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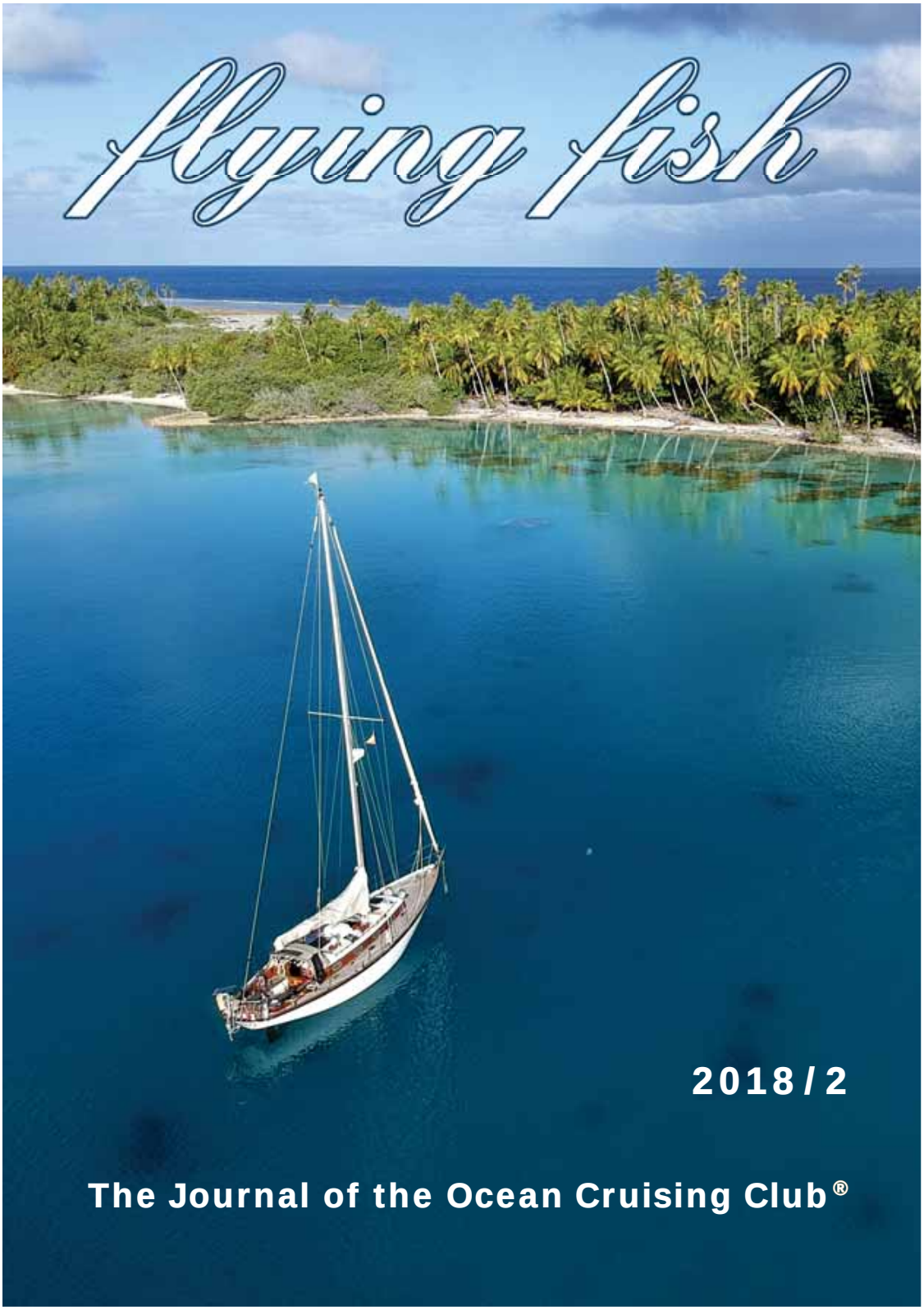

2018/2

The Journal of the Ocean Cruising Club®

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I always wonder if anyone ever reads the editorial, so it's really nice when my requests bring results! This was the case with my appeal for more proof-readers in *Flying Fish* 2018/1, and though only one (excellent) volunteer came forward in time to assist with this issue, two more have put their heads above the parapet more recently and will be initiated on 2019/1. The turnover rate tends to be slow, fortunately, as most proof-readers assure me they really enjoy it and some have read every word of every issue for decades. Now that's what I call dedication!

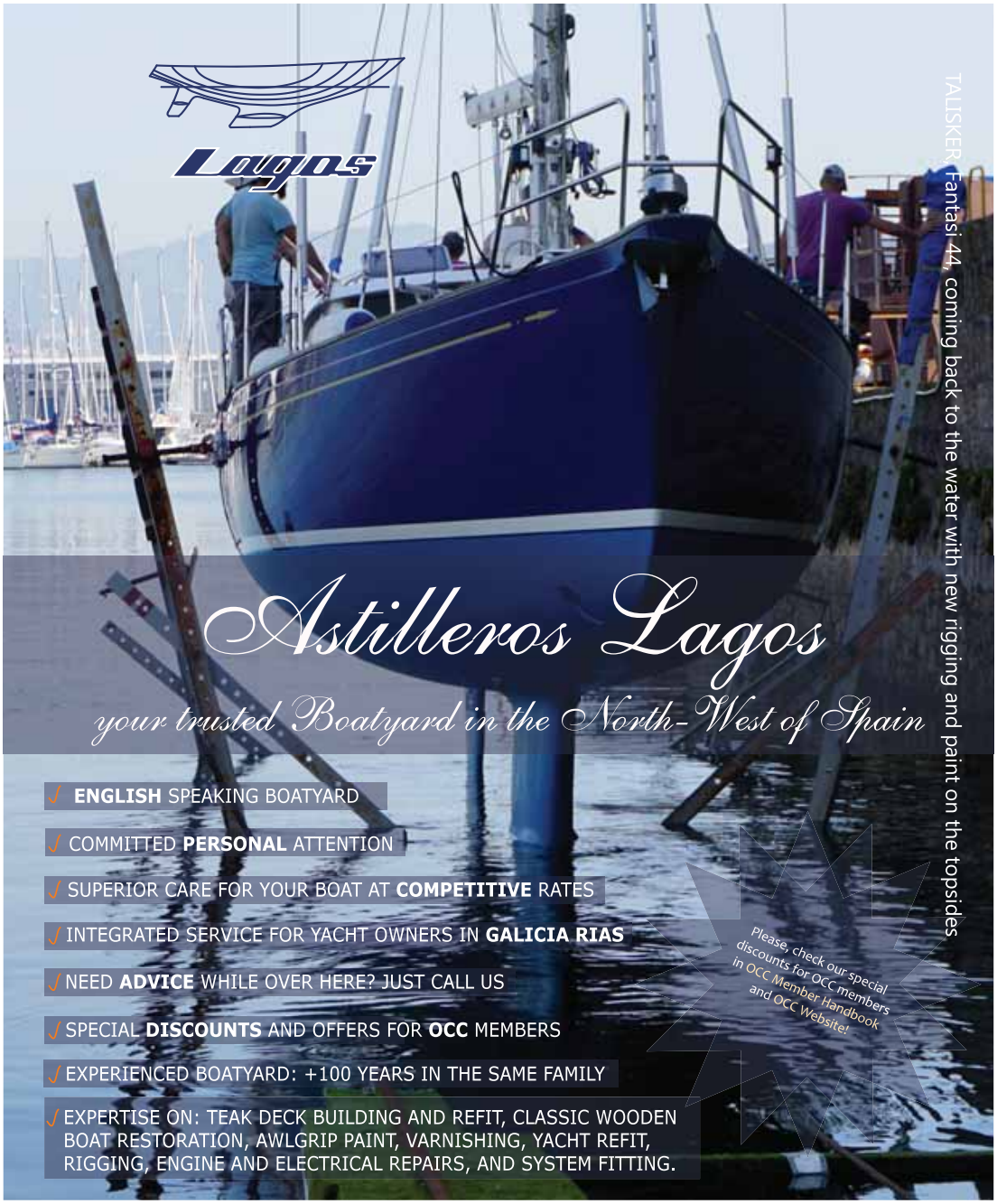
From the sublime to the ridiculous – well, not quite! – and what I'm asking for this time are more recipes, ideally short ones which can be squeezed into half a page or less. When I started the feature in *Flying Fish* 2009/2 my intention was to use recipes to fill those irritating gaps at the ends of articles – the ones which are too small for a half-page advertisement but rather too big for a snatch of poetry, philosophy or other *bon mot* – so while the occasional longer recipe is fine, it's the short, simple, boat-friendly ones that I welcome most. One day we must have a bring-a-plate party featuring only items made from recipes which have appeared in the *Fish* – it could be quite a feast!

Back to the sublime – or at least the very impressive – and as someone struggling to learn Portuguese I take my hat off to the four members who've written for this issue despite English not being their first language. This underlines just what a worldwide Club we are and I would urge anyone, native English-speaker or not, who has a story to tell but is unsure of their writing skills to have a go. Spell-checkers do much to help with our sometimes crazy spelling, and as editor it's part of my job to sort out any grammatical glitches, though hopefully without losing the author's own, individual voice. Turn to pages 39, 166 and 192 to decide for yourself whether I've succeeded.

You may already have noticed that this is the fattest *Fish* for several years, and this is reflected in the wide variety of places it features. From Alaska to Antarctica, North Cape to South Georgia, and the Aegean to the Marshall Islands via the Bahamas, our members have not just been there but have invited you to accompany them, in spirit at least. And, as always, their photos are just as evocative as their words.

Finally, the usual reminder – the **DEADLINE** for submissions to *Flying Fish 2019/1* is **Friday 1st February**, though I always try to be flexible if the issue isn't full. I have three articles already on file, however, plus another promised, so don't leave writing until the last moment ... and unless you're a seasoned contributor, please read *Sending Submissions to Flying Fish* on page 18, or the more detailed *Guidelines for Contributors* downloadable from the homepage of the *Flying Fish* online archive, before you start. Many thanks indeed, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Cover Photo: Celeste at anchor in the beautiful Tuamotus, August 2018 – see A Penchant for the Primitive, page 5. Drone photo by Ellen and Seth Leonard



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A PENCHANT FOR THE PRIMITIVE: Reflections on spending my twenties at sea

Ellen Massey Leonard

(Ellen and Seth Leonard both grew up sailing, and set off on a four-year westabout circumnavigation from Maine via Panama and the Cape of Good Hope in 2006, when they were 20 and 23. Despite moving to landlocked Switzerland on their return for Seth's PhD in Economics, they continued voyaging each summer, covering over 13,000 miles in Alaska and the Arctic between 2013 and 2017 – see Voyaging to the Top of America *in* Flying Fish 2016/1.

They returned to warmer climes by sailing to Mexico in the winter of 2017/18, and recently completed their second Pacific crossing, followed by a three-month cruise through the French Polynesian islands. They celebrated 50,000 sea miles on the crossing and hope to sail many more!

All photographs are by Ellen and Seth Leonard, as is this issue's evocative cover photo. Visit their impressive blog at https://gonefloatabout.com/ for many more.)

Starting out aged 20 and 23 …

As we sailed into Kodiak, Alaska in June 2017, I realised it was exactly ten years to the day since my husband Seth and I had made landfall after our first ocean crossing. I remember that moment vividly. Ever since I'd learned to sail at age six I had wanted to cross the Pacific, and here I was, only 21 years old, having done just that. Seth and I had been alone at sea together for nearly

… and back in the South Pacific, twelve years later

a month, and in all that time had communicated only with one another. Entirely removed from the world beyond our watery horizon, we'd fallen into a quietly efficient and contented routine – of watches, meals, bucket showers, navigation, reading and simply observing our pelagic world. Neither of us wanted it to end. Sighting Hiva Oa, deep green beneath a bank of cloud, was almost bittersweet – the fulfilment of childhood dreams, the tangible evidence of a great accomplishment, but also the end of those magical days at sea.

After rowing ashore it took us over an hour to walk the mile or so to the *gendarmerie* in Atuona, so bowled over were we by the sights, scents, and sounds of land. At one point, while we were admiring a songbird by the side of the road, a truck slowed to see what had us so enthralled. Those Marquesan men were the first people we'd talked to, besides each other, in a month.

In typical Marquesan *kaoha* (*aloha*) spirit, the *gendarmes* were unconcerned about our clearance process, so we had plenty of time to wander over to the post office, connect to dial-up internet on their boxy computers, and type out our first e-mails to our parents since leaving the Galapagos. Then we bought a fresh baguette in the market and strolled down to the seawall to eat it and watch the locals surf.

Approaching the Marquesas Islands after a month at sea, 20th June 2007

When an acquaintance in New York whom I've not met in person read my account of this, she assumed Seth and I had undertaken this voyage many, many years ago and that we were both in late middle age. I can see why she'd think that – even in 2007 it was highly unusual to cruise aboard a boat which had more in common with *Suhaili* than with a modern production yacht.

Primitive but beautiful – Heretic dwarfed by ships in Gatun Lake, Panama Canal, March 2007

Seth and I seem to have a penchant for the primitive. We're not Luddites – Seth writes computer programs for the finance industry for a living – but somehow we always end up voyaging aboard unnecessarily primitive boats. Some of it has had to do with being very young and having very little money, but I think more of it has to do with our personalities. Outwardly it might appear that we're a little masochistic or that we're trying to prove something to ourselves through unnecessary discomfort. In reality, though, we're just incorrigible optimists. We want to sail around the world? Sure, let's do it! Who cares that the portholes leak so badly you could use them to shave under? Who cares that the boom looks like Swiss cheese or that the masthead is cracked? Your bunk's soaked? Wear your foulweather gear!

Our secondary – or perhaps primary – problem is that we both care far more about a lovely sheer line than pressure water or even modern electronics. Again we're not Luddites – or wooden boat nuts, which may or may not be the same thing. We don't think that anything old and wooden is automatically beautiful, nor do we relish the idea of thousands of potentially loose or rusting fasteners holding our hull together. Both of us did, however, grow up with the *Wooden Boats* calendar on the wall, *Skene's Elements of Yacht Design* on the bookshelf, and historic schooners anchored in the bays outside our windows. In my case, that bay was a fair-weather anchorage in British Columbia and the schooners included the *Robertson II*, which once carried fishing dories to the Grand Banks of Newfoundland. In Seth's case, that bay was Blue Hill, Maine and those schooners were the windjammers that once took granite to New York City.

When Seth and I met – in Brooklin, Maine, incidentally one of the world's classic boat capitals – he had already purchased the boat on which he planned to sail around the world. She was a 38ft cutter-rigged sloop copy of the famous Bermuda racer *Finisterre*. Built in 1968 of solid GRP – to a 1954 design – she was heavy, wet and, some would say, cramped. Her short (27ft) waterline, tapering stern and low freeboard, combined with her limited headroom – the cabin sole was laid on top of the centreboard trunk

– made her cabin very small compared with modern 38ft production yachts (which tend to have high freeboard, LWLs nearly as long as their LOAs, and sterns as wide as amidships). But she was simply lovely, with her curving bow, wine-glass transom, and varnished mahogany cabin with its oval ports. Had Seth had an ugly boat, I'm not so sure I would have volunteered myself for the voyage...

At the time (July 2006), Seth and I were 23 and 20 years old respectively. While we had both grown up sailing, and been taught to navigate on paper (although unfortunately we hadn't been taught celestial), neither of us had been offshore. So when, with the callow assurance of all 20-year-olds, we announced that we were going to circumnavigate the planet, we were met with incredulity, naysaying and even ridicule. Consequently, the boat was rechristened *Heretic*. (She had to be rechristened something – her prior owner had called her *Le Bon Temps*. Try that on the VHF.)

Poor *Heretic* was rather the worse for having passed through several owners who hadn't used or maintained her. The ports honestly did leak enough to shave under, the bunks really were constantly wet, the propane system was so dodgy that we used a portable alcohol stove until we had re-plumbed it, the rig really might have fallen over if we hadn't replaced the whole thing, and the only wires we didn't replace caught fire on one of our first passages. The holding tank was a bladder that leaked into the bilge (respirator required for that project!), the sheer-clamp needed refastening, and the tube through which the control line for the centreboard ran had rusted through at the waterline – it's a miracle she didn't sink before we found that out! On the day we departed after months of restoration work, a mysterious fitting on the engine started gushing oil so badly

Navigating the traditional way, one of the more minor ways in which Heretic wasn't a 21st century boat

Battling against Heretic's decrepit state before departure from Maine in 2006. Too bad the heater never worked!

that we plugged it up with the first thing to hand – an old, disused gimbal from the galley.

Then there were the many 'modern conveniences' which *Heretic* lacked and which, because we were 20 years old and knew no better, we didn't miss. On account of all the repairs, we didn't leave Maine until 31st October, the day after the first major winter storm (with 60 knots recorded in the harbour) passed through, and the morning of the first very hard frost. *Heretic*'s GRP hull was uninsulated and she had no heater. She also didn't have a dodger*. We simply thought that a heavily condensating hull, a drenched cockpit, and cabin temperatures hovering at freezing were normal for cold-weather sailing.

Heretic had no autopilot and, for the first 2000 miles, no wind vane. It wasn't until we started to meet other cruising boats that we realised hand-steering as if racing round the buoys was not normal. Because we were hand-steering we had two friends aboard with us, and the four of us (three boys and me) shared *Heretic*'s small, old-fashioned, open cabin. It wasn't until we were invited aboard an Island Packet that we realised that *Heretic*'s layout – two small quarter berths, galley and chart table facing each other, table down the middle with two settees either side, hanging locker facing the head, and V-berth forward – and her utter lack of privacy – were no longer standard issue. Seth and I also realised then that most voyaging yachts are crewed by romantically involved couples (which we already were) rather than groups of friends. We started looking for a wind vane.

* A sprayhood to Brits, to whom dodgers are what Ellen would probably describe as weather cloths, another little comfort which *Heretic* doesn't appear to have had...

Filling water tanks with buckets and jerry jugs, Marquesas, June 2007. (This is still how we do it)

With a tiny (270 ampere hours) battery bank and no generator, *Heretic*'s power requirements had to be kept to a minimum. So, although we did nod to the 21st century with electric navigation lights and a small, black-and-white, GPS unit, we did without – ready? – chart-plotter, autopilot, refrigeration, electric anchor windlass, watermaker, pressure water, hot water, shower, communications other than radio, and even electric lights in the cabin. We like to row and we didn't want to bother with gasoline, so we had a hard dinghy with oars (actually we still do – we took it to the Arctic). The boat didn't come with an oven and we didn't install one. And even the idea of having things like air conditioning, TV, a dishwasher or a washing machine was about as far from our minds as settling down in some landlocked Midwestern cornfield.

Of course many sailors have girded the globe in similar conditions, but today, and even a dozen years ago, most cruisers think you're some kind of grumbling old gaffer if you do. Or that you're a cash-strapped 20-year-old, which we were. But for four years that's how we lived. New Zealand was a bit cold, and rounding South Africa's Cape Agulhas in an unpredicted force 10 storm in such a heavy displacement boat was very wet and a little frightening as successive breaking waves filled the cockpit, but the voyage was, nonetheless, one of the happiest times of our lives.

So when we raised Mt Desert Island, Maine in June 2010 – when I was 24 and Seth 27 – it was again a bittersweet moment. We'd done what we set out to do, to circumnavigate the world, but we didn't want it to end. We even thought of turning

the bow east for the Azores right then and just keeping on, but we're a little bit more responsible – not much – than that and we showed up on time for the party that was planned in celebration of our voyage. Then we moved ashore, reluctantly and tearfully sold *Heretic*, and Seth started his graduate studies.

After a year, we realised that we could play truant all summer if I also got an academic job. More sailing! So we set out to find a replacement for *Heretic*. It took us a long time, constrained as we were by our budget, our need (not desire, mind you) to be able to voyage literally anywhere on earth, and our hopeless addiction to classic lines. What we did in the meantime – racing Atlantic Class sloops in Maine and cruising the US Eastern Seaboard aboard a wooden L Francis Herreshoff ketch – didn't help that addiction.

We found *Celeste* in Victoria, BC in the spring of 2013. Once again, we fell for her lovely lines. Francis Kinney, editor of *Skene's* and long-time designer for Sparkman & Stephens, had drawn her in 1985 as a private project for a sailor in Victoria. She was then custom-built in cold-moulded wood by Bent Jespersen and, from the outside, she looks very similar to *Heretic* – 28ft LWL but 40ft LOA, low freeboard, and beautiful varnished cabin with oval ports. Below the waterline, however, she's much more modern with a fin keel and separate skeg. Built of cold-moulded wood rather than GRP she's also lighter displacement. Both these attributes mean less wetted surface and greater speed. Below decks we were amazed to find a fairly modern layout – double quarter berth in a small aft cabin to starboard of the companionway, and galley with 'fridge and oven to port. Navigation station, settee, chart drawers and pilot berth faced a curved dinette amidships, followed by hanging locker, head with shower stall, and V-berth as you walked forward.

As for modern conveniences, wood insulates much better than solid GRP, and she had a forced-air heater and a 'bus' heater that ran off the engine. Also running off the engine was a hot water tank that, combined with a little pressure pump, made for

Seth looking for Santa Claus in the Arctic Ocean, August 2015

Where's that pilothouse? Seth huddled in the companionway on watch in the Bering Sea, July 2015

lovely showers after puttering into an anchorage. A Cape Horn wind vane was proudly mounted on the stern and a big canvas dodger kept her cockpit dry. So we already thought *Celeste* was pretty luxurious before we even started work on her.

What *Celeste* didn't have wase electronics. We replaced her no-longer-functional VHF, autopilot and radar, and installed a little GPS unit like the one we had on *Heretic*, as well as a chart-plotter – both have become a whole lot cheaper than they

Beautiful, but primitive for high latitudes – Celeste in Alaska, July 2017

Ellen bundled up for a watch in the Arctic, August 2015

were 12 years ago. We replaced most of her old wiring and mounted solar panels. Still conscious of power draw, we replaced her light bulbs with LEDs and installed a Refleks diesel heater which, unlike the forced-air one, uses no electricity. We also replaced her engine (which, as evidenced from the clouds of blue smoke it emitted, was burning a lot of oil). Thinking ahead to where we planned to take *Celeste*, we plumbed in the smallest Katadyn PowerSurvivor watermaker, which we could run off our solar panels. Finally, with the backing of OCENS, we installed an external antenna and set up a satellite phone communication system for receiving weather files and ice charts – because, what do you do when you finally own a boat that's not primitive? Take her somewhere where she will be primitive!

Yes, we planned to take our 30-year-old cold-moulded wooden, low freeboard, open-cockpit cutter to the Arctic Ocean north of Alaska. This time, though, we knew it wasn't normal. We knew that normal high-latitude sailors have metal boats with enclosed pilothouses. High-latitude boats can be steered from inside these heated pilothouses. Sometimes they even have those nice plexiglass bubbles so that you can look out 'on watch' while wearing just your long undies. High-latitude boats have big heaters and big engines. Our little heaters, by contrast, would usually get the inside temperature up to 10° if it was 1° outside. And our engine was only 30hp.

I suppose it would have been smarter to have bought a burly metal boat with all these attributes or, if we really couldn't kick our classic boat habit, to have taken *Celeste* to someplace where she really would feel luxurious – like the South Pacific. But that incorrigible optimism and that willingness to suffer for beauty meant we pointed the bow north. Really north. Up past the Aleutians to the Bering Strait*. Which is where we learned just why Jimmy Cornell designed his newest *Aventura* so that he didn't have to stand watch in the cockpit with the freezing spray. Up across the Arctic Circle to Alaska's North Slope. And then up to the polar pack-ice in the Beaufort Sea. Which is where, at 72°N, we found out just how much clothing you really can wear all at once. (It's a lot.) The flashy yacht *Celeste* didn't feel so flashy after all.

* See *Voyaging to the Top of America*, *Flying Fish* 2016/1.

Seth raising sail at 71°24'N, August 2015

Once again, though, we had the time of our lives. Seeing the Arctic – its people, its wildlife, its frozen ocean, and its wild weather – was something neither of us will forget. And doing it in *Celeste*, a primitive boat for the place, didn't put us off – we're already scheming for Greenland someday. In the meantime, though, we're headed back to the South Pacific, where we'll probably feel like we've landed in the lap of luxury.

Just in case we missed life in the Arctic – living aboard Celeste in January 2017, the coldest Pacific Northwest winter in 20 years

2018 Update

I wrote this piece for the Cruising Club of America's annual chronicle *Voyages* in 2017, when we were still in Alaska. Since then we have indeed sailed back to the South Pacific via Mexico, and it turns out I wasn't quite right that we'd feel like *Celeste* was the height of luxury. Don't get me wrong – we'd reached one of the world's most glorious cruising destinations. Often when you revisit a place that you hold dear in your memory it does not measure up, and we feared that this would happen to us on our return to Polynesia. Not at all. The lush and mountainous Marquesas, the sun-bleached coral atolls – all were just as stunningly beautiful and inviting as we'd remembered them. The underwater world was just as alive with manta rays, sharks, tuna and reef fish as ever (though sadly the coral was not as healthy), and the inhabitants just as warm and welcoming as in our memories. So the voyage was a great success in every way and I was glad that my assumption about *Celeste* had been proven wrong.

Plotting the course to Cabo San Lucas, February 2018. We still use paper charts

Some things were indeed luxurious improvements on *Heretic*: the satellite phone for getting weather forecasts and e-mail (we'd only had HF and VHF on *Heretic*), being able to shower in the head instead of on deck in view of the whole anchorage, the 'fridge, the electric lights in the cabin, and the electronic autopilot for light-air days when the wind vane didn't hold as true a course. Other things, though, told us that *Celeste* remains a primitive boat no matter the latitude. The little sun awning we had sewn for the cockpit just couldn't compare with the impressive shade contraptions – which we took to calling Bedouin tents, mostly out of envy – on all the other boats we saw. We discovered that our 'fridge was terribly badly insulated, something we hadn't been aware of in the cold ambient temperatures of Alaska and the Arctic, so that our solar panels weren't keeping up and we had to decide between charging the batteries with the engine (expensive and bad for the engine) or turning off the fridge. (We opted for engine, primarily because of the fish we were catching.) Our little watermaker, while

Bucket laundry aboard Celeste, Hiva Oa, June 2018

it had made us self-sufficient in the Arctic, wasn't really enough for all the water we were drinking in the hot climate, let alone for showers and rinsing dive gear, so we were back to hauling jerry jugs and using those solar shower bags, just like we'd done on *Heretic*. Laundry was once again in buckets.

Long distances between, for example, our good anchorage and the coral wall we wanted to scuba dive reminded us that the rowing dinghy is still good for our health. Tacking back and forth outside an atoll waiting for the tide to change to let us into the lagoon reminded us that our engine is still pretty small for our boat.

That said, many of these 'primitive' qualities would not have been considered primitive when, say, the Smeetons were voyaging, and so perhaps they are just a testament to how comfortable modern cruising yachts have become, both in the tropics and the high latitudes. And frankly, they don't really matter – we're all out there having fun, all in our different ways

Loading the (rowing) dinghy for a scuba dive, Tuamotus, August 2018

SENDING SUBMISSIONS TO FLYING FISH

CONTENT: anything which is likely to be of interest to other members – cruise and liveaboard accounts (including humour), technical articles, recipes, letters, book reviews and obituaries. Please check with me before to submitting the latter two, and also tell me if you're sending the same piece elsewhere, inside or outside the OCC. Finally, please double check that all place, personal and boat names are spelt correctly.

LENGTH: no more than 3500 words and preferably fewer than 3000, except in *very* special cases – and normally only one article per member per issue.

FORMAT: MS Word (any version) or PDF, with or without embedded photos (though see below), sent by e-mail to flying.fish@oceancruisingclub.org.

ILLUSTRATIONS: up to 20 captioned photos, professional-standard drawings or cartoons. **PLEASE** don't send more than this – while you have a single piece to illustrate, I receive up to 20 articles for each issue, so may have 400+ images to juggle! Any digital format is fine, but please contact me before sending prints.

Photos should measure at least 16cm wide at 300 dpi or 67cm wide at 72 dpi (the default setting for most cameras). If this means nothing to you, please send your photos **EXACTLY** as they were downloaded from the camera – merely opening and saving under another name degrades the quality. If sending photos by e-mail, **manually** attach no more than three per e-mail (do **NOT** use the 'attach to e-mail' facility available in many image programs, which compresses the file data), rounding off with a separate message telling me what you've sent. Alternatively use WeTransfer [www.wetransfer.com] a great little free (!) internet program. Finally, please include a list of captions, including credits, in the order the photos relate to the text. Something along the lines of: '**01** (DCM 3285) Preparing the boat for sea; **02** (DCM 3321) Leaving Horta, John at the helm; **03** (DSP 00045) The whale! Photo Sue Black'; is ideal.

CHARTLETS & POSITIONS: a rough chartlet if relevant, for professional re-drawing. If your article includes cruising information useful to others, include latitudes and longitudes where appropriate, preferably as a separate list.

COVER PHOTOS: eye-catching, upright photos of high resolution and quality, with fairly plain areas top and bottom – sky and sea? – to take the standard wording.

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DEADLINES: 1st FEBRUARY for June publication and **1st OCTOBER for December** publication, though an issue may be closed earlier if it becomes full.

For more information, either e-mail me or refer to the *GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS* to be found on the website. Thank you.

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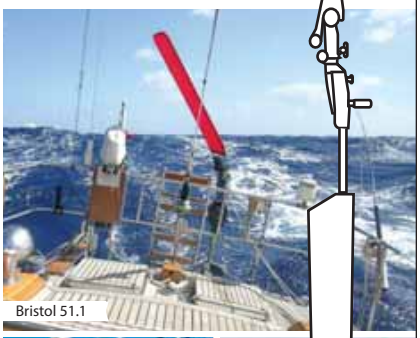
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HIGH AND DRY IN ANTARCTICA
Steve Brown

*(*Novara *will be a familiar name to many members – see also page 143 of this issue. She is a Bestevaer 60C, designed and built in Holland as a 'scientific research vessel'. Of aluminium construction, she is very strongly built with a double bottom (containing tankage) for much of her length.*

Steve and his wife Trish have cruised the entire coastline of the Americas with her, including a Northwest Passage transit in 2014, following a circumnavigation aboard Curious*, their previous yacht, between 2008 and 2012. The brief 'mission statement' on their impressive website at https://www.sy-novara.com/ reads 'Still Curious!'.*

All photographs courtesy of Bjorn Riis Johannessen and Andrew Cassels.)

There cannot be many yachtsmen who can claim to have been knocked down and driven ashore inside an active volcano, and even fewer while their boats are covered in inches of snow and ice! This is a claim that I would rather not make, but our arrival inside the volcanic caldera at Antarctica's Deception Island is not easily forgotten.

Having made the 685 mile passage from the Falkland Islands to the South Shetlands in five days, by 11th January 2018 the weather GRIBs showed winds building to over 30 knots from the northeast so we changed course to transit the islands through English Strait, with the intention of running before the wind to the anchorages in Deception Island. Once through the straits we made a fast passage in rapidly deteriorating weather, with the wind building to 45 knots and driving snow reducing visibility to 30m or less and with ice and snow building up on the rig, sails and deck.

Deception Island showed clearly on the radar, our charts gave us an accurate position, and we were able to transit Neptune's Bellows without any problems, but where to

High and dry


70°W
60°W
50°S
PATAGONIA
N
Atlantic Ocean
Stanley
FALKLAND ISLANDS
TIERRA DEL FUEGO
Ushuaia
Cape Horn
Drake Passage
60°40'W
60°30'W
Telefon Bay
Macaroni Point
Pendulum Cove
DECEPTION ISLAND
Port Foster
Whalers' Bay
South East Point
63°S
Entrance Point
Neptune's Bellows
0 1 2 3
nautical miles
Scotia Sea
60°S
SOUTH SHETLAND ISLANDS
ELEPHANT ISLAND
ROBERT ISLAND
GREENWICH ISLAND
English Strait
KING GEORGE ISLAND
DECEPTION ISLAND
GRAHAM LAND
ANTARCTIC PENINSULA

A shredded jib

anchor? Only Bjorn of our team had been into Deception before and he suggested Telefon Bay as our preferred choice, but our AIS showed that there was at least one yacht already in the bay and we were unable to contact them to see if they had lines ashore that would prevent us anchoring safely.

The anchorage in Pendulum Cove would put us on a lee shore, Whalers' Bay was said to be fouled with debris from the old whaling station, so we took the decision to anchor under the lee of the headland at Pendulum Cove until conditions improved. As we rounded the headland we encountered very strong williwaws, with over 75 knots registered on a couple of occasions. Visibility was down to just a few metres, the boat caked in ice and snow from the blizzard we had sailed through, the centreboard raised as we approached the shallower water, and the foredeck team sent forward to ready the anchor. Then, as we were about to drop anchor, a gust estimated at 90 knots or more knocked the boat on her side to around 75°.

The next few seconds passed in a blur. *Novara* has high gunwales and solid, 25mm stainless steel rails and the foredeck crew were hanging on grimly. Bjorn was thrown out of the cockpit and washed against the guard-rails, where fortunately his fall was checked. But one of the mainsheets that had been flaked

Tons of ice

Not enough pulling power

over the cockpit coaming was washed overboard, fouling the propeller and stopping the engine. Incredibly, despite so much ice aloft and the centreboard in the raised position, *Novara* bounced back upright in an instant, caught the wind, and with no means of controlling her we were blown onto the shore.

A quick check showed that all crew were safe and uninjured, while *Novara* was stable sitting on her keelson, listing at about 5°. An inspection showed that the few other items on deck were still secured, and in the survival conditions we were encountering I made the decision for the crew to go below to the shelter of the cabin and put the kettle on! A Pan Pan was put out to the two other vessels in the area and to the Spanish and Argentinean bases and immediate assistance was offered, but as both crew and vessel were safe we decided to wait until the storm had eased a little before venturing outside.

An Argentinean supply ship, the *Canal Beagle*, was in the bay and offered assistance, and later that evening we attempted to tow the boat into deep water using one of their landing craft, but with only 300hp available the attempt proved unsuccessful. This showed that we might not be able to pull the boat off the beach ourselves, and although *Novara* has 10mm aluminium hull plating with double spaced ribs and stringers, because of the potential environmental impact should one of the hull tanks be ruptured, I took the decision to ask for additional assistance. We notified UK MRCC of our position and they contacted the Chilean authorities.

The following morning when the winds abated we dived on the propeller to clear the lines, but with the boat sitting on the beach and the sea water intakes blocked by shingle, we could not use the main engine to attempt to pull ourselves clear. A further update was made to UK MRCC and the Chilean Armada, who diverted the *Lautaro*, a large supply/service ship, from its base on King George Island. She arrived on Saturday evening, but too late to use the evening's high tide to pull the boat clear, so we used the time to lighten the load by moving surplus stores ashore.

Setting the tow

On the following day Capitan Gibbons sent his own divers across to survey the hull and ensure that there was nothing to stop *Novara* being pulled backwards into deeper water and, with surprisingly little effort, at 2000 local time on Sunday 14th January she was refloated.

She was inspected thoroughly for damage and none found, the seawater intakes were cleared of debris, and all systems were checked and operable. After thanking Capitan Gibbons and the crew of the *Lautaro* we motored into Telefon Bay for the night.

The Lautaro

Capitan Gibbons and his crew

Throughout all my dealings with the Chilean Armada, from Easter Island to Antarctica they have always been friendly, helpful and professional. During the recovery process both the Chilean Armada and UK MRCC kept in contact via the Iridium sat phone and e-mails, and our thanks went out to both sets of professionals for their help and reassurance.

The following morning we checked the boat thoroughly once more, and finding all systems sound and operable we continued with our expedition, heading south through the iceberg-filled channels.

Afloat once more

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Although most Founder Members qualified during the decade preceding the Club's formation in 1954, a few put forward qualifying passages from much earlier decades. One of these was Frederick B Thurber of Rhode Island, USA, who cited a 1100 mile voyage from New York to Havana in 1910 aboard a yacht named *Pole Star*. Sadly there is no record of that voyage in the Club archives, but he made good the omission with the following account of the first leg of a passage from Providence to Rome made the following year, which appeared in *Flying Fish* 1966/2 with an introductory paragraph written by then-editor David Wallis.

It seemed logical to reproduce this account from 52 years ago in as near facsimile as possible, hence the slightly different typeface, the different editing conventions (eg. indented paragraphs throughout, 25-foot rather than 25ft, etc), and the lack of what today would be considered a proper title.

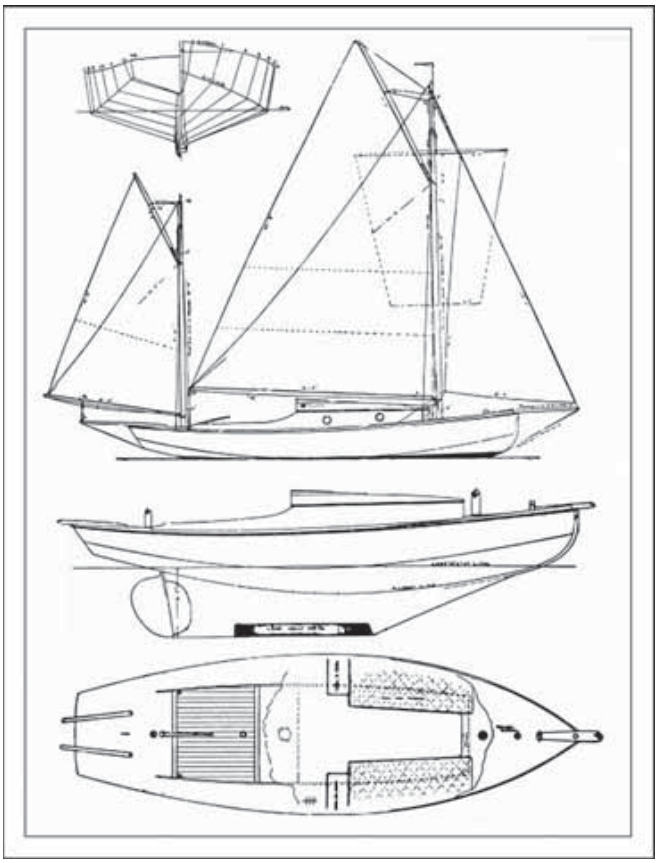
All the (rather small) images were sourced online for this reprint – in 1966 *Flying Fish* carried no illustrations of any kind – and a few explanatory notes added at the end.

FREDERICK THURBER and SEA BIRD

In 1911, when 'Sea Bird' and her three-men crew started on their voyage to Rome via the Azores, long ocean passages in relatively small boats were an almost unheard-of yachting practice. This voyage marked the beginning of deep water cruising by yachtsmen in small boats. 'Sea Bird' was a 25-foot yawl with a draft of 3 feet 8 inches1.

Thorough preparations were made in getting the *Sea Bird* ready for sea. These included stocking provisions for 40 days as well as ordering new sails and new running and standing rigging. All of the latter was of extra strength. We also installed a 3 h.p. Knox engine which consumed 15 gallons of either gasoline or kerosene in 24 hours and gave the boat a speed of 3½ knots in smooth water. Two 20-gallon fuel tanks

Sea Bird under sail



Sea Bird's lines. She carried 700 lbs of ballast on the keel (shown shaded) and another 1000 lbs of internal ballast, though some of this may have been replaced by stores. Her simple, single-chine hull was designed for easy – and often amateur – construction

were installed under the transom and a reserve tank holding 10 gallons was placed in the cockpit. Our drinking water was carried in two 15-gallon tanks, in addition to 12 two-quart bottles.

We carried enough fresh food for the first three or four days, while our canned food consisted principally of soups, corned beef, salmon, beans, fruit and sardines. Other stores included jams, pickles, 48 packages of crackers, five pounds of pilot bread, ten loaves of bread, three jars of butter (over which paraffin was poured), onions, potatoes, several pounds of tobacco and a dozen quarts of liquor.

The cabin, which was to be our home for 40 days, measured 8 by 6 feet and had 4 feet 6 inches headroom. The transoms had hard cork cushions; one transom was built out a foot or so so that one could recline on it without having to lie under the side deck. As the other was almost entirely under the deck with less than 12 inches between the deck and the cushion, one could turn over only with difficulty! The engine was under the bridge deck aft where there was less than three feet of height between the floor and the deck. In the after part of the cockpit was a box, one side of which was used for tools, lashings and other deck gear, while the other contained a three-gallon kerosene tank. A five-gallon kerosene tank was also installed in the forward end of the cockpit. With all this additional weight, besides that of the crew, the *Sea Bird* floated three inches below her lines and, as her freeboard was anything but generous, this made her look very low in the water.

We had set Saturday, June 10th, for our departure, as we wished to arrive at Rome by July 20th, the date on which the competing motor boats were due. This gave us but 40

days to reach our objective and *Sea Bird* must average more than 100 miles per day, as a sailing vessel is often obliged to cover much more than 100 miles in distance to make 100 miles on her course. As 100 miles a day is a fair average for a large sailing ship, we were aware of the task before us. It is a well-known fact that June is the best month for crossing the Atlantic, for at that time of year the prevailing winds blow from the south and west. Hence we anticipated little head wind. We also realized that the Gulf Stream would favor us with 15 to 30 miles of current per day.

Sea Bird with crew and guests

A letter was given us by Mayor Fletcher, of Providence, to deliver to the Mayor of Rome, and this we carefully put in an oiled silk envelope. We also carried a Bill of Health but we were not successful in obtaining ship's papers as we were of only 3½ tons register and the government does not document vessels under five tons. However, the Collector of the Port at Providence kindly gave us a certificate adorned with brilliantly colored seals, which we knew would please the Portuguese and Italian officials.

By noon of the 10th everything was aboard. There was a great deal of handshaking and well wishing by the crowd of yachtsmen who had assembled at the Rhode Island Yacht Club to see us off. At 1:55 p.m., five minutes before the start, the crew went aboard. Commodore Massie then stepped to the edge of the dock and made a farewell speech and presented each of us with a gold mounted pipe. Captain Day[2] replied appropriately and, at the conclusion of his speech, a gun was fired as a signal to start. We slipped our mooring lines, started the engine and, under sail and power and with the American and Italian flags flying proceeded down the bay.

Sea Bird arrived at Newport at 5:30 p.m. and, as there was no wind, we proceeded out through the Narrows under engine. The sea was smooth outside and scarcely had we cleared Brenton's Reef Light Vessel than a hard shower approached. Our first night at sea was neither exciting nor pleasant, with little wind and frequent rain squalls. Our course was ESE 17 miles to Vineyard Sound Light Vessel, which was passed at 11:00 p.m., and at 5:45 the next morning we reached Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard where we were to secure an additional compass belonging to Captain Day and take on more fuel. Thirty gallons, in five gallon cans, were obtained of which four cans were placed in the cockpit. This reduced the area of that space to four feet wide by 18 inches long. Two other cans were lashed between the mizzen shrouds. In addition, we carried a can each side in the main shrouds and 21 one-gallon tins were lashed on the starboard side of the house. This made a total of about 100 gallons of fuel or sufficient for six days' running.

At 9:30 a.m., we cleared the harbour. Full of the importance of the occasion, the harbour master saluted us with a shotgun, with the result that in a few seconds buckshot

rained down on and about us like hailstones! As the wind was light, the engine was kept going and at noon Sunday we took our departure from Wasque Point, Martha's Vineyard. By one o'clock, we had reached the smooth water beyond Muskeget and headed ESE for the light vessel some 60 miles away. At 4:00 p.m., when well south of Nantucket, we picked up a nice sailing breeze and stopped the engine.

With three in the crew, our schedule of watches gave us four hours on and eight off when the weather was pleasant. However, if squally, we were called out to shorten sail as many as three or four times in a watch. The sensation of being suddenly awakened out of a sound sleep to come on deck, where you would be drenched by spray, into a night as black as your hat, is not conducive to a genial temper.

At 4:30 a.m., Monday, the steam chime whistle on the light vessel was picked up and at 5:45 we passed close aboard, and asked to be reported. Our course now lay nearly 1,900 miles due east, but it was our intention to sail SE until the 38th parallel was reached, thus getting across the Gulf Stream and into more settled conditions as quickly as possible. However, the wind headed us so that the best course we could then make was east. By 8:00 a.m., the sun threatened to come out but was soon obscured and shortly thereafter the fog came in as thick as mud. Before long, the wind had freshened so that jib and mizzen were all the *Bird* could carry. Crossing the westbound steamer lane was not particularly agreeable under such conditions and kept us on the alert every minute. By eleven o'clock the fog cleared somewhat, the wind shifted to the SW and we were enabled to make good our SE course.

In the afternoon the wind came in light from ahead with fog, giving us no sights that day. Fog continued thick up to midnight, and the lumpy sea made our going slow. As we approached the edge of the Stream, the fog was cleared away by squalls, preceded by thunder and lightning. During this time we lay to under jib and mizzen. We were now well in the Stream as was evident from the confused condition of the sea, and the ever present Gulf weed. By 8:00 a.m., the atmosphere cleared, enabling us to take a longitude sight, after which the wind came in fresh from S by E so that we were making a good six knots.

During all of Tuesday afternoon the wind held S by E and we ran along on an easterly course. *Sea Bird* was so heavily loaded that she made little progress unless the sheets were started. That day we obtained the first good sight since our departure and found our position to be 40°20'N. 68° 12'W. which placed us some 50 miles north of our course.

