CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
JULY 2019 NO. 286
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



ROBERT CLOUDEN

A LAGOON REBORN

— *Eco-News on page 9*


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On the cover: A failed marina project (see lower inset) nearly killed the largest lagoon in the Grenadines. Now, it's alive again. Story in Caribbean Eco-News, page 9



Info & Updates

Convoys Make Trinidad Passages Safe and Fun

The Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT), working with Jesse James of Members Only Maxi Taxi Service, and with the assistance of several long-time cruisers, has implemented a process to help cruisers get together and travel to and from Trinidad in convoys that enhance safety and security.



KARI ANNE AARHUS

TTCG Lt. Cdr. Remmy, TTCG Lt. Cdr. Marshall, Pat Ripple and Jesse James, celebrating the arrival of Convoy #1

In response to a piracy incident in April 2019, Jesse James, who provides tour and taxi services to visitors to Trinidad, began to informally coordinate convoys of eight to ten boats. He enlisted the Trinidad & Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG) and North Post Radio (NPR), to ensure that there were "official eyes" watching over the convoys en route. By early June, five convoys had made the crossing from Grenada and Carriacou to Chaguaramas.

The process is now being formalized to make participation even easier. The first step is to complete the fillable pdf Convoy Request form on the YSATT or Members Only website (www.ysatt.com or www.membersonlymaxitaxi.com).

Local businesses such as Peake Yacht Services are also sending the form to their customers when a reservation is made. (All information received from the requests is kept confidential except as required for convoy management.)

YSATT staff identifies boats planning to travel in the same time frame, then asks one member of each convoy group to take the lead in liaising with the other convoy members. YSATT provides the Convoy Leader with route waypoints — southbound convoys leave from Prickly Bay, Grenada or Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou — as well as advice on communications and other aspects to help the convoy proceed smoothly.

Jesse James and YSATT will continue to serve as the liaison between the Convoy Leader and TTCG and NPR during both the preparation and the passage. The TTCG picks up the convoy at a pre-arranged waypoint, and NPR maintains communication along the way. Convoy participants are asked not to spread out over more than three nautical miles, and to ensure their running lights are on, as well as their AIS (if available). Participants still file individual Float Plans, which are routed via the Convoy Leader.

There's a challenge to adjusting your speed to keep together, and then sailing within relatively close proximity to the other participants. But while the convoys were initially set up to provide security, participants have discovered they can also be fun. And most of the convoys have ended with a social gathering on arrival in Chaguaramas, where participants have the chance to meet each other and share stories.

Pat Ripple of *S/V Capers*, who was a participant in Convoy #1 and assisted in the development of the convoy forms, says, "We've sailed to Trinidad for the past 14 years and were prepared to do our usual overnight sail. But we jumped at the chance to join a convoy and had a great time. Staying together was a fun exercise, and it was a comfort to look around and see all the navigation lights of fellow convoy members during the night. Hearing the VHF conversations among Steve, our convoy leader, the T&T Coast Guard and North Post Radio was reassuring. Another highlight was the potluck we held a few days after arrival with special guests Jesse and two Coast Guard officers."

"It's pretty obvious that a convoy is a good solution for boats making this passage," says Steve Manley of *S/V Receta*, who led the first convoy and assisted with the development of the process, "but it wouldn't have happened without Jesse's leadership and tenacity, or TTCG's and NPR's willingness to go the extra mile for us. I think the cruising community appreciates that — and I'm sure it will bring new yachting business to Trinidad as a result."

Acting YSATT President Tommy Johnson said, "Trinidad has a wide array of highly skilled workers and businesses serving the Caribbean yachting community. We want to make sure that the yachting community continues to feel comfortable coming to Trinidad to visit our beautiful country, to have work done on their vessels and/or to store their boats. We thank the Coast Guard, North Post Radio, and Jesse James for their engagement and support. This convoy process shows boaters that we care about them both coming and going, too."

Contact Jesse James at (868) 683-5202/757-0139/634-1658 or jessejamesmembersonly@yahoo.com; or YSATT at (868) 634-4938 or info@ysatt.com for more information.

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New Rules for Cuba-Bound US Boaters

US sailors planning to visit Cuba, take note: The US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) has amended the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) to remove the authorization for group people-to-people educational travel. The CACR amendment took effect on June 5th.

Addison Chan, cruising guide author and administrator of the Facebook group "Cuba Land and Sea," adds, "The current US administration has changed the way the Cuban Assets Control Regulations are to be applied with respect to the ability of American citizens to take their personal vessels to Cuba.

"Since February of 2015, American boat owners have been permitted to take a private vessel to Cuba for up to 14 days without requiring an export permit from the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security. The exemption has now been cancelled, which means that any American wishing to take their boat to Cuba must first be granted a Temporary Sojourn Permit (TSP). The American boating public were advised by press release of 'a general policy of denial' with respect to TSP applications.

"When the layers of bureaucratese are stripped away the simple truth is that the current US Government has undertaken the measures necessary to make it illegal to take an American-flagged vessel to Cuba. In the past there was a practice to grandfather permission that was granted prior to the date of change but in this instance, as if to underscore the seriousness of intent, previously issued permission was rescinded.

"The one glimmer of hope is that Americans are still free to go to Cuba. The most important change during the Obama detente with Cuba was to allow travelers to self-declare their qualification for one of the 12 categories of general license defined in the CACR. That ability remains. Which means that Americans may fly or sail to Cuba provided they are traveling for a legitimate purpose and in the case of boating the vessel is either properly permitted or of a flag other than American."

International Conference: 'Havana and the Sea'

Meanwhile, Commodore José Miguel Diaz Escrich of the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba and his team are busy organizing the ongoing activities surrounding this year's 500th anniversary of the founding of Havana, with special emphasis on the International Conference "Havana and the Sea in its 500 Years", to be held September 5th through 7th. The scholarly conference will conclude with the Maritime Procession of the Virgin of Regla, Patron of the Bay and Port of Havana, a once-traditional boat parade that has not occurred since 1961.

Dr. Eusebio Leal Spengler, Historian of the City of Havana, is the Honorary President of the Conference. Topics discussed at the conference will include the history of Havana Harbor's strategic-military evolution and its Spanish defense system; Havana in maritime traffic; the Port of Havana as a center for the circulation of merchandise, ideas, art, inventions, science and fashion; Havana and its contribution to the maritime culture of Cuba; the sea in the Cuban imagination; the Bay of Havana and the urbanization of its surroundings; Havana's contribution to the development of recreation and watersports in Cuba; and Havana's new environmental and tourism challenges. Javier García de Sola Arriaga, member of the Spanish Association of Americanists, will present "Havana, strategic port of the Indian fleet."



Contact Commodore Escrich at (537) 204-66-53 or 204-16-89, e-mail yachtclub@cnih.mh.tur.cu, Facebook: Cnih de Cuba, Twitter: @CNIHdeCuba and yachtclub-hemingway.com/nautica for more information.

Noonsite's New Website Design

For 20 years Noonsite has been providing sailors with up-to-date news and information covering nearly 200 countries and over 2,200 ports.

Now, Noonsite has launched a new website on a new platform and with a new design. The new site has various improvements over the old site, ranging from faster page load times to mobile compatibility.

Among the changes are improvements to the site navigation. They have removed the left column and replaced it with a "quick type" country field and an "explore" menu on each country or port. When viewing a country or port page, click on the page title where it says "Explore" and you can navigate to every section of that port or country.

You can expect to see continuous improvements over the coming weeks, and new features over the coming months.

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If you are a member of Noonsite your account has been migrated to the new platform. Your password, however, has not, and you will need to reset your password using the "Forgot Password" feature. If you are not a member, why wait? Membership is free and comes with lots of perks.

Visit www.noonsite.com for more information.

Selected Cruisers' Local VHF Nets

When you drop anchor in a new port, one of the fastest ways to find out what's going on is to tune in to the local cruisers' VHF radio net. Here are some recommended by *Compass* readers, Times given are local.

- Nassau, Bahamas: 0715 on Channel 14
- St. Martin/Maarten: 0730 on Channel 10, Monday-Saturday
- English Harbour, Antigua: 0900 on Channel 06, Daily
- Le Marin/Ste. Anne, Martinique: 0830 on Channel 08, M, W & F
- Bequia: 0800 on Channel 68, Daily
- Grenada: 0730 on Channel 66 Intl., Monday-Saturday (Channel 69 if 66 repeater unavailable)
- Chaguaramas, Trinidad: 0800 on Channel 68, Daily

As this issue of *Compass* went to press, this list was correct to the best of our knowledge. Corrections and comments are welcome! Send them to sally@caribbeancompass.com

BVI Charter Yacht Society Donates to Youth

During the recent BVI Dinghy Championships, BVI Charter Yacht Society Executive



Director Janet Oliver met the young sailors and presented a cheque to the Youth Sailing Programme. Ms. Oliver explained to the sailors that the Society is committed to supporting future generations of sailors, as many of the captains and crew grew up in sailing programs just like the Royal BVI Yacht Club's.

Each registrant at the Charter Yacht Show, held in November at Nanny Cay, whether broker or crew, is a contributor to the fundraising effort. The Charter Yacht Society support reflects their dedication to ensuring that the passion and discipline of sailing is passed on to the young people of the BVI. "Many of you sailing here today may be the charter yacht professionals of the future," explained Ms. Oliver, "and our members are proud to support the early years of your journey."

The Charter Yacht Society, a non-profit organization founded in 1982, represents the organized voice of individual BVI-based yachts and their crew (www.crewedyachtsbvi.com).

The 2019 BVI Charter Yacht Show will take place November 7th through 10th at Nanny Cay Resort & Marina.

Visit https://crewedyachtsbvi.com/boatshow for more information.

Carriacou Children's Fundraisers Next Month

The annual Carriacou Regatta is coming up the first week of August. The Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF) again will stage fundraising events during regatta week to benefit the children of Carriacou, with proceeds providing items such as school uniforms, shoes, backpacks, lunches, and college scholarships to families that could use a little financial assistance. CCEF fundraising events will include the welcoming potluck barbecue and the popular flea market and auction.

Cruisers unable to be present during the regatta can support the fundraising by donating items such as surplus boat gear, household goods, clothes, games and toys, and personal items. When visiting Carriacou, drop your donations at the Slipway Restaurant located on the Southwest shore in Tyrrel Bay. The password for CCEF's free WiFi also is available from Slipway's staff. Of course, CCEF always appreciates cash donations as well. It's for the kids!

USVI Charter Yacht Show 2019

The USVI Charter Yacht Show 2019 is set for November 11th to 14th, at IGY's Yacht Haven Grande in St. Thomas.

"This year we are excited to announce a 'Chef and Bartender Expo' as well as an extension of the increasingly prestigious culinary competition to include more competitors. There will be an exciting shake-up to the themed yacht-hop, too," says Oriel Blake, executive director of VIPCA.

Registration is now open for the Culinary Competition. This year's theme is "Inspired Raw Cuisine." Registration is first come, first served. Contact info@vipca.org to register.

The 2019 USVI Charter Yacht Show's action-packed schedule features four days of yacht viewing, an opportunity for yachts and crews to introduce signature services, features and amenities to brokers. Plus, there will be a crew cocktail party, awards dinner, sunset cruise, marine expo, and the "State of the Industry" address, which highlights many of the off-the-beaten-track anchorages in these world-famous cruising grounds.

Visit www.vipca.org for more information.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass*, we welcome new advertisers Magnificent Customs Brokerage International of Grenada, on page 35; Marine Mart of Trinidad & Tobago, on page 31; and Papillote Press of Dominica, on page 17.

Good to have you with us!



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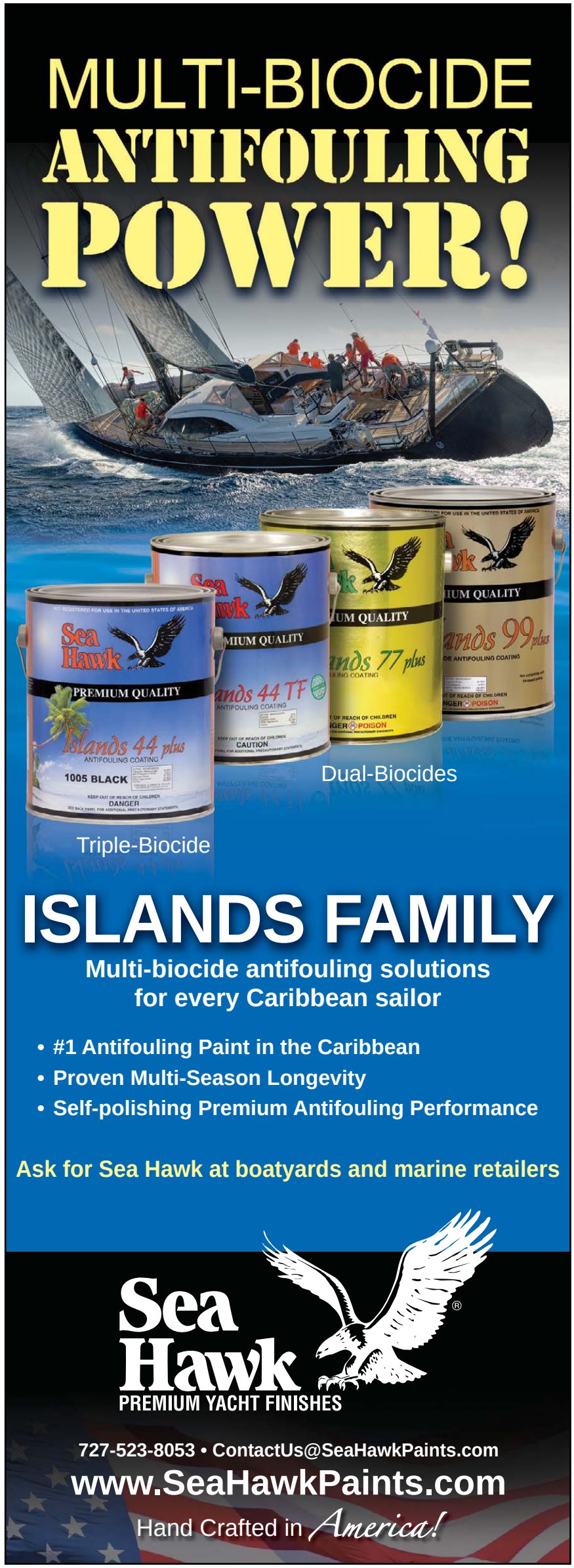
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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Budget Marine Supports Optimist World Championship

The Optimist World Championship is the world's largest youth sailing competition and will be held from July 6th through 16th in Antigua & Barbuda.

"This year is special as Antigua & Barbuda are ready to set a new world record for the number of countries registered in a single class regatta, as we will host 266 sailors from 64 countries," says Paola Vittoria, head of the 2019 Optimist World Championship Organizing Committee. "Setting up such a big event is not an easy job and we are delighted to announce that Budget Marine became the latest supporter of the Optimist World Championship."



Budget Marine, known as the Caribbean's leading chandlery, has three locations in Antigua and is heavily involved in the sailing community. "Budget Marine is proud to support the event as co-sponsor of the Awards and Prize Giving Ceremony," says Louisa Norris, General Manager of Budget Marine Antigua. "We are excited to be involved with Antigua & Barbuda's record-breaking Optimist World Championship and are keen to motivate young sailors to participate in both the fun events and the serious maritime business."

"Budget Marine is also helping us achieve our Clean Regatta goal by providing dedicated shirts for our Green Volunteers and neck buffs to all participants and team members," Vittoria added. "We are extremely proud that Antigua & Barbuda are breaking a world record and can't wait to welcome all 64 countries to our islands."

Visit http://2019worlds.optiworld.org for more information on the Optimist World Championships.

For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.

Extended Service Warranties from Perkins Engines

Perkins Platinum Protection simplifies the extended service warranties available from Perkins. It's the best value coverage and further improves the service we provide by offering up to ten years of engine protection for Perkins engines owners. Parts and Power in Tortola, BVI, is a Perkins dealer.

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Visit www.partsandpower.com/manufacturers_perkins.php to find out more about Perkins Platinum Protection.

For more information on Perkins Parts and Power see ad on page 14.

Puerto del Rey's New Wally Castro Marine Facilities

Puerto del Rey Marina in Puerto Rico has inaugurated new offices and a showroom for one of the island's leading boat dealers, Wally Castro Marine.

Wally Castro Marine's new facilities offer brands such as Riviera, Boston Whaler, NorTech, Blackfin, Bertram, Regulator, Wellcraft, Jarrett Bay, and Worldcat.

A new service center, Wally Castro Marine Parts & Service Center, with professional personnel qualified to work on all types of inboard and outboard engines, has been added as well. This center is an authorized distributor and warranty-certified shop for Mercury, Quicksilver, Suzuki, Garmin, Raymarine, and Flir thermal cameras. Routine maintenance, tune-ups, repairs, installations, and retail sales are available.



Nick Stickler, Wally Castro, Nick Prouty, William Rogers and Valentina Prouty

Call (787) 705-9242 or (787) 860-3757 to learn more about Wally Castro's products and services.

Visit www.facebook.com/MarinaPuertoDelRey or call (787) 860-1000 for information about Puerto del Rey marina.

Hot Summer Deals in Grenada

Grenada heats the summer up with the re-launch of its #NextStopGrenada campaign, which runs until October 31st. Visitors will receive extra discounts on accommodations, tours, and experiences during Grenada's extended summer season. As an added bonus, JetBlue increased airlift to Grenada, giving travelers more chances to enjoy these specials.

Grenada Tourism Authority's (GTA) Marketing Manager Francine Stewart introduced a new feature of the campaign this year with the launching of the #NextStopGrenada summer savings card. With this card, visitors can take advantage of additional discounts on tours, experiences, restaurants, and more. It is available at the airport and the participating hotels.

Now in its second year, the campaign was developed by the GTA and designed to provide travelers with true value for money as well as the chance to experience all that Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique have to offer.

The islands sport a wide selection of festivals and cultural events throughout the summer as well, including the Carriacou Regatta (August 2nd through 5th) and Grenada Spicemas Carnival (August 11th through 12th).

JetBlue's increased service from New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport to Maurice Bishop International Airport in Grenada runs throughout the summer. From now through July 31st, direct flights operate daily, and from August 1st through September 3rd, two planes a day depart for Grenada.

Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation Dr. Modeste-Curwen also highlighted the recent announcement by American Airlines that will bring additional direct flights from Miami and a new route from Charlotte, North Carolina for the upcoming winter season.

Visit www.puregrenada.com/summerdeals for a complete list of summer specials and participating hotels, hospitality partners, and tour operators.

Caribbean ECO-News

New Umbrella Agency to Protect Caribbean Marine Environment

Taking a major step in regional efforts to protect the Caribbean marine environment, the Caribbean Shipping Association (CSA) has launched the Caribbean Marine Environment Protection Agency (CARIBMEPA). CARIBMEPA will act as a consolidator for marine environment issues and actions in the Caribbean; be an umbrella organization for engaging industry, regulators, governments, conservation groups, educators and more in protecting the marine environment; and be a focal point for facilitating the implementation of MARPOL ("Marine Pollution"), the main International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, in the Caribbean and educating the public about protecting the marine environment.

While 86 percent of nations in the Wider Caribbean Region have ratified MARPOL, only 24 percent have implemented it, leaving the region vulnerable to marine pollution.

Currently, CARIBMEPA is an "association of associations" including the North American Marine Environment Protection Association; the Inter-American Committee on Ports; the American Salvage Association; the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre; the Caribbean Shipping Association; Cruise Line International Association; the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre – Caribbean; the Port Management Association of the Caribbean; Caribbean Maritime University; the Central American Commission of Maritime Transport; and Women in Maritime Association - Caribbean.

Read more at http://www.seatrade-maritime.com/news/americas/caribmepa-launched-to-protect-caribbean-marine-environment.html

Ashton Lagoon Restored, Eco Trail Unveiled

May 31st was a momentous occasion for international and national environmental leaders as well as the governments of St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada with the official unveiling of the long-awaited Ashton Lagoon Eco Trail on Union Island in the Grenadines. The Eco Trail is a highlight of the Ashton Lagoon Restoration Project.



ROBERT CLOUDEN (2)

Ashton Lagoon is the largest natural bay in the Grenadines and is surrounded by one of the last remaining mangrove forests in SVG. Because of its rich ecological importance, this area was legally designated a National Conservation Area in 1987. But in 1994, a marina-hotel-golf-course development was initiated and construction of the marina causeway blocked water circulation within the lagoon, which led to the loss of mangroves and significant coastal livelihood resources. After one year, the marina project was abandoned when the development company failed.

The goal of the Ashton Lagoon Restoration Project was to restore water circulation, ecosystem health and biodiversity, and to create sustainable economic opportunities for community members through ecotourism within Ashton Lagoon.

Twenty-four years later, with much effort conducted by various conservation partners and the Government of St Vincent & the Grenadines, Ashton Lagoon has been restored. The project was led by Sustainable Grenadines (SusGren) with support from the Phillip Stephenson Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, United States Agency for International Development through the Caribbean Marine Biodiversity Program, the German Development Bank through the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, the Global Environment Facility – Small Grants Program, and BirdsCaribbean.

The restoration project included the replanting of over 3,000 red mangroves in an area where there was significant die-off, and the construction of breaches in strategic areas of the abandoned Ashton Marina pier structure, which ultimately restored water circulation to the area. Additionally, wildlife-viewing towers were built to promote eco-tourism activities and a community-owned apiculture and honey production enterprise developed to provide opportunities for sustainable employment and use of the natural resources.

Contact the office of Sustainable Grenadines, Inc. (784) 485-8779 or susgreninc@gmail.com for more information on SusGren and the Ashton Lagoon Restoration Project.

Antigua Implements Environmental Standards for Diving and Snorkelling

Antigua & Barbuda has become the first English-speaking country in the Western Hemisphere to implement the Green Fins initiative. The country is the tenth government worldwide to officially adopt Green Fins and the second in the Caribbean.

Internationally coordinated by The Reef-World Foundation, Green Fins is a UN environment initiative that aims to protect and conserve coral reefs through environmentally friendly guidelines to promote a sustainable diving and snorkelling tourism industry.

