



# Gas Lines

Published for the  
employees and retirees  
of Boston Gas  
1987/Vol. 57, No. 9  
November 1987

**The Rainbow Tank is sweet sixteen--Hollywood's calling!**





Thousands of commuters saw it being repainted every day, all summer long. Dozens of phone calls were received from an interested public. National and local news media inquired on a regular basis. Television crews and reporters scrambled to the top

for footage and interviews. And, the word came from Hollywood that a movie would be made. Tinseltown was finally ready for our "Rainbow."

Why all the interest? There's nothing new about the rainbow. Surely, they were not interested in the 20 workers hanging from scaffolding 140 feet in the air, the 2,000 gallons of paint used, the fantastically bright colors, or that it is the largest copyrighted work of art in the world.

Certainly, there is a passing interest in all of these factors, but the real interest is in what the artist felt when the design was conceived—*hope*. To the late Corita Kent, her rainbow was a symbol of hope for a bright future for the City. Her rainbow over Boston began a new era in the City which is still evident all around us. Boston has grown into a vital, modern, ever-growing metropolis emulated by cities across the country. In 1971, as today, Corita's rainbow represented a

bright, promising future for Boston Gas and its employees.

Boston Gas has the unique opportunity to renew and regenerate our promise for the future every five years, when we brighten the Boston skyline by refurbishing and repainting the rainbow tank.

Much has been written and

much has been said about the rainbow. As with any work of art, the pros and cons are a matter of personal opinion. No one can deny, however, that it took forward-thinking and progressive leadership on the part of our company officials to make the (continued on page 2.)



Two stars--Eva Marie Saint and our rainbow tank.



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BOSTON GAS HISTORY

1822 - 1972

# 1822 LOOKING BACK 150 YEARS 1972

*Beginning with this issue of Gas Lines, in commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of Boston Gas, a series of articles will outline the history of the gas industry in Boston and the history of the Boston Gas Company. This information is based on historical documents, old newspaper articles and writings of historical significance found in the company archives. The first installment deals with the use of gas in European cities during the early 1800's, prior to its introduction to Boston.*

In the year 1822 Boston, finally abandoning its town meeting, was chartered as a city and, in July of that year, gas lights first glowed within the precincts of the newborn municipality. The history of Boston's life and growth as a city parallels the story of gas and its remarkable success in Boston, making 1972 the sesquicentennial celebration year of both the City of Boston and Boston Gas Company.

When Bostonians caught their first glimpse of "inflammable air," as gas was then called, they had no notion whatsoever of the influence the new illuminant was destined to have on the future. But history suggests that the first appearance of gas met at once with an admiring gaze and a "good public" in Boston. This reception was significant because gas had not always

been greeted so favorably in the cities of Europe. In 1803, Sir Walter Scott, the novelist and poet, wrote a friend, "There is a madman proposing to light London with smoke!" Phillipe Lebon, the first French inventor to enter the field, went bankrupt from the free show he gave Parisians in 1801 when he lit the apartments and gardens of a hotel with gas. Napoleon himself called the whole affair "une grande folie." Nineteen years passed before gas gained a firm footing in the French capital.

Many of the troubles encountered by early promoters of gas were due largely to the poor quality of the first gas produced. There was such a lack of technology in the pioneer years—particularly in the process of purification—that some of the gas used in London

did resemble the "smoke" Sir Walter Scott ridiculed. In addition, some of the promoters made such extravagant statements that they added to public distrust of the product.

For example, Frederick A. Winsor, a noted pioneer in the field, exhibited such optimism that he unhesitatingly promised gas could be used for "tanning skins" and "smoking bacons and hams." As to using gas for illumination, Winsor exclaimed, "gas illuminations may be carried on to the utmost extent of beauty, a flame which will play in all forms, submit to instant changes, ascend in columns to the clouds, descend in showers from the trees and arise from the water." When all London was afraid of being poisoned by the poorly purified gas, Winsor contended that a day would come when people would cut small holes in their gas pipes, "for the express purpose of having the advantage of inhaling continually the gas, which is the favorable thing imaginable for the health."

Bostonians had to wait another generation before they could see the grandeur of gaslight. The work done by William Murdock, the father of gaslight in England, and the steady improvement in the quality of the gas produced, were forces that could not fail to win recognition of the utility and value of gas. In 1810, the London police urged Parliament to install gas lighting to preserve public safety in the streets of the city at night. In 1813, Westminster Bridge was illuminated with gas lamps, and, by 1816, gas had become commonplace in London.

Inevitably, reports of these achievements were conveyed to Boston. As early as 1806, David Melville who is credited as being the first pioneer in the gas field in America, had installed gas lights in his home in Newport, Rhode Island. In 1816, the first gas company in the United States was chartered in Baltimore, and in 1822, Boston newspapers such as the *Boston Messenger* and *Daily Advertiser* began printing favorable comments concerning the arrival of gas in the United States.

*Next month: "Boston Sees the Light"*

## RAINBOW CONTEST

### When It Rains Rainbows, It pours

How many songs are there with "rainbow" in the title?

When *Gas Lines* asked this question in the August issue, it was with the assumption that employees, by racking their brains, could come up with at least ten or fifteen song titles. Boston Gas employees, however, are always full of surprises.

The winning entry, submitted by Dorea McConaghy, legal services, contained the titles of 141 songs. Dorea's prize will be dinner for two at Pier 4.

Runner-up Bob Lovely, engineering, listed 120 songs. Paul Bergeron, customer relations, 72 songs; Geraldine DiNapoli, legal collection, 46 songs; Barbara Lemieux, general accounting, 43 songs.

In all, seventeen employees and their families responded to our question. Kathi MacGillivray, daughter of Bill MacGillivray, sales prospector, and Thomas Kelly, customer relations, gave their entries an added touch with art work representing their conception of a rainbow.

Other entries were submitted by Mary Flynn, cashiers; Anna Mannion, general accounting; Allen Badger, pressure group; Jacqueline Wenz, consumer information; Jim Coughlin, customer relations; Valorie Donohue, meter control; Frank O'Hara, engineering; Jane Kearney, advertising; Robert Kamb, engineering; and Sylvia Don, merchandise accounts.

All song titles were authenticated by Boston Music Company.

# 1822 LOOKING BACK 150 YEARS 1872

## BOSTON SEES THE LIGHT

(Second in a series of articles outlining the history of Boston Gas Company)

After gas was successfully introduced in England and the first gas company in the United States was chartered in Baltimore in 1816, it was only natural to assume a favorable public opinion should be awaiting the inauguration of a gas company in Boston.

If there was favorable public opinion then it must be inferred from the absence of hostility to gas, rather than declared from any direct, affirmative evidence. The newspapers of the time were busy reporting news of the Peruvian Indians' victorious war of independence from Spain and, in the United States, the granting of the first patent for artificial teeth to Charles Graham of New York City. Evidently, it had not occurred to the local newspapers to describe such local events as the excitement caused when Bostonians first saw the "inflammable air" take fire and brighten the night.

The first user of illuminating gas in Boston was Daniel Darby, a Devonshire Street boot and shoemaker, who lit his shop in 1817. But the first written evidence of gas in Boston was a short paragraph in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* on July 15, 1822:

*"Several attempts have been heretofore made to introduce gas lights into this town without success. We are not acquainted with the causes of the failure. An experiment has lately been made with better promise. A company formed for the purpose of furnishing the gas has succeeded in obtaining that which burns entirely free from smell or smoke, and they offer to furnish it for general use on such terms as will make it the cheapest as well as the most perfect artificial light. They have made a very satisfactory experiment at the shop of Mr. Bacon on Court Street, the splendid appearances of which has nightly attracted much*

*attention. We understand that preparations are making for introducing it into extensive use."*

The Mr. Bacon on Court Street in 1822 was the proprietor of an apothecary, making the first gasworks in the city of Boston a drugstore. On August 19, 1822, a group of men, referred to as "the association" and as "the City Gas Company", "prayed permission" from the newly established mayor and aldermen to lay pipes for the purpose of supplying gas to customers in Boston.

This petition, referred to a special committee for consideration, declared the petitioners' readiness "to produce gas, set forth the advantages achieved by the use of gas in other cities, and ask authority to lay pipes in Boston which shall have a maximum diameter of three inches". Only in the very rare instances in which it may be necessary to cross a street, they said, will the laying of the pipes require that street pavements be torn up. The petitioners also said they intended to lay their pipes for the most part under the sidewalks. Lastly, they called attention to the use of gas in the future for lighting the city's streets and public ways at a 25% reduction in cost as compared to the present use of oil.

The petitioners included some of the outstanding names in the city: Alexander Parris, John Raulstone, John Randall, David Mapley, William Prescott, Daniel Pearson, Horace Gray, Edward Clark, Joseph Kidder, George Doane, B. P. Tilden, J. C. Gray, W. Webster, W. P. Main, F. C. Gray, F. Dexter, P. T. Jackson and Charles P. Curtis.

On August 27, 1822, only eight days after receipt of the petition, the special committee reported to the aldermen that the petition should be allowed. That same day, the aldermen granted the association the right to lay pipes

under the sidewalks. In granting approval to lay pipes, the aldermen also provided the city's first "public utility" law. They stated that in laying the pipes, all pavement and bricks must be taken up under the supervision of the commissioners of the highways and at the expense of the association. Thus the city's first Board of Aldermen set the field of law and regulation of public utility corporations.

The newly organized association immediately began planning a site for their gasworks from where they would supply gas made from the distillation of oil. This was the cause of a long delay in the realization of their original goals since, in those early days, the path to commercial success and practicability lay in the development of gas made from coal and not from oil.

On January 22, 1823, the Massachusetts General Court passed an act chartering the Boston Gas Light Company, allowing it a capital not to exceed \$75,000, and affirming the company's right, with the assent of the mayor and aldermen of Boston, to lay pipes in the city's streets. Named as incorporators were William Prescott, Alexander Parris, Bryant P. Tilden, Nathan Hale and John C. Gray.

For all commercial intents and purposes, the charter of the Boston Gas Light Company as a Massachusetts corporation has continued in existence ever since. This charter makes the company the oldest gas company in New England and the second oldest in the United States. However, the incorporation of 1823 did not mean immediate success for the new company. The impracticability of the plan to use oil as the source of gas supply delayed the general manufacture and sale of gas in Boston until 1828.

*Next month: "Production and Competition"*

(Third in a series of articles outlining the history of Boston Gas Company)

The earliest experiments by the newly-formed company to introduce gas for the purpose of supplying light for the buildings and streets of Boston began in 1823 in a building used as a riding school and circus, situated in what was then called Sheafe's Lane, now known as Avery Street.

In 1827, the company purchased from William Vernon an estate located in the North End section of the city on the northwest side of Copps Hill. This tract included 15,000 square feet of land and formed the nucleus of the property on which was situated the first operating gas plant in the City of Boston.

An engineer named Robert Cary Song, who had a major role in the country's first gas company in Baltimore, was brought to Boston and his skill helped overcome the technological problems facing the Boston company.

This plant was expanded in size until it included all the land bound by Hull, Commercial and Prince streets, Hillman's Alley, and Snowhill Street.

The first public street lamps were lighted in Dock Square on January 1, 1829. Fifty years later, there were 10,000 gas lamps in use by the city.

The Boston Almanac for 1837 described the gas works in this manner:

*"The gas made at this establishment is a compound of coal and resin, and is esteemed for its brilliancy and illuminating power. There are three*

*gasometers (gas holders) connected with the company's works, two in Hull Street, each of forty feet in diameter, and one in Washington Street at the extreme south part of the city, of eighty feet. This is the largest gasometer in the United States and contains fifteen thousand feet of gas."*

In a few short years, the North End works had become a great plant, employing a large number of men, and exercising great influence in commercial and political affairs. It was for many years one of the leading gas works in the country. The North End works were continually enlarged and improved, until it had a daily capacity for four million cubic feet of coal gas. Repeated additions to the holder capacity denoted the increasing output of gas and led to the reduction in the price of gas.

The coals used during the early years of gas manufacture in Boston were from Newcastle, brought across the Atlantic from England. Later, coal from the Albion mines at Pictou and the Lingan mines of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, were imported to Boston. So strong was the position of Newcastle and Nova Scotia coals in this market, that it was not until 1850 that any special effort was made on the part of the Pennsylvania coal miners to sell their product along the Atlantic seaboard.

On one occasion, when the question

of imposing a duty on Nova Scotia coal was before a congressional committee, Mr. W. W. Greenough of the Boston Gas Light Company announced that the legitimate source of supply of coal for New England was from Nova Scotia, and that, "if the Creator had intended my company to use the Pennsylvania coals, He would have placed them east of the Allegheny Mountains."

Inevitably, however, the domestic coal came to play a larger part in the manufacture of gas in New England as arrangements for transporting it here by water were improved and as shipment by rail was developed.

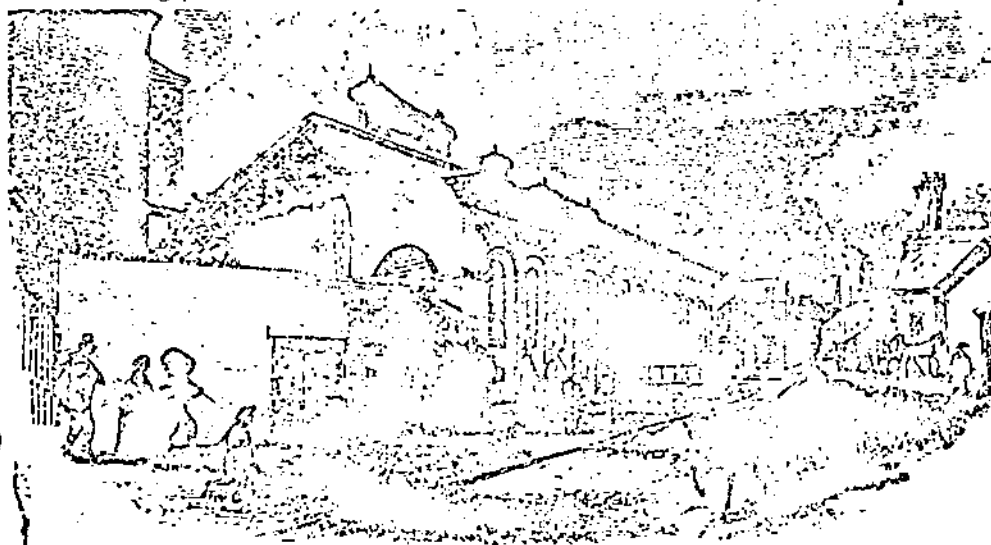
Gas was originally sold either on the basis of the number of burners installed or the size of the supply pipe. The original price of measured gas in the city was \$5 per thousand cubic feet. Production costs were high and the company had to keep the sale price high to prevent its customers from burning up all its "stock on hand".

