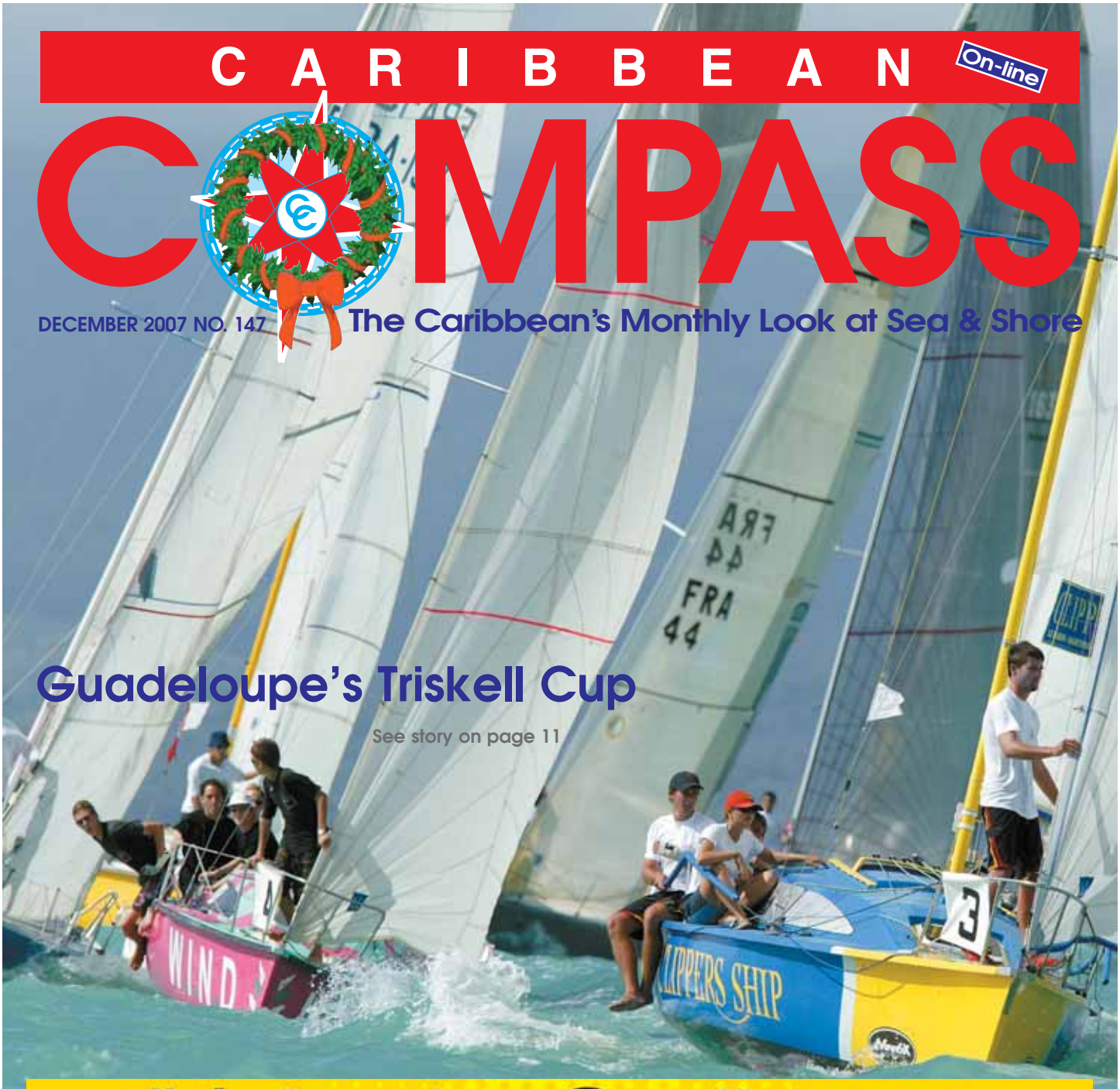
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Guadeloupe's Triskell Cup

See story on page 11

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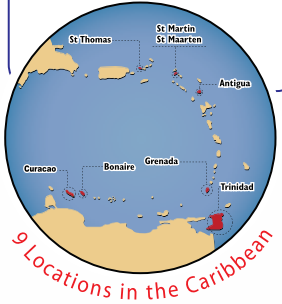
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Info & Updates

Crew Visas for Netherlands Antilles
Recent changes to the Immigration legislation of the Netherlands Antilles impact the previous acceptance of the Seaman's Book in lieu of a visa for nationalities requiring a visa (see www.netherlandsembassy.org.uk/visas_mvvs/aruba_the/do_i_require_a_visa_0). As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, all crew on that list are required to present a visa for The Netherlands Antilles upon arrival. This visa can be obtained at almost any Dutch Consulate around the world.
The St. Maarten Marine Trades Association has held meetings with the Island Government of St. Maarten in efforts to obtain a postponement of the implementation of this new ruling. A relevant draft amendment is being circulated for discussion.
For more information visit www.smmta.com.

Anchoring at Princess Margaret Bay, Bequia
The Bequia Tourism Association requests that yachts anchoring at Princess Margaret Bay, Bequia, stay at least 130 meters (140 yards) off the beach as this beach is a designated swim area for both visitors (including yachtspeople) and residents. Your cooperation would be greatly appreciated.
For more information contact bequiatourism@caribsurf.com or visit www.bequiatourism.com.

St. Lucia's PM Supports Yachting Sector
Keats Compton reports: The Caribbean can become a premier world yachting destination, according to the Prime Minister of St. Lucia, the Hon. Stephenson King, following his visit to the 48th Annual Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show which was held October 25th through 29th. Mr. King headed a delegation comprising the Consul General for St. Lucia in Miami, Kent Hippolyte, and Caribbean Marine Association and Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia President, Keats Compton. The party was hosted by Gordon Connell, Director of Association Services of the Marine Industries Association of South Florida.



At the Ft. Lauderdale Boat Show, left to right: Keats Compton, President MIASL and CMA; Gordon Connell, Director of Association Services, MIASF, Charles Garner, President, IGY: Hon. Stephenson King, Prime Minister of St. Lucia

Mr. King is no stranger to the sea: his father sailed on inter-island schooners. Appointed Prime Minister in September, Mr. King has already committed himself to assisting to promote St. Lucia as part of regional yachting initiatives envisaged by the Caribbean Marine Association.
At the Florida show, the Prime Minister engaged hardware vendors on the possibility of job placements for St. Lucians, with a view to achieving the skills transfer required to support the industry back home. The St. Lucia Government has placed yachting-related skills on its priority list for educational assistance, as the level of investment in marinas in St. Lucia has risen rapidly, with The Landings and Discovery at Marigot Bay nearing completion. The recent acquisition of Rodney Bay Marina, the largest full service marina on the island, by International Global Yachting will push that investment significantly higher. St. Lucia's planned re-development of the main harbour at Castries into a dedicated cruise and yachting facility will permit the construction of additional purpose-built facilities.
St. Lucia's Customs and Immigration procedures are being streamlined, and those deemed to be harmful to the island's competitiveness will be reviewed. The Prime Minister expects that these initiatives will all enhance St. Lucia's attractiveness as a yachting friendly jurisdiction.
For more information contact info@miasl.org.

—Continued on next page

Happy Holidays to all from Compass!

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See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

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—*Continued from previous page*

Trinidad's *Humming Bird II* Being Restored

Norman Faria reports: The Caribbean region's most celebrated cruising boat of the 1960s/1970s period, the 40-foot plywood ketch *Humming Bird II*, is being restored in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Built on the shores of the Gulf of Paria by Trinidadians Harold La Borde and his wife Kwailan in 1965, it should be ready for public viewing early next year.

The La Bordes' historic circumnavigation of the world, the first by Caribbean people in such a home-built craft, was from 1969 to 1973. There was a grand welcome back home at the Chaguaramas docks by the then Prime Minister, Dr. Eric Williams, and an appreciative crowd. The La Bordes were awarded Trinidad & Tobago's top



Trinidad's circumnavigating Humming Bird II, *circa 1970 in the Pacific*

award, the Trinity Cross, for their achievement. Harold wrote a book, *All Oceans Blue*, about the voyage.

After being given to the Coast Guard for sail training and used for that purpose for a while, *Humming Bird II* was stored at the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association yard for several years. The elements, and the local *corbeaux* (scavenging birds) who made it their roost, took their toll. In time, the boat became "completely rotten", as Harold told *Compass* last June in an interview.

In 2005, with the assistance of the Trinidadian government and the personal involvement of the then Minister of Culture, the restoration project started. A young shipwright, Sherwin Bobette, was hired to work on *Humming Bird II* at the Museum on the South Quay in downtown Port of Spain.

The hard-chined boat was designed by American John B. Clarke. Harold said he first read about the design in an issue of *Yachting* magazine and sent away for the plans. The restoration is faithful to the original design, including all interior and exterior fittings. Some allowances will be made for the public inspection process when it is finally put on display. It is hoped that a secretariat will be established to provide visitors, including school children, with a video presentation about the building of the boat and its historic voyage.

The La Bordes had earlier built a smaller plywood ketch, the 21-foot long *Humming Bird I*, which they sailed to England with countryman Kelvin Wong Chong in 1960. After they gave away *Humming Bird II*, they started on an even larger boat. This was the round-bottomed *Humming Bird III*, also a ketch. It is made of local teak. It carried the La Bordes and their two young sons, Pierre and Andre, on another circumnavigation from 1984 to 1986. "We've kept this one the longest," says Harold as he lovingly makes sure all the ropes are properly coiled in the cockpit at the Humming Bird Marina in Chaguaramas, which he recently sold.

For more information, contact Harold La Borde at labby@tstt.net.tt.

—*Continued on next page*



—Continued from previous page

Cops and Robbers on the Rio Dulce

Julia Bartlett reports: Following some dinghy thefts on the Rio Dulce, on Guatemala's Caribbean coast, cruisers organised a meeting with the Navy, Tourist Police and Inguat, a tourist information service. The



normal groans were heard from the cruisers: "We've done all this before", "Nothing will happen", "I can write the script." Not true in this case! Following the donation from the cruisers of a couple of VHF radios, the Navy leaped into action.

A report by Roy McNett which was published on the river's blog, http://riodulcechisme.com, said, "Two local men were arrested by the Guatemalan Navy early this morning (November 3rd) in the act of attempting to steal a dinghy and outboard motor from *S/V Antares,* anchored in front of Crow Bar Marina.

"Henry Hauck, owner of *Antares,* said he was awakened at 3:30AM by the sound of his dinghy rubbing against the hull of his boat… Hauck discovered a cayuka at the stern of his boat. `At the same moment, some shouting started, spotlights turned on and I heard the noise of a loading AK 47 (or something like that),' Hauck noted.

"The Guatemalan Navy patrol, commanded by Navy Officer Alferez Cardona, was also at the stern of *Antares,* with two men under arrest who had already cut halfway through a stainless steel security cable with a pair of bolt cutters which they tossed into the river when they realized they'd been discovered."

Julia adds: The Navy is now patrolling three "safe anchorages" which are described in a safety and security handout to be given to cruisers when clearing in at Livingston. And they really are patrolling, every night!

For more information visit http://riodulcechisme.com.

Sailor at 85 Crosses Atlantic Solo

Ernie Seon reports: At age 85, when most people would be winding down, Bill Marden is a solo high-seas adventurer. Marden arrived in the Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia, in November after crossing the Atlantic from the Azores alone in his 52-foot yacht. He did it, he said, "because no one was foolish enough to come with me". Marina General Manager



Cuthbert Didier said that in the decade that he had been at the marina, no one else of Marden's age has sailed into the facility after single-handedly crossing the Atlantic.

It's not the first time that Marden, a Texan, has sailed long distances alone. Five years ago, for his 80th birthday, he sailed from Texas to Trinidad, a distance of some 3,000 miles. The three-week voyage from the Azores was about 800 miles longer but Marden was not daunted when he set off after a brother who had promised to make the trip with him dropped out.

A World War Two US Navy veteran, Marden has been sailing for 30 years. During World War Two he served on a wooden minesweeper under General Douglas MacArthur on duty in the Pacific. Said Marden: "Everything I learned about the sea I learned in the US Navy which I joined as a teenager."

Recounting his voyage from the Azores, Marden told of bouts of bad weather including a tropical storm. "I knew all the while that one slip and it would be the end," he said.

Marden's yacht will remain on the hard at the Rodney Bay Marina for the next ten months. After spending time with his family in Texas, he plans to return to St. Lucia next year, pick up his boat and keep on sailing.

Amerindian Artifacts in St. Vincent

If you are planning to explore St. Vincent, don't miss a visit to the St. Vincent & the Grenadines National Trust's newly-opened permanent exhibition at the Old Public Library, Heritage Square in Kingstown. The small but fascinating display sheds light on the richness of the Amerindian culture that existed on both St. Vincent and the Grenadine islands from around 160AD, up to and beyond the arrival of the Island Caribs around 1450AD. Open 10:00AM to 5:00PM, Monday to Thursday. Admission EC$5.

For more information contact svgntrust@vincysurf.com, (784) 457-1291.

Got Stuff for Carriacou?

As boats move north from their hurricane-season hide-outs and arrive from Europe and North America, please remember that the Carriacou Children's Education Fund will gratefully accept contributions of clean, used clothing; household goods; treasures of the bilge; and handmade craft items. These items will be auctioned at the annual fund-raising in August, directly preceding Carriacou Regatta Festival. Proceeds go to provide local needy children with school uniforms, textbooks, and lunch money. Contributions can be left at the Carriacou Yacht Club in Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou.

For more information contact boatmillie@aol.com.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome aboard new advertiser Le Phare Bleu Marina of Grenada, page 15. Good to have you with us!

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Business Briefs

Dockwise Announces Strategic Alliance

Dockwise Yacht Transport (DYT) has announced a cooperative partnership with BBC Chartering & Logistic to expand global shipping options for its clients — namely owners and captains of private luxury yachts. This strategic alliance allows DYT to continue offering its unique float-on/float-off yacht transport service with its own fleet of four semi-submersible ships while adding an alternative lift-on/lift-off service option through BBC, which operates more than 140 vessels worldwide.

"DYT's float-on/float-off method, which has been raised to somewhat of an art form since we developed it in 1987, is used by no other yacht carriers," said DYT President Clemens van der Werf, adding that the company built its recently commissioned "super ship", the 685.7-foot (209-meter) *Yacht Express,* to meet the demand for more DYT transport trips across the Atlantic. "The reality, however, is that there will always be clients who need additional scheduling flexibility or the ability to get to a destination we do not service directly. BBC is a powerhouse in global shipping. While it will provide the tonnage, DYT will manage their operations for the yacht transport business, offering our clients extra sailings and more flexibility."

"While yachts are similar to other heavy-lift cargo with respect to the necessary lifting gear, they also require a greater sensitivity with respect to the lift and stowage," said Svend Andersen, BBC's Managing Director. "This is why the DYT/BBC alliance is ideal for the yacht transport industry. BBC has the specialized vessels and equipment, while DYT has the extended knowledge base for managing the loading and unloading of such precious cargo from start to finish, with its own loading masters provided for all operations."

Among the new routes accommodated by BBC will be regular connections from the Caribbean to Northern Europe, Florida to Brazil, and to Dubai. All other worldwide destinations can also be accommodated on request.

For more information see ad on page 43.

5th Marine Trade Show in Trinidad Another Success

The Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT) held their 5th Marine Trades Show in October 2007 at the Sweet Water Marina in Chaguaramas. Twenty-nine companies occupying 34 booth spaces participated to show off to both local and visiting boaters the marine services and accessories Trinidad has to offer.

The Hon. Kenneth Valley, Minister of Trade and Industry, opened the show noting that it was "…the only show of its kind in the region that highlights the services offered to boat owners, bringing together suppliers and consumers in a dynamic environment conducive to conducting business." The Minister went



on to say: "Government has identified yachting as one of seven targeted industries which form a major component in the country's diversification efforts … (and) …we are deeply committed to this sector's development." So much so that Cabinet has agreed to the establishment of a Yachting Steering Committee — currently chaired by Sharon McIntosh, who is also the General Manager of YSATT — to coordinate the implementation of the industry's strategic plan, which was prepared in 2005. This committee comprises representatives of the Chaguaramas Development Authority, the Tourism Development Company, the Tobago House of Assembly, key state agencies and industry stakeholders. The committee is required to submit a report to Cabinet on its progress through the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

The show was attended by approximately 300 boating and yachting enthusiasts, with industry demonstrations held at various intervals throughout the show. 3M showed off their sanding and polishing systems by treating a piece of gelcoat on the spot. Trump Tours put on another interactive demonstration by bringing cocoa farmers from the Lopinot area of Trinidad to show visitors how to "dance the cocoa". Weatherman Eric Mackie ended the demonstrations with a question and answer session which lasted for over an hour.

For more information or to reserve space for next year's show, contact manager@ysatt.org.

TechNick Yacht Services Opens in Grenada

TechNick Yacht Services Ltd. is a new engineering, fabrication and welding business located in Spice Island Marine Service Boatyard, Prickly Bay, Grenada. Specializing in stainless steel and aluminium, TechNick will work to customers' specifications, and repair or design items to suit customers' needs.

TechNick is owned and run by Nick Williams, who has 20 years of experience in the marine industry in the Caribbean. Nick was the technical manager of The Moorings in St. Lucia and previously owned and managed marine construction and salvage vessels. He has built numerous jetties and harbour infrastructure in Dominica and managed the final construction of that island's Aerial Tram, which carries passengers on a bird's-eye-view tour of the rainforest. With his extensive technical experience and as a long-term yacht owner himself, Nick is perfectly placed to understand the needs and requirements of other boat owners.

For more information e-mail technick@spiceisle.com, or call (473) 536-1560.

Digital Future for UKHO?

UK Hydrographic Office Chief Executive Mike Robinson has outlined a digital future for his organisation by reaffirming the UKHO's intention to launch a new global vector chart service next year. Speaking at the Institute of Marine Engineering Science & Technology President's Day Forum on October 16 in London, Robinson said the world of marine navigation was changing from paper-based to digital products.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

He also highlighted that the UKHO, with its Admiralty brand of navigational products and services, is determined to remain a commercial success in this digital future.

"We are about to start trials of a new global vector service which we will make available during the first half of next year," he announced. "This will form the basis for a number of future products and services over the next few years."

Robinson explained that the availability and quality of 'official' vector charts had not improved as quickly as expected by the maritime community and widespread adoption has yet to occur, despite potential safety advantages.

"The principles established by International Hydrographic Organization member states in vector charting are somewhat different than in paper and effectively prevent any one nation from charting the world," said Robinson. He went on to add that "although the UKHO considers that where they have 'the capability', sovereign nations are best placed to chart their own waters, we (the UKHO) are offering our services to take that base navigational data and add value with our world-class cartographers, and provide products and services to the mariner that the mariner deserves."

Although the UKHO has significant resources, Robinson acknowledged that the challenge of moving to a digital world would test its capability. "We are going to need assistance from industry in a number of different ways; from original equipment manufacturers, system integrators and software companies. The world is going to change but there is time, if we plan and invest in our people."

The UKHO is currently a Ministry of Defence Trading Fund but it is undergoing a status review which may see all or part of the organisation become a Government-Owned Company; such a change in status could possibly increase its ability to compete commercially. Robinson was keen to stress, however, that despite the organisation's growing commercialisation, the UKHO's primary objective would remain to support the Royal Navy. "We supply 70 percent of all charts and publications sold to merchant shipping, but the Royal Navy remains our largest and most important customer."

Mustique Blues Festival…

Creative Director Dana Gillespie and Producer Basil Charles have just announced the line up for the 13th Annual Mustique Blues Festival to be held at Basil's Bar in January. Appearing this year are: Ronnie Jones, Carvin Jones, Zach Prather, Dana Gillespie, Papa George, Steve Simpson and the London Blues Band: Julien Brunetaud, Dino Baptiste, Jake Zaitz, Jeff Walker, Mike Paice, Darby Todd and Enrico Morena. Special Guest: Felix Dennis.

The Mustique Blues Festival begins Wednesday January 23rd at Basil's Bar with a Blues Jump-Up and barbecue, and continues nightly until Wednesday February 6th with special family "Sunset Blues" shows at 5:00PM on Sundays.

For those who can't make it to Mustique, the Blues Festival will be playing in Bequia on Friday January 25th, and then on St. Vincent the following weekend.





It's music time! In addition to hearing Dana Gillespie (left) and The Country Relatives (right) in the Grenadines next month, you can catch music festivals from Jamaica to Carriacou throughout December and January. See Calendar on page 54

Each year the Mustique Blues Festival performances are recorded and released as a CD, and the 2007 CD is on sale now at Basil's Bar, or through www.basilsbar.com. With all of the performing artists donating their services, the revenue from the CDs and from the Blues Festival itself go towards funding secondary education for the youths of St. Vincent through the Basil Charles Educational Foundation. More than 30 children are currently benefiting from the funds raised through the Blues Festival.

For more information visit www.basilsbar.com.

….and Bequia Music Fest

The four-day 5th Annual Bequia Music Fest (Thursday January 24th through Sunday January 27th) will kick off, as last year, with a Thursday evening performance by the 13-piece Elite Steel Orchestra from St. Vincent at the Frangipani Hotel. On Friday night, the Mustique Blues Festival comes to Bequia — and anyone who has seen Dana Gillespie and her London Blues Band and special guests perform in Bequia before will know this is a night not to be missed.

On Saturday 26th the evening will have both a local and international flavour, with Bequia String Band music, country music Bequia-style from The Country Relatives, and reggae bands from St. Vincent and Bequia. These acts will be joined by an All-Star Band of Bequia-loving musicians from around the world and many surprise guests to make an un-missable Saturday line-up. Returning by popular demand, the sensational Toby Armstrong and the Mount Gay Blues Band from Barbados will close Saturday night with another show-stopping performance.

Sunday at De Reef in Lower Bay will be the ever-popular Music Fest Jazz & Blues Jam and Mount Gay Surprise Party on the Beach — free for all, and the climax to a great weekend of music. If you'd like to jam with other musicians on Sunday afternoon, please contact the organisers and they will try to fit you in!

Advance tickets (EC$50 per night, or EC$85 for a two-night ticket) will be available from mid-December from the Bequia Tourism Association office and Lina's Delicatessen in Bequia, or Quik Print in St. Vincent.

For more information visit www.bequiatourism.com/bequiamusicfest or e-mail musicfest@begos.com.

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Thurs 24th January - Frangipani Hotel from 8.30pm
From St. Vincent - **STEEL PAN CELEBRATION** - world-famous 13-piece **ELITE** Steel Pan Orchestra

Fri 25th January - De Reef, Lower Bay at 8.30pm
Blues Night featuring artistes from the **MUSTIQUE BLUES FESTIVAL**
DANA GILLESPIE AND THE LONDON BLUES BAND:
Julien Brunetaud, Dino Baptiste, Jake Zaitz, Jeff Walker, Mike Paice, Darby Todd & Enrico Morena
Featuring: Ronnie Jones, Carvin Jones, Zach Prather, Papa George, Steve Simpson

Sat 26th January - De Reef, Lower Bay at 8.30pm
From Bequia: KINGS OF STRINGS
COUNTRY RELATIVES - Country & Western
KYRON BAPTISTE
COLIN PETERS & FRIENDS - Reggae, Calypso & more
From Barbados: TOBY ARMSTRONG & THE MOUNT GAY BLUES BAND
Plus "All-Star" Band - Blues & Jazz pianist **DAVID MAXWELL** & guest artistes

Sun 27th January - De Reef, Lower Bay at 1.00pm
Blues & Jazz Jam Session - "All Star" Band & guest performers!
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Red Tape for Yachts Comes and Goes

In early 2007, ten member states of the Caribbean Economic Community, CARICOM, passed legislation requiring Advance Passenger Information to be transmitted to CARICOM's Joint Regional Communication Centre in Barbados for ALL air and sea carriers — including yachts — arriving at, and departing from each member state.

By registering on a website, the masters of said "air and sea carriers" are to find and fill out a detailed form which asks for information such as passengers' names, nationalities and passport numbers, and the vessel or aircraft's dates and exact times of departure and arrival.

The form can be submitted electronically or by printing it out and faxing it.

Although this Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) was supposed to go into effect on February 1st, 2007, the first anyone in the yachting community heard about it was in August, when yacht skippers clearing out of Antigua began complaining about being asked, unexpectedly, to go to an Internet café to fill out a new and complex Immigration form on line. At that point, only Antigua had begun to ask yachts to comply with APIS regulations.

The difficulties that the average recreational sailor has with the API system as it stands have been well documented, with yacht skippers reportedly struggling for anything up to four hours to access the website (www.caricomeapis.org) and figure out how to complete the form — often while paying for the time at an Internet Café. Clearance procedures were also significantly lengthened if APIS was required. Yacht tourism is recognized as being the second most economically important form of tourism in the Eastern Caribbean, behind hotels but ahead of cruise ships. Anyone with knowledge of yacht tourism knew that this kind of time-consuming red tape could quickly strangle it to death.

Due to the efforts of the Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) in general, and the Antigua & Barbuda Marine Trades Association in particular, Antigua & Barbuda soon recognized the potential damage APIS could do to its valuable yacht tourism sector and in October dropped any mention of APIS for yachts of less than 100 net tons.

But like the arcade game "Whac-A-Mole", in which plastic mole figures pop up from their holes at random, also in October St. Vincent & the Grenadines — like Antigua, with no prior consultation or announcement — unexpectedly began asking yacht skippers to comply with APIS. Enforcement was sporadic: Immigration officers at some SVG ports of entry were more understanding than others of visitors' unsuccessful on-line attempts to comply; at times officers required "proof" of compliance in the form of a stamped print-out from an Internet café or a fax transmission report. (Notwithstanding that you can print out an on-line form without ever having submitted it electronically, and a fax transmission report doesn't indicate what document was actually sent.)

Numerous yacht owners have told *Compass* they began by-passing St. Vincent & the Grenadines or would do so. Others no doubt came here but avoided clearing in or out, taking the risk that their papers would not be checked and costing the SVG government their entry fees.

The St. Vincent & the Grenadines Recreational Marine Trades Association wrote to the relevant Ministers of Government on November 1st concerning the APIS legislation, stating: "This Association obviously would like to see our yachting industry continue its sustainable growth. The [API] legislation currently being only marginally and sporadically enforced has nothing other than negative connotations in this regard. We applaud the most recent debate on the creation of [CARICOM] single space initiatives… however it will be some time before this becomes a reality, if it happens. In the interim all that we and the CMA are asking for is for the formal suspension of compliance with [APIS for yachts] so that we are, at worst, in the same situation as our Caricom neighbours."

On November 21st, SVG's Chief Immigration Officer told *Compass* that the APIS requirement for yachts has been temporarily suspended in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, pending review.

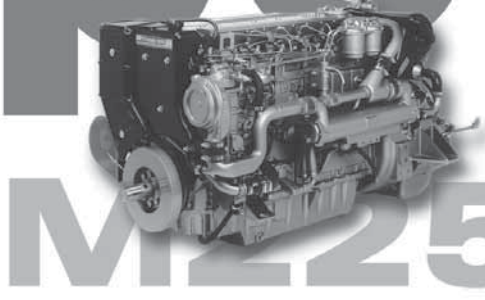
But we still seem to being playing Whac-a-Mole: we've just learned that yachts clearing out of Barbados in November were asked to fill out APIS forms.

Trinidad & Tobago's APIS legislation lapsed at the end of June 2007. The remaining CARICOM countries involved — Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, St. Lucia, Grenada and Guyana — never enforced APIS compliance for yachts, but at least some of these countries still have the laws on the books.

The Caribbean Marine Association and its national-level member associations have promised to work with their individual Governments until a practical solution has been achieved.

Editor's note: The St. Lucia Ministry of Tourism contact given in last month's Compass *is incorrect. You can send comments regarding the effect APIS would have on your experience of St. Lucia to vfrancis@gosl.gov.lc.*

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Caribbean Eco-News

Recycling in Antigua

Lucy Tulloch reports: On a small island like Antigua, of 108 square miles and a population of 80,000, surviving primarily from tourism, recycling is crucial to the island's preservation. But with no primary manufacturing industries, this can be an expensive and challenging venture.

Currently, over 100 tons of waste is dumped at our landfills daily, and this is increasing yearly. Most of the waste, such as plastics, glass and metals, is non-biodegradable. These materials remain in our soils or get transported into our marine environment where they adversely impact reefs and wildlife such as endangered sea turtles.

The National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA), has always advocated enhanced waste diversion and the promotion of the "3-Rs" policy. The



message of Reduce, Re-use and Recycle has been promoted through the years but it is only in recent times they have opted to facilitate the recycling initiatives of the private sector and local NGOs.

The Rotary Club of Antigua Sundown took action. It set out to establish a recycling processing facility and to launch a national recycling program with funding of US$90,000 raised from the United Nations GEF Small Grants Program and the British High Commission to cover equipment costs and public education. In-kind contributions were received from the government in the form of tax concessions and a building. The private sector contributed towards installation and building improvements. The NSWMA now assists in collection and public education initiatives.

In December 2005, the first waste recycling facility in the Leeward Islands was opened in Antigua. The facility receives plastic bottles, crates, aluminium cans, non-ferrous scrap, lead acid batteries and now printer cartridges and mobile phones. In the first year, over 150,000 pounds of plastics and 25,000 pounds of scrap metal were received for recycling. The actual recycling process takes place overseas in Venezuela, Florida and even Peru.

Batteries contain dangerous acid which leaks into the soil and lead (a carcinogenic) persists in the soil forever. Discarded batteries are now banned at Cooks Sanitary Landfill but they can be taken to the Recycling Facility on Powell's Industrial Estate just off the Airport Road. So far, over 9,000 used car and boat batteries have been sent to Venezuela, where the lead goes back into making new batteries.

The English Harbour area was visited by over 3,000 yachts in 2006. That's a lot of water bottles! We now have a big yellow recycling bin for plastics and aluminium cans for this area, next to the National Parks Garbage Facility in Falmouth Harbour. It is emptied regularly but we must ensure it is not mistakenly used for household rubbish. For recyclable plastics (clear plastics such as soda and water bottles; and cloudy-white plastics like milk and gallon water jugs), look for the triangle on the bottom of the container. All aluminium soda cans may be recycled, e.g. Coke, Sprite, beer, sodas. At the moment, we can't recycle steel cans (e.g. tinned vegetable and fruits).

We aim to launch an awareness campaign for visiting yachts, local businesses, schools and residents. School children will be invited to be involved in teaching the adults, since the new generation are sometimes more informed on this subject than the oldies. It will take us some time to get into the habit of recycling, but now we have the facilities, I believe we can conserve our natural resources and hope to be one of the leaders in recycling in the islands.

Anyone wanting to volunteer help can contact me at lucy@thelucy.com. For more information contact Mario Bento at bento@hotmail.com.

Cayman Island Divers Reduce Waste

Divetech in West Bay, Grand Cayman, recently announced a new programme for its diving guests to do their part to preserve the environment. Divetech is offering reusable sport bottles, available for purchase by guests for US$6. With the purchase of a sport bottle, guests then get free drinking water for the entire length of their stay, along with a souvenir item to take home.

Prior to the implementation of this creative programme, guests would easily buy ten to 12 bottles of water a week, so in addition to being a great "green" practice, it also results in a cost saving to the resort's visitors.

"Previously, we purchased about eight to 12 flats of 16-ounce bottled water a week," said Nancy Easterbrook of Divetech. "This amounted to over 10,000 plastic water bottles going to the landfill each year. Even if only half of our customers convert, that still significantly reduces the volume of plastic sent to the landfill."

Islands Chosen for Climate-Change Project

A Special Programme for Adaptation to Climate Change (SPACC) has selected Dominica, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines to implement pilot adaptation measures addressing the impacts of climate change. SPACC is funded by the World Bank, participating countries and other donor countries.

The project aims to design pilot adaptation measures to reduce expected negative impacts of climate change on marine and near-shore areas, and implement pilot adaptation investments. Reducing climate-change impacts will primarily result in protection of marine and terrestrial biodiversity and prevention of land degradation, especially along the coast. It will also induce economic benefits in the tourism, fisheries, agriculture and forestry sectors, help maintain the resource base upon which these economic activities rely, and promote climate-resilient sustainable development. The experience gained through these local-level activities will assist and inform the policy decision-making process and is expected to influence the enactment of climate-resilient sustainable development policies.

Specifically, the project will examine, among other things, destruction of coastal ecosystems by increased sea level rise and salinization; strategies to protect biodiversity in coral reefs; and the strengthening of key infrastructure to withstand intensified hurricane winds and storm surges.

The project seeks to produce knowledge of global value on how to implement adaptation measures in small island states that can be applied in other countries in the region, and even for islands in other parts of the world.

For more information visit www-wds.worldbank.org.

Guadeloupe Aquarium

Stéphane Legendre reports: The only aquarium between Curaçao and Saint Thomas, the Guadeloupe Aquarium should not be missed. Due to its central location in the Eastern Caribbean, it is easily reached.

Created 20 years ago, more than 1.6 million visitors have already enjoyed its 1200 square metres of underwater sea-life. Tourists represent 84 percent and school children the rest. A shop and a restaurant are on site.

Since 2004, two million Euros have been invested to increase this aquarium's capacity and attractiveness. An extra 220 square metres, including a basin containing 250,000 liters of water dedicated to Caribbean



sharks, opened in July 2007. The sharks can be viewed through a 7.5 metre (25 foot) long, curved methyl-methacrylate glass window, weighing four tons. A new extension is planned for 2012.

Seventy species (a total of over 700 animals) are on display: crabs, seahorses, corals, piranhas, turtles, etcetera. There are some stars of course, like the ten black-tip sharks. (The question which comes to mind is always: are Caribbean sharks dangerous? The answer is no; among the 465 species of sharks, only five or six are potentially dangerous to man.)

The Karet medical care center for sea turtles is located on the premises of the aquarium. Each year a number of injured turtles are successfully treated here, marked and released. As all sea turtles are endangered, the public is reminded to not eat their flesh nor their eggs; not buy articles produced with their shells;...

