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COMPASS
OCTOBER 2014 NO. 229
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



Cruising Haiti Today

See story on page 12



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OCTOBER 2014 • NUMBER 229

Bocas del Toro
Sailing to history 18


CHRIS DOYLE

Dominica Trails
Explore ashore..... 20


CHRIS DOYLE

Rudder Loss
Finish trip
or abandon ship?..... 23, 26

What Bugs You...
... about the cruising life?..... 32


TINA DREFFIN

Dog & Dolphins
Tame and wild engage 34



DEPARTMENTS

Info & Updates	4	Meridian Passage	36
Business Briefs	7	The Caribbean Sky	37
Regatta News	9	*Compass* Fiction	38
Product Postings	29	Readers' Forum	39
Sailor's Horoscope	30	Calendar of Events	40
Island Poets	30	What's on My Mind	40
Seaweed Cartoon	30	Caribbean Market Place	42
Book Review	33	Classified Ads	46
Look Out For…	36	Advertisers' Index	46

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Cover Photo: Coastal Haiti abounds with sailboats and sailors. Will cruising yachts be far behind? Cruising Kiwi photographer David Morgan captured this colorful image



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http://bit.ly/1fMC2Oy

Info & Updates

Welcome to the Friendly Net

As reported by Ken Goodings on the 'Caribbean Navigator' Facebook page: The Friendly 7.188 Net on the 40-metre amateur radio band definitely lives up to their name: they welcome all licensed Hams every morning at 7.188 Mhz (Lower Side Band) from 0600-0800 Atlantic time. It's the largest 40-metre net in the Caribbean region, with net controllers from Guyana, Tobago and other Eastern Caribbean islands up to Puerto Rico.

For more information visit http://friendly7188net.net.

Missing Martinique Radar?

Meteo France's wonderful radar weather image of the Lesser Antilles has a new URL: www.meteo.fr/temps/domtom/antilles/pack-public/animation/animMOSAIC_ant.html

Antigua & Barbuda National Sailing Academy News

Elizabeth Jordan reports: We started our free schools' programme in September 2010. In that time, we have taught over 500 children to sail and have sponsored swimming lessons for more than 700 children.

All of this has been achieved, to date, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors including Sophie Racing, eSeaClear, Pete Townshend, and the Peter Harrison Foundation, the Mill Reef Charity Fund and the Boltini Trust.

However, relying solely on charitable donations is not sustainable and it was for this reason that we relocated to the new headquarters of the Academy in Dockyard Drive, English Harbour where we hope to create a viable enterprise which will, in turn, provide the revenue for us to continue the free schools' programme. We have installed a 180-foot dock and hope to extend it for the coming season. We offer long-term dockage for boats up to seven-foot draft, at very competitive rates. We also have a concrete slipway from the main road into the water (four feet deep) for the haul and launch of tenders, RIBs and powerboats. Our watersports include dinghy sailing, keelboat sailing, kayaking and paddle boarding for adults and children. All are available for hire and a range of Royal Yachting Association dinghy and keelboat courses are available. We underwent a weeklong inspection and training session with visiting RYA inspectors in July; the Academy is now an accredited training centre and all its instructors are RYA certified. Our major income stream at present is our accommodation, so if you are looking for affordable accommodation in English Harbour within easy reach of marinas, shops, bars, restaurants etcetera, visit www.thelodgeantigua.com.


NSA

For more information on the National Sailing Academy visit www.nationalsailingacademy.org.

Success Again for Carriacou Children's Education Fund

Gordon Evans reports: At Carriacou Regatta 2014, the Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF) fundraising events began Tuesday afternoon, July 29th, with a Mexican Train dominoes competition at the Slipway Restaurant. The 13 participants were each asked for a donation for CCEF and proprietors Dani and Kate generously matched the players' donated amount.

The next evening more than 70 people gathered at Tanty Lizzy's Seaside Fountain restaurant for the Annual Pre-Regatta Potluck Barbecue. Both cruisers and Carriacou locals gathered to socialize, share dishes of food, and barbecue meat on grills set up by Tanty Lizzy's son Eric. Participants were each asked for an EC$5 contribution to CCEF. Additionally, a raffle was staged. This has developed into a very popular activity in recent years, with the winner of the first ticket drawn having their choice of the available prizes. Prior to the raffle drawing, Harm from *S/V Horta* welcomed the gathering, explained CCEF's charitable projects, and reported that he had counted flags from at least 20 different nations displayed on yachts anchored in Tyrrel Bay.

—Continued on next page

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Wilsons' Cruzan Canvas
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Jamaica NEW
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IBS b/v
Kaya Atom Z



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CCEF's fund-raising week concluded with the Annual Auction on the Friday afternoon. This event is much more than a live auction of donated items. Tables were set up on both floors of Frankie Matheson's After Ours disco to sell donated items at whatever price could be negotiated. Tables included the popular "bargain table" of boat parts, electronics, and all manner of miscellaneous items; a household goods table; a books and charts table; art prints, games and toys; clothing, shoes and sandals; hats,



CCEF

CCEF's 2014 fundraising volunteers. Well done!

T-shirts, and more. While participation in the live auction seems to be declining, the table sales have skyrocketed, more than offsetting the live auction shortfall.

A significant factor this year was the huge number of items donated by cruisers in Grenada. Special recognition goes to Budget Marine in Grenada for the collection and packaging of the Grenada cruisers' donations, to Captain Theo and the *M/V Amelia* car ferry for delivering these items to Carriacou at no cost, and to Paul at Technical Marine Management, Budget's distribution representative in Carriacou, for the pickup and delivery of the goods to Arawak Divers for storage.

Heartfelt thanks go to the donors, both individuals and businesses, for their generosity. The list has grown far too large for individual recognition, but CCEF and especially the schoolchildren of Carriacou are most appreciative. Hearty thanks also go to all the volunteers who assisted CCEF during regatta week and throughout the year.

This year's fund-raising collected EC$11,000 during Carriacou Regatta week. Adding to that amount the significant cash donations through the year, as well as the donations by cruisers for using CCEF's WiFi service in Tyrrel Bay, brings CCEF's total collection during the year-long 2014 campaign to more than EC$21,000, and CCEF's grand total during the past 14 years to nearly EC$226,000!

Next year will be CCEF's 15th campaign. CCEF hopes for continued success. You, the donors, make it happen. Donated items can be dropped off at Arawak Divers as you pass through Carriacou. Budget Marine in Grenada will continue to be a collection point. See the staff at the Slipway Restaurant for CCEF's WiFi password. And mark your calendar for the 2015 Annual Carriacou Regatta.

For more information visit www.carriacouchildrenseducationfund.org.

Good Help for Haiti

Mandy Thody reports: Good Samaritan Foundation of Haiti, Inc. works in several villages of Ile-à-Vache, Haiti, with a primary school, adult education, artisan training,



scholarships for higher education, clinics, and a rapidly growing microcredit. Please support our work to make the island economically and socially stable, and preserve one of the most amazing environments and communities in the Caribbean!

Good Samaritan Foundation of Haiti, Inc. can be found on Facebook, and at www.goodsamaritanofhaiti.com, or telephone Mandy on (340) 513-2022.

—Continued on next page



The island of Saint Lucia was made for seafaring – or perhaps it's the other way around. The prevailing warm and soothing northeast trade winds provide ideal sailing conditions. Yet, it's Saint Lucia's breathtaking scenery that attracts the finest yachts from around the world. Drop anchor near the majestic peaks of Petit and Gros Piton. Rodney Bay invites a night on the town. Or choose Marigot Bay for a chic excursion. Must-see dive spots abound, and there are plenty of hidden bays where you'll create your own Caribbean mystique. Of course, no getaway would be complete without exploring the luxurious side of Saint Lucia through its restaurants, shopping, and resorts. Immerse yourself in a luxe yachting adventure in simply beautiful Saint Lucia.

E-mail: information@stlucia.org

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—*Continued from previous page*

Marijuana Tourism Discussed at CTO Conference

Marijuana tourism was a key topic during the Caribbean Tourism Organization's State of the Industry Conference held in the United States Virgin Islands from September 17th through 19th. The CTO said that the debate surrounding marijuana tourism has taken a sharper focus in recent months following its legalization for recreational use by two US states and subsequent increases in the numbers of visitors there.

"The Caribbean has an interest in this subject; the Caribbean has an interest in attracting visitors to our shores, and so medical tourism, including the discussion about marijuana, is going to be one of the parts of the debate that we have," said CTO Secretary General, Hugh Riley.

Presentations at the conference were made by the deputy chief executive officer of Jamaica's first medical marijuana company, Richard Kildare; Dr. James Hospedales, the executive director of the Trinidad-based Caribbean Public Health Agency; and Josef Woodman, the chief executive officer and founder of Patients Beyond Borders. Rory Johnston, a PhD student at the faculty of health sciences at Simon Fraser University in Canada, spoke on the ethical and legal implications, as well as the risks, associated with medical tourism.

Participating in a panel discussion on the notion or reality of marijuana tourism, Dr. Hospedales said his advice could be summarized in one sentence: "Proceed with an abundance of caution, given the significant adverse effects of cannabis smoking on health and social and occupational functioning, and especially so among youth".



ANDIES VAN EERTVELT

Columbus's Santa Maria Found?

More than five centuries after Christopher Columbus's flagship, the *Santa Maria,* was wrecked in the Caribbean, the vessel's remains might have been found lying off the north coast of Haiti.

"All the geographical, underwater topography and archaeological evidence strongly suggests that this wreck is Columbus' famous flagship, the *Santa Maria,*" said archaeological investigator Barry Clifford.

Tentatively identifying the wreck as the *Santa Maria* has been made possible by separate discoveries made by other archaeologists in 2003 suggesting the probable location of Columbus' fort relatively nearby. Armed with this information about the location of the fort, Clifford was able to use data in Christopher Columbus' diary to work out where the wreck should be. An expedition mounted by his team in 2003 had already found and photographed the wreck, but had not, at that stage, realized its possible identity. Current re-examination of underwater photographs from that initial survey, combined with data from recent reconnaissance dives on the site have allowed Clifford to tentatively identify the wreck as that of the *Santa Maria.*

The evidence so far is substantial, says Clifford. It is the right location in terms of how Christopher Columbus, writing in his diary, described the wreck in relation to his fort. The site is also a match in terms of historical knowledge about the underwater topography associated with the loss of the *Santa Maria.* The local currents are also consistent with what is known historically about the way the vessel drifted immediately prior to its demise. The footprint of the wreck, represented by the pile of ship's ballast, is also what one would expect from a vessel the size of the *Santa Maria.* Using marine magnetometers, side-scan sonar equipment and divers, Clifford's team has, over several years, investigated more than 400 seabed anomalies off the north coast of Haiti and has narrowed the search for the *Santa Maria* down to the area where the wreck has been found.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) says the remains of the shipwreck require further investigation. A UNESCO team led by the former head of the Spanish National Museum on Underwater Archaeology, Xavier Nieto Prieto, recently examined the wreck off Cap-Haïtien in northern Haiti and collected samples as part of the investigation. *The Miami Herald* reports that, as part of its scrutiny, the UNESCO team recovered samples of diagnostic artifacts to date the site and investigated other nearby shipwrecks.

"The evidence collected concerning the location, nature and artifact content will now be subjected to thorough investigation by an acclaimed team of experts," UNESCO said.

St. Lucia Records Increase in Yacht Visitors

The St. Lucia Tourist Board has reported significant growth in visitor arrivals for the island in the first seven months of the year. Tourism officials announced that total stay-over arrivals by air and ferry at the end of July have surpassed all numbers previously recorded in the island's history. The success also extends into the yachting sector, which recorded a 16-percent increase in arrivals during the same time period.

According to Director of Tourism Louis Lewis, "With such an impressive start, the St. Lucia Tourist Board is projecting a similar if not better performance throughout the balance of the year, especially considering the increasing airlift in the upcoming winter season from both the US and Canadian markets." US carrier Jet Blue is scheduled to begin direct flights from Boston to Hewanorra International Airport on November 1st.

More than 200 yachts carrying an estimated 1,200 people will make landfall in St. Lucia in December in the annual Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC).

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome new advertiser La Course de L'Alliance regatta, on page 11. Good to have you with us!

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BUSINESS BRIEFS

US Marina Interests Eye Cuba

As reported by Reagan Haynes in *Soundings Trade Only Today,* Cuba is gaining attention as a potential trade partner for the United States marine industry as some speculate whether the US will lift its half-century trade embargo with the country. The US National Marine Manufacturers Association recently had a small delegation of select members touring the island who are interested in learning more about its industry potential.

Marina consultant Richard Graves and Associates is planning a US-sanctioned industry tour of the country for February 18th through 22nd, 2015, directly after the Miami International Boat Show to help interested parties save on airfare.

Anticipating the end of the travel ban, Cuban state enterprises responsible for marine infrastructure have begun an unprecedented push to prepare the island nation for yacht tourism and US boaters. Although there are only 15 marinas with 789 slips, there are plans to add 23 more marinas with more than 5,000 slips, Graves said.

The expansion of Marina Gaviota at Varadero, 90 miles from the Florida Keys, is intended to help augment facilities for large recreational vessels. When complete, it will accommodate about 1,200 boats. *Soundings Trade Only Today* reports that an official opening is planned for 2015, but vessels are using the marina now.

Successful Perkins Open House at Parts & Power

Parts & Power, the British Virgin Islands-based Caribbean distributor for numerous industrial and marine products and brands, hosted an open evening event on September 4th at their facility in Port Purcell, Tortola. The event was held in conjunction with the BVI Chamber of Commerce and Hotel Association (BVICCHA), and focused on their Perkins engine-based product range. Sixty people attended.



The happy Parts & Power and BVICCHA team at the end of the event

Managing Director of Parts & Power Tom Gerker stated, "We were delighted with the turnout and support for the event. Our staff worked very hard to prepare everything, and we were very pleased to receive such a positive response from those who attended."

Several Perkins-based raffle prizes were awarded, and attendees at the event also received discount vouchers for Perkins based equipment.

Even if you couldn't attend, you can still enjoy this offer: Parts & Power are offering 20-percent off selected service spare parts during October and November. Visit www.partsandpower.com/products_store_specials.php for details.

For more information on Parts & Power see ad on page 26.

Busy Summer Reported at Nauti Solutions, Grenada

Danny Gray reports: Nauti Solutions in Grenada, your one–stop service shop, has had a good hurricane season, working on an engine rebuild, a number of cylinder heads, plumbing problems, winches, jammers, a big sun awning for a 76-foot cat, anchor plates, ladders, also lots going on in the welding shop, plus service work, etcetera.

To all boats in this year's ARC and Caribbean 1500, have a safe passage and fair winds and when in Grenada look us up — we're just across the road from Port Louis Marina in St. George's Lagoon. We also have storage sheds and offer guardianage on our moorings in Prickly Bay if you plan to fly home.

For more information on Nauti Solutions see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.

Latest Cruising *Guide to the Dominican Republic*

The newest edition of *The Cruising Guide to the Dominican Republic* 6.0 is now available as a free PDF at www.freecruisingguides.com. It is also available through Kindle and other popular e-book sellers. This 6th edition is entirely updated and includes an expanded discussion with additional charts of the Windward Passage as a "very sailable" alternative entrance into the Caribbean and gateway to Caribbean islands frequently bypassed along more traditional routes.

The author, Frank Virgintino, explains that even after all his years of cruising the Dominican Republic, there is always more to learn and enjoy about the experience. He says, "My hope is that this guide will encourage cruising sailors intent on exploring the Caribbean to include the Dominican Republic as one of their destinations."

All of Free Cruising Guides' books are currently being translated into Spanish. *The Guide to the ABC Islands* has recently been translated and is available on the website for FREE. The next guide to be translated will be the three-volume set of *The Lesser Antilles.*

Stand by for the release of Free Cruising Guides' free *Directory of Vendors for Cruisers* with thousands of vendors searchable by business category and country.

For more information on Free Cruising Guides see ad on page 33.

