CARIBBEAN COMPASS

FREE

AUGUST 2010 NO. 179

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

Dominica all Day



See story on page 20



Saving ENERGY

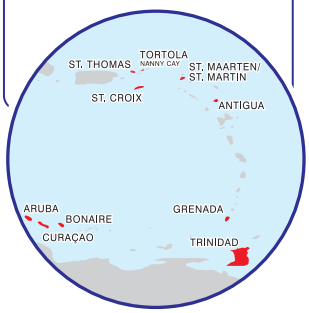
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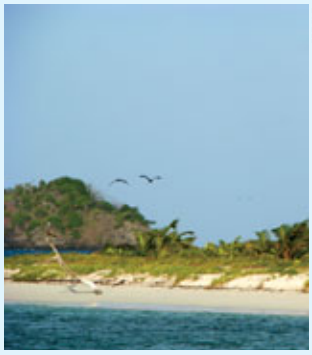
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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Editor.....**Sally Erdle** sally@caribbeancompass.com

Assistant Editor.....**Elaine Ollivierre** jsprat@vincysurf.com

Advertising & Distribution.....**Tom Hopman** tom@caribbeancompass.com

Art, Design & Production.....**Wilfred Dederer** wide@caribbeancompass.com

Accounting.....**Debra Davis** debra@caribbeancompass.com

Compass Agents by Island:

Antigua: Ad Sales & Distribution - Lucy Tulloch Tel (268) 720-6868 lucy@thelucy.com

Barbados: Distribution - Doyle Sails Tel/Fax: (246) 423-4600

Curaçao: Distribution - Budget Marine Curaçao curacao@budgetmarine.com Tel: (5999) 462 77 33

Dominica: Distribution - Hubert J. Winston Dominica Marine Center, Tel: (767) 448-2705, info@dominicamarinecenter.com

Grenada/Carriacou/Petite Martinique: Ad Sales & Distribution - Karen Maaroufi Cell: (473) 457-2151 Office: (473) 444-3222 compassgrenada@gmail.com

Martinique: Ad Sales & Distribution - Isabelle Prado Tel: (0596) 596 68 69 71, Mob: + 596 (0) 696 93 26 38 isabelle.prado@wanadoo.fr

St. Lucia: Ad Sales - Maurice Moffat Tel: (758) 452 0147 Cell: (758) 720 8432. mauricemoffat@hotmail.com Distribution - Lisa Kessell Tel: (758) 484-0555, kessellc@candw.lc

St. Maarten/St. Barths/Guadeloupe: Ad Sales - Stéphane Legendre Mob: + 590 690 760 100 stellegendre@wanadoo.fr Distribution - Eric Bendahan Tel: (599) 553 3850, ericb@cirexpresslogistics.com

St. Thomas/USVI: Distribution - Bryan Lezama Tel: (340) 774 7931, blezama1@earthlink.net

St. Vincent & the Grenadines: Ad Sales - Debra Davis Tel: (784) 457-3527, debra@caribbeancompass.com

Tortola/BVI: Distribution - Gladys Jones Tel: (284) 494-2830, Fax: (284) 494-1584

Trinidad: Ad Sales & Distribution - Jack Dausend Tel: (868) 621-0575, Cell: (868) 620-0978 Jack.Dausend@Gmail.com

Venezuela: Ad Sales & Distribution - Patty Tomasik Tel: (58-281) 265-3844 Tel/Fax: (58-281) 265-2448 xanadumarine@hotmail.com

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CMPA caribbean marine publishers association

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Cover photo: Simon Walsh captured this image of the seaside village of Soufriere, Dominica



Compass **covers the Caribbean! From Cuba to Trinidad, from Panama to Barbuda, we've got the news and views that sailors can use. We're the Caribbean's monthly look at sea and shore.**

"It is my pleasure and perhaps my obligation to let all our boating friends know how much we enjoy reading the *Compass* and how it enriches our experience cruising the Caribbean. We boaters can hardly wait till the next monthly edition is available so we can catch up on the real skinny on events and people."

— Tito Figueroa
Yacht Alleluia

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Info & Updates

New Buoyed Channel in Great Bay, St. Maarten

St. Maarten Ports Authority has put in a buoyed channel for marine traffic in Great Bay. It goes to and from the Captain Hodge wharf and to the marinas in the north-



east side of the bay. This new channel is meant to guide mariners safely to these destinations and maintain clear anchorage areas. The channel is marked in accordance with the IALA Maritime Buoyage System Region B. This means when entering from the sea, vessels must keep the red channel marker on their starboard side. The channel and anchorage area is a No Wake Zone. Operators must maintain a safe speed at all times. Adjust your speed to the prevailing circumstances and conditions and so that you can take proper and effective action to avoid a collision and/or be stopped within an appropriate distance. Remember, when reducing your speed you may not always reduce your wake. Look back and check your stern wave and adjust your speed until you have a minimal wake.

The sea side entrance to the channel buoys has red and green flashing lights and is located at 18°01´.085 North and 063°02´.086 West. The maximum draft for vessels using the channel is approximately seven feet. Vessels with deeper draft wishing to go to Bobby's Marina for services can call their offices or contact them on VHF Channel 69 for further information. Anchoring is not allowed in the channel.

Mariners must use this channel for traffic to and from these locations as well as local traffic to and from the Cruise Tender Pier in Pointe Blanche unless there are draft restrictions.

The International Collision Prevention Regulations 1972 are applicable in this channel as well as on all inland waters of St. Maarten.

Efforts are being made to void this area of any anchored vessels. If you should find yourself in this area please make all efforts to remove your vessel and re-anchor so that in any wind direction your vessel does not cross the channel.

For more information contact Eddy_Johnson@portofstmaarten.com or visit www.portofstmaarten.com.

USVI and Puerto Rico Now Accept Electronic Check-Ins

As reported July 12th in *The Triton* (http://thetriton.com): US Customs and Border Protection has begun accepting electronic submissions for clearing in for participants in the Local Boater Option (LBO). The web-based, automated check-in adds to the phone and in-person options of reporting private vessel arrivals from a foreign country.

The LBO is a pre-clearance system in limited US Coast Guard sectors (including Tampa, Miami, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands) that enables mariners to be interviewed and cleared in advance. Only US citizens and lawful permanent residents are eligible. Once they are approved, they receive a number and then can phone in their arrival instead of having to report in person. Under the new Small Vessel Reporting System, they can now also report in on-line.

It is intended for boaters to be able to file and update their float plan on-line. Once a float plan is entered and activated, SVRS will issue a float plan number. Upon arrival in US waters, LBO members can check-in using the float plan number on the CBP website, www.cbp.gov, and click on the "travel" and then "small vessel reporting system" areas.

Singlehander Attacked in St. Martin

On June 28th, 63-year-old solo circumnavigator Mike Harker was attacked and beaten aboard his Hunter 49, *Wanderlust 3,* while anchored at St. Martin. *Wanderlust* was in Simpson Bay Lagoon below Mt. Fortune ("Witch's Tit"), …

—Continued on next page





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…as the nearest boat to the channel along the French/Dutch border with no other boats to the south, west or north.

Mike reported that two men swam out to his boat at about 4:00AM and demanded money. When he said all he had was the cash in his wallet, they beat him, tied him up and ransacked the boat. He was able to call a Mayday on VHF 16 and says, "The police and the emergency medical boat were all at my side within 15 minutes". Liveaboards from two yachts anchored to the northeast of *Wanderlust* also responded.

Video security cameras at a nearby dinghy dock have gotten photos of the attackers and the police obtained DNA samples.

Mike has been released from the hospital and intends to sail south for the hurricane season.

Link to Gold in Skipper's Death in Panama Disputed

On June 29th, 61-year-old Bo Kjaer-Olsen was shot in the leg and bled to death aboard his 70-foot, 1949 Sparkman and Stevens schooner, *Antares,* while at anchor near Bajo Pipon in the Republic of Panama. Bajo Pipon is a sparsely populated stretch of river roughly eight miles south of the town of Pedregal. Bo's son Zach and daughter-in-law Sujey were also injured in the attack.

According to Don Winner of www.panama-guide.com, Bo was a famous salvage diver and treasure hunter who probably had about 200,000 dollars worth of gold on his boat — a presumed reason for the attack by five gunmen. Winner reports that Bo had recently completed a salvage operation in Honduras of a sunken treasure ship and the government of that country had paid him with the 17th century Spanish gold. He adds: "Panama is a very safe country, relatively speaking. This was apparently not just a random attack against a boater…. There was a hefty motive — money and gold."

However, Panama resident and family friend Don Ray writes at www.chiriquichatter.net, "From the family talking with Bo's boating friends, they learned that no boater would be foolish enough to store extreme valuables on board a ship, and Bo's friends said the thought was absurd. Let me make this very clear! There is no gold and there was no gold."

First Inductees at Trinidad & Tobago's Sailing Hall of Fame

Pierre La Borde reports: On Saturday July 3rd, the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association (TTSA) inaugurated its very own Sailing Hall of Fame during its annual prizegiving dinner. The first four inductees are as follows:

Harold La Borde: the first national of T&T to sail around the world, which he did with his family in 1973 in his home-built yacht *Humming Bird II*, having sailed across the Atlantic in the 26-foot *Humming Bird* in 1960. He also made a second circumnavigation with his family, via Cape Horn, in *Humming Bird III* in 1986. Two more transatlantic crossings took place, in 1992 and in 2000. Harold and his wife Kwailan hold the nation's highest award — the Trinity Cross.

Rawle Barrow: a racing and cruising yachtsman who in the 1960s competed for T&T in several PanAm games, CAC games and the Olympics in the Flying Dutchman dinghy. He has also competed in regional regattas for many years in his yachts *Petit Careme* and *Sweet Luv*. He has long been instrumental in the development of TTSA, and of sailing in local and regional waters.

Sidney Knox: a World War II pilot, businessman, and longtime sailor who was one of the founders of both the San Fernando (Trinidad) Yacht Club and TTSA. For many years he was the President of TTSA, guiding its evolution to where the club is today. He also helped to develop the Tobago Regatta and competed for many years in regional regattas in his yachts *Mayumi* and *After Hours*, among others.

Dougie Myers: a well-known racing yachtsman on the local and regional scene, Dougie passed away in 2004. He competed in many Tobago, Grenada, Barbados, Carriacou, and Antigua regattas on his yachts *Legacy, Hooligan, Huey, Huey Too* and *Domani*. It is a testimony to his dedication to racing that several marker buoys in these regattas are named in his honour.



Inaugural T&T Sailing Hall of Fame inductees (left to right): Rawle Barrow, Douggie Myers's brother Harry, Harold La Borde and Sidney Knox

Two Waterfalls Currently Off Limits in St. Vincent

If anchored along or otherwise visiting the Leeward coast of St. Vincent, please note that that the popular tourism sites of Trinity Falls and the Falls of Baleine are currently closed due to the danger of flash floods and landslides in the rainy season.

If you want to visit a beautiful waterfall in St. Vincent, Dark View Falls is open as of this writing.

For more information contact tourism@vincysurf.com.

Cruisers' Breakfast Highlights T&T Directory Launch

Ruth Lund reports: On July 14th some 65 cruisers and 40 yacht-related contractors, company representatives and interested officials met over a delicious "Trini" breakfast at Sails Restaurant, Chaguaramas, Trinidad. This event was sponsored by the Chaguaramas Business Community (CBC), an informal group of business people who, since April of this year, have been meeting regularly to find ways to improve service quality, foster better customer relations and promote Trinidad's leisure marine industry.

The purpose of this breakfast was to launch the new *Boaters' Directory of Trinidad & Tobago* and provide a forum for information sharing between yacht service providers and visiting cruisers. Donald Stollmeyer, Chairman of the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT), spoke about the *Boaters' Directory*, now in its 15th edition, and the integral role publisher/editor Jack Dausend has played, …

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…working with tremendous commitment to improve the relationship between the cruising foreign boaters and the citizens of Trinidad & Tobago since 1990.



DESKTOP DESIGNS AND LETTERS

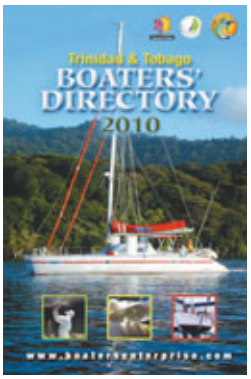
Jack Dausend addressing the breakfast meeting

Cruisers then filled out a small questionnaire regarding their experience in Chaguaramas, after which the buffet breakfast was devoured. Carlos Fensom, whose Facebook page, "Trinidad for Cruising Sailors", has generated much discussion, then spoke about what the CBC was trying to achieve; Jesse James reported on the situation regarding bringing pets into T&T; and Dr. Arthur Potts of the T&T Institute of Marine Affairs made a presentation regarding the economic impact study on the boating industry currently being done.

Mark De Freitas, Manager of the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association, facilitated the discussion session, during which concerns about safety and security in the yards and on the water, Customs and Immigration issues and other problems were raised. The new Officer in Charge at Customs, Mr. Ramkissoon, Gina Carvalho of YSATT and various CBC members gave responses where appropriate.

Cruisers expressed appreciation for the event. The information gathered will serve to guide marine service providers. The intention is to organize similar sessions in future, hopefully with the relevant officials/representatives present. The CBC interest group works in close liaison with YSATT (many are both CBC and YSATT members) and recognizes that while some things are best channeled through an official body, there is much that individual contractors and companies can do to improve and revitalize the yacht service industry.

New T&T Boaters' Directory Now Available



Cathryn Winn reports: For 15 years, the *Trinidad & Tobago Boaters' Directory* has been providing yachtsmen with an annual guide so helpful it has been called "the cruiser's Bible". Jack Dausend, editor and publisher for all of these years, along with his co-directors Ryan Nunes and Phillip Lewis, are proud to announce the arrival of the 2010-2011 edition.

As usual, the full-colour front section is designed to help you get to know Trinidad better. You'll find maps of Chaguaramas; Customs and Immigration rules; pet owners' guidelines; and much more of interest.

The yellow pages are set up in business categories, and there is a separate section of blue pages of brand names, plus a listing at the back of all the active marine businesses.

With this one compact book in hand, you can find a doctor or a dentist; navigate the telephone and postal services; talk to your Embassy; and find that elusive part for your outboard engine.

The *Boaters' Directory* as always is free of charge and found at all the marinas and chandleries in Chaguaramas. You can also get the entire *Boaters' Directory* on-line at www.boatersenterprise.com.

New Sloop Launched in Carriacou

On July 11th a 32-foot traditional Carriacou sloop designed and built by Bernard Compton and commissioned by Dave Goldhill was launched in Windward, Carriacou.

Dave tells *Compass*: "Since *Genesis* was launched in 2005 (*see "Traditional Launch of Carriacou Sloop* Genesis" *by Alexis Andrews,* Compass *April 2005*), the Carriacou workboat has taken on significantly different economic proportions. The boats were getting bigger and bigger and dearer and dearer, which has resulted in a powerful A Class, well represented in Antigua, but leaving a gaping hole in the size that a layman could afford: i.e. the B Class, 32 feet and under.


GEORGIE TUSON

"With the recent resurgence of boat building in both Windward and Petite Martinique I wanted to build a vessel that was a traditional design but built to withstand time — not the usual ten-year plan, but, with modern epoxies and the availability of bronze fastenings and power tools, something that would endure the ages.

"This will not be a work boat as such, so the emphasis is more on simplicity rather than the dependence on six strong men always available to hoist and tweak. The rig will be as traditional as possible — but the word hybrid seems to creep into our terminology these days…."

The name of the new boat is *New Moon*.

Cruisers' Site-ings

• The new, comprehensive *Jamaica Cruising Guide* is available at ***www.jamaicacruisingguide.com***. It is a free download. The author of the guide is Frank Virgintino, who recently cruised Jamaica extensively. Frank is also the author of the on-line guide to the Dominican Republic.

• There is an interesting discussion on the topic "Is the Caribbean Safe to Cruise?" at the Women and Cruising Blog: ***www.womenandcruising.com***. Visit the new section on cruising families while you're there.

• Also check out The Interview with a Cruiser Project at ***http://interviewwithacruiser.blogspot.com***.

• Visit ***www.seaworthy.com*** for Bahamas and Caribbean Cruising Advisories.

• For a master's course on hurricanes go to ***www.street-iolaire.com*** where you will find the following articles: "Securing for a Hurricane", "Tracking Hurricanes", "Hurricane Holes", "Hurricanes — Exploding Some Myths", "Leaving a Boat Unattended in Hurricane Season", "Reflections on Hugo" and "Reflections on Ivan".

• Recently a survey was sent to participants in Antigua Sailing Week. A number of replies have been received but insufficient to reach firm conclusions. You may not have taken part in recent years or you may never have taken part but, as a result of business or other connections, you may have an intimate knowledge of Sailing Week and your opinions will be as valuable as those who have taken part. Complete the survey ***www.surveymonkey.com/s/P9KMFST***.

***Loose Cannon* Found After a Month Adrift**

As we reported last month, a J/24 called *Loose Cannon* went missing from Carlisle Bay, Barbados on May 23rd. The boat was found adrift north of Curaçao by the sailing yacht *Fayole* exactly one month later, on June 23rd. The J/24 was towed to the Coast Guard base in Curaçao, where it was inspected. Basic gear including folded sails, lines, diving masks, flares, fire extinguishers and life vests were aboard. The authorities reported that they found no evidence of a man-overboard situation or vandalism, and concluded that the boat had probably gone adrift accidentally. The St. Lucia-based boat had been in Barbados to race in the Mount Gay/Boatyard Regatta.

New St. Maarten Yacht Rates Not Set Yet

We reported in the May issue of *Compass* that the body in St. Maarten responsible for collecting yacht fees, the Simpson Bay Lagoon Authority, has been reorganized and was making proposals to the government for a new fee structure. While a review and studies have been done, these have not yet led to a decision on the new rates.

For current rates visit www.sxmlagoonauthority.com.

Grenada's Marine Industry Supports National Sailing Academy

The Grenada National Sailing Academy, based at the Grenada Yacht Club, received generous support from the local marine industry for its Summer Camp running from July 26th through August 6th. The camp trains complete beginners, aged between eight and 14, the basics of sailing. The marine industry is experiencing rapid growth in Grenada and many youngsters welcome the opportunity to learn about sailing and its possible career opportunities.

Budget Marine has been supporting the youth sailing programmes in Grenada for many years and has once again demonstrated that support by contributing, along with Spice Island Marine, three racing Optimists to the GNSA. Significant help in repairing some of the boats has come from Grenada Marine, and GNSA has also secured generous discounts on sail repairs by Turbulence Sails. Port Louis Marina offered use of their extensive premises and the Camper & Nicholson waterfront and pontoons for the Treasure Hunt and other sail-training games. Also there have been donations from James and Jacqui Pascall at Horizon Yacht Charters, Anita Sutton of Island Dreams, Bob Goodchild of Flyingfish Ventures and Bryden & Minors.

After the Summer Camp, the GNSA will be looking to expand its current race-training programme with a new group of beginners.

Act Fast for Grenada Carnival!

Carnival Monday in Grenada is August 9th. If you're in Grenada and reading this in the first week of August, there's still time to get involved in Grenada Carnival by joining Ricardo Keens-Douglas's visitor-friendly carnival band VAT: "Very Attractive Tourist". No feathers, sequins or beads required — just come dressed as a Very Attractive Tourist. Most of you might have the tourist outfits in your locker already: beach dresses, wraps, bikinis, Hawaiian shirts, surf shorts, beach bags, sunglasses, straw hats — and guess what? There's a Sailor Tourist section, too!

For more information call 440-2385/459–5332, e-mail rkd388@gmail.com or visit the mas camp located on Green Street, St. George's.

Amendments to Selected Shortwave Weather Broadcasts

We are glad to have been informed of corrections to the Selected Shortwave Weather Broadcast schedule that appeared in the June issue of *Compass*:

0630 AST - The Trinidad Emergency Net (Eric) on 3855 has been off the air since sometime in March.

0630 AST - the Caribbean Emergency and Weather Net on 3815 was removed from the list but is still on the air.

Also:

0730 AST - KP2G (George) is no longer broadcasting weather on 7086 at this time, although he continues at 1630 for the cocktail and weather net.



***Compass* Now Available in Tobago**

Caribbean Compass is now available in Tobago. Editions will be stocked exclusively at Store Bay Marine Services (SBMS) shop at Cable Beach. Based in the south-west of Tobago, SBMS offers internet (Wi-Fi at the anchorage at Store Bay) and laundry facilities to visiting yachts and also has a team of marine engineers to enable quick and quality repairs island-wide. The company has distribution contracts with major marine suppliers in the US, and in Trinidad and other CARICOM countries, which allows for efficient ordering and delivery of marine parts. Tobago is located outside the hurricane belt — an unspoiled cruising ground with numerous idyllic, safe and secure anchorages for those sailing between Grenada and Trinidad.

To pick up your latest edition of *Caribbean Compass* go to Store Bay Marine Services, Unit B, Bago's Beach Bar, Pigeon Point Road, Crown Point. For more information on Store Bay Marine Services visit www.sbms.co.tt.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome new advertisers the Round DR Race, on page 17; Mercury Marine, on page 24; and Chateau Mygo Restaurant of St. Lucia and Lumba Dive of Carriacou, both in the Market Place section, pages 43 through 45. Good to have you with us!



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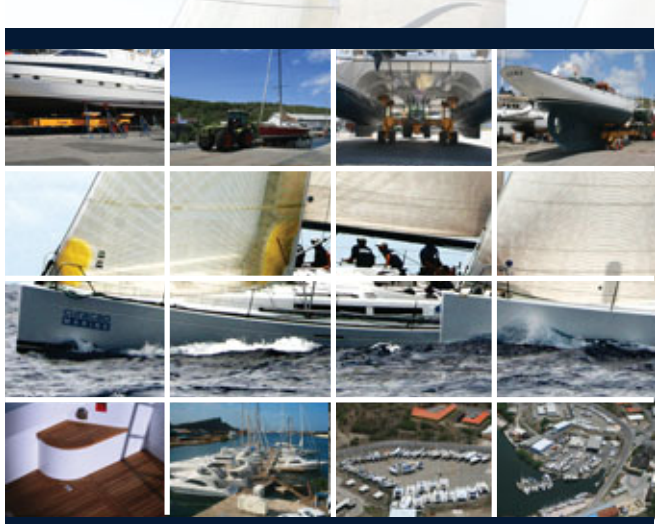
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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Yachting Could Lead Bahamas' Economy

According to a June 22nd report in *IBI Magazine*, the Bahamas' Minister for the Environment Earl Deveaux said that yachting could eventually become the leading contributor to the Bahamian economy. Deveaux told the local press, "If you look at the marine environment of the Bahamas and what Bahamians can do and what the world demands, then you will see we have the most beautiful cruising destination in the world."

Deveaux told the *Bahamas Weekly* newspaper that the recent passage of a yacht code should help grow the Bahamas Maritime Authority. "Right now, yachts represent less than one percent of the register of the Bahamas Maritime Authority," he said. "We seek to grow the BMA in every respect, but probably the most significant area where we can grow it in the short run is the yacht registry." He envisions ten percent growth by the end of this year.

Deveaux also wants to target boaters in Florida as potential visitors and to prepare Bahamians for job opportunities at sea. "Captains, engineers, stewards, deckhands and the onshore opportunities for provisioning the boat with fuel and water, cleaning them, and guiding them through some of our waters represents a huge opportunity to grow the Bahamian economy."

Deveaux noted that a yacht he visited recently was registered in the Caymans, while the crewmembers were from Australia, England and Ireland. "Any one of those jobs by a Bahamian would represent a huge leap, and if you multiply one by 78,000, you get the idea of the potential I speak about," he said. "The registry is good, but the bigger opportunity is getting Bahamians on yachts."

Do You Have the Right Marine Insurance?

Offshore Risk Management reports: Storm season is here. Do you have the right marine insurance? The cost of insurance for boats, marinas and anything else marine-related has increased so much over the past few years many people cannot afford to insure properly. Or they have cut back on coverage to get the premiums to an affordable level, often underinsuring.

In addition, insurers have pulled out of the market, tightened their rules or imposed conditions to protect underwriters rather than you, their customer.

You could be impacted by reduced coverage or no coverage for storm damage; punitive depreciation penalties for boats over five years of age; inexperienced personnel managing your claim; or no service and no coverage.

Offshore Risk Management offers customized insurance coverage: no need to pay for things you don't want or need. Premiums can be tailored to fit your budget. For a business operator in the slow season, this can be a lifesaver. We have experienced adjusters on staff to assist from claim to settlement, and on-line filing and instructions anytime to get your information to us and help to you quickly.

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Lower insurance costs. Most clients experience a 15 percent or more savings in their insurance costs. And better service, no charge.

For decades we have insured thousands of boats and marine professionals worldwide.

For more information see ad on page 19.

Le Phare Bleu Marina Invests in Its Staff

Lynn Fletcher reports: While others are looking to reduce their staff costs during the low season, Le Phare Bleu is investing in its team of 40 employees.



Le Phare Bleu's owners, Jana Caniga (left) and Dieter Burkhalter, flanking Employee of the Year Enoch Fraser

Working at Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel, located at Petit Calivigny Bay, Grenada, offers benefits including the Employee of the Month Award, in-house Training and Development Courses, a Staff Appreciation Party at Hog Island, and the Employee of the Year Awards Ceremony on board the lighthouse ship *Vastra Banken* Restaurant.

The 2010 Employee of the Year Award was won by Head Gardener Enoch Isaac Fraser, who has worked at Le Phare Bleu since August 2008. Enoch wins a two-week trip to the marina owners' homeland, Switzerland. After the ceremony all the staff and management got into party mode and danced into the night.

During his trip, Enoch will not only visit tourist attractions, but also will gain knowledge of how another gardening/landscape company operates and bring back useful ideas to develop some new projects at Le Phare Bleu. These projects include creating compost beds using the vegetable waste from the marina's two restaurants. The compost will fertilize the marina's well-maintained gardens.

As part of the staff training and development program, special vouchers were given to long-serving members of staff to enjoy a night's stay at the hotel, including breakfast and lunch at the Poolbar Restaurant plus dinner on board the lighthouse ship *Vastra Banken* Restaurant. This will enable staff to sample the Le Phare Bleu guest experience and help them to understand the importance of customer care.

For more information visit www.lepharebleu.com.

ISO Standards to Improve Quality of Marine Fuels

New editions of two ISO standards on marine fuels have been developed to meet higher international requirements for air quality, ship safety, engine performance and crew health.

The development of "ISO 8217:2010, Petroleum products - Fuels (class F) - Specifications of marine fuels", the fourth edition of this standard, was driven by a request from the International Maritime Organization to have it ready by the July 1st implementation date of the revised Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

ISO's work in this area has led to improved quality of marine fuels and greater confidence and transparency between buyers and suppliers in the global market for marine fuels which is, in turn, a significant factor in maritime transport and global supply chains. In the past, local environmental legislation and other local conditions have varied considerably, leading to a large number of categories of fuels being available.

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The new editions of ISO 8217 and ISO 8216 will help to increase the international harmonization of marine fuel categories and raise the bar for quality. They tighten existing limits and add new parameters to meet with the evolution of technology in the sector and increased stakeholder expectations.

For more information visit www.iso.org.

Errol Flynn, Jamaica, Installs New Dinghy Dock

The pleas of those who anchor out while visiting Jamaica's Port Antonio will soon be answered with the installation of a 40- by eight-foot aluminum dinghy dock and 20-foot aluminum access ramp provided by Errol Flynn Marina. The new floating dock will be positioned on the waterfront near the marina administration building. With the ramp access, visitors will be able to take dock carts directly down the ramp to load provisions directly into their tenders.