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…not throw plastic bags over board (turtles mistake them for jellyfish, eat them and suffocate); and not disturb them when seen at sea or on the beach.

Marine biology students come to the aquarium to carry out studies in the aquarium laboratory. Aquarium biologists have successfully managed the reproduction of thousands of seahorses in captivity. These were later released, improving Guadeloupe's marine biodiversity.

Since 1993 a program called "Ecole de mer" (sea school) has hosted more than 12,000 children visiting the aquarium each year, thanks to a partnership between the aquarium and Guadeloupe's school directorate. This school also provides educational support for teachers who are interested in marine biology.

If you sail to Guadeloupe, don't miss a visit to this interesting place. It is conveniently located next to Marina Bas-du-Fort at Gosier.

For more information visit www.guadeloupeaquarium.com.

Avoiding 'Tourism Overkill'

The world's most appealing destinations — islands — are the ones most vulnerable to population pressure, climate change, storm damage, invasive species, and now, 'tourism overkill'.

To see how the integrity of islands around the world is holding up, *Traveler* magazine and the National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations recently conducted their fourth annual Destination Scorecard survey, aided by George Washington University. A panel of 522 experts in sustainable tourism and destination stewardship donated time to review conditions in 111 selected islands and archipelagos.

The results show that beach-blessed islands draw sun-and-sand resort tourism development that can get out of hand quickly, although there are exceptions. Multiple cruise-ship crowds can also overwhelm an island, transforming it. No surprise, then, that cloudy, beach-poor islands score well. Yet even these islands are sometimes losing traditional families to soaring real estate prices.

Islands were awarded points by the panelists, with the most points being the best score.

Saint Lucia, ranking 21st with a score of 64, was given as an example of an island "in moderate trouble: all criteria medium-negative or a mix of negatives and positives". The negative factors noted by panelists included "dependence on all-inclusive resorts (a majority of the hotel rooms on the island), which has limited creation of a thriving restaurant scene [and] also limits authentic interaction with locals, creating us-and-them atmosphere." Positive factors included "extremely attractive, natural, lush beauty".

St. Thomas, USVI, earned the lowest score, 37: "in serious trouble". One panelist wrote, "Once upon a time, St. Thomas was the most beautiful island in the Caribbean, with sculpted peaks and deep coves. It's all developed now, and the pressure of up to ten cruise ships in a day (almost 2 million arrivals a year) erases that natural beauty."

Among the top scorers were Dominica and the Grenadines, tied for eighth place in the world, with 77 points ("minor difficulties"). Panelists felt that Dominica's "lush mountains, indigenous population, art, craft, agro-based products, and small-scale accommodation facilities all add to the opportunity for sustainable tourism development." But warning was given about "a serious dichotomy between lip service to preserving and protecting its wilderness, which is the major product, and the soliciting of more cruise ships, the proposed oil refinery, and support for Japan on the whaling issue." The Grenadines were seen as a "beautiful destination for yachting and high-end tourists [with] good environmental awareness among the local population, who guard their islands zealously. [But] given their fragility, there is need for strict development controls."

For complete results visit www.nationalgeographic.com/traveler/features/islandsrated0711/islands.html.

Art Pneuveau!

Dawn reports: As I walked past La Kas aux Artistes in Le Marin, Martinique, I was attracted by a three-foot-tall penguin made out of — no, surely not! I went in, a smile on my face which got broader the deeper I entered the world of Belgian artist Serge Van de Put. Here's someone who obviously enjoys his work and wants the public to share his humour.

No ordinary sculptor this, the raw material for his work is none other than used tyres! While there are other 'recycling' artists, he was the first to introduce tyres to the art world and has been experimenting with his chosen material for several years.



Artisan as well as artist, he constructs the stands and skeletons of his sculptures using metalwork techniques acquired at the shipyard in the port of Angers, his birthplace. He then puts flesh on the bones using lumps and strips of rubber cut from used tyres, screwing them together, layer upon layer, to produce almost living beings. Mostly animals and birds, full of expression and movement, but also extraordinary characters that truly look alive.

These creatures have had a previous life, been around, had the freedom of the open road; look at the running ostrich: it has inherited the memory of speed and great distances run. Listen to the 'human' characters, with their cubist appearance, stories of truck-stop and lay-by, of races and chases.

But behind this feast for the eyes and spirit lies a serious message; the purpose of his exhibition is to promote public awareness of environmental issues, particularly recycling. In fact, all the materials used in his work are courtesy of two local eco-friendly enterprises involved in the collection and recycling of industrial metal and automobile waste.

With their support, several educational workshops took place with primary school children, who watched with fascination the creation of fabulous creatures from ugly lumps of rubber and even made their own, learning at the same time the value of recycling.

An exhibition of work completed during Serge's stay on Martinique will continue until December 9th.

La Kas aux Artistes on Rue Duquesnay is a non-profit organisation which aims to promote and display a variety of contemporary art, primarily from Martinique and the Caribbean.

For more information visit www.kasauxartistes.com.

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TRISKELL CUP 2007

Professionalism — with a French Touch

by Stéphane Legendre

When John Burnie, Swan Charter manager for the Caribbean, asked me if I would like to sail on one of his boats, with local racing star Claude Thélier as skipper, for the seventh edition of the Triskell Cup regatta, I of course agreed.

From November 2nd through 4th, the 7th edition of the now-famous Triskell Cup took place off Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, on the superb waters of the Cul de Sac Marin in front of Gosier Island. This year's event was interesting because, in addition to Guadeloupe's avid racers, many fine-tuned boats came from neighboring islands and mainland France. Seventy boats turned up this year, including two from Antigua, one from Dominica, 12 from Martinique, two from France and one from Saint Martin, competing in seven classes.

We had very different boats on the water for those three days — family cruising boats, luxury charter boats such as the Swans, racing boats like the beautiful Archambault 40s, and also a very interesting boat built in China: the Flying Tiger from Antigua. It is amazing to realize this boat with carbon mast and boom, plus racing sails, costs only (?) US$59,000.

We also had a Whitbread round-the-world race veteran, *Neptune*, which is currently being restored. She came dressed with new sails, although the spinnaker is missing at the moment. In the 1977-1978 Whitbread, *Neptune* competed against contenders such as *King's Legend*, *Pen Duick IV* and *Flyer*, coming eighth overall after 130 days at sea, 11 days behind the winner, *Flyer*.

The weather for Triskell Cup 2007 was ideal, with clear skies and 13 to 18 knots of easterly wind, slowly dying on the last day. After a first day of two races followed by a cocktail party, Day Two's two races culminated in a special dinner and a show with zouk music. On Sunday, two more races preceded the prizegiving ceremony at Marina Bas-du-Fort. Five of the seven class winners placed first in all five races.

Although fewer boats participated than last year's 83, the level of competition remained high and the event is becoming increasingly professional. The jury had its share of protests, but after those were resolved, everyone enjoyed what is another strength of this event — the marvelous conviviality which prevailed every evening at Marina Bas-du-Fort around the open bar and during the dinners and shows nicely organized by Jean Michel Marziou's team.

Neil Forester, Antigua Sailing Week's General Manager, was on hand for Triskell 2007, also sailing aboard Claude Thélier's Swan 56. Neil came to Guadeloupe as a friend, a neighbor and a keen observer. As Neil put it, in his perfect French, "Triskell Cup's conviviality is something we have to learn from. In Antigua the overall level is higher, and the boats are different — more sophisticated, sometimes with professional crews. We therefore lack a bit of this 'French touch' for the evenings' events." He adds, "We have a lot in common — geographical proximity and a central position in the Caribbean — and a mutual interest in having great events if we work together."

In 2008, the Triskell Organization is planning to hold the Triskell Trophy race just before Antigua Sailing Week so that boats coming from the south can conveniently participate in both events, using the Triskell Trophy as a warm-up.

The obvious fact that we have to work together is becoming a reality here — it is very important for the future development of sailing in the central area of the Lesser Antilles. No single island can do it alone, and even though Guadeloupe is investing a lot in nautical infrastructure, we need partners.

And what about my experience on the Swan 56? it was just a delight under Claude Thélier's experienced supervision. Not quite enough wind for us to win, but nevertheless a good sailing experience.

For more information contact Jean Michel Marziou at (590 690) 495 757, organization@triskellcup.com or visit www.triskellcup.com.



A highly diverse fleet reveled in good racing and magnifique *after-parties at Triskell Cup 2007*

Triskell Cup 2007 Winners

Racing Class 1
1) *Clippers Ship*, Surprise, Nicolas Gillet, Martinique
Racing Class 2
1) *Caraïbe Gréement*, Melges 24, Philippe Leconte, Martinique
Racing/Cruising Class
1) *Sailing Styl Caraïbes*, Archambault 40, Arnaud Meillac, Martinique
Cruising Class
1) *Getelec*, Opium 39, José Vilier, Saint Martin
Coastal Monohull Class
1) *Mac Village*, Muscadet, Eric Michel, Guadeloupe
Multihull Class
1) *Super U*, CDK 28, Vincent de Meynard, Guadeloupe
Beach Catamaran Class
1) *Tip Top*, Hobie Cat Tiger, Thomas Bohl, Guadeloupe



REGATTA NEWS

'High Level' St. Maarten Opti Champs

The third annual Sint Maarten Optimist Sailing Championships that took place on October 13th showed an increasingly high level of sailing ability as 17 young sailors from Sint Maarten and Anguilla sailed a series of seven races in the Simpson Bay Lagoon. The event is sponsored by Sol, the suppliers of fuels, lubricants and gases, who have given youth sailing ongoing support over the years.

The sailors were split into two fleets, with the top sailors going into Gold and the newer sailors into Silver. The Gold Fleet winner was Stephen Looser, who has won this event since its inception but who only just scraped by on this occasion. He was one point ahead of Zoe Pfeiffer from Switzerland and the last race made the difference. Third place went to Jolyon Ferron, who blew his lunch-time lead of two points in the afternoon. Fourth place went to Kendall Richardson of Anguilla, who is likely to be a strong contender in the future.



Fleet champions Ethan Loyd and Stephen Looser

The Silver Fleet was won by Ethan "Rumple" Loyd of Anguilla, followed by Max Hootsmans of St. Maarten. Third was Michael Curtis of Anguilla.

Many of the upcoming young sailors are products of the training programmes of the Sint Maarten Yacht Club and this regatta saw a number of younger and newer faces who are currently being trained by the club coach and sailing teacher Daniel Pennings.

Andrew Rapley was the race officer and an enthusiastic crowd of parents watched the races and the numerous moments when the shifty winds of the Simpson Bay Lagoon created some interesting moments with many position changes.

The Optimist is the most popular small racing dinghy in the world and is the class in which more top sailors developed their skills than any other. Sailors cannot be older than 15 years to compete.

Guadeloupe's Land Rover Fishing Fest

Stéphane Legendre reports: The second edition of the Land Rover Fishing Festival was organized by the Guadeloupe Fishing Club from October 30th to November 3rd at Marina Bas-du-Fort, Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe. This year, a Land Rover Freelander 2…



—*Continued on next page*

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…was offered to the boat which could beat the record of 410 pounds.

Two days at sea fishing were separated by a lay-day for swimming, eating, conviviality and family entertainment at the Gosier Wiki Beach entertainment complex. Seventeen boats, mainly from Martinique, Saint Martin, Saint Barthélémy and of course Guadeloupe, participated. Initially 30 had registered, but many were prevented from coming by adverse weather. Although conditions remained difficult the first day, they smoothed out nicely by the end of the tournament.

Hook Up, skippered by Eric Petit Lebrun from the Guadeloupe Fishing Club, won with a total of 1,300 points with two blue marlin and one sailfish released. Mr. Constantini's *Joao*, from the Guadeloupe Marlin Club, came second with 1,000 points for two released blue marlin.

For more information visit www.guadeloupefishingclub.com.

Girls Compete in Women's One-Design Event

While most teams competing in this year's Budget Marine Women's Caribbean One-Design Keelboat Regatta had an average age of 40, team Trinidad & Tobago was by far the youngest team to compete,



with an average age of 15.

The participation of the T&T Women's Youth Sailing team — skipper Megan Chan Chow with crewmembers Ella Bayne, Nephema Callender and Rushell Rousseau — at the November 3rd and 4th event, raced at Simpson Bay in St. Maarten, was made possible with support from Budget Marine, Telly Paul General Insurance Services Limited, the Public Transport Services Corporation, All Dive & Marine and the Sports Company of Trinidad & Tobago Limited.

At Team T&T's first regional regatta, they finished sixth overall. After 12 races, the FKG team from St. Maarten led by skipper Kim Frye took home the title, with second place going to Women in M'Ocean from Barbados, skippered by Penny McIntyre.

First Triangle Emeraude Rally a Gem!

Stéphane Legendre reports: The first edition of this rally, organized by the Saint François Yacht Club of Guadeloupe, took place from November 3rd to 11th. A fleet of 20 boats sailed from Saint-François to Les Saintes, Dominica, Marie-Galante and back to Saint-François.

The event attracted cruising boats, beach catamarans, racing boats, (and even one sea kayak for the first leg), Boats were very different. I sailed on Claude



Thélier's 60-foot racing trimaran *Région Guadeloupe*, a fantastic machine which sails at 17 knots with only 8 knots of wind. Half way to Les Saintes from Saint François, left without any wind at all, it was a surprise to see a sea kayak overtaking us. But soon the wind came back and away we were sailing at 19 knots entering Las Saintes' Terre de Haut bay before anchoring for the evening.

In addition to sailing, the Triangle Emeraude Rally gave participants the opportunity to follow an environmental "Green Thread" during the week. What does it mean?

At each stop-over, participants had a treasure hunt, earning points which determined a winner per leg and overall. Plus, at each stop a small conference on ecology and environment was organized by Terre d'Avenir, an environmental association from Guadeloupe. At Les Saintes the issue was: how do we solve the problems of waste treatment and tap water delivery?

In Portsmouth, Dominica, the challenge was to fill in a questionnaire about the island while visiting sites such as Spanny Falls, Indian River or Carib Territory. The rally received a warm welcome from the Dominica Marine Association, and evenings here were respectively spent at The Purple Turtle and Big Papa's restaurants on the beach, enjoying authentic island food and music.

In Marie Galante, a conference was organized on turtles and shore-birds before a buffet on Saint Louis's beach.

The conviviality between all types of sailors participating was obvious and this big family of around a hundred people had a really good time. Their only comment was that it was too short and that the organizers should next year think of a longer rally, with maybe a new island to discover. Another suggestion was to hold it a bit later during the winter season in order to welcome sailors from Europe and North America, who would be delighted to discover interesting places while learning about environmental issues the islands are facing.

The Saint François tourism office treated the rally participants very well, hosting buffets at the start and the end of the rally.

For more in formation on Triangle Emeraude Rally visit www.triangle-emeraude.com or e-mail: ycsf.gpe@orange.fr.

Caribbean 1500 Arrives Safe in BVI

All 69 boats sailing in this year's Caribbean 1500 rally arrived safely in Tortola, British Virgin Islands, after passages of seven to 14 days. The rally started in Hampton, Virginia, on November 4th. The 2007 fleet included participants from 20 states, four Canadian provinces, and Bermuda. Approximately half of the boats were manned by veteran ralliers. The boats averaged 46 feet in length.

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This year's passage brought three sets of weather conditions to the fleet. The faster boats were unable to find wind and motored a substantial portion of the distance. The middle of the fleet was treated to a ten- to 15-knot beam reach for much of the passage and was, for the most part, able to maneuver around scattered squall lines. The slower boats suffered with extensive convective squalls east of the Gulf Stream, reporting high winds and even hail.

For the second year in a row, the Overall Handicap winner came from Class 5. The *Four C's*, a Jeanneau 43 DS sailed by Ken Johnson and his crew, took the top honors.

For more information visit www.carib1500.com.

Island-Hopping Golden Rock Regatta

The 3rd Golden Rock Regatta ran from November 11th to 16th, taking participants from Great Bay, St. Maarten to Gustavia, St. Barths; Oranjestad, Statia; and Frigate Bay, St. Kitts; returning to Statia for a gala prizegiving at historic Fort Orange.



The Golden Rock Regatta's goal is to promote tourism to the region and to Statia in particular. Most participants fly in from the US and the Netherlands and board their chartered yacht in Oyster Pond, St. Maarten. After completing their entries at Captain Oliver's Yacht Club, they sail around the horn into Great Bay where they are joined by participating local boats. Charter boats were joined this year by the 12 Metre *Kate* and the gaff schooner *Passaat*.

For the first time the Golden Rock Regatta featured a Cruising/Racing Class, with two US teams on Sun Fast 37s, fighting it out in a nail-biting finish. The series ended in a split result with both parties scoring four points. Team Truple, an almost completely women's team, captained by Pam Morris from the Eastport Yacht Club in Annapolis, was defeated by Team DLA Piper skippered by Chris Land from the Manhattan Sailing Club. Team Truple led the standings for the first two days, after which the tables were turned with Team DLA Piper winning the next two races. In such a case the team winning the last race wins the series.

Prizes were awarded after each day's race, which had been shortened from previous years to allow crews more time ashore.

Class winners after four races were:

Cruising/Racing Class: *DLA Piper*, Sun Fast 37, Christopher Land

Bareboat Class: *V.O.C. (Very Odd Crew)*, Cyclade 51, Bas Roorda

Open Class: *Kate*, 12 Metre, Klaas van Duuren

Overall winner of the Golden Rock Regatta 2007 was *DLA Piper*.

For more information visit www.goldenrockregatta.com.

BVI Women Tackle International Event

A team of four women — Emma Paull, Becky Roulette, Clair Burke and Linda Phillips — represented the British Virgin islands and the Bitter End Yacht Club in the Rolex International Women's Keelboat Championship, held November 14th through 17th in Houston, Texas. They were the only Caribbean team at the event.

Team BVI won the Caribbean Women's Keelboat Championship in St. Maarten in 2004, '05 and '06. It was after the third win that Emma and Clair decided that the team should stretch and work towards competing in the Rolex International Women's Keelboat Championship.

Skipper Emma Paull sails Laser Radials and IC24s. She is Club Manager at the Royal BVI Yacht Club. Main and spinnaker trimmer and mother to a seven-month-old, Rebecca Rowlette (Emma's sister) owns Husky Salvage & Towing with her husband Kevin. Jib trimmer Clair Burke is a senior manager at Tricor Global and a Laser Radial sailor. Linda Phillips, on the bow, runs Doyle Sails BVI with her husband Bob when she is not sailing or spending time with her two college-aged daughters.

In Houston, team BVI placed 18th out of 39 teams in an 11-race series. The winning team was skippered by Sally Barkow of Wisconsin, making Barkow's third Rolex International Women's Keelboat Championship win. Barkow was 2005 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year.

With the Rolex IWKC founded 23 years ago to encourage women to step up to the male-dominated world of keelboat racing, the regatta has moved from New England to the Mid-Atlantic and now to the Southwest to host over 500 teams, 2,400 women and 23 countries. Until its next edition in 2009, its reach will be ever-expanding through ongoing clinics around the globe and the Next Step to Rolex junior program, further fulfilling the mission of inspiring women to set new goals.

For more information visit www.ussailing.org/riwkc.

Dutch Dominate Aruba Heineken Cat Race

On November 15th, three possible winning F18 crews sailed off Palm Beach, Aruba, for the final race of the 17th Aruba Heineken Catamaran Regatta. After a long course with three sausages and two triangles, Eduard Zanen and Mischa Heemskerk took the bullet and the overall victory. Gunnar Larsen and Bastiaan Tentij tied on points with Wouter Samama and Sam Frank, but Larsen/Tentij became second overall on count back. All three of these teams are from the Netherlands.

According to the winning team's Heemskerk, they had good preparation before the start of the last of ten races, and tried to stay calm: "We knew the pressure was on the top three teams. This morning, we said to each other that our event was already successful, so let's enjoy this last race and sail smoothly. We won with a considerable lead."

This year's class of slower catamarans was dominated by veteran participant Manfred Thomasch from Austria and Henk Hankart from Aruba. They took all ten bullets with their Dart 18.

For more information visit www.arubaregatta.com.

Close Results in Nanny Cay Nations Cup

Alastair Abrehart reports: Team Bitter End Holmberg managed to knock the defending BVI champions from their perch at the third annual Nanny Cay Nations Cup, held in the British Virgin Islands November 17th and 18th, but it's hard to imagine how the regatta could have ended any closer.

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As competitors went into the 20th and final race of the two-day event, two-time winners Team bmobile BVI were two points behind the USVI's Team Bitter End Holmberg. The BVI team had to win the final race — with the Holmbergs placing fifth (last) — to win the event for the third time in a row. If the BVI placed second and the Holmbergs last, the regatta would end in a tie. The Holmberg team had not placed worse than third the entire regatta.

Conditions were perfect for the last day, with a little more wind than Saturday but very little wave action. All eyes were on 16-year-old Alec Anderson helming for the BVI with Robbie Hirst calling the tactics. The start went badly for the Holmbergs. They ended up "taking transoms" and tacked out into the Sir Francis Drake Channel, then rounded the windward mark in last place by several boat lengths. It was a two-round race but the Holmbergs could not close up on the run downwind, rounding the leeward mark still firmly in last place.

Back on shore the points were double checked — the two teams were locked on 18 points each. In the event of a tie, it's the number of first places that decides the outcome. After sailing ten races over the weekend, the BVI had five bullets but the Holmbergs had six. Team Holmberg, representing the Bitter End Yacht Club and the USVI, took the 2007 Nanny Cay Nations Cup. The Holmbergs, namely John, wife Dianne, son Kai (age 8), brother Peter and his wife Denise, gracefully accepted the fine half-hull trophy and perpetual award.

The Nanny Cay Nations Cup is a round-robin regatta where the simple requirement for entry is that all crew members carry the same passport. IC24s are modified J/24s and the fastest growing one-design class in the Caribbean with fleets in the US and British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Hark, the ARC!

As this issue of *Compass* went to press, the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) was set to sail from Las Palmas, Canary Islands, on November 25th, bound for St. Lucia. At the Official Opening Ceremony for the 22nd ARC on November 18th, 240 yachts from 27 nations were entered, making this the largest-ever ARC.

Andrew Bishop, Managing Director of the organizing body, World Cruising Club, declared ARC 2007 officially open and thanked the Port Authority and Tourist Board of Las Palmas for their support with the event: "The assistance we have received over the past 22 years must be one of the longest sponsorships in sailing and for this we are extremely grateful."

Before departure, a full programme of workshops and seminars designed to offer practical and informative advice for the Atlantic crossing was offered, including vital checks for rigging, power management, advice on provisioning, routing and weather.

The finish destination is Rodney Bay Marina in St. Lucia, a distance of 2,700 nautical miles from Las Palmas and a passage that will take most of the yachts between 18 and 21 days. The current ARC course record of 11 days, 5 hours, 32 minutes and 30 seconds, was set last year by the Italian maxi yacht *Capricorno*.

Cuthbert Didier, General Manager of the Rodney Bay Marina in St. Lucia, said an exciting month-long programme of social, cultural and sporting activities is being put together to host and entertain the hundreds of yachtsmen and friends and visitors after they arrive. The Marina will come alive from December 9th when the ARC Village will be opened, offering nightly entertainment featuring local artistes, plus food, drinks and craft items on sale.

Didier said this year, other events taking place on the island will be incorporated into the ARC programme. These include the Kalalu Festival and the Gros Islet, Anse la Raye and Dennery Special Nights.

Among the activities planned so far are a boat-building and dinghy sailing day off Reduit Beach on December 9; The Buzz welcome party on December 10, and a National Day extravaganza on December 13 featuring sports and entertainment.

Other events on the programme are "Tropical Sundown", featuring soft steelband music at various marina restaurants, the Caribbean ARC Costume Party which will be open to the general public and will be held at the Pigeon Island National Landmark, the Junior Steelband playoff, cultural lecture and dance at the Marina, the General Manager's ARC party for participants, sponsors and officials, and the ARC Jam.

For more information and to follow the fleet, visit www.worldcruising.com/arc.

Transatlantic Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup 2007

As this issue of *Compass* went to press, an international fleet of maxi yachts, representing seven nations — Barbados, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Monaco and Norway — was set to depart Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain, on November 26th in the Transatlantic Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup 2007, which ends in St. Maarten. The event, promoted by the International Maxi Association (IMA) and organized by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda (YCCS) with the collaboration of Real Club Nautico de Tenerife and St. Maarten Yacht Club, is open to monohull sailing yachts of 18 metres (59 feet) and longer, racing under IRC handicap.

A wide range of maxis will be competing: from the largest boat in the fleet, the 35-metre (115-foot) *Sojana* (GBR) owned by Peter Harrison, to the smallest, the 21-metre (70 -foot) Mini-Maxi *Blue Pearl* (GBR) skippered by Anders Johnson, and from the brand new 2007-launched *Fado* (ITA), chartered by Bernd Kortuem and skippered by Marcello Iacuzzi and Julie Marie (GER), to the 13-year-old *Narlida* (NOR), owned by Morten Bergesen.

Prizes will be awarded at a ceremony scheduled to take place on December 14th in St. Maarten, followed by a reception and dinner at Palapa Marina where participants will get a flavour of Antilles-style hospitality.

A satellite tracking system will monitor each yacht's progress for the duration of the regatta and can be accessed for viewing at www.yccs.it.

Superyacht Cup Antigua Attracts Sponsors

The Superyacht Cup Antigua 2007 will be held from December 12th through 15th, based out of Nelson's Dockyard, Antigua. The start/finish line for the daily races will be set just off the entrance to English Harbour.

The Superyacht Cup is an excellent way to kick off the Caribbean season. Captain Charlie Dwyer of *Yanneke Too* says, "After completing seasonal yard work and a transatlantic crossing, racing round the marks against other yachts is a great way to get the crew working together and motivated for the season." Having had a good experience at SYC Palma in June, *Yanneke Too's* owner is flying to Antigua especially to take part in the four-day event.

Camper & Nicholsons International, who have been long term supporters of the Superyacht Cup in Palma and Antigua, return as Gold Level sponsors for this year's event. A new sponsor at Silver Level is Ocean Yacht Systems (OYS), world leaders in the design and manufacture of rod, kevlar and PBO rigging, custom hydraulics and bow and stern thruster systems, who have been long-term supporters of SYC Palma. OYS-rigged yachts participating in SYC Antigua include *Rebecca*, a 42-metre (138-foot) Frers-designed ketch;...

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…Timoneer, a 44-metre (144-foot) Dubois-designed ketch; and *Yanneke Too*, a 36-metre (118-foot) Dixon-designed ketch.

Yacht-shipping specialists Peters & May have also joined up as a sponsor for the Superyacht Cup in Antigua in December. This follows their involvement with the very successful Superyacht Cup in Palma. They are the world's leading boat and yacht logistics company, and have been working with superyachts, top racing teams and motoryachts for more than 30 years. With the recent purchase of the majority shareholding of the Chicago-based AOS, Peters & May have been able to provide an important global, yet local, service to their customers. The Caribbean route for moving boats from Europe is proving extremely popular for Peters & May and their support of the Superyacht Cup in Antigua firmly reinforces their interest in this important area of the world. Peters & May have also been appointed the 'official logistics supplier' for the Superyacht Cup Antigua.

Other sponsors include Italian sports and leisure clothing company SLAM and Lyman Morse Boatbuilding.

The four-day event culminates in the traditional Superyacht Cup prizegiving dinner which will be a little more colourful this year: the 'black tie' dress code has been dropped for a more Antiguan-fitting 'Loud shirt/Caribbean Style'.

For more information visit www.thesuperyachtcup.com.

Curaçao Youth Championships 2008

The Curaçao Youth Championships will be sailed from January 2nd through 4th 2008 at Jan Thiel Beach, Curaçao. Get there early for an Opti/Splash clinic December 28th through 31st with two times Optimist World Champion Martin Jenkins from Argentina.

For more information contact Marjolein van Aanholt-Grol at marjolein@att.biz or visit www.cyc2008.org.

Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival 2008

The Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival 2008 runs from January 25th through 29th. The keelboat racing takes place over four days, with a mixture of passage, pursuit, and open sea courses. In the hotly-contested Workboat Regatta, sponsored by Digicel, local sailors from Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique battle for the ultimate prize of Skipper of the Year.

A bonus for 2008 is that for the first time ever, keelboat crews will be offered the opportunity to race the local workboat dinghies.

With terrific racing, daily prizes, excellent parties and a special dash of "spice", the Grenada Sailing Festival



ONNE VAN DER WAL

has become an event not to miss! And guess what? Just after Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival 2008 is Carnival in Trinidad, February 4th and 5th, only a night's sail away….

For more information see ad on page 11.

7th International San Juan Regatta

From January 31st until February 3rd, 2008, Club Náutico de San Juan (CNSJ) will host their 7th International Regatta. The regatta will bring together hopefuls from United States, USVI, BVI, Trinidad and Tobago and Dominican Republic, among others, competing in Optimist, Laser and Snipe categories

As in years before, the Optimist category will be subdivided by age into Green, White, Blue and Red fleets, while the Laser category will be subdivided into 4.7, Radial and Standard.

The racing will take place from February 1st until February 3rd in the San Juan Bay area. Trophies will be awarded to the first three boats in each class, although other awards may be given.

"Each year the regatta gets bigger and better," stated Gilberto Berrios, the Regatta's Director. Berrios,



who is in charge of the CNSJ's sailing program, expects this year's regatta to bring in the highest number of participants to date.

Pre-registration will take place until December 1st, but competitors have until January 31st to complete a late registration form.

For more information visit www.nauticodesanjuan.com or e-mail vela@nauticodesanjuan.com.

Gran Prix del Atlántico Change

This year's Gran Prix del Atlántico transatlantic race has changed its final destination from Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, to Le Marin, Martinique.

The start is at Gibraltar on January 9th, and a stop will be made at Lanzarote in the Canary Islands. The Spanish-organized event has a Mini Trans-At (6.5 metre) class, plus classes for catamarans and cruisers. The prizegiving at Le Marin is scheduled for February 11th. Approximately 50 boats are registered and can be followed online.

For more information visit www.granprixdelatlantico.com.

28th St. Maarten Heineken Regatta

The new website for the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta — www.heinekenregatta.com — is now officially open. You can access the entry form as well as…

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page
…the Notice of Race, and as new information comes available the website will be updated.

Those entering the regatta have a new entry form and system that directly links their boat name to the Caribbean Sailing Association website, and once they input their boat's name all relevant details, such as rating and boat length, will be updated automatically. This new technology will allow the regatta to have the most current information at hand and allow for a smoother, more relaxing registration. This new system allows the entrant to come back to the website at a later time to update their information.

St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2008 runs from March 6th to 9th.

Bequia Easter Regatta: 20 - 24 March 2008!

The Bequia Sailing Club, organisers of Bequia's ever-popular Easter Regatta, are looking forward to a



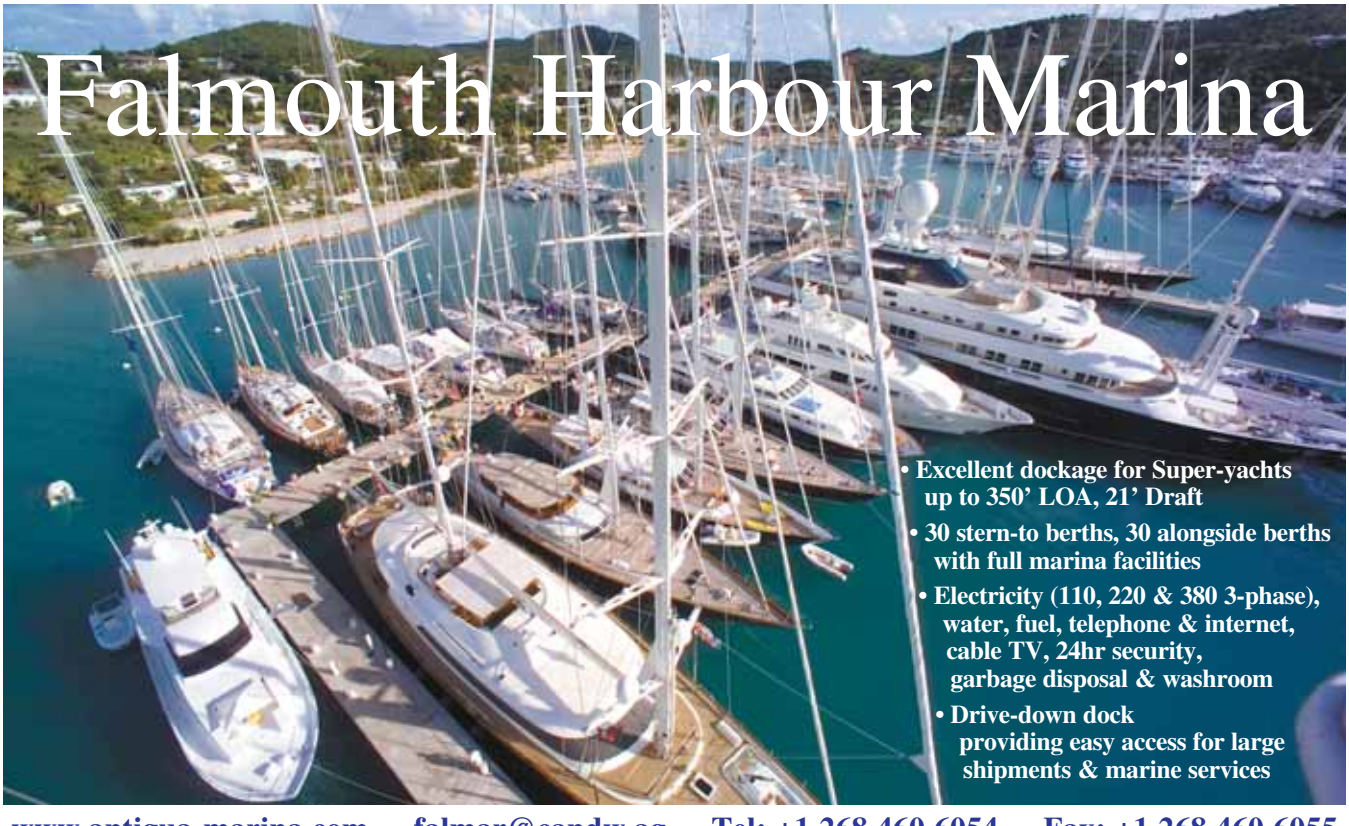
WILFRED DEDERER

bumper turnout from March 20th to 24th, 2008, with Easter earlier than it has been for many years. With the prospect of a very strong J/24 and Racing Class turnout, great fun racing for cruisers and liveaboards in Cruising II Class and thrilling action from the 30-plus local double-ender fleet, Bequia is THE place to be for Easter 2008.

