



**GREEK WATERS PILOT – Rod and Lucinda Heikell, 13th (2018) edition. Published in hard covers by Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson [[www.imray.com](http://www.imray.com)] at £42.50. 568 A4 pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-8462-3950-2**

Imray, the publishers, unequivocally claim that the *Greek Waters Pilot* by Rod and Lucinda Heikell is 'the definitive cruising guide to the coasts and islands of Greece' and that it is an 'indispensable guide for anyone sailing around Greece'. Indeed, it is often referred to as 'the Bible'. Charterers and flotilla sailors who cruise only in the Ionian or West or East Aegean for short periods may, however, find the Heikells' pilot books specific to those areas more appropriate to their requirements, given that this might be a cheaper option, and that those pilots do contain more detailed information on some of the smaller harbours and anchorages that cannot be covered as comprehensively in this major guide. Cruisers on their own yachts may also find much of interest, together with additional pilotage information, in these companion publications.

After forty years of cruising, skippering and delivering boats in the Mediterranean, Rod Heikell has become the acknowledged expert on sailing in the Med and in particular in Greece. His first edition of the *Greek Waters Pilot* was published in 1982 and this early, simpler, monochrome version has become a collector's item. The *Pilot* has long been the yardstick by which other pilot books are measured and is also published, under licence, in German, French and Italian. Fluent bilingual Scandinavians presumably see no need for a translation.

The Introduction gives an excellent overview, sound advice, and fully covers the common factors and wide range of essential information relevant to cruising in Greece. Since each Sea Area of Greece has a character of its own, each of the book's ten chapters covers issues particular to an area, together with its coastlines and islands.

Although Rod wrote the early editions of the book on his own, Lucinda now contributes significantly to all aspects – she and Rod work as a team, sailing, researching, writing and checking together. In particular she has contributed photographically to the *Pilot*, which now includes many more excellent shots which help improve their readers' perspective and better complement the text. They jointly write in a concise, clear and yet entertaining style, which conveys first-hand practical advice while conjuring the magic of Greece. Their asides – details of geography and history, food and wine and, in particular, mythological anecdotes – make this book much more than 'just a pilot book'.

Details of over 450 harbours and anchorages are included. The checking and organisation of so much detail within the confines of the 568 pages is a Herculean achievement. Equally impressive are the authors' obvious energy, enthusiasm and

ability to keep on top of the endless changes and corrections that inevitably arise. Their comment that they simply ‘potter around the coast and islands checking up on things’ is probably something of an understatement. Between editions, free correctional supplements are published on the internet at [www.imray.com](http://www.imray.com), and these are enormously helpful.

The 13th edition of the *Greek Waters Pilot* is said, by the publishers, to contain ‘detailed updating of every part of the guide; in particular, areas of the Ionian, Saronic and Northern Greece, visited by the authors since the last edition, have had major revisions’. We understand that other changes to both the text and charts have been effected following information received from the Heikells’ network of connections and via reports from individual cruisers. Having visited many locations in the Aegean and, to a lesser extent the Ionian, and vandalised with notes our 12th edition, we can say with confidence that every correction or modification that we thought might be appropriate appears to have been addressed in this latest edition.

With each copy of the new *Pilot*, Imray provide a voucher for the download (on their free Navigator App) of their digital charts for both Central and Eastern Mediterranean to iPad, iPhone or Android devices. These have a retail value of £70 inclusive of quarterly updates in the first year of use. Thereafter one would have to subscribe to receive such updates, but could still continue to use the charts in their original form. Given the increasing number of yachtsmen who prefer information in digital form, it is possible to buy a PDF version of the entire book via e-book stores. Theoretically the price is the same as the printed version, but digital stores sometimes discount it.

In conclusion, we would unhesitatingly recommend the *Greek Waters Pilot* to anyone planning on or already sailing in Greece. The million-dollar question, however, is would we recommend its purchase to owners of previous editions? Our answer can only be that it is each individual’s decision where their own priorities lie. We would choose to forgo a meal in a *taverna* and a bottle or three of wine – or possibly even *ouzo* – on the boat in order to purchase this latest edition of the book, which at £42.50 (plus delivery) is a snip in terms of value for money.

M&HN



**HAPPY HOOKING: THE ART OF ANCHORING – Capt Alex Blackwell and Capt Daria Blackwell, 3rd edition. Published in soft covers by the authors and available through Amazon at £22.89. 378 229mm x 152mm pages with many black-and-white photographs and line drawings. ISBN 978-1-7957-1741-0**

This is a big book – more than 350 pages – but then it’s a big subject. Gather a cockpit full of sailors in any part of the world and it won’t be long before the talk turns to anchors ... and anchoring ... and anchorages ... and more opinions on all of them than seem entirely credible. But this book is not really aimed at experienced sailors who have managed to get themselves as far as Nuku Hiva or the Drake Passage. It starts out with the premise that somebody has just bought his or her first boat and doesn’t even know there are different types of anchor.

