



THE ADLARD COLES BOOK OF MEDITERRANEAN CRUISING – Rod Heikell, 4th edition. Published in soft covers by Adlard Coles Nautical [www.adlardcoles.com] at £20. 186 248mm x 171mm pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-4729-5123-6

The first edition of this book was published in 2004 under the title *THE RYA BOOK OF MEDITERRANEAN CRUISING*, the subsequent three editions being published by Adlard Coles, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing plc. All four have provided excellent introductions to the Mediterranean as a whole, and as such have proved invaluable guides for those considering or planning a cruise in the Med.

Concise, clear and entertainingly written, they convey the magic of Mediterranean cruising with first-hand practical advice on sailing in these unique and diverse waters. OCC member Rod Heikell is an acknowledged expert on sailing in the Mediterranean, and for 40 years has cruised its coasts and islands in his own yachts while also skippering charter and delivery boats. He is the author of 14 pilot books for different parts of the Med which have become essential navigational aids for many cruisers.

This relatively slim book provides sound advice on Mediterranean cruising options, equipment, practical issues, navigation, weather, berthing and anchoring. The last quarter of the book gives a country-by-country overview of routing, local weather, formalities and facilities ashore. The three appendices comprise an equipment checklist, related reading and websites, plus quick and easy-to-follow distance tables. It is well illustrated throughout with coloured charts, diagrams and photos.

An introductory book to the Mediterranean of this calibre obviously needs to be kept up-to-date, since facts change, as do readers' requirements and expectations. To claim that this edition has been 'extensively updated' is, however, something of an exaggeration. With the exception of a brief reference to Brexit and the sub-section on electronics, most of the narrative and photos appear, quite understandably, to have been brought forward from the third edition. The excellent cover is, however, refreshingly modern and clearly designed to 'sell' the new edition, and we have found this book is usually the first one our visitors pick up and read, possibly because it is not a weighty tome and is not bogged down with detail.

Anyone who is considering a visit to the Med and is not already familiar with the area should make this their first purchase. Owners of the previous edition, or those with reasonable practical experience of Mediterranean waters, may wish to think at least twice before purchasing this update – unless of course they have deep pockets or simply like to have the latest edition of a quality book in their ship's library.

MN

CORNELL'S OCEAN ATLAS – Jimmy and Ivan Cornell, 2nd edition. Published in spiral-bound format between hard covers by Cornell Sailing Ltd [www.cornellsailing.com] at £69. 136 A3-size pages, in 4 colours throughout. ISBN 978-1-9997229-0-6

To be honest, I had assumed on first seeing the cover and flicking through a couple of the pages, that this book was a nicely illustrated reprint of the NOAA Pilot Charts which are available for free download online. However, on reading the explanation of the pilot data's sources in the foreword, and looking more closely at the charts' content and arrangement, my view quickly changed.

The book's content is more detailed, more relevant, more accurate and more up-to-date than that of either NOAA or the Admiralty, whose data spans way back into the 19th century and was collected from manual observations by commercial shipping. That means that it is unavoidably subject to inaccuracy and patchiness in its coverage, while its historic nature means it cannot significantly reflect any impact on weather and currents which may have been caused by climate change since the latter part of the last century. Instead, the weather and current data used by the Cornells reflects detailed and comprehensive satellite observations covering specifically the last 25 years.

So far as detailed content is concerned, this 'ocean atlas' is subtitled 'pilot charts for all the oceans of the world', but neither nomenclature really does the book justice. Firstly, as an 'atlas' it includes descriptions and explanations of global oceanic weather systems and phenomena, as well as global current circulations and 'local' winds and weather patterns covering all oceans and all latitudes. Secondly, as a volume of 'pilot charts' it is in no way reproducing either the Admiralty Routeing Charts or the NOAA Pilot Charts. Instead, although it presents the data in the familiar wind rose format in 5° squares, the data itself has been independently computed by the Cornells using publicly available weather and current data obtained from satellite observations over the 25 years from 1991 to 2016. The charts also include average tropical revolving storm paths derived from the same data, as well as – new for this second edition – what it calls 'windgrams', single average wind roses for specific commonly sailed routes, printed down the right hand side of pilot chart pages and covering the area and month in which they are usually undertaken.