Prior to the new dinghy dock, visitors had to bring their dinghies to the main dock and climb up some four feet to the top of the dock. The new dock will be low profile to facilitate loading and unloading and have ample cleats so visitors can lock their dinghies to the dock if desired.

It is expected the dock installation will be completed by November.

For more information visit www.errolflynnmarina.com.

Roll and Tip — the Forgotten Painting Method

Philippe Richard of Aikane Trinidad Ltd. shares his experience regarding this time-tested method currently used by his specialist catamaran company to achieve results that can compete with any modern spray job:

Fifteen to 20 years ago, when I was doing the job myself, I had the opportunity to paint boats or parts of boats. At the time, not being equipped for spray, I used the simplest and easiest method: rolling the paint. I later saw these paint jobs ageing well and I have found it very strange how unknown this paint application is, which, with its finished look, is very comparable with a spray job.



I've since left the team and now as coach I have for a long time encouraged our boatyard staff to change their method of paint application from the spray to the roller and brush, but obtaining this change took time.

Today the spraying of "yacht-quality paint" has taken over and we have completely forgotten the tried and tested method of brushed paints and varnishes. But despite the apparent abandonment by users, all major manufacturers have in their product list a paint to be rolled or brushed on. This method needs to be looked at as a cost-effective alternative.

Recently I decided to enforce the rule in our yard: no more spray guns. In the beginning it took a little extra effort on everyone's part to credit the quality of the promised result, but rapidly, one after the other, they were convinced beyond my expectation by the efficiency of the roll-and-tip method during the painting of a 45-foot catamaran.

Later, reviewing the figures using this application we noted the following benefits:

- We didn't have to use the costly protection required by the spray for the boat itself and for its immediate surrounding.
- We didn't need any compressed air and didn't use power to produce it.
- We didn't need any of the costly equipment the spray requires.
- The men's protection was much lighter and more comfortable.
- We used less than 20 percent of the paint needed for spraying the same job.
- Ultimately, something we could only perceive: the negative environmental impact must have been drastically reduced.

I am glad I was able to convince the people working with me of the efficiency of the roll-and-tip method. I think professionals should sometimes look further than the tip of their spray gun and try some more economical ways to actualize a job. In reducing the cost per job our skills can become accessible to those with smaller budgets and we will see an increase in our business volume.

I have seen many fiberglass boats ten years old and over needing care, but the gel coat repair is not so easy due to discoloration and the spray paint is just too costly for some budgets.

I encourage everyone to try the roll-and-tip method. Simply get the proper paint and the slow solvent from your supplier, ask for the data sheet and respect the application requirements to the letter; it works.

Follow the Yellowbrick Road

OC Technology, part of OC Group, the global sports-marketing company specializing in professional sailing, has signed a new strategic partnership with Yellowbrick Tracking. This establishes Yellowbrick as the leading company in the offshore yacht-tracking market with the largest fleet of Iridium-based tracking units available.

The new partnership will see all operational delivery of tracking services carried out by Yellowbrick, including the provision of the hardware and the on-line management system, while OC Technology will continue to market their integrated communication systems that have been developed over the last decade.

The standard OCTracker unit will be renamed YellowbrickMAX and Yellowbrick will now manage all the tracking operations of the combined business. The Yellowbrick units are self-contained, battery-powered, lightweight tracking devices capable of reporting a boat's position, speed and course at pre-determined intervals, and are programmable remotely. In addition, Yellowbrick will also manage the OCTracker+ units, to be renamed YellowbrickMAX+, which allow for a hard-wired installation and extended data transfer capabilities, such as true wind speed and other data.

Since 2006, Yellowbrick have provided tracking and information display solutions for sailing events including the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers.

For more information visit www.yellowbrick-tracking.com.

RBVIYC Offers Summer Discounts

The Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club has negotiated discounted rates for yacht charter and adult learn-to-sail training this summer! Yachts are available to charter for long weekends and training is available on either yachts or IC24 keelboats.

For more information visit www.rbviyc.org.





BIG Business: YACHT RALLY LEADERS TO MERGE

Every year for the past decade, more than 200 yachts embarking from Europe have arrived in the Caribbean at the start of the sailing season as part of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC), a transatlantic sailing event that began in 1986.

And every year since 1990 a fleet of some 60 yachts embarking from the East Coast of the US has arrived at around the same time as part of the Caribbean 1500 passage-making rally.

It was announced on June 30th that the organizers of these two rallies, the UK-based World Cruising Club (WCC) and the US-based Cruising Rally Association (CRA), would merge.

About World Cruising Club

Sailing event organizers WCC are best known for the ARC, the world's largest annual trans-ocean sailing event. The ARC is the originator of the many WCC cruising rallies now taking place around the globe. Since its inception by yachting journalist Jimmy Cornell, more than 4,000 yachts and 23,000 crew have participated in the 2,700-nautical-mile course from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to the Caribbean. The first four ARC rallies finished in Barbados, and in 1990 the Rally relocated to the new marina at Rodney Bay, St. Lucia.

Since January 2006, WCC has been an independent event-management company running a portfolio of cruising rallies based on the familiar concept of safety and fun pioneered by the ARC. Other WCC events include World ARC Round the World Rally, ARC Europe and Rally Portugal. WCC also runs a series of seminars in association with *Yachting World* magazine, and runs www.noonsite.com, a one-stop website providing information for cruisers on all maritime nations of the world.

About the Cruising Rally Association

The Cruising Rally Association, founded in 1990 by Steve Black, manages a year-round calendar of offshore cruising rallies including the Caribbean 1500 and the Atlantic Cup, a return rally from the Caribbean to the US. CRA also organizes regular ocean sailing seminars. More than 750 cruisers and future cruisers attend CRA events each year. To date, more than 1,200 boats have sailed the Caribbean 1500 and Atlantic Cup Rallies and more than 2,250 crewmembers have prepared for ocean sailing by attending CRA's ocean sailing seminars.

From January 2011, the CRA rallies will be run by World Cruising Club.

Steve Black tells *Compass*, "I am thrilled to have our events under the same umbrella as the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers and the World ARC. Joining with WCC is a real endorsement of our events. I am sure that we will eventually have more European participants in our events, and more Americans and Canadians will enter the ARC and World ARC. As part of a much larger organization we can ensure the continuity of events like our Caribbean 1500 well beyond my stewardship. I hope you will join with me in celebrating a new beginning for our events."

Caribbean Compass fielded some questions from Caribbean sailors — including both past rally participants and independent passage-makers — about this major merger. We put them to WCC's Communications Director, Jeremy Wyatt:

Interview with Jeremy Wyatt



CC: *Both individual rally organizers have a good track record. What factors went into the decision to merge?*

JW: In a nutshell, Steve wants to ensure the long-term continuation of the events he started and to spend more time sailing! We've worked with CRA for a number of years, co-promoting seminars and other activities, so World Cruising Club was a natural choice to take on the CRA events. There is an obvious benefit to WCC in having a significant presence in North America: it will help us to serve our participants more effectively, and we hope to welcome more American and Canadian sailors into our other events, particularly World ARC, our round-the-world rally, which will set sail from Saint Lucia in January 2012.

CC: *How will the merger affect WCC and CRA? What form will "the umbrella" take? Will there be a new name for the combined organization? A single website?*

JW: from our perspective we will take a gradualist approach: small but constant improvements that benefit our event participants. It is important that we appreciate and understand the needs of the loyal following that CRA has built over the years and we don't want to make any hasty changes. However, it is likely that we will use the name World Cruising Club America for our profile in North America. CRA events will continue to be managed from the US and there will definitely be an American accent running the rallies.

CC: *How will the merger affect rally sponsors?*

JW: We take a holistic view of our sponsors, working hard to offer them exposure across all our events and building a long-term relationship with them. Unlike many sailing-related sponsorships, our title sponsors and Corporate Members have been involved with World Cruising Club for many years — for example, Marina de Lagos has been an event sponsor in Portugal for over 15 years. World Cruising Club already works with some CRA sponsors and so the combined offering will benefit all our sponsors with whom we aim to maintain long-term working relationships. The merged group will have an even wider impact, which will enhance the offering to our various sponsors.



Above: The Caribbean 1500 fleet's in at its Caribbean homeport, Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola…
Left: Jeremy Wyatt of World Cruising Club
Right: The Cruising Rally Association's Steve Black says, 'We expect an all-time record turnout for our fall rallies, which I attribute to improvements in the economy and several years of pent-up demand from people who postponed their dream trip'



CC: *How will the merger affect rally departure and destination ports? Does the combined organization want to promote certain destinations, or the activity of passage-making itself, or both?*

JW: We already have a long-term commitment to our port sponsors in Saint Lucia and Tortola so there will not be any changes there. There is certainly potential to combine the Atlantic Cup and ARC Europe, which both start from Nanny Cay, Tortola, to create a larger event for the benefit of participants and sponsors alike, but nothing has been announced yet, and would be unlikely to take effect until 2012.

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CC: *How will the merger affect rally participants? On June 30th you announced, "Our combined events will provide more opportunities for cruising sailors wishing to sail offshore in company, while strengthening safety standards and procedures and facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experience amongst cruisers." Please give some specifics.*



... and the ARC fleet's in at Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia

JW: A key area in which World Cruising Club is recognized as a trend leader is in encouraging safety and best practice amongst cruising sailors. We invest much time and effort promoting appropriate safety standards, ensuring that crews have the right equipment and, importantly, that they know how to use it. We will also be looking to share the knowledge generated from many thousands of ocean sailing miles and collected in our surveys, which we pass on at seminars, via our in-house magazine and via online events and noonsite.com.

CC: *You've noted that that the merger will produce "the largest global organization dedicated to the sport of passage-making". How is passage-making a sport, exactly? Historically, it seems that both WCC and CRA have acted as service organizations, smoothing the way of ocean-crossing sailors who will go en masse with them. Will promotion of a sport now take precedence?*

JW: A cruising rally is a fun event, but sailing is still called a sport. All our events have an element of fun competition; it adds to the enjoyment of an ocean crossing and appeals to our participants. However the events we run are not ocean races; they are intended for typical offshore cruising sailors, not professional racers. We aim to keep it that way.

CC: *Will the merger encourage "cruising" in the sense that ARC founder Jimmy Cornell understood it back in the day? Or will the combined organization be doing something different — promoting a sport or enabling the timid, perhaps? How many participants are "real cruisers" (i.e. how many continue to cruise) and how many are getting an item crossed off their "bucket list"?*

JW: This is an interesting question. World Cruising Club encourages many potential cruisers to take the first step in expanding their cruising horizons. That they then go on to cruise further and longer with or without a rally is good news and maintains the ethos behind the reasons for the original establishment of the rallies by Jimmy Cornell.

Our organization can provide a framework to help people plan and prepare for offshore cruising as well as sharing information and experiences from other cruisers. Noonsite.com is the hub for a worldwide community of cruisers and we publish extensive preparation advice via worldcruising.com for Club members.

However, the ARC is so well known that it is definitely "on the bucket list". Around 40 percent of ARC sailors give their primary reason for participation as "wanting to take part in the ARC" while just 20 percent say their major reason was to be part of a large trans-ocean fleet.

CC: *Since their beginnings, what changes have WCC and CRA seen in the physical aspects of the boats (e.g. size, preparation) and in demographics (e.g. age of participants, nationalities, experience)? How will these trends affect future plans?*

JW: Over 60 percent of the ARC fleet are between 40 and 50 feet and there is no doubt that over the past 25 years the size of a typical cruising yacht has grown larger: the median size in the ARC has gone from 42 feet to 47 feet. Changes in navigation and sail-handling technology, the introduction of bow-thrusters and relatively cheap, reliable, powered anchor windlasses have all made it easier for cruisers to cope with larger boats. The boat builders have recognized this trend and now produce a huge range of family cruising boats in the 40- to 50-foot category. Rising incomes and the relative fall in the cost of a cruising yacht, thanks to mass production by builders, have also added to the growth in demand for larger cruising yachts.

Despite the mantra of "keep it simple" we have definitely seen the introduction of more sophisticated technology on board the typical yacht. Take communications equipment as an example. When the ARC first started in 1986, most, though not all, of the yachts had a VHF radio. Some also had an HF radio and we were lucky if we got more than 50 percent of the fleet positions every two or three days. Now almost all the boats carry a satellite telephone, around 50 percent also have an HF radio, and all the boats are tracked by satellite. You could spot the same trends in the use of refrigeration, electronic charts, power generation and other areas.

The added complexity of modern cruising boats means that people are hungry for information. We want World Cruising Club to be recognized as experts and a key hub for circulating knowledge and information about cruising.

Demographics haven't changed dramatically, though one area of growth has been in the number of people taking a sabbatical — a year or two away from normal life, often with young families. What was once considered as "career suicide", has now become much more acceptable as employers, at least in Europe, recognize the importance of a work/life balance.

The ARC has always been an international event, but with each year its scope extends further. This has been notable with the opening up of Eastern European countries. In the 2009 event we had 32 different nationalities represented in the fleet, including virtually every country in Europe, North America and Australasia.

CC: *Can the combined organization do more to get internet access aboard vessels at sea, so participants can browse "noonsite" for example? A Pactor subscription service, for example?*

JW: In our experience, the growth of land-based WiFi networks, especially within the Caribbean region, has changed the way cruisers use the Internet. The "go-anywhere" systems such as Sailmail are used for e-mail communications when offshore or out of range and then local WiFi is used for "band hungry" activities such as updating blogs, sending photos and researching ports via the Internet. On noonsite.com, we find that very few users browse the site via slow-speed connections. However we are planning to revamp the site to make it available for mobile browsers using smartphones.

CC: *Where is the combined organization trying to go in the future — literally as well as figuratively? What events will be added/deleted from the calendars? Anything new planned?*

JW: Well, it is far too early to be talking in detail about specific events. We certainly plan to grow our American events and the round-the-world rally World ARC, and we are constantly looking at ways to enhance the rallies. The added profile from including CRA events will help us pull together more tangible benefits for cruisers, for example, of key equipment, charts and insurance. Already one leading European insurance company is offering lower premiums to members because our boats are all fitted with satellite tracking devices. The dispersed geographic location of our participants means that we are also looking for ways to build our community online and we have some exciting developments in the pipeline for noonsite.com.

CC: *Is there anything else you would like to tell* Compass *readers?*

JW: We certainly hope that our reputation speaks for itself; our proven track record over many years has seen both the ARC and Caribbean 1500 act as the launch-pad for thousands of sailors into the world of offshore cruising and we look forward to welcoming even more onboard.

For more information on World Cruising Club visit www.worldcruising.com. For more information on the Cruising Rally Association visit www.carib1500.com.



CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Untangled! — A Humpback Whale Released

Caroline Rinaldi reports: Seventy metres of line and buoys, an incredible tangled mess, was found rolled up around the pectoral fin of a humpback whale by the research team of the Association Evasion Tropicale (AET) on April 8th on the west coast of Guadeloupe.





Top: After being released from its drogue of discarded fishing gear, the whale stayed close to the boat for some minutes
Bottom: Some of the lines, buoys and pieces of wood that were taken off the entangled whale

The captain of the research boat sighted two humpback whales turning around at the surface. One of them approached the boat very closely and he noticed some buoys "following" the whale.

Realizing what had happened, the captain and his crew began to grab and slowly lift the mess of lines into the boat while cutting them off the animal, who stayed close to the boat. After the lines were all cut away, the humpback remained next to the boat for some minutes before it realized that it was free. It then joined its companion, who had remained by its side. Then they began a route north at a speed of eight knots. The boat followed them at a distance for a while to make sure the untangled whale was okay.

It is hoped that the whale will be able to recover from the experience of dragging more than 40 kilos of line and buoys from its fin. But where it became entangled and for how long remain mysteries. Without this disentanglement effort, would it have been able to make the 1,500-mile (or more) journey back to its feeding ground?

This event was the first of its kind recorded in the Guadeloupe archipelago waters. It is difficult to say how many more marine animals might be affected in the Caribbean. Drifting pieces of discarded nets and line can be lethal traps for marine mammals, turtles and other sea creatures.

Disentanglement efforts are very dangerous and need specific techniques so as not to injure humans or animals. They should only be attempted by those with extensive field experience with whales. Specific rescue teams have been specially trained in disentanglement on the US East Coast since 1984, having already freed more than 90 great whales and many other marine animals. But the best help remains to prevent entanglement by not leaving old nets, gear and other trash in the ocean and working with fisheries to modify gear.

For any stranding or distress of marine mammals in Guadeloupe, contact the French Marine Mammals Stranding Network: (690) 57 19 44 or evastropic@wanadoo.fr.

For the rest of the Eastern Caribbean contact the Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network: nath51@verizon.net or visit www.eccnwhale.org.

What To Do with a Beached Whale?

In the Wider Caribbean Region, there is an urgent need for capacity building in the area of on-the-ground response to marine mammal strandings, collection of relevant data, training in methods of sample collection, archiving of samples and establishment of an on-line database for findings.

Regional workshops for stranding response have been completed in the Dutch, French and Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries and territories. Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, hosted a workshop in November last year, followed by one in Bouillante, Guadeloupe, in January, and one in Panama City, Panama, in April.

The goal of the workshops was to review the techniques and protocols for responding to stranding incidents for marine mammals and to facilitate possibilities for collaboration and harmonization of a French/Dutch/Spanish stranding network for the Wider Caribbean Region. This Caribbean network will collaborate with an international network of stranding responders. Another workshop goal is the establishment of a centralized archive of samples and a database of findings of countries in the region.

Specific objectives of the workshops included:

• Establishing standardized data collection methods;

• Continued training of individuals throughout the Caribbean in marine mammal stranding response, allowing for maximum chance of successful recovery of stranded animals;

• Training participants in the use of standardized techniques and protocols for preparation, handling, transport and storage of marine mammal specimens when responding to marine mammal strandings to ensure effective sample collection for research;

• Establishing a clear "Incident Command System" on each island to organize stranding events with clearly defined roles for all involved agencies/organizations, and a set pyramid of authorization;

• Reinforcing national and regional coordination needs for stranding response, analytical capabilities, and technology and information exchange; and,

• Creating a link with other sub-regional stranding networks in the Caribbean such as the Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network and Southern Caribbean Cetacean Network, ensuring better communication and cataloging of stranding events.

Because marine mammals are transboundary animals, successful conservation of marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region will ultimately depend upon the commitment of countries here to build and maintain, with international assistance, internal capacities for setting conservation priorities and achieving high standards of population and habitat protection.

The attendees valued the opportunity to have a forum to discuss their shared challenges. The discussions addressed the future establishment of regional cooperation programs to increase scientific, technical, and educational exchange among relevant national, regional, and international organizations. Specifically, it was recommended that a regional stranding database be developed, which would be attainable by the different stranding networks of the region and which would include the expert contacts from all the territories and countries.

A complete report of each workshop is available at www.car-spaw-rac.org.

Eastern Caribbean Students Draw Attention to Seabirds!

Three school children, from Dominica, Antigua and Martinique, have secured their schools EC$300 for books on nature conservation. Emma Farley, Jordan Simmons and Christelle Brunot are the winners of Environmental Protection In the Caribbean's (EPIC) Eastern Caribbean poster competition, "Why are Seabirds Important?" The pupils will also receive prizes of binoculars and copies of the book *Birds of the West Indies* by H. Raffaele *et al.*



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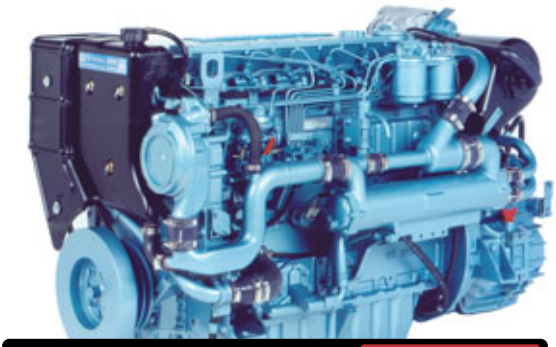
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—*Continued from previous page*

Emma Farley of Ross University Preparatory School, Dominica, wins the eight-and-nine year old category with her colourful collage of breeding terns. Lisa Sorenson, President of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB) applauded



MELISSA ADAMS

Emma's lively poster: "This artist showed how the seabirds and humans alike depend on a healthy marine ecosystem to survive."

Winner of the ten-and-eleven year old category is Jordan Simmons, of St. John's Catholic Primary School, Antigua, with his striking depiction of a variety of seabird species and their relationship with mangroves. Nils Navarro Pacheco artist and coordinator of the Caribbean Wildlife Art Working Group praised the artist for his "interesting, creative and technical use of collage."

Christelle Brunot of Collège Dillon 2, Martinique, wins the 12-plus category with her bold poster of a Brown Pelican. Natalia Collier, President of EPIC, complimented the artist on her portrayal of the pelican gliding over a pristine sea and Christelle's plea to Caribbean people to "protect our flora and fauna".

EPIC is currently creating a Seabird Breeding Atlas of the Lesser Antilles, which will provide much needed data on the breeding populations of seabirds and their distribution throughout the region. As well as fieldwork, Katharine and David Lowrie of EPIC undertake outreach throughout the area explaining why seabirds are important and should be conserved.

Katharine explains, "The competition was to raise awareness of the magnificent seabirds that live on our islands. We received some fantastic poster entries; it was very difficult choosing the winners and so we decided to award Seabird ID cards to the runners up: Florian Magloire, Ecole élémentaire Pierre Cirille, Martinique; Melissa Adams, Kingstown Preparatory School, St. Vincent; and Linaique Legendry of Collège Dillon 2, Martinique. A special highly commended vote went to Daniel de Bruin, Lynch Plantation School, St. Eustatius and Ruth Joseph, Collège Dillon 2, Martinique.

"The entries illustrated how our next generation of teachers, politicians, scientists and artists view seabirds as an integral part of island culture. Seabirds are also a crucial part of the marine environment, maintaining healthy ecosystems. In many parts of the world, declines in seabirds have heralded collapses in fish stocks."

EPIC would like to thank the following conservation charities for donating prizes: SCSCB for the cash prizes, Bird Life International for the bird books and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for the binoculars.

For more information visit www.epicislands.org.

New Tools: Grenadines Marine Information System

The Grenadines Marine Information System MarSIS is a Geographical Information System that has been created to integrate existing scientific information with a variety of local knowledge of the Grenadines' marine resources, areas important for conservation and livelihoods. It also includes hundred of underwater pictures and videos across the Grenadines.



Schoolteachers from across the Grenadines received hands-on training in the use of the first underwater mapping information system of its kind in the Caribbean

This information system has been collaboratively developed over the past five years with a range of community members within each Grenadine Island in order to provide a wide information base about the marine environment. This will allow for more informed decision-making and ultimately promote sustainable marine resource management in the Grenadines. Community members involved in this project requested that workshops be held for the teachers of the Grenadines so they can learn how Grenadines MarSIS can be shared with the school children and used by the wider public.

The Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, provided the funding to conduct these workshops.

From June 7th through 11th more than 50 primary and secondary school teachers from across the Grenadines received hands-on training in the use of the cutting-edge technology that created the Grenadines Marine Resource and Space-use Information System, the first underwater mapping information system of its kind in the Caribbean.

Using the same technology that drives Google Earth, the powerful geographic information systems technology was used by Kim Baldwin, a PhD researcher, and another geospatial technologist with the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies at the University of West Indies, Cave Hill, to show teachers how the marine information system (including the 3D seafloor model) of the Grenada Bank was created. They also gave training to the teachers in the use of Google Earth in order to increase access to this locally derived information and incorporate it within science, technology and geography curricula.

The first workshop took place in Carriacou at the Multi-Purpose Centre in Hillsborough on June 7th; the second on June 8 in Union Island at the Sustainable Grenadines Project office; the third workshop at the Canouan Government School on June 9th; the fourth workshop in Mustique on June 10th; and the final workshop at the Bequia Community High School on June 11th.

For more information visit www.grenadinesmarsis.com. From the website the Grenadines MarSIS dataset can be downloaded into Google Earth. Also included is a link to a YouTube video tutorial and a Google Earth Users Manual is available.

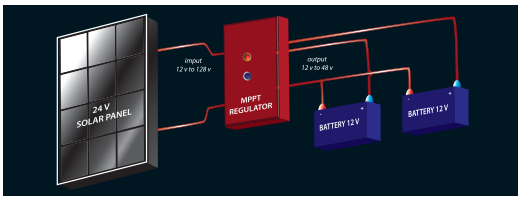
Trinidad Boaters 'Clean and Beautify' Down the Islands

Steven Valdez reports: As part of the nationwide "Clean and Beautify Trinidad & Tobago" campaign on June 27th, several powerboat enthusiasts and members of the Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club arranged a clean-up of Scotland Bay, Turtle Bay and Chacachacare on the northwestern coast of Trinidad.

Stuart and Suzanne Dalgliesh of *Finesse*, Rodrick and Pauline Clarke of *Fun Hog* and Christine and Roger De Freitas of *North Star* cleaned the inner mangrove area in Scotland Bay as well as the two main campsites. They collected more than 50 jumbo bags of mostly plastic and Styrofoam waste. The Hefty garbage bags were donated by Alston's Marketing.

—*Continued on page 23*

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A Long Time Coming:

Carriacou's New Marine Protected Area

by Neil Ladell



CHRIS DOYLE

The new marine protected area will shield the mangrove swamp from development but still allow its use as a hurricane hole

When Silver Diving owner Werner "Max" Nagel first arrived in Carriacou, Grenada in 1993, he knew the vibrant coral reefs needed to be safeguarded through conservation efforts. "I've been diving in the Far East, Middle East, Europe and throughout the Caribbean but there's no place quite like the reef here," explains Max.

Max was not the only one who saw the need for coastal and marine protection around the island. Concerns were also spreading throughout the community and government offices at that time. Brian Whyte, of the Carriacou Historical Society, recalls that the once-popular seine fishery in L'Esterre Bay had started to decline around the same time. He comments, "Previously [the seine fishery] attracted people from Bequia to Union Island. It used to have well over 100 people involved. But the pelagic species that they caught, such as jacks, have widely declined in the last 20 years."

The late 1990s saw Carriacou's marine conservation efforts gain momentum as community members began campaigning to "Save Sandy Island" while independent researchers and the Fisheries Division assessed the status of marine resources. Then, in 1999, swells from Hurricane Lenny hit with ferocity. Sandy Island, Carriacou's hallmark cay, was split in two and denuded of its prized almond and palm trees. Adding to the devastation, Lenny's tsunami-like surges tore out corals and mangrove trees. Overnight, the need to protect the marine ecosystem had become more apparent than ever.

In the years that followed, a strategy was developed to protect a 787-hectare area encompassing the Tyrrel Bay mangroves, Sister Rocks, Mabouya and Sandy Island.

After 15 years of research, planning and community consultation the Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area (SIOBMPA) was officially launched on July 31st, 2010. For Max it's a dream come true. "Everyone is congratulating [the Board] because we took the steps to protect the area," he smiles. "It's been a 100 percent positive feedback!"

Having seen all the enthusiasm from Max, Brian and many others, I was surprised when someone greeted the area's new protected status with scepticism. In my conversation with *Sailor's Guide to the Windward Islands* author, Chris Doyle, he raised some important concerns that deserve clarification, particularly those that may limit boating activities. As a participant in the establishment of the SIOBMPA, I would like to explain the decisions behind the decision to protect it.