If the substitution of coal for oil as the source of gas supply was a fundamental step which had to come before gas could become a commercial success in Boston, another requisite for the progress of the company was the advent of the gas meter. Samuel Clegg first produced a gas meter in London as early as 1815, and although some English-made meters may have been imported here, none were manufactured in the United States until 1832. The Boston Meter Works were organized in 1849. Much controversy and abuse centered about the early meters and their alleged inaccuracies before the dependable meter of today was finally evolved. Yet, even the first crude provision for measuring gas meant the economic salvation of the gas industry, and made possible its establishment on a sound basis.

From the first price of \$5 per thousand cubic feet of measured gas in Boston, the charge was gradually reduced until in 1860 it was \$2.25. Toward the close of the Civil War, it was increased to \$3.25 and continued to command this rate until 1870, when reductions again were frequently made until, in 1909, the price was as low as 80¢ per thousand cubic feet. In 1922, it rose to \$1.35 and today is back at a level of \$5.83.

The Boston Gas Light Company accomplished the broad popularization of gas by lowering the costs of manufacture and by producing the gas in vast quantities.

*To be continued.*

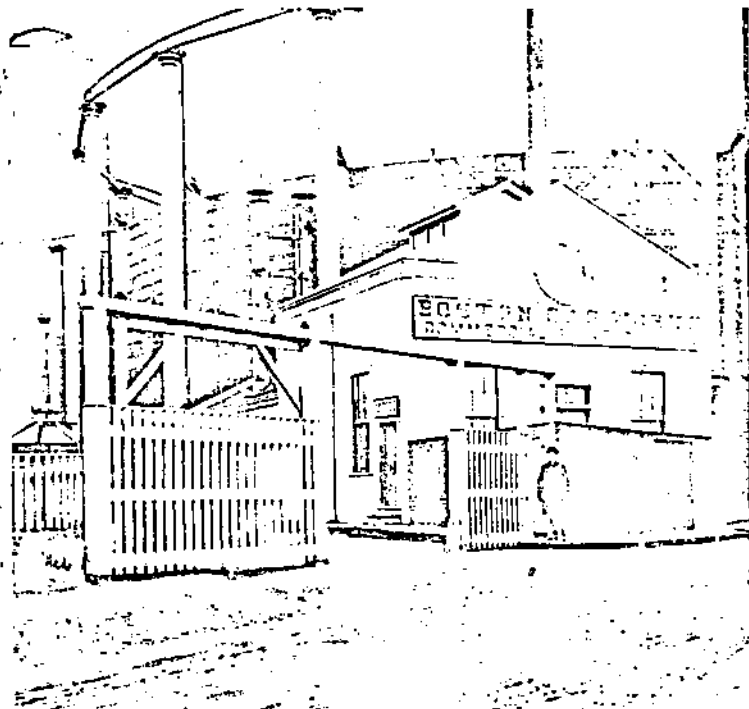


EXTERIOR VIEW OF BOSTON GAS WORKS.

# 1822 LOOKING BACK 150 YEARS 1972

## THE MAKING OF AN INDUSTRY

(Fourth in a series of articles outlining the history of Boston Gas Company)



Following the lead of the Boston Gas Light Company, other companies were formed to supply the areas now a part of Boston or Metropolitan Boston. Competition among companies was keen during the mid to late 19th century and duplication of facilities was common, even to the extent of different companies laying pipes in the same streets.

Numerous companies were formed during the 19th century:

- 1846 Charlestown Gas Light Company
- 1852 Roxbury Gas Light Company
- 1852 South Boston Gas Light Company
- 1853 Jamaica Plain Gas Light Company
- 1853 Brookline Gas Light Company
- 1853 East Boston Gas Light Company
- 1853 Chelsea Gas Light Company
- 1853 Citizens' Gas Light Company (Quincy)
- 1854 Dorchester Gas Light Company

- 1854 Newton and Watertown Gas Light Company
- 1857 Waltham Gas Light Company
- 1884 Bay State Gas Company
- 1896 Massachusetts Pipe Line Company

By the early 1900's, several of the companies would merge into what became known as the Boston Consolidated Gas Company.

Previous to 1852, the Boston Gas Light Company was practically a family concern, under the management of George Darracott. From 1849 to 1861, the president of the company was the Honorable Samuel A. Eliot. He had been mayor of Boston and member of Congress, was treasurer of Harvard College and the father of Charles W. Eliot, president emeritus of Harvard. Eliot was succeeded as president of the company by John A. Lowell, 1862 to 1877, whose grandson, A. L. Lowell was also president of Harvard. Associated as director of the company with Eliot and Lowell were George W. Lyman, Charles P. Curtis, Augustus Lowell and other equally distinguished men,

so that the old Boston Gas Company became one of Boston's household institutions along with Plymouth Rock and the *Mayflower*.

Successful management of the company through the nineteenth century called for intelligence and breadth of policy. With the city's growth in population and the constantly changing and enlarging needs of industry here, courage and resourcefulness were needed to keep the organization abreast of the times.

In 1853, W. W. Greenough was made treasurer and general manager. He held these offices for 36 years until 1889. One of the first steps of the Greenough management was the sale in 1854 of the Roxbury mains and rights to the Roxbury Gas Light Company. This act of partition was reversed by the consolidation fifty years later. Shortly after Greenough took charge, in an act reflecting the consumerism of the times, he hired a complaint clerk by the name of Johnson who worked for the company 56 years.

## THE ERA OF CONSOLIDATION, STABILITY AND GROWTH

*(Fifth in a series of articles outlining the history of Boston Gas Company.)*

In 1896, the Massachusetts Pipe Line Gas Company was chartered with powers for making and selling gas. This company visualized the possibility of the consolidation of other gas companies in Greater Boston. In 1898, it built a large gas holder and large gas plant for purification and measurement of gas in Everett and laid its large mains to connect and feed other companies. One of their outstanding engineering projects was the construction of the Malden bridge tunnel under the Mystic River. The tunnel, which was 952 feet long and 54 inches in diameter, connected the Everett Works and the City of Boston for gas distribution.

In 1897, the New England Gas and Coke Company was organized and it built a by-product plant of 400 coke ovens in Everett for the manufacture of coke and gas. This plant adjoined the works of the Massachusetts Pipe Line Company.

In 1898, the state legislature requested the Board of Gas Commissioners to consider and report to them a plan for the consolidation of the corporations supplying gas in Boston. The board submitted a plan for consolidation in 1899, but it was opposed by the gas companies and no action followed that year.

In 1902, the Massachusetts Gas Companies, a voluntary association, was formed to take over the New England Gas and Coke Company and, in 1903, this new organization was permitted to consolidate the eight gas companies operating in Greater Boston. The consolidation became the Boston Consolidated Gas Company in 1905, eliminating much confusion and expensive duplication of facilities. The old companies passed out of existence and the new company began its remarkable career under President James L. Richards.

As soon as the companies were consolidated, many extensions and

improvements to plant and mains were begun. In 1908, a new plant in Everett with a 14 million cubic feet daily capacity began the manufacture of water gas to mix with the oven gas brought from the coke company. But the growth of the business began to exceed the capacity of the new plant in a short time.

To secure a steady supply of coal of properly blended quality, Massachusetts Gas Companies in 1908 acquired coal mines in West Virginia. A fleet of collier-type steamers was added, accomplishing economical and dependable transportation of this coal to the Everett plant.

The gas industry in Boston was progressing rapidly. The advent of electric lighting in the 1880's marked the beginning of the gas industry's new character as a fuel industry, rather than a lighting industry. Prior to 1900, about 80% of all gas sold in Boston was for lighting.

Although rudimentary cooking with gas had been practiced for many years, box-like gas stoves and queer-looking heaters became popular in the late 1860's. In 1883, a gas stove with a water back was among the first water heaters and in 1899 the first automatic water heater was produced. The 1890's saw gas-fired steam boilers, melting furnaces, coffee roasters and other industrial applications.

The first utility appliance sales store was opened in Providence, Rhode Island in 1873. Shortly after that Boston Gas opened its first appliance center on West Street. Gas heating, long restricted to room radiant heaters and gas steam radiators, gained wide acceptance as a central heating method in the years after 1916.

James Lorin Richards was president of Boston Consolidated Gas Company from 1905 until 1921. During this period, the company assumed control of the East Boston Gas Company, Chelsea Gas Light Company, Newton and Watertown Gas Light

Company, Waltham Gas Light Company, and the Citizens Gas Company of Quincy.

In 1927, the Boston Consolidated Gas Company building at the corner of Arlington and Stuart Streets was dedicated. The thirteen-story office building was the largest in the world to be heated entirely by gas. Prior to 1927, the company headquarters were at 24 West Street, Boston.

Other developments were also taking place. An inventive genius, Heinrich Koppers, developed the coke-oven to a new stage of perfection in Germany. The Koppers' interest introduced this modern coke-oven to the United States and for years their engineering, operating and research organizations made substantial contributions to the development of the coal mining and coke plant industries. Believing in the soundness of investing in related industries, the Koppers' interests acquired Massachusetts Gas Companies in 1929 through the formation of Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates. By so doing, the same efficient coordination was gained among coal mines, selling companies, steamships, docks and coke plants as Massachusetts Gas Companies had accomplished by forming the Boston Consolidated Gas Company from many smaller local gas companies.

In 1930, Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates purchased the Charlestown Gas and Electric Company and, in 1931, transferred it to Boston Gas. Also in 1930, Boston Consolidated Gas extended its franchised territory into the towns of Wayland, Concord, Lincoln, Sudbury, Bedford, Littleton, Ayer, Acton and Groton.

In 1932, a new distribution service station was built at McBride Street, Jamaica Plain, on the site of the old Jamaica Plain Gas Company. All customer service and distribution activities functioned from McBride Street and Seyon Street in Waltham.

*(To Be Continued)*



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM 1930 TO TODAY

*(Sixth and last in a series of articles outlining the history of Boston Gas Company)*

During the depression-ridden 1930's, Boston Consolidated Gas Company continued to prosper economically and its employees became a closely-knit family-type unit through social activities with increased concern for their joint benefit.

As the company expanded its franchise to the western suburbs in 1930, the employees formed their "Employees' Association" for the purpose of promoting activities for their civic, social, athletic, and educational welfare. Woodbury Hale was elected the first Association president. September 1930 was Volume I, Issue I, of the company magazine, with a large "?" where its title should be. A contest was held to find a suitable name for the new magazine with a \$25 prize for the winner. Judging the contest was Dana D. Barnum, president of the company; Walter Beckjord, general manager; and Gerald A. Higgins, the magazine's first editor.

Five hundred and seventy-five titles were submitted. With seven entries almost identical to the winning "Gas Lines", the prize was increased to \$35 and shared equally. One of the seven winners was a young man working in the distribution department who had joined the company five years before — Russ Woodward. Now training supervisor in the engineering department, Russ retires on January 1, 1973. "I remember it well," said Russ, when reminded of the event. "The \$5 we each received went a long way in those days."

In July 1930, when the company expanded into the western suburbs, the event was appropriately celebrated with a tour by town and city officials, including Mayor James M. Curley of Boston. The tour included the Arling-

ton Street building, the Everett generating plant and the Allston station, which sent gas into the new territories.

In January 1931, the Boston Consolidated Gas Company Credit Union was established and James A. Stewart, treasurer of the company, was elected its first president. The following month the company added the Charlestown Gas & Electric Company to its family when it was purchased by Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates.

In 1932, the company's new service facility was completed at McBride Street in Jamaica Plain and, in the same year, a touch of the company's social consciousness was evidenced by a window display at Arlington Street which explained the benefits and advantages of gas appliances — all written in Italian.

1933 saw the introduction of a new air-cooled Electrolux gas refrigerator which was heralded as one of the most important developments in the gas industry in many years. Sales in all areas increased in 1934. Gas heating costs were drastically reduced and more than 1,400 house heating installations were sold.

The Boston Consolidated Gas Company Band was founded in 1934 under the direction of Fortunato Sordillo. For many years the band was the toast of parades and concerts throughout the city and state.

Through the years, the company was fortunate to have outstanding executive leadership such as Dana D. Barnum, president of the company and former president of the American Gas Association who, in 1935, was elected president of the American Standards Association, the national clearinghouse for standards and safety codes. Mr. Barnum was succeeded as company

president in 1937 by E. M. Farnsworth, who had been the vice president and general manager since 1934.

To provide for the ever-increasing demand for gas during the new decade of the 40's, a ten-million cubic foot waterless gas holder, similar to that at Commercial Point, was completed at the Everett plant. These holders were the largest of their kind in New England.

In 1941, in a unique experiment revolutionizing customer service, twelve special company service cars were equipped with short wave radio receiving and transmitting sets.

During the war years, many of the company's young men and women left for the armed services. At home, precautionary steps were taken to protect company property in case of air raids by setting up 23 mobilization centers and employees joined the war effort through war bond campaigns, blood drives and camp shows. Employees also formed a troupe which traveled to all the state's Armed Forces camps to entertain servicemen. At war's end, 193 returning war veterans were honored by the company at a dinner at the Hotel Statler. On that occasion, seven company men killed in the war were honored posthumously.

The year 1947 was a great milestone in the company's history as it celebrated its 125th anniversary. As part of that celebration, several hundred employees and friends attended a gala birthday ball at the Arlington Street auditorium.

In April of 1948, Earl H. Eacker, vice president since 1942, succeeded E. M. Farnsworth as president.