As for coverage, it is indeed global and fully includes the high latitudes. However, it saves space and increases relevancy by increasing the number of pages and their content in respect of the more frequented areas of the world's oceans – it has 32 pages covering the North Atlantic, Caribbean, Mediterranean and the Baltic; 24 for the North Pacific; 24 for the South Pacific; 25 in total for the North and South Indian and just 13 for the South Atlantic.

Are the changes since the first edition significant? Yes, I think they are. Firstly, it expands the underlying data set by 25% in adding the last five years (and, given climate change, the impact of those last five on the averages may be more relevant than the last fifty!), and secondly, it now includes the 'windgrams' noted above, which represent a very useful addition. The list price has, however, remained the same.

So would I spend £69 on it, when I can download NOAA's entire catalogue for nothing or buy just the Admiralty Routeing charts I think I will need for £15 apiece – particularly when it contains more than just a couple of full pages of advertising? Yes, I would. And why? Because it shows comprehensive, detailed, accurate, relevant and,

above all, recent, averages of what are the 'new normal' conditions to be expected anywhere in the world's seas. It is not a coffee table book, in spite of its colours and its glossiness – it's too big and its content makes it too much of a text book. However, for both armchair planning and keeping on board when deciding exactly where and when to sail next, it's something I would certainly appreciate. For the work which has gone into deriving its data and making it accessible in this way, it represents very good value and its data cannot be found in this form elsewhere.

TJB

NB: OCC members ordering Cornell's Ocean Atlas are offered a reduced price of £60 plus postage, and can have a signed personal dedication if they wish.



YOUR OFFSHORE DOCTOR – A Manual of Medical Self-Sufficiency at Sea – Michael H Beilan, 2nd edition. Published in soft covers on the CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform and available from Amazon at \$14.95 / £11.37. 204 229mm x 152mm pages. ISBN 978-1-9795-8087-8

The skipper is responsible for the vessel and the crew. Just as the boat must be well found and seaworthy, so the crew must be kept safe, victualled and healthy. Preparation is the secret to a safe and sound vessel and to a fit and healthy crew. In *Your Offshore Doctor*, Michael Beilan starts with a chapter on 'Preparation'. He recommends various websites regarding vaccinations and he emphasises that skippers should be aware of any chronic illness affecting crew members. Crew must take adequate medication with them for such afflictions as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy and hypertension. Remember, there is always the option to stay ashore.

Beilan recommends that sailors should take courses in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid. Although there are online courses, there is no substitute for proper hands-on experience with a mannikin. He is keen on record keeping. A note of when an event occurred and the treatment can prove invaluable. In medical practice, it has been said 'If it wasn't written down, it never happened'.

The next chapter deals appropriately with lifesaving under the headings CPR, choking, bleeding and shock, and anaphylactic shock. Good advice is given on CPR and the Heimlich manoeuvre, but I could not find an account of how to place a patient in the recovery position, not even in the chapter entitled 'Unconsciousness'. I agree with Beilan's advice regarding haemorrhage. He suggests that blood loss is best staunched by direct pressure on the bleeding point for at least ten minutes, perhaps longer. He advises 'Do not peek', because more blood will be lost while having a look too early. He dismisses the use of tourniquets, and certainly they can be counter-productive.

Further chapters cover infections (including sexually transmitted diseases), heart attack, unconsciousness, burns, swimming emergencies (drowning, the bends, jellyfish stings), trauma and, importantly, dentistry. In other sections, less common afflictions such as rattlesnake bite and poisoning are described. The emphasis, however, is somewhat

uneven. Sometimes more medical detail is included than perhaps is required by a non-medical sailor – for instance three pages explaining why antibiotics are not effective in viral illnesses such as cold or flu. On the other hand an increasing number of yachtsmen are taking a cardiac defibrillator offshore, a practice of debatable value, and yet I could find no reference or discussion of it, even in the section on heart attack.

This is a book to read before setting sail – it is not a handbook to dip into briefly. *Your Offshore Doctor* is written by an American doctor for American sailors. Virtually all the web sites given, mostly good and comprehensive, are American, and temperatures are given in Fahrenheit, as is the custom in the USA. The drugs all carry American names such as Acetaminophen (paracetamol), Demerol (merperidine in the USA but pethidine elsewhere). Bonine is the antihistamine Meclizine, often known as Dramamine. This is not a problem, but skippers must be careful that they carry the correct drugs in the correct doses especially if not bought at home.

