Sonny Boy is gray carries one gene for albinism," Clark added. "Therefore," Clark added, "of the babies that he and Snowball would have would and half of them gray."

Both pools will be deep. The windows will be the largest yet used at the Seaquarium — five feet wide and four feet, six inches high.

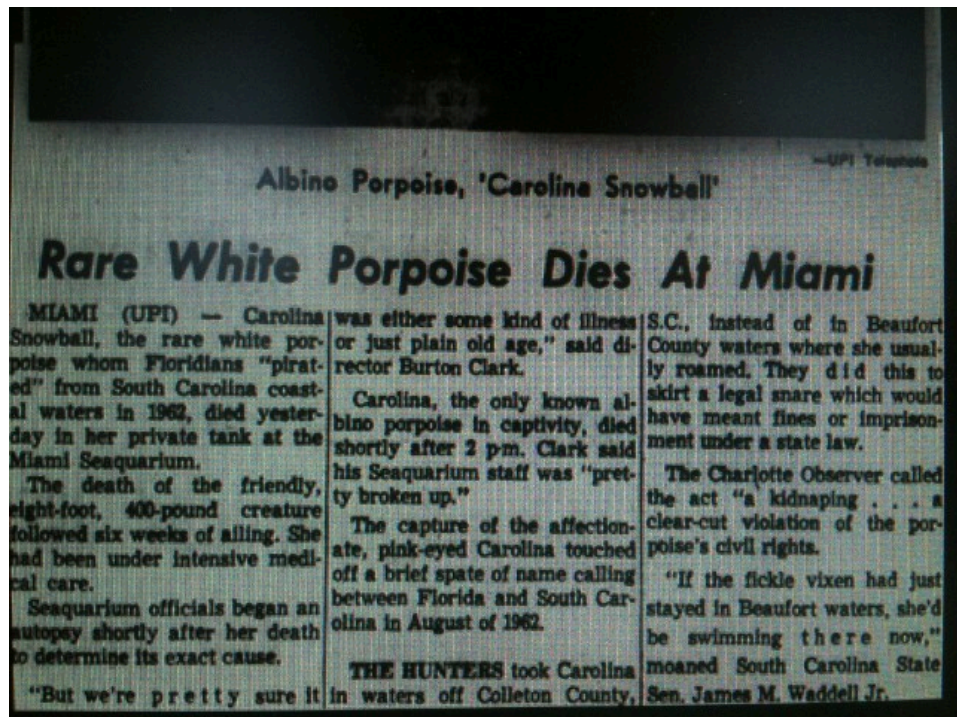
The Miami News, Sept. 3, 1963



This press photo with trainer Judy Schurr is dated February 12, 1965. Trainer Judy Schurr is also shown with Carolina Snowball in the postcard below.



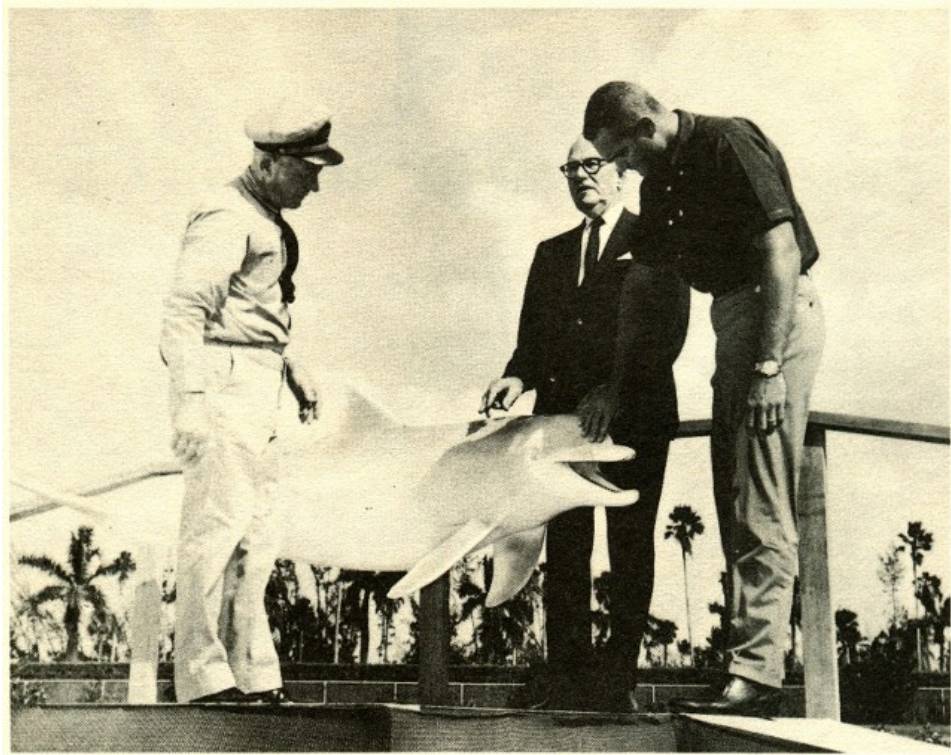
Three years after CAROLINA SNOWBALL was brought to the Seaquarium she developed an infection at the base of her tail. She began swimming erratically one day and, to the horror of tourists watching, she veered into the picture window with a sickening thud. Despite six weeks of heroic efforts undertaken by Robert Baldwin, director of operations at Miami Seaquarium, Snowball died in 1965.



St. Petersburg Times, May 5, 1965



In a necropsy, doctors discovered that Snowball lived with all sorts of problems. She had a tumor of the stomach as large as a tennis ball, cirrhosis of the liver, emphysema, cysts embedded in several organs, and muscles full of parasites. Nothing could have been done for any of this.



