

**Ben-Yosef Aharon (Eskimo) ז"ר**

Born December 27 1926 in France

Made Aliya in February 1933

Grew up and studied in Tel Aviv

Joined the Palmach in 1944

Died August 6<sup>th</sup> 1977 in Haifa

Written by: Sara Ben-Yosef

**This is the Way it Was**

I got to know him in November 1950. We were married in 1951. Aharon was then the head of port intelligence in the Navy. As a youth he was a member of the Hashomer Hatzair Youth Movement. When he was 16 years old his whole group joined Hapoel Tel Aviv and that is when his romance with the sea began. In 1944 he volunteered for the Palmach and went to the course for launch commanders together with Shaikha Ophir and others. In 1947 he participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> and last course for Naval Officers. He took part in all of the activities of the Palyam at that time (such as helping Olim off the ships that broke the blockade).

In the book: "The Palmach Sea Commandos" by Avraham Zohar, Zalman Abramov writes: " While I was looking for action in the Harel Brigade or the Yiftach Brigade, Eskimo and Yisrael Rotem met me and told me about the new naval unit that was being formed. Eskimo was very dramatic in his description and it sounded good to me, so I joined. We were given the green house in Jaffa and that is where we started to mobilize young Palyamniks and others. Reuven Pinchas (the Turk), Shmedra, Gideon Goroditz, Berale and Avremale Livni – some of them were barely 17 years old then – this whole group was given the temporary name: "The Eskimo Commandos or 'The Suicide Squad' ".

In April 1951 and December 1952 he took part in moving two merchant ships through the Straits of Tiran. He went to an officers' training course and when it was over in February 1953 he joined the 13<sup>th</sup> fleet. At first he was Chief Intelligence Officer and later Chief Operations Officer. In 1957 he sailed to Germany and brought back a torpedo boat on the ship "Palmach". In December 1961 he was appointed second-in-command of the 13<sup>th</sup> fleet, and in June 1965 he was appointed Commander of the 13<sup>th</sup> fleet. Eskimo was also active in sport and during the years 1955 – 1965 he swam the Kinneret several times.

He participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> course for high-ranking officers in 1961 and ended his military service as an instructor at that school during the years 1969, 1970 and 1971. He retired from Tzahal in May 1971. We have two sons; Amir served in the Air Force and Tamir in the 13<sup>th</sup> fleet.

Eskimo died of cancer on August 6<sup>th</sup> 1977.