The section on procedures is helpful. Different types of injection are described well. Setting up an intravenous infusion (a drip) is covered in detail but at sea is extremely difficult. The casualty is likely to be shocked, 'shut down' and cold. This makes access to a vein more than challenging, especially when being buffeted around on the cabin sole in the dark. In my view this should only be attempted by an experienced doctor or paramedic trained in the procedure. Those who sail with men of a 'certain age' should carry a urinary catheter. Acute retention of urine is agony, so learn how to pass a catheter – this book will help. For those with hypertension concerns, which does not include anyone with whom I have sailed, the suggestion to take an automatic blood pressure monitor is useful. Non-medics should leave the stethoscope at home.

Anyone, any skipper, but particularly a doctor, dreads having to treat someone at sea without proper equipment or drugs. Hence the temptation to turn the boat into a floating pharmacy with enough emergency medical kit to perform a transplant. This book recommends nearly sixty medications for an offshore voyage, some of them potentially hazardous (opioids, adrenaline) which in my opinion is too many unless there is a medic, like Dr Beilan, aboard.

Every boat should carry a medical text – for American sailors, this may be the one.

MHT



CAPTAIN BUNGLER'S ODYSSEY – Paddy Macklin. Published in soft covers by Podkin Press [www.podkinpress.com] at £16. 288 252mm x 178mm pages with a scattering of photos. ISBN 978-0-9559-4832-9

The full title of this book – *Captain Bungle's Singlehanded Round the World Odyssey* – gives the impression that the author is somewhat inept, but nothing could be further from the truth. Paddy Macklin may have lacked a certain awareness of what was to lie ahead when setting forth to cross the oceans, but what sailor doesn't on his or her maiden voyage? Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather before him, Paddy shows himself to have a true spirit of adventure as he progresses from being a pupil at a top English public school to sailing round the world on a shoestring.

Paddy is an intrepid adventurer who is self-motivated with a strong sense of self-preservation. He has a wonderful off-beat sense of humour which he drops in at regular intervals, but he is also emotional, and this is brought out when faced with certain circumstances.

The scene is set with descriptions of his upbringing against a background of motor sport, Invicta cars and life in the fast lane, even as a youngster setting himself targets which he achieves against the odds but which at times he pursues to extreme lengths – precursors of taking on the winter storms of the Southern Ocean in a very modest boat, determined not to be beaten. As he regularly tells himself when he gets disheartened by the relentless storms, ‘stop moaning, it was your choice, you didn’t have to do it’.

Following the introduction, which gives an insight to his formative years, Paddy takes the reader through a series of adventures as he learns the ropes of bluewater sailing on a shoestring, learning the hard way. Describing himself and his lifestyle as a hippie, which is probably not far from the truth, he retains a strong link with his family who come up trumps when needed, and has a remarkable memory for the large number of friends he has collected along the way, some who have helped him and others for whom he has done a good turn.

After several years of promising himself a non-stop circumnavigation in his beloved and faithful *Tessa*, a 27ft Buchanan-designed sloop, he eventually sets sail from Falmouth to try and emulate Sir Robin Knox-Johnston’s epic voyage of 1968. The second half of the book is a three-way description of Paddy’s circumnavigation. Having set up sat-phone communication links with his mother and sister for two separate days each week – his only communication with the outside world other than a VHF – the reader gets different perspectives on his experiences. The family ‘blogs’ reflect their reaction to and interpretation of his communications and their perception of his highs and lows. They are followed by extracts from Paddy’s log covering the same period, and one can feel the emotion coursing through each of them. One such entry describes a (very) near miss in the Southern Ocean when, sailing goose-winged, he has to alter course at short notice for a ship that is apparently unmanned on the bridge.

Paddy’s description of the seas encountered in the Southern Ocean bring to life the way that sailors of yesteryears must have felt, with the size and shape of the waves making the Bay of Biscay seem like a millpond. There are plentiful photographs of the waves taken through *Tessa*’s dome, hence the lack of clarity, but the effect is certainly there. He does not achieve his ambition to sail round the world non-stop, as he has to spend time in New Zealand making repairs, particularly to *Tessa*’s charging systems, and to sort himself out for the second half of his odyssey.