For pre-registration and more information visit www.begos.com/easterregatta or e-mail bsc@caribsurf.com.







Bajan Racer Burke is 'Bringing It All Back Home'



THOMAS HOPMAN

Above: Andrew indicates the fine points in a photo of his favorite design (so far), Bruggadung I, *displayed at the Barbados Yacht Club*
Below: Bruggadung II, *with Andrew at the helm, once again mastering the Racing Class at this year's Angostura Tobago Week*



COURTESY BURKE FAMILY

Andrew (sitting) and his younger brother Wayne "Doc" Burke standing by the mast of Andrew's boat Drew Way

Bob Dylan lyrics might be an unlikely inspiration for a Caribbean yacht racer, but they work for Andrew Burke. Andrew lost his left arm to cancer in 2005. Now 58, the life-long sailor says, "Like the Bob Dylan song 'Tangled Up in Blue' says, I just keep on keepin' on." And more. With what crewmember Michael Brown calls "a dedication and determination that are awe inspiring", Andrew has taken a lifetime of sailing, yacht designing, boatbuilding and racing to new heights. In the past two years he has helmed the Beneteau First Class 10 *Bruggadung II* against the best of the best in top regional regattas each year, consistently bringing the trophies back home to Barbados.

In March 2007, Andrew drove the 10-metre sloop to victory in Spinnaker Class 6 in the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. The very competitive class comprised 12 boats ranging from a Melges to a J/100 and hailing from St. Thomas, the USA, St. Maarten, the Netherlands, Antigua and Guadeloupe. At Angostura Tobago Sail Week in May, racing against 11 fierce opponents including Californian Les Crouch's Riechel Pugh 44 *Storm*, and Trinidadians Michael Rostant on the Mumm 36 *High Tension/bmobile* and Paul Solomon aboard the Henderson 35 *Enzyme*, *Bruggadung II* took first place overall in Racing Class for the second year in a row, winning by 20 points after 11 races. And although a collision with Donald Stollmeyer's *Bacchanal Woman* from Trinidad nixed *Bruggadung II*'s chances of winning the Mount Gay/Boatyard Regatta in home waters this June, as she did last year, both boats were patched and back on the race course the following day. Andrew Burke doesn't give up.



WILFRED DEDERER

Donald, another veteran racer, says, "Andrew is the best overall sailor I have raced against. Not only is he incredibly good on the water, but he's incredibly good in…

—Continued on next page



—Continued from previous page

…preparation and forethought about how to make his boat more competitive. His results clearly demonstrate this. I was rather happy when our boats collided in the Mount Gay Regatta last June — it meant we were close to him!"

Andrew and his siblings grew up on the beautiful beach at Carlisle Bay, Barbados's main yacht anchorage, right next door to what is today the Barbados Yacht Club. His grandfather had fishing boats. "Burke's Beach" was a boatyard, run by his uncle and his uncle's brother-in-law. One of the notable yachts built on Carlisle Bay was the 43-foot, varnished mahogany-on-oak *Reindeer*. Another was Lady Chandler's *Okapi*, built in 1922. "We had good shipwrights," Andrew says.

As a boy, Andrew helped his father, Owen, in the family home's basement, building small craft such as wooden rowboats and Heron dinghies. The first boat he built by himself was a 16-foot sailing canoe, the *Flying Fox*. Unfortunately, it had a tendency to sink. It was fast, though: "The only race we won was the only race we finished." Later he dabbled with surfboards and got into foam sandwich construction.

Andrew learned to race on Heron and Lightning dinghies. His family built their own Lightnings' hulls, tweaking the design, he admits, giving the boat a rounder bow and flatter sections aft.

Having learned to sail on dinghies, he says, he still doesn't over-rely on the use of electronic instruments when racing. Again quoting Dylan, he remarks, "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows!" (He tells of one Tobago regatta where he sailed as helmsman with *Bruggadung II*'s original owner, Ralph Johnson. Another crewmember kept interrupting during a race because one of the instruments was malfunctioning. "So Ralph beat them all to death with a winch handle — the instruments, not the crew." That they still won the event need not be said!)

In 1967, Andrew sailed a Lightning at the West Indian Championships which were held in Barbados. He won, to become that year's West Indies Lightning Champion. The same year, he sailed a Flying Dutchman at the Pan Am Games held in Canada. He didn't take home the gold that time — Buddy Melges did — but he did beat the Puerto Rican contender.

Twenty years later, Andrew was back at the Pan Am Games, in 1987 in Indiana, this time sailing a Star — having never been aboard one before. Selected to represent Barbados in the Finn class at the 1992 Olympics, held in Barcelona, he had only had one opportunity to sail a Finn before the event. He didn't place, "but we beat Angola — and Antigua!"

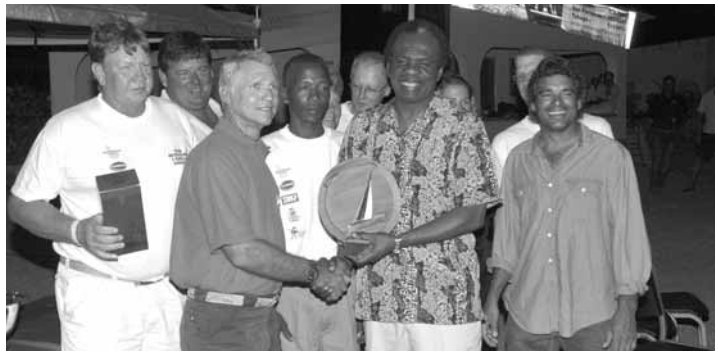
Along the way, Andrew taught himself yacht design, picking up knowledge from his father and uncles, from sailing magazines, and simply by doing.

"My first 'big' boat was the 35-foot *Nefertiti*; at the time it was the biggest yacht in Barbados. I just drew it on a piece of paper in 1973, and built the frames inside our house when my wife and I were first married. We took *Nefertiti* to PSV Regatta in 1977 and won all three races. Then *Morning Mist*, a Swan 37, came along as competition, so I added more draft."

After placing second behind the Trinidadian Laurie Vigo's Heritage 36, *Business Machine*, a couple of times, *Nefertiti* won PSV (Petit St. Vincent) Regatta again in 1981, '82 and '83. "I was always changing the boat," Andrew says. "To save weight, I put in a Briggs & Stratton lawnmower engine." (The West Indian handicap rule was subsequently amended to disallow air-cooled engines!) But when his friend Dan Stoute told *SAIL* magazine's Gail Anderson that Andrew only allowed "one toothbrush and one tea bag" aboard for the entire crew, "*that* was an exaggeration". (He acknowledges, however, that his amputation took about 11 pounds off the crew weight, and also maintains a sense of humor about the inevitable "single-hander" jokes.)

Noting the expense involved in campaigning the regional race circuit, Andrew says, "It was always 'rake and scrape' to do the boats — always a challenge to do well." In 1982, at Antigua Sail Week, Andrew recalls, "I was looking at the scoreboard when Bill McAteer (of *Immigrant* fame) told Jim Kilroy (of the Ron Holland-designed maxi *Kialoa IV*), 'This is Andrew Burke, who is going to kick your ass in a boat that cost less than one of your winches'." Well, very nearly! *Nefertiti* placed second overall behind *Kialoa IV*.

Bursting with new ideas, in 1984 Andrew designed the famous Burke 10 Metre, *Bruggadung*, for his fellow Bajan racer Ralph Johnson. Regarding Andrew's design process, crewmember Renata Goodridge says, "He does it all in his head — he's an artist." *Bruggadung* was built at the Harris Paints facility in Barbados (Ralph is the company's CEO) and launched October 31st, 1984. Within a week of launching, the new design placed third in that year's Cockspur Rum Regatta, then won mid-November's PSV Regatta and went on to win Trinidad Race Week (the event that later moved to Tobago) in 1985 and '86. *Bruggadung* participated in the 1987 Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC), which finished in Barbados in those days. Setting a then-record of 16 days, 20-plus hours from the Canary Islands, her arrival back home attracted hundreds of well-wishers.



WILFRED DEDERER

Andrew and Team Bruggadung II accepting their prizes in Tobago

In 1987, Ralph Johnson purchased the Beneteau 10-metre *Reverie* from Martinique and renamed her *Bruggadung II*. As stated on the Angostura Tobago Regatta website (www.sailweek.com): "This is the boat that has been synonymous with Bajan yachting for the last 20 years." She was Caribbean Racing Yacht of the Year in 1996.

Meanwhile, Andrew campaigned his self-designed and built *Countdown* in Racing Class at regional regattas through the early 2000s.

In 2004, Ralph handed over *Bruggadung II* to his younger brother Paul (Ralph now races his Beneteau 53f5 *Rapajam* in Racer/Cruiser Class) and Paul enlisted Andrew as helmsman. "The First Class Tens are really nice boats," Andrew says, and he often finds himself racing against his cousin, Peter Burke, aboard *Blazin'*, another Beneteau 10-metre.

Still "always changing the boat", Andrew has overseen extensive modifications to *Bruggadung II*, going as far as the rule will allow. Even the stemhead fitting has virtually disappeared to save weight. Any modifications to accommodate Andrew's one-armed, balance-challenged status are also ultimately about making the boat win. The 2007 edition of the magazine *Sporting Barbados* says, "For a number of years Trinidad's Tim Kimpton (racing *Hooligan*, *Crash Test Dummies*, etcetera) ruled the roost, not just in Barbados but also across the Caribbean racing scene including the prestigious Antigua and Tobago events. But in more recent times the pendulum has swung decisively in favor of the locals with *Bruggadung II*, under the expert captaincy of veteran Andrew Burke, lifting the premier award at both Tobago and Barbados last year."

In addition to weight-saving modifications and good sails from the local Doyle loft, Andrew attributes *Bruggadung II*'s ongoing success to Ralph and Paul Johnson's ownership and to excellent crew work. Among the regular crewmembers are Paul Johnson (owner and cockpit crew), Dick Stoute (main), Dana Seymour (jib trim), Alex McKenzie (foredeck), Renata Goodridge (mast), Shane Atwell (cockpit), Madelaine Mercure (cockpit), Rodney Reader (main/cockpit), Darren Chow (runners), and Peter Thompson (runners/jib).

Because Andrew is still on heavy pain medication, his racing crew sails *Bruggadung II* to the start line, where he takes over. And because he can't drink alcohol, the crew is also responsible for most of the serious after-race partying.

While undergoing a radical "left forequarter" amputation (as well as his left arm, the shoulder is gone), plus chemotherapy and radiation, in England two years ago, Andrew says, "I never asked the doctor about death — I asked when I could go sailing again. He said 'two minutes after you land in Barbados'." It wasn't 'two minutes', but Andrew was shortly on his way to Trinidad to help friends sail a Moorings 444 back to Barbados.

In addition to being *Bruggadung II's* racing driver, Andrew currently owns a 43-foot Beneteau Idylle, *Regent One*, aboard which he and his wife Sally won the Two-Handed Around the Island Race in Fun Class at Carriacou Regatta Festival last year, knocking Andy Smelt's Spencer 44, *Yellow Bird*, from its accustomed perch. Although his real love is racing, Andrew does enjoy cruising with friends and family, especially in the Grenadines. Asked what his ultimate cruising boat would be, he jokes, "*Maltese Falcon*! No really, I like to be more hands-on — a Frers 43 would be good."

Paul Johnson has told www.sailweek.com that the intention of Team Bruggadung II is to probably put one more serious year into a Caribbean campaign that will include the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, Antigua Sailing Week, Angostura Tobago Sailing Week and the Barbados Mount Gay/Boatyard Regatta. Following which, he hopes to re-join his brother Ralph and put together another campaign with a new racing boat in the 38- to 42-foot range. "Will we see the debut of another Burke racing machine from Barbados?" asks the posting.

We wouldn't be at all surprised.



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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. 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!

December 2007											
DATE	TIME										
1	0549			21	2145			11	1438		
2	0631			22	2250			12	1524		
3	0711			23	2356			13	1609		
4	0751			24	0000	(full)		14	1655		
5	0832			25	0100			15	1744		
6	0914			26	0159			16	1836		
7	0959			27	0253			17	1932		
8	1047			28	0341			18	2033		
9	1138			29	0425			19	2137		
10	1220	(new)		30	0507			20	2241		
11	1323			31	0548			21	2342		
12	1415			**January 2008**				22	0000	(full)	
13	1505			1	0629			23	0038		
14	1553			2	0710			24	0921		
15	1639			3	0755			25	0216		
16	1725			4	0841			26	0306		
17	1811			5	0931			27	0342		
18	1858			6	1023			28	0423		
19	1949			7	1116			29	0505		
20	2044			8	1210	(new)		30	0548		
				9	1301			31	0634		
				10	1351						

Cruisers Help Surgeons Help Kids in Venezuela

by Ellen Sanpere

It was the same, it was different this year. The 16th Fundamigos International Mission brought together U.S. and Venezuelan medical teams, 150 volunteers and 93 patients for three days of maxillofacial surgery in the Dr. Luis Razetti University Hospital, Barcelona, Venezuela, from October 18th to 20th. Led by Doctora Ana Velásquez de Manyon, eastern Venezuela's only expert in cleft lip and palate repair, Venezuelan surgeons Yván Millán and Rafael Escobar greeted US surgeons, Richard Bosshardt and Dennis Lynch, who flew in from Florida to help restore smiles to economically disadvantaged Venezuelans. Last year, only Dr. Bosshardt was able to join the mission; this year he brought with him OR nurses Suzanne Oldham and Gail Hughes, as well as a US$20,000 grant from Smile Train (www.smiletrain.org), the world's largest cleft lip and palate charity.





Above: Cruiser Tony, right, helping move patients to the recovery room
Left: Teri and Tracy folding bandages at Marina Bahia Redonda

As in the past, visiting cruisers at Marina Bahia Redonda, Puerto La Cruz, were recruited to donate their time, energy and money to the annual effort. North American "yachties" are well known for their generosity, but there were fewer of them this year at the marina. Nevertheless, those who were there joined a few English and European cruisers to work hard in many ways during the weeks preceding the mission. Ever-present Anne Robinson, of the Bahia Redonda Mini-Mart, organized cruisers for fundraising, a toy drive and other activities. Yachties raised over Bs600,000 playing Bingo and Spades and on a *peñero* boat trip to the beach. Jeanne Andrews of *S/V Dragonfly* and Lynette Scott of *S/V Perfect Ride*, led teams making over 4,000 gauze bandages. On their respective boats, Lynette sewed and Jeanne washed 62 meters of sheeting and 45 meters of terrycloth, donated or discounted, for sheets, blankets and towels, as there are none at the public hospital available for the mission, nor at the homes of many of the patients.

Once the mission began, a crew of cruisers boarded a bus provided by a local business shortly after sunrise each day and headed for the hospital. Another group worked the afternoon shift, from 2PM to as late as 9PM. Some went to the operating suite to wash instruments, tables and floors, translate for the U.S. teams, or assist in the recovery room; others went to the patient floor to occupy the children waiting for or recovering from their surgery; and others went to the *caminito* to help Doctora Maggie de Casanova prepare and serve 800 meals per day for the medical teams and the families who accompany the patients. Later, Dra. Maggie donned one of her crazy hats and sang to the children, accompanied on cuatro by the ever-faithful Antonio. The caminito has always been a favorite post for the cruisers, although this year, one familiar face was missing: Susan Franklin *of M/V Pipe Dream* had passed away this summer. Her many years of volunteer service were commemorated with a colorful banner on the kitchen building. There were some new knives to chop onions and garlic, and cruiser/chef Olga knew how to use the sharpening stone Hutch had brought. On the 4th floor, the operating suite sported new lights, anesthesia machines, monitors and beds. The water pump still had to be turned on manually when the instruments required washing.

According to economist Domingo Carmena, volunteers come from several organizations in the Puerto La Cruz area: high school students who fulfill their public service requirement; Chevron's ex-pats, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, college students, and local missionaries also donate their time to the approximately 7,000 volunteer hours of this three-day mission. Marc Manyon coordinates the English-speaking volunteers and commends the Bahia Redondans for their reliability: "They show up!" he says.

By Saturday evening, 86 operations had been completed, including the repairs of 25 cleft lips and 30 cleft palates. Congenital and acquired facial deformities (accident, injury or disease) are also treated. Seventy percent of the patients were children, some having been under the knife several times before. One 18-year old girl had her 14th surgery this year. The oldest patient was 91 years old, the youngest only four months.

Recent years have seen many top Venezuelan plastic and reconstructive surgeons leave the public hospital for the vastly more lucrative private sector. Now, only Doctora Ana helps those who cannot afford surgery in a country known for its promotion of cosmetic enhancement. Few parents of any economic strata can address alone the complicated issues of nutrition, speech, education, social and psychological development for a challenged child. In the past, when an economically disadvantaged child was born with a cleft or malformed facial feature, the parents often hid their embarrassment — and the child.

Fundamigos HLP is the only organization in eastern Venezuela that reaches out to these families. After surgery, each patient is followed for continuing revisions, dentistry and care. During the annual international mission, the Hotel Punta Palma donates rooms and meals for the visiting medical teams. When new restrictions on patient donations were legislated, most of the Fundamigos staff transferred to the hospital payroll, but funding never covers all the expenses. When she is not in the operating room or foundation offices, Dra. Ana makes food and desserts for sale at the hospital and clinics to raise funds. Every Bolivar collected goes to help a patient in need.

It may take a village to raise a child — it takes even more to give some kids a smile, and that has not changed. Want to help? Volunteer for future missions by contacting Marc Manyon, at manyon@cantv.net. Not going to be in Venezuela? Send a check to: Fundamigos HLP, Mun. 1213, P.O. Box 025352, Miami, FL 33102-5352.

Ellen Sanpere lives most of the year in the Caribbean aboard S/V Cayenne III, *an Idylle 15.5, dividing her time between St. Croix, Venezuela and Chicago.*

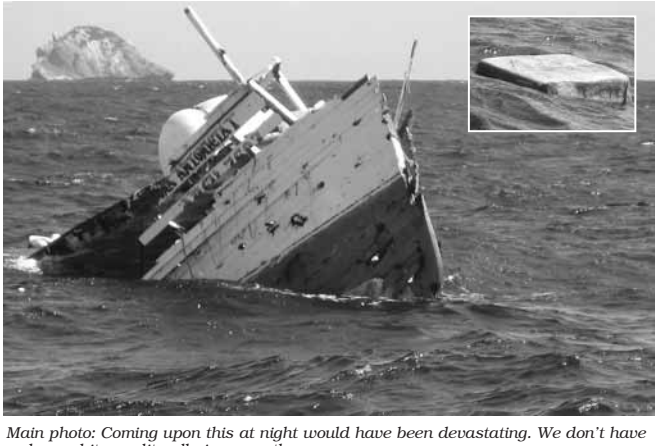
Stumbling Onto a Story

by Laura Sargent

This was a passage my husband, sons and I have done many times, the yearly sail from Trinidad to Bequia. Nothing out of the ordinary, dodging ships and oil rigs between Trinidad and Grenada, a few small squalls, generally a peaceful trip.

It was the morning of October 31st, 2007. Our heading put us between Sail Rock and World's End Reef off the Tobago Cays when I noticed a large "something" in the water about a quarter of a mile directly off our bow. I looked through the binoculars and saw it was the bow of a large wooden boat sticking high out of the water, the rest of the vessel submerged.

When we got closer we called St. Vincent Signal Station on VHF channel 16 to report our find and its location: a blue and white wooden power boat, about 40 feet in length, badly damaged, no persons visible, and debris floating about. It appeared to have been a recent wreck. Seeing the boat from a distance we were concerned about crew or passengers in serious distress. As we approached we found there were



Main photo: Coming upon this at night would have been devastating. We don't have radar and it was literally in our path
Inset: One of the packages floating near the wreck

no people visible. I asked the SVG Signal Station if we should stay around the wreck until the Coast Guard arrived but they suggested we continue on our original course.

We sailed slowly past the wreck and started to recognize the debris as mostly small, tightly wrapped packages. This scene was something significantly more than it had originally appeared. The half-submerged boat was riddled with small holes on the bow and there were large gaping holes on the bow and side. There were many blue and yellow, brick-sized packages floating out from the hull, and some small packages tied together along with a few large boxes. This sight was a little unsettling to say the least. It was still apparent that there were no people on board and, since the recommendation from SVG signal station encouraged us to leave the area, we proceeded on, passing more packages and debris floating along the current line.

Subsequent news reports said that a Venezuelan boat had been seized by a British Navy warship east of the area in late October with a reported 700 pounds of cocaine on board. It was stated in the local newspaper that the crew had been arrested and this boat had been in tow back to Venezuela when it broke away in bad weather. The local news was asking people to please turn in any packages that may wash up on the beaches.

You never know what you may find on the seas of the Caribbean. To us this is another "remember when" story to share with family and friends. Yet I am sure it is considerably more than that to someone somewhere else.

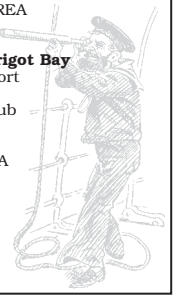
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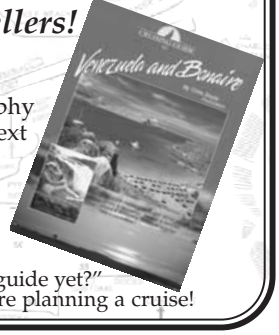
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Inland Travel in Panama

by Jack Cooley

We were sitting out the 2007 hurricane season in Panama, near the town of Bocas del Toro on the Caribbean island of Colon, along with many fellow cruisers. There are two marinas here: Bocas Yacht Club & Marina and Marina Carenero. There is also considerable anchoring space.

After checking out the Bocas del Toro area and completing a few boat projects, we needed a field trip to "get away from it all" and see more of the interior of Panama. In September we partnered with our friends Bob and Norma from S/V *Happy Ours* for a trip to the town of David on Panama's Pacific side, and Boquete and Volcan in the Chiriqui Highlands.



We took a three-dollar water taxi from Bocas Town to Almirante on the mainland, a 30-minute, high-speed boat ride. Once on the dock at Almirante, we took a taxi to the bus station, a five- to ten-minute ride costing 50 cents. Buses leave about every 30 minutes for David, a four-hour ride that costs US$7. This was a beautiful ride across Panama's continental divide. As we climbed into the clouds, we crossed several rivers and streams, and enjoyed seeing the native people, forests, grazing and farming areas along the way.

In David on the Pacific coastal plain, we stayed at the Hotel Castilla, located right off the central plaza, for US$28 per night. (It is best to phone ahead for a reservation: 774-5236.) Taxi fare from the bus station should be 50 cents per person. Other lodgings include the Occidental, right on the plaza, at US$24 per night including breakfast (775-4068); the centrally located Madrid, at US$33 per night (775-2051); and the Iberia near the Grand National Hotel, at US $38 per night (774-6604).

In David, for good Chinese food at a reasonable price, try Restaurante Mariscos y Steak House; phone 775-3385 for directions. Another nice restaurant with reasonable prices is Mar Caribe; phone 721-2625. Tourist maps of Bocas del Toro, Boquete, Volcan, Bambito and Cerro Punta are available for about US$3.50 each at Libreria Regional on the west side of the central plaza.

To visit Boquete and Volcan, we wanted more flexibility than the bus would offer, and chose not to rent a car, so we negotiated a price of US$7 an hour with Alex, a bilingual taxi driver (6-521-3425).

Boquete is in the Chiriqui Highlands. Although it is only about 30 minutes from David, get an early start, as it frequently begins to rain by around 2:00 or 3:00PM at the higher elevations. We stopped before reaching Boquete to check out the new, upscale, condo community of Los Molinos, which features a club house/hotel/restaurant. (Phone 507-263-4832, www.losmolinos.com.pa.) The complex has beautiful river and mountain views. Other upscale condo complexes include Altos del Maria (507-260-4813, www.altosdelmaria.com/pplanner) and Valle Escondido, the first condo community in Boquete, built in 2001.

As we entered the outskirts of Boquete we stopped to visit Paradise Gardens, a bird and animal rescue center operated by retired Brits Paul and Jenny Saban. They have rescued quite an array of monkeys, parrots, macaws, a Central American variety of wildcat, etcetera, and have sheltered them in very attractive garden-like surroundings. Entry is US$5 per person. (Phone 6-615-6618). Other attractions you may want to explore include Mi Jardin es su Jardin, Gonzales Family Gardens (free), Caldera Hot Springs, the petroglyphic site at the hot springs, Boquete Tree Trek, the Kotowa Coffee Plantation tour, and whitewater rafting.

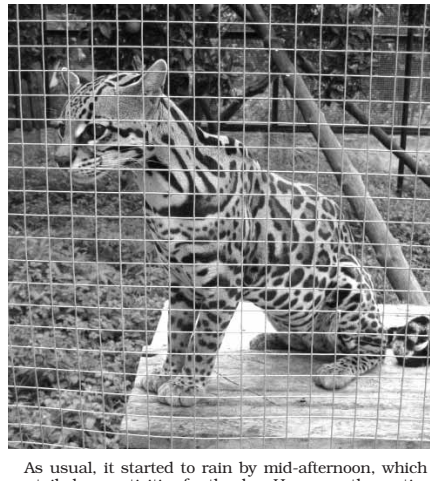
From David, it is about one and a half hours to Volcan, Bambito and Cerro Punta. In Volcan we visited Sitio Barriles ("site of the barrels"), also referred to as "Edna's Gardens". Edna Landau gave us a most informative bilingual tour on the site of an ancient cultural center. We saw petroglyphs, grinding stones, and many other artifacts that date from 2,000 BC. This is named the "site of the barrels" because of the barrel-like stones found here. It is theorized that these stones were used as rollers to transport building materials such as other stones, timbers, etcetera, from a considerable distance. The stone barrels are therefore considered to be a primitive form of wheel.

This is the only place in Panama showing evidence of the Mayan culture. The figures found here indicate these ancient people may have been of both African and Oriental descent. Check www.chagres.com/sitio_barriles-24.jpg for a picture of the ancient burial tomb at the site. Special programs are held here every third Sunday, starting from January first. For more information, call Edna at 575-1828, her husband José Landau at 6-607-5438, or e-mail luislandau@mixmail.com.

We enjoyed a meal at the restaurant of the Dos Rios Hotel on the outskirts of Volcan (771-5555, www.dos-rios.com.pa).

Left: At Sitio Barriles we saw artifacts that date from 2,000 BC, including this clay figurine

Below: A Panamanian native margay at Paradise Gardens animal rescue center



As usual, it started to rain by mid-afternoon, which curtailed our activities for the day. However other activities and sights in the Volcan/Cerro Punta area include whitewater rafting, coffee processing at La Finca Janson, the trout farm at Hotel Bambito, Dracula Orchid Nurseries (near Los Quetzales Ecolodge), and the Gardens of Guadalupe. It may be possible to visit the Harass Cerro Punta horse farm, where thoroughbreds are raised and trained for shows and races worldwide. I understand you can also rent horses here; however when we stopped, there was a closed gate at the end of the driveway. There was a speaker at the gate, so it may be possible to obtain permission to enter at that point, or call ahead and inquire.

All prices above are per person, except lodging, which is the cost for two persons.

Jack Cooley is cruising the Caribbean aboard S/V Mystic Adventure.

Dolly's Answer

1) Near shore
2) Coastal shelf
3) Deep slope
4) Abyssal plain
5) Ridge
6) Vent
7) Seamount

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DON'T LEAVE PORT WITHOUT IT
CARIBBEAN COMPASS

Oilbirds, Honeycreepers and High Tea

by Devi Sharp

Chaguaramas, Trinidad, is famous as a place to work on your boat. But my husband, Hunter, and I were ready for a break from the boat and from chores and it was time to heal our gritty boat knees, so we packed a duffel and spent four days and three nights at the Asa Wright Nature Centre. The Centre is located in Trinidad's central northern mountain range on an abandoned coffee and cocoa plantation. In 1967, the now 100-year-old house and its associated buildings were turned into a guest house and the surrounding 193 acres were dedicated to conservation and protection of native animals and habitat. The Centre is well known in the birding community as a great place to stay and see lots of tropical birds. There have been 159 species of birds recorded within its grounds.

The main house features a long veranda that provides a commanding view of the Arima Valley — and the bird feeders. Fruit, bread and nectar are provided at the feeders which are almost constantly buzzing and chirping. Bananaquits gather like flies on fresh meat, but they are small yellow, black and white birds on fresh papaya.

Purple and green honeycreepers add to the palette of tropical colors. An occasional visit from a blue-crowned motmot is a treat. One could spend hours watching the hummingbirds. The diminutive white-chested emerald hummingbird had staked out his territory at two feeders and when the larger white-necked jacobin tried to visit the feeder the little emerald tried to drive the jacobin out of the air. They gave us a spectacular dog fight.



DON MOCKFORD

'One could spend hours watching the hummingbirds'

Agoutis patrol beneath the feeders for crumbs. These rodents are the size of a very large house cat and prized for their sweet meat, so, unless they are in a protected area, they are scarce and shy.

Make no mistake, this place is not about sitting on the veranda and watching birds at the feeders, but between walks on the trails and during High Tea at four in the afternoon, the veranda is the place to be. There are miles of well-marked trails that wind around hillsides, across small streams and over ridges. Strategically placed benches provide rest and bird-watching stops. The pool at a waterfall provides a welcome place to take a mid-day swim.

The Centre is proud of the tradition of serving local foods prepared on site. Most of the fruit and all of the coffee are from the grounds of the Centre, which tries to be an example of sustainable agriculture. The site is large enough, however, that you never feel as if you are in an active plantation.

A visit to Dunston Cave, the site of nesting oilbirds, is available to guests who stay at the Centre for at least three nights or at a charge for other guests if there is already a visit scheduled. The Centre limits the number of visits to protect the birds from daytime disturbance. This conservation measure has proven to be effective and the monthly counts of oilbirds show a steady population that fluctuates between 128 and 170 birds.

The "cave" is really a gorge with a stream flowing though the crack in the rock walls. Oilbirds are the only nocturnal fruit-eating birds in the world. They spend their nights foraging for the fruit of the oil palm and tropical laurels. The chicks grow fat on these oily fruits and before they fledge they are 50 percent heavier than their parents. Our guide described them as "big balls of butter that are blind and naked at birth." They are called oilbirds because the nestlings were once used as a source of lamp oil.

Oilbirds spend the daylight hours in their cave, roosting on ledges and nests. When disturbed they make loud screams, snarls and clucks, thus earning the Spanish name, "Guácharo" (the one that wails and moans).

A close look at an oilbird will tell you a lot about how they live. They are chestnut brown with white spots on their neck and wings. This color and pattern provide good camouflage in the cave environment. Large eyes allow them to see better in low light. Stiff bristles around their beak give them a "sense of touch" at their face allowing them to feel around in the dark. A very heavy hooked beak allows them to pluck the fruit of palms and laurels. The whole fruit is swallowed and the seed is regurgitated. Although the oilbird forages by sight, it is one of only a few birds, and the only nocturnal one, known to navigate by echolocation in sufficiently poor light conditions, using a series of sharp audible clicks for this purpose.

We were guided into the cave in groups of three and allowed to use cameras without flashes. Our guide was very careful to minimize our disturbance to the oilbirds. It was just light enough to see the birds on ledges and a few birds let out a raucous call that echoed through the cave. It would be deafening to have the whole colony disturbed at one time.

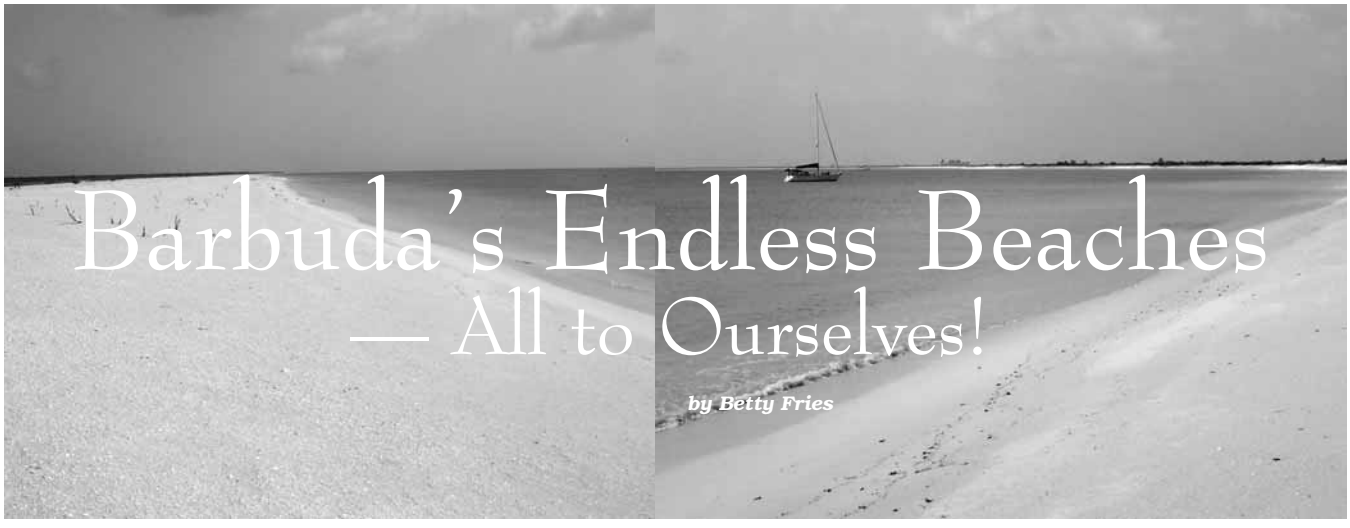
We walked back to the Centre on our own and Hunter and I deviated to the bell bird trail. We were rewarded with an excellent look at this ventriloquist bird that is easy to hear and difficult to see.