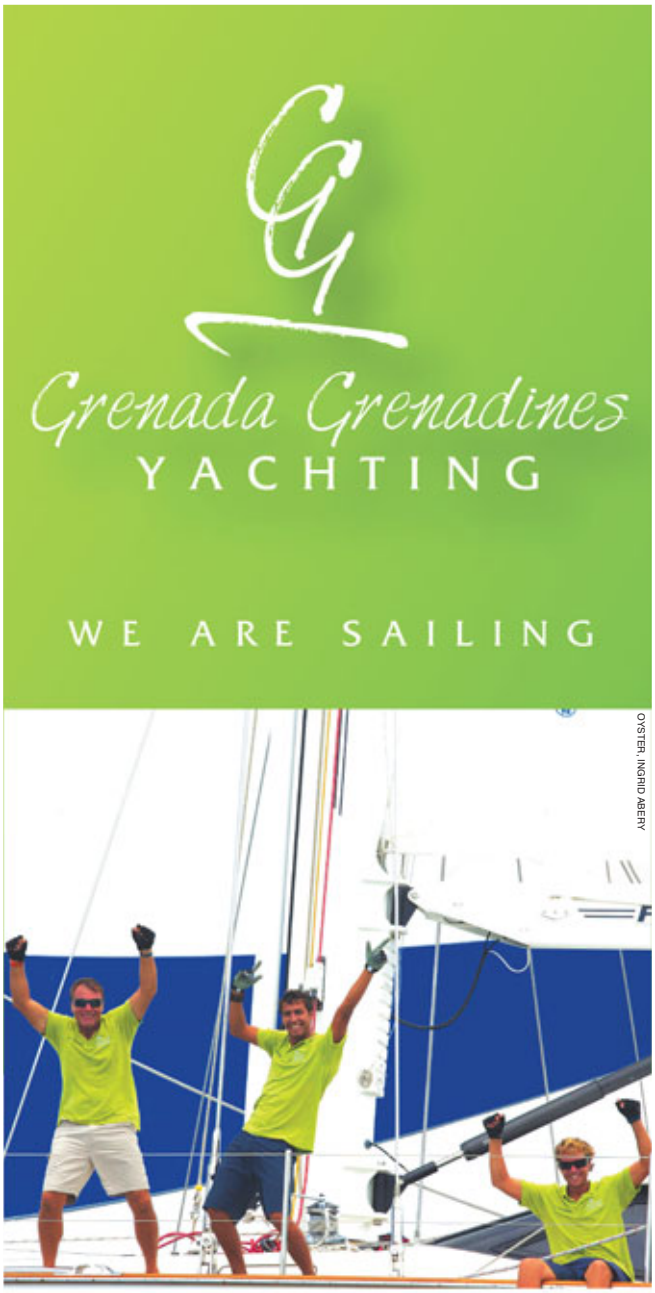
New Location for Paint & Stuff

The well known St. Martin composites and paint shop, Boat Paint & Stuff, has moved to a new warehouse. The sole St. Martin/St. Maarten distributor for PPG/Amron paints has now moved a 120-square-metre store on the French channel entering the lagoon, next to the French bridge. By December you'll be able to dock your tender directly at the store/warehouse to buy your products.

Boat Paint & Stuff is also the exclusive Caribbean distributor for the Coppercoat ten-year life span antifouling. Boat Paint & Stuff sells polyester and epoxy resins, mat, biaxial cloths, fillers, accessories, etcetera. Guaranteed best prices for quality products! Quantities are customized to your needs, meaning no waste.

—Continued on next page





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Opening hours: 7:30AM till noon from Monday through Saturday and 1:30PM till 4:00PM from Monday till Friday.



Serge and Stephane will be pleased to assist you in any way they can, to advise and help you pick the right product.

For more information on Boat Paint & Stuff *see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 to 45.*

Bequia Whaling Documentary Now Available Online

"The Wind That Blows" is now available as a DVD and as a download. Visit the website, thewindthatblows.com, to rent or purchase a copy of the story about the island of Bequia, her heroes and humpbacks. There is more information about the project on the website as well.

If you happen to be so lucky that you will be going to Bequia, you can get a copy of the DVD at Coco's Restaurant, the Bequia Bookshop or the Bequia Tourism Association office.

Underwater Museum Book Published

Fans of Grenada's underwater sculpture installation will want to know that a new book is now out: *The Underwater Museum* by Chronicle Books. A one-of-a-kind blend of art, nature, and conservation, *The Underwater Museum* re-creates an awe-inspiring dive into the dazzling under-ocean sculpture parks of artist Jason deCaires Taylor.



This book is available at Amazon.com.

Indigo Watersports Leaves Buccament Bay Resort

Kay Wilson reports: It is with deep regret that Indigo Watersports Ltd ends its four-year business relationship with Harlequin Hotel and Resorts' flagship property, Buccament Bay Resort, on the island of St. Vincent. Indigo Watersports Ltd is in the process of relocating the dive operation to new premises.

The owners of Indigo Watersports Ltd would like to extend heartfelt thanks to staff members, both current and past, for their incredible support over the past four years, whose contributions enabled the company to attain its Professional Association of Dive Instructors 5 Star Resort status, win PADI Education Center of the Month in March 2013, provide Emergency First Response Training for over 100 of the resort's local staff, and certify 12 Vincentian dive professionals including eight PADI Dive Masters and four PADI Dive Instructors. Indigo Watersports also hosted Kids' Sea Camp over two consecutive years, which, with over 60 participants, to date is still the largest dive group to ever visit St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

Indigo Dive looks forward to providing world-class dive training, and excursions to residents and visitors to our beautiful island nation for years to come.

For more information contact Kay Wilson at (784) 493-9494 or e-mail info@indigodive.com.

Maritime School of West Indies Facebook Page

Thais Roosens has updated and will maintain the Maritime School of the West Indies' Facebook page. Check it out at www.facebook.com/pages/Maritime-School-of-the-West-Indies/157728984269469.

Global Boat Rental Insurance

GetMyBoat, a peer-to-peer and charter marketplace, has launched a global boat rental insurance product. Policies can be purchased by the day, the week, or any duration desired and are underwritten by a globally trusted yacht charter insurance provider. Boat rental insurance can be purchased by companies, private owners and renters nearly anywhere in the world.

For more information visit https://getmyboat.com/boat-rental-insurance.

Horizon's St. Vincent Base Opens October 1st

To celebrate the opening of its new charter base in St. Vincent, Horizon Yacht Charters has a special offer: The first ten bookings will each receive a skipper to Bequia (if required), a bottle of champagne and snorkeling equipment for each guest — all complimentary!

Horizon also announces new additions to its growing fleet in St. Vincent: a Leopard 38 catamaran and a Jeannie 54DS luxury crewed yacht.

For more information e-mail info@horizonstvincent.com) or call (473) 439-1002.

—*Continued on page 45*

REGATTA NEWS

'Unforgettable' Aruba International Regatta

Veteran contender *Sunbelt Realty Dash* with captain Remco van Dortmondt won the Budget Marine Cup in the sixth edition of the Aruba International Regatta. Twenty-eight teams competed for the award during the weekend of August 16th and 17th at Surfside Beach and in the harbour of Oranjestad, Aruba.

Despite strong winds that required effort — not only to win the races but also to keep safe — participants enjoyed the most successful edition of this regatta ever. The challenging sailing conditions in combination with great ambiance on shore and a beautiful self-built-boat exposition made sure that hundreds of sailing enthusiasts had, as one participant from Curaçao called it, "A weekend I'll never forget".

The overall event attracted 124 participants, ranging from young Optimist sailors, to those on Sunfish, beach cats and yachts, plus kitesurfers, windsurfers and micro-boats, resulting in over 100 sails on the water. The micro-boat competition is new to



JOOST HORWARD FOR ARUBA INTERNATIONAL REGATTA

the regatta, but not to Aruba. It is a traditional pastime in which the skippers trim their 30-, 35- and 40-inch boats minutely for races that add color and tradition to the regatta. Fourteen micro-boat captains, some of the more senior participants in the regatta, participated with several boats each.

The sailing conditions were rough, with winds that started at around 20 knots on the Saturday morning, building to 28 knots with gusts up to 38 knots on the Sunday afternoon. One yacht, the *Chipi*, skippered by Javier Galdo, was dismasted, but nobody was harmed and thanks to the good seamanship of race director Anthony Hagedoorn and Captain Galdo the boat was soon towed back to the regatta beach. Owing to a navigation mishap in the lead boat of the Beach Cat Class, the full class overshot a buoy and hit the shallows. Four boats damaged their rudders, and another beach cat lost its rudder later in the races.

The upwind–downwind courses of six miles ensured fast tactical racing where participants had to dodge currents and changing wave patterns, and deal with wind shifts and variable wind speeds. Overall Budget Marine Cup winner *Sunbelt Realty Dash*, a J/35 from Curaçao, beat the competition in the Racing Class; the Beneteau Oceanis 46 *Nawati* with captain Werner Haan was second and the Aruban team of *Ocean 505*, a Moore 24 with captain Maurice Hagedoorn, finished third. In the Open Class, *Eva Luna*, a one-off sailed by regatta founders Eric and Anita Mijts and their crew, took first place and finished second overall. The strongest competition in Open Class came from Curaçao: the Defender 29 *Venus Callipyge* with captain Hans van der Straaten and the Jeanneau 34 *Melody* with captain Winfried Merkies came in second and third respectively.

First place in the Beach Cat Class went to father-and-son duo Rob and Sil Grijpma, who outwitted the competition of Frances Grijpma (yep, Sil's mother) and Henk Steenbergen. Third place was for Patrick Melchiors and Frank van Kan. In the Sunfish Class, Richard van der Wal, the Aruban champion, won the class ahead of Robbie Ferron from St. Maarten and Randy Brown. In the Optimist II Class, Alexander van der Velde finished ahead of Vivian Hankart and Tijn Hartmans. The Optimist I Class was won by Jort Hartmans; Luna Upegui and Enric Braamskamp were second and third respectively. The youngest Optimist sailing class was won by Feike Benega, who beat Lucas van Hest and Sophie Dings.

The winner in the women's kitesurfing competition was Noortje Derksen; Agnes Verduijn came in second. In the men's competition, Pechi Pecachek retained his Aruba International Regatta title and beat Arnold Lieuw and Frank Miroslav. Windsurfing Under 15 was won by Melvin van der Linde. Tom Croes was the main trophy winner in Under 17, followed by Sam Kaffener and Malik Hoveling. The rising stars Ethan Westra and Nick van den Eerenbeemt battled in the Under 20 competition, Ethan won and Willem ten Ham took third place.

The organizing committee, consisting of Eric Mijts, Joost Horward and Anthony Hagedoorn, got great feedback from participants. More and more sailors recognize the goal of the Aruba International Regatta: it's all about sailing.

Next year, same spot, same time, join the seventh Aruba International Regatta for even more action and fun on the Aruban waters.

For more information visit www.aruba-regatta.com or Facebook.

CSA Members Represented at Youth Games in China

The Caribbean Sailing Association is delighted that representatives of six member countries sailed at the Second Summer Youth Olympic Games, held August 16th through 28th in Nanjing, China, providing the youngsters with a wealth of experience that will be invaluable to them in all of their future endeavours, not just in sports. CSA member yacht club representatives at the Youth Olympic Games were Rhone Kirby (Antigua & Barbuda), Mack van den Eerenbeemt (Aruba), Samuel Morrell (British Virgin Islands), Celeste Lugtmeijer Cathelier (Dominican Republic), Lucas Miranda Martinez (Puerto Rico), and Paige Clarke and Scott McKenzie (US Virgin Islands). The CSA congratulates these talented athletes: "You have made the Caribbean region and all member countries very proud."

ON THE HORIZON…

'Clean Regattas' Group Partners with CSA

The Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA) has announced a partnership with Sailors for the Sea for the Annual CSA Conference taking place from October 24th through 26th in Antigua.

Sailors for the Sea is a conservation organization that engages the boating community. Equal parts education and outreach, Sailors for the Sea is working with the Caribbean Sailing Association to implement the Clean Regattas program throughout the region.

The Annual CSA Conference brings together regatta organizers, rating rule measurers, yacht club representatives and other sailing specialists from around the Caribbean, offering Sailors for the Sea the perfect opportunity to work with the region on implementing sustainable practices in each event.

Hilary Kotoun, Sailors for the Sea Social Impact Director, says, "Over the past few years, Sailors for the Sea has worked with many regatta organizers in the Caribbean to operate and certify environmentally friendly events as Clean Regattas. Based on this work, we have joined forces with the CSA to further these efforts, supply regattas with items that will aid them in running Clean Regattas, and support local NGOs and regattas working together. We believe the conference will be an ideal place to bring these efforts together and move the needle forward on improving ocean health."

The Sailors for the Sea team will help interpret Clean Regattas Best Practices and give advice on implementing these environmental standards based on their prior experiences at other regattas around the world. The session will help organizers work through guidelines, identify tools to help them, and bring to their attention available funding to assist in achieving clean regatta status.

CSA President Peter Holmberg, is delighted: "The conference is the perfect opportunity to bring together the key players in Caribbean regattas and the forum can be used as an opportunity to challenge the way that organizers operate. The environment *is* our product in the Caribbean and as such it is vital that we take responsibility for our events and their impact on our greatest natural resource, the ocean. We welcome the support from Sailors for the Sea in moving us further towards sustainability and look forward to sharing the resulting year-round benefits throughout the region."

For more information about the CSA Annual Conference visit www.caribbean-sailing.com. To learn more about Sailors for the Sea visit www.sailorsforthesea.org.

Puerto Rico's Discover the Caribbean Series

The 25th edition of the Discover the Caribbean — the oldest regatta in Puerto Rico — will be held October 31st through November 2nd, hosted by Ponce Yacht & Fishing Club. The PY&FC and its sponsors offer sailors from Puerto Rico and the Caribbean three days of sailing competition and shoreside activities, this year featuring three sailing areas in which different classes will be competing.

For more information visit www.ponceyachtandfishingclub.com.

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Caribbean Dinghy Championships 2014 Cancelled

The Caribbean Sailing Association has had to cancel the Caribbean Dinghy Championships 2014 (CDC), scheduled for November 14th to 16th. The dates conflict with the Central American & Caribbean Games (CAC Games), November 15th to 30th, at which a number of Caribbean countries will be participating. The CAC Games occur only every four years. The CDC will be held next year.

For more information visit secretariat@caribbean-sailing.com.

Guadeloupe's Triskell Cup 2014

The Triskell Cup Regatta 2014 will run from November 8th through 10th at Petit Cul de Sac Marin and Baie de Gosier, Guadeloupe. This is a highly competitive three-day event that attracts keen sailors from Antigua, Martinique and farther afield. A fleet of 50 boats is not uncommon.

There will be classes for cruising monohulls (Coastal Class) with an Osiris rating, racing monohulls (Racing Class) with a CSA rating, and cruising multihulls (Multi Class) with a Multi-2014 rating. Scoring will be extracted for Class 8 and Surprise as one-designs, Melges 24 and Figaro 2. The Organizing Authority reserves the right to amalgamate, cancel, divide, subdivide or rearrange classes at its sole discretion.

For more information visit www.triskellcup.com.

Fun Multi-Island Course de L'Alliance

The Course de L'Alliance is a small, but well-loved regatta that takes place each year uniting the neighboring countries of St. Maarten, St. Barths, Anguilla and St. Martin.



Local sailors say that once you have participated in this regatta you'll want to do it again, and again, and again. It's simply that type of event!

This year will be its 11th edition, taking place from November 28th through November 30th, and the Sint Maarten Yacht Club, who took over the running of the Course de L'Alliance from Marina Fort Louis two years ago, hopes it will be the best one yet.

With sponsors that include IGY, Marina Fort Louis, St. Martin Yacht Charters, regattaguru and FKG, the aim of the organizers is to create a competitive yet fun regatta that all participants will remember with pleasure and will want to return to the following year! It also helps mark the start of the race season in the Caribbean and gives participants the opportunity to blow the cobwebs away and prepare their crew for the coming season.

It starts with a registration 'event', the day before the regatta, at Marina Fort Louis in French St. Martin, which brings together the participants in a relaxed and social environment. On Friday morning, November 28th, the race begins as all competitors gather together in Simpson Bay for the start. The race officer and chief organizer, Paul Miller of regattaguru, makes sure that the starts, finishes and course for each day are professionally handled in every way.