Paddy Macklin is a memorable character, down-to-earth with his observations on life, kind at heart and, I think, would admit to being a bit of an eccentric. Despite his shoestring circumnavigation, done at times using school atlases rather than Admiralty charts, he survived to tell the tale of views of mountainous waves, knock-downs and roll-overs, and returned to Falmouth none the worse for wear, albeit rather later than intended. *Captain Bungle’s Odyssey* is a book to adorn the shelves of any bluewater yacht and should be read by anyone aspiring to sail the Southern Ocean in winter. If it seems like a challenge you would relish and this book doesn’t put you off then the chances are that you will get what you deserve. But it can be done – Paddy Macklin did it.

PJM

TALES OF THREE SHIPS – text by Fiona Jones, illustrated by Hannah Edge. Published in soft covers and available from the author [www.talesofthreeships.co.uk] at £6.50 plus postage. 36 296mm x 208mm pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-9999-0310-7

This picture book by OCC member Fiona Jones, aimed at children aged about three to seven, describes the first part of her 14-year circumnavigation with her husband Chris in their Gitana 43 *Three Ships* and was written to explain their way of life to their grandchildren.

Each large-format page carries a colourful illustration by Hannah Edge. These are well-observed and full of detail, providing lots of opportunity for a young reader to spot things, or for an adult to point things out. The large-print text is written in rhyming couplets, which can be very effective if done well and can assist a child who is learning to read. Unfortunately, however, some of the lines don't scan properly, which could make reading this book aloud to a child quite frustrating – you get into a rhythm with poetry, and when extra words upset the scan, the flow is spoilt.

This is an entertaining story which is successful in describing many aspects of the cruising lifestyle – preparations, saying goodbye, bad weather, the joys of arrival, and even exploring a new and different country. The (simplified) sailing details are accurate, but there's a curious error near the end where the page describing Cape St Vincent – which has links to Prince Henry the Navigator – depicts Lisbon's famous Rose Compass accompanied by the words 'They saw a monument to Captain Cook in a giant compass shape'. But then it was never intended to be a geography text book!

Tales of Three Ships is quite long, and might be best read a few pages at a time to a younger child, but those captivated by the adventure can look forward to enjoying further books in this series as Fiona and Chris continue their circumnavigation.

NL



THE ATLANTIC CROSSING GUIDE – revised by Jane Russell for the RCC Pilotage Foundation (seventh edition). Published in hardback by Adlard Coles Nautical [www.adlardcoles.com] at £50 / \$75 (£45 through Amazon and £35.40 for the Kindle edition). 292 A4-size pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-4729-4766-6

I reviewed the third edition of this modern classic in *Flying Fish* 1992/2 and my goodness, what a lot has changed! The interweb thingy was invented, GPS and electronic charts came along, marinas have been built inside marinas, and now we are all passengers on our yachts while wi-fi takes care of all the boring stuff (including navigation – see more on that below). It also seems that I may have become a grumpy old man.

That third edition's cover had a single photograph of *Wrestler of Leigh*, the redoubtable Rustler 31, burying her nose into the back of a stormy-looking wave under a threatening, leaden sky – and clearly thriving in her element of the wild, untamed ocean. This seventh edition's cover tells an entirely different story. It shows the bow of a teak-decked

40-something footer cresting a tradewind wave in glorious sunshine with an enticing blue horizon ahead. The message has changed from: 'So you want to cross the Atlantic? Here's what you need to know' to 'Yes, it's every bit as good as you hope, here are lots of photos to prove it, here are plenty of things to think about while planning and preparing, and here are some descriptions of lovely places to leave from and arrive at'.

I exaggerate to get the shift of point of view across, but I don't denigrate the book because of that shift. I believe that its layout, structure and its text (with the exception of its pilotage notes and chartlets) are pitched perfectly at the modern first-time Atlantic crosser. Ocean sailing has become both widely aspirational and achievable in a way it used not to be. Boats have grown and their systems have become comprehensive, integrated and reliable. The balance has shifted from achievement through managing, to achievement through enjoyment.