Tragedy struck the company in May of 1942 when an employee was killed

*(Continued on Page 10)*

Under the Greenough management, the company's business increased rapidly. The piping and fixture business of the Company was sold to a former foreman of the fitting department, and a number of the old fitters began businesses of their own. The resulting competition led them to seek customers not only in every new building erected, but also among business firms and people who had never been asked to use gas. In 30 years the number of gas customers had grown from 3,000 to 30,000 and the rich Boston Gas territory began to attract the attention of outside capitalists. Not only the Boston Gas Light Company, but also the South Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, and other suburban companies became prosperous, and the metropolitan Boston district became a prize eagerly sought by enterprising invaders.

In 1861, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts established several inspection laws. The new laws set the minimum illuminating power of the gas at 12 candles and the gas was required to be sufficiently purified from sulphurated hydrogen, ammonia, and carbonic acid. Later, the standard candle power was raised to 16 and quantitative restrictions were placed on sulphur and ammonia.

In 1882, the Boston Gas Light Company built a coal gas plant at Commercial Point in Dorchester, which represented the best possible construction at the time. Both the North End Works directed by W. A. Wood and the Commercial Point Works directed by C. D. Lamson were operating at peak efficiency. Mr. M. S. Greenough, son of W. W. Greenough, was the company engineer. He successfully supervised the construction, operation, manufacture and distribution of gas. He was a leader in the industry, serving as president of the American Gas Light Association in 1886 and 1887, and president of the New England Association of Gas Engineers.

The Boston company was in excellent condition to withstand attack from competitors; electric lighting had not yet begun effective competition with gas, the company works and mains were ample and in excellent condition, the gas sold at a premium and sales were increasing rapidly. In 1887, the entire capitalization, including capital stock and bonds, of all the gas companies in Massachusetts was \$12,626,208. The gas industry had arrived.

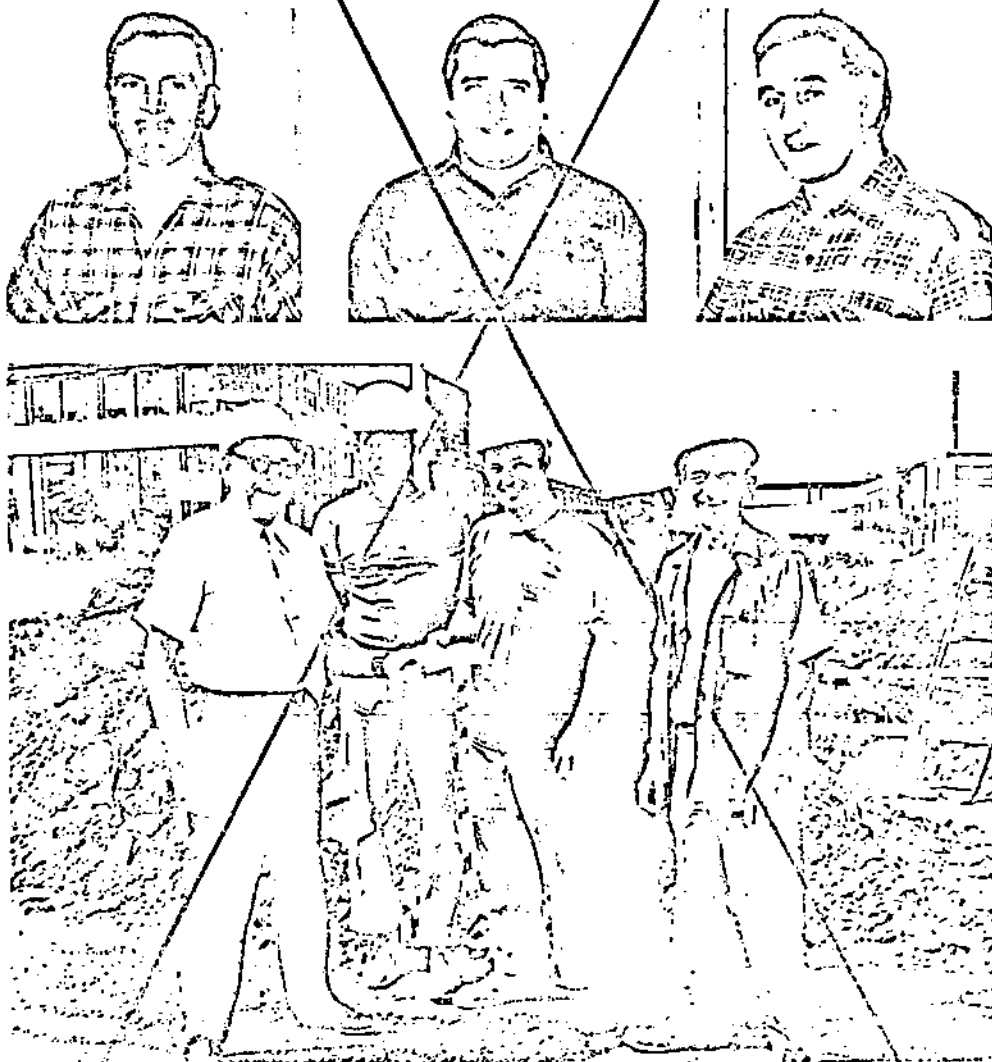
(to be continued)

## WATS OFF TO . . .

Daniel J. McGonagle, customer service, who was cited recently in a letter from a grateful lady, "May I express my sincere gratitude to a young man whose name is Dan McGonagle. I shall never forget his kindness and courtesy. I am not a very young grandmother, whose car broke down in a most inconvenient location. As I have recently been ill, I thought it unwise to attempt the hike it would entail to reach help. I sat for a solid hour watching cars whiz by before I heard a cheerful voice say, 'Excuse me, Madam, can I help you?' Boston Gas Company, I salute you for hiring the caliber of people you evidently do, and to the young man, a million thanks."

Mrs. Julia A. Donoghue, wife of John A. Donoghue, methods and procedures, who graduated cum laude from Boston College in June with a BA in English and Education. Mrs. Donoghue, a former employee of Boston Gas house heating and engineering division, completed her education in just 29 years, after taking time out for marriage and raising seven children.

W. Gary Twohig, school contact representative, volume sales, who was awarded a certificate of commendation and two awards from the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce for his outstanding performance in the Chamber's spring "contact" membership drive.



CENTRAL DISTRICT produced four more \$50 United States Savings Bond winners in the distribution department's monthly safety contest. Their names remained in the "hat" for being accident-free. Presenting the bond on the job to Edward Feeney, the June winner, is Jim Welch, distribution office supervisor. Looking on with envy are (left to right) Gerald Hannibald, Bob Doyle, and crew foreman John Mitchell. Insets—At left, John McDonough, March winner; center, Arthur Coughlin, April winner; and right, Arthur Contini, May winner who also won the first savings bond when the contest began in November 1971.

## HIGHLIGHTS

(Continued from Page 8)

in a \$2 million fire and explosion at the Everett plant.

It was the dawn of a new era for the company and the New England gas industry when, in 1949, Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates joined with the New England Gas and Electric Association and Providence Gas Company in sponsoring a new natural gas pipeline company. The new company, Algonquin Gas Transmission Company, was formed to bring natural gas to New England. After nearly 130 years of manufactured gas, Boston Consolidated Gas would begin distributing natural gas to its customers.

In 1950, company employees again responded to a call to arms as the Korean War began. Two company men lost their lives in the conflict.

The monumental task of converting gas appliances for natural gas use — which would not be completed until 1960 — began in 1953 in the towns of Groton, Littleton, Ayer and Acton. That same year, President Eacker was elected president of the American Gas Association at its 35th annual convention in St. Louis and the company expanded south of Boston with the merger with Old Colony Gas Company, adding 20,000 customers and 123 employees.

In 1955, the company name was officially changed to Boston Gas Company and the following year all the appliances in the eight Old Colony District towns were converted to operate on natural gas.

During the mid-50's gas sales increased rapidly. To meet the great demand for gas in the western suburbs, the company installed 45½ miles of new mains and over 1,500 new service lines.

One of the greatest projects in the company's 136-year history was launched in 1958 — the adjustment of 700,000 appliances in the central district to use 800 BTU gas. Headquarters for the conversion operation was 71 Amory Street, Roxbury, under the direction of John T. McKenna, field coordinator, and the company's present assistant vice president of operations. By 1960, all appliance conversions in the company's franchise territory were completed.

The age of the computer arrived at Boston Gas in 1961 when a new data processing system known as the "IBM

1400 Series" was installed. That same year, the franchise territory was extended northwesterly to Harvard, Carlisle, Shirley and Boxborough.

The company now served 32 communities over 475 square miles.

In January 1964, Claude F. Machen, vice president, succeeded Earl Eacker as president of Boston Gas. The following year the Southampton Street gas holder, long a prominent Roxbury landmark, was dismantled. That same year, the company headquarters at Arlington Street were sold and the employees were relocated to the McBride Street Operations Center.

Boston Gas entered the late 1960's with great optimism as the demand for natural gas continued to climb. Gas sales in all areas were rising steadily and the demand for gas began exceeding the supply. Boston Gas had shown great foresight in constructing an installation which would play a key role in maintaining adequate supplies of gas. In November, 1967, construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant began at Commercial Point. In 1968 the first shipload of LNG arrived at Commercial Point from Algeria aboard the *Aristotle*, marking the first time LNG was imported to the United States.

In October 1969, the second strike in the company's history began, ending 77 days later. The following year, construction began on the second LNG tank at Commercial Point and "Old Fatty" — the 200-foot-high gas holder, which had been a Boston landmark for 47 years — was dismantled. Built in 1923, the holder was one of the largest in the country.

Upon completion of the second LNG tank, Boston Gas had the largest single operational LNG storage facility in the United States. The plant has a storage capacity of 2.14 billion cubic feet of natural gas in liquid form — more gas than is used in the entire city of Boston in a two-week period.

A new era in the distribution operations of the company began in 1971 when Boston Gas became the first gas company to utilize insertion of 8-inch plastic pipe in renewing existing gas mains. That same year, work began on what would become the largest work of art in the world as the "rainbow" design created by artist Corita Kent was painted on Boston Gas' 150-foot-high LNG tank at Commercial Point.

In October 1971, after six years of

operating the company from the McBride Street facility, Boston Gas, through Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates, signed a long-term lease for five floors of office space in the John Hancock Tower in downtown Boston. Plans were made to occupy the new quarters in the fall of 1973.

The company began its 150th year in 1972 by expanding its territory further west with its merger with the Norwood, Wachusett and Central Massachusetts gas companies, adding 15 communities, 25,000 new customers and 89 new employees. January 1972, also saw William J. Pruyn, senior vice president of Boston Gas, elected president of the company and Claude F. Machen named chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

While acquiring new companies and additional customers, Boston Gas also announced in February of 1972 an agreement to sell the Charlestown Electric division to Boston Edison.

In October 1972, the company was expanding once again with the announcement of Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates' purchase of three more gas companies: Mystic Valley, Lynn and North Shore gas companies and Massachusetts LNG Corporation. When the purchase is approved, the companies will be merged with Boston Gas, adding 600 employees, 175,000 customers and 27 communities to Boston Gas' franchise area. The company's customers will total over 500,000 in 74 communities covering 900 square miles when the merger is complete sometime in 1973.

So much for the past. What does the future hold for Boston Gas? A few things to ponder are the concern for the nation's energy supply; the company's gas supply; alternatives to pipeline gas; more imported LNG; the manufacture of synthetic gas; supporting the efforts to develop exploration for gas off the New England coast; consumerism; social responsibility, and more. We strive to fulfill an unwritten company philosophy:

*To continue to progress, adapt and meet the energy needs of our customers while providing the best possible service. To meet our obligation to our investors by striving to give them a good return on their investment. To be a socially responsible corporate citizen by involving ourselves in the needs of our communities and customers.*



## **BOSTON GAS COMPANY**

The nation's second oldest gas distributor and New England's largest, Boston Gas serves 74 cities and towns in eastern and central Massachusetts. A network of over 5,700 miles of gas distribution mains brings this clean-burning fuel to approximately 500,000 customers. The company heats over 300,000 homes and many municipal, apartment and commercial buildings and supplies gas to over 35,000 commercial and industrial establishments.

The company employs about 1,700 people and has executive offices at One Beacon Street in downtown Boston. The majority of Boston Gas personnel are based there and at operations centers in West Roxbury and Malden. Satellite stations throughout the territory supplement these three principal facilities.

Boston Gas and the City of Boston share a common birthdate. In the summer of 1822, the year Boston town became a city, gas lights were first lit in the Dock Square section of the city. The city and the company have grown together ever since.

In its first 130 years, the company manufactured its own gas from coal. Prior to 1900, most of this gas was used in Boston for lighting, and gas lamps still dot Beacon Hill and the Back Bay sections of the city.

With the advent of electric lights in the 1800s, gas use shifted from primarily lighting to cooking, hot water heating, house heating and various commercial and industrial applications.

The growth in the uses of gas paralleled the growth of the company's franchise territory. During the early 1900s, Boston Gas merged with many small gas companies throughout Greater Boston. In the last half century, as Boston Gas expanded into the suburbs, the company changed dramatically. The 1950s saw the conversion from manufactured gas to natural gas piped from the U. S. southwest. The 1960s and '70s brought computerization of records, the use of plastic pipe, the widespread use of liquefied natural gas to help meet heavy winter demand and the construction of a substitute natural gas plant.

Throughout the decades, the company has always had responsible and dedicated employees to deliver the gas safely and efficiently meet customer needs.

In the same way the company's history is rooted in Boston and the surrounding area, Boston Gas' underground mains are embedded in the communities it serves. The company is, therefore, committed to improving the quality of life for its customers, employees and the general public.



Phone: 522-8300

Date: May 7, 1971

For further information contact:

Jim Connors

Release Date:

144 McBride Street, Boston, Mass. 02130

BOSTON, MASS., May 7, 1971 -- Perhaps the largest work of art in the United States, and possibly the world, is being considered for an installation of Boston Gas -- on its 150-foot high liquefied natural gas (LNG) tank in the Dorchester section of Boston.