Actually, I wish I’d had a copy when I bought my present boat and found she came

with the original 45 year old CQR. What followed was hours (weeks) of deliberating over magazine tests and YouTube videos, most of which seemed to contradict each other (see ‘opinions’ above). *Happy Hooking* summarises them all – and a lot more that you would never have considered without devoting your life to the subject, as the Blackwells seem to have done. After all, who knew about the Rocking Anchor or the Flying Anchor or the one that has an air bubble on the top to keep it upright, or the XYZ Extreme which looks like a piece of modern art – or the Box Anchor which might double as a cake tin...

The authors treat them all to the same measured and dispassionate analysis – and no matter how many nights you have spent swinging to the hook, or how opinionated you may become with a glass of rum punch in your hand, you are guaranteed to find something here to help you counter somebody else’s point of view – it really is that comprehensive.

Of course, the very fact that it sets out to be so all-encompassing means that experienced cruisers might be a little bemused to find step-by-step instructions on filling a bucket with seawater while the boat is moving – but then, how many times have you seen a novice nearly pull themselves over the side trying to do exactly that? And if you consider anchor-cleaning methods deserve a place in a book about anchoring, then why on earth not include letting the thing hang just below the surface while you motor on your way (as long you don’t forget it, of course)?

Advice on heaving-to gets in there (well, you’d anchor if you could reach the bottom) and the use of drogues. In fact, by the time the authors get around to discussing prop-walk the reader might be forgiven for worrying about the amount of space in their on-board bookshelf. But did you know that you can tell a right-hand propeller by shaking hands with it?

Considering the sheer weight of information, an index would have been helpful and the Blackwells – American members based in Ireland – tend towards Imperial measurements and US terminology – although there is a glossary at the back. Also, being self-published, it could have benefited from some independent editing. There is one hilarious passage describing an ingenious system for distributing the chain in a below-decks anchor locker. This involves a bungee and a line through a series of blocks so that the foredeck crew can yank the chain sideways as it goes down. It sounds a great idea, well-deserving of the name the Anchor Yanker – although the authors’ spellchecker has helpfully substituted a W for the Y!

Never mind. Buy the book. It’s a treasure trove – even if for nothing more than the ability to stop any anchoring argument in its tracks by quoting the Intercept Theorem (a method for calculating scope by rode angle). The most useful formula, however, is the one for calculating your Proper Anchor Value. This is equal to the sum of Boat Value Before Hitting Rocks minus Boat Value After Hitting Rocks.

JP



**SAIL AWAY – Nicola Rodriguez, 2nd edition. Published in soft covers by Fernhurst Books [[www.fernhurstbooks.com](http://www.fernhurstbooks.com)] at £18.99. 248 240mm x 170mm pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-9121-7723-3**

The second edition of Nicola Rodriguez' *Sail Away* has just been published, and as the reviewer of the original in 2011 (see *Flying Fish* 2012/1) I was interested to see how the two books differed and what was new. Back then I wrote:

'Leaving in 2002, Nicola and John Rodriguez cruised for two years in a Westerly Corsair, which was seriously damaged in hurricane *Ivan* while they were at home for the birth of their first son, Jack. Undeterred, they set off again in 2007 in a Moody 38 and a year later their second son James joined the crew.

The first thing you notice about Nicola's book is the gorgeous colour photographs, many of them taken by her husband John. These alone would be enough to tempt one to follow the book's title and *Sail Away* – (how to) Escape the rat race and live the Dream. But dip into the nearly 300 pages you'll find just about everything covered, along with encouraging anecdotes from many experienced cruising sailors, including several OCC members. The author doesn't go into any topic at great length – you'd need a full library to do that – but she suggests further reading and points you in the right direction. Extensive lists, from galley stores to safety equipment and much in between, will give the aspiring cruiser lots of ideas...

This book would be particularly helpful and informative for any couple considering setting off with small children. Nicola and John were joined by two sons in relatively quick succession, in the latter part of the time they were cruising, and the author conveys very vividly the joys of having kids aboard, along with the hard work and stress – a two year old needs constant supervision unless he's asleep in a secure bunk! Having cruised for three years with a daughter under five, I'd echo all that Nicola says – your child will benefit hugely from having such close contact and attention from both parents, and a tropical beach beats any sand pit. However, it's probably wise for the parents to be fairly experienced sailors before trying to cope with a child, or children, on board.'