After midnight, we made fast time with wind on the starboard quarter and early in the morning we doused the jib and double reefed the main. Under this short canvas, *Sea Bird* tore along in fine style. By seven o'clock, we ran into more rain squalls, which were followed by short periods of calm. During this interval we took up the slack of the jibstay and went in swimming. The water of the Gulf Stream was beautifully clear and blue and delightfully warm and we decided that if anyone would be able to keep a supply of it at some resort, he would make his fortune. At 8:00 a.m., the wind again came in from the SSW and we logged six knots until noon.

That afternoon a fine quartering breeze was picked up but, in the evening, we ran into squally weather and were kept busy reefing and shaking out all night. Wednesday morning dawned with light air, calms and rain squalls. It was then that we discovered that the *Bird* was making water quite rapidly. Investigation found it to be from the

stuffing box around the shaft and, although we tried every means of stopping it, the leak persisted. We found, much to our relief, that it did not increase, but leaked about the same amount every watch. It was necessary to pump her every four hours and sometimes twice in a watch, a practice which had to be continued for the rest of the trip.

Having water continually in the bilge was most annoying, while a leak in the deck forward, which even the skipper's ingenuity could not remedy, kept the blankets and stores forward in a soggy condition. Kerosene, which leaked from the crankcase into the bilge, had by this time saturated nearly everything in the boat. It even found its way to the potatoes! However, we were able to use them by paring them down to the kerosene line and then adding plenty of salt. Another cheerful discovery was made in the afternoon. When drawing a glass of water from one of the tanks we found that salt water had leaked into it through the deck plate. At first we thought we might be faced with a scarcity of water but, after checking our other tank and bottles, we concluded that we had enough. Nevertheless we did use the salty water for our coffee, which did not improve the taste of it or appeal to the skipper.

Now a word about our sleeping accommodation. As expected, once on our way we proceeded on the starboard tack which we held for 20 days. The lee bunk was always the choice, hence if two were below during the same watch the unlucky wretch on the weather berth had his troubles. By lying flat on one's stomach, with arms and legs extended spread eagle fashion, one would be able to hold his position until the *Bird* took an extra heavy lurch, which would throw him on the floor or on top of the man on the bunk. After I had been precipitated in this manner several times in one night, I decided to lash myself in. This was done and the scheme worked admirably for about an hour when, without warning, the lashings gave way and I was rudely awakened by landing on the end of my spine on the opposite bunk. After that we discovered that the best place to sleep was on the floor between the transoms. This spacious place measured 6ft long by l8in wide, fitting one like a coffin. It did not permit turning over easily but had the advantage of wedging in the sleeper when once in place, which was a great relief.

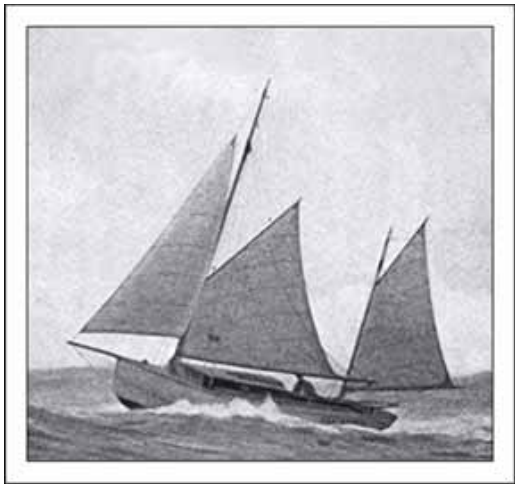
The wind freshened somewhat during the night but let up about two o'clock Thursday morning, to be followed by a succession of squalls. At 4:00 a.m., when I relieved the skipper at the helm, an unusually bad squall was making up. The sky was filled with dark clouds tinged with green, tufted and oily looking. The *Sea Bird* had been driving along under jib and jigger[3] with lee rail awash, so the skipper decided to stay on deck and it was fortunate that he did. Suddenly, the wind shifted four points[4] to the north'ard and blew hard. Goodwin tumbled up from below and assisted in lowering the jigger, receiving a nasty cut over the eye, which temporarily blinded him. Meanwhile, the skipper was lowering the jib, which came three-quarters way down and then jammed, owing to the halliards fouling aloft. It blew so hard that the tops of the seas were blown off and every minute we expected to see the jib torn into ribbons, but nothing could be done about it.

Sea Bird lay to under the head of the jib and made wonderful weather of it, shipping no solid water except what blew over her. It blew 45 to 50 m.p.h. for about ten minutes, by which time a nasty sea was running. The wind then moderated to about 40 m.p.h. and we put her off before it and, under head-sail alone, she fairly flew off to leeward.

She drove before it for three hours, riding the constantly increasing seas like a duck. By 8.00 a.m. the wind suddenly dropped out and for the next four hours we made slow progress, the heavy seas shaking the wind out of the sails. Eventually the sun made an appearance and at noon we picked up a fine westerly which was the wind we had been waiting patiently for during the past five days and, with all sails set, the *Bird* jogged along at five knots.

All the next afternoon the conditions were ideal. We had a moderate breeze, a long, easy rolling sea, a cloudless sky, and we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. After mess we took an amplitude, that is, checked up our standard compass by the sun as it set, and found there was ½ point westerly deviation. During the evening the wind hauled more southerly and, as it was then a broad reach, we made fast time. With the exception of an hour or so about 3:00 a.m., when we lowered away for a squall, the *Sea Bird* averaged about 6½ knots until Saturday noon. After working up our sight, we were much pleased to find that we had covered 163 miles, which was by far our best day's run.

That afternoon the wind hauled into the south and increased to the extent that we shortened to jib, double-reefed main and single-reefed mizzen. Suddenly the wind increased in force to a moderate gale and we were obliged to take all sail off and heave to under trysail. All that night we experienced a succession of rain and wind squalls that almost took the heart out of us. Before sunset, we had again decided to heave to for the night but found that, by running off, we nearly fetched our course. So, under jib and reefed mizzen, we bore off to leeward, being careful not to broach to in the stiff sea that was running. I have seen some lightning in the six times I have crossed the Gulf Stream, but never anything to equal the display that night. From all sides, continuous flashes of sheet lightning alternated with jagged forks striking into the sea and served to intensify the blackness of the night. When dawn finally broke, it was a most welcome sight. The engine was run continuously and, as a result of a leaky petcock, it filled the cabin with a thin blue smoke from the burnt kerosene. Owing to the danger of a sea boarding us it was necessary to keep the hatch closed all but a crack, and an hour below was all that one could stand.



Sea Bird reefed down

The afternoon of the 19th the wind came in fresh from the south, so the *Bird* went along comfortably without the mainsail. After a while, formidable looking clouds of the type that were always a sign of bad weather began to make up. We took all sail off her, started the engine, saw to it that the ports were screwed down tight, closed the sides, put a lashing round the helmsman and waited. It was not long in coming. Suddenly, the wind came out of the NW, catching the boat broadside on and

putting her on her beam ends. She lay upon her beam ends for a minute or so as if paralyzed, the water from leeward coming into the cockpit and half over her house. Then she gradually righted and Goodwin and the Skipper got her off before it. The squall lasted only a few minutes but must have blown 75 miles an hour when it hit us.

Below decks, everything had collected in one corner of the cabin. The engine was still going but a heavy battery box was bouncing against the flywheel, which threatened to destroy it. Cylinder oil was brought on deck as quickly as a can could be dislodged from the general tangle and poured into the scuppers, and the slick thus formed kept the breaking seas from coming aboard. Later on, the wind hauled into the north and blew hard, so that jib and mizzen staysail were all the canvas she could carry. A nasty following sea, necessitating our using oil off the quarter, and a heavy sea from the west made the going lumpy.

Just before sunset, a rain squall was followed by what we all agreed was the finest rainbow we had ever seen; a double bow of immense span, with the most vivid spectrum. We ran her off to the south all night, hoping to make 100 miles or so to more settled weather. As the morning advanced, the wind decreased and the sky cleared so that, by noon, we were carrying a single reefed mainsail comfortably. Fortunately, we had made sufficient southing so that we were well clear of the axis of the Stream, for which we were all heartily thankful.

On the morning of the 20th, nine days after our departure, the wind was fresh and *Sea Bird* made good time all day long, logging almost seven knots[5]. At 8.00 p.m., it freshened and we double reefed the main; by early morning it increased to half a gale, causing us to heave to until daylight. By 4:00 a.m., there was no sign of a let up so, under jib and mizzen staysail, we got under way and scudded before the blow at a fast clip. Both the wind and sea increased during the morning and at one o'clock we took in the staysail. By 2:30, the wind was blowing with gale force. By careful handling, the *Sea Bird* had been making good weather of it and fast time but now, with the extremely high seas and the increase in wind, it became difficult to steer her.

It was exciting shooting down the long green slopes into the hollows below, where we would almost lose the wind, and then catch it again as the next big sea rushed by. While making such wonderful time towards our destination, we did not want to stop but, anxious as we were to make a record passage, we were not willing to take unreasonable risks. Therefore, as we were in danger of being pooped or of pitchpoling, we decided to heave to and put out our sea anchor. It required careful manoeuvring to bring her around in that sea. The jib was taken off, the anchor and rode were made ready, and oil poured freely into the scuppers. Following a couple of heavy breaking seas, a smooth appeared. The helm was put hard over, and *Sea Bird* rounded to as prettily as could be. The sea anchor was thrown over, the reefed mizzen set and the oil turned on.

The motion of a vessel riding to a sea anchor or drag is decidedly different from that when riding to an anchor on the bottom. In the former instance, as each surge strikes the craft, she is forced astern until it is past, with the result that her motion is wonderfully smooth and easy. When anchored on the bottom, the vessel fetches up with a sudden jerk on the cable as the surge lifts her, then she almost jumps off the top of the sea into the trough. A sea anchor such as we used consisted of an ordinary 20 lb. anchor and a piece of oak four feet long by eight inches wide by one and one-

half inches thick. Through the center a hole was cut large enough to go over the stock of the anchor, and notches were placed at either end for the flukes to fit into. The board was then firmly lashed to the flukes. The weight of the anchor would sink the board about 15 feet below the surface and the resistance caused by the board dragging through the water held the *Sea Bird's* bow to the seas. We had out about 50 fathoms of cable, which kept the anchor two seas ahead of us.

Conditions remained unchanged until afternoon. A few times, when *Sea Bird's* bow sagged off three points or more, she shipped solid water over her forward deck which struck against the forward end of the cabin house like water from a fire hose. The decks at other times were dry, except for occasional spray blown from the crests of seas. By 2:00 p.m., the wind began to moderate and, at three o'clock, we upped anchor and set the jib, which was all the canvas the *Bird* then wanted. Owing to the steep, heavy seas, which were still running, it required careful steering to keep her dead before it. I remember that late that afternoon one sea broke over her stern completely filling the cockpit, flooding the decks and nearly taking me overboard.

We had now been out two weeks and had had only two chances to dry our clothes. The cabin presented a sorry sight. Cushions, blankets, pillows and food were wet and mildewed; kerosene and engine oil were in evidence everywhere (we had become thoroughly seasoned to the odor and taste of the former). Therefore, we were not too cheerful, especially as the novelty of sitting cramped in the cockpit, wet and shivering, for a four-hour watch had long ago worn off. But, after getting a latitude sight at noon[6] we felt much encouraged. It showed that we had covered 1,420 miles since taking our departure from Wasque Point, averaging 101 miles a day, which was right up to schedule. This left 570 miles to go before we would sight the Azores.

The wind came strong all afternoon and that night, as if we were not already sufficiently damp, a drenching rain storm from the low black clouds that scurried over had come down upon us. The weather broke, however, in the morning and soon the sun was shining and the wind moderated so that we carried full sail for the first time in over a week. It was such a beautiful day and so appreciated by us that we christened it the 'Tom Fleming Day'. There was still much spray flying which made it impossible to dry things. However, we hoisted our wet garments to the masthead by the flag halliards and succeeded in partly accomplishing our purpose.

During the night of the 23rd, we were kept busy shortening sail and shaking it out again and, to put it mildly, our 'rest' was somewhat broken. In one watch we were routed out four times. Early the next morning, heavy swells commenced to roll in from the south-east, the result of a storm some distance away, although the wind we were carrying held from the south-west. We were running under double-reefed mainsail at the time and the boisterous sea forced us to heave to and get our morning sight. All day long the going was heavy and during the skipper's watch on deck that evening the wind increased and the *Bird* had more sail than she liked to carry. But to shorten any more would have meant to lower the mainsail entirely; in which case she would be a little shy of canvas. Therefore, the skipper drove her and drove her hard.

The *Bird*, with the wind on her quarter and heeled over on her ear, travelled like a race horse. Down below in the lee bunks you would hear the roar of the water as she violently plunged along. Rising on the crest of a sea, she would leap off the top into the hollow below with a crash and a jar which made the inch and a quarter planking

seem none too thick. By midnight, when the watches were changed, we all agreed that four hours was enough of that sort of work and the mainsail was taken off.

It is anything but enjoyable to steer a watch under such conditions. Owing to the heavy pitching and rolling of the boat, the only safe place for the helmsman was sitting on the cockpit floor, as it was quite impossible to stand. Moreover, if he went overboard, there would be no chance of being picked up. Owing to the restricted dimensions of the cockpit, after one had fitted himself in place, there was no chance to change position and the helmsman would be so cramped after his four hours that he could scarcely move.

At eight o'clock, we put the reefed mainsail on her and, under the same conditions as on the day before, drove her hard all day long. However, by four in the afternoon the wind gradually let up, the sun came out and we carried full sail for the first time in days. As the water had been coming over her pretty steadily for the past 24 hours, our faces were caked with salt but our spirits were high, induced by a rising glass and a beautiful sunset, which was something we had not seen for many a day. The smooth water and light winds were a great relief as was the cloudless sky which, even without a moon, gave us visibility of several miles.

After figuring our longitude that noon, we found that Corvo, the most western island of the Azores, bore SE by E½E [7] a little over 100 miles. That meant that we should reach the island between twelve and three o'clock the next day, June 28th. We were now enjoying real ocean weather, i.e., blue skies, light wind, smooth seas and a warm sun. For a number of days, the wind had blown from east of south, which prevented our working south of the 40th parallel. Here again, the pilot chart misled us, wind from the westerly quadrant being predicted. As we had made almost enough easting, our course had to be shaped considerably more to the southward and, with the contrary light wind at the time, the engine was continually requisitioned.

The *Bird* jogged along a bit under four knots and at four o'clock the next morning we witnessed one of the finest sunrises that it has ever been my good fortune to see. At 5:15, a tiny speck on the horizon, which appeared as a dark blue cloud, was sighted. After a look through the glass, a hail of "Land ho, two points off the port bow!" brought the watch below on deck in a hurry. There was no more sleep that morning, as we expected to reach land by seven or eight o'clock, yet we were somewhat puzzled at sighting the island so early in the day.

We had little kerosene left but, as the sea was like glass and there was scarcely any wind, the motor was kept going. Before long Flores, an island ten miles to the southward of Corvo, was sighted. At eight o'clock, the entire outline of both islands was plainly visible, though little detail could be seen except the mountains and valleys, the rest appearing as a deep blue haze.

It was 2:00 p.m. before we were within a mile of Flores and, owing to the wind heading us, we were unable to go through the passage between the two islands. Skirting along the western side, we were awed by the grandeur of the scenery and the majestic height of the island which rises some 3,000 feet almost perpendicularly from the sea. Soon a fisherman was sighted and we made for him. A young boy, born in San Francisco of Portuguese parents, acted as spokesman. They seemed greatly surprised when they heard where we had come from and looked at us with a great deal of awe. Noticing some fine fish in their boat, we soon made a trade, offering them chewing

tobacco, a copy of *Life*, and a novel entitled *Her Only Sin*, for a fine six-pound red snapper!

We rounded the southern end of the island at six o'clock that afternoon. Our course from there to Horta was 130 miles E by S. Under the conditions at that time, the chances of reaching our destination the next day seemed most doubtful. There was a smooth sea and little wind all night. A steamer's lights several miles away were made out early in the evening. At eight o'clock Friday morning, we had made only 30 miles, Flores being plainly visible astern. At 3:00 p.m., the island of Pico was made out as a speck of cloud on the horizon. This remarkable island rises to a height of 7,600 feet and was 60 miles away when first sighted. At dawn, Saturday, Fayal was plainly visible. During the forenoon, the ship was given a general cleaning up and made ship-shape. We hoped to reach Horta, which lay just around the Guia Peninsula, before six o'clock. With our code flags, we signalled the station on the hill top and asked to be reported to the *New York Herald.* To give variety to the last two miles of our passage, and to add to our misery, we felt a strong tide running against us. We had a little of our precious fuel left and with this expected to save the situation but, as if it were in sympathy with the adverse conditions, the engine kept stopping. In a most spasmodic way, we slowly gained distance and, just after dark, came about for the last tack which would take us into the harbour. To cap the climax, the blooming engine stopped when within 100 yards of our goal. We had been out just 20 days and six hours, sailed 2,004 miles, were in front of and within 100 yards of getting into the harbour — and were stuck!

Disgusted, discouraged and mad[8], we tacked back and forth for ztwo hours and a half, and while doing so we indulged in some language of the deep sea variety. Finally, a pilot boat manned by four husky natives came alongside and attempted to tow us, but in vain. So they left us, but the tide soon slackened so that we were able to slip into the harbour where we were directed to a berth by the harbour master. Discovering that by routing out the cable operator our messages would go that night, they were hastily scribbled and then all hands were generously served with grog. Requesting the pilot to have the doctor down early in the morning, the entire crew of the *Sea Bird*, for the first time in 20 days, turned in for an all night sleep.

The next two days were spent in hauling out the *Sea Bird* to repair the leak in the stuffing box. In this labor we were greatly assisted by the boys from the English cable station who also entertained us in a royal manner. Fresh provisions, including delicious fruits with a bunch of bananas hanging in the rigging, and a good supply of native wine, were put aboard. On the morning of July 4th, we again set sail.

The course for Gibraltar was E½S. Light southerly winds took 'Sea Bird' half way, then she picked up a northerly which drove her to within 100 miles of Cape St. Vincent, where she met the usual stiff easterly. Under way again after heaving to for 10 hours, Cape Spartel was sighted on the 17th, and passing Tarifa under double reefed main, a double round of grog was issued in celebration. The passage was successfully concluded when 'Sea Bird' rounded to off Gibraltar mole at 6 o'clock the same evening.

NOTES

1. Information found online suggests she may have been nearer 26ft overall, and was undoubtedly hard chine with a very small cabin containing only two berths – referred to here as 'transoms'. Although a term still used in the US, a more usual description would be 'saloon settee'.
2. Thomas Fleming Day, who had founded *Rudder* magazine in 1891 and was one of the first to promote long passages in small, often home-built, boats. Online research indicates that *Sea Bird* was designed by Thomas Fleming Day and Charles D Mower, and built by or for the former in 1901.
3. The mizzen.
4. 45°, each point of the compass being 11¼°.
5. This was probably calculated from their distance made good over the ground, and included a knot or two of help from the Gulf Stream. An average of 7 knots through the water seems highly unlikely for a heavily-laden boat of perhaps 22ft LWL.
6. Presumably crossed with a longitude sight earlier in the day, as latitude alone would not indicated the distance travelled eastwards.
7. Close to 118°.
8. In the American sense of 'really angry', though some might consider the British sense applicable too!

A ROUGH ATLANTIC CROSSING ... in a 31ft boat with a dog, a cat and a pregnant woman

Aleix Gainza

(*Aleix started sailing in his late teens and enrolled at the Institut Públic Escola de Capacitació Nauticopesquera de Catalunya (Nautical Sciences and Fishing Training School of Catalonia) a few years later. After a spell as first officer aboard the brigantine* Cyrano *he returned ashore to obtain a degree at the Facultad de Náutica de Barcelona (Barcelona School of Nautical Studies), and then became head of sail training at the Real Club Náutico de Barcelona (Royal Yacht Club of Barcelona). He met Eugenia when she signed on for a passage from Barcelona to the Balearic Islands, and they got married three days before the start of the voyage related here.*

Crew member Tritón, a flat-coated retriever rescued from an animal shelter, was later joined by tabby cat Atlas. Both are happy on board, though Tritón gets nervous at the beginning of a passage and runs around on deck.)

My wife Eugenia and I met on a sailboat and soon discovered that we shared the same dream – sailing around the world in our own boat. We wanted to visit fantastic places with palm trees, coconuts and turquoise waters. We found a lovely yawl-rigged boat, a 31ft (9·4m) Nantucket Clipper MKIII designed by Alan Buchanan and built in 1977, and named her *Infinito* (Infinity). After two years of preparation and living aboard we cast off the lines from Barcelona in August 2016 with our furry friends Tritón

Eugenia and Aleix

The anchorage at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

and Atlas. Our first Christmas alone, far from the family, was in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, due to a horrible south wind that kept the taverns and the pontoons full, but we finally set sail for the Caribbean in mid-January.

The crossing began comfortably, though the sea was chaotic because of the south wind and the trade winds. The boat's response was great and there were no squalls. However, Eugenia was not feeling very well. She had never been dizzy on board before, but now she was having a hard time – headaches, some vomiting and a lot of abdominal pain. We decided to stop in Mindelo, Cape Verdes, so she could visit a doctor.

Finding a doctor was not easy, not even for our health insurance agents, but three days after arriving we finally found a specialist. I wandered the streets of Mindelo with Tritón, while she visited the doctor. She emerged from the hospital three hours later, pale and walking slowly without saying a word. After a moment she told me she was

The crew ready for departure

My lovely crew underway

The entire crew sailing south-southwest

fine, no problems, but some metres further, while talking about banal things I don't remember, she said: "I'm pregnant!".

Everything changed at that moment – it was the last thing we expected! We were in an African archipelago, where it had taken three days to find a doctor. The supermarkets were not well stocked. In the marina, the boat was moving violently due to the swell and all the boats were breaking mooring lines, day after day. Without a doubt, Mindelo was

The Mindelo skyline

Our second day at sea from the Cape Verdes to the Lesser Antilles

not the perfect place to stay. The doctor said we could continue sailing – she was just a few weeks pregnant and there was no danger at all. So for some reason that now I find hard to understand, we decided to continue to our destination, the Caribbean.

Then, unexpectedly, we met many friends – some from Barcelona, others from our town, and old work colleagues ... the world is a handkerchief. We were all looking at the forecasts for some good weather to set out. So, on January 25th, after a copious meal, we left Mindelo to head west. Our friends left a few hours later, and we did not hear from them again until we reached the other side.

Leaving the islands of Cape Verdes behind was not an easy task. The acceleration zone between São Vicente and Santo Antão was very strong, the waves were high and very short, and the winds changed constantly, so the windvane was working erratically. On the leeward sid of Santo Antão there was no wind all night, so we only moved thanks to the current. Then from one moment to the next, in a matter of a few metres, we found the trade winds. *Infinito* went galloping westwards like a frightened horse.

A dolphin family 300 miles from the Cape Verde islands

A few hours after passing Santo Antão and both feeling good

Over the following hours the wind increased, and after reefing the main, I saw that she was much better with only the yankee sheeted to the whisker pole. 'When the wind drops I'll raise it again', I thought, but it wasn't to be like that. The wind kept rising hour after hour and on the third day, with 30 knots and 8ft (2·4m) waves, the 'party' began. Eugenia was still feeling bad, throwing up all the time and very tired. I wrote a message to the friend from Barcelona, who was behind us and checking the weather forecast every day. 'Everything is fine, keep calm. The forecast has not changed. In a few hours, everything will be quieter', he said.

On the crest of a wave…

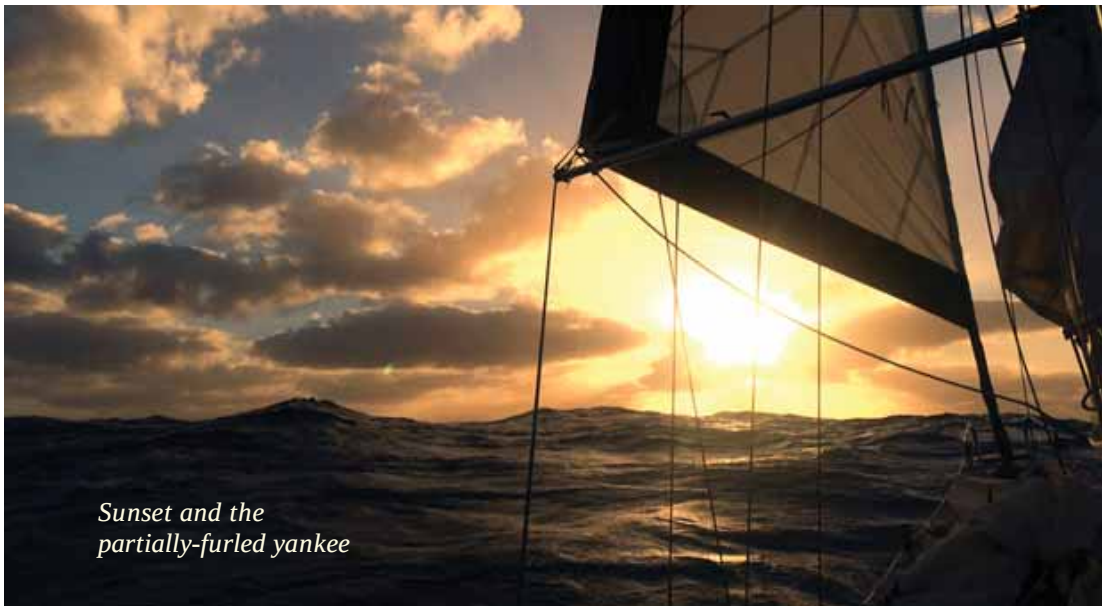
Atlas, the best sailor ever …

… claims a non-flying fish

But it was not like that. The wind kept rising and we were galloping the high and breaking waves with a very violent movement, rolling from side to side every few seconds. Eugenia seemed to faint from time to time, and each breaking wave that reached us exhausted her a little bit more. She had no strength to hold on and had a hard time moving around the boat, hitting herself all the time due to her lack of strength. I felt so bad for her.

Tritón was looking at us strangely. He didn't understand what was happening, and although he loves swimming he was always looking for a place where the waves wouldn't get him wet – but that place didn't exist. Atlas, the cat, was excited about the show and at first he didn't mind it too much. He fitted his body under the sprayhood, between the hatch and the winch, while he contemplated the landscape and waited for 'flying fish hunting time'. When he heard fish crashing against the sails he ran outside to find them, and during the night he looked for fish on the deck. He waited for a moment without spray, and then caught them and hid them in some remote place inside the cabin so that he had enough food reserves for a good breakfast. So, every morning, my task was to sniff the entire boat to find the damn hidden fish.

Instead of getting better, the weather got worse. The deck was always wet, and soon the cat found not only flying fish on deck but also sardines and other non-flying species that simply went there swimming! As the days went by, long algae grew on the deck. By then Eugenia was at the limit of her endurance and hadn't the strength to get out of bed (where she spent most of the time) without help. When she felt dizzy or was



Sunset and the partially-furled yankee

bothered by a smell, however, she'd want to go out to the cockpit for a short time, so about ten times a day I had to lift her, help her into her foulweather gear, and get her outside. There, I had to make her fast with a rope to the lifeline so that the fierce waves wouldn't fling her to the other side. Most of the time she was also starving, so the *Infinito*'s galley looked like the kitchen of a 24-hour restaurant. Then I had to untie her again, take off the drysuit and lower her back into bed. She often needed to go to the bathroom, so first I had to remove the cat's litter and sit her on the toilet, then help her to get back to bed, and finally pump it.

There was one interesting thing that we didn't know yet – it is called toxoplasmosis. Apparently, if a woman has never suffered this disease (similar to a common cold) it is very dangerous to contract it during pregnancy and the consequences can be almost fatal ... and cats transmit it. Perfect! – I'm in a small boat in the middle of the Atlantic, with a pregnant woman who is not immunized and a cat on board, and we're heading to a place where there is a certain risk of Zika virus. All the elements seemed to come together.

Next day the situation became really dangerous. We no longer had waves just from the stern, but also suffered some from the side, as well as a squall about every four hours. When the squalls caught us the wind suddenly increased to 45 knots and forced me to roll up the yankee until there was only a small piece of canvas. I started sleeping less, one day four hours, the next day two ... every few minutes I woke up to check the windvane, the sheets, the mast, if my wife was still breathing, if the dog was still on board and if the cat had stowed away any flying fish.

On the seventh day the situation worsened again like an explosion. It was no longer necessary to be in a squall to have winds of 45 knots. Eugenia's health remained the same, but my strength started to notice the weight of all the work that boat and crew involve. At the end of that day, with the waves up to 16ft, I received a message from my friend. 'Warning! Tomorrow the wind will rise to 35 knots and you will have waves up to 11ft (3·35m)'. Fantastic! – the weather forecast was completely wrong. I

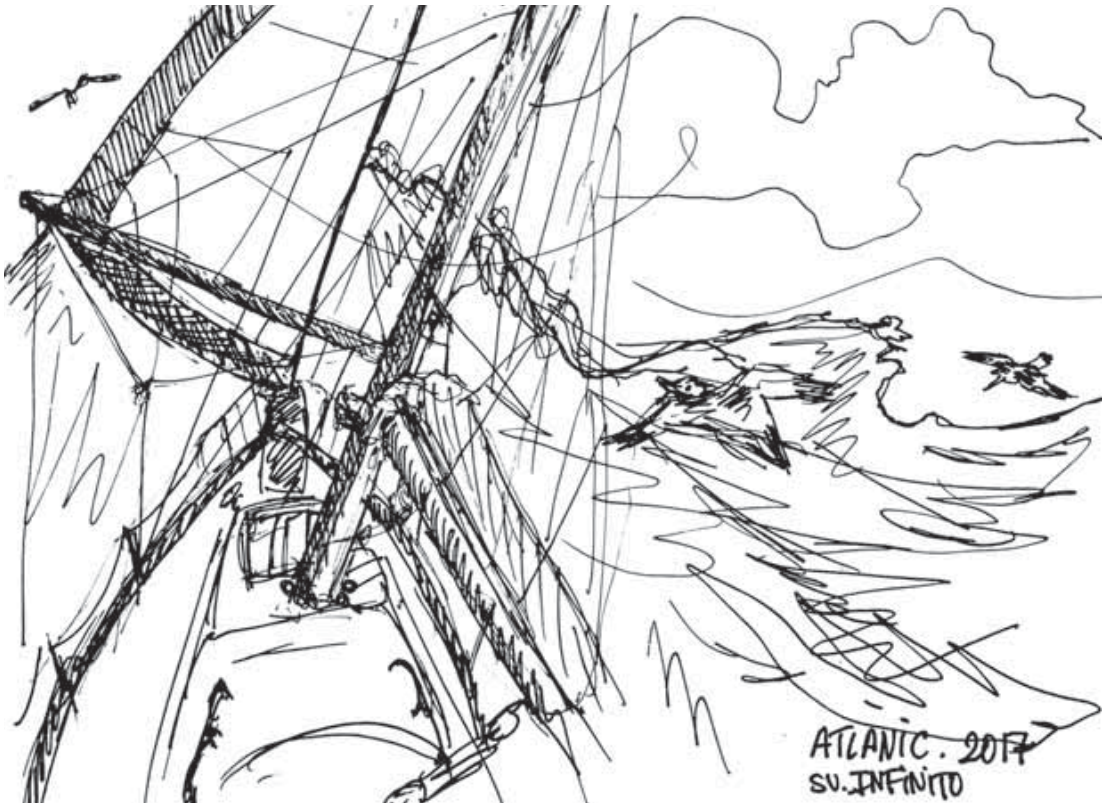
replied quickly saying, 'Worse? Now 45 knots and waves 16ft (4·9m). Give me good news!'. I never got an answer.

Indeed, on the next day the weather visibly worsened. The wind did not increase too much and stayed between 45 and 50 knots, but the sea rose up furious, majestic and huge, as I hope never to see again. The breaking waves followed us overwhelmingly, higher than the 23ft (7m) mizzen, so I calculated that the largest measured about 26ft (8m). I was terrified. Eugenia no longer came on deck – it was too dangerous and she didn't have the strength to do anything, she was like a rag doll that you have to move from one place to another. The waves looked like mountains, with valleys, rivulets and high waterfalls. From each crest you could contemplate an inhospitable landscape. The seabirds flew fast, skilfully escaping the fury of the sea, but *Infinito* couldn't move so quickly. She heeled sharply when each wave reached us, and her small hull surfed the waves at 14 knots with only a tiny sail area.

I had heard about solitary waves, and on the morning of the tenth day, between those huge and brutal mountains of water, I saw a white line on the horizon. It stood out from the other waves and seemed to move fast. I was perplexed that there were waves higher than those around us. One broke, almost above the radome of our radar, I bent down and looked towards the bow – there were many kilos of water there. It hit the stern and filled the cockpit, leaving us almost vertical with the bow towards the sky. I looked back again and saw something terrible – that wave that stood out on the horizon was going to reach us. The sea went down many metres, we slowed suddenly from 6 knots to 5 knots, then 3 knots ... the wall grew and did not stop growing, maybe to 32ft (nearly 10m). It made a low sound as if an orchestra was tuning the basses. It was still many metres away, but seemed to be very near. More than a wave, it was like a set of waves in one, or a huge ripple of the ocean. It got closer and closer and *Infinito* looked down again. She seemed scared.

Something was happening on the crest. It curved, cracked, and there were turquoise lines, shinings and breaks. Its sound was similar to a loaded railway combo going full speed through a tunnel. Our own speed suddenly increased again – we were sailing downhill! The noise became unbearable and I quickly looked for the crew. 'They're all inside and closed, okay', I thought. I closed my eyes and crouched in the cockpit as the wave hit the boat. A lot of water was falling from everywhere. I was underwater and I was holding my breath. I noticed how my harness pulled all my weight onto my ribs and then how it pulled me against the cockpit. Suddenly, most of the water disappeared, the boat straightened up again and I raised my head. There was still a lot of water everywhere. The pole and the yankee were still in place, and both masts were still standing, but water was falling from the crosstrees. The windvane* looked battered but in one piece. 'Am I really in the tropics?' I asked myself. Eugenia suddenly came outside, drawing strength from where it didn't exist. "Are you okay?" she asked, with the broken pressure cooker in her hand. I don't remember what I answered. The other crew didn't seem to have suffered any damage, but the cat's eyes were wide open and his ears pulled back.

I tried to slow the boat down but that made things much worse. When the waves reached us they swept the entire deck, filled the cockpit to the top and the water crashed hard against the main hatch. If I had opened it to help my wife or to cook, the water would have reached the forward cabin, so we had to keep moving



forward. I was very worried about Eugenia, every day she got a little worse. She cried, vomited and was starving all at the same time. Sometimes her mind played games to get away from our situation and changed the cry into a huge laugh – it was a mix of laughter and screams. I just wanted to make landfall. I thought a lot about solo sailors, and I wished I was one of them. They can have a tough time without having to pretend that everything is fine.

I think I was never more than 20 minutes without doing anything – there was always something needing to be done, day and night ... to help Eugenia to the toilet, to dress her in her drysuit and raise her weight up to the cockpit and bring her down again after ten minutes, to cook something tasty, to find fish on the deck before the cat did, to replace fallen objects, to clean the cat's sand, trim the sails, look for the candies, reef ahead of a coming squall... Then Eugenia wants to go outside to be sick and is starving again, the cat has peed on the bed, remove the sheets and wash them, hoisting them well up to dry and put clean ones on (after moving Eugenia to the forward cabin), clean the dog's business, find more hidden fish, wash the dishes, another squall, lower the sheets down, Eugenia wants to go outside again, the damn candies again ... I really don't know where I found the energy, but I suppose it was due to the desire to survive, reach land and, above all, love. I lost about 8kg (17·6lbs) during the passage.

* A Windpilot Pacific, bought second-hand and named Pepito Grillo, the Spanish name for Jiminy Cricket. (Why are so many windvane self-steering gears called after cartoon characters...?)

Playing the blues on my xaphoon as we approach Martinique

Besides the 'party' life went on. Tritón was bored so he started playing with the chart-plotter. First, he tried what happened if he changed the language, so he set it to Chinese. Once this was solved (thanks to the manual) he decided to do a factory reset and we lost a good part of the route. After he had made several resets and changed the language for a few more times I set a pin number to lock the settings. Unfortunately I didn't think about setting a hard one, and I used 1234. It didn't take Tritón long to discover the code, and he played several more jokes on us before we reached land. I got my revenge by making them listen to me playing my xaphoon*.

The storm lasted three more days. After that the wind and waves dropped considerably, but the situation was still quite unbearable. The cat had lost patience and, more and more often, took advantage of an oversight to pee in some corner, preferably on top of our clothes, bed or cushions. The ship reeked as he peed faster than I could clean.

Three days before reaching land the situation became more comfortable, although the sea was still chaotic and the waves came from different directions. Eugenia was still sick, but we were no longer so worried about our lives. The worst had been left behind. We were worried about our friends, who surely had experienced the same horrible passage, but it was impossible to communicate with them. All the while the waves kept pushing *Infinito*. A bit of surfing, then we're slow. On one of these waves I saw something strange as it disappeared to the west – a large, pale object slid down its surface to the trough. I ran to the helm, unhitched the wind vane and kicked the tiller hard. The boat abruptly changed her course and a large piece of wood, perhaps lost from some cargo, passed by us scarcely 16ft (5m) away. Another scare on the list. We had to make land soon.

I spent the last two days concerned about the health of my wife and the baby and hoping to arrive soon. Tritón was convinced that the passage would last for ever

* An amazing instrument, not much bigger than a recorder but with the sound of a saxophone. Head to YouTube to see one being played.

and spent the daylight hours lying on the deck, looking at the horizon. He had some scrapes and wounds due to the constant movement, as he often slid from one side of the cockpit to the other. I think Atlas was still wondering what he could do to stop the boat moving. The day before we arrived, with only 15 knots of wind and smooth seas, *Infinito* moved slowly, as though she was dancing. The weather was nice (hot and sunny), some dolphins appeared, the engine was running well and we could start smelling the land ... everything was okay and there were no major repairs to do.

Next morning at first light Tritón suddenly lifted his head and ears. First he looked twice, and then he went to the bow and looked a third time. Soon after that he looked at me and started running and jumping. Then he started barking and making funny dog sounds. After 19 days we reached Martinique!

We contacted our friends, some in Martinique like us and others in Suriname or Barbados. All of them were fine with their boats still floating, though some had major repairs to make. A boom had broken, and there was some other damage such as torn sails, rigging failure, a mast fastened with truck straps ... we were very lucky not to have had any major damage.

We decided to sell *Infinito* in Martinique. It was not an easy decision as she had become our friend and our home, but she was too small for those waves and that crew. We bought *Cythere*, a beautiful ketch-rigged Endurance 44, to continue following our dream, with one more crew member and new horizons to explore.

Follow *Cythere* and her crew – including young Mia – at www.saltylife.es. Currently in Spanish only, though auto-translation does a surprisingly good job for the non-linguists among us.

Anchored in the Caribbean

FROM THE GALLEY OF ... Tim Bridgen, aboard *Marionette*

Smoked mackerel

Fillet very fresh mackerel from whole, without gutting or removing the head or tail. It's easier, as well as avoiding most of the mess. To do this, use a very sharp, flexible, narrow-bladed knife – otherwise known as a filleting knife. Lay the fish on its side and make a vertical cut right across its body just behind its pectoral fin (the one on its side near the head), as deep as the backbone. You'll feel it easily because you're using a sharp, thin-bladed knife – right?

Without changing the position of the knife twist it towards the tail, hold it flat against the backbone, and run it along the backbone until it slides out just above the tail. If you do this smoothly and gently, keeping the knife parallel to the cutting surface, you'll remove a clean, boneless fillet. Do exactly the same on the other side, except you'll need to be gentler and not press down at all, otherwise things get messy.

Make a brine solution of 2 litres of water and one cup of salt, or use clean sea water and half a cup of salt. Put the fillets in the brine and leave for 20 minutes. Rinse them lightly in fresh water, blot them dry, and leave them in a breeze for an hour or more. You want them to look dry and slightly shiny, which means they've formed what's called a pellicule which acts to draw the smoke flavour into the oil in the fish.

Prepare your smoker by sprinkling a handful of soaked fine wood chips onto its bottom, placing a drip tray over those, then putting a wire rack over that. You'll need to buy the wood chips – you can't use pine sawdust from your workshop. I think a good strong oak smoke works best. Lay the fillets on the rack and put the lid on the smoker. You can get portable camping smokers online for £30 and upwards, but otherwise a large biscuit tin or similar works fine, with a few holes in the lid, some tin foil in the bottom as a drip 'tray', and a cake rack or grill pan tray over that.

Then you need a heat source. My smoker cost £40 from Amazon and came with a stand for the smoking tin, a couple of methylated spirits* burners to put under it, and a starter pack of wood shavings. I only use the meths burners if I'm ashore – on the boat I put the smoking tin on a gas barbecue fixed to the stern rail.

Heat vigorously until smoke starts to come out of the tin and then leave it on the heat for 10–15 minutes. Check progress periodically – you are waiting for the macherel to look like it does in a good qulity

hsupermarket plastic pack – dark orangey-brown and juicy looking. When done, remove the tray and cool as quickly as possible.

This method also works well for the tuna family, cutting the meat into thick steaks before brining. It's particularly good with the more strongly flavoured, darker fleshed species – bonito, skipjack and mackerel tuna.

* Usually called denatured alcohol in the US.

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THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH
Stuart Letton

(*When Stuart wrote about* Time Bandit*'s passage from southern Spain to Norway a few years ago – see* Winter Sun to Midnight Sun, *in* Flying Fishes 2015/2 *and* 2016/1, *he didn't admit that he was already starting to stray. Only Anne – and possibly* Time Bandit *– suspected....*)

We've been together a long time, through thick and thin, both good times and bad. It was a long-term relationship, but sadly we're now going our separate ways. I have to confess the fault lies with me – my impetuosity, impatience, and I guess a seven year itch that took quite a long time to scratch. We got on really well for all those years. We went everywhere together and even with all our ups and downs, we kept going when many others just didn't or couldn't.

Then 'she' came into my life – tall, slim and drop dead gorgeous. We were simply meant for each other. And so, after seven years together, nearly 50,000 miles, and many months of agonising, anguish and tears, not to mention polishing and varnishing, we've finally parted. *Time Bandit*, our beloved Island Packet 45, has gone to new owners to continue her travels.

Us? Tall, slim and drop dead gorgeous will be *Time Bandit II* ... but from the 'dark side' ... a square boat ... a proper boat but with a trainer hull ... a catamaran. Our monohull friends are horrified. Our multihull friends thankful we've finally come to our senses. The Ocean Cruising Club probably re-considering our membership. I have to exorcise my need for speed demons, however, so I'm returning to my catamaran roots dragging Anne, screaming, behind me.

Time Bandit approaching Hole in the Wall, Tasmania, before 'she' came into my life

The affair started a few years ago. Early one morning we woke to the sound of the cruisers' jazz band. Hall Yard was drumming out the beat on the mast, Ann Chor was straining at the bow, and Sue Easterly was screaming in the rigging so, accompanied by these unwelcome harmonies we joined a dawn mass exit from a wild anchorage in the Canaries. Along with a dozen others we had woken to find our pleasant little cove of the night before turned into a raging, white-capped lee shore.

One by one we picked up our anchors and headed around to the neighbouring sheltered anchorage, all pretending we'd actually bothered to get a forecast the night before and wrongly decided it wouldn't come to much. As the anchor came home I was conscious of the two-hulled job behind us, an anxious skipper on the trampoline probably regretting his smugness off the night before ... 'Look! I'm in a catamaran. I can anchor right off the beach', his transoms now kissing said beach. I was too busy to think about it until ten minutes later when, under furled genoa alone, this guy went flying past at 12 knots. '*Outremer – Fast Cats*' read the strapline on his hull. That line was filed away somewhere in the depths of my brain, where it muddled around aimlessly waiting for one of those passages when 2, 3 or 4 knots was so painfully slow.

I started digging the hole off the coast of Norway back in 2013. It was a bright sunny day and we were making our way slowly south in a gentle westerly. Very slowly. At some point, memories of *Outremer – Fast Cats* exploded from the depths of my brain and at the next wifi spot I looked to see if Google knew anything about these boats. Before you could say, 'brokers' exhorbitant fees', WHOOSH ... up came an action-packed video of *Obedient*, an Outremer 45, doing 16 knots up the Sound of Jura, our home waters, spray flying from the lee bow like a fire hose.

Time Bandit II – Tall, slim and drop dead gorgeous

You could cut cheddar with that bow

A little detective work led me to the owner and, ignoring the rule that 'when you're in a hole, stop digging', we ended up in Stranraer in southwest Scotland on a blustery winter's day in November 2013. On the drive down the coast, waves were crashing over the promenades. Old folks out for their morning walks with their ubiquitous little white dogs were dodging the breaking seas and at severe risk of appearing on the evening news ... posthumously.

We finally blew into Stranraer about eleven. Spotting *Obedient*'s owner amongst the morning walkers was easy, thanks to the subtle but noticeable Musto branding policy.

No sooner were the introductions made than Gordon says, 'Let's go for a sail'.

'It's blowing 35 knots out there', says I.