As mentioned above, the efforts to establish the SIOBMPA date back to the mid-1990s — further if a 1988 government proposal is included. This process has involved the participation of community members, business owners, international organizations, international conservation groups, government, independent researchers, consultants and academics. The SIOBMPA contains mangroves, seagrass beds, beaches and coral reefs that were prioritized for conservation because of their vital contributions to Carriacou's coastal and marine system and quite possibly to the entire Grenadian Bank. In 2007, a management plan jointly published by The Nature Conservancy and Grenada Fisheries Division ranked the overall biodiversity health of the area as requiring human intervention measures for conservation. All evidence showed that protected status was needed to ensure the health of the area.

In the first year of operation, the SIOBMPA will trial a series of plans for which feedback will be welcomed. One critical change for boaters is that anchoring, except during emergencies, will no longer be permitted. The first phase of Manta Ray moorings for boats have been installed on the southeast side of Sandy Island, with future moorings planned for L'Esterre Bay once concerns over algae building up, sea floor substrate and safety have been resolved. To promote safety at sea, particularly for swimming, snorkeling and scuba diving, areas around the small islands, Point Cistern and the Tyrrel Bay mangroves will be "recreational only" zones. On the topic of safety, the Tyrrel Bay mangroves continue to provide ideal boat shelter during hurricanes. The majority of the protected area is comprised of two different fishing zones that are designed to promote sustainable fisheries.

Promoting sustainability in community and local livelihoods are major motivations behind the protected area. One of Brian's hopes is to see the revitalization of fish populations so that L'Esterre's seine fishing tradition can be rebuilt. Efforts are also being made to hire and train local staff, particularly the area's current resource users — park fees will be used to support these efforts. In general, the role of community has a place at all levels of the SIOBMPA's operations. Following a regional trend in coastal and marine conservation, the SIOBMPA is co-managed by a board representing non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, government ministries, and private associations. Further, to remain inclusive, the process allows for any local stakeholder to become a board member.

For Chris, like many visitors to Carriacou, Sandy Island and the Tyrrel Bay mangroves conjure up memories of some magical moments in his life. He recalled a youthful memory in which he impressed a young visiting female diplomat by sailing her out to Sandy Island's beach where he cooked up freshly caught fish for lunch. More recently, he finds himself seeking the tranquillity of the mangrove estuary. "Half an hour here makes me at peace with the world," he proclaims.



THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

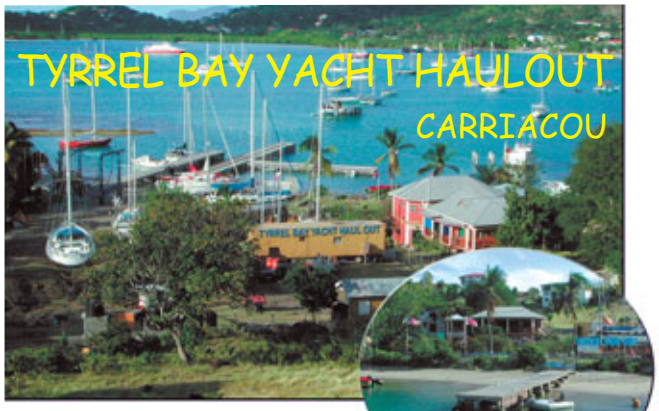
MPA zones. Note: the Mooring Zone marked with an asterisk is currently only a proposal, pending further management resources and safety review

The desire to ensure that present and future users can enjoy such unique experiences in the area's natural beauty is a primary reason for the establishment of the SIOBMPA. Changes are bound to invoke different reactions, but I maintain that, for the sake of long-term revitalization the ecosystem, all the science has pointed to the need to protect and monitor the area.

"It's amazing! We have 85 percent of the reef fish, creatures and corals documented in Paul Humann's reef life guides for the Caribbean," Max boasts in reference to an authoritative marine biology book series. In his opinion, as in mine, that's something worth protecting. Just imagine what life will accompany the proper management and protection of this area.

For more information contact SIOBMPA Co-Management Board at siobmpa@gmail.com, or Roland Baldeo, MPA Coordinator, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries, Fisheries Division, Government of Grenada, (473) 440-3814, rolandbaldeo@hotmail.com.

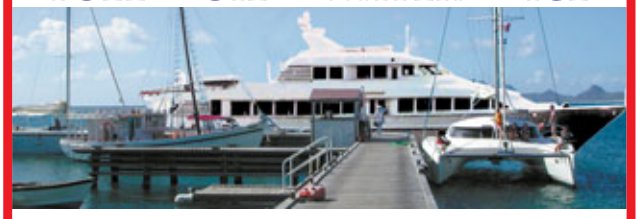
Neil Ladell, MSc, is interning with the Sustainable Grenadines Inc. as part of the Coady International Institute's Youth in Partnership Program, which is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency.



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REGATTA NEWS

Tight Racing in Trinidad & Tobago Dinghy Season Champs

The Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association saw exciting dinghy racing on June 12th, during the final Budget Marine Dinghy Ranking Race of the season. A presentation ceremony was held after the races and trophies were awarded for both the April term winners and the Season Champions.

Excellent skills were on show in the three races from the young racers in the Optimist Class in light breezes, which favored the smaller competitors. Myles Kaufmann showed good speed downwind to take the first race in the Optimist Advanced group, with this season's Champion, Derek Poon Tip, coming a close second. Race Two saw some close battles as the sailors began to get accustomed to the conditions. Myles Kaufmann took the honours again with Derek Poon Tip in second place. In Race Three, Kelly Ann Arrindell took first place, with Myles second and Derek third.

A gutsy performance by the Vessigny Vikings Club's nine-year-old Geovannie Leafai saw him sweep the field in the Beginner Class, winning both races and confirming his place as the Season Champion. The Beginner Class continues to grow and this term has seen excellent progress with races being won by Stevon McSween and Shawn Ramoutal, both from Vessigny, and Ryan Peters from Chaguaramas.

In the Laser Radial Class, Mark Peters took the April term prize after a very close series of races against Wesley Scott ended with Mark winning by a single point. However, Wesley took the honours as Season Champion. Daniel Briggs and Dekife Charles continue to develop well in the Laser Class, both having won races this season. Vessigny's Faith and Leah Moraine showed their superiority, winning two of the three 420 Class races. Alianson Thomas and Nicholas Knox took the 420 Class trophy for the April term, but Faith and Leah won the Season Champions' trophy.

The TTSA Sailing School Administrator thanked Budget Marine for continuing to sponsor the ranking race events, which are vital to the development of young sailing talent in Trinidad & Tobago.

The sailing school is now geared up to run sailing summer camps till the end of August. September will see the final stages of preparation for the launch of the new National Sailing Academy with the goal of establishing a modern structure for the development of sailing as a sport for all in Trinidad & Tobago.

For more information contact youthsailingschool@yahoo.com.

Big Fleet for St. Lucia National Dinghy Championships

Danielle De Rouck reports: The 4th Annual St. Lucia National Optimist and Laser Sailing Championships were held June 12th and 13th, hosted by the St. Lucia Yacht Club.

This year's new sailing class, the Benjamin Optimist, had eight participants aged six to ten, newcomers who raced well in perfect conditions on the Saturday morning. The Optimist Class had nine competitors aged eight to 14 years who fought through variable conditions including high winds of 23 knots and heavy rain. The Laser Class had ten competitors, the biggest fleet ever.

The prizegiving ceremony was attended by the St. Lucia Olympic Committee President Richard Peterkin and regatta sponsors including IGY Marina manager Adam Foster, who provided sponsorship for 20 young people to join the SLYC sailing programme.

Congratulations were given to all sailors and winners, as well as regatta organizers and coaches Max Todd and Fredric Sweeney. The regatta committee and sailors thank the regatta sponsors: IGY Marina, Island Water World, Bryden & Partners, JE Bergasse & Co., Chris Renwick and Home Services Ltd.

St. Lucian youth sailors Stephanie Devaux-Lovell, Luc Chevrier and Marcus Sweeney competed in the North American Optimist Championships in Canada from June 26th to July 4th; Jasia King competed for her second time in the Volvo Youth World Laser Championships in Turkey, also in July; and Stephanie Lovell travels with the St. Lucia team to the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in August. We wish them all success.

St. Lucia National Dinghy Championship Winners

BENJAMIN OPTIMIST CLASS



Jasia King and Raina Bergasse are among St. Lucia's keen young competitors in the Laser Classes

1) Danny Dillon
2) Amit Zevi
3) Kai Wagstaff

OPTIMIST CLASS
1) Stephanie Devaux-Lovell
2) Marcus Sweeney
3) Luc Chevrier

4.7 LASER CLASS
1) Stephanie Devaux-Lovell
2) Raina Bergasse
3) Marc Spurway

RADIAL LASER CLASS
1) Beth Lygoe
2) Thomas Meixner
3) Jasia King

Curaçao Teen Tops Caribbean Laser Championships

Over the June 12th and 13th weekend, Curaçao's 18-year-old sailing sensation Dennis van den Berg won the 21st Caribbean Laser Championships sponsored by Heineken Premium Light and hosted by Club Orient. The regatta, held in St. Maarten, attracted 19 entrants.

Sailing for the first time with a Standard rig, Dennis won five of the eight races sailed, finished in second place twice and dropped only to third place in his worst race. Antigua's Karl James, a five-time consecutive winner here in the past, won the first and last races, placing second in the Open Class and third in the overall standings. St. Barth's Markku Harmala took third in the Open and fifth overall.

In the Masters' Class, St. Barth's Benoit Meesemaecker sailed consistently well to take first place (second overall), St. Maarten's Frits Bus was second (fourth overall) and the USA's Timothy Landt finished third (sixth overall).

The Radial Class was won by Rodrigo Delgado, Manuel Lehoux was second, and St. Maarten's Ernst Looser third.

A squall greeted the fleet before the first race on the Saturday and then sucked up all the wind, creating light and shifty conditions on the course. The Sunday returned to more stable, but still light, conditions. Sint Maarten Yacht Club Commodore Robbie Ferron presented the Dominican Republic's Omar Bros with an SMYC burgee, noting that the amiable sailor has participated in the regatta no fewer than 16 times. Prizewinners went home with framed Antoine Chapon paintings.

Puerto Rico's Gonzalez Wins Scotiabank International Opti Regatta

Carol Bareuther reports: Concentration spelled success for 14-year-old Jorge Gonzalez, from San Juan, Puerto Rico, who won the 18th Annual Scotiabank International Optimist Regatta, held out of the St. Thomas Yacht Club, US Virgin Islands from June 18th through 20th. "It was cold, windy and shifty and that's what made it so important to concentrate," says Gonzalez who took the fleet lead on the second day of racing and held it when the two final races were canceled on the last day of sailing due to stormy weather.

The USA's Duncan Williford finished second overall, while St. Thomas' Nicholas Gartner placed third overall. Gartner was also the top-scoring US Virgin Islands' sailor.

Ninety sailors ages 7 to 15 years from 11 nations — Barbados, Bermuda, Brazil, the British Virgin Islands, Curaçao, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Trinidad & Tobago, the United States plus all three US Virgin Islands — set sail in this Caribbean Sailing Association sanctioned event. Eight races were completed for the Red, White and Blue Fleets and 18 for the Beginner Green Fleets.

Gonzalez's finish also earned him a first place in the 13- to 15-year-old Red Fleet. In the 11- to 12-year-old Blue Fleet, it was Romain Screve from San Francisco, California, who took the top place prize. Ford McCann from Houston, Texas, bested the 10- and -under White Fleet. This marked the first regatta that David Kleeger raced outside of his home waters in St. Croix, and he won the beginner Green Fleet against 17 other sailors from a host of locations.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page

Fourteen-year-old Megan Grapengeter-Rudnick, from Connecticut, USA, finished as Best Female and fifth overall. Grapengeter-Rudnick also won the Pete Ives Award, given for a combination of sailing prowess, sportsmanship, determination and good attitude both on and off the water.

Meanwhile, Puerto Rico's eight-year-old Savannah Baus won the Chuck Fuller Sportsmanship Award.

Scotiabank in the US Virgin Islands has proudly served as title sponsor of the Scotiabank International Optimist Regatta since 1992. This youth regatta is the largest annual event of its kind in the Caribbean.

For full results, visit www.styc.net.

Antigua's James Cops Caribbean Keelboat Championship

Top Caribbean sailor and former Olympian Karl James's Antiguan team turned in a typically masterful show to win the two-day Marlow One Design Caribbean Keelboat Championship, held in St. Maarten June 19th and 20th, never dropping below third in any of the 18 heats sailed.

James relished the mixture of downpours and blustery conditions in the Simpson Bay Lagoon that made racing the Sunfast 20s more unpredictable than ever, no big deal for James whose skills have been honed in the equally shifty Jolly Harbour of Antigua.

Frits Bus's St. Maarten team finished in second place for the fourth time in a row, this time after breaking the tie for third place with Chris Marshall's Gill team. Simon Manley steered Scuba Shop team into a very respectable fourth place.

A surprise fifth place went to the only youth team in the regatta, skippered by 15-year-old Jolyon Ferron and crewed by Saskia Looser, Stephen Looser, and Rhone Findlay. The youth team was invited "for the experience" to make up the correct number of entrants for the regatta. To their credit they matched their peers tack for tack, winning two races and finishing in second place twice. "We were expecting last or second last, so we're very pleased," said Jolyon, who added it was the first time the four had sailed together as a team.

A total of 13 teams participated, with six from St. Maarten and seven from Antigua, Curaçao, Trinidad, and St. Barth's.

Orion of Puerto Rico Conquers Quantum IC24 Regatta

Orion, skippered by internationally renowned sailor Fraito Lugo from Puerto Rico, won this year's Quantum IC24 International Sailing Regatta hosted June 19th and 20th by the Royal BVI Yacht Club.

Racing was challenging this year, owing to inclement weather. Courses had to be reset several times as a result of changing wind directions, and wind speeds varied between zero and 25 knots.

The fleet of nine boats came from Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and the BVI. Second place went to BVI boat *Sea Hawk*, skipper Mike Hirst, and third place to St Thomas boat *Brand New Second Hand*, skipper Chris Curreri.

Race organizer from the Royal BVI Yacht Club, Guy Phoenix, commented: "We were delighted that so many boats entered the regatta, particularly given the bad weather. We hope that next year we can build on the success of this year's events and see even more countries represented. Special thanks to the event sponsors, Quantum Sails, who remain faithful supporters of this event."

For full results visit www.rbviyc.com.

Windsurfing and Stand-Up Paddle Through the BVI

Wilhelm Schurmann from Brazil won the Windsurfing Class while Californian Lance Erickson took top honors in the SUP (stand-up paddle) class in the Highland Spring HIHO 2010 event, which attracted racers from 11 countries on a tour of the BVI starting June 26th.

Daily windsurfing and stand-up paddle races pitted competitors on long-distance inter-island races. A combined 100 miles of competition were completed with races including the 12-mile Anegada Race and the 27-mile Sir Francis Drake thriller.

Second in the windsurfing fleet went to veteran racer Jean Marc Peyronnet from St. Maarten, while Andrea Colombo of Switzerland took third. In the inaugural stand-up paddle class, Ernie Johnson claimed second leaving Florida racer Tom Pace in third. The top female racer was Andie Johnson and surfing legend Mickey Munoz was fourth overall.

"What a great week," said Schurmann, the world's top-ranked Formula racer. "Great inter-island racing and great parties!"

Adding stand-up paddling or SUP to this year's Highland Spring HIHO event was a huge success. The paddlers covered 19 miles in five days of racing. The Mount Everest of the week was the six-mile paddle from Pelican Island to Little Thatch, won by USVI racer Colin Butler. Other race highlights were the five-mile Anegada coast run and the fun relay races which included all event participants, including men, women and kids who had never before been on a paddle board.

"Lots of fun," said John and Bari Denney from Jupiter Paddleboarding in Florida who made the trek down to the event. "We already have two full boatloads of people signed up for next year's event!"

The next HIHO will take place June 26th through July 3rd, 2011. For more information visit www.go-hiho.com.

Bequia Junior Sailing Participates in Premier's Cup

Ellen Ebert Birrell reports: With new skills and enthusiasm, six Bequia teenagers and their coach recently returned from Tortola. The 8th Annual KATS Premier's Cup International Youth Regatta was held July 9th through 11th. On arrival day, competitors practiced with the IC24 racing fleet. After 12 weekend races, St. Thomas came in first, edging out Anguilla, followed by BVI, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, Bequia and then the USA.



Standing: Jamal Ollivierre, Kamol Bess and Coach Courtney Adams. Kneeling: Kimanyi James, Storm Corea, Lincoln Daniel and Cordell Adams

Junior programs are making news around the Eastern Caribbean, including the newly formed National Sailing Academy of Antigua & Barbuda and Culebra (Puerto Rico) Junior Sailing. With the new millennium, Bequia Youths and the Sea — which taught swimming, knot-tying, and sailing in local double-enders — was started by Bequia Rotary. Eventually, it fell under the magic direction of Mackie Simmons. Through his extraordinary sailing skills and dedication, junior numbers swelled. He called upon high school students to build two Optis, taking the fleet to seven, and utilized Sunfish, J/24s, double-enders and other resources to nurture interest and competency among Bequia children. With his death a few years ago, the junior program stalled. It is now in the process of rebuilding with support from Bequia Rotary, the Bequia Sailing Club and community leaders including Mackie's brother, Sylvester Simmons, current team manager.

"The next step for Bequia Junior Sailing is to build a group of kids sixteen years of age and under who meet regularly throughout the year. From that group, a team can be selected each spring to represent Bequia in the annual Premier's Cup Regatta. They need year-round coaching to build boat speed and their understanding of racing rules and strategy," Simmons says. He owns *Iron Duke*, a century-old Bequia-built sailing seine boat that he used to race. Simmons admits that his dedication is to youth but he lacks yacht-racing expertise. He is enthused about resources both locally and regionally. He believes recruiting young people who race and can dedicate time each week to work with the juniors will be key.

Sponsorship for travel expenses came from LIAT Airlines, Bequia Sailing Club and Sand Pit Company. Regatta fee, lodging, meals and entertainment came from KATS (Kids and The Sea), individual volunteers, Nanny Cay Marina, Peg Legs Landing, Rotary Clubs of Tortola, and other sponsors.

Read more about the regatta at www.virginislandsnewsonline.com/news/st-thomas-wins-premier's-cup-international-youth-regatta.

Light Airs for Lucky Horseshoe Race in Barbados

Peter "Wipers" Hoad reports: It was a hot, no-wind day in Barbados for the Lucky Horseshoe Regatta, held July 18th. Many sailors arrived on the beach to find a sea of glass with few ripples. Bajans in general don't like sailing in less than ten knots of wind, so it took some coaxing to get them going.

Once started, the racing brain took over in three classes: J/24 (13 boats), Laser and Cruising. Crews were under pressure to get their boats going and find wind.

In the end, Ron Hunt's J/30, *Jaystar* won Cruising Class, Jason Tindale won Laser Standard, Amy Cox topped Laser Radial, and in the J/24s Neil Burke's *Impulse* stole victory from Paul Johnson's *Somtins Happnin*, with Colin Syme's *Maximum* taking third.

Special thanks to Philip Barnard from St. Vincent and Robby Yearwood from Grenada for bringing their boats and crews to make the event more competitive. As usual, the Lucky Horseshoe restaurant's after-race party makes us all winners with free burgers and fish cutters and two hours of free drinks, topped off with live music, fun for so and fun for all.

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AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2010

Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this AND next month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward; i.e. tide the floods from west to east. Times given are local.

Note: the maximum tide is 3 or 4 days after the new and full moons.

For more information, see "Tides and Currents" on the back of all Imray Iolaire charts. Fair tides!

August

DATE	TIME
1	0411
2	0455
3	0542
4	0633
5	0728
6	0827
7	0927
8	1027
9	1126
10	1222 (new)
11	1316
12	1419
13	1501
14	1553
15	1646
16	1740
17	1835
18	1929
19	2021
20	2112
21	2159
22	2244
23	2327
24	0000 (full)
25	0008
26	0049
27	0129
28	0210
29	0253
30	0338
31	0427

September

DATE	TIME
1	0519
2	0614
3	0712
4	0810
5	0908
6	1005
7	1100
8	1124 (new)
9	1247
10	1341
11	1435
12	1531
13	1627
14	1752
15	1816
16	1908
17	1957
18	2043
19	2126
20	2207
21	2248
22	2328
23	0000 (full)
24	0009
25	0052
26	0137
27	0224
28	0315
29	0408
30	0504

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Cobbler's Boots or, How Not To Do It...

An Atlantic Crossing, That Is

by Frank Pearce

Lucy did warn me, phoning from Horta, having just arrived as crew on the magnificent 140-foot Frers-designed *Rebecca*. She told me of predominant winds of 30 knots, reaching 40 knots, and huge seas. *Rebecca* had reduced to storm jib and trysail. "And it's cold," she said, "thermals, fleeces, oilskins needed." And this on *Rebecca*.

Lucy made me promise to always be clipped on; she knows I am somewhat negligent in that matter. Lucy has made numerous Atlantic crossings to and from the Caribbean, two of which we did together, and for her to be signed on as crew on *Rebecca* shows that she knows a thing or two. Her warnings should have been taken seriously. I didn't.

After sailing some 1,500 miles up and down the Eastern Caribbean islands during the 2009-2010 season and having taken part in various regattas, I was, in retrospect, complacent about the preparation of my 50-foot Sciareli-designed schooner, *Samadhi*, for the Atlantic. My previous five Atlantic crossings had been in relatively benign weather and I was looking forward to more of the same, catching some fish, playing a bit of music, reading some books at leisure, doing a few sail changes of course and getting out the old sextant for old times' sake.


KENMORE HEWLLE

The author set out from Antigua aboard his 50-foot schooner, Samadhi, *bound for Europe — but he hadn't heeded Lucy's warnings or followed his own advice...*

My crew, James, flew out from the UK, having taken a month off to do the trip. He and I have sailed a lot together and having him on board was the best bit of preparation that I did. The potential third crewmember was ultimately not available and by the time we were ready to go, most of the crew seeking positions had fled from Antigua, so it was just the two of us.

Samadhi, with her schooner rig, is beautifully balanced (more than can be said for me) and very easy to handle (ditto). We have an autopilot and an excellent Sailomat wind vane steering gear. My last crossing, aboard *Whirlaway*, a 42-foot teak-hulled Holman-designed sloop, had been singlehanded and no problem, so having two of us was going to be luxury.

Our initial intention had been to sail from Antigua to Anguilla. In Anguilla we could meet up with the new owner of *Tradition*, the 50-foot Carriacou sloop that I had previously refitted in Carriacou (*see "The Tradition Project" in the October through December 2009 issues of* Compass), wait for a good long-range forecast, and depart from there. But on leaving Antigua we had a brisk 25-knot easterly and were able to head off due north, so why drop down to leeward to Anguilla? We romped along, making good 165 miles in the first 24 hours.

I was taking forecasts from various US Coastguard stations and listening in to Herb Hilgenberg in the afternoons. Had we checked in personally with him on SSB he would have given us detailed weather advice for our area, as he was doing for about 20 other yachts on their way to the Azores. Herb had his work cut out as there were some nasty systems coming off the US East Coast, seemingly emanating from Guatemala and developing as they moved north towards Bermuda. His advice to other yachts I am sure saved many of them getting into foul weather by routing them either away from the systems or suggesting they stop and heave to until fronts had passed through.

When we left Antigua on May 20th it was the time of full moon — not ideal if there is prospect of heavy weather. As we sailed north, winds were often up to 30 knots or more, and the seas became huge when the strong full-moon current turned against the wind. Thirty knots of wind is not so unusual in the Caribbean, but the seas generated in mid-Atlantic, especially with a strong wind-over-tide situation, are another matter.

My lack of preparation was soon exposed. The decks, on what is a normally "dry" boat, were often under a depth of water and deck hatches that had appeared to be watertight were letting in water. I had failed to secure personal stuff properly down below and so guitar, squeeze-box and books were thrown all over the place. Bedding and bunks became soaking wet, and it was getting remarkably cold.

The only pressurized fresh water on *Samadhi* is to the "shower" in the cockpit: simply a trigger on the end of a tube stowed in the lazarette.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

I had just carelessly dropped it into the lazarette. Later, when going to use the shower, I found the pump was not working. Why? The trigger had caught on something and been pumping out our fresh water for goodness knows how long and the pump fuse had blown. Never mind the pump, how much water have we lost? Maybe one complete tank, half of our supply. Not good news.

Lying in my bunk, I heard the unfamiliar noise of water sloshing through the main bilge. Lifting the cabin sole I was alarmed to see how much water there was there. In 35 knots of winds with huge seas running, we lifted up the floorboards and pumped out the last dregs of water to check where it was coming from. After moving stuff around to gain access, crawling in beside the engine we eventually found water was draining into the bilge from right aft. How could that be? The lazarette hatch is on the aft deck. Seawater was rushing down the side decks, along the cockpit coaming and flooding overboard — in doing so passing over the lazarette hatch. This hatch had never needed to be sealed, yet. James caulked the hatch with rubber extrusion and the ingress of water stopped.

On past trips from the Caribbean to the Azores, I have preferred to be about 500 miles east of Bermuda to keep clear of dirty weather to the west. Then I kept going north until about 39 degrees North, before heading due east for the Azores — depending of course on the weather outlook. With so much northerly in it, we were hard on the wind, which was fine until during one night, when winds were again up to about 35 knots, the current started to run against the wind and suddenly the seas became huge. I should have slowed her down or even hove to, but from the comfort of my bunk (again!) *Samadhi* seemed to be coping well enough. Then she fell off two monster waves with sickening crashes. As I felt her lift over each wave and then become airborne, I lay there waiting for her to "land" — ouch.

Inspection below showed that a forward bulkhead had fractured in way of the foremast and there had been movement of other joints in the interior joinery work.

At the time we had no foremain set, had three reefs in the main and a tiny bit of jib; there was not much left to reduce. We really needed a strong storm jib hanked on to an inner forestay and a storm trysail, none of which we had. Using the 110-percent genoa rolled to pocket-handkerchief size is not satisfactory: the set of the sail is bad, it is halfway up the forestay and the material is not really strong enough. Changing down to a smaller yankee set in the groove of the foil was not a safe option in this amount of wind with only two crew.

A potential Tropical Cyclone was heading up towards Bermuda. (It truthfully could not be called a Tropical Cyclone until after the start of the hurricane season on June 1st, but that's what it was.) We were then about 500 miles out of the Leewards, about 400 miles southeast of Bermuda.

Time for a council of war. "What you thinking, James?" "I was thinking how nice the Caribbean is!"

We called up coastguard weather on the sat phone, gave our position and received a most worrying report. Without exaggeration, they warned of seas up to 25 feet. Yes, really. Okay, moderating, but I should hope so! We either had to stop and heave to or turn and head south. With 2,000 miles to go and some damage, we decided on the latter. (It had been a trifle worrying that *Maltese Falcon*, at 290 feet overall, had been checking in with Herb and he had advised them to stay in Bermuda and let the weather settle down.)

Notwithstanding all the forecasts available to us, there had been no mention earlier of a feeder band, like a trough, extending west to east about 30 miles south of us. I could hardly believe what I was hearing. Just when we had decided to head south and get out of it, here was this belt of serious weather in our way. Well, we'd either heave to and wait for it to pass over, or sail south through it and hope nothing blew out.

We dropped the main, took more rolls in the now very little jib, then the wind increased to more than 40 knots again. The size of the seas was something that in 55-plus years of sailing (help, am I that old?) I had never before encountered. If it were not a tad worrying it would have been exhilarating. I do believe that James had a grin on his face as *Samadhi* lifted to each of the huge seas and scudded down their backs.

Taking hourly stints on deck we sailed through the night. *Samadhi* behaved wonderfully and gave no cause for alarm, but would that scrap of jib hold out? It did, and in the morning we dramatically sailed out from under the heavy overcast clouds. The wind, of course, then went to the southeast with more heavy rain and poor visibility. But what else could we expect this trip but wind dead on the nose?