Transforming the huge white tank into perhaps the world's largest "canvas" will be internationally acclaimed artist Corita Kent.

"Corita Kent has been commissioned by Boston Gas to capture, in her unique style, the spirit of Greater Boston as well as Boston Gas, its employees and its product -- natural gas," said C. F. Machen, president of Boston Gas.

"We believe her use of vibrant colors, unrestricted movement and imagination will accomplish this."

To brighten the skyline of Boston, Corita Kent has created a rainbow of color -- purple, green, blue, red, yellow and orange -- in free flowing sweeps across the LNG tank. Her original art has been done first on an exact-scale model of the LNG tank.

Corita Kent began work on her design late last December. Her preliminary model was submitted in March and her final model accepted May 6. It is hoped that transfer of her design to the tank can be accomplished this summer.

The tank, which stores gas in a liquefied state at 260 degrees below zero, will be transformed into a 73,374-square foot alfresco art object. By comparison, the Massachusetts State House dome is a little over 5,800 square feet.

Corita Kent first attracted widespread attention while she was director of the art department at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles. Her medium is serigraph (silkscreen print) utilizing the printed word ingeniously and interestingly. Quotations used in her serigraphs -- which come to life in her art -- come from scholars, poets, writers and others.

Miss Kent's art is in the permanent collections of 37 museums, including Boston's Museum of Fine Art, and in galleries across the United States and around the world. She presently lives in Boston and travels extensively.

###

# Boston Evening Globe

MONDAY, MAY 10, 1971

## TOP SPOT

### *Tank Full of Rainbows*

By Edgar Driscoll Jr., Globe Staff

There'll be a permanent rainbow near the Southeast Expressway come summer if the Boston Gas Company has its way.

It has commissioned the internationally acclaimed artist, Corita Kent of Marlboro street, Back Bay, to decorate its 150-foot high liquefied natural gas tank on Commercial Point, Dorchester, adjacent to the Expressway.

A former Roman Catholic nun, who as Sister Corita won all sorts of top awards for her swinging prints, she has come up with a rainbow design of primary colors which has met with Boston Gas officials' approval.

Negotiations are now underway to paint what may well be one of the world's largest "canvases" under Miss Kent's direction. The gay bands of color, executed in her free-wheeling, expressive way, will be in orange, yellow, vermillion, blue, green and black. They will arc over the curved tank and down its sides, at widths of up to 35 feet.

The tank to be painted is the white one with the "Bostongas" insignia on it. It holds 290,000 barrels of liquefied gas at 260 degrees below zero. This is the equivalent of one billion cubic feet of vapor gas, or enough to supply the entire city of Boston for a week.

A second tank nearby, which is approximately the same size, has not been painted yet. Plans call for its being painted next fall and it is likely that Miss Kent will be asked to design a companion design for it.

Miss Kent began work on her latest — and certainly largest creation ever — last December. Her preliminary model was



ARTIST CORITA KENT displays model of repainted gas tank.

(Charles Dixon photo)

submitted in March and he final design accepted May 6.

"Corita Kent has been commissioned by Boston Gas to capture, in her unique style, the spirit of Greater Boston as well as Boston Gas, its employees and its product — natural gas," says Claude F. Machen, president of the company. "We believe her use of vibrant colors, unrestricted movement and imagination will accomplish this."

TANKS, Page 4

# HUB gets a tank full of rainbows

## ★TANKS

Continued from Page 1

A small, dynamic woman, now in her early 50s, Miss Kent resigned from the Order of the Immaculate Heart of Mary two-and-half years ago after 32 years in the convent. As artist-teacher and director of the Order's College in Los Angeles, she was the first to sing the praises of the Lord via pop art.

"I want to do a different thing ... You should be true to your own conscience. That's a good, old-fashioned way of saying you know what God's will is," she said at the time of her leaving the sisterhood.

Today, her hot-color, joyous silk screen prints are in the collections of 37 major museums here and abroad, including the Boston Museum, the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Why a rainbow for the 73,374-square foot tank? (the dome of the State House is a little over 5800-square feet).

"I've been interested in rainbows for quite a while,"

the trim, bright-eyed artist said yesterday. "It seemed a neat thing to do with the tank's oval form. To me a rainbow represents hope, uplifting, spring ...

"It's a joyous expression, joining Heaven and earth together," the former nun said, quoting from Genesis IX. of the Bible in which God promises to "put a bow in the sky as a sign of a covenant between Him and man."

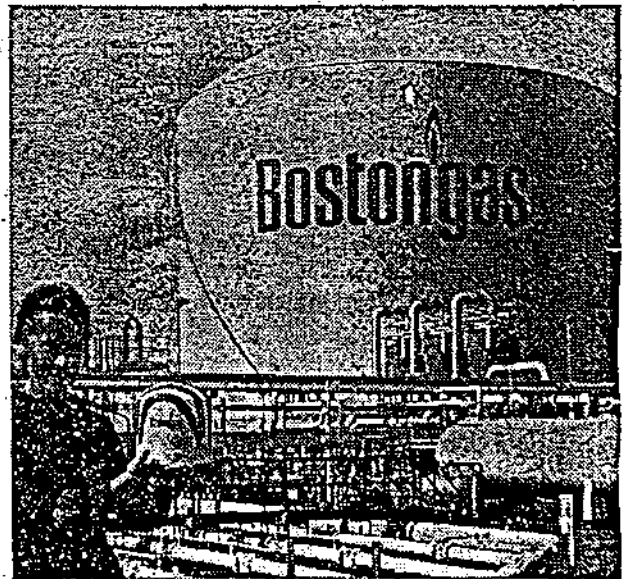
Miss Kent said the biggest thing she's ever done before was the 4 foot by 40 foot mural she executed for the Vatican Pa-

villion at the New York World's Fair. "But I've always had a passion to paint billboards. Now this is the closest I've come. The tank is a round billboard, you might say."

The artist, who is currently being honored with a 12-page spread in the new Graphics magazine, a national publication, says she hopes her rainbow will make people feel better as they travel the Expressway.

Said a pleased Gas Co. official, "I think she'll make it a million smiles long."

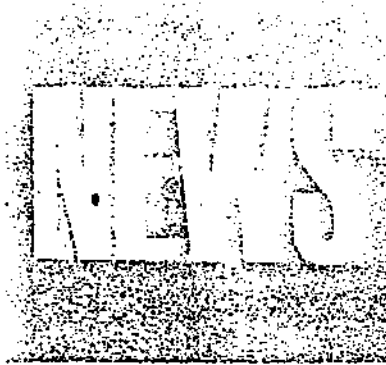
BOSTON HERALD TRAVELER, TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1971 B



RAINBOW-COLORED scale model is shown by Back Bay artist Corita Kent, whose design will be reproduced on Dorchester gas tank in background.



144 McBride Street, Boston, Mass. 02130



Phone: 522-5600

Date: September 27, 1971

For further information contact:

A. P. Sanda,  
522-5600, Ext. 103

Release Date: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Work began today on what is perhaps the world's largest work of art--the Corita Kent rainbow on Boston Gas' 150-foot-high liquefied natural gas (LNG) tank overlooking Dorchester Bay in Boston.

When completed, the tank, which stores natural gas in a liquefied state at 260° below zero, will be transformed into a colossal 73,374 square-foot alfresco art object. By comparison, the Massachusetts State House dome is only a little over 5,800 square feet. "To Corita Kent," Claude F. Machen, president of Boston Gas stated, "the rainbow represents hope, uplifting and spring. To Boston Gas it represents much more. It symbolizes the vitality of a company which shares both a proud history and an exciting future with the communities it serves. As Boston Gas enters its 150th year, the rainbow reflects the enthusiasm and optimism of the company, its employees and its customers."

Under the watchful eye of internationally-acclaimed artist Corita Kent, workmen of Okerad Signs, Inc., of Weymouth, began transforming the rainbow of orange, yellow, red, blue, green

...more

NEWS FROM BOSTON GAS--2.

and purple from a scale model to the tank. "I've been interested in painting rainbows for quite a while," Corita Kent stated. "It seemed a neat thing to do with the tank's oval form. To me it's a joyous expression, joining heaven and earth together."

The first splash of rainbow was the orange stripe at the top of the side of the tank. Working on scaffolding, workmen first sketched the top of the stripe and immediately painted it. Before continuing the stripe downward, the staging was lowered and the Boston Gas logo was painted on the tank. As work resumes tomorrow, the staging will be brought again to the top of the side of the tank and one half of the orange stripe completed. Then, working clockwise around the tank, each stripe will be brought from the top of the side down. The final stage of the painting will be connecting the stripes across the crown of the tank. With favorable weather, work is expected to be completed in approximately two weeks.

"It is our intention to have the rainbow completed for the American Gas Association convention coming to Boston October 17-20, Mr. Machen stated. "This is our opportunity to show the leaders of the natural gas industry what can be done with an industrial plant so that it adds to rather than detracts from the community. Every plant facility in every industry requires periodic maintenance and face lifting. With a little thought and a little work a company can make a genuine contribution to its neighbors."

The rainbow caps a new Commercial Point. What was once a number of large, unattractive gas holders, oil storage tanks and

NEWS FROM BOSTON GAS--3.

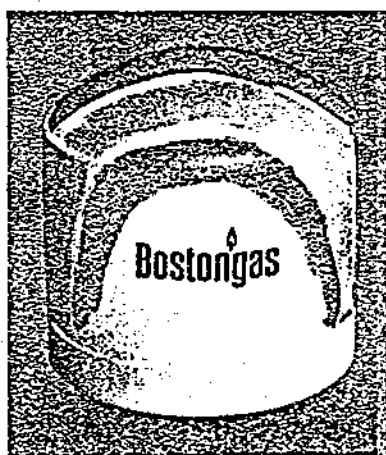
outbuildings is now a beautifully landscaped, esthetically appealing, industrial complex. Surrounding the two LNG tanks are acres of tree-studded lawn, gravel paths and paved drives lighted with natural gas lamps. "Boston Gas takes great pride in the appearance of its LNG plant," Mr. Machen stated. "Through the artistry of Corita we can now share this pride with the people we serve."

11-11-11  
11-11-11



ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM BOSTON GAS

### A New Landmark



Towering over Dorchester Bay by the Southeast Expressway is perhaps the largest work of art in the world — the Corita Kent rainbow on Boston Gas' liquefied natural gas (LNG) tank. What once was a homely area of gray gas holders, oil storage tanks and out buildings now sparkles with acres of grass, trees, gravel paths and paved roadways lined with natural gas lights. And over it all — the rainbow!

To complete this remarkable transformation and to share it with our customers and

all people living and traveling in Greater Boston, Boston Gas commissioned internationally acclaimed artist Corita Kent. Her instructions were to capture the spirit of the company, its employees and customers, and the city. "The rainbow," Corita explains, "seemed a neat thing to do. To me it is a gay thing representing hope, uplifting, and spring. It's a joyous expression joining heaven and earth together."

Corita's original design was executed on an eight-inch-high scale model of the LNG tank. From that model, pictorial artists from Okerad Signs, Inc., of Weymouth; and painters from general contractor Roy O. Leonard, Inc., of Framingham, transferred the rainbow design to the 150-foot-high tank. In its completed form, the rainbow is a 73,374 square foot alfresco art object. By comparison, the Massachusetts State House dome is only 5,800 square feet.

The public reaction to this colossal work of art runs both pro and con. Those familiar with Corita's work have expressed amazement at its size; others have simply expressed amazement. But as with any work of art, be it huge or minute, opinions will vary, since art is a matter of individual taste.

The rainbow is and will be many things to many people. Transcending this, however, is the undeniable fact that it is one of a kind; there is nothing quite like it anywhere in the world, just as there is nothing quite like the people it represents.

144 McBride Street  
Boston, Mass. 02130

**Bostongas**

11/71

0075

## WORLD'S LARGEST COPYRIGHTED OBJECT

What has been acclaimed as the world's largest work of art since the Pyramids has become the largest copyrighted object in history.

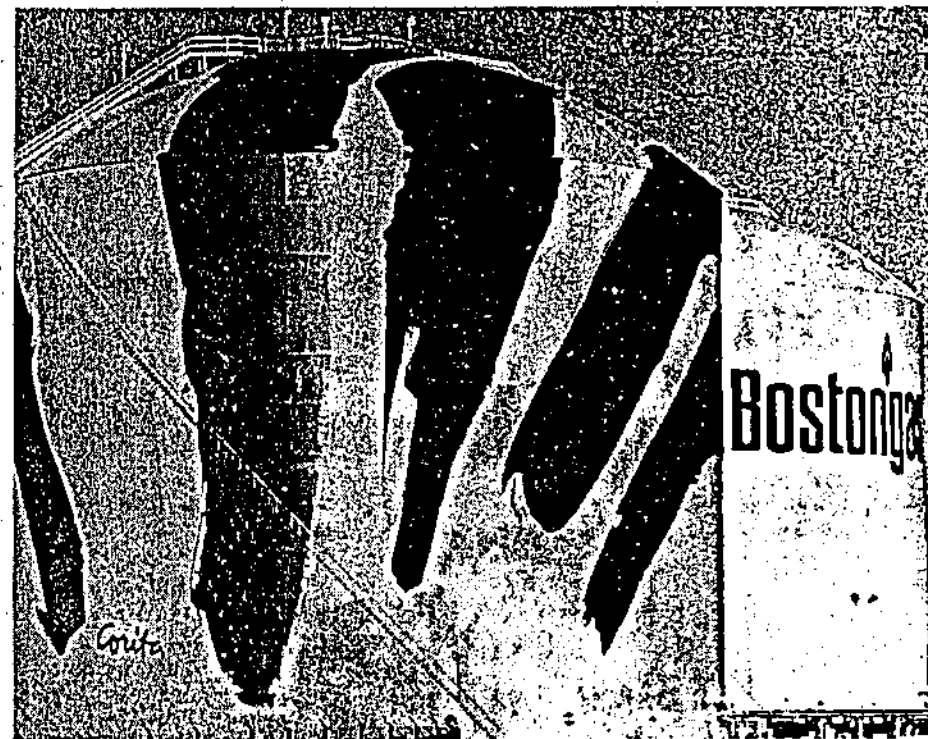
The rainbow design on Boston Gas Company's liquefied natural gas tank overlooking Dorchester Bay in Boston, a giant 73,374-square-foot alfresco art object created by internationally acclaimed artist Corita Kent, has been granted a copyright by the Library of Congress.