So what about the detail? The first part, Preparations, is well-written, comprehensive and very well-illustrated. I set it some 'what about?' challenges (eg. total electrical failure, steering failure, anchoring choices etc) and it passed them all. It's surprising how much very sensible advice is packed in. We all have our pet do's and don'ts, and we'd all disagree with some of the things it says. However, it lays out all the choices, options and 'things to think about' really very well. The sections on 'creating a home from home' and 'a happy ship' are good examples of a more modern cruising approach.

The second part, Passage Planning, is much more of a curate's egg – good in parts. Its descriptions of routes and weather systems are very good, but are let down by the fact that its routing chart extracts have rather odd wind arrows and, hard as I looked, I couldn't find a key for them. So you're left wondering exactly which way they're pointing and whether each feather is 5 knots or the equivalent force in the Beaufort scale.

Its coverage extends up into the higher latitudes, recognising the increasing popularity of sailing in the ice. It also stretches across to the Panama Canal and down to Senegal and The Gambia. Again, we could all find fault with some of its harbour inclusions and exclusions – I regret that it misses the Algarve and, on the way to Panama, perhaps Cartagena would have been useful.

We then come to the real problem area, which is the harbours themselves. The pictures and text are captivating and informative, and I appreciated all of those for the harbours with which I'm familiar. Details like those of banks, post offices and gas supplies are gone, but its coverage of marinas, moorings and anchorages is fine and Google Earth can provide the rest. The chartlets, however, are very largely useless in this edition, being screenshots of Navionics electronic charts. They are far too cluttered to actually be used for pilotage, and they lack details such as light characteristics, which are only accessible in the 'live' chart version by drilling down.

Then, I am forced to say, my confidence in the pilotage notes took a knock. That is a dreadful thing to write, so let me explain. I looked hard at the chartlet and the notes for Falmouth, my home port. The chartlet correctly shows a red can marking the west side of the deep water channel into Carrick Roads (it shows the fact that it is lit, too, but not its light characteristics). It also shows that Black Rock, close to the west of that can, is now also lit as the isolated danger it has always been. The pilotage notes, however, remain unchanged from the sixth edition. At that time, the pilotage text and the chartlet were at least consistent with each other, but in fact neither reflected

the fact that the lighting and buoyage had by that time already changed (Black Rock was lit for the first time in 169 years in 2006 – wrecking traditions die hard!).

My concern is that this may not be a single oversight, but may possibly be a result of ‘outsourcing’ the chartlet production to Navionics, which has metaphorically ‘distanced’ them from the writing of the pilotage notes. It also demonstrates the fact that the chartlets are so hard to use that at no stage in the checking process did anyone notice the disconnect between words and picture. I only managed to because I am familiar with the history of the marking of Black Rock. It probably also says something more fundamental about electronic aids to navigation which can encourage you to look without seeing – but that would just be me being old and grumpy.

The publisher’s price is high, but Amazon’s feels much better, starting as it does with a ‘4’. For the amount of really good information it contains and the truly beautiful photography, it’s perfectly good value. However, because of the chartlet problem in this 7th edition, and my doubts over whether the pilotage notes have been fully updated, I really could not recommend buying it unless you were prepared to heed entirely the warning on the fly page from Navionics that their charts are ‘not to be used for navigation’.

TJB



SHAKEDOWN CRUISE – Nigel Calder. Published in hard covers by Adlard Coles Nautical [www.adlardcoles.com] at £20 / \$25. 224 246mm x 162mm pages, plus 16 pages of colour photos in the centre. ISBN 978-1-4729-4671-3

We’ve all heard of Nigel Calder – and most boats have his books on board, complete with oily thumb prints when *Marine Diesel Engines* or the *Boatowner’s Mechanical and Electrical Manual* have helped sort out a problem. But I was surprised to discover that the *Shakedown Cruise* in this title took place in 1987, the same year we were enjoying our second Atlantic circuit. We probably shared anchorages, although we never met. So the experiences of *Nada’s* crew ring very true; it was the era of simple cruising, often in smaller boats, with no GPS or other technical gadgets. The fact that Nigel and Terrie’s 39ft home-completed GRP ketch had a fridge, freezer and microwave made her better equipped than most cruising boats 30 years ago – certainly ours. But there’s no point in having all that unless you have enough power, and their microwave was soon relegated to being a bread bin...