Carolina Snowball, a spectacular attraction, died after 3½ years at the Seaquarium, presumably of old age. Left to right: Captain Emil Hanson, Captain W. B. Gray, Snowball's captors; Al Pfleuger, taxidermist.

To mark the delight she brought to so many people who came to see her, CAROLINA SNOWBALL was mounted in a playful pose at the entrance of the Main Tank of the Miami Seaquarium, in a place of honor on the wall near the popcorn stand.

After capturing CAROLINA SNOWBALL, Captain Bill Gray moved on to become the Director of Collections at the Miami Seaquarium, where he worked and authored several books, until his death in the early 1980s.

SONNY BOY, the son of CAROLINA SNOWBALL, lived 11 years at the Seaquarium, until his death in 1973.





Early 1970s, Seaquarium, 25c

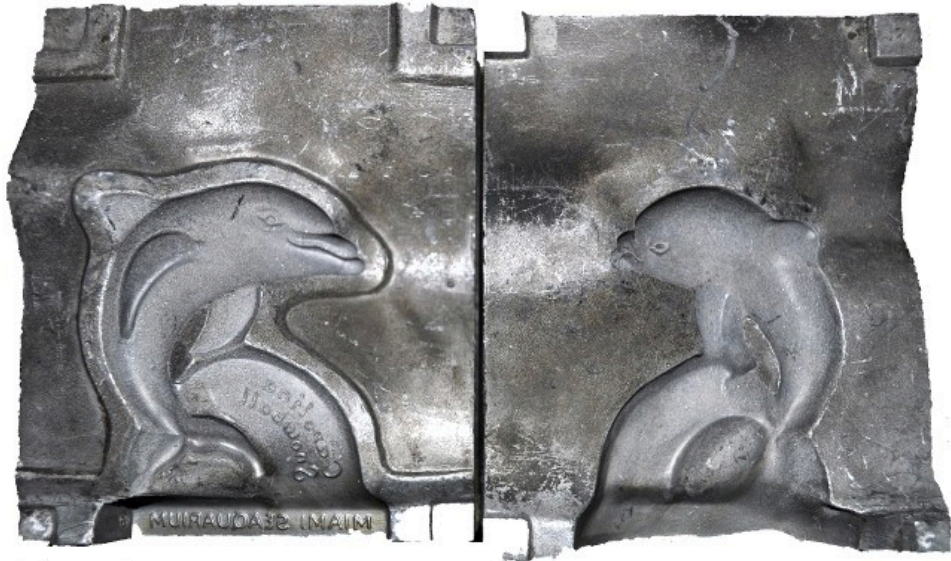


Late 1980s-early 1990s (in the shop)



TODAY, Seaquarium, \$2. The CAROLINA SNOWBALL moldset is sometimes seen with a "Flipper" engraving from SEAQUARIUM.

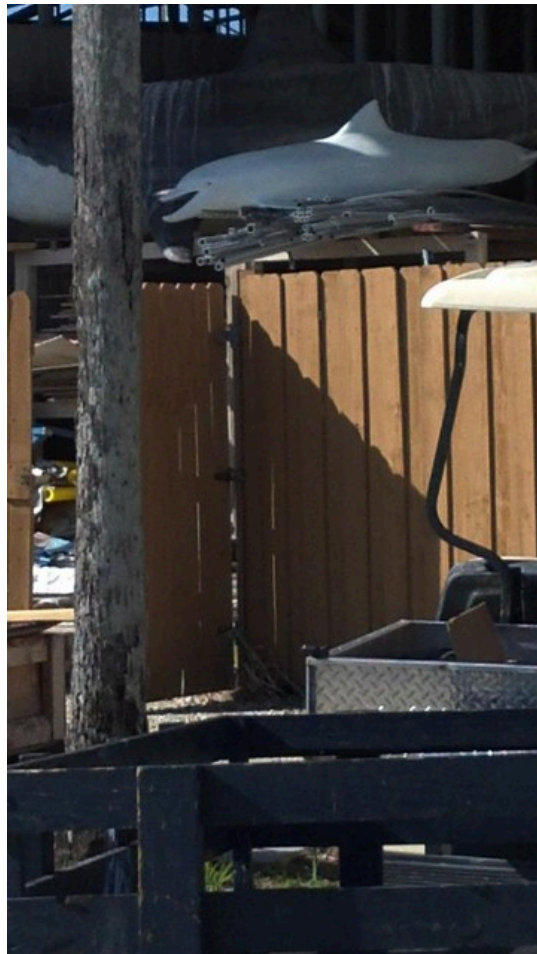




The CAROLINA SNOWBALL moldset is a pre-numbering system, early mating-design moldset, placing it among the handful of moldsets made immediately following the success of MOLD-A-RAMA at the Seattle World's Fair in 1962. (Probably ordered soon after her capture on August 4, 1962, perhaps along with the MGM flipper reissued in week 13.)

Where is CAROLINA SNOWBALL today, you might ask?

Well, it took some serious looking, but we finally found her. She's mounted along with a Great White Shark, behind a storage area. That's her (below) above that fence line, with pipes stored on shelves under her. You used to be able to view in that area, but over the years bracing was added to support the structure above, and the area has since been turned into a storage area.



Disclaimers: The color and/or exact condition of the MOLD you get in the CLUB-A-RAMA may or may not be as shown. Not for children under 3.

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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/MOLDVILLE/156515454416041?success=1>

If YOU would like to own this very moldset (and perhaps even include a fully operating MOLDVILLE machine to go with it) so you can reissue your own souvenirs from 50 years ago, please email MoldvilleMachine@gmail.com TODAY - before someone else beats you to it!

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