For those not inclined to long walks, just sitting on the veranda with a cup of tea or locally grown coffee is equally rewarding. A naturalist guide was always available on the veranda to help with bird identification or to point out a group of toucans that just landed in the far-off wild nutmeg tree. These local men and women are very knowledgeable and are without exception very warm and enthusiastic about the natural history of this little slice of heaven in Trinidad.









Barbuda's Endless Beaches — All to Ourselves!

by Betty Fries

We left St. Thomas early this year (August 10) with the intention of going to Antigua and Barbuda to play tourist. You have to intend to go there to get there from St. Thomas. The wind immediately shifted east-southeast as we left Eustatia Sound off the east end of Virgin Gorda in the British Virgin Islands. After 19 hours of slogging, we stopped for the night on one of the mooring balls off Statia Island. It's always pleasant to stroll ashore here and see what's going on in this old island community.

The next morning was a 5:50AM start for another motor-sail the 95 miles to Jolly Harbor, Antigua. For the last three years, we had spent April in Antigua for Sail Week and the Classic Yacht Regatta, mostly to act as a sort of floating bed-and-breakfast for a race boat and the TV 2 camera crew out of St. Thomas. Now we wanted to see the island without the madness of hundreds of boats and the pageantry of regattas. It was quiet and sleepy. The vendors, shopkeepers and dockmen who were our friends had gone back to their normal lives. We felt a little lonely, so after three days visiting familiar haunts we went on to Barbuda.

The 30-mile sail to Barbuda was perfectly beautiful. To make it even better we caught a four-dinner mahi mahi on the way! What a bonus. Having read about Barbuda in Doyle's *Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands*, we opted to avoid the tricky south coast for the lovely anchorage off the Cocoa Point Resort and the K Club.

The pinkish-white sand beach goes as far as the eye can see. There were no other boats, and no people. We were seduced. There's no other way to explain why it took so long to get up the gumption to get in the dinghy and go ashore. We were alone in perfect water with an interesting little reef close by and fresh fish to grill — that explains it.

We finally did take the dinghy ashore and wandered among the large ranch-style houses that make up these exclusive resorts. At this time of year, the only thing they're vying for is the sandspur growing prize! Walking across the point, we looked out over the waters of the southern shore. It's easy to see the streaks of brown and dirty green which mark the complex growth of reef off this side of the island. It's much nicer where we were anchored.

The next day we motored around Palmetto Point to Eleven Mile Beach which abuts another beach and yet another. Here there are no resorts. no boats and no people — just perfect beach and turquoise water. Later a boat came in, but had the good taste to anchor miles away. That evening a horse shambled up the beach, head down, to disappear into the twilight.

We were parked close to shore near the narrow neck between the sea and the huge inland lagoon that we'd need to cross to get to Codrington for check-out in the morning. It looked like we'd have a weather window coming up as Debbi headed into the North Atlantic so it was time to get ready to go south.

There are two options for getting to town. You can radio and ask one of the water taxis to pick you up on the strand, or you can carry your dinghy across 50 feet of sand and then motor across. As we were dragging the 90-pound Yamaha across, I had definite regrets about not choosing option number one!

It's easy to find Codrington; it's the only group of buildings in sight. After a very wet motor, we tied the dinghy up among the small fishing boats by the city dock. The dock was being repaired, and one of the workers gave us directions for the Port Authority, Immigration and Customs — all in different places, of course.

Walking up the road to the main junction, we passed small business enterprises and homes, some long abandoned and others long under construction as though the families migrate around the island. Since the British deeded the island to the abandoned ex-slaves en masse when they left, this may very well be the case. There is no evidence of the type of active development or island industries we see all along the rest of the island chain.

Now where do we find the Port Authority? There are no signs. As we were standing in the middle of the main intersection by the market, a gentleman in a battered pick-up stopped to ask if he could help. He was the official we need to see! His house is on the corner, and we sat on his porch rail while he made out the necessary document. Next was Immigration across the road and two houses down — we could see it from the porch. At Immigration, we were told that the lady we needed to see had taken the stamp to the airport to meet that day's flight; we had just missed her. The airport is not far, though, and Customs is along the way. We strolled along the road through neat neighborhoods as far as the church, took a right for one block, then a left to the second yellow house on the left. A passerby assured us that this was Customs — just knock on the right-hand apartment door.

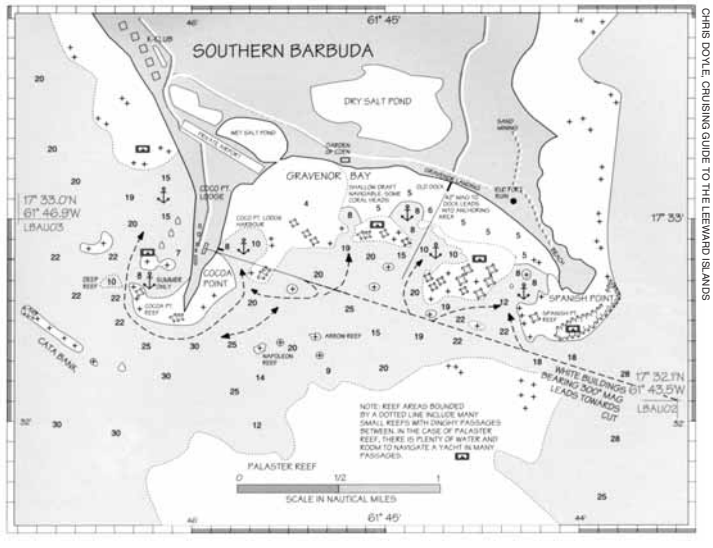
The Customs officer was happy to begin our paperwork, but we were now out of order and must drop back in after seeing Immigration at the airport. As we chatted, his lunch was delivered from the foodshop across the street. The young delivery man offered to give us a lift to Immigration; it's quite hot at noon. Along the way, we asked about taking our dinghy through the northern opening out of the lagoon back to our boat. He diverted the car to show us the direction from the shore, but reconsidered. It's a very tricky passage, and a local guide is the only sure way of finding the way through the reefs to where we wanted to go. Looks like I'm not going to get out of dragging the Yamaha back across!

At Immigration it took only a few minutes to complete the paperwork, but we lingered. Not many cruisers come to Barbuda, and the Immigration lady was curious about our lifestyle. Since we had to return to Customs, she asked us to carry back a small package that arrived on the plane. Without a doubt, the Barbudans are among the friendliest islanders we've ever met!

With all of our official duties completed, we wandered at random along the roads, into, through, and out of town, back to the market, and then to our dinghy at the town dock. The ride across the lagoon is dry in this direction, but the traverse across the sand was just as hard as it was the first time. We took the dinghy along the beach to look at some construction — a small resort perhaps.

Back at the boat the dinghy motor is hoisted onto the rail. Leaving the bay, a first reef goes into the main. It is hurricane season, and we're headed for Trinidad. Gazing back at one of the most beautiful spots we've ever been in, we agree that we'll be coming back to Barbuda. Then we'll play tourist.

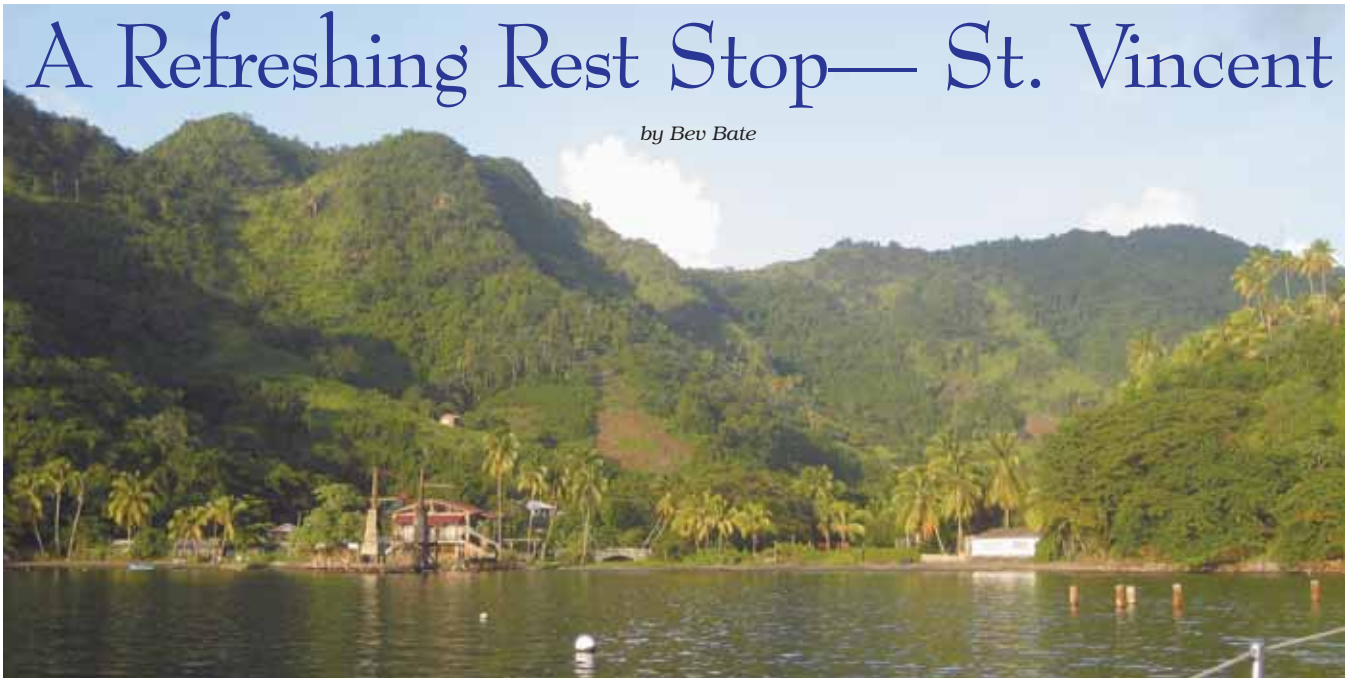
Nine-Mile Beach to the left and Nine-Mile Beach to the right — sand as far as the eye can see



CHRIS DOYLE, CRUISING GUIDE TO THE LEEWARD ISLANDS

A Refreshing Rest Stop— St. Vincent

by Bev Bate



The diesel engine quietly throbbed, breaking the silence of the night as the boat glided on a glassy sea lit only by the stars. A brilliant spotlight in the center of the bay blinded the approach while the steep, black hillsides of the bay loomed overhead. Standing on the bow and scanning the blackness, with spotlight in hand, my husband, Bill, eagerly searched for the reflective white glow of a mooring ball but none was seen. Calling to him from the helm, I gave him the assurance it should be directly ahead. The darkness seemed endless as the boat made cautious progress into the bay and our minds flashed back to the warnings we'd read and comments of other boaters suggesting we stay clear of St. Vincent or be plagued by panhandlers and worse. We didn't know what to expect but were hopeful the darkness would develop a new reality as we closed on the mooring balls.

We were continuing our trip south from Soufriere, St. Lucia. We departed a little later in the day than intended. The winds were light so our passage was slower than anticipated. However, according to our charts, there were no obstacles entering Wallilabou Bay (13°14.9'N, 61°16.5'W) and we expected to find mooring balls in front of the Wallilabou Bay Hotel.

We were confident one could tie onto the mooring ball unassisted and were proceeding to do so when out of the darkness came a man paddling on a surf board. Because of all the warnings our guard was suddenly up as we anticipated aggressive panhandling or something worse. Instead, when the man spoke he welcomed us to his island, assuring us we had arrived at a safe island and had nothing to worry about. He then proceeded to connect our mooring line. He did not request any compensation. As we normally tip boat boys for connecting the mooring, we offered him EC$10, which he gratefully accepted. He offered to come by in the morning and fetch fresh bread, fruit or vegetables but we declined, indicating we had to consume the supply we still had on board. He wished us a good night and paddled off into the dark. He never approached us again.



Above: Moored in Wallilabou Bay on St. Vincent's lush leeward coast, set from the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' movies can be seen at left

Left: Close-up of the movie set

In the morning we woke with great anticipation and were eager to see the bay we'd entered during the night. When we peered out we were awestruck by the beauty and peacefulness of our surroundings. Bill said to me, "This is what I've been dreaming of." What he was referring to was a tropical, peaceful, quiet bay with lush jungle gardens reaching down to the water and sandy beach.

Wallilabou was a primary location for the Pirates of the Caribbean movies. We understood many of the stage sets were still intact. We immediately picked out a number of the sets on shore and excitedly sat over our morning coffee recalling some of the scenes from the movies. The whole place had a completely different feel and view from the nothingness seen through the black darkness of the night approach.

—Continued on next page

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The morning began to take on enriched color. As we relaxed in the cockpit in the early morning, enjoying the breathtaking views, a man rowed to our boat to welcome us to the island. He was low-key, polite and respectful, offering to fetch anything we might need. As an afterthought he asked if we'd like a fish. He then displayed a still glistening, nice-sized, freshly-caught tuna. We had been wanting a small tuna and were delighted to purchase it for only EC$40. He cleaned it and sliced it on his boat, keeping the mess off of ours. This, of course, was all included in the price. As he worked away, a couple of other fishermen approached and joined in friendly conversation about their island. They were genuinely interested in us enjoying St. Vincent. When the fish was handed over, the conversation ended and they rowed away to continue their fishing. Bill jumped into action, lighting the barbecue, preparing to cook delectable fresh tuna steaks for breakfast.



We eventually went ashore, tying up to the rustic dinghy dock in front of the hotel. As we wandered around inspecting the sets from the movie, which were in varying stages of decay, we found our imaginations running wild with flashes of remembrance to the movies and matching them to the scenes before us. We had not seen a movie set before and found it interesting to wander behind the sets where scaffolding and pipes were holding the building fronts together. We learned that during the shooting of the movies, the movie company paid the local fishermen not to fish as they had taken over their fishing grounds in the bay. Consequently many of the fishermen ended up running errands or acting as extras in the movies. We talked to a couple of young boys who were around ten years old when the movies were being filmed and they excitedly shared their experiences. They said the whole bay was full of boats, many of them square-riggers. We wandered into the hotel restaurant, which had also been used in the movie and now displays memorabilia and photos. Mounted on the wall was a huge poster autographed by many of the actors. Other photos showed some of the actors signing the poster so you could see what the signing person looked like.

In the hotel we confirmed that our moorage, otherwise EC$10 per night, would be free if we had a meal there. We came back for lunch and enjoyed an authentic and delicious Creole lunch where I also had my first glass of fresh guava juice. It was delectable. As we waited for our meal we were happily surprised to find the latest edition of the *Caribbean Compass* available. The hotel staff was courteous and relaxed, making us feel comfortable. After the meal they offered to lend us a copy of the Pirates of the Caribbean DVD to watch that evening on our boat. We were able to recognize the stage sets from our day's visit.



Under the afternoon sun we set off on a short hike. There was a cooling breeze and we were surrounded by rich green jungle broken by a stony creek where we heard gleeful laughing and chatter. Through the greenery we saw a couple of women, with children, washing clothes in the creek using the rocks as a washboard and spreading the clothes on bushes to dry. It was like going back a hundred years in time. We found it refreshing to watch the women and children having fun while doing their chores. It was a real social event. The natural harmony gave it a mystical feel, like stepping into a movie.

We hiked up the hill to a small waterfall and pool where we rested on a bench in the cool shade of the towering trees. While walking back we stopped at Morna's Craft Shop to have a look and to inquire about buying some fresh garden produce. We met Berthold, the owner, who showed us his many unusual and artistic creations crafted from pipes, car parts, cans, etcetera, adorning his garden. He and his mother are also avid basket weavers and display them for sale in their boutique, along with a variety of clothing and paintings. They also make guava liqueur. We spent almost an hour visiting and learned much about the island and people. However, we didn't leave before Berthold plucked some fresh lettuce from his garden and produced a few tomatoes from his refrigerator, as he had none in his garden. This turned out to be the most delightful vegetable-buying stop we had ever experienced.

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Left: Creative sculpture at Morna's Craft Shop

Below: St. Vincent's Botanical Gardens are the oldest in the Western hemisphere



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We returned to our boat delighted with our decision to stop at Wallilabou. As the afternoon sun began sinking into the sea we marveled at the overwhelming feeling of peacefulness broken only by the occasional call of birds in the trees. What a wonderful way to end the day.

The next morning under sunny blue skies we walked up the hill under the canopy of green towering trees along a paved road toward the town of Kearton Bay. We were met by a few cars and colorful, neatly-groomed women hurriedly walking along the road, as well as small groups of uniformed school children heading off to school. We arrived at the bus stop and found, across the road, a red, worn pickup truck serving as a fishmonger shop. A man announced the fishmonger by blowing bugle calls through a conch shell. Another man scooped out his fresh, glistening, odorless catch from a large bin in the back of his truck. He weighed the fish on a scale and bagged them for the women who were patiently gathered around waiting to make their purchase.

Our focus on the fishmonger was broken by the arrival of a local bus to take us to Barrouallie. The road was winding and narrow but the bus was cautiously driven by a confident driver. We found the countryside colorful, the buildings well appointed and though there isn't much money, great care is taken to keep the homes neat and maintained.

Our sailing and visiting of islands comes with a purpose as we are members of a non-profit foundation called Schools Beyond Borders (www.schoolsbeyondborders.com). In this stead we soon arrived in Barrouallie where we were greeted by an off-duty waitress from the restaurant in Wallilabou who had offered to introduce us to the principals of two schools serving the area in Barrouallie. We met with the principals of the elementary and secondary schools where we were pleased to add them to the Schools Beyond Borders Foundation program. Both schools are struggling, as are most schools in the Third World and developing countries. This program is designed to help where each participant in the program can do their little part in helping others in the world.

Our day continued as we caught another local bus heading to Kingstown, the capital of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. We prefer this way of exploring and adventuring in the country we are visiting. Aboard buses. we are able to meet and talk to local people as we travel. We feel comfortable and find in general the people on the bus are friendly, helpful and courteous. We were delighted by the flashing views along the very scenic coastline when it appeared. However, on this trip our bus driver must have been a Grand Prix enthusiast as he stretched the tolerances of the bus wheeling through the curves along the narrow road. We searched the faces of the other passengers, finding them relaxed and not concerned, and once again this reassured us.

Just before reaching Kingstown, we got off the bus at the St. Vincent Botanical Gardens, the oldest botanical gardens in the Western Hemisphere. We were offered a guide but chose to wander independently through the lovely grounds, encompassing 20 acres. Our impression was initially that it looked like an elaborate golf course with long stretching short cut green grass and well-placed trees. The gardens were out of flowering season and yet reds and violets were mixed with varying shades of green. There are two trees of great distinction in the gardens. One is the Soufriere tree, last seen in the wild in 1812. The other is the offspring of a breadfruit tree originally brought to the island from Tahiti by Captain William Bligh. The gardens also contain a small aviary where some of St. Vincent's endangered parrots are being bred. As we wandered the grounds there were small groups of people well spread out and the quiet was only broken by occasional parrot calls and the call of other birds.



After Queen Victoria was 'not amused' by a red-robed angel, this window was given to St. George's Anglican Church in Kingstown

Walking in downtown Kingstown we passed the lively and colorful fresh fish and fruit/vegetable markets. They were clean and pleasing to the eye. The locals were busy going about their daily routines, paying little attention to us foreigners. We had a sense of genuine acceptance by the locals.

One of our purposes for visiting Kingstown was to check into the country. Customs does go to Wallilabou almost daily when there are boats to check in. We offered to attend their offices in Kingstown instead where we found check-in was easy and straightforward. We then had a short jaunt down the road to Immigration. The lineup was short and we were through in minutes. All officials were friendly and efficient. As a matter of fact, when the Customs officer saw the name of our boat, *El Shaddai*, he burst into singing the song "El Shaddai", a popular Christian song from the 1980s by Amy Grant.

Our Lonely Planet Guide stated there were three churches in the downtown core, a short distance from where we were. They were unique because of their interesting designs. The first one we reached was a Methodist Church that was being completely renovated. One of the workmen was refinishing a piece of furniture using a photo of the original church interior as a guide. The interior was a startling bright aqua blue in contrast to the grey exterior. There was a large pipe organ located across from the altar.

St. George's Anglican Cathedral was stunning with its stained-glass windows which were a strange contrast to the bright yellow and turquoise walls. A woman sitting at the entrance invited us in to take a look. We were particularly interested in seeing the stained-glass window depicting a red-robed angel. Queen Victoria had commissioned it in honor of her first grandson and then rejected it, citing that angels in the Bible only wore white. Somehow this magnificent work of art made its way to St. Vincent, and the Anglican Church became the beneficiary. The grounds of the Anglican Church are filled with graves dating back before the 1800s.

The final church, St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, has a unique mixture of architecture, including Gothic spires and Romanesque arches. We caught glimpses of the interior from the courtyard which is open to the public.

We began our journey back to the peace and quiet of our moorage in mid-afternoon where we settled back on the boat for a delightful tuna dinner. As the day was waning, across the bay from us a group of local fishermen were setting up a net in a corner of the bay. They carefully laid the net out on the still water and then waited. Meanwhile, a fishing trawler, *Betty Boop*, moved closer into the bay and appeared to be waiting for the local fishermen to bring in their catch. After what seemed like hours, the fishermen started hauling in their net, keeping the larger fish and shaking the smaller ones from the net back into the ocean. They worked patiently, tirelessly and cooperatively, each one having a specific task to perform in order to meet the needs of the trawler. Once the netted fish had been transferred onto the trawler, *Betty Boop* moved out to sea.

Our brief stop at St. Vincent gave us a feeling of wanting to stay longer, confused with a need to continue south. Drawn by the stronger urge to move south, we pulled from the mooring. We are confident that the boats we saw going on by, and many who each day miss this brief stop, are missing a great experience on a very safe and interesting island. We can say confidently that where the books and boaters talk about the dangers and hassling hawkers, our experience showed no evidence of those concerns. As far as we could find, none of them exist any longer.

St. Vincent, from the perspective of Wallilabou Bay and Kingstown, is overwhelmingly inviting and a worthwhile visit if you are tired of the usual, and seeking an exotic rest stop.

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WALKING THE PLANK

by Julia Bartlett

I am here, on my own boat, in my own home at last, surrounded by jungle at La Joya Marina on Guatemala's Rio Dulce.

"So, where's the path into town?" I ask Garin, the grizzled rancher who recently bought the place and who is branding the dock planks to keep in practice.

"Right behind you, just keep on going." He points down a dock.

To go to the shops I have to walk the plank, literally. It's the only way, apart from boat, to get to town.

The plank, planks actually, run off the end of the dock balancing on trestles sunk into the mud and take me on the sort of adventure that I would pay a lot for at Disney World.

First I step over barbed wire as I teeter above the water hyacinths and get buzzed by turquoise dragonflies. Water weed drifts under me from left to right and I get the impression that the plank is moving and vertigo sets in.

"Don't look at the water," I tell myself, "concentrate on the plank."

Tarzan-type vines drip from the trees and I grab at one as I slip on a wet patch of wood. I miss the vine but stay on the plank after a nasty wobble.

"Remember the wet bits are slippery, wet bits are slippery." I am becoming my own nag.

Next is an incline that would be a challenge on a wet day, then a T junction. No sign post.

The right-hand plank seems to go to a shack perched above the swamp with something that looks suspiciously like a crocodile lurking underneath. I turn left.

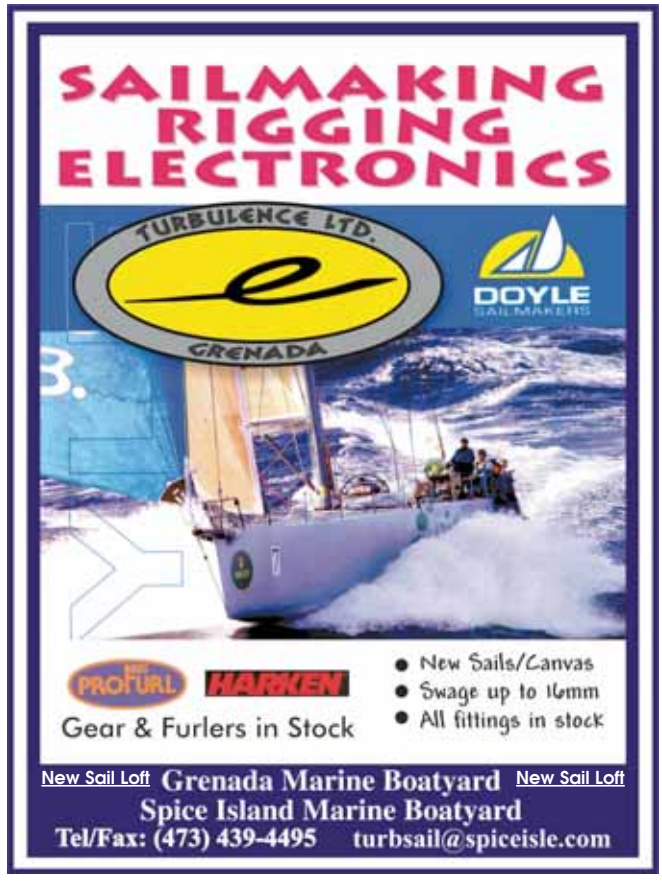
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The riverside La Joya Marina, above, is only accessible by boat or by walking the plank (right). Note the passing platform





—*Continued from previous page*

Several planks further on there is another T junction. It's a maze snaking beneath black-trunked, dripping trees. Talking of which, there is a movement in the branches above me and I turn suddenly with another nasty wobble as something hits the water next to me. No it wasn't a snake; it was a three-ton bromeliad. Even if it hadn't severely injured me it would certainly have knocked me off the fantasy walkway if it had hit me.

As I am recovering, a small figure rushes towards me, pointing the way to turn.

"Fuerte, fuerte, cinco quetzales," he chirps. "Strong, strong, five quetzales." (One quetzal, the national currency, is worth about 35p or 70 cents US.)

I follow his instructions, ignoring the turning next to me and moving on to the next one, the green duck weed beneath me forming a carpet now.

"Cinco quetzales," he repeats.

"Si, claro," I reply, which means, yeah, sure.

I weave my way onwards to where laundry flaps off a barbed wire washing line. The wire is a just the right height to take my eyes out if I should become blasé enough to daydream.

"¡Ten cuidado!" Be careful! A young woman steps out of the house, lifts the wire for me and smiles, "Cinco quetzales."

The fact that she has asked for the same amount as the boy makes me realise that this is indeed a toll path. Well, if they built it and are maintaining it, it's fair that they should be paid.

"Una via o dos vias?"

"Por dia."

Okay, once I pay I can go back and forth as many times as I want to that day, cool. I can see myself tripping along this path loaded with groceries, jugs of diesel and crates of beer, I don't think!

The path turns and I come to a passing platform and crossroads. To the right a pig is sleeping like a dog in front of a house. He sees me and comes to investigate.

"Good pig, nice pig," I croon as he sticks his snout against the camera lens.

"No," I say firmly and he steps back, puts his head on one side and cocks his ears up like a dog. He is obviously oblivious to the fact that the humans he is guarding are going to murder him and eat him!

I cross more flowing water and something cool and wet touches the back of my leg. I freeze. Slowly I swivel from the waist up and look down into a polite pair of brown eyes. It is a dog in a hurry, asking to come by me.

"Sorry, you have to wait a minute," I tell him.

Ahead I can see a passing platform and open marsh with a concrete building in the distance.

The building turns out to be a school and the road is right there.

The road is loaded with huge trucks, tankers and buses. I turn towards the bridge, a huge modern span of concrete that flies over the Rio Dulce above the tree tops. I climb slowly, leaving the shade of the trees at the side of the road behind and emerging into a harsh beating sun that bounces back off the white concrete, attacking from all sides at once.

A continuous yellow line runs along the center of the road meaning no stopping and no overtaking. In front of me the road disappears into a few puffy white clouds and up there on the cusp vehicles are parked while drivers and crew get out to look at the view. An enterprising local has chairs arranged under a shade on the sidewalk and is taking pictures of visitors with an instant camera, using the view as a backdrop. He peels the laminate off and slots them into a cardboard frame and the truckers and tourists wander off to admire their own images, ignoring the soaring birds and the river and islands laid out beneath them.

I take a towel from my bag and wipe the stinging sweat out of my eyes as I start down towards Fronteras, the only sizable settlement in these parts. I am at eye level with the plants that cling to the power cables and then the micro eco-systems in each of the trees. Plants growing on plants growing on plants. Nature crowding into any foothold it can find in the encroaching concrete.

Finally I reach the jam-packed street of Fronteras and turn down the steps reeking of last night's urine that lead off the road and then into the shade of Bruno's Marina. The shade pours over me like cooling water and the noise of traffic fades miraculously away and bird song takes it place.

Just one cool one and I'll be ready to enjoy the vibrant bustle of town. It's all about pacing myself.



A watch-pig sees me and comes to investigate...'

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GOING 'BASIC' IN VENEZUELA'S SAVANNAHS

by Phil Chapman

Having left our boats, *Chaser* and *Waylander*, at a marina on the Venezuelan coast, my wife, Yvonne, and I and our friends Chris and Tony had headed inland to explore.

After a few days in the town of Mérida at the base of the Andes (see last month's *Compass*), it was time to leave our *posada* (a kind of guesthouse) and make for Los Llanos, Venezuela's famous savannahs. We packed our rucksacks, said good-bye to our hosts and walked round the corner to a small bar for some breakfast. Our tour organizer Carlos met us there to introduce us to our driver and guide. He'd already explained our itinerary, and what to take: clothes, bug spray, etcetera. He told us the accommodation would be basic. We would have to sleep in hammocks, but there were toilets and showers.

Our driver, Namier, arrived with the jeep and we were introduced to Pablo, our guide for the week. After a short delay getting a cold box, we put our gear into the truck and said *adios* to Mérida. We stopped at a great restaurant where they serve the best kebabs ever. Not really kebabs: the Venezuelan version is like a side of a cow on a broom handle roasting vertically against a log fire. As well as beef, they had pork sausages — you pay by the kilo. Our food was all included in the tour price; Pablo simply ordered meat enough for the six of us, together with salad, vegetables and half a dozen Cokes. This was the best steak I've ever tasted, crispy burnt on the outside and succulent in the middle.

We drove on and on; it was a long way in a 4 x 4. The National Guard stopped us and checked our papers, causing a delay, but eventually we arrived, in the darkness, to be greeted outside the gates by a six-foot caiman (a type of alligator).

Inside the camp we were introduced to our hosts for the four-day stay: Nicolandro, the owner, and his wife Rosa. We'd been on the road for about 14 hours, so we just needed to chill out in our room. We were shown to our accommodation.

Well, Yvonne and I have lived in Spain for the past 15 years, so we speak a bit of Spanish, but in Venezuelan Spanish some words are different. One of these words would appear to be *basico*. Now basic accommodation means a room without TV, doesn't it? Our *posada* in Mérida had been "basic": bed, shower and toilet. Bearing in mind we were looking at this through tired eyes, but we were shown into a round hut with mud/cow dung walls and a straw ceiling which housed its own eco-system of insect life ranging from cockroaches to large spiders. We did have a pole in the centre of the room, in case you wanted to do some dancing, I suppose. It also served to support one end of our hammocks.

—*Continued on next page*



Above: Don't worry about lumpy mattresses — there aren't any

Left: Our first trip in Los Llanos was by dugout canoe

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It wasn't all bad: we did have an electric light bulb. The toilet block was across the field outside. Tony and I thought we'd investigate in case one of us needed a night visit. The toilets had a lightbulb, too, but only till 11:00PM when the generator is turned off, which is quite fortunate in some ways as the single-cylinder Lister diesel was thumping away just outside our hut. I opened the door to the shower to see a brick-walled shower and a black-and-white-speckled marble floor. Oops! Wrong again. On closer inspection it was a white floor covered with 200 bugs and roaches together with a frog the size of a rabbit. We closed the door — fast! The dunny wasn't as bad. Bad, but not that bad.



Left: Our hut. We took turns to venture outside to the amenities



Right: Posing for photos with a not-pleased-looking caiman, who was soon released

We strolled rather quickly back to our hut, wondering how to explain this to the girls. But what the hell, we're all transatlantic sailors, and now backpackers — we can handle these things. Well, we had to because there was nowhere else around for 50 miles and even there their accommodation was the same. We didn't unpack our bags; we just raised them off the floor into spare hammocks so we didn't get any unwanted occupants. We accompanied each other to the toilet (Tony took his machete) before rolling into our hammocks hoping that with the light of day things would look different.

Curfew came at eleven and lights were out. You've heard the expression, "Can't see a hand in front of you""? Well, we couldn't. It was black, which was a little disconcerting knowing that we had to give way to an alligator outside the camp, and inside the camp in one of the trees were two boa constrictors. The noises outside let the imagination run wild too, with chickens squawking, cows mooing and many sounds we'd never heard before — so much so, we just couldn't help laughing. We all got a fit of the giggles, which helped us go to sleep and avoid hearing the footsteps that were no doubt going on inside our hut.