The copyright protects the design, a free-wheeling rainbow in orange, red, blue, green and purple, from being copied for any use without the company's permission for a period of 28 years, according to Guido A. Rothrauff, Jr., senior vice president and general counsel for Eastern Gas and Fuel Associates, parent company of Boston Gas. The

copyright can then be renewed for an additional 28 years.

Rothrauff explained that copyrights are issued only to things that have "intrinsic, artistic merit," such as novels, sculptures, paintings, drawings, ceramics, artistic jewelry, original designs applied to textiles, and the like. The copyright application technically called for it to be accompanied by a "full-scale sample" in addition to the \$6 filing fee, he added, but it did allow for substituting color photographs "if impractical to submit an original full scale model."

To fulfill a "publication requirement" for the copyright, the company distributed a quantity of replicas of the rainbow tank in the form of a 2½-inch-high ceramic paperweight imprinted with the copyright notice.



**THE RAINBOW DESIGN** on Boston Gas Company's liquefied natural gas tank overlooking Dorchester Bay in Boston, acclaimed as the world's largest work of art since the Pyramids, has become the largest copyrighted object

in history. The copyright granted by the Library of Congress protects the giant 73,374 square-foot orange, red, blue, green and purple rainbow design created by artist Corita Kent from being copied for a period of 28 years.

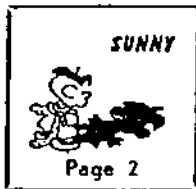
# CORITA KENT



Photo by Tim Frush

*Corita Kent's art can be found in the permanent collections of thirty-seven world-famous museums including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the National Gallery of Art, and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Her silk screen prints are sold in twenty-three art galleries across the U.S., and are carried at the Corita Headquarters and Lois Burnett Gallery in Los Angeles. She designed the critically acclaimed fifty-foot mural for the Vatican Pavilion at the 1964 New York World's Fair, and her work has been seen in hundreds of exhibits. She has also accepted commissions from more than twenty-five companies including Nieman-Marcus, Westinghouse Broadcasting Co., and the Container Corporation of America. Corita designed her first silk screen prints in 1950 and, at present, the total body of work exceeds 600 originals. More than twenty-five of these have been made into greeting cards. She taught at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles where she directed the now famous Art Department.*

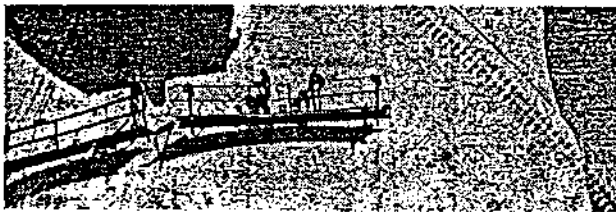
*Corita was named one of the "Top Nine Women of the Year" by the Los Angeles Times and was chosen by Harper's Bazaar for its special edition of "American Women of Accomplishment." Her articles have appeared in Ladies' Home Journal and McCall's magazines. DAMN EVERYTHING BUT THE CIRCUS is her sixth book.*



## *Chief Justice Speaks Out*

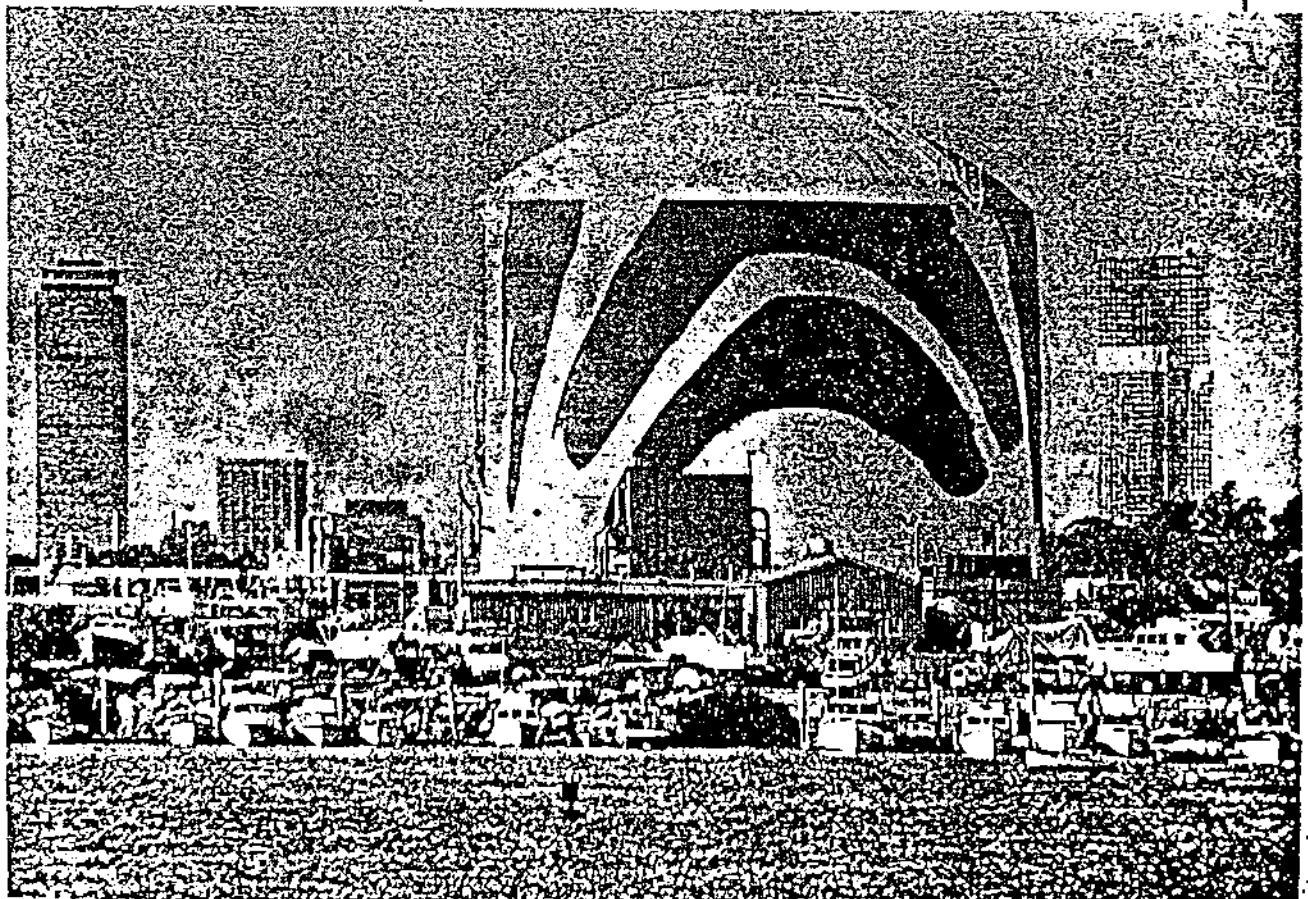
# Judges Babying Convicts--Adlow

Story on Page Three



Sign company employees use a scaffold (left) in making their contribution to Boston's world of art. They're high up on the side of the 150-foot-tall gas storage tank in Dorchester, covering it with a rainbow of orange, yellow, red, blue, green and purple. Corita Kent, who designed the painting, said: "It seemed a neat thing to do."

AP Photos



# Tank Painter Bugged by Wind

By DICK SOLITO

Looking back, burly Dave McBurnie, the outdoor pictorial artist who draped the colorful rainbow over one of the Boston Gas Company's tanks in Dorchester, remembers the winds that vexed him on the job.

"The wind seems to circulate in crazy patterns around the tanks and creates problems by swaying the scaffolding," McBurnie said.

"One moment you're in front of your work and then you're four feet away hanging on for life."

He recalled, "I didn't have a good night's sleep from the time work started." That was Sept. 27.

But it wasn't the impromptu trapeze act, at heights up to 150 feet, that gave McBurnie insomnia for three weeks.

"I laid awake nights worrying if the paints would meet," said the outgoing Weymouth resident who admits to being "over 40."

Asked to explain the difficulty, McBurnie said, "We couldn't do a whole design in one color because the staging was hanging vertically and the designs ran off at an angle. We'd start at the top, lowering the scaffold, and we might get half of the blue design and then pick up part of another color. Sometimes we were doing as many as three colors at a time.

"Then the scaffolds were moved clockwise back to the top and we'd go down the side of the tank again, joining that section of a design we had been unable to reach before."

THE PROCESS

painters who assisted him, all employed by the Okerad Sign Co. of Weymouth, was scrutinized closely on an almost daily basis by a small, dynamic lady.

She is Corita Kent of the Back Bay, an internationally prominent artist and former nun.

Corita, as she signs her works and is popularly known, was commissioned to prepare a design for the 73,374 square-foot tank at Commercial Point by Boston Gas as the company enters its 150th year.

Her final design, which was accepted last May, was a 7½ by 8-inch wooden model of the tank decorated by a rainbow of bright colors of orange, yellow, blue, green and purple.

Corita said she chose this symbol because "one of the themes I've been working on in other paintings has been the rainbow. I've been preoccupied with it the last two years or so.

"It just seemed a thing I've been interested in . . . it's a sign of hope and we all look for those in this time. It's a sign of hope that urges you to go on."

IN ASSESSING the job by the Okerad company Corita said, "Actually I've done a lot of my work small and had it blown up . . . but I've always had it blown up photographically. In this case it's different. These men are used to creating in a way that will have an effect at a distance.

"This is a bit of a pull for me both ways. When close up these are really not my lines. It's really their painting. But



ARTIST CORITA KENT shows model of gas tank with rainbow design to Claude F. Machen, president of Boston Gas Co.

Impression I wanted. It's a painting of mine really translated by them."

The artist continued, "The model is small and my brush strokes are very rough . . . with a real intention of conviction and power that satisfied me. The edges come from the oomph or vitality that you put in it . . . so the edges are important to me. So it is a little shocker that the edges on the tank would not be my edges but the painter's. But from the high, it will look the way I wanted it. It looks smashing from the air, I'm told."

McBurnie, who had the task of translating Corita's design to a larger work scale on white paper and then sketching it out with charcoal on the tank said, "when you're up there you don't know how it looks from the ground. Some of the strokes are 15 feet long and the bands of paint have widths up to 35 feet."

HE SAID, "We had to duplicate every brush stroke — every little mark. She must have done it with a magnifying glass."

McBurnie said when the project first got under way, "Corita thought there was a

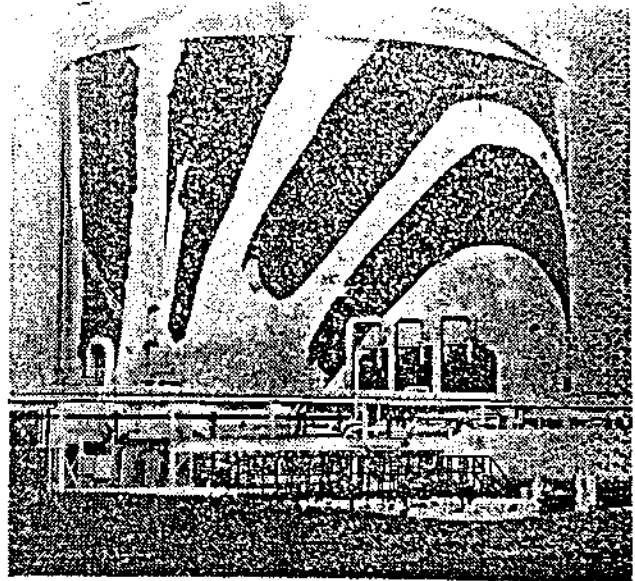
that your signature should be on it not mine."

Corita laughingly remembered the incident.

She said, "That was a ha moment. They were thro by the fact they had nev done anything like it befo They compared it to paint a billboard and it got ve rough. So we talked it on for three days since it was going the way I wanted. Since then things really w swell."

That's plain to any Sou east Expressway commuter. The signature, 5½ feet hi and 16 feet long, is "Corita

*Boston Herald  
American  
July 21, 1972*



BOSTON GAS STORAGE TANK, which has dazzled motorists on the Southeast Expressway, has been named tank of the year.

## Fancy Storage Tank Wins Award for Art

In what must be one of the most unusual awards of the year, the Boston Gas Co. was presented with a plaque for its contribution to pop art Thursday.

The award honored the unusual design of the company's natural gas storage tank at 220 Victory rd., Dorchester, and was presented by the Steel Plate Fabricators Ass'n of Hinsdale, which makes such an award annually.