Eventually the seas calmed down and we even had to do a bit of motoring. When the rain cleared we got stuff on deck to dry out and started to get warm again. Three days later we were in Anguilla and pleased to be there, even if somewhat chastised by our experience and me being very cross with myself for not having assumed bad weather and prepared *Samadhi* for it. Sorry Lucy, sorry *Samadhi* — I'll listen next time, promise! And thank you, James, for never being critical of my shortcomings in preparation, for always being cheerful and positive.

But, why "Cobbler's Boots"? This could be called "Don't do as I do, do as I say" but, like the old cobbler who walks around with the soles of his shoes hanging off, I as a Marine Surveyor had failed to follow the advice and requirements that I would request of others. Maybe it's not a bad thing for the likes of myself to go to sea seriously now and again, if only to reaffirm my beliefs in how a vessel should be prepared.

What conclusions can one draw from the experience?

• Firstly, I should not have left at a time when I was really tired. This would also have avoided sailing at the time of full moon.

• I should have checked the watertight integrity of hatches and skylights with a serious hose test.

• I should have had heavy-duty storm sails. An inner forestay with hank-on storm jib and a storm trysail would have been so reassuring. With a small strong rig like that, *Samadhi*, being a very "sea kindly" yacht, would have jogged along and no doubt we would have avoided the damage caused by my driving her fast through big seas.

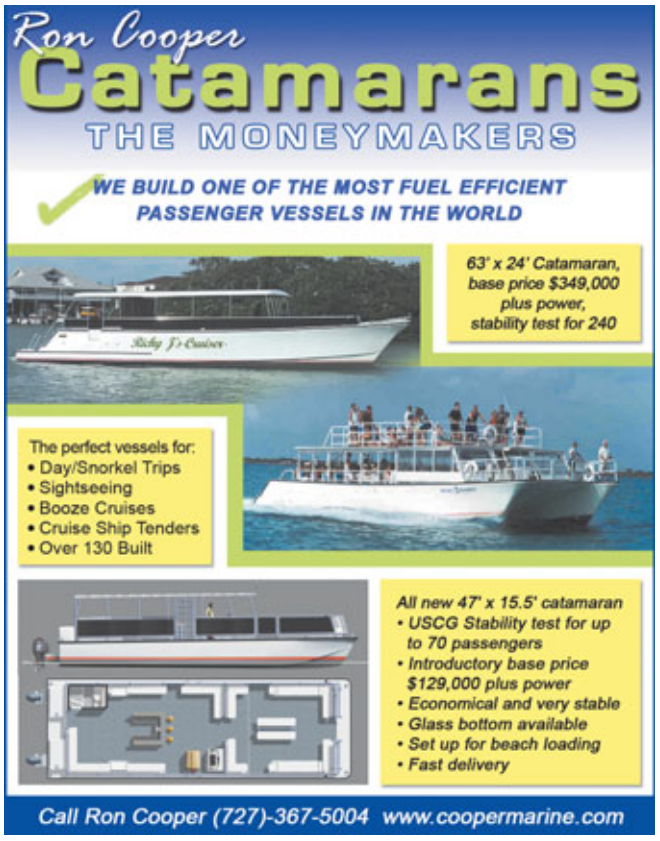
• As a rule of thumb I have often asked clients to consider what will happen in the event of a serious knockdown, something that would not have been unlikely in the wind and sea conditions we experienced. Will the cooker fall off its gimbals? What about batteries, gas cylinders and all that heavy gear in the bilges, maybe a spare anchor and chain, tools, portable generator, and the cabin sole itself — stuff normally secured by gravity that will fly up into the deckhead if she falls over badly? It happened twice to the Smeatons on *Tzu Hang* many years ago. Read their book *Once is Enough*: photographs of impact damage to their deckhead caused by flying tools and so on are alarming to say the least.

• Admittedly, we never came near to that, but we did find that moving about in the saloon became an acrobatic feat, largely because of insufficient handholds. Being thrown across the saloon to collide with the table could so easily cause injury. With big, beamy boats placement of sufficient handholds needs to be a serious consideration.

• A word about eggs! I simply stowed them in a locker in the forecabin. Bad place. Upon our return I found each and every egg was rotten and the yolks broken; I can only assume it was the severe motion that had scrambled them within their shells.

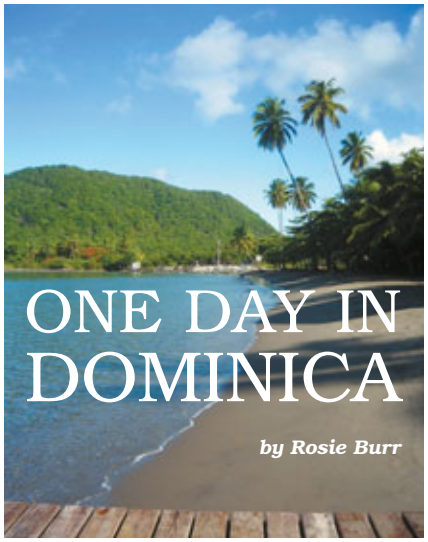
Many other yachts safely made the crossing at that time; some others turned back. Now *Samadhi* is back in Grenada, all the repairs have been done and she is stronger than ever. Hopefully we will have taken part in the Carriacou Regatta Festival by the time this is read and can look forward to visiting Portugal next year.





ONE DAY IN DOMINICA

by Rosie Burr



Above: Prince Rupert Bay

I want to tell you about our one day in Dominica. Simeon Hoggarth and I anchored *Alianna*, our 1983 Corbin 39, by the town of Portsmouth in Prince Rupert Bay. It's a beautiful dark sand bay at the north of the island, lined with palm trees, local bars and restaurants. We only planned to stay the night, but our friends Mark and Liesbet on *Irie* encouraged us to spend at least one day seeing some of this beautiful island.

And so, a car was arranged and by 8:00AM the next morning we were on our way. The four of us squeezed in, plus Darwin, *Irie's* dog. We drove down the east coast of the island, stopping occasionally for photo opportunities and then hung a left at the main town, Roseau, and drove up into the tropical rainforest. The main roads were full of potholes, and the deeper we got into the rainforest the more track-like they became. The car gave us great cause for concern with the noises it was making but it hung in there for the entire trip. Road signs were few and far between but friendly locals and a map kept us from veering too far from our course. The roadsides are covered in tropical foliage — mango, breadfruit, banana and papaya trees all grow in abundance.



Main photo: The 'Mother', one of two magnificent cascades at Trafalgar Falls
Inset: Colorful heliconia blossoms accent the rainforest

Below, right: The trekkers — Simeon, Liesbet, Mark and Darwin

Our first stop was at one of two freshwater crater lakes, aptly named Freshwater Lake, the largest in Dominica. We were so high we were no longer in rainforest but "cloud forest", with ferns and mosses growing wild and distinctive red heliconia flowers and ginger lilies adding splashes of colour to the lush greenery. The lake, the hills and the treetops were covered in a thick mist and the temperature was cool. A small dam at the lake serves as the source for hydroelectric power providing 40 percent of Dominica's electricity. Huge wooden pipes a metre in diameter can be seen running down the mountainsides.

We then headed through muddy roads that looked like they could turn into landslides at any minute — thank goodness it wasn't raining — toward our next stop, Titou Gorge. We were glad there was no oncoming traffic, as these roads are very narrow.

Titou Gorge ("little throat") is a lovely spot. A short walk along a river leads to a wide pool coming out of the gorge. We swam up the narrow gap in diamond clear water with the sun sparkling down through the cliffs on either side, the water reflecting a kaleidoscope of blues. At the end of the deep gorge are a small gushing waterfall and a rock that basked in sunshine where we could sit and rest. Another stream of water cascades from above into the pool; this one is warm thanks to hot springs — a sweet contrast to the cold crisp water our feet were standing in. Best of all, we had the whole place to ourselves.

After all this we were starting to feel hungry and made our way to a small village called Wotton Waven, where we found a local restaurant open, many being shut owing to the lack of cruise ships that day. Sad to say this was our only bad experience of Dominican hospitality. We had asked the girl the price of the food in advance and ordered accordingly. The owner then turned up and was very friendly with us. However when the food arrived we were told they got the price wrong and that it was more than double what we had originally been told. Perhaps it was a genuine mistake, but we couldn't help but wonder if we were being taken advantage of. The owner finally agreed to a lower price but still more than we had originally been told.

Despite this we still had the rest of the day to enjoy and set off to our next spot, Trafalgar Falls. Here we saw not just one but two spectacular waterfalls. The first, taller and thinner, is called "Father Fall" and to the right is the faster and denser "Mother Fall". Water that crosses the Titou Gorge falls down 200 feet of steep rock face. At the base of these falls are hot springs that form a series of small connecting pools that run alongside the river. We bathed in these pools, luxuriating in the therapeutic warmth — again with barely another person in sight.

As the day started closing in on us we made our way back to Roseau, stopping briefly to pick up the odd orange, mango or breadfruit that had fallen by the roadside. Back in Roseau, Mark and Liesbet, who had visited before, showed us a couple of churches and Government houses and the library, as well as the 18th century Fort Young, which is now a rather nice hotel.

Now it was time to head back up the coast to Portsmouth, drop the car off and make time for one last Kabuli beer at Big Papa's Restaurant before heading back to the boat and an early night in preparation for a 5:00AM start for our next island.



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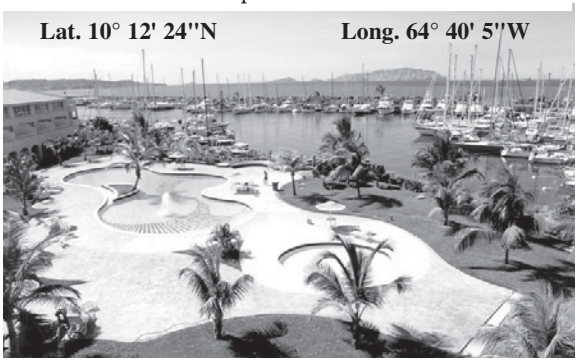
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Hiking the North End of Dominica:

FROM CAPUCHIN TO PENNVILLE

by Devi Sharp



I was sure we could not fit six more people in the little bus, maybe three or four, but not six. It appeared that all of the seats were occupied. Not to worry, in a few seconds and with a bit of island magic, everyone was out of the bus, seating rearranged and we were guided into seats for the hilly drive from Portsmouth to Capuchin. We told the driver that we would like to go to the trailhead to hike to Pennville and he said no problem. I guess it was obvious that six "tourists" with hats, sunglasses, daypacks and walking sticks were bound for a hike.

The trailhead is the end of the road, so getting started is easy. Our driver let us off about a quarter mile from the trailhead, which has a large sign stating that the trail is Section 13 of the Waitukubuli National Trail Project. The Waitukubuli National Trail covers the entire island of Dominica and has 14 segments, numbered from south to north. When completed the trail system will be about 115 miles long. Some segments are on roads and others are on paths through the forest. The trail will link many tracks and trails which were first cut by the Kalinago Carib people, as well as routes used by slaves to access sugar plantations hundreds of years ago. The trail system is being developed through a project of the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica implemented in partnership with the Regional Council of Martinique and funded by the European Union. Waitukubuli means "long is her body" — the Carib name for Dominica.

The trail starts as a two-tire-wide track and rapidly becomes a one-track trail. In March of 2010 the trail was in very good condition because it had been cleared in December 2009. The first section of the trail ascends for about one hour through undisturbed rainforest. Large trees tower over the trail providing shade. There were many mango trees along the trail and it was terribly frustrating that all of the mangos were beyond our reach. The half-eaten fruit on the ground served testament to the bounty of ripe fruit above our heads.

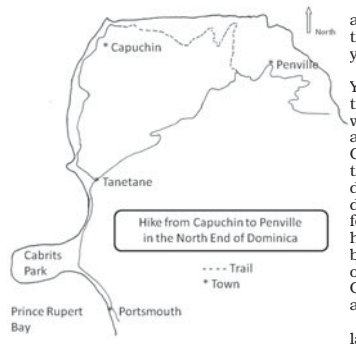
It took us about an hour to get to a corner where the trail levels off a bit and gives you a view looking north — on a clear day you can see Guadeloupe. We imagined that the trail had been a wagon trail for horses or donkeys taking sugar, fruit and coffee out of the plantations and down to market. Along the way there are trail markers painted with red paint on trees. It is not clear how the sub-segments were determined, but we did see them periodically. The markings noted the trail system segment (13) with a sub-segment (e.g. SEG 13/14).

The trail continues through the forest and tall trees with a few openings to provide views. At SEG 13/17 the trail makes a turn to the right, and there is a very clear trail that goes more or less straight, through a freshly cleared field. If you take this diversion off the trail and through the field you will end up in an old citrus and coffee plantation. My frustration at not being able to reach the mangos was abated by the plentiful grapefruits. We filled our bellies and backpacks with grapefruit and sour oranges and doubled back to the main trail.

As the trail continues it follows the contour of the hillside. The last third of the hike is through cultivated hillsides where you can see just about every fruit and vegetable you see in the local market at Portsmouth. We chatted with a few men tending the fields and one fellow offered to sell us plantains. We were a bit reluctant to add more weight to our citrus filled daypacks, but we dug out a few EC coins and tucked away our plantains.

We were greeted at the trail's end by a few men who were building a small fiberglass fishing boat. There was a water spigot where we washed up a bit. The men told us not to go the three-quarters of a mile to Pennville to catch the bus, but to just flag down any bus or truck going west. We flagged down an empty school bus and got a ride back to Portsmouth.

Directions for Hike from Capuchin to Pennville



The entire distance of the hike is about five miles and will take about three to four hours depending on your pace.

To start, take the bus to Capuchin. You can get the bus at the bus "station" in Portsmouth or just start walking toward the town of Tanetane and flag down a bus going to Capuchin. There are more buses in the early morning when the children are going to school. Ask the driver to let you off at the trailhead for the trail to Pennville. You may have to walk the last quarter mile because the trailhead is at the end of the road, past the village of Capuchin and the buses don't usually go quite that far.

The trailhead is marked with a large sign stating that the trail is Segment 13 of the Waitukubuli National Trail Project. There are trail markers painted on trees with red paint that have the segment and sub-segment, for example SEG 13/14. The only point on the trail that was confusing was at the trail marker that noted SEG 13/17. At this point the trail makes a turn to the right, but there is a very clear trail that goes more or less straight, through a freshly cleared field. If you take the diversion to go off the trail through the field you will end up in an old citrus and coffee plantation and will have to double back to the trail.

The trail ends on the road between Pennville and Portsmouth about one mile west of Pennville. You can catch a bus or hitch a ride back for the five miles to Portsmouth.

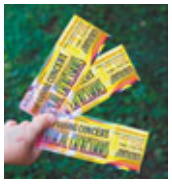
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Musical Expressions — Trini Style



by Stephen Aspey

Is it not strange that sheep's guts
should hale souls out of men's bodies?
William Shakespeare

Shakespeare might well have said something similar about oil drums had steel pan been invented in his lifetime. On June 5th, visiting cruisers were treated to a wonderful night at a steel pan yard in St. James, Trinidad, courtesy of a number of the local businesses in Chaguaramas, and a very enjoyable night was had by all.

The "Musical Expressions" event was a fundraiser held for the Starlift Junior Steel Orchestra to attend the 2010 Montreal International Steel Pan Festival. Carlos Fenton, of Alpha Upholstery and Canvas, garnered donations from several of the businesses in Chaguaramas in order to purchase tickets and Jesse James, of Members Only Maxi Taxi & Tours kindly provided free transport to and from the event.

Cruisers gathered outside the office of Members Only in Tropical Marina to receive their free tickets from Carlos. Many cruisers know Trinidad as a great place to haul out and get work done on their boat but Trinidad has much more to offer, from dense tropical jungle, unspoilt beaches and great local foods to the world famous Carnival and, of course, great music. I've been to Trinidad many times but this was going to be my first time at a pan yard.



If you haven't heard a good steel pan band then you can't begin to appreciate the incredible sound that a skillfully tuned and played steel pan can make. The Starlift Junior Steel Orchestra is made up of youngsters from ages eight to 16 and every one of them is an artist. To see these talented kids, so full of energy, team spirit and love of their music, was to share in the real heart of Trinidad.

The evening was supported by some of Trinidad & Tobago's best musicians, including solo artist Marilyn Williams; the world famous Lydian Choir; 3 Canal with their spectacular Rapso style, and the award-winning BP Renegades Youth Orchestra who were, quite simply, brilliant. These world-class musicians donated their time to help support the fundraising effort and the audience was treated to a variety of styles including soca, vintage kaiso, and folk.

Steel pan was invented in Trinidad and evolved from tamboo-bamboos, being tuneable sticks made from bamboo. These were hit onto the ground or with other sticks to create rhythms deeply rooted in the drumming traditions of both Africa and India. It wasn't until the late 1940s that the recognizable steel pan, made from a 55-gallon oil drum, came into being.

Since then, new methods of construction and most importantly, tuning, have evolved and modern instruments are custom-made from sheet steel and tuned using strobe tuners, an art form in its own right. The pan family comes in many pitches including soprano, alto, tenor, baritone and bass and this combination gives the music its unique sound.

The evening kicked off with the Starlift Junior band playing a variety of pieces, from traditional Trinidadian pan music to a great cover of Michael Jackson's "Thriller", showing off the versatility of the instrument.

Next up were Salah and Adiylah Wilson, both native Trinidadians, who have been based in Montreal, Canada, for the past 35 years. They have been at the forefront of international steel pan for many years and are the organizers of the international festival.

Marilyn Williams treated us to a performance full of her vibrant personality and powerful singing voice that lifted us out of our chairs. The Lydian Choir's beautiful and heartfelt performance was a joy to share. Perhaps the most surprising sound, however, came from 3 Canal, with their exotic blend of lyrics and dance known as rapso. It is rare to hear a completely unique musical style for the first time and 3 Canal's energetic and rhythmic performance had us all tapping our feet. Rapso is another uniquely Trinidadian musical tradition and has been described as "de power of de word in the riddum of de world". If you get the chance to see these talented guys, jump at it.

Every performance was excellent and the variety of styles on display was a wonderful expression of the unique musical traditions of Trinidad. All the cruisers were delighted with the event and especially grateful to the local businesses in Chaguaramas for donating the tickets and transport, and giving us a truly memorable and entertaining night.

PS The Starlift Junior Steel Orchestra won first place in Junior Panorama and second place in Adult Panorama (despite being juniors) at the 2010 Montreal International Steel Pan Festival.

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CRUISERS' PROFILES

Spreading the Music of the Islands

by J. Wynner

"Hot Pants. What a name!" I thought as I listened to Anna Malm tell me about a steelband she and her husband, Krister, formed in their native Sweden in the early 1970s. Anna must have observed my quizzical look when I repeated "Hot Pants?"

She quickly replied, "Hot *Pans*, no T, no T. Hot Pans! It is a mostly female band, which ranges in ages from seventeen to seventy. I am the eldest," she added with a laugh.



Krister and Anna on board Kaiso

In case you're wondering what steelbands have to do with a nautical publication, well, the story is really about a seafaring Swedish couple's love for, and recording of, the music of the islands — in particular the music of Trinidad & Tobago. Krister and Anna Malm have been sailing the Caribbean waters for more than 40 years. They came to Trinidad for the first time via a stop-and-start adventure which took three years: they sailed across the North Sea to Scotland, then down to Cork in Ireland, then across to Spain and along the Spanish and Portuguese coasts. "Then we sailed into the Mediterranean all the way to Greece. So you can imagine that took some time, before we got here," says Krister.

The second time out, the trip took three months — sailing first to southern Portugal then to Madeira, across to the Canary Islands and then, with the wind at their backs, nosing it down to the Caribbean, docking in St. Lucia before sailing to Trinidad.

Now, they fly to and fro. After the Trinidad Carnival season they go sailing up-island, returning to Trinidad and then winging their way back home, usually at the end of March or early April, leaving their present vessel, *Kaiso*, at Chaguaramas.

"When we first arrived in 1969 in Trinidad on our small sailing boat, Krister, who is a musicologist and had been in the Caribbean documenting and recording music in all the islands, was asked to stay on by Dr. Elder, a prominent folklorist of Trinidad and Tobago. Dr. Elder was commissioned to set up a music archive," relates Anna, a microbiologist by profession, who also has a musical side to her. "I have always been into music, but not professionally."

Anna was also asked to stay on, in the capacity of a microbiologist. Trinidad had just started a laboratory in the Food and Drugs Department of the Ministry of Health to test the safety of foods. Anna explains, "I was also asked to run the laboratory since the person who was sent to study food microbiology gave up and there was no one to take care of it. So it just happened. We did not plan to stay here. It just happened that both of us were asked to stay and do some work here."

When their Trinidadian-born son was christened, they thought it apt to call him Eric, after uncles of both Krister and Anna, and also T&T's first Prime Minister, Eric Williams. Also, Eric is a name common both in Sweden and Trinidad. Eric Malm, who personally knows most of the calypsonians including the Mighty Sparrow and Lord Nelson, like his parents has been very involved with the culture of T&T and was recently given an award by Trinidad & Tobago High Commission in London for promoting T& T's culture.

Since their initial two-year stint in Trinidad, the Malms have been coming regularly to Trinidad where they have participated enjoyably in T&T's culture, plunging themselves into the music of the land and, as the locals say, "beating pan" for J'ouvert with bands such as Birdsong, Merry Makers, Brimblers, Harvard Harps, and, of course, Anna and Krister's band, Hot Pans, which they brought to the island for 2009 Carnival.

When they returned to Sweden in 1971 after the first visit, they took a steel pan back with them. Although Anna had some guest performances playing her clarinet in a T&T calypso tent with Art de Couteau's band, since very few women played pan in those days Anna needed time to learn the steel pan. So she waited until they returned home to really get into it.

In Trinidad they had been living in Cipriani Boulevard in a house which backed the Silver Stars' pan yard, so the sound of the steel pans were quite familiar to them. "We could hear the pans every night. We could not hear the radio but we heard Silver Stars," says Anna. Krister takes up the beat: "In Sweden, when we returned I started to work with the Swedish Government Concert Bureau. I took a steelband on a tour of Sweden with a mixture of members from different bands. They toured and we called them Merry Makers. But it was not the old Merry Makers, it was the new one. Anyway, four of them came without their pans, so they made the pans in Sweden".

When the Trinidadians left after the tour, Anna and Krister started a band with the pans that were left behind. One Trinidadian who lived in Sweden at the time was pannist Rudy "Twoleft" Smith, a well-known jazz musician on the pan. "He never played in the band but he was important in guiding the band," says Anna. "At first it was only Swedish players. Gradually some Trinidadians residing in Sweden joined and eventually some other Europeans. And so Hot Pans was created. Since then Hot Pans steelband has been on the Swedish music scene, regularly performing at different functions and parties." They are also passing on their steel pan skills and knowledge in schools and communities. After Hot Pans came the offspring: Cool Pans, Sweet Pans and Taxi Stand, which are just some of the steel pan bands acquainting Sweden with one of the indigenous art forms of Trinidad & Tobago.

Visit Anna and Krister's website at www.kaiso.se. For more information about Hot Pans visit www.hotpans.se.



Above: Capital Signal provided a barge and tugboat, which transported the collected garbage to be disposed of properly

Below: Somebody hasn't yet got the simple message: 'You bring it, you take it!'



—Continued from page 13

...Eco News

Shane and Paula Ferreira and their two young sons, along with Christian and Willie Locke of *Fun Now*, linked up with Sean and Cindy O'Conner of *Elbow Room* to clean up the first two bays by collecting more than 50 jumbo garbage bags of garbage. On the eastern side by the concrete jetty in the bay, Mike Hatch and friends on another yacht cleaned up the area and also collected a big pile of garbage.

This "down the islands" clean-up effort was greatly assisted by Barry "Bim" Rostant of Capital Signal who provided a barge and a tugboat, which collected and transported all the garbage to be disposed of properly.

On June 26th, Gregory Maxwell and some friends went to Chacachacare and collected more than 30 bags of garbage. The following day, the Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club Commodore, Chris Kelshall, and a group of friends also went to Chacachacare to clean and beautify the bay.

These individuals, as well as the thousands of others that assisted in the nationwide clean-up campaign, should be thanked for their efforts in making our environment cleaner and more enjoyable to use for all of us!

Unfortunately there are persons who continue to litter our beautiful country, which makes these efforts useless unless they are sustained. Therefore, the plan is to have these clean-up exercises every quarter, but volunteers are needed in order to make them a success. So come lend a hand when that time comes around next time!

Natural/Recycled Crafts Key to Venezuelan River Community

Members of the Venezuelan environmental NGO Fundación La Tortuga (FLT) have visited the state of Delta Amacuro for the fourth time to further an ambitious project in support of the indigenous communities of this freshwater environment. These visits to Delta Amacuro form part of a community development project undertaken by Fundación La Tortuga, with the help of anthropologist and professor Ronny Velasquez, with the consciousness that people are part of the marine and freshwater environment. On this trip, Chelo Nogueira, vice president of FLT, Yadersy Wetter and Manuel Fernández represented the organization.

The primary goal of this trip was to promote traditional handicrafts, while raising awareness of controlling waste and preserving the rivers. The FLT's destination this time was the village of Volcán, located in the Juan Millán parish of Municipio Tucupita, where they learned more about the interesting culture of the indigenous Warao. Many cruisers have visited the Orinoco River delta, located in Delta Amacuro, and meeting Warao people is always a highlight of their experience.

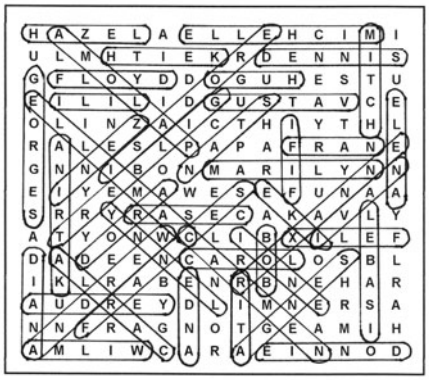
The FLT visit resulted in an alliance of mutual collaboration with the Warao communities, who excel in the making of high-quality containers, water bottles, bags, jewelry and other items from natural materials, plus other crafts that include recycled man-made materials. Dynamic working relationships were developed that will encourage and support the artisans' activity, and at the same time promote the use of sustainable natural materials and the recycling of many of the modern materials most often used in the area.

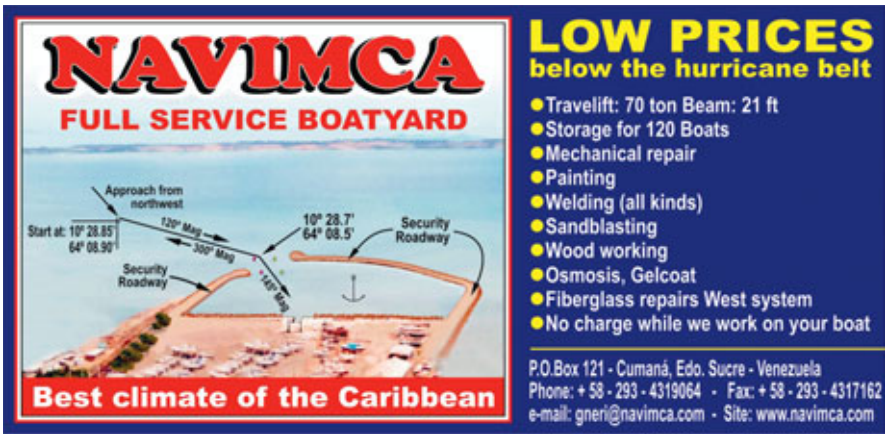
During the expedition, FLT members realized the keen awareness the inhabitants of Volcán have for the benefits of their natural resources, and planned a strategy for future visits to explore the use of more recyclable materials that are used in this area, and develop environmental programs to make production sustainable.