Antigua & Barbuda, which has a population of just 100,000, received 285,000 overnight visitors and 1,000,000 cruise ship tourists in 2018. It is estimated there are over 30 businesses that provide either snorkelling or diving activities to these tourists. Reef-World hopes the initiative will significantly reduce the environmental impact on coral reefs by reaching 10,000 tourists in the next year.

The country now has a national team of two senior Green Fins network leaders, three Green Fins assessors and three dive schools joining the global network of more than 560 trained and assessed Green Fins member dive and snorkel operators.

Following a week of training by Reef-World, a national team comprised of the Ministry of Tourism and the Fisheries Division is now certified to recruit, train and conduct assessments of new Green Fins members in the country.

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This involves providing training about the ecology and threats to coral reefs, simple and local everyday solutions to these threats, and Green Fins' environmental standards to dive and snorkel operators.

The newly trained Green Fins assessors will be carrying out assessments to evaluate the environmental impact of dive and snorkel operators, and providing one-to-one consultation to help the businesses develop and implement best practices to improve the sustainability of the marine tourism industry. The individual feedback and support includes practical, low-cost alternatives to common threats to the marine environment (for example, anchoring, single-use plastics such as plastic bottles, and lack of awareness of existing rules and regulations), and is based on each company's area of highest negative impact on the reef, as determined by the assessment.



THE REEF-WORLD FOUNDATION

Green Fins provides the only internationally recognised environmental standards for the diving and snorkelling industry and has a robust assessment system to measure compliance. Reducing diving and snorkelling-related damage to sensitive marine ecosystems, including coral reefs, helps to make them more resilient to other local and wider stressors, such as overfishing or run-off from land containing pollutants and plastic debris as well the impacts from climate change, such as rising sea temperatures.

The newly qualified Green Fins assessors in Antigua & Barbuda are Trevor Joseph of the Fisheries Division, Sophia Steele of the Environmental Awareness Group and Fauna & Flora International, and Akeem Daley of the Ministry of Tourism. The dive operators who have already been trained and certified by the Green Fins initiative are Antigua Reef Riders, Dive Carib and Jolly Dive. There has also been significant interest from other operators who have signed the membership form and are looking forward to their training and assessment.

Vashti Casimir, Antigua & Barbuda's senior tourism officer responsible for sustainable tourism, says, "We're hoping that through this programme we'll have more diving and snorkelling businesses coming on board to ensure the practices across that industry remain environmentally friendly."

Sailors for the Sea Building Community of Green Boaters

Sailors for the Sea Powered by Oceana, a conservation organization that educates the boating community on restoring ocean health, is building a network of engaged conservationists through its Green Boating Initiative.

Sailors see firsthand the threats that our oceans face such as plastic pollution, oil spills, overfishing and marine habitat destruction. The Green Boating Initiative mobilizes the sailing and boating community to take action to address these ocean health issues and protect marine environments worldwide. Green Boaters are provided with the latest information and resources on sustainable boating practices and opportunities to act on critical policy issues that are needed to combat marine plastic pollution, prevent habitat destruction, source responsible seafood and limit overfishing.

Sailors for the Sea was founded in 2004. In 2018, Sailors for the Sea joined forces with Oceana, the largest international advocacy organization dedicated solely to ocean conservation. By combining Sailors for the Sea's goal of educating boaters about marine conservation with Oceana's experience mobilizing supporters to advocate for policy that supports healthy and abundant oceans, the Green Boating Initiative creates a global network of active, engaged ocean champions within the sailing and boating community who are taking action to save our oceans.

To join the community of Green Boaters, visit http://bit.ly/green-boating-pr. For more information, visit sailorsforthesea.org or follow them @SailorsfortheSea on Facebook and @SailorsfortheSea on Instagram.

BVI Spring Regatta Sailing Toward Green

Judy Petz reports: What could be better than lounging beside the water, listening to the waves lap against the shoreline, watching sailboats race in cerulean surroundings? How about knowing that your lounger was made from recycled bottles, keeping them from a trash heap or the sea? Sailors appreciate that the sea is their playground. Most are determined to help keep our oceans clean and do their part to protect our environment by living responsibly and sustainably.

Reducing our environmental footprint is not a new goal for the BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival. We have partnered with Sailors for the Sea, a leading conservation organization, to bring innovations to Caribbean regattas for the last 11 years. Our motto has always been "recycle, reuse, repurpose". Living in a territory of islands surrounded by some of the most beautiful waters in the world has made us more cognizant of the fragile balance between man and nature. Since Hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated the BVI, creating five years' worth of debris in two single-day events, living responsibly and sustainably is more important than ever.

The BVI Spring Regatta has tried to up our game each year by adding new policies to extend our reach and allow us to impact our community more positively. We understand that reaching out allows a mutual understanding of the importance of education and practices that help us set priorities. The regatta allows us to use our international platform to educate others in ways that encourage people to become more aware of the effects their lifestyle choices have on the environment and the community and by doing so, encourage them to incorporate sustainability in their daily lives to protect our finite resources.

Among the measures incorporated to create a more sustainable regatta:

2008 – Recycled glass and plastic during the regatta, even though there was no on-island recycling facility.

2009 - Became the first regatta recognized as a Clean Regatta by Sailors for the Sea, with a Silver Certificate. Gave refillable water bottles giving free water refills during the event. Banned the use of plastic straws, gave oil spill pads to all participants, established the Green Rangers to keep the shores and water clean and dispose of trash and recyclables properly. Adopted "Sailing Toward Clean and Green" motto.

2010 - Given a Gold Certificate from Sailors for the Sea. Reduced disposable plastic and decreased paper use by distributing press packs electronically and monitoring recycling bins. The BVI Marine Association sponsored the refillable water bottles and allowed the sale of them to go to BVI Recycling programs.

2011 – 40th anniversary of the regatta. "The drink you hold this year could be the award you get next year."

2012 - Awards were created from recycled glass. Provided oil spill kits for all motorized race-official boats.

2013 - Required all food vendors in the regatta village to use compostable containers, banning Styrofoam from the village. Heineken matched funds collected from participants with the funds going to GreenVI. This infusion of funds allowed us to purchase carbon offsets and made us the first carbon neutral regatta in the world (recognized by Sailors for the Sea).

2014 - Food vendors required to use compostable cutlery. Green Boat Award initiated to encourage participants to follow sustainable procedures on their boats. Award was made by Nutmeg, a local sustainable goods shop.

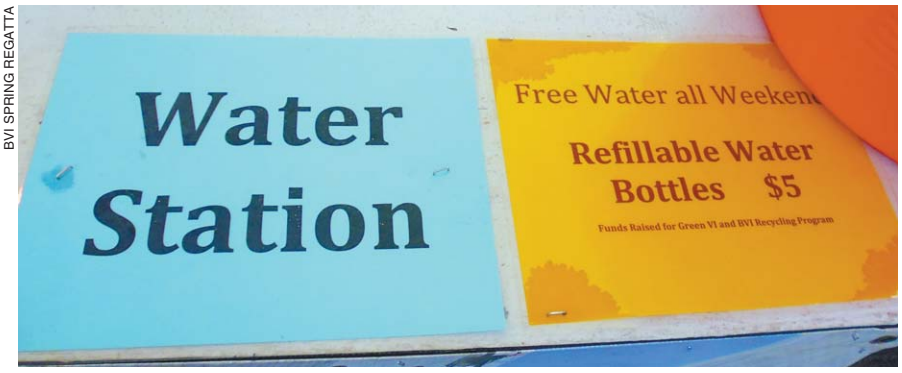
2015 - A Biobag was given to each boat with a list of green cleaning products and suggestions specific to sailing yachts (e.g. no discharge of black water, reduce gray water, use of non-toxic bottom paints, no bottom cleaning in sensitive areas, etc). Awards made on-island from recycled glass.

2016 - Since open composting areas are not as feasible in the Caribbean (due to the warmth and local pests) we established a compost system distributing scraps from food vendors to local pig farmers (the scraps were picked up by the Pig Man by donkey). Established electronic registration to decrease paper usage.

2017 - Established an initiative based on "How long till it's decomposed?" educating participants in the time needed to decompose popular products, thereby encouraging more responsible use. Made sure all bar glasses are reusable or compostable. All results were only given electronically.

2018 - Awards locally made and sustainable or usable. The awards are made from Hurricane Irma debris. BVI Marine Association continued its sponsorship of refillable water bottles as well as the solar lights used in the village to reduce the use of electricity. A beach clean-up day was coordinated to assist with storm recovery. Acting as our Green Rangers, students from high school and the local college organized a full regatta-village clean up.

On top of our decade of green initiatives, in 2019 the regatta added an Eco-Lounge dedicated to education and leisure, having posters teaching visitors what they can do, as individuals, to limit their environmental stress. To make recycling easier and more convenient, youth sailing dinghies were placed strategically acting as collection points for any plastic bottles used by regatta participants. And finally, the lounge was outfitted with furniture made from recycled plastic. Visitors were encouraged to relax in the lounge and watch the racing.



BVI SPRING REGATTA

The 2019 BVI Spring Regatta continued the encouragement to use reusable water bottles by providing the bottles in each skipper's bag (with the bag made by Nutmeg Designs on Tortola using recycled sail and kite material) along with providing free drinking water throughout the regatta weekend. The skippers also received shampoo bars and laundry bars in their skipper's bags, to help them "bag the bottles".

Don't think that it takes large groups to affect environmental changes. Little acts really do add up to big change. Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean. As we all contribute and do our part, we can work together to make a big splash.

Regional Bird Conference in Guadeloupe this Month

Every two years, BirdsCaribbean holds its international conference. The meeting is the largest of its kind, attracting hundreds of guests from the region and beyond. This year, the meeting will be held on the island of Guadeloupe from July 25th through 29th.

BirdsCaribbean is the largest conservation group in the region. At the conference, over 200 members will gather in one place to share the latest in research and more. Training workshops teach skills such as how to do a bird survey. New research and techniques for helping birds are shared. This know-how is brought back to dozens of islands where it can be used to save rare birds or protect valuable habitats.

This year's conference is "*Keeping Caribbean Birds Aloft*" (or "*An nou poté mannèv pou zozio karayib volé*" in Créole). In keeping with the theme, the conference will feature many ways to help birds in the Caribbean.

"Our birds face many challenges, and we want to address them," noted Lisa Sorensen, the Executive Director of BirdsCaribbean. "We will work on how to protect birds from threats such as plastic pollution or habitat destruction. We are also working to promote birds for their value as a tourism attraction and the benefits they provide to people."

Visit http://birdscaribbean.org/bc2019 for more information.

St. Lucia Bans Styrofoam Importation

The Government of St. Lucia is part of the UN Environment's Clean Seas Campaign, which was launched in 2017. Several other Caribbean countries have also pledged their commitment and support to this campaign, which works with governments, businesses and citizens to increase awareness of the need to protect our oceans from marine plastic pollution by reducing our production and consumption of single-use plastics and microplastics, as well as engaging in safe disposal practices.

With 60 countries now members of the Clean Seas Campaign, it has become the world's largest global alliance for combating marine pollution, covering more than 60 percent of the world's coastlines. Member countries are demonstrating their support and commitment by initiating various actions at the national level.

St. Lucia's Department of Sustainable Development, in partnership with several other government and civil society organisations, has worked tirelessly towards the implementation of a ban on the importation of Styrofoam and selected plastic food service containers. The ban will be done over a 12-month period through a phased approach that will commence on August 1st, 2019. A subsequent ban on the use, sale, and manufacture of Styrofoam and selected plastic food service containers will commence on August 1st, 2020.

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50	$1.25	$1.13	$0.62	$0.57
60	$1.36	$1.22	$0.68	$0.63
65	$1.51	$1.36	$0.75	$0.70
75	$1.56	$1.40	$0.76	$0.71
80	$1.71	$1.54	$0.92	$0.87
100	$1.76	$1.58	$0.94	$0.89

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REGATTA NEWS

11th West Indies Regatta in St. Barth

Beach-built schooners and sloops from all over the Eastern Caribbean gather each spring in Gustavia, St. Barth, to commemorate the great days of trading by sail between the islands. The style of this regatta is radically different from the island's Voiles de St. Barth, as it focuses on Caribbean traditions rather than high-tech equipment and top "rock star" racers. This year, the West Indies Regatta took place from April 26th through 28th and included an island market, live music and more — in addition to the sailing, of course. A mini-regatta was organized with the crews of the boats in collaboration with the young people of the St. Barth Yacht Club to introduce the youth to these traditional boats.



WEST INDIES REGATTA

Some 15 traditional wooden vessels were lined up along Gustavia's quay for this 11th edition. On the entry list for racing were the Carriacou sloops *Genesis*, *Free in St. Barth*, *Sweetheart*, and *New Moon*, the Carriacou cutter *Tradition*, the Bequia schooner *Mzungu*, the Petite Martinique trading sloop *Mascot*, and the wooden English lifeboat *Sea Terror*. The classic spectator boat was the Baltic trader *Vendia*.

The participating Classic Yachts visiting from outside the Caribbean were *Blue Peter*, an Alfred Milne design; *Columbia*, a Gloucester schooner; *Mah Jong*, an S&S ketch; *Woodwind*, a Paul Johnson ketch; *Avenger*, a Nova Scotia schooner; *Aarluuk*, a Herreshoff ketch; *Ontong Java*, an African wooden catamaran; and *Mara Noka*, a wooden Wharram catamaran.

The West Indies Regatta is above all about the Caribbean lifestyle, allowing participants to promote and sell their island's local products, including fruit and vegetables, chocolate, jewelry, artwork and more. In the evening, the unique atmosphere included music on the quays. The community of the island reaffirmed support for the West Indies regatta by collaborating with the organizers to support this local and regional tradition.

By combining a historic boat race with the authenticity of a produce and craft market, this sporting and cultural happening confirms the links of friendship, sharing, and exchange between St. Barth and its neighboring islands.

Visit westindiesregatta.com for more information.

ON THE HORIZON

Sunfish World Championships for Bonaire

In September, Bonaire will host the 2019 Sunfish World Championships, powered by World Sailing sponsor Maclaren. From September 14th through 20th the top sailors from each participating country will race. From the 21st through 25th the Masters (several categories of age 40 and over) and Youth (under 19) will show their skills. With tradewinds averaging about 13 knots in September, the organizers look to a great competition.

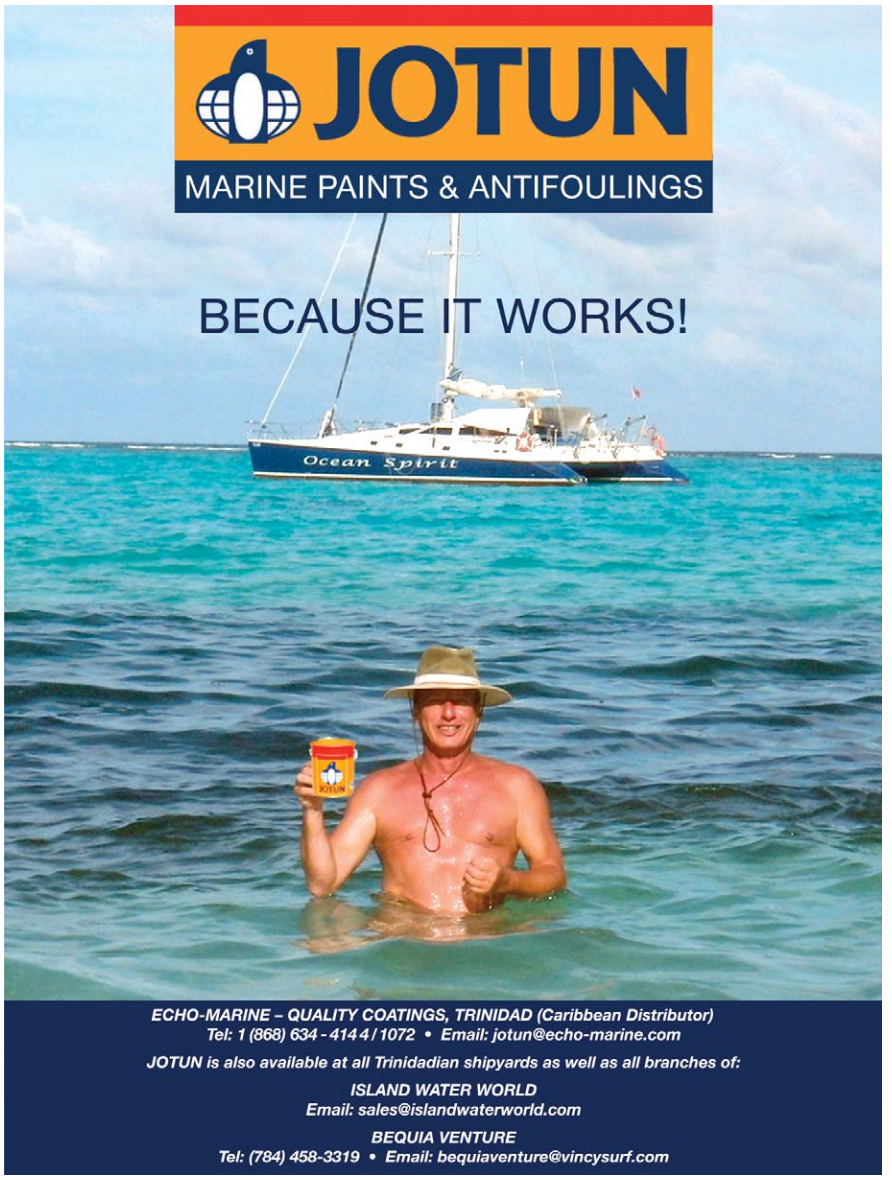
Maclaren will bring 72 brand new boats, sails and trollies to the island so that all competitors will sail with identical equipment, leaving only one variable: the talent of the sailors. The Sunfish will be available for sale after the event for a great price, so if you are thinking about getting a fun sailing dinghy, September is the time!

The Sunfish sailboat is a beach-launched sailing dinghy with a very flat hull carrying a lateen sail on an unstayed mast. Upgrades can be added to enhance sail control for competitive sailing, making the boat attractive to both novice and experienced sailors. The Sunfish was developed by Alcort, Inc., and first appeared in the early 1950s as an improvement on their Sailfish, having a wider beam for greater stability, increased freeboard, and a footwell for a more comfortable sailing position. In 1995, the American Sailboat Hall of Fame commended the Sunfish for being "the most popular fiberglass boat ever designed, with a quarter million sold worldwide" (at that time).

The boats will launch from the beach at regatta host Plaza Resort, a full-service resort with multiple restaurants, and dive and watersports facilities. The competition will be in the bay directly in front, providing minimal transit time to and from the course. There will be good viewing areas to watch the competition both at the resort and along the shores of Bonaire.

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Bonaire has a long and rich history in sailing and boatbuilding. As part of the island's culture, sailing in many disciplines is popular, so if you are looking for something else to do while you are there, head out to Sorobon for world-class wind surfing or to Kite Beach for some air on a kite board!



Contact bonaire@sunfishworlds.org or visit sunfishworlds.org for more information.

Caribbean Dinghy Championship News

The newly formed Caribbean Sailing Week (CSW) will take place from October 17th through 20th in English Harbour, Antigua. The regatta combines two individual Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA) events that are over 20 years old: the CSA Annual Conference and the CSA Caribbean Dinghy Championship.

The Notice of Race for the 2019 CSA Caribbean Dinghy Championship (CDC) is now available. The CDC review committee worked hard to keep the best of the existing event format while also increasing participation. Historically, it was a team event with six sailors per team across four classes. The overall prize was the team trophy.

Race Officer and On-the-Water Manager for host Antigua Yacht Club, Karl James, says, "We are happy that the new format focuses on class events for Laser, Laser Radial, RS Fevas, and Optimists, but ultimately we still want to encourage and reward participation from teams as big as possible by country. For that reason, we have retained the team trophy, now called the Nations Trophy. The winners will be calculated from the best-performing sailors across all four classes."

The event introduces the first Caribbean-based inclusive regatta, with sailors being invited to participate in two new "Para Sailing" classes; the RS Venture Connect SCS (Seated Control System) and the Hansa 303. The addition of inclusive equipment to the CDC, a "Fun Class" consisting of two-person RS Zest sailboats, will be made available for event competitors.

CSA president Alison Sly-Adams adds, "Following a successful World Sailing delivered by the Para Development Program Clinic hosted by Sailability Antigua in January, we committed to ensuring the CDC would be a fully inclusive regatta. The addition of two new classes appropriate for people who are either physically or intellectually impaired will be the first regatta of its kind in the region. We look forward to supporting the growth of Sailability programs across the region."

The CSA encourages early entry in the CDC to help with planning and logistics and has therefore introduced an early-payment discount for entries made on or before October 16th.

This year, the event will be part of the newly named Caribbean Sailing Week alongside the CSA Annual Conference, clinics, and training.

Visit www.caribbeansailingweek.com for more information.

Online Registration Open for Grenada Sailing Week 2020

Online registration is now open for the highly anticipated Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week 2020, taking place from January 26th through 31st. The host venues have been confirmed.



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

The event will start at the prestigious Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, nestled at the bottom of Grenada's colorful capital, St. George's. Racers can warm up and hone their skills on the protected blue waters of the west coast, where tactical racing is called for in the shifting winds. With the transition race, the fleet will move to stunning Secret Harbour Marina in Mount Hartman Bay.

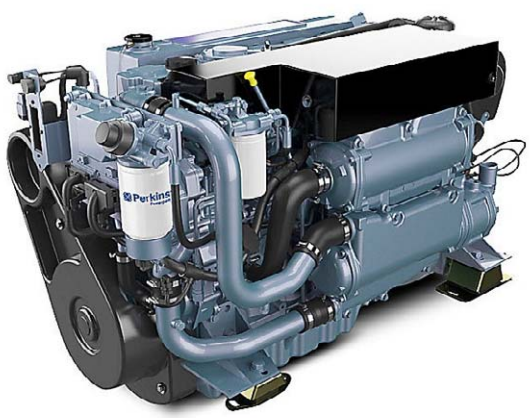
Along this more challenging south coast, racers will battle the currents and winds of the unhindered Atlantic Ocean.

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There will be CSA classes, J/24s, a Classic Class, and Carriacou Sloops. Consideration will be given to PHRF or other classes such as Bareboat, depending upon sufficient entries (minimum of five boats). Prizegiving and parties will be held every night.