Friday evening in St. Barths is always a great deal of fun with the daily prizegiving, revelry and great atmosphere that is St. Barths.

Saturday sees Day Two of the regatta and the sailors will this time head for idyllic Anguilla. Here again they come together for the daily prizegiving event and get to experience the famous Anguilla hospitality: more fun and undoubtedly more revelry.

Sunday, Day Three, is the last day and here sees a relaxed sail back to St. Maarten. (Well, fairly relaxed, depending on which boat you are on.)

The final prizegiving is held at the St. Maarten Yacht Club on Sunday afternoon.

This event is not all about the prizes. The regatta is about friendship, the differences and the similarities between St. Martin, St. Barths, Anguilla and St. Maarten, it is (of course) about sailing, and last but certainly not least it is about having fun. A lot of fun!

If you would like to take part in this truly Caribbean event contact smycmanager@gmail.com for details.

For more information see ad on page 11.

St. Lucia's Mango Bowl Set for November

Dee Lundy-Charles reports: The Mango Bowl Regatta 2014 is gathering way as a roster of competitive sailing teams sign up for the St. Lucia Yacht Club's third hosting of the popular event on the CSA calendar. This year's dates are November 28th through 30th. For the third year running, IGY Rodney Bay Marina will be a key sponsor.

The first two years of St. Lucia's international sailing event have produced a strong base of participants in Martinique, which is expected to send up to eight Surprise Class boats, unique to the French island and similar to the J/24. Up to six J/24 crews from Barbados are expected to participate. Over the next weeks, organizers will be encouraging early applications, which merit a ten-percent discount off the entry fee.

Five classes will participate in races off Reduit Beach in Rodney Bay on November 29th and 30th, and teams from Martinique, Barbados, Grenada, St. Maarten, England and of course, St. Lucia, have already flagged up their interest. *Attitude*, the local J/24 owned by Charles Devaux, has been crewed to the Mango Bowl trophy for the two previous years, first by a female team skippered by Olympic hopeful Stephanie Devaux-Lovell, who nicknamed the 24-foot bright orange keelboat *Blonde Attitude*. Last year a male crew skippered by 24-year-old Fredric Sweeney took the helm and approached Viceroy Sugar Beach GM Andre Boersma for sponsorship. Andre is a former J/24 sailor, and *Sugar Beach Attitude* was born. With the financial support of the luxury resort, along with IGY Rodney Bay Marina, the J/24 team, ages ranging from 15 to 28, was able to compete in Martinique, Barbados and Bequia, where they won the 2013 Easter Regatta.

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This year, the Mango Bowl organizing team is again led by SLYC Secretary Anne Purvis, who has travelled to other Eastern Caribbean regattas over the past two years to observe how the established competitions operate. The logistics of Mango Bowl 2014 will see improvements including additional on-the-water judges and more secure course marking. Anne is confident that the lessons of the first two years were well learnt, and is pleased that so many repeat participants are signing up early.

For more information visit www.stluciayachtclub.com or e-mail slycsecretary@gmail.com.

Launch 2015 with Round Barbados Series!

Alene Krimholtz reports: There's no better place to start the Caribbean racing year than in Barbados, the home of Mount Gay Rum, for the 2015 Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series, January 16th through 24th, 2015.



PETER MARSHALL

The event comprises three days of coastal course racing along the south and west coasts of Barbados, the 79th anniversary Mount Gay Round Barbados Race and the 300-mile Ocean Passage Race to Antigua. All elements can be entered independently of each other, and, with a little help from key sponsors the Barbados Tourism Authority and Mount Gay Rum in organizing a social programme all sailors and their families will enjoy, there's something for everyone.

Provisional entries include a great range of yachts with group or individual charter packages available, including *Monster Project* (VO70), *Spirit of Adventure* and *Cuba Libre* (VO60s), and *Balearia* (TP52). Charter places are also available with Ondeck Antigua, Stormforce Coaching from the UK and Rum Line Sailing of St. Lucia.

Coastal course racing includes CSA-rated Racing and Cruising Classes, a one-design J/24 Class, and local handicap classes for monohulls and non-CSA-rated boats.

The signature event, the 60-nautical-mile Round Barbados Race, takes place on January 21st; put simply, one day, one race, one goal: to break records. Winning yachts that break an existing Round Barbados Record will win their skipper's weight in Mount Gay Extra Old. In 2014, both *Monster Project* and *Idea* (RP78) took home the big prize, while *Balearia* was 18 seconds short of a new record. Records in various classes are set based on LOA — it's not just the large race boats that can win. Our smallest "craft", Charles Hunte's windsurfer, will be racing again this January and would welcome some opposition from overseas.

Complimentary berthing for competing yachts is available in the historic Inner Basin of the Careenage, Bridgetown. The Radisson Aquatica Resort, located adjacent to the host club, the Barbados Cruising Club, will offer discounted rates to competitors and their families.

For those who love the thrill of offshore racing, the 300-nautical-mile Ocean Passage Race to Antigua is the final race in our series and leaves you perfectly positioned to take part in the rest of the Caribbean racing circuit.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Barbados Cruising Club in January 2015 where you'll earn your red cap from the home of Mount Gay Rum.

For more information visit www.mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com, follow us on Facebook (Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race) or e-mail alene@barbadoscruisingclub.org.

See ad on page 10.

South Grenada Regatta Discontinued

The Organizing Committee of the South Grenada Regatta has announced the permanent discontinuation of their annual sailing regatta.

Launched in 2009, the South Grenada Regatta was held along the south coast of Grenada in February and/or March each year. In addition to competitive fleet and match racing, it featured a wide range of water and shore activities, including live musical performances. The announcement to cancel the regatta has come as a surprise, especially since the event's sixth edition, held in March of this year, was one of the most successful to date.

Although happy to have supported international yacht racing in Grenada over the years, South Grenada Regatta founders Jana Caniga and Dieter Burkhalter, who also own Grenada's Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel, now plan to concentrate on one of their other passions: the development of the music industry in Grenada. Dieter, an accomplished musician, has for years worked with Grenada musicians, organizing live music performances at Le Phare Bleu as well as their signature "floating" dinghy concerts. Jana and Dieter have also become involved in the development of a new music event that has potential to promote Grenadian musicians as well as tourism on the island. 'Live…On The Beach' was recently held at Le Phare Bleu where five Grenadian bands competed for Best Original Song. It was the first event of its kind in Grenada, and the initiative of a newly formed non-profit organization, Music & Beyond (spearheaded by Dieter and Jana), to encourage local bands to write original songs and gain exposure to a new market of listeners.

The South Grenada Regatta Committee wishes to thank all of their race participants, sponsors, supporters and volunteers for their steadfast dedication and commitment over the years.

For more information, contact (473) 444-2400.

Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week 2015

Ruth Lund reports: Book your place on the start line and at our host marina venues for Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week 2015!

With loyal sponsors Island Water World, Grenada Tourism Authority, Mount Gay Rum, Sea Hawk Premium Yacht Finishes and Spice Island Marine Services stepping up with their support, the January 29th to February 3rd Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week (GSW) promises to be an event not to be missed.

A great team of officials is already committed and the wet and dry committees are taking the views of previous participants into account in the planning of the 2015 event. Making sure of your place on the start line is easy — register online via our website www.grenadasailingweek.com. After that, the next step is to make sure of your place at our two host venues.



Picturesque Port Louis Marina in St. George's Lagoon will again provide an ideal arrival venue with its excellent facilities and services. In January, St. George's will be busy with the RORC Transatlantic Rally yachts and Grenada Billfish Tournament boats, so GSW participants are encouraged to confirm their dock space ASAP by contacting danny.donelan@cnportlouismarina.com or (473) 435-7431 to make their booking.

Second and final host venue will be party centre Prickly Bay Marina, also a full service marina with dock space and moorings. A water taxi will be available to transport crews from boat to shore. Early booking is advised by contacting Davide@pricklybaymarina.com or (473) 439-5265.

For more information see ad on page 9.



CRUISING HAITI TODAY



Part 3: Cruising Through Haiti, A Trip Back in Time

by Frank Virgintino

I have cruised Haiti for two decades. In all of that time, I have found Haiti to be an exceptional Caribbean cruising ground, provided that areas of dense population are avoided.

The Windward Passage is undoubtedly the easiest, quickest and safest way into the Caribbean Sea for those coming from Florida or the East Coast of North America. If you are headed to the Caribbean via the Windward Passage, a cruise through parts of Haiti makes good sense.

Anchorages

Coming from the north, usually the Bahamas, the first possible stop would be Cap Mole St. Nicolas (19°48.45N, 73°25.02W entrance to harbor). Cap Mole St. Nicholas is a town set in a really beautiful harbor. You can clear in at Cap Mole if you so desire. The setting is positively breathtaking. If there is a shortcoming, it is that the town anchorage is a lee shore if the wind is out of the north or northeast. In addition, the water depth in front of the town is over 20 feet, which translates to a great deal of anchor rode. There is a mooring that can be picked up, but I cannot vouch as to its condition. About a mile north of the town is a small fishing settlement and north of the settlement at the head of the harbor is a "bulletproof" anchorage, well protected against strong northers. Given its distance from the town, I would not leave my boat there unattended.

Twelve miles south of Cap Mole and a bit west is Bombardopolis, a fishing settlement at the southwest corner of the north peninsula (19°39.13N, 73°25.26W). It is a charming and safe community where the residents will be happy to receive you. Anchoring is in ten feet of water or less in a small cove that is well protected from the prevailing winds. You cannot clear at this fishing settlement, but then again no one will ask you to.

From Bombardopolis, it is 65 nautical miles due south to Grande Cayemite island. The island is located at the north side of the south peninsula, towards the west end. The anchorage is in front of the town of Pointe Sable (18°36.15N, 73°47.82W). It is somewhat bigger than the settlement at Bombardopolis but no less hospitable. The controlling depth between Grand Cayemite and Little Cayemite is about eight to nine feet.

The backdrop to this easy anchorage is truly beautiful. You will see and experience the life of simple fishermen and their families who rely on the catch of the day to fill their needs.

Less than five nautical miles farther south is the small town of Pestel (18°32.31N, 73°46.77W mouth of harbor). Pestel is a supply town and, a few times per week, boats come in to find the essentials of life, ranging from clothes to medicines. The local populace from miles around comes to purchase what they need. It is noisy and very colorful, very similar to Madame Bernard market on Ile-à-Vache. The anchorage is in the lagoon at the rear of the harbor but there is an overhead wire at 55 feet. I like to anchor at the northwest corner of the entry to the harbor in 20 feet of water. The anchorage is not as protected as the lagoon, but much nicer in all other aspects.

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'Haitian fishing boats are largely powered by sail and the fishermen are excellent sailors in the West African tradition'. Top photo: The author's yacht at Port Morgan. On the map on page 13, some suggested routing stops are numbered for a northbound voyage





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From Grand Cayemite and/or Pestel you will sail west and make a possible stop at Anse d'Hainault, a town of 30,000 people at the very west end of the southern peninsula. It is a safe anchorage as far as the winds are concerned, but the boat should not be left unattended in front of a town of this size. It is a very good place to stop and anchor and rest, particularly so if the wind from the east is strong.

From Anse d'Hainault to Ile-à-Vache, located at the southwest end of the north peninsula, you will cover a distance of about 65 nautical miles. The route from Tiberon at the extreme southwest end of the south peninsula to Pointe-à-Gravois, which is just west of Ile-à-Vache, can be challenging if the wind is blowing hard. You should not depart from Anse d'Hainault and "turn the corner" en route to Ile-à-Vache unless the wind is ten knots or less, conditions normally found after sundown. If you do sail at night, keep a watch for Haitian fishing boats, all of which are unlit.

Ile-à-Vache is a wonderful and safe place to visit and boats have been calling there since the time of Colombus. At Ile-à-Vache you enter from the west side and at the northwest corner of the island, enter the bay and anchor in front of the town of Cai Coq. Over the years, many things have changed at the island and it is no longer a sleepy little fishing village. They now have streetlights, a few of the local establishments have generators, and many people now have cell phones.

Just a few miles across from Ile-à-Vache is the mainland town of Les Cayes. There is no good anchorage at Les Cayes, but you can anchor for the day (leave someone on the boat) if you want to clear in or out or want to reprovision. Or, if you only want to clear, you can get the Port Morgan Hotel to do it for you for a small fee. The hotel is located right in the anchorage at Cai Coq.

For those that want to explore more of Haiti, 65 nautical miles east of Ile-à-Vache is the old Victorian town of Jacmel. It was a very deluxe resort town at the height of its grandeur and still is a great place to visit. Immigration is located right on the pier that you will anchor close to. This anchorage is untenable if the wind has a southern component in it.

For those that are cruising west along the south coast of Hispaniola, the trip outlined in this article would be undertaken in reverse. However, the route north to Bombardopolis should not be attempted if a strong norther is blowing down from the States. When the tradewinds reinstate, a cruising boat could make its way to Grand Cayemite Island and then head north-northwest to make Bombardopolis.

Clearance procedures

Clearance procedures in Haiti are not uniform. On the north side of the north peninsula at Cap Haitien, a cruiser was asked to pay US$350 to clear in with all the agencies waiting in line to get "their share." Away from the big cities such as Cap Haitien and Port-au-Prince, clearing in and out is normally a case of visiting the Immigration officer. Haitian officials in the larger cities are accustomed to dealing with large commercial vessels and many of them make their livelihood by being creative with the fee schedule.

You can clear in for Immigration at Cap Mole St. Nicholas, Anse d'Hainault, Les Cayes and Jacmel. The fee to Immigration is normally US$10, which gets you a stamp in your passport. Unless you clear in at one of the really big cities, you will not receive any other paperwork.

There is also an agency in Haiti called Semana. It is the safety arm that checks on the safety of boats, such as ferries, that take passengers. If you come across a Semana officer, he will probably ask you for a small tip.

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One such officer, seeing so many boats anchored at Cai Coq on Ile-à-Vache in 2013, decided he was going to assess each boat, requiring a "safety certificate" for which he charged US$2.50 per vessel ton. He did pretty well for a few weeks and made a real nuisance of himself. After I placed a call to the Department of Tourism and complained, he disappeared and has not been seen since.

The mayor of Ile-à-Vache is currently charging cruisers US$5 for a "beach cleanup fund." I told him when I met him that "I thought he was really cleaning up" but he did not get the play on words and simply waited for me to pay the five dollars. If there are a great number of boats anchored at Ile-à-Vache, on occasion, the Immigration department from Les Cayes will send a boat over with Immigration officers. They will charge US$20 per passport stamp and will give you a receipt upon request.

Charity

Haitians are often short of cash to buy essentials, as they have to sell their fish or crops to raise cash to purchase what they need. But most Haitians are not short of food or basic clothing. At Ile-à-Vache young boys will come out in their dugout canoes (*bois fouille*) and tell you they are hungry. If you want to give them basic work, that is fine, or perhaps have them guide you around the island for a fee. However, they are not hungry. At Ile-à-Vache there is a government-run restaurant that serves full mid-day meals for 50 cents US. Many of the missionaries eat there as well.

All through Haiti if you are going to give some type of charity, it is best to do it through the orphanages, churches and schools, of which there are many. They know best who needs what. At Ile-à-Vache, there is a large public school that can use donations of school supplies. Also, at Madame Bernard, the next village to the east, is the orphanage run by Sister Flora. She is a Canadian Catholic nun who has been on the island over 30 years. Even with her under-100-pound, less-than-five-foot-tall frame, she has made an enormous impact. Many people of all faiths visit her and give many things that she needs. Books to write in for her school, Pampers, powdered milk, medicines of all types and so forth are all much appreciated.

The same is true for the other villages that you will visit. At fishing settlements such as Bombardopolis and Pointe Sable they can use donations of fishing supplies: floats, hooks, anything that they would otherwise have to pay cash for.

Haitian fishing boats are largely powered by sail and the fishermen are excellent sailors in the West African tradition. Many sail using plastic bags and old bedsheets for their sail inventory. Last year, *Free Cruising Guides* and the Seven Seas Cruising Association, through a "clean wake" joint project, collected and distributed 43 used sails.