Dig, dig, dig. Anne steers us out of the marina while Gordon and I hoist the main – seemingly endless amounts of halyard and expensive canvas compared to what we were used to. Five minutes later we are flying up Loch Ryan doing an effortless 10–12 knots. Not flat out but, strangely for us, just plain flat. No heeling over, no coffee cups secured in little cup-shaped holders, no standing braced and needing one leg longer than the other.

These were clearly signs! Probably signs to stop digging, right enough, but a man's gotta do...

So, at the end of May 2018, we found ourselves in the south of France at the Outremer Cup, trying to discuss the pros and cons of catamarans versus keelboats, while also trying hard, but failing, to eat our body weight in Outremer-sponsored oysters and champagne cocktails. Twenty-four of these beauties turned up for the event – Outremers, not

What have I done?

oysters. For three sun-drenched days we raced around the Mediterranean on azure blue seas, on boats the size of tennis courts, sailing faster than the wind and flying hundreds of square metres of very expensive sailcloth. I was in heaven.

And in a bit of a dither... Just how far was I going to go on this quest for speed? This unexplainable need for change? This venture to the dark side?

Come back next issue and find out!

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OUR GREEK ODYSSEY, CONTINUED
Mike and Helen Norris

(Flying Fish 2017/2 *carried* Our Greek Odyssey, *Mike and Helen's account of their 2500 mile passage from Portugal to Greece, aboard* Island Drifter, *their 37ft cutter-rigged Countess ketch, and their subsequent visits to Crete and the Dodecanese islands in the southeast Aegean. Visit their blog at www.islanddriftergreece2018.blogspot.com.*)

At the end of November 2017 we left *Island Drifter* laid up for the winter in Agmar Marine's excellent boatyard at Partheni on the Greek island of Leros. At the beginning of March the following year we flew back to Leros via Athens to continue our 'Greek Odyssey'. This time we planned to cruise and explore the Sporades Islands in the Northern Aegean. (charts 01 & 02)

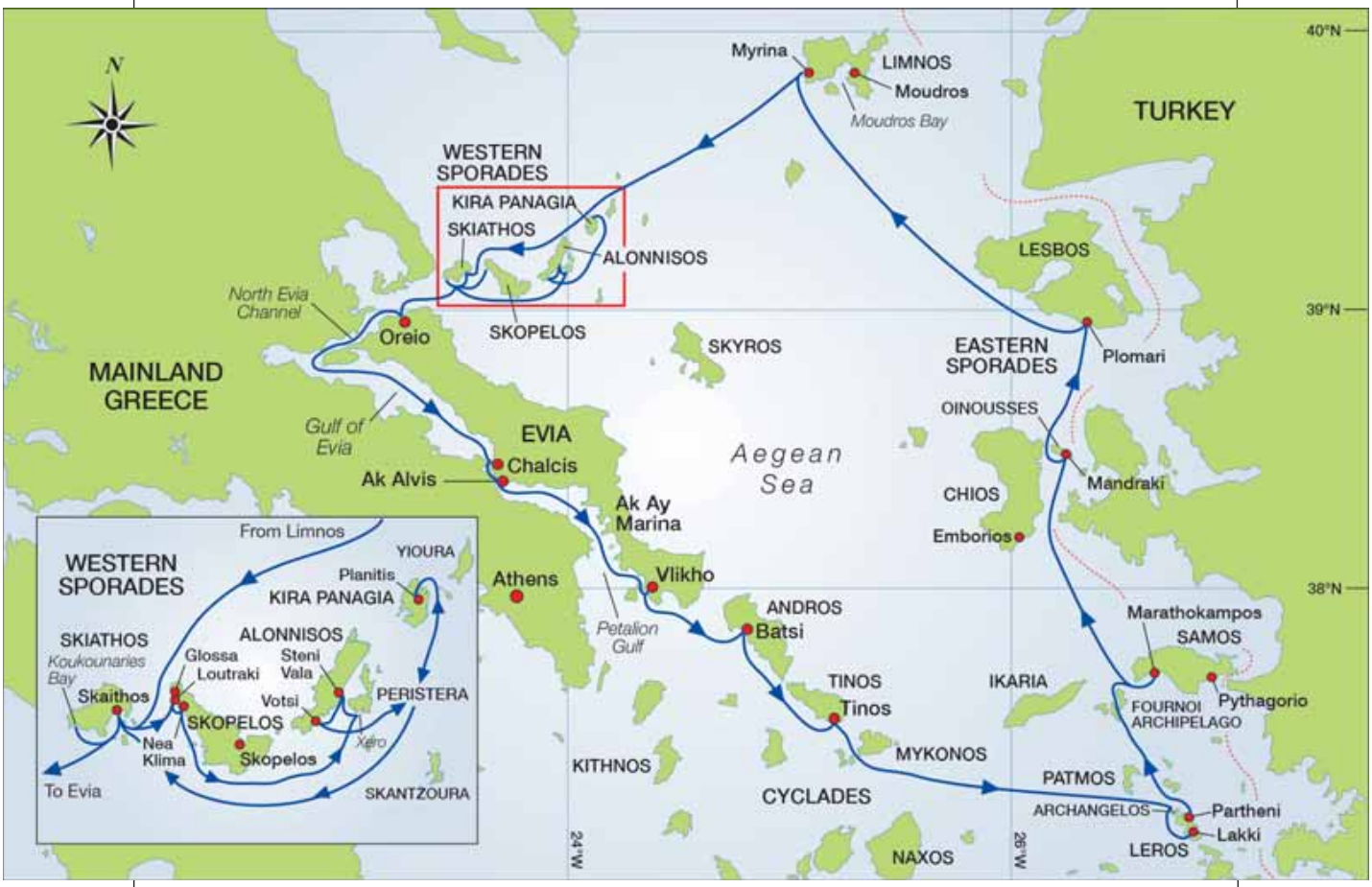
We spent our first six weeks living aboard in the boatyard while working on *ID*, with the help of the yard's engineering staff where required. As it was at the end of the rainy season (December to February), the weather was well suited to our task, each day being just like a very good spring or autumn one in the UK.

Helen servicing deck fittings

The Eastern Sporades

The eight principal islands of the Eastern Sporades run up the northeast Turkish coast for 200 miles from the Fournoi archipelago in the south to Limnos in the north. They do not form an immediately recognisable group, as each island has strong characteristics of its own. What they do have in common, with the exception of Samos, is that they receive fewer visitors than the other island groups and therefore generally have a more authentic Greek atmosphere.

Fortunately, in April and May the strong Meltemi wind from the north had not set in and it was therefore fairly easy to make our way north, often with the assistance of a southerly wind, and our friends Max and Sue Walker joined us for this part of our cruise. Max has run his own international yacht delivery company for the past thirty years and Mike got most of his delivery work through him.


N
40°N
39°N
38°N
24°W
26°W
Myrina
LIMNOS
Moudros
Moudros Bay
TURKEY
WESTERN SPORADES
KIRA PANAGIA
SKIATHOS
ALONNISOS
LESBOS
North Evia Channel
Oreio
SKOPELOS
SKYROS
EASTERN SPORADES
Plomari
MAINLAND GREECE
Gulf of Evia
EVIA
Chalcis
Ak Alvis
Aegean Sea
OINOUSSES
Mandraki
CHIOS
Emborios
Ak Ay Marina
Athens
Vlikho
Petalion Gulf
ANDROS
Batsi
Marathokampos
SAMOS
TINOS
Tinos
IKARIA
FOURNOI ARCHIPELAGO
Pythagorio
MYKONOS
KITHNOS
CYCLADES
PATMOS
ARCHANGELOS
Partheni
Lakki
LEROS
NAXOS
From Limnos
YIOURA
Planitis
KIRA PANAGIA
WESTERN SPORADES
SKIATHOS
Koukounaries Bay
ALONNISOS
Glossa
Loutraki
Steni Vala
Skaithos
Votsi
PERISTERA
SKOPELOS
Nea Klima
Skopelos
Xéro
To Evia
SKANTZOURA

Marathokampos with Mount Kerkis in the background

On our passage north to Samos we cruised through the Fournoi archipelago with its many attractive and well-protected anchorages. Only two of the islands are inhabited, though the principal one, from which the archipelago takes its name, has an active fishing fleet and boatyard. Visitors are few and far between, and Fournoi town's ambience is reminiscent of 1970s Greece with its slow pace of life and cobbled streets shaded by leafy mulberry trees.

West of Samos lies the mountainous island of Ikaria, named after Icarus who, legend has it, fell into the sea close to the island. Today Ikaria's uniqueness lies in the fact that its inhabitants are proven to live longer than the population of the Greek mainland or any other Greek island. Indeed, Ikarians live on average ten years longer than the population of any US state or European country.

Samos has an international airport, yacht charter fleets, some excellent beaches and scenery, and caters seriously for tourism. The large town of Pythagorio on the southeast coast is only a mile or so from Turkey – indeed the island's mountainous east/west spine is a geological extension of Mount Mycale in Turkey. The town, built over the ancient city of Samos, is today named after Pythagoras (he of triangular fame), who was born there. We particularly liked Marathokampos, an attractive, well-protected fishing harbour and low-key resort spectacularly located at the foot of 5000ft Mount Kerkis on the southwest coast of the island.

Some 50 miles north of Samos, on the southeast corner of Chios lies Emborios anchorage – a small indented cove, well protected from the prevailing northerly wind. In the summer the town becomes a smart holiday resort, visitors coming primarily to enjoy the town's beaches at Mavro Volia, which are comprised of large, smooth, black volcanic stones that retain the heat of the sun.

Since a southerly gale was forecast we pulled into the well-protected harbour of Mandraki on the islet of Oinousses, less than a mile off the northeast coast of Chios.

Island Drifter at anchor in Emborios cove

The island has a seafaring tradition that belies its size. Its large, modern, concrete quay – financed, we believe, by local shipping magnates – and the large Merchant Naval Officers' Academy, mean that Mandraki differs considerably from the rough and ready rustic charm of many other small ports.

Thirty miles north of Oinousses lies the port of Plomari on the south coast of Lesbos. We were delighted to meet up with Scandinavian friends who have second homes there, whom we'd first met when cruising in the Baltic in 2012. With them we went on local walks and visited both an ouzo distillery and an organic olive plantation. At the latter we enjoyed an outstanding four-hour barbecue of local lamb, salads and wine, eating at long trestle tables in the middle of the estate's olive groves.

Mandraki harbour quay on Oinousses, with the mountains of Chios in the background

From Lesbos we sailed northwest overnight (unusual in Greece) to Limnos, our final, 90 mile, passage in the Eastern Sporades. Once away from light pollution the view of the stars, and in particular the Milky Way, was truly magnificent. Myrina, the main town and port on the island, is overlooked by a huge Venetian fort on the hilly peninsula which

Enjoying a communal barbecue in the olive groves

shelters the harbour from the prevailing northerly wind. The town's old quarter, with its narrow alleys, is shaded by giant vines that date back to the Ottoman occupation.

The enormous bay of Moudros, to the east of Myrina, was the base from which the ill-fated Gallipoli Campaign was launched in 1915. Casualty numbers were horrific. For Australians and New Zealanders the Gallipoli Campaign holds particular poignancy, and both countries commemorate Anzac Day annually on 25 April.

Island Drifter at anchor in Myrina harbour, Limnos

The Western Sporades

For some unknown reason the Western Sporades are also known as the Northern Sporades! Some 100 miles from Limnos, they were our next target destination as we were due to drop Max and Sue off at the international airport at Skiathos, the group's capital, and pick up our next guest, Peter Coy. With a convenient wind shift to the northeast, we enjoyed another overnight sail from Limnos to the Western Sporades.

The principal chain of islands in the group spreads for 50 miles northeast from Skiathos, itself only three miles off mainland Greece. These islands are in fact an extension of the Greek mainland's Petalion peninsula. Skyros, some 40 miles southeast of the principal chain, while included in the Western Sporades, has more in common historically, culturally and economically with the larger island of Evia to its west.

The four larger inhabited islands of the Western Sporades – Skiathos and Skopelos, and to a lesser extent Alonnisos and Skyros – are, unlike the islands of the Eastern Sporades, very much on the main tourist track. All the other rocky islets that form the National Maritime Park are uninhabited, and indeed access is mostly restricted or prohibited.

Skiathos is all about beaches, bars, restaurants and nightlife, and tourist and charter boats dominate the town quay which can best be described as 'pleasantly chaotic'. We therefore chose to drop our anchor in the town anchorage, where planes coming in to land at the airport at the head of the bay sweep overhead, seemingly at mast height.

Early the following morning we motored over to the empty ferry dock, where Max and Sue disembarked to get a taxi to the airport. We then headed off to Skopelos where Helen, who had been suffering for some time from a trapped nerve in her neck, had located an excellent lady physiotherapist via the internet. We therefore based ourselves in Skopelos for ten days until Peter Coy joined us for our cruise of the Western Sporades islands.

After another night in Skiathos town anchorage we picked up Peter from the empty ferry quay at 0600, then headed for Koukounaries Bay on the southwest coast. It claims to have the best beach in Greece, but unfortunately, like most good beaches in the Med, was dominated by parasols and sunloungers belonging to adjacent *tavernas*, hotels and apartments, which detracted somewhat from the bay's natural beauty. Water skiers, speedboats, parasailors, towed plastic doughnuts, wake boards and jet skiers didn't help matters either!

Helen on the rack

Peter enjoying his first of many souvlakis on our cruise! Unlike us, Peter built his own Countess from scratch over a period of six years so is knowledgeable about boat construction

Skopelos, the next island to the east, is larger and more rugged than Skiathos and its concessions to tourism are lower key and in better taste. Much of the island's countryside and coast is as spectacular as in the film *Mamma Mia!*, some scenes of which were filmed on the island. The towns of Skopelos and Glossa are the most attractive in the whole of the Sporades. Loutraki port is near the north end of the island's west coast. With its splendid beaches and the very attractive village of Glossa perched on the hill above, it remains, even with the daily influx of ferries bringing tourists, a very pleasant location. The Taverna Agnanti in Glossa has a stunning view of the harbour and serves food 'to die for' – as Mike nearly did when he saw the prices on the menu. Nea Klima, further south, is another charming village that also continues

Loutraki harbour

Island Drifter moored bows-to at Steni Vala

to survive on a modest summer tourist trade. It has particular appeal for cruisers since there is an excellent sandy beach with crystal-clear water adjacent to the quay.

We returned to Skopelos port for the last of Helen's physio treatments (her physiotherapist worked wonders). The houses and churches of the old town are piled up on top of each other, creating an amphitheatre above the harbour. Its narrow alleys restrict access to all but pedestrians, donkeys and the occasional suicidal motorcyclist. It is a truly delightful location.

Before visiting the island of Alonnisos, northeast of Skopelos, we stopped in the small cove of Xero on the south coast of Peristera, a smaller, virtually uninhabited, islet east of Alonnisos. Not another yacht or house in sight, just crystal-clear water and excellent protection.

Alonnisos itself is more rugged and wilder than its southern neighbours, but no less green. The island is more up-market than either Skiathos or Skopelos and hence attracts fewer tourists. We pulled in to Steni Vala, a small, shallow pretty cove, where we moored with our bows to the quay. From there, and with a northerly gale forecast, we sailed all of three miles to Votsi, a small harbour with excellent all-round shelter favoured by the local fishermen who have taken over the €3,500,000 quay, which was financed by the EU for visiting yachts! There was only limited room to swing at anchor in the harbour but we overcame the problem by putting out an aft shoreline. Fishermen apart, Votsi is a very attractive harbour.

Once the gale had passed we headed for the anchorage at Planitis on the northern coast of Panagia. This large double bay has a very narrow (82m) entrance where, in strong northerly winds, a considerable sea piles up – being pushed towards it by the wind and sea is said to be a very frightening experience. Conversely, once in it is impossible to get out until the weather abates, though regardless of the conditions outside, inside the bay it is always calm.

Finally we returned to Skiathos port, where Mike took Peter ashore by dinghy at 0400 in pouring rain to catch his early flight back to Heathrow. The rain, thunder and lightning continued for two solid days, but fortunately Mike had spotted an empty berth on the quay while taking Peter ashore so we quickly moved into it. Some sailing friends nearby had recently been struck by lightning, so we were keen to avoid isolation.

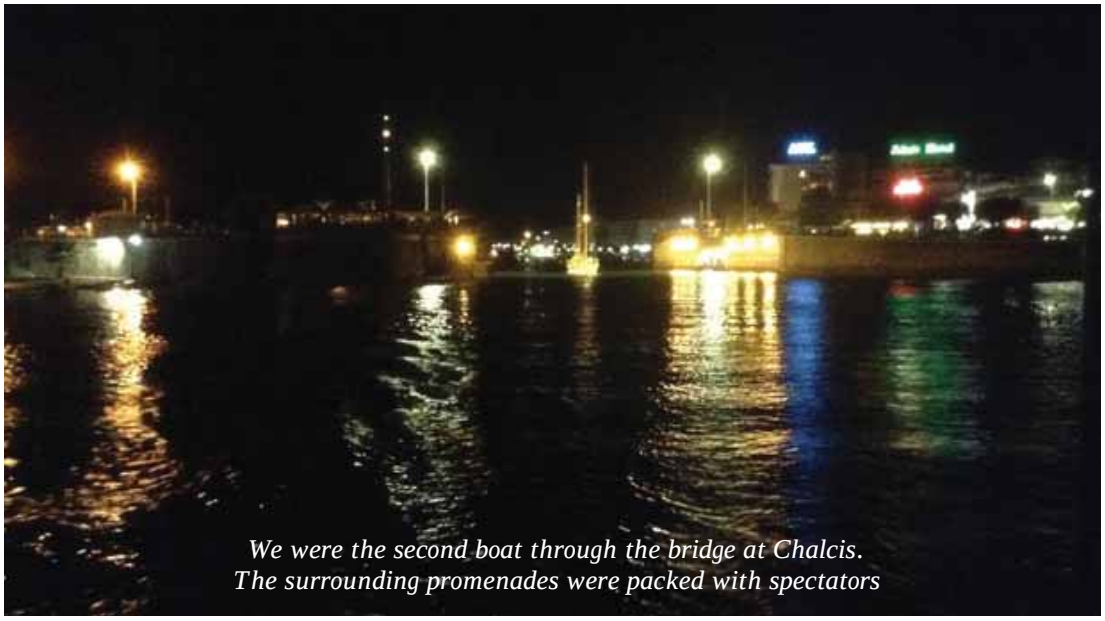
The Planitis anchorage was like a mirror

Evia and its gulfs and channels

Peter's departure was the signal to start our return to Leros – south via the Evia Channel, and then east-southeast across the northern islands of the Cyclades.

Evia, at some 90 miles long, is the second largest island in Greece after Crete. A mountainous spine divides the island's eastern cliffs, which face the prevailing northerly Meltemi wind, from the well-protected west coast and Evia Channel. Ferries link the island to the mainland, as do two bridges at Chalcis, the island's capital. Evia's proximity to mainland Greece and in particular to Athens has meant that many second homes and holiday complexes now exist on the island. Even so it is not on the main tourist route for foreign visitors, albeit that Greece's enemies invariably approached Athens from the island! Fortunately it is so large and wild that its natural beauty has not been seriously affected. The bulk of the island's anchorages and resorts are on the west coast, surrounded on adjacent plains by grain fields, olive groves and pine forests. The mainland coast is generally more rugged, sparsely populated and either barren or covered by *maquis*.

After leaving Skiathos we enjoyed a broad reach to the mouth of the North Evia Channel. Thereafter, as we progressed into the channel, the wind slowly dropped and



We were the second boat through the bridge at Chalcis. The surrounding promenades were packed with spectators

we ended up motoring to the small port of Oreio on the north coast of the island, our target destination for the night. In ancient times Oreio was an important maritime city and the remains of an acropolis that guarded the harbour can be seen above the town. Today it is off the beaten tourist track, although it does have a modest summer trade. After arriving, we enjoyed our customary G&Ts while watching the sun setting over the mountains of the mainland.

To be certain of arriving in good time to sign in and pay the bridge toll at Chalcis, we departed at dawn next morning for the 60 mile passage down the northern Gulf of Evia. Chalcis is one of the ten largest cities in Greece and, not surprisingly, it has an urban rather than an island feel. Right in the centre of the city, beneath the unique 40m-wide drawbridge which spans the channel to the mainland, the gulf waters swirl by at speeds of up to 7 knots. Then, for some unknown reason, every few hours the current reverses. Aristotle is reputed to have jumped into the water in frustration over his inability to explain this phenomenon and even today there is no entirely satisfactory explanation for this capricious current.

The first bridge was built in 411 BC and had numerous successors before the current bridge, which slides back into a recess under the road, was constructed in 1962. It is opened once every 24 hours, always at slack water and at night to avoid inconveniencing the heavy traffic that uses it. Once through the old bridge, we motored south through the city, passed under the 30m-high suspension bridge built in 1993, and eventually emerged into the Southern Gulf of Evia via the narrows at Ak Alvis.

South of the sprawling suburbs of Chalcis Evia becomes increasingly barren, bleak and windswept, and in places very narrow. Once in the Southern Gulf we pushed on south through the night, passing through the narrows at Ak Ay Marina into the Petalion Gulf. Eventually we anchored in the peaceful, well-sheltered sandy bay of Vlikho towards the southern end of the island, had breakfast, and then slept until noon. Then we swam in the crystal-clear water and chilled out.

The Northern Cyclades

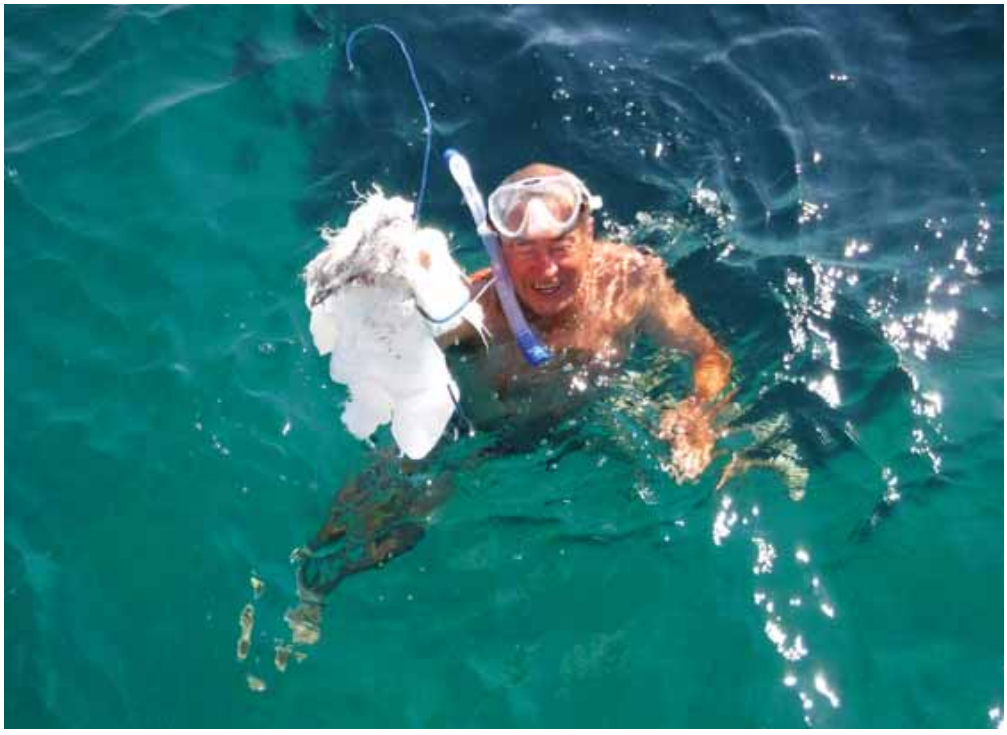
The second leg of our return to Leros was via the Northern Cyclades. The Cyclades as a whole are the central group of islands in the Aegean, so named because they more or less encircle Delphi, the ancient centre of trade and worship. We plan to cruise these islands properly in 2019, but in the meantime used them as convenient stepping-stones on our way back to Leros.

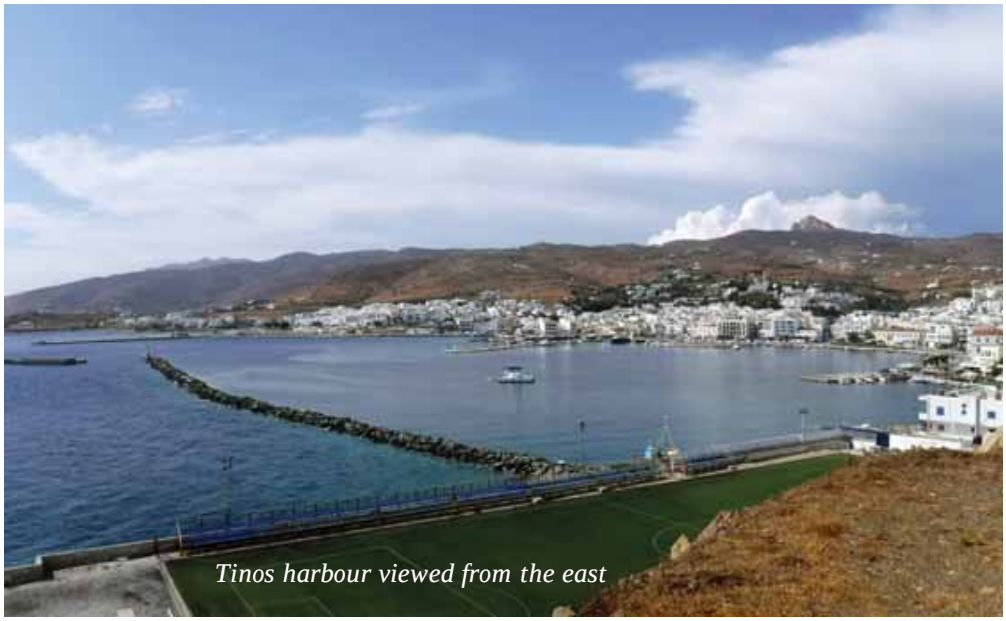
Andros, the northernmost and second largest island in the Cyclades, is very mountainous with a summit of 3721 feet and snow-capped peaks in winter. It is a walker's paradise – valleys with streams and ancient stone mills cleave the wild mountains, each village has its own spring, and waterfalls cascade down the hillsides for most of the year. The island is popular with Greek holidaymakers and has become something of a weekend-cottage suburb for Athenians, but only a few 'in the know' foreign tourists go there. We anchored in Batsí town harbour – though not without difficulty as a plastic sack had become wound around the prop and left us significantly underpowered. Batsí is as pleasant a location as the pilot book indicated – very Greek, quiet at night, a good town beach, very clear water, and no ferries or tripper boats.

Tinos, our next stepping-stone to the southeast, has a particularly rugged coastline although the interior is very fertile. On our way there the wind blew at over 30 knots, so we ruled out the possibility of stopping at one of the dozen anchorages on the southwest coast. Instead, we headed for and eventually moored in Tinos town port near the south end of the island, as it has an excellent reputation for all-round shelter.

There are over sixty small villages peppered throughout the island. The interior is extensively terraced and cultivated, and swathes of oleander bushes and other

Mike with the plastic sack that had wrapped itself around the prop





Tinos harbour viewed from the east

colourful shrubs were in full bloom. Tinos is particularly famous for its old, elaborate, Venetian dovecotes – many the size of a two-storey house! – and the marble which it both exports and uses as a local building material. Even the water points on the quay were works of art in carved marble.

The vast majority of visitors are Greeks, who come to see the impressive all-marble church of Panagia Evangelistria. It was erected over the spot where, in 1822, a Greek Orthodox nun now canonised as St Pelagia, the patron saint of Greece, was directed

Hydrovane, towed generator and mizzen all enjoying a good workout

in a dream to discover an icon of the Virgin Mary. This seemingly proved capable of effecting miracle cures for the sick and disabled, and is currently housed in the church. There are two major annual pilgrimages during which Tinos is inundated by the faithful and the desperate.

A 24-hour weather window of unusual but favourable (for us at least) west-northwest winds was forecast, so we decided to take advantage of it and depart two days earlier than planned for Leros, some 90 miles to the southeast. The force 6 wind proved perfect for a Countess, which likes a bit of a breeze, and we enjoyed probably the best passage we've had so far in Greece – a broad reach with two reefs in both the main and genoa and with the mizzen up. *ID* happily bowled along at 6 knots on a stable platform. We allowed the third member of crew, our Hydrovane, to steer, made the most of the overnight sail by trailing the towed generator for only the second time since we've been in Greece.

Before decommissioning *Island Drifter* at Lakki and then having her lifted back out into Agmar Marine's boatyard in Partheni, we anchored for a couple of days off the small island of Archangelos, just north of the boatyard, sharing it with just the *taverna* owners and a resident herd of goats.

The colourful Taverna Stigma on Archangelos

After a fairly hectic week in very hot conditions decommissioning *Island Drifter*, we returned to the UK, with plans to return to Greece in mid-September to continue our explorations.

FROM THE GALLEY OF ...
Janice Fennymore-White, aboard *Destiny*

Granny Dubois' French Baguette recipe

Ingredients

- 375g (3 cups) strong flour
- 8g salt
- 5g instant yeast or 12g fresh yeast
- 300ml lukewarm water

Mix the flour and salt together in a big bowl (but not the yeast as the salt will it and the dough will not rise. Add the yeast to the water. If you're using fresh yeast, follow the instructions that came with it. Mix the flour + salt and the water + yeast together to make a rough, wet mixture. Cover the mixture with cling film and put a tea towel on it. Put it in a warm place and leave to rise for 90 minutes.

After 75 minutes start to heat your oven to its highest setting – mine goes to 230ºC – and put a bowl of water inside. Line your baguette tin or oven tray with baking paper and, at 90 minutes, pour the mixture in. A spatula will come in handy as the mixture is really sticky. Bake for 30 minutes and tadaaaa ... ready to eat!

The baguette can also can be cooked in a pressure cooker with vent open like a Dutch Oven, though it won't be baguette-shaped. Double the cooking time and turn over halfway through to brown both sides (I put a silicon disk in the bottom to ease turning). This gives a texture more like crumpets, but is still good.

When mixing the dry and wet ingredients you can add sunflower, linseed, sesame or caraway seeds (or a combination) to give additional texture and flavour.

Nigella's no fuss, no faff coffee ice cream

Ingredients

- 300ml (10fl oz) double cream*
- 175g (6oz) condensed milk
- 2 tbsp instant espresso (or 4 tbsp instant coffee) powder and a little hot water to blend)
- 2 tbsp espresso or coffee liqueur (optional)

Whisk the ingredients together using a hand or electric whisk – NOT a food mixer – until soft peaks form. Then fill an airtight container (or two smaller ones) and freeze for at least six hours, preferably overnight. Enjoy!

Experiment by replacing the coffee with 125g of raspberries, strawberries or blueberries, either folded or whisked in, or desiccated coconut. Our favourite is rum and raisin! For this I soak the raisins in 3tbsp of rum, drain them, whisk the rum into the mixture, and fold the raisins in last.

* The double cream can be replaced by whipping cream, evaporated milk or coconut cream (for the latter use the same quantity of coconut and condensed milk).

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PASSAGE TO HORTA:
The 2018 Pursuit Rally
Chris Haworth

While I was crossing the Atlantic aboard *Nyaminyami* in 2013 with my great friends Francis Williams and Jane Williams – my first major passage – I read a book by Theo Dorgan entitled *Sailing for Home* in which he describes Horta as 'a crossroads of the Oceans', and Peter Café Sport as '... amongst Yachtsmen, maybe the most famous pub in the world'. I had never heard of it! Inspired by his description, however, I resolved that I too would arrive in Horta by yacht and visit Peter's Bar…one day!

So when, in autumn 2017, I received a call from Jane Williams (by now owner/skipper of *Indulgence*, a 1984 Nicholson 35) advising me that the OCC, on the invitation of Peter Azevedo's son José, was arranging a rally to Horta the following June to celebrate the centenary of Peter Café Sport, and asking if I'd be interested in joining her for the passage, my answer was an emphatic 'yes!'. With about 8000 people, Horta is the principal town on the island of Faial, one of nine islands that make up the Azores archipelago, some 750 miles due west of Lisbon and a 'stopping off' point for water, supplies and R&R for sailors for centuries.

My brother David and I left Bristol on the 0530 train and reached Falmouth mid-morning on 4th June. Skipper Jane Williams and crewmate Kate Thornton were waiting for us aboard *Indulgence* in Pendennis Marina, fully prepared and victualled. We wanted to get going swiftly to catch the fair tide around The Lizard and into the Channel, and finally left around 1130. In lovely sunshine but not a breath of wind we motored south along the coast to The Lizard, making last-minute phone calls and e-mails, turned the corner, and set a course of 240° towards Horta. Late that afternoon we picked up the forecast 10–15 knots from north-northwest, switched off the engine, and were making 5–6 knots under full main and genoa. The adventure had begun!

Our skipper, Jane Williams

The crew: me, David and Kate Thornton (Jane was taking the photo)

I do not propose to provide a day-by-day account of our passage – which for those who are interested can be accessed at https://janesnich35.blogspot.com/ and which some may find quite amusing – but will try to pick out the highlights of our trip, lessons and tips learned by this relatively inexperienced ocean sailor.

From our research of prevailing conditions we planned to head predominantly west before sailing south, being careful not to be drawn into the Bay of Biscay – where, we understood, winds could be light to non-existent at this time of year. However, this strategy was not helped by the GRIB files downloaded daily from PredictWind which showed much better winds to the south and a significant ridge of high pressure to the west. The good news was that although there was little wind forecast, what there was was generally coming from the northern quadrant – we didn't want head winds in *Indulgence* as she doesn't enjoy the best tacking angles. As an aside, we generally found that as the GRIB files gave the mean average forecast wind speed, in practice we would experience a bit more – 10% more if 10 knots were forecast, 20% more if 20 knots were forecast, and 30% more if 30 knots were forecast. This observation was confirmed as a good rule of thumb by weather and navigation guru Stokey Woodall whom we met in Horta.

With four crew members of varied experience (including two competent sailors who hadn't previously completed passages of more than two days) we adopted an informal watch system during daylight hours. At night we stood individual watches of two hours, starting at 2200 (after dinner) and finishing at 0600 (dawn), which generally gave each person six hours of night-time sleep. We were, however, fairly flexible. The procedure was that the person on watch would give his/her replacement a 20 minute 'wake up'

call, but if the 'on duty' crew was happy to extend their watch then they would delay the 'wake up' call and the next person would do the same for their replacement. In this way we sought to get the best performance from each individual as suited their mood and energy levels. It wouldn't necessarily suit all crews but it worked well for us.

Our passage took 14 days, and although the rhumb line to Horta from Falmouth is about 1250 miles we sailed 1465 miles. For most of the time we had light winds of 10–15 knots or less, although we had several days when it blew 20 knots, and on a couple of occasions it reached 30 knots though for less than six hours. For three-quarters of our voyage the wind was from the northern quadrant and only one-quarter from the southern quadrant. We motored for a total of 100 hours, 28 of which would have been required for battery charging whatever the conditions, so about three days of the 14 when there was either less than 5 knots of breeze or no wind at all.

It's essential to get plenty of rest…

We were fortunate to have very little rain – just a little drizzle or thick, misty dew at night. Until we got within a few days of the Azores the night sailing was surprisingly cold, calling for full wet-weather gear, hat, gloves and several layers, though it was much warmer during the day. I had expected that as we headed south it would quickly get warmer, but this didn't occur. I had also expected clearer skies both at night and during the day, but for 10 of the 14 days it was cloudy with no direct sun, and with no stars or moon at night until the last three days – typical North Atlantic conditions, I gather! Looking at the forecast we were often concerned that we would run out of fuel, as the Azores High seemed to be constantly expanding directly over the islands

David and me refuelling mid-ocean

and creating a huge wind hole between us and Horta. As it transpired, *Indulgence* was able to sail all the way to Horta with reasonable wind the last couple of days, but boats that left after us experienced many more hours of motoring.

The highlights of our trip – at least for me – can be categorised as follows:

Sailing highlights
We hoisted a conventional spinnaker whenever possible, which helped mileage, but kept it flying a little too long on one occasion as the wind increased to 25–30 knots

We flew the kite whenever possible

in big seas and broached. Important lesson learned – shortening sail early on the ocean is a necessary and sensible precaution ... you aren't in the Solent! Similarly, we could have shortened sail a little more aggressively prior to nightfall on a couple of occasions, which would have saved foredeck work in the middle of the night!

Clear skies at last!

Two or three glorious sunny days in 10–20 knots as we approached the Azores, accompanied by spectacular, moonless, star-filled nights – or, as one crew member put it, 'we were blessed with an awe-inspiring heavenly display of astronmical jewels' – though neither description does justice to a clear night sky in the open ocean!

Then on one occasion we were called up on the VHF by a passing Italian cargo ship, who could clearly spot expert sailors when they came across them ... to ask if we needed any assistance!

Nature highlights

We were frequently visited by pods of dolphins and, on separate occasions, by two solitary whales. To quote from Day 3 of our blog: 'Just been interrupted by a pod of dolphins swimming for a few minutes alongside the boat, about five of them also dancing around the bow. I'm exhilarated! I'm not sure what it is about dolphins, but they bring joy to one's soul every time you see them. They seem to want to play and are such fantastically agile swimmers, it's all happening so quickly zooming in and out – it seems amazing they don't all crash into each other as they leap to the surface. We saw a whale earlier – not massive, probably about 25 feet. A different sort of experience as this one was seemingly on its own, moving

gracefully and a little shy, we didn't get closer than 50 yards and then it dived and we didn't see it again. Wonderful, incredible creatures, leviathans of the ocean, how could anybody kill them?'.

As we progressed south and west we saw more and more shearwaters of different types, beautifully graceful flyers so close to the ocean surface, seemingly effortlessly soaring on wave crests and dipping into their troughs, almost never flapping their wings ... beautiful and mesmerising.

Philosophical highlights

Sailing on the ocean gave me time to relax properly and think more deeply away from my usual hectic working life, bombarded with communications and information from every direction, and often allowed me the time and head space to become quite philosophical! There isn't space to share those thoughts with you in this article, but the blog gives more detail.

Culinary highlights

I don't know who said it, but I'm sure a well-fed crew is a happy crew and we were both. Our most memorable meal, to celebrate my brother's 55th birthday, comprised:

Fruit Cocktails

Fresh Melon and Parma ham

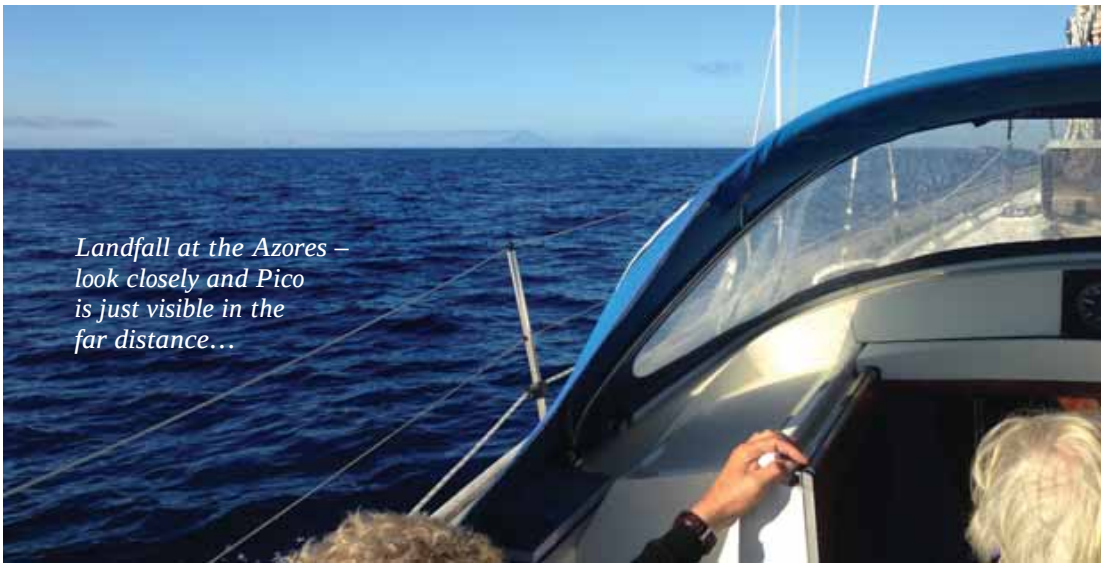
Rump Steak with a mustard, onion, cream and marmalade/red wine sauce
Boiled new potatoes, fresh broad beans and carrots from the garden

Steamed chocolate pudding with double cream

Cheese and biscuits (Roquefort and Cheddar)

Coffee and Chocolates

Accompanied by a fine bottle of Bordeaux



Landfall at the Azores – look closely and Pico is just visible in the far distance…

Approaching the finish line

... and all prepared and cooked with nothing more than a Neptune Gas Cooker! Although not served up every night, the food prepared almost exclusively by Jane and Kate was of an exceptionally high standard and I commend them unreservedly.

We arrived off Horta on Monday 18th June as planned, a beautiful sunny morning with 10 knots of breeze from the south. Directly opposite, across the 5 mile-wide channel, lies the island of Pico which features the eponymous volcanic peak of Montanha do Pico, the highest mountain in Portugal. It is a dramatic cone some 2341m (7680ft) in height in the classic volcano shape, with its summit frequently shrouded or poking through cloud. We had first seen the peak from some 60 miles away and now, in much closer proximity, it was a magnificent sight with a strangely alluring sense to it.

A number of other yachts were clearly visible in the channel, and as the finish time of 1200 drew near more appeared over the horizon. The plan was to have a grand finale to the sailing part of the rally by virtue of a sort of 'reverse start' with all boats trying to cross the finish line, positioned between the harbour's two breakwaters, as close to 1200 as possible. Although many of the 52 entrants from all over Europe, Canada, the Americas, the Caribbean and even one from Japan, were already in a very busy Horta Marina and reluctant to come and join in for fear of losing their berth, about fifteen boats contested the finish. It was a closely fought affair with line honours clinched by Rally Organiser John Franklin, but a fine spectacle was enjoyed by locals, casual onlookers, fellow sailors and members of the yachting press. Time for a shower, a shave and a beer at Peter's Bar – not necessarily in that order!

For Chris's impressions of his week in Horta, see pages 1 and 2 of the September 2018 *Newsletter*.

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HEADING SOUTH? GO NORTH!
Jonno Barrett, Port Officer Salcombe, Devon

(*Jonno has been an OCC member for nearly 40 years, having qualified with a passage from Greenland back to the UK in 1973 which left an Arctic itch not shared by his wife Rosie. They have been sailing together for some 25 years, first in their 37ft Buchanan sloop* Shiraz *and since 2012 in* Whirlaway.

Whirlaway of Percuil *is 42ft overall with 10ft 10in beam and 6ft 4in draft, and was built in Burnham-on-Crouch on England's east coast in 1963. She was designed by Kim Holman* as an ocean racer, and is now enjoying the active retirement worth of a classy Admiral's Cup contender.*

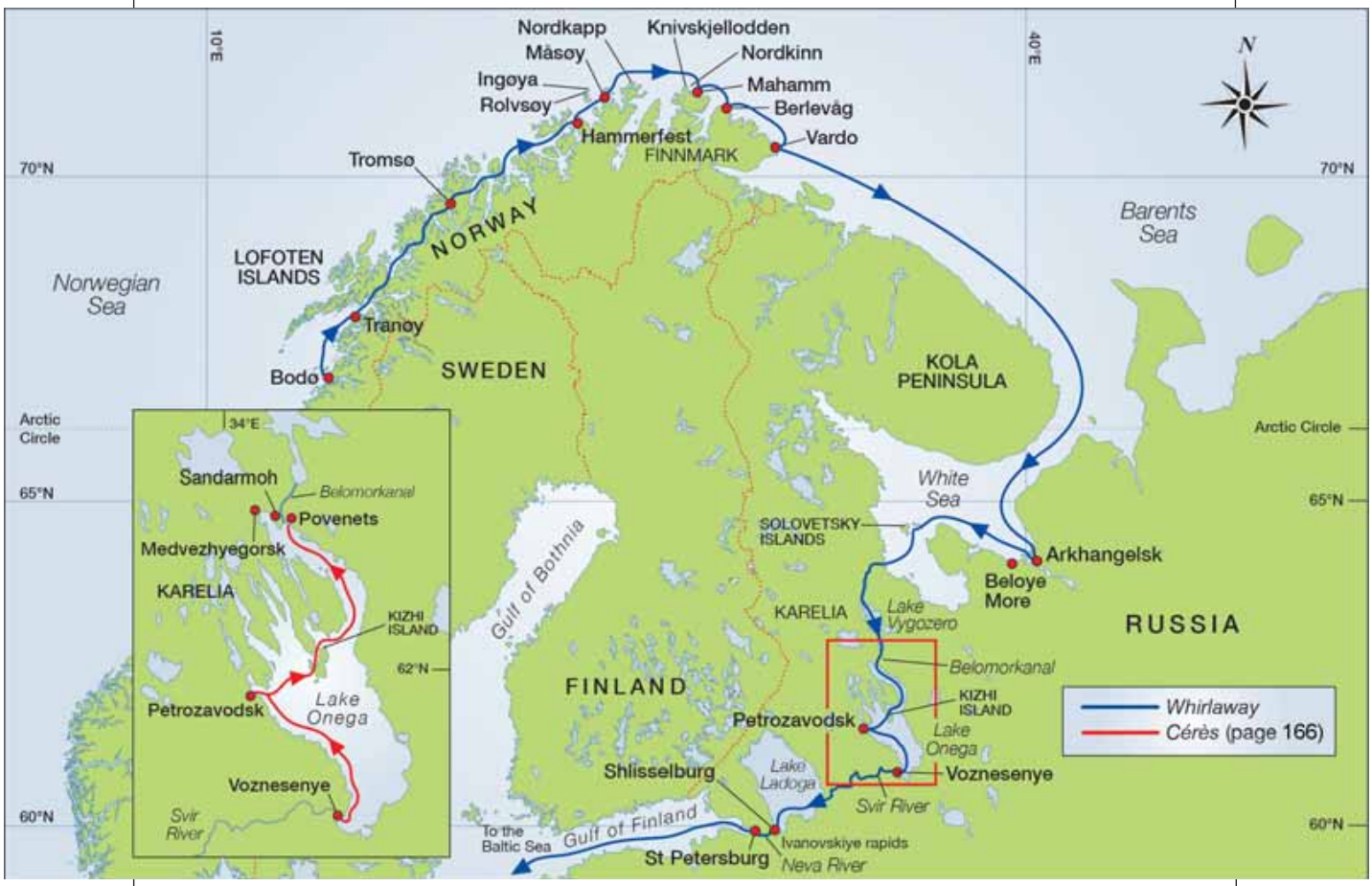
All photos by Jonno and Rosie Barrett except where credited.)

