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In Memory of
Hank Suydam

In the backyard a lectern draped with tropical leaves had been placed on the green lawn. Banyan trees, with thick, crooked roots, arched overhead and hibiscus bushes and giant ferns formed a natural screen around the yard. The sky was soft blue; the sun shone warmly.

In this lovely outdoor setting a memorial service was held last week for Henry Suydam Jr., our Miami bureau chief, who died in his sleep on Dec. 3 at the age of 40. It was the perfect setting because Hank, an adventurous man, had lived for the outdoors.

He came to LIFE 15 years ago. Both his parents were journalists, his mother for several years a feature editor and columnist for the Washington *Times-Herald*, his father the chief editorial writer for the Newark *Evening News* who ended a distinguished career serving as press secretary for the State Department. His father got a clear look at his spirited journalistic offspring at the 1953 Bermuda Conference of Winston Churchill and President Eisenhower. Hank had learned that Churchill enjoyed daily afternoon trips to the Mid-Ocean Club beach. He and a photographer smuggled a camera inside a towel, stole past the security perimeter of Royal Welch Fusiliers and wound up with a memorable picture of Sir Winston sitting alone at the edge of the sea.

In 1954, Hank became our Dallas bureau chief and his zest for journalistic enterprise continued. He undertook an exposé of illegal gambling and payoffs in Galveston, Texas. In the process one of the gambling house owners, Anthony Fertitta, trailed Suydam back to the hotel and knocked him down. But he had his story.

Wherever he worked, he was nervy and resourceful. From Washington, where he became bureau chief in 1960, his investigations helped mount a case against Jimmy Hoffa. He was in the thick of the Panama riots and kept turning up with new press credentials for his reporters—first French, then German, anything to avoid being identified as American.

Any journalistic adventure sent him charging. Just before Christmas 1960 he heard a radio bulletin about the tanker *Pine Ridge*, which had cracked amidships from heavy gales 200 miles off Cape Hatteras. With two men he hired a seagoing tug to take them out to the dying ship. The ship company had forbidden anyone to board the tanker, which by now had broken completely in two. Suydam and his men pulled themselves aboard the stern section, rode out the storm for three days. They returned home with the towed stern and a dramatic story of a broken ship's battle against the sea.

In 1964 Hank moved to Miami where he supervised our coverage of the astronauts, whom he greatly admired—they undertook the kind of bold exploits he warmed to. When Castro allowed Cubans to leave the island last year, Suydam quickly chartered a boat, bumped across the rough straits and was one of the first American journalists to reach Cuba to report the exodus.

Hank was a sensitive man who thought quickly and clearly, but most of all he was a man of passion and action. He loved to skin dive, to ski, to fly planes. When a story hit him, his enthusiasm and sense of involvement were unending. He had a daring and tenacity and a kind of glamorous style. This is the way we will remember him.

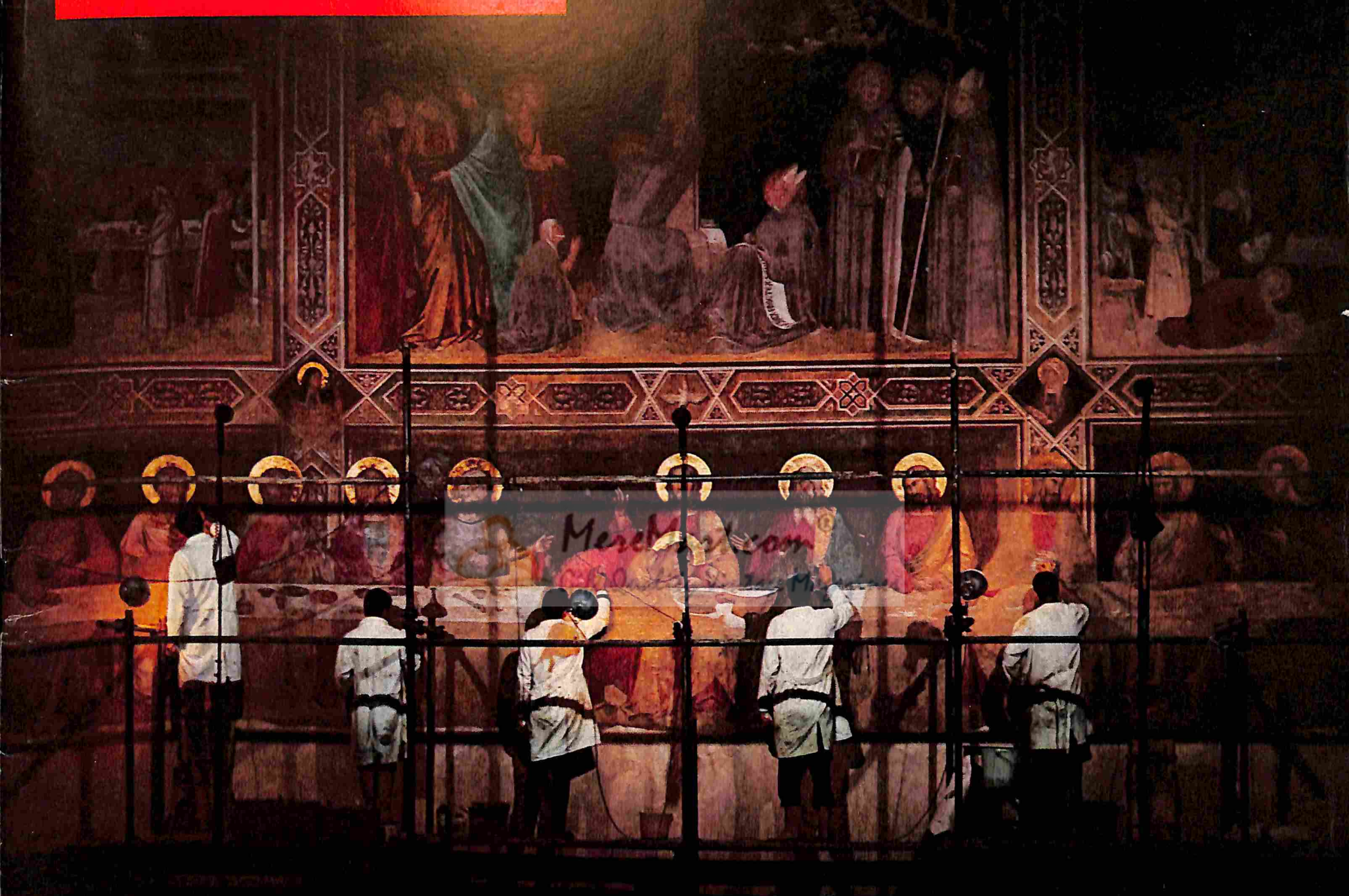


HANK SUYDAM

George P. Hunt
GEORGE P. HUNT
Managing Editor

LIFE

*A Mission of Restoration
After Italy's Devastating Floods*



SAVING GADDI'S 'LAST SUPPER'

Heroic Job of Rescuing A Great Heritage



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