Grenada Sailing Week is known for its camaraderie between skippers and crews, many returning year after year to join the tradition of a West Indian regatta.

Island Water World continues its support as title sponsor for the seventh year in a row. Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, Secret Harbour Marina, Mount Gay Rum, Sea Hawk Paints, Grenada Tourism Association, and Dream Yacht Charters are on board as major sponsors for the 2020 event, ensuring you have the best time possible.

So, come on down to the southern Caribbean, shake out those sails for the start of 2020, and "spice it up" in Grenada.

Visit yachtscoring.com/emenu.cfm?eID=9522 to enter online.

Date Change for Antigua Classics 2020

Thanks to popular demand, the dates of the 33rd Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta have been changed to April 1st through 7th, 2020. All the races will start in Rendezvous Bay, directed from a Committee Boat, and the Dragon Challenge will again be included. The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta is also delighted to announce that Locman Watches (Italy) have agreed to become the event's main sponsor.

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta is the premier classic sailing event of the Caribbean, attracting a large number of classics from around the world. The 33rd



ANNA LANDRY

edition will showcase a wonderful variety of competitors, including the traditional craft from the islands, vintage, classic, and historic ketches, sloops, schooners, and yawls that make up the bulk of the fleet, plus Tall Ships, more newly-built Spirit of Tradition yachts, and a Dragon class.

Visit www.antiguaclassics.com for more information.

YOUTH SAILING NEWS

BVI Dinghy Championship Results

Twenty-one sailors across four classes competed in the 2019 BVI Dinghy Championship on May 18th, with racing in the Sir Francis Drake Channel.

In the six-boat Laser fleet, Christian Thompson added the BVI Laser title to his Masters victory from September 2018 with three firsts, two seconds, and one fourth place, collecting seven points. Ollie Alsop also claimed a race win and matched with three seconds and a fourth to secure second overall on 11 points. Joe McIvor's win of the final race was enough to bring him up to third overall with 14 points.

Twelve-year-old Samuel Allen showed an impressive performance in the Laser Radial class, winning five of the six races for five points. Max Reshetiloff came in second, taking the final bullet of the Championship for ten points, while Stephen Ganga finished third on 13 points.



RBVIYC / CLAIR BURKE

The 2019 BVI Dinghy Championships winners — well done, all!

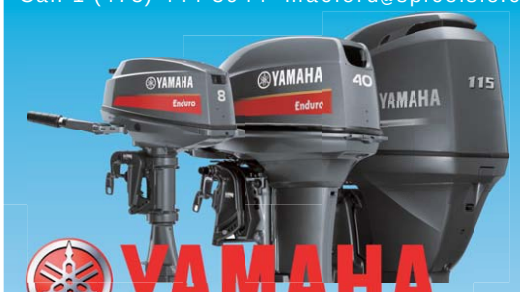
The RS Feva class was a family affair with father-son, father-daughter, and brother-sister combinations in three of the four boats, but it was a team of friends from the youth sailing program that stole the show. Victoria Rowlette with crew Amanda Plaxton took four bullets in the six-race series to finish on just six points. Ted and Anya Reshetiloff took the bullet in race three and finished on 11 points in second place. Chris and Ashley Brockbank snatched the first race win and finished in third overall on 12 points.

The Optimist Green fleet (for those new to racing) welcomed four young sailors who sailed an eight-race series. Ethan George led the way with bullets in all but one of the races for seven points. Josiah Morris ended in second place with 15 bullets, and Savion James finished third collecting 18 points. As three of the newest members of the Royal BVI Yacht Club racing class in the after-school program, they put their lessons into practice at their first-ever regatta. Archie Drewett, who raced in the morning only, put in an excellent performance, racing for the first time and finishing in fourth position.

Visit www.regattanetwork.com/event/18683#_home for more information.



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A Story of David and Goliath

by Katrina Kelshall

Tobago is a small regatta — maybe the smallest regatta in the Caribbean. But because it's small, it is sweet. Just like a mango. It is what the French might call a *bijoux* regatta, a rare gem compared to the larger regattas the Caribbean boasts of hosting.

You won't find *My Song* or *Comanche* here — if you want that, do the northern regatta circuit, where you will be awed by big boats, big budgets and sleekly outfitted professionals who sail for pay and smile on cue. None of that in Tobago: it's a more amicable setup. Run by friends, for friends. And in true club style, you will find a bunch of mates at the bar recounting typical, tropical, shaggy dog stories that are never frozen on the page. True, true "ole talk."

Apart from the amiable ambiance, the venue is also key to Tobago's success, because Crown Point Beach Hotel hosts the regatta and from its pretty garden and gentle cliffs we overlook white-sand Store Bay and the fleet of racing yachts and liveaboards. It's ridiculously reassuring to be able to see your boat at anchor from the pool, the bar or the restaurant. And if you choose to race stripped out, there are hotel rooms and cozy cabanas scattered under the flamboyant trees with self-service kitchenettes, AC and room service. The hotel's restaurant Blu is excellent — service is charming and the food is well presented and very tasty. (Try the creamy fish chowder or braised lamb shank at the most affordable prices in the Caribbean.)

Endorsed by Sailors for the Sea, the regatta runs five races over three days; this year the event's dates were May 15th through 18th. Race courses are traditional but well planned and the breeze in May is usually consistent — this year blowing a steady 15 knots, gusting to 18. The post-race prizegiving is always close to the bar, accompanied by a string band or some other rhythmic island talent.

If the new ANR Tobago Regatta is working to rejuvenate the legendary Angostura/Yachting World Tobago Regatta of yesteryear, it is succeeding in making a venue "where friends meet."

This year there were only eight boats, divided into two classes. Sadly, a number of local skippers declined to take part this year's regatta, as they were dissatisfied with their Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA) rating and the way it was being implemented. As the old adage goes, "the way to hell is paved with good intentions." Let's just take a moment to remind ourselves that it is each skipper's individual responsibility to have his or her boat measured and then to have the rating updated on an annual basis in preparation for regatta season. There is some wiggle room, and temporary ratings can be issued in certain circumstances, but that's only at the measurer's discretion. ANR Tobago Regatta's event organisers flew CSA Measurer Renata Goodridge down from Barbados, with the positive intent of allowing an overseas measurer to work with Race Officer James Benoit from Grenada in assuring fair ratings for the regatta. The necessary equipment to measure boats was brought to Tobago, although it was made clear upon arrival that there was nowhere that a boat could be fairly measured close to the regatta venue. However, all sails could be easily measured, if needed.

Normally skippers come prepared with an up-to-date rating. The aim of the regatta game is to get as many boats as possible to the start line by creating a level playing field so that the greatest variety of boats can compete against one another, fairly. If it were not for the dexterity of the rating system, how could we possibly make up a class that included a 70-foot wooden classic yacht and a 27-foot fiberglass racer? This is what happened at the ANR Tobago Regatta this year — tiny little *Panache*, the smallest boat in the regatta, was vying for first place with the legendary 120-year-old *Galatea* — and *Panache* got top spot on the podium by winning on corrected time.

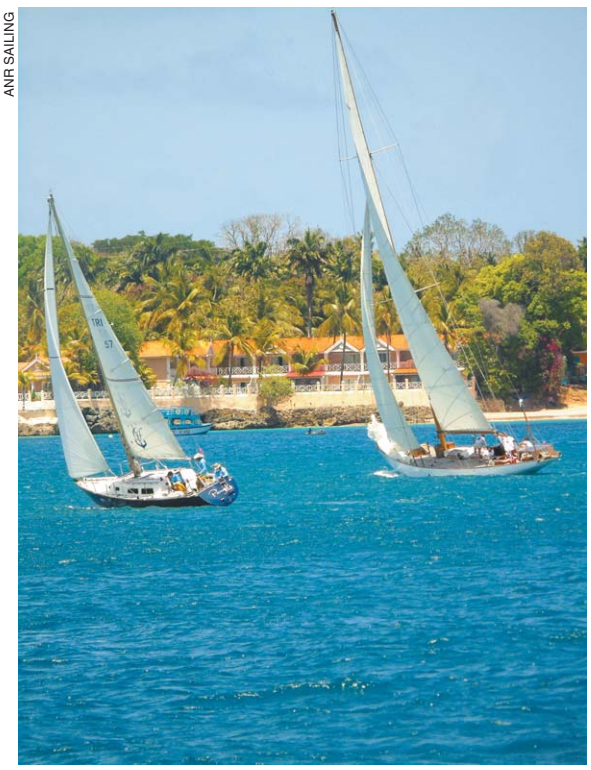
The ANR Tobago Sailing Regatta may not be the biggest or the most media-hungry event in the Caribbean, but what it is, is authentic, charming, informal, and friendly. Good food, good breeze, competitive skippers, and a location like no other. In true David and Goliath fashion, this little regatta is a winner.

Two things are crucial to make this work in the future. One is the installation of a jetty (even if it's temporary) on Store Bay and the other is facilitation of Customs and Immigration at the point of entry. But it's going to come.

All else that's needed is for you to give it a try. It's really not a bad idea: if the northern boatyards are maxed out for hurricane season or only taking long-term bookings, then head south to Tobago for a final regatta season fête, and from there a flotilla can make a safe sail along the coastline to Chaguaramas and out haul at one of the seven shipyards or marinas in Trinidad. Talk about a happy ending!

Tobago welcomes you. Come race next year from May 13th through 16th!

Visit www.anrsailing.com and www.facebook.com/anrsailingregatta for more information.


ANR SAILING



Above:
David and Goliath. Panache *was first overall on corrected time.*

Left:
Wade Riley and his victorious Panache *crew*

Marine Vocational Youth Development in the USVI

Youth2Adult — Y2A — is a series of articles celebrating sailing's role in youth development for Caribbean children.

In this month's "Y2A" and a series of forthcoming articles, we'll look into what's happening with educational, marine and yachting training and development for USVI youth. July's "Y2A" features the story of St. Thomas' 25-year-old Aaron Angol as well as the island's long-standing Marine Vocational Program (MVP).

MVP

"Oh man, they love it!" says Jacqueline Brown, Executive Director of St. Thomas's Girls & Boys Club. As director since 2005, she says of MVP, "There's so much tied into this program."

MVP's collaboration with the Girls & Boys Club is mutually beneficial. According to MVP's founder and director Jimmy Loveland, "In order for children to join MVP, they must be a member of Girls & Boys Club, which drives membership for them. And, of course, the club also sends MVP new faces."

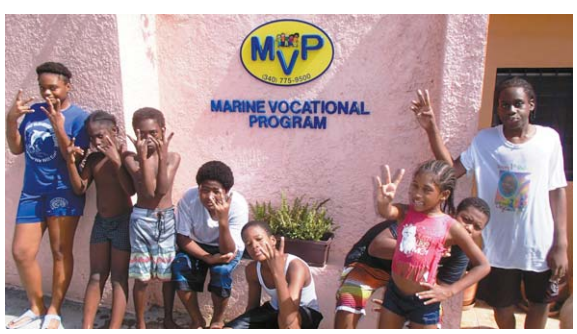
St. Thomas's MVP is housed in a hillside facility above Benner Bay on the island's east side. Replete with training stations for lessons ranging from knot-tying and line-splicing to fish and bird identification, and with a pool and docks below providing additional training spaces, here students learn about corals and other marine life, how to sail, how to operate a motorized vessel, snorkeling, water-safety rules, and more. "Our aim is to take these children and see them develop skills that prepare them for a career path into the marine tourism industry or prepare them for the merchant marine or maritime military branches," says Jimmy.

"We salvaged two flagpoles from American Yacht Harbor that had been blown over during Hurricane Maria and erected them here." Jimmy sweeps his smartphone on Facetime across MVP's northern view to show me USVI and US flags flapping in the wind. "Some of our kids come from the projects in Charlotte Amalie. They come through our program over a period of years beginning when they are ten and lasting until they graduate from high school. Since adding the flagpoles, we now start each day with a pledge of allegiance before we get the other activities underway. Putting their hands on their hearts and reciting the pledge of allegiance brings structure and meaning to their day.

"Our children couldn't swim when they started MVP and now they snorkel around an island in 50 feet of water!" Jimmy says.

New this year is SCUBA training. "MVP is starting SCUBA with their advanced students who are 14 and 15 years old. They started with us at ten or 11 years of age. Our dive curriculum includes two weeks in classroom before entering our pool with a tank in the third week. They can't graduate MVP without a PADI SCUBA certification under their belt," Jimmy explains with pride.

MVP is about the community, locally and farther afield, coming together around positive youth development. "PADI contributed the books we use. The CEO



Making the 'MVP sign' in front of the MVP sign

of IGY marinas saw to it that MVP received monies from the After the Storms Fund. Jimmy Facetime scans to his docks: "That boat there was donated. We plan to sell it to make money for MVP."

Recent years haven't been without their challenges for MVP. Since Hurricanes Irma and Maria's devastation in 2017, MVP has, amazingly, hardly missed a beat. Jimmy says, "In fact, we were up and running again in October 2017 after Maria."

Jimmy sees a sustainable future for MVP by building a structure including a board and paid executive director. He sees continuing funding coming from the already ongoing donation of boats, cars and trucks. In turn, MVP sells them to make cash available to keep MVP's building, learning resources, pool, docks, Cal 24 sailboat and Zodiac going.

Another innovative funding idea from Jimmy is a soon-to-be-built website featuring Golden Oldie photos. He plans to sell memberships to bring attention to MVP and raise money. The site will post MVP progress, weather conditions, and items for sale. In addition, people will "see additional value in the 'MVP Golden Oldies' plastic membership card because MVP will secure discounts from stores and services around St. Thomas that will be honored when our members present their card," Jimmy explains.

In upcoming *Compass* issues, Y2A will feature other youth vocational training within the yachting and marine sector from organizations such as My Brother's Workshop, KATS (Kids And The Sea) and VIPCA (Virgin Islands Professional Charter Association).

St. Thomas' Aaron Angol

Aaron Angol was operating the IGY Fuel Dock in Red Hook, St. Thomas, as my husband and I came in and threw him our dock lines. His smile lit up the dock. After assisting to tie up our 40-foot sloop, he immediately engaged us. He handed Captain Jim the diesel-pump nozzle. Jim inserted it in *Boldly Go's* deck fuel filler and sat dutifully holding the spout handle for some time before asking, "Is this pumping?"



Without being insulting, Aaron pointed out that the captain would hear the sound of the diesel coming through the hose as well as feel it — once he'd turned it on. We all had a laugh as Aaron teased the captain, making the chore of fueling the yacht fun.

"Born and raised in St. Thomas all my life," said Aaron when he agreed to open up about his life. Born October 29th, 1994, Aaron got his career in the hospitality industry going before finishing college.

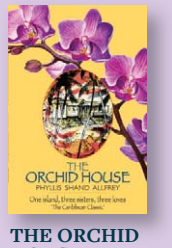
"I began working for the St. Thomas Ritz Carlton October 26, 2016 through mid-2017. It was only one year, unfortunately. But I plan to return to it one day. I graduated from the University of the Virgin Islands last year, right after Hurricane Irma. It was a little rough but I made it through. I really love the tourism industry. Talking to people. Showing them about my island."

Aaron's tourism career path was interrupted when all the resorts on St. Thomas closed after the major 2017 hurricanes. Despite being derailed by "IrMaria," Aaron is not downhearted. "American Yacht Harbour gave me a call. I really like what they have to offer and I accepted the job. I am looking forward to see what the future holds. My main dream is to become a manager…. Here at the American Yacht Harbour, it is pretty similar (to the Ritz Carlton). Customers come from the cruise ships, they do day charters, go fishing. I love it!"

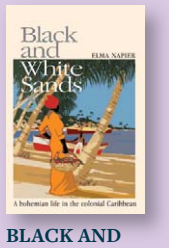
After high school, Aaron stepped out of his paradigm. "A lot of the decisions I've made, like finishing schooling, people I knew, they didn't go on that same path," says Aaron. His message to Caribbean youth: "Just go on and chase your dreams. When I realized anything is possible, you put your mind to it and you have a passion for it, it will be accomplished."

Ellen Birrell attributes her opportunity to cruise the Caribbean aboard S/V Boldly Go *to life skills built in childhood in coastal southern California. Believing swimming and sailing along with reading, writing, arithmetic, music and art are essentials for island youth, she supports youth development through writing and networking.*

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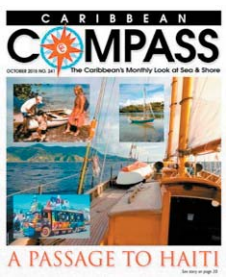
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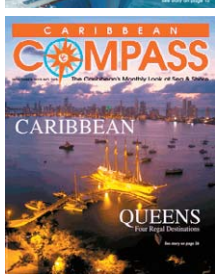
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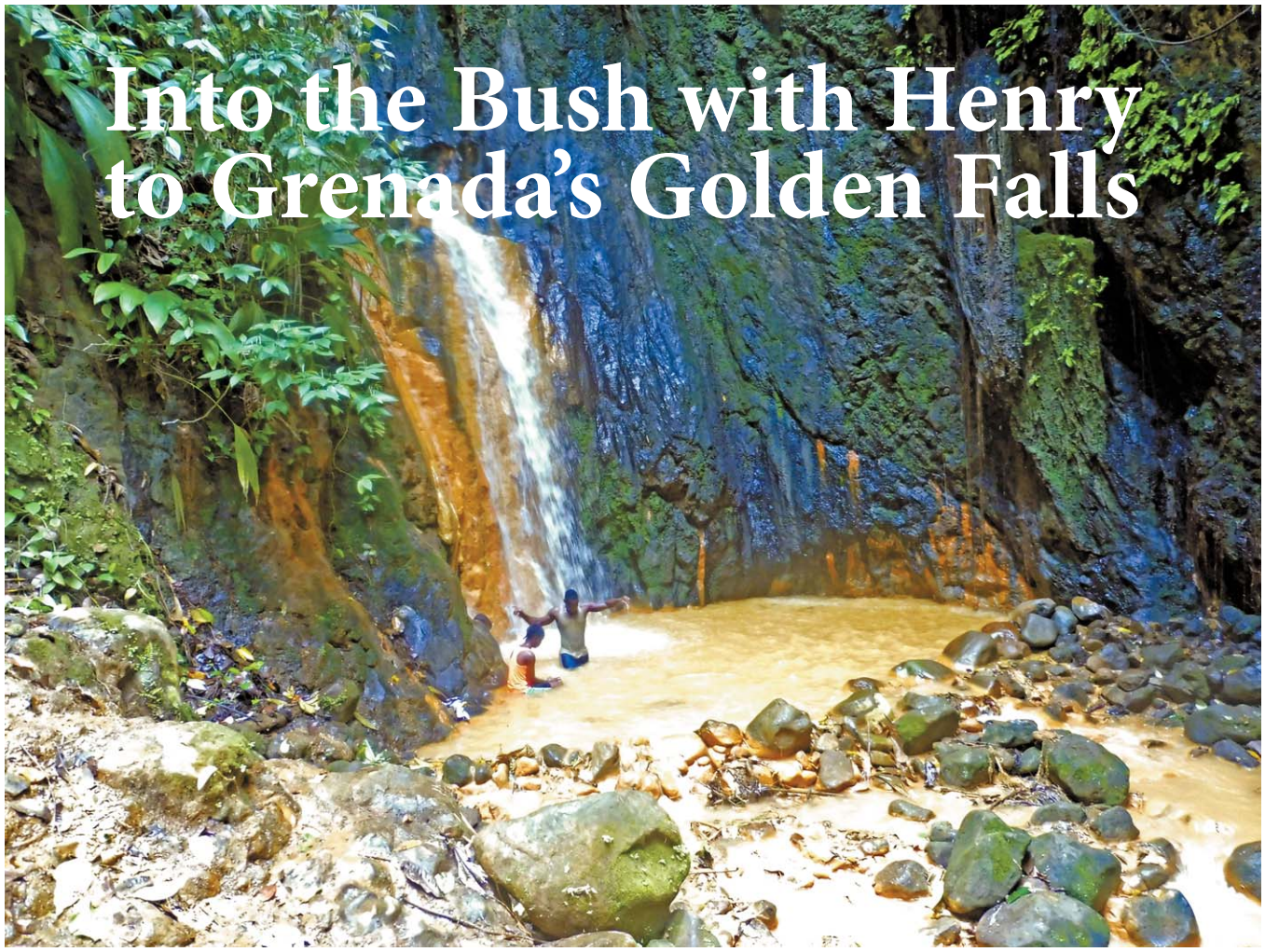






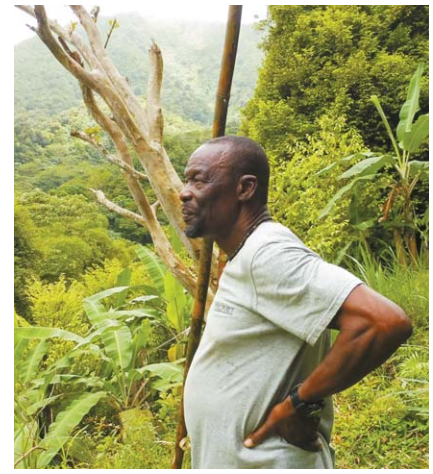


Into the Bush with Henry to Grenada's Golden Falls



by Chris Doyle

Henry Safari Tours in Grenada has a reputation to uphold. Yes, they can handily do all the usual tours, but they are also the adventure-tour people when you really want to do something wild and different, go far from houses and deep in the wonders of the



Above: When Henry asked me to go with him, I was delighted. Left: The falls are a rich golden color from years of deposited sulfur.

bush, and have an experience few others will share. The problem is that yesterday's adventure tours, such as the hike to Seven Falls, have become today's regular scenic trips, and even cruise ship passengers are heading there. So, new and more challenging hiking goals are needed, and when Henry asked me to go with him to Golden Falls, a waterfall neither he nor I had heard about until recently, I was delighted.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

We started by driving from St. George's over the Grand Etang road, which takes you over the mountains and through delightful scenery right away. Many years ago we all had to follow this road to get to the old Pearls Airport, and so in those days every visitor by air got an automatic tour of Grenada; this road is a great introduction to the heartland. We wound up in the foothills of Mount St. Catherine, passing the nearest village, Mount Horne.