A final word

To cruise Haiti you must be fairly self-sufficient as there are no marinas or repair facilities, although the larger towns do have repairmen that can help you with the work if you have the parts.

Fresh water is in short supply everywhere, so be sure your fresh water maker is in good working order or bring enough jerry jugs to tide you over.

Go back in time. Cruise Haiti and get a sense of what the Caribbean was like 50 years ago.

I have cruised Haiti for two decades and say without hesitation, "*Ayiti mete met hounga sou mwen*!" (Haiti has cast a spell on me.)

Frank Virgintino is the author of Free Cruising Guides, *http://freecruisingguides.com.*



'You will see and experience the life of simple fishermen and their families who rely on the catch of the day to fill their needs'



Our 'Out of Africa' Experience at Cow Island

by Bill and JoAnne Harris

ON our overnight sail to Haiti we saw a *triple* green flash at sunset. It was the first in a series of wonderful surprises.



At Ile-à-Vache — Cow Island: 'We decided to take a hike through the little village and then up and over the mountain, through the pastures and the jungle...'

Getting There

We departed Cabo Rojo on the south coast of the Dominican Republic at around noon. We were bound for Ile-à-Vache, a beautifully quaint island just off the southern coast of mainland Haiti, and sailed almost 120 miles to its anchorage, Port Morgan. We knew we would need good light to get through the reef and to navigate through the countless floats marking the fish traps.

We must say that we had some safety concerns about traveling to Haiti, even though we had previously sailed thousands upon thousands of nautical miles. We knew that, given the bad economy, there were countless desperate people there who wanted to leave Haiti for a better life, especially after the 2010 earthquake.

In 2009, our first season in the Bahamas, we were in Little Farmer's Cay in the Exumas for the local sailboat races. However, another event was in store for us: we provided assistance to a Haitian sailboat that had been rescued by BASRA (Bahamas Air Sea Rescue Association). Bill had spotted the small sailboat being towed in and offered our assistance right away. BASRA granted us permission to provide food, drinks, clothing and anything else the passengers needed. BASRA explained that this boat had sailed from Haiti and had been at sea for four days when it encountered a squall.

We got on the radio and told the other cruisers what was going on and asked if they could prepare some food and gather up some dry clothes or blankets for the Haitians. Our friends Karl and Carrie aboard *S/V Sanctuary* were moored next to us, and collected the food and other items from the other boats in the anchorage and delivered it to us. We were not able to board the BASRA boat, so we rafted up our dinghy to it and began serving food up in Solo Cups along with plastic ware that we had left over from our chartering days. The 62 Haitians had fled because of the earthquake and were desperate to get to the USA. The entire rescue event was truly civilized: no one was pushing, shoving or yelling. There was one outstanding gentleman who was taking the food and dry clothes from us and kept passing it back to those behind him. Soon it was time for BASRA to take them to the dock. The gentleman who had been passing the food around pointed to his pants, or where his pants should have been. He only had a towel around his waist. He needed a pair of pants, and immediately Bill pulled off his shorts and gave them to him. The kicker is, we later realized there was about US$80 in the shorts' pockets that we were going to use to purchase fresh lobsters. The money could not have gone to a nicer man.

Later that evening the US Coast Guard cutter arrived to carry the Haitians back to Haiti. We understand the law, but our hearts sank for these Haitians who had risked everything aboard this 32-foot sailboat with only a sail and compass to guide them.

Meanwhile, we had heard rumors of pirates attacking vessels just off the Haitian coast. One story was that a guy was approached by some men in a dugout; they boarded his boat, threw him off it, and he swam ashore and hiked back to the Dominican Republic. Although we always take precautions and have our security always in mind, still in the back of our minds we kept hearing the voices of our friends who had asked us, "Why in the heck are you going to Haiti?" Our answer was that if we had that thought process we would have never left Texas and experienced all of our amazing sailing adventures!

We had a long but great sail — well, a motorsail for us some of the way. Our big trimaran, *Ultra*, is super slow, but it gets us there. We traveled at night and made sure we were well offshore to avoid fish float entanglement and potential boarding. At daybreak, the magnificent sunrise was a true gift. We began to see numerous fish trap markers dotting the water. The problem is, the fishermen use clear Coke and water bottles, or green Sprite bottles, which are not easy to see. JoAnne was on the bow as the spotter giving directions to Bill on the wheel to dodge the fish traps right and left. Also, in the four- to six-foot swells we began to see dugout canoes with men paddling them and towing their fishing lines. Some of them had their dugouts rigged with a series of black trash bags, weathered black tarps, grain sacks stitched together for sails. Remember, these men are really far out to sea, five to ten miles in a tiny little boat that you can barely see above the surface of the water. None of these boats have motors, and have only the stem of a palm frond for a paddle. Before we knew it, we were upon at least 40 of these boats.

We had made up several small snack packages of cookies, crackers and lollipops to give out while in this area. We began collecting the Ziploc bags and tossing them to the fishermen.

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- Hurricane Moorings





Calivigny Bay, St. George's, Grenada W.I., POS 12°00'11N / 61°43'29W

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We practically threw our shoulders out trying to pitch them as far as possible and yelling "*Bonjour*!" We transferred Coca-Cola and water to smaller plastic bottles with a float and threw those to them, too. We also had a number of foam fish floats that we had collected on the windward sides of the islands we had visited, just for this purpose, so we these pitched to the fishermen as we sailed by so that they could replace their plastic bottles. These men are exquisite sailors, and were able to navigate precisely to the gifts. Their big smiles were so great to see!

The Welcoming Committee

We made our way safely into the harbor and were greeted right away by Ashley, who is a "boat boy" — the boys/men have named their profession this. He arrived alongside aboard a beat-up surfboard with a cut-off palm tree branch for a paddle. He sidled up beside *Ultra* and in halting English welcomed us to Ile-à-Vache. He also handed us a Ziploc bag with a recommendation letter inside from another cruiser



HARRIS (2)

At Madame Bernard Village Market: 'Great energy from all of the people and the abundance of activity'

and told us that if we had any jobs for him, he would be very happy to work for us. Before we knew it, we had at least 15 boat boys in dugouts all around, offering us the same. WOWIE! After sailing over 24 hours and suffering the stress of trying not to run over the countless floats and dugouts, we were exhausted and a little overwhelmed. Most of the "boys" were between the ages of five and 19, and one gentleman was in his early 50s. We quickly explained to all that we were exhausted and needed to rest and that we would discuss with them any jobs that we might have for them later.

While we were trying to rest, more boat boys came out to greet us, hanging outside our stateroom window, saying, "Bonjour! Welcome to Ile-à-Vache, Haiti!" Since we were not getting any rest, we decided it was time to get up and begin to clean up the boat and see if we had some small jobs for them. They explained that they needed their money for school. If they do not pay the US$25 for three months of school fees, they cannot go.

We tried to come up with small projects for them to do. Our idea was to hire several individuals; we explained to them that we only have a certain amount of money to spend on labor and instead of giving it all to one person, we will distribute the money evenly to all who help us with projects. The projects included painting our life ring, waxing the hull, washing the salt off of the stainless steel stanchions and polishing them, and guide service to the market. We also traded mask and snorkel sets for labor, since they can use those for spearfishing. We hired about ten boys/men to work on the boat. It was amazing fun, as all were smiling ear to ear and took tremendous pride in their work. They received cash for school and we received a sparkling boat.

This is a really beautiful place and most everyone lives in the village of Cai Coq ("Kaykok") by the anchorage, Baie de Port Morgan — as in the famous privateer/pirate Henry Morgan. We felt very safe while we were here. Most people are extremely poor and they have no electricity and no running water. Also, there are no cars on the island. If you have any disused boat batteries, this is a perfect place to take them. These wonderful people would be overjoyed to have them to run a light bulb in their home.

We decided to take a hike through the little village and then up and over the mountain, through the pastures and the jungle, to see the Abaka Bay Resort. When we arrived at the beach with the dink, our three 13-year-old friends that we had met earlier were there to greet us. We visited with them a bit and then began our walk through town. They were right beside us the whole way. As we mentioned, they were 13, but looked more like eight or nine; they were very small. We made it to the resort and ordered Haitian Prestige beers for us and Cokes and cookies for the kids. They were so happy! We had so much fun, and we know that it was a total treat for the kids. We then headed back and then over to see the point of Cai Coq to explore that area. It was a great walk, and we got to visit with many locals as we passed by. We ended up finding another hotel/hostel type place. We ordered beers and tall bottles of Cokes again for the kids. WOWIE! We thought they would float away or be on a caffeine high for the next three days, since they probably seldom get to have these.

Recommending Helpers

We told our helpers that we would give them all recommendation letters, individual photos of themselves and our boat cards, since this is their livelihood. So, if you find a boat boy with our recommendation, you can be confident that you are hiring a well-mannered and experienced worker. After days of boat projects and lots of continuous visitors, we printed out all of the recommendation letters one by one,



'Before we knew it, we had at least 15 boat boys in dugouts all around'

signed them, and also made a special handwritten note on each. We also included an *Ultra* postcard with a photo of the boat on it and all were placed in individual one-gallon Ziploc bags. We asked that each boat boy come out to collect his own recommendation letter, so we could give it to him personally. What a wonderfully rewarding experience. Well, word definitely got out quickly and we were swarmed with boat boys that we had not even met yet, that were asking for letters.

—Continued on next page



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—*Continued from previous page*

We tried to politely explain that if they had not worked for us, we could not do that for them. However, we did give them cookies and pink lemonade.

Dinghy Drama

It was now time for our next adventure, which was to go to the village of Madame Bernard to visit the St. François Orphanage and meet Sister Flora, the remarkable



HARRIS

nun who runs it. We had food, clothing and linens to donate. After that, we would go to Madame Bernard's spectacular outdoor market.

We had organized with Ashley to be our guide and picked him up off the beach at his beachfront home. One option had been for us to get to Madame Bernard via a hike and then a water taxi. The other was to take our own nine-foot dinghy. Being the crazy people we are, we decided to take our own dinghy and do some additional sightseeing. Okay, no problem, well *yes* problem — sort of. It ended up being an adrenaline pumping experience!

We began in the harbor, and then out into the sea we went. We followed the coastline, but the waves were on the nose and they were all coming into the boat. OMG, the dink was filling up big time. We had forgotten to put the bailer back in the dink after making our overnight passage. (When we make a big passage, we remove the 15-horsepower motor and all items inside the dink: fuel tank, paddles, lifejackets, bailer, etcetera.) So JoAnne quickly pulled a Ziploc bag out of her backpack, transferred the contents of the huge container of oatmeal for the orphanage into it, and then used the container for a bailer. Lots and lots of water was coming in as fast as it was being bailed. We were all soaked to the bone in the salty waves, then surprise, the rain came down in buckets, too. What a way to start out the day; all we could do was laugh.

Ashley told us that it was still farther and still farther. It took us about an hour and a half to get to Madame Bernard. Too bad we did not take photos, but we were too busy almost swamping the boat. Note to self: It is a quick trip by boat, if you have a bigger motor and a bigger boat!

Oh well, it was a great adventure and we forgot about it right away after seeing the mesmerizing market. Everyone was arriving from all around the island by burro with all of the goods they were going to sell. They even had a burro parking lot. Also, many people were arriving from the mainland via a water taxi and sailing dugouts.

St. François Orphanage

We hiked up to the St. François Orphanage and were greeted at the gate by the friendly staff. We requested to meet with Sister Flora. She politely took time out of her busy schedule to visit with us and to accept the milk powder, oatmeal, clothes and linens that we had brought with us as a donation. She gave us a tour of the orphanage, an amazing facility with a staff that is wonderful with the children. Many of the children have special needs, and we could clearly see the compassion and love the staff had for all of them. If you have the opportunity to visit, please keep in mind that they need just about everything. We learned that day that they especially need medications of all kinds.

Madame Bernard Village Market

We have never been to Africa, but it is on our bucket list. We have heard amazing stories from friends who have been to African marketplaces, and we felt as if we were experiencing one of our very own. We absolutely love market events, and this one was at the top of our experiences of a lifetime! Great energy from all of the people and the abundance of activity. It was truly brilliant to be completely immersed in this unforgettable cultural experience.

We arrived at the dock and many friendly people were there to assist and greet us with a "bonjour". Out in the harbour, the dugouts were sailing in loaded to the gunwales with all kinds of things to sell. There was everything under the sun at the market. Vendors occupied a series of thatched-roof and metal-roof huts all around us, complete with displays of beautiful produce, handmade baskets, numerous grains, molasses by the ladle full, baskets of fresh and dried fish, a colorful bean selection, straw art, clothes (lots of knock-off designer T-shirts), lots of chickens running around, raw meat hanging up all over the place, and a hut to exchange US dollars for Haitian currency (US$1 = 43.2 gourdes). We bought some wonderful cassava bread plus their version of peanut brittle, which was sweet and savory and had a kick with some spicy peppers and curry. Bill bought three tall, old-fashioned bottles of ice cold Coke for less than one US dollar.

Three Cups of Eau

We arrived home from an amazing day in town, and our three daily visitors showed up minutes later. JoAnne quickly began making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. (We felt for these kids, because we did not ever see their parents around and wondered if they prepared mid-day meals for them. We could see the boys were truly hungry.) One problem: we were out of loaves of bread, and now only had cassava bread from the market, which is more like dry flatbread. Well, unfortunately, the key word is *dry*. About two minutes later, Bill reported that the kids were saying "*Eau, s'il vous plait*". Oh yes, JoAnne forgot the drinks. Dry cassava bread and peanut butter and jelly — oops! They probably told each other, "This boat lady is crazy!" *Trois eaux* coming up!

Left: 'These men are exquisite sailors'

Below: Local boats on the beach at Soulette



MANDY THODY

We thoroughly enjoyed our exploration of Ile-à-Vache and look forward to one day visiting again. It is a wonderful stop if you decide to travel the southern route of the island of Hispaniola. We hope you get the opportunity to visit.

The additional photo for this article was supplied by Mandy Thody of Good Samaritan Foundation of Haiti, Inc. Good Samaritan Foundation of Haiti can be found on Facebook, and at www.goodsamaritanofhaiti.com, or telephone Mandy on (340) 513-2022.

Mandy tells us, "We work in several villages of Ile-à-Vache with a primary school, adult ed, artisan training, scholarships for higher education, clinics, and a rapidly growing microcredit program. Please support our work to make the island economically and socially stable, and preserve one of the most amazing environments and communities in the Caribbean!"

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A SINGLEHANDER'S SOJOURN AT BOCAS DEL TORO



STEVE JOST

by John Smith

Leaving the hotel-filled skyline of Aruba astern and setting out under triple-reefed main and a spitfire jib, *Mermaid of Carriacou* never fell below six knots until, upon reaching the Farallon north of Porto Bello, Panama, I chose to heave to before crossing the busy shipping lanes in the morning. I hoisted my vertical set of red lights and, with the captain now officially declared dead, I could get some rest before continuing on to Bocas del Toro.

From Porto Bello westwards — once across the busy approach to the Panama Canal, turning northward along the coasts of Costa Rica then Nicaragua, and west into the Bay of Honduras — lies a monstrous, mostly uninhabited lee shore of swamps, mangroves, rivers, barrier reefs and rainforests: a thousand miles of… nothing. It is dark. It is ageless. It is wet and it is overwhelmingly green. Too much green!

I sailed via the small island of Escudo de Veragua — which nine days later I had not yet reached owing to light or strong constantly shifting winds, or no wind, and a steady running easterly current. It took me seven more days — 16 in all — to sail the 120 miles from Porto Bello to Isla Colón in Bocas del Toro province.

This was accomplished only after having to drop my 250-pound emergency anchor, "Dr. Jekyll", after the wind died and the aforementioned current almost put the *Mermaid* onto Isla Colón's Bluff Beach — to the amusement of the surfers playing there. When the wind did return I pulled a "cut and run": in the light breeze I let my anchors run and very slowly, with stomach and heart churning, very tenderly sailed her away from that lee shore. I actually had my ditch kit, EPIRB, kayak, logs and dog all settled together ready to abandon ship rather than get caught in what to my non-surfer eyes appeared to be a very ugly place to landfall. For a moment the ill-fated *Water Pearl of Bequia* flashed across my mind.

