

Paris, July 23rd. 1952

"KEN-TOOKI" raft launched.
Covered by all competition
POSITIVE DEVELOPED: 56 meters - 188 ft

A 30ft by 41 ft raft on which a young British nurse and five men hope to "do a Kon-Tiki" across the Mediterranean, was launched yesterday from an island on the Seine seven miles off Paris, amid cheers, bottle waving and cameras...

The raft was christened the "KEN TOOKI" by a film actress, Genevieve Jounet known in France as "Miss white teeth" for her roles in a series of publicity films. A bottle of champagne was provided for the ceremony, but Mr. Michael Jones ex-RAF pilot officer and a member of the crew confessed that there was little champagne in the bottle, as they had drunk it beforehand.

Although the raft was only three yards from the water's edge it took 5/4 of an hour and a dive for Mr. Jones to get it afloat. There was no slipway, so the crew used a four-wheeled cart and heavy wooden rollers.

The KEN TOOKI, built in less than a month, floated bravely, but was slightly down front. The only girl of the adventurous crew, Miss Maribel Grand declared that was alright as it would be rectified by the weight of the stores and the water tanks.

Mr. Richard Miller, 28, American leader of the group and a US Navy petty-officer said that getting the KEN TOOKI as far as Lyon would be a problem, because of about 150 locks to negotiate and it is impossible to be towed in them. They most probably will have to put it at the back of a barge. An extra member has been taken on since the project was started. He is a 26 year old Australian, former sheep farmer from Sydney Mr. Kim Walker who remained in Europe after representing Australia in the Olympic Ski-jumping contests last winter.