Now, it should be said you can hike to Golden Falls from Mount Horne; the village kids do it all the time. This is the easiest path and takes about an hour. But Henry wanted me to try another way, a little more challenging for those that want more adventure. We drove up the Mount St. Catherine road — a tiny, rough grassy road that was probably built for horses and carts — and followed it up into the hills until the driving became too tough. Then we set out on foot.

The scenery was lush and green, the path peaceful, and in the early part we could see down to the old Pearls Airport and some of Grenada's windward-side town of Grenville. When we came to a small trail going up one of the roadside banks, Henry said, "This is the place." We followed this tiny farm path up through forest and then steeply down into a magnificent valley. The incline is steep like a roof, but there are some footholds. Henry had picked up an eight-foot-long piece of bamboo, which enabled him to navigate the slope with ease. I, with my little aluminum hiking pole, which now only goes to half length, also managed, though a little more tentatively. It was a staggering thought that a farmer goes up and down this path often to cultivate and harvest, and climbs back up with a headload of produce.

After about an hour and half's downhill hike we reached the river and followed the rough trail up along it. The topography that makes this area exciting — which is steep, rocky, and somewhat slippery with lots of canyons — also makes it challenging. Happily, the young residents of Mount Horne, who clearly love this destination and visit all the time, have strung a lot of knotted webbing to make it easier.

The river flows yellow with sulfur and near the end you make your way up from pool to pool, to the golden falls. And they are a rich golden color from years of deposited sulfur. The falls are intricate and beautiful. Henry said, "It is like a work of art", and I think that sums it up best.



Young residents of Mount Horne, who clearly love this destination and visit all the time, have strung knotted webbing and made log bridges to ease the way

In a canyon there is a deep pool that people jump into. The kids told Henry there is another, completely clear, upper waterfall, but that it is tough to get to. They immediately headed up.

To get to the main the main waterfall, you pass over a canyon on an ingenious little bridge made of a couple of logs and a plank. The main waterfall has a pool below and while the waterfall is cold, piping hot water comes into the pool on one side through a hole in the rock.

Going back up to Mount Horne was a lot easier than coming down.

Chris Doyle is the author of several well-known Caribbean cruising guides.
Visit his website at www.doyleguides.com

MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JULY - AUGUST 2019

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

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

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

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

July 2019		21	0317	10	2025
DATE	TIME	22	0358	11	2117
1	1047	23	0440	12	2208
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6	1553	28	0831	17	0114
7	1636	29	0928	18	0156
8	1727	30	1028	19	0228
9	1817	31	1130	20	0318
10	1906			21	0401
11	1955	**August 2019**		22	0444
12	2047	1	1231	23	0531
13	2137	2	1321	24	0620
14	2229	3	1427	25	0713
15	2321	4	1521	26	0810
16	0000 FULL MOON	5	1621	27	0910
17	0012	6	1702	28	1011
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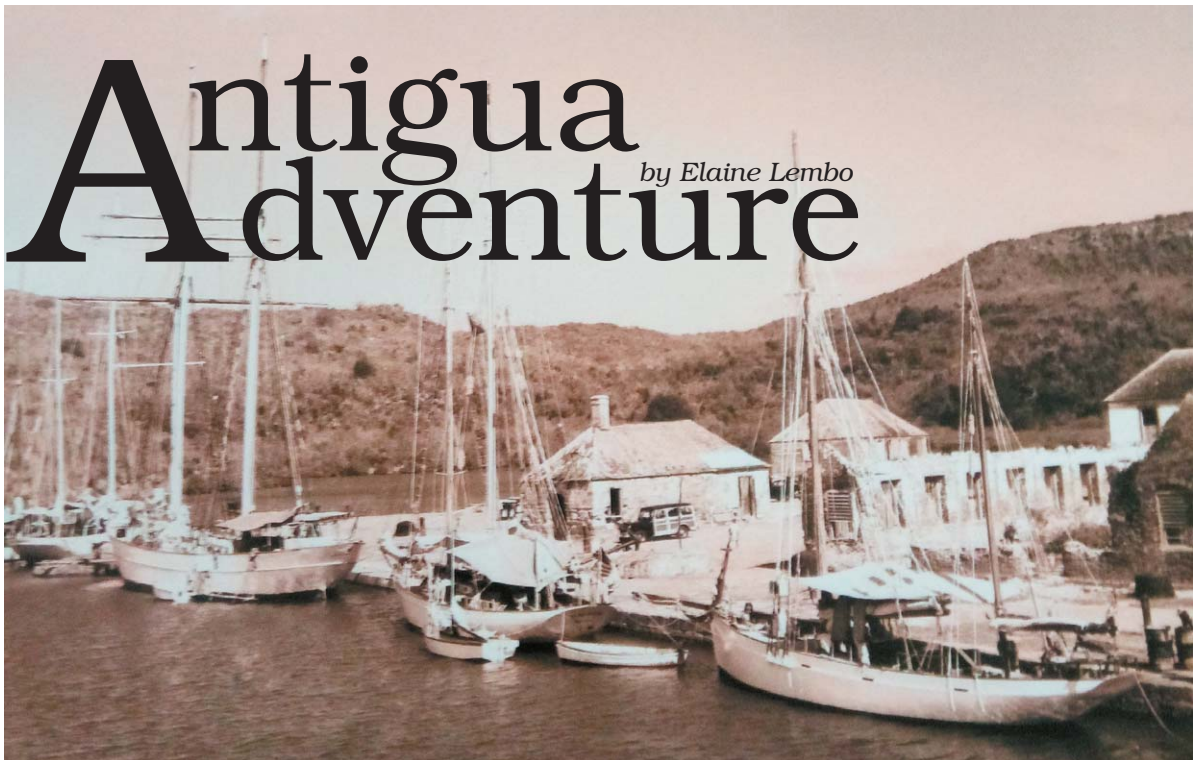


Antigua Adventure

by Elaine Lembo

A wooden schooner, a family named Nicholson, and a pair of love stories: these are the forces behind the rebirth of a nautical empire in a leeward Caribbean island.

Nicholson and Antigua — the names have been uttered in the same breath here since the middle of the 20th century, when the island nation was still a British territory.



COURTESY NANCY NICHOLSON

Above: Nelson's Dockyard in the early days of Caribbean yacht chartering

Below: Lisa Nicholson in her garden, overlooking today's charter fleet at the Antigua Yacht Club docks

Decades after *Mollihawk*, the Nicholson family's 70-foot schooner, first slid past Fort Berkeley into English Harbour for a refit, Antigua has grown in renown as an international sailing hub and a significant base of commerce for the leisure superyacht industry.

The family name is associated with those claims to fame and more. Nelson's Dockyard, the-once derelict British naval supply and repair facility where the Nicholson business started, today is a protected UNESCO World Heritage site. Archeological discoveries, alongside steady streams of tour buses, add new layers of understanding of the past.

That the Nicholsons — Commander Vernon Edward Barling, his wife Emmy and their sons Rodney and Desmond, and their extended families — played a pivotal role in raising the profile of the country on nearly every front of the marine industry isn't lost on the Antiguans whose livelihoods were transformed as a result.

It's certainly not lost on Lisa, who is the last living family member still capable of looking back to the beginnings, to a post-Victorian era when the island and its people, largely ignored by British managers, with the remains of a sugarcane-based economy, were getting by in crude conditions.

Romance Ship

As the sounds of the annual December charter yacht show in Falmouth Harbour carry like notes from a wind chime up to the home Desmond and Lisa Nicholson built on the remains of a colonial site at nearby Pigeon Point, Lisa takes time to reminisce.

The Nicholsons had made landfall in Antigua in the winter of 1949 and a year later started putting their own boat and others out for charter. Lisa's appearance, as her mother's, came later, in the way it only could with the Nicholsons — via one of their crewed charters, and aboard the same boat.

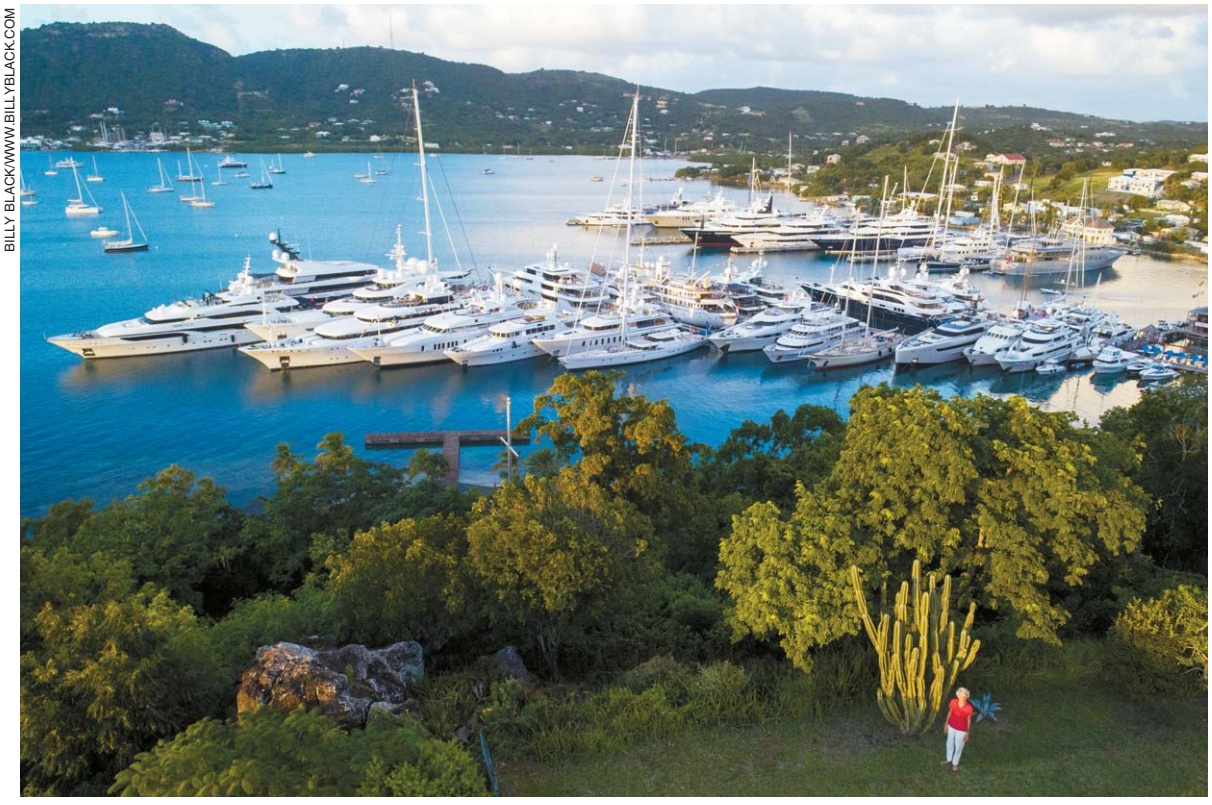
Widower Laurens Hammond, of Hammond organ fame, had decided to charter *Freelance*, a black 86-foot schooner built of iron in 1908. Crew were son Rodney and his then-wife Julie. Hammond was hooked — not just by the sailing, but also by divorcee Roxana Dodd, another guest on board. Laurens and Roxana married in 1954, and in June 1956 took Roxana's three children, including Lisa, on a two-week charter aboard *Freelance* from Martinique to Antigua.

This time, Desmond, not Rodney, was skipper, and he took notice of the beautiful Lisa, a recent Radcliffe graduate. "I still have a digitized version of a film Mr. Hammond took during the charter," she says. "There I was, a young girl, splashing around in the waves. Little did I know what was happening."

Soon after, Lisa accepted an invitation from Desmond to help with a charter. "All the crew were West Indians," she recalls. "I worked with a crewmate named Kenneth to prepare the meals. I used the Fanny Farmer cookbook. He would say, the flour is to the east, the salt is to the west."

Lisa and Desmond married in 1957. "Our honeymoon was sailing *Mollihawk* to the Barbados drydock for a refit. On our sail back, we bought a generator in Tobago and chairs in Martinique. We decided to build our house here, and I've never lived anywhere else. I still have all those chairs."

She chuckles over the memories, of the nickname she and her mother gave *Freelance* — The Romance Ship — then adds with a smile: "It's kind of like a fairy tale, isn't it?"



BILLY BLACK/WWW.BILLYBLACK.COM

VEB Nicholson & Sons

A stunning black and white photograph of attractive newlyweds Lisa and Desmond, taken by fashion photographer Toni Frissell at Shirley Heights, is a favorite. "Look at what isn't there in the view!" Lisa says. "That tells quite a story."

True — no homes in the hills, no bustling marinas at water level. But what did exist in the area of English Harbour was a lot of neglect.

Hand-wringing over the fate of the old Naval Dockyard was intense in the first half of the 20th century. In 1906, the British Admiralty transferred ownership to the Antigua government, but precious little was done at the site, whose condition was described as "deplorable."

But change was a-comin'.

In March 1949, *Mollihawk*, a 70-foot wooden schooner "of 1903 vintage," as Desmond later described her, sailed in from Cork, Ireland. Commander VEB Nicholson, drawn to the steady tradewinds of the Caribbean, had long imagined returning to the area he'd patrolled during World War II.

"The first thing we did was a big yacht refit on the grassy deserted wharves," Desmond later recounted. "Then we picked up shingles, wind-strewn over the Dockyard, to fix the roof of the old Commissioner's Room and Paymaster's House in which we squatted to make a shoreside home."

What happened next is the quintessential rags to riches tale, though at the time, the key players had no idea what they were getting into.

"The Mill Reef Club was just starting out and its guests came down and asked to go for a sail," Lisa says. "Desmond's dad decided to try it out and see if it could work, taking people for a sail commercially. Recreational yachting was just starting with the end of the war. The Mill Reef Club people took the cruise, they liked it, and then they told their friends. And one thing led to another."

The first charter was a 12-day affair aboard *Mollihawk* in 1950. By 1955, six private yacht owners had turned the care of their boats over to Nicholson. By 1959 the fleet had grown to 17. Mill Reef Club guests and their friends were well-heeled Americans eager to explore by sail.

No electricity service existed at the Dockyard; there was no place to stay before or after the charter, no ship's chandlery, no charter brokers or marketing. So the Nicholsons created everything, from the Admiral's Inn to Carib Marine. And the Commander kept meticulous records of it all. He logged every query, every guest, all addresses. Every booking became part of a flow chart of business activity for individual yachts and the fleet. No software or tech dilemmas here: the fledgling charter industry tools were carbon copy paper in a cardboard-bound booklet. The Commander collected the money and paid the bills, and sons Rodney and Desmond skippered the boats. Rodney's wife, Julie, was good at writing letters and started handling the details of the charter queries, unwittingly planting the seed for her own brokerage dynasty.

And Lisa?

"I did what was needed!" she laughs, explaining that she and Desmond had just built a house and started a family. Later, when they gained permission and funding to open the Admiral's Inn hotel, Lisa worked there and in the office of VEB Nicholson & Sons.

Desmond loved photography and documented some of the development of the Dockyard, also becoming de facto publicity director. Brochures designed and written by Desmond and his father described each yacht, with layout and specs, as well as sailing itineraries from Antigua south to Grenada.

The fleet members included ketches, sloops, yawls, and schooners, hulls of wood, steel, even ferro-cement. *Thelma III*, *Pas de Loup*, *Sagittarius*, and *Harbinger* were some of the better-known names. Itineraries were typically one way from Antigua to Martinique or back.

Spark that Lit the Flame

Word spread of crewed yacht charter vacations, fueling the Nicholsons with yet more ideas. Their attention turned toward travel agencies and another newfangled concept, that of inviting travel agents to Antigua to have a look at the boats.

"We called it the Nicholson Charter Yacht Show, and we'd invite them down for a cruise," Lisa says. Parties for the travel agents were thrown at the senior Nicholsons' home in the old Powder Magazine. "Commander Nicholson entertained them," she says. "He was the life of the party."

→

Julie Nicholson

No stereotype could define the life and career of Lisa's sister-in-law Julie Nicholson, who died earlier this year, at the age of 90. With her passing last winter at home in Maine, the world of crewed yacht charters lost one of its key industry pioneers.



COURTESY NANCY NICHOLSON

Lifelong sailor, Smith College graduate, and a certified Able-Bodied Seaman, Julie Pyle hailed from a wealthy New England family. Travel and exploration were her obsessions, and in the early 1950s, the Caribbean island of Antigua was a scheduled stop during her 18-month circumnavigation aboard Irving and Exy Johnson's Brig *Yankee*. She came ashore and fell in love, irreversibly altering the course of her life and countless others.

As it had with Lisa, Julie's marriage into the Nicholson family deeply involved Julie in the business of crewed sailboat charter, a newfangled concept in the mid-20th century that Commander Vernon Edward Barling Nicholson and sons Rodney and Desmond are widely credited with creating.

While Julie started out as crew with her husband, Rodney, aboard the Nicholson fleet, she excelled at the details of arranging charters, matching client with boat. In so doing, she succeeded in making her own love of sailing contagious for people in search of a different kind of vacation experience, concocting the role of the crewed charter vacation broker.

The contemporary superyacht sail and power charter industry, along with thousands of worldwide brokers, builders, crew, and owners who thrive from it, are the direct result of what the Nicholson clan, Julie chief among them, began.

Today, the business and the reputation of the successful Nicholson brand carry on. From Antigua to the US East Coast, family members and original employees run the constellation of offices. They include Nicholson Yacht Charters in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in Blue Hill, Maine (run by Julie's daughter Shelby); Nicholson Yacht Charters & Services in Antigua; and Nicholson Yachts charter brokerage, fleet management and sales in Newport, Rhode Island.

Elaine Lembo is a writer and editor whose career has spanned decades in the publishing and recreational marine industry fields. Currently, she is the communications director for Nicholson Yachts in Newport, Rhode Island, and an editor at large for Cruising World *magazine, where she was on staff for nearly 18 years. She is also a contributing writer for the New York Yacht Club newsletter. Her article about the origins of the schooner rig is featured in the most recent issue of* 41N*, the publication of the Rhode Island Sea Grant (https://41nmagazine.org).*

Left: The original naval dockyard buildings were used for whatever was needed

Below: A photo of newlyweds Lisa and Desmond, taken at Shirley Heights, is a favorite. 'Look at what isn't there in the view!' Lisa says.

Bottom: Lisa says that after her marriage in 1957, 'We decided to build our house here, and I've never lived anywhere else.'



BILLY BLACK/WWW.BILLYBLACK.COM (2)



was managing the chandlery, also became a founding member of the Antigua Yacht Club and Antigua Sailing Week. When he retired from the business, he founded the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda in the island's capitol, St. John's, and the Dockyard Museum at English Harbour, devoting himself to archaeological, conservation, and environmental projects, and writing about them.

While it is accurate that the Nicholsons did not restore Nelson's Dockyard, they made it come alive again. "When I think of the Nicholson family," Lisa says, "I think of them as the spark that lit the flame. They were the right people in the right place at the right time."

Milestones

In 2004, Lisa and Desmond Nicholson returned to Shirley Heights to retake that photo. Needless to say, the scene had changed. The Dockyard was bustling. West of it, Falmouth Harbour housed marinas, hotels, a boatyard, yacht club, restaurants, and marine services.

Clearly, the Nicholsons' enterprise and energy had had a far-reaching, transformative impact.

"I love the activity it brings, especially to the community," Lisa says of the frenetic pace of the yachting sector today.

"It's grown up organically and the local people were involved in the yachting community from the very start," she says. "It's a joint effort between the outsiders and the local people. Antigua became a place where yachts collect and get services. Captains come here; they feel comfortable leaving the yacht and crew; there's plenty to do. What has evolved isn't one big marina, but smaller marinas in a community," she says. "They've grown gradually."

It's a stark evolution from the days when the Commander's wife would give bread to the hungry children who clamored for attention on the wharves.

As for the plethora of domes and chrome and superstructures, Lisa's attitude is inclusive.

"Personally, I prefer sailboats, but I see this is the way yachting is going and it's beneficial to the island," she says.

It helps that two of her grandsons — Louis and Alex Sinclair — who spent early years sailing in Antigua, are on rival syndicates vying for the next America's Cup in 2021. Alex is with Team American Magic, representing the New York Yacht Club; Louis is with the defender, the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron.

Lisa finds a comfortable position in one of those Martinican chairs. She sips a glass of water from the house cistern, adding with relish: "I just married into this amazing Nicholson family, and it has been a wonderful adventure."

Getting to the Caribbean Cruising Dream

by David Carey

"In the end, we only regret the chances we didn't take."

It's a saying all too familiar. Yet, the truth is, we don't often have dreams so crazy they scare us. I'd never had a big dream before. I'd had goals that I wanted to accomplish, like renovating houses, finishing my master's degree and building a muscle car, but these were not all-encompassing life-changing dreams, they were the reason you got up and went to work kind of dreams; hell, you have to spend your money somehow.

It wasn't until my wife and I decided to buy an old yacht on the other side of the world and take our three young boys on the trip of a lifetime, that I realized what dreaming big really meant.

The craziest part about this idea is that we had never owned a boat before, let alone a full-size liveaboard yacht. The reason I knew we were dreaming big was that the dream completely took over our lives for two years in the lead-up to our departure. We completely reshuffled our routine, our kids' schooling, and our possessions. Everything had to change, and it did. We needed a radical savings plan, we needed to learn about boats, and we needed personal coaching to ensure this dream became a reality!

As I sit in the aft cabin of our Moody 47, a solid bluewater yacht that we now call home, I have the time to think back to some of the obstacles we had to overcome to make this dream a reality.



Learning to Sail

The first was obvious: we didn't own a boat or know how to sail. We set out to buy a trailer-sailer that we could take out on the weekends to practice on. This was a fantastic experience, and we often talk about those memories fondly. We learned to sail in the gulf in Australia where we lived, and where I had grown up. Instinctively, I knew that although this little boat suited our budget and we could learn a lot about sailing on it, we needed to get aboard a proper yacht. The local sailing club hosted twilight sailing on Wednesday nights, so we contacted the club, and they were happy for us to crew during the races so that we could learn how the big boys did it. The captain and crew welcomed us aboard their Beneteau First 47 and, perhaps because we were eager to learn and happy to do any job that was asked of us, we were asked to crew for the entire season.