The Warao of the Orinoco River delta produce sustainable handicrafts from both natural materials and recycled man-made materials



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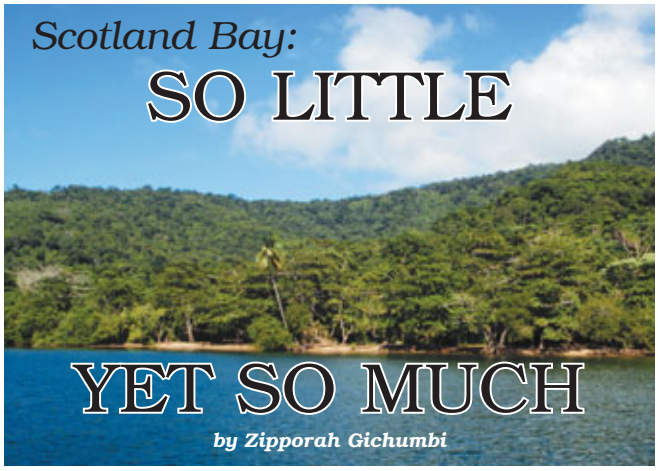
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Scotland Bay: SO LITTLE YET SO MUCH

by Zipporah Gichumbi



Left: Small scattered beaches where I can just put up a hammock between two strong trees and enjoy a book
Above: Ruins and blooming trees
Below left: Waking up to green mountains surrounding me, and ocean water under my floating home — bliss

WITH few anchorage options available in Trinidad, I would say Scotland Bay beats all other anchorages hands down. Right from the entrance of Trinidad at the Boca, Scotland Bay is like a siren calling out to me. From the outside almost all I can see are the rocky sides of the mountains, which I always think are like a fort for the bay. They surround and protect the bay from anybody coming from the sea, as an intruder can be seen from miles away yet all he can see are the mountains. The bay is surrounded by mountains on three sides and thus very peaceful and calm. When arriving in Trinidad I always feel like just skipping the clearing-in process and just anchoring in my favorite place. That not being an option [*see footnote*], I still feel Scotland Bay pulling me even as I pass by on my way to Customs and Immigration at Chaguaramas. It just has that effect on me.

For one thing, Scotland Bay is a sight to behold — so full of natural beauty and grace. Also I am intrigued by the amount of life that goes on in there. The forest is thick and the roaring of the howler monkeys is a testament that wildlife sure exists in the mountains! At first I felt scared because they sound so aggressive but after a while I became used to it and now I see it as a phenomenon unique to Scotland Bay. I never did see any one of them, but their roaring reminds me they are there.

I love to wake up to birds chirping in the morning. There is something about the music created by birds that fills one with joy and hope for the day. Waking up to green mountains surrounding me, birds chirping in the trees and monkeys roaring in the forest, and with the ocean water under my floating home — bliss.

Reflecting the trees all around, the water is a beautiful shade of green instead of the usual blue. It is very refreshing to swim here, as the water is always cool. Every now and then I get a glimpse of a turtle or some other unique sea creature.



At night the bay is just as full of life. There are bats flying all over the water surface. Hundreds of them come from their daytime hiding place to feed on fish and every now and I hear them hitting the surface of the water. At times I put fruits on the deck, as I was shown how to by a friend; the bats are attracted by the scent and come to dine. Also to be seen are the fireflies popping in and out of the forest. When I first came here I was almost convinced there were campers up the mountains as the fireflies can be so numerous at times, to the point they look like lanterns burning from afar. During nights full of stars I lie out on the deck and just get a peaceful feeling. The amount of nature coming together in Scotland Bay is always amazing for me.

There is a trail going up the mountain and many a sailor has hiked up exploring the depths of the forest, but I have never been there. It is so thick that I have a fear of getting lost in the closely-knit trees, and sometimes there are landslides. Looking



at the mountains and breathing in the mountain breeze does it for me. In any case, I have come to learn that it is illegal to hike in these mountains, probably because the coast guard has bases in the area.

Without the option of hiking in the forest, I choose to take dinghy rides along the coastline instead. All along the shore and in some places at the edge of the mountains, there are ruins of buildings or constructions left behind by American soldiers who occupied Scotland Bay around the time of World War II. I was fascinated by all the ruins left behind and, on doing some research, discovered that Scotland Bay was a recreation center for Americans during their occupation of Chaguaramas. There was a football field and courts for both tennis and basketball (not that it is possible to tell that from what remains). The bay also exhibits ruins of an old zoo, which was known as the Bronx Zoo, also an American construction. The zoo might explain the population of monkeys in the forest, but that is just my guess. But if that were the case that might mean other, more silent, animals roaming around — all the more reason for me to admire the forest strictly from the edges!

Along the coastline there are more kinds of ruins. Some are parts of walls, others are supporting structures or stairs leading into the mountains. Every now and then it is possible to see a house that looks intact but neglected. At the edge of the first mountain cliff from the seaward side, there is a structure that looks like a house that I always guess was used as a stakeout place where anybody approaching the island could be seen from miles away. Some sailors who have visited some of the ruins choose to have themselves remembered by informing anybody going there after them that they were there before, through writing things such as "Viking from the North was here" and a date. It is fascinating for me to think of those people who once lived or visited these places before me. I try to wonder what became of them or how much farther they have traveled.

Another intriguing feature at Scotland Bay are the seaside caves. These are found at the base of rocky mountains on the side of Scotland Bay that borders the unprotected ocean waters. They are an awesome sight, especially during strong waves when the water hits the rocks with enormous force and then is swallowed by the mouth of the cave. Exploring them can be dangerous, too, because the waves can be so strong as to push the dinghy against the rocks or, worse, into the caves. I have never tried to explore the caves and have no intention of ever doing it, although some of the caves are high enough for a person to walk through. How far into the mountains they go or what they hide inside them I don't know. Like the forested mountains, I refer to just behold them from the outside.

Even the "tame" activities at Scotland Bay are not all bliss. Anyone taking dinghy rides along the coastline has to be wary of hidden underwater ruins that have sharp edges and can be very damaging to a dinghy engine or the inflatable dinghy material. Anyone choosing to walk on the small scattered beaches has to be very careful as there are a lot of broken pieces of glass lying in the shallow water or in the sand, waiting for your unsuspecting feet. I always take it upon myself to collect those I can and discard them in places least likely to be stepped on, but there is always one more out there. There can also be lots of litter among the trees. The local population used to camp or picnic here and much of the rubbish as well as alcohol bottles were left behind. That can be a disappointment.

With so many trees growing here, it is inevitable that there are some poisonous ones but not to worry, the relevant government institution has placards warning against touching or eating from the poisonous trees such as manchineel. My kudos for that.

The pleasures here are simple. Mostly I just resort to swimming from the boat. If I want to be closer to land, I just put up a hammock between two strong trees and enjoy a book and whatever else is on offer from Mother Nature.

Scotland Bay may be a small part of a big island, hidden away in a corner, but it sure has a lot to offer. It is definitely a place to visit if you are in Trinidad. I so enjoy the place that one time when I anchored there I decided to bake a cake, just to celebrate all the combined forces of nature here and its magnificent beauty. It is definitely a good reason to add some calories into the body: celebrating beautiful Scotland Bay. So little yet so, so much.

Note: Foreign-flagged boats must let Trinidad & Tobago Customs know if they are moving from their port of entry to any other anchorage in T&T. Customs will give them permission to go and they must report to Customs when they return. The reason for this regulation, unique among Eastern Caribbean islands, is Trinidad's close proximity to South America, requiring law enforcement agencies to be more vigilant. The Customs officer in charge in Chaguaramas, says it's a quick and easy procedure to let Customs know of an intended movement, and there is a place on the back of the Customs form where the Customs records such movements. Yachts are not allowed to clear out for a foreign port and then stop at Scotland Bay for the night, or stop in Scotland Bay before clearing in at Chaguaramas.

EXPLORING CARRIACOU'S AMERINDIAN PAST

by Jack Russell

Anyone who has spent time on Carriacou knows that this Grenadine island has a rich culture unlike any other place on Earth: Big Drum, Quadrille music and dance, Carnival and Shakespeare Mas. But few know of Carriacou's rich pre-Columbian Amerindian culture: a thriving and flourishing culture which lasted for more than 1,300 years.

The first professional archeologists to visit Carriacou were from the Smithsonian Institute, in 1904. The results of their research concluded that Carriacou had "among the finest West Indies ware that has yet come to the Smithsonian Institute" (Jesse Fewkes). Since the 1960s, a few archeologists have worked sporadically on Carriacou. Only recently have larger archeology teams come here to understand in more detail the lives and societies of the indigenous pre-Columbian peoples who inhabited Kayryouacou ("Island of Many Reefs") as they called it.

Nearly every summer since 2003, an archeology team comprising approximately 25 students, led by Scott Fitzpatrick of North Carolina State University, Quetta Kaye from University College London, and Michiel Kappers at In-Terris Site Technics in the Netherlands, have come for five- to six-week periods, to excavate among the dozen or so known Amerindian settlement sites on the island, most of which date back to as early as AD 300 and up to European contact in the early 17th century.

For two weeks this past May, Scott and Michiel were in the Grenadines. They spent a few days mapping the excavated site on Grand Bay. They also went to Mustique and to Union Island's Chatham Bay and other sites on Union Island to do exploratory digs for future excavations. My wife, Karan, and I were fortunate enough to be able to spend a few days with them on Carriacou and Union Island, helping them excavate and sift earth, searching for remains of the Grenadines' first inhabitants.

Scott and Michiel told me that when the team first began excavating on Carriacou seven years ago, many Carriacouans were suspicious of them. For hundreds of years, there have been stories about pirate treasure buried on the island. In the minds of some Carriacouans, why would a large group of foreigners bring expensive equipment and pay the government to dig, if not for buried treasure? Though the team has yet to find any gold doubloons, the archeologists have found buried treasures far greater than any pirate's gold. Buried beneath the bank just off Grand Bay is the richest archeology site either Scott and Michiel have excavated in their nearly 20 years of digs throughout the world. Through carbon dating, the team has proven that this site was a continually active village of 100 to 200 inhabitants for 1,300 years. When I asked why Amerindians settled on the windward side of the island instead of the calm leeward shore, the answer I received was because of the wind. Mosquitoes cannot live in windy areas, and smoke from cook fires blows away. Almost all Amerindians settled on the windward side of the islands for these very reasons.

But who were these ancient ones who inhabited Carriacou's shores? There are a lot of different theories about the peoples who inhabited the islands of the Antilles: many peoples of different language subgroups and tribes, such as Arawak, Carib and Taino. I could spend this article discussing the history of each tribe, and who displaced whom, but this is not an anthropology paper; so for brevity's sake, I am going to lump all of these subgroups together into one people, Amerindian.

According to Scott and Michiel, the oldest human remains in the Antilles are on Trinidad and date back 8,000 years. Though an island today, 8,000 years ago Trinidad was still likely joined to the South American continent. This was due to the last Ice Age, which, although past its end by then, still created a sea level lower than what we have today. This meant these people migrated to what is today the island of Trinidad by land and not by sea.

The next oldest human remains in the Antilles are found on the Greater Antilles islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, and date back 4,000 years. Archeologists are not sure if these peoples migrated from present-day Florida and the Yucatan Peninsula, or north from the Orinoco River Valley in Venezuela. Scott believes it is very possible that these peoples migrated from South America. Being highly skilled sailors with large well-crafted canoes, using the northwest currents and the tradewinds to carry them, they could have made the nearly 1,000-mile journey in a few short weeks. (For you sailors who want to know about the Amerindians' boats, we'll get to it after a little more history.)

Many believe that, beginning in the fourth century AD and until the coming of the Europeans in the late 15th century, there was a semi-continuous migration of different Amerindian peoples from the Orinoco River Valley throughout the Antilles. The majority of the new migrants were integrated into the pre-existing Amerindian island groups. Yet, all agree that there were Amerindian warrior tribes, such as the Caribs, who made war against established Amerindian islanders, killing the men and taking the women as wives. Simply put, for 8,000 years the Amerindians were the primary, if not the sole inhabitants of the Antilles, until the Europeans arrived in 1492.



The Amerindians of the Antilles were people of the sea. Here, researchers examine, along with pottery, tools made from conch and other seashells found on 'the Island of Many Reefs'

Now that we've finished our very brief 8,000-year history of the Amerindians of the Antilles, the *Compass* being the *Compass*, it's time to talk about the Amerindians' seamanship and boat building.

The Amerindians of the Antilles were people of the sea. They were highly skilled shipwrights, sailors, navigators and fishermen. The Amerindians sailed these waters in large dugout canoes made primarily from gommier trees (*Dacryodes excelsa*). The Amerindians, with only stone tools, toppled the tall, broad gommier trees by ringing the base of the trees with their stone axes then burning contained fires at the ringed bases until the trees fell. After they removed the trees' bark, they dug out the huge solid trunks by controlled fires and stone tools such as the adze. Once the trunks had been gouged out, they were stretched open using a combination of water, hot stones, and wooden wedges of different lengths to widen the canoes in the middle and taper them down to pointed ends. After this process had been completed, the hull shape was preserved by the canoes being buried in damp sand to cure before being dried in the sun.

The canoes were of two kinds. The smaller *coulianas* were no more than 20 feet long and pointed at both ends. They were primarily for inshore fishing and for making short trips along the coast. The bigger craft, the *canouas*, could be more than 50 feet in length, and were capable of carrying 70 to 80 people. Though paddles were primarily used to propel the canoes, sails made of woven leaves of the moriche palm were sometimes also used, especially for long journeys.

Amerindians were excellent seamen, who knew the location of the islands by heart, and had their own means of navigating in the open sea using the stars. They sailed the open seas to distant islands, sometimes for settlement, sometimes for war, and many times for trade; for, like almost all peoples throughout the world, the Amerindians were traders, trading throughout the islands and beyond such things as cloth, tools, tobacco, weapons, and, from islands such as Hispaniola, gold.

Christopher Columbus wrote concerning the Amerindians' boats in his journal in 1492:

Each of these islands had a great number of canoes, built of solid wood, narrow and not unlike our double-banked boats in length and shape, but swifter in their motion; they steer them only by the oar. These canoes are of various sizes, but the greater number are constructed with eighteen banks of oars, and with these they cross to the other islands, which are of countless number, to carry on traffic with the people. I saw some of these canoes that held as many as seventy-eight rowers. In all these islands there is no difference of physiognomy, of manners, or of language, but they all clearly understand each other...

After our few days of archeological excavation with Scott and Michiel on Union Island, Karan and I being non-yachties, took the *Jasper* back to Carriacou. When we docked and stepped onto the jetty, we saw anchored just off Hillsborough's shore an incredibly long wooden dugout canoe. Not far from the canoe was a very large catamaran. The deck of the catamaran was filled with 30 to 40 people, all in yellow life vests, jumping up and down, shouting chants, and lifting wooden paddles high into the air. After the chants were chanted, the boisterous bunch got into dinghies and motored to the shore where the now beached dugout canoe awaited them.

They were French, I was told. They were paddling in an exact replica of an authentic Amerindian canoe up to Martinique; for like all islands of the Antilles, Martinique has a rich Amerindian history. The canoe crew had started the day before from Grenada and were on their way to Union Island where they would spend the night. After a week of excavating Amerindian remains and studying these ancient people, I was so envious of the would-be Amerindian canoe crew. I asked a leader of the crew if I could meet them in Union and join up. But alas there was no room in the canoe.

I watched the modern voyagers, 30 or more women and men, shoulder to shoulder, paddle past the jetty out into the bay, I thought about the Amerindian canoe housed in the Carriacou Museum. The canoe had been excavated from beneath the sand not far from the Grand Bay site. The museum's written description inside the 20-foot canoe reads, "This size of canoe would have held 9-12 people and would originally have been paddled from the Orinoco River in Venezuela." Unlike the modern thrill-seeking canoeists with their huge chartered catamaran following behind them to make sure all went well, the dozen or so ancient Amerindian voyagers would have been crammed together tighter than tight, with all their worldly possessions in a canoe no bigger than my mess-around aluminum canoe back home... All I can say about the Amerindians who sailed and settled on Carriacou and the islands throughout the Antilles is: they sure were some tough SOBs.

If you would like to know more about the archeology going on in the Antilles, or lend a hand and maybe dig up skeletal remains as Karan and Scott did on Grand Bay, you can receive information at www.in-terris.com, or you can e-mail Michiel at michiel@in-terris.com.

US Navy Pirate Hunter: THE SAGA OF CAPTAIN DAVID PORTER

by Victor Parachin

From the time the Spanish discovered a new world and began transporting gold, silver, pearls and other treasures from Latin America, pirates were not far behind. Beginning in the mid-1550s and extending over the next two and a half centuries, ships traveling in the Caribbean Sea were vulnerable to pirate attacks. The period from 1815 to 1820 was a time of unusually severe disruption due to a wave of piracy. In 1820 alone, 27 American ships were attacked and plundered. Because the ships were insured, the high losses forced insurance companies to sharply raise premiums. As losses mounted, ship owners and insurance companies along with American politicians demanded that effective action be taken to stem the tide of piracy.

Responding in 1821, President Monroe authorized the US Navy to establish an anti-pirate squadron to rid the Caribbean of piracy. The most logical person to lead this new and unique unit was Navy Captain David Porter who was already regarded as a naval hero. Born at Boston, Massachusetts, on February 1st, 1780, Porter entered the US Navy as a midshipman in 1798. He was engaged in military action against France and fought in the Tripolitan War against the pirate states of North Africa. In fact, Porter became a prisoner of war when the *USS Philadelphia* was captured off Tripoli in October 1803.

Upon release in 1805, Porter commanded the *USS Enterprise* and was later placed in charge of naval forces at New Orleans, Louisiana. His claim to fame came during the war of 1812 when he conducted a highly effective series of attacks on British ships. In July of that year, the US issued a declaration of war against the British. Porter assumed command of the 32-gun frigate *Essex*, and first sailed from New York toward Nova Scotia and Newfoundland where he subsequently captured several ships. In October of 1812, Porter and the *Essex* sailed into South American waters rounding Cape Horn into the Pacific, making the *Essex* the first American warship to reach that ocean. There he continued skirmishing with British ships. On March 28th, 1814, a sudden and fierce storm damaged the *Essex*.

Unfortunately for Porter and his crew, British Captain James Hillyar of the *Phoebe* discovered the *Essex* and attacked. The battle lasted two hours during which time the *Essex* was pounded by Hillyar's cannons. When it became clear that his ship was doomed, Porter tried to run her aground in order to burn the ship. However, winds kept pushing the *Essex* out to sea. According to Porter, Hillyar's "shot never missed our hull, and my ship was cut up in a manner which was perhaps never before witnessed. I saw no hopes of saving her and, at 20 minutes past six p.m. gave the painful order to strike colors." The *Essex* lost 58 men killed, 31 missing and 66 injured out of a total crew of 255. Porter was forced to surrender but not before declaring, "We have been unfortunate but not disgraced." Even though he was a blight to the British, they had considerable respect for his skills as a naval officer and military strategist. Consequently, Porter was promptly paroled and sent to New York on the condition he would no longer fight against the British.

Returning to Washington, DC as a highly popular war hero, Porter was made a member of the newly constituted Board of Navy Commissioners, a high-level advisory board to the US Navy Secretary. An authentic seaman, Porter became restless ashore and requested some kind of sea duty again. That is when he was selected to lead a Navy unit specifically formed to fight pirates. Stationed at Key West off the southern tip of Florida, Porter, at 42 years of age, was commanding the largest peacetime collection of US Navy ships which had ever been assembled.

That US Naval force became known as "The Mosquito Fleet" because it utilized small and shallow-draft ships. These smaller boats could travel more rapidly chasing pirate ships into shallow waters. His fleet comprised 16 vessels made up of naval brigs, converted Baltimore schooners, a paddle steamer and one decoy merchant ship completely armed with hidden guns. Key West was chosen because of its proximity to pirate waters. The island was known as Thompson's Island and, under Porter's command, the island soon had one of the most active naval bases in the United States. The name, "Mosquito Fleet," held another meaning for the sailors serving under Captain Porter because the insects carried yellow fever and malaria. Before long, the island's naval hospital was filled with sailors experiencing high fevers.

Porter's orders were simple and direct: to suppress and eradicate piracy, end the pirates' slave trading, protect the commerce of US business interests, maintain security for citizens traveling in the Caribbean, and provide safe passage when necessary. Although the orders were simple, the mission was complex because pirates were plentiful and the numerous islands of the Caribbean provided pirates with ample hiding places.

Nevertheless, Porter and his sailors fiercely and ferociously attacked pirate ships wherever they found them. His fleet scoured the entire Caribbean, the Bahamas and the Gulf of Mexico. Porter targeted pirate bases in Puerto Rico, Mexico, Cuba and the Florida Keys. Wherever pirate ships and bases were discovered, they were destroyed. Cuba presented a unique challenge for Porter because the Spanish resented any American presence and often looked the other way when pirates attacked ships. As Porter's successes expanded, even Spanish merchants saw the advantages of a sea without pirates. Those merchants encouraged Cuban authorities to support Porter in his pirate hunting.

With increasing support from home and abroad, Porter's successes grew. One of the most notable was the defeat of a notorious Cuban pirate named Diabolito or Little Devil. Porter's forces surprised Diabolito and his pirates off the northern coast of Cuba, forcing them to abandon their ship and hide in the land. Without a ship, their piracy was effectively over.

As head of the anti-pirate squad, Porter often had to walk a diplomatic tightrope, which he managed quite well. However, he experienced one disastrous diplomatic blunder. It took place at Farjardo, Puerto Rico, in November 1824. Spanish authorities arrested one of Porter's officers who was surveying the island for pirate activity. Incensed, Porter immediately dispatched 200 armed naval sailors into the town, demanding a formal apology. Although he did receive a formal apology, his armed excursion onto Spanish territory resulted in objections from Spain. As a result, Porter's detractors in the Navy Department used the event as a pretext to



US NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER

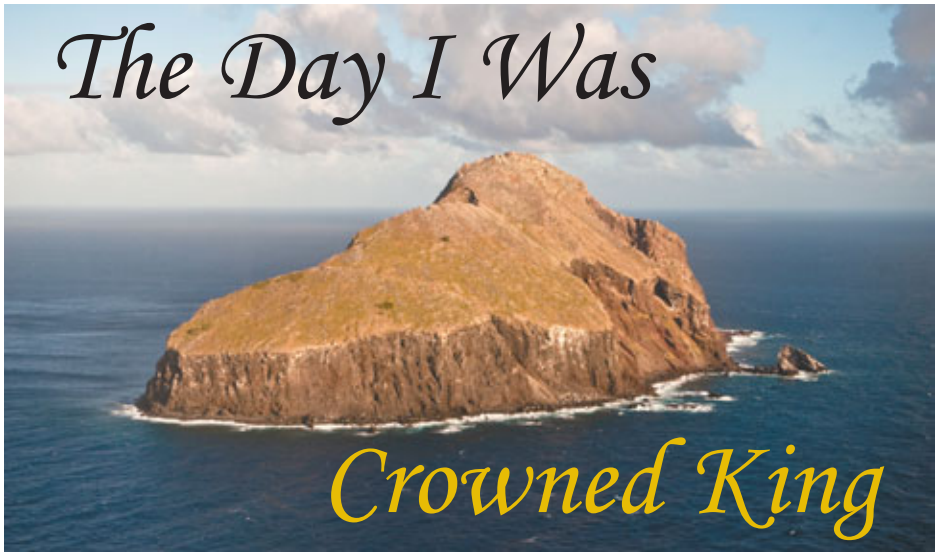
dishonor him. Convening a military tribunal, Porter was court-martialed in 1825 and received a six-month suspension from duty. The sentence so angered Porter that he resigned his commission and left the United States for Mexico where he was welcomed and made commander-in-chief of the Mexican Navy. Mexico needed his services because the country was engaged in a war of independence from Spain.

Porter led the Mexican Navy for three years and then returned to the United States in 1829. Upon his return, President Andrew Jackson made him consul general of Algiers. Ten years later, in 1839, Porter was made US Minister to Turkey at Constantinople. He died of yellow fever while serving in that capacity on March 3rd, 1843.

Among Porter's many victories, perhaps none were as great as his eradication of piracy from the waters of the Caribbean. Porter's work effectively ended the careers of famous pirates such as Diabolito, Charles Gibbs and Jean Laffite. By capturing hundreds of other pirates, maritime trade was made safe and, by 1825, piracy virtually ceased to exist in Caribbean waters.







The Day I Was Crowned King

by King Michael the Grey, King of Redonda

In August 2009 Bob the Bald, the King of Redonda, died peacefully, setting sail on his final voyage and into uncharted waters.

Quite by chance, while his flagship *Saint Peter* was being broken up, his sea chest was discovered in the bilges. Somewhat water-damaged documents found inside the chest declared that he had chosen to pass on his title in the time-honoured fashion down the literary line naming me, Michael Howorth, as his successor.

King Bob, otherwise known as Robert Williamson, besides being a writer and author of some note, was every inch a sailor — and to be king of an island territory such as his realm, it is almost an essential trait. The island of Redonda is located about 30 miles to the southwest of Antigua and 13 miles northwest of the volcanic island of Montserrat.

Redonda is an island one mile long by one third of a mile wide, rising to a height of 971 feet, and while it is now a somewhat inhospitable and currently uninhabited remnant of an extinct volcano cone, it was not always that way. In the early part of the 20th century, large quantities of phosphate-bearing ore were mined from the island for processing as fertilizer. Accommodation was established on Sussex Plateau, rainwater reservoirs, a jetty and a cable-hoist were installed. At its peak of production, more than 7,000 tons of ore were being exported each year. Work ceased with the outbreak of the Great War, and was never resumed. Hurricanes destroyed most of the buildings, with only ruins at Sussex surviving. The now-abandoned island has become a refuge for seabirds, reptiles, a herd of goats and a colony of burrowing owls recently displaced from Antigua.

I had first met King Bob back in the early '90s when, with Frances, my wife, we used English Harbour in Antigua as the homeport for our charter yacht *Red Hackle*, a beautiful German Frers ketch. Bob inducted me into the Royal Navy Tot Club where each night as the sun set, a tot of rum is drunk and a reading made from "This Day in Naval History". As my career as a yachting journalist developed, so he became my man in Antigua, feeding me with local news of interest and checking out story leads. He said he read every word I ever wrote but along with his stories about being the true King of Redonda I took that with a sprinkling of sodium chloride.

Yet in the document of succession left by King Bob he decreed that if I was to become the island's next King I had to prove I was still writing. I also had to visit the island within 12 months of his demise and once there raise the royal Redondan standard. As I did not get to Antigua until the December, when I was sent to cover the annual charter yacht show for the magazine *SuperYacht World*, and did not know until I actually got there that I was to become the next King, I had but a short time in which to mount such an expedition.

Short of setting sail with a flotilla of superyachts, most of which were at the time tied up attending the Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting, the only way it seemed to arrive quickly on the island was to commandeer a helicopter. The only machine capable of taking such a flight of fancy was that stowed aboard the 67-metre superyacht *Allure Shadow*. After promising a knighthood to the yacht's owner and agreeing to promote the yacht's captain to command the royal fleet as High Admiral, the loan of the Robinson 44 was agreed.

At the crack of dawn on December 12th, 2009 I, together with my royal retinue that included John Duffy the Sheriff of Plum County and a photographer, stepped aboard *Airfarce One*, and flew westwards to land at Sussex, the capital town on Redonda. Once there, the standard was raised and a toast was made to the memory of King Bob.

