



# Once a fool: From Japan to Alaska by amphibious jeep

*Boye De Mente*

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In 1957 Tokyo-based American journalist Boye Lafayette De Mente joined Australian adventurer Ben Carlin on an amphibious jeep named "Half-Safe" (after a deodorant slogan, "Don't Be Half-Safe!") for a 3-month long journey from Tokyo to Anchorage, Alaska via the North Pacific, the Bering Sea and Shelikof Strait...in one of the most remarkable seafaring adventures of the 20th century that received media attention worldwide and made the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

The amazing trip began and ended with a series of mishaps and emergencies that including a strange encounter with Russians, a radio that didn't work, a frozen propellor, Japanese fishing nets, a battery problem, a great wall of water, fueling up at sea in a rain storm (from a huge metal tank dragged behind the jeep), clogged engine cooling intakes on the bottom of the jeep, the frigid water of the Bering sea, beds of floating kelp, submerged offshore rocks, and waves so choppy they were thrown around in the jeep "like rocks in a tin can!"

**ONCE A FOOL: From Tokyo to Alaska by Amphibious Jeep** is De Mente's detailed account of the journey, including run-ins with his shipmate that could have ended in murder.

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