ARTIST CORITA KENT

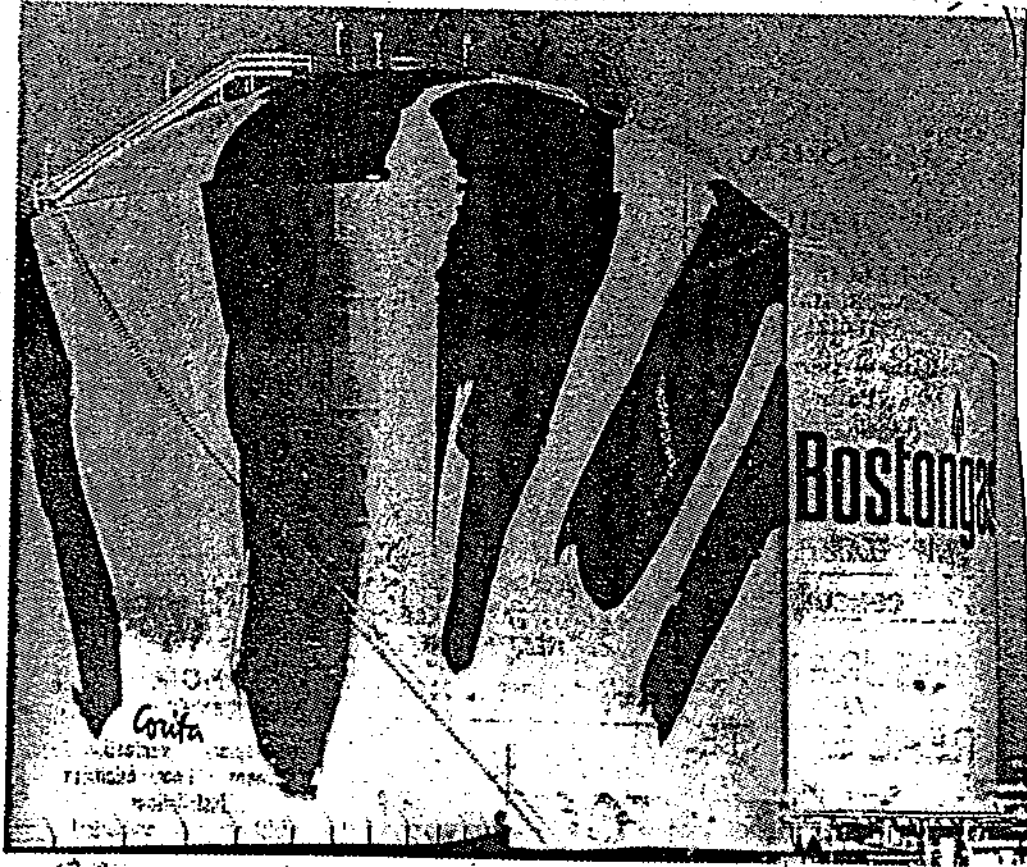
The tank which won the award is 165 feet high and looks something like a striped candy cane, with a free-flowing design of bright orange, yellow, red, blue, green and purple.

Earl A. Bratton, executive director of the fabricating plant, presented the plaque to William J. Pruyn, Boston Gas president.

In presenting the plaque, Bratton said, "The Steel Plate Fabricators Ass'n wants to recognize the engineering excellence represented by the tank, and especially to honor Boston Gas for its contribution in providing an aesthetic contribution to the community.

"The company has demonstrated how a little imagination can help transform an industrial facility into a visual asset to the urban environment."

was executed by Corita Kent, a former Roman Catholic nun who now teaches art and does design work in Los Angeles.



## Industrial art

Boston Gas Company's liquefied natural gas tank is the largest copyrighted object in history. The giant 73,374 square foot orange, red, blue, green, and purple rainbow design by artist Corita Kent is protected by copyright for 28 years.

# The Treasures in Corita's Rainbow

*Margaret  
Had you  
seen this?  
Eunice*

**T**his month—as a 2000-gallon fresh coat of paint dries on Boston's most famous work of public art—marks the one-year anniversary of the artist's death.

Were this 1970, the year the Boston Gas tanks first received rainbow splashes and became the world's largest piece of copyrighted art, Corita Kent, then 54 and a resident of the city for two years, would have been standing by the Southeast Expressway, gently driving workmen crazy with exacting demands and specifications.

Were it just three years earlier, *Sister Mary Corita*, the Hollywood nun, would be pictured in front of one of her Byzantine works on the cover of *Newsweek*, introducing pop art to middle America.

To this day, the superficial aspects of Corita's (the way she signed her name) style which seems to be indelibly etched into the public's consciousness are some 1960s clichés—rainbows, flowers, hearts and other unfailingly bright, graphic imagery. Ironically, the trademarks that gave her widespread recognition ultimately caused many critics to dismiss her work as too commercial to be in the context of "serious art."

In perspective, Corita deserves reconsideration. Long before her death from cancer last year at age 68, her early work was well known and sought after. She had pioneered the use of visible language and commercial icons in her serigraphs, paintings and built environments. Not as well known, however, was a brave experiment she began in 1981 that



pushed her art into an uncharacteristic, distinctly non-pop phase, causing her to dig deep and produce some of the most original and developed work of her career.

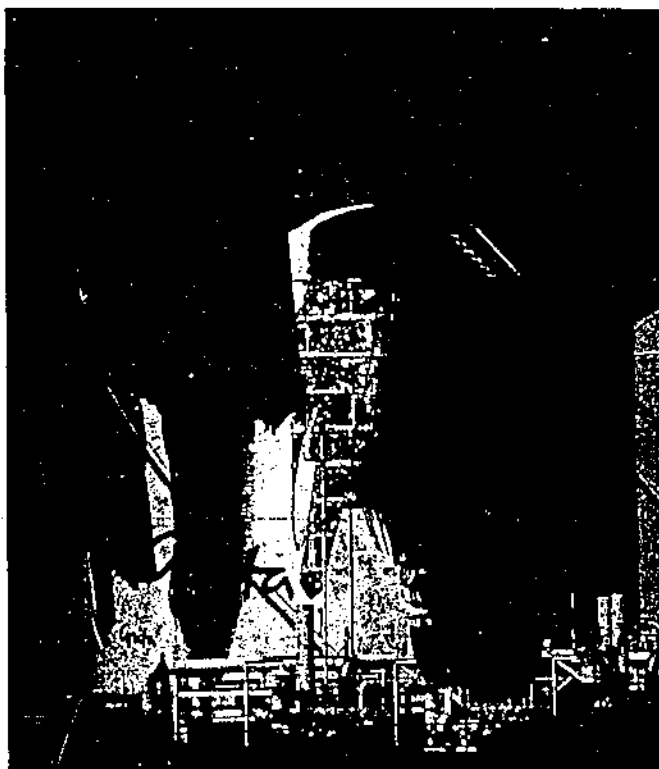
The striking transformation in Corita's art paralleled events in her life. In 1979, Corita's sister, Mary Catherine, suddenly died of cancer after nursing Corita through two bouts of the disease. It was a devastating time in the artist's life but one she was reluctant to acknowledge in her work. As she told *The Boston Globe* in 1981, "Many artists

have a tendency to portray the darkest part of the struggle. That's valid, but I'm more private about that.... My friends know I don't need the whole world to know."

Corita, according to Mickey Myers, her former art student in Hollywood and close friend in Boston, "had more than her fair share of dark nights of the soul. She had a great deal of depression, really had to push herself to accomplish every brush stroke," and her own artwork "did not inspire her at all."

What people saw on the canvas had, of course, always been a different story: vibrant colors and bold designs. So it was something of a surprise even to some close friends when suddenly, in place of the hard-edged realism that characterized her pop phase, there was suddenly a new softness expressed in pastels, transparent inks and lyrical, almost ethereal imagery.

What helped ease Corita into the difficult process of self-exploration was a friendship she developed with Elinor Mikulka, a painter from Watertown, Massachusetts. One day the two were commiserating over the agony of getting new artwork started when Mikulka suggested a joint trip for scenic inspiration. Corita, who was inexperienced in landscapes and reclusive in her working process, was initially reluctant. But in 1981 they began taking weekly trips, often to parts of New England Corita had never explored. As Myers recalls, they painted "together, but separately," never even showing each other their work.



For her part, Mikulka found that the trips "helped us become more observant, see more colors. (Corita) became interested in her work in a way she hadn't been for many years. It was like she was discovering what she was capable of for the first time . . . finding she could play with muted colors, with monotone, in a way she never allowed herself to do previously."

Next to Corita's bed at the time of her death was one of her last prints that juxtaposed a quotation with an image, another of the artist's trademarks. The message—"Expanding beyond what we know we can be"—meant for Corita the risk of revealing more of herself on canvas. It was not an easy concession, but as Myers, now the artistic advisor to Corita's estate, points out, "Artists can't hide what they're living through unless they're working from a formula and Corita didn't."

In sorting through the Back Bay apartment where Corita lived alone for the 19 years before her death, Myers came across some of the last works,

including several that have never been seen. "I haven't begun to tap what (this latest work) is telling me," she says excitedly. "I find the depths of development to be almost frightening. I find stuff in that work that rivals Whistler, Turner, [any of] the great watercolor masters."

Perhaps indicative of the fact that like contemporaries Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg, the name "Corita" conjures up certain notions, very few critics were even aware of the striking changes in her work during the last five years of her life. In fact, Corita's commercial ventures, such as the Boston Gas tanks, caused some critics to dismiss the artist's work. But it was these same advertising and corporate associations—commissions from Digital, Group W—that enabled Corita to donate her energies to favorite causes such as The United Farm Workers in the 1960s, Amnesty International, Physicians for Social Responsibility and Hands Across America during the last five years.

Mickey Myers cited the artist's own

reply to criticism of the use of marketplace iconography. "(Corita believed) there was nothing that wasn't beautiful," Myers recalls. "She said that if you carried that theory around with you, you tended to block out a lot less than if you felt you already knew where beauty existed."

Responding to the critics who argued that messages belonged on posters, not paintings, Corita would say, "I think of it more like a singer putting words and music together, which doesn't make it less music." *The New Yorker* affectionately placed her "between Rembrandt and Gutenberg," while *The Saturday Review* praised her for having "courage" to be unabashedly poetic about the possibilities for human growth.

Surely courage is an appropriate word to describe the artist. With each of her battles against cancer, Corita grew simultaneously introspective and revealing on canvas while remaining socially conscious and giving of her talents. This generosity, coupled with her uniquely unpretentious philosophy of making art accessible to more people (she deliberately kept the prices of her work artificially low for this reason), makes the term "pop artist" a bit of a misnomer. She may be more accurately termed a "populist artist."

Corita, who left Hollywood for Boston to escape the trappings of celebrity, was nonetheless thrilled by public reaction to her work. She considered her commission by the U.S. Postal Service for a "Love" stamp in 1985 one of the highlights of her career because it would reach such a broad audience. And she would, no doubt, be genuinely delighted by an event that took place in Sioux City, Iowa, last December, where an art center that was featuring a Corita retrospective suddenly found its walls bare: a man had come off the street, viewed the exhibit and purchased every piece.

It is this visceral, impulsively and expansive response that won Corita widespread recognition in the 1960s and 1970s. It may well be the next and final phase of her work, with its added dimensions that requires a second look, that will give her career just that.

*Andrew Levinsky is a Newton-based free-lance writer.*

## ICON

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Circulation 929-2222

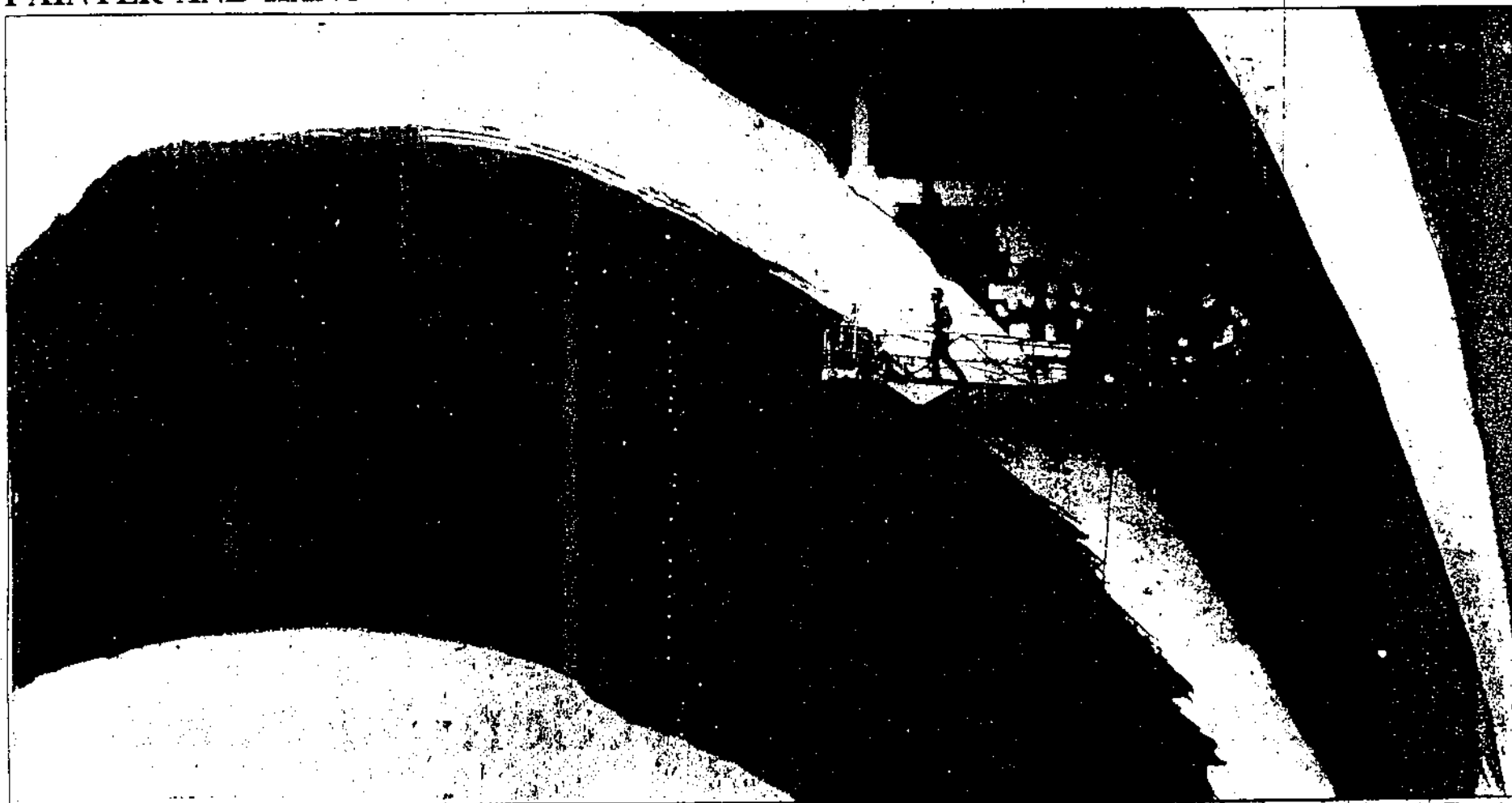
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# The Boston Globe

Vol. 231; No. 149

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 1987

## PAINTER AND HANGER



A worker on a scaffold dangles from the side of a Boston Gas tank in Dorchester yesterday as the multicolored design is scraped before repainting.

The task may be somewhat easier today as the National Weather Service has forecast cooler, cloudy weather, with a chance of showers. Weather, Page 44.

