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Pacific Lady

The First Woman to Sail Solo across
the World's Largest Ocean

By Sharon Sites Adams

with Karen J. Coates

Foreword by Randall Reeves

September 2008

240 pages | 5 ½ x 8 ½ 24 photographs, 4 figures,
map, glossary

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OUTDOOR LIVES SERIES



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Book Description

It was an age without GPS and the Internet, without high-tech monitoring and instantaneous reporting. And it was a time when women simply didn't do such things. None of this deterred Sharon Sites Adams. In June 1965 Adams made history as the first woman to sail solo from the mainland United States to Hawaii. Four years later, just as Neil Armstrong very publicly stepped onto the moon, the diminutive Adams, alone and unobserved, finally sighted Point Arguello, California, after seventy-four days sailing a thirty-one-foot ketch from Japan, across the violent and unpredictable Pacific. She was the first woman to do so, setting another world record.

Inspiring and exciting, Adams's memoir recounts the personal path leading to her historic achievements: a tomboy childhood in the Oregon high desert, an early marriage and painful divorce, and a second marriage that ended when her husband died of cancer. In the wake of his death and almost by accident, Adams discovered sailing. Six weeks after her first sailing lesson she bought a boat, and within eight months she set out to achieve her first world record. *Pacific Lady* recounts the inward journey that paralleled her sailing feats, as Adams drew on every scrap of courage and navigational skill she could muster to overcome the seasickness, exhaustion, and loneliness that marked her harrowing crossings.

Pre-Publication Praise for *Pacific Lady*

"A thrilling adventure story and an engaging read, *Pacific Lady* is a book of detail and depth. Sharon Sites Adams's remarkable achievements inspire us to find our own oceans and sail on through the highs and lows of our own lives."—Amy Racina, author of *Angels in the Wilderness*

"Eight-thousand miles of open ocean, with the same navigational tools used by Columbus, and no way to communicate. This is one gutsy lady. Widowed at thirty-four, she escaped into the world of sailing for the first time, bought her own boat, and sailed into history. As the press put it, 'A woman who dared and won.' This is the stuff movies are made from."—Martel Scroggin, author of *Wasco*, *The Moonlighters*, and *The Sheepshooters*

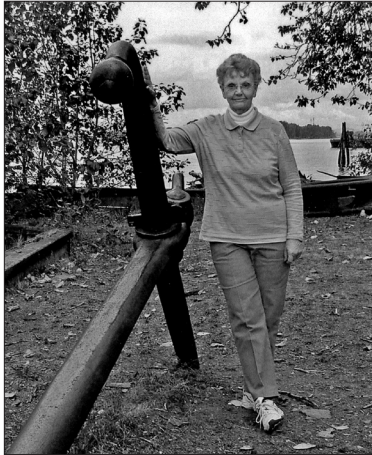
"*Pacific Lady* tugged at me from the opening story. Even though I know nothing about sailing and solo ocean crossings, I was mesmerized by Sharon Sites Adams's determination, curiosity of the world, and intrepid spirit. When she embarked on her trip across the Pacific Ocean alone, I simply could not put down the book until I knew that she had made it safely home. Karen Coates has done a graceful job of translating this singular story into spare, elegant prose. I will never forget it."—Shauna James Ahern, author of *Gluten-Free Girl: How I Found the Food That Loves Me Back and How You Can Too*

Post-Publication Praise

Please visit this book's [Web page](http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/Pacific-Lady,673431.aspx) (<http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/Pacific-Lady,673431.aspx>) for the most current post-publication praise.



Author Biography



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Sharon Sites Adams, *Los Angeles Times* Woman of the Year in 1969, is a popular speaker, making appearances and telling her story before various organizations and gatherings.



[download Coates author photo](#)

Karen J. Coates is a journalist, a correspondent for *Gourmet* magazine, and a contributor to numerous publications, including *Archaeology*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and *Fodor's Travel Guides*. She is the author of *Cambodia Now: Life in the Wake of War*. Coates also teaches journalism through the Indochina Media Memorial Foundation (IMMF), and she keeps a food blog at <http://ramblingspoon.com>. She and her husband, photojournalist Jerry Redfern, divide their time between Asia and New Mexico, where they keep a home in the Rio Grande Valley.



Additional Information

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