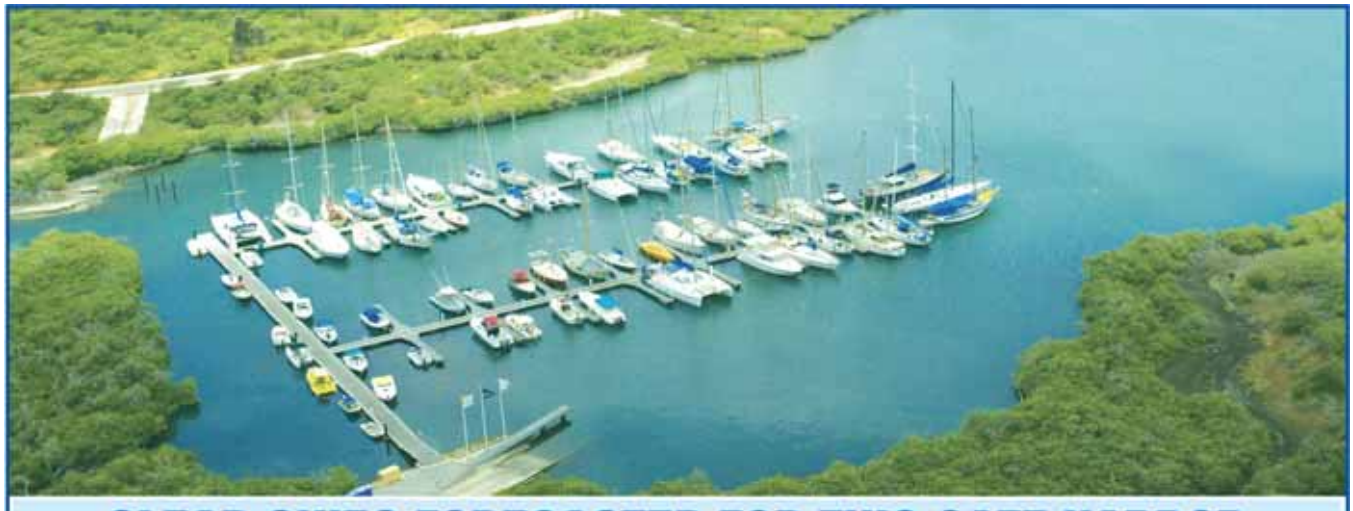
We woke at day-break, quickly checking our hammocks to see if anything had moved in. We took turns to venture outside to the amenities. Either the shower had been cleaned up or the frog had a large meal — the floor was empty. We checked the toilet to see if the bugs had moved house, but that was okay too. We took turns to stand under the hose pipe in the shower and have a chilly but refreshing rinse off. We were called in for breakfast; the table was filled with bread, ham, scrambled eggs, fresh passionfruit juice and coffee.

Our first trip in Los Llanos was in a dugout canoe with an outboard motor, up-river through the savannahs. This was beautiful: what we wanted to see. We soon saw some freshwater dolphins. Nothing like the ones we see in the ocean, these were pink, blind and dumb-looking with no dorsal fins — strange creatures. Moving on farther we came across large iguanas, and, as we stopped to take photos, Nicolandro edged his boat slowly backwards to the bank, dived head first into the water and brought out the ugliest looking turtle we've ever seen.

We were probably three hours or more traveling across the savannahs before returning to shore where we got back into our jeep to return to the camp for lunch.

After our meal of beans, chicken, rice, plantain, etcetera, we had a siesta for a couple of hours before climbing back into the jeep for a safari across some of the drier parts of the savannahs. Looking for wildlife, we saw capybaras, the world's largest rodent, a three-foot-high guinea pig. We also saw caimans and anacondas. Anacondas frequent these areas in large numbers and can be up to 20 feet long. Unfortunately after recent heavy rains they were proving hard to find despite Nicolandro's persistence walking through the marshes with bare feet, poking around with a stick.

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AT SPANISH WATER

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It was getting near dark so we started to make our way home, but Wilfredo, Nicolandro's son-in-law, saw a caiman dive into the water as we drove past. He told the driver to stop and he and Nicolandro jumped over a fence and ran into the water (again with no shoes), poking around with a stick in one hand and a lasso in the other. Wilfredo managed to do the rope work and as the noose tightened there was much thrashing around in the water until Nicolandro jumped on the caiman's back, and this was only a small one! They managed to lift it out of the water and bring it back to the road where they tied some string around its snout. We all took our turns for the photo shoot. After the release, four very satisfied sailors, backpackers, and now wildlife hunters were driven back to camp for the evening meal. After dinner we had a quick chat with the family and our guide before falling into our hammocks for our second night.

We were beginning to accept our conditions a little more now, realizing too that we had the top-end tour because our ten-seater jeep had only the four of us in it. Our hut, too, would normally have had to accommodate any other passengers in our jeep. Chris and Tony are good friends, they respect our privacy as we do theirs, but another four strangers would have been too much, I think.

Next day after breakfast we were back aboard the jeep for a trip upriver to do some *piraña* fishing. We were all given handlines and some meat in order to catch the voracious eating machines for our dinner that night. That we did; we even have the jaws to prove it. It was very hot, though, and I was feeling the heat for some reason that day, but come 1200 hours, we headed back to the camp for lunch. I wasn't too hungry as Yvonne and I are not used to eating so much especially at midday, but Chris and Tony didn't let us down — they managed to make our cook feel needed.

After our siesta it was horse-riding time. This was one activity Yvonne wasn't looking forward to. She doesn't like heights, especially wobbly ones, but she was given a sleepy horse and we all trotted off. About an hour along the road our young horse-riding guide, Wilfredo, a great horseman, said we should go cross country through the water to look for wildlife. I didn't really fancy my horse stepping on an alligator but Wilfredo assured us there was no problem. We were about a mile inside the water-logged fields when Wilfredo galloped off, — he saw something in the distance. It was a giant anteater, which he rounded up, then shouted at us to come closer. Now these "charter" horses seemed to know who is boss, and it certainly wasn't us. They go when they want to go and stop when they want to. Wilfredo managed to come a little closer and call our horses and they trotted towards him. The anteater was a great find; we were lucky to see one this time of year. They are apparently a member of the bear family; in Spanish they are called an ant-eating bear and when you see their large claws you can understand why.

It was time now to trek back, but my horse came to a standstill and despite talking to it nicely, giving it a swift kick in the groin and a whip on the shoulder, it wouldn't move, and as usual the Waylanders were out in front. Wilfredo came over. He didn't shout, just blew a kiss to my horse and it took off like a scud missile, blasting past Chris and Tony and leaving them to eat my dirt for the first time. Okay, granted, I fell off, these things have no brakes, and no mainsheet to release. It did eventually stop and while I was peering up at its belly, I considered how fortunate I was, for three reasons: one, I didn't fall in cow dung; two, I didn't fall in water; and three, I wasn't wearing my new super-cool cowboy hat and poncho — then I would have felt stupid!

My horse calmed down after being a bit skittish and we all trotted off back home. Yvonne, Chris and Tony didn't laugh — much!

Our final morning we got an early start, but our bus back to Puerto La Cruz wasn't leaving the terminal till about ten o'clock at night so we decided to treat ourselves and our guide Pablo to a white-water rafting trip. It was an eight-hour drive from the camp to the river, so we said our good-byes to Nicolandro, Rosa and Wilfredo before heading off with Pablo.

We arrived at the river at about 1:30PM. Our driver went to collect the boat from somewhere up-river. The raft guide was with him when he returned with the boat on the roof of the jeep. We all lifted it off and slid it down the river bank, then walked down some steps to carry it across to a safe entry point. Our new guide explained the rules: strap your feet in, then, when he says, paddle frantically either forward or backward according to command. If needs be, stop paddling and get down inside the boat, then when told, get back in position and paddle. This was all in Spanish — it's a good way to learn the language when your life depends on it! The rafting trip was fantastic and a great finale to our ten days away. We were soaked, but got changed and back in the jeep, and then were driven 20 miles or so back to the bus terminal.

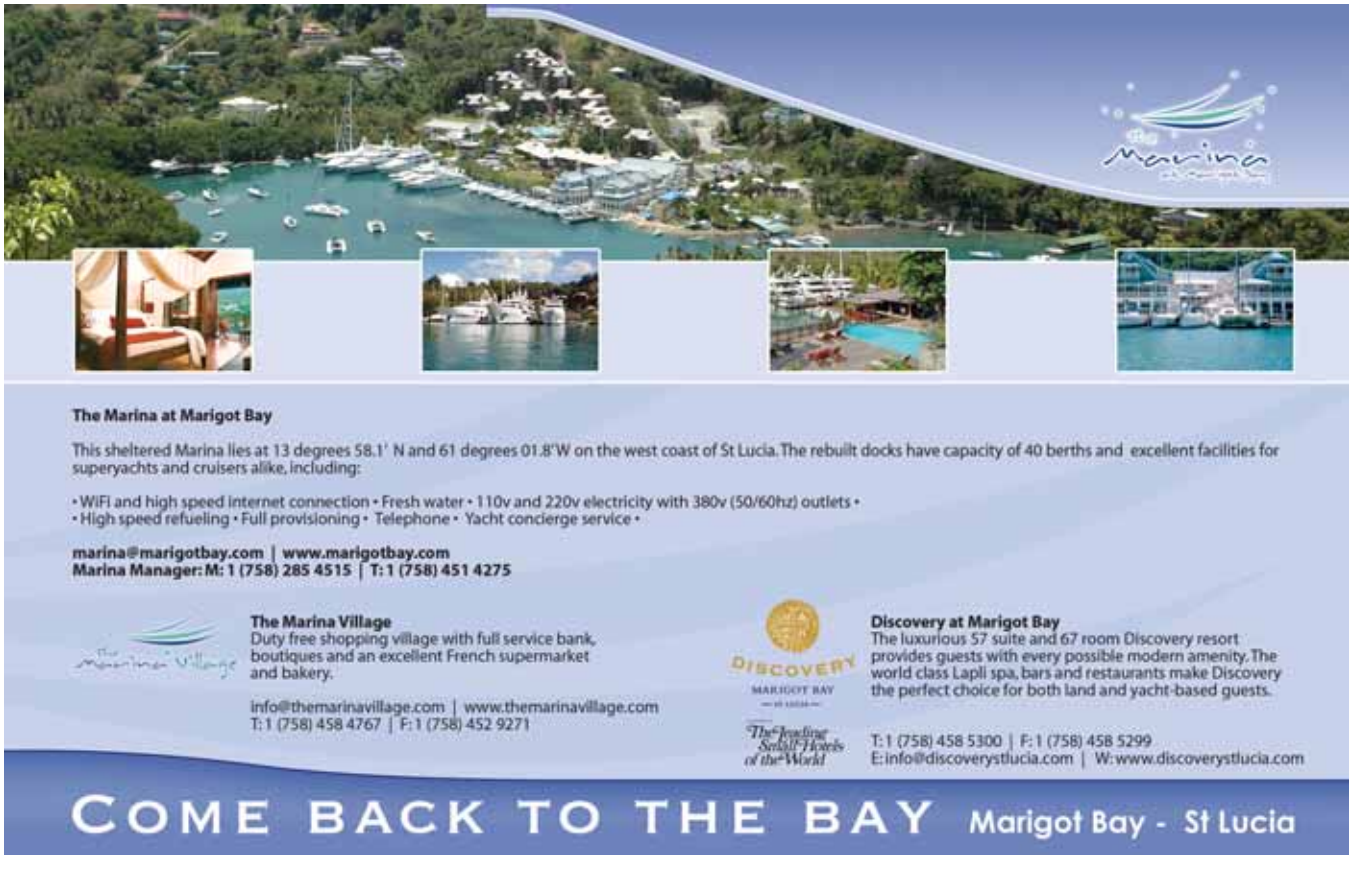
The bus was late, we were tired and smelly, and when the bus turned up at midnight our group of seats wasn't available. In fact, we thought there weren't any seats at all, but after a little fuss four individual seats were found. We didn't lose much time going to sleep and I didn't wake until 5:00AM when the bus made a stop. At that time some people got off, which meant Chris and Tony could come out of the boot and I could go back with Yvonne and we had four seats together in comfort again.



These 'charter' horses seemed to know who is boss, and it certainly wasn't us!

Arriving back at Puerto La Cruz around 2:00PM we jumped into a cab and were whisked to our respective boats. Oh! the luxury, clean soft beds, no bugs, clean toilets and hot water, television, cold wine and a rum and Coke — with ice!

Did we enjoy the ten days? Would we do it again? It was fantastic, we all had a great time, we would do it all over and we'd recommend it to everyone. I do believe though, if our jeep had been full and we had not been able to stretch out on a sideways-facing seat for 12 hours, the ride would have been very uncomfortable. Also, sharing a hut with many strangers with no facilities or space to put things would not have been much fun. So, just being the four of us worked. Chris and Tony are great company, we all enjoyed ourselves and are looking forward to another adventure together.



The Caribbean Ferry Experience

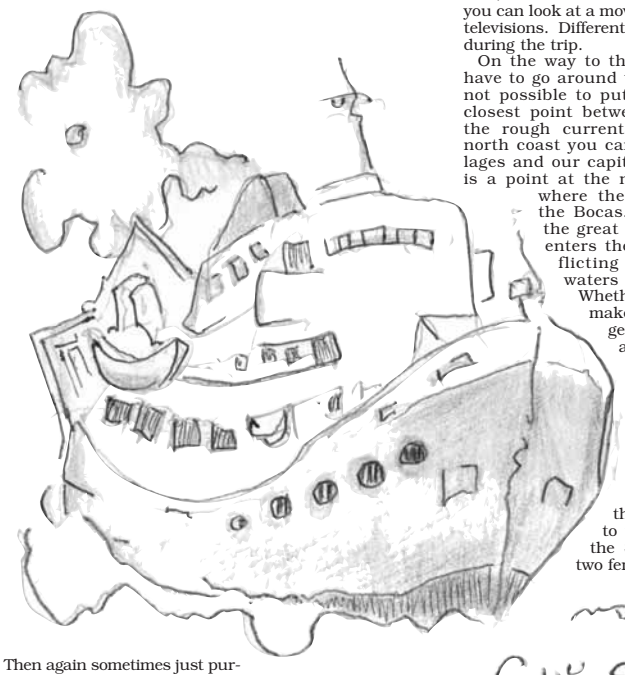
by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

Some countries in the Caribbean are two-island or tri-island states and getting between some of these islands can be done by air. But the most affordable and enjoyable way is by ferry. It provides the opportunity to take photos and view features not seen from the air. When you go by air you get a flat view and only see details when you are just about to land. But when you travel by boat you get to see much more.

But why endure this commute at all? Well, the most obvious answer is to visit friends and family. Then again, travelling to a neighbouring island is also a means of going on a vacation. Ferries are how some of the smaller islands also get material — for example, food and building materials — from the larger and usually more commercial sister isle.

I am from Trinidad and visit friends and vacation on the neighbouring island of Tobago often, so the most economical way is by ferry. I also have friends in St. Kitts-Nevis and ferrying is the method of travel when I go between those islands.

When it comes to buying tickets, in some islands you can buy your ticket ahead of time to sail for a certain day or on the day of the sailing, as with the ferry between Trinidad and Tobago. And, similarly to an airport, you have to arrive a certain period of time before you depart and get your ticket confirmed and wait to board. In Grenada you buy your ticket for the ferry to the sister island of Carriacou just before entering the ferry.



Then again sometimes just purchasing the ticket gets a little confusing, like paying for parts of the ticket at different locations. For instance in St. Kitts-Nevis, you buy the ticket at one counter and around the corner is another window where you pay the departure tax.

Waiting for the ferry to arrive or depart is a good time to strike up conversations with fellow passengers and find out more about your destination from a local's point of view. Of course these conversations do not have to end on boarding. To me this is more valuable than what you would find in a travel guide or brochure. But waiting need not be boring: you often have peddlers plying their trade outside the ferry terminal and you can buy food, craft items, souvenirs or fruits.

When on ferries you have two options; you can pass the time inside or on the deck, depending on your mood and, more importantly, the weather. The trip to Tobago is quite long, lasting two hours by catamaran (fast ferries as they are locally called), or five hours on a slower vessel. But I must note that the cost varies, with passage on the slower vessels costing less. There are additional fees if you want to take your own vehicle. The duration of the journey depends on whether you are going with the current (shorter trip) or against the current (longer trip).

The bigger boats also carry more cargo. On the larger vessels you have the option of booking a cabin, and at night this can be a plus, however it will cost extra. To cut costs, some people bring a blanket or sleeping mat and sleep in chairs, couches or on the floor. Travelling at night is quite an experience, on these long boat rides. I recall on a night crossing back to Trinidad, my friends and I sat in the first row of seats at the bow. The sea was a bit choppy and you could see the outline of the waves and feel every time the ship went over a wave.

As I say this, I know that a major concern many people would have about travelling on the sea is motion sickness. If you know you are prone to it, please take some medicine before getting on board. Besides medicine one preventative measure that has worked for me is not eating any greasy or heavy meals just before departure or on the ferry. When I get hungry during the trip, I munch on crackers or some fruit, such as apples or grapes.

If you decide to stay inside, you could have a proper meal — either one you brought with you or one bought on board. Ferries between Trinidad and Tobago sell food, and there are also sections on the ferry where you can look at a movie during the trip on wide-screen televisions. Different sections show different movies during the trip.

On the way to the sister island of Tobago, you have to go around the top of the Trinidad as it is not possible to put a port at Toco, which is the closest point between the two islands, owing to the rough currents. As you travel around the north coast you can see the different seaside villages and our capital city of Port-of-Spain. There is a point at the northwestern tip of the island where the sea gets quite rough, called the Bocas. This is where the outflow of the great South American Orinoco River enters the Atlantic Ocean and the conflicting currents cause the rough waters at this point.

Whether sitting inside or on deck, make sure you have a good view. You get to see parts of Trinidad that are inaccessible. For instance, along the way, you pass between some of the closer offshore islands including Monos and Huevos. When the tide is low, you can see caves along the coast of some of these offshore islands.

While travelling from St. Kitts to Nevis, it is fascinating to see the lush green landscape give way to the dry desert-like conditions of the Southern Peninsula. Sometimes two ferries cross and you get to wave at the passengers on the other ferry. You also might get to see great marine life on the way, such as dolphins and flying fish.

The trip between some islands is not long; for instance, the commute between St. Kitts and Nevis only lasts 20 minutes. Sometimes I think that you can never be late for the ferry, because they usually wait an extra 10 minutes in case anyone is late. This is a short but vital link between islands. Can you believe ordering a meal from St. Kitts and getting it delivered to Nevis? How cool is that! With such short commutes it is expected that besides visiting, some people work and go to school on neighbouring islands. Therefore, it is only natural that travelling on the ferry gets crowded, such as at the start and end of the work and school day. In Trinidad and Tobago, since the trip is long, most Trinidadians would go over for the weekend, as a sort of mini-vacation.

From my ferry rides and listening to the experiences of others, one thing I have to say in closing — the route may be the same but every trip is unique.

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Leaving the Caribbean:

Skybird's Transatlantic, Antigua to Azores

by Mary Robinson

After an extended period of cruising in the Caribbean, it was time to go home. My husband Alan and I prepared our yacht, *Skybird*, for our passage back to Europe at anchor in Falmouth Harbour, Antigua.

Our first problem was to get the autopilot repaired. Our "Alpha 3000" is an old model; no one locally seemed to be familiar with it. Cay Electronics sent the entire thing back to the USA and the makers recommended that both the ram and the control box had to be replaced. When this bad news arrived, we even considered replacing it with a more recent and better-known model. But we decided to stick with the Alpha, as we knew it had suited the boat perfectly in the past. The new parts were ordered.

Our second problem was Alan's health. He had been feeling unwell for fully four weeks; we had both kept hoping that it was just a "tummy bug" and that he would get over it. It was only a week or so before our proposed departure date that we realized that he would have to see a doctor. Dr. Fuller in Antigua's capital, St. Johns, was very thorough and helpful and sent Alan for various tests. When the test results came through a few days later, the doctor had to deliver us a bombshell: he advised us that Alan should not sail.

By this time our friends David and Graham had arrived by air from UK to crew the passage with us. When they arrived they had been shocked to see Alan looking so ill and weak, so I think they were less surprised than we were to hear the doctor's orders. Alan would have to fly home, leaving the three of us to sail the boat. I would be navigator, but as I am not very agile nowadays, David, who has a yacht of his own in UK and who had sailed on *Skybird* before, would be "Sailing Master".

It was already well into June, the start of the hurricane season, so I was getting twitchy about leaving as soon as possible. A forecast of a good southeast breeze for the next few days gave added urgency to my determination to get underway as soon as possible. The autopilot parts at last arrived, so Cay Electronics fitted them on Saturday the 9th. Alan spent Sunday, his last day on board, passing on every possible piece of information that he could about the boat, the engine and the stowage of tools and spare parts. Then he was gone.

The three of us planned to waste no more time but to put to sea on Monday. We deflated and rolled up the dinghy before we took *Skybird* to the Yacht Club Marina for fuel and water. While we were tied up there, I walked over to English Harbour to check out.

We left Antigua on Monday afternoon, giving the autopilot its first sea trial as we went. The sea trial was not successful so we had to turn back and anchor once more back in Falmouth. We had to re-inflate and re-launch the dinghy on Tuesday morning to fetch Cay Electronics back on board. I didn't want to go back to Customs and Immigration to report that we had failed to leave, so this fact added yet more urgency to our departure. On Tuesday afternoon we set out again.

This time, to our relief and delight, the autopilot worked perfectly. We named it George; he became by far the most popular and hard working crewman on board as he steered unfailingly day and night in all conditions. The rest of us stood watches of four hours on and eight hours off unless the person on watch called for an extra hand on deck.

I had registered with Chris Parker to receive customised weather information via single-sideband radio for the passage. As he predicted, we had a fair southeast wind for our first two days, heading north. Thereafter, he warned that we would encounter a massive blocking area of high pressure that lay from mid-Atlantic to the Bahamas. We would have to motor for the next two days if we wanted to make any progress.



Skybird's *reduced crew on arrival at Pymouth, England. During the passage from the Caribbean, they stood watches of four hours on, eight off*

The weather was exactly as predicted. In the high pressure it was appallingly hot. The sun at midday was directly overhead; we rigged up a white awning over the cockpit dodger to reduce the impact of the searing rays. North of the high we picked up a westerly breeze and set the sails and turned off the engine at last. By now I wanted to get Chris on the radio again, but he had taken a long weekend break and wasn't due back on the air until the following Tuesday.

On Tuesday morning, David was on watch as dark clouds built up astern. Graham emerged from his berth, planning to quietly make himself a cup of tea. His gentle start to the morning was interrupted by David's shout of "Pull this!" They set a reef and furled half the genoa. The squall hit; rain lashed down, lightning split the sky and great crashes of thunder pealed around us.

The thunderstorms lasted for over an hour that morning, so I had no chance whatsoever of making contact with Chris on the radio. The next day I tried Chris again on 12350 (the frequency that was recommended at this distance) but could hear nothing and had to give up. By Thursday I was really anxious to make contact; I could hear Chris very faintly on 8137 but he couldn't hear me. Radio interference caused by e-mails or fax transmissions made matters much worse. But eventually I got through with the help of a relay. The same thing happened when I tried again a few days later. Again I was helped by a relay. Both times the weather routing advice was excellent and the relays were invaluable. Many thanks to all concerned.

The rest of the trip was reasonably uneventful. *Skybird* went well; our best day's run was 181 nautical miles. We hardly saw any shipping, nor even the trace of an aeroplane in the sky. Just an empty, ocean bathed in sunlight by day, lit up by moon, stars and phosphorescence by night. After a fortnight we began to see a few fishing boats, the occasional dolphin or a distant whale as we approached the Azores.

The sun still shone, but it was blowing hard by the time we made landfall in the island of Flores, 16 days out of Antigua. The top of the island was masked in thick white cloud. But as we neared the anchorage of Lajas the cloud swept down in a cold grey blast from the mountains to meet us. As we rounded the massive breakwater, the dark windswept harbour did not appear to be in the least pleasant or a welcoming.

Our first impression was wrong. Flores is the most beautiful, unspoilt and welcoming of all islands. Even Customs and Immigration consisted of a friendly policeman who met us on the dock-side. He filled in a document on the bonnet of his car and assured us that there was no need for any further formalities before leaving. There were only two snags: everything is up-hill (exhausting after 16 days with only the deck to walk), and, despite the obvious fertility of the island, the shops had very sparse stocks of fresh fruit and vegetables.

The best thing of all about Lajas is Paula's Restaurant. The service is very friendly and the food very good. (Personally, I recommend their local fried octopus but there is a good range of more conventional items on the menu.) This is more than a restaurant, it is an assembly point for locals and yachties alike; this is where everyone meets to exchange chat and news. This is where you can arrange anything from a taxi tour of the island to a delivery of diesel to the pier.

After a delightfully relaxed week in Lajas we set sail again. I missed Chris Parker's help with the weather but did the best I could with Internet before leaving and Navtex transmissions later. After a further ten days we arrived at Plymouth, UK, where we were delighted to be met by Alan, who looked a whole lot better than he had when he left the boat back in Antigua.

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THE RIVALS

Part Two

by Bob Berlinghof

Bruno sat in the cockpit of his 38-foot steel ketch, *Never Mind*, and watched the sun streak the sky orange and lit his second cigarette of the day, with his second cup of coffee. *Another incredibly sublime dawn, less hazy than yesterday, not so much Sahara dust.* He thought of trying to get Hal banished from Bellevue island's ex-pat community for sins real and imagined, because he was running out of options. He would never rat Hal out to the authorities. Only wimps did that. He was not fond of violence, though it occurred to him that a threat with a tire iron might do the trick. But that's all it would be, a threat. Banishment wasn't gonna fly — Hal was too popular with the younger set at Musket's bar — only the Old Guard would rally behind Bruno, and a few of *them* were suspect. He would have to put it to Hal like in the old Westerns: "This town ain't big enough for the both of us."

He was considering the ramifications of using the tire iron as a prop, when a local double-ended fishing boat clunked astern of the cockpit.

"Hello? Bruno Frankenheim?" called a female voice, with a grating New York accent. "Can I come abawd?"

Bruno was naked and went below for a towel. When he emerged, she was struggling onto the aft deck, having clumped up the boarding ladder in tiny-strapped leather Manolo Blahnik heels, wearing a white blouse under a tight-fitting grey Armani jacket with a matching grey skirt, very smart indeed.

"Take off the heels!" screamed Bruno. "And watch the teak!"

"Sorry," she said. The water-taxi operator handed her up a little black handbag and an oversized Louis Vuitton suitcase.

"Hold on a minute," said Bruno.

"Can you pay the man, please?" asked the woman, no older than 30. "I get all confused with this local currency, and I don't want to pay him too much."

"Take it off what you owe me, Franklin," said Bruno, annoyed, to the young man, who waved and motored away.

"To what do I owe this pleasure?" said Bruno, towel wrapped around his loins, wondering if his memory had really deteriorated so badly that he didn't recognize this young, pert, and possibly sex-starved woman before him. *She's moving on board*, he thought, but the implications of her suitcase were threatening as well as thrilling.

"You don't have e-mail, and evidently you don't get your snail mail either," she began, moving unsteadily before ducking under the awning and sitting down hard in the cockpit. She left the suitcase on the aft deck but clutched the handbag in her lap like a hand grenade.

"To make a long story short, I am Rene Goldman." She held out her hand which he firmly shook. When he failed to recognize her name she continued, "Daughter of *Sarah Bernstein*, later Sarah *Goldman*?" Still nothing.

"But you knew her as Sarah Bernstein… in the Bahamas… back in November, 1977? I was born the following August."

"My daughter? You are my *daughter!*"

"So she *told you*? She never even told *me*!"

"How is ol' Sarah?"

"She's… *gone*, I'm afraid."

"Oh?"

"Breast cancer."

"I'm *so* sorry. Sarah was… incandescent. I'm sorry she didn't feel the same way about me."

"Well, we have to look on the bright side. I only found out about you in her *will*. I confirmed that you lived here by Googling your name. You were written up in trips.com."

"Good or bad?"

"Bad. Said you were a — quote — cantankerous old fart."

Bruno dressed and offered his daughter breakfast. Over a soft-boiled egg, toast, mango slice, and coffee he heard her abbreviated story. Her mother, a violinist with the New York Philharmonic, had returned to New York pregnant and determined to take as little time off as possible. She had married Lou Goldman before Rene was born. Goldman, a real estate developer, left Sarah and Rene a fortune when his Cadillac ran under a tractor trailer on I-95 in heavy rain. Rene was just 16. Rene had had boarding schools, Vassar, and more money than she could spend while growing up (though she must have tried pretty damn hard, if her clothes were anything to go by; Bruno knew nothing of brand names but he could smell that they were expensive).

Yet he could not help but be distracted by her shiny straight brown hair — she looked like a walking shampoo ad — to crown her ample bosom, generous hips, and narrow waist. He tried to expunge such impure thoughts as best he could.

Then she began to describe the absolute *nightmare* of a trip she had getting here, the overcrowded flight to Barbados, the smelly, cramped connecting flight and terrifying taxi ride, the missed ferry. At the ferry dock a local gaff-rigged sloop was loading cargo for Bellevue and the captain had offered her a ride. She was seasick and there were chickens shitting all over the deck! Chickens! Shitting! All over the deck! She had sailed into Bellevue after 9:00 PM and stayed the night at the Blue Sky Guest House, a place ("can you believe it?") with NO AIR CONDITIONING! By dawn mosquito bites had dotted her arms and legs, forcing her to check out and look for Bruno's boat.

Bruno hadn't been hard to find. The young water-taxi driver knew him — he owed Bruno 50 bucks for an outboard repair.

"Why didn't you ever write or *call* me?" Rene said, suddenly turning on him. "Did you really *not give a shit* about me *that much*?"

"Hey, wait, that's not really fair. I knew you existed, yes. But when I offered your mother support money in return for visitation rights she turned me down flat. Said she was getting married and wanted *nothing* to do with me, in fact, she didn't want me to ever contact you. She said it would be too confusing for you, that you would soon have a *real* father, and I…"

"So you just pretended I didn't exist?"

"No, I sailed around the world on two different boats. I was pretty busy myself. Look, now that you're here, why don't you sleep in the forepeak? I promise you, no mosquitoes." As he showed her below, she was frank about the less than luxurious appointments.

"Not much light down here, is there? When was the last time you painted?

"Does it always smell like old socks and diesel oil?

"That's the shower? *Coffin*, is more like it!

"I can't possibly pump the *toilet*, I'll *break a nail*!

"This sure isn't quite the *yacht* I imagined."

How long can I stand this? Bruno wondered.

She complained that she couldn't understand the local language — *gibberish*, she called it, and the food was, *like, disgusting*. "I mean, how many times can you eat macaroni pie and a salad made of sliced carrot and diced cucumber? Yuck!"

"Tell me, do you *work* for a living, Miss Vassar?"

"Yes, I *do*. I go up into Harlem twice a week. Volunteer work. With young black and Hispanic children. I teach them to appreciate *ahht*, and sculpt, paint, that sort of thing."

"And for how long may I expect the pleasure of your company?" asked Bruno, able to contain himself no longer.

"Funny thing is, I thought I'd check out some property to *buy* here."

A chill ran down Bruno's back and he tried not to shudder. "Really, but *why*?"

"New York's just such a *rat race*, you know? I want *out*, at least during the *winter*. And then there's the whole 9/11 thing."

"Yeah, I *heard* about it. But you *do* realize this ain't Paradise, not even close."

"Yeah, but there's *something* here. The sea. The sky. Reggae. Strapping black men — hey, I'm just teasing you… Dad?"

Since it was Saturday Bruno decided to skip work and take Rene to the beach. She squeezed into a white bikini and brought along a pale green silk pareo and her precious handbag. They motored Bruno's inflatable dinghy for ten minutes to a deserted beach, 400 yards long, adorned by a single wooden shack with a sign outside, *Karaoke every Fri. night*! — Bramley's Beach Bar.

They swam and had a fish and chips lunch. There was no denying Rene's physical presence, but he cringed whenever she opened her mouth. How could my daughter be such a… a *shrew*? A spoiled Jewish princess? What did I expect? I should feel grateful she cared enough to look me up. I haven't exactly been a model father.

Things were just beginning to thaw between them when Hal Everton's radar drew him in a beeline towards Rene. He sat down next to her, ignoring Bruno, and began chatting her up! *The nerve of that bastard*, thought Bruno, jumping to his feet. It was too much for him to bear. "You little… snot-nosed marsupial!" He reached over, grabbed the neck of Hal's T-shirt, and yanked him to his feet. "Where's my wheel puller?"

"Shit, Bruno, I didn't know you *needed it back*."

"*Take it* and *get the hell* out of Bellevue!" Bruno shouted, getting to the point, as he shoved Hal onto a concrete step at the beach's edge.

"Is this about Jeanette? She's gone back to Sacramento."

"I… don't… *like… you*," Bruno hissed, puffing out his chest like a lizard.

Hal stared right into Bruno's eyes and smiled in his disarming manner. "So?"

The cheek of it enraged Bruno. He pushed Hal's chest as hard as he could, Hal fell backwards, and they rolled around in the sand for what seemed an eternity before Hal's head was pushed down, then Hal bucked Bruno off and they were separated by massive Wayne Alleyne, a local weight-lifter. Hal suffered a minor nosebleed where Bruno's elbow had clipped him by accident, that and a graze over his right eye. Bruno pretended to have to be restrained by Wayne and danced on his toes.

He had lost it momentarily but realized that without the element of surprise, the younger man would surely have prevailed. Oh, but it felt *so good* for a second, he thought. *I did it*!

His triumph turned to ashes when Rene ran over to Hal to see if he was all right. "What is your *problem*?" she spat out at Bruno. She poured her drink in the sand, wrapped the ice in her silk pareo, and applied it to Hal's forehead and nose. Hal was happy to stare at her cleavage while she clucked and offered sympathy.

Later that day she returned to *Never Mind* to pick up her suitcase. "Hal's got much more space on his catamaran,," she said, matter-of-factly.

"What the hell do you *see* in him?" Bruno wondered out loud.

"He's so… *gorgeous*! Don't you think? I'm afraid I'm, like… falling for him."

Six months later, Bruno sat on deck on a clear and windy winter's morning at dawn, smoking a cigarette, smiling at the delicious irony of it. Rene and Hal were planning an island wedding later that month at the old Wallace house, which Rene had bought. Everyone would be there — the combined ex-pats from Maggie's bar and Musket's bar and an even greater number of Bruno's local friends, clients, and former employees, some with their children and extended families — over 120 people in all.

Weird how things work out, thought Bruno. I may be the only man alive to have simultaneously lost a shrew and a rival and gained a son and daughter. Soon she'll be Hal's headache — and good bloody luck to him, he'll need it!