Needless to say (but I'll say it) my safe arrival under sail at the Bocas marina occasioned in this singlehander a need to celebrate the thin edge I had survived — that edge which defines both a good landing and a successful passage. I reach! With the aid of some fine Abuelo rum, the company of sailors and a few beers… well, we celebrated a bit.

News of *Mermaid's* arrival cheered some and, as usual, ruffled a few feathers as well. I mean, *sailing* into the anchorage — "How reckless!", etcetera. I also fired, with legal firecrackers, an 80th birthday salute to my fellow singlehander Lon Matlock, who at the time had been at sea for 26 days from the Canal Zone. I made some noise. I danced. Long-haired pirates in the trailer park! Oh, well.

I have not been in a place like Bocas del Toro since I lived in Key West in the '60s and, short of a few old biker bars from that era, I have never seen so much "ink". Everyone here has a tattoo. Really! Music, bare feet, bicycles, long hair, surfers, backpackers, probably 20 different languages including both the local Guaymi Ngobe-Bugle and the Cuna dialect of the San Blas Islands, both spoken in this area for over 8,000 years. Seeing Israeli surfer girls in cut-offs and tank tops haggling with Cuna Indian women in traditional woven clothes with gold rings in their noses is a mind-altering experience in itself. Want to go grocery shopping? Learn some Chinese. I challenge you to find a single *mercado* here not operated by Chinese folks. Their ancestors all had a role in the construction of the Canal and their presence is ubiquitous; it makes for some really delightful shopping expeditions.

I still cannot get the image of that Israeli surfer girl out of my head — some archetype or *deja vu* perhaps, similar perhaps to what the Guaymi folks at the bottom of Bahia Honda might have thought when they saw *Mermaid of Carriacou* under full sail approaching the very cut through the islands of Bastimentos and Solarte as had Christopher Columbus over 500 years ago — and, to be sure our boats, are not much different. Difference is that I stayed for over two years!

Left: Sunset over the anchorage



COLLECTION OF JOHN SMITH

Right: The author aboard his 50-year-old Grenadine island sloop, Mermaid of Carriacou

One of my favorite shore activities was just to sit in the commodious park among trees so huge they seem to have stood there forever. A gazebo, flowers, children's swings and an occasionally operating fountain, all made complete by a bust of El Libertador, Simón Bolívar, and surrounded by Chinese grocers and the combined aroma of a dozen different bakeries and lunch buffets. And not so far beneath the surface there can usually be heard some rock 'n' roll coming from The Loco Toro, mission control for a large part of the Boca's gringo population. A rowdy, roady surfer bar with cold drinks, wide screen TVs and occasionally a few poles on the bartop, and, yep, you can get served food here but take note of the sign over the kitchen: "Good Food Takes a While. Yours Will Be Ready in a Minute".

Be forewarned, however: there are a few of the less than desirable beasties around as well. And, unless you have already been to the Bay Islands of Honduras, the local biting sand flies called *chitre* here will definitely get and hold your attention — which is probably good because all the smacking, slapping and swatting will also keep the majority of the mosquitoes away. It's easier to just go swimming or surfing… or have another Abuelo.

I never saw a crocodile over eight feet long or a snake over 12, and never saw one of the deadly varieties at all, although I did happen to be bitten on the thigh by a Brown Recluse Spider, resulting in a long and ugly healing process and leaving a large scar. (All this occurred before I learned of a new therapy in the event of Brown Recluse bites: that of applying a nitroglycerine and petroleum jelly — or maybe aloe jelly — to the open wound. The toxin slowly shuts down the capillary system, causing massive necrosis and severely limiting healing potential. The nitroglycerine, being a vasodilator, opens these very small blood vessels, restoring a bit of circulation to the affected area, greatly decreasing the amount of necrosis and secondary infection.)

There is also some great small boat cruising and fishing among the countless bights, sounds, bays, mangrove bays and beaches of Bocas del Toro. While fishing with a friend from aboard my inflatable and towing a small surface squid, while passing the absolutely beautiful sight of the Smithsonian Institute Jungle Research Station on Isla Colón, my seven-foot spinning pole bent double and the reel sang its glorious song.

—Continued on next page



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What turned out to be a 28-pound barracuda did not want to get anywhere near my dinghy. And when it was finally almost alongside, the quandary became my own: in a rubber inflatable boat, what to do with a four-foot-long "saber-toothed grunt" with a mouthful of razor-sharp teeth? It wound up demanding a long — I mean a very long — left arm stretch and a right arm slash to quiet the critter. The Indians and other folks knew the area and had fished it for years, so the fish was cut up and shared out. Later that same week I was boating 30-pound cobia using live jacks caught from my deck with a small Japanese *sabiki* rig.



JULIA BARTLETT (2)

Underwater it gets even more interesting. In addition to the healthy reefs and extensive fish population, here in the underwater world, history is literally at your fingertips. With a long history of European visitation beginning in 1502, including all those who settled here after completion of the Canal, those who were re-settled here by the fruit and banana empires, and who came by thousands of ships, the seabed is a bottle collector's wonderland. Everything from Chinese opium syrettes to 18th century liquor bottles is found here, often in less than ten feet of water surrounding the larger towns, especially Bocas. Anyone visiting here should visit Captain Billy's Bottle Shop to get an idea of the vast array of what has been found and is still being found here. Being in the water with good eyes almost always yields up some artifact from a bygone era. I found several dozen such bottles while just exploring with my snorkel gear and kayak. I left them with friends; these artifacts had come a long way to be thrown into the sea here and so seemed to belong here.

About 20 years ago a few small islands very near to Isla Colón sank. Disappeared... phtt... gone. It was to one of these sites that I often swam while towing my kayak with air bottle and "snuba" hose. I spent many hours investigating the hard bottom from which the currents had swept all the soft dirt and vegetable matter, leaving a hard coral surface. Except for some young corals, the area was quite clean and by swimming just along the bottom, I found many bottles, and one day a most remarkable find: a stone axe or adze head, more like a hoe than an axe. It was about seven by four inches broad and about an inch thick, made from a very hard stone not common on the islands here. It was old, very old. I carried it to a resident Canadian archaeologist who confirmed the handmade nature of my artifact and estimated its age at about 3,000 years! I visited some Guaymi friends in the village of Saigon on Isla Colón and showed to them my find, hoping to elicit some response. There was excitement and there was silence. My friend showed it to his wife who spoke neither Spanish nor English, prompting a combination of "shock and awe", but of the quiet kind. I had discovered an ancient "thunder stone" made by the ancestors "in a time before time", before European encroachment and conquest had all but erased any pre-Columbian history. Time had inexorably wrought many changes and all but erased an entire people's identity, but this stone, this thunder stone, had survived — and was now in the hands of the descendants of its maker.

In modern times they are mostly kept safe by the older women of the tribe who serve as midwives. During childbirth the stone is heated and applied to the abdomen of the mother to ease her pain and to ensure a continuing connection between the young newborn and the ancient ancestors, to ensure that the spirits of those ancestors are a part of the birthing and a continued influence on their lives. Whew! I thought it was just an old farmer's hoe.

When I left Bocas del Toro I gave the stone to my friend, who gave it into the care of his wife. It belonged in Bocas, and its story far outshone the glass bottles and bead trinkets of a later, more jaded society. It was, after all, ultimately my friends' property, made by a grandfather, an ancient one who lived here thousands of years before and could now help maintain the long line of history established by these indigenous people as a thunder stone from a time before time.

As for why I linger to explore and learn from these people, it is perhaps that — apart from my own father and the sailing community of the Windward Islands — I have never met people for whom I hold so much respect.

A wonderful spot, truly — if you do not mind seven metres of rain a year, months of flat calm, shifting winds and wild currents. Not a sailor's ideal harbor — especially one from Carriacou! So, after waiting around a few years for the Bocas boatyard and hauling facility in Almirante to open (which it did six months after I left), I shanghaied the young, strong and reckless son of a friend and with him as apprentice seaman set out to find a shipyard farther to the north, perhaps in the Bay Islands of Honduras.

Bocas del Toro remains one of the magical places in the Caribbean.
A plethora of exotic anchorages.
A pool of foreign cultures.
A web of international and local languages.
All woven together as elaborately as one of the fine Guaymi Indian *shakara* bags: strong but simple, functional and beautiful.

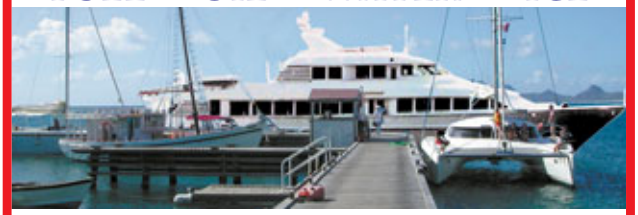
Left: Lively Bocas Town has small hotels for backpackers and surfers

Below: A view of Isla Colón from Isla Carenero



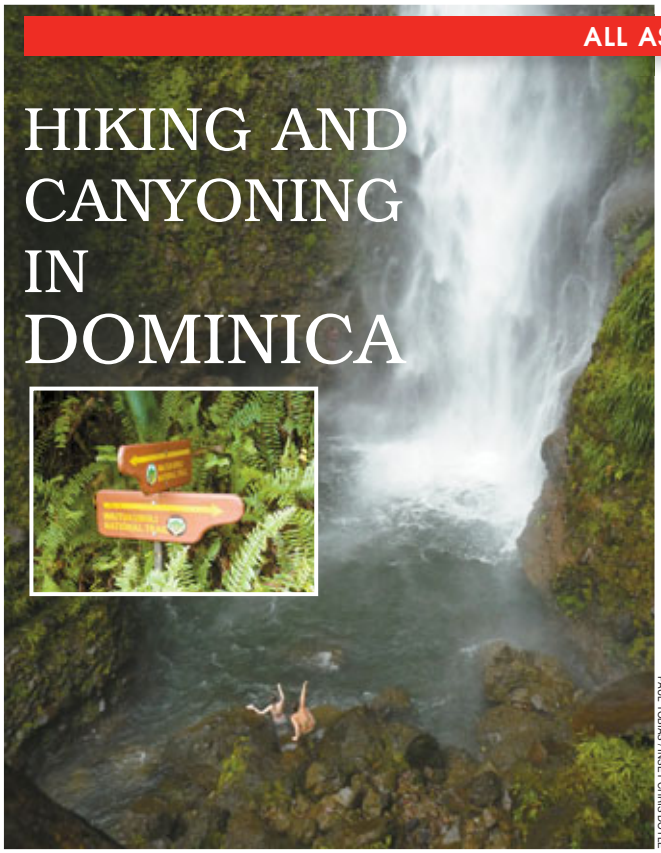


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ALL ASHORE...

HIKING AND CANYONING IN DOMINICA



PAUL TOBIAS / INSET CHRIS DOYLE

Waterfalls are dotted throughout Dominica's rainforest, and trail hiking in the National Parks is a must-do

by Jo-Anne Nina Sewlal

I spent five weeks on Dominica in June and July of this year, doing a biological survey of the island's spiders. This job requires a lot of hiking and exploring — and having fun!

Dominica is mountainous, so just walking around will get you well on the way to getting epic buttocks. But more strenuous trail hiking in the National Parks is a must-do.

A one-day National Parks pass costs US$5; a week pass costs US$12 and entitles you to unlimited visits. They are available from the Forestry Division in Roseau, as well as at visitor centres and some shops nearer to the sites — look for signs. Do not think that you can take a chance and go on the trails without a pass: foresters are stationed at the visitor centres and trailheads, and patrol the trails. Dominicans take the natural beauty of their island seriously.

Parrots and Waterfalls

There are many hiking trails listed according to the level of difficulty. One of the easier hikes that I did was the Syndicate loop. The trail starts behind the Syndicate visitors' centre in the Morne Diablotin Park, from which point you are totally immersed in *montane* rainforest. The path is wide and well maintained, and the terrain gently undulates so that you are not struggling to climb or constantly looking where you are walking. If you are a bird watcher then Syndicate is the place for you. Here there is a special lookout to see the Sisserou (*Amazona imperialis*) and Jaco (*Amazona arausiaca*) parrots; they often pass by on their way to nearby trees to roost for the night.

A popular hiking destination is waterfalls. Driving along the coast, my colleagues and I saw a sign for Sari Sari Falls and on the spur of the moment decided to hike to it. Along the way we encountered "human signs" — residents would shout "waterfall, waterfall!" and point. After parking, we walked by an unfinished house and an open field to reach the trailhead. Proceeding down some flights of wooden stairs, we got to a river that had a rope stretched across to help hikers get across. The rope ends at a little tent on the opposite bank. This is the first of two stream crossings. The trail gets narrow and slippery at times, with the final ascent being quite steep — so much so that one has to climb steps like a ladder. However, the view at the top, when you see the waterfalls, is a spectacular reward for all your hard work. On the small plateau at the end is a wooden platform from which you can feel the spray as the water falls down. This hike takes about 45 minutes to an hour one way.

Hikes to Lakes

Another popular hike is to Freshwater Lake, in the area of Laudat. The road to Freshwater Lake ends at the parking lot of the visitors' centre. The centre usually opens around 10:00AM and features an interpretation room housing exhibits and information on the area and on Dominica as a whole. There is a snackette and washroom facilities. To get to the trailhead you drive a little way down the road that leads to Boeri Lake; the sign at the trailhead is gone. (We actually did the trail back to front, starting at the visitor centre instead of the trailhead.) The hike takes one and a half to two hours and — if you go the correct way — the trail gently undulates for about two-thirds of the way with the last part in a steep ascent: again, you have to climb the stairs like you would a ladder.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

But all the way you see splendid views of the lake and the surrounding mountains. There is said to be a trail that leads to nearby Boeri Lake, another crater lake, but we did not find it.

To get to Boeri Lake, we parked at the parking lot at Freshwater Lake and walked to the trailhead from there. There are no visitor facilities; the road just ends at a cul-de-sac and there is a sign indicating the start of the trail. Although rated as having a difficulty level of "three", we did not find it very difficult. However, one has to be careful as the rocks that pave the way are slippery and there are two small stream crossings. The entire hike takes between 45 minutes and an hour. At the start you'll pass a short way through montane forest, and then most of the trail is through elfin woodland. Along the way you get some amazing views of the hillsides and the village of Laudat. The shore of the lake is very rocky with some big boulders, and the lake is reported to have its own Nessie-like creature. A short path to the left of the sign at the lake will take you to a platform. Unfortunately the railings are gone and about a quarter of the floor is caved in, but that does not prevent it from being a good spot to have lunch, take in the natural beauty of the lake and look out for the "lake creature".



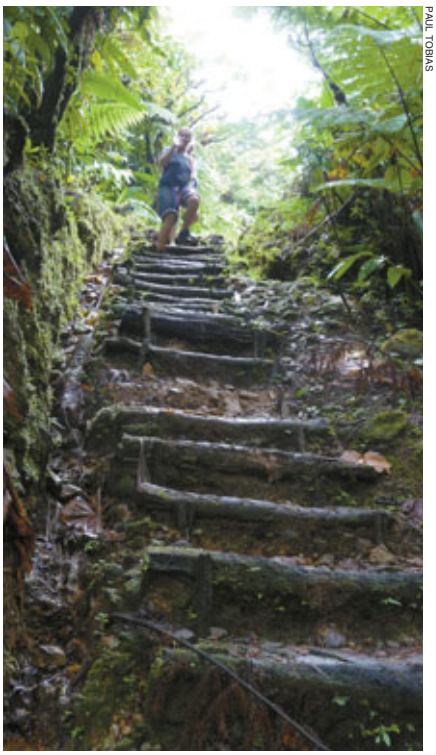
JO-ANNE NINA SEWLAL

Left: The trail gently undulates. Along the way you see splendid views of Freshwater Lake

Right: On steep parts of the trails 'you have to climb the stairs like you would a ladder...'