When Christopher Columbus spotted the island in 1493 on his second journey to the New World, he claimed Redonda for the Spanish crown, naming it Santa Maria la Redonda. This precipitous and somewhat forbidding island is characterised by cliffs that fall almost perpendicularly nearly 1,000 feet into the sea below the summit located on the western side.

Columbus, unlike true Kings of Redonda, did not actually land on the island and it has become the tradition that it is only by doing so and staking a claim to the title that the Kingship can be passed on. The "title" of King is not hereditary and appears to have been passed from one incumbent to another as a result of literary connections.

The history of the Kingdom is not without its own royal intrigue. It has become known around the world for its curious catalogue of whimsical "Royal Characters" created by famous literary figures. There have over the years been several "Kings of Redonda" and numerous pretenders. It all started in 1865, when, allegedly, Matthew Dowdy Shiel, a ship owner from Montserrat and a man apparently descended from a long line of Irish kings, decided to crown his son, Matthew, king. He did so with the help of William Walrond Jackson, the then Bishop of Antigua.

Detractors say Matthew was nothing more than the illegitimate son of William and, rather than the descendant of Irish kings, Shiel was more likely the descendant of Irish convicts who, having been deported to St. Kitts, escaped and went to Montserrat. But by whatever means, Matthew rose to the title and in 1929, some 49 years after his supposed coronation, Matthew Shiel claimed to be King Felipe of Redonda. Later, he became well known as a science fiction writer and that is where the literary connection has its foundation. The earliest written record of a King of Redonda appears in 1929 in a pamphlet promoting the works of the said Matthew Shiel and it may be presumed that, being a consummate self-publicist, he could have invented the story to increase his book sales.

In 1936, a succession took place making the Irish poet John Gawsworth King Juan I, and it was after his abdication in 1967 that 'history' became a little confused. It appears that King Juan I did in fact make several attempts to sell the title. At least three advertisements are known to have appeared in *The Times* newspaper and he may have offered it for sale by other means. The writer Jon Wynne-Tyson became King Juan II in 1970, the year King Juan I died, and he claims to have been directly appointed by Gawsworth — a fact disputed by pretenders to the throne. Indeed, some claimants to the title go into great detail to support their claims on websites but these often contradict what little factual history there is relating to the title. The Spanish novelist Javier Marías, currently living in Spain, lays claim to the crown through the purchase of artifacts pertaining to the Kingdom at Sotheby's in 1997, when papers belonging to King Juan II (the writer Jon Wynne-Tyson), who had abdicated, were sold at auction. Tyson did himself visit the island, landing on it in 1979 and planting an ecological flag upon its summit. It has been established that until King Bob did so, no other King had ever landed on the island.

In 1997, the year King Juan II abdicated, King Bob sailed across to the island in *Lord Baden Powell*, a 40-metre square-rigged topsail schooner, and, with 61 loyal subjects, went ashore where he planted his standard at the top of King Juan's Peak, declaring himself King, a claim he said had the backing of his predecessor King Juan II. Without doubt, King Bob had a definite advantage over his detractors by living on Antigua in close proximity to Redonda. He granted knighthoods to worthy persons and paraded his "royal" personage around Antigua and could frequently be seen driving around Antigua in the "royal" car, a rather elderly Mazda 323 topped by a gold crown.

Once back in Antigua I was crowned that day at a coronation ceremony held in the ruins of what was Fort Charlotte, overlooking English Harbour. Presiding over the occasion was Terrance, Lord Archbishop of Redonda. In a moving service, the Sheriff of Plum County read out the proclamation of the past King and the archbishop first presented me with the Royal Orb, a golden pineapple, followed by the Mace, a stick of golden sugarcane, each representing the riches of the Caribbean. Before the crown of Redonda was placed upon my head, the archbishop asked me to take a pinch of salt from the royal saltcellar.



Top: A mythical micro-nation, Redonda is in reality part of Antigua & Barbuda — and essentially one large rock
Above: The new King, preparing to board Airfarce One *and visit his kingdom*

My first act as King was to bestow the office of Viceroy to John Duffy who, after taking a pinch of salt from the royal saltcellar, became Viceroy John Duffy of Plum County. It is expected by those seeking ridiculous titles that I will continue the tradition established by King Bob and issue a New Year's honours list at the beginning of each year.

Speaking at the ceremony after taking the name King Michael the Grey, I said that I would uphold the title and continue ruling with all the myth, mystery and fantasy of my predecessors. I did add that, as a travel writer specializing in the Caribbean and more especially yachting, I would work with the Ministry of Tourism of Antigua & Barbuda to promote the islands and I thanked the Government for the indulgent tolerance with which they viewed my Kingdom.

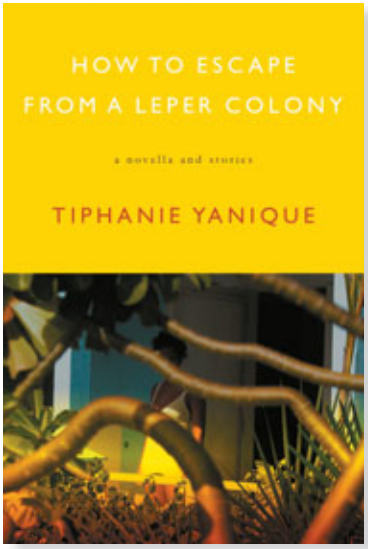
In reality, Redonda became a British possession in 1860 and a dependency of Antigua in 1967. Redonda has belonged to the peoples of that Government since then and any claims to kingship, while spurious, are merely tolerated by the Government for their publicity value.

The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office has no records of any agreement ceding the island to a king and doubts that the British Government of the day would have granted the title to anyone. Since independence from Great Britain in 1981 it is Antigua & Barbuda that now holds sovereignty over the rock, and all that really reigns in Redonda is confusion.

In 2007, the Wellington Arms pub in Southampton, England, unsuccessfully attempted to declare itself an embassy of the "nation" of Redonda, in order to gain diplomatic immunity from the nationwide ban on smoking in enclosed workplaces that included pubs. Unfortunately, for freedom-loving smokers in the UK, they were unsuccessful.

DISPLACED IN THE ISLANDS

How to Escape From a Leper Colony: a Novella and Stories, *by Tiphanie Yanique. ©2010, Greywolf Press. 184 pages. ISBN 978-1-55597-550-0.*



This book's title is unusual and grabs the bookstore browser. Who has even thought of leprosy since the discovery of a cure for Hansen's disease in the 1930s — except perhaps tourists visiting Chacachacare, an abandoned leper colony in Trinidad? It is here that the first story takes place.

Living up to the intrigue of the title, this compilation of stories also grabs the reader from the first page.

The title story foreshadows the rich textures prize-winning author Tiphanie Yanique offers throughout the collection. When found to have leprosy, Deepa, a 14-year-old Trinidadian Hindu girl, is sent to the colony in 1939. On busy roads and dusty paths, Yanique takes the reader from Trinidad to this remote island, just five miles away. A red sari made redder by a child's blood is the first of many vibrant visuals that remind one of lush color photos, rather than typeset words.

The colony is run by white nuns, who remain separate from patients of all colors and faiths, and who are assisted by an assortment of volunteers wrapped in white: Trinidadian doctors, British journalists, young people carrying Bibles in their pockets, and criminals trading time in jail for time among the lepers. There are two churches, Catholic and Protestant. Though there isn't any place for Hindus, Deepa finds it easy "to chant about Jesus Christ and slip in a Lord Krishna here and there."

After many days of trying to figure out where Deepa should sleep, the nuns put her in a one-room house with an old African woman, Tantie B. There is talk about a cure for their disease, and Tantie B wants Deepa's mother not to think badly of her parenting skills, should the young girl go home someday. She is the grandmother Deepa never knew.

Two years older than Deepa, Lazaro becomes like a brother to her and says his "mother tell me a island can be like a world." He wishes to be Deepa's lover and is happy to take her exploring around the island, especially to the nuns' burial site. The colony is a microcosm of African, East Indian and European Diasporas.

Today, Chacachacare appears abandoned in haste. Plates and bowls sit on tables, patient records are revealed to any boater who stops to explore. When Yanique visited and learned that the details of the abandonment were a mystery, she made up a story to explain it. It might be true, or it might be fiction; regardless, the story is fascinating and beautifully written.

The Caribbean hosts an anthology of islands, populated by people and their descendants who have been transported from somewhere else. Each island is unique in its mixture of dialects and histories, yet many living there are subject to feelings of alienation and the influence of more affluent countries. Yanique's stories brilliantly portray different people of the Caribbean islands, all of whom have been displaced in some way, whether voluntarily or otherwise, recently or long ago. "The Bridge Stories" offers one ill-fated solution to connect the islands.

The book is dedicated to the Virgin Islands, where the author was born and raised, and several stories take place there. The characters — thugs in love, a Carnival-costume maker, a Frenchie (Frenchies, generally residents of Frenchtown, are people of French decent who colonized St. Thomas), a Muslim, a beauty queen, expatriates, bi-racial couples and their children — all deal with issues of race, sexuality, status, religion, double standards, affluence or poverty, tourism, and changing cultures.

"Kill the Rabbits" takes place in the US Virgin Islands around Carnival time. It's a multi-level story about Cooper, a pickpocket on St. Thomas, and Herman, the son of two American professors who buy a house and a bar on St. John after a cruise ship visit. The two very different young men are both in love with Xica, a motherless young woman in a yellow dress, raised by her grandfather, a costume maker. She sees Herman as "a transient thing who simply appeared and I expected him to disappear any minute, so I fell in love with him." She observes, "Flesh is also a kind of costume. It is also a thing to hide behind. A thing to move you and to be moved by. Skin. The walls of a gated community," as she visits Herman on St. John.



Today, yachts escape to the former leper colony at Chacachacare — perhaps the ideal place to read this book's title story

Cooper, a thief and accused rapist, ponders why his culture is "something worth keeping alive," and frets about whorishness, "…selling ourselves. But not ourselves, really. The land. But the land is us… The St. Johnians can't even afford to live in St. John." As he observes a white man bearing a heavy wooden cross beneath the jail cell window on Easter Sunday (is that Herman, after reading his father's *History of Christian Martyrdom*?), he concludes: "The answer is the same no matter where they might be or where they might be from. For love, of course. Nothing else is worth it."

Yanique writes with a tough love for her island, her region, her people — yet she does not preach. Her stories have won international prizes for fiction. A Fulbright scholar, she is an assistant professor at Drew University in New York and visits St. Thomas when she can. Her skill as a writer makes the most unlovable characters loveable, or at least, palatable and understood. Her artistry gives black text on white paper a shine like gold dust on a yellow dress. Her images are filled with tight white pants, red saris, purple bridesmaids' dresses, Puma trainers, Maui Jims, silk nightgowns, dark burkas, and tuxedos. In her portraits of island people, she captures the colors, textures, sounds and even the smells of the Caribbean — aspects that transplants and tourists might notice but rarely experience, let alone explore, understand or love.

Available for purchase online at www.tiphanieyanique.com, BarnesandNoble.com, and Amazon.com.

Ellen Sanpere has lived on Cayenne III, *an Idylle 15.5, since 1998, mostly in the Caribbean. She recently moved ashore on St. Croix.*

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MARINA ZAR-PAR
Boca Chica, Dominican Republic
www.marinazarpar.com





AUGUST 2010

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Break out the drifter. Boat business will be in the doldrums this August, along with your energy levels. Later in the month romance will join the light-airs section of your life. Concentrate on creative ventures.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
While creativity is on a rollicking beat, communications will be right off your stern and lagging behind after the 20th, so make the best of them before then.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
Any marine-related business will be under full sail, especially in the first week. Romance will cruise into your anchorage in the second week; give it a warm welcome.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Although communications are still garbled and romance might seem headed for the rocks, it will all improve after the 7th to complement your business and boatwork efforts.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
August will be a creative month, so put everything else to one side and take full advantage of this aspect to get new boat projects well underway before the end of the month.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
Verbal skills will be flowing freely until the 21st so make group plans and finalize deals before then. Let romance take its course, even if it's away from you.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Concentrate on nautical business aspirations in the first week and use your work energy for the rest of the month to bring those business plans to a safe harbor.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
Concentrate on creative projects this month and finish up all boatwork left undone so far, even if crewmembers are less than helpful. Get out the cat-o-nine-tails if you must.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
You can accomplish a lot on board this month if you don't allow others to backwind your efforts.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
Contact anyone who can help you sail forward before the 21st when your powers of persuasion will wane. Romance will be on the ebb tide and business dealings a bit swampy.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
You'll be feeling energetic so put it into your boat business in the first week and let a sailorly new romance be your reward after the 7th.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
As communications remain a slog to windward and you watch your love life sail away, take a break from it all and treat yourself to some time off. Hang with good boat buddies or go single-handing until the situation improves.

DON'T LEAVE PORT WITHOUT IT
CARIBBEAN COMPASS

Island Poets

A LITTLE REMINDER


WILFRED DEDERER

Life on the water or life on land?
A decision few people understand...

What do you want, how do you thrive,
In your short but precious life?

Waking up any time you choose,
Or stopping the alarm by pressing snooze?

Having a nice breakfast on your vessel's deck,
Or rushing out of the house, already a wreck?

Reading the plot of a darn good book,
Or stuck in traffic with a frustrated look?

Spending the day, exploring a new place,
Or sitting at work, a demanding boss in your face?

Leaving the area and sailing around,
Or doing your job, as if chased by a hound?

Exchanging stories with other cruisers,
Or surviving in the office with a bunch of losers?

Being surrounded by water and sand,
Or staring at the same old features on land?

Having a cocktail outside, feeling free,
Or chugging a Bud in front of the TV?

Grilling that fish you recently caught,
Or cooking a meal with ingredients you bought?

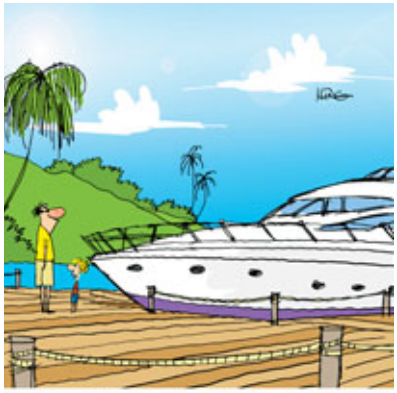
Rocked in your bunk by waves oh so kind,
Or going to bed with work on your mind?

Whenever you feel lonely, annoyed or sad,
Know there is a less exciting life to be led.

Whenever you doubt your existence at sea,
Remember how living on land would be!

— Liesbet Collaert

jerry-toon


JERRY KING

"I bought her off eBay, dad. By the way, don't be surprised if there's a small charge on your credit card."

Towards a Systematic Nomenclature for Recreational Yachties and Associated Yacht Folk

by Andy Pell and Lorna Rudkin

As academics, we were given a grant by one of the lesser-known divisions of the EU to examine the types (social, economic and length of experience) and assess the motivations of long-term yacht liveaboards.

The traditional literature lists the more obvious types, focusing upon older males with beards and floppy hats who have spent many years perfecting stoops, are able to row a dinghy in a Force 9 gale and splice galvanized rigging wire with their bare hands. Their diet is often made up of tinned goods, barnacles, old "backy" (which dieticians have decided can make up one of their five-a-day intake of vegetables) and the local grog (which is often rated not by age or clarity but by its octane ratio).

A younger generation has also been detected, often in pairs with ideas of romantic places and a decidedly low requirement for space. In vessels many would balk at choosing for racing round marks in a lake, they cross oceans and tackle poor weather. This data-set is remarkably numerous, possibly caused by their use of blogging, which in turn encourages others. Their skill with modern technology is a strong differentiator between them and the older generation who still hold that the sextant is too modern.

Reports have also been made of a more numerous group, tending to be in middle age. Those in this segment has often been economically active but have retired to broaden their horizons and escape their offspring (see group above). This group tends to splits into two distinct sub-groups.

This division seems to be along lines of sociability. Some travel in groups; researchers refer to this as "flocking" and work is being carried out to see if the gravitational effects of boat hulls are in some part involved. Others are more solitary and tend to interact less, not only with their fellow yachties but often within a single boat's average crew of two. Preliminary enquiries have yet to show differences between these two sub-groups when going to and through the Panama Canal. Flocking is often most clearly exhibited when the more sociable feel in some way threatened. Areas where piracy or theft is rife will often be hot spots for VHF nets and "pot-lucks", clear indications of the more sociable group. It has been suggested that some of the less sociable seek out more isolated places to anchor where they "commune with nature", which may be indicative of social/psychiatric disorders.

Other possible delineators include hull or mast numbers as these factors seem to divide the groups horizontally. Some owners of catamarans have friends with monohulls but rarely mention them in company. Similarly, in our own experience, ketch owners staunchly defend this rig while having difficulty explaining any real benefit. Our own suggestions, being a useful hand-hold when returning from some strenuous research or a sound place to rig a hammock, seem to be in a minority.

Having bought and renovated a research vessel and started the initial study (names, addresses and invoices from bars supplied on request) we have found a need for further research monies and will be, therefore applying for further funding.

Current research funded by the Regional International Department of Cruising and Leisure Executive (RIDICULE).

Andy Pell and Lorna Rudkin cruise the Caribbean aboard Yacht Tixi Lixi.



The World Meteorological Organization establishes one list of Atlantic hurricane names for each of six years; i.e. one list is repeated every seventh year. But if a storm is extremely destructive, that name is retired from the list. Find retired hurricane names in this Word Search Puzzle by Pauline Dolinski.

RETIRED HURRICANE NAMES PUZZLE

H	A	Z	E	L	A	E	L	L	E	H	C	I	M	I
U	L	M	H	T	I	E	K	R	D	E	N	N	I	S
G	F	L	O	Y	D	D	O	G	U	H	E	S	T	U
E	I	L	I	L	I	D	G	U	S	T	A	V	C	E
O	L	I	N	Z	A	I	C	T	H	I	Y	T	H	L
R	A	L	E	S	L	P	A	P	A	F	R	A	N	E
G	N	N	I	B	O	N	M	A	R	I	L	Y	N	N
E	I	Y	E	M	A	W	E	S	E	F	U	N	A	A
S	R	R	Y	R	A	S	E	C	A	K	A	V	L	Y
A	T	Y	O	N	W	C	L	I	B	X	I	L	E	F
D	A	D	E	E	N	C	A	R	O	L	O	S	B	L
I	K	L	R	A	B	E	N	R	B	N	E	H	A	R
A	U	D	R	E	Y	D	L	I	M	N	E	R	S	A
N	N	F	R	A	G	N	O	T	G	E	A	M	I	H
A	M	L	I	W	C	A	R	A	E	I	N	N	O	D

AGNES
ANDREW
AUDREY
BOB

CAMILLE
CARLA
CARMEN
CAROL
CESAR

DENNIS
DIANA
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DORA

EDNA
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FRAN
FRANCES
GEORGES
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KEITH
LENNY
LILI
MARILYN
MICHELLE
MITCH
PALOMA
RITA
ROXANNE
STAN
WILMA

Word Search Puzzle solution on page 23

Mollykins and the Evil Spirit — a Modern Folktale

by Lee Kessell

In a seaside village on a lush and lovely island in the southern Caribbean, where the spirit world with all its terrors is part of everyday life, a particularly evil spirit had caught hold of 14-year-old Mollykins — and it put her in a cheap wooden coffin! Mollykins had done nothing to deserve this but Mistress Poteree, the evil spirit, was jealous because Mollykins was the prettiest girl in the village.

Now everyone in the village knew that Mistress Poteree was a *garze* who had sold her soul to a devil in return for magical powers. So when Mollykins disappeared they shuddered and said nothing.

Mistress Poteree decided to give Mollykins a chance to escape, laughing to herself that no one in the village would ever dare interfere. You see, the villagers knew that if a coffin suddenly appeared in your path after nightfall, an evil spirit was after you and the only thing you could do was to take off your shirt and put it on backwards and then sit on the coffin until daybreak when it would disappear and let you go home. Mistress Poteree told Mollykins that if anyone opened the coffin they would free her. Sounds easy, but Mistress Poteree made sure that Mollykins could not be heard through the coffin and no matter how loudly she shrieked for help, no one would hear her.

That night, along came Joe the baker, going home for dinner and bed before getting up early in the morning to bake the breakfast bread.

"Oh me God, a coffin," whispered Joe. He immediately took off his flour-dusty shirt and put it on backwards and then sat on the coffin to wait it out. "Well, I won't go hungry," said Joe. "I'll just eat this bread I was taking home." And so he did.

Mollykins shouted with all her might, but Joe couldn't hear her. Mollykins became frantic, and the delicious smell of the bread made her stomach churn and gurgle with hunger. Mollykins shrieked and shouted with all her might but of course the baker didn't hear her. At first light Joe was at last free to go home.

The next night along came Ma Mina, the sewing lady, and exactly the same thing happened, but she went home hungry.

The following night 12-year-old Sessi was caught by the coffin on her way home from her aunt's, but she fell asleep as she sat on the coffin and woke up on the hard, stony ground.

Mistress Poteree laughed long and loud and poor Mollykins grew thinner and thinner. Next a small boy was trapped, and he cried himself to sleep. After this, everyone in the village got home before dark and that is how a young shipwrecked sailor, trying to find a bed for the night, found a long wooden box across the path. The young man was a stranger to the islands and knew nothing about evil spirits or cursed coffins so he decided to look inside, hoping to find some clue to its owner.

Mollykins had heard the footfalls approach and then stop so she called for help. The young man thought he had heard a faint cry so he looked about, but seeing no one he bent down and opened the lid of the box. When he saw a young girl inside he jumped back in surprise. Mistress Poteree flew to the coffin in a panic but before she could slam the lid shut,

A young shipwrecked sailor, trying to find a bed for the night, found a long wooden box across the path

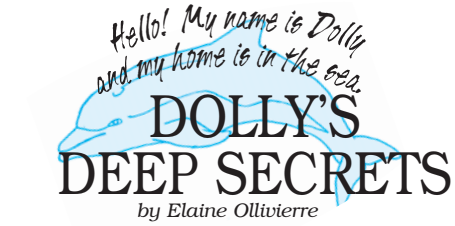
Mollykins leaped out and threw her arms tightly about the wide-eyed young man. Mistress Poteree now found herself inexplicably locked inside the coffin and she shrieked like a banshee.

The villagers, who had seen Mistress Poteree fly through the air, quickly spread the word and every one ran to see if the coffin and Mistress Poteree had vanished. Instead they saw Mollykins hugging a strange young man and heard Mistress Poteree shrieking like a banshee. What had happened?

The answer came as dark-rolling clouds gathered over the village and a monstrous devil, dazzling red from head to toe with two sharp horns springing from his forehead, pointed his spear at the coffin. He gave a mighty roar like thunder and sent a shaft of green lightning right into the coffin. Mistress Poteree and the coffin disappeared in a fiery ball and cloud and the devil disappeared with it. All that remained was a scorched patch of earth.

As you can guess, Mollykins married the young man. They found a boat and sailed off together to see the world. Mollykins adored her young man and he thought it was much more fun to sail with a loving companion. And, oh yes — no more *garzes* were ever seen in the village again.

THE END



DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

Do you remember the name of the horizontal underground stems from which seagrass leaves grow? They're called **rhizomes**. Seagrass plants reproduce asexually by sending out a rhizome under the sand on the sea floor. At different points along the rhizome, shoots sprout upwards and roots grow downward as the seagrass spreads into new areas.

Does seagrass reproduce sexually? Male and female seagrass flowers are usually found on separate plants and may be small and difficult to see. But yes, they do produce ova and pollen. The pollen has a gelatinous coating that protects it from the seawater as it floats away from the flower. The ova and pollen fuse to form seeds, which are carried away from the parent plant by water currents to start a new life somewhere else.

Rhizomes have other uses. They contain a vascular system of 'tubes'. The seagrass makes food by photosynthesis in its leaves and it absorbs nutrients from the water and from the sea floor through its roots. The food can be passed through the tubes for other leaves, roots and shoots to share.

As rhizomes and roots grow, they become tangled and form clumps that are difficult to pull up. In this way, they help to stabilize the sand on the sea bottom. Seagrass rhizomes only grow at the ends. If a rhizome is cut in two, the cut ends do not grow again. This means that it is easy to destroy seagrass beds if their rhizomes are damaged by yacht anchors or speedboat propellers for example.

Is seagrass of any use to anyone? Let's make a list.

• Seagrass meadows improve the quality of the seawater around them. Their root systems hold sand and mud on the sea floor while their leaves trap fine particles from the water.

• Seagrass leaves act as **baffles.** This means that they slow down the flow of water around the leaves so that small creatures can find refuge and not get washed away.

• Seagrass meadows provide excellent nursery grounds within the tangle of their leaves for many marine species.

• Seagrass leaves are eaten by larger marine species like green turtles. The turtles do not destroy the seagrass because shoots spring up again from the rhizomes.

• Dead seagrass leaves may wash up on beaches and can be used as mulch for gardens.

Puzzle: Six words from the passage are written below in code but not necessarily in the order given. Decode the symbols then find the answer to the question.

M E A D O W	§ * Δ = × ↓
P O L L E N	o * × × * ◊
L E A V E S	↓ § ∞ * + ×
B O T T O M	◊ ● ↑ □ * £
S P R O U T	♥ ● ↑ ≈ ● ↓
P O I N T S	§ * ♥ ♥ ● =

Question: What is seagrass? ↑ ◊ ↑ ∞ Δ = ● § ♥ ↑ = ×

— See puzzle answer on page 45

THE SKY IN AUGUST

by Scott Welty

The Planets this August
MERCURY - An evening star all month. Low in the western sky at sunset.
VENUS - A bright evening star also all month.
EARTH - Stuck in an oil slick.
MARS - Also in the west and setting around 2030.
JUPITER - Not playing nicely with the other planets. Rising 2130 early in the month and 1930 later. Setting in the daytime.
SATURN - Joins the party in the west setting just before Mars.



FIGURE 1

Sky Events This Month
9th - New Moon
13th - The spectacular grouping of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn, and the crescent moon. Look in the evening sky around 1900 hours (see Figure 1).
17th - Moon just misses the bright star Antares (see Figure 2).
20th - Venus at maximum elongation (see below).
24th - Full Moon

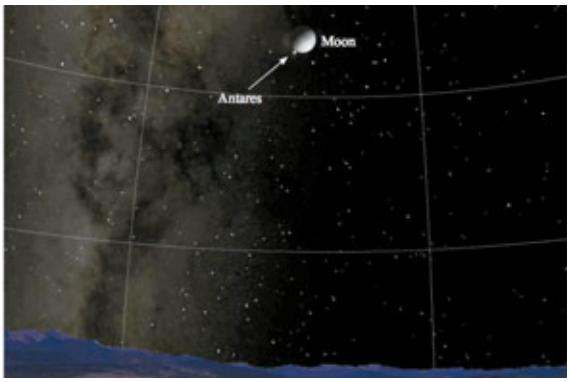


FIGURE 2

Figure 1: Nice grouping! August 13, around 1900 hours looking west
Figure 2: The Moon just misses the bright star Antares
Figure 3: The sun is straight up at noon. Venus can be found about 45 degrees to the left and down a little (east and south)

Venus in the Daytime!

Elongation means how many degrees something appears away from the sun. Since Venus is an "inferior" planet (closer to the sun than we are) it will have a maximum elongation of less than 180 degrees. That is, Venus will never appear high in the sky at midnight. It can't get "behind us" since it's inside our orbit.