Bruno sucked in smoke and exhaled with a satisfied smile. He would wait until *after* the wedding to tell Rene about her half-brother in the Tuamotus.





DECEMBER 2007

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Although crewmembers may be less than supportive in the first week, aspects are good for productive progress in creative endeavors.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
Be prepared for endless rough seas with your mate. Some Taureans could find love is on the rocks by month's end. It might be time to cut the ties that bind and sail solo for a while.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
There may be some bits of truth in the many creative opinions floating toward you. If you remain emotionally aloof you will be able to collect the gems amongst the flotsam and jetsam.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Ho, ho, ho! While you won't feel like working on the boat — or doing much of anything — this month, lust will be overtaking you with its myriad possibilities for fun.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
You will start the month with high winds in your business. Stay on course and try to ignore the constant complaining from crew.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
You will be sailing through some rough seas in your creative life, with misunderstandings and petty quarrels in the wind. Don't worry, you can weather it.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Maintaining a sense of humor may prove a challenge and your good mood will have cut the anchor rope and sailed away. Ask Santa to bring it back!

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
Your love life will take the helm and even though you may pass through some sloppy seas in the first two weeks, things will smooth out nicely by month's end.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
You will receive some good business news around the third week, a nice holiday gift for a deserving sailor!

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
It will seem that crew and family will oppose you at every tack during the first three weeks. Even your sense of humor will have disappeared. But by Christmas fair winds and following seas will return.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Batten down the hatches until the New Year. This month, you'll meet lots of choppy seas in business and all you'll get from your partner will be arguments and harassment.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Love and lust will be high on your list of priorities this Christmas season, while creative pursuits will be something of a beat to windward.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) TRUSS
2) TYE
4) TROW
5) TRY
7) TRUNCHEONS
8) TRIPE
10) TWINE
11) TYPHOONS
14) TUMBLER
15) TURTLE
18) TURBONADA
19) TROLL
20) TIP
21) TUB
22) TRISAILS
23) TWIN
24) TRAP
25) TUVALU

DOWN
1) TWEEN
2) TRICE
3) TOUR
4) TROPHY
5) TROPICAL
6) TUCK
7) TRUNK
8) TURRET
9) THOLE
10) TRIM
11) THAR
12) TRIPPING
13) TUBE
14) TUNGULA
16) TWO
17) TURNS
19) TURKS
20) TOW
23) TUG
24) TU

Island Poets

THE OCEAN

Freedom, out sailing, just me and the sea
Peaceful, so peaceful, as living should be
No hustle or bustle, no time for "up-tight"
Ocean, sweet ocean, she makes me feel right.

Fishes they call me, "Come in and come play!"
Mains'ls and fores'ls, the wind shows the way
Wavelets or whitecaps, we glide on along
List'ning to Nature's most glorious songs.

Whistling and singing to those who can hear
Sharing her secrets with those who stay near
God in His glory gave oceans and sand
Heavenly samples to split up the land.

Drifting and floating on waves without end
You and the ocean are my two best friends
My dream will be always that you and she
Shall be here with me eternally.

— Sandra Pomeroy

Treasured Isle

Mast-head lights like fireflies
dance above the ships that lie
at night's anchor in Norman Harbor.

A mere speck on the Caribbean Sea
but a place whose bold history
has been immortalized by R.L. Stevenson.

A mysterious isle where legends say
old Blackbeard hid his gold away
in sea caves along the rocky coast.

Now I think of days before
of bedspread sails and wooden swords
and the pirate games we'd play.

Skull and bones on handmade flags
a buried treasure in a marble bag
we boldly sailed our backyard fleet.

And as a child I'd been amazed
to know that there'd come a day
I'd walk along the very shore.

Now in the morning I'll sail away
but this 'Treasured Isle' will always stay
anchored deep within my heart.

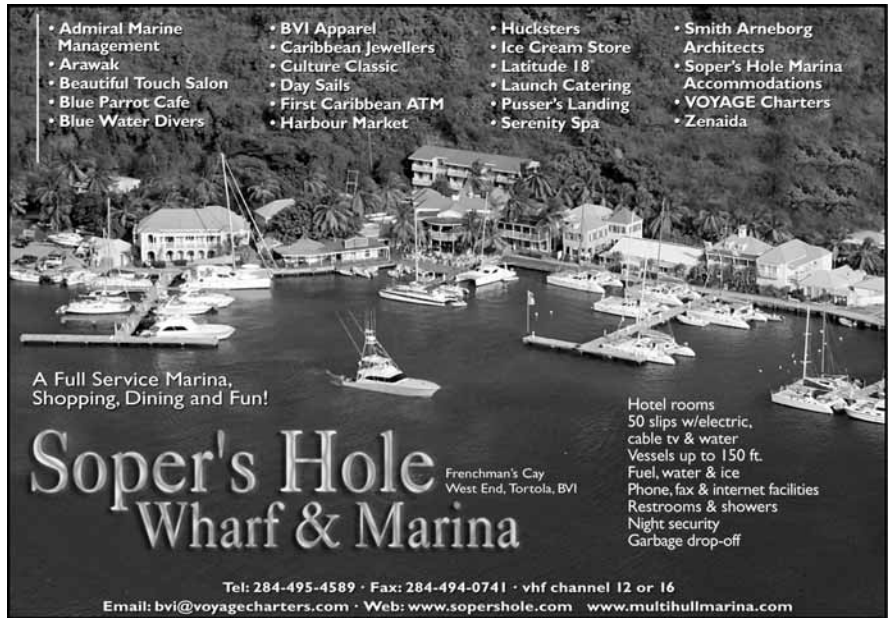
— James K. Richardson

Fortunate Encounter

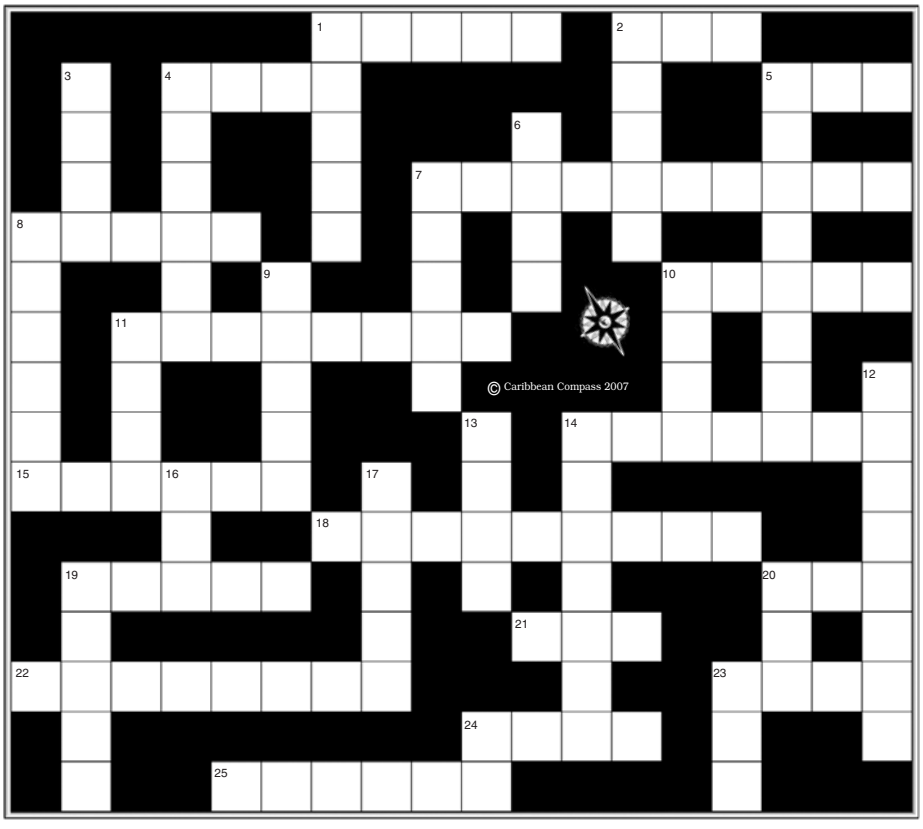
Rouge-red cloud
against
magenta mountains,
flocks of
scarlet ibis
descend in
evening twilight,
come to
roost the night
in Caroni Swamp.
Nature's beauty.

— Nicholas Lee





Compass Cruising Crossword



Nautical Alphabet

'Crossing Your Ts'

ACROSS

1) Bracket supporting square-rigger's lower yards
2) Runner of thick rope or chain
4) Type of salmon boat
5) Render oil from, as whale blubber
7) Clubs
8) Edible intestine
10) Fine line
11) Asian hurricanes
14) Copper nailed to mast to prevent gaff from chafing
15) Hawksbill or loggerhead, for example
18) Spanish squall
19) Fish off stern of moving boat
20) End
21) Rust bucket?
22) Loose-footed storm sails
23) One of two equals, as jibs or screws
24) Capture
25) Island nation between Hawaii and Australia

DOWN

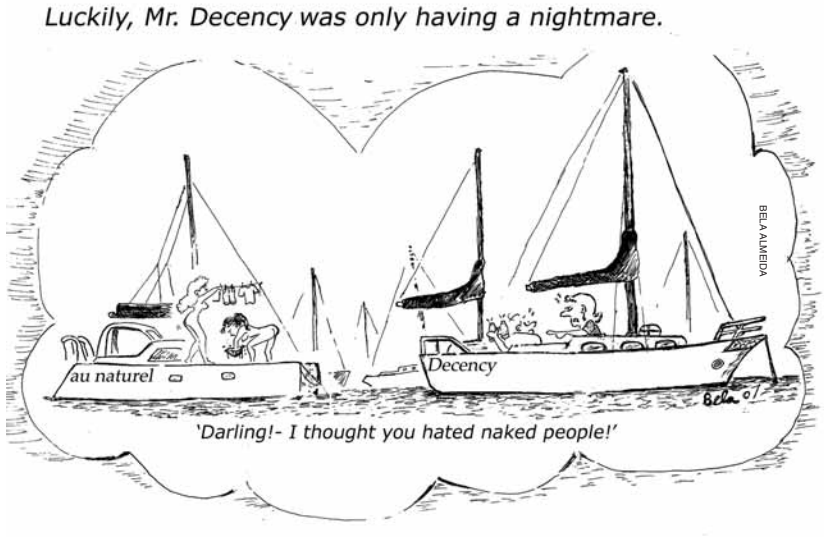
1) Between, as decks
2) To haul up
3) A cruise is one
4) Regatta prize
5) Pertaining to area between sun's greatest northern and southern declinations
6) After part of ship under the transom or counter
7) Steamer luggage
8) The *Monitor* was a _____ship
9) Pin used to hold oars
10) Adjust, as sail
11) "___ she blows!"
12) Canting using a line, as yard or anchor
13) Half of a chain pump
14) Boat from Borneo
16) A cat has this many hulls
17) Tacks
19) _____head: an ornamental knot
20) Pull
23) Towing vessel
24) You, in Spanish

— Solution on page 36

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CHRISTMAS ON THE REEF

By Lee Kessell

"Mummy, what is Christmas?"

Mother Damselfish got the surprise of her life when her little daughter Dimity asked that question one sunny afternoon on the reef in the sandy bay. "Wherever did you hear the word Christmas?"

"I was swimming by the shore where some human children were playing and I heard them talking about Christmas," Dimity replied. "They were all very excited and asked each other what they wanted Father Christmas to bring them. Will he bring me anything?"

"Oh, is that it?" Mother Damselfish sighed. "Earth people have all sorts of customs and beliefs that we don't have here on the reef and Christmas is one of them."

"But it sounds fun!" Dimity persisted, "And I want Father Christmas to bring me something too!"

This got Mother Damselfish thinking and she decided to get all the parents together to organize the first Christmas party for reef children ever! In no time at all the whole bay was talking about the Christmas party and volunteers were coming forward and offering their help in any way they could. And there was plenty of work to be done. As so many children and parents and even those without children or grandchildren were invited, it was decided to hold the party on the big sandy area at the base of the reef. The children could play games on the sand while the grownups relaxed. Food and drinks would be set out on the ledges of the reef and everyone, even the children, would help decorate the entire area. Once the idea got going there was no stopping it.

Not everyone knew about Christmas, especially the children, so Mother Damselfish tried her best to pass on the little information she had. She understood it had something to do with the birth of the Christ child and that everyone who wanted to, celebrated the day each year with parties and the exchange of gifts. Mother Damselfish remembered the day when she was only a small fish herself and a party of human grownups and children had come into the bay where they set out a picnic and played games on the beach. Then, half-way through the afternoon, a small boat had motored into the bay and a very fat man dressed in a red jacket and pants trimmed with white, with a red cap on his head and a long flowing white beard, had leapt out onto the beach and begun handing out brightly wrapped packets to the children. There was lots of laughing and talking, hugging and singing and everyone enjoyed themselves until the sun sank into the sea, leaving the blue sky streaked with red and yellow rays just like a Sunset Tellin sea shell. Yes, Mother Damselfish was determined that the reef would have a Christmas party just as good as that — or even better!

The day before the party, the reef children collected garlands of green and yellow sargassum seaweed and draped them all around the rock ledges of the reef. They found some lovely blue Y-branched algae and made them into posies held together with frills of white scroll algae. The bright pinks of the twig algae gave splashes of colour to the ledges and the purple sea pearls dotted about glistened like sparkling stars. Mother Damselfish said that the reef decorations far outdid any of the coloured paper streamers and twinkling tinsel that the human children had used as their party decorations. The reef children laughed with delight.

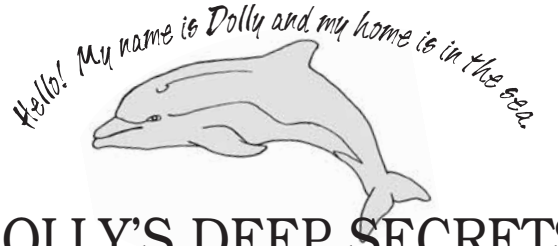
The reef mothers had a hard time getting their children to bed that night they were so excited, but in the end their drowsy eyes closed and they fell asleep. The next morning everyone was up bright and early and all the food preparations began. There were mounds of fresh and juicy sea grapes, lots of crunchy sea lettuce, shells piled high with soft, sweet-tasting oatmeal algae, dark green leaves of sea watercress wrapped around yellow Swiss cheese algae and whatever else the inhabitants of the reef managed to gather and form into mouthwatering delicacies.

At last everything was ready for the reef's first Christmas party feast and all the children were hungrier than they had ever been! Mother Damselfish declared the party open and adults and children tucked into the food until they could eat no more. While the adults nodded off, drowsing away the effects of so much eating, the children swam and crawled about the sandy bottom of the bay. Some of them played hide-and-seek while others tossed the mango-seed ball that one of the children had brought along. When some of the adults felt up to it, they organized races. The fish children were divided into age and size groups and they had swimming races, while the sea snails, shells and bristle worms scurried across the sand. With so much playing the children were soon hungry again and so everyone finished up the last of the party delicacies.

And it was none too soon for it was time for the long-awaited arrival of Father Christmas with gifts for the children. Fat, jolly Mister Gold-Ringed Eel had been chosen for the job and with his false beard made of fine, white net algae he was the perfect underwater Santa. The children shrieked and clapped when they saw him and could hardly wait for Mother Damselfish to give out the presents. There were strings of pretty shells, whose occupants had long since left them, made into necklaces for the girls along with bracelets made of very small sea pearls. The boys were given bats of wood smoothed by sand and sea found by the edge of the beach and old seeds dropped from trees and round as ping-pong balls. At the end of the gift-giving the sun had begun to sink down into the sea painting the blue of the water a happy Christmas red, so before it got dark, the parents collected their children and everyone went home — but not before they had all clapped and cheered, hugged and kissed and declared that from now on, Christmas on the Reef was to be Cutie Cove's very own tradition.

THE END

In no time at all the whole bay was talking about the Christmas party



DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

Do you remember learning about the Census of Marine Life? This is a ten-year undertaking to survey the world's oceans and seas to find, count and track the thousands of species found in the marine environment. All the information gathered will be stored in a database called **OBIS: the Ocean Biogeographic Information System**. Let's look more closely at the different projects which are part of the census. They are marked here in bold print.

The marine areas of the world have been divided into sections which are being surveyed by different groups of scientists and researchers. The **near shore** environment is being studied for biodiversity, that is, a look at how many different creatures, large and small, live on the shore. **Coral reefs** are also being investigated to find how many species use the coral reefs as home. The Gulf of Maine is being used as an example of a **regional eco-system** so special acoustic technology is being used to count the fish which live there. A study of life on **continental shelves** and one on **tracking large migratory (pelagic) fish** are both being carried out in the Pacific region.

Outside the continental shelf, the terrain slopes sharply down to the **abyssal plains** at the bottom of the sea. These slopes are the **continental margins** and they and the abyss are also being investigated for the number of species which live there. The bottom of the ocean is not flat but, just like on dry land there are mountains, volcanoes and ridges. **Seamounts, vents and seeps** and the **mid-ocean ridges** are other areas studied in the Census for the peculiar organisms that can survive in the tough conditions so far under water.

The Antarctic and Arctic Oceans (**ice oceans**) are being specially studied as they are particularly prone to the effects of global warming. And the sea itself is being investigated to find the number and variety of **microbes** and **zooplankton** (tiny, microscopic organisms) present.

OBIS will also include information on the history of fishing to give us some idea of how mankind has been using the world's ocean resources in the past so that plans can be made for the future.

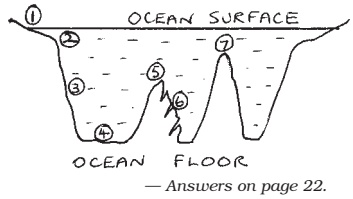
Many of the scientists involved in the Census met in New Zealand in early November 2007 for an update on all the projects. Find out next month how they got on.

For more information, check out the Census websites at www.coml.org and www.coml/secretariat.org.

PUZZLE

The diagram shows a cross-section of the ocean bottom. Match the numbers to the terms given.

Abyssal plain
Coastal shelf
Deep slope
Near shore
Ridge
Seamount
Vent



— *Answers on page 22.*

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2007 ©

Scandinavian Tradition on Bequia

by Mariann Palmborg

In 1980 my spouse, Peter, and I started to build a replica of a Colin Archer rescue boat from 1910. We were just ordinary Norwegian people — social workers — but we were not *that* ordinary; we both were hard workers and very determined. We built the 50-foot boat in the middle of Oslo and called her *Fredag*. We sold all our belongings and started a circumnavigation in 1984.

After a year of cruising, it happened — what all cruisers probably have nightmares about — we went on a reef at night and sank after the coast guard tried to "save" us. The boat was all we had, and we had no savings and no insurance.



Of course we had to save *Fredag*. With a lot of help from other yachties and the lovely people of Union Island, and the late John Caldwell (author of *Desperate Voyage*) who ran Palm Island Resort at that time, we were able to raise her.

Then came six hard years when we were known as the couple who never gives up. We chose Bequia as a base and survived by doing charters, transport, whatever. With insufficient maintenance funds, we had a series of mishaps: dismastings, engine disasters and so on and so on. In 1995 we sold *Fredag*. She went back to Norway to become a school ship, while Peter and I stayed on Bequia.

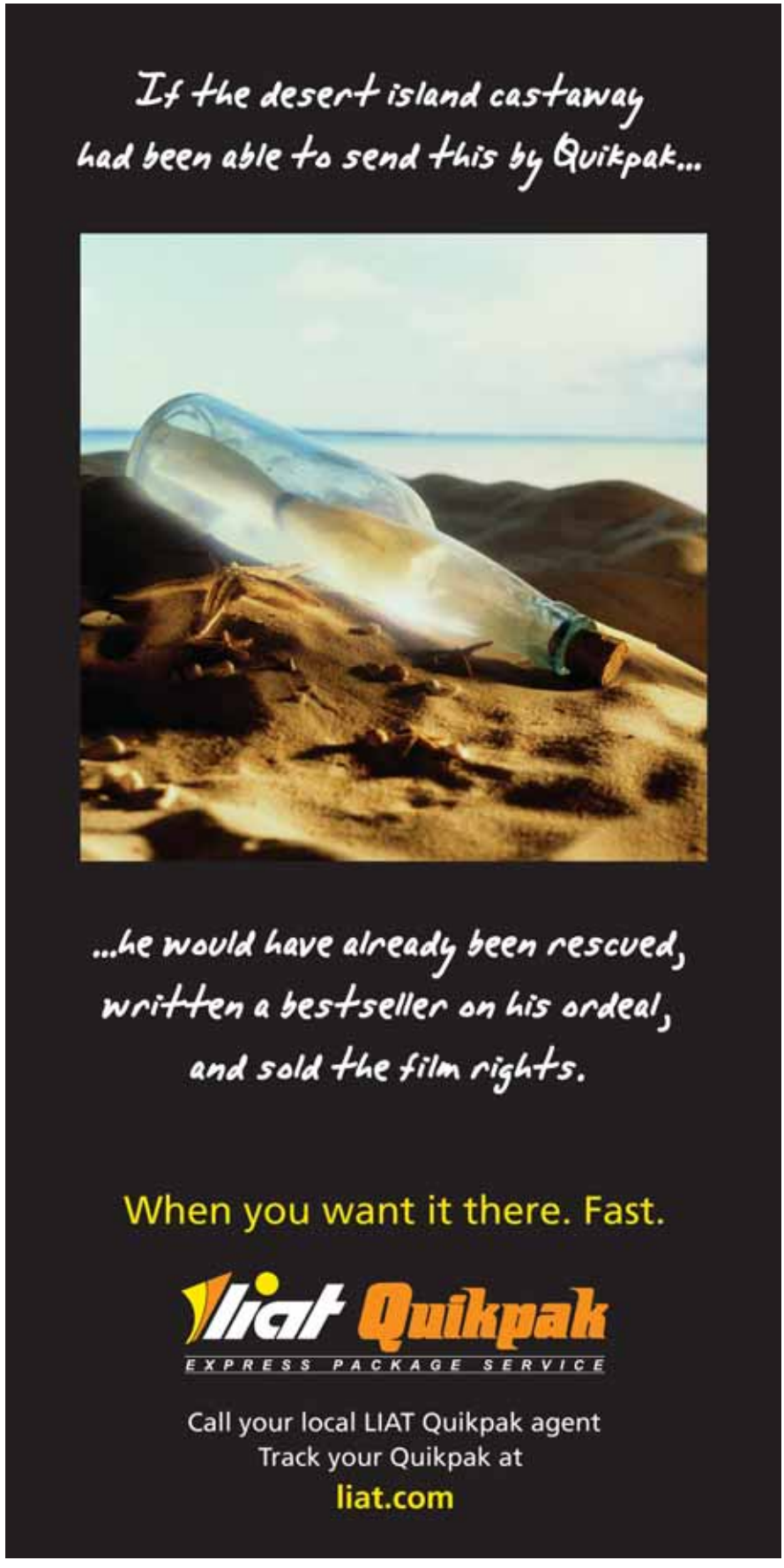
As long as I can remember I have gathered people on Christmas Eve for an informal gløgg party. Gløgg is a spicy, hot wine drink we use to warm ourselves at Christmas-time in the cold north. I started to invite people aboard *Fredag* for gløgg in 1992. The party grew over the years until the last time I had it aboard there were 150 people — at the same time! After moving ashore on Bequia, it grew even bigger.

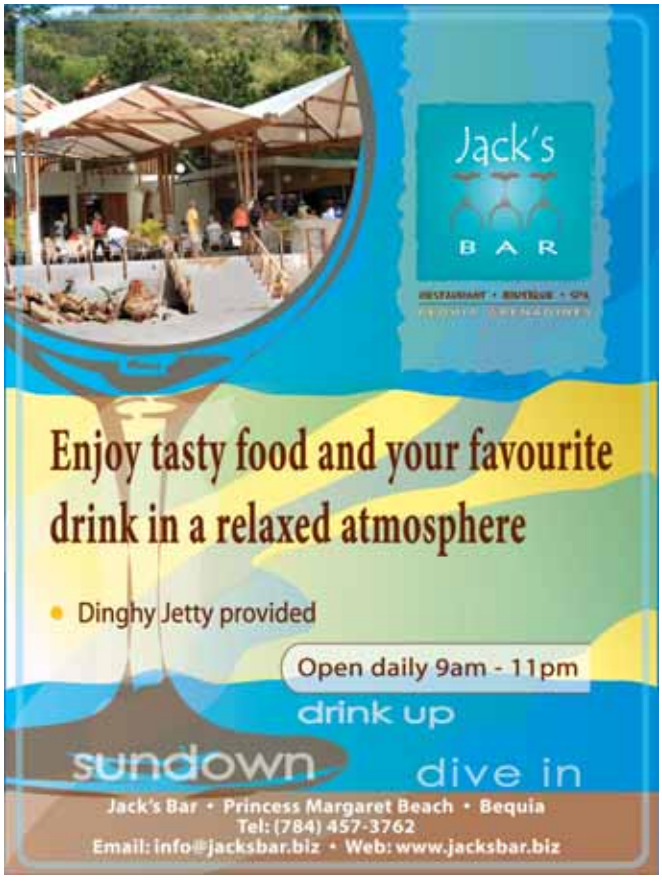
Now this party is a "must" for Scandinavians, a meeting point for all Scandinavian boats crossing the Atlantic that year and island-resident Scandinavians. Other nationalities want to join in, but there are rules: you have to have a strong connection to a Scandinavian country and/or speak the language. (I have some American friends with roots in Norway, who are practicing Norwegian really hard to qualify for participation!)

Lately the party has included a raffle: guests bring prizes with a Scandinavian twist, like caviar, aquavit or Swedish meatballs. Children from the Sunshine School for Children with Special Needs sell the raffle tickets and we made over EC$1,000 last year — the money goes to the school.

All Scandinavians are welcome to the gløgg party at Mariann "Why Knot's" place in Mount Pleasant, Bequia, on Christmas Eve 2007 from 1300 to 1500 hours. Bring red wine for the gløgg and a raffle prize if you have something typically Scandinavian. Taxis will be available at the Port Hole Restaurant in Port Elizabeth from 1250 hours; pay only one way at the time (EC$3 per person, half price for children).

For more information call "Why Knot" on VHF channel 08, phone (784) 457-3047 or 432-3232, or Skype whyknotbequia.



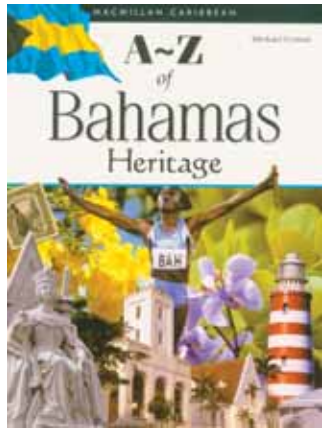




The Heritage of the Bahamas and Grenada, from A to Z

A - Z of Bahamas Heritage, *by Michael Craton, Macmillan Caribbean © 2007. Paperback, 424 pages, black-and-white and color photos throughout. ISBN 978-1-4050-0242-4. £15.95.*

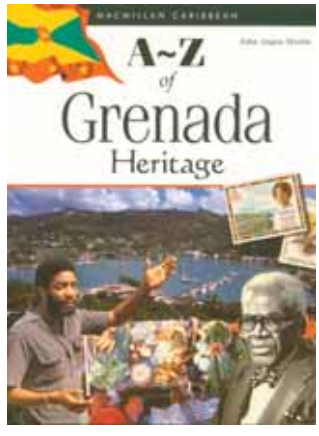
A - Z of Grenada Heritage, *by John Angus Martin. Macmillan Caribbean © 2007. Paperback, 296 pages, black-and-white and color photos throughout. ISBN 978-0-333-79252-0. £15.95.*



Macmillan A - Z's are a comprehensive series of reference books that provide an invaluable and entertaining source of information about the countries that comprise the Caribbean region. Highly illustrated and in full-color throughout, they are a unique "one-stop" resource for anyone interested in the cultural heritage of this fascinating and diverse part of the world. These are the two latest publications in the series.

A - Z of Bahamas Heritage provides brief but definitive entries on such matters as the most recent findings about the aboriginal Lucayans; the legacies of piracy and the Loyalists; the competing influences of Africa, Britain and United States; the styles of boatbuilding, fishing, farming and land tenure; the origins and development of Bahamian arts and crafts; language, cuisine, goombay music and Junkanoo.

The author, Michael Craton, was educated in England and taught history at the Government High School in Nassau, Bahamas, for six years. He researched and wrote the first full *History of The Bahamas* in 1962. He is the author of many works on the British West Indies, including *A Jamaican Plantation*. Collaborating with Dr. Gail Saunders, the Archivist of The Bahamas, he produced the prize-winning, two-volume Bahamian social history called *Islanders in the Stream*.



A - Z of Grenada Heritage gives a guided tour of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, covering cultural aspects such as Anansi stories and the Big Drum Dance; geographical features including the Grand Etang National Park and Grand Anse Beach; and history from Fédon's Rebellion to Hurricane Ivan.

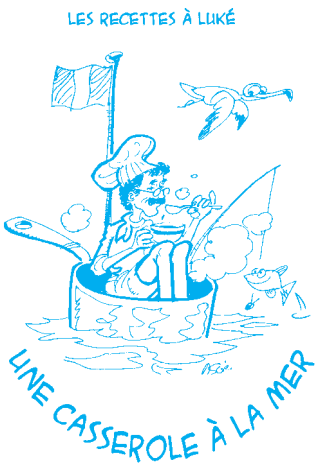
The author, John Angus Martin, was born and raised in St. George's, Grenada, before emigrating with his family to Brooklyn, New York, in 1978. After graduating from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, he spent three years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone, West Africa. He currently works as a Country Desk Officer in the Africa region of the US Peace Corps, and returns often to Grenada. This is his first book.

Both books are available at bookstores or from www.macmillan-caribbean.com.



FRENCH 'CRUISINE'

***Les Recettes à Luké: Une Casserole à la Mer**, by Luc Guibert de Fontaine. Self-published, paperback, 130 pages, black-and-white photos and illustrations. 15 Euro.*



This collection of recipes by a French chef and cruising sailor is designed to be used in a typical boat's galley. You won't need a lot of fancy equipment, readily available ingredients are used (especially if you like to forage for seafood) and, barring marination, each recipe requires no more than an hour of combined preparation and cooking time (a microwave is often employed).

The Mediterranean-influenced recipes are given first in French and then in a mainly comprehensible, if quirky, English translation. For example, "Mousse Tahitienne aux Citrons Vert" is charmingly translated as "Lime Mousse Like in Tahiti" and a shrimp tempura becomes the intriguing "Doughnut of Schrimps". This cook found one or two translations mystifying: the recipe for "Pilot Whales Serafini", which calls for four whole somethings, had me wondering if I could find a pot big enough to simmer them in — until I did the research to find out that the main ingredient, a *sepia*, is actually a type of cuttlefish. I guess the stuffed squid are supposed to look like little cetaceans. But usually, when the Franglish becomes incomprehensible or hilarious ("In a quivering olive oil frying pan, brown the burgots…"), any cook with a tablespoon of experience can quickly figure out what is meant, and those with a *soupçon* of French can refer to the original recipe for clarification.

The 60 or more recipes are divided into sections for entrées, seafood, meat and poultry, vegetables, desserts and miscellany. The French cruising culture's predilection for hunting and gathering is shown in the numerous recipes for reef and near-shore critters such as white sea urchins, octopus, whelks, parrotfish and lobster. (We ask those so inclined to "harvest" thoughtfully.) Many will prefer to troll for fish such as king mackerel and tuna, and the recipes for these look excellent.

The dessert cart also looks mouth-watering, and we suspect that Luké's coconut-papaya crumble will become a classic.

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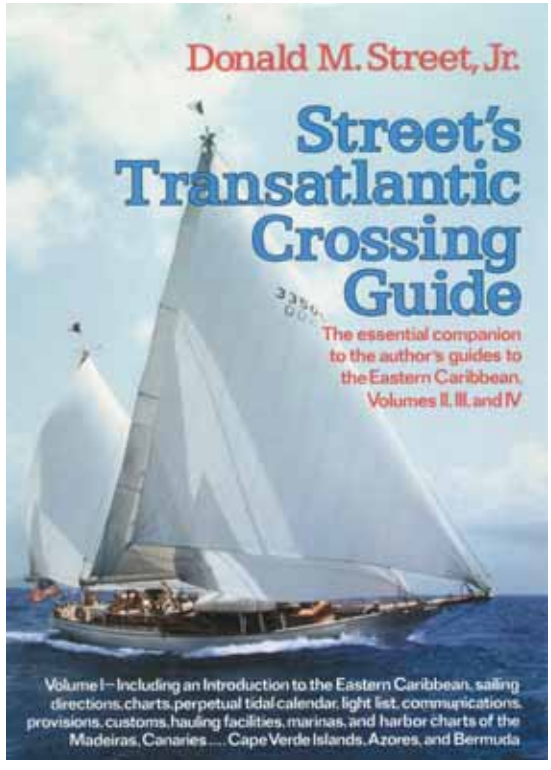
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Sailing Directions Eastward from Panama

FILLING IN THE BLANKS

by Don Street



If you draw a line through the Caribbean Sea from Isla de Mona, off Puerto Rico, to Aruba, the area east of the line is covered by so many guides that they are impossible to list. West of that line, although it is not *terra incognita*, there are vast areas that are charted poorly or not at all and not covered by any guides.

Jamaica, the San Pedro Bank, and the Morant Keys are well covered by the late John Letheridge's guide, originally printed about 15 years ago. It has not been re-printed but rocks don't move so much information in the guides is still valid. Panama and the San Blas Islands are well covered by the highly respected *The Panama Guide* by Nancy and Tom Zydler. But information about other areas in the western Caribbean is very scarce.

I have been writing guides since 1964. My *Cruising Guide to the Lesser Antilles*, published in 1966 and now back in print, was a result of ten years cruising the area. This guide was revised and expanded many times through the years, last revision 2001.

My *Guide to Venezuela and the ABC Islands* (1980; revised, expanded and re-printed in 1990) was also the result of about ten years cruising the area, amended with much information supplied by experienced Venezuelan yachtsmen. It is out of print, but again, the rocks haven't moved.