The last lake we visited was a bit different. The hike to Boiling Lake passes through the Valley of Desolation. Although not the longest hike on Dominica, it is regarded as the most strenuous and although my colleagues and I are experienced hikers, we were advised to use a guide. The trail starts at Laudat and takes you past huge pipes used in the island's geothermal exploration. About three-quarters of the hike to the Valley of Desolation is uphill. Along the way there is a plateau as the trail follows the ridge through elfin woodland, where one can see Sisserou or Jaco parrots. But do not stop for too long, as you have a way to go to get to the Valley and the Boiling Lake beyond. Then there is a steep, slippery descent, from which one can see where the trail to Boiling Lake picks up. Some of the stairs had fallen owing to mini-landslides.

—*Continued on next page*



PAUL TOBIAS



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One should be cautious on the final part of the descent: one has to cross a stream that flows over huge smooth boulders with some footholds carved across them. At the end of this descent is the Valley of Desolation.

As one crosses the Valley you see steam rising from vents and smell sulphur in the air. In one part, as I climbed over the rocks I could hear hissing coming from a small crack in the rocks next to where I put my hand — pressure was being released. At the rather slow-moving stream that flows through the Valley, sulphur accumulates on the rocks. The tour guide wrote in the sulphur deposits. I tried my hand at this, but my attempt was not very artistic — the water is hot!



Above: Also part of Dominica's National Park system is the Cabrits Garrison, overlooking Prince Rupert Bay. Try the loop trail that leads you past many of the beautifully restored historic buildings

Right: A stream flows over and around boulders. In Dominica, you're never far from water

After crossing the Valley, the trail picks up again at the start of the forest. This is where the going gets tricky, as it is difficult to pick up where the trail starts as it crosses the river at multiple points. Along the way there are many small pools where one can have a dip or stop to have lunch. The hike through the forest is quite short, after which it is across another dry rocky expanse for another 15 minutes and, after a final short ascent, you reach the plateau above Boiling Lake, the second largest boiling lake in the world. It is breathtaking, worth the hike to get there. On a clear day you can see bubbling on the lake's surface. One unusual point is that you can feel both hot and cold at the same time. You will feel a freezing breeze and then a warm one at the same time, or one right after the other.

We ended that visit with a swim through the shallow part of Titou Gorge.

Indian River Boat Ride

The island claims to have 365 rivers, and just as you enter the town of Portsmouth, in the island's northwest, there is the Indian River. We had some free time so, as a change from hiking, we decided to take a boat ride there. It cost US$15 each and lasted between an hour and a half and two hours. A site pass is needed, and you can buy it on the spot.

Our guide was quite knowledgeable and showed us the different flora and fauna along the way and related some history of the area. At the start of the ride we saw a large school of silver mullet, and later a variety of birds, including green heron and yellow crowned night heron. We saw the plant known as the beach or sea hibiscus (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*), whose petals start off yellow and, as the day progresses, turn orange. Parts of the riverbanks were covered in thick patches of *roseaux* reeds, which the Amerindians use to weave their baskets. We were informed that the capital city was named Roseau because this reed was so abundant along the banks of the river that runs through the city.

We stopped at the Ticking Croc Tavern and boarded the little wooden jetty that leads to the Indian River Bush Bar. At this point the only way to continue up the river was by kayak, as it was too shallow to accommodate our boats. The Bush Bar does not serve food, but offers alcoholic beverages (including a variety of rum punches, many infused with local spices) and non-alcoholic drinks such as herbal teas. After a short stop there and walk along the trail we boarded our boat and headed back.

The highlight was a little tributary at the side where we saw a weathered little house complete with a tiny jetty. It was part of the set of Calypso's hut for the movie "Pirates of the Caribbean 2".

Canyoning at Titou Gorge

I also took the opportunity to go canyoning with Extreme Dominica. Canyoning is offered in groups of a maximum of 16 persons. The price per individual is US$160, however, for large groups the price goes down. The price includes transport to and from the Extreme Dominica office in Roseau, and to and from the office to Titou Gorge. It also includes two guides and all equipment. You can rent a GoPro helmet camera for US$35 using your own memory card. If you don't have a card you can buy one for US$15.

At the Extreme Dominica office you get "geared up" with a wetsuit, harness (referred to as a "diaper"), lifejacket and helmet. (Wear shoes that have a good grip and will not fall apart when they get wet: you will be spending most of the two to three hours in the water.) Then you receive a short training session on a rappelling wall to get familiar with the equipment, the correct body position and where to put your hands. The gear also includes a friction device, so you are never really "on your own" as there is a guide at the top and one at the bottom of the rappel holding the main rope.

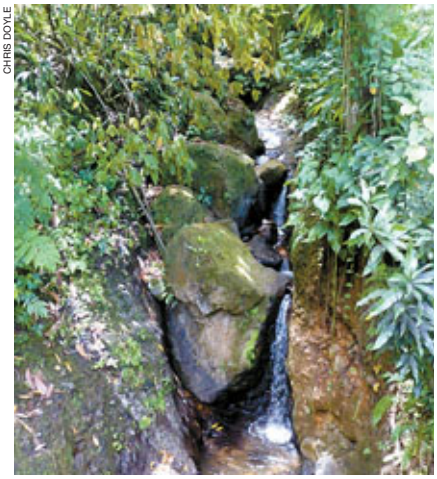
After that you are shuttled off to Titou Gorge, the site of the Cage of Bones drop scene in "Pirates of the Caribbean". At the end of a short walk into the forest, you cross the stream and make your first rappel. When you near the end, just a few feet above the water, they let you go and you splash in. Great fun! (They can let you in gently if you are nervous.) Getting through the gorge involves a mixture of rappelling (including through a waterfall), hiking and diving. The guides are extremely knowledgeable about the route and will tell you what position you need to be in for each dive.

At the end there is a "shake your booty" competition before a small belly flop into the river, so you get to show off the buns that you have developed after all those hikes.

A couple of hikes that I did not do were to Trois Pitons and Morne Diablotin. I guess I have an excuse to visit Dominica again!

Jo-Anne N. Sewlal Ph.D. is the editor of the Environment Tobago *newsletter and is an instructor in the Dept. of Life Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad & Tobago. Visit her website at www.caribbeanspiders.com.*

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LOSS OF STEERING: DISASTER OR INCONVENIENCE?

Steering loss all too often results in abandoning ship. Under some circumstances, this is perhaps the wisest course of action. But at other times, the ability to use an emergency tiller, replace a broken steering cable, or steer using the sails and/or a drogue, can result in a successfully completed passage.

Emergency Tillers

The inadequacy of many emergency tillers was brought home to me early in my career as a delivery skipper.

I was delivering a 40-foot sloop with a short keel but attached rudder from Grenada to Ft. Lauderdale via St. Thomas. About 50 miles west of San Juan, the hydraulic steering system packed up. We installed the emergency tiller but it was neither well designed nor strong and collapsed after about five hours. I discovered that the biggest socket in the socket wrench set would fit on the rudder head. A tackle on the wrench handle led to a winch gave us enough control to sail her 400 miles to San Salvador in the Bahamas, where we stopped and rebuilt the emergency tiller.

Atlantica, a 46-foot, Stevens-designed gaff-rigged schooner, also had an emergency tiller which, we discovered when we tested it, was really useless. The lever arm was only three feet long and, typical of gaff-rigged schooners, on a reach (because of the gaff falling off as sheets are eased), *Atlantica* had heavy weather helm. An hour on the helm and the helmsman's arms had been stretched so much he looked like an orangutan. The emergency tiller was made out of pipe, so we made a wooden extension that fitted into the end to create an eight-foot lever arm.



MARTIN SMYTH

In 2003, this J/44's rudder reportedly 'snapped off' about 1,000 miles east of Barbados. Her crew, after unsuccessful attempts at jury-rigged steering and towing, abandoned ship and boarded another yacht. The J/44 later washed ashore on Barbados

(As an aside, by the time we had reached Bermuda on that delivery we had learned to trim the gaff vangs that we had rigged, so that the twist was completely removed from the main and fore when sheets were eased. This removed the weather helm to the point that my daughter Dory, age 11, could stand a one-hour helm watch. But gaff vangs are another story: contact streetiolaire@hotmail.com for more information.)

In contrast was our experience aboard *Pixie*, a 54-foot Gardner-designed, ketch-rigged motorsailor that we were delivering from St. Croix to Ft. Lauderdale. The second day out, the hydraulic steering failed. However it was no problem as Gardner had designed a proper emergency tiller. *Pixie* had a midship cockpit, so there was a large poop deck. We undid a deck plate, lifted a cushion on the aft cabin bunk, dropped the emergency tiller through the deck plate onto the rudder head, and we were all set. The tiller was a full six feet long, giving us plenty of leverage.

Almost all emergency tillers are designed to pass over the wheel steering stand. This arrangement looks good on paper but when you try to use it in heavy weather, especially going downwind, because of the height of the tiller, it does not work.

Today, most boats are so wide that a better arrangement would be to make the emergency tiller in a T going across the boat. This would be much easier to make and give a longer lever arm, plus, being in a T, two people could steer, one on port side the other on the starboard side. The arms of the T should be made removable to facilitate easy storage of the tiller.

If the boat has a long stern, a centerline tiller can be installed with the tiller going *aft* from the rudder head.

In any case, have an emergency tiller that you know works. Before a passage, go out in heavy weather and test your emergency tiller, not only going to windward, but also on a broad reach and dead downwind, two points of sailing that require a lot of steering.

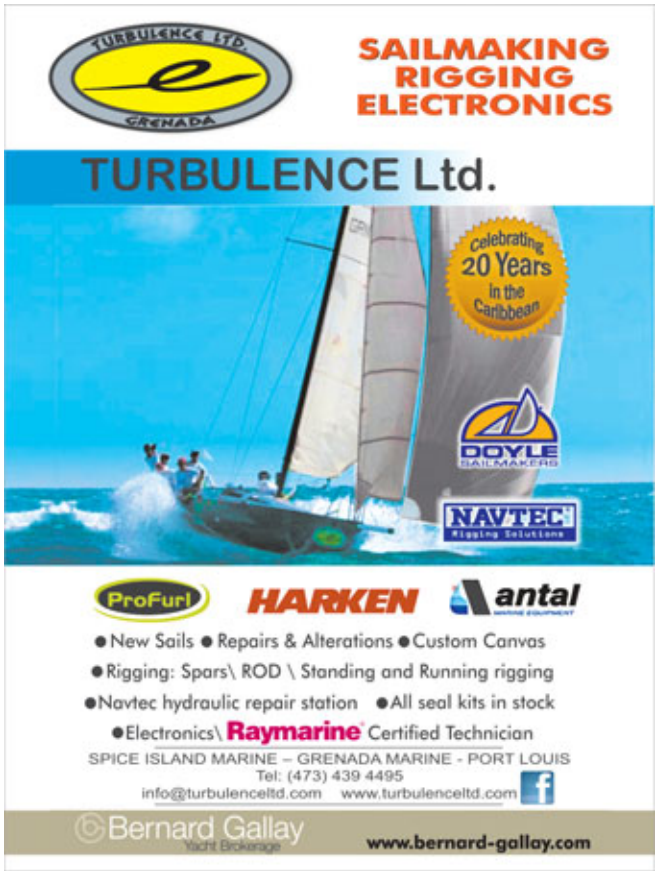
Steering Cables

On cable steering systems the most common failure is broken cables. Replacing steering cables at sea is difficult, but not impossible. Megayacht skipper Billy Porter started his career in the Royal Navy as a teenager and retired as Chief Warrant Officer after running the Royal Navy sail-training establishment. He tells the story of *Great Britain II* in a round the world race with only one stop.

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The crew were all from the Royal Navy sailing program. They figured that on a race of this length, with thousands of miles sailing downwind in the Roaring Forties, they would have a steering cable break. When this happened, the boat would round up, the spinnaker would be doused, staysail hoisted, staysail main and mizzen trimmed so the boat would lie hove to until the broken cable could be replaced. One crewmember was told to get all the gear and spare cables assembled so that when the time came he could replace the broken cable.

Inevitably, a steering cable broke and all went according to plan. The designated crewmember dove below to replace it, and the rest of the crew felt it would take him two or three hours to do the job. But 20 minutes later he popped out of the hatch and said, "New cable installed and tensioned; get underway!"

How did he do the job so fast? When *Great Britain II* was in port the crew lived ashore, but one crewmember always stayed on board as watchman. The crewmember who was in charge of the steering cables reported that every time he had the watchman duty, he would set his alarm for 2400; the minute the alarm went off he would dive into the lazarette and change a cable. The first time it took him almost three hours but each time he changed a cable he reduced the time necessary. He assembled all the tools he needed, stored them in the lazarette, and secured the spare cables there so that they were easy to run once he pulled the broken cable.

For those that are doing long passages with cable steering, it is worthwhile to try replacing a steering cable in port before going to sea.

Rudder Loss

Now that the vast majority of boats built in the last ten years have spade rudders, losing a rudder entirely by hitting something, or by having the rudder drop out, has become a common enough occurrence that in South Africa there is a company that makes emergency rudders specifically designed for your boat, which can be disassembled for storage until needed.

But if you do not have an emergency rudder, do not waste time trying to rig a spinnaker pole with a door secured to it. I have heard and read about dozens of sailors who have tried this rig and it does not work.

Olivier van Noort, a 55-foot cutter designed and built by De Vries Lentsch, lost her rudder in the 1953 Fastnet Race shortly after rounding Fastnet Rock. She rigged her spinnaker pole across the deck, ran lines through blocks secured to the ends of the pole, port and starboard. They were attached to a drogue streamed astern and led to winches. They were able to sail the all the way back to Plymouth.

The famous yacht designer Doug Petersen reports that halfway between California and Hawaii a very beamy one-tonner he designed lost her rudder. They sailed all the way to Hawaii using the same rig as *Olivier van Noort* but the one-tonner was so beamy they just led lines port and starboard through blocks secured to the rail cap at the widest part of the boat.

Mike Keyworth once demonstrated to Mark Pillsbury, editor of *Cruising World*, how he could sail a Swan 44 that had the rudder and skeg removed and replaced by a spade rudder. He removed the spade rudder and then demonstrated that he could steer the now-rudderless boat by towing a Hathaway, Reiser & Raymond "sea brake" drogue. He beat to windward, tacked, reached, ran and jibed, all with no rudder, steering strictly by trimming the sails and adjusting the drogue.

My favorite story of all is the story of *Williwaw*, a 48-foot sloop that lost her rudder in 1978 while racing the Middle Sea Race for the Sardinia Cup. The crew felt they should drop out and secure a tow but the skipper, Lowell North, and the mate, Peter Barrett, both Olympic gold medalists, insisted that they could continue the race and finish, steering by carefully trimming the sails. This they did. To put icing on the cake, Lowell and Peter insisted on sailing into the marina, including tacking, all with no rudder on a short-keeled racing machine.

With the wind abeam or forward of abeam good sailors on most boats can steer a boat using sails only. This is easy on a ketch or yawl, hard but possible on a sloop or cutter. The cutter with a staysail as well as a jib is easier to steer under sail alone than a single-headsail sloop. Once the wind goes aft of abeam, switch to the drogue routine.

In the light of all the above, loss of steering or loss of rudder should not be regarded as a complete disaster but rather a major inconvenience.