The summer twilight races were terrific; we got a real sense for what we were getting ourselves into, and we could tell that boating agreed with us. The first part of our plan to gain sailing experience was working out. On one particular Wednesday night, the forecast was for 30 knots. Some "heavy weather" sailing was just what I wanted. I needed to know that I wouldn't fall apart in some decent wind, so even though the race was almost canceled due to the conditions, we set off into the gulf, the mood a little tense. The race was going well, the captain was very experienced in handling his boat, and I felt confident in his abilities.



Above: The author and his wife, Erin, living the dream — here, below the Piton in St. Lucia

Left: Exploring the Caribbean with his three young boys 'on the trip of a lifetime'

I became a little unsettled when I noticed someone from a neighboring yacht had fallen overboard. As we sailed around the course, it was soon time to gybe and I was asked to grind the winch controlling the mainsail. I had not been asked to do this before, and I was excited to be given more responsibility. I took up my position at the rear of the boat. As the mainsail went through the wind and the boom swung from one side of the boat to the other, I had no idea that this boat had a traveler at floor level and the mainsheet would also come across the boat right where I was sitting. I don't remember feeling any pain when my head was caught by the mainsheet and slammed into the winch. I rolled over to one side and had no idea what had just happened; I just knew I was bleeding profusely due to the pools of blood I could see in front of me. To add to the drama, at that exact moment, the bow man had been washed through the lifelines by a wave, and the headsail had wrapped around the forestay. Needless to say, the captain had his hands full sorting out this mess.

The sails were wrangled back onto the deck, the man overboard rescued, by me funnily enough, and I was patched up as best we could. I had actually cut my head open just above my nose at the start of my eyebrow, and when I looked in the mirror below deck, I thought to myself, "That doesn't look good." I could almost make out the word "Lewmar" on my forehead.

We retired from the race, and I drove home to tell my wife what had happened and that we needed to go to the hospital to get it checked out. Five stitches later and my face was looking pretty average with butterfly clips and a massive bruised egg. Returning to work the next day was fun. I worked as a safety inspector, and my colleagues were thoroughly enjoying listening to the story. I am a pretty confident guy, but I felt a little embarrassed and sorry for myself considering I had not long before announced to the world that my wife and I were buying a yacht to go cruising. Some people must have thought that was the end of that, but not me.

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Getting Offshore Experience

My face healed up quickly enough and our big dream, although challenging, had not beaten us; we just needed more experience. Racing around the buoys on a Wednesday night was great, but we wanted bluewater experience. An offshore yacht delivery was just the ticket. My wife had organized, through a yacht delivery company, a position for me to crew on a yacht from Tasmania to Brisbane — a two-week trip of about 2,000 miles that would see us crossing Bass Strait and sailing up the eastern side of Australia. My naivety would be my undoing on this one. I had no idea of the questions I should have asked the skipper of this yacht before I agreed to crew. I had only a small amount of information on the vessel and the other crewmembers. This was not a paid position, and I was required to take two weeks leave from my full-time job, and pay for my flight to Tasmania and any personal gear I wanted to take, which included a new offshore Musto jacket and a personal EPIRB.

I packed my bag, said goodbye to my family and set off for Tasmania. I remember sitting in the airport waiting for my flight and trying to eat a kebab, I could hardly get it down, I was so nervous. Maybe it was my intuition telling me that I was out of my league. I was picked up by the skipper and his friend at the airport and whisked away to the awaiting yacht, a Formosa 42.

As I met the other crewmember and climbed down the companionway, I couldn't help but notice the open circuit-breaker panel with a pile of spaghetti-looking wires hanging out of it. Again I thought to myself, "That doesn't look good." Without warning, the captain announced we were off! No safety briefing? No introduction to the boat, I wondered? Unfortunately, when you are an inexperienced crewmember along for the ride, you don't always feel you can speak up. We motored away from the slip and into a stiff breeze on the nose. The plan was to use the engine when we couldn't get the angle to sail.

About four hours into the trip we had motored approximately 20 miles offshore when we noticed a funny smell and a strange squeaking noise coming from down below. The other crewmember went below to investigate, and it only took him seconds to report that there was water up to the floorboards!

I had no idea what to think, I looked to the captain who took one look down below, leaned over the rail and threw up. He had apparently become seasick from the fumes that were coming off the batteries that the oversized alternators, fitted to the engine, were frying.

The bilge pumps were, of course, the first idea. The switch for the pumps was activated. Nothing happened. They didn't work. The captain managed to inform us, between throwing up and breathing, that there was a spare bilge pump, but it wasn't hooked up. I will never forget seeing the first mate stripping wires from the pump with his teeth and wrapping them around the posts of a spare battery to activate the pump. "This can't be how it's done," I thought to myself. We radioed the coast guard, turned the boat around and made for the port. The "captain" shut his eyes and lay down in the cockpit, while the first mate and I were left to bring the strange boat into a foreign port on a moonless night.

The yacht was tied up to the dock, and I promptly went to bed. I had had enough for one day. The next morning revealed that the engine's cooling system cap and heat exchanger had malfunctioned, and the raw water pump had filled the boat with water.

My crewmate and I began to discuss whether the condition of this vessel was sound. After probing the captain, we uncovered that he had never actually had the sails up on this boat and that we were the second crew that had attempted this delivery with him after other problems were discovered. It didn't take much to decide that this delivery wasn't a good idea. We grabbed our bags, wished the captain all the best, and promptly left for the airport. Arriving home and heading back to work two weeks early, with my tail between my legs, I provided endless entertainment for my workmates; and having to tell my boss another embarrassing sailing story was becoming an unwanted habit.

Accidents Happen

A few months had passed. We were still saving for our yacht, selling all of our possessions, canceling insurance policies and magazine subscriptions, hosting international exchange students to make money, and feeling a little more confident that we were back on track toward achieving our dream. While our little red trailer-sailer was great, it was only a temporary boat to practice on, and the plan was to sell it closer to our departure date. We needed every dollar we could get our hands on.

I was not very happy with the way the boat sat on the trailer, it didn't seem to be supported by the rollers and appeared to have belonged to another boat at some stage. To increase its resale value, I set about rejigging the geometry of the supporting rods that held the rollers that the boat sat on. This involved cutting the tie rods, shortening them and rewelding the eye ends back on.

Thanks to my background as an aircraft technician in the Australian Air Force, I was experienced with the use of tools and this job should have been an easy one. Complacency would be my undoing. I was lying on my stomach under the boat, with an angle grinder in one hand cutting the tie rod, which I thought had no weight on it. It did. As the very thin cutting disc made it all the way through the tie rod, the weight of the boat pushing down pinched the rotating disc and the grinder jumped out of my right hand and onto my left. It was over in the blink of an eye. The grinder fell to the concrete still running, I managed to turn it off with my right hand, but I knew something terrible had happened to my left. Like a child, I grabbed my left hand and held it to my body, wrapping it in my jumper. I finally summoned the courage to take a look and, for the third time, I thought to myself, "That doesn't look good."

A gaping wound from my thumb to my wrist exposed some serious meat, and the fact that I couldn't move my thumb really worried me. As I walked inside to tell my wife that we needed to go to the hospital, yet again, I was almost in tears. I knew this one would take some serious healing. It turned out I had severed two of the three tendons that allowed me to move my thumb. I would require microsurgery to reattach the tendons, and the rehab would be extensive, not to mention the 25 stitches that were needed to close my wound up. I was admitted to hospital that night in preparation for the surgery the next day. Lying in the hospital bed, I had time to reflect on what going after this dream of buying and cruising a yacht on the other side of the world was really costing me.

Holding the Dream

The strange thing was that I had lost none of my ambition or drive; the dream was still as alive as ever, and I was actively fighting for it. Even after losing the use of my left hand for eight weeks, not being able to drive a car and having to take public transport to work, suffering the embarrassment of all these mishaps was all part of the story, part of the adventure and a part of my life I will never forget.

I don't think chasing a dream should be easy. I should have known I would be in for a bit of trouble along the way. In the end, all I could hope for was that my family would be safe, and we were as prepared as we could be for our trip. For me, the mindset that failure was not an option overwhelmed me, and I become borderline obsessed with sailing, but it's that unrelenting drive that can get you there in the end.



'We have caught fish as big as my youngest child'

So, Was It Worth It?

As I write this, I am with my wife and our three kids, anchored off the tropical island of Antigua, aboard our very own yacht that we have been actively cruising in the Caribbean for the last 15 months.

As a family, we have grown closer in ways we never could have on land. We have met some amazing people and have experienced cultures we never otherwise would have been exposed to. We have caught fish as big as my youngest child and climbed active volcanoes, peering into their craters. We've snorkeled with sea turtles and witnessed them giving birth on the sand under starry skies. We've laughed and we've cried. The highs have been high, and the lows have been low.

I've discovered that the cruising life is anything but easy; in fact, it's without a doubt the hardest thing I have ever done. But one thing's for sure: I have never felt so alive.

Dave is an Australian father of three who only began sailing two years before he and his family embarked on a trip of a lifetime. The idea came to him after watching a documentary. Two years later they left home to fly to the Caribbean, where they had bought their boat sight unseen. They currently live aboard their Moody 47 in the Eastern Caribbean and will be crossing the Atlantic Ocean and sailing the Mediterranean this year. To follow their journey visit www.sailingtoroam.com





Summering on the Rio? DON'T MISS TIKAL!

by Darelle Snyman

Although this article is mostly about our amazing visit to Tikal it is difficult not to first enthuse about life on the Rio Dulce. Life on the Sweet River, as it is known in English, is sweet. We — a cruising family of two adults, one teenager and a cat — were late arrivals to the Rio during the 2018 hurricane season, our first visit. We arrived with the intention of leaving as soon as the hurricanes settled back into their dormant state. As often is the case in cruising, plans change, either by choice or by the intervention of weather, self-inflicted boat projects or, worse, something that decided it was a good time to break. Our planned two-month stay on the Rio turned into a six-month stay. We have fallen in love with Guatemala and its friendly people.



Life on the Rio

The Rio Dulce has long been a favourite hurricane hideaway for cruisers and is probably the safest "hurricane hole" in the western Caribbean. This lush, freshwater retreat has a choice of marinas to suit everyone's needs and tastes. We had friends at different marinas and found all to have very friendly and helpful staff. Life on the Rio for the cruiser can be as busy or as relaxed as you want it to be; if you want busy, better get a day planner, you are going to need it. The Rio is a social hub with activities that include movie nights, day trips, karaoke nights, swap meets, the ubiquitous potlucks and more. The morning net will inform you of all the happenings on the river and what delicacies are being cooked up at the host of restaurants that dot the Rio. Most places are a short dinghy ride away, but because the Rio is an aquatic community, *lanchas,* or water taxis, are readily available to cart you around. If you find yourself with too much time on your hands, there are also wonderful charity organizations that are always in need of volunteers; it is a very satisfying way to gain some insight into the lives of the local people.

Shopping is mostly done in the dusty, bustling town of Fronteras; anyone that has ever navigated the roads of Fronteras on foot will probably smirk at the word bustling. The term chaotic is probably more appropriate: there are no sidewalks; the shops and vendors' stalls are right on the edge of the road. Walking to your destination or just browsing the produce stalls is a gauntlet of dodging people, cars, *colectivos*, scooters, trucks, *tuk-tuks* and buses. This is all accompanied by cacophonous noise — a bit overwhelming to the senses at first.

For many cruisers the Rio has become a safe and inexpensive haven to leave their boats while returning home during hurricane season or to explore the treasures of Guatemala and other Central American countries. Imagine the luxury of not having to worry about hurricanes affecting your floating home!

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Clockwise from top: View of Temples I, II and III from right to left, as seen from Temple V; Temple IV piercing the jungle canopy; one of the Rio's riverside houses





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Guatemala has many beautiful places rich in culture to visit and one of these must-see treasures is Tikal. The ancient Mayan ruins of Tikal are shrouded by the lush El Petén jungle in northern Guatemala. In its heyday, Tikal was one of the most powerful kingdoms of the Maya, home to anywhere from 10,000 to 90,000 inhabitants. By the end of 900 AD the Maya abandoned the city and the jungle reclaimed it until its rediscovery in the late 1800s. Today, it is one the largest archaeological sites in Central America.

Getting to Tikal

Your initial destination when leaving Fronteras is the twin towns of Flores and Santa Elena, approximately 65 kilometres (about 40 miles) south of Tikal. One option is to jump on a Fuente del Norte bus; they have several daily departures to Santa Elena. Their standard bus is your cheapest option, but it can end up being a long and crowded trip. If you prefer a faster, more luxurious option, meaning you will have air conditioning, you can try their Mayo de Oro buses, which have only two departures a day from Fronteras.



Left: An altar, with faint engravings still visible

Below right: Yachts on the scenic Rio Dulce

We were a group of cruiser friends that planned the trip to Tikal together and decided to pool our resources and hire a shuttle with a private driver. We liked the freedom of having our own vehicle on standby to go when and where we pleased. We had gotten to know our driver, Ernesto, from previous outings and approached him with the idea. He fell for it and we made a deal that suited us all. We're not sure he knew what he let himself into, carting around a bunch of cruisers for three days. At least we were a friendly, non-difficult bunch, if somewhat rowdy.

Where to Stay

We opted to stay in the picturesque town of Flores with its narrow winding cobblestone streets, colourful colonial houses and laidback atmosphere. The pretty town is located on a tiny island on Lake Petén Itza and connected to its sister town Santa Elena via a causeway. Sounds idyllic, doesn't it? If it only happened that way. We budget-conscious cruisers only looked at the price and the pictures without reading the accommodation description very carefully. So after driving around aimlessly on Flores island we eventually had to call our booked abode for directions. To our dismay the directions took us away from the pretty island town to a side street in Santa Elena, where we ended up at the roach motel with its cold showers and blanketless beds. (Yes, it can get cold in Guatemala, especially in December.) Being sailors, we dealt with in the best way we could — we took cold showers and walked back to Flores for some alcoholic beverages to ease our disappointment.

We initially played around with the idea of staying at one of the hotels or lodges inside Tikal National Park, but, as already stated, we are cheap. Staying in the park, however, is more convenient if you plan to do the sunrise or sunset tour.

Tikal

After an early morning cold shower we set off for Tikal. It's about an hour's drive from Flores, and you want to arrive early. The ancient city with its ruins of temples, pyramids, palaces and ball courts is spread over a vast area hidden among the lush jungle vegetation, a large area to explore on foot in one day.

We arrived with great expectations; after all, we'd heard from so many how wonderful and amazing Tikal is. Armed with our site maps we decided to split up so that everyone could explore at their own pace and those that wanted to acquire the services of a guide could do so. I loved the fact that you had to hike from temple to temple along miles of meandering trails accompanied by bird song and the chattering of spider monkeys overhead. The decibel levels of the howler monkeys, however, were less appealing: they make noise, incredibly loud noise. Only a fraction of Tikal's buildings have been excavated; many are still completely engulfed by the lush tropical vegetation waiting to be discovered and restored. I was pleasantly surprised that Tikal was less crowded than expected, considering it attracts thousands of tourists annually.

As you leave the parking area and touristy stalls behind you will notice along the path a few impossibly high trees with smooth, unbranching trunks, their canopies reaching for the sky. These ceiba trees were sacred to the ancient Mayans who believed they connected the underworld with the earth and heaven. Today these trees are still respected by modern-day Mayans and the ceiba is Guatemala's national tree.

The focal point of the city in ancient times was the Great Plaza, the public arena for most ceremonial activities. This was also the area in the park where we encountered the greatest concentration of tourists. It felt surreal to emerge into this grassy clearing with the Temple of the Gran Jaguar (Temple I) and the Temple of the Masks (Temple II) towering over us. The two temples face each other across a grassy expanse. The size of these structures boggled the mind and they are not even the tallest structures in the park.

Bordering the plaza to the south is the central acropolis, which housed Tikal's royal families. To the north is the north acropolis, which functioned a burial ground for the royalty for over 1,300 years. The Gran Jaguar, at a height of 47 metres (154 feet) has become the iconic emblem of Tikal. This majestic structure was built in the year 700 AD to honour the great ruler Jasaw Chan K'awiil, whose tomb was found deep within the structure by archaeologists. From the top of Temple II you have an impressive view of the plaza and the Gran Jaguar. Jasaw Chan K'awiil constructed Temple II for use in his lifetime. A fun fact about the Great Plaza is that it was acoustically designed so that the high priests could be heard from anywhere in the plaza.

Talking about views, one of the coolest aspects of Tikal is that you can actually climb to the top of the temples. Many have carefully constructed wooden staircases to ensure safety and to spare the ancient limestone edifices from thousands of clambering feet. Be prepared for a lot of climbing, but it's well worth all the spectacular views you will delight in. Climbing these monoliths really gave me a greater appreciation for the challenges the ancient Maya must have faced in building these architectural masterpieces. In recent years a few tourists have plummeted to their deaths while ascending the steep staircases; can you just imagine how many Mayan lives were lost in their construction? The most puzzling thing to me, after a day of clambering around on these ancient ruins, is why did short-legged people like the Maya build these incredibly steep steps on structures that they had to navigate every day?



It was wonderful exploring the Great Plaza but soon it got too crowded, so my husband and I took to the jungle again, heading for Temple IV. Our son had long since abandoned us to explore on his own. As we walked through the lush stretches of jungle one of its unique inhabitants became a familiar sight: the coati. To me they looked like a cross between a dog and a ring-tailed lemur, but they are actually closely related to raccoons. They took very little notice of us as they moved through the jungle in groups, inspecting the forest floor for tasty morsels.

No journey to Tikal is complete without ascending to the top of Temple IV, the tallest pre-Columbian structure still standing in the New World. This 70-metre edifice, also called the Two-Headed Snake Temple, towers above the jungle canopy and has become famous for its use as a filming location for Yavin 4 in the Star Wars movie, *Episode IV, A New Hope*. Sitting on the stone steps at the top I could only stare in awe at the jungle canopy as it spread out below us, I was on top of the world. It clearly was a magical moment for all present; everyone just sat in silence with his or her own thoughts, taking in the view.

From Temple IV we headed to an area called the Lost World complex or *El Mundo Perdido*, an ancient complex dedicated solely to the observation of the stars. At the heart of the complex is the oldest building in Tikal, the Great Pyramid. It shares the space with another distinctive structure, the Talud Tablero Temple, whose architectural style deviates from the other Tikal structures. Its style resembles that used by the Teotihuacan people in Mexico and many consider it as supporting evidence that trade relations existed between the two cities.

By now we were becoming a very tired bunch of explorers and we decided it was time to bid Tikal farewell. I do believe you need more than one day to properly experience this magical place; its historical richness is just too overwhelming to comprehend in a couple of hours of exploration.

It was a quiet but satisfied group of cruisers that returned to their roach motel for a welcoming cold shower. Tikal exceeded all our expectations.

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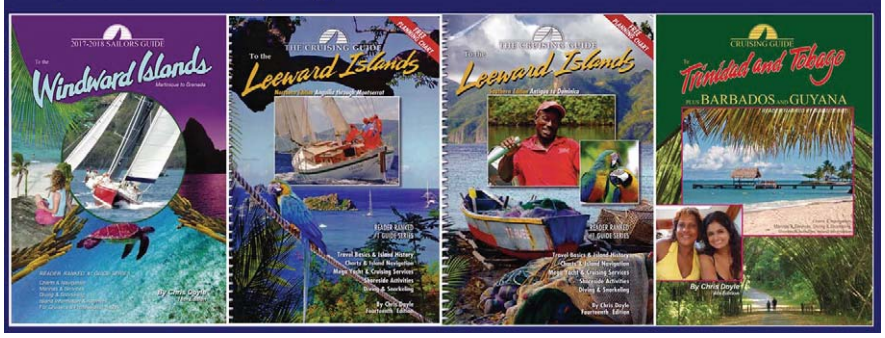








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JOHN LISON, Solar Chef

"I can't remember the last time I had my boat's ten-pound propane tank filled," says John Lison. And he's a liveaboard sailor who loves to cook.

John Lison is a solar chef, who uses the power of the Caribbean sun to cook every day. He explains, "I have a solar oven on a boat in the Caribbean and have been cooking and baking in it for over ten years. I leave it on the foredeck and sometimes I feel guilty wasting the sun's energy when there is nothing in it and the temperature inside is over 225°F.

"At the age of 36 my IQ was tested," he says by way of background. "I asked my boss for six months without pay to go off sailing and the answer was no. So I quit. I was filming documentaries and educational films and the pay was good with one month off a year but the pull of being free and going sailing when and where I please was too tempting. In the Chesapeake Bay I met an old timer cruising the inland waterways and asked him where he was headed and when he was sailing off again. He said he didn't know, and I thought *that* was true freedom. After full-time living and traveling on a sailboat I had enough experience to teach sailing and windsurfing in the Virgin Islands.



'I have never burned a loaf of bread while baking in the solar oven.'

"Then my sister Mary gave me a solar oven, so I decided to give it a try. I must say it makes cooking and baking more like fun, and less time consuming.

"The first time I was baking solar bread aboard, a friend came over and asked me to go help him. I ended up being gone for most of the day, and came back to a good loaf of bread with a nice crust. I can bake multi-grain nut bread in 15 minutes — of prep time that is. Then I pop it in the solar oven and go fishing, shelling or dinghy sailing and come back later to great bread made from scratch. No need to wait for any rising, as I use instant dry yeast and the bread rises as it bakes.

"Before long, I gave the library my pressure-cooker recipe books and now I use the solar oven for everything: rice-and-beans, fish, lobster, pot roast, hard-cooked eggs (without using water), spaghetti, cake, fudge, capinata, ribs, chicken, etcetera. I collect rainwater for drinking, and as a precaution I pasteurize it in the solar oven to kill any germs. About the only thing I use propane for is coffee when there is not enough wind for the generator to make it with the 12-Volt coffeemaker. Now, if I could just sleep in longer, the sun could make coffee, too.

"I use a Solavore oven (more on that later), and this type is passive solar: that is, there is no magnification so you do not have to keep it at a specific angle to the sun and things do not burn. I can even cook as I sail, if I tie the oven down on deck.

"I don't know why more cruising folks don't have solar ovens. They pay for themselves by using free solar power. I can go for weeks without using propane. So many of my friends say they don't have the room, and they have 40- and 50-foot sailboats! My sailboat in the Caribbean is 29 feet long and I store the oven outside on the foredeck. I only take it below before hurricanes or to go sailing, and it is easily stored in my V-berth. I threw out my propane oven and now just have a propane stovetop, which gives me a lot of extra space in my galley.