This month, Venus reaches its maximum possible elongation of 46 degrees on the 20th. What this means for you is a great chance to see Venus in the daytime! We've all probably noticed that you can often see the moon in the daytime. It's big. But you can also see Venus in the daytime with clear skies.

Figure 3 shows the sun and Venus at noon on the 20th. The sun is nearly straight up at noon on that day in the Caribbean. Venus will be to the left (east) and a little south. You can look at Venus with your naked eye or through your binoculars but DO NOT LOOK AT THE SUN WITH YOUR BINOCULARS. In fact, if you're going to look with binoculars you should put the sun behind something like your mast or bimini to prevent you from accidentally focusing on it. If you're going to use your binoculars, focus them on something VERY far away (such as the horizon) first and then scan to the left of the sun. Don't worry if it's cloudy on the 20th. Venus will be pretty far east from the sun all month.

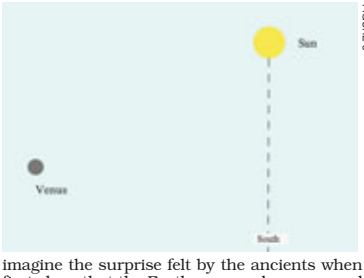


FIGURE 3

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

I recently helped with a boat delivery, sailing from Key West to Kemah, Texas, which is in Galveston Bay. Short version: It was hot… very hot… with little wind. We arrived in Galveston Bay in the wee hours with a full moon setting. As the eastern sky began to lighten the moon came out from behind a cloud in the west — with a chunk missing! Partial lunar eclipse! A nice surprise and not visible in the Caribbean, as the moon would have been down already for us here. Imagine my surprise, and better yet imagine the surprise felt by the ancients when a chunk was missing from the moon. Actually, this was one of the first clues that the Earth was a sphere as people quickly figured out that a sphere is the only shape that will always project a circular shadow no matter the angles involved and the shadow of the Earth on the moon during a lunar eclipse is always circular. So there!

Scott Welty is the author of The Why Book of Sailing, *Burford Books, ©2007.*



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Beginner's Luck — A Fish Tale

by Michelle Daniels

My husband, Dave, and I have been cruising the Caribbean going on four years now, but until this year we never fished. We love to eat fish, but have considered ourselves the world's worst fishermen. Why's that?

Well, back in our land-living days, we owned a property on Lake Lanier, Georgia. Lake Lanier boasts some of the best bass fishing in the country. Our neighbor, Grant, was an avid fisherman. Our docks sat 40 feet apart. Grant would come down to his dock, cast a line in between our two docks and within minutes pull up a bass. Never having had our own success at fishing, we eagerly listened to Grant's advice, sure that our fishing luck would change. So, we too cast our lines in the same patch of water. Our lines remained slack; Grant continued to snag fish. No question, we were the world's worst fishermen!

When it came time to outfit our 1998 Island Packet 40, *Daniell Storey*, for cruising, friends and acquaintances encouraged us to purchase fishing equipment. We were sure to catch fish, they said. So, depending upon the advice of a resident fishing professional at the local chandlery, we purchased the necessary rod, reel, lures, fillet knife and sport-fishing guidebook.

I think we trolled the line once in the first three years and lost a lure. Frustrated, we stowed the equipment away.

This past January, however, things were about to change when a cruising friend of ours, Steve, on *S/V Seaman's Elixir*, "primed the pump" as Dave likes to say. Steve's enthusiasm for fishing was contagious. He was so optimistic that our luck would change that he gave us one of his pink squid lures. Out came the fishing gear. At the time we were in the USVI and we decided to try trolling between St. Thomas and the Spanish Virgins. We actually hooked a fish, but lost the lure. Deflated, we thought the curse would never be shaken off.

But Dave decided that if Steve was kind enough to prime the pump with the first pink squid, we should go find another one and, at least in the spirit of the gift, continue trying. And so it came to pass that in March we landed our first fish, a six-pound King Mackerel, while sailing along the south coast of St. John. Our first taste of mackerel — delicious! Then, in April while sailing north from Antigua to Barbuda we caught three Little Tunnies.

We were now completely hooked (pun intended) on the idea of trolling a line while underway. Travel between islands gained a new level of excitement. On our return sail from Barbuda to Antigua, sure enough, we caught another Little Tunny! Early on the morning of April 29th we departed Antigua and headed south towards Guadeloupe, once again trolling our fishing line. At 0930 hours, "Fish on!" This time, it quickly became clear that we'd hooked something large. This fish fought hard. After a bit, it leapt out of the water — a mahi mahi! We were giddy with excitement. Now the real test; could two novices successfully haul in a catch like this? We did. The male mahi mahi measured 40 inches! We were like kids at Christmas time, grinning ear to ear.

How long would our beginner's luck continue?

Saturday, May 22nd, anchor up at 0600 hours and we were on our way from Anse D'Arlet to Le Marin along the south coast of Martinique. Although a short distance of 15 nautical miles, the last ten of those miles is almost guaranteed a beat into the prevailing easterlies of more than 20 knots and often with an opposing current.

—Continued on next page



Our second mahi mahi catch

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—*Continued from previous page*

We expected an early start would give us a bit of a break, as the winds tend to pick up later in the morning.

As Dave set up to troll the fishing line, I said, "Those two marlin steaks we had for dinner last night were the last of our fish so it's time to catch another!" (We'd purchased the marlin from a local fisherman.) Our sail plan was to head directly for Diamond Rock, which has a very steep contour line underwater with depths quickly reaching over 1,000 feet. We would follow the 150- to 300-foot depth contour line. There was a better-than-average chance that some good catches could be found here.

Dramatic Diamond Rock is nothing short of the peak of an underwater mountain that stands sentry off the southwest tip of Martinique. Today, it was shrouded in the early morning mist, which softened its tortured facade.

Fish pots littered the 150-foot contour line so we followed the 300-foot line, making our way around Diamond Rock. The wind was less than ten knots, the time was 0700 hours. Dave went below. I carefully navigated outside the line of fish pots. The last thing we wanted was to snag one of them with our lure. Then, "zzzzzzzz." I looked over at the fishing rod. I could hardly believe it! Something was hooked, again!

I called down to Dave, "Fish on!" He came to the companionway, "You're kidding, right?" I just grinned. One glance at the rod said it all. We'd snagged something big, all right. As Dave took the line to work the fish I had a moment of concern when I looked behind us and saw a fishing pot back a ways. Did I snag that? But, Dave quickly relieved my concern: "Definitely a fish." This fish was not in a hurry to show itself to us, though. It stayed deep. Looking at Dave strain, I realized whatever this was, it was larger than any of our other catches. Then, as I watched behind us, a shimmering jewel of yellow and green broke the surface and leapt into the air. Another mahi mahi! Wow, our second one!

Dave reeled the fish to within about 70 feet of *Daniell Storey*. As we watched it fight, it made a fast dash from the starboard side, crossing our stern to the port side. Fishermen have shared stories of fish crossing the stern in this manner, apparently to cut the line on the prop. Now, don't ask me how these fish are smart enough to figure that out, but so we've been told. With this in mind, I steered *Daniell Storey* to starboard to keep the fish off our stern while Dave reached to release the tension wheel a bit to let out some additional line and set the fish further behind us. The fish jerked the line so quickly, though, that the reel overspun, causing a bird's nest mess to form around the reel. Hmmm, definitely still beginners in the sport of fishing. This could get interesting.



Michelle with a new job — fillet duty!

We decided to put the rod back in its holder until the mahi mahi tired. Meanwhile, we tossed about a couple of ideas for landing the fish should Dave not be able to reel it in any further. For ten minutes the mahi mahi remained below the surface, resting. Time to change that. Dave took the reel once again and began working the fish. The mahi responded by putting up a fight and breaking the surface, then staying there. We knew then that it was quickly tiring. Dave attempted to reel in some line and luckily the line overlaid the snarl and we were in a good position to reel in our catch. As Dave reeled the mahi mahi alongside, we saw two fresh bite marks on its side! Something, most likely a barracuda, had taken advantage of the poor mahi's plight. If it had been a shark, we'd be pulling in only a head.

Net in my left hand, rum to anesthetize the fish in my right, I stood prepared as Dave brought her up alongside. She was indeed a heavy lady and measured 48 inches! She is also the most tender of all mahi mahi we've ever eaten.

All we can say is this beginner's luck thing is great and Steve on *S/V Seaman's Elixir* gets a lot of the credit for making that happen. Thanks a million for your influence, Steve, on our getting the pole out and having some fun.

Mahi Mahi Coconut Fingers

1 pound mahi mahi, sliced into sticks
1/2 Cup pako crumbs
1/2 Cup shredded coconut
cayenne pepper
milk
cornstarch
olive oil

Blend together the pako crumbs and shredded coconut into a bowl. Add a few dashes of cayenne pepper. Dip each mahi stick first in milk, then roll in cornstarch, then dip in milk again and finally in the crumb mixture. (The cornstarch helps the crumbs to adhere to the fish sticks.)

Cover the bottom of a skillet with olive oil and heat until pan is hot. Add the mahi mahi to the skillet and brown each side over medium heat, cooking until the fish is tender and flaky (3 to 4 minutes). Serve with Banana Ketchup dipping sauce (recipe below) or your own favorite.

Banana Ketchup Dipping Sauce

1/4 Cup mayonnaise or yogurt
2 Tablespoons banana ketchup
juice of one fresh lime
Caribbean hot sauce

Blend all ingredients, adding the hot sauce a drop at a time until you achieve the desired heat.



Bittersweet Mauby, the Summer Refresher

Mauby was always a special holiday drink at our home. The spicy drink is made from the dried bark of a small tree native to the northern Caribbean and Central America. A member of the buckthorn family, its botanical name is *Colubrina elliptica*. This bitter bark is known by various common names, depending on the island where it is grown or consumed: *mabi* or *mavi* in Puerto Rico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic; Cuba names it *jayajabico*; in the US it is soldier wood, while in the Bahamas it is called smooth snake bark, and in the French Caribbean it is *bois mambee*. Other names are black velvet, coffee colubrina, *corazon de paloma*, mawbie, and snakewood.

The wood — hard, heavy, strong and durable — is commonly used for posts. The sapwood is light brown, while the heartwood is much darker brown. The orange-brown bark is smooth on young small trees, but as the tree matures it becomes scaly. The inner bark is light brown and bitter. During the dry season the tree will shed most of its leaves as the sap drains to the roots, but at the height of the rainy season it will be shrouded in attractive purplish-green leaves. This is when the bark should be harvested.



We have a choice of buying the bark, the concentrate, or the ready drink. Mauby concentrate can be mixed with water or soda

Most Caribbean people don't even know the tree, but love the refreshing drink. Some claim it as an aphrodisiac, others say it helps relieve arthritis, and everyone knows it is a great coolant on a hot day.

All the mauby I've made and drunk has been prepared from the bark (combined with sugar, herbs and spices) although my research found sources that also use the leaves and berries. Unsweetened, which is very seldom, the refreshing bark decoction is used as a bitter tonic for diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol and stomach disorders. According to research done at the University of the West Indies, mauby combined with coconut milk may lower blood pressure.

People love mauby! Trinidad locally produces more than one and a half million gallons a year of mauby concentrate. Due to the lack of local sources, the bark is imported from Haiti and the Dominican Republic. We are lucky to have a choice of buying the bark, the concentrate, or "Mauby Fizz" — the ready drink.

Often the drink is fermented using a portion of the previous batch, while sometimes it is consumed unfermented. Mauby concentrate can be mixed with water or soda. To the mauby novice the first taste is sweet, but changes to a bitter aftertaste. Some Americans say the only thing they can compare it with is root beer. Many people find it an acquired taste — but an addictive one!

Mauby Island Total Refresher

6 pieces of mauby bark
1 gallon of fresh water
4 sprigs of marjoram
1 bunch anise (optional)
1 stem of rosemary
1/2 Cup of thinly sliced peeled ginger root
1 stick of cinnamon
1 Tablespoon ground nutmeg
12 whole cloves
2 Tablespoons Angostura bitters
3 Cups brown sugar (more or less to taste)
1 Tablespoon dry yeast

Boil the mauby bark in one quart of the water and let sit covered for at least an hour. Then add everything except the yeast. Bring up the heat and simmer for an hour before letting it cool, preferably overnight.

Add the yeast to a Tablespoon of water and combine this with the mauby mixture. Then carefully bottle, filling each to the neck. Let sit in a shaded place overnight. Chill and enjoy.

Using brown sugar will contribute to the darkness of this drink. The Angostura bitters will actually buffer the slightly bitter aftertaste.

Makes enough for a party or for gifts.

For the Gardener

The mauby is a nice functional backyard tree. It grows to about 20 feet, and should be staked when hard winds blow. It only needs direct sunlight a few hours a day, and likes well-drained soil. Every month during the dry season, I recommend giving it a five-gallon bucket of water. Molding with mulch will give support to the young roots and help the soil conserve nutrients and water. Small green blossoms appear usually in July and the berries come on from September to March. Some mauby trees are evergreen, but you won't know until after planting. Usually this tree not only drops its leaves, but as it matures it will produce a multitude of small berries. I would not recommend this tree if you are a neat freak.

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Dear *Compass*,

While browsing through the May 2010 edition of your magazine I came across two letters in your Readers' Forum section that left me feeling a bit uneasy. The first letter, by Charles Lamb of *S/V Itza Purla*, disturbed me because Lamb encourages a "boat boy" to claim a fee for assisting a yachtsman in an emergency. Since when is payment of fees the expected outcome of assistance? Helping people in crisis is — or at least was — what civilized people do.

Like most of us who have been sailing for any length of time, I have assisted many boaters over the years and have yet to receive a penny for my efforts. No payments were offered and none was expected. My reward lay in simply knowing that I was able to help. This is how boating should be, or at least I feel so.

Now, in case you feel that I am carrying on at length over nothing, let us explore letter number two from the same issue.

In this letter, Gary Upman of *S/V Kokopelli* gives us not one, but three examples of boat boys not being monetarily rewarded for their assistance. What stood out only too glaringly in Upham's second and third examples of yachtsmen abusing the locals is that in both examples other yachtsmen also helped to avert calamity. Furthermore, Upman seems to confuse the word *appreciate* with *pay*. Why does Upman not lament the plight of the poor un-paid yachtsmen? Why are his sentiments so discriminating? And then, he goes on to insult the civility of West Indian people by asking the hypothetical question, "Why get involved at all if it isn't appreciated?"

Ironically enough, I was sailing along, stewing over this well-intended bigotry, when I spotted the crew of a St. Vincent pirogue desperately signaling my attention. The nature of their distress need not concern us here: what matters is that I ended up towing them for several hours, until we reached a safe anchorage. Their poor boat handling left a gouge in *Mariposa's* hull and their poor seamanship required them to cut the towline — my line! The only *compensation* I was offered was a hearty thanks and a wave good-bye.

And that was good enough for me. With Upman's "why get involved" attitude, I expect there would be three fewer islanders alive today.

What further disturbs me is that *Compass* would print not just one, but two of these sorrowfully misguided letters, seemingly endorsing their discriminatory leanings.

I have discussed this insidious us-and-them attitude with other yachtsmen and know that my sentiments are shared by many. We all look forward to your comments.

Sincerely,
Daniel Mead
S/V Mariposa

Dear Daniel,

Thank you for sharing your thought-provoking take on the content of the letters mentioned. We're sorry, however, that you were disturbed by the fact that they were published. We call our letters section the Readers' Forum precisely because we intend it to be a forum *— a public place for the open exchange of ideas and opinions (and for further discussion of those ideas and opinions) — rather than an "amen corner" that only echoes sentiments endorsed by the editor.*

CC

Dear *Compass*,

In response to Ron Llewellyn's evaluation of Trinidad and Donald Stollmeyer of YSATT's response, both in the July issue's Readers' Forum, I would like to say that I know for a fact that all of the events that Mr. Llewellyn reported are true from my experience here and as reported on the daily cruisers' net. Mr. Stollmeyer's response was very unprofessional and childish, reminding me of Tattoo of Fantasy Island fame: "This is paradise... nothing bad happens here". It also represents the problem that Mr. Llewellyn was alluding to. Namely, denial. As stated, all of the thefts Mr. Llewellyn described were reported over the cruisers' net and to YSATT — fact. Since then there have been five boats broken into and stripped of clothes, bicycles, computers, and electronics. I witnessed the investigations and spoke with two of the owners and two caretakers of some of the breached boats. A 14-foot RIB with a Yamaha motor and blue cover was taken just recently. Regarding the latter: it was apparently reported to the Coast Guard at 3:00AM and they finally responded at 5:00AM. Note that there are not one, but two large Coast Guard stations less than two miles on either side of the area of theft. As of this writing the dinghy has yet to be recovered, even with a detailed description of the offending pirogue, motor, occupants and supposedly working security cameras at Peake's boatyard aimed directly at the dinghies.

By the way, all of the above incidents were reported to YSATT, so Mr. Stollmeyer can also add "misinformed" to his resumé. In fact, shortly after the five boat break-ins occurred, a cruiser reported over the net that a YSATT official (I'm hoping that it was Mr. Stollmeyer and that all YSATT officials aren't of the same grain) told him that all the thief did was rummage through first-aid kits looking for drugs. Period. When another net user asked if the reporting sailor believed that to be accurate, he wisely said that he believed the YSATT official was likely understating for tourism reasons. I personally and kindly call it denial on the part of this (these) YSATT official(s) that shows a grave disregard for the wellbeing, safety and security of cruisers. I'm afraid that if a cruiser was murdered during one of these robberies that the Stollmeyer/YSATT report would be that they accidentally stepped in front of a knife... this is paradise, Mon! The police and Coast Guard take the same bury-their-head-in-the-sand, don't-bother-me-I'd-rather-lime approach. Cruisers aren't even a distant consideration in my opinion.

The Trinidad & Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG) have new, fast boats. That's got to be good, right? Unfortunately all they seem to accomplish in them is joy riding. I was anchored out from Power Boats one night as they flew wide open, 700-horsepower strong beside the commercial dock; a hundred yards from the mooring field they chopped their throttles, gunned the motors at full throttle, chopped them again.... Apparently they were mimicking the local pirogues by trying to see how high they can make the bow rise. I, in four months time, have seen the Coast Guard board one boat. This was because the captain of this particular catamaran fell asleep while coming from Grenada and hit a local trawler.

Another hail to the Coast Guard is their idea of filing a "sail plan" from Trinidad to Grenada and vice versa. The last boat arriving from Grenada filing this "sail plan" attempted to contact TTCG for hours via VHF and mobile phone, to let them know they had arrived safely — with no response. The cruisers finally had to have YSATT call the Coast Guard. However, if you're on the beach wearing a G-string or want to race your boat... they've got you covered, Babe! (Call the Venezuelan Guardia Costa instead for even less concern.)

Pirogues, TTCG, the Harbor Pilot boat (the worst), and 90 percent of all the power boats fly through the mooring field and by all of the marinas creating tremendous wakes. I helped an elderly British couple dock at the Customs steel-and-concrete boat demolition dock Mr. Llewellyn referred to, and at Power Boats, because they had no chance alone with pirogues flying by creating two- and three-foot wakes that reverberated off the wall. This is the rule, not the exception. I haven't figured out if it is out of ignorance, disrespect, or showing off. YSATT has had many complaints about this, including one from me. It is a dangerous activity and one must keep a close eye out constantly, especially at night as they also run with no lights on for the most part. Mr. Stollmeyer is equally in the dark again I guess.

I would also have to agree with Mr. Llewellyn that the floating garbage problem is one of the worst in the world. To think locals swim and play in this hepatitis-, tetanus-, and e coli-laced crap should be enough to get any government or legitimate organization to address the problem, let alone Mr. Stollmeyer to at least acknowledge the safety concern, but what do they do? The government starts a campaign to promote eco-tourism to foreigners as many of their cleaner neighbors have done! Denial.

I further agree with Mr. Llewellyn's assessment of the cruising population. Only a year ago we could not find a mooring or place to anchor. Finally, we had to anchor very far to the west among the commercial boats. Now I rarely see a day without a vacant mooring ball. Many marinas are almost empty or partially full. If YSATT (Mr. Stollmeyer) estimates an approximately 30-percent loss of business... blame it all on the economy? Don't think so.

The solution. If the police and Coast Guard could possibly be persuaded to do their jobs — i.e. catch thieves, stop wakes, stop looking at these new-fangled boats as toys — it could only help. If Mr. Stollmeyer and other Trinidadians would realize how much income cruisers bring into their economy...

—Continued on next page





Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

Start Planning
Your Next Sailing Season

Cruising 'The Forgotten Caribbean', Part One: The DR

Carriacou Regatta Festival 2010

... and more!

—Continued from previous page

…(a tired old line) and that they do have a choice to, and in fact do, go elsewhere as Trinidad isn't a bargain and isn't safe anymore, some of the problems may be solved. Someone is going to have to acknowledge that this area has the highest crime rate aimed at cruisers in the entire Caribbean and take action. Otherwise, with attitudes like Stollmeyer's, Trinidad will continue losing business and possibly lives. In many ways cruisers are a tight-knit community, especially in times of need, and for the disrespect and arrogance Stollmeyer showed a fellow cruiser with legitimate complaints, my family will not be returning any time soon once our repairs are made.

I sincerely apologize for this laborious decision to the hard working, decent people, including YSATT members and employees, that we've met here who do understand business and professionalism as well as long-term friendships.

Sincerely,
Rob Minks
S/V Argonauta

Editor's note: We have offered Mr. Stollmeyer the opportunity to respond. His reply appears below.

Dear Compass Readers,

I apologize if my reply to Mr. Llewellen's letter led anyone to think I was saying everything in Trinidad is fine. This is far from what I intended and I would have thought my opening statement, quote, "…I would be the first to agree that Trinidad is not perfect and is of course open to legitimate criticism…" would have indicated my position. As to Mr. Minks' accusation that I am in a state of denial, hardly likely; I have recognised shortcomings and have been trying to improve Trinidad's yachting product for far too long to possibly be in a state of denial.

Be that as it may, Mr. Llewellen's letter clearly sought to convey an extremely negative viewpoint, one that would severely discourage any open-minded cruiser from visiting Trinidad when, in fact, there is a huge amount of good and a plethora of wonderful experiences awaiting cruising visitors, many of which are not available in the other islands.

Let me refer to just a few examples in Mr. Llewellen's letter based on my personal experiences:

• Islands of rubbish. I have sailed in and out of Trinidad on countless occasions and I have never come across an island of rubbish.

• The Customs dock. I have tied up to the Customs dock day and night (many islands do not even have a Customs dock) and I have never had a problem with the dock or the wakes from passing boats.

• The "stolen" no-wake zone sign. The no-wake sign was removed when a building was erected in its location many years ago; it was not stolen.

• The oil industry displacing howler monkeys. I have been working in Chaguaramas harbour since 1981 and I have never seen a howler monkey here, so what could possibly lead Mr. Llewellen to say, "The oil industry does not rest. The howler monkeys don't stand a chance."?

I can give many more examples but, however I look at it, I can only conclude the purpose of Mr. Llewellen's letter is to denigrate and to do so in the extreme.

I wish to repeat and make it very clear: my position is that there are several aspects of the yachting product in Trinidad/Chaguaramas that need to be improved. Yes, there is rubbish in the sea, yes the Customs dock could be improved, yes there is need to stop speeding boats from driving through the harbour, and so forth. At the present time many of these shortcomings are actively being worked upon by a government-appointed committee that I now chair, in collaboration with the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT). I don't think this indicates "denial". It will take some time to address all the issues but I can assure the yachting community the issues are being worked upon. In the meantime, regardless of the shortcomings, there is a need for a balanced view and an appreciation for the many, many positive aspects of Trinidad.

Donald Stollmeyer

Dear *Compass*,

Trinidad has been a lot in the news recently, mostly with regard to the one attempted and one completed act of piracy against yachts en route from Grenada, the successful one being the last (in December 2009). In addition, prior to that there were some suspicious activities dealt with without consequence.

James Pascal of the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG) was very good about keeping us informed of some of the measures that have been proposed, and some put in place, to keep yachts safe on that passage. These measures were all very sensible but oriented toward defense. It seemed to me what we needed was a very offensive, proactive approach by the Trinidad & Tobago Coastguard. They needed to get out there, find out what all those Venezuelan pirogues were up to in their waters, and let them know Trinidad was not going to allow a bunch of thugs to terrorize their seas.

While the T&T Coastguard is very tight-lipped about their activities, I have had several reports from different sources that they have done just this, and I believe it. Had they done nothing, I would have expected to see more attempts at piracy. As it is, hundreds of boats have sailed between Trinidad and the other islands since December and I have not heard even one report of suspicious activity in the passage. I would like to congratulate the Trinidad & Tobago Coastguard and hope they continue with these patrols, so we can continue to sail to Trinidad with confidence.

If the pirates were returning drug runners looking out for extra booty (that would explain the guns and number of people in a pirogue), I would imagine the extra heat that has been applied by the coastguard to their activities would make their bosses take a very dim view of their extracurricular activities.

I sailed from Grenada to Trinidad in June this year, in daylight hours in rather calm weather, and my experience leads to me think that you would have to very judicious about applying a pirate trapline behind the boat, as has been suggested by some readers in *Compass*. There were four of us onboard. As we were approaching Trinidad I went below to clean up a mess. When I came back on deck, the rest of the crew reported that a Venezuelan fishing pirogue had zoomed close by with two fishermen waving in a friendly manner. None of my crew noticed it till it was quite close. I would not want to damage an innocent boat or friendly fishermen. As long as they are not endangering my boat they have a right to pass close by.

It is a shame that we have not heard more about the activities of the T&T Coastguard, as I think YSATT is correct in suggesting that the decrease in yachting visitors in Trinidad is due to fears of piracy. The picture of Trinidad painted by Ron Llewellyn in July's *Compass* was so negative I think he must be viewing it through anti-fouling-splattered spectacles. As far as I could see, it was the same old Trinidad. Power Boats was booked solid, and both Peake Yacht Services and Coral Cove had plenty of boats, although they were not full. Yes, Trinidadians can be pretty bad about throwing their fast-food boxes overboard, but it has always been that way. I found everyone was very upbeat about the recent election and rather optimistic, and I certainly enjoyed my stay. Any downturn in business is, from a customer's point of view, an opportunity to get work done by people who are more competitive and keen.

Like Ruth Lund, who wrote about her Trinidad "home from home" in the June issue of *Compass*, my female peers are protected by age from being subjected to the "*psssst*" of admiring workers. This is not the most endearing feature of Caribbean culture, but it has certainly been around a long time. Many, many years ago I was married to a young Swede and it drove her nuts, though it did not intimidate her. The final straw came when she was with another young Swedish woman in a restaurant in St. Vincent. She heard the usual "*psssst*" behind her and she turned to give its sender the evil eye and ask him if the noise she heard was the sound of his balls deflating. But before she could start he exclaimed: "Not you, the other one!"

Happy sailing,
Chris Doyle
Ti Kanot

Dear *Compass*,

In order to make it easy to file a "float plan" with either coastguard, Grenada or Trinidad & Tobago, I have made out a form that other boaters might find useful, for giving all the information required:

I would like to file a float plan for a trip departing _____ (departure port) at ___ (time) on ____ (date) bound for _____ (arrival port).

I expect to arrive at _____ (arrival port) at around ___ (time), when I will contact the coastguard station there.

Boat Name _____
Flag ____
Type _____
Colour _____
# of persons aboard _____
Master _____ _____
Radio equipment on board _____
Signed _____ _____

Float plans can be filed leaving Trinidad by e-mail to ttcgops@gmail.com or by phone at (868) 634-1476. Float plans can be filed leaving Grenada by phone at (473) 444-1931.