Shakedown Cruise is subtitled *Lessons and Adventures from a Cruising Veteran as he learns the ropes*, and from the day of the launch in Louisiana to Venezuela, via Key West, the Bahamas and the Leeward and Windward Islands, *Nada* was beset with problems and hairy incidents – to say the skipper was on a learning curve would be an understatement. Within days they are aground – 6ft of draft in 4½ft of water – but eventually a fisherman helps get them floated again. Throughout this book, the pages with a dark grey background contain Nigel Calder’s current thoughts on dealing with a variety of tricky situations, so along with being an entertaining read, this cruise account contains lots of useful advice.

As the author admits, *Nada* isn't the most suitable boat for this voyage. She doesn't sail well to windward, she's top-heavy due to her extra-strong deck so her gunwales are awash in even a moderate breeze, and she has too much stuff on board, including a diesel stove with a cast iron top. As well as being heavy, it creates far too much heat in the tropics. Calder bought it because of his aversion to gas as a cooking fuel – this reviewer sailed with a similar skipper and stove back in the '70s – it also turned out to be an expensive mistake! Over the following years the Calders have owned *Nadas II*, *III*, and *IV*, all of them more seaworthy, more comfortable, and eventually using gas for cooking, which admittedly is much safer and better regulated than it used to be.

To add to an already challenging situation on *Nada*, there were two very young children aboard. Pippin was just a year old at the start of the cruise, and she was joined by her brother Paul less than a year later. Having crossed oceans with one (very easy) two-year-old 25 years ago, I have great admiration for a young couple coping with two children, especially as Pippin was frequently seasick, something small kids aren't usually bothered by. Their son was born during a three month trip back to US, and within days of their return to Venezuela, Nigel and Terrie were taking the children on intrepid trips inland, up steep mountain roads and sometimes having to sleep in very rustic accommodation – the sort of thing you look back on years later and can't quite believe you got away with! At this point Nigel realises that going into the Pacific isn't on, due both to the children and the need to be close to home to research his books, destined to become best-sellers and to support the family financially.

Shakedown Cruise is illustrated with 16 pages of evocative colour photos and numerous black and white chartlets showing *Nada's* track southwards. Unfortunately the islands are almost obliterated in the dark grey of the shallow soundings, and only the deeper sea is pale. Presumably taken directly from the colourful, easy-to-read Imray-Iolaire charts which the author was using, the conversion to black and white simply doesn't work. On the plus side, a considerable amount of well-researched history gives an interesting background to this lively narrative, and for anyone who has cruised the Caribbean, especially 30 years ago rather than more recently, it will bring great memories along with gasps of horror at some of the alarming incidents that this inexperienced crew had to cope with. That they came through relatively unscathed is a great relief. I thoroughly enjoyed this book – highly recommended!

EHMH



THE MERCY (film). A British biographical drama, directed by James Marsh, written by Scott Z Burns and starring Colin Firth, Rachel Weisz, David Thewlis and Ken Stott.

With the resurrection of the Golden Globe Race comes the release of a film called *The Mercy*, which tells the extraordinary tale of Donald Crowhurst's bid for fame and fortune in the first Golden Globe singlehanded non-stop race around the world. Starring Colin Firth and Rachel Weisz, it's a disturbing journey through the deteriorating state of mind of a man who set out to win everything and realises he is about to lose everything instead.

The reviews have been mixed, but for sailors, especially those old enough to have followed the original story or read the subsequent excellent account in *Voyage for Madmen*, it's a must-see. Soon after setting off in *Teignmouth Electron*, Crowhurst realises that the 41ft trimaran is not up to the task. Yet having wagered everything, including his house and his business, he cannot quit. He must keep going.

The boat leaks and he uses a bucket to empty the outriggers. He survives a storm under bare poles. When he comes to accept that his boat will not survive the pounding of the high latitudes, and desperate to win the £5000 prize money that will save him from bankruptcy, he concocts a means of reporting his position by plotting a course he imagines would put him in the lead. With this, the media create a sensation around his story. His mental state cracks in the horse latitudes when he makes no progress. He knows he won't stand up to the scrutiny if he does come in first, so he slows himself down to come in last – except that Moitessier decides he doesn't want the fame and keeps going, and Nigel Tetley drives his boat so hard that she breaks up and sinks. Only young Robin Knox-Johnston in the much smaller and slower *Suhaili* remains in the race, the only sailor to cross the line. Unable to deal with the fallout, Crowhurst breaks and decides to seek 'the Mercy'. His boat is found adrift with no-one on board, leaving behind a great mystery and infamy.