Full disclosure: "I used to run a non-profit called the Solar Oven Society (SOS). About ten years ago I gave a sample of my whole-wheat solar bread to sailor Anne Patterson, who also lives aboard and sails the Caribbean. She liked it so much she ended up becoming the CEO of my solar oven company, renaming it Solavore Sport Solar Oven www.solarovens.org. The company is in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and it is reverting back to a nonprofit organization.

"I like the Solavore because of its ruggedness and clear plastic Plexiglas thermal top. (Its competitor has a glass top, not really my choice on a sailboat.) Mine has been out in the tropical sun and saltwater environment for over ten years and it still works fine. There are no moving parts and it's made out of nylon-type plastic so nothing really bothers it. When it fills with rainwater I have extra drinking water or warm dishwashing water.

"There are many solar ovens on the market, and you can find them new and used on eBay. I have a friend who bought the same model I have on eBay for only US$50. And if you go on YouTube they have dozens of ways you can make your own.

"It is such a no-brainer for me to have a solar oven along with solar panels and a wind generator."

John's Solar Multi-Grain Bread
2 Cups whole-wheat flour (organic if available
2 1/2 Cups white flour (organic/unbleached if available)
1 Tablespoon dry instant yeast (found in Caribbean markets or online)
about 2 Cups of water
some olive oil (or your preference)
and some of the following (depending on your tastes)
sea salt
teriyaki sauce

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

sunflower seeds
sesame seeds
flax seeds
chopped walnuts
slivered almonds
wheat germ
oatmeal flakes
honey, molasses, brown sugar

This recipe takes only about 20 minutes of prep time if you have the ingredients out and handy.

I mix all the dry ingredients except yeast first, including any salt. Then I add the water and yeast, etcetera. I keep one hand dry and use the other for kneading right in the bowl, so there is less clean up.

Time in the solar oven? Two and a half to four-plus hours, depending on the sun's intensity and whether you use the reflector or not. I have never burned a loaf by being away too long; longer time in the oven just gives a nicer crust.



A full solar meal. Everything except the tomatoes and wine was cooked with sun power



With a passive solar oven, there is no magnification so you do not have to keep it at a specific angle to the sun and things do not burn.



A hearty soup can cook all day while John is out and about. When he gets back aboard, supper's ready.

I used to let the dough rise once or twice until I studied the instructions on the dry instant yeast, which stated, "no rising time needed": the bread rises as it starts to bake. I once tried it in a convection oven and it flopped — too much heat, too fast. But in the solar oven the bread has time to rise before the heat kills the yeast.

The brands Red Star and Mauripan make dry instant yeast in 450-gram (almost 16 ounce) packages for less than five bucks and they have lasted in the tropics onboard my sailboat for at least a year without refrigeration — longer with, I presume.

Wishing you good cookin' and cheers from the sailboat *Verso*, currently anchored off the little island of Culebra near the big island of Puerto Rico.



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PRODUCT POSTINGS

Summer's here and the time is right for hauling out, repairing, upgrading and equipping your boat for next season. Check out the product postings below. You might find just what you were looking for, or didn't yet know you needed!
Shop local — the Caribbean is well known for its many fine chandleries. If your local chandlery doesn't have the items you're interested in, manufacturers' websites are given.

WeBBoat 4G Plus Delivers Connectivity

With expectations of 24/7 connectivity, Glomex Marine Antennas' award-winning weBBoat 4G Plus delivers. Its coastal Internet antenna system receives and amplifies 3G/4G cellular and WiFi signals from 20 miles away and redistributes them to 32 devices throughout the vessel as a hotspot.



The weBBoat 4G Plus has dual SIM card slots. This maximizes cellular coverage while reducing roaming charges.

Inside the 10- by 12-inch weBBoat 4G Plus radome are four antennas: two high-gain/wide bandwidth 3G/4G for cellular and two for WiFi. It also contains the integrated router with three Ethernet LAN ports for adding hardwired, networked devices and access points.

Installing the weBBoat 4G Plus is simple. Once mounted, the single power lead is connected to a 12 or 24V DC source. Glomex offers a wide range of brackets for optimal placement of the 2.6-pound device. Firmware updates are automatic, so there's no downtime for maintenance.

Using weBBoat 4G Plus is easy, especially with the Android or iOS apps. All aspects of the system are controlled while monitoring the status of both SIM cards. Performance is continually monitored with direct to factory service report capability.

Visit www.glomex.us for more information.

World's First GPS Antenna with ZigBee

Glomex Marine Antennas also debuts the world's first GPS antenna using internationally accepted ZigBee technology. Connected wirelessly to the ZigBoat system, the ZB211 delivers push notifications on fleet tracking, geo-fencing, weather forecasts and anchor watch. It has no fees, cloud service subscriptions, registrations or privacy policy agreements.

The wireless ZB211 GPS/Tracking antenna tracks a vessel's location and movement using a real-time, one-to-one encrypted connection to ensure 100 percent privacy and safety. If the boat strays from the defined geo-fence area or begins to drag anchor, the ZigBoat system sends a notification via an SMS message. It also records detailed route and speed history and provides weather forecasts through the ZigBoat mobile app for Android and iOS.



At only 10 by 13 centimetres with the supplied mount, the ZB211 GPS/Tracking antenna will install in a wide range of deck locations. It runs on 12/24V DC with a typical draw of 0.2W.

The ZB211 GPS/Tracking antenna has up to 20 dBm of output power and 3 GNSS (GPS, GLONASS, Galileo or BeiDou systems), with an accuracy of less than ten metres with a clear sky view. Built for a marine environment, it functions from -25° to 55° C.

Visit www.glomex.it for more information.

See Ya Later, Macerator!

The realization that a macerator pump needs servicing leaves many boatowners sighing with despair. Even if a technician does the dirty work, it'll take days to get rid of the odor. With Raritan Engineering's patented 53101 Macerator Pump with Waste Valve, it's fast and easy to disconnect the pump from the holding tank discharge tube, with minimal, if any, spillage.

Available in 12 or 24V DC, it's built for a long, reliable service life. Fully encased in epoxy, its motor has a spring-loaded shaft seal and its unique nitrile rubber impeller is tested and proven to run dry three times longer than the competition. Heavy duty, dual-cut steel chopper blades ensure complete waste maceration.

Eliminating the need for an external ball valve, Raritan's Waste Valve isolates the impeller from the holding tank discharge port. It has a 38-millimetre barbed inlet and 19-millimetre MNPT threaded outlet.

With the optional Smart Macerator Control, the 53101 Macerator Pump with Waste Valve is almost maintenance-free. It continually monitors the pump motor to protect against priming failure and dry running.

Visit www.raritaneng.com for more information.

Marine Fire Suppression Fluids & Gases

There's a great deal of misinformation within the marine industry regarding fire suppression agents, especially in light of the EU-mandated phase-down of hydrofluorocarbon-based materials. Sea-Fire Marine, manufacturer of marine fire suppression and detection systems, offers a brief history and comparison of agents common on board vessels the world over.

The original fire suppression agent has always been water. In the age of sail, it was ideal. Not so with the advent of the combustion engine: when applied to burning petroleum, the fire spreads. It also destroys electronics.

Carbon dioxide and Halon derivatives gained popularity in the 1950s and '60s. They were effective, electrically non-conductive and residue-free. Because the gases were compressed, storage space wasn't a major issue. Unfortunately, Halon was found to be a high ozone-depleting chemical; as a result, production was banned in 1990.

With the search for alternatives, CO_2 gained prominence. However, it has three significant drawbacks: it's a greenhouse gas, requires a large number of cylinders and is potentially fatal if breathed at design concentrations.

In the 1990s, HFCs rose to dominance as a fire suppression solution. Ideal for marine applications, HFC227 is fast, effective and clean. Like Halon and CO_2, however, it's a greenhouse gas and contributes to global warming. Discharging an average-sized cylinder of HFC227 has the same CO_2 equivalent as driving a car 268,760 kilometres. This is why it is being eliminated as part of a phased-down mandate from the EU, and restricted or taxed by various countries such as Australia and Norway. It is expected that similar legislation will begin to affect Canada and US-flagged vessels.



In 2002, 3M introduced Novec 1230 Fire Protection Fluid. It has low acute toxicity and high extinguishing efficiency, giving it a wide margin of safety compared to other chemical clean agents such as HFC227. A fluid, it vaporizes rapidly during discharge, is non-corrosive and non-conductive, and leaves no residue. It is, importantly, a long-term, sustainable solution with virtually zero global warming potential, e.g., it has an atmospheric life of about a week versus HFC227's 34 years. So confident is 3M of its product, it offers its BlueSky Warranty: if it is ever banned or restricted from use due to its environmental properties, the company will refund the cost of the fluid.

Visit www.sea-fire.co.uk for more information.

ZigBoat Protects Vessel When You're Away

ZigBoat provides owners access to critical vessel information when away. The Starter Kit includes the Gateway core module, and battery, flood and porthole/door sensors. The Connectivity Kit includes the Gateway, battery and flood sensors, and a USB dongle for GSM/3G connectivity. Optional sensors include heat, smoke, motion, smart plug, shore power and GPS tracking with geofencing. CamBoat, an IP WiFi HD video surveillance device, can be added to the kits or for multiple camera applications.

ZigBoat delivers notifications without fees, cloud service subscriptions, registrations or privacy policy agreements.

The heart of the Glomex ZigBoat system is the Gateway core module. It doesn't need wiring or drilling holes, so installation couldn't be easier; all that's needed is a 12 or 24V DC power supply. It has a backup battery life of three to five years. At only 102mm L x 102mm W x 28mm H, it can be tucked away in any centralized, protected space.

Each wireless ZigBoat sensor has a unique QR code that's scanned using the free mobile app to connect it to the Gateway, making it truly plug-and-play. They're placed throughout the vessel as needed.

The Android or iOS ZigBoat app has an intuitive dashboard that delivers 24/7 access to all monitored systems. Real-time push notifications can be sent on the starter kit.

Visit www.glomex.it for more information.

Sea Hawk Paints' Epoxy Protection for Non-Optimal Surfaces

Sea Hawk has announced the introduction of 1241 Surface Tolerant Epoxy Coating System, a new multi-purpose, surface tolerant, two-part epoxy coating system for protecting ships, offshore marine structures, tanks, pipes and new marine construction projects. 1241 has a chemically-cured formulation allowing application at low temperatures and to damp surfaces, even those exhibiting flash rust, making it ideal for steel and aluminum hulls. Its self-priming nature provides an excellent surface for ship and barge antifouling hull coatings.



For more information on Sea Hawk Paints see ad on page 8.

It'll Buff Out!

UV rays and resulting chalky oxidation can leave boats looking neglected. With Shurhold's "World's Best Dual Action Polisher" and a jar of Buff Magic, it's simple to restore the deep, lustrous finish to paint, gelcoat and metal.

The World's Best Dual Action Polisher's 127-millimetre random orbital head quickly removes oxidation without the damaging burns and swirls common with higher-rpm machines. A variable speed from 2,500 to 6,500 opm accommodates a wide range of tasks, including waxing and buffing. With its quick-change Velcro backing plate, switching pads is fast and easy.

Unlike palm-sized polishers, the World's Best Dual Action Polisher is designed for comfort and efficiency. The soft-touch D-handle adjusts to the ideal position and its gripping areas are ergonomically designed. A power cord with GFCI plug end provides the length to safely work on large projects, especially around water. Everything needed comes in the canvas storage bag, including a wrench and replacement brushes.

The other half of the recipe to achieve a professional finish is Shurhold's Buff Magic. The compounding paste contains jeweler's rouge abrasives that break down as it's worked by hand or machine, becoming ever finer. The unique formula takes a surface from dull to ultra-glossy with little effort.

Visit www.shurhold.com for more information.

Moldaway Cleans the Natural Way

Moldaway removes mold, mildew, algae, dirt, blood, and food and drink stains without scrubbing. It's an oxygenated cleaner that's effective on a wide range of surfaces and removes stains the natural way. Moldaway contains no bleach or chlorine, so it's safe to use on colored vinyl, canvas, plastic, carpeting, interior and exterior cushions, sails and wood.

Two teaspoons of the powder are mixed thoroughly into a quart of warm water and will remain effective for ten hours. The solution is then sponged or brushed onto a cool surface. After standing damp with the mixture for ten minutes, it's rinsed with clean water. For extremely soiled areas, it can soak longer.

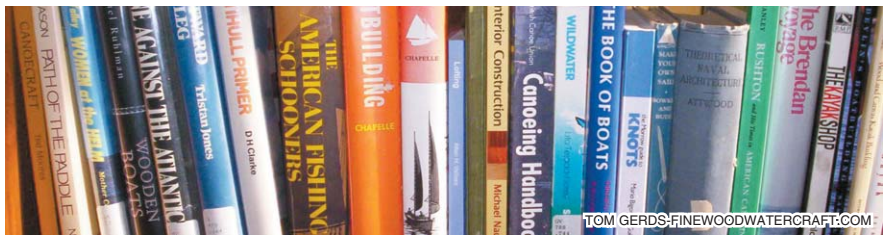
Visit www.shurhold.com for more information.

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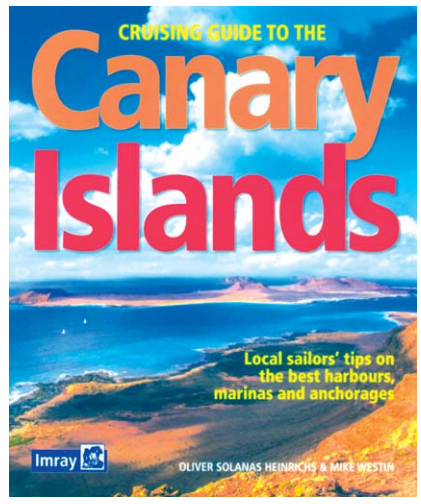
SUMMER READING

Part Two

In the cockpit, in the hammock, on the beach or on the hard — wherever you are, you'll be needing more summer reading! Last month we hit three essential topics — food, anchoring and having the right boat. This month, we'll look at two cruising guides, a sailor's memoir, and some island-themed fiction.



• ***Cruising Guide to the Canary Islands: Local sailors' tips on the best harbours, marinas and anchorages***, *by Oliver Solanas Heinrichs and Mike Westin. Barbalander AB, Bislas and Imray, Laurie, Norrie and Wilson, Ltd. ©2017. Soft cover, 184 pages, color photos and sketch charts throughout. ISBN 978-184623-847-5*



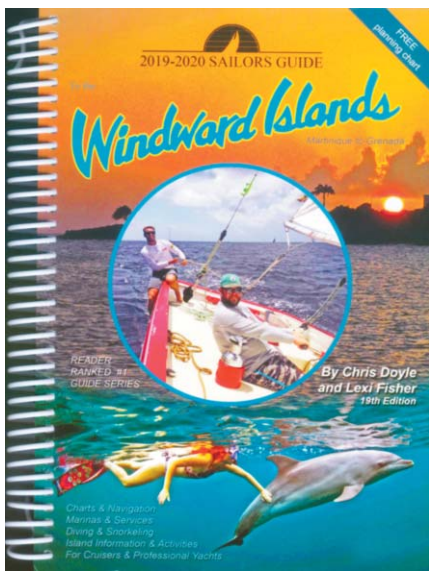
For hundreds of cruising boats each year, the Canary Islands are the staging area for an ocean crossing to the Caribbean. How a crew spends their preparation time here can be crucial to the success and enjoyment of the transatlantic passage. However, these authors see the Canaries also as a cruising ground in their own right, and have even met "a fair number of cruisers who have made the Canary Islands their home more or less permanently."

Co-author Oliver has been a resident of the Canaries for two decades, and both authors are representatives of the Ocean Cruising Club, the Seven Seas Cruising Association and other such organizations, and have been sharing information with fellow cruisers for many years.

All this adds up to a practical, lively and user-friendly guide to the Canaries. It has a chapter on each island, giving you insider tips along with essential facts and plenty of useful photos, marina plans, sketch charts and more, and will tempt Caribbean-bound cruisers to look at the Canaries as more than a stepping stone.

Available in print or as e-book at www.canarycruisingguide.com

• ***The 2019-2020 Sailors Guide to the Windward Islands***, *by Chris Doyle and Lexi Fisher. Chris Doyle Publishing in association with Cruising Guide Publications. Soft cover, spiral bound, 432 pages, color photos and sketch charts throughout. ISBN 978-0-9978540-7-7*



This 19th edition of Chris Doyle's cruising guide is revised and updated for 2019-2020. After 36 years in print, it continues to be the top-selling cruising guide to the Windward Islands and includes some of the best local information available. The guide covers the main Windward Islands of Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Grenada, as well as exploring the Grenadines.

A wide range of topics are covered, including the latest information on marinas, marine services, watersports, shopping, restaurants, area sights, regulations affecting the yachtsman and navigational directions. Most importantly, full-color sketch charts, GPS waypoints and color aerial photography are included to assist in navigation and provide invaluable information on anchorages.

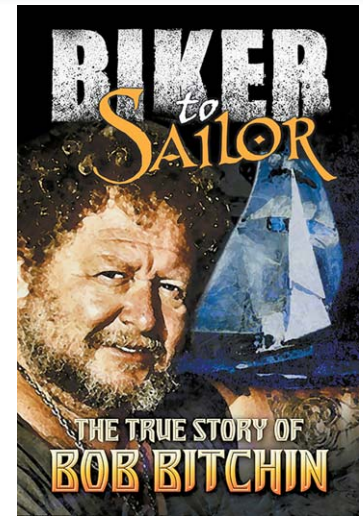
A popular feature is the island-by-island directory, which gives the names, phone numbers, e-mail and website addresses of most yacht-related businesses in the Windwards. Additionally, the guide includes a free, color, 27- by 17-inch planning chart covering the Windwards.

Available at chandleries and bookshops in the Windward Islands or at www.cruisingguides.com

• ***Biker to Sailor: the True Story of Bob Bitchin***, *by Bob Bitchin. FTW Publishing, ©2015. Hard cover or e-book, 300 pages. ASIN: B012ENXIZE*

Memoirs have been described as showing us "how other people choose to portray their stories to the rest of the world." This example of the genre is billed as "the true 35-year odyssey that took a man from the most violent and drug-crazed segment of society to the quietest and most mellow lifestyle on earth."

Author Bob Bitchin (born Robert Lipkin, and reportedly renamed by comedians Cheech and Chong), creator of magazines including *Biker News*, *Tattoo, Latitudes & Attitudes* and *Cruising Outpost*, says, "*Biker to Sailor* tells how I, a 300-plus-pound tattooed outlaw biker and California head shop owner in the early 1970s, ended up sailing the Caribbean and the world. It starts when I was Evel Knievel's bodyguard. I later found myself sailing on the flagship for Greenpeace, and that changed my life. The book ends with this very mellow fellow sailing the globe." Or as the book's editor, Sue Morgan, says, "The biker black has been replaced with Hawaiian shirts. Biker boots evolved into sandals. Appearance-wise he can sort of pass as a boater these days…"

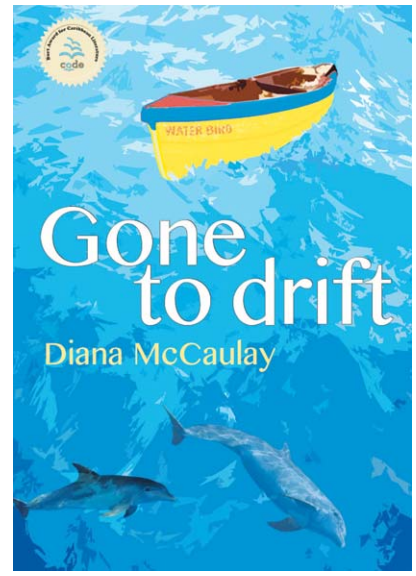


Bob presents his story to the world in a freewheeling, nearly frivolous way that simultaneously says, "Don't take all this too seriously" and "Anyone — ANYONE — can become a cruiser."

Available in hardcover or as e-book at amazon.com and other online sources.

• ***Gone to Drift***, *by Diana McCaulay. Papillote Press. ©2016. 212 pages. ISBN 978-0-9931086-1-7*

The author, Diana McCaulay, is an award-winning Jamaican writer. This is her first Young Adult novel. It tells of 12-year-old Lloyd, desperate to find his beloved grandfather Maas Conrad, an old-time fisher who is missing — gone to drift — in the Caribbean Sea. With the help of a "dolphin woman" and his friend Dwight, Lloyd sets out to find him. Remembering what Maas Conrad had taught him about the old ways, he discovers that the enemies of the sea — and his grandfather — are closer to home than he could imagine.



Told mostly in simple declarative sentences and through multiple points of view, with excellent use of dialect, the story is somewhat dark: there are bad-guy dolphin traders, polluted bays, overfishing, the loss of a traditional culture, a largely absent father and an overworked mother, and Lloyd's mounting anxiety about his missing grandfather.

The reader often feels unease. Did those who came to save the dolphins care only about animals and not about people? Who was really responsible for Maas Conrad's plight? Who can Lloyd trust? But ultimately, Lloyd's love for his grandfather is the anchor that holds him secure.

Available from Harper Collins in the US and from online sources including www.papillotepress.co.uk, as well as in bookshops in Dominica and other Caribbean islands as well as in the UK.

• **The Wreck**, *by Ralph Trout. Libertad Publishing, LLC. ©2017. Soft cover, 420 pages. ISBN 978-0-9992239-3-2.*

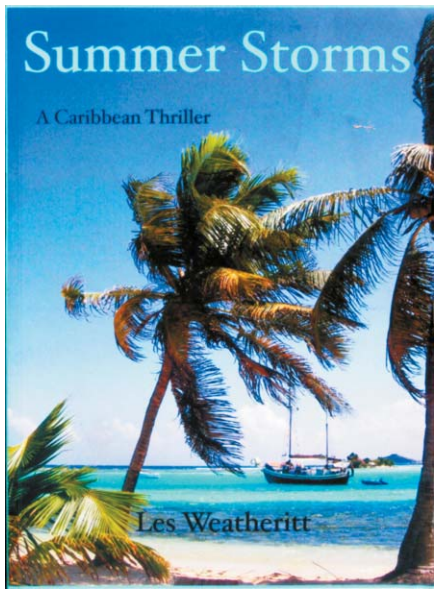
Former treasure diver and Caribbean cruiser Ralph Trout takes a standard formula for thrillers set in the Caribbean — a swashbuckling male expat hero with self-doubts; his buddies, including the obligatory wise local person; and a sexy local-girl love interest (who naturally comes with cross-cultural bonus points for having lived for a few years in the First World) take on the wily bad guys — and turns this well-worn recipe into a top-notch page-turner. An American comes to Carriacou to have a traditional sloop built — and the fun begins.