Globe staff photo/John Tlumacki

# Corita Kent Leaves Bright Legacy to Dorchester

by Chris Lovett

While bombs fell on Hanoi and servicemen from Dorchester fell in combat, and while families back home fled to the suburbs, a sign of hope sprang up, 150 feet above Commercial Point.

Covering a billion cubic feet of liquefied natural gas with red, blue, green, orange, yellow and purple brush strokes, it remains the largest object ever copyrighted.

For artist Corita Kent, it was "a neat thing to do."

Between the first brush strokes—applied 15 years ago Saturday—and Kent's death of cancer last Thursday at age 67, her rainbow, that most evanescent of subjects, has outlived both bewilderment and nostalgia to become a landmark.

"I thought it was bizarre at first and it grew on me," said Barbara McDonough, a Neponset resident who lives within a mile of the rainbow.

"At first I thought it was a waste," she said. "Now, I'm proud of it."

Within months after the rainbow was completed, the Pope's Hill Neighborhood Association was battling plans by Boston Gas to add underground storage tanks for propane. Boston Gas later dropped its plans and Nancy Harrington, president of the association at the time, later came to think differently about the rainbow.

"I think it was always like a pleasant thing. Now it's a symbol," said Harrington.

"You pass the Rainbow Tank, you know that you're in Dorchester," she said.

If you pass the tanks on Morrissey Boulevard or the Southeast Expressway, you see the Corita signature roll by, fast or slow, depending on the traffic. If you look from Ronan Park or the UMass Harbor Campus, it is the rainbow that marks Commercial

Point and the curving line of Dorchester Bay.

"It's a beacon from land, sea and air," said Mary O. Shannon, executive secretary of the Boston Art Commission.

"I don't know how people feel about paint spilled across a gas tank," said Shannon, "but it's something that should attract people's attention and make them use their imagination, at least for a little while."

People who bothered to write about how they felt either praised the bright colors or condemned their simple, child-like quality, according to Boston Gas public relations manager Frank A. Arricale. That the comments were evenly divided makes Arricale conclude that most people approve of the Rainbow Tank.

"We thought it was pretty revolutionary at the time to put a large work of art before the public that could rub either for or against us," he said.

Kent did submit ideas for a design on a twin tank that Boston Gas built at Commercial Point in 1970, two years after the Rainbow Tank. Plans for a second tank design were dropped, said Arricale, because "it would look too busy, side by side."

The tanks replaced an earlier gas holder that rose and fell with its contents. Painted in sections of gray and red-and-white checkerboard, the holder was a more changeable and less premeditated landmark.

In Kent's work, the Rainbow Tank is a prime example of the stylistic change after she left the Order of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, where she had been a Roman Catholic nun for 32 years.

Her earlier works have been described as more complex, employing greater numbers of colors in more explicitly religious subjects.

In the late sixties and early seventies, Kent embraced and transformed commercial and "pop" art in simpler, more brilliant and abstract plays of primary color.

"She revelled in it. She thought she could say just as much with a brush stroke as with a figure of St. Sebastian, complete with arrows," said Bill Bagnall, former director of the DeCordova Museum, which

graphics, not the small-scale, contextual words we hear about art and architecture today," said Boston Landmarks Commission executive director Judith McDonough.

Bagnall called the Rainbow Tank "a joyous gesture in color."

"It's essentially the exploration of what a medium does," he said. "It's splashes of paint, but in such a free way and such a monumental way that it's like fireworks."

More recently, Kent has been known for designing the first and most widely sold "Love" postage stamp, and for producing the anti-nuclear billboard design for Physicians for Social Responsibility.

"She was essentially a communicator," said Bagnall.

"She felt that she wanted to produce an art that was widely available with economy," he said. "She felt that art was not a luxury item."

Despite her sympathies with the anti-war movement, and later with anti-nuclear campaigns, Kent was not a proselytizer, said Deborah Brown, owner of Bunnell Frame Shop on Newbury Street. The shop is the Boston dealer for Kent's prints, and her works are the only ones Brown displays, aside from works collected by her father, Boris Minsky.

"She was a very sweet, strong, quiet woman who made all of her feelings shown through her art," said Brown.

"She felt very strongly about the nuclear arms campaign and Physicians for Social Responsibility," said Brown. "She felt that individual people working very hard could change things."

Kent also boycotted a celebration introducing her stamp on the set of the television series *Love Boat* because she thought it trivialized her work, said Dorchester artist Mickey Myers, a close friend and former student of Kent.

"Corita's work for so many people is symbolic of love and hope," said Myers. "But what needs to be underlined in her work and her friendship is that love and peace and friendship are only achieved with hard work."

The results on the Rainbow Tank, first executed by a Weymouth sign company, have been compared to the legendary toil on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.



Facing Morrissey Boulevard and the Southeast Expressway, the artist's signature on the Rainbow Tank. (Lovett Photo)

"It is a true legacy of someone who put together a synthesis between popular art and the spiritual which we all have at the back of our minds," said Krim.

And Kent's seemingly "casual" brush strokes, according to Krim, can be the one saving splendor in the heart of an expressway traffic jam.

"They give a sense of joy, even under a rainy, foggy set of conditions," he said.

Kent has denied that one of her brush strokes was intended to show a profile of North Vietnamese Presi-

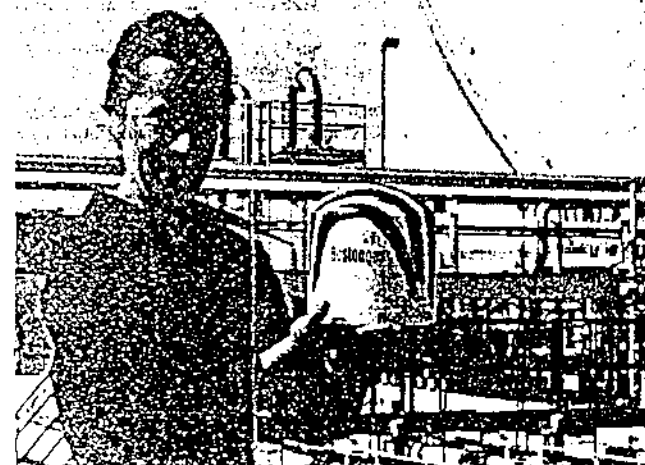
either bent or broken.

What admirers agree on is that the Rainbow Tank transforms a large commonplace object that is, inherently, neither beautiful nor ugly.

"It's very symbolic," said Myers. "because this is what the message is: that the rays of hope exist in the midst of chaos, not in denying chaos but in embracing it."

Above all, Myers prefers to admire the Rainbow Tank while driving along Morrissey Boulevard toward home in Dorchester's Melville-Park neighborhood.

BOS



# Corita Kent, 67, of cancer; artist won renown for gas tank design

By Edgar J. Driscoll Jr.  
Globe Staff

Corita Kent of the Back Bay, internationally known artist, teacher and former Roman Catholic nun, died at home of cancer Thursday. She was 67.

Her most monumental work, at least in terms of size, is the rainbow design of primary colors that adorns the Boston Gas Co.'s 150-foot high, liquefied natural gas tank on Commercial Point, Dorchester, adjacent to the Southeast Expressway. It is the largest object ever to be copyrighted by the US Copyright Office.

During her career she had won all sorts of top awards for her brightly colored, free-wheeling, semi-abstract or abstract prints and posters. She was considered the first to sing the praises of the Lord via Pop art.

In 1965, she designed a new, vertically oriented 22-cent Love stamp for the US Postal Service with the word "Love" slashed on it in her distinctive style. She called it "a high point in my career, because the stamp will be seen all over the world." Her design became one of the most popular commemorative postal issues ever, with more than 700 million sold.

The gas tank work, designed in 1971 and executed in orange, yellow, vermilion, blue, green and black, has been viewed by millions of drivers over the years. To her the rainbow design conveyed "hope, uplifting and spring."

Some of those commuters discerned the form of North Vietnam's leader, the late Ho Chi Minh, towards the bottom of one of the splashy forms. When asked about this, the artist replied that the likeness was "as unintentional as the faces people find in clouds."

Miss Kent, whose works of art are in the collections of some 40 major museums throughout the world, was a Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for 32 years before she resigned from the order in 1968. As Sister Mary Corita, she spent many of those years as head of the art department at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles.

When she left the order and settled in Boston, she explained "I want to do a different thing.... You should be true to your own conscience. That's a good, old-fashioned way of saying you know what God's will is."

Over the years, her exuberant prints - more than 800 limited editions - went from the fairly naturalistic to the semi-abstract, the abstract and Pop art, in which she found inspiration in commonplace objects. In her Pop works she lifted the lettering, symbols, colors and layouts of the commercial sign world and gave them spiritual meaning. Laced into her compositions were quotes from Scripture, poets, playwrights and philosophers.

Through them ran a positive, uplifting strain while dealing with the futility of war, racism and the despoiling of the earth. She had a strong social conscience and often undertook commissions for a wide variety of social causes, most recently the official poster for Hands Across America.

The blue-eyed former nun made her first serigraph in 1952 while teaching at Immaculate Heart College. By the mid-60s her work had gained national attention and she was being ranked with artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol and Jackson Pollock.

In the '70s her work became more subdued. "My work still says the same things that it did when I was going through my 'rainbow period,' but I tell the story in a dif-



1971 photo

## CORITA KENT

ferent way now," she told an interviewer in 1978. "I guess you could say that my energy is directed inward these days," she said, reflecting on changes within herself as the result of a major cancer operation two years before.

She was born in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and raised in Los Angeles. She was a graduate of Immaculate Heart College in 1941 and received her master's degree from the University of Southern California in 1951. She entered the sisterhood in 1936.

In the early 1940s she was a grade school teacher in British Columbia. She began teaching art at Immaculate College in 1946.

For years, she exhibited in Boston at the old Boleoph Group Gallery on Newbury Street. Among major museums owning her work are the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Although in recent years she primarily made a living from corporate commissions, the commissions allowed her to support her causes, such as the United Farm Workers, Amnesty International, the Campaign for Human Development and the Women's International League for Peace and Justice.

Miss Kent leaves a sister, Sister Mary Ruth, OIM, of California; a brother, Mark Kent of Seattle, Wash.; and several nieces and nephews.

A celebration is planned at a date yet to be announced for the Los Angeles campus where she taught.

GLOBE 9/17/78

## Corita Kent, Boston artist, dies

Corita Kent of Boston, 67, internationally known artist, teacher and former Roman Catholic nun, died yesterday. Her most monumental work, at least in terms of size, is the rainbow design of primary colors that adorns the Boston Gas Co.'s 150-foot high gas tank in Dorchester near the Southeast Expressway.

Page 22



*Boston Herald  
Sept. 19, 1986*

# Cancer claims artist Corita Kent at 67

free-flowing rainbow on our tank are symbolic, not only of her artwork but of Corita the gracious lady herself," Bacon said. One of Corita's best friends and proteges, Back Bay artist Mickey Rossell, who was with her when she died, added: "The rainbow is a sym-

Boston Gas President John J. Bacon said: "Corita's rainbow design, painted on our tank in 1971, has become such a local landmark that it is hard to imagine the area without it. Her warm colors and

But Kent is remembered best by most people in Greater Boston for her dramatic rainbow on the gas tank, done with six bold and sweeping strokes and signed only "Corita."

## Corita Kent, artist and activist, dead at 67

By PAUL SULLIVAN  
ARTIST CORITA KENT, whose works ranged from the landmark Boston Gas tank in Dorchester to last year's U.S. Postal Service's "LOVE" stamp, died yesterday in her Back Bay home, after a six-month battle with cancer. Kent, 67, a former nun known as Sister Mary Cor-



CORITA KENT  
Designed "LOVE" stamp

"At midnight, she cut a huge birthday cake, encrusted with pink and yellow frosted rosebuds."

From Page 3  
bold of hope and there's a certain sense of hope for the future and the desire to carry on in all of Corita's work.

"Where better to be reminded of hope and to carry on than on the Southeast Expressway?" Rossell said. "Rosell added Corita's 'LOVE' stamp was a best seller and she was very proud of it. The tiny stamp and the huge gas tank showed how flexible an artist she was."

Corita painted the design for the huge, 150-foot-high tank on a tiny model 7 1/2 inches in diameter and 8 1/2 inches high. It was transferred to the real tank by five painters who took six weeks and 655 gallons of paint to do the job. It remains the largest object ever copyrighted by the U.S. Copyright Office.

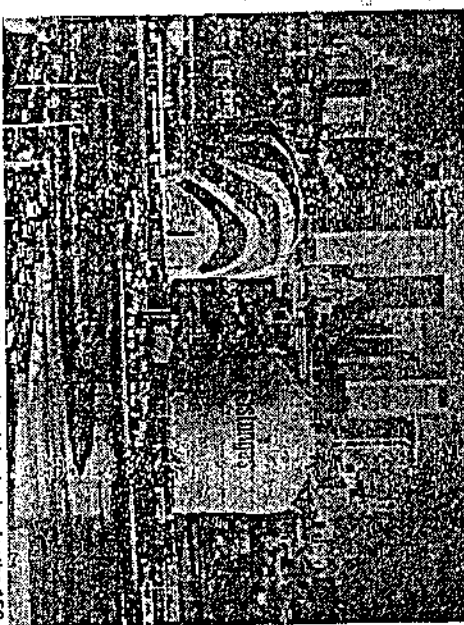
Corita had always hoped that someday she'd get to paint a design for the other tank," Rosell said. But that was never to be as Boston Gas used the second tank on the site for its company logo.

Controversy arose over the design when some viewers said one of the rainbow streaks looked like North Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh. But Corita always denied that that was her intention.

During her career as an artist, Corita produced more than 800 limited print editions and her work can be found in permanent collections of 31 major museums, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Art Institute in Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Born Frances Kent in



ARTIST AT WORK: Corita Kent plans her next work with brushes in hand.



MEGA-MASTERPIECE: Artist Corita Kent painted the design for the 150-foot-high tank on a tiny model that was transferred to the real tank.

Fort Dodge, Iowa, she was the fourth of six children. She was educated in Los Angeles and worked in the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Born Frances Kent in

late stock and set off in a new direction. It is something like painting a tree — then a burst of new life."