Whirlaway in the Sound of Luing, Scotland. Photo David Wilkie

Four years ago Rosie suggested we go to the Baltic: "Warm", she said. Why not? It's a classic cruising ground and we'd not been there.

From our home at Salcombe on England's south coast the obvious way was to head up Channel and round the Texel to the Kiel Canal. So this summer found us in northern Norway. We'd come via the west of Ireland, winter in Oban, then Orkney and Shetland to Ålesund in Norway, with last year a gentle summer cruising Lofoten in warm sunshine. It's been something of a passage cruising journey, with only two overnight sails (Scilly to Bantry and Shetland to the Ålesund area) but we just kept pottering on each day. As Nancy Blackett said, 'exploring's only going next door, it's just keeping on going next door'. Wise chap that Arthur Ransome.

* Kim Holman, a leading British yacht designer of the 1950s and '60s, of whom it was rightly said 'he never designed an ugly yacht'. Most of them were pretty fast, too.

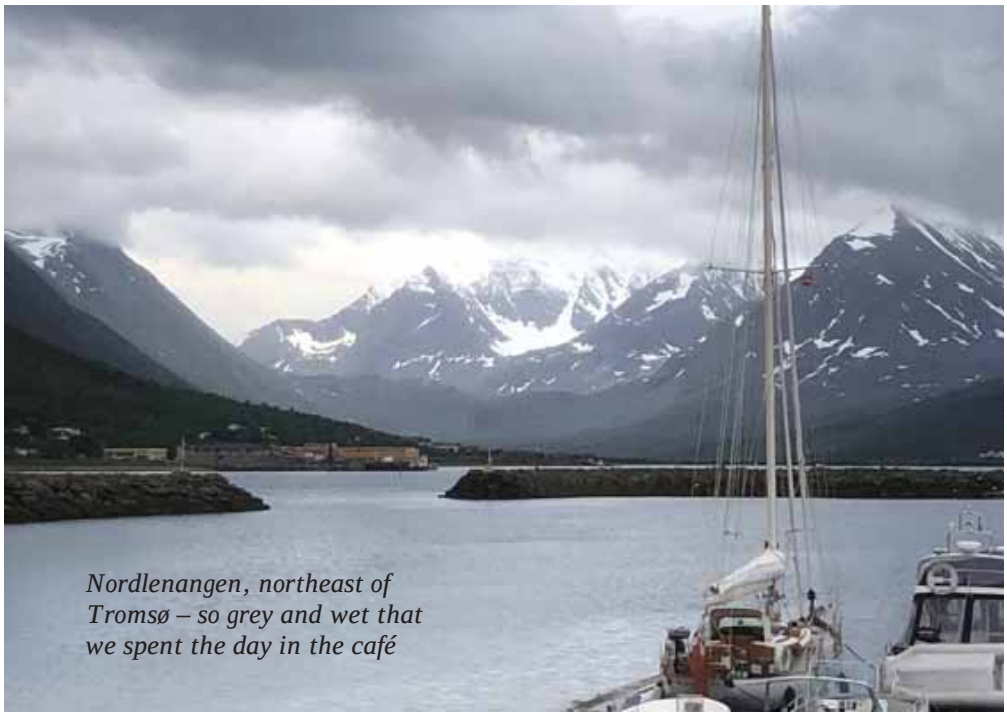

Nordkapp
Knivskjellodden
Måsøy
Nordkinn
Ingøya
Mahamm
Rolvsøy
Berlevåg
Hammerfest
Vardo
FINNMARK
Tromsø
70°N
10°E
40°E
N
NORWAY
Barents Sea
LOFOTEN ISLANDS
Norwegian Sea
Tranøy
Bodø
SWEDEN
KOLA PENINSULA
Arctic Circle
34°E
Sandarmoh
Belomorkanal
Povenets
Medvezhyegorsk
KARELIA
KIZHI ISLAND
62°N
Petrozavodsk
Lake Onega
Voznesenye
Svir River
65°N
60°N
Gulf of Bothnia
White Sea
SOLOVETSKY ISLANDS
Arkhangelsk
Beloye More
KARELIA
Lake Vygozero
RUSSIA
FINLAND
Belomorkanal
KIZHI ISLAND
Petrozavodsk
Lake Onega
Voznesenye
Shlisselburg
Lake Ladoga
Svir River
Ivanovskiye rapids
To the Baltic Sea
Gulf of Finland
St Petersburg
Neva River
Whirlaway
Cérès (page 166)

We wintered *Whirlaway* in Bodø, her third winter away from home, and perhaps her toughest – a wooden boat in an arctic boat park? It wasn't ideal, but she came to no harm and we'll paint her next winter, and it was probably kinder than the previous winter's dehumidified shed (a language issue) further south.

I was becoming aware that it would be appreciated if the Baltic made an appearance before too long, so it looked as though this year would be the long haul back down the Norwegian coast, perhaps to west Sweden or south Norway, but everyone prefers a circular walk... At pretty much every stage Rosie had expressed a preference (I think that's the expression used at Relate marriage guidance) for south over north, and we're a team after all. So we headed north. Not roughty toughty north, just pottering north. We come across lots of grand expedition yachts with sheltered coamings, strong aluminium hulls and orange masts, but I did ice in my youth and discovered that it's rather cold. And icy. The clue's in the name, really.

We left Bodø in June and it felt like pretty hard work. After slightly longer than planned getting ready in Bodø (fitting a new autopilot and hence instruments, then the heater stopped working ... getting going always takes longer than you hope) we headed out for a cold, rainy broad reach up the coast to Tranøy. At least we assumed it was up the coast, but we didn't actually see it, which was a shame as it's stunning. Our friend Vivien did sterling work, as we had to hand-steer the lot due to a charging problem. It wasn't exactly the blue sky and stunning Lofoten mountain views she'd seen in our previous year's pictures.

While it improved here and there, the weather as we made our way to Tromsø was not lovely. It did pull back enough for us to enjoy the spectacle of it all as we worked our way through the leads to delightful Tromsø, the town centre dock handy for a bit of the high life – water and so on and even laundry. We took a few days to do this and



Nordlenangen, northeast of Tromsø – so grey and wet that we spent the day in the café

Midnight sun at Måsøy

that, said hello to Andy and goodbye to Vivien (will she ever come again?), listened to various friendly Norwegians apologising for the weather ('worst summer since' and so forth). Interesting museums too, largely reinforcing my desire not to go to icy places! You'll spot that this was heading north and away from the Baltic, two things that you might think would induce a chill beyond the climate, if not actual mutiny – and yet Rosie approved (she says the word was more 'acquiesced'). Read on, for we had a cunning plan.

New people bring new perspectives, and we enjoyed Andy's take on it as a landscape architect. He has some pretty pithy things to offer on the paving of Tromsø...

We sought some good and proper midnight sun, so left Hammerfest in the afternoon with our eyes on Ingøya, an island further north with an attractive looking anchorage. On a calm afternoon it looked ideal, but then the wind filled in and it became a bit like work and the anchorage less than ideal. We were relieved to bear away between Ingøy and its neighbour Rolvsøy, despite a minor panic about overhead cables (no longer there), to a carefully timed local midnight and open sea to the north approaching the captivating Måsøy. Duty done, we squeezed onto the tiny pontoon behind the ferry berth. As we approached Nordkaap the high mountains gave way to more of a feel of the west of Scotland, lower and friendlier and, to us, as charming.

Nordkaap is not the northernmost point on the European mainland – it's not on the mainland, being an island, and it's not the most northerly. That is the low promontory of Knivskjellodden which, as you will know, means knife shell point. It's hard to be a star if no one can spell your name, there's no high cliff and you can't even get there in a camper van. So Nordkapp wins the prize. We trudged round, motor-sailing on a grey, low-cloud day, and on across the fjords to Nordkinn to fetch up at Mehamm. We thought of the motorhomes and tripper buses, out of a good few kroner for the sake of being on top of a high cliff looking out to the north – not at ice bears, not even at *Whirlaway* passing, but at about 50 yards of cloud. They'd have done better among the knife shells further down.

That was our furthest north – 71° 11'·4N. So now, as we headed on, we'd be going south. Well actually mainly east – it was still a while before we saw the sun set.

Finnmark offers an exposed coast with settlements hard won from the sea. Berlevåg impressed for its breakwaters, 100-odd years in the building, with the romance of these end-of-the-world spots fully present. Russia is starting to impact too, with tales

Old net-drying racks on the harbourside at Berlevåg, Finnmark

of Pomor traders from the White Sea and the brave Norwegian partisans in the war, supported from Russia. We made our way on, fetching up in Vardo, an attractive island port and handy for a crew change, as Andy set off back to the paving slabs and my old friend Nick Walker joined.

Jonno (left) and Rosie with Vladimir Ivankiv, OCC Port Officer Representative for St Petersburg, whose assistance and contacts made the entire trip possible

Our one overnight passage a year was here trumped by external rules. You can't stop before you clear into Russia or indeed anywhere along the Kola Peninsula. And you have to arrive at the notional 'Point C' at the right time. So it was a 500 mile leg non-stop to Arkhangelsk in the White Sea, keeping a predefined schedule for the first 200 miles – 200 miles of brisk headwind, as it turned out. It was a bit trying, but we did it and entered 'the Throat' – the 50 mile wide entrance to the White Sea, or Beloye More in Russian, only in Cyrillic script... The sun came out and the wind eased to gentle breezes, where in fact it remained for the next month or so. Mainly.

The White Sea evokes a very big Poole Harbour. Strong currents (usually against you), and low, tree-lined sandy cliffs. But no Bournemouth or Poole Town Quay handily there. It's about 300 miles from Point C at the entrance to the Arkhangelsk channel buoy, so it was a couple of days later and 2100 when we got there. We'd had no GSM signal or radio contact and this was our first experience of Russian coastguard and immigration, so we were a bit nervous. A brief signal let me WhatsApp to Vladimir Ivankiv* in St Petersburg (about as far away as Cowes and Scotland), and then we contacted the pilot boat on Channel 14. 'Follow up, keep to starboard, Mike Yankee' (pronouncing *Whirlaway* defeated them).

Off we set, worrying about customs and so on. Where to stop, how to register? 'Mike Yankee' came the call, 'your agent has arranged for the customs launch to meet you in the channel in one mile. Follow them up the river, and when you are finished you will meet the Vice President of the Solombala Yacht Club who will take you to a mooring in town'. So we did, cleared in at 0400 on a Sunday morning, and there on a boat ready and waiting was Mikhail – dragged out of bed by Vladimir 500 miles away!

* See page 167. Vladimir Ivankiv, our Port Officer Representative for St Petersburg, is an essential contact for any cruiser visiting Russia.

Arkhangelsk, our first contact with Russia, offered little English, a warm welcome, a pretty waterfront and persistent insect life. Joined by old friend John Ungley we set off for a 120-odd mile passage to the impressive Solovetsky islands. He'd come via Amsterdam and Moscow (there being no direct flights from Dorchester), and he and we enjoyed the sunny sail to a lovely anchorage under the Solovetsky Kremlin. If you find yourself there, it's a must see – impressive fortress, long history of trade and monastic stuff, and then the first of Stalin's gulags ... with a museum showing scary 1930s film of happy chaps in the camps with concerts, theatres and so on while they laboured away.

Alongside in the central basin in Arkhangelsk

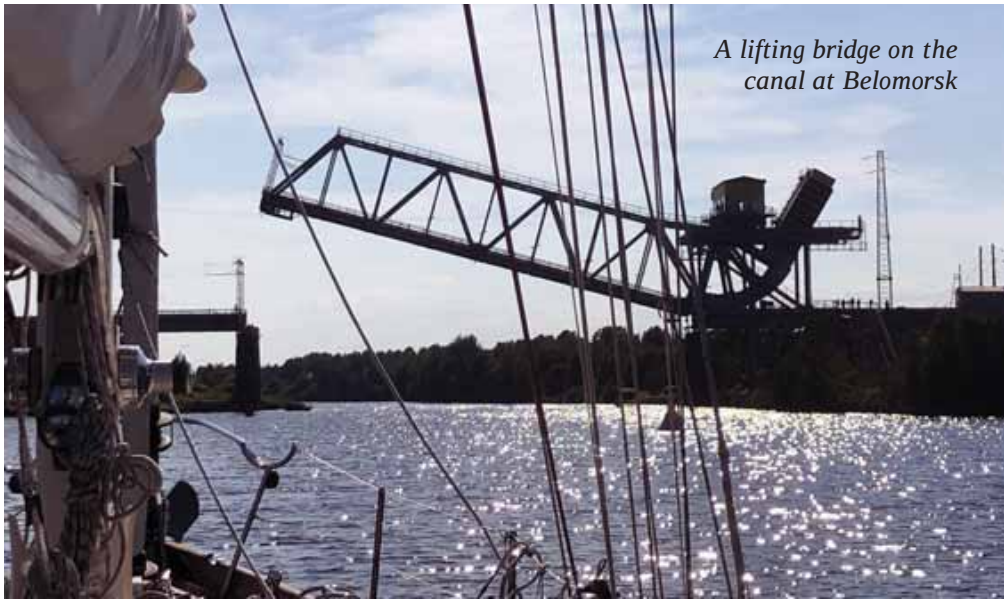
The reality was perhaps a bit different. The Belomorkanal was dug to link then Leningrad to the White Sea for strategic reasons. Allegedly 12,000 died slaving on it. And that, of course, was my cunning plan for domestic bliss. Geographically aware OCC members will know that Saint Petersburg is ... on the Baltic shore. So Stalin's hellishly-dug canal permitted our circular cruise – not any way a worthy outcome, but we were grateful for it.

You need, and are required to have, a Russian-speaking pilot for the waterway to St Petersburg. You can't get into the first sea lock without one, and there is nowhere outside to moor to meet them. So we were mightily relieved to see a backpacked figure

In front of the Solovetsky Kremlin

Entering the sea lock at Belomorsk

perched atop a large concrete piling outside the lock. We touched alongside. 'Oleg?', 'Yes?', big sigh (who else would it have been?) and he scrambled aboard, grabbed the Russian river radio (you need this) and called the lock. In no time it opened, about 100 yards by 20 with a rough wall – we were thankful for our fender boards – and nifty bollards set in the wall which float up with you. We used a single line by the mast with two good lots of fenders either side of it, which worked well all through the 19 locks of the canal. It's worth staying at the back of the lock, as they fill them for a 5m or more rise quite quickly. And one should perhaps resist the temptation to take pictures too obviously, as the locks are military property ... as the uniformed ambassador with the gun helpfully signalled. For some things you don't need a Russian speaker.



A lifting bridge on the canal at Belomorsk

The lock entrance approaching Lake Vygozero

Nick left us here for the long rail trip to St Petersburg and home. But Oleg made up for him. Always willing, competent on the boat, careful with the pilotage and never flustered by the occasional linguistic challenge, he proved an asset to the crew and yet another example of the Ivankiv touch.

It was pretty isolated territory. There was the occasional small village marked by the waterside shacks we'd first seen on the way up to Arkhangelsk, not tumbling down but certainly at some very odd angles – they put the shack into ramshackle.

Oleg at Lake Vygozero on the Belomorkanal, pleased that the rain had discouraged the mossies

Leaving Lake Vygozero – and still climbing

We passed one larger town with a big aluminium smelting plant, and occasionally spotted a railway. We saw a couple of ships, one keeping us company for an hour or so as we locked through. But that was it. It's an out-of-the-way trip, and the better for it. Along canal and river and across some areas of open lake – Lake Vygozero involved a brisk 20 mile beat – and those 19 locks saw us tumbling down into Lake Onega at Povenets, the eight downhill locks mainly double ones, being set in about 6 miles.

Across to Kizhi island and the world returned. River cruise ships, and huge hydrofoils like cockroaches on the water, disgorged trippers to this heritage island. A morning walking round and we were off on a cracking 50 mile reach, pausing to refill our washing-up tank from the lake, to Petrozavodsk and a shop! The capital of Karelia, Petrozavodsk is an attractive town/city, with wide boulevards and trolley buses.

We headed back out onto Lake Onega for the 70 miles to the entrance to the Svir River, and our world changed again. Big ships in numbers came past as our

A typical river freighter, an unusual sight on the Belomorkanal but common from Lake Onega onwards

Anchored off the village of Mungala on the Svir River …

little branch line joined the main St Petersburg/ Moscow waterway. The buoyage reversed (the leading direction seems to be towards Moscow). The shacks became houses and wood became brick as on we went. It's about 120 miles, which would normally take a couple of days – except that we were held up for three days waiting for the bridge

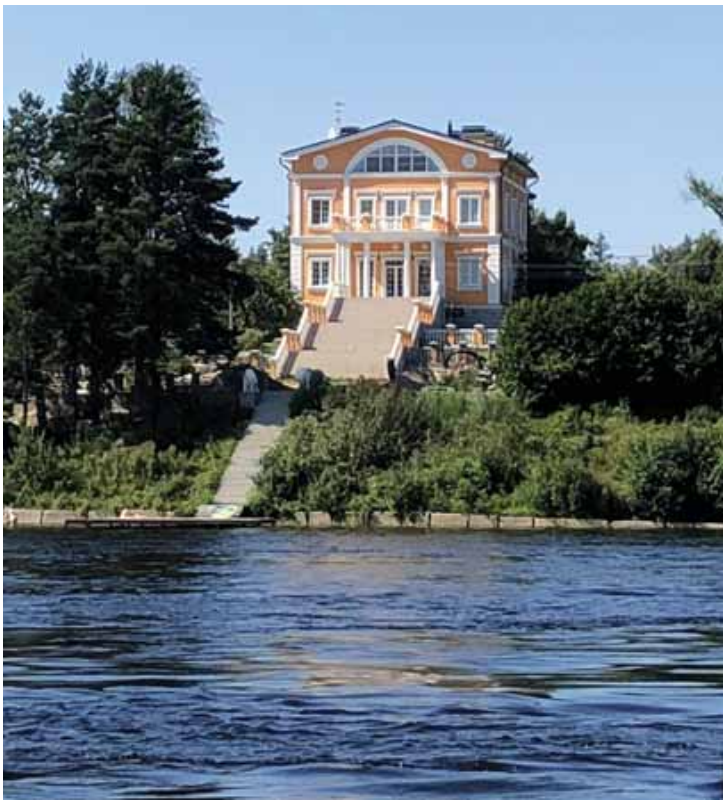
… waiting for the bridge at Lodejnoje Polje to open

to open. We squeezed under the meagre 3m they raised it – a metre a day – and on towards Lake Ladoga (Europe's largest lake, 85% the size of Wales), enjoying a beautiful but flat calm sunset as we crossed to the Neva River at Shlisselburg, arriving in the dark, in good time for the bridge lift booked by Vladimir.

Busier, with bigger houses, but still – and this will be a lasting Russian memory – kids and families playing on every bankside with access. Strong currents whooshed us towards St Petersburg past ever more grandiose houses. We touched 11

Alongside at Schisselburg at the entrance to Neva River

knots racing past the impressive mansions overlooking the Ivanovskiye rapids, glad to be going downriver. We moored in the suburbs and said goodbye to Oleg and hello to a new figure on the pontoon – our invaluable *deus ex machina*, Vladimir Ivankiv, who had news of our next highlight.



Mansions overlook the rapids on the Neva River

It's one of life's bits of luck that, for traffic reasons, they lift the eight bridges through St Petersburg at night. So we had the totally memorable experience of passing through that most coherent and impressive of city centres in darkness. Past the floodlit Peter and Paul fort, gawping at the Hermitage, and suddenly alongside to drop our pilot, Amir, as dawn came. Alone at last, we pushed on past the sudden change from bankside elegance to

bustling shipyards and floating docks, sandblasting haze and all, till at 0600 we found our Vladimir-arranged berth at the Krestovsky Yacht Club marina and could turn from being intrepid boat travellers to St Petersburg gawpers, combining ten days of tourism and work on *Whirlaway* in the heatwave sunshine.

We took the chance to process a lot of memories. Derelict industrial plants like the set of some dystopian epic film, families swimming beside their crazily-angled waterside shacks, freezing rain hoping for the temperature to get out of single figures, sultry days wishing it would drop into the 20s. Huge, bare mountain islands snow-spotted in June, flat delta lands winding through millions – zillions – of trees. All in about six weeks.

One of St Petersburg's eight lifting bridges

And that's how we headed north to the Baltic – and got there! Just ahead of the divorce papers...

The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page.

St Augustine

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Parasailor – The Passage Maker

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SUN, SEXTANTS AND SCRIMSHAW
Charlie Frost

(*Charlie started sailing Optimists on Cornwall's Helford River when he was seven, gradually moving up the scale through larger dinghies, keelboat racing and tall ships. Membership of the Sea Cadets gave him the chance to become a sailing instructor, and while studying at Plymouth University for a degree in mechanical engineering he spent the summers teaching sailing and powerboat courses at Mylor Sailing School on the Carrick Roads. Following his return from the passage described below he was promoted to manager of the sailing school.*)

In mid June 2018 I flew out to Horta, on the Azorean island of Faial, to meet Peter Flutter, Peter Morgan and Will Murray, who had sailed the former's 45ft steel ketch *Tyrian of Truro* down from Falmouth in the Azores Pursuit Rally. *Tyrian* was built in Penryn, Falmouth's near neighbour and my home town. Before starting the passage back we had two marvellous weeks in Horta, soaking up the atmosphere of this small Portuguese island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. It is a busy, friendly place. The weather was hot, usually around 28°C, and the coastline mainly volcanic cliffs, with a few beaches with black volcanic sand. The rally was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Café Sport, a bar/ restaurant in Faial with which the OCC has long had strong links. It is a lively place, run by José Azevedo whose father 'Peter' and grandfather before him had run it too. The bar is also a celebration of the art of scrimshaw – carving or decorating whale teeth and whalebone – with a scrimshaw museum on the floor above filled with cases of intricately-carved whales' teeth.

There is a tradition in Horta of sailors leaving a signature painting to mark their visit, and Will and I were given the job of drafting and painting a design on the harbour's concrete surround. We made a sketch of *Tyrian*, with waves and a sperm whale tail fluke alongside our names. Be sure to look out for it among the hundreds of others if you visit!

Tyrian heads out of Horta to greet the arriving yachts

We left the traditional painting beside Horta marina

We had an opportunity to see real sperm whales when we went out on a whale spotting trip in a commercial RIB with an experienced marine biologist. We were lucky enough to spot sperm whales breaching, as well as Risso's dolphins, with shearwaters flying above us. Another day we took a taxi up Faial's *caldera*, and looked down into its large volcanic crater before cycling back down the hill – apparently we hit 35mph, faster than I have ever cycled in Cornwall. You'd think it would be easy to cycle down a mountain track, but I did get lost a couple of times before reaching the bottom!

At last it was time for us to head home. We said goodbye to Will and shipped our stores. I knew I was in good hands with the two Peters, a dentist and a merchant shipmaster, both of whom are extremely knowledgeable and experienced sailors. The roughest part was leaving the archipelago – we were motor-sailing upwind and I surprised myself by being seasick for the first time in 15 years of sailing. A few Stugeron and I was back on my feet, however. Once north of the neighbouring island of São Jorge we set a northeast course for Falmouth.

A sperm whale fluke

Leaving Horta

Life on board *Tyrian* was very comfortable. The food and drink were excellent and we were always sure to have at least one Super Bock (a Portuguese beer) each day. After the first few hours we turned the engine off and set out quietly into the night. The watch system had started and I had my first night watch under the stars. With the expertise of the skipper and first mate, plus a useful app on my phone, we identified planets and prominent stars and practised some of the skills learned in a lecture by Stokey Woodall back in Horta, such as telling the time using the North Star and the pointers in the Ursa Major constellation.

During the day, outside of my onboard duties I was taught many useful techniques in both navigation and sailing. The main skill that I learned was how to use a sextant to take a sun sight, and then how to do the calculations to find a position. Some practice is required in this, and my position was usually out due to user error or forgetting a minus sign somewhere along the way. It's not like the films where it can apparently be done in a few seconds! Luckily the GPS was still working.

We seemed to have the same two shearwaters follow us all the way home, and other wildlife was abundant in the North Atlantic. Animals such as sperm whales and basking sharks and a suspected fin whale swam right up close to the boat during a sail change at night. Other creatures included Portuguese man o' wars (men o' war?), flying fish and other jellyfish that I couldn't identify.

For me, the best day of the passage was the very last. I came on watch at 0600 on my 21st birthday. There was a northerly force 1 so everything was silent. There was not enough wind for the self-steering gear to work, so I helmed the boat right into the glorious clear sunrise. I have always prided myself on my upwind sailing in dinghies, but sailing a 23 ton steel ketch close-hauled in less than 5 knots of wind and making 2 knots of headway is a new achievement.

After breakfast and a few birthday celebrations I stayed on deck for the whole day, excited to see land but sad that the trip was near its end. Several pods of common

dolphins approached the boat, along with basking sharks and lots of jellyfish. We passed the Isles of Scilly on our port side and pressed on, and when I saw the familiar sight of the Lizard Peninsula with the signature Goonhilly satellite station on top of the hill, I knew I was nearly home.

Desperately trying to get a sun sight

We entered Falmouth at about 0400 the next morning and had a well-earned rest after painfully trying to locate *Tyrian*'s mooring in the dark. After a good sleep I woke to find myself in very familiar surroundings, with a short trip to the fuelling pontoon to replace the large amount of diesel we had used during the very light wind passage. My family met me on the pontoon.

Later in the summer I was presented with my OCC burgee in the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club by Commodore Anne Hammick and my skipper, Port Officer Peter Flutter. The evening was very enjoyable and I received lots of advice from experienced OCC members on how to set about buying my own boat for a bit of cruising myself. However, I think I still have some way to go.

Dolphins keep pace with Tyrian south of the Scillies

Receiving my OCC burgee from Peter Flutter and Commodore Anne Hammick

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ocean Cruising Club for organising such a great rally and for providing me with generous sponsorship to help me undertake the voyage. I'd also like to thank my friends at Seaware Ltd for sponsoring me and helping me to get the best kit for this passage and for many passages to come. And finally, my thanks go to Peter Flutter and Peter Morgan for taking me on this marvellous voyage, organising my accommodation in Horta, and providing me with a breadth of information and knowledge that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

People on land think of the sea as a void, an emptiness, haunted by mythological hazards. The sea marks the end of things. It is where life stops and the unknown begins. It is a necessary, comforting fiction to conceive of the sea as the residence of gods and monsters – Aeolus, the Sirens, Scylla, Charybdis, the Goodwins, the Bermuda Triangle. In fact the sea is just an alternative known world. Its topography is as intricate as that of the land, its place names as particular and evocative, its maps and signposts rather more reliable.

Jonathan Raban, *Coasting*

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FROM THE GALLEY OF ... Tim Bridgen, aboard *Marionette*

Mackerel not fried in oatmeal

Mackerel is an oily, fishy-flavoured fish with a thin, tough skin. It is therefore not going to appeal to anyone who doesn't love fish. This is a shame because it has an extremely high-quality flesh, very closely related to that of its other family members, the tunas. It's also abundant in British (and other) coastal waters for most of the summer.

So how to make it respond to cooking in a way that's more like tuna? Simple – treat it like tuna and don't ever fry it and don't ever coat it in anything. It always needs to be scorched by its cooking, and its partners while cooking can be any combination of garlic, pepper, bay leaf and lemon – nothing else. Forgive me for being so strident, but mackerel's reputation has suffered greatly by so often being fried in porridge oats.

It is so easy to fillet (see Smoked Mackerel, page 50) that I would always do so, except for barbecuing when I would only gut it. My own favourite cooking methods, in order of preference, are:

1. On a beach barbecue, very lightly oiled all over, seasoned, and with two garlic cloves and a bay leaf in the belly cavity.

2. Very, very fresh, under a hot grill with a tiny bit of oil, plenty of black pepper, a little salt and a slice of lemon until they're seriously singed.

3. Baked for a few minutes at the top of a very hot oven, just lightly seasoned. This works particularly well if the baking is done laid on top of some pre-roasted vegetables which have themselves been cooked with olive oil, garlic, lemon and a bay leaf.

Cooking is all about people. Food is maybe the only universal thing that really has the power to bring everyone together. No matter what culture, everywhere around the world, people get together to eat.

Guy Fieri

Pure water is the best of drinks, the Temperance party sing,
But whom am I that I should have the best of everything?
Let statesmen revel at the pump, Peers with the pond make free,
Whisky or beer, or even wine, is good enough for me.

Anon

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BAHAMIAN MOORINGS

Phil and Norma Heaton

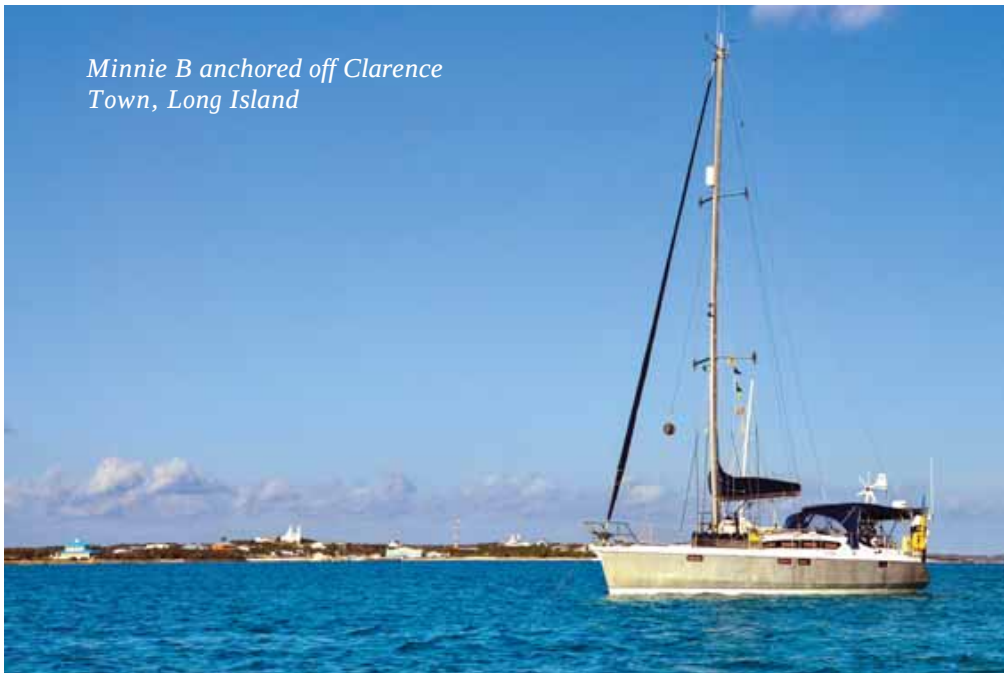
(*Phil and Norma left Northern Ireland at the end of May 2009 aboard their Ovni 395,* Minnie B*, and completed a circumnavigation in 2016* – see Around by Chance, Flying Fish 2016/2*, as well as* Indonesian Update *in FF 2015/1 and* Virgins in the Virgins *in 2017/2. And/or visit their blog at www.sailblogs.com/member/philandnorma.)*

The very name Bahamas conjures up images of white sand beaches, turquoise waters, reef fish, rays and sharks. In contrast we had been given dire warnings about the area – very busy, expensive, the food is basically American, lightning will strike, the depths can be perilous, and it would be difficult to sail onwards to Bermuda. Not true and true in parts, but it is a bit like referring to Africa as if it is a homogenous entity.

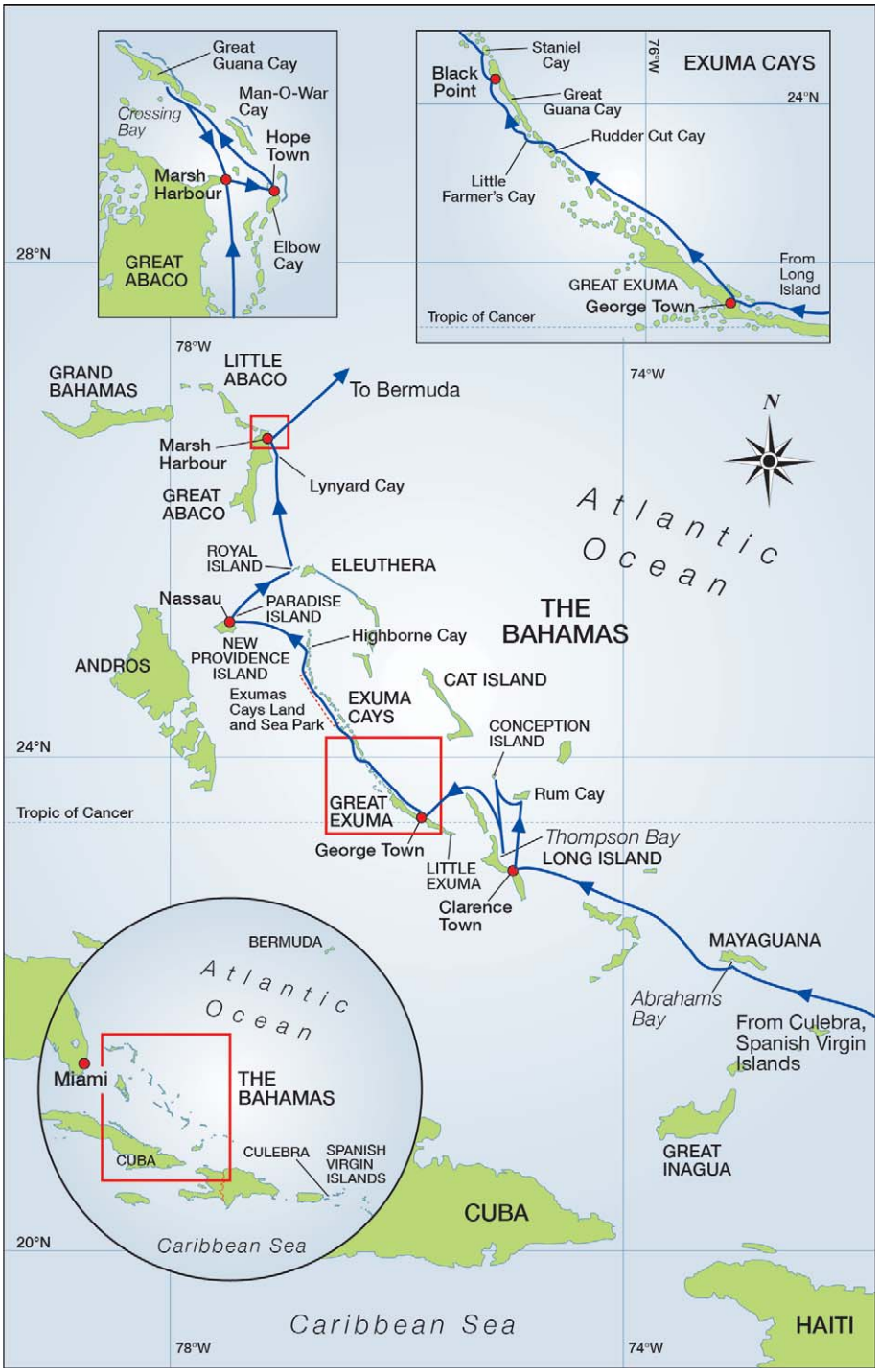
After spending nine years of distant and long-distance cruising we were ready to head for the Mediterranean and be closer to the UK and home. It seemed a shame to bypass the Bahamas, however, particularly having chartered a boat and enjoyed a few days of diving there with our daughter Julia in 2003 ... and an OVNI 395 draws only 70cm (2ft 4ins) with the keel and rudder up.

Landfall Mayaguana

We left Culebra in the Spanish Virgin Islands on 10th March 2018 for the 520 mile passage to Mayaguana, with 18–23 knots of wind from the southeast. Our first noon-to-noon run was 170 miles, the second 159 miles. Then the wind died so we needed some diesel assistance for about 12 hours, but we were sailing again by the morning of 13th March.



Minnie B anchored off Clarence Town, Long Island


Great Guana Cay
Man-O-War Cay
Crossing Bay
Hope Town
Marsh Harbour
Elbow Cay
GREAT ABACO
28°N
78°W
Staniel Cay
Black Point
Great Guana Cay
Rudder Cut Cay
Little Farmer's Cay
EXUMA CAYS
24°N
76°W
From Long Island
GREAT EXUMA
George Town
Tropic of Cancer
74°W
GRAND BAHAMAS
LITTLE ABACO
To Bermuda
Marsh Harbour
Lynyard Cay
GREAT ABACO
ROYAL ISLAND
ELEUTHERA
Nassau
PARADISE ISLAND
NEW PROVIDENCE ISLAND
Highborne Cay
ANDROS
Exumas Cays Land and Sea Park
EXUMA CAYS
CAT ISLAND
CONCEPTION ISLAND
Rum Cay
GREAT EXUMA
George Town
Thompson Bay
LONG ISLAND
LITTLE EXUMA
Clarence Town
THE BAHAMAS
Atlantic Ocean
N
24°N
Tropic of Cancer
MAYAGUANA
Abraham's Bay
From Culebra, Spanish Virgin Islands
GREAT INAGUA
BERMUDA
Atlantic Ocean
Miami
THE BAHAMAS
CUBA
CULEBRA
SPANISH VIRGIN ISLANDS
CUBA
20°N
Caribbean Sea
Caribbean Sea
HAITI
78°W
74°W

Our destination was Mayaguana to clear in, but first we had to cross the lagoon, with depths of less than 3m and strewn with rocks and coral heads. It is 4·5 miles from the western pass to the anchorage near Abraham's Bay, and we motored carefully, threading our way past the many obstacles. It being early afternoon the sun was high in the sky, so we had excellent visibility as we learned to differentiate depths and seabed from the changing colours of the water.

We cleared in the next day with very friendly officials. Mayaguana is somewhat sad, however, in that there are so many boarded up houses,

The Tropic of Cancer, Long Island

The Columbus Memorial, also on Long Island

reminiscent of Niue. We spoke to some local women who reckoned the population was now less than 200 and said that, with few sources of employment, young people were moving to Nassau for work. There were a couple of bars and a shop but opening times seemed haphazard and damage from Hurricane *Joaquin* in 2015 was apparent, albeit the vegetation has recovered quickly.

Cape Santa Maria, Long Island

Long Island – rightly named

On 15th March we made the overnight downwind sail to Clarence Town, Long Island in winds of 10–15 knots varying from northeast to east-southeast. The 132 miles took 23 hours. We were expecting something a bit more substantial than Abraham Bay and it was ... a bit. The anchorage is good in all but northerly winds and the holding in sand is sound. We sought places to snorkel but the reef fish and coral (damaged in storms) were limited.

Travelling by hire car on the 80 miles of main road – the Queen's Highway – we visited the northernmost point to see the memorial to Christopher Columbus who arrived there on 25th October 1492, possibly his second stop after San Salvador. The views are spectacular. Then to Dean's Blue Hole – at over 600ft deep the world's deepest sea-water blue hole. We swam off the beach and snorkelled over and around it. The water goes from light blue and turquoise to dark blue and then black. Remarkable. Next was Hamilton's Cave, where Leonard took us on a guided tour of the labyrinthine passages with stalagmites and stalactites, which used to be used as a place of refuge during hurricanes. Stunning.

The island is dotted with churches, mostly in very good

Dean's Blue Hole, Long Island

condition and painted in white, red and green. In Clarence Town there are two prominent and very striking churches, one Anglican and one Roman Catholic, on the rise above the bay. Both were built by the same priest, Father Jerome, who was an architect and arrived in the Bahamas in 1908 to rebuild wooden churches that had not withstood hurricanes.

Hamilton's Cave, Long island

Rum Cay and Conception Island

We had been advised by OCC friends that we should visit Rum Cay and Conception Island, and sailed the 34 miles to Port Nelson on Rum Cay in 12–15 knots of southwest wind. It was set to veer to the north that evening giving us good shelter, and so it did. Ashore there is a derelict marina with no plans to rebuild, a badly damaged wooden government dock currently being rebuilt in reinforced concrete, and Kay's Sand Bar serving beer, rum and food. The island population is about forty-five people, with many spending their days at Kay's. We saw half a dozen nurse sharks and two lemon sharks in the marina cove, waiting for the detritus from a man who was cleaning fish. Then while launching the dinghy from the beach to return to *Minnie B*, a lemon shark swam lazily by seemingly taking a good look at our legs ... hmm.

On 24th March we sailed the 23 miles to Conception Island in 14 knots of northeasterly wind. This uninhabited marine and land park was ours alone – joy. No sooner had we set the anchor than a 1·5m lemon shark arrived and slowly circled the boat before taking up station off the starboard quarter, on the seabed just 3m down. Very shortly it was joined by another slightly smaller lemon shark which settled down immediately astern. Interesting. These are intelligent creatures. They

Conception Island

know the bow from the stern, and they know that boats mean food – some folks had clearly been feeding them.

Deciding to go for a snorkel on the reef, we removed shiny things such as watches and climbed gingerly into the water without splashing so as not to alarm the sharks – apparently lemon sharks can be bad-tempered if they are bothered. They just sat there. Off we went, but the reef was only okay so, back to the boat and, yes, our two friends were still there. We did not feed them – best to let them live more natural lives. Next day another boat arrived and our friends clearly thought they might be a better bet as they moved to take up station off its stern. We dinghied to the creek halfway down the west coast and found lots of skittish green turtles, and then walked the beach and the east coast which was sufficiently dramatic in a Bahamian kind of way – modestly.

Lemon shark – our friend at Conception Island

Shelter island … and magenta lines

The forecast was for a front to go through with 20–25 knot easterly winds, so we returned to Long Island, heading for Thompson Bay on the west coast. But first a word about magenta lines...

For over 20 miles the passage south along the west coast of the island has only 2–4m depths. We were motoring along around low water and the tidal range is about 0·9m. The electronic charts have very helpful 'control points' and magenta lines that show routes through shallows. It is straightforward to follow the magenta line and change course at the control points, keeping very tight control on XTE[1] ... until the magenta line takes you through a collection of rocks that could rip the bottom out of your boat. They are a good navigation *aid*, but you must jink about to avoid rocks and coral heads – a good lookout at all times is necessary, and recognising the difference between cloud-created shadow and rocks is helpful.

We arrived safely at Thompson Bay, a favourite among cruisers, where there were already about twenty-five boats. We were immediately invited to join the Cruisers' Monday gathering ashore, where we met some very experienced and helpful Bahamas cruisers.

Zooming through the Exumas

We left the shelter of Thompson Bay on 29th March for the 38 miles to George Town, crossing the shallow bank in 3–6m of water with an east-southeast wind of 15–20 knots under genoa alone. The narrow passage at Little Exuma was getting the full 25 mile fetch and the seas were large and very confused, so we took the precaution of turning on the engine and steering by hand. The anchorage at George Town and Elizabeth Harbour is immense and there were more than 300 boats dotted around. It is the cruising terminus for many boats from North America, and indeed some spend months here. We anchored in 1·8m near Kidd's Cove, to be close to the town but with some lee from nearby islands.

We could have participated in beach yoga, beach volleyball, noodling[2], bocce[3], dominoes, poker, choir practice and many other activities that the cruisers use to pass the time. Instead we topped up our provisions, had a drink at Blu, overlooking the harbour, and moved on.

Our first stop was Rudder Cut Cay, where at low water we could stand on the seabed at the stern – we had 0·7m under the keel and the tidal range was 0·9m. We snorkelled the full-size grand piano and mermaid sculpture on the seabed which was commissioned by the illusionist David Copperfield who owns nearby Moosha Cay – curious.

Ten miles further on is small but interesting Little Farmer's Cay, where we anchored off the west side near Ty's Sunset Bar and Grill. On the east side we had a drink at the famous Ocean Cabin, where the owner, Terry Bain, enthusiastically expounded his socio-economic philosophy. As a consultant in Libya during the 1980s it is

1. Cross Track Error, the distance one actually is from one's intended route
2. Noodling is one of several names for attempting to catch catfish with one's hands by reaching inside the creature's refuge
3. Bocce is closely related to British bowls and French boules/pétanque

A squall passes through at Black Point, Great Guana Cay

understandable that his views cause some discomfort to those with a more conservative outlook, but we thoroughly enjoyed our conversation and debate.