Overlooking a few hiccups, including the author's a woefully tin ear for local dialect (no, Carriacou people don't say "we'se" and "you'se"), it's a rollicking read. The sense of place is vivid, the treasure-wreck dive scenes are gripping, the characters are relatable, and the sailing and boating accounts ring true. There are twists and turns aplenty, history, romance, sex, money, greed, pirates, sunken treasure, and high adventure enough to make this a rip-roaring piece of Caribbean summer reading.

Available at amazon.com and other online sources.

• **Summer Storms: A Caribbean thriller**, *by Les Weatheritt. ©2017. Soft cover, 387 pages. ISBN 978-1-9735094-8-6*

Another noteworthy adventure novel written by a former Caribbean cruiser and set in the islands is *Summer Storms.* Les Weatheritt, author of *Caribbean Passagemaking*, has turned his pen to fiction with good results. Like Trout, Weatheritt conveys an accurate sense of place and true-to-life sailing scenes.



The Amazon blurb says, "At the heart of this story are a handful of very different people: a laconic English sailor, a recuperating American marine, a tough Dutch soldier, and two very smart police detectives from Martinique. The characters form unlikely alliances with one another as the plot unfolds. And to add to this international cast there is a walk-on role by a hurricane. Smuggling and piracy, murder and tempests, espionage and extraordinary rendition, and stubborn island pride, all force ordinary people into extraordinary action and thence to be bigger than they ever thought they could be."

This story can seem overly didactic at times, although the point made about "covert Great Power bullying" in the islands is well made and central to the tale. And, as it sweeps throughout the Lesser Antilles, the yarn spun is long — but hey, it's summer, right? And spaces between the paragraphs make it easy to save your place while you go for another cold beverage or a swim before diving back into this contemporary Caribbean adventure.

Available as e-book or paperback from amazon.com

The Sky from Mid-July to Mid-August

by Jim Ulik

It was 4:31AM. There was a sudden jolt and the Earth began to shake violently. According to news reports the earthquake caused a number of deaths and a huge amount of property damage throughout Los Angeles. People went outside because the buildings were crumbling around them.

Because the earthquake knocked out the power, many anxious residents called 911 to report seeing a strange "giant, silvery cloud" in the dark sky. Others were concerned about all those points of light in the sky. A number of those people called Griffith Observatory in the days that followed for an explanation. The year was 1994 and it was the first time many people in Los Angeles had ever seen the Milky Way. "The real night sky is now so remote, most people have forgotten what it looks like," said the Observatory's director Ed Krupp.

There are about 2,500 individual stars visible to the human eye without using any special equipment. Current levels of light pollution can bring the number of visible stars below 100. The effect of light pollution is not only about stargazing. Studies show that too much light at night negatively affects human health and disrupts the migration, feeding habits and reproduction of wildlife. Another negative is the cost of energy production and usage. Statistics do not necessarily show a correlation between artificial lighting and crime prevention (US Department of Justice).

The International Dark Sky Association was founded in 2001 to encourage communities, parks and protected areas around the world to preserve and protect dark sites through responsible lighting polices and public education. Hopefully, you can experience some of the celestial events below without too much interference from light pollution.

Tuesday, July 16th

For a few fleeting moments after sunset you may catch a glimpse of the rising red Moon. Don't worry, the red Moon is not a sign of an approaching apocalypse, as posted on some internet web pages. Normally the rising Moon is bright yellow that turns white as it gets higher in the sky. However, on this side of the Earth tonight the rising Moon is approaching the end of an eclipse. This partial eclipse ends around 1900 hours. Earth's shadow will be visible for less than one hour, covering the upper left quadrant of the Moon. The bright object above or west and near the Moon is Saturn. Further westward is Jupiter situated near Antares.

Sunday, July 21st

The first meteor shower this period is the Alpha Cygnids. These shooting stars can be seen radiating out of the north-northeastern sky from the tail of the swan Cygnus. This shower may not produce many shooting stars but at least they are present earlier in the evening. The ability to spot meteors will be reduced after 2200 hours as the Moon begins to brighten the night sky.

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Blinded by the light? The Milky Way minus light pollution

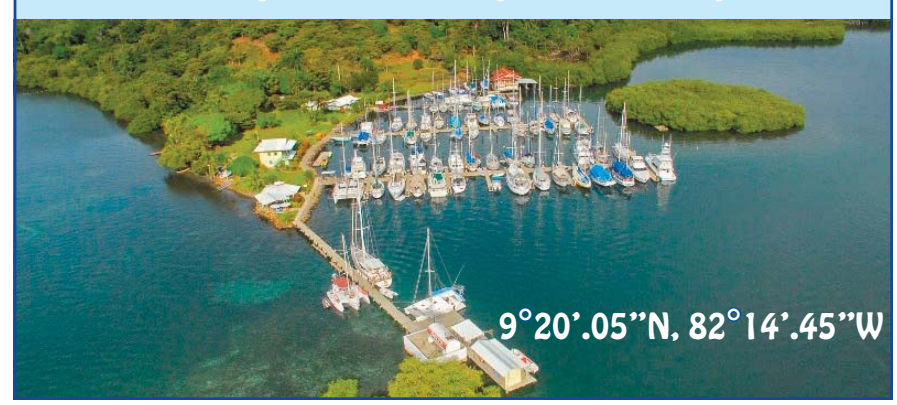
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—Continued from previous page

Monday, July 22nd

This may be one of the last mornings to spot Venus. Over the next few mornings Venus will sink below the horizon as it aligns with the Sun. The goddess will eventually reappear as an evening apparition in September.

Wednesday, July 24th

The Moon reaches third quarter today a few hours after it sets. Moonset is just before noon and third or last quarter occurs just after 2100 hours.

Sunday, July 28th

There are three meteor showers reaching their peak towards the end of July. Tonight the first shower to peak is the Piscis Austrinids. As shown in Image 3 the star Fomalhaut is located low in the southeastern sky around 2200 hours. The



US NAVY

The red Moon rising over the Atlantic

shooting stars from this shower will appear to come from a location just west of Fomalhaut, the "mouth of the southern fish".

Monday & Tuesday, July 29th & 30th

The second and third showers peak overnight July 29th and 30th. The Earth is now passing through a comet's debris field, creating the Southern Delta Aquariids. Active from July 12th through August 23rd, this shower can produce up to 16 meteors per hour. The third, lesser active shower is the Alpha Capricornids. This shower is active July 3rd through August 15th. Conditions are good for viewing any fireballs, as it is one day away from the New Moon.

Tuesday, August 6th

The Southern Iota Aquariids meteor shower peaks tonight. Like the Southern Delta Aquariids, the radiant is in Aquarius; however, this shower originates from a point higher or to the west. This shower is active July 1st through September 18th. The best time for viewing is after the Moon sets around 2330 hours.

Wednesday, August 7th

Over the last 24 hours the Moon has moved from its position in Virgo and is entering the constellation Libra. The Moon has also reached First Quarter. During a typical first quarter phase the Moon rises around noon and sets near midnight.

Friday, August 9th

This morning Mercury reaches its highest point or greatest separation west of the Sun. Mercury is observable low in the east-northeastern sky for only a few days before sunrise. Mercury rises at 0430 hours. Sunrise is at 0555 hours.

Tonight the Moon and Jupiter are positioned close together. Both objects are just east of the constellation Scorpius.

Monday, August 12th

Tonight the Moon closes in on Saturn. The ringed planet is located less than five degrees off the dark side of the Moon. The pair is situated in Sagittarius. Higher up Jupiter shares the night sky with Antares.

Tuesday, August 13th

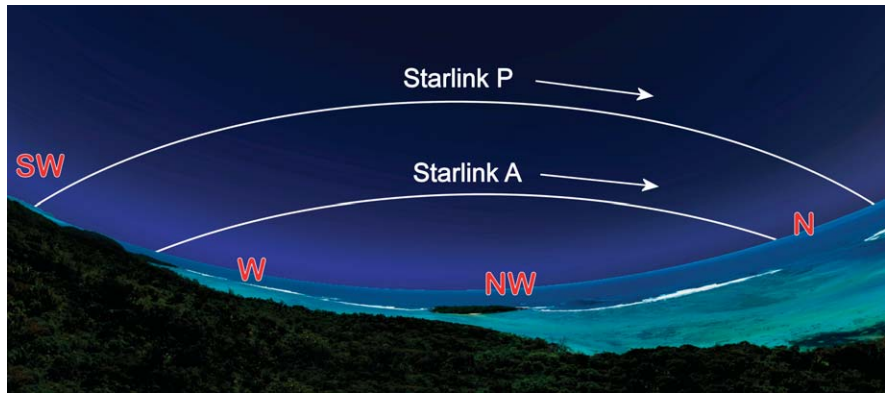
One of the most famous and popular meteor showers is the Perseids. The shooting stars will radiate out of the north from Perseus. One hundred or more shooting stars per hour may be seen in higher latitudes. Amounts visible in the Caribbean may range from 50 – 75 meteors per hour. The brightest meteors may be seen after midnight. However, the best time for viewing is after the Moon sets around 0400. The Perseids are active July 17th through August 24th.

Thursday, August 15th

Make your plans for a Full Moon party tonight. The Full Moon moment actually occurs at 0829 AST when the Moon hovers over Pitcairn Island (0429 PST), one of the 115 certified International Dark Sky Places (IDSP). Look for moonrise in the Caribbean a few minutes before 1900 hours.

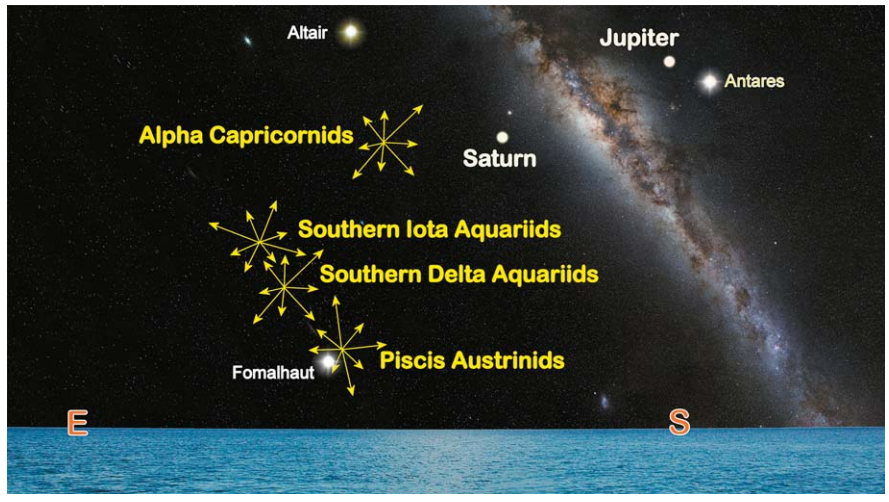
In the News

Look up in the night sky for a new constellation. For a couple of nights this period



Above: The transit of Starlink A and P on July 26th between 2026 and 2039 hours

Below: Meteor showers in the night sky on July 28th at 1730 hours



there is a fleeting opportunity to spot a few moving objects in the sky. The moving star formation is the beginning of a network of up to 12,000 satellites to be placed into a low Earth orbit by SpaceX. Starlink is a next-generation satellite network capable of connecting the globe, especially reaching those who are not yet connected, with reliable and affordable broadband internet services. The sunlight reflecting off these satellites will make them appear as stars in the night sky. Each satellite is equipped with a star tracker navigation system that keeps it in position and tracks space debris to avoid collisions.

All times are given as Atlantic Standard Time (AST) unless otherwise noted. The times are based on a viewing position in Grenada and may vary by only a few minutes in different Caribbean locations.



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THE ASSERTIVE WILLET RAISES THE ALARM

Surrounded by slumberous tourist villas, Belmont Bay in Union Island appeared to be no more than a sleepy narrow strip of sand upon which the sea regularly pours its laments and joys. So it seemed in August last year, until my presence was noticed and a loud, high-pitched repetitive *Kleep-Kleep-Kleep-Kleep-Kleep-Kleep* pierced the salt-laden air, causing several shorebirds to scatter in a fluster of wings and nervous sideways looks.

The source of the sound was easily located in the form of a stocky willet standing roughly 50 metres away. Dressed in a brownish mantle and pearly white belly, it stood on dark-coloured legs firmly squared in the sand, chest thrust forward and a sturdy, relatively un-tapered bill bellowing yet another wave of disconcerting *kleeps*, making it quite clear that humans were not tolerated. I stood, camera in hand and my hopes of photographing shorebirds blighted by the suspicious nature of a single willet, wondering "willet ever shut up?" Suddenly, its wings exploded in a pattern of light and dark as it took to the air with a detour in my direction, offering me my only chance for a photograph.



Its wings exploded in a pattern of light and dark as it took to the air.

This was by no means unusual behaviour; willets are extremely alert, skittish birds and usually the first bird to alert other shorebirds of an intruder's approach — a trait that made them vulnerable to the guns of 19th century hunters, who acquired a particular taste for their eggs and fat, juicy juveniles.

Piercing alarms and a striking black and white pattern along the wings make these otherwise soberly dressed birds not only easily identifiable, but beautifully unique. Willets, *Tringa semipalmatus*, can be found in the Caribbean islands feeding along the water's edge on sandy beaches, salt ponds, mangrove wetlands, river estuaries and rocky shores. This large species (about 38 to 40 centimetres or 15 to 16 inches in length) has two disjunctive breeding populations differing in ecology, body size, colouring and vocalisations. Birds breeding in the freshwater habitats of inland western US belong to the subspecies *T. semipalmatus inornatus*, also known as the Western Willet, while populations breeding in the marshes of the Atlantic coast belong to the subspecies *T. semipalmatus semipalmatus*, known as the Eastern Willet, a duskier and smaller race, with a thicker bill. The latter breed in pockets along the entire east coast of North America all the way to the coastal marshes of Florida and the coastal wetlands of the Antilles, where breeding has been recorded in the Cayman Islands, Virgin Islands, Antigua, St. Martin and Barbuda. They also breed in the Bahamas and Los Roques off the coast of Venezuela.

These gregarious shorebirds are short-medium to long-distance migrants, depending on how far birds travel to wintering grounds. Eastern Willets are known to undertake transoceanic flights from the US to Brazil, while Western Willets undertake direct flights from California to Chile. The West Indian populations, however, are permanent residents all year around. Still, not all the willets we find in the West Indies are permanent residents. For instance, birds from Nova Scotia undertake direct transoceanic flights to the Lesser Antilles and can be seen throughout the islands, including Martinique, Guadeloupe and Barbados. Furthermore, the Western Willets migrate not only south to Chile, but also to the Caribbean and northern South America. Willets are also globetrotting vagrants with individuals recorded in Hawaii, Finland, Sweden, Azores, France and Croatia.

As I write this, in the month of May, Caribbean willets are now dressed in their heavily barred, brownish breeding plumage and have by this time laid most of their eggs, as have the migrants that headed north in March and April, to their breeding grounds. Once paired, willets are highly faithful to both their nest and mate, only parting when one of them dies. Many couples arrive already paired at the breeding grounds in order to take up their old territories and begin nesting immediately. Throughout the breeding range males court females with bowing, flashing their beautiful black and white wings, and flight displays. However, these courtship displays often become highly competitive, as females aggressively compete for mates in ground confrontations that may culminate in physical attacks, as each bird grasps each other's legs or wings with her bill, until one or both become immobilized. Males watch these fights passively, uttering the occasional *kleep.*

Willets are named for their territorial call *pill-will-willet*, often heard during the breeding season, when they become positively noisy, as the call seems to stimulate others into joining the cacophony. Breeding males are extremely territorial, engaging in aerial dogfights and aerial pursuits from heights of ten to 100 metres or more and attracting participants from miles around. Once territory is established, neighbouring birds will constantly test the boundaries by walking along the edge of their territories, varying between indirectly facing each other and indirectly facing away, while trying to push the boundary line into the competitor's territory. Indeed, these confrontations can become physical with the male birds attempting to pull out each other's feathers. If females are present, they will join in too, to help their respective mates.

Willets are semi-colonial to solitary ground nesters that breed at two years of age, in a great diversity of sites, including the edge of salt marshes, grassy sand dunes, or coral cobble in the Caribbean islands. Couples may begin incubation before the four-egg clutch is completed, thus leading to an incubation period of 21 to 29 days, which is shared equally between both parents. The brood leaves the nest a few hours after hatching and, incredibly, in some cases newly-hatched chicks may hike up to several miles with their parents in search of food.

Willets are very attentive parents and have been reported to carry each member of a newly hatched brood individually across marshes and creeks, flying with the chick held between their thighs. When faced with a threat, they defend their chicks with sharp claws and fearsome eerie screams, *Kre'e'e'e'eh*! In fact, these birds are dedicated mobsters and will gather in large groups, made up of adults and juveniles alike, to mob whoever happens to threaten their chicks, including humans. Though this aggressive behaviour relaxes somewhat after chick rearing, willets are naturally assertive birds and will continue to defend foraging territories throughout the year. When there is a limited food supply they will defend territory day and night, engaging in confrontations from ritualized parallel walks to downright chasing other birds and stealing their food.

So keep a look out for the plain-spoken willet. You may hear it before you see it, perched high on a tree or fence or whatever elevated structure it can find to better cry out its displeasure — or it will most likely be standing on the ground, looking no less imposing.

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THE BOTTOM DWELLERS

by Darelle Snyman

The bottom dwellers are those species that prefer to hang about the seabed. They are often masters of disguise.

The Fantastic Flounder

A bottom dweller that needs no introduction is the flounder. Its distinctive flat shape makes it easy to identify, but alas, not so easy to spot. Not only do they bury themselves in the sand but they are also experts at camouflage. Flounders are ambush predators, meaning they lie in wait for their prey to come to them, their stalked eyes often the only clue to their presence as they lie buried under the sand. These elevated eyes allow them to survey their surroundings for prey and predator alike. A cool fact about flounders is that their eyes can move in any direction independently from one another at the same time! This provides them with a wide range of vision, which is crucial to their survival.



These interesting creatures are known for their ability to change colour very rapidly, not only when settled and waiting for unsuspecting prey, but also while swimming over different types of reef bottom.

Flatfish however don't start out flat: the larvae initially look like a regular fish with a symmetrical body and an eye on each side of its head. Within a couple of days of hatching, however, their unique transformation begins with a flattening of the body and the loss of the swim bladder. This transformation is accompanied by a most extraordinary event: its eyes start to migrate. It is either the left or right eye that migrates towards the top of the head. The position of these bulging eyes results in flounders being divided into two basic categories, right-eyed and left-eyed flounders. Those with eyes on the right side belong to the family Pleuronectidae while the Bothidae and Paralichthyidae families include those species with eyes on the left side.

The most commonly encountered and to me most beautiful flounder in the Caribbean belongs to the family Bothidae, the peacock flounder (*Bothus lunatus*). This peacock might not have feathers but the iridescent blue rings and spots that grace its body make it stand out among its somewhat drab relatives. For a master of disguise I am surprised at how often I have encountered them and love to watch them as they glide effortlessly across the substrate in a wave-like motion. It is during these short bursts of movement that their blue rings and spots really stand out, but don't lose track of this fish; once settled it can disappear in the blink of an eye. Studies have shown that the peacock flounder can change its colour and pattern within two to eight seconds to match the bottom substrate. They achieve this Houdini act by controlling the melanin in their skin cells to match their surroundings. To perform this colour change they need to see their surroundings; sadly, a blind flounder is unable to camouflage itself at all.

The Solitary Scorpionfish

The best masters of disguise are probably the solitary scorpionfish. Their mottled color patterns and the fleshy appendages that cover their bodies allow them to blend in perfectly with their coral and rocky surroundings. Their ability to blend in makes all members of the Scorpaenidae family excellent ambush predators; their unlucky prey does not stand a chance. Scorpionfish hunt at night, patiently waiting in the shadows of rocks and reefs before pouncing on unsuspecting small fish or crustaceans swimming past. Their large mouths create a vacuum and within a split second their prey is sucked in and swallowed whole.

During the day you will find them resting motionless in crevices and caves or on the sandy bottom, mimicking rocks. If you are lucky enough to spot one, do not be fooled by its docile appearance: they are armed with venomous dorsal spines that blend in with their fleshy exterior. When they are alarmed or disturbed their spines appear. For a human, an unlucky encounter with a scorpionfish can result in extreme pain and a burning sensation that will need immediate medical attention.

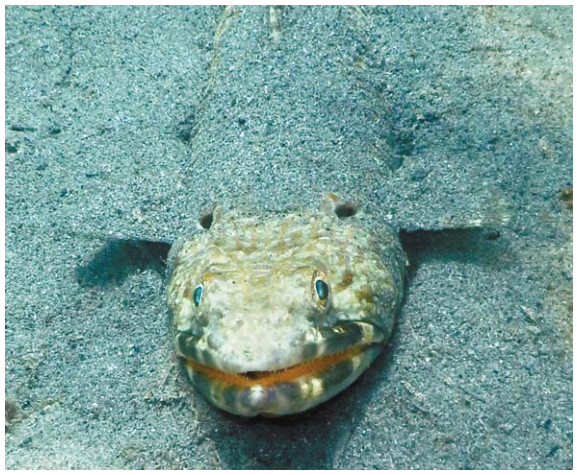
Clockwise from upper left:
The peacock flounder is a master of camouflage;
An aptly named sand diver, partially buried in the sand;
Still inconspicuous, a sand diver in its typical resting position;
A spotted scorpion fish mimicking a rock



I encountered the grumpy looking scorpionfish in the photo during my explorations of the marked wreck in Tyrell Bay, Carriacou. This is a spotted scorpionfish (*Scorpaena plumieri*) and I was so preoccupied with taking photos that I must have swum over it countless times before noticing it. I always get this rush of excitement when I spot a species I have not encountered before, and naturally it became my new photo subject. From the photo you can see how well this creature matches its surroundings. It is close to impossible to disturb these guys, which makes it easier to photograph them. Their most distinctive feature for identification is the three dark bars on their tail or caudal fin. They also have white spots on a dark background at the inner base of the pectoral fin, which is more visible when they swim.