I thought *The Mercy* was very well acted and would not be surprised if there were several Oscar nominations. Despite being a story of more than seven months spent drifting around the Atlantic, it was fast-paced and the end came sooner than expected. I'd forgotten that Honorary OCC Member Knox-Johnston donated his winnings to Crowhurst's widow and children – the scenes of him crossing the finishing line at Falmouth is actual footage from the real race.

For sailors in general it won't be a joyful experience. For racers, it may reveal some of the inner struggles that propel them to the start line and across the finish.

DOB



200,000 MILES: A LIFE OF ADVENTURE – Jimmy Cornell. Published in semi-hard covers by Cornell Sailing Ltd [www.cornellsailing.com] at £29.95. 414 214mm x 149mm pages carrying over 500 colour photos. ISBN 978-0-9572-6268-3

200,000 Miles is both a continuation and expansion of Jimmy's autobiography *A Passion for the Sea*, published some ten years ago, and a distillation of many years' practical experience in world cruising under sail. Largely based on anecdotes from Jimmy's wide-ranging experience, though not in chronological order, it is fun to read and possible to dip into as a guide to practically any aspect of long distance sailing. Thus advice ranges from pets to pests, monohulls versus multihulls, etc etc. He is, however, even-handed, and gives alternative views of each issue, explaining his opinions based on his enormous range of experience in his own boats over the 200,000 miles of the title. The book is substantial and thus not an easy bedtime read, but is very well produced. Almost every page carries a photograph or two, although many are not captioned, and

there are a few chartlets in addition to those on the end-papers.

His advice begins with choice of boat design and material, and desirable fit-out parameters for reliability as well as crew safety and protection. For instance, he advises readers not to follow racing specifications, that spade rudders are best avoided, that gear should be oversize and reliable, to divide up sail area with a cutter rig etc. It is interesting that Jimmy originally put forward the ideal size of an ocean cruising boat as 40ft, in order to be easily handled by a couple, but went up to 43ft for *Aventura III* and then 45ft for *Aventura IV*, though she carried more crew for the Northwest Passage. He has also fallen in love with aluminium construction and centreboards, although these can involve higher costs.

In addition to his own circumnavigations, Jimmy's regular surveys from his own rallies – the 1986 ARC onwards – are illuminating and well-quoted, including comments on failures and damage situations. His primary philosophy for enjoyable sailing is to follow the trade winds as far as possible, and safety and reliability in offshore waters are stressed in good measure. He has caveats, however, such as – do not ignore a weather system in order to pinpoint an arrival date, as 'this can cause a headache'.

Jimmy provides a great breadth of advice besides passage-making, such as his admirably detailed coverage of laying-up. Although time on this is always well spent, after many lay-ups Jimmy seems to have got it down to a fine art and is able to leave his boat tucked up for an extended period after just two days of work! Certainly the reviewer can identify with his tips to avoid finding, on return, a boom packed tight with bird-nest material and a masthead wand bent and damaged by perching sea birds! Although not specifically stated, the maintenance and repair matters mentioned throughout the book do require a skipper to be able, practical and knowledgeable, so hopefully more independent of outside assistance.

To sum up, *200,000 Miles* is both an entertaining read and a good onboard reference, with a wealth of all-round advice and practical experience. Every page speaks of knowledge gained from his adventurous life on both land and sea. Recommended.

JLC



Just the other day I was in my neighbourhood Starbucks, waiting for the post office to open. I was enjoying a chocolatey café mocha when it occurred to me that to drink a mocha is to gulp down the entire history of the New World. From the Spanish exportation of Aztec cacao, and the Dutch invention of the chemical process for making cocoa, on down to the capitalist empire of Hershey, PA, and the lifestyle marketing of Seattle's Starbucks, the modern mocha is a bittersweet concoction of imperialism, genocide, invention, and consumerism served with whipped cream on top.

Sarah Vowell