Another 10 miles northwest and we anchored at Black Point, Great Guana Cay in 4m. The settlement is famous for its laundry, one of the best equipped in the Bahamas. There is more to it than just washing, however, and we enjoyed nice walks around the island to the east (ocean) side and along the west coast where there were people weaving strips of palm which are sent to Nassau for final assembly into basketwork for tourists. We lunched on conch and watched a large party of MPs and government officials carrying out a development-funding assessment. The local people would like to have a bank – understandable if you have a cash business.

A further 9 miles on is Staniel Cay and Big Major's Spot. The currents around the islands can be quite strong, so picking your anchor spot requires some care. Even so,

A pensive mermaid at Rudder Cut Cay

we saw boats at anchor in places we would never consider – too much current and too exposed. Maybe they are old hands and know a great deal more than we do about these waters ... or maybe they were practicing their Bahamian mooring ?

Staniel Cay has a small marina, bars and restaurants, hotel and other shore accommodation, so it is popular. We chose to anchor at Big Major's Spot, which is a longish dinghy ride to Staniel Cay but well sheltered from the prevailing winds – and it has the swimming pigs! (Those who have not been there might think this involves too many rum punches, but no, there is a whole herd of pigs, big and small, on the beach and they love to come in the water and swim, gobbling any food on offer. Holidaymakers come from all over the Exumas and even Nassau to see them.)

The famous swimming pigs at Big Major's Spot

We have now visited three Bond movie locations – Colon, Panama (*Quantum of Solace*), Thailand (*The Man with the Golden Gun*) and now the Bahamas (*Thunderball* and *Never Say Never Again*). There is a limestone cave to snorkel into at low water – or duck through a sump at high water – which has a high, domed roof with holes which let in dramatic shafts of light. It is home to a lot of reef fish quite habituated to people. Our timing was good as a party of people left just as we arrived and we had the cave to ourselves for a while ... magical.

The 176 square mile Exumas Cays Land and Sea Park – created in 1959 and the world's first protected area of its kind – is truly delightful. We picked up a mooring at Cambridge Cay, where a charming American sailing couple were volunteering for the Park, collecting fees, providing maps and organising sundowners on a nearby sand spit.

Thunderball Cave

The Park HQ at Warderick Wells also has moorings, as well as excellent information on places to snorkel and marked paths for lovely walks ashore. The whole Park is archetypal Bahamas with low islands, a few higher outcrops in the limestone, eroded cliffs and shelves, scrub and sub-tropical trees, white sand beaches, coral reefs, and every shade

Sundowners at Cambridge Cay

The Coastguard approach to check Minnie B as she approaches Nassau

of blue and turquoise that one can imagine.

With a cold front on its way we headed the 30 miles north to Highborne Cay as our jumping off point for New Providence and Nassau. We stayed there two nights, and on 14th April sailed the 45 miles northwest in 14–18 knots of wind which varied from east-northeast to east-southeast – we were on every point of sail to dodge the reefs, especially the rock and coral-head strewn Yellow Bank.

Nassau and the Abacos

Over 70 percent of the population of the Bahamas live in the capital, Nassau, on New Providence Island, or on Paradise Island which dominates Nassau harbour. This island, linked by two road bridges to New Providence, is holiday home to the rich and famous and as well as having the resort/hotel/casino/entertainment centre of Atlantis. A day pass for a non-resident costs US $160 and children of 12 are classified as adults.

Atlantis resort, Nassau

We moored at Nassau Harbour Club, aiming to get our scuba dive tanks tested and filled, get stainless steel bushes made for the autopilot and a towed generator connection, stock up on provisions ... and do some sight-seeing. The latter took us to the historic part of Nassau, with 18th century forts, colonial administration buildings, the cruise ship area and its inevitable souvenir shops. But on our way back east to our marina we passed through a large area of closed commercial and retail premises – it was clear that between them the shops at the cruise ship terminal and the edge-of-town shopping malls have killed what was once the retail heart of the city. It is sad, but we were told that the government is trying to work with the building owners and developers to revitalise this part of the city.

The Queen's Staircase, Nassau

After Nassau, we thought the Abacos would be a good departure point for Bermuda as we could clear out at one of the three ports of entry ... hmm. The clue is in the name – entry. In the Abacos we discover that no-one clears out. It is the same system as in the USA – no clearance *zarpe*, no passport stamps ... so we had not needed to go to there after all. Although all was well and we were not impeded significantly, it could have been a mistake as we failed to consider that in easterly winds the cuts through the fringing reef and cays can be extremely difficult.

Our first stop was Royal Island in northern Eleuthera – we motored the 39 miles on 19th April in a flat calm. A forecast of stronger easterlies kept us in the very sheltered inlet until the 22nd, when we sailed the 63 miles to Lynyard Cay, off Great Abaco. It was a close reach the whole way, with 18–24 knots winds from the east-southeast and a very lumpy sea. Two reefs in the main and two in the genoa kept *Minnie B* comfortable and we averaged 7·3 knots, but with an overcast sky and a cool wind it was not overly pleasant. We moved on to Marsh Harbour, the main town in the Abacos and focused on the weather, but after a couple of days without a favourable forecast we decided to explore, first to Elbow Cay.

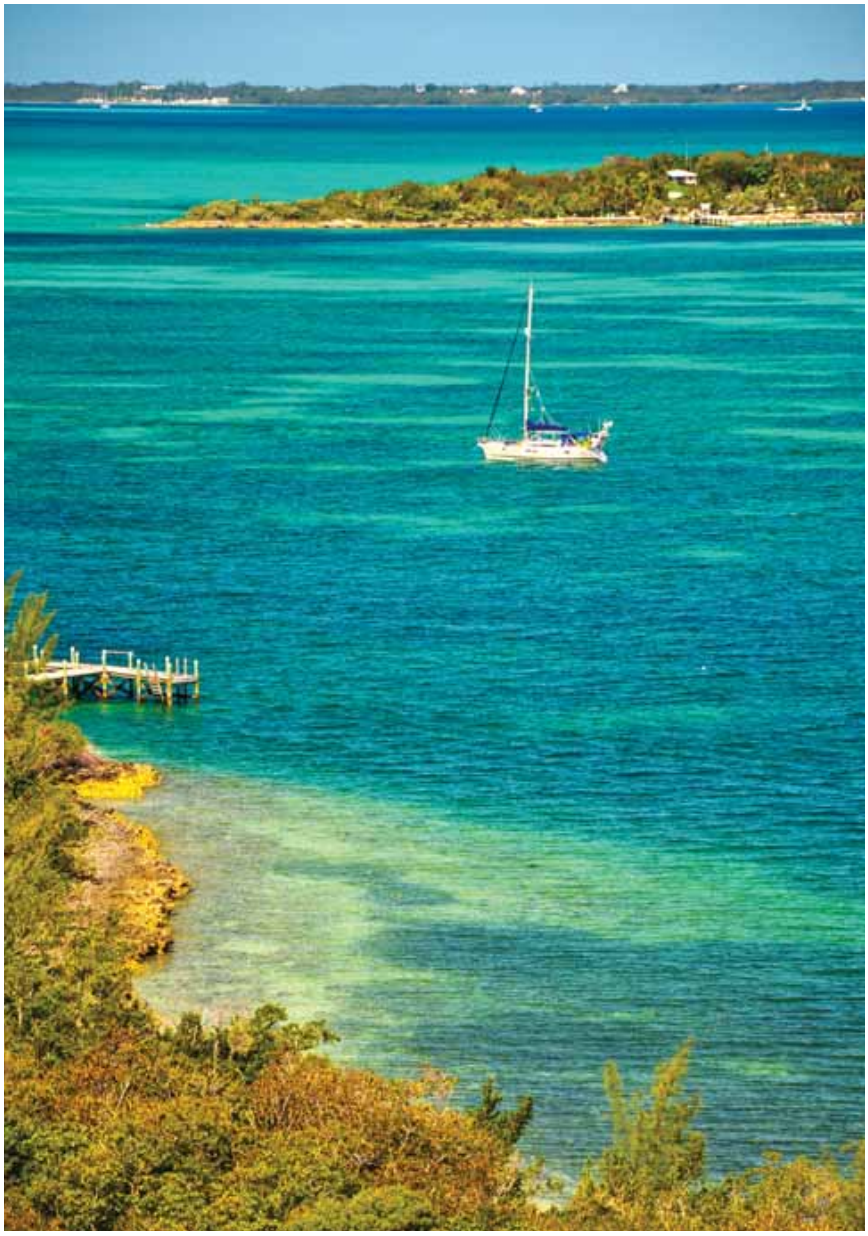
This is the home of the famous lighthouse with its red and white hoops and a light that is still fuelled by kerosene – the local people resist all attempts to convert it to electricity. On 26th April we anchored outside the harbour and dinghied in to visit the lighthouse and museum as well as strolling on the Atlantic side of the cay. Hope Town is picturesque with candy-coloured houses, some with elaborate gingerbread (fretwork) embellishments. However, most of the houses seem to be for rent, and there had been massive development since our visit 15 years previously.

On 28th April we motored the 13 miles to Crossing Bay on Great Guana Cay, which has good shelter from winds from northeast to southeast. This was another return visit, and we had to visit the infamous Nipper's. Needing some exercise, rather

A flying fish above Great Guana Cay, Abacos

than dinghy the two miles down the coast we went ashore in the bay and walked, but soon a local man stopped his golf buggy (the *de rigueur* mode of transport) and offered us a lift. So, Nipper's – the go-to place on Sunday for music and drinking and lots of people, with great views on the Atlantic Ocean side and a lovely beach too ... and loud music and loud drinking ... Our exercise on the return to Crossing Bay was again cut short, when we were offered another lift in a golf buggy by a megayacht crew member.

Hope Town lighthouse, Abacos



Anchored at Elbow Cay, Abacos

And so farewell

With a weather forecast that would enable us to leave for Bermuda, we returned to Marsh Harbour. By 6th May, having cleaned the boat's bottom, changed the propeller anode, completed final provisioning, checked the weather forecast for the umpteenth time, and got *Minnie B* in offshore sailing mode, we were ready. North Man O'War pass was in benign mood, and with 12–18 knots from south-southeast we were soon making 7 knots with the 740 mile passage ahead of us. We said farewell to the Bahamas, and thank you for a lovely time.

CAPE HORN AND ANTARCTIC WATERS: Including Chile, the Beagle Channel, Falkland Islands and the Antarctic Peninsula – Paul Heiney. Published in hard covers by Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson [www.imray.com] at £60. 210 A4-size pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-8462-3836-9

I am not sure that anyone could, or even should, attempt to produce a comprehensive cruising guide to these remote and challenging cruising grounds. In compiling this latest RCC Pilotage Foundation title, Paul Heiney makes it very clear that it provides only an overview of what lies in store for the more adventurous.

The notes on preparation have been culled from many experienced sailors who have gained these insights first-hand and over many years, and I would urge anyone considering venturing this far south to read and re-read Section 1. *Preparing for the Extremes* – in which the author highlights some of the many personal skill-sets, equipment, techniques and the high levels of boat preparation required – well before departure.

There is much to be gained even by experienced sailors, and I successfully used the advice on tandem anchoring techniques (reprinted in this guide) gleaned from the RCCPF's Chile guide by Andy O'Grady* before my own adventures in Chile, South Georgia and Antarctica. There is a good sub-section on the fascinating wildlife to be found in the area, but I would recommend that anyone visiting these waters add specific books on the wildlife to be seen beneath and above the waves.

Section 2 provides advice and information on how to get there, in itself a challenging proposition, but the book outlines the various route options, distances, weather, currents and possible anchorages, plus what can be expected from the locals if you stop along the way! Whilst some things never change others are a moving feast. Harbours get developed, formalities are changed (sometimes for the better) and it is always a good idea to obtain the latest information – eg. the marina in Piriapolis has been extended to accommodate up to 100 boats and there is now an immigration office directly behind the marina.

Section 3 covers Chile from Valdivia to the Beagle Channel and Magellan Strait, and provides a good overview of what is to be found in these amazing cruising grounds. Once again there is plenty of background information on formalities, charts, weather and the key harbours where fuel and provisions are available, plus details of just a handful of the many anchorages that can be explored along the way, all supported by detailed chartlets and stunning photographs to whet the appetite.

* *CHILE: Arica Desert to Tierra del Fuego*, third edition revised by Andrew O'Grady. Reviewed in *Flying Fish* 2015/2.

The same format covers the subsequent sections on the Beagle Channel and Cape Horn, the Falkland Islands including South Georgia, and the Antarctic Peninsula, each with information specific to the area. Here things get even more adventurous and the book provides links to other, more detailed cruising guides for each area, lists charts required, etc. Permits for South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula are getting more difficult to obtain and the rules and regulations are getting ever more stringent, but the links provided will help you find a route through these bureaucratic minefields.

As with all RCCPF guides, the quality is excellent and there are lots of top-class photographs. It achieves its aim of providing adventurous yachtsmen and women with a sufficient understanding of what can be expected when venturing south into these vast, exciting and challenging cruising grounds.

SB

KNOX-JOHNSTON ON SEAMANSHIP AND SEAFARING – Sir Robin Knox-Johnston. Published in hard covers by Fernhurst Books [https://fernhurstbooks.com] at £14.99. 220 150mm x 231mm pages but no photographs or other illustrations. ISBN 978-1-9121-7714-1

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston is a legend, an inspiration, even a hero. As the first person to sail singlehanded non-stop around the world by the three great capes of Good Hope, Leeuwin and the Horn he led the way in bringing sailing to the notice of the world. He has competed in some of the greatest ocean racing events, including the Whitbread, Jules Verne, Route du Rhum and, at the age of 68, the Velux 5 Oceans.

Starting out in the Merchant Navy, and with over 250,000 miles sailed aboard a wide variety of yachts, Robin has experience and knowledge that is hard to match. *Knox-Johnston on Seamanship and Seafaring* was brought out in June 2018 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of his departure from Falmouth on the Golden Globe Race, the event which shot him into the record books and saw the start of an illustrious career. It has an admiring foreword by Alex Thomson, after which Robin pens an introduction that considers the changes in boats, navigation and communications which have taken place over the past 50 years. It then comprises two main sections:

- **Part 1: Seamanship** – in which 26 short pieces cover 'Skills' such as using waypoints, obeying COLREGS, throwing a heaving line, and the art of anchoring; followed by another 13 pieces addressing 'Gear', including safety harnesses, leadline and sextant.
- **Part 2: Seafaring** – with a sub-section of 13 pieces on 'Boats' that includes *Cutty Sark*, the Metre Classes, Dunkirk Little Ships, MOD70 and of course, *Suhaili*; another covering 'Races' including the Velux 5 Oceans, Vendée Globe and the Round the Island Race; and a final sub-section of 10 pieces about 'Places' that have significant meaning for Sir Robin, such as the Southern Ocean, Durban, Bombay and Greenland.

I started this book with a high level of interest and enthusiasm – indeed, who wouldn't? When Robin did a book signing in June 2018 in Falmouth the queue snaked down the

street, with all copies of the book being sold before all would-be purchasers could be satisfied. Sadly, however, it failed to meet my expectations. Apart from the Foreword and Introduction there is no new writing here – it is a collection of Robin's writings that appeared in *Yachting World* magazine. This in itself is no bad thing, but according to the dust cover 'you can benefit from Robin's wealth of experience as he shares his thoughts ... in this new book'.

Much of the disappointment, and indeed frustration, could have been avoided if each piece had carried the date on which it was first published. This would have avoided the confusion that results when reading a piece which includes such phrases as 'this summer', 'last year', 'at present' etc. It would also have avoided such apparent *faux pas* as the statement 'With modern anchors like the CQR ...' when writing about the Art of Anchoring. Had we been told when the piece was written we would understand the reference to 'modern'. OCC members might also take issue with his definition of a circumnavigation. It appears that, to Robin, you have only completed a 'proper circumnavigation' if you have sailed south of the three great capes as 'A voyage that takes the sailor through the Suez or Panama Canal does not count'.

Having said all that, while the experienced sailor is unlikely to find many nuggets in Part 1, Part 2 has some interesting stories about Boats and Races. For me the Places sub-section did not spark except for an amusing story about visiting Lerwick.

So, as an anthology of Robin's writing and to see how he has addressed sailing matters over a period of 50 years, the book has a place on the shelf. His love of the traditional ways comes through strongly, but his enthusiasm for the new is muted despite keeping pace with changes in technology and design.

CPH

YANMARA, SHIP'S CAT – Suzanne Hills. Published in soft covers by AM Publishing New Zealand, and available from Amazon at £7.78 / US $10.60. 216 127mm x 203mm pages with a route plan, boat details and black-and-white photos. ISBN 978-0-9951-0768-7

Dog lovers beware! Although not in the first person, *Yanmara, Ship's Cat* is written from Yanmara's point of view and dogs are, without exception, baddies. No need to read further, in fact... For cat lovers however, or those with an impartial view of the animal kingdom, this is a delightful book, and though written with pre-teen girls in mind this (pensionable) reviewer enjoyed it thoroughly.

Many members will recall Yanmara from *5000 Miles in 'The Variables'*, Suzanne's account of *Whanake*'s South Pacific crossing which appeared in *Flying Fish* 2016/1. Yanmara was a kitten when they left Valdivia but Ship's Cat by the time they reached New Zealand, a transition which forms the background of the book.

Deep literature it ain't, but not only does Suzanne write extremely well, she also shows a deep understanding and empathy with cats and what motivates them – mainly fish, in Yanmara's case! Of course there's a strong element of anthropomorphism, not just towards Yanmara herself but also many of the other species she meets and – unlikely though it might sound – befriends.

For me pride of place must go to Karin and Rossi the Swiss Army Knife crabs, but we also meet Nina the sea eagle, Ken the dancing albatross, a pair of depressed and nameless jellyfish, Matt and Laurie the dolphins, Slater the suckerfish, Jeff and Octavia the octopuses, and Martha the humpback whale and her five-tonne son Little Arthur. Only Le Rat is not made welcome.

In addition to being a fine (and inexpensive) Christmas stocking-filler containing much gentle humour, *Yanmara, Ship's Cat* would make a great animated cartoon, or (with less detail) an appealing illustrated book for younger children. Suzanne tells me that Yanmara has a growing fan club and may soon have a presence on YouTube. She definitely should – like most cats she's a natural star! Highly recommended.

AOMH

ASTRONAUTS OF CAPE HORN – Nicholas Gray. Published in hard covers by The Conrad Press [www.theconradpress.com] at £16.99. 240 158mm x 240mm pages, plus 15 pages of good-quality mono photographs and a chartlet. ISBN 978-1-9115-4638-2

Astronauts of Cape Horn owes its unusual title to the fact that by the time of the sixth and last moon landing in 1972, twelve men had stood on that alien surface but only eleven had doubled Cape Horn singlehanded. Some of the latter are well-known, at least to fellow sailors, but others are now almost forgotten. Nicholas Gray, himself a very experienced singlehanded sailor, has done much to rectify this between the covers of this fascinating book.

The first recorded rounding of Cape Horn – as against passage through the Magellan Strait – was in 1615, and it was almost another 200 years before land was discovered to the south. Prior to the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 it became the graveyard of countless fully-crewed ships and men. As (almost) every cruiser knows, the first man to circumnavigate singlehanded was Joshua Slocum, who left Boston in 1895 aboard the *Spray*, but like most smaller vessels of the time he passed through the Magellan Strait. He was followed by Harry Pigeon, Alain Gerbault, Edward Miles and Louis Bernicot in the 1920s and '30s.

A prodigious amount of reading and research – allied to at least one stroke of sheer luck – went into the writing of this book. This (fairly well-read) reviewer had never heard of Alfon Hansen, who left Norway in 1932 aboard his 36ft Colin Archer-designed gaff cutter *Mary Jane*. Amazingly, received wisdom at the time was that the best season in which to double the Horn was June or July, the depths of the southern winter. Accordingly, Hansen left Buenos Aires in June 1934. He later called in at a town more than 1000 miles up the Chilean coast, but after leaving to continue north was never seen again. Meeting Hansen in Buenos Aires early in 1934 may well have inspired Argentinean Vito Dumas, who in 1942 left his homeland aboard his 31ft *Legh II* to head eastabout, finally doubling the Horn in June 1943 as related in his *Alone Through the Roaring Forties*.

Next to set off was Frenchman Marcel Bardiaux in his home-built *Les 4 Vents*, variously reported as either 25ft or 30ft (LWL, LOD or LOA?), who left France in October 1950

and reached Cape Horn in May 1952, only to hit a (small) iceberg which forced him to return to Ushuaia for repairs – via the Beagle Channel as he had already passed Cape Horn. He finally entered the Pacific via the Magellan Strait – almost certainly the first non-naval vessel to pass through all three passages in a single season.

Fourth to head for the Horn alone was Australian Bill Nance, who left the UK aged 23 in December 1961 aboard *Cardinal Vertue* (a sistership of Humphrey Barton's *Vertue XXXV*). Unlike Dumas and Bardiaux he never wrote about his voyage, and Nicholas Gray only learned the details due to the stroke of luck referred to previously – a chance contact with Pam Wall, OCC Port Officer for Fort Lauderdale, Florida whose late husband Andy had doubled the Horn with Nance's brother Bob (see *Flying Fish* 2014/2) and who had kept in contact with Bill. Like Dumas, Nance headed eastabout via the Cape of Good Hope and the southern Indian Ocean, the last 2000 miles to Australia under jury rig. After two years in New Zealand, on 1st December 1964 he set off across the Southern Ocean towards Cape Horn, which he rounded on 7th January. *Astronauts of Cape Horn* is worth buying for this chapter alone.

The chain continued, with Edward Allcard doubling the Horn in 1966 after a chance meeting with Bill Nance in Buenos Aires. His 36ft yawl *Sea Wanderer* was 55 years old by then but appears to have coped admirably, a voyage recounted in *Solo Around Cape Horn*, published shortly before Allcard's death last year and reviewed in *Flying Fish* 2017/1.

Compared to their predecessors, the encounters of Sir Francis Chichester, Sir Alec Rose and Sir Robin Knox-Johnston with Cape Horn in 1967, 1968 and 1969 are well-documented on film as well as in print. Very different characters sailing very different boats, all three wrote about their circumnavigations, in *Gipsy Moth Circles the World*, *My Lively Lady* and *A World of My Own*, all of which make interesting reading. All three yachts are still sailing.

Frenchman Bernard Moitessier, like Sir Robin a competitor in the 1968 Golden Globe Race, passed south of the Horn in his 38ft *Joshua* in February 1969, but remained in the Southern Ocean past the Cape of Good Hope and eventually made landfall in Tahiti. Also in the Golden Globe Race was Nigel Tetley sailing the Piver-designed trimaran *Victress*, the first multihull to double the Horn. After surviving the Southern Ocean and passing Cape Horn safely a month after Moitessier, and with more than 20,000 miles already under her keels, she began to break up within 1500 miles of home and had to be abandoned – a sad and needless outcome which Nicholas Gray describes with great sympathy.

The final man to double the Horn prior to the sixth and last moon landing on 7th December 1972 was Sir Chay Blyth aboard the 57ft *British Steel*. Unlike his five world-girdling predecessors he opted to head westwards into the prevailing winds. Leaving the UK in October 1970 he rounded the Horn on Christmas Eve, beat into the Roaring Forties for a further five months to round the Cape of Good Hope in May 1971, and finally made landfall in the Solent to a hero's welcome on 12th August after 292 days at sea.

Since then there have been many solo circumnavigations in ever-decreasing times, but nearly all with the underlying knowledge that, should the worst happen, the authorities can be alerted and help summoned. Up to the 1970s, all who crossed oceans in small boats were as isolated as if they had been walking on the moon – in many ways more so.

Normally a book review should offer more than just a synopsis of its contents, but *Astronauts of Cape Horn* is not a normal book – with its comprehensive bibliography it opens a window onto a world of enterprise and endurance unknown to most modern cruisers. Its focus is relatively narrow and I hope that Nicholas Gray will follow up some of the stories – or others – in greater detail in future books. Meanwhile I can recommend *Astronauts of Cape Horn* without hesitation. A traditionally-bound hard-back complete with dust cover, it would make an excellent Christmas present – but only after buying a copy for yourself first.

AOMH

PS: The contribution made by OCC member Roger Robinson should not be overlooked. In addition to drawing the chartlet of Cape Horn (though he tells me the publishers have printed an earlier, unfinished version) his archives provided several of the photographs.

VANISHING SAIL: THE STORY OF A CARIBBEAN TRADITION (film) – written and directed by Alexis Andrews, produced by Alexis Andrews and Justin Sihera, Indian Creek Films 2015. Available on DVD from www.store.vanishingsail.com at £19.15 / US $24.95.

We loved this film. It tells the story of Alwyn Enoe, one of the few remaining traditional boat builders in the West Indies, as he builds his last boat in Windward, Carriacou. Alexis had become enchanted with Carriacou sloops and bought one in Antigua in the 1990s, subsequently sailing her back to Carriacou where she had been built. He became friends with Alwyn, from whom he commissioned a boat which they named *Genesis*.

In 2012, Alwyn had not received any commissions for new boats for several years, and his sons had found other employment to support themselves, away from the boat-building craft. In his late 60s, Alwyn decided it was time to retire. Before he did so, however, he wanted to build one last boat for his family and asked Alexis to document the tradition before it was lost for ever. "If this thing gone from here, everything gone you know ...", Alwyn explains. The result is this beautifully-filmed story which follows Alwyn and his sons over a three-year period as they build *Exodus*, a traditional Carriacou gaff-rigged sloop.

They haul trees from the forest to make her frames, and fashion a mast out of a utility pole. As the boat nears completion, Alwyn is seized with the idea of finishing her in time to compete in the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, five weeks away. They complete her just under the wire and launch her in an enthusiastic, traditional ceremony. Alwyn and his sons then set off on the 48 hour sail to Antigua to join the regatta.

Woven throughout the film are stories and commentaries by some wonderful island personalities including boat builders, neighbours and seamen of all stripes. Don Street even makes an appearance. The film explores the vibrant history of boat building and trading (and smuggling) under sail in the eastern Caribbean, and reaches back to the Scottish settler origins of the art. Besides being an engrossing story of an ancient,

vanishing skill and one man's poignant effort to preserve it, we are given intimate and genuine exposure to this small island community. For now, Alwyn's legacy continues as his sons do their best to carry on their father's work and Carriacou's tradition.

Vanishing Sail is the winner of numerous awards including the Directorial Discovery and Audience Choice awards at the 2015 Rhode Island International Film Festival, the 2016 Grand Jury Prize at the Barcelona International Film Festival, and most recently, the 2017 Donald Gosling Maritime Media Award for Best Television or Film.

One last thing. The film is gorgeous. Shot primarily in Carriacou, the Grenadines and Antigua, it had us ready to jump on the next plane from wintry Maine. It also inspires one to take part in, or at least attend (plus camera!), the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. Whether your interests lie in cruising, racing, boat building, or boat design, *Vanishing Sail* will not disappoint.

JAG

This review originally appeared in the 2018 issue of *Voyages*, the annual magazine of the Cruising Club of America.

FIRST AID AT SEA – Dr Douglas Justins and Dr Colin Berry (7th edition). Published in spiral-bound format between hard covers by Adlard Coles Nautical [www.adlardcoles.com] at £12.99. 30 250mm x 170 mm pages in full colour on card. ISBN 978-1-4729-5341-4

This latest edition of *First Aid at Sea* remains 'a little cracker', to use the words of a previous reviewer (5th edition, *Flying Fish* 2009/1). It contains all the essential information for immediate first aid, as well as for non-life threatening situations where readers may still seek reassurance or guidance.

It remains the same practical, water-resistant, spiral-bound design, colour-coded sections which make finding the correct page much quicker and more straightforward than thumbing through an index. As in previous editions the language is clear with no medical jargon to confuse the reader. The previous reviewer questioned the need for a page to be devoted to distress signals. I have to say I agree with his wife, who suggested that inexperienced (or indeed experienced) crew may benefit from a step-by-step guide to seeking help when faced with an emergency situation.

Many sailors quite rightly worry about the potential for serious injury aboard a yacht, such as head injuries, hypothermia and drowning. While these serious situations are covered extremely well in the book, I particularly liked the pages covering sudden illness. In this section it describes the point at which to call for urgent medical assistance or evacuation. While prompting the crew to seek medical advice at the appropriate point may serve to reassure them that they are giving the correct care to the casualty, early advice regarding intervention and evacuation may prove to be life-saving.

First Aid at Sea is light despite its robustness, and will be easy to stow on board even the smallest yacht. It offers excellent value for money and is a worthy addition to any boat's safety equipment.

CB

THE NARROW DOG TRILOGY (NARROW DOG TO CARCASSONNE, NARROW DOG TO INDIAN RIVER, and NARROW DOG TO WIGAN PIER) – Terry Darlington. Published in soft covers by Bantam Books [www.randomhousebooks.com/imprints] at £6.99, £9.99 and £8.99 respectively. 426, 432 and 354 130mm x 198mm pages, with a few sketch plans and line drawings but no photographs. ISBNs 978-0-5538-1669-3, 978-0-5538-1816-1 and 978-0-8575-0063-2.

Terry Darlington is a 'Marmite' writer – you either like his clipped, sometimes terse style or you don't. The same is true of his frequent quotations and allusions, while the fact that all three books tell of travels aboard a narrow-boat* called *Phyllis May* could be seen as a turn-off by some OCC members. However anyone who has ever had anything to do with boats will recognise a fellow spirit when, on page 309 of *Narrow Dog to Wigan Pier*, Terry Darlington writes: 'Pretending a problem isn't there, however monstrous, even when it is staring you in the face, is one of the most common and effective strategies in life. ... But the strategy never works on a boat. Ignore a rattle and a piece of your boat will tear itself off... Get something on the prop and it will stall you in a cross-current as the trip boat is coming for you'.

Narrow Dog to Carcassonne, first published in 2005, tells how Terry, his wife Monica, and Jim the (very reluctant) whippet, left their base at Stone in the English Midlands to make a circuit of the country's canals and rivers via London and Bristol ... after which they sat back and thought 'where next?' and decided on Carcassonne in the south of France for no better reason, apparently, than that they liked the name (one gets the feeling that Terry makes a lot of decisions for reasons like this). They're experienced narrow-boaters and not crazy, so arrange back-up to make the Channel Crossing – possibly the only narrow-boat to have done this, as the standard method is to ship by ferry – after which they visit Belgium and Paris, have an exciting time on the River Rhône, and eventually make it to Carcassonne – or as close as a canal-boat can to this ancient town.

This all could become a somewhat boring account of canals, locks and glimpsed towns were it not for Terry's eye for detail and oddball humour (quite frequently at himself). It also transpires that he speaks fluent French, which may not always be obvious to those discussing him and the *Phyllis May* in his presence.

No such opportunities in *Narrow Dog to Indian River*, published in 2009. *Narrow Dog to Carcassonne* having been a somewhat unexpected success to author and publisher alike, he and Monica (Jim is not consulted) are encouraged to spread their wings and take *Phyllis May* to the US. Even they realise the Atlantic might be a bit much for her, so have her shipped to the Chesapeake and follow the Intracoastal Waterway south through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and across Florida. One can foresee Terry having quite a party with those southern ladies, and he does. Just occasionally the writing seems a little laboured and one imagines him scratching his head and

* Designed to travel England's 'narrow' canals as well as the wider ones, and originally to carry commercial cargoes, a typical narrow-boat is around 70ft (21·1m) LOA with a beam of just under 7ft (2·1m). Virtually flat underneath, they do not manoeuvre easily – and I speak from experience.

wondering how to fill the next chapter, but never for very long. Few narrow-boats can ever have enjoyed a dolphin escort.

Narrow Dog to Wigan Pier, from 2013, is sometimes a little darker in tone. Ostensibly it describes first a trip up England's western canals from Stoke to Tewitfield – as far north as a narrow-boat can get, basically – and then a circuit around the centre of the country. But it is in a new boat, *Phyllis May II*, after her predecessor is lost in a yard fire, and the writing is interspersed with large chunks of autobiography and smaller chunks of philosophy. Both are interesting, not least because of Terry's considerable intelligence and distinctly off-the-wall view of the world. He tells us that he doesn't plan to write another book, and though I'm sure he could, and it would probably sell well, I think he's wise to stop while he's ahead.

There are no photographs or other illustrations, though each book has a page or two of sketch maps at the beginning. Doubtless other narrow-boaters will follow the Darlingtons' routes on detailed waterways maps (and glean a great deal of useful information in the process), but those of us with nearly 2m draught have no reason to take life so seriously. For more detailed maps and photos visit their website at www.narrowdog.com – where you are also encouraged to buy Terry's books, of course.

A few pages at the end of each book are devoted to listing the quotations and allusions mentioned in the first paragraph of this review. I regretted not knowing this until I reached the end of *Narrow Dog to Carcassonne*, though felt cheered at having recognised quite a few. Now I tend to check the unfamiliar as I go along. Terry Darlington has a degree in English from Oxford University, and as his syllabus is unlikely to have extended from William Langland to Allen Ginsberg one can only conclude that he also enjoys reading.

In summary? Well I really enjoyed all three books, and so did the people I lent them to. I can't promise that you will, but unless you have no sense of humour at all there has to be a very good chance...

AOMH

RACUNDRA'S THIRD CRUISE – Arthur Ransome. Edited and compiled by Brian Hammett. First published by Fernhurst Books [https://fernhurstbooks.com] in 2002, this edition in soft covers published 2018. 128 235mm x 150mm pages illustrated with original photographs. ISBN 978-1-9121-7711-0.

Arthur Ransome has a lot to answer for. Many a ten year old, including this reviewer, went on to a life of nautical pursuits after reading *Swallows and Amazons* and its 11 sequels about the adventures of the fictional Walker family and their friends, the Blackett sisters.

It wasn't until much later that I came across *Racundra's First Cruise* – Ransome's account of his introduction to *Racundra* and her inaugural cruise from Riga, where he had her built, to Helsinki, in August and September of 1922. It was much later still that I discovered what an interesting character was Arthur Ransome. A man whose political views were of the left, who reputedly was the only British journalist permitted to remain in Moscow through the Bolshevik Revolution and its aftermath. Here was a

man who had Lenin as a chess opponent, and who fell in love with and subsequently married Trotky's personal secretary, Evginia Shelepina. Indeed, once Ransome had obtained a divorce from his first wife, he was married to his beloved Evginia by the British Consul in Riga. *Racundra*'s third cruise in 1924 was their honeymoon.

Despite its title, *Racundra's Third Cruise* is much more than a 21st century version of a book by Ransome that he never had published. The first 80 pages is an account of the cruise itself, on inland waters from Riga up the Aa River (now called by its Latvian name the Lieupe). Editor Brian Hammett has combined Ransome's words with those contained in his diary and entries extracted from *Racundra*'s log. The result is a fascinating insight into river cruising through a countryside suffering from the aftermath of a long and bitter civil war. Hammett calls the remaining 45 pages a 'prelude', containing lots of interesting background information about *Racundra*'s earlier cruises, about Arthur and Evginia, and about the boat herself, as well as more general insights into Baltic cruising life and times in the early 1920s.

Even at the age of ten I can remember being irked by the unreality and monotony of interactions between siblings aboard the *Swallow* and the *Amazon,* and other boats in later books. In my admittedly limited experience, no family I knew was that peaceable and civilised in the various stressful situations that occurred during their adventures. This, however, was more than compensated for by the skill with which Ransome's prose imparts the spiritual as well as physical pleasure of cruising in small boats in interesting places.

His description of real cruising experiences aboard *Racundra* did not suffer from this pacific limitation. Here is an extract from his diary of an incident recognisable to many in the cruising fraternity as 'cabin fever':

> "The Cook says there is no point in living in *Racundra*, that only children are glad to live in a ship, that there is nothing to see, nothing to write about, and that she's sick of wind and rain and living in a small cabin; that I grow worse with age, and that proper authors live at home and write books out of their heads."

A charming idiosyncracy that carried over to his later childrens' books was to use nicknames for things and people. *Racundra*'s somewhat temperamental hot-bulb, kerosene-powered Swedish engine became 'the little donkey', Evginia the 'Cook', the old, experienced, nautical person who helped Ransome fit out *Racundra,* and who crewed on the first two cruises, 'The Ancient Mariner'. On the second cruise a fourth crew member was a grass snake over three feet long called 'Oureberes', a mis-spelling of *ouroboros* – a mythical dragon that is depicted as swallowing its own tail and hence has no beginning or end. According to the The Ancient Mariner's daughter, on cold nights Oureberes would sleep coiled around Evginia's breasts.

Clearly, the Cook was an interesting character in her own right. She stood 6ft 3in tall, was secretary to the man who formed the Red Army that prevailed in the Russian civil war, was suspected by MI5 of smuggling diamonds out of Russia to finance the *Comintern* in Paris, but jumped ship near the end of the third cruise because two mischievous boys in a dugout canoe emerged from the river marshes to toss a mouse down the forward hatch. As Ransome puts it: '... the cruise is almost over. The Cook has gone and I am left a hero to face a raging lion in a mouse's skin'.

Soon after the third cruise and tired of endless travel, Ransome settled in the Cumbrian Lake District. Short of cash, he sold *Racundra* to a young Adlard Coles for £220. It was from there Ransome wrote *Swallows and Amazons*, and the rest, as they say, is history. Ransome died in 1967. *Racundra* outlived him by ten years – late in her life she was rescued in a neglected state from Tangier harbour, was restored, and sailed across the Atlantic to eventually founder on a Venezuelan reef.

For the general cruising fraternity, this slim paperback is highly recommended as the kind of book to have on board in case of enforced idleness in a sheltered anchorage while waiting for inclement weather to pass. Although it describes a world long gone, it nails much that is important, enjoyable and interesting about the cruising life. For Ransome aficionados, it is a valuable addition to his hagiography.

JWF

IN BED WITH THE ATLANTIC – Kitiara Pascoe. Published in soft covers by Fernhurst Books [https://fernhurstbooks.com] at £11.99. 264 129mm x 198mm pages including eight of colour photos. ISBN 978-1-9121-7716-5

The subtitle of this book, '*A young woman battles anxiety to sail the Atlantic circuit*', could be slightly off-putting for a seasoned ocean sailor. Most OCC members have made several ocean crossings, and while testing situations of course can frighten anyone, does someone else's chronic anxiety make interesting reading? In this case yes, it does – because Kitiara Pascoe is an excellent writer with an eye for detail.

When her partner Alex buys an elderly and unloved Nicholson 32 to sail to the Caribbean, Kitiara battles with self-doubt, not least because her sailing experience is almost nil. In the past she had been plagued with periods of depression and panic attacks, so while she wants to experience the adventure of crossing an ocean, visiting tropical islands, and swimming in warm water, internal voices keep telling her 'I don't think I can do this'. A year-long refit for the boat, including fitting an Aries wind vane, reminds Kit of how little she knows. A steep learning curve is normal at the beginning of your first long cruise – it certainly was for this reviewer – but being reasonably confidant and determined is essential.

Fortunately Alex is calm and competent, and Kit is surprised to find that she is seldom seasick, a major cause of deciding that sailing isn't for you. The young couple manage to cope with the various problems that invariably crop up on a shakedown cruise, and when *Berwick Maid* and her crew leave Falmouth for Spain, it's Kit's first night passage. The five-day crossing is bouncy and cold, and she's miserable until dolphins appear and play around the bow, an uplifting experience that we've all enjoyed. Arriving in La Coruña with force 6 and huge waves behind them, Kit is overwhelmed with relief. After cruising the *rías* they leave for Porto Santo, Madeira, the Canaries and a month-long crossing to Grenada. As her confidence grows and she relaxes, Kit finds herself enjoying the way of life that we are all so familiar with.

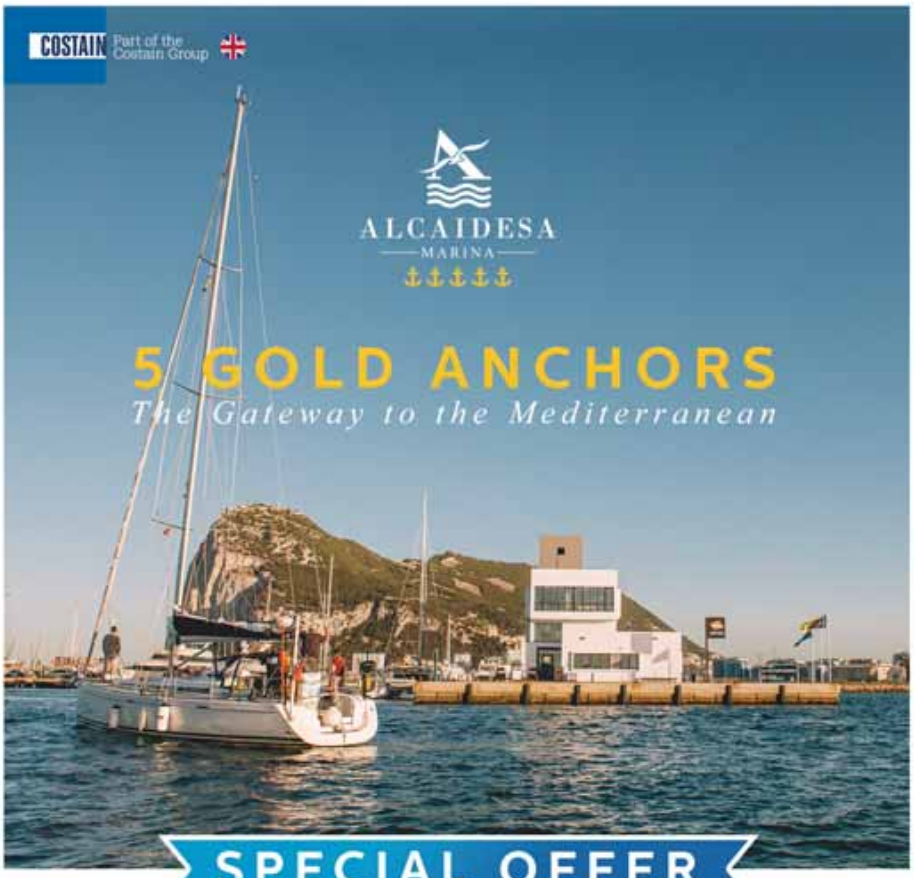
The book covers *Berwick Maid*'s three-year cruise – north up the island chain to St Martin, across the Caribbean Sea for a lengthy stay in Panama, and back to spend three months exploring the Bahamas (where the author becomes increasingly disillusioned

by the high price of imported American food, and anchorages full of boats that arrive in the autumn and don't move for six months). Some well-researched historical background makes interesting reading at this point.

So *Berwick Maid* heads for home, and with a 27-day passage which includes a lightning storm, Kit has plenty of time to analyse her feelings. She comes to the realisation that it wasn't the bad weather that was the problem, it was her reaction to it – seeing it as a constant battle, instead of just dealing with it. She's beginning to feel at one with the sea. Another gale and an errant halyard twisted round the mast and forestay keeps the crew busy before landfall in Flores, followed by stops in São Jorge, where Kit gives a vivid description of bull running on the quay at Velas, and a street festival which they enjoy in Terceira. With their return to the UK getting closer, Kit worries about getting back – will everything have changed while she hasn't? What she does in fact discover is that the whole world has opened up – suddenly things that had terrified her before the Atlantic circuit have become doable...

All in all a fairly standard cruise, with the exception of the detour to Panama and back again, but an interesting insight into how one young woman overcame her demons and discovered mental strength she never knew she had. This book could be very helpful to a potential crew member, probably female but not necessarily, who is frightened at the thought of what she's getting into and doubts her ability to cope. The strong message is, 'Yes, you can!'

EHMH



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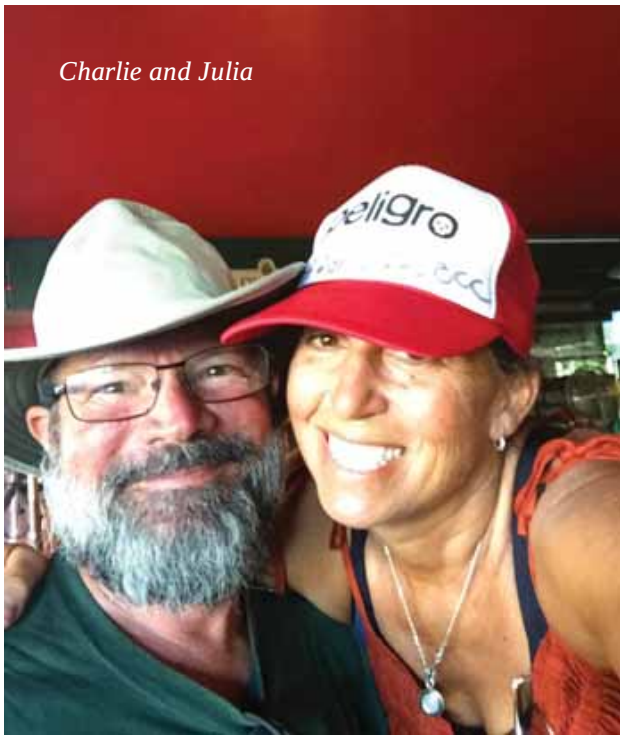
OF BOOBIES AND BREAKAGES – Our first offshore voyage Charlie Braffett and Julia Rahal

(*Charlie comes from Houston, Texas and started sailing in 1973 in small lake boats. After a 20 year hiatus he bought an Erickson 32 in Panama while serving in the Army there, and won the Panama National Championship. He acquired* Seagate*, a Hans Christian 38T (the T stands for 'Traditional') in 2007, sailing her on Lake Roosevelt before moving it to Ventura, California in 2012.*

An advertisement for crew for his first offshore trip was answered by Julia, and they have been together ever since – she had long dreamed of sailing to the South Pacific. They share the same birthday, and plan to get married on that date so Charlie will have no excuse for forgetting their anniversary!)