The Lounging Lizardfish

Last but not least are the lizardfish, bottom dwellers that are often seen lounging on the sand with their pectoral fins splayed out as if they are basking in the sun, just like a real lizard. These creatures have been aptly named: their elongated, cylindrical bodies, scaly heads and large mouths give them a distinctly reptilian appearance. Members of the lizardfish family Synodontidae have a mouth full of razor-sharp interlocking teeth, making them ferocious little carnivores. Even their tongues are covered with needle-like teeth: not good news for any small, unwary fish passing by. From their sunbathing position they scan the ocean floor before launching lightning-fast attacks on unsuspecting prey. They are voracious predators of small fish, squid, shrimp and other invertebrates.



The cutie in the photo is the sand diver (*Synodus intermedius*), the most likely lizardfish you will encounter in Caribbean waters. The name "sand diver" refers to the fact that you will often find them buried in the sand with only their heads exposed. These guys blend into their surroundings by lightening or darkening their body coloration. Because of their variable coloration it can become very difficult to distinguish the different species of lizardfish from one another. The main distinguishing features of the sand diver are the eight pairs of reddish-brown bars on the top and sides of their bodies and the yellowish-gold longitudinal lines that extend along their bodies. If you are able to take a really close look at their eyes you will see that the corneas are covered with an iridescent layer, which is thought to provide protection against very bright light. They are not as skittish as you would think and are fairly approachable, meaning you don't have to half drown yourself to get a decent picture of them.

Next time you find yourself finning across a sandy patch close to the reef, dive down and you might be lucky enough to encounter one of these fascinating bottom dwelling creatures.

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LOOK OUT FOR...

THE CANNONBALL TREE!

by Lynn Kaak

As you travel through the Caribbean, every month there's something special to look out for.

Couroupita guianensis, or the Cannonball Tree, seems like the botanical equivalent to the platypus: what was Mother Nature thinking when this was thrown together? Did she find left over parts and figure "why not?" The end result is an interesting blend of features. This native of the South and Central American rainforests is certainly notable.

The first of these features to be discussed — the fruit — provides the tree's name. They are large brown orbs, roughly the size of a cannonball, but getting up to 25 centimetres (ten inches) in diameter. They are also dense, although not nearly as heavy as a cannonball, weighing roughly from five to ten kilos (11 to 22 pounds). Their skin is thick, and their flesh is green, rather like that of a kiwi fruit. The flesh from the ripe fruit is not pleasant smelling; in fact, it is sometimes described as "fetid". The fruit we checked out was unripe, and had a smell like cut foliage. It can take 12 to 18 months for the fruit to mature, with one fruit containing anywhere from 60 to 500 (yes, five hundred) seeds. A typical tree will produce up to 150 of these fruits. Peccaries, pigs, birds and other animals eat the fruit and assist with seed dispersal; the seeds have a protective coating that helps them escape damage from the animals' digestive systems.





Another unusual feature of the Cannonball Tree is its wax-like flower. The flowers are unique in that they have two kinds of pollen; one is fertile, while the other is not. The sterile pollen is sought after by bees, wasps and ants that seek it for their nests and hives, but on their way into the flower to get it they must brush past the fertile pollen, which then clings to their bodies. The six-centimetre (two-and-half-inch) flowers are brightly coloured in shades of red and pink, and are extremely fragrant. The yellow inside, which attracts the pollinators, is also quite visible. A tree can have up to a hundred flowers around its trunk at a time, providing a riot of colour and a plethora of perfume. Children have fun with the fallen blossoms, fastening them over the tops of their ears or eyeglasses for a wild decoration.

Rather than growing from branches, as most tree fruits and flowers do, the Cannonball fruit and flowers hang from a system of stems (racemes) that, at first glance, don't look as though they are from the same tree. Each raceme looks like a thorny and woody vine that is growing around the trunk in a symbiotic relationship with the tree — but it is definitely part of the Cannonball Tree. Each raceme can be up to 80 centimetres (25 inches) long, with numerous offshoots for the flowers or the fruit. The fruit and flowers exist at the same time. And of course, to carry the weight of cannonballs, the racemes are very strong.

Aside from those features, the tree is pretty typical. It can grow to a height of about 30 metres (110 feet), and has a fairly rough bark and leaves that grow in clusters from the end of the branches. The leaves can be from eight to 31 centimetres long (three to 12 inches). The branches and leaves grow above the racemes.

This relative to the Brazil nut and passion nut is sought out for its unique fruit and incredible-looking flowers. It prefers areas with more rainfall, being a rainforest native, and isn't particularly fond of cooler temperatures.

There is a fine example of the Cannonball Tree at the Botanical Garden in Kingstown, St. Vincent.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

GREAT JOB, ELAINE!

Dear *Compass*,

Although I'm sure I speak for the hundreds of contributors to *Caribbean Compass* whose work has been copy-edited and proofread by retiring associate editor Elaine Ollivierre, I'd like to thank her personally for her work on my behalf, not least for looking after my contributions under the "Island Poets" banner. You've done a great job, Elaine, especially for a former math and science teacher! I should add, however, I will never forget our reading together in the lobby of the Hotel Frangipani back in about 1979 my long poem "A Daughter of the Trade Wind," for which you played the part of Melissa, the "daughter" herself.

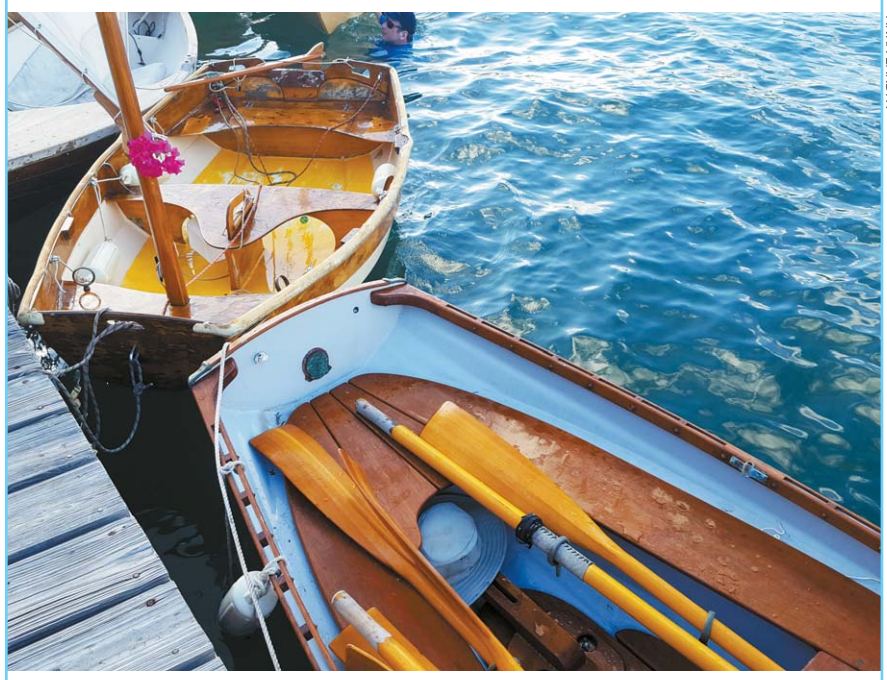
Fair winds, Elaine.

Richard Dey
Boston, Massachusetts

CALENDAR

JULY

1	Public holiday in BVI (Territory Day), and in Suriname (Emancipation Day)
2	Public holiday in Curaçao (Flag Day), and in Cayman Islands (Constitution Day)
3 – 4	St. John Festival, St. John, USVI. www.stjohnfestival.org
4	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Independence Day)
4 – 8	Aruba Hi-Winds Kitesurf event. www.hiwindsaruba.com
5 – 14	Dominica Dive Fest. www.dominicawatersports.com
6	Foxy's Hempfest, Jost van Dyke, BVI. https://foxysbvi.com
6 – 7	Firecracker Race, BVI. WEYC, westendyachtclub@gmail.com
6 – 16	Optimist Worlds, Antigua. AYC, www.antiguayachtclub.com
7	Mott Memorial Hobie Cat Challenge, Grenada. PCYC, www.pcycgrenada.com
8 – 9	St. Vincent Carnival 'Vincy Mas'. www.carnivalsvg.com
14	Public holiday in French islands (Bastille Day); yole races in Martinique
14 – 20	Reggae Sumfest, Jamaica. www.reggaesumfest.com
15 – 16	St. Lucia Carnival. www.stlucia.org/summerfestival
16	FULL MOON
16 – 1 Aug	Tobago Heritage Festival, http://tobagoheritagefestival.com
22 – 28	Statia Carnival, St. Eustatius
24	Public holiday in Venezuela (Simón Bolívar's Birthday)
25	Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Constitution of Puerto Rico Day)
25 – 27	Public holidays in Cuba (National Revolutionary Festival)
26 – 27	Carnaval of Santiago de Cuba
28 – 4 Aug	Tour de Martinique des Yoles Rondes. http://federationyolesrondes.com/
31	Carriacou Children's Education Fund Pot Luck. sunnycharters@yahoo.com
TBA	Kite Surfing Festival, Havana, Cuba. CNIH, yachtclub@cnih.mh.tur.cu



ANNA LANDRY

AUGUST

1	Public holiday in many places (Emancipation Day)
1	Carriacou Children's Education Fund Fleamarket & Auction. sunnycharters@yahoo.com
2 – 5	55th Carriacou Regatta. carriacouregattafestival.com
3 – 4	Summerfest Regatta, Puerto Rico. CNSJ, www.nauticodesanjuan.com
5	Barbados Carnival 'Crop Over/Grand Kadooment'. www.visitbarbados.org
5 – 6	Antigua Carnival. www.antiguacarnival.com
5 – 7	BVI Emancipation Festival, Tortola. https://publicholidays.la/british-virgin-islands/emancipation-festival
5 – 9	Anguilla Summer Festival & Boat Races. www.anguillasummerfestival.com
6	Nevis Carnival 'Culturama'. www.culturamanevis.com
9 – 10	Mercury Fest, St. Lucia. www.stlucia.org/summerfestival
12 – 13	Grenada Carnival 'SpiceMas'. spicemasgrenada.com
15	FULL MOON
16 – 18	Aruba Regatta. www.carnifest.com/aruba-international-regatta-2019
23 – 25	St. Lucia Roots & Soul Festival. www.stlucia.org/summerfestival
31	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Independence Day)
TBA	Round Grenada Regatta. PCYC, www.pcycgrenada.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 monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to* sally@caribbeancompass.com

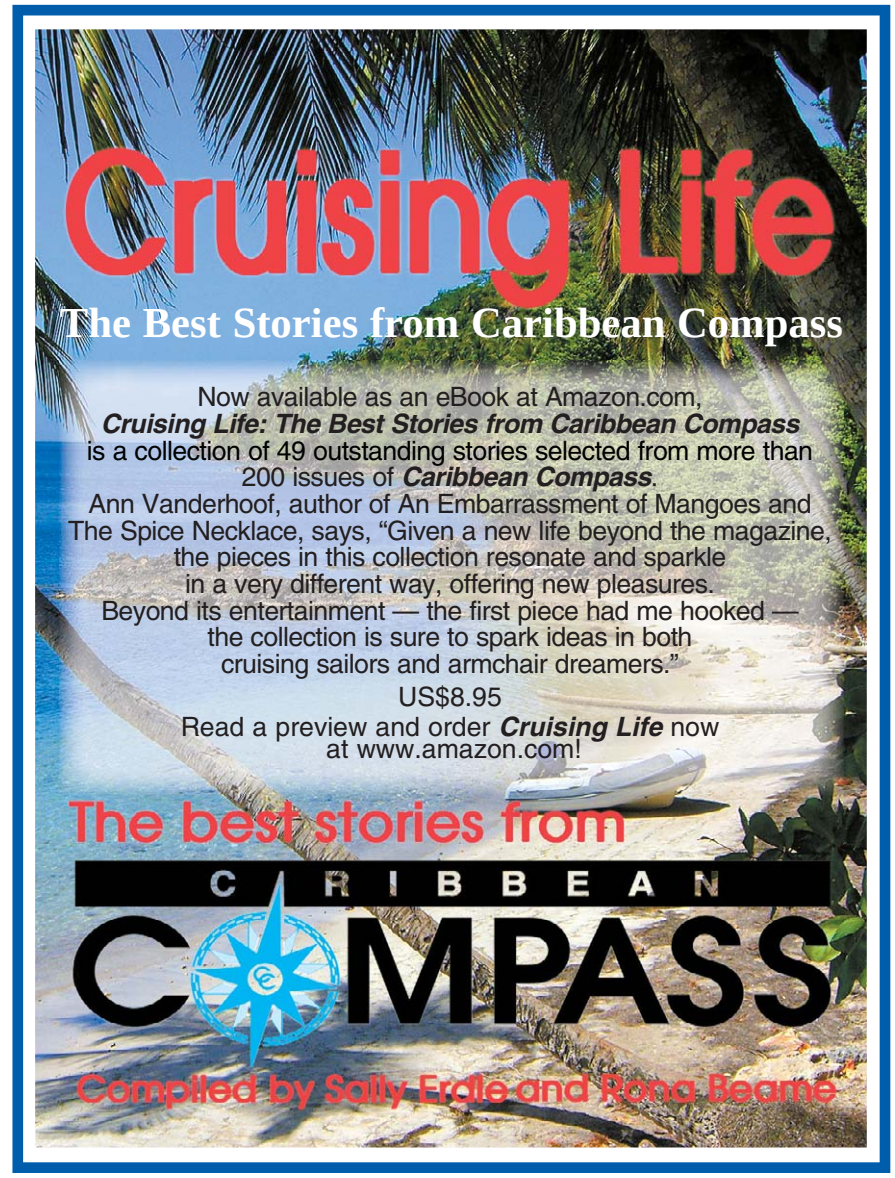


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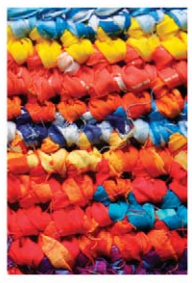
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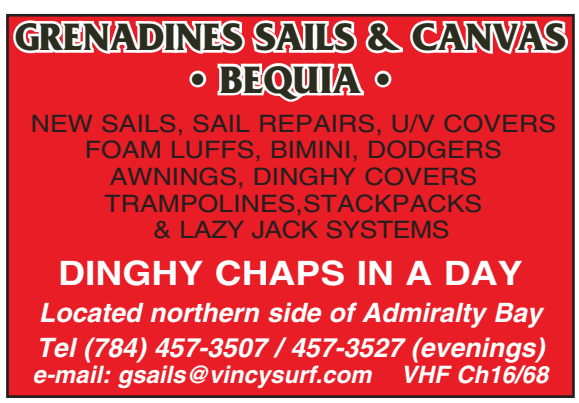
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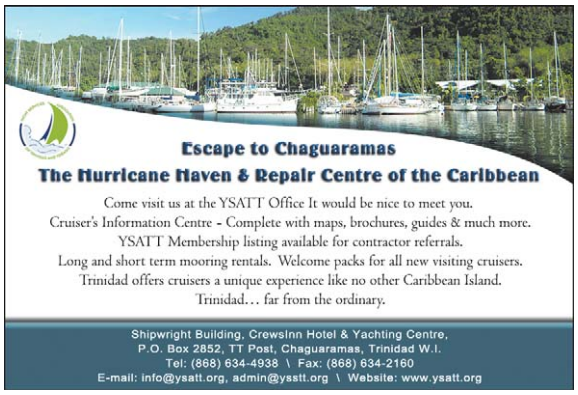






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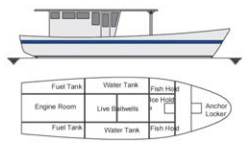
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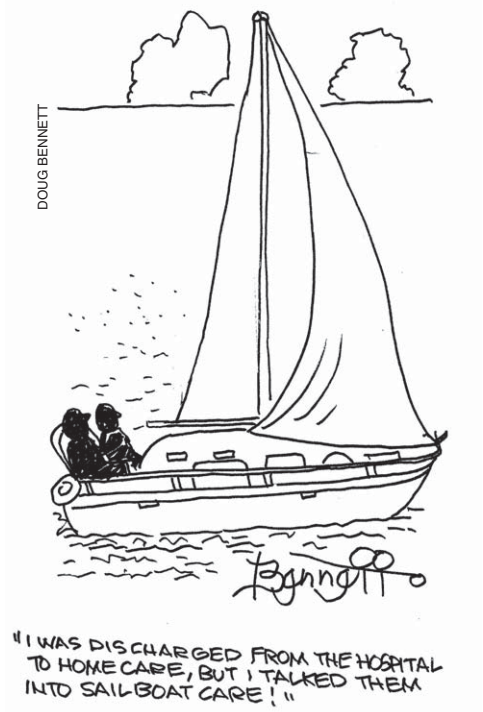
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WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Busting the Hurricane Season Heebie-Jeebies

by Chelsea Pyne

Although many of us have traded frostbiting winters, huge city chaos, and fast-paced jobs for turquoise waters, easy breezy days with piña coladas in hand, and off the grid WiFi connections — we still pay a price for our Caribbean Dream.

Most notably that price comes at this time of year — hurricane season. Although weather forecasters predict this year to be an "average" season (as of right now), we should all be prepared for the worst. It seems that weather events around the world — from earthquakes to wildfires, landslides to avalanches — have picked up intensity. So let's not sugarcoat this: hurricane season is here; are you ready?

Of course having food and water reserves, medical supplies, and evacuation plans have the utmost importance, but I want to mention something that is overlooked and affects us on a cellular level: stress.

Low-level stress is something that many feel year-round. Just the memory of Hurricanes Irma, José and Maria can pick up the heart rate and trigger anxiety. Low-level stress takes a heavy toll on health, and we may not even realize it. I experience low-level stress from worries about dragging anchor, upcoming rough-weather reports, trying to find an affordable marina, looking for more income to feed the cruising kitty, not knocking the boat into the fueling dock, and the plethora of little problems that pop up every day — not to mention those that arise when monster storms roll in. The tension builds, the hair falls out. If I don't know how to cope with stress, it can make me ill.

As many of us cruisers are anchored to home islands through jobs or family, it is not always easy or reasonable to just pick up and take off for the whole hurricane season. After speaking to some of my local St. Maarteners, who also had to buckle down for Irma, we found controlling breath through meditation was a game changer.

After a year of practice, this has helped to combat stress while boosting my brainpower, health and memory — and it only takes 12 minutes of my day. Through thorough research, I found that a certain type of yoga meditation, called Kirtan Kriya, not only calms the mind but also is scientifically proven to counteract and prevent cognitive decline. This means that my focus, mood, recall, and overall wellbeing are enhanced. Kirtan Kriya is shown to be effective at a minimum of 12 minutes per day, but it can be practiced for hours. And if, say, you had made all possible preparations and were waiting out a storm, you could practice this meditation and let it lead you into a silent breathing exercise instead of a stress explosion.

Dr. Dharma S. Khalsa, President and Medical Director of the Alzheimer's Research and Prevention Foundation (a non-profit organization based in Arizona, USA), said, "…yoga and our Kirtan Kriya meditation improves brain, mood, and memory function. Kirtan Kriya has been revealed to make your brain younger and sharper. There is more awareness and interest now than ever before in how lifestyle-based activities impact brain health and, in fact, are crucial to maintaining cognition, memory, mood, well-being and a good quality of life. Yoga and Kirtan Kriya are some of the most important techniques."

If you're interested in practicing this meditation, first check out alzheimerprevention.org. This foundation has been researching Alzheimer's for over 25 years, and I felt I couldn't find a better source. Their research has shown the powerful effects of Kirtan Kriya on memory, brain function, mood, depression, and sleep.

These dynamic exercises (see sidebar) use movement and breath to balance the brain, open communication among its sections and hemispheres, and stimulate its self-healing ability.

Practicing a simple "mantra" or motivating chant can enhance your mood, lift depression, and keep you calm during a stressful time. As I've seen on my island, there is a great disparity of wealth, yet pirates and megayacht captains alike can practice this meditation. No gurus need to be flown in to give private sessions at the beachside villas — it's so easy, and can be done from your chair or cockpit.

If you aren't able to make the trek to Trinidad or Panama to get out of the hurricane zone this summer, keep this simple, safe, and affordable practice at hand. Taking the time to stretch your body, breathe deeply, and let go of stress does a whole lot more for wellbeing than you may have ever imagined. In times of panic, meditation can literally keep you sane. When there's nothing else you can do, just focus on your breath.

Namaste.



If I don't know how to cope with stress, it can make me ill.

An Addition to My Hurricane Kit

Posture: Sit in an easy pose with a straight spine, and a light neck lock (pull the chin toward the back of the neck). Wrists are on the knees, arms and elbows straight. Start with palms up and the tips of the index fingers and thumbs lightly touching.

Eyes: Meditate at the brow point.

Mantra: Chant "Saa, Taa, Naa, Maa". With each sound, alternate through four finger positions:

On Saa, lightly touch the index finger to the thumb.
On Taa, lightly touch the second finger to the thumb.
On Naa, lightly touch the third finger to the thumb.
On Maa, lightly touch the fourth finger to the thumb.

Each repetition of the mantra takes three to four seconds.

For more information, visit alzheimersprevention.org or YouTube "Kirtan Kriya".

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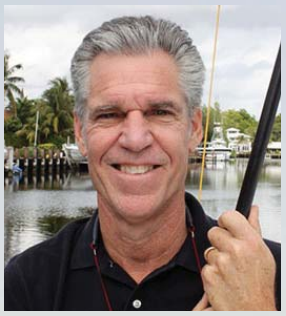
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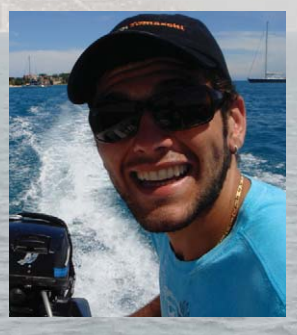
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