

TALEISIN'S TALES – Lin and Larry Pardey. Published in soft covers by Pardey Publications [www.landlpardey.com] at £14.53, US \$18.95 and NZ \$35.00. 189 150mm x 229mm pages, with many colour photos, chart excerpts etc. ISBN 978- 1-9292-1411-2. Also available for Kindle

Having written several cruising narratives during their circumnavigation aboard Serrafyn, after they built and launched Taleisin Lin and Larry concentrated mainly on how-to-do-it books and videos. These included Storm Tactics Handbook, The Self-sufficient Sailor, The Capable Cruiser, The Care and Feeding of Sailing Crew and The Cost Conscious Cruiser, all still in print and nearly all reviewed in these pages over the years. Then in 2011 Lin returned to the narrative genre with Bull Canyon, the story of how the 29ft Taleisin was built 60 miles inland from the coast. It concludes with her truck-ride to Newport Beach for launching.

Probably more a book for dipping into than for reading from cover to cover, Taleisin's Tales picks up where Bull Canyon left off, with the launching of Taleisin on 31 October 1983, and follows the three of them as they head south to Mexico, then across the South Pacific to New Zealand where they established a permanent 'home-base' – all without the security-blanket of an inboard engine. The Pardeys have always been champions of the 'keep it simple' mode of cruising, while also enjoying attainable levels of comfort – a philosophy which comes through in Lin's description of showering in the specially-constructed tub beneath the companionway, complete with foot-pumped hot water. In the same way, and without any attempt to preach, advice on sound seamanship is unselfconsciously included in passing whenever relevant.

Each of the nine chapters, other than the first, carries a section from the relevant chart, with Taleisin's track clearly marked in blue though some of the chart details are necessarily so small as to be almost illegible. It's necessary to turn right to the back, however – pages 188 and 189 – to see her entire route, together with her later passages including her 16- year circumnavigation concluded in 2010. Scope for several more volumes there!

Lin has a gift for lively writing, which does full justice to the islands they visit and, particularly, to the many people they meet along the way, both local and fellow cruisers. There is no doubting their gift for friendship and empathy with people of all ages and from very different backgrounds, who invariably welcomed them with open hearts. It's very good to know – see Sweet Carolines, page 5 – that at least in the less-visited archipelagos this is often still the case. That Lin and Larry always kept comprehensive logs and journals is clear from the detailed descriptions of incidents which occurred well over thirty years ago, though one assumes the many verbatim conversations must have been largely reconstructed.

Taleisin's Tales is very definitely a 'feel-good' book, illustrated by many colour photos, all of which must have been digitised from prints or transparencies taken at the time.

Unfortunately many have come out rather dark, which is a great pity as the scenes they depict are often fascinating. Sadly they do let down the otherwise high quality production.

Taleisin's Tales will be of particular interest to those either planning to follow the same route or already familiar with it, and for the rest of us it perfectly fits the age-old description of 'a jolly good read'. I look forward to further volumes!

AOMH