Going offshore, what a wonderful idea! Been planning it for years, got the boat almost ready and even found a beautiful soul to go with me. Now I just need to spend all of my savings, sell my house and car, fix everything left to fix and shove off with my love. Easy as pie, although I'm not keen on pie. First things first, get the boat on the hard for fresh bottom paint and check the through-hulls. While I'm at it, I'll have a survey done just to check things out. In the meantime, my love and I have to stay in revolving hotels, it being tourist season here in Ventura, California, which makes it very challenging, but our little red wagon carries us effortlessly from hotel to hotel.



Charlie and Julia

The survey comes back and suddenly the yard bill gets significantly larger. Just a few things ... such as replace entire exhaust system, retire/replace all bilge systems, replace all engine hoses and redo the head. The final suggestion (which is the most expensive) is to install a feathering prop. When they pull the prop they find the prop-shaft is no good, and a correct prop for the new shaft is non-standard and requires custom machining. My original 1st March voyage commencement begins to slide a tad.

Farewell land, for now

While we're waiting we start to get the other gear that's necessary for this great endeavour. We go to have the liferaft serviced and are told that it is a coastal liferaft rather than an offshore. Also learn that our PFDs[1] are out-of-date, and buy ones with personal AIS[2] modules for good measure. Then shots, medicinal and sundries for several months. Next comes provisioning, where Julia comes to the fore. She not only organises and stores away two car-loads of food, but also keeps us well-fed on the trip.

A bank loan to pay the yard bill and we are ready to splash the boat. Start the engine and test it out, it won't start. Bleed the lines, engine starts, throw it into forward and ... we go in reverse. Throw it into reverse and ... we start to move forward. Hmmm, pull boat back out of water, check the prop, discover factory setting was right-hand, mine is left-hand. A few adjustments later and we are motoring around the harbour. Just a few more things to get ready and we'll be off. Fill water tanks and emergency jerry cans and test water supply – pump will not stop. After tracing lines for leaks, find they have left the tap in the head on. Try out head with new hoses – pump will not function, find the yard have closed all the through-hulls. Enter our initial GPS co-ordinates for the Marquesas and take a day off to rest and not leave on a Friday (bad luck, don'tcha know?).

Morning comes and it's a beautiful day. Motoring out of the harbour with the Channel Islands in sight, we raise the mainsail and motor-sail. The wind picks up and we cut the engine to begin our voyage. The wind picks up some more and we surge along at about 7 knots. Wind picks up some more and we reduce headsail, a bit more and reef the main. By this point we have 20+ knots of wind and 10ft seas from the starboard quarter, so decide to stay overnight at Smugglers Cove on Santa Cruz Island. The cove is flat with about a dozen weekender boats at anchor, which we join. We spend *Cinco De Mayo*[3] on the hook with a couple of beers to celebrate.

Motoring out the next day, as we leave the lee shadow the winds kick up to about 20± knots. Under reefed main and staysail we are doing 8 knots, with 12ft seas slapping us from the starboard side. Finally, too tired to stay up, I hand over to our Hydrovane and take a much needed nap. Next morning, the boat is doing exactly what I left her

1. Personal Flotation Devices – lifejackets to most of us.
2. Automatic Identification System
3. *Cinco de Mayo* is an annual celebration held on 5th May to commemorate the Mexican Army's 1862 victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla. It is observed in the US more than in Mexico, particularly in areas with large Mexican-American populations.

doing and I relax a bit – a Hans Christian is a true bluewater cruiser and a joy in rough weather. Same winds and waves for another day and then we finally get some relief – 15 knot winds and 6ft following seas with us toodling along at 6½ knots. Made 124 miles in our first 24 hours! It looked like it was going to be a quick, pleasant passage with the worst behind us ... or so we thought.

On the next two days we make 139 and 146 miles respectively and are enjoying the sail. Then the cord holding the hydrogenerator snaps and our power begins to fade. No problem – just start up the engine and charge the batteries. 26 minutes later, the engine quits. Test fuel flow and find no issue, will work on it some more later. Attempt temporary fix on the hydrogenerator while hanging upside down off the stern of the boat at 7 knots. The 550 cord I use fails so will have to think of something else.

Over the next few days I repair the hydrogenerator five times with no permanent success. The engine still won't start, and to top it off our headsail tangles on the furler and the staysail comes loose from everything but a couple of hanks. It takes two hours of staying stationary to untangle the headsail as we cross the Tropic of Cancer. At least we're in the tropics now!

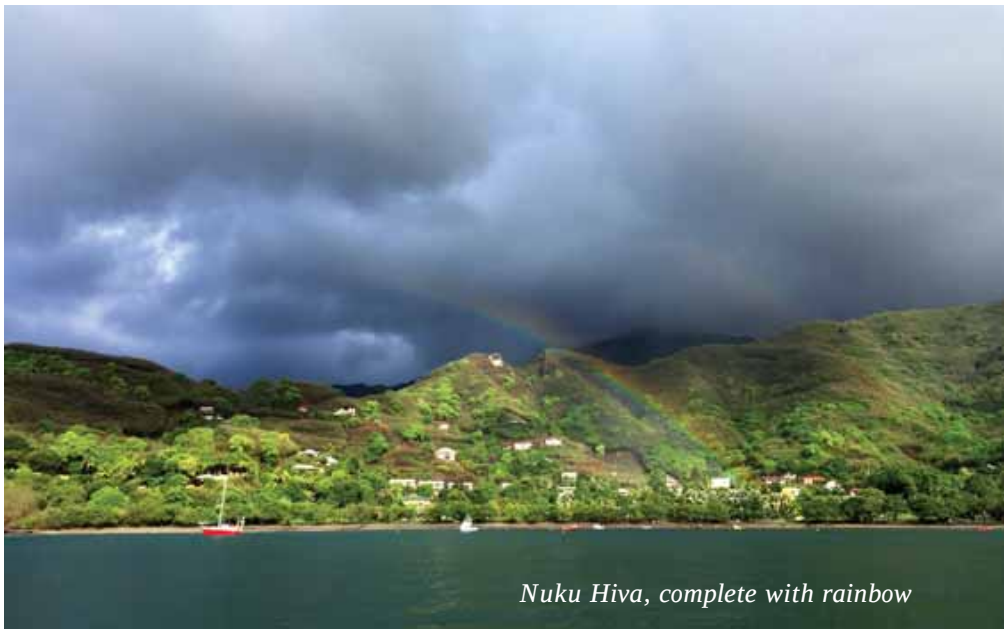
Gladys (see next page)

On 15th May we sight our first ship since day three – I think it is headed for Guaymas, Mexico. Try to bleed the engine with generator running on the deck, but no success. Finally get hydrogenerator to behave for a while with double 2000lb test crabbing line. We also see squadrons of flying fish and an odd grouping of three seabirds that keep circling around us. All this while seeing the Southern Cross for the first time (reminds me of a song).

Then we hit the dreaded Intertropical Convergence Zone, or ITCZ. We make only 67 miles the first day in sweltering heat, but do better over the next couple of days and even get the staysail jerry-rigged. See some eerie lights on the night of the 18th which

turn out to be oil rigs – what they're doing out here, I have no idea. Next morning, a National Police helicopter (Ecuador?) flies by to check us out. The real ITCZ takes over and we average between 30 and 60 miles a day, though sometimes only 12, towards our destination. One night a booby lands on our bimini and spends the night. At the time we think it lucky, so name her Gladys and take her picture. Next day we find booby poo all over the bimini and our solar panels, ugh! Even while cleaning the bimini she won't go until we use a stick to shoo her off. She's a persistent bird and keeps trying to come back, which initiates 'booby watch' as part of watch duties.

Finally, on 28th May, we cross the Equator. We make the appropriate salutes to the sea and prepare for the night. Later, while I'm pulling in the headsail, the boom lets loose from the traveller. I call up Julia to take the helm while I try to bring in the boom, and while wrestling it in find the 90° shackle has let loose. Julia brings up the spare and we get it re-attached, then find the headsail has a double twist in it. We try endlessly to unfoul it but to no avail, and drive on towards Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas under main and jerry-rigged staysail. We pull into the bay on day 28, and the anchor chain fouls coming out and nearly lands us on a lee shore but, finally, we're here!



Nuku Hiva, complete with rainbow

We spend the next five weeks trying to get the engine fixed, but then give up. While waiting, the outboard breaks and has to be replaced. We eventually leave Nuku Hiva for Tahiti with no engine, no headsail, and some friends towing us out to sea with their dinghy.

The first five days go well, with 100+ miles most days. Then, just before the turn around the Tuamotus, we suddenly hit unforecast 30+ knot winds. Even with a reefed main and staysail, I suggest we turn back and wait it out. After making the turn we gybe and I notice part of the main flapping in the breeze – the sail has completely blown out above the first reef. I give the helm to Julia, notice that the second reefing line

So close yet so far, Tahiti

is still attached to what's left of the leech, and proceed to double-reef as if the whole sail was still there. I get her tidied up and we continue back, away from the blow, until morning. It's quite spectacular watching the spray coming off the foredeck.

Then we decide it will be easier to cope with the projected 20+ knot winds and 10ft waves for 90 miles to Papeete than to return 700 miles to Nuku Hiva, so push on that afternoon and finally turn the Tuamotus while hitting the heavy winds and thunderstorms. We ride like that most of the day till the winds start falling off. But here's the problem – because we've chosen to go around the Tuamotus rather than through them, it gives a tight angle of sail to make Tahiti. Also, the Equatorial current is pushing us west at the same time as the wind is dying. The closer we get, the more it looks like we're going to drift away.

Then we encounter an atoll that we have to pass to the west, further throwing us out. We contact the emergency services, but all they can do is rescue the people and I'm not giving up our home! While I'm doing some research on islands to the west we're notified that a fishing boat is coming out to give us a tow! Will wonders never cease – here we are, nine miles from Papeete with no wind, and somebody is heading out to help! A couple of hours later we are nestled into Marina de Papeete, safe and sound.

Safe in Papeete

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SOUTH GEORGIA – The Windiest Place on Earth?

Rev Bob Shepton

(*Bob has been* Flying Fish*'s most prolific contributor over the past 28 years, though usually sailing his Westerly Discus* Dodo's Delight. *Further details about* Novara*, which features in this article, will be found in the introduction to* High and Dry in Antarctica*, on page 20 of this issue.*

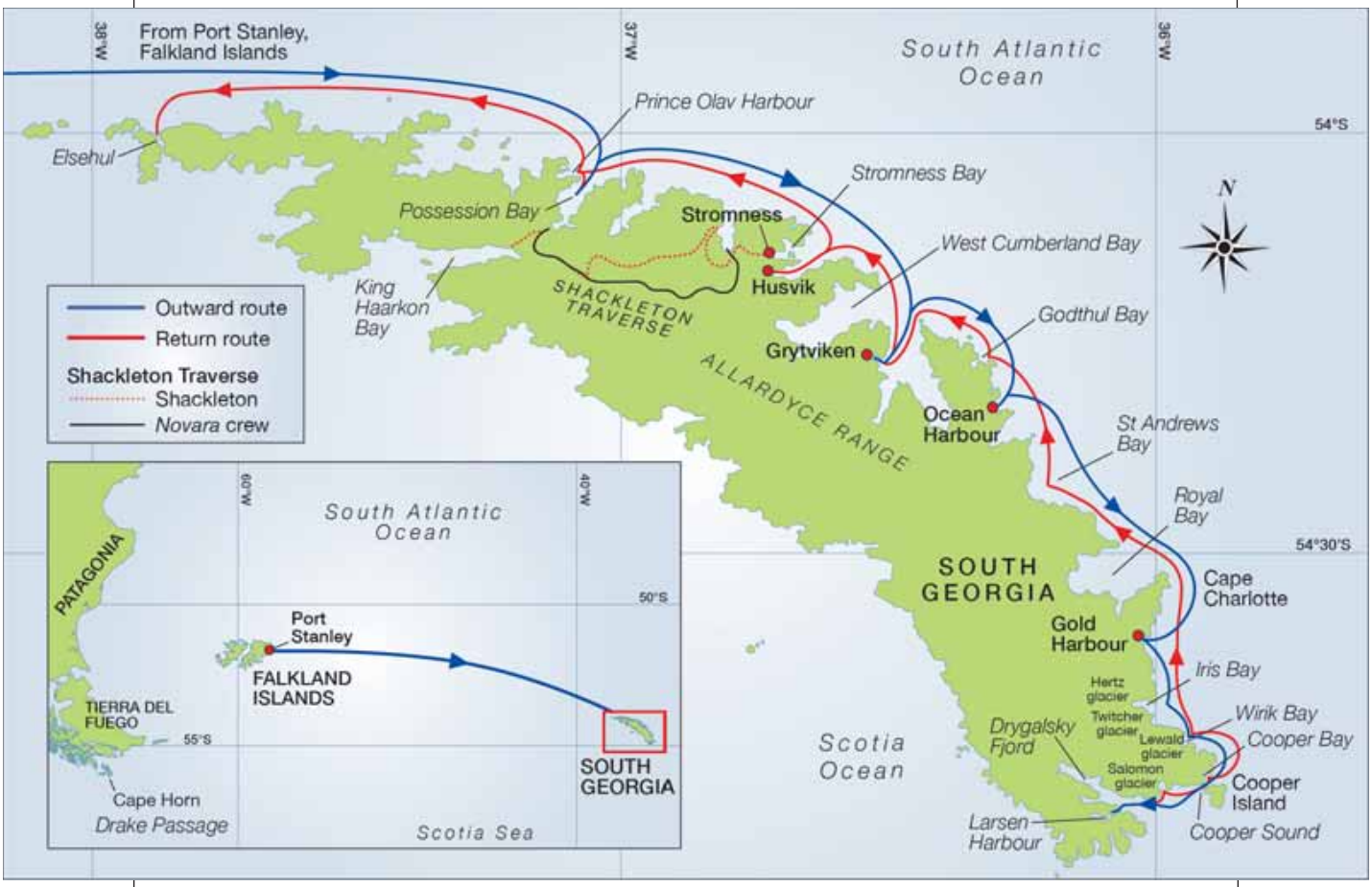
For any feelings of déjà vu, blame the March 2018 Newsletter *which carried a much-abbreviated account of this voyage. Photos are by the author except where credited.*)

South Georgia – the windiest place on earth? At the very least it tried hard to qualify for such a title. And it was cold, with or without the wind chill factor.

For me it all started in Baffin when the crew of *Novara* visited *Dodo's Delight* in 2014 (see *Flying Fish* 2015/1). Somehow a plan to visit South Georgia came up ... 'Oh I would be up for that'. I was kindly included. The flight to the Falklands where *Novara* had wintered proved arduous and expensive, but by 2nd September 2017 we had all assembled on board, ready for the passage to South Georgia now it was the Antarctic spring.

There were seven of us, including Steve the owner and skipper – more than sailing the boat required, but South Georgia is a remote and attractive proposition to those who like challenge. We were a diverse crew, English, Scottish, Norwegian, Spanish, but we gelled well together. The skipper slept on the floor, contending (or was that pretending?) that he enjoyed it. I tried not to feel guilty as I was in his usual bunk! The food cooked by those who claimed cooking skills was second to none, and *Novara* lived up to her reputation as the 'luxury liner', earned in Baffin with unlimited supplies of wine. 'More red wine' had become an iconic phrase from the evening aboard *Novara* in the film of our 2014 expedition. But I did get into trouble for lacing my coffee with

Novara in Port Stanley before sailing


From Port Stanley,
Falkland Islands
38°W
37°W
36°W
South Atlantic
Ocean
54°S
Prince Olav Harbour
Elsehul
Possession Bay
Stromness
Stromness Bay
West Cumberland Bay
King
Haarkon
Bay
SHACKLETON
TRAVERSE
Husvik
Godthul Bay
Grytviken
ALLARDYCE RANGE
Ocean
Harbour
St Andrews
Bay
Royal
Bay
54°30'S
SOUTH
GEORGIA
Cape
Charlotte
Gold
Harbour
Iris Bay
Hertz
glacier
Twitcher
glacier
Wirik Bay
Cooper Bay
Drygalsky
Fjord
Lewald
glacier
Salomon
glacier
Cooper
Island
Cooper Sound
Larsen
Harbour
Scotia
Ocean
Outward route
Return route
Shackleton Traverse
Shackleton
Novara crew
N
60°W
40°W
South Atlantic
Ocean
50°S
PATAGONIA
Port
Stanley
FALKLAND
ISLANDS
TIERRA DEL
FUEGO
55°S
SOUTH
GEORGIA
Cape Horn
Drake Passage
Scotia Sea

The systems are not as complicated as they look

the double cream I found in the 'fridge!

There seemed a strange anomaly amongst the crew, as I was used to my previous crews, even the schoolboys, reading books for shut-off. This crew just kept on chatting amongst themselves late into the night and never seemed to read books. But I discovered later they were reading on their phones and tablets. So much for old age!

The boat herself is almost unique. *Novara* is a 60ft aluminium schooner with an aero rig, the mast and booms revolving as one unit. There are only three such schooners in the world, plus one or two single-masted versions. One or two of the rigs are immense, but *Novara*'s was not so extreme. To the uninitiated like me it still seemed heavy and complex at first sight, though there are electric winches on each mast for setting and reefing the roller headsails on the forward ends of the booms and the mainsails on the after ends, and it did not take long to get a working knowledge of how to raise and lower and reef. There were plenty of possible sail combinations on the two masts, and for balancing them out, though this could take quite a time, and it proved a powerful rig.

Running before under the foremast sails on the way to South Georgia

Serious sailing. Photo Bjorn Riis-Johanessenn

The skipper at the command post. Photo Bjorn Riis-Johanessenn

The passage to South Georgia can only be described as exceptional. We were crossing the Scotia Sea at the east end of Drake Passage, possibly the stormiest sea in the world. Our passage was positively benign, force 4–5 occasionally 6 from the northwest giving a broad reach most of the way. On the penultimate day the wind came around astern – "the worst point of sailing on this boat", as Steve said – with the sails on the foremast booms blanketed by those aft. She rolled even more, but we put into Grytviken five days and eight hours from Stanley, having also diverted down Possession Bay to inspect it as a possible alternative start to the Shackleton Traverse.

Novara alongside the jetty at Grytviken

The iconic Petrel, an abandoned whaler

South Georgia is a World Heritage Site and we had been rather fearful of the rules and regulations in place to safeguard the island's pristine eco-systems. The Government Officer came aboard and gave an efficient, comprehensive and effective resumé of the regulations whilst remaining completely welcoming. In fact Paula and the scientists at the British Antarctic Survey base could not have been more welcoming – we remained at Grytviken for a week waiting for weather and they had us up to King Edward Point for drinks and even the occasional meal. I did have to give a couple of slide shows of past expeditions as a thank you, though I had never been paid in spare jars of marmalade before!

Grytviken is a special place. It is the only old whaling station where you can wander freely and look around, the others being in dangerous states of decline. The museum and shed with the James Caird replica which they opened for us, and the handsome church built originally from prefabricated parts, were of special interest. They opened the Post Office and we did the tourist thing, buying postcards with South Georgia stamps even though we were going to post them later in the Falklands, otherwise they would not arrive

A replica of the James Caird, in which Shackleto's party made their incredible voyage from Elephant Island

Paying my respects to the great man

for over a month. We went for training walks including some ski touring where possible, and sorted our gear in preparation. A great week.

From Grytviken we went harbour hopping down the coast to the southeast. Ocean Harbour was sheltered and fine with an interesting three-masted wreck from whaling days, but there was a lot of kelp, a feature of South Georgia. Gold Harbour was not so fine. We had motored down there with gusts of 65 knots coming out of Royal Bay, and that night we watched our track on the chart-plotter as *Novara* swung at anchor. Suddenly, in a 70 knot gust, she shot backwards on the plotter and Steve and Alan leaped out of the saloon to turn the engine on and stop us dragging further. With help from Terry, they winched the anchor up and re-set it. Steve and Alan slept fitfully in the saloon that night, keeping half an eye on the plotter. It was not the only 70 knot gust but we did manage to stay put.

The next morning proved reasonable and we continued on southeast. Iris Bay for the Hertz glacier was sheer and the Twitcher glacier had receded hugely from where it was depicted on my map of the island, and was just a horrible, huge, serrated icewall falling into the sea. We continued on and I was on the helm as Alan stood amidships and then at the bow giving hand signals as to which way to weave through brash and growlers – on such a large boat it was difficult to see the ice in front from the cockpit way back aft.

An example of the minimal gear they took with them on the Traverse

The whalers' church at Grytviken, built by the whalers from prefabricated sections in 1913

We viewed Wirik from a distance as we passed, and as I was gently approaching on echo-sounder to see whether it was possible to go through a gap between an outlying reef and the mainland the skipper came out and quietly but firmly stated his preference. A skipper's word is law, so we immediately swung radically to port to take the longer but safer way round. Bjorn, using his magic iSailor chart on his tablet ("let's hope they also produce charts for android systems soon") gave courses for the Cooper Island side of the channel, and the skipper was clearly happier to take over himself as we went through the fairly narrow Cooper Sound with rocks on either side to view the Salomon glacier beyond. It offered a comparatively gentle start for a ski tour, but the sea was too rough that day for taking the dinghy in. We looked into Drygalski Fjord but put into Larsen.

Larsen, our furthest south

Larsen was noteworthy for three reasons. First it is almost bomb proof – probably the safest anchorage on South Georgia, or anyhow in the south. Secondly we all went for a dinghy ride to the end of the inlet and discovered some Weddel seals. This is the only colony of Weddel seals on South Georgia, and our contacts at Cambridge were thrilled to hear they were still there, as they are in decline on the island, and that these had produced offspring. We saw two live pups but were saddened also to see two dead ones, one mother trying vainly to revive hers. Thirdly Alan, Terry and Steve took the opportunity in this safe, quiet anchorage to undertake the complex task of joining the 45kg Bruce anchor to the 45kg CQR on their respective bow rollers, with 10m of chain between so they could be laid in series one behind the other, with another 80m of heavy chain laid out from the second one. The first anchor would have to be raised on a separate line, but there was a capstan on the electric anchor winch, as well as a spare winch on the mast. Suffice it to say that henceforth we laid out two anchors every time and it generally worked superbly, however strong the winds.

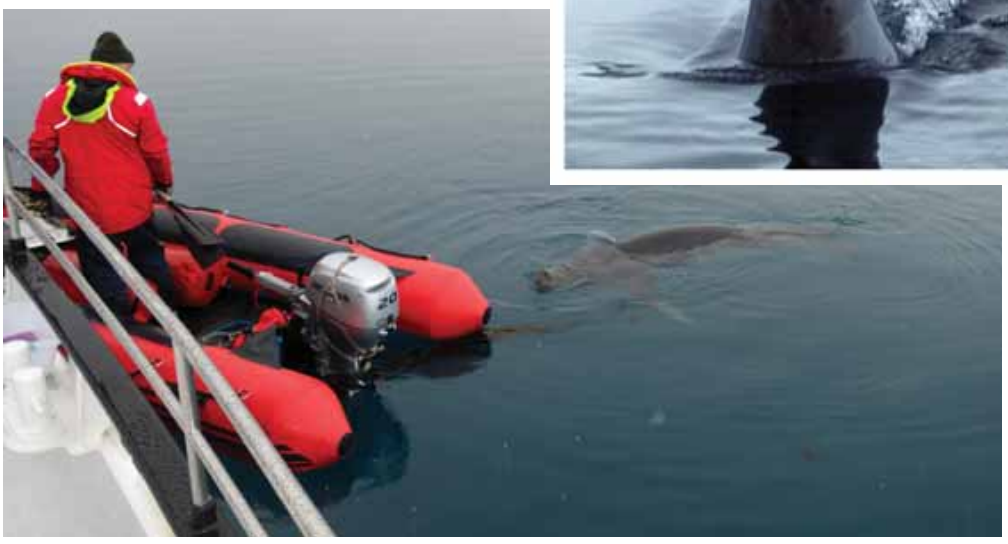
Wirik Bay, another beautiful anchorage

The next day we returned to the Salomon glacier and conditions were much calmer. Bjorn, Dan and Alex duly landed, sorted their gear on the beach, attached skins to their skis, and started up the glacier. Some hours later near the top they found a fairly flat section and started to put up their tent. Bjorn was just saying "It's nice to put up a tent in calm conditions" when whack, a 50–60 knot blast hit them and it turned into an epic, putting up the tent, cutting snow blocks and building a wall to windward, and then all through the night.

Elephant seals at Wirik Bay

Meantime we were also having something of an epic in Coopers Bay. We had laid our anchors and Alan and Terry had fixed two lines ashore when the wind hit us. The big problem was that it became entirely unpredictable – it went round in circles and so, after releasing the lines ashore, did we. I remember the skipper standing at the helm shrugging his shoulders and saying, "So which way do we lay the anchors?". Even though the keel was raised, at one stage the keel scraped over a rock. Eventually we laid them with the bow pointing to the entrance and they

A leopard seal took a liking to the dinghy…



Two mighty objects, Wirik Bay

held, in spite of us only being able to lie to 25m of chain from the second anchor for lack of swinging room.

All this time a leopard seal had been circling round the boat giving every appearance of resenting our invasion of his territory. He really did look a slinky dangerous animal. Ashore there were fur seals, elephant seals and giant petrels. I was continually surprised how big these latter really were.

The next morning we received word via sat phone from the ski-ing team that they were coming down, so moved round to Wirik. They were able to cross over from Salomon to the Lewald glacier which led down satisfactorily to Wirik. We went ashore and admired the elephant seals and gentoo penguins in the morning, and the ski-ing team arrived down safely in the afternoon. Sausages and mash, the ever flowing wine, and Simon and Garfunkel from the speakers made a memorable ending to the day.

The visit next day to St Andrews Bay was another highlight. There were literally thousands upon thousands of king penguins, with a brown mass of chicks corralled together in the background. Elephant seals, fur seals and giant petrels were also part of the mix. There was even a leopard seal – which we noticed had been tagged for research – asleep on the beach. It was a truly incredible assemblage of wildlife, most

King penguins and Novara, St Andrews Bay

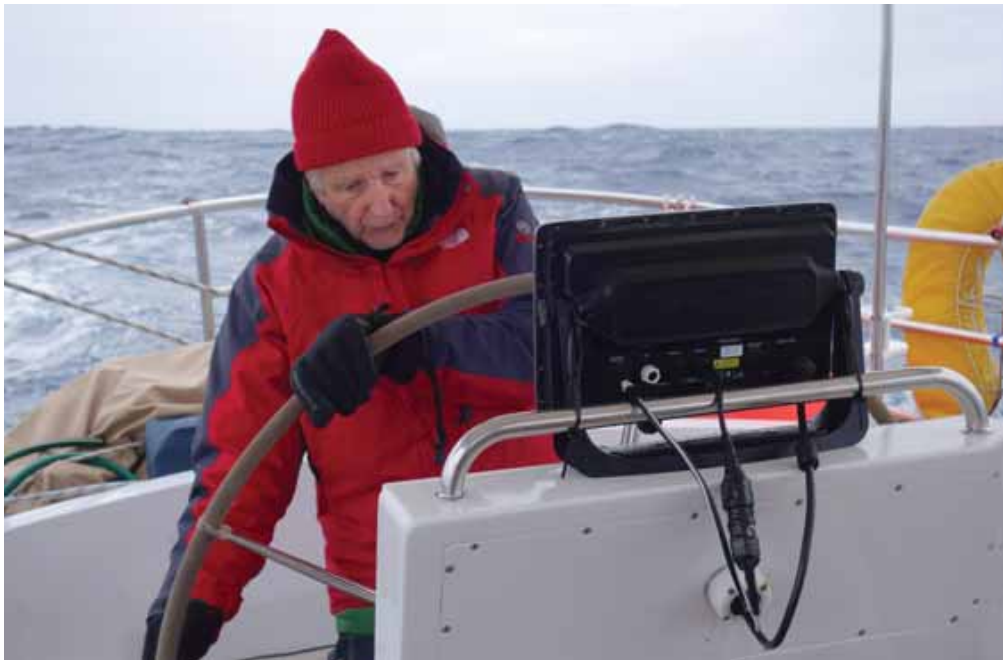
of which paid little attention to us, except for the fur seals which always resent an inadvertent close approach.

We returned to Grytviken via a night in Godthul Bay. We were a little apprehensive that we might be out-staying our welcome, but not a bit of it – Paula and the BAS people were as welcoming as ever. We also met up again with *Pelagic Australis*, with whom we had socialised in Stanley before departure. After they had to leave the BAS jetty we lay outside them at the main jetty. She is a large and massively strong boat, able to take a fair number of clients to South Georgia or the Antarctic.

We eventually moved round to Husvik in Stromness Bay where we saw *Australis* again, at anchor, and then on to Prince Olav Harbour where there was a truly dilapidated whaling station. We had no intention of visiting it, but one has to keep 200m from all these old, disintegrating whaling stations anyhow, other than the better-preserved example in Grytviken. We were ready to start our campaign re the Shackleton Traverse.

I went on a couple of pleasant training day tours but was faced with a difficult decision. I had come with the intention of doing the Traverse, but was it really feasible? First of all the party was reduced from five to three, to save taking two tents and to lessen the amount of work involved building snow block walls for protection – which added stress to me as the slower third man and also weighed out another member – but in the end crucially it was the weather that made the decision for me. Aged 82 and so going more slowly than the rest I anticipated needing three or four days to do the Traverse, but the forecast looked as if it just was not going to give us three or four days of settled weather. I withdrew, with regret but also with some relief that I was not going to have to do the long distances and heights involved on consecutive days without a break. In the end safety, not least of the whole party, and sense had to prevail.

Novara went round to await the Traverse party's arrival down the glacier



Steering was not always easy

All, however, did not go to plan. We got up at 0600 on 1st October to move to Possession Bay and land the ski traverse party. There was a delay as it was still blowing 40 knots, but finally it moderated somewhat and we fetched our anchors, but when we turned the corner it was blowing at least 40–50 knots (the wind instrument had given up) and there was quite a sea running straight up the bay against us. I was on the helm and the chart-plotter shows a zigzag course – with slow engine revs, skipper's orders to prevent slamming, it was impossible to keep the bows from being blown off. We persisted for a while but then came the welcome order to return. "Choose your moment and turn round" ... "I don't think there is a moment, Al, I'm going now". We turned around and made our way back and laid our two anchors down where we'd been before.

It was misty and dull next day but much calmer as we retraced our route down Possession Bay, and by the time we landed the traverse party with all their gear it was like a mill pond. Al, Terry and Dan helped them carry their haul sacks over moraines to the start and returned to the boat. Sometime later the wind began to get up – we rushed to get the anchors up but, sure enough, we were soon experiencing gale-force gusts. It became something of a struggle as the tripping line from the first

Camp 1 on Shackleton's Traverse

The ski party break through a gap in the ridge to get to the next plateau

anchor got caught round the keel which we were now not able to raise. But after a while we got our anchor and made our way back to Prince Olav Harbour.

The ski party of Bjorn, Steve and Alex did very well. They had clag with zero visibility much of the time, constant rain for over a day, and big winds from time to time, but they completed the traverse from Possession Bay to Fortuna in two days plus, leaving the final short trek with no snow over to Stromness. I had undoubtedly made the right decision – there was no way I could have done it that fast.

At noon on 8th October we departed for the passage back to Stanley. It was another bouncy ride against the wind, but we had not gone far when it was discovered that all eight bolts holding the aft mast to the hull had sheared, so we put into Elsehul to effect repairs. Al, Steve and Alex did a brilliant job, but by that time we had received a forecast showing a huge depression marching up Drake Passage and on its way to us. It would have been stupid, maybe dangerous, to head out with that on the way so we put back to Prince Olav Harbour in choppy seas to await developments, and two days later retired back to Grytviken.

Still a long way to go to get to the boat

We were made as welcome as before, and took the opportunity to make a small presentation one evening to Paula who had been such a helpful, welcoming and yet efficient Government Officer. Then we were invited to a birthday party

Return to Grytviken

aboard *Pharos*, the Fisheries Protection vessel which had recently come in, and enjoyed being given a tour of the ship by its skipper. Two yachts had also arrived from the Falklands – *Santa Maria Australis* with a BBC film crew making another Planet Earth-type film, and Thies and Kiki in *Wanderer III*, once owned by Eric and Susan Hiscock, wooden and still with a Haslar windvane system. It took us back a bit.

The return passage to Stanley was horrendous. A sharp short sea and strong wind greeted us as we came out of Grytviken and then we tacked for days against the wind,

We got back to Port Stanley just in time for our flights

Guess who had to rethread the drogue when we got back to Stanley…

never being able to lay the course. There was one day of sunny sailing weather but still the wind was not in our favour, and soon we were lying-to on a drogue for 42 hours in winds reaching at least 45 knots (I heard afterwards it reached 70 mph in Port Stanley). *Pharos* offered help, but we were secure, and later a Hercules checked us out. Water was forced into the engine through the exhaust outlet, and the oil had to be pumped out and changed at least twice before we could proceed, but finally we motor-sailed hard on our course but against the wind for two days or more before the wind finally went round to the southwest to take us into Stanley. Ten days and 1200 miles for the 800 mile rhumb line passage ... another 'Never Again' experience!

So, South Georgia – remote, windy, wild, pristine, with the magnetic attraction of glaciers and snow-covered peaks (a number still waiting to be climbed), and abundant polar wildlife. Unique. Special. But a hard, hard place with little or no let up from the weather, at least while we were there. Or as I remarked one supper time, "I happen to have sailed in every ocean of the world, but I have never come across a place so persistently vicious as South Georgia". The skipper was quick to agree, but neither of us would have missed it for the world – except perhaps for the return passage ...

I am very grateful to The North Face, and especially to Patagonia, for their support.

S *  * S

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

King James Bible, Psalm 139 verses 9 & 10

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THE END OF THE AFFAIR
Linda Crew-Gee

(*Linda continues the tale of her Buzzards Bay 14, Francis H, begun in* Flying Fish 2018/1...)

The main reason for making a circular tour of French Polynesia with Pete was to get back and sail *Francis*. Otherwise we could have sailed *Oryx* off somewhere else rather than returning to New Zealand after 6600 miles – but *Francis* was there waiting for me. I had bought her because she was irresistibly sweet and beautiful. I was in search of a new life and so was she. Once rigged and ready I had wanted to sail her, but instead I left her in a mud berth in Stillwater for six months and sailed to Polynesia with Pete. To her, it did not look like the new lease of life I had promised her. I had intended when I eventually got back to sail her around Hauraki Gulf slowly and leisurely and get to know her. Instead I was in a hurry to get her to the Bay of Islands for the Tall Ships Regatta in January 2018 to show her off!

On our return to NZ I found *Francis* safe in her mud berth, bone dry and looking as pretty as ever. Soon we had kitted her out in all her finery and set off for the long sail to the Bay of Islands, 130 miles to the north. Suitable anchorages are far apart, weather forecasts are only forecasts, strong changeable winds are the norm, and with no VHF, GPS or mobile phone signal I felt I was about to embark on one adventure too many that year. I was not wrong.

I could never have imagined how magical it would feel to be able to almost touch the dolphins swimming alongside, or how enthralling it would be to glide through

Awaiting my return in Stillwater

Linda at the helm

flocks of hundreds of undisturbed birds. When a whale's head surfaced only 100m from us, facing us and broaching with a big splash, my imagination went wild. Its head was much bigger than *Francis*'s bow and I imagined its open jaws swallowing us. The tail, when it eventually surfaced, was even more scary – the whale was at least three times the size of the boat.

On her second day on the open sea *Francis* showed how much she was loving it. We were making slow progress in the early morning breeze, absorbing the beauty of the coastline. I was on the tiller, half a mile off Elisabeth Reef, when the rudder came off, breaking the tiller as well. What a shock to see it suddenly floating astern! Luckily I managed to grab onto it, and Pete jumped out of the cabin to rescue it. Needless to say I was worried, watching us drift towards the reef while Pete hung over the stern struggling to put the rudder back on, but he kept his cool while I was thinking of waving for rescue!

Turning in early and exhausted we slept well in her cramped cabin that night.* The weather forecast was not ideal, but our most committing leg was probably doable so we decided to go for it and at crack of dawn sailed out of a well-sheltered Whangamumu Bay. The wind was blowing hard – southwest force 5–6 – and the sea rough. We already had two reefs in before we had properly set off, and I was wondering if we should turn back. I sensed trouble ahead and was apprehensive. When the wind increased in the afternoon it required the engine to make any progress at all, and we sailed, motored and motor-sailed. We tried it all but progress was slow. With the wind on the nose and short waves *Francis* was like a toddler trying to climb a staircase. She was stopped in her tracks with every wave, but she did not give up. She was sturdy, buoyant and surprisingly dry.

* Buzzards Bay 14s have a 14ft waterline but are more than 17ft overall.

Bream Island, off Bream Head, Whangarei

By the end of the day we had made it to Oke Bay anchorage. To quote Pete: "This was some sail – a memorable sail, and not an enjoyable one" – so even by that old salt's standards it was quite something. As for me, I was ready to hail any tour boat that passed by, asking for a tow for my tiny boat which had struggled for hours to make little progress in a very rough seas. Or at least to take me away – I wanted to be out of this! Then a shocking thought crossed my mind: how nice it would be to be sitting in an office looking at a computer screen. I was stunned. It was obvious that I was not enjoying the experience, and that I did not appreciate the magic of wild seas, white wave crests, silvery seaspray, the shining sea surface, the sudden gusts, the birds... When Pete noticed that I was not my usual happy self and asked me how I felt, I only put a finger across my lips. I needed to understand what was going on inside me, and eventually did. It was a very interesting discovery.

We had put *Francis* and ourselves through our paces. I'm not sure who fared best in the 11 hours of hell rounding Cape Brett in a tiny boat, horrible seas and force 5–6 headwinds. It was good to see what *Francis* could take and make – it seemed she could take a lot but could make but a little. When Pete declared that we wouldn't be taking her across the Tasman Sea I was disappointed but I'm sure *Francis* sighed with relief, as I did. It wasn't exactly the maiden voyage we had envisaged and not surprisingly I have few pictures.

Fraser Rocks, north of Russell in the Bay of Islands

Sailing with other junks

The following day we entered the Bay of Islands. It was sheer joy to be on her helm, sailing in smooth waters and moderate winds along one of the most beautiful coastlines in the world. This was a perfect environment for a beautiful little boat. On her name plate it is written: *Francis H – Bay of Islands*. We had brought her back to where she belonged. I was elated.

As we left her at anchor in Opua, surrounded by big yachts, she looked what she is – a perfectly-formed, cute, tiny boat. Chris, the very first person to come aboard in the Bay, became her suitor. I watched him falling under her spell while he was admiring her in deep silence, and sensed his heart flying towards her in the same way mine had when I first saw her – *Francis* had seduced her next owner.

I was not surprised when he said, "She's so cute. If you ever want to sell her I'll buy her. Ask me first". So I did. I took a month to part with *Francis*, sailing her in the Bay and just enjoying being aboard her. We sailed with Chris to Kerikeri and Murray Reid, her builder 40 years earlier, came to see her at the Stone Wharf where she had first been launched. His toddler boat was, by this time, a well-weathered lady of the sea.

Francis in Kerikeriv

I hope Chris has as much fun with her as I did during our brief encounter. It was a great relief to know she would be continuing her life on the waves in the ownership of a most accomplished sailor. I was proud of her, and am grateful to everyone who helped me accomplish my mission of giving her a new lease of life. Fair winds and smooth seas, little mermaid!

A ship is floating in the harbour now,
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's brow;
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,
No keel has ever ploughed that path before;
The halcyons brood around the formless isles;
The treacherous ocean has forsworn its wiles;
The merry mariners are bold and free:
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Epipsychidion*

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CÉRÈS THROUGH THE RUSSIAN INLAND WATERWAYS, Part 2

Thierry J-L Courvoisier

(*In July 2016* Cérès *and her crew sailed from Helsinki to St Petersburg, before continuing eastward through the Russian inner waterways with the intention of reaching Tromsø by early September.* Flying Fish 2018/1 *left them at Voznesenye on the shores of Lake Onega...*
Follow their movements on the chartlet on page 84.)

We enjoyed a peaceful night in Voznesenye alongside a half-stranded steel barge. The following day, 31st July, was a beautiful day to sail north along the lake's western shore, with southwest force 4–6 on flat waters and bright sunshine. We set off early for the long sail to Petrozavodsk, but it proved too far for a single day and the shore along which we sailed was devoid of human settlements and covered by a thick forest. We spotted a well-protected cove, however, where we could anchor for the night. It was large, calm and almost circular, but rather shallow so we had to stay in the middle. The forest was everywhere, except for a few houses on the northern strand. One other ship was at anchor in the bay, soon joined by a flotilla of smaller boats equipped with fishing gear that appeared from nowhere when the sun went down. As elsewhere on these waters, none of them came anywhere near us or made any sign of even seeing us. The sun set in glorious colours, the wind died completely, the forest was quiet and not a sound was heard.

We reached Petrozavodsk the following day. Although it is the departure point from which boats and hydrofoils carry tourists to Kizhi, an important site we were to visit a few days later, there is no harbour. Vladimir* had told us to tie up at a naval

Cérès in Voznesenye

Surrounded by forest on the western shore of Lake Onega

museum run by Victor Leonidovich Dmitriev. We had also been warned that, while the approach to the museum pier is in relatively deep water, there are underwater obstructions which are neither visible nor marked in any way. I was therefore rather nervous while approaching, until our phone call to Victor was answered and a man – who turned out to be Victor – appeared at the end of the quay and started to make signs indicating the course to follow towards the pier while avoiding the obstructions, somewhat like airport staff guiding docking planes. This was successful and we arrived without incident.

The 20m long wooden pier was poorly protected from the lake by a few rusting wrecks. A rather odd ship was moored on the other side – it reminded us of a galleon from times past: very high on the water, short and broad, with two masts and a long bowsprit. In some ways the presence of such a ship was not a complete surprise in a museum. More surprising was the fact that she looked ready to sail. Indeed a man

* Vladimir Ivankiv, Port Officer Representative for St Petersburg and an essential contact for any cruiser hoping to traverse the Russian waterways – see page 88.

Wrecks protecting the museum pier

came on deck and told us that they were preparing to leave the next day for Kizhi, where a sailing school was about to open. He was very helpful, and drove me and some jerry cans to the nearest fuel station so we could fill our tank. We also took our empty gas bottles for filling at a nearby gas plant, where the smell of gas was pervasive and somewhat worrisome. At first the staff were unsure about our request, but eventually they were convinced and refilled the bottles. Getting water, which we also needed, was more difficult and impossible anywhere near the pier and museum. Tap water was, we were told, not potable even when boiled!

Our new friend told us that he had been among the first crew to circumnavigate the Scandinavian peninsula. When the Belomorkanal, which we would sail along a few days later, was opened to civilian navigation in the early 1990s as a consequence of Perestroika, he had set sail on a boat built by a group of enthusiasts from the region. They sailed north, reached the White Sea through the canal, sailed the Barents Sea to North Cape, then southwest along the Norwegian coast, into the Baltic Sea to St Petersburg, up the Neva River to Lake Ladoga, and back home along the Svir River.

Petrozavodsk is a medium-sized city of some 260,000 inhabitants, the capital of Russia's Republic of Karelia, and a hub for tourists travelling to Kizhi. There is an interesting museum in the centre of the city, where one learns about the geography and history of Karelia, a large region that spans the northwest of the Russian Federation and the eastern part of Finland. One reads there that the city was founded and prospered in the 18th century following a decision by Peter the Great to establish an arms and ammunition factory. Hence the name of the city – 'the factory of Peter' in Russian. Its location was chosen

The maritime museum pier in Petrozavodsk

Lenin is still in good shape in Petrozavodsk

as being safe from attack from the Baltic Sea, upstream to facilitate transport to St Petersburg, and within easy reach of iron ore and coal, the main materials to manufacture weaponry. The history recounted by the museum terminates at the end of the 19th century, the events of the last 100 years being conspicuously absent and replaced by rather uninteresting folklore. It is as if the recent history of that region is still too fresh and the wounds too raw for the population to have come to terms with it.

Opposite the city museum is a pleasant building hosting some Ministry, in front of which a lorry carrying a water cistern was stationed. Women who were obviously secretaries and administrative staff in the Ministry emerged from their offices in high heels and tight dresses to fill tea kettles at the cistern. Drinking water was also available in the supermarkets, however, in 5 or 8 litre bottles. We filled the boot of a taxi with them, and repeated this wherever possible during the following weeks to keep our water tanks topped up.

There were two big and aggressive dogs on the museum premises where we were moored. Victor warned us that although they were harmless while he was around, they would attack and could kill somebody at night after he had left. We were therefore told to not leave our boat under any circumstances between evening and morning.