I would fully endorse Nicola's comment that the most precious part of a cruising child's education will be his or her log. She's referring to older kids, but making a scrapbook is hugely worthwhile for any age group and, 25 years on, we still enjoy revisiting the log made for the benefit of our youngest crew member, with its photos, messy paintings, little souvenirs, and the story of our three years living aboard, especially as she has only a hazy memory of it today.

Comparing the two books, the page count is more or less the same in both editions, although the new one is a taller paperback with print that is slightly larger, and the new, coloured page headings for the different topics makes it quicker to find what you're looking for. There are more recipes in this edition, all in a much easier to read format, with larger print plus a photo of each dish. Other than that, it is word-for-word the same as its predecessor. Anyone who bought the first edition won't benefit much by replacing it with this one, but for those new to cruising, looking for a wide range of up-to-date information and good advice to help them prepare for a first voyage, *Sail Away* is a great choice.

EHHM

**THE SCHOONER MAGGIE B: A Southern Ocean Circumnavigation – Frank Blair.** Published in hard covers by Seapoint Books [[www.seapointbooks.com](http://www.seapointbooks.com)] at US\$40.00/£31.99 (considerable discounts on Amazon). 400 260mm x 210mm pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-0-9973-9208-1

I loved this book. It's that rare combination of great adventure and writing that draws you in and makes you want to be a part of it all. Accompanying the text are many excellent photographs, some quite dramatic, and Yuta Onota's beautiful illustrations. For those who have ventured to some of Frank Blair's destinations, the book allows one to revisit and compare notes with the author's experience, and where the passage or landfall is unfamiliar, the lively narrative offers delightful armchair exploration.

Frank Blair served in the US Navy for five years, first as a carrier-based fighter pilot, flying single-seat fighters in the Mediterranean and the Western Pacific, and later conducting low-level reconnaissance over North Vietnam. His love of sailing began in childhood and for 20 years he taught seamanship at the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School. In 2005 he built a 63ft wooden schooner in Nova Scotia, and in March 2006 set off on a two year voyage to circumnavigate the globe. Frank's account of his voyage begins to unfold when his 20 year old son Alden asks him to promise that 'by the time I graduate from college, I want you to buy or build a boat that you and I can sail around the world, together with friends'.

Frank set about fulfilling this promise. *The Schooner Maggie B* tells about the failures along the way as well as the great successes, chief among them a sailor's dream voyage accomplished. He recounts the apprehensions and joys, the breakdowns and the recoveries, landfalls at faraway ports, struggles with local bureaucracies, the sublime pleasures of a clear night watch and days with fresh gales. This book should be on every sailor's 'must read' list.

A number of acclaimed authors and adventurers have shared their enthusiasm for *Maggie B*:

Caroline Alexander, author of *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition* and *The Bounty: The True Story of the Mutiny on the Bounty*: wrote 'Some adventures are thrilling to read about, but the reader is glad to be safe at home; more rare are adventures you would actually want to share. *The Schooner Maggie B* is the latter – a sailor's story of fulfilling the old dream of circumnavigation. The highly-readable narrative unfolds not only daily events of wind and weather, but also the decisions of seamanship and sea-lore that each day brings – leaving you with the heady feeling you are now a seasoned Blue Water sailor'.

Nigel Irens, master boat designer and the designer of *Maggie B* wrote: 'As a fine violin is brought to life by the hands of a worthy violinist, *Maggie B* was dependent on her captain and crew to make something of her. How fortunate we were as designers and builders to see this vessel picked up where we had left off and brought to life over the coming years by such a formidable leader and his enthusiastic crew!'

Charles Doane, cruising editor at *SAIL Magazine*, and author of *The Modern Cruising Sailboat: A Complete Guide to Its Design, Construction, and Outfitting* and *The Sea Is Not Full: Ocean Sailing for Fools, Poets, and Other Pretenders* added: 'What a charming book! I had admired *Maggie B* from afar, thought her one of Nigel Irens' most intriguing designs, and was heartbroken when she was destroyed. Here her owner brings her fully back to life, shares the ups and downs of a challenging circumnavigation via the Horn, drops many valuable hints on blue-water voyaging, and puts us aboard right beside him'.

The schooner *Maggie B* was tragically destroyed in a fire after Frank completed his circumnavigation. 'While my grandchildren will never sail her, neither will she sit on the hard somewhere and rust and rot away unloved. We gathered up some of her ashes from the fire and will scatter bits all around the world', Frank, devastated by her loss, ends the book. He now sails *Farfarer*, like *Maggie B* a Nigel Irens design, built by the same boatyard as the *Maggie B*, Covey Island Boatworks in Nova Scotia.

ZSG

A fuller version of this review appeared in the 2019 issue of *Voyages*, the annual magazine of the Cruising Club of America.