Footnote: There is more information about steering loss in my book The Ocean Sailing Yacht, Volume 1. *This book was printed in 1974 and 140,000 copies were sold.* The Ocean Sailing Yacht, Volume 2, *©1979, is all newer information. Times have changed, much new equipment has come on the market, but there is still a ton of valuable timeless information in both books and sailors regularly tell me that so much information is still valid, that both books are a worthwhile investment. They both are available via the internet.*

Bill Cooper, in his book Sell Up and Sail, *writes: "... if you plan to go offshore, read* The Ocean Sailing Yacht *by Don Street. Don is an opinionated eccentric, but he is a seaman."*

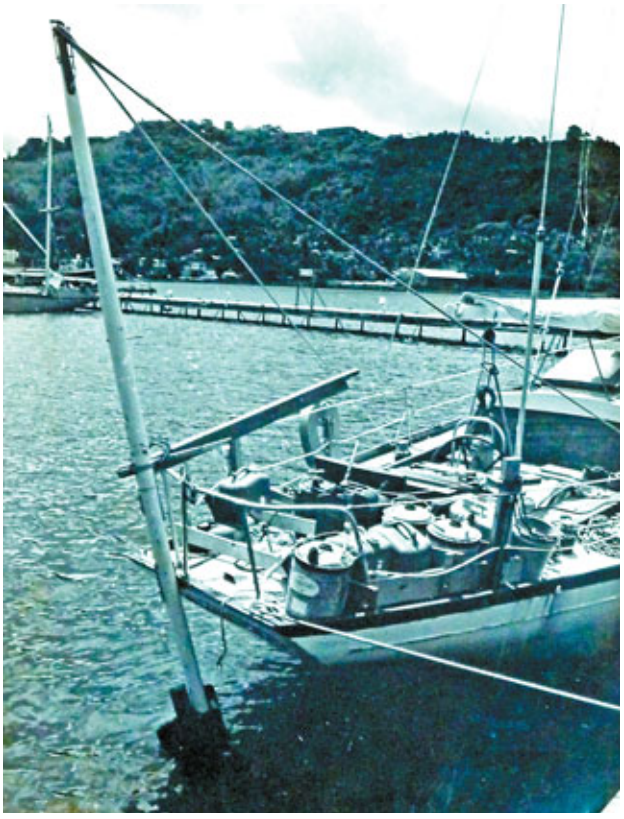
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Coping with Rudder Failure: THE *TRAUMEREI* DELIVERY

by Chris Doyle

Losing a rudder and abandoning ship has been a feature on several sailors' Facebook pages recently. The most recent incident involved a small yacht that landed in Union Island minus crew, who had abandoned her in the Atlantic after the rudder fell off. That took me back to the only delivery I did where our steering failed catastrophically. Then, of all strange coincidences and out of the blue, the following e-mail arrived:

"I know this sounds crazy but I am wondering if you are the Chris Doyle who helped my parents (Willard and Liz Hain) sail the yacht *Traumerei* in the '70s from Florida to Grenada. Well, actually we ended up in St. Thomas because we lost the rudder, but you get the gist. I was about seven or eight years old and I went by Susan then."



Traumerei *with jury-rigged steering system after safe arrival at the old GYS docks in St. George's Lagoon, Grenada*

Although Susan was just a kid at the time, she remembers the rudder rightly. We did finally end up in Grenada, after a breakdown stop in St. Thomas. This happened long ago and I've been lucky to now be back in touch with two of the other participants to help fill in details.

The Delivery

As a delivery, *Traumerei* was great. She was a sturdy boat around 38 feet long, maybe 15 years old, that came with her owners, who knew her very well, their delightful daughter, Susan, and a handy teenager called Kevin who was the son of a friend. So why pay me to come along? Well, Willard, although very capable, was having some problems with his eyesight as I remember and could not see too well. Luckily, his ears were still perfect and he loved music and kept a huge supply of classical tapes on board. Liz, quite a few years younger (it was a second marriage), was a very practical and able woman, but she was also homeschooling Susan, and was perhaps not confident enough to feel she could take charge if need be. If *Traumerei* had a downside, it was that she had a gas engine, though Willard was well attuned to it. *Traumerei* also had a small fuel tank, so Willard had many jerry jugs of gas securely lashed to the rail with wooden boards sandwiching them on both sides.

I did wonder about those gas jugs as we left Florida and all around us were lightning storms. Still, it was Day One and to suggest we ditch our entire fuel supply on the off chance we might be struck (and even then I had no idea what would happen if we were) seemed more than excessive. Happily, we never got directly in a storm. We were later to be very grateful for the wooden boards.

We followed the usual course for deliveries to the islands: we sailed to the Bahamas, cut through them to the Atlantic Ocean and beat our way southeast. (No "Thornless Path" when you are trying to make time.)

This was before the invention of GPS and one of the pleasures of being a skipper was your shaman-like ability to wave an instrument at the sun, do some additions and subtractions, and proclaim, "This is where we are." The best time to be the shaman was when you were about 35 miles off an island after a week or more at sea and could say, "We should spot land straight ahead any time now." Very soon, someone would say "Land ho!"

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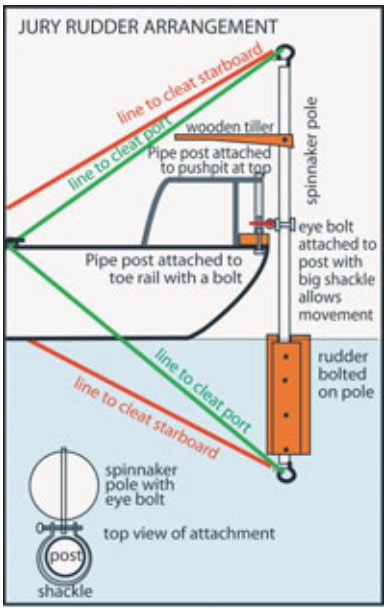
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Rigging Repair

And that is where we were, with St. Thomas in sight, when there was a "crack" and we lost one of the lower shrouds. We put the boat about immediately to take the strain off the broken stay. Luckily, it had broken not far from the turnbuckle so it was not too hard to make a temporary repair. Willard had packed his boat with gear, and was ready for almost anything (just as well, as it turned out). He managed to find a bulldog clamp of the right size, so we bent the wire in a big loop, clamped it, lashed it well to the turnbuckle, tightened it up, and continued to St. Thomas.

Our next minor problem was that as we approached, the engine would not start, as the batteries were flat. When we had last used the motor the ignition had somehow been left in the "on" position. Happily, in those days there was a big long dock with plenty of room in Charlotte Amalie. Taking the helm while coming alongside a dock under sail on someone else's boat, which is also their home, makes me nervous, but the approach was into the wind and we could control the speed by letting the sails flap. Willard had a good stock of fenders, which we deployed to the full, so if our arrival was not exactly elegant, at least we did no damage.



Would the bottom part of the rudder just sweep away to sea? To overcome this, we decided to stay it. Two ropes from the top and two from the bottom of the pole leading to cleats on either side, level with the cockpit, should keep it aligned enough to use

We had now sailed well over a thousand miles but still had around 400 more to reach Grenada and did not want to chance it with rigging that had proved dodgy, so we decided to take a few days and re-rig. Back then, St. Thomas had very little for yachts. There was a marina, one marine mechanic, and a chandlery of sorts. The rigging was 5/16ths inches in diameter, and we were unable to find the same to replace it. We could, however, buy quarter-inch stainless rigging wire and the Norseman fittings to go with it, so we decided that brand new quarter-inch would be much stronger than what we had, and we changed it all, using the very easy, do-it-yourself Norseman fittings. Willard was relieved and well pleased with the job.

'Steering is Gone!'

We set sail again on an optimistic note. We had new rigging wire, we were now in the Caribbean Sea, not the Atlantic, and the tradewinds were blowing reliably. As always on a delivery, we planned the shortest route and set a direct course to Grenada, heading up a fair bit to allow for current. With Liz in charge, the food was good and there were plenty of healthy snacks; one of my favorites was to spread peanut butter in a stick of celery and munch away. No corned beef and crackers on this trip! The first night at sea was great: the trades were consistent and moderate. What could go wrong?

The next day, Kevin was on watch when there was a flapping of sails, and a call that "the steering had gone". As skipper I came into the cockpit and I had to try for myself just to make sure. He was right. I asked him to go look at the steering quadrant and see what was happening; with a bit of luck a wire would have broken and we could fix it. "The rudderstock has broken, the quadrant is flapping around and water is pouring in." Not so good. Having no steering is not an immediate threat to life; a leak can be. Inspection showed that the stock, which had been built of hollow stainless tube, had sheered somewhere down in the rudder shaft and water was pouring out of the top. It was not too hard to cap it and stop the water. What next?

We lowered sails to assess the situation. Kevin said he would be happy to snorkel over the side and see how the rudder looked. I thought that if the rudder was still securely in place and mobile, we might find a way of attaching a port and starboard line to the aft part of the rudder, bring them up to each side of the boat and thus steer. I seemed to have a memory that some of the old English barges had a hole drilled at the aft end of the rudder for just that purpose. Willard surely had just the right clamp to make the attachment. On surfacing, Kevin was not enthusiastic. The rudder was hanging in there but maybe not too securely, and there was so much movement from the seas, making an attachment would, in any case, be problematic.

We were at this time 24 hours out of St. Thomas on a direct course for Grenada, and the nearest land was Saba about 60 miles due east, well out of sight. Could we get any help? Or at least alert someone that we had a problem? That proved difficult. Willard had equipped *Traumerei* with the very latest in marine radios: a VHF. But this was a fairly new system at this time and had not reached the islands. In those days, both yachts and ships in the Caribbean still used old battery-draining AM transmitters. Still, we gave it a go. No one was listening.

This should surely be the time to beat my breast, gnash my teeth, fall on my knees and pray to some improbable deity, or at the very least have a minor panic tantrum, but it was hard to do. We were in the Caribbean Sea, the sky was blue, we were well fed and the crew were all very calm. They gave the impression that they were sure this was the kind of stuff a delivery skipper dealt with every day, so it could not possibly be a problem, could it?

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Jury-Rig Steering Options

It so happens that at some point on my journey to Florida I had picked up some American yachting magazine and read an article on "what to do when your rudder breaks". What a relief — or maybe not.

We decided to re-hoist the sails and see if we could steer some kind of course by balancing them. Then as we moved along we could refine our steering according to the article. The boat was well balanced and we found she would sail along nicely if we sheeted the jib in and then we could steer higher or lower by easing or tightening the main. By letting the main out a long way and playing with the jib we could even get her to go on a beam reach. This was a pretty good range. Even better, if we got her clipping along on a close reach we could heft the main in tight, she would come up into the wind, the jib would back and we could tack her. It was a slow and cumbersome tack, but it could be done. We managed to get her on a comfortable close reach towards Grenada. To do this the jib was in fairly tight and the main well out with the top third of the leech flapping.



Sailing from St. George's to Prickly Bay with jury-rigged steering

Now that we were moving, we decided to try to fine tune the steering *à la* the yachting magazine article. The first thing we tried was a steering oar, which seemed to make sense. We constructed a reasonably decent oar using the hollow wooden spinnaker pole with a short plank bolted to it. We even shaped the plank a bit. With high hopes we lashed it securely to the center of the aft part of the boat, and then tried steering. In one sense it did steer the boat well; if you could move it, the boat turned. In another it was hopeless; in the Caribbean seas the forces on the thing were horrendous. It took three people tugging with all their might to even begin to control it. That would not do.

Next we tried the bit where you drag something astern and steer by moving it from side to side. That also might work on a calm day in a flat sea, but was hopeless in the ocean.

Still, balancing the sails was working beautifully: we were right on course for Grenada. The down side was at night when we saw shipping and thought it was coming towards us. We had to tack while still a mile away to make sure we did not get close. Also, the continuously flapping sail took a toll on the stitching. At breakfast each day we would take the main down and Liz would hand stitch all the seams that were coming apart.

We had fair confidence that we could sail right up into the lee of Grenada just as we were going. But what then, when we hit the fluky lee-shore winds? We needed a rudder and put our minds to how to construct it.

Constructing a Rudder

Traumerei had a long overhang at the stern and secure pushpit. Had the pushpit had a support right at the back of the boat it would have been ideal as a single pivot point for a rudder, right aft. Since there was not one there, we decided to construct one, fastening a post from the toerail to the pushpit. (As I look at the photo, it appears that we cannibalized some tubular bit of gear for this. I remember using a bolt upward though the toerail to secure the bottom, and somehow we secured the top to the pushpit.) The spinnaker pole was to be our rudder shaft, and if we put an eyebolt though it, we could attach it to our post with a big shackle that would go right around the post, allowing for rotation and plenty of movement. (Had we not been so well equipped, we would have had to resort to some creative lashing.)

But, you may ask, what use is a single pintail? The bottom part of the rudder would just sweep away to sea and mash up the whole arrangement. To overcome this, we decided to stay it. Two ropes from the top and two from the bottom of the pole leading to cleats on either side, level with the cockpit, would hardly create a rigid structure, but it should keep it aligned enough to use. We decided to give it a try.

Willard had good tools and lots of hardware, and he was good at carpentry, so he, Kevin and I worked on the new rudder. We had plenty of time — after all, no one had to steer now. The wooden planks that sandwiched the fuel cans stored on deck were used to make the rudder blade. One thing that the steering oar fiasco had taught us was that the blade did not have to be very big. My memory may be faulty, but I think we made it about a foot wide and two to three feet high, starting with a board either side of the spinnaker pole and securely bolted through it. We wanted the steering to be easy, so we balanced it with about 15 percent of the area in front of the shaft, the rest behind. A few feet above the pivot point we fastened on a plank shaped to be a tiller, using some old metal strapping. Since the boat was sailing so well, there was no hurry to deploy it; we would wait till it was needed.

The Proof

Three days after we lost the rudder we arrived within a few miles of Grenada and, as we came into the lee, the wind died. Time to try our rig. Since we were not moving, it was easy enough to install. In the swell our jury rudder rolled from side to side at the back of the boat in a pretty wide arc, but with the ropes tensioned fairly tight it was stable enough. We started the engine and put it in gear. To our delight the jury-rigged rudder worked perfectly, just like a real one. A few hours later we came into GYS (now Port Louis) in St. George's and tied to a dock. The weird contraption on the stern attracted attention and people came by to hear our story. We all felt a sense of achievement for having dealt with this crisis and arriving safe in port unaided.

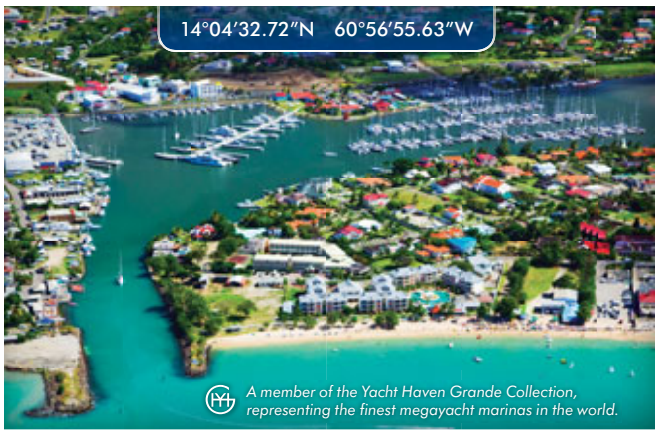
Willard went off to organize the first steps for a real repair and got an appointment to haul the boat in Prickly Bay the next day. The rudder worked well enough that we figured we could sail the six miles there, though we did make arrangements for people to come look for us if we failed to show. The rudder worked so well that we were able to sail there without problem.

As the boat was hauled we could see that cracks were beginning to appear on all the spinnaker poles' glued seams. It had worked perfectly, but would not have lasted much longer. The real rudder was still hanging in place, so it just needed a new shaft.

Epilogue

Susan told me a little of what had become of the *Traumerei* crew.

"I now live outside of Vail, Colorado (in the mountains) and suffer through each and every winter by looking forward to our yearly holiday trip to the Caribbean and summer in the Rocky Mountains. I've lived here longer than I've lived anywhere in my life (23 years) and my 19-year-old son and 15-year-old girl-and-boy twins have grown up here, becoming avid skiers and soccer players. I moved back to the States when I was 13 to live with my dad (Willard was my stepdad) and go to school. I continued to visit my mom and Willard every summer (by then they had moved from Grenada to Puerto Rico) until I went to college and had my own life. They eventually brought *Traumerei* back to the States, sold her, and became land bound for a while. About ten years into that they got a wild hair up their butts and bought *Liebestraum*, a 40ish-foot Gulfstar, and came back to Puerto Rico for a stint. Once Willard got too old to live on the boat they retired in South Carolina where my mom still lives. Willard died about five years ago but my mom is still kicking at 83. My mom treats us to a trip once a year (usually right after Christmas) and we charter a boat and go somewhere in the Caribbean."