When Victor offered to show us around the museum we expected a rather dusty collection of possibly rather

Collecting drinking water in front of the Ministry

uninteresting local tools and objects. Victor guided us to a large wooden platform half floating and half ashore, where it had been washed up by a storm, which reinforced my feeling that, were the weather to turn bad, *Cérès* would be neither protected nor safe. The interior of the wooden shed that stood on the half-stranded barge was indeed dusty, and showed old photographs on the walls. The story these objects told was, however, most astonishing. The first photograph we were shown depicted Victor, some years younger, forcefully handling the massive tiller of a wooden ship. The picture had been taken, he told us, on another home-built boat they had sailed to Svalbard. It had an open deck, no engine, but oars, and their only communication equipment was an old hand-powered radio. So intense was the thirst for discovery among the people on this lake shore that, as soon as it became possible in the 1990s they sailed by all possible means out into the world, and to the most hostile waters.

A younger Victor at the tiller en route to Svalbard

On their way back from Svalbard the group led by Victor grew somewhat mystic and decided to pursue their efforts towards openness and love between peoples, and therefore to sail to Israel in order to visit Jerusalem. For this adventure they built three boats, this time in the Viking style, each equipped with a single mast and square-sail. Once ready they organised a baptism ceremony for their ships in which church dignitaries and Boris Yeltsin* took part. They then sailed off, south this time, to the Volga, Moscow, the Black Sea, Turkey, and east to the end of the Mediterranean Sea. After completing their pilgrimage to Jerusalem they turned west, and sailed all the way to the Atlantic. There the project seems to have run into difficulties. Ukraine had become independent of Russia, and the Ukrainian members of the team claimed their independence from the project. They sold their boat leaving the others to struggle back to Russia, which they did without visas or paperwork.

Finally we were shown the next boat under construction, which looked somewhat like an 18th century ship. The hull was there in rough planks but the inside structures were barely started. It was the beginning of August, and their plan was to leave in October to sail around the globe, carried by the same ideals of world love and peace. In comparison with the adventures of our hosts in Petrozavodsk, our passages on a solid, modern yacht equipped with charts, electronics and winches gave the impression of being an amiable Sunday trip on a quiet pond. Our exchanges were concluded by the signing of mutual books, some Swiss wine and vodka, and flags and pictures.

* Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin was the first President of the Russian Federation, serving from 1991 to 1999.

Kizhi church in the evening light

The following morning Victor appeared as we set off and waved us again through the unseen rocks and obstacles to the open waters of the lake. We crossed its northern part heading eastward, before entering a maze of long islands all oriented north-south between which a well-marked channel helped us find our way to Kizhi.

The main building in Kizhi is a large wooden church, which dominates the shore of a strait between two islands. There is a quay for the numerous visiting tourist boats and hydrofoils, and a small pier for private boats where we were expected to dock, but since there was not enough water for our draught we dropped anchor off the church. The weather was calm and warm, which encouraged all the crew to take a dip and spare the shower water. Swimming next to *Cérès* beneath this massive wooden church on a hot afternoon in the high latitudes of western Russia was an unexpected and very enjoyable experience.

As well as the massive church there are a number of old Karelian buildings which have been transported, rebuilt and put on display for visitors. A visit had been organised for us and was conducted by a young lady, Anna, with whom it was a pleasure to interact for some hours on that day and the next, while touring the island on rented bicycles. The nautical school opening took place while we were there. The style reminded me of scouting decades ago, although some nervousness could be felt, caused by a fatal accident in a similar camp some weeks earlier in another region of Russia.

Although some of us would have liked to stay longer, the long voyage ahead of us – which included rounding the northernmost coasts of our continent rather late in the season – encouraged us to depart for Povenets and the southern end of the Belomorkanal. This was a 12 hour sail, at first among the islands north of Kizhi, then up the long, wide arm of Lake Onega. The day began with pleasant, quiet weather and ended with a fresh, humid and cool southwesterly breeze.

Cérès alongside an old patrol boat in Povenets

Povenets is a poorly sheltered harbour open to the south, where we expected to find a long stone quay. Our contact there should have been Konstantin, the maritime security officer for the lake and the Belomorkanal, another person forewarned of our arrival by Vladimir. Konstantin was not available, however, so had provided the name of another person to call. That person was no longer in charge and had redirected us to Dimitri and Misha, who expected us but seemed to have little or no understanding of nautical practices. The quay was busy with a cargo ship being unloaded of gravel by a floating crane, and though there was room for us against the high stone quay the swell would have made it uncomfortable to say the least. We were therefore redirected alongside an old patrol ship in a somewhat quieter spot, but only 1·5m from a rusting, half-sunken wreck. We secured there after having carefully hand-sounded to ensure the grey-brown water did not hide some pernicious obstacle and after an old man who seemed to have some responsibility for the patrol ship had removed his fishing gear.

Once confident that *Cérès* would be reasonably safe for the length of our stay we were given a form by Dimitri, who requested payment for staying there and assured us that Konstantin would be back the next day to tell us all about the Belomorkanal.

We also asked him if it would be possible to get a taxi the following day to visit the surroundings – walking around the harbour led us to a few housing blocks a few hundred metres away, but not much more. Misha appeared in the late morning to tell us that no taxi driver was willing to drive us around but that he would do it himself, for which we were grateful as we wanted to visit Sandarmoh, where thousands of prisoners had been shot in the late 1930s. At that time prisoners from the various camps in the north of Russia were regularly shipped in – for example, from the Solovki islands to the mainland – assembled in the evening, robbed of all their clothing, transported by lorry to Sandarmoh and shot in front of open graves. They were mostly young men, some convinced almost to the end of the virtues of the Bolshevik system and thinking that they were victims of judicial errors in an otherwise benevolent system. One such story may be read in *Stalin's Meteorologist* by Olivier Rolin.

Sandarmoh is now a forest, in which many trees bear photographs of victims. The Soviet archives had been open for some time by the mid 1990s, allowing historians to locate Sandarmoh and to find the names of at least 6000 victims, now listed in a blue binder in a small chapel on the site. The forest floor is uneven, testifying to the incredibly large number of anonymous collective graves in the area. The forest is young, possibly dating from the period of Perestroika when the significance of the area was recognised. The photographs show young, bright faces – people who were prevented from contributing to the emerging society that many of them had welcomed. A few monuments have been erected by communities, the Jews and the Poles for example, to commemorate 'their' victims. Modern Russians resent these, because they suggest

Sandarmoh forest, where thousands of prisoners were shot in 1937 and 1938

that Stalin's purges were aimed at identifiable communities, whereas we were told on several occasions that the police and political actions had not differentiated between the origins or religions of the victims. Erecting these monuments now seems to be used as a political message, fostering tensions between modern Russia and the communities for whom the monuments stand rather than remembering the suffering of a whole people. We saw very few people on the site, which is barely indicated from the road. The archives were opened and the memory awakened some 20 years ago, but the book has closed again, with the site left to its quiet sadness.

In the meantime Konstantin was expected to arrive in the evening, and our guide organised a barbecue to take place on the quay in the wind and rain. Misha explained that he, Dimitri and another associate rent the harbour facilities from the State for the equivalent of some €30 per month, and may organise whatever activities they deem appropriate and financially rewarding. Hence the gravel unloading and their careful counting of the lorries that came and went. He told us of bold plans to build better protection for the harbour and to dredge it to depths able to host yachts – plans that seemed wildly over-ambitious for the handful of boats that pass by every year, although the berthing fee they charged us amounted to not far from their monthly rent of the quay and facilities, of which there were none.

Late that night, after several hours spent standing in the cold drinking beer and eating grilled chicken, Konstantin finally arrived. We saw a massive, powerful man emerge between the headlamps of a large car to bring more food and vodka. The fire was reanimated and the evening went on for several more hours. A rendezvous was finally agreed for the next morning so that we could obtain the instructions we needed to sail the canal.

This done, in the morning Konstantin insisted on taking us to visit nearby Medvezhyegorsk, with its train station and forts overlooking the lake built by Finnish prisoners in the 1940s. Following this we could not leave before trying Konstantin's *bagna*, the Russian equivalent of a sauna, in his home. This involved not only fire and steam but also large quantities of vodka. During a long afternoon and evening we learned, among many other things, that the worries of the Russian people deal much more with local considerations like water quality and sewage than with the importance of Russia on the world stage, that the activities undertaken in the harbour do not lead to any significant development for the region, and that the lake is safer when the old patrol boat alongside which we were moored stays at the quay. There was enough time also to meet the officer responsible for other aspects of regional security before hiring a taxi back to *Cérès* in the middle of the night.

Next morning we were free to leave Povenets for the first lock, just a couple of nautical miles away.

> There is little man has made that approaches anything in nature, but a sailing ship does. There is not much man has made that calls to all the best in him, but a sailing ship does.
>
> Allan Villiers

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TRAWLER TRASH IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

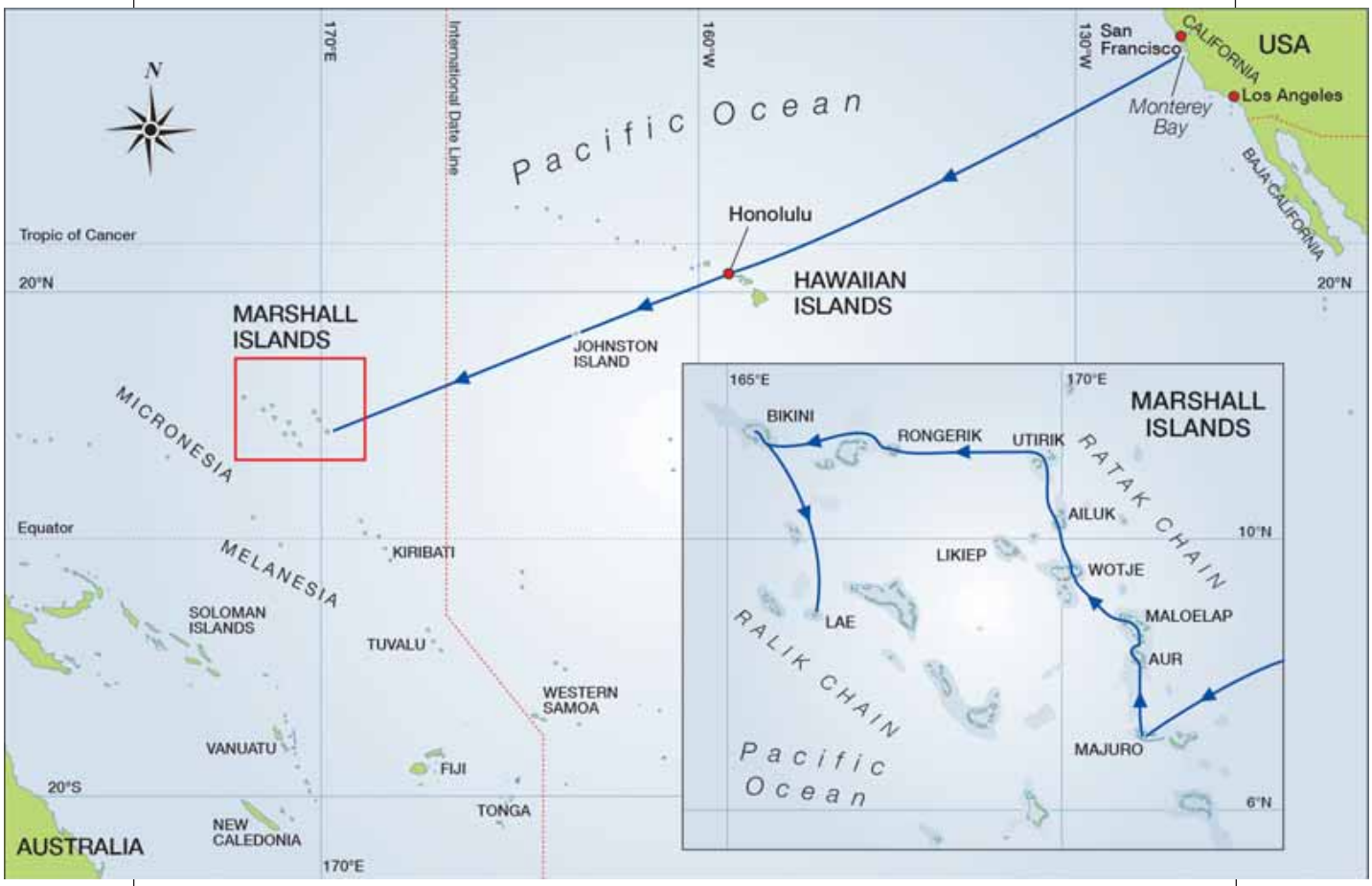
Janice Fennymore-White

(*Janice and Andrew received the 2017 Vasey Vase for their extensive Arctic voyaging over the previous four years, which followed eight years spent building their aluminium Van de Stadt Samoa 48,* Destiny. *Visit www.sailblogs.com/member/destinyatsea for the full story.*)

The best laid plans can sometimes go astray, and ours to over-winter aboard *Destiny* in Sisimiut, West Greenland, hit the pan in November 2017 when Greenland's former masters the Danes declined to extend our visas. Greenland is independent, is not part of the EU or Schengen and the Greenlanders were happy for us to stay, but their immigration policy is still handled by Denmark. Despite lots of research and planning we had to leave, so *Destiny* was hauled out at Anguungaquaq shipyard in Sisimiut. We spent a busy three days draining down all the systems in preparation for –30°C winter temperatures, and removed all susceptible bottles and tins as well as cleaning products. We left *Destiny* on 2nd November.

Destiny ashore in ice-locked Sisimiut, 21st March 2018

Once we knew that we could not fulfil our winter ambition we posted that we were available to crew, preferably in warmer waters, on the OCC website's 'crew wanted' forum. Within a week we had two offers. First to contact us was Bud on MV *Reel Dreams*, who needed crew to get his Kadey Krogen 58, a trawler-style motor vessel, from Monterey Bay, California to the Marshall Islands. Bud, his wife Marilyn, sister-in-law Janice and Yorkshire Terrier Bubba are on a three-year adventure. Marilyn had surgery in November, however, and needed recovery time, so Bud wanted crew to get the boat to Majuro where Marilyn and Janice would rejoin him. The trip covered the three months that Andy and I needed to be away, so a few e-mails and phone calls later we agreed to undertake the challenge.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170°E
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Pacific Ocean
San Francisco
CALIFORNIA
USA
Los Angeles
Monterey Bay
BAJA CALIFORNIA
Honolulu
Tropic of Cancer
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HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
MARSHALL ISLANDS
JOHNSTON ISLAND
MICRONESIA
Equator
MELANESIA
KIRIBATI
SOLOMAN ISLANDS
TUVALU
WESTERN SAMOA
VANUATU
FIJI
20°S
TONGA
NEW CALEDONIA
AUSTRALIA
165°E
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BIKINI
RONGERIK
UTIRIK
RATAK CHAIN
AILUK
10°N
LIKIEP
WOTJE
MALOELAP
AUR
LAE
RALIK CHAIN
MAJURO
Pacific Ocean
6°N

We joined Bud, Marilyn and Bubba on 27th November at Monterey Bay. After a few days' familiarisation with the motor boat and some final provisioning, Bud, Bubba, Andy and I departed for Honolulu on 1st December. Andy and I do get seasick (particularly me), but on *Destiny* I prepare bottled meals and tubs of ginger cookies for at least a week, by which time I can stop my tablets and function normally. Bud does not get seasick, and we left Monterey Bay into a forecast heavy swell which continued for many days. As we departed we had dolphins playing around the bow, keenly watched by Bubba. After that we saw a few flying fish and a few boobies, but for 2000 miles the Pacific Ocean was barren. Bud had told us he averaged 6 knots, but the reality was more like 4 to 4·5 knots on this particular leg, even seeing 3·5 knots. With that wind speed and direction we would have been doing 7+ knots in our 'blow boat' (Bud's term for sailing yachts). Trawler Trash is a term used by one of Bud's friends for his motor boat and which now proudly appears on his nav seat cover.

Bud uses weather forecaster Chris Parker, who kept us apprised of the weather fronts and advised a 200 mile diversion to the south to avoid some particularly rough weather. This meant fuel forecasting reduced our rpm on the two engines to ensure we had a contingency reserve to get to Honolulu. *Reel Dreams* has a very different motion to *Destiny* and I did not get rid of my seasickness – despite trying without tablets for a few days I had to resume taking them until we reached Honolulu on 22nd December. Bud was good, doing most of the cooking on passage, so I took over the galley once we were in harbour and, it being Christmas, we made pastry and mincemeat and produced a few trays of mince pies! Hawaii Yacht Club welcomed us into their midst late evening with a celebratory beer in the bar.

Honolulu gave Bud an opportunity to catch up with his cousin Wayne, whom he had not met for thirty years. Wayne kindly showed us round the island and invited us to his house to meet his lovely family on Christmas Eve. We joined the Hawaii Yacht Club festive celebrations, and delighted in watching their parade of illuminated boats – Father Christmas, Rudolfs and palm trees! Andy and I also took time to buy some warm weather clothes (having come from the Arctic) and lightweight wetsuits for snorkelling.

MV Reel Dreams

Honolulu, Hawaii

With a better forecast we set out for the Marshall Islands on 30th December. I tried going 'cold turkey' by not taking any seasickness tablets, but after four days I started vomiting blood, so it was a relief that the tablets (Postafen – Meclizine hydrochloride) instantly settled everything down and the next 2000 miles were better than the previous. We had to stop at Johnston Island, where the Americans destroyed most of their chemical and biological weapons, to do an alternator change, the second on the Hawaii leg. You are not allowed to go ashore and are supposed to get permission from the American Coast Guard even to anchor, but the mechanical emergency meant we had not done this. There is a skeleton crew ashore and someone radioed us, taking all our details.

Since leaving Monterey the temperature had gradually been rising – layers of clothing were removed, trousers swapped for shorts, and shoes for bare feet. We had several time changes and a dateline change, which completely confused our phones and tablets, particularly the calendar app. With more gales forecast we eventually stopped at Majuro, the capital of the Marshall Islands. Marilyn's return to *Reel Dreams* had been delayed due to further surgery, so Bud decided to take the time to visit the atolls that make up the archipelago. On 23rd January we left Majuro for Aur Atoll, heading for the south entrance. Our first warning of the entrance was white breaking waves ahead. It is 30m (100ft) wide and 15m (50ft) deep, and all submerged. It was too late in the day to go ashore and visit the Mayor – it was dark by 1930 so there were 12 hours to dream away, or sweat!

Next morning we went ashore. Bud dropped us off at the steep-to sandy beach, then took the tender out to deeper water, threw an anchor over the side and swam ashore (we continued this process throughout the voyage, necessitated by the 1000kg, 70hp rigid tender). Our first welcome came from kids at the local school right on the beach and we then walked through the village to find the Mayor. After talking with him, his wife gave us some bananas which we exchanged for a bag of coffee. Invited to view

the village, we chatted with locals, seeing their homes and animals – chickens, dogs and pigs. The Pastor invited us in for fresh coconut milk, which was very refreshing, and Bud gave each of his children a lollipop. Taking our leave, we became engaged by another group of school children. Andy and I sat down with them and looked at their spelling books, which contained some quite difficult words. Bubba was a point of interest, but the pet concept was impossible to explain.

At each atoll village we visited, the houses had solar panels with a battery. They also had one or two 1500 gallon (5700 litre) tanks for collecting fresh water from the roofs. It transpired that these were donated by a Taiwanese company and have been gradually distributed throughout the islands, making a big difference to the islanders. The same company gifted a power station on Wotje Atoll. We were lucky to have an island tour of Wotje with Ray of MEC power. Like the other atoll islands, any houses on Wotje without electricity are given solar panels.

Every village had its own subtle personality. They were all laid out with wide paths and most houses were made from plywood with tin roofs and open sided to allow air flow. On some islands, however, people had used old Japanese World War Two buildings for housing. Even the pigs had moved into old bunkers to raise their piglets. The Japanese did not reach Ailuk (pronounced Ilook), which is a beautiful village. It was hit by a typhoon in the 1990s, and all its houses were destroyed and the trees uprooted, though fortunately no one was killed. Since then the locals have been rebuilding with concrete blocks. Shade is very important, and all the villages had huge breadfruit or pandanus trees throughout.

Within the atolls most of the population generally live on one or two islands, with the remainder given over to growing coconut. The islanders also raise some of their pigs on these islands, ready for celebratory slaughter at birthdays, deaths or weddings. On

Janice, Bud and Bubba visiting local women working on handicrafts

Janice having a difficult counting lesson in Marshallese

several islands we walked into the jungle to cross to the windward side. The coconut trees were dense, with lots of dead debris and coconut husks in piles. The locals collect them to process the copra for income, while the women use other parts of the leaves to make beautiful baskets, and wall coverings with cowrie shells woven into the design. The windward beaches all had lots of plastic rubbish. We found some lovely shells, Andy using a stick to roll the shells over to check if they were occupied. You have to be careful, as some of the owners have very powerful stings which can be fatal.

Andy and I spent time snorkelling. The health and formations of coral varied at each stop, with the best where there were no people. With no human predators the fish were more varied, a lot bigger and friendly. We had bought a great reference book with over a thousand excellent photos, and much fun was had trying to identify the individuals we had seen on our return to *Reel Dreams*. There are a lot of interesting wrecks to dive, relics of World War Two, and Bud, Andy and I explored a number of these.

English is taught in the schools and most people speak at least some – definitely better than our Marshallese. Wotje has both an elementary school and a high school, and students from Aur and Maloelap Atolls (about 60 and 87 miles away respectively) come to Wotje High School in August and remain until May when they return to their island homes. There are some 400 students who live-in from ages 12 to 16. Part of Bud's conversation with the Mayor was about the importance of education. It is nicely summed up by the High School's motto: 'Today we Follow, Tomorrow we Lead'.

With each village visit a regular pattern developed. First we visited the Mayor. Next we walked around the village and surrounding area. On most walks we were met by children. We said 'Yokwe', they said 'Hello'. They always asked where we were from, so Andy would produce a stick to draw a world map in the sand and so a geography lesson happened. They loved it. They thought it very funny that we were from England but our boat was in Greenland where it is very cold! (Another impossible concept for the

Janice, the church bells and local kids

children – our boat is in a frozen sea, with continual darkness. It must sound like hell to them.) As each child joined the happy band they would want to shake hands and say 'Hello'. This led on to 'what is your name?' from both sides. They struggled with Janice until Andy drew it in the sand. Each child was then encouraged to draw their own name, from the oldest of 12 years or so down to the youngest of about 4 years. It was very impressive. On one occasion, asking their ages resulted in a difficult (for me) counting session. Meanwhile Bud would wander round looking at the remains of Japanese wartime buildings, followed 'pied piper' style by another band of children interested in Bubba. When we left, Bud would produce some individual boxes of raisins, rather than sweets. These were given to the kids, who shared the contents amongst themselves. At the tender we said 'Yahweh' and they said 'Bye', with giggles all round. What a great time we had with them all!

The atolls are not places to enter at night without good local knowledge, especially as the charts for Ailuk and Utirik were up to a mile out. As well as using the radar and our eyes, Andy had downloaded Google satellite pictures of the atolls and entrances, importing them into Open CPN on Bud's laptop so he could get familiar with another useful tool while Andy was around to help him. Google Earth satellite images are converted to a geo-referenced file so your vessel is shown in true position over the image. Google Earth is 100% correct, unlike many nautical charts for remote areas of the world – we could even make out shallow coral heads this way! (Check out the Venturefarther website and OpenCPN VF plug-in for details of very easy Google Earth KAP file manufacture. We used the same process for East Greenland.)

Visiting Utirik on Sunday morning we heard singing from the church, voices lifted across to our ears on the gathering breeze. As custom dictates we visited Walder, the Mayor, and his family first – his children had drawn 'Welcome' in the sand for us where we came ashore. We were met on the beach by Dallas, who asked if we had any flour, rice or coffee they could buy. Their last supply ship had been in December with the next one not due until March, and they had run out. There had been no fee set for Utirik, so we planned to pay with food. We left a tub of coffee with Dallas at the end of our first trip ashore, as the church were having a gathering to pray for his sick mother. This was the first time we had been directly asked for anything, so the following morning, before we went ashore again to visit Mayor Walder and his wife Laureen, we raided the boat provisions and put together supplies of rice, flour, sugar and coffee, which we offered as our fee to be shared amongst the residents by Mayor Walder. We had a great interaction with Laureen and Walder, going through phrases such as 'how are you?' and the reply. Realising that we would be transferring from the Ratak (eastern/sunrise) atoll chain to the Ralik (western/sunset) chain they gave us the answers for both dialects.

Rongerik was the only uninhabited atoll that we visited, following an eventful, breezy passage with a lumpy sea. Shortly after I relieved Andy at 0600 the starboard alternator bearing started making an awful noise, so we shut off that engine and ran the rest of the passage on the port engine. At about the same time the control panel for the stabilisers failed, so for the rest of our trip we had no stabilisers! Andy and I did a few snorkel trips on Rongerik, being greeted rather too closely on one of them by an inquisitive grey tip reef shark at least 5ft long. While snorkelling we saw nice reefs, signs of recovering coral, glorious fish of all sizes and awesome giant blue clams. Why? No humans, hence the abundant marine life. All four of us explored the fabulous beaches, with the first birds in quantity flying overhead and nesting. We also went jungle bashing to the windward side which resulted in some scratched limbs.

Jungle bashing

Some scale: we are normally based in the Arctic, and *Destiny* waited for us in Greenland. Greenland and the Marshall Islands have very similar populations of approximately 56,000 people, and both cultures have evolved to live off the sea. The land area to house them is very different, however – Greenland has 840,000 square miles, versus 70 square miles for the Marshall Islands (made up of 1225 islands and islets, with only five being single islands and the rest grouped into 29 coral atolls). Although only 70 square miles in land area, the Marshall Islands are scattered across 750,000 square miles of ocean. True atolls, the islands are low and narrow, encircling large central lagoons. Wotje is the widest at less than a mile across, while the highest elevation, at 34 feet (10·2m), is on Likiep. The southern islands have more vegetation than those in the north, which enjoy a drier climate. There are no rocks or hills, just coral and sand. Pandanus is an important food in the northern islands, with breadfruit equally so in the south. Coconut production and fishing are important everywhere.

Bud was very keen to visit Bikini. Within the Marshall Islands all land is owned by someone, land being the most valuable asset the Marshallese have. This was a problem when the USA did nuclear testing on Bikini in the 1950s. (They dropped a total of 66 bombs – 'Bravo' on 1st March 1954 was equivalent to 17 megatons of TNT, or 1300 times the destructive force of the Hiroshima bomb. It was specifically designed to create a vast amount of lethal fallout.) Bikini was evacuated, but Rongelap and Utirik were not and lay directly in the path of the fallout. Subsequently, the locals on several islands had to be relocated due to radiation contamination, but all the best land was already taken. What was left was uninhabitable due to lack of fresh water, or the soil would not support the local food or copra production for earning money.

Without stabilisers the passage to Bikini was uncomfortable. Bud's scratches from jungle bashing had become infected so he started antibiotics, and after a few days was able to go ashore and meet the skeleton Marshallese crew who maintain Bikini, planting vegetables. Every six months American scientists visit to take soil, plant and water samples. The top layer of soil brought in after the bombings is 'clean', but if you dig down a little it is not 'clean', hence the monitoring and observing how Mother Nature tries to heal our human abuses.

Snorkelling from the Reel Dreams tender

Local men on their outrigger, off to collect coconuts from the next island

We were not prepared to go ashore on Bikini, snorkelling instead as the sea water is changed daily! We saw some great fish up close and personal, shoals of various fish happy to follow and swim around us. We had the opportunity to do closer inspections of new coral, some soft corals, tunicates and sponges, but best were the giant clams. We found two next to each other, both a metre wide and with fabulous iridescent lips in hues of blues, browns and greens. Looking into the insides of these ancient clams was absolutely amazing, but they were incredibly sensitive to movement and snapped shut quickly. They must have been very old to have reached this size, but we saw very few smaller clams. We found a green sea turtle tucked under a coral ledge resting, but after hovering over it watching for a while we moved off without having disturbed its 'down time'.

Having called at Aur, Maloelap, Wotje, Ailuk, Utirik, Rongerik and Bikini, our last visit was to Lae Atoll. We tried to anchor off the village, but had to move to the next island, the beach area being more sand than coral outcrops. In the late afternoon we were visited by the Acting Mayor, the first time local people had come out to us. It was good to invite them onboard and offer them soft drinks (the islands are alcohol-free) while Bud and the Acting Mayor chatted. Later that evening a boat came out in the dark to deliver a bag of drinking coconuts for us – delicious cooled in the 'fridge. They remove the husk in a way that leaves a soft plug. When you want to drink from it, you knock the plug off and if a hole is not evident you push a knife through the soft area left by the plug – easy! Before we left the island Tingey, a Mormon Elder, collected a few sprouting coconuts to let us taste *iiu* (pronounced yew). You open the coconut and the whole of the centre has become an edible, soft, tasty white pith. The coconut is a truly versatile fruit!

The locals at Lae Atoll still use traditional sailing outriggers to visit the other islands and collect the coconuts, and it was the first place where we were able to watch the men working on at least four traditional outrigger boats. These are great boats, which sail really well and fast even when laden with six men and sacks of coconuts.

We arrived back in Majuro on 22nd February after an uncomfortable two days' motoring. In 82 days Andy and I had covered 5377 miles on *Reel Dreams* – 973 engine hours, which included replacing five alternators and carrying out three oil and filter changes on each engine, with another on each engine due. The stabilisers had stopped working, with no possibility of an on-passage repair. We looked on our trip as a research opportunity into motor boats, crewing other people's boats and travelling in the Pacific. We had interesting experiences and gained answers to our questions. We will be sticking to sails. And another visit to the Pacific? ... maybe. As predicted, it would have been an almost perfect reach the whole way by blow boat!

We left on 1st March, Nuclear Remembrance Day in the Marshall Islands – a national holiday when the Marshallese remember the American nuclear tests of the 1950s. Our hearts go out to these lovely islanders who were friendly, welcoming, and quick to smile and laugh. The Marshall Islands are not on the usual cruisers' track, but they are well worth visiting.

FROM THE GALLEY OF ... Jane Eastman, aboard *Pax*

Pimientos de Padron

Ingredients

- pimientos (small green peppers, readily available in continental markets and supermarkets)
- plenty of olive oil
- salt (preferably sea salt or other large crystal variety)

Heat the olive olive in a large pan until very hot. Add the peppers (whole, including stalks) and fry for 5 to 10 minutes, turning often, until soft and starting to blister. Drain on paper towel, sprinkle generously with salt and serve immediately.

Pimientos de Padron are a favour starter in southern Galicia, and though most are akin to small bell-peppers in flavour, the occasional one can be extremely hot. Russian roulette with the taste-buds indeed!

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TANDEM ANCHORING
Bill Salvo and Nancy Hearne

In our twenty years of full-time cruising and living aboard we have anchored in many hundreds of different places and conditions. *Cascade II*, our Jeanneau Sun Legend 41, displaces about 20,000lbs (9 tonnes) and carries four anchors – a Fortress FX-55 (15kg), a 20kg Delta, a Fortress FX-23 (6·8kg) and a 15kg kedge, plus two small dinghy anchors, one of them a Danforth. The 20kg Delta is our main anchor, which we have used in most anchoring situations with good results. Our goal is always to anchor in sand, and to avoid Posidonia weed* at all costs. Our chain is 10mm and we always anchor with a minimum of 5:1 one scope. We always back hard on the anchor once we have all the chain out that we intend for the depth, and a 'chain snubber' is deployed so as not to overload the windlass. Nancy always takes the wheel when anchoring.

In recent years we have frequently found ourselves in the Great Harbour in Siracusa – it is our favourite town in Sicily. But ... the bottom is mostly soft mud that I liken to chocolate pudding. Reversing at only 2000 rpm we can pull the Delta and 10:1 scope slowly through the mud – not an ideal situation – so we gave some thought to a possible solution and came up with 'tandem anchoring', using the small Fortress with about 1·5m of 8mm chain shackled between the eye in the Delta and the shank of the Fortress. This simple solution with 5:1 scope has proved incredibly successful in Siracusa mud in all the winds we have encountered.

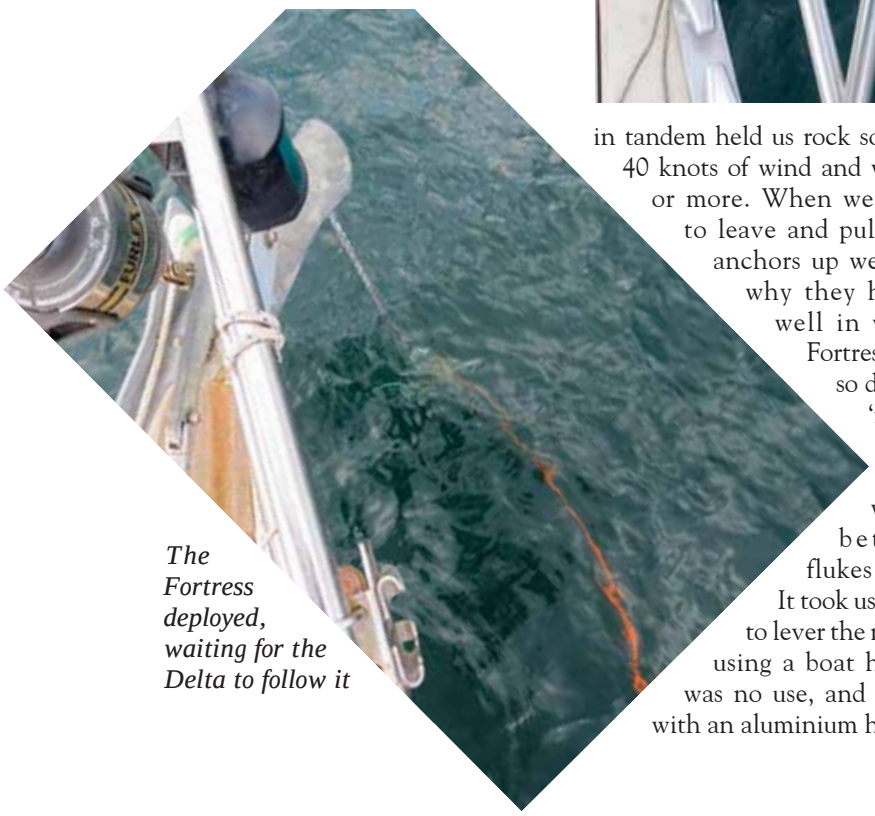
But the real test, as we discovered recently, was in an open bay off a little village near Augusta, Sicily, where there was not a speck of sand to be found. The Delta with the little Fortress

Both Delta and Fortress in stowed 'underway' mode

* *Posidonia oceanica*, also known as Neptune grass or Mediterranean tapeweed, is a type of seagrass endemic to the Mediterranean. Balls of fibrous material from its foliage, known as egagropili, are often washed up on nearby beaches.

The Fortress nestled in its bracket on the rail with a polypropylene rope attached. The bracket is adjustable for wider 'fluke heads' (for want of a better term)

The Fortress still in its bracket but with the securing lines freed and awaiting deployment. Note the chain shackled to the eye of the Delta



The Fortress deployed, waiting for the Delta to follow it

in tandem held us rock solid in up to 40 knots of wind and waves of 2m or more. When we were ready to leave and pulled the two anchors up we discovered why they had held so well in weed – the Fortress had dug in so deep that the 'roots' of the weed were solidly wedged between its flukes and shank. It took us half an hour to lever the roots off, first using a boat hook, which was no use, and then a mop with an aluminium handle.

The Fortress deployed on the 'seabed', with the Delta ready to be set in reserve. Note the shackle on the former's crown, to which a tripping line would be attached

I should mention that we buoy the Fortress from its crown with a polypropylene line, so that we can recover it upside down after the Delta is almost in its chocks and place it in its bracket on the pulpit. When both anchors are deployed but before they hit the bottom we slowly reverse while paying out the chain, so as to orient them one ahead of the other when they hit the seabed.

Don't hesitate to e-mail me, Bill Salvo, at svcascade@gmail.com if you have any questions.

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NORTHWEST PACIFIC PASSAGE
Annika Koch and Björn Christensson

(*Annika and Björn have been sailing together since 1973, first in a home-completed 31-footer, later buying a Forgus 37 named* Lindisfarne, *in which they explored the Mediterranean and the Baltic before returning to their home near Gothenburg. Three years later, on 1st May 2005, they started their circumnavigation, reaching Australia before heading back north to Canada. In 2012 they upsized to* Moon, *a Koopmans 47, built in Holland in 2001 but then lying in Langkawi, Malaysia.*

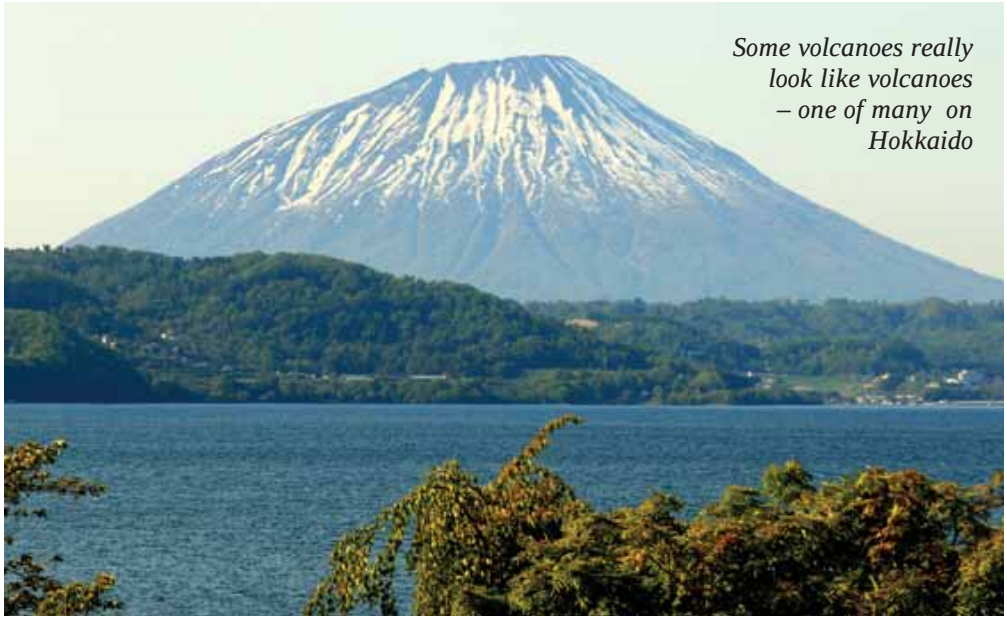
Annika and Björn have visited Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Japan and Alaska, sailed south down the west coasts of Canada, North America and Mexico, transited the Panama Canal into the Caribbean and then doubled back north as far as Boston. Visit their highly professional blog – in both Swedish and English – at www.sailaround.info to read more. All photos by Annika and Björn except where credited.)

Kushiro, Hokkaido, Japan – Sunday 5th June

With paperwork done on Friday all four yachts are ready to go. We leave at 1500 into a flat sea and grey skies, with *Shuang Yu* (American), *Kéa* (French) and *Liv* (Swedish) some hours ahead of us. No wind means our speeds are very similar and we remain in VHF range all night.

Monday 6th June: Day 1

A cold morning after a clear night with no moon. The water temperature is only 4°C and the air temperature during the night down to 6°C. We were told by the Coast Guard to stay at least 4 miles offshore because of fishing nets, but there were still a lot. It's lucky our radar picks up the markers, because during the night we had to alter course to avoid at least three.



Some volcanoes really look like volcanoes – one of many on Hokkaido

Religion is an important part of Japanese life

Cherry blossom in May plays an even bigger role

Early in the morning we heard *Shuang Yu* calling a fishing boat and understood that they had been caught in a fishing net. They had chosen to go even further out, obviously not always good. Later via our SSB radio net we learned that they were free but could not use their engine. Pam, who usually jumps into the sea to clear anything around the prop, tried, but it could have ended in tragedy in the bitterly cold water. She almost

The Japanese take customs clearance seriously – up to ten officials can arrive

Harbours in Japan are mostly free, but plenty of fenders and fender boards are needed

couldn't get back up into the boat and was shivering for half an hour before she could breathe normally. They started to sail towards the closest Japanese port but *Kéa*, the French catamaran, was closest and volunteered to turn back and assist. Diving gear and drysuits solved the problem and the two were able to continue northeast, though *Shuang Yu* later chose to head due east.

The predicted wind became a no-show, which of course was a blessing for the diving operation. We tried to sail in the few gusts, but the engine was on for pretty much the whole day and by evening we'd motored 130 miles of the 1300 to Attu in bright sunshine.

Moon and her crew in Kushiro, the day before leaving for Alaska

Tuesday 7th June: Day 2

Another cold, clear night, with fog a few hours after sunset and no moon but lots of stars. The nights get shorter every day! We are travelling northeast, which also means that the morning comes earlier with every mile. We have already adjusted the time by two hours to have daylight during 'daytime'. Our routines for 24-hour sailing are starting to get in place and we sleep okay, although the sea is a bit rolly and the engine makes lots of (normal) noise. This is the second time we have had to run the engine at the beginning of a passage knowing that the weather will be calm for the first few days. Last time it was between Tasmania and South Island, New Zealand. That time we were overcompensated with wind in the final days of the passage, only beating the arrival of a storm by a couple of hours. This time we hope the approaching low will not be that nasty.

Fredrik, the son of friends back home, is helping us with an overall view of the weather patterns. Hopefully we will be able to come north of the strongest winds and be able to continue towards Attu despite the low. We can only communicate with the

Sunset over a Russian island en route to Attu

outside world via SSB and Pactor modem, a slow connection that only allows short messages. We probably won't have internet for another three weeks. In the meantime we enjoy the sunshine and an unusual situation in this area – no fog! The high pressure has obviously brought very dry air, and in spite of the cold current from the Bering Sea, the little humidity doesn't condense as fog. We have studied a blog from this area written last year and they didn't see much of the sun for the whole summer!

To port we have snow-covered Russian islands south of Kamchatka, 30 miles west of our route, very beautiful in the morning sunrise. The south-going current from the Bering Sea, now only 3°C, slows us down by about 1 knot, but thanks to our big (900 litre / 200 UK gallon) diesel tank we have no restrictions on motoring. Despite

the sun and no wind it's bitterly cold, so we wear lots of extra clothes and of course a wind-breaker on top. In the sun and in the lee of the pilot-house it's okay with only one layer, but not 'outside' and at night.

Moon's interior is normally a comfortable 18°–20° thanks to our hot water heating system and its eight radiators, powered either by the engine or, if we are sailing, the WhisperGen. In daytime, with the sun through our big windows, it's almost too much! Our friends have more normal boats with little extra heating, except for *Liv*, a Hallberg Rassy, which in the Swedish way is equipped with an air heater. But as all their diesel may be needed for the engine its use will be restricted. Distance made good 125 miles.

Wednesday 8th June: Day 3

Just after sunset we saw the new moon for a short while before it disappeared below the horizon. After that another cold night with no moon but a lot of stars. However the night was lit up by the gleaming stream from the propeller – really amazing, like some backwards-pointing flashlight under the boat. For a few hours during the night we had some swell, but it disappeared in the morning and we were surrounded by flat, oily water all the way to the Russian island away to port. Taking advantage of the flat conditions we had a shower before lunch – the humidity inside *Moon* is very low and the teak grid in the shower had dried within an hour.

Distance made good 123 miles, 98 percent of it under power. Today we saw our first tufted puffin – really cute!

Thursday 9th June: Day 4

Fog all night – 'normal' weather, in fact – but by early morning it was more like light drizzle, and we could see large passing ships about three miles away. We had two close calls with ships during the night, the first before midnight and with a CPA (closest point of approach) of less than 100m. We'd called them when they were 10 miles north of

One reason for sailing to Alaska was the wildlife.
This horned puffin is very similar to its Atlantic cousin

A curious Russian fishing boat that approached to within 50m of us

us and asked if they were aware of a sailing yacht on their route. They clearly were not, but no problem – they altered course 5° to starboard and only resumed their previous course once we were astern. The next one was more alert and had already seen *Moon* on the AIS monitor and, because we called them when they got closer, changed course 10° to starboard.

The wind is still very weak, but now from the southeast which allows us to motor-sail almost close-hauled on our northeast course, making *Moon* much more stable. The current has also changed since early morning, and we are now making 6·5 knots through water and often adding 0·5–1 knot of current. Previously, with weak tail winds and an adverse current, we were doing 5·5 knots but losing up to 1 knot.

This morning we even had an hour without the engine, sailing at 6·5 knots under the windvane in absolute silence, but it did not last for long. Before re-starting the engine we rinsed the krill out of the water strainer – no wonder there is so much wildlife in this part of the world. Late in the afternoon we had a visit from a big, big sperm whale which came within 20m of *Moon* – a little too close...

Distance made good 143 miles, 98 percent of it under power.

Friday 10th June: Day 5

Fog the whole day, cold and part drizzly. Swell and waves moderate because the true wind is only 10–15 knots though we have 14–20 knots apparent when sailing close-hauled – perfect! We shut down the engine only a couple of minutes into this fifth day and have been sailing ever since ... very nice and quiet. As long as the wind exceeds 6–8 knots the Windpilot Pacific Plus windvane does a great job of keeping *Moon* on course. Another advantage is that we don't have to hand-steer when using the HF radio. HF interferes with the rudder sensor to the autopilot computer so we can't use it when transmitting. HF radio communication is mysterious. Sometimes it is non-existent, but other times, like this morning, the conditions are great with very fast download of GRIB files – extra important as a low is forecast to pass tomorrow. The WhisperGen is working well, meaning full heat and electricity aboard and no restrictions on cooking, making bread, radar, nav PC and all the other nav instruments, which is a relief in this dense fog. The morning radio net had some bad news – *Liv* could not get their heater to start, giving them a very cold boat. *Kéa*, the French cat, had hit something during the night (they think probably a log) and got a 20cm scratch through the outer skin of their

composite fibreglass hull. No leakage however, and there is some sort of stiffener/support inside the hull where the scratch is. They were complaining about the cold inside the boat, but had no second thoughts about continuing towards Attu despite the damage.