Besides the famed gas tank and "LOVE" stamp, which sold 700 million copies, her other public commissions included a 13-year association with Westinghouse Group W, for which she produced 26 full-page designs. Newman-Marcus department stores and a mural for Bon Secours Hospital in Melrose.

Throughout her career Corita also undertook commissions for a wide variety of social causes, most recently producing the poster for Hands Across America. Her work is also the basis for a series of billboards highlighting the dangers of nuclear war for the Physicians for Social Responsibility.

She has also worked for the United Farm Workers, International Walk for Hunger, Clergy and Laymen Concerned for Vietnam, Common Cause, Oxfam International, Volunteers for Older Americans, Amnesty International, the Campaign for Human Development and the Women's International League for Peace and Justice.

She produced work for the defense funds of Daniel and Philip Berber and Daniel Ellsberg, plus the electoral campaigns of Sen. George McGovern, Gov. Jerry Brown and Gov. Michael Dukakis.

Corita leaves a sister, Sister Mary Ruth of California and a brother, Mark Kent of Washington State. A celebration in her memory will be held at Immaculate Heart College at a later date.



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# NEWS

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Date: October 7, 1994

For further information contact:

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Release Date:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BOSTON GAS ANNOUNCES THE COMPLETION OF  
THE FAMOUS RAINBOW DESIGN ON DORCHESTER TANK**

***Largest Piece of Copyrighted Artwork Returns to Boston***

BOSTON (10/7/94) -- Boston Gas Company has announced that the repainting of the famous rainbow design on the remaining gas tank at their Dorchester facility is now complete. The original "Rainbow Tank" was removed in November, 1992 due to increased gas pipeline capacity from the Southwest United States and Canada. The original rainbow was designed in 1971 by internationally acclaimed artist, Corita Kent. Corita, a former Sister of the Immaculate Heart, was inspired by the promise of the rainbow in the Book of Genesis and designed the rainbow as a symbol of hope for Boston. When removing the first tank, Boston Gas was committed to repainting the design on the remaining tank because of the symbol it had become for Boston and the overwhelming requests for its return.

"Corita's rainbow has become a landmark of Boston, welcoming millions of people to the city each year. We are excited to bring back the world's largest piece of copyrighted art to Boston and its people. The rainbow's brilliant splashes of color represent enthusiasm and optimism for the city," stated Chet Messer, president, Boston Gas Company.

-more-

The painting of the tank has become a family tradition. Clarence Okerfelt painted the original rainbow design on the tank 23 years ago, under the watchful eye of the artist, Corita Kent. In keeping this tradition, Robert Okerfelt, Clarence's son, and his assistant, Joseph Bechard, painted the current rainbow on the tank. Although Corita passed away in 1986, Mickey Myers, Corita's former student and the artistic advisor of her estate, supervised the painting to ensure the rainbow was identical to Corita's original design. Mickey, an artist in her own right, worked closely with Corita during the initial painting of the tank in 1971.

Transferring the rainbow design from Corita's original seven-inch wooden model of the tank is an intricate process. Robert Okerfelt used photographs and drawings of the original and made 425 large paper stencils to duplicate the design as accurately as possible.

To commemorate the original "Rainbow Tank," the colored paint chips from the rainbow have been captured in three-inch square lucite cubes and are available for sale. Proceeds from the lucite cubes will benefit Boston Partners in Education (BPE), a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting academic and social development of students in Boston public schools. BPE also assists in local public school tutoring and literacy programs, as well as providing training and technical assistance to teachers, administrators, parents, businesses and students. Corita supported BPE for many years due to her love for children and her dedication to improving education. To date, more than \$11,000 has been raised for BPE from the sale of the lucite cubes.

The "Rainbow Tank" commemorative cubes can be purchased for \$12.95 through Boston Partners in Education. To place an order, checks should be made payable to Boston Partners in Education and addressed to: *The Rainbow Commemorative/P.O. Box 9200/Waltham, Mass./02154*. Quantities are limited.



## "RAINBOW TANK" FACT SHEET

- The "Rainbow Tank" was, and now returns, as the largest copyrighted work of art in the world.
- The original "Rainbow Tank" was erected by Chicago Bridge & Iron Company in 1969, and was dismantled in 1992 due to a reduced need for stored liquefied natural gas (LNG) at the Commercial Point/Dorchester facility.
- The original design, that has now returned to the remaining Commercial Point gas tank, was created in 1971 by artist Corita Kent to symbolize hope for Boston's future.
- The painting is a four-step process consisting of primer, intermediate and white coats, then the application of the rainbow colors: orange, yellow, vermillion, blue, green and purple.
- Rainbow artist Corita Kent lived from 1919 to 1986. The painting of the rainbow is being overseen by Mickey Myers, the artistic advisor of Corita's estate, who was also involved in the original painting of the rainbow.
- Robert D. Okerfelt of Duxbury, son of the original painter Clarence Okerfelt, sketched the rainbow outline on the tank.
- Amount of paint: 425 gallons of white; 10 gallons of orange; 20 gallons of yellow; 25 gallons of vermillion; 20 gallons of blue; 15 gallons of green; 40 gallons of purple.
- Rainbow artwork surface measures 73,374 square feet compared to 5,800 square feet of Massachusetts' State House dome. Corita's signature on tank measures 5 1/2 feet high by 16 feet long.
- To commemorate the original "Rainbow Tank," the colored paint chips were placed in lucite and are available for purchase as individual pieces of art. Proceeds benefit Boston Partners in Education, an inner-city nonprofit which Corita Kent supported. The "Rainbow Tank" commemorative cubes can be purchased for \$12.95. Checks should be made payable to Boston Partners in Education and mailed to: The Rainbow Commemorative/P. O. Box 9200/Waltham, MA 02154
- Tank height: 140 feet; width: 152 feet; circumference: 477 feet.
- Tank capacity: 331,000 barrels or 13,900,000 gallons of liquefied natural gas, equivalent to 1.2 Billion cubic feet of natural gas (enough gas to supply entire City of Boston for one week).

###



## Corita Kent

Corita Kent, internationally known artist and teacher, was born in 1919 in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and raised in Los Angeles.

Corita, whose works of art are in the collections of some 40 major museums throughout the world, was a Sister of the Immaculate Heart for 32 years before she resigned from the Order in 1968. As Sister Mary Corita, she spent many of those years as head of the art department at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles.

For years, she exhibited in Boston at the Botolph Group Gallery on Newbury Street. Among major museums owning her work are the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Her most monumental work is the rainbow design of primary colors that adorned the Boston Gas Company's 140 foot high, liquefied natural gas tank on Commercial Point, Dorchester, adjacent to the Southeast Expressway. It was the largest object ever to be copyrighted by the U.S. Copyright Office. This tank was removed in the fall of 1992 as the storage space was no longer necessary. The rainbow is now being repainted on the remaining tank.

The gas tank work, designed in 1971 and executed in orange, yellow, vermillion, blue green and purple, has been viewed by millions over the years. To Corita, the rainbow design conveyed "hope, uplifting and spring."

In 1984, Corita designed a new stamp for the U.S. Postal Service with "Love" slashed on it in her distinctive style. Her design became one of the most popular commemorative postal issues ever, with more than 700 million sold.

Due to her love for children and her dedication to improving education, Corita was a strong supporter of Boston Partners in Education (BPE). BPE is a nonprofit organization that supports academic and social development of Boston's public school system, and advocates for a quality public education for students in Boston and beyond. To commemorate their 20th anniversary, Corita generously designed an anniversary poster for Boston Partners in Education just before her death in 1986.

Corita died in Boston on September 18, 1986.

###



## Mickey Myers

Mickey Myers met Sister Mary Corita Kent in Los Angeles when Mickey was 9 years old. (Mickey's father had commissioned Corita to design an album cover for a record he was producing.) Their association spanned 33 years. Mickey studied art from Corita at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles and their friendship resumed in Boston, when Corita moved here.

Throughout the Boston years, Mickey and Corita conferred with each other on several projects, including Corita's commission from the Boston Gas Company for the original gas tank now being painted on the remaining tank in Dorchester. In the early 70s, Mickey actually painted Corita's design of a 40 ft. rainbow mural in the cobalt treatment room of the Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Mass.

Mickey serves as the Artistic Advisor of Corita Kent's estate, and co-produced **PRIMARY COLORS: THE STORY OF CORITA**, a one hour documentary for PBS (1991). In her own right, Mickey Myers is known for her limited edition silkscreen prints, particularly a spirited series of crayon images. Over 25 posters have been made from her prints and distributed internationally. Her current work is in pastel, reflecting the images of her present residence in Vermont.

# # #



## **BOSTON PARTNERS IN EDUCATION**

Boston Partners in Education (BPE) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting academic and social development of Boston's public school students, advocating for quality public education for students in Boston and beyond. BPE was founded in 1966 as School Volunteers for Boston with 28 volunteers who were trained, and placed in three schools. Today there are nearly 4,000 volunteers who help out approximately 40,000 Boston school children each year. The initial purpose of the program was to create a school library system for Boston Public Schools, as well as assist Spanish-speaking immigrants in becoming integrated into the school system.

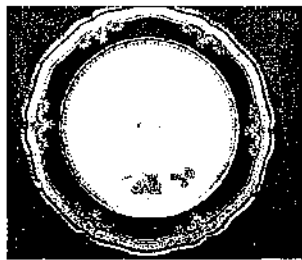
Today BPE has expanded to include management of grass roots programs, parent workshops, as well as providing training and technical assistance to schools, community agencies, and businesses through its affiliate, Education and Management Consultants. BPE has been a founder and leader of the Massachusetts Association of Partners in Education, The National Association of Partners in Education, and The International Partnership Network.

Artist Corita Kent was a strong supporter of BPE because of her love for children and her dedication to improving education. Corita donated over 100 of her prints to BPE for their 15th anniversary, and the prints were then placed in Boston public schools for everyone to enjoy. Just before her death in 1986, Corita also designed a poster for BPE to commemorate their 20th anniversary.

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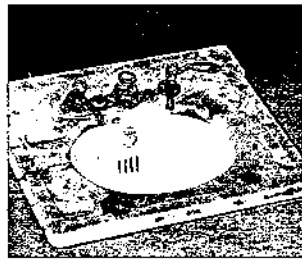
Survivor Dean, looking through one of the reclaimed portholes



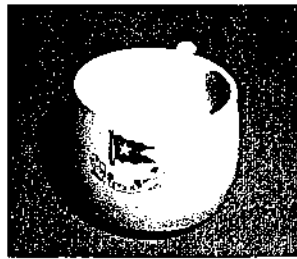
Dinner plate



Pitcher



Royal Doulton marble sink



Teacup with White Star logo

## TITANIC

### Artifacts of a Disaster

ON APRIL 15, 1912, "TITANIC" BECAME SYNONYMOUS WITH "disaster." But at the time, the Titanic was the most opulent vessel in history. A controversial show opening this week at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England, presents 150 treasures rescued from the Atlantic since 1985—all restored, via chemicals and electrolysis, nearly to their pre-iceberg grandeur. Many are elegant (silver trays, a bronze cherub light holder, a steward's white jacket), some fascinatingly banal (a hot-water dispenser, two of the ship's 1,241 portholes). Most haunting: the bell that lookout Frederick Fleet rang at first sight of the iceberg.

The show has detractors, including survivors who believe the ship should be left undisturbed. The artifacts come from the "debris field" that resulted when the boat showered objects as it sank and hit bottom, which placates some. "As long as they take them off the seabed and not the wreck, it's all right," says Millvina Dean, who was 9 weeks old when she was rescued along with her mother and brother. Her father was last seen standing on the Titanic's sinking deck.



Journey to the bottom of the sea

"This ship is a grave and should stay as it is."

## FASHION

### Strap-a-Bear

THEY'RE MADE FOR KIDS. BUT lately, trendy teens and chic moms are strapping on teddy bears, too. From Barneys (where they're sold in the children's department) to the Tutto Bene boutique in the Hamptons, the plush-bear backpacks are runaway best sellers. So popular that the Alaska-based manufacturer, the Mango Teddy Bear Co., can scarcely keep up with the demand. "They're pure whimsy," says Kim Stall, the buyer at Manhattan's E.A.T. gift shop. Whether they're stuffed with pj's for a sleepover or slung over an Armani suit, the fad's just more proof that people never outgrow their love for teddy.



Endless love: Teddy



Typical card: Creature and coeds

## CARDS

### Collectible Gore

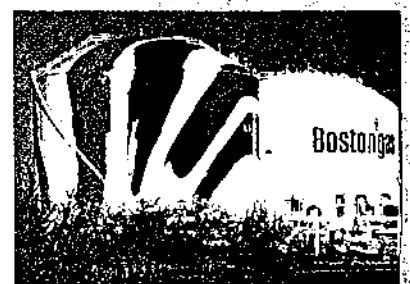
IF THE PROLIFERATION OF trading cards—serial killers, Vietnam, even GATT negotiators—hasn't made you sick, these just might. The Topps Co.'s Mars Attacks cards feature such ghoulish scenes as a giant bug decapitating a woman while two naked women stand by or a horrified boy crying as an alien vaporizes his dog. The cards are so gruesome (and frequently misogynistic) that Topps pulled the 55-card series shortly after its 1962 release. But with the set selling for \$2,000, the company has reissued the cards, along with 45 new and unimproved ones. "The gore excites the kids," says Topps's promotion manager, Gayle Young. With a Martian comic book already out, look for a possible animated TV series and a movie next. Or don't.

LUCY HOWARD and MARC PEYSER  
with bureau reports

## PUBLIC ART

### Can You Spot Ho Chi Minh?

LIKE ELVIS, HO CHI Minh shows up in strange places. Perhaps no sighting of the former North Vietnamese leader is more famous than the one in the Boston gas-tank rainbow, painted by Corita Kent in 1971. Bostonians demanded a new rendition when the company razed the painted tank two years ago and left its unpainted neighbor alone. Some say Ho No. 2 looks different: squished nose, flat eyebrow. Spokesman Frank Arricale disagrees: "You don't change a Picasso because a group doesn't like it."



The old tank, with Ho in the blue stripe