Mike Hatch
Trinidad

Dear *Compass*,

In April my husband and I sailed from les Iles des Saintes to Portsmouth, Dominica.

I had read in Chris Doyle's book that "boat vendors" there could be quite aggressive. I was also told this by a British woman while riding on a bus tour in the Bahamas. On the bus, another woman and I were discussing our reluctance to visit some of the countries that describe these vendors as being pushy. She and I were saying how our personalities are not the kind to "take on" aggressive behaviour. Overhearing our conversation, the British woman who has encountered that type of vendor shared her handling methods: "Just tell them to go away. They will come up to you when anchoring. Tell them to piss off, that you are busy now and to come back later. Be direct, look them right in the eye and be firm."

Armed now with the "right technique", off we traveled, having no problems of this kind in any of the countries from the Bahamas to the Saintes. Two miles offshore from Portsmouth we were approached by the first vendor, Faustin Alexis. With the motor running it was difficult to converse, so before speeding off he said, "If anyone there comes up to you, tell them you are dealing with me". At approximately 5:00PM we were in the anchorage and looking for a place to drop the anchor, when we were approached by two other men in a boat, wanting to sell us fruit. My husband declined, saying we were "being looked after by Alexis". (Chris' book said that if you tell them you have chosen a vendor to deal with, that the others will respect that and depart.) The two men responded by saying they are different than Alexis and that they sell only fruit. My husband then further declined, saying that right now we were busy trying to anchor, and would consider buying fruit another day. Angrily they left.

Then a third vendor approached me by the cockpit on the starboard side of our boat. I was concentrating on communicating with my husband to anchor. The man was shirtless and had no identification on the side of his boat. He tried to engage me in conversation, and, using the technique I'd been coached in, I responded tersely saying we were busy and would prefer to discuss business with him tomorrow. He persisted and I kept trying to put him off. Finally he said, "You are not friendly. Dominicans are friendly, happy people. You are not welcome in Dominica."

In the meantime, two further vendors had come to the boat, one on my port side, the other at the bow talking to my husband. That vendor was telling my husband that he "had to buy a Dominican courtesy flag". My husband said that he was busy getting the snubber line in place and would maybe buy a flag once we had cleared Customs. The vendor kept badgering him that he "must buy a flag". The vendor who had told me I was not welcome then approached the bow, looked my husband in the eye and said, "You better leave, you are not welcome here". Taking this as a threat, and fearing retribution to ourselves or our property, we lifted our anchor and departed. While we were lifting it, yet another vendor was paddling out on a board. A total of six vendors had approached us, and we were surrounded by one at each corner of our boat when trying to anchor.

Finding a quiet spot further south we anchored for the evening. We were tired, hungry, stressed and scared. Early the next morning we departed for Martinique, our plans to stop in Roseau, Dominica abandoned.

While under sail between Dominica and Martinique we heard a noise, and after investigating we discovered our drive shaft that had broken. Now under sail we tried to reach St. Lucia as the guidebooks outlined extensive repair facilities there. The wind died and the current took us offshore. We bobbed at sea for six days with no wind. With our frustration growing, and knowing we would not make St. Lucia, we sailed wanting to make landfall anywhere we could. On the seventh day we were nine miles off the south coast of land — Dominica! We radioed "Pancho Yacht Services" who, not having a big enough boat to tow us that distance, enlisted the help of his competitor "Sea Cat" who had a larger boat. Three hours later we were safely secured to a Sea Cat mooring ball in the Roseau harbour. Pancho, Sea Cat, and all the Dominicans we met from there on in couldn't have been more helpful.

We stayed in Dominica three more weeks to pull the transmission and get a replacement shaft and universal joints. We used the services of MDM Enterprises in Canefield, managed by Alan Morris. Alan drove us in his car to four scrap yards to locate the correct shaft. He was totally committed to getting us operational, and even re-welded the original shaft so that we would have a spare in case the new one should break. Knowing we still had a great distance to travel before the start of hurricane season, Alan worked almost around the clock, juggling his other customer orders in order to have our repair done in three days. We enjoyed a lovely meal with his wife, son and daughter, and we saw them many times during our stay there. They could not have been more accommodating.

Vendors should know that when we cruisers are coming into an anchorage we are tired, hungry, often new to the area, and feeling a certain amount of stress. I know that when we were surrounded in Portsmouth I only felt scared and threatened, not at all feeling the "happy friendliness" the aggressive vendor described. Because of this I will never go back to Portsmouth in Dominica. I will choose to spend my hard-earned money elsewhere (it should be noted that between repairs, mooring fees, towing charges, groceries, Customs fees, restaurants, etcetera we spent US$1,000 in Roseau).

I will not employ the "dismissive" method with any future vendors, but will smile and politely decline or accept.

The Portsmouth vendors would be well advised to adopt the approach of the vendors in Bequia. There they come close to you, but unless you initiate conversation or wave them over to you, they do not come to your boat. It boils down to respect.

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No country should allow bullying of visitors, because guess what? They don't come back.

Name Withheld by Request

Editor's note: As Name Withheld mentioned she'd gotten advice about the vendors in Portsmouth from Chris Doyle's book, we asked Chris for his comments, which appear below.

Dear Name Withheld,

I am happy that you managed, after some frustrations, to find how helpful and welcoming people can be in Dominica. You even managed the impossible: to get "arch-rivals" Pancho and Sea Cat working harmoniously together!

You may have had a very old guide of mine, because I do not think I have called the vendors in Portsmouth pushy for many years. My current section on these men starts off:

"Dominica has an exemplary group of young men who provide the main yacht services for yachts. Not only will they help you get fruits, bread and ice, take your laundry, find a technician, and act as a water taxi, but they act together in the group called PAYS (Portsmouth Association of Yacht Services), which provides security, helps maintain dinghy docks, and tries to make sure yachts have a good stay."

Then I do add: "Be wary of others, especially those that paddle out on surfboards. This is the way some young guys start up (I first met Jeffrey this way), which is fine, but one or two crack-addicts are also out there. If you have any problems with any vendor, call Sea Bird (Jeffrey), the current president, or failing him, another PAYS member."

It sounds to me like all the crack-heads descended on you at once! However, most of us have not had as much hostility as you described since the bad old days of many years ago. Had you stayed, I am sure Faustin Alexis would have sorted things out for you.

In your letter it does seem that on arrival you were somewhat apprehensive, and when people tell you things like "tell them to piss off" the emotional tone of this maybe put you even more on your guard. So it could be unruly vendors plus your apprehensions fed into the way you dealt with them, and managed to make the situation worse than it need have been. I must say when I have told people to "Please wait till I have anchored, then I will talk with you", they have always agreed. If I am dealing with someone I am not sure about, my policy is to ask his name first thing. That way I know who I am dealing with and if there is an altercation, I can be specific if I want some help dealing with it.

I hope one day you try Portsmouth again, and find out how nice it can be. My suggestion is you contact one of the good guys in advance and have him meet you as come in to anchor.

Best wishes,
Chris Doyle, author
Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands

Dear Compass Readers,

I have given the schooner *Satori* to Martin Jennett of Union Island, St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Martin is someone I do not really know personally but I do know a little of what he has done in the world of traditional sailing. I read of him and his rebuilding of the schooner *Scaramouche* in the Grenadines. To say the least, I admire him and what he is doing: chartering old traditional sailing vessels, rebuilding them and bringing them back to life.

He will bring *Satori* back to life to sail again, something I can't do anymore. For want of a better explanation, after 16 years I lost what Rocky (in the movie) called "the eye of the tiger". So when you are down island and see *Satori* sailing again we can all thank Martin and what he is doing in the sailing world!

Scott Nichols
Retired

Dear Compass Readers,

Well, there we were, through the Canal, the *Picton Castle* moored in hot steamy Balboa on the Pacific side of the Isthmus of Panama, getting ready to shove off into the broad South Pacific Ocean, working hard to get provisioned and stowed, sailing time bearing down on us — and we had to get this new mainsail finished for the legendary sloop *Mermaid* and her skipper of long renown, John Smith. The *Mermaid* is a 50-foot wooden working sloop built in Carriacou without an engine in the 1960s. So many like her were built for trading in the Grenadines, fishing and maybe once in a while a leetle bit of smuggling of rum, whiskey and cigarettes from St. Barth's before that island blew up and became a jet-set destination. With jutting bowsprit and a raking mast she is little different than the small pyrate sloops that once did their deeds o' swashbuckling in the isles of the Caribbees.

In Anguilla, with Captain Kevin Gray's masterful help and encouragement, we got the sailcloth landed in from Doyle's in Barbados. Then we immediately laid out and cut the sail and seamed it up on our big machine at Roy's Place on the beach at Sandy Ground. We did the second layout there, too, right away in order to get the final dimensions and tablerings. On the way to Bonaire (even though we did not know we were going to Bonaire) we sewed up the tableings and corner patches with our small machine. In Bonaire, with a nice clean dock available, we got the big machine out and sewed on all the other patches, reef bands and the like. On the way to Panama the gang sewed in grommets by hand, furiously even working on night watch on the quarterdeck.

Now we had to rope it and stick on the cringles. As it happens, we had an equally nice large cement floating dock at Isla Flamenco complete with awning and light to work with. So Rebecca, Jo, Brad, Ollie, Nadia, Nadja and others got to it. And got done in time to toss it on a small hop plane with Ollie and WT to get it to the *Mermaid* at Boca Del Toro and bent on to see what it looked like. We think it will be a strong sail. Maybe a few too many barefoot prints on it, but that adds to the charm; John is a barefoot kind of guy, *Mermaid* is a barefoot kind of vessel....

Daniel Moreland, Captain
Picton Castle

Dear *Compass*,

Many *Compass* letter writers have offered comments on that large South American landfall south of Grenada, so here is our two cents worth.

After sailing the Eastern Caribbean, we think Venezuela is underappreciated as a cruising destination. It has some of the best waters and scenery in the Caribbean. Customs procedures to come and go are not difficult. There are fewer marinas available in Venezuela, and at least one, Bahia Redonda in Puerto la Cruz, is a first class operation at bargain prices.

The country also has a much-discussed reputation for being dangerous. During our year in Venezuela we've met many other liveaboards and visitors. Some have had security issues, occasionally serious. If you go, learn what you can beforehand from reliable sources and avoid known problem areas if possible. It also doesn't hurt to be aware of the general political situation, which is on the mind of virtually every Venezuelan and determines important aspects of everyday life, such as money exchange. Overall we feel that a little advance planning, taking appropriate precautions and being alert will give you the same level of safety as anywhere else in the world.

Venezuelans on the whole are a gracious and welcoming people who try to be helpful even if you are self-conscious about your Spanish or lack of it. Looking inland, the country has an amazing variety of sights to offer. As in some other countries, we are still puzzled that long-distance bus operators don't seem to know the difference between air conditioning for passengers and refrigeration. So if you choose to explore the interior of the country by road, bring a few warm clothes.

Altogether, Venezuela is a fascinating country and worth a visit, without the worry of hurricanes.

Larry and Debra
S/V Debonair

Dear *Compass*,

This cruising season, we decided to venture over to the mysterious east coast of Martinique. Stopping first at Le Marin on the south coast, we were stunned by the incredible number of yachts there, perhaps as many as 500. Next we were astounded by the several cruisers we met in Le Marin who were mortified that we intended to visit the east coast, even though none of them had ever cruised there themselves! Lastly, we were absolutely delighted with what a wonderful little cruising ground the east side offers, and were amazed to find that virtually no-one cruises there.

In two lovely weeks cruising from Le Marin up to La Caravelle and the Baie du Tresor, we met only one (yes, only one!) other cruising yacht. In spite of the availability of Jerome Nouel's truly outstanding cruising guide, Martinique's east coast is absolutely the Caribbean's best-kept secret.

Although small (it stretches only about 25 miles from Martinique's southeast tip up to the northeast tip at La Caravelle), the east coast is a marvel of a cruising ground. It offers the adventurous "just anchor behind the reef and hope it doesn't blow too hard" kind of anchorages but also has many well-protected, deep and calm coves surrounded by Martinique's verdant landscapes. Best of all, the area offers both types of anchorage, and everything in between, within only a few miles of travel! The scenery ranges from bucolic pastureland and wildly flowered gardens to a classic "palm trees on a sandbar" island out on the barrier reef called Loup Garou. The "fonds blancs" (white bottomed lagoons) of Baignoire de Josephine (Josephine's Bathtub) and the Isle de Madame are gorgeous areas for picnicking, snorkeling and just enjoying nature. In many anchorages, very good, shallow and calm snorkeling can be found just by hopping off your stern. There are quite a few interesting sites and activities: bird rookeries; a colony of endangered, rare, endemic iguanas; the ruins of an impressively large pottery factory; the park trails around Pointe Caracoli, where resident mongooses and stunning views can be found. For the essentials of provisioning, there are even a couple of small and pleasant towns (François and Robert) that are easily reached for groceries or a patisserie.

—*Continued on page 45*

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Letter of the Month

Dear Compass Readers,

Frank Virgintino's Letter of the Month in the May issue of *Compass* presented an excellent justification for following the "Thornless Path to Windward" from the US East Coast to the Caribbean, and for cruising the Dominican Republic and the western Caribbean. In it, he takes me to task for ignoring those latter areas.

A look back in history will explain why I have always written about the area east of a line running from Mona Island to Aruba and why I have always urged the offshore passage from the East Coast to the Eastern Caribbean rather than the passage through the Bahamas.

In 1956, when I fled the canyons of New York, the yachtsman heading south really had only two cruising-destination choices, the Bahamas or the Lesser Antilles. Haiti was under the control of Papa Doc and his henchmen. Trujillo ran the Dominican Republic, and luxuriated in his private yacht *Sea Cloud*. To stop a civil war, the US Marines were sent into the DR in 1965. In both countries yachts were fair game to be fleeced by Customs, Immigration, the Police and any official who had a gun.

The Bahamas, ill lit and poorly charted, was a good place to avoid. Moreover, from Turks & Caicos, the eastern end of the Bahamian chain, it was a non-stop beat to windward of 240 miles to the western end of Puerto Rico, or 320 miles on to San Juan. From the middle 1960s through the early '80s, The Bahamas was a major drug-trafficking route, making it unattractive to the innocent yachtsman. In those days, the offshore passage from Morehead City or Beaufort direct to St. Thomas was an attractive alternative to the Thornless Path.

Colombia was in the beginnings of a civil war between the Liberals and Conservatives. Except in the Canal Zone and the San Blas Islands, Panama was the Wild West.

The east coast of Central America was an area where the port captains, Customs and Immigration officers all felt visiting yachts were owned by rich gringos who should be relieved of their money. (The one area of peace and tranquility in the western Caribbean was the Bay Islands, which became very popular with yachtsmen from Tampa as it was a fairly easy 630-mile sail, easier than the sail to the Eastern Caribbean of about 1,400 miles, some 1,200 miles of which would be dead to windward.)

In the late 1950s early '60s, Venezuela was having a problem with student strikes and riots, to the point that the government closed all the universities. Castro was smuggling guerillas in to Venezuela via boats. In a couple of instances, the Venezuelan Coast Guard mistook yachts for boats trying to smuggle in Castro's guerillas and fired at them. Luckily no one was killed. Needless to say this situation made cruising the Venezuelan coast and offshore islands unappealing.

In contrast to the above-enumerated problems, the Eastern Caribbean was peaceful, law abiding and well run. Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands were US governed, the British islands were all still colonies run by a British-appointed governor who had real authority backed up by a police force trained at the Police Academy in Barbados. (Once trained, officers were not assigned to their native island. A small percentage of police on any island was local, and was usually in the top ranks, having served on other islands for many years.) The French islands were well run by officials from Metropolitan France. Customs and Immigration was no problem in the French islands — they ignored yachts completely!

I bought the engineless *Iolaire* in February 1957 and started cruising, then chartering and exploring. There were very few yachts in the entire Eastern Caribbean then. There were about 15 based in St. Thomas, three in St. Croix, one in Tortola, eight or ten in Antigua, a couple in Trinidad.... The old British establishment in Barbados had an active small-boat racing fleet.

As years went by, boats flocked to the Eastern Caribbean. As the island chain became more developed, *Iolaire* and I looked for new areas to explore. In the middle '60s Dr. Daniel Camejo and Rolly Edmunds came from Venezuela to cruise the Eastern Caribbean. They assured me the problem with the Venezuelan Coast Guard firing at yachts was over and persuaded me to sail to Venezuela and enjoy the wonderful cruising along the coast and offshore islands. Dr. Camejo, who was just starting the El Morro development west of Puerto La Cruz, offered to grubstake me to do extensive cruising and exploring. This led to my 1980 (revised in 1989) *Guide to Venezuela, the Offshore Islands, and ABC Islands*, plus the Imray Iolaire charts of the area, which opened the area to the cruising yachtsman. *Iolaire* was the first foreign yacht to extensively cruise this area. We enjoyed fantastic cruising there until 1995, when we felt things began to go downhill.

I hope this letter has explained why, to this WPOF (Well Preserved Old Fart), "the Caribbean" is the Eastern Caribbean. It also explains my reasons for urging heading south from the US East Coast via an offshore passage and downplaying the "Thornless Path" in the past.

But times have changed. Political stability has apparently finally arrived in the Dominican Republic, as illustrated by the number of new hotels and marinas that have been established. The shakedown of visiting yachts, in effect a couple of years ago, has reportedly ended.

Until a few years ago, the Caribbean coasts of Colombia and Panama were a dangerous area for a yacht and to obtain insurance to cruise there was almost impossible. Now, however, both governments are working with the US Coast Guard to stop drug smuggling. These coasts have apparently become among the safest areas for the cruising yachtsman in the entire Caribbean. Driven by a combination of petty officialdom, crowded anchorages and crime, many adventurous yachtsmen have headed west. (Guidebooks are now available for much of the western Caribbean. It is interesting to note there are two guides to Panama and the San Blas islands: *The Panama Guide* by Nancy and Tom Zydler, and *A Complete Sailors Guide to The Isthmus of Panama* by Eric Bauhaus. I advise buying BOTH guides: cross check one against the other then choose your anchorage.)

Taking the "Thornless Path to Windward" to the Dominican Republic, then cruising the Dominican Republic and sailing on to explore Jamaica, perhaps Cuba, and the western Caribbean is now a viable option.

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DO IT YOURSELF!

by Roland O'Brien

What is a boy from southern Vermont, where there isn't a lake large enough to sail, doing sailing the Caribbean? Fair question. Canoes and kayaks were the largest vessels able to navigate the West River and the small ponds in the area where I grew up. Bullhead fishing was the only nighttime activity on the water. Now I'm making night passages and dodging cruise ships.

Several years ago, my wife, Kathleen, and I bought a 41-foot Coronado freshwater boat and started purchasing and installing the necessary gear for spending some years in the Caribbean. We bought nearly all the gear we needed on eBay, then installed it ourselves, as we had a low budget and planned on living on retirement income only. At one point we had more than 600 transactions on eBay: some sales, but mostly purchases — everything from fishing gear to new ball valves, chart-plotters, a wind generator, radar, autohelm, single-sideband radio gear and a power windlass.

Now, after nearly five years in the Caribbean, we continue to maintain the boat ourselves, only purchasing necessary equipment for repairs and doing the installation without outside help. Some repairs we've had to do were simple, others very complex. We learned as we sailed. Sometimes the work we accomplished was fun, other times complete drudgery, but at least it was ours, and there was no one else to blame when things didn't work out quite the way we planned. As the old tried and true statement goes, "Cruising is just working on your boat in exotic places." And, we did, all the way from the Erie Canal to Venezuela and many island nations in between.



Look, Ma — all assembled and ready to weld! And we did it ourselves

Recently a couple of instances when we paid a professional (off the boat), caused us to think about the many things we have had to do over the past few years. The most recent time we hired a professional was to replace a couple of pieces of damaged or broken lifeline. The gate, which is used frequently, had broken a wire so the resulting hook became both a hazard to the hands as well as one of those safety features that require immediate action. The section from the gate to the stern rail was also looking rather poorly, so the two pieces were taken to a professional rigger. After looking at the pieces and measuring same, we were given a verbal price of $86. That sounded fair, so we left the parts and came back the next day to pick up the new replacements. The price on the invoice was $125. Seems the man quoting the job had neglected to add labor costs. And, to make matters worse, when back at the boat, the new stern lifeline was two inches too long.

In retrospect what we should have done was purchase four new end fittings and the less than ten feet of cable at one of the chandleries (or from the rigger) and borrow a Nicropress unit from another boater. Total cost, less than $60. Fortunately, we were able to swap port to starboard rear lifelines and were able (barely) to use the longer lifeline on the other side.

A previous use of a sail shop professional was similar, except that the workmanship was fine. We arrived at the time requested to pick up a sail that had needed some minor stitching. When told the sail was not ready, we noticed the young man just about to start working on our sail. We were told to come back in 45 minutes, which we did. However, when the invoice was prepared it had a price for labor that amounted to one-and-a-half hours (their labor rate is known). Sometimes we will have a small repair accomplished locally instead of doing it ourselves to help keep the local service companies in business, but one wonders about their pricing schemes.

Another, earlier, sail repair request was met with less than enthusiasm. When we asked about having a leech-line added to our mainsail, the man wouldn't look us in the eye, would not provide an estimate of cost or number of days we might expect for completion. And, to top it off, the operator of the sail loft said, "Besides, I'm closing early for Christmas." Total non-responsiveness. Sounds like general complaining on our part? Not really. It just reinforces the reason we brought along our old Pfaff 130 sewing machine which does zig-zag stitching and can handle most sail repairs. We cut some spare sail material in six-inch widths, installed the leech line and stitched the cover over the entire leech. Cost? About six hours of our time.

Cruisers should not be afraid to tackle repair jobs on their own. For example, when our watermaker stopped functioning we took the pump apart and located the problem. The manufacturer provides manuals, which can be downloaded from the Internet free of charge. All necessary troubleshooting suggestions were provided along with pictures and spare parts break-outs. Another item that required investigation was an over-temperature condition with our inverter. Upon disassembly it was found that the solder joints for the small cooling fans had failed (salt air corrosion strikes again!), and it was only necessary to clean, prepare, and re-solder the joints.

Our engine exhaust pipe, which runs from the manifold to the muffler, rusted through. We stopped in Vieux Fort, on the extreme south end of Saint Lucia. Vieux Fort's claim to fame is that the island's international airport is located there. Incidentally, it's an excellent airport. The town appears quite impoverished and is in need of major renovations, to put it politely. However, we were able to locate all the steel pipe-fittings and flexible pipe we needed, and even get the assembly welded. The search for the items and the welder was interesting and we got to meet some new local people who turned out to be very responsive. The "forced marches" we have taken in search of parts can be part of the fun and provide great memories.

A recent challenge presented itself when we shut down the engine after a 100-mile journey (the wind stopped halfway so we motor-sailed the remainder of the trip). We noticed that the bilge pump was still running but with no resultant drop in bilge level. Upon disassembly of the pump we found that a pop rivet that holds a rubber check valve against a stainless-steel grate had failed. The repair, simple enough: grind a little bit and push out the original rivet remains, then reinstall a new rivet. The pump is working fine now. Will the problem happen again? Yes, owing to not having a stainless steel pop rivet available. Aluminum and steel combined, or even all aluminum, won't last long in that environment. Occasionally, one has to improvise. Logically, we should obtain a few stainless steel pop rivets and make a more permanent fix.

The satisfaction of knowing how to do many more things than when we started makes it all worthwhile. Again, we feel that cruisers should be able to repair most, if not all, items on their boat. Of course for some, certain things must be left to the professionals, and items occasionally need replacement. It's not as easy as back home where you could just take your auto to your favorite mechanic and just say, "Please fix it." Out on the water many times there is no mechanic or marina just down the street. So, give it a try yourself, you might just be very proud of the results.

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This is a fantastic opportunity to lovingly restore this fine vessel, for either personal use or resale. We invite interested parties to inspect the vessel, which is lying in Grenada. For an appointment, please call Mr. George Robinson at: 1 (473) 440 1193 or 1 (473) 407 5369.

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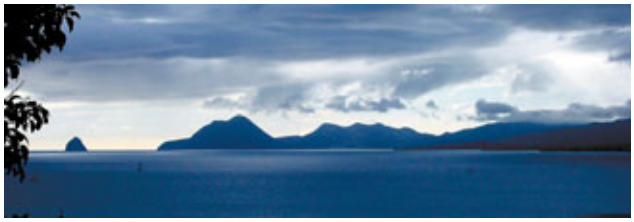
AUGUST

1	Carriacou Regatta
1	Emancipation Day. Public holiday in Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago Emancipation Day celebrated in some countries on the 2nd
1	Emancipation Day Regatta, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), (758) 452-8350, secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
1	Pursuit Race St. Maarten to Anguilla. Sint Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC) tel (599) 544-2075, fax (599) 544-2091, info@smyc.com, www.smyc.com
2	Carriacou Regatta
2 - 8	Tour des Yoles Rondes, Martinique. www.tourdesyoles.com
7	Marigot Bay Race Day, St. Lucia. SLYC
9 – 10	Grenada Carnival. www.spicemasgrenada.com
16 – 22	57th San Juan International Billfish Tournament, Puerto Rico. www.sanjuaninternational.com
21	Round St. Lucia Non-Stop Race, SLYC
24	FULL MOON
28	Great Race (powerboats) from Chaguaramas, Trinidad to Store Bay, Tobago

SEPTEMBER

4 – 5	Back to Schools Regatta, Tortola. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, rbviyc@rbviyc.com, www.rbviyc.net
6	Labor Day. Public holiday in USVI
10	Date statistically most likely to host a hurricane
12	Barbados National Dinghy Championships, Day One. http://sailbarbados.com
19	Barbados National Dinghy Championships, Day Two
23	FULL MOON
25	Open Sail to Norman Island, RBVIYC

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass *went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com.*



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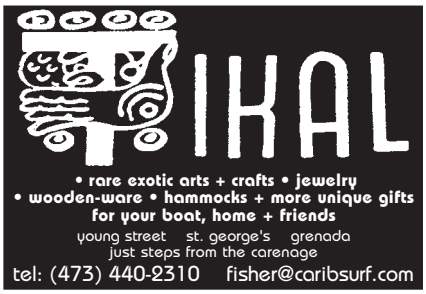
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—Continued from page 39

...Readers' Forum

Why are cruisers so intimidated by this area? It is true that the area requires careful navigation due to the numerous reefs, and that the reef visibility is highly variable and can be surprisingly difficult depending on slight changes in sky conditions. However, a yacht can cruise the area and avoid the trickiest anchorages entirely, or gradually ease into them when weather, confidence and prudence permit. Some anchorages are only accessible to yachts drawing less than two metres, but these are the minority. Other aspects that could be considered negatives are a lack of marina facilities (there are a few marinas that cater mainly to small power boats); obtaining fuel and water is difficult (if not impossible); and there are very few restaurants or bars.

We were delighted to meet Jerome Nouel quite unexpectedly during our visit. Jerome has been cruising this area since coming to Martinique almost 40 years ago. He confirmed that few yachts venture to the east side, and was as perplexed as we were over it. We sensed his real disappointment that more cruisers are not enjoying this coast that he clearly loves so dearly. Nouel's latest 2009 edition is in French; an English version of earlier editions may still be available in Martinique chandleries. The guide is comprehensive and very well organized; offers concise, objective advice (no ads and no restaurant reviews); the sketch charts are self-explanatory and beautifully done; aerial photos of all anchorages are provided and speak the proverbial "thousands of words". With a little effort to translate essential information, the guide can be very useful even if French is not your first language.

So many cruisers lament how crowded "the islands" have become, but an entire coastline awaits them on the east side of Martinique!

Regards,
Ruth and John Martin
S/Y Moon Dog

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