Distance made good 136 miles (all under sail!), totalling 657 miles so far – close to half the great circle distance from Kushiro to Attu.

Saturday 11th June: Day 6

A foggy night, but not much rain and 15–20 knots of wind from east-southeast. The swell and the wind didn't always co-operate, making *Moon* a bit uncomfortable, but compared to what we had expected from the predicted low this was nothing – almost an anticlimax, in fact. Pointing about 45–50° to the apparent wind, or between 35–45° over ground, almost on the great circle for Attu.

The conditions stabilised in the morning and remained unchanged throughout the day, making the sailing both comfortable and relatively fast despite our reefed mainsail. Sailing close-hauled, *Moon* is almost as fast with full headsails and a reefed main as with a full main, providing there's more than 10 knots. Under 10 knots from astern and we have to motor-sail, as the swell and waves roll *Moon* and the mainsail flops from one side to the other, giving no contribution to the speed. Before noon the wind became more easterly, giving us a course of nearer 25–30° over ground. Much of the time we still have an opposing current, but seldom more than half a knot.

The WhisperGen had been running for 36 hours and started to get too warm, so was stopped by the microprocessor. It was probably caused by lack of nitrogen, which we couldn't top up enough before leaving Japan. Now we were in almost the same state as the others, although we still had a warm boat while motoring. When it was too cold we turned the engine on for a few hours, especially during the night – the temperature kept above 16° during daytime, despite no heating.

The evening net showed that *Liv* and *Moon*, 30 miles apart, had made almost the same distance during the day, though *Kéa* the catamaran had used her gennaker and made great progress. The backing wind brought us into the shipping lane again, and now and then we called ships that had a CPA of less than a mile to make sure they were aware of us. No problems so far – they were all very polite and altered course to give us enough room to feel comfortable. Distance made good 148 miles, all under sail.

Sunday 12th June: Day 7

Fog but no rain during the night and decreasing wind until 2000 when we had to start the engine. It stayed on all day, though not a bad thing as the WhisperGen isn't working and it's getting cold. During the day it's around 16° inside *Moon* without using heating more than occasionally, but at night it falls rapidly. There is a new low with stronger wind due within a day or two, but until then we will probably have to use the engine.

During the night we had one ship ahead with a CPA of less than 100m. We called as usual when we were 10 miles apart, and after some trouble understanding us they confirmed that they could see our AIS and were going to alter course to starboard. We had no preference which side they wanted to pass us, but thought it a bit odd because they were on our starboard side. Sure enough, when the change of course came on AIS it was to port! When we were talking on VHF they probably hadn't seen us on AIS and the reflex was to alter course to starboard to pass port to port.

It's obviously important to use simple but exact expressions to get around the language barrier. 'Maintain course' is preferable to 'continue this course', and that solved the problem this time. We will use 'maintain' to avoid misunderstandings in the future. There is another reason for 'maintain' – we are a sailing boat, and 'maintain' makes it clear that we are aware of the rules and that the other vessel can count on us keeping our course. Ships have A-transponders and we normally see them 30 miles away. B-transponders on yachts and some fishing boats are less powerful and we see most of them only 10–15 miles away. Surprisingly, *Liv* can sometimes see *Moon*'s B-transponder 30–35 miles away – True Heading obviously makes good AIS equipment.

The radio net this morning showed similar distances to *Kéa* and *Liv* as yesterday, mainly because we have all used our engines more or less continuously. We had a close encounter with a fin or sei whale during the net – not as close as the sperm whale the other day but a more relaxing 50m... In late morning we started the EchoTec watermaker for the first time since November. We had postponed this until we had clean sea water around *Moon*, and of course we had to have at least one tank empty. We 'test ran' it for 45 minutes to get rid of any residue and then got water of absolutely top quality – and at the usual 50 litres per hour with pressure still well below 800 psi in spite of the very cold sea water. The high capacity is because the three filters and 5–6m of hose between the intake and the high pressure pump are in warm areas. It's very convenient to be able to use the engine water strainer with its glass lid to check the amount of krill and other small sea creatures – the watermaker's pre-filter will certainly clog if we have lots of krill.

It looks as though we may make landfall on Attu on Thursday 16th Japanese time. We will soon cross the international date line, however, and gain a day, making us arrive on the 15th at the westernmost (and easternmost) spot in the United States. Distance made good 135 miles, total since Kushiro 833 miles. Engine in use 18 hours out of 24.

Monday 13th June: Day 8

We actually saw the moon for a short time last night, before the clouds and fog returned. By early morning the fog had eased and at dawn we had red skies to east, then after lunch we got partly clear skies and sunshine for several hours. We motor-sailed until early morning, when the wind backed and we had to lower the staysail and motor into 4–5 knots of headwind with just the reefed mainsail until evening.

We learned on the morning radio net that *Kéa* had got a net around one of their propellers. They have diving equipment (they helped *Shuang Yu* with a net the first day) but even with drysuits it's still very cold! All through the night the AIS had shown Russian fishing boats in the area where *Kéa* caught the net.

Distance made good 128 miles, but engine in use 24 hours out of 24...

Tuesday 14th June: Day 9

Light wind from northeast, but very rough seas with swell from the east and waves from the northeast. This, together with our heading northeast into the waves, makes life onboard uncomfortable and progress slow. Warmer water at 6–7°, however.

During the evening radio net we learned more about about *Kéa*'s adventure with the fishing net. They had managed to get most of it off the prop, but there was still

Preparing to drop anchor in Casco Cove, Attu. Photo by Dominique, aboard Kéa

some nylon around the shaft between the sail drive and the prop that was impossible to remove in the cold water – not good. *Kéa* is still 30 miles northwest of us, motor-sailing southeast, and *Liv* 60 miles south-southwest, sailing east-southeast with more wind and a building sea.

At the morning net we had contact with all three other boats. *Shuang Yu* has made very slow progress and is now 500 miles south of us, *Kéa* had motor-sailed southeast during the night and is now 30 miles southwest of us, and *Liv* is 70 miles south. We were surprised to find that our slow motor-sailing east-northeast during the night had brought us so much closer to Attu compared to *Kéa* and *Liv*. The wind backed during the morning, so we changed course to due east and set the staysail, which resulted in more speed and a better angle to the waves. Hopefully we will have more wind in the evening and from a more northerly direction. It would be nice to be able to turn the engine off, although for the moment we don't have any heat inside *Moon* without it.

Distance made good 99 miles, nearly all of it motor-sailing in confused seas. Total 1060 miles since leaving Japan, and less than 200 miles left before Attu landfall.

Wednesday 14th June: Day 10

Not a pleasant night with the swell running from dead ahead, no moon, and drizzle now and then. On top of that a short, steep wind-driven sea made us stop every so often, so we motor-sailed for a long time to make progress.

At yesterday evening's radio net we were furthest north, with *Kéa* 30 miles south-southwest and *Liv* almost 90 miles in the same direction. *Shuang Yu* had made some progress but very slowly. Then shortly before the morning net we saw *Kéa*'s AIS signal only 5 miles south of us, and by the afternoon they were still there. *Liv* had been able to sail during the night and was now 50 miles south-southwest, but *Kéa* and *Moon* had both slowed to avoid making landfall in the dark. It looks like all three of us will arrive before noon tomorrow.

During the night and morning we crossed two borders – first the territorial border between Russia and the USA, and some hours later the international date line. Then after leaving Attu we will cross from 180°E to 180°W. The first time we crossed the date line was heading west across the South Pacific in 2008, then again en route to Alaska from New Zealand in 2011. Crossing the date line confuses us as to just what time and day it is, but as long the sun rises east of us we are safe...

Distance made good 127 miles, about half of it under sail.

Thursday 15th June: Day 11

At the evening radio net it was clear that the three of us in the north would make landfall at much the same time, and as there are not that many safe anchorages we have all chosen the same bay. During the last 20 miles we could occasionally see the partially snow-covered slopes as the sun made heroic attempts to chase away the low clouds, but in contrast the boats astern sometimes disappeared in light fog.

At 1000 we finally shut down the engine after dropping anchor, and shortly afterwards both *Kéa* and *Liv* were resting nearby. We invited both crews for a sundowner aboard *Moon* in time for the evening net, when we will try to make contact with *Shuang Yu*. As they approached the bay *Kéa* saw two small vehicles moving, so obviously there are people at the US station although it closed in 2010. We plan to visit them tomorrow.

With **Kéa** *and* **Liv** *in landlocked Finger Bay, Adak*

Leaving Attu on a (very) cold morning

In spite of some drizzle – the low that should have moved on by now seems to have stopped right over Attu – the scenery is beautiful with snow patches at the foot of the nearby slopes. Overall it is very green but with absolutely no trees – we will have to wait until Kodiak to see some forest. We plan to continue east after a day or two's rest, weather permitting. It is a little too far between the islands to go day-hopping so it will mean overnight sails, and the route is all upwind...

The passage had taken us 10 days and 16 hours, and though the great circle distance is 1300 miles we covered 1367 miles over the ground (probably nearer 1500 miles through the water allowing for adverse current), an average speed over the ground of 5·33 knots.

Brown (grizzly) bears are another major attraction…

MAINE TO THE ROCK WITH KITE
Jack and Zdenka Griswold

(*Jack and Zdenka sail* Kite*, a Valiant 42, out of their home port of Portland, Maine. In 2016 they finished a seven-year westabout circumnavigation. They served as Roving Rear Commodores from 2014 to 2016, Port Officers from 2016 to 2018, and Zdenka joined the General Committee in April 2017. Since returning to Maine in 2016 they have explored the coasts of Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and New Brunswick.*)

It seems that Jack has developed an allergy to cold weather sailing. Zdenka, on the other hand, is firmly in the camp of 'if you're cold, put on another layer'. Not surprisingly, 2nd July 2017 saw Jack donning his long-johns as *Kite* approached Shelburne, Nova Scotia on a bright sunny day. The shore shimmered and shapes on land seemed to be floating in the air. These were not heat waves, however; these were cold waves from the 50°F water. Wait, it got worse. Leaving Shelburne we picked up a large ball of discarded lobster pot line on our prop which meant actually going into that water to cut it off. Zdenka helpfully suggested putting on a second wetsuit.

Jack dressed for cold weather

And so began our summer cruise to Newfoundland. For a few days we sailed in company with our friends, OCC members Roger Block and Amy Jordan on *Shango*, the first time since our passage from Réunion to South Africa. But we wanted to get to Newfoundland, so we parted ways and quickly skipped up the Nova Scotia coast

The Lunenburg waterfront

Baddeck waterfront and lighthouse

Welcoming St Peter's Marina in the Bras D'Or Lakes

Approaching Francois as the fog begins to lift

to the Bras d'Or Lakes and Cape Breton. The lakes are entered through a lock at the western end. Once in, we were treated to bucolic scenery, benign sailing conditions, and water actually warm enough to swim in which put a contented smile on Jack's face. The area is also known for its music, and every restaurant and café seemed to have live music going, which we really enjoyed.

We exited at the eastern end through the Great Bras d'Or Channel where the currents rip, sailed past Bird Island which was teeming with puffins, gannets, razorbill auks, bald eagles and seals, and stopped for a couple of days in Ingonish on Cape Breton. Our plan was to do a 160 mile overnighter across the Cabot Strait to Francois, an outport on the south coast of Newfoundland. Newfoundland's coastline was once dotted with outports, small fishing villages where the only access is by sea. It is hard to imagine how hard life must have been in these small communities. Isolated and remote, they had to be self-sufficient in a rough environment dominated by fog, gales, a rocky shoreline, and a cold, cold ocean. When the cod fishery collapsed, the outports started to decline and die. Now only a few are left.

True to form, our crossing was in a pea-soup fog and we didn't get our first glimpse of Newfoundland until we were only a hundred yards away. But as we made our way into the fjord where Francois is located the fog began to lift, revealing massive cliffs on either side rising hundreds of feet. It was spectacular and, as we were to find out, was the norm for the south coast. Francois – or Fransway as the locals call it – was perched along the shore under the cliffs. We were told that only about 80 year-round residents remained, with eight or so kids in the local school. Some have never driven a car. The government provides a ferry service several times a week to Burgeo, a town further west, that has a road. It also provides a diesel-fuelled generating plant for electricity, as well as helicopter evacuation for medical emergencies. So life is much better than

Francois swathed in fog

it was not so long ago, but making a living is difficult. Young people leave for jobs elsewhere, and the government actively encourages people in the outports to relocate because of the expense of providing services to keep them going.

This was an interesting phenomenon. In McCallum, another outport we visited, the village of some 40 people had recently voted on whether to resettle. We were told by a local resident that close to 80% wanted to move and take the government resettlement grant, something in the region of $250,000. Apparently it takes a 90% vote to abandon the town and resettle, however. This makes for some interesting currents in such a small

Francois after the fog had cleared

Kite at the McCallum floating dock

place. We were invited for tea (and wifi) to the house of one lady who explained that, even though the ballot was secret, most people knew how everyone else had voted.

We spent three weeks poking along the coast, anchoring in impossibly magnificent spots under the cliffs and in remote coves where it seemed we were at the end of the world. We took long walks across heather and gorse-covered hills. We began to understand just how interconnected people in the various outports are through marriage, work and family. We realised the intimacy of the area when we arrived in Burgeo and met an ex-lighthouse keeper from a long-abandoned outport called Pushthrough, who knew exactly who we were and where we had been.

The former outport of Pushthrough, supposedly named for a whale that got stuck and was pushed through the channel; the village is long gone

Great Jervis Harbour, near McCallum

One evening we were anchored in La Hune Bay when a pretty Pacific Seacraft named *Kelly Rae* came in and anchored near us. This was the first time we'd seen another cruising boat since our arrival in Newfoundland and it turned out that we had met the skipper (now a fellow OCC member), Rich Simpson, ten years previously in the Bahamas. The cruising world is indeed small.

Next morning we struggled to get our anchor up. The windlass lugged down, slowed, and finally died altogether. Looking down from the bow, about 15 feet below the surface we saw a truly massive ball of kelp the size of our bedroom that had been snagged by our anchor. It took about half an hour to cut it all away. After that, without a working windlass, we tried to avoid anchoring if possible. Fortunately, every harbour that had

Sharing La Hune Bay with Kelly Rae

La Hune Bay, where our windlass died

a village or the remains of a village also had a government wharf that we could tie up to. This made life easy as we headed west along the coast all the way to our last stop in Newfoundland, the town of Port-aux-Basques. This is the terminal for the ferry from Nova Scotia which supplies much of Newfoundland with goods and tourists. Even so, the town is fairly modest. Exploring on our folding bikes, we ran into four guys playing Newfie music in a small shopping-centre parking lot. For the next few days we kept seeing them in different places and got to know them a little. We asked Rick, the lead singer, if they had any CDs and the following morning he came down to the boat to give us one, still one of our favourites from 'the Rock'.

Ramea

Rick and the boys

We eventually got a weather window to sail back to Cape Breton and Ingonish. And sail we did. Up to then we had pretty much motored everywhere. Unfortunately this was also our last good sail, and the rest of the way to Maine we again mostly motored. In Halifax we tied up at a pier right in the middle of downtown for a few days, a short walk from lots of restaurants, the farmers' market and most of the sights, and stumbled on a wonderful musical celebrating the music of Stan Rogers, a Nova Scotia icon.

A ferry entering Port-aux-Basques. Note the eponymous (and enormous!) dog

Grand Bruit, recently abandoned, was having a 'Come Home' reunion of former residents

A solar eclipse took place while we were in Halifax, and we went to St Mary's University to see it. The astronomy department had hauled out telescopes onto the lawn and handed out special filters. Everyone had a chance to view the eclipse, and with gorgeous weather it was a festive, fun afternoon.

Observing the eclipse at St Mary's University, Halifax

In front of the Maritime Museum at Halifax, a super location

Halifax Farmers' Market

Lunenburg, with its multi-coloured houses, was a favourite stop

Nova Scotia has many lovely harbours and bays. Mahone Bay, dotted with islands, is one of the prettiest, and we stopped there to visit our Portland neighbours and OCC members Gene Gardner and Jo-Ann Ramsay from *Eli Blue* at their waterfront cottage. Lunenburg, with its multi-coloured houses, was another picture-perfect, favourite stop. We spent our last night in Nova Scotia anchored off a crescent-shaped beach near Shelburne. The next day was sunny but totally windless with a sea like glass. We fired up the engine and made the overnight hop back to Maine.

Newfoundland, though at times cold and foggy, is a special, other-worldly place which feels very remote. It is rough but stunningly beautiful and remarkably welcoming. Sadly, the outports are rapidly disappearing and we are grateful for the brief glimpse that we had. If you have a chance, go.

Grand Bruit, one of Newfoundland's many abandoned outports, in the evening light

OBITUARIES & APPRECIATIONS

Daniel (Dan) W Walker

Daniel Woodruff Walker was born in 1927. A member of Exeter Class of 1945, he captained the undefeated wrestling team in his last two years. With World War Two still continuing he joined the United States Marine Corps, serving in China, before attending Yale to graduate in 1950 with a degree in engineering. As a Lieutenant during the Korean War he was an outstanding Rifle Platoon Leader, decorated with the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Dan Walker, a young man who loved boats and the sea

Dan then embarked on an extraordinary two-decade career as Chief Diver and International Operations Manager of the pioneering and successful International Underwater Contractors Corporation. His important innovations were preceded by such licences as Mixed Gas Bell Divers in 1976, Lloyds Certified NTD Diver in 1977, UK Diving Supervisor and Life Support Technician in 1978 and UK Explosive Technician's Licence in 1978.

A distinguished yachtsman, he joined the Ocean Cruising Club in 1962 following a 3500 mile voyage from Newport, RI to Marstrand, Sweden aboard the 56ft *Circe* made seven years previously. He was also a member of the Royal Ocean Racing Club and the New

Dan aboard his salvage vessel, Samuel Baxter

York Yacht Club. During his sailing career he participated in a number of ocean races and passages, including sailing *Mokoia* in the Trans-Ocean Race and *Circe* in one of his five Fastnet Races. He also sailed several Bermuda Races.

Late in life he bought *Samuel Baxter*, a salvage ship which resembled a cargo vessel, which he sailed home from the UK and moored for years in front of his house. It was an anomaly among neighbouring yachts until he donated it to an appropriate charity. At the time of his death last year he owned a 40ft trawler-yacht named *Mustang*.

He never retired, volunteering with a number of different charitable organisations well into his 80s, including making over thirty trips to Honduras aiding altruistic doctors who provided emergency medical care in a remote area. A life well spent.

Ann-Marie Walker and Bill Strickland

Fran Flutter

Frances Ann Storm Clark was born on 5th October 1948, the elder daughter of adventurous parents. Peter and Patchen Storm Clark were both aviators, Peter an airline pilot who participated in the Berlin airlift, and Patchen a wartime Air Transport Auxiliary delivery pilot, after time as an ambulance driver. They decided to live aboard a sailing boat, firstly *Charmian*, a 14 ton Hillyard, then *Nina*. In 1950 they planned to emigrate to Australia, but caught by an autumn storm in Biscay, they were forced

Fran with her parents and younger sister in 1958, after returning from their Atlantic circuit aboard Tally Ho

Fran at the OCC Annual Dinner in 2013

back. Their crew proved useless, and I believe Fran was washed out of the cockpit by one wave before being washed back by the next! Their next yacht, *Tally Ho*, the winner of 1927 Fastnet Race, needed work, but this completed they lived aboard at Birdham Pool, Chichester before moving to the Hamble and Moody's Boatyard. During this time Fran was selected to represent the UK in the Optimist Worlds in Denmark.

The family's Atlantic circuit in *Tally Ho* in 1957–58, recalled by Fran in *Flying Fish* 2014/1, was among the pioneers of extended family cruising. They were fêted wherever they landed, with two small blonde girls a universal passport, and at sea Fran stood her watch. Back on the Hamble, Fran's father returned to flying until he was grounded by ill health. *Tally Ho* was sold and they bought a house on the Thames and a Contessa 26 – the largest boat that could be moored at the bottom of their garden. Fran, now studying chemistry at University College, London joined her parents on yearly cruises on the East Coast and to Holland.

Following our marriage Fran and I decided to buy a boat and live aboard at Moody's. We suffered a major setback when our 37ft gaff ketch *Kirsty* was wrecked in Cowes in 1976, Fran suffering major leg injuries. Boat repairs were duly effected, while the National Health Service rebuilt Fran's legs! To prove boat and crew we left in 1979 to repeat her Atlantic circuit of 22 years earlier, and both joined the OCC shortly afterwards. After returning to the UK we relocated to Falmouth, from which we had extended summer cruises to Norway, Scotland, north Spain and the west coast of Ireland, together with classic boat festivals in Brittany.

In the early 1990s Fran purchased *Prodigal*, a 35ft cutter designed for an OSTAR and a superb singlehander's boat. She lived aboard, gained confidence in the boat, and prepared for a long voyage – what was to become a four-year circumnavigation, including two years in the Pacific. She coped with some major incidents, nursing *Prodigal* to Australia with a failed forestay, and a knockdown near the Azores when nearly home. On her return she was awarded the Barton Cup, the OCC's premier award, having previously received the Rose Medal for an earlier part of the voyage.

The cruising had been hard on *Prodigal* and she needed TLC, so Fran set about refitting her to the highest standard, first in Falmouth and then at Totnes. There she met David Tyler, and after a shakedown sail in *Tryste* to Orkney, Sweden and Denmark, returning via Orkney, they became a strong sailing partnership. In 2005 they again headed north to circumnavigate Iceland, visiting the Azores on their way home. The

next year they coast-hopped to Madeira and the Canaries before crossing to Brazil, re-crossing to Cape Town. There was a slight change of plan in 2007, so instead of heading east they re-crossed the Atlantic to the West Indies before transiting the Panama Canal and enjoying the Pacific. They wintered in British Columbia before another Pacific cruise which ended in New Zealand, and spent 2010 cruising to Brisbane and Sydney.

In autumn 2010 Fran returned to Falmouth and a late-diagnosed ovarian cancer, a bad hand to be dealt. She played it very courageously, and while in remission bought, refitted and lived aboard her last boat, *Sundowner*. She bravely rejected a fourth round of chemo, and continued to live in Falmouth. She was much heartened when her family's old yacht *Tally Ho* was acquired by Leo Goolden – there is a real prospect of the yacht sailing again after attempts in the past have proved unsuccessful.

Inevitably the last couple of weeks were difficult, but she never failed to smile with her carers and nurses. She finally came off watch early in the morning of 17th August. Her funeral was attended by over 100 friends and family and she will be greatly missed by her friends all over the world.

Peter Flutter

An additional tribute: Note: With Fran's death I lost not only a good friend but a meticulous *Flying Fish* proof-reader and occasional book reviewer. She had an encyclopaedic knowledge of yachts and cruising and it was never necessary to double-check what she said – I knew it would be correct.

Anne Hammick, Editor

Richard Yates

Richard Nicholas Yates was born on 22nd March 1942 in Randolph Crescent, Edinburgh. His early years were spent farming in southwest Scotland, until 1979 when he sold his farms and moved to Jersey where he discovered his great passion in life – sailing. He became an instructor for Jersey Cruising School, and in a short time became an instructor of the instructors, teaching numerous people the essence of what he loved, which was cruising. In his words it was 'the art of seeing and doing things at a slow pace and enjoying them'.

Richard in Los Roques archipelago, Venezuela

Richard in his chair on the after deck in La Rance, Brittany

He bought his first boat, a Sovereign 34, in the early 1980s, and as a family we spent most of our summers cruising in Brittany and the Channel Islands, leaving us with some of the happiest childhood memories we could have wished for. He continued life in the sailing world but on land, setting up Hardy and Le Quesne where he and James Hardy built up and sold a successful yacht insurance and registration business.

He joined the OCC in 1988 following a passage from Jersey to Gibraltar aboard the 49ft *Nortide*, and for a number of years was OCC Port Officer for Jersey. As a child I often remember him saying, "there's an OCC boat in, we need to go and see them as they're always good people," and since then the OCC burgee has always held a special place in my heart. In 1990 he bought a Hallberg Rassy 352. He crossed the Atlantic in her four times in five years, cruising Venezuela, Aruba, Bonair and Cuba. Further cruising from Miami to Maine ensued before returning home.

His final boat was a Hallberg Rassy 44 called *Beaucastel* – named after one of his favourite wines – in which he cruised the Caribbean for a couple of seasons before returning home to prepare for a cruise through the Mediterranean. The first leg of the voyage took her to Turkey, where he based her in Göcek with the aim of sailing her back to Jersey over the following five years. Suffice to say that, following his motto of sailing at a slow pace and enjoying it, she stayed in the area for eight years. During this time he had his grandchildren to stay numerous times, and fondly regaled us with stories of watching them learn to row and being rescued whilst under his supervision! Over those years my parents made a number of Turkish friends who, together with local sailors, attended his funeral after he succumbed to a short battle with cancer in April this year.

He crossed the Atlantic eight times and cruised hundreds of thousands of miles, but when asked in hospital what his greatest pleasures in life had been he answered unequivocally: 'There have been two – firstly sailing across the Atlantic with both my children on separate occasions, and secondly, sailing into New York with my wife'. He will be sorely missed, but he transmitted his love of sailing to his family and friends and this is something they will continue to enjoy and always remember him for.

Michael Yates

Lester Smith

Lester's life can be summarised in a few words – a lifelong passion for boats, the sea and sailing. As a small boy he started sailing dinghies at Stratford-upon-Avon where his family stayed during the war with grandparents, winning many cups in Merlin Rockets at the Avon Sailing Club. After passing his final exams as a Chartered Surveyor and Auctioneer, and while waiting to be called up for National Service, he hitched his 14ft Merlin Rocket to his 1936 Morris 8 two-seater tourer (which had cost him £35) and drove to Devon to work for the summer for keep only as a sailing instructor with The Island Cruising Club in Salcombe.

After six months training, and commissioned in the Royal Engineers, he was posted to Cyprus, where for two years he captained the RE and Army sailing teams in Cyprus, sailing 12ft Fireflies. After returning, he moved to Exmouth where he started his own estate agency. He transferred to 12ft Nationals and Enterprise dinghies, and won many trophies at the Exe Sailing Club. A few years later he bought his first cruising boat, a 28ft Waterbug called *Frangipani*, followed later by having a cruising boat – which he named *Lucifer's Daughter* – built to Lloyds 100A1.

After a long period when business and family commitments took precedence, and during which he and his first wife Judy divorced, he started windsurfing with his two boys. When his business was taken over by the Bristol and West Building Society in the late 1980s he found it extremely difficult to work for a corporate company, and as he and I had met by then he decided to retire aged 51. He qualified as an Ocean Yachtmaster and we bought a new 35ft Hallberg Rassy which we called *Tatsu* and based in Dartmouth.

Tatsu, Lester and Heidi's Hallberg Rassy 35, in the Mediterranean

This is when we began serious cruising, which continued for the next 25 years and 60,000 miles or so. After exploring the Atlantic coasts of France and Spain we spent 14 months completing the Atlantic circuit, visiting the Canaries,

the Caribbean Islands, Bermuda and the Azores. The 2800 mile passage from Gran Canaria to St Lucia became the qualifying passage for both of us when we joined the OCC on our return. The following year we circumnavigated England from Dartmouth via the Caledonian canal, Norway, Denmark, Germany and Holland. We once sailed to the Azores just to attend a lunch!

For 12 years Lester also owned a Falmouth Sunbeam, a 26ft, 3/4 decked vintage wooden sloop built in 1924, which he raced in a keen fleet of identical boats in Falmouth. For three years he was Class Captain. This restricted cruising time, so in 2001 we sailed via Gibraltar to the South of France and kept *Tatsu* in Le Lavandou, mainly cruising to Corsica and the Italian islands and mainland. In 2011 we decided to sail to Croatia via the Aeolian islands and for three seasons based *Tatsu* in Dubrovnik. Winters were mostly spent skiing in Switzerland, joining my family.

Due to the unexpected discovery of age-related macular degeneration in Lester's eyes, *Tatsu* made her last passage with us in 2015, from Dubrovnik via the Straits of Messina, along the Italian coast and islands to Rome and via Elba and Corsica to Cannes. Not being able to live without a boat, the compromise was a small motor boat in which we explored the Cornish and Devon coast in detail, combining it with walking the coast path.

There does not seem to have been a wasted day in Lester's life – racing, sailing, being on the water, living next to the water – just what he loved.

Heidi Smith

Robert (Bob) E Drew

Robert E. Drew passed away unexpectedly at home on 5th September aged 84, due to complications from congestive heart failure. Despite declining health for several years, he had remained active in boating aboard *Shamrock*, a Jarvis Newman 36, mostly in Maine and points east.

Born in 1933, the son of Charles G Drew and Kathleen Lee Drew, Bob was predeceased by his first wife Carolyn and his eldest son Robert Jr. He married Mindy Gunther, also an Ocean Cruising Club member, in 1977 and is survived by three children, nine grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

Bob in his wheelhouse

Bob grew up in Aruba and Venezuela where his father managed several oil refineries. His love of the water began in Aruba, messing about in various small boats with his father, several of which they built. He graduated from Tufts University in 1955 and was an active member of the Tufts sailing team. One of his favourite summer jobs while at college was running the launch at the Larchmont Yacht Club, where he learned to make landings with speed and finesse. His skill at manoeuvring our larger boats in tight spaces often made me nervous, but was always done to perfection.

After serving as an officer in the US Navy Bob founded AL Spar Inc, an aluminium mast manufacturer which supplied spars and rigging to many major yacht builders. Later, purchasing a small sports accessory company, he became a licensee for all the major professional sports leagues. After selling that business he embarked on his favourite career, that of marine surveyor. He became a Certified and Accredited NAMS and SAMS surveyor, and truly loved surveying boats and helping prospective buyers learn about their new vessels. During his twenty years in the profession he consulted with buyers and owners of thousands of vessels.

In later years, if Bob wasn't surveying a boat he was building one. He was an accomplished woodworker and boat builder. In recent years he built two canoes, two kayaks and a lapstrake (clinker) dinghy in his small workshop. If something was needed around the house or on his many boats, Bob could and would build it. These included furniture and household items too numerous to detail, and every room in the house contains at least one thing built by him. In addition to being a fine woodworker, Bob could do and fix almost anything on a boat. Whether it was a diesel engine, problems with the running rigging, sails, bilge pump, mast or boom he could solve the problem. He could also cook up a fine meal in any sea conditions.

For many years Bob was an active racer, and had the trophies to prove it. Later, on friends' boats, he competed in five Newport Bermuda Races, several Halifax Races and all of the major races in and around Long Island Sound.

Bob and I owned six boats, the largest being *Knight Hawk*, a 53ft cutter in which we cruised for 25 years. In her we sailed three times to Newfoundland, to Labrador,

Bermuda, the Caribbean and Puerto Rico – Bob's qualifying passage for the OCC, which he joined in 1997. Then in 2004 we sailed transatlantic to Ireland via the Azores, and spent five summers cruising in Ireland, Scotland, Norway and north of the Arctic Circle. Trips to Maine and up and down the Intracoastal Waterway were common in our own boats as well as those owned by family and friends. Bob built half models of all our boats, most to different scales just to be creative.

In addition to being a member of the Ocean Cruising Club, Bob was a Past Commodore of both the Cruising Club of America and the Sachem's Head Yacht Club, and was a member of the New York Yacht Club, the Irish Cruising Club and the Royal Cruising Club.

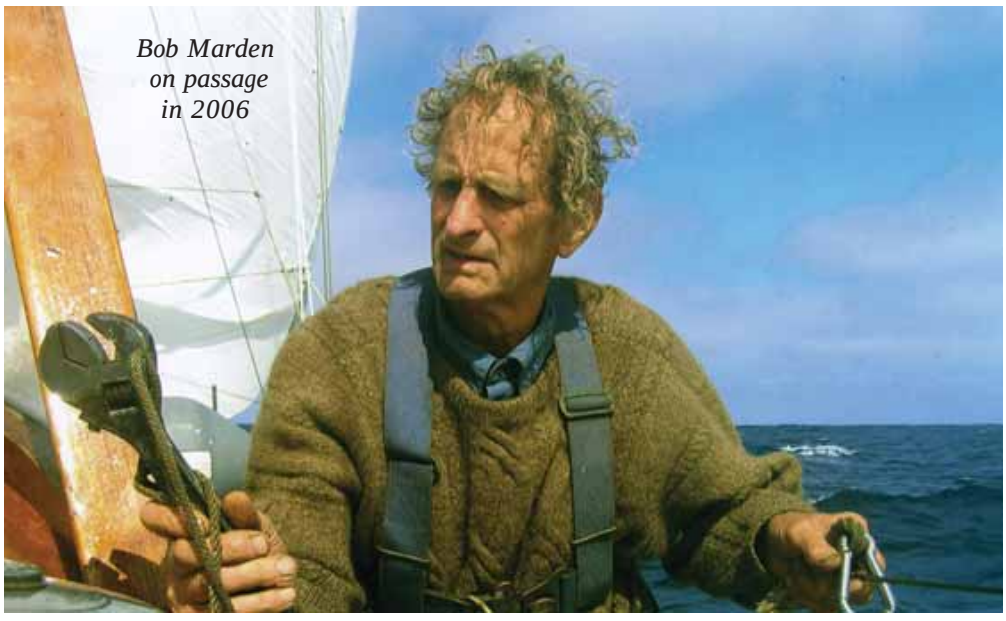
Mindy Gunther

William (Bill) Marden

William Gordon Rutherfurd Marden, who died on 26th May 2018 just a few days before his 96th birthday, was one of the Club's oldest members.

Bill was born on 1st June 1922 in New York City, but his mother came from New Zealand and when she died in 1932 Bill and his two brothers were sent to New Zealand to live with their grandmother on a sheep station. He learned how to shoot, ride and herd and shear sheep and attended a tough private boarding school.

When he was 18 years old, and shortly before the US joined the World War Two allies following the attack on Pearl Harbour, Bill arrived in California on a cargo ship and hitchhiked across the US to study physics at Harvard during the summer session. During the War Bill served in the US Navy, mainly on a minesweeper in the Pacific near the Philippines. He earned the rank of 1st Lieutenant and it was during this time that he learned how to sail and how to navigate using a sextant.



Bob Marden on passage in 2006

Following the War he returned to Harvard to graduate in 1948 with a Bachelor of Science degree in animal husbandry, and three years later received his Master's degree from Cambridge University. While in England Bill met Anne Marie Dumont, whom he married in 1952. They settled in Texas where Bill worked as reproductive physiologist, inventing the electronic ejaculator for bulls which he manufactured himself and patented in 1957. Over the following decades he set up breeding labs in Argentina and Panama, balancing a summer spent sailing with running the 'Marden Bull Motel' during the rest of the year.

During the summer of 1967 the entire family sailed from Palacios, on Texas's Gulf Coast to Bar Harbor, Maine aboard *Pipe Dream*, and the following year he, his eldest daughter Bea, then aged eleven, and three others circumnavigated Newfoundland aboard her. Bill and Bea then hitchhiked from Nova Scotia to Massachusetts, from where Bill, who owned and flew his own plane, flew them both back to Texas. He believed that life was meant to be lived through travelling, meeting new people and telling stories. During the 1970s Bill gave presentations every year to the Texas A&M Sailing Club. He was a frequent contributor to *Flying Fish*, either describing passages aboard his 52ft cutter, *Fancy Free*, or voicing thought-provoking opinions, sometimes at variance with current thinking but always backed by his long experience.

Bob after arriving singlehanded Cartagena, Colombia in June 2009

Bill joined the OCC in 2000, citing a 1780 mile passage from St Helena to Recife, Brazil made aboard *Fancy Free* 19 years previously, the year after the boat was built for him in Taiwan. He received the 2008 Rambler Medal for his 4000 mile, singlehanded voyage from the Azores to Barbados via the Cape Verde Islands at the age of 85 (see *Once Was Enough, Flying Fish* 2008/1). This was followed seven years later by the Endurance Award, for his dogged determination to get back afloat aboard his own yacht, by then a Hans Christian 38 named *Seawind*, which he had transported from California back to his Texas ranch (see *An Unusual Voyage, Flying Fish* 2013/2). He liked to sail in as simple a manner as possible, with no self-steering, a minimum of sail, no bottled water, no soft drinks, no beer, no pills and no bread (fresh pancakes were the substitute).

Bill was known for his wild, unkempt appearance – he certainly looked like a sailor. He was said to be about as subtle as a thunderstorm, and cared deeply about his interests. He was passionate about flying planes, reading books, and telling stories. He was especially interested in his ancestry, and loved to travel the world and meet new people. He is survived by Anne, his wife of almost 66 years, their three children, fifteen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Janet Gayler

Janet Elizabeth Gayler was born on 24th June 1944. After leaving school at 17 she worked in an office for three years before going to teacher training college in Ormskirk, where she trained to be a teacher/social worker. She then spent ten years in secondary education, teaching history, English and social studies and becoming Year Head for five years in a seven-stream entry comprehensive school. Her interest in social work led her to move to the education department in Barnet as Head of the Hospital and Home Tuition Service, where she ran two centres for children who were out of school, either as school refusers or having been excluded. During this time she was seconded for a year to help organise the new system of Statements for children with special needs.

In 1988 she left Barnet and moved to Bexley, where she was Head of the School Support Service, having a staff of 14, many of them part-timers or returners. She always tried to see the best in the pupils and was enthusiastic in trying out new ideas and encouraging her staff to

Janet aboard our brand new Victoria 34, Simoon 3, in 1997

fulfil their potential. She and her staff trained in teaching dyslexic children, and this became a passion with her. More than twenty years later she and a handful of her loyal staff met every few months for lunch to reminisce and enjoy being 'Janet's girls'.

Janet was never sporty and avoided gym and games at school, and her interest in sailing began much later on a dinghy sailing course at Bisham Abbey, where she spent much of the time capsizing! Undeterred, she then went on to Salcombe for a week's sailing with the Island Cruising Club, crossing the Channel to France aboard a 50ft yacht called *Lucretia* which was advertised as having a bath, though it turned out to be the repository for wet weather gear!

Walking near Port St Mary on the Isle of Man in May 2004

On her return Janet was told about the Cruising Association, which she joined in 1980. Over time she became involved in several committees, eventually becoming a Vice President and Chairman of Council. She went on many sailing holidays in England, France and Ireland, and was even cook to a honeymoon couple in Yugoslavia for two weeks. Then in 1993 she flew to the Azores to join a 40ft yacht called *Samuel Johnson*, and many years later the 1553 mile passage back to Cork became her qualifying voyage for the OCC, which she joined in 2006. It was a slow trip, but gave her valuable experience when she later crossed the Atlantic with me and Julian Harrap in *Simoon III*.

Janet and I met in 1997 when I was looking for crew, and it soon became clear that we enjoyed sailing together. Over 8½ years we completed a circumnavigation of the British Isles, covering 8500 miles and visiting 260 different ports, marinas and anchorages.

In December 2007, with myself as skipper, Julian Harrap as first mate and Janet as cook/crew, we crossed the 2750 miles from Puerto Mogán, Gran Canaria to Bridgetown, Barbados. It took 28 days, and we were at sea for Christmas and New Year. On Christmas Day we enjoyed confit canard and Christmas pud with custard laced with brandy, but had to eat out of soup bowls as the weather chose to be quite windy. Earlier on we had been becalmed twice, drifting in the sunshine, and on one occasion covered only 36 miles in 24 hours with a favourable 1 knot current. We had two seasons in the Caribbean – in 2008 covering 678 miles including visits to 15 different islands and stops at 32 anchorages and marinas, and in 2009 spending time in the Virgin Islands, British, American and Spanish. We spent three weeks anchored in Culebra in the Spanish Virgin Islands, but

still covered 397 miles and visited 25 different places. In all we covered some 20,000 miles in *Simoon III*, and visited 406 different anchorages harbours and marinas.

In retirement we planned to sail for at least three months every year. After the first season in the Caribbean I decided that we needed a larger, more comfortable boat and commissioned *Simoon IV*, a 43ft Hallberg Rassy from Ellös in Sweden, complete with electric winches, a bow-thruster and a washing machine. We collected her in August 2009 with the intention of returning to the Caribbean, but instead fell in love with the Baltic. After time in England having a generator fitted, we returned to the Baltic and spent the summer of 2010 cruising through the towns of Europe, visiting Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp and Copenhagen, before wintering in Augustenborg. Subsequently we sailed extensively in Denmark and Sweden, and visited Poland, Germany, Estonia and Latvia, attending Cruising Association and International Council of Cruising Yachts rallies and sharing magical moments with sailors from England, Germany and Sweden. In all we sailed around 7500 miles with *Simoon IV*, visiting 193 different places, and from February 2013 until December 2016 served the OCC as Roving Rear Commodores for the Baltic.

Sailing Simoon 4, a Hallberg Rassy 43, on the west coast of Sweden in July 2013

Janet was a superb hostess, and we were always on the lookout for boats flying the OCC, CA or ICCY burgees so we could invite the crews over for drinks on board *Simoon*. We kept a visitors book which all guests had to sign – it now contains more than 500 names.

Janet was diagnosed with cancer in October 2016. She faced several operations and sessions of chemotherapy with the utmost bravery and determination, but very sadly lost her battle and died in September 2018. She is greatly missed.

Simon Fraser

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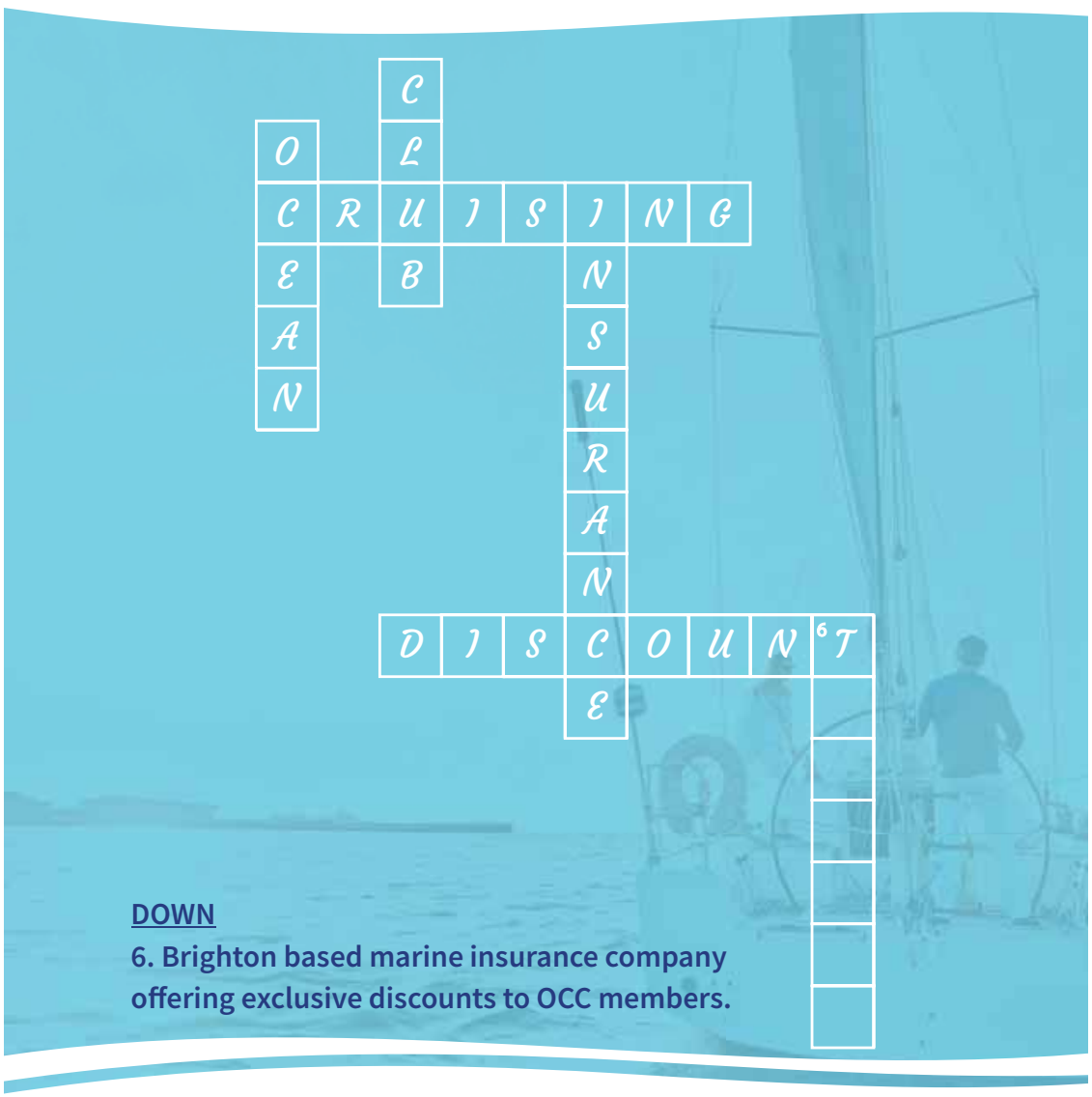

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