My forthcoming *Street's Guide to the Atlantic and Caribbean Basins* is a re-write of my 1986 *Transatlantic Crossing Guide*, which was mis-titled by the publisher as it not only covered all transatlantic crossing routes, but also getting to and from the East Coast of the United States and Panama to the Eastern Caribbean, and was a cruising guide to the Atlantic islands: Bermuda, the Azores, Madeira, and the Salvage, Canary and Cape Verde islands. Almost all the information was based on personal experience or first-hand information. (I hope it will open up the Cape Verde islands to the cruising yachtsmen. Presently they are regarded as a quick stopping place en route to the Caribbean while in actuality they are a wonderful, undiscovered, uncrowded cruising area. You can cruise the Cape Verdes for three or four weeks, enjoy Christmas there and cross the Atlantic in January when the Trades have filled in reliably.)

The chapter "Eastward from Panama" in the new *Guide to the Atlantic and Caribbean Basins* has been the most difficult writing I have ever done, as for the first time in my guide-writing career, I have had to rely on second-hand, and sometimes even third-hand, information. In contrast, the rest of the book is based on personal or first-hand information.

Little has been written about sailing eastward from Panama as it is so tough no one does it twice unless they are a highly paid delivery skipper, and even they never do it a third time. The only yacht delivery I have left uncompleted in my more than 50 years of off-shore sailing was one from Cartagena, Colombia, to Grenada in a 40-foot Sea Wolf ketch. We aborted in Maracaibo, Venezuela. I believe that if we had had the information included in my forthcoming guide we would have been able to complete the trip.

A few tough sailors just say "to hell with it", stick their heads down, take off from Panama, and beat to windward without stopping until they hit an island in the Eastern Caribbean. The late Major Ron Roberts (father of Patti Stoken of Independent Boat Yard fame) took off from Panama single-handed on his Arthur Robb-designed Cheoy Lee. He tied in a reef, set a small working jib and sailed direct from Panama to St. Thomas. No wonder we called him, with great affection, "Mad Major".

But no matter how you cut the cookie, heading eastwards from Panama, against wind and current, is tough. There are, however, many different options — all based on the premise that most yachts will want to make stops.

The coast of Colombia is poorly charted by the US and British hydrographic offices. There are general charts of the coast, and detailed charts of a few of the major commercial harbors that yachtsmen avoid, but no detailed coverage of the harbors that yachtsmen would like to stop at and anchor as they fight their way east.

I am told that the Colombian hydrographic office has done an excellent job of producing detailed charts of the harbors along the Colombian coast. Unfortunately, the only way to obtain these charts is to go to Cartagena, get in a taxi, go to the hydrographic office (well out of town), select the charts wanted, get a bill, get back in a taxi, go back to town, take the bill to the designated bank, pay the bill, get a receipt, find another taxi, go back to the hydrographic office, show the receipt, pick up the charts, find another taxi and go back to the boat in Cartagena.

Google Earth (earth.google.com, which maps the earth by superimposition of satellite and aerial imagery) covers some of the anchorages quite well. You can also buy electronic charts of the area, but — MOST IMPORTANT — check the datum from which the charts were developed: if British Admiralty or US datum, forget it. Only use the ones done from the Colombian hydrographic office.

I have obtained information from cruisers who have anchored in almost all the anchorages on the Colombian coast [*Editor's note: see* Cruising Guide for the Coast of Colombia *by Lourae and Randy Kenoffel: "Colombia Coast Update" at www.caribbeancompass.com*], but there are a few gaps.

There is a possible harbour I spotted via Google Earth, Salina de Umalaga, at 11°53.281 N, 72°14.4 W. The entrance is 1,500 feet wide with a rock in the middle. The harbour is about two miles long, but narrow. It would appear from Google Earth that there is sufficient water in the harbour, but this is not confirmed by any user reports. If it is a viable harbour, it would provide a stopping place between Five Bays and Cabo de la Vela.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

Another information gap is along the Panamanian-Colombian border. Isla Rosario, well charted by the US, is 20 miles from Cartagena. It is a playground of wealthy Colombians. Via about third-hand information, I gather there are a couple of anchorages in this area that would enable yachts to head eastward from Panama to Isla Rosario in a series of daytime sails, anchoring every night. If anyone can supply information on these anchorages, it would be greatly appreciated.

There are other routes east from Panama. You can head north, stopping at Albuquerque Cays, San Andres, Providencia and then through the Yucatan Channel; or northeastwards to Jamaica with possible stops at Roncador, Serrana, Quita Sueño and Serranilla Banks. All these are marked by lights of dubious reliability — you can end up on the bank before you see the light. Obviously these cays should only be approached by experienced reef pilots in conditions of good light.

A brief description of all the above is given in *Reed's Caribbean Almanac*. They note that on all these banks anchorages can be had, but not only do they warn that they are uncharted, they note that the lights are not in their charted positions. Usually the position is correct in latitude, but off in longitude, a common mistake in early charting before the advent of very accurate time. (This is an example of hydrographic offices' failure to correct their charts. All of these banks are marked by lights that must be — should be? — periodically maintained. If the maintenance crew took a position, even with a hand-held GPS, the lights' positions could be charted correctly.)

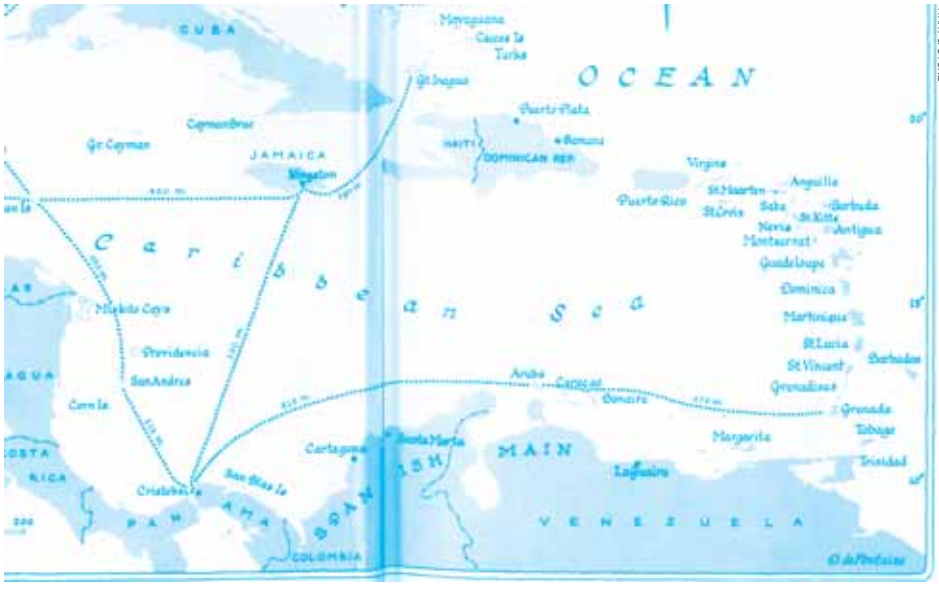
Some of the above — San Andres, Albuquerque, Providencia — are covered by British Admiralty charts, but remember they were done in the middle years of the 19th century and have not been updated. Eyeball navigation in good light, not GPS, is required.

Cruisers Rod and Jan Tuttle visited these islands and reported on their cruise in *Compass* in the August, 2000, issue: useful information that I have used in my new guide with appropriate credit given.

Cartagena resident Lee Miles led a flotilla of boats to Banco Nuevo, where he reported an anchorage but an unhappy flotilla. From there they went to Serrana and felt they were in heaven. I'm looking forward to receiving details of both these anchorages from him.

About Roncador and Serranilla I have absolutely no information. Can anyone help?

Heading from Panama northeast to Jamaica the trip can be broken up by stopping at Banco Nuevo and San Pedro Bank. Regarding San Pedro, the BA and US charts are the wrong scale and from old survey; use Letheridge's guide if you can find a copy.



Also out of print is Hart & Stone's seminal A Cruising Guide to the Caribbean and the Bahamas *(first published in 1976), which included this illustration of eastward routes from Panama*

Heading east from Jamaica to the western end of Hispaniola, the trip can be broken up by stops at Morant Cays and possibly Navassa Island. The former is covered by Letheridge's book. The latter is covered by two US charts done in the early years of the 20th century and also shows up well in Google Earth. Looking at Google Earth and the chart, it would appear that there is an anchorage off the southwestern tip of the island. Navassa Island is uninhabited but listed as a US possession. Why? The reason should be of interest. I have not been able to obtain any information on this island. Can anyone help?

The south coast of Hispaniola is not covered by any guides but is well charted by both US and British charts, all done in the early 20th century. But the charts have not been updated in the last 30 or more years, so new harbors and marinas are not shown. An excellent article by Alan Clemmetsen on the south coast of Hispaniola, in the November 2006 issue of *Yachting World*, provided a lot of useful information but illustrated the fact that all second- and third-hand information must be double- and triple-checked. Doing this I discovered that one harbour was listed as being one degree of longitude (50 miles) west of where it actually was.

Phil Richards, who has sailed in the Caribbean since the early 1960s, has spent a lot of time on the south coast of Hispaniola and in the western Caribbean. He was kind enough to go over my material and charts of the area.

At the most recent Annapolis Boat Show I discovered that Lisa and Andy Copeland have spent a couple of months on the south coast of Hispaniola, and are writing an article on the area for *Cruising World* and also a guide. Lisa has kindly offered to review that section of the chapter "Eastward from Panama", correcting any errors and adding any information she feels is important.

If cruising yachtsmen will help me by filling in the blanks in my information as listed in this article it will not only allow me to do a really good job on this section of the guide but it will also make passages eastward in the Caribbean easier.

Please send information to streetiolaire@hotmail.com. Thank you!

P.S. Researching this section of the guide, I realized that the historians are wrong. Historians say that the Spanish treasure galleons left Panama and Cartagena in the middle of the hurricane season because the Spanish accountants wanted to have the treasure ships back in Spain in time for them to close their financial books by the end of the year. This was not the reason. Checking wind and wave-height charts, one realizes that no square-rigger (much less Spanish galleons, which were not noted for their weatherliness) could beat eastwards from Panama except during hurricane season when the sea goes down and the wind eases off and becomes variable. These summer conditions allowed the galleons to stand north and pick up the Yucatan Current, then the Gulf Stream passing north of Cuba and west of the Bahamas, then the southwesterly across the Atlantic.

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Fighting FIRE at Chacachacare... and on Your Own Boat

by Glyn Johnson

Shortly before 2:00PM on Wednesday, September 19th, 2007, a large sports fishing vessel was anchored near a small pier in Chacachacare in Trinidad while the owner and his friends relaxed. We were anchored nearby with friends Mike and Barbara from *S/V Phantasie*. This is one of our favourite anchorages in Trinidad away from the crowds, and we had enjoyed a nice lunch and were looking forward to a quiet afternoon.

We had seen this sports fishing boat on previous Wednesdays at this spot and this was obviously a regular day out for the owner. Suddenly we heard the shout of "FIRE!" across the water and looking out could see dense clouds of smoke pouring from the side vents and back of that boat. Most of the people who had been aboard it were enjoying a swim and were therefore safely away from the fire.

Mike and I collected my fire extinguishers and jumped into the dinghy to try and assist. It appeared that the fire was in the fishing boat's engine room where a generator and other equipment were still running. The owner and another man were on the foredeck using a powered crane to lift a large dinghy over the side and into the water. There was a lot of very acrid smoke coming from the vents along the side of the boat and we tried to direct one extinguisher to act through there. We quickly found that the vents had screens which tended to blow the powder back in our faces.

The smoke at this time was too heavy to try and enter the stern of the vessel. We gathered swim towels and things to try and block off the vents and tried the second and third extinguishers with the nozzle pressed hard against the screens to minimise blowback. We managed to momentarily knock the fire down and for a few seconds there was no smoke coming out. But it then flared up again and, with only one extinguisher left, we realised that we were losing the battle to save this lovely boat. We fired off the remaining extinguisher but to no avail.

As I considered what to do next, I was able to see into the stern of the vessel and found the large hatch to the engine room was open. All I could do at this stage was to close it and hope the fire would burn itself out. With all persons accounted for there was little more that could be done.

The owner informed me that he had 1,100 gallons of fuel on board and it was time for us to move our boat out into the bay away from the danger. In any case, it was necessary to move to be able to make radio contact with the coastguard.

Some local pirogues had arrived and were trying to throw water onto the boat. We moved back in close to them to use our deckhose, but it was already beyond hope and with the difficulties of trying to maintain position in a sailboat in order to use a deckhose we once again backed off to become spectators to this tragic event. The vessel continued to burn and about two hours later it erupted with huge flames and plumes of black smoke billowing into the air as the reported 1,100 gallons of fuel went up.

Thinking about it afterwards, I am sure that we should have been able to extinguish that fire but we were hampered by our lack of knowledge about that type of boat and we'd reacted too quickly with our extinguishers. Worse, somebody had opened the engine room hatch to see what the problem was and failed to close it again, supplying oxygen to the fire.

This was a very sad sight and it makes you think about your own vessel. Have you a fire control plan? Do you know what to do? Have you adequate extinguishers on board?

Fire needs three components to exist, commonly known as the fire triangle: a source of ignition, something to burn, and oxygen. Fires on board may start for any one of a variety of reasons but the way to fight them follows a standard pattern: remove the source of ignition, remove the fuel, remove the oxygen.

What does this mean in practice? My fire plan, or priorities I would seek to achieve in the event of smoke coming from my boat, would be:

1) Shut down all possible sources of ignition. That means all electrical circuits, engines and generators, etcetera.
2) Turn off cooking gas and fuel lines at their source.
3) Block off all vents and hatches into the area of the fire.
4) Use the extinguishers. But remember extinguishers are a one-shot option and so, unless you can get right into the seat of the fire, they are unlikely to be effective unless you have already taken one or more of the other steps.



'There was a lot of very acrid smoke coming from the vents along the side...'

In practice, how much you can achieve and the order in which you achieve those items will depend on the particular circumstances on the day. Clearly, a simple fire such as a cloth blowing onto a stove top is readily dealt with. But a fire in an engine room or an electrical fire behind panelling or in an enclosed space is much more difficult to extinguish. If it appears to go out, then leave everything to cool down or have another extinguisher ready, as opening up a compartment to look will let in the oxygen again and it could go whoosh!

Smoke is a killer in its own right, as well as making it difficult to see and breathe. Dive masks can help, keeping smoke out of eyes, and the sort of face respirator you should wear when sanding bottom paint can help with the breathing.

What should you carry for firefighting on board? Ask an expert for advice, but practise with your old, out-of-date extinguishers (we all have them I expect) so you know what will happen when you really have to use one. Used properly, they are very effective.

Finally, prevention is better than cure and working out a fire drill is more relaxing than actually fighting a fire for real.

Always keep in mind that this may be the only life you get to live and virtually anything can be replaced apart from you.

Glyn Johnson is cruising the Caribbean aboard S/Y Wandering Star.

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A QUESTION OF MURDER

by Lorna Rudkin

Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, I put it to you that guests who come to stay on boats could, generally, be divided into three categories.

Firstly, there are family members who, if they come at all, will stay for a couple of weeks. They sometimes drive us mad and we may have a couple of disagreements, but this is normal in most families anyway, and at least we're familiar with their various habits. So we refrain from Familicide.

Then there are the friends who arrive for a few days. They insist on helping, break a few things because they don't realize that, for instance, they can't put their entire body weight on the cockpit table. They, at least, do leave. Though sorely tempted, we refrain from Amicide.

Finally there are the guests from hell. This set arrives but refuses to leave. All entreaties fail and we have to resort to murder.

We hate the idea of killing any living thing and our beliefs mean that we never do — with three exceptions.

We do not hesitate to kill mosquitoes and have to question, quite seriously, why they ever evolved at all.

We do kill cockroaches but have a slight pang when doing so as all written information insists that they're very clean insects. It's just such a pity that the very sight of them is so horrible that no one, with the possible exception of an insect specialist, could find them fascinating!

The third boat guest to come under scrutiny, and subsequent annihilation, is the poor, hard working and tiny Crazy Ant.

The mosquito needs no introduction, or so we thought! It is responsible for malaria, dengue fever and many other diseases, all of which can be fatal. Huge sums of money are devoted to eradicating this pest and we certainly do our bit by using the spray can.

No one we've ever spoken to can tolerate that high-pitched, unmistakable sound of a mosquito just about to land on their ear at three o'clock in the morning! The first reaction is to whack, blindly, at the thing. This often means hitting your own ear which, at least, serves the purpose of waking you up. This method is never successful and, if you just turn over and go back to sleep, the process will be repeated. So, there's nothing for it but to get up and try to look for the thing. Well, boats are perfect camouflage for the rotten little mozzy which merely flies onto the nearest bit of wood, which most boats have in abundance, and there it reposes until everything settles down.

It's as if the thing has a huge brain and is calculating speeds and distances and it dances, dangling its long legs, just out of sight.

There's nothing for it but to spray, leave the cabin and go elsewhere to read for a quarter of an hour until the spray droplets have settled. At least the mosquito will be dead.

A mosquito net over the cabin hatch helps, but what do you do if it rains? If it's me, I leap out of bed at what I fancy is the first sign of a deluge and drop the hatch to nearly shut — thus saving the life of the net a little longer. The excess net then dangles inside the cabin and, as the rain gets heavier, so the water creeps onto the net and down into the cabin. So, up I get again, re-open the hatch which brings a fair amount of water onto my head, put my arms outside and pull the net off the hatch. As the net is weighted with quite a bit of lead the whole thing then drops into the cabin if I'm not careful and, in any case, I'm now fairly wet. Now I have to shut the hatch, so I drop it onto its catches then raise it slightly with my head in order to lift it off the catches and drop it to its closed state. I have to use my head because I'm not strong enough to lift the hatch with my hands and pull the catches back at the same time. Why am I doing this when my husband is a big butch boy at six foot one? Because I sleep on the outside of the bunk! In any case he's asleep and doesn't get bitten by mosquitoes.

The next question is whether to open the hatch when it has stopped raining. To put the net back in place involves going topside which, in itself, means I run the risk of being bitten by the outside mozzies.

We've tried buying the electric mosquito killers into which we'd pop a tablet-thing which gives off some kind of fumes when warmed, but haven't found any which run on 12 volts.

We've tried the tennis racquet things, with their electric wires, but they're only any good if you can see the mosquito.

The slowly-burning coils are not okay for us either as we get lost in a cloud of noxious smoke and end up with headaches which are worse than itches.

One final thought on mosquitoes though: the dengue-carrying mosquito, which is a day-flying insect and the same size as the night one is, apparently, quite recognisable by its striped legs. Now, I don't know about you, but I am not sure that I could spot the stripes on a leg that is about five hundredths of a millimetre thick and being trailed by a fast-moving insect!

Cockroaches are a completely different kettle of fish. We, sadly, have to report that we are familiar with both the German roach and the ordinary, huge, black, disgusting things which lurk in the inaccessible places in the boat.

The large roaches have two similarities to the mosquito in that they can fly and they emerge at night.

We constantly asked ourselves how these repulsive insects got onto the boat. We tried greasing the stands, when ashore, and spraying the mooring lines when in a marina. We never bring cardboard aboard and we dunk suspect fruit and vegetables into seawater.

In fact the answer is simple — they fly aboard and, once in residence, are loath to leave.

Our one experience of the German roach, which is brown and has long, constantly searching feelers, is that they're not too difficult to eradicate with spray but, gosh, they can move quickly. So, the remedy is to always have a spray can to hand because, if you spot one, and take your eyes off it for a picosecond, it will have vamoosed.

The big roach, with its calculated way of standing stock still, could have me dashing for the valium. Again, it succumbs to spray but, with its last bit of life limps off into a dark corner and drops a packet of eggs which, given time, is going to produce lots and lots of roachlets.

I would get up in the middle of the night, tiptoe into the galley in the dark, get hold of the spray can then, suddenly, put the light on and — bingo! — if I was lucky there'd be one lurking on the cooker which would be so mesmerised it would give me a moment of attack time.

We tried the boric acid cakes and we tried the Roach Hotels, including the ecologically friendly ones with the sticky mats; now I don't know about you but I really didn't want to see a live roach with all its six legs stuck to a piece of cardboard.

—Continued on next page



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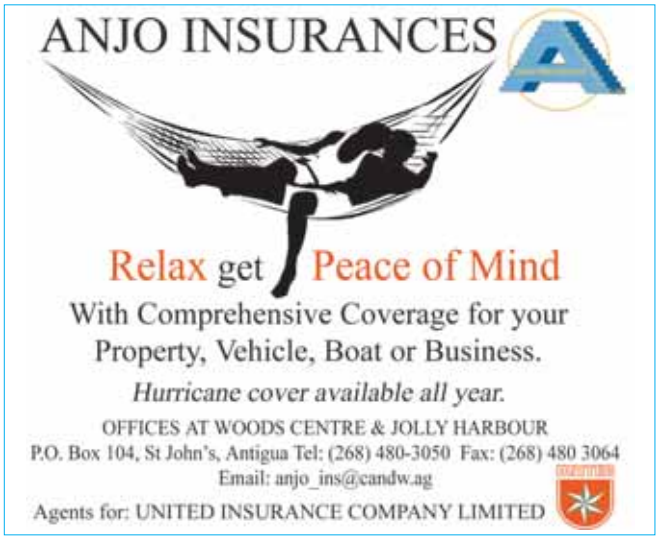
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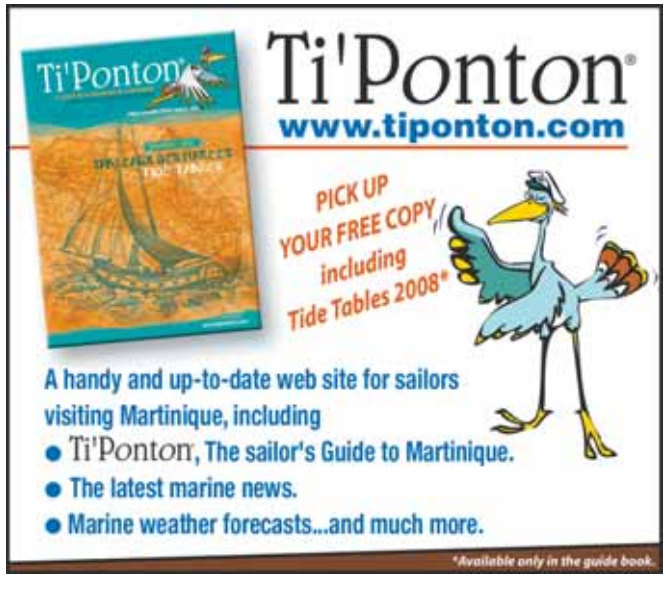
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—*Continued from previous page*

The contraption is lauded for containing no poisonous substances but it can't be kind, even to a repulsive creature, to have it die slowly from being glued down. Besides the darn things make squeaking noises.

We actually started to feel sorry for roaches after reading Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, but not sufficiently to want to tolerate them on *Tixi Lixi*!

The answer for this yachty nightmare is The Bomb. Not easy if you live aboard and want to live a bit longer, so we had to wait until we were going to vacate the boat for a while. We returned to a bug-free zone with only the carcasses to contend with.

My only question is — how is it that if we found a dead roach aboard it never had any innards? Do the living eat the dead?

(Should you wish to read further on cockroaches there is a coffee-table book called *The Complete Book of the Roach* by Mark Everard which is, unaccountably, unavailable from Amazon at the moment! Not only do we know that it exists but we have an American friend who has a copy. Your future as an entomologist could just be beginning!)

And, finally, there's the busy little Crazy Ant. I'm not proud to say that we've had an infestation of these fascinating creatures too.

Our ketch, *Tixi Lixi*, had been hauled and standing under trees and, on going back in the water, we noticed just the odd ant doing its crazy little journey here and there on the boat. We presumed that the ants had dropped from the trees.

These few little ants, which measured no more that three millimetres in length, rapidly became many ants. At the height of the problem we would see three different columns all wending their way to who-knows-where. It's difficult to tell with crazy ants as they all run in all directions.

The one thing I did notice, though, is that they would form a rough column and we would hardly ever see a hoard all collected in one place all at once. Does this mean, therefore, that they all line up in the nest and have a controlled departure time when they're about to go off on a foray?

"We hate the idea of killing any living thing and our beliefs mean that we never do — with three exceptions"

It was difficult to predict the habits of the ants as, sometimes, they'd be out and about and, at other times, we'd see none — at which time we'd become hopeful that they would have been eradicated, or just jumped ship. No such luck!

Although we admire the work ethic of the ant, we don't want it carrying on with any of its practises, on *Tix*.

We'd been looking at various extermination methods from the on-set of the problem. We'd bought a spray, which we were assured, by the label, couldn't fail. It did.

We tried a solution which had to be put on a little mat. We were informed that the ants would love it because it was sweet, they would go back to their nest and the whole ant family would die.

I cut up little bits of plastic margarine box which I then stuck to the various surfaces of the boat, where there was an obvious ant-track, popped the solution onto the plastic and waited. The box said that within three weeks the ants would be gone. Well, the ants loved the solution. This time they did congregate in large groups and lapped up the nectar. I was replacing the fluid every day and waiting for three weeks to elapse at the end of which time we had even more ants.

Interestingly, for me at least, the odd one would drown in the solution. It would remain there until the fluid had been consumed and then the other ants would carry the corpse away — I still ask myself, why?

We found one ant nest and, in the time it took me to find the spray (the right one for ants!) the little insects had picked up their larvae and gone. Vanished.

Next I tried boric acid powder mixed with a bit of jam. This time I was sure I'd got them but no, again they loved it and, after a day, the mixture became hard and they merely walked on it.

After all these fruitless efforts I began to wonder if we were being invaded by some other creature altogether. In desperation I peered at the things through a magnifying glass and could see that they were, indeed, *Paratrechina longicornis* or, more simply, Crazy Ants. Then, joy of joys, salvation arrived thanks to a friend in Trinidad. He came up with the remedy in the form of a tiny little bottle of Terro solution, using just one drop at a time, which did the trick. This time we had to wait just two weeks for a result.

Again, the ants loved the drops, went back to the nest to break the good news of food available in the galley and, within two weeks they were gone. Just like that!

So, Ladies and Gentlemen of the jury, my client appeals to you to find her guilty only of the crime of Insecticide.

Sweet, Sweet Potatoes

"Sweet potatoes", with their soft, brilliant orange flesh, are an integral part of every US Thanksgiving. It wasn't until we cruised the Caribbean I discovered we had actually been eating a variety of yam. The pale- to yellow-fleshed, red-skinned sweet potato in the island markets is even sweeter and lends itself to more recipes that its mis-named continental impostor.

Sweet potato is a Caribbean staple vegetable that requires a long growing season to produce mature roots. Sweet potatoes are often confused with yams, however yams are very different. While the sweet potato is native to Peru, yams originated in Africa. Although yams contain more sugar, they do not taste as sweet as sweet potatoes, and can grow as heavy as 100 pounds. Before Europeans landed in the Western Hemisphere the sweet potato was already well traveled. This root had already passed through South America and Mexico, and was carried by boat to far-away Pacific islands and farther on to New Zealand. In many countries of the Pacific, the sweet potato is a



prime food source, especially if the rice crop fails. China grows most of the world's crop.

Columbus brought back to Spain many new foods he discovered during his first voyage in 1492. Sweet potatoes were among Columbus's treasures. The Spanish immediately loved the sweet potatoes and began cultivation. Soon Spain exported the sweet root to their rival, England. France acquired a taste for the root when Napoleon's wife, Empress Josephine, who was born in Martinique, craved the sweet potato. The Portuguese seafarers carried the sweet potato to Africa and Asia.

The sweet potato is very nutritious. A half-cup of cooked sweet potato supplies two grams of protein, four grams of fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, beta-carotene, manganese and folic acid. Sweet potatoes may be shredded raw and added to salads or used as a topping for soups. Sweet potatoes can even be juiced!

Sliced Baked Sweet Potato

Slice peeled sweet potatoes 1/2 inch thick. Place on a piece of foil or baking sheet and brush both sides with vegetable oil. Bake at 400°F for half an hour or until cooked through.

Fried Sweet Potato Cakes

3 nice-sized sweet potatoes
2 eggs
1/2 Cup flour (more or less, depending on moisture content of potatoes)
2 Tablespoons cooking oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Peel and grate raw sweet potatoes. Mix in eggs and flour. Season to taste. Form into cakes about an inch thick. Heat oil in skillet and place cakes in oil. Cover and fry till cooked through and the cake breaks easily. Uncover and brown.

Serves four.

Sweet Potato Soup

4 or 5 large sweet potatoes
4 cups of water
1 large onion
Additional 3 cups of water
Salt and seasoning to taste

Peel sweet potatoes and onions and chop both into one-inch pieces. In a large stockpot, put water, potatoes and onion. Boil until potato is soft. Put vegetables and liquid into a food processor or blender and purée. Return puréed mixture to stockpot and add additional three cups of water. Heat and add seasonings.

Serves six.

Spicy Sweet Potatoes

3 large sweet potatoes
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine
1/2 cup chopped or sliced almonds (other nuts — even coconut — can be substituted)
A pinch each of salt, pepper, cloves and cinnamon (or to taste)
Sufficient flour to coat balls
2 Cups vegetable oil for frying

Peel and mash boiled sweet potatoes, then add butter, nuts and spices. Blend until sweet potatoes can be rolled into small balls. Carefully roll the balls in flour. Deep fry until golden brown and serve.

Makes a great side dish or a unique appetizer.

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MORE STORED ABOARD

Here are more ideas for creative meals using items you probably have stored aboard.

What to do with all those tins of soup you have left over, purchased for that rainy day that never happened? Here are some ideas.

Chicken Risotto

1 Tablespoon olive oil
500 grams (1 pound) boneless and skinless chicken breasts or thighs
1 ten-ounce can of condensed cream of chicken soup (use any other sort, such as celery, mushroom, etcetera as long as it is condensed "cream of")
13 fluid ounces (1 2/3 Cup) milk
2 ounces (1/2 Cup) grated Parmesan cheese (you can use the stuff that comes ready grated, but fresh is nicer)
1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
14 ounces (2 cups) uncooked Minute Rice
1 tomato (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste.

Cut chicken into small bite-sized pieces. Heat the oil in a frying pan/skillet. Add the chicken and cook until it is just browned.

If using the tomato, chop it up and put to one side.

In a medium-sized saucepan with a lid, mix together the soup, milk, cheese and Italian seasoning. Bring to a gentle boil and add the rice, chicken and tomato. Cover and cook on a low heat for about five minutes till the rice is cooked. Serve sprinkled with some extra Parmesan cheese.

This should serve four people — depending on appetites!

Easy Chicken Casserole

7 ounces (1 Cup) uncooked rice
1 kilo (2 pounds) chicken pieces of your choice (and yes, they *should* be skinless!)
1 packet of dry onion soup mix
1 ten-ounce can "cream of whichever flavour soup you prefer" (chicken is best)
1 soup can of water
1 can of mushrooms (size depending on how much you like mushrooms)
1 teaspoon paprika
Salt and pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 180°C (350°F). Drain and rinse the mushrooms.

Put the rice into a fairly large, greased casserole dish that has a lid. Arrange the chicken pieces on top of the rice.

In a saucepan, mix together the onion soup mix, the "cream of whichever" soup, water and mushrooms. Season to taste with salt and pepper, heat and pour over of the chicken.

Sprinkle the paprika over the top. Cover and bake for 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Take off the lid for the last 15 minutes to allow the casserole to brown.

If you don't have a lid for your casserole dish, kitchen foil put tightly over the top will do the trick.

This should serve about six people and is lovely with steamed green vegetables.

Tomato Beef Pasta

3 Cups pasta such as elbow macaroni, penne or the curly sort
2 Tablespoons olive oil
500 grams (1 pound) minced (ground) beef
2 medium onions, peeled and sliced
1 ten-ounce can condensed cream of tomato soup
1 twenty-eight-ounce can diced tomatoes (do not drain)
Garlic granules to taste

Cook pasta according to packet directions and drain. Pre-heat oven to 180°C (350°F).

In a medium-sized saucepan, brown the meat in one Tablespoon of the oil, breaking it up as it cooks, then set it aside in a colander to drain. Using the other Tablespoon of oil fry the onion till tender. Add the cooked beef to the onion along with the soup and diced tomatoes. Cook, stirring often, for about five minutes. Add the cooked pasta and mix well.

Pour into a 6 pint (3 quart) casserole dish and bake for 40 to 50 minutes. (Pop some grated cheese over the top next time, to make it a little bit different.)

This makes a complete meal in itself for about six people. It can be stretched further with some steamed carrots, broccoli or cauliflower.

Cheesy Meat Balls

500 grams (1 pound) tasty sausages or sausage meat
Cooking oil
1 can condensed cheddar cheese soup
3 Cups Bisquick or similar biscuit mix

Pre-heat oven to 230°C (450°F). If you are using the sausages take the meat out of the skins and discard the skins.

In a large frying pan/skillet, with a little cooking oil, fry the sausage meat until browned and cooked through. Take the meat off the stove, add the cheese soup and mix well. Add the biscuit mix and mix well again.

Now for the messy bit! When it is cool enough to touch, using your hands form the mixture into balls about 1 inch in diameter. Place the balls onto a non-stick baking tray and pop in the pre-heated oven for about 15 to 20 minutes.

You should have about 40 or so balls. These are nice served warm or cold. Put a cocktail stick in each one and serve around a bowl of homemade (or bought) tomato sauce, sweet and sour sauce or barbecue sauce for dipping.

Offshore Marinara

1 twenty-eight-ounce can chopped tomatoes and their juice (If you have tinned whole tomatoes just chop them up with a pair of scissors while still in the can)
1 six-ounce can tomato paste
1 Tablespoon olive oil (extra virgin is best)
4 cloves of garlic, crushed
2 teaspoons Italian seasoning or 1 teaspoon dried parsley or basil (or you can use fresh herbs if you are lucky enough to have them)
1/2 teaspoon salt
Ground fresh pepper to taste
1 teaspoon sugar (I like to add a little sugar to toma to recipes as it takes away the acidity, but omit it if you prefer)
2 fluid ounces (1/4 cup) red wine

In a medium-sized saucepan heat the olive oil and cook the garlic, but do not let it burn. (Garlic becomes bitter if allowed to burn)

Add the chopped tomatoes and the tomato paste to the garlic, stir well. Add the Italian seasoning, salt, sugar and red wine. Let the sauce simmer gently for about 15 minutes. Add some chili flakes or hot sauce if you like it hot and spicy.

This sauce is good and easy if you want to serve the **Cheesy Meat Balls** over pasta.

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Dear *Compass*,

In your September issue Mike Cobbe of *Kelly's Eye* told us that some of the things he reads in *Caribbean Compass* beggar belief. I, in turn, am amazed at the way in which some people, like Mr. Cobbe, rush into print before engaging their brains and, in the process, make public fools of themselves.

Mr. Cobbe's belief was beggared first of all by an article which you published in August. This was by Aubrey Millard and described how he and his wife Judy set out, with a friend, to sail from Antigua to Cuba. Mr. Millard told how an accident befell their friend after they passed to the south of Nevis and a decision was made to divert to Christiansted in St. Croix. Approaching the harbour in 25-knot easterly winds, Millard made the decision to proceed with a night entry in spite of the fact that his 20-year-old pilot book said "it is imperative that the entrance... be made in daylight". Clearly Millard felt that their computerized charting system, linked into their GPS, would give him sufficient information to enable a safe entry to be made and in his article he made it clear that his wife, Judy, a highly experienced and capable navigator, would run the plot while he had the con.

In the event, the exercise was successful in spite of the fact that the compass light proved to be inoperative. Upon arrival Millard likened the experience to the "blind pilotage" exercises that he did for his watch-keeping certificate in the Canadian Navy when all bridge windows were covered and he had to navigate by instruments only. His article included a reproduction of the chart plot, which showed clearly how the passage into Christiansted was made.

On reading Millard's article my first thought was that he had proved yet again that the views expressed in pilot books do not always have to be treated as if carved on tablets of stone. The authors of these publications have to protect themselves and sometimes it is better to say "never", rather than suggest that certain passages can only be undertaken by highly experienced yachtsmen and thereby risk being sued by incompetents who end up on the rocks.

On the basis of these facts Mr. Cobbe reached for his pen and describes Millard as stupid, although conceding that he writes intelligently. He then castigates him for putting other people's lives at risk, sailing without harbour plans for ports of refuge and using a 20-year-old pilot book.

Therefore he thinks it logical that, for the benefit of all, Millard should simply give up sailing!

What effrontery! Who does this mindless scribe think he is?

Unlike Mr. Cobbe, I have given this matter some thought before putting pen to paper and I do have the advantage of knowing what I am talking about. As mentioned, Aubrey Millard was in the Canadian Navy; he was a career officer who commanded warships and had full responsibility for the lives of those who served under him. Since then, he and Judy have sailed the 32-foot *Veleda IV* nearly 40,000 miles, including two Atlantic crossings. It is my guess that Aubrey has spent more time going astern than Mr. Cobbe has spent at sea.

When you printed the letter to which I am reacting you did follow with a note reminding readers that Aubrey Millard's night entry into Christiansted was in response to a medical emergency. I am confident that many other experienced yachtsmen will share my view that it was an outstanding feat of seamanship. If there were Caribbean awards for such things, then Aubrey and Judy would be at the top of the list for 2007. I have no doubt that their injured friend would support my view.

As for Mr. Cobbe, an award for dentopedology might be more appropriate.

Yours sincerely,
Christopher Price
S/Y Hummingbird

Dear *Compass*,

I have no choice but to refute the offensive, erroneously conceived, supercilious, biased, and sophomoric judgments of Mike Cobbe in his rant in your October issue's Forum about our hazardous night entry for a medical emergency into Christiansted, St. Croix, that appeared in your September issue.

He accuses me of having no harbours of refuge on our passage from Antigua to Cuba. In the article, I indicated we considered and had pilots and chartlets for Montserrat and Nevis, but these were rejected as they were upwind of our location, and as Puerto Rico was too far, we decided on Christiansted. We are always cognizant of alternatives or harbours of refuge on our passages. Yes, our USVI pilot was 20 years old, but we had no intention of going there, or near there, in our original passage planning. However, rocks, capes and islands do not change and we had a current computer navigation system which covers all the Caribbean islands, and many other locations as well, and as we had a medical emergency we had to deal with, Christiansted was the best harbour to head for. We could divert with a functioning computerized navigation system to any port or harbour of refuge from Antigua to Cuba, including Jamaica, not, as erroneously accused by Cobbe, only to St. Croix.

He picks on the picayune detail of our having no light for our magnetic compass, but conveniently forgot that I mentioned that as a standard practice for night passages we wear headlamps strapped to our foreheads with red LED lights, allowing us to see all our cockpit instrumentation, including the compass, as well as permitting us to make log entries and to consult the pilot books in the cockpit without harming our night vision.

I was also offended by his cheap shot at the Canadian Navy in which I was privileged to serve. He owes an apology!

He insultingly belittles my sailing skills, suggesting, fallaciously, that I am a danger to others and should instead take up something else like knitting. I guess I have just been lucky these past ten years of full-time liveaboard cruising not to have endangered anybody. To the contrary, we, my wife and I, have participated in several rescues over the years, giving aid to sailors in distress, and towing boats to safety. I guess I am just lucky in that of the 38,350 nautical miles we (just my wife and I in our 29-year-old Ontario 32-foot sloop) have sailed — and the passages through all the Great Lakes, the Mississippi and Tennessee-Tombigbee waterways, two Atlantic crossings, a circumnavigation of the United Kingdom, transit of the North Sea, circumnavigation of the entire Mediterranean, including circumnavigation of the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, as well as a circumnavigation of the Black Sea, and three transits north and south of the Windward and Leeward Islands of the Caribbean down to Tobago, Trinidad and Venezuela, including the Orinoco Delta — we have not put any other lives at risk. I guess I am just lucky, eh?

Aubrey Millard
S/V Veleda IV

Dear *Compass*,

Tina Dreffin made some good points in her article in the November issue of *Compass* about freshwater-borne diseases such as leptospirosis. One problem with this article, though, and those of Dr. Marybeth Ellison from 2005, is that a description of a problem gives you little indication of its probability — necessary information if you want to assess risk. It is like being told gruesome blow-by-blow stories of pirate attacks without knowing how often they actually happen.

First off, I can only assume the wheelchair-bound friend Tina met must have been in St. Lucia in the 1970s or before, because schistosomiasis was eradicated in a big program conducted during that decade. I talked to Dr. Michael Camps who was a community pediatrician in St. Lucia for the last 20 years and he said he never saw or heard of a case in this time. He also pointed out that to catch schistosomiasis you have to be in a pool of still water (it could be at the side of a fast-running river), but that you would not catch it in a fast-running stream. You also need some kind of damage to the skin (cut, scratch or abrasion) for it to enter.

So what about leptospirosis? The figures are hard to find. Leptospirosis is a world-wide problem and the United States gets about a hundred cases a year (most with a positive outcome). Most of us jump on a bus or drive a car and think nothing of it, so let us compare this with car accident statistics for the same USA. There were 6,420,000 auto accidents in the United States in 2005 with 42,636 people killed. About 115 people die every day in vehicle crashes in the United States — one death every 13 minutes. Okay, I know, more people drive than bathe in rivers, but it gives you an idea.

The correct source for Caribbean information is www.carec.org, but their site and figures often seem horribly out of date. But in the Caribbean the leptospirosis rate is much higher than in the USA. This is probably less a factor of how abundant the bacteria are and more a factor of how many people in the Caribbean go barefoot and wade in mud. The last figures I could find were for 2001 up to week 39. At that time there had been 224 cases of leptospirosis reported. This compared with a flu case load of 46,288.

—Continued on next page



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1999	30'	Henderson 30 (Racing Yacht)	US$ 60,000
1978	34'	Steel Sloop: ROB	US$ 45,000
1986	36'	Lavranos Tosca	US$ 53,000
1989	36'	Reinke Super 10 Steel Sloop	US$ 45,000
1977	36'	Roberts (Home built)	US$ 40,000
1977	37'	Gin Fizz	EU$ 42,500
1968	39'	Cheoy Lee Off Shore 40	US$ 95,000
1978	40'	Atlantic 40	US$ 70,000
1985	40'	Offshore 40 *(REDUCED!!!)*	US$ 149,000
2002	40'	Panoramer 40 (Steel)	EU$ 160,000
1987	42'	Ta Chiao Mermaid 42	SOLD!!!
1999	43'	Wauquiez Pilot Saloon	EU$ 247,500
1985	43'	Gitana	US$ 115,000
1999	44'	Finngulf *(REDUCED!!!)*	US$ 235,000
1992	45'	Fortuna	US$ 150,000
1991	50'	Celestial Pilothouse	US$ 268,000
1987	51'	Beneteau Idylle 15.5	US$ 160,000
1988	52'	Grand Soleil	US$ 275,000
1995	53'	Super Maramu *(REDUCED!!!)*	US$ 329,000
1982	53'	Hatteras Luxury Cruiser	US$ 254,000
1994	55'	Oyster 55	US$ 776,000
1973	56'	Visch Motor Yacht	US$ 150,000
MULTIHULLS			
1993	36.5'	Dean Catamaran *(REDUCED!!!)*	US$ 99,500
2002	37'	Fountaine Pajot	US$ 325,000
2001	43'	Lagoon Catamaran	US$ 399,000
1998	47'	Gancel Catamaran	US$ 168,000
1980	54'	Norman Cross Trimaran	US$ 295,000
1995	55'	Custom Built Trimaran	US$ 350,000
1991	55'	Lagoon Catamaran	US$ 559,000
1990	72'	Alumarine (Lougebin) Catamaran	US$ 1,190,000

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—Continued from previous page

As Tina said, there is nothing wrong with decreasing your risk, and in the case of leptospirosis it is likely to be much more prevalent after heavy rains when the rivers get full of run-off from the land. Living is risky and unfortunately stuff sometimes happens.

Good swimming all,
Chris Doyle
Ti Kanot

Dear *Compass*,

I just downloaded the November *Compass*, and read your article on APIS. It's a great update — thanks for staying on top of it!

I can confirm the situation as reported for Antigua. When I cleared out at Nelson's Dockyard on 31 October, the Immigration officer made no mention of APIS, so I asked what the status was with regard to private yachts, since I had read that they were requiring it. She told me that Antigua was no longer requiring small private yachts to provide Advance Passenger Information, however it is still required of private yachts over 100 tons.

I sincerely hope that the CARICOM nations will do the sensible thing and transform APIS into a means of making yacht tourism amongst the islands more inviting by a providing single clearance process for all of the islands.

Best regards,
Hudson Hoen
S/Y The Belle of Virginia

Dear *Compass* Readers,

It was with great sadness that I read the Johnstons' letter in your November issue's Readers' Forum. Their photo of large sea turtles being slaughtered in Soufriere, St. Lucia, haunted me in the darkness of night; I only found peace when I awakened in predawn hours to write this impassioned plea to the St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines governments, the fishermen who netted the sea turtles (legally, according to the newly reinstated turtle-fishing season laws), and the new generation of children following in the steps of their fathers.

Sea turtles face a plethora of life-threatening challenges: even if the eggs aren't (illegally) harvested, few survive hatching due to avian and land predators; sharks prey on them during their first five years of life as they swim in open waters; suitable nesting sites are lost to coastal development; they drown after becoming entangled in monofilament fishing line or nets, and from eating ocean trash. They can take from ten to 50 years to mature and reproduce.

By the time you even see a turtle, it has survived all this. And then is killed. A creature that tastes so good, is so easy to catch, and comes back to the same place over and over again could disappear before anyone knows it is gone. Some scientists fear sea turtles could become extinct in the next few decades.

If sea turtles are protected in neighboring islands, but are harvested in St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines, the conservation effort has been undermined. We could be at the turning point of saving these ancient beasts, or of losing them.

How blessed you are to live in the natural beauty of the jewels of the Caribbean! Tourists flock to your islands to see such beauty, to feel it, and revel in it. By killing your sea turtles, instead of making them guests on your shores, you are leaving a lasting impression. Tourists return to islands that support admirable conservation efforts. Owners of restaurants, boutiques, and supporting industries benefit. Surely, sea turtles are worth more alive than dead as the next generation looks to the future for jobs.

Martin Luther King, Jr. nominated Thich Nhat Hanh (a Vietnamese Buddhist monk) for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967. I leave you all — as mindful individuals — with one of his precepts, designed to promote reverence for life: "Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I vow to cultivate compassion and learn ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants.... I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to condone any act of killing in the world, in my thinking and in my way of life."

Very kind regards,
Tina Dreffin
S/V Scud

Dear *Compass*,

I think Vladimir Putin was the cause of all my troubles.

Last Friday (October 5th) I went to VC Bird Airport in Antigua to pick up two Russian friends who wanted to stay on my boat as a working holiday — you know, do a little work, go to the beach. I got there in plenty of time for an anti-diabetic hot dog, drowned it with a coffee and went to see them arrive on the Virgin Atlantic flight from Gatwick. They didn't. Finally when all the passengers had left the airport I went to the Virgin desk. "Were they on the plane?" I asked. "We can't tell you that for security reasons." "Why not? Surely security is finished when they've all left the airport?" "No, it's finished when we say so." (I half expected her to say "And stop calling me Shirley"). "Well," I replied with a locked jaw, "one of them is called Aristotle. Now, there are probably only three people in the whole world called Aristotle and two of them probably live in Greece. Now, if you can secretly examine your secret passenger list and find two Russian names, and one of them has 'A' beginning his first name then I can suppose that they were on the flight." They refused to do that so I drove back to English Harbour, head spinning with this latest example of bureaucracy.

Later we discovered that they had missed the plane, so I rang Immigration at Gatwick. A bad-tempered woman answered my question and said that the two guys had been stopped getting on the Virgin flight to Antigua. Of course I asked the reason and she said vaguely, "It was something to do with a visa problem." "But they weren't carrying visas because they were in transit and they weren't required to have visas for Antigua." "All Russians must carry visas to enter the UK, even in transit." "That's rampant rubbish," I replied. "Two weeks ago my first two Russian guests arrived with precisely the same papers and no visas and had no problems. Maybe," I went on, "this outrage is due to Vladimir Putin chucking a load of Russian bombers at Alaska yesterday morning and scaring the pants off every bureaucrat in the world." "No, no," she replied. "We're not politically motivated here at Immigration."

"Well," I said, "I was told that you are going to send them back to Russia this evening so I have a few hours to try to reverse this ridiculous situation." "Oh no," she replied smugly. "You're too late. We put them on a plane for Kaliningrad this afternoon."

Mr. Putin, you can send your bombers to Gatwick any time you like but tell them not to land unless they have visas, even if they are in transit!

Bob Williamson
Schooner St. Peter

Dear *Compass*,

Since the 15th of October, fees have gone up quite a lot here at Marina Cumanagoto, Cumaná, Venezuela. At the new rates, a 43-foot monohull ketch is charged 59,125 bolivars per day.

A couple of marinas in nearby Puerto La Cruz quoted lower rates.

Mary Draker
Yacht Kristina

Dear Mary,

While we can understand boaters being upset by unexpected price hikes, it's hardly surprising that marina fees in Venezuela — along with the prices of many other things — are being adjusted. Although the official annual inflation rate is 17 percent, one Venezuelan newspaper reported that the inflation rate in the month of October alone was 13 percent!

A source in Venezuela tells us that the official government exchange rate is currently 2,150 bolivars to the US dollar, but that's irrelevant because boaters generally get their bolivars from money changers. On the black market, the bolivar held the line at 3,700 for quite a while but recently it took off like crazy: since early September it has reportedly gone to around 5,700 in Puerto La Cruz and as high as 6,500 in Caracas.

Another cruiser wrote in early November: "We just left Cumaná. I guess dockage at Cumanagoto did triple, sort of. Last year we paid Bs21,000 and this year it was Bs63,250 — including electricity and water. But convert that into US dollars [we got 5,800 bolivars per dollar this year], and it comes to US$8.08 in 2006 and US$10.91 in 2007. Fuel was Bs47.8 per liter — we paid Bs25,000 (US$4.31) for 427 liters of diesel and about 13 gallons of gasoline. And we had a good meal at a new air conditioned restaurant in the mall, overlooking the marina. Dinner for three with wine and dessert was under US$50."

Another friend asked Marina Bahia Redonda in Puerto La Cruz for a quote on November 9th: the dock rate there for a 43-foot sailboat was given as Bs45,200 daily (if you use air conditioning there's an additional Bs155 per foot daily, to cover the cost of electricity). Assuming A/C is used (at Bs6,665 per day for the 43-footer), Bahia Redonda's price for this size boat is about a dollar a day less than Cumanagoto's.

At the official exchange rate, a slip for a 43-foot monohull at either Bahia Redonda or Cumanagoto will currently cost the equivalent of about US$21 to US$27.50 per day. At the black market rate given above for Puerto La Cruz, the cost would be somewhere in the range of US$8 to US$11 per day. Either way, compared to the US$15 to US$25 per night cost of a mooring in the Virgin Islands, for example, we don't think it's an outrageous price for a marina slip.

By the way, you can track Venezuela's black market exchange rate at www.venezuelafx.blogspot.com. Note that this website gives what the bolivar is going for in Caracas, probably for large sums; the exchange in Puerto La Cruz is usually about ten points lower and lower still in Cumaná and Margarita.

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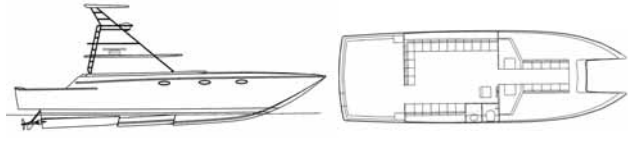
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Christmas Past, CHRISTMAS PRESENT, Christmas Future

by Julia Bartlett

It was three days before Christmas, the sun was shining and the palm trees rustled in the Trades. Our boat-sized Christmas tree had been dug out its home at the far end of the pilot berth, the fairy lights tested and the cocktail cabinet was full. I had a last minute list ready for an early morning Christmas Eve Day visit to the supermarket with brussels sprouts underlined, wistfully. They were not big on brussels sprouts in Venezuela.

My keep-fit regime had worked and I could afford to over-indulge a little over the holidays. Undressed in the shower I surveyed the results of my hard work in the mirror and that's when I noticed that my left breast was an odd shape. Fear shot through me, catching my breath like an icicle. I lifted my arm and it looked worse. With my right hand I felt my breast and there it was, a small hard lump. I had my shower and checked again. It was still there. After a sleepless night I told my partner.

"What do you want to do?" he asked. "Do you want to go home to get it checked out?"

The boat next to us, in Marina Hilton, was *Thunderball* with Larry and Carrie on board and they were my heroes. Three years previously while we were all in Luperón, on the north coast of the Dominican Republic, Carrie had discovered that she had breast cancer. Well, actually Larry found the lump while they were having fun. Carrie had opted to stay in the DR for treatment and one of the reasons was that she felt that once she went home, psychologically, it would be harder to hang on to the cruising dream.



'Carrie and Larry were an inspiration to me. Christmas morning I shall drink a toast to them'

I am not going to tell you the full story of Carrie's fight but here are a few details to give you a flavour. Treatment involved long bus journeys on Dominican roads to and from Santo Domingo while taking chemo-therapy, coping with the language barrier and watching other patients suffer and decline because they couldn't afford the same treatment that Carrie was having. The clambering on and off a boat at anchor after a major operation was an agonising exercise. Larry nursed Carrie, supported her emotionally, cooked often-rejected but appetising meals, shopped and maintained the boat. All this was in the steamy heat of the tropics.

Carrie recovered fully, if a little lopsidedly, and when they sailed out of Luperón they took a little piece of everyone's heart with them. Who better could I have moored alongside when I found my lump?

I thought about my partner's question and then I answered, "I think that I'll get a biopsy here first and make that decision when I get the results."

When I told Larry and Carrie about my lump I discovered that they were waiting for the results of Carrie's routine six-monthly blood test.

"Larry's promised that if I'm clear we can do the Great Wall of China next year," Carrie said.

The day before Christmas Eve I had my fine-needle biopsy performed and Carrie got the all-clear from her blood test.

"That's a wonderful Christmas present; I'm so pleased," I said as I hugged her.

"Yes it is," she said. "Do you know I've got a hernia now? Getting old sucks and that's for sure!" And she laughed.

"The alternative is pretty boring, though," I said.

"How are you coping with the anxiety of waiting?" asked Larry.

"That's the hard part. Nobody talks about that much," I said.

It helped that Larry had asked about the anxiety because I had the suspicion that I was over-reacting to my discovery. After all, it was just a little lump that was probably totally benign. I wouldn't have been surprised if I had a heart attack from the level of anxiety, perhaps fear is a better word, I was experiencing. I was ten times more scared than the first time that I realized that the nearest land was three miles under me.

There aren't any medals given out for the way that Larry and Carrie had risen to their challenge but they were an inspiration to me and an example that I wanted to live up to.

—*Continued on next page*





CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2007

1 - 2 17th Wilmerding Memorial Challenge Regatta, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, tel (284) 495 1002, fax (284) 495-4184, mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
1 - 2 St. John Christmas Music Festival, USVI. www.stjohnbluesfestival.com
3 - 7 MYBA St. Maarten Charter Show. www.mybacaribbeanshow.com
5 Saba Day. Public holiday in Saba
5 - 10 46th Antigua Charter Yacht Meeting. www.antiguayachtshow.com
5 - 12 Chanukah
9 National Heroes Day. Public holiday in Antigua
9 ARC Village opens, Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia
12 - 15 Superyacht Cup Antigua, www.thesuperyachtcup.com
13 Prime Minister's Cup, St. Lucia. St. Lucia Yacht Club (SLYC), secretary@stluciayachtclub.com, www.stluciayachtclub.com
14 Transatlantic Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup prizegiving, St. Maarten. www.yccs.it
14 - 16 Carriacou Parang Festival. www.grenadines.net
15 Kingdom Day. Public holiday in St. Maarten
15 Commodore's Cup Race, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), www.rbviyc.net
16 - 24 Nine Mornings Celebrations, St. Vincent. www.svgtourism.com
19 Separation Day. Public holiday in Anguilla
21 Winter Solstice
24 FULL MOON
24 - 2 Jan St. Kitts Carnival
25 Christmas Day. Public holiday in many places
26 Boxing Day. Public holiday in many places
26 Triumph of the Revolution Nautical Festival, Havana, Cuba. Club Náutico Intl. Hemingway (CNIH), yachtclub@cnih.mh.cyt.cu
26 - 1 Jan St. Croix USVI Festival, www.usvitourism.vi
28 - 31 Opti/Splash clinic, Curaçao. marjolein@att.biz
29 Merry Christmas Race, Havana, Cuba. CNIH
31 Festival Day. Public holiday in Montserrat
31 Nelson's Pursuit Race, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
31 St. Barts New Year's Eve Regatta

JANUARY 2008

1 New Year's Day. Public holiday or "recovery day" in many places
1 Patron Saint celebrations at Marin and Diamant, Martinique
1 - 2 St. Kitts Carnival , www.stkittsnevis.com
1 - 5 St. Croix Christmas Festival, www.usvitourism.vi
2 Victory of Armed Forces Day. Public holiday in Cuba
2 - 4 Curaçao Youth Sailing Championship. www.cyc2008.org
6 Three Kings Day/La Fête des Rois. Public holiday in some places
9 Gran Prix del Atlántico race departs Gibraltar bound for Martinique
11 Eugenio María de Hostos Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico
11 - 13 6th Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, Dominican Republic. www.caribwind.com/ltc
11 - 23 St. Barts Music Festival. www.stbartsmusicfestival.org
12 Underwater Cleanup, Bonaire. www.dive-friends-bonaire.com
14 - 20 Barbados Jazz Festival. www.barbadosjazzfestival.com
15 Martin Luther King Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
16 - 19 Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada. wendypatw@yahoo.co.uk
17 - 20 St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta. www.ClassicRegatta.com
Errol Barrow Day. Public holiday in Barbados
22 FULL MOON
23 - Feb 6 12th Mustique Blues Festival. www.basilsmustique.com/blues.htm
24 - 26 Jamaica Jazz & Blues Festival, Montego Bay. www.airjamaicajazzandblues.com
24 - 27 Bequia Music Fest. www.bequiatourism.com/events.htm
25 - 29 Port Louis Grenada Sailing Festival. ***See ad on page 11***
31 - Feb 3 7th International Club Náutico de San Juan Regatta, Puerto Rico. www.nauticodesanjuan.com
TBA Ronde de Nuit Race, Martinique. Club Nautique Le Neptune (CNN), cn.leneptune@wanadoo.fr
TBA Latitude 18 Halyard Challenge, BVI. RBVIYC
TBA Zoo Regatta, Gosier, Guadeloupe. v.demaynard@ool.fr
TBA Governor's Cup Race, BVI. RBVIYC
TBA Around Antigua Race, AYC
TBA Curaçao International Regatta. www.curacaoregatta.com
TBA Around Barbados Race. www.sailbarbados.com

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 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

—Continued from previous page

Christmas Day was extra special, everything was poignant, emotions were more tender, but it's not an innovation that I would recommend. I had had my Christmases Past and Christmas Future was a question mark, so I did my best to make the most of Christmas Present. It was like living within a twist of "A Christmas Carol" and the moral of the story was similar. There were changes that I was planning to make in my life if I got the chance of more Christmases.

My results were late. They had told me they would take ten days but had forgotten to allow for the holidays, which are somewhat extended in Venezuela, so it was well after New Year when I got them. I was handed a plain white envelope.

"No se observan evidencias citologicas de malignidad en la muestra examinada," my partner read, and deciphering the Spanish before I could translate he announced, "It's clear, no cancer," and hugged me.

I felt strangely flat, deflated, as the adrenaline subsided. I suppose it's like the anticlimax after the holidays. There was no one apart from Larry and Carrie to share the good news with because I hadn't wanted to worry family and friends, especially during the holiday season. Then gradually a quiet, warm feeling of well-being spread through me and I made some special New Year resolutions.

It was when we had met up in Grenada, just before leaving for Margarita, that Carrie asked me to write about her story.

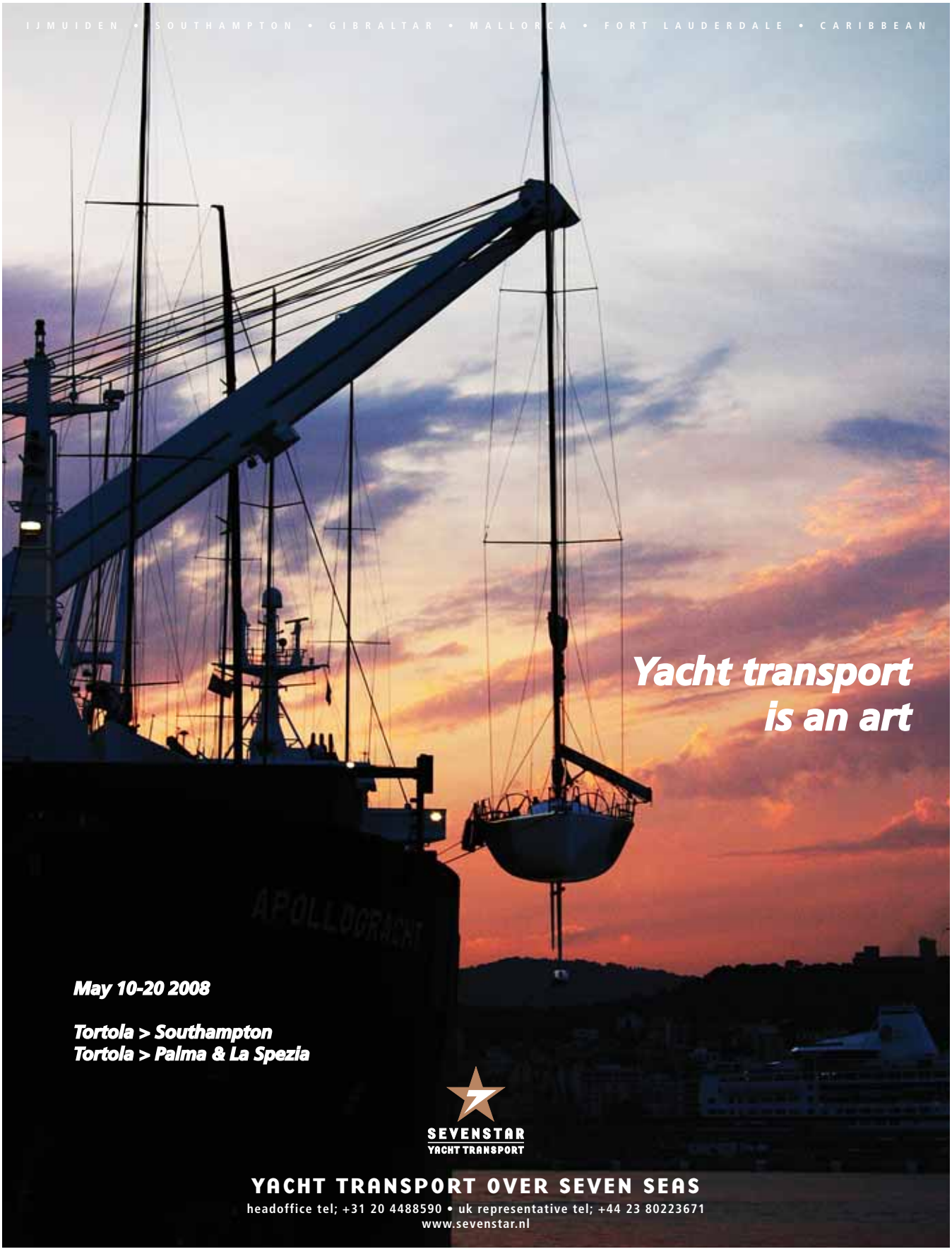
"I know that cruisers and would-be cruisers worry about having a serious health problem while they are away, especially in an underdeveloped country. I'd like them to know that there are ways around it other than giving up and going home," she said, "and sometimes it works out better. The treatment I received in the DR was first-rate, nurses were wonderful and it was relatively inexpensive."

Sadly, Carrie's blood test two years ago had been for a particular sort of cancer and her "hernia" turned out to be a different sort. I looked after *Thunderball* for her and Larry when they returned to the States and was there for her last visit to the Caribbean to say good-bye to the boat four years after her original diagnosis.

Carrie's story has also become partly my story because of the impact of the example she and Larry set me. This Christmas my best presents will be this Christmas itself, my health and my loving family and loyal friends. These are the most precious gifts I could possibly have. Christmas morning I shall drink a special toast to Carrie, and to Larry, now gallantly continuing on his own, and say thanks for the gift of appreciation of the present they gave me.

I hope that you all enjoy this Christmas Present and I wish you a healthy and happy New Year.




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December

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Coolmatic CR-50



Gross capacity: approx. 48 litres
Voltage: 12/24V DC
Dimensions (WxHxD): 448 x 525 x 492 mm
Weight: 19 kg
< WA50500

Coolmatic CR-65



Gross capacity: approx. 64 litres
Voltage: 12/24V DC
Dimensions (WxHxD): 452 x 527 x 492 mm
Weight: 20 kg
< WA50650

Coolmatic CR-80



WA50800 ^
Gross capacity: approx. 80 litres, Voltage: 12/24V DC,
Dimensions (WxHxD): 479 x 642 x 475 mm, Weight: 23 kg

WAECO mobile solutions

NEW

TAYLOR MADE LIFELINE CUSHIONS: NEW



Make your lifelines a better backrest. Polyester covered, not bare foam! Will not discolor, fade or rot in the sun, and cleans easily with liquid soap.

TY415045 - 4.5 ft. / TY415060 - 6 ft. (sold in pairs)

SAIL BINDERS: NEW Mast

These Sail Binders are elasticated and clip together. They are ideal for storing the mainsail on the boom. They are easy to use and feature an adjustable D-ring - one size fits all. Measures 59" - 75"



MOSQUITO NET HATCH COVERS: Mast

Fits over the hatch to prevent mosquitos from entering the cabin. The tubes at the bottom can be filled with a lead cord or a bar of aluminium to keep the net down when windy. Measures 24.5" x 24.5"

NEW



DUO GEN WIND GENERATOR:

Features a powerful 3-phase alternator, and computer-designed rotor blades optimised for low speed, user-friendly operation. Distinctive and elegant in design, the D400 is superbly engineered for long, trouble-free service. Available in 12V and 24V

NEW



What you need

DEPTHMATE PORTABLE SOUNDERS:

Speedtech Instruments

Anchoring security for cruising sailors! Find deep water easily from your dinghy. This unique pocket-sized depth sounder is very accurate and of very high quality. It is useful for boating, fishing, scuba diving, coastal survey, and scientific work.
Depthmate model SM-5A has an external transducer at the end of a 12 foot wire for accuracy at a distance.



SM-5



SM-5A

GARMIN CHARTPLOTTERS: GARMIN

A sleek, space-saving chartplotter that features an ultra-bright 4" QVGA display; built-in, satellite-enhanced worldwide basemap and simplified user operation. With SD card slot to add additional features with the optional BlueChart® g2 Vision card.



GPSMAP 420/420s



GPSMAP 520/520s

This slim-line chartplotter flush-mounts easily in your boat and boasts an ultra-bright 5" QVGA display. It also sports a built-in, satellite-enhanced worldwide basemap and simple, straightforward buttons and menus. Add the optional BlueChart® g2 Vision SD card for more features.

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- High power Xenon lamp
- Magnetic trigger switch with sliding lock



Nemo 4300

QUICK WATER HEATER 30%* OFF!

Nautic Boiler BX16



Capacity: 16 L
Material: Stainless steel
Insulation material: closed cell Polyurethane
Voltage: 110 Volt
Power: 1200 Watt
Weight without heat exchanger: 9,5 Kg
Weight with heat exchanger: 10,5 Kg

*Discounts valid for December 2007 while stocks last.

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