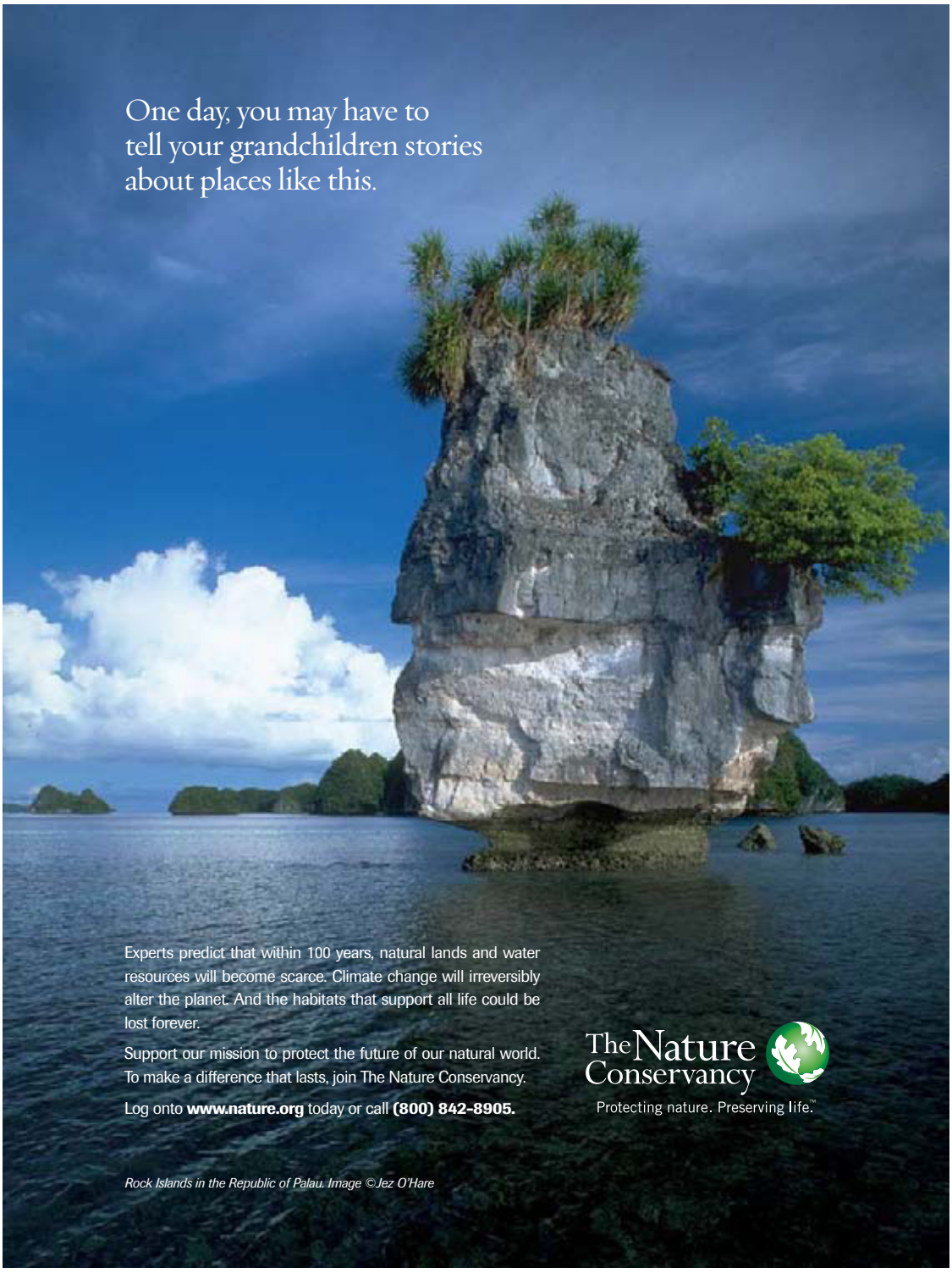


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One day, you may have to
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Experts predict that within 100 years, natural lands and water resources will become scarce. Climate change will irreversibly alter the planet. And the habitats that support all life could be lost forever.
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Rock Islands in the Republic of Palau. Image ©Jez O'Hare

PRODUCT POSTINGS

Portable GFCI Cords for Shock Safety

Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) are designed to protect people from line-to-ground shock hazards. These may develop from faulty appliances, tools or defective portable cords. If a ground fault occurs and



the leakage level exceeds four to six milliamperes, the GFCI unit protects the users by opening the circuit and interrupting the power supply. Hubbell Marine offers GFCI Line Cords and Portable Plugs to help make boating safer.

Hubbell's UL-listed Circuit Guard GFCI Line Cords provide ground fault protection indoors and out. Available in lengths of 46 cm, two metres and eight metres, they are offered with an automatic set or manual set to meet the needs of various applications. A multiple outlet model is also offered.

These Line Cords feature an all-glass circuit board to provide superior moisture immunity. One-piece, flush-sealed keypads offer greater reliability and resistance to impact. UV-stabilized housing resists dust, sunlight and chemicals. Heavy-duty molded plugs and connectors, combined with solid, crimped and soldered plug blades provide a dependable connection. Molded strain relief prevents conductor strain and resulting failure. A bright fault indication light provides fault confirmation from a distance.

Hubbell also offers Circuit Guard Portable GFCI Plugs, offered in manual set and automatic set. They feature a power indicator light and straight blades. After tripping, users can reset the module by pushing a button, while a test button enables them to make sure the GFCI is in working order.

For more information visit www.hubbell-marine.com.

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Looking for a proven solution that protects hulls with advanced copper-free biocide? Mission Bay paint is the safest environmentally friendly antifouling on the market, comes in five brilliant colors, and is Lloyd's Registry Certified. When exposed to UV light, a nano-based-technology copolymer releases an active copper-free biocide that dissipates in seconds without bioaccumulation into the environment.

For more information on Mission Bay anti-fouling visit http://www.seahawkpaints.com/Our-Products/Product/Mission-Bay.aspx. For more information on Sea Hawk paints see ad on page 20.

New LED Anchor Lamps: 'Fit and Forget'

Demanding sea conditions call for tough, dependable navigation lighting. Hella Marine's new compact two-nautical-mile NaviLED 360 Anchor Lamps are created with the latest technological advances to deliver long-lasting and cost-effective service.



These advanced all-round LED lamps need no filaments, and thus no maintenance. With nothing to break, they're both shock- and vibration-proof. Hella's own Multivolt 9-33V DC electronics maintain reliable operation even under severe voltage fluctuations and low battery voltages. Sealed within the base, this circuitry provides reverse polarity, spike and over-voltage protection.

Consuming less than 1W, these LED lamps offer outstanding efficiency. Their 100-percent correct light output makes them more highly visible than conventional navigation lamps. An ultra heavy-duty Grilamid lens and UV- and impact-resistant plastic housing help ensure longevity.

Each corrosion-resistant lamp comes pre-wired with twin-core marine cable for completely sealed IP 67 installation. Available with black or white shroud surface mount base, lamps are covered by a five-year warranty, and carry IMO Col Reg 72, USCG, ABYCA-16 and Wheelmark approval. Units measure 60 mm W x 56 mm D and weigh only 90 g, including cable. Video of Hella Marine's advanced design, manufacturing and testing methods can be found at www.youtube.com/user/Hellamarine.

For more information visit www.hellamarine.com.

Mercury Marine Launches 250HP Sterndrive

The new Mercury MerCruiser 4.5L 250hp sterndrive establishes new standards for acceleration and overall performance, thanks to design innovations such as a long runner scrolled intake manifold and high displacement, which produces an outstanding power-to-weight ratio. This V-6 engine weighs 130 pounds less than a 5.0L V-8 small block, yet provides similar performance.

The 4.5L is a "good citizen" on the water, providing maximum fuel efficiency and exceptionally quiet operation. Its newly designed rear-facing throttle body, anti-whistle throttle plate, engine cover and mounts, lightweight flywheel, fuel supply module, and structural oil pan all work together to deliver superior idle and smoothness and low noise and vibration.

Mercury paid particular attention to ease of maintenance when designing the MerCruiser 4.5L V-6, eliminating the need for the traditional 20-hour service. This unit features a maintenance center near the top-front section of the engine, ensuring that consumer touch-points — including oil filter and fill — are easily identifiable and accessible. Additionally, the valve train is maintenance-free for the life of the engine, and a QR code on the engine's service label allows smartphone users to access "how-to" videos online.

Available in single or twin installations and compatible with Mercury's full series of Alpha and Bravo Drives.

For more information visit mercurymarine.com.

High-Strength Shackles for Tough Jobs

Heavy-duty tasks demand dependable, extra-sturdy shackles. Titan High Strength Shackles from Canada Metal (Pacific) ensure reliable performance, meeting needs of the most rigorous jobs. Their breaking strength outstrips that of high-test G4 chain.



Meeting or exceeding current RR-C-271 Type IVB Grade B specifications, these rugged shackles are 30 percent stronger than comparable Grade A products. Both the shackle and the pin are hot-dip galvanized for premium corrosion resistance.

Proof-tested and load-rated, Titan shackles come fitted with a bold black-colored pin. Every shackle is stamped with the Titan logo and working load limit and size.

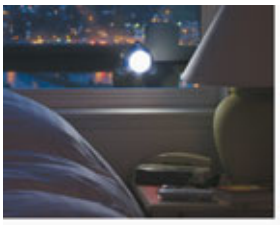
Available in both anchor and chain types, Titan High Strength Shackles range in bail size from 8 mm to 35 mm. Working load limits range from 1,250 to 21,000 kg and breaking loads from 6,250 to 105,000 kg.

Proof-tested and engineered in Canada, all CMP products meet or exceed industry specifications.

For more information visit www.canmet.com.

Solar-Powered Interior Light

Now is the right time to switch to solar-powered, internal lighting. The LightShip from Davis Instruments





delivers portable, solar-powered LED lighting at a low cost. LightShip can be attached to the inside of any hatch, window or porthole with good sun access for all-night lighting.

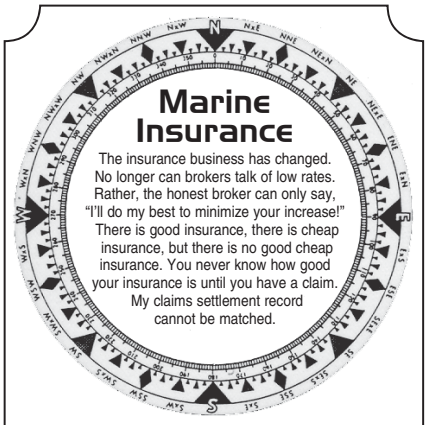
The LightShip installs easily with three powerful suction cups that face the solar cell to the sun for charging the NiMH battery. Three bright-white LEDs provide enough light for reading or users can switch to one, single red LED for better night vision capabilities.

A built-in light sensor switches the LightShip off automatically during daylight hours. It can also be switched off to store up energy for future use. Owners can attach one to a well-lit area during the day, then move it to wherever it's needed at night.

Constructed from tough polycarbonate, the LightShip features a clear, molded lens and reflector to maximize LED intensity. For interior use only, it measures 5 cm H x 13 cm W and weighs only 227 g.

For more information visit www.davisnet.





I have been connected with the marine insurance business for 47 years. I have developed a rapport with brokers and underwriters at Lloyds and am able to introduce boat owners to specialist brokers in the Lloyds market.

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OCTOBER 2014

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Lust and imagination could blow in together, whipping up some rough seas in your relationships. No amount of reasoning will get you anywhere — your sense of humor will be the only thing holding you on course.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
Boat-business worries could make problems with your mate. This aspect will be around for some time, so find imaginative ways to prevent your mind from anchoring in a negative place. The more you think about worries, the stronger they become.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
Your energies will be rising and falling over heavy swells, but you will find balance through ingenuity and love.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Any static in communications will clear up by the 26th. Your creative inspiration and romantic mood will make this month pleasant sailing for you.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
High spirits and positive energy will broad-reach you away from money worries. Spend time with friends to help center all that positive drive.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
The fluky winds of your sporadic energies will even out in the last week. Just keep a firm hand on the helm and all will improve in November.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Creative inspiration will be under full sail around the 16th and will make landfall in success in creative endeavors. You'll be assisted by your romantic skipper or first mate.

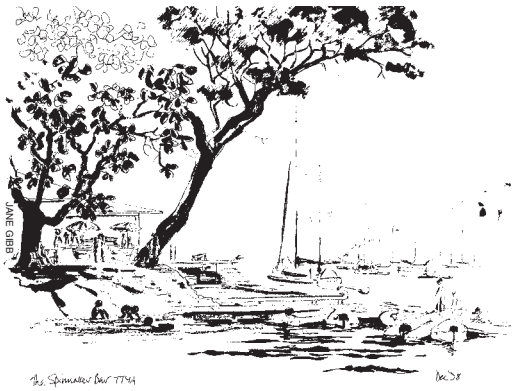
♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
You may find small irritations business-wise getting the best of you in the first three weeks, but things will take an easier tack in the last week as Venus and the Sun both enter Scorpio. They will bring creative progress and love, which will improve everything.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Finish projects on board before the 27th and clear the decks for inventive and romantic aspects that promise to make life more interesting on your chosen course.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
There is a strong possibility of some rough waters in your domestic life, so keep an open mind to the needs of everyone aboard and don't get involved in petty arguments.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Get on an even keel! Now is a good time to work towards bringing balance into your love life through imagination and verbal skills.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Concentrate on getting projects done to free yourself from outside responsibilities so you can steer a clear financial course in November. Assistance from personal relationships and your own imagination will sail in on the 2nd to assure you excellent way on your chosen course at that time.



Island Poets

WANDERLUST

I'm off again! I have to move continually. I cannot soothe
The spirit that tugs at my soul, this energy I can't control
Insists that it is time to go, though why I must I do not know,
Or where or how I cannot tell, I only know I am compelled.

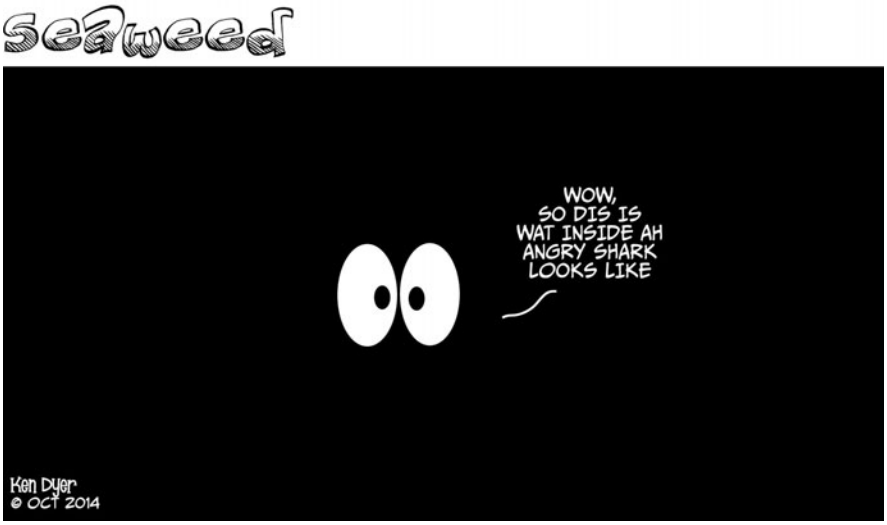
I'm happy in a certain place, but very soon, I have to face
The fact that I must go away to somewhere strange. I cannot stay.
So start the engine, hoist the sails, whatever trials this entails.

Don't like airports. Don't like planes, frustration, passports – there remains
Something inside that bids me leave, though family and friends may grieve,
Was it that some ancestral gene from long ago has made it seem
That staying too long in a place or settling down is a disgrace?

What makes me wander long and far? Could it have been a wandering star
That glowed too brightly on the morn so long ago when I was born?
Should I perhaps try to control this compulsion, make it my goal,
To settle down, to stay and be a part of some community?

I fear my dears there's not much hope. How can I change? How could I cope
With "same old same old" every day? Same people going their same way?
Some force demands I change my course, be it for better or for worse!
No matter how hard I may try, my life is just one long good-bye.

— Nan Hatch



Trevor Plays Halloween

by Lee Kessell

"You want to play Halloween? But you know what happened the last time we played Halloween!" Ernie cried in disbelief.

"Well, it's not going to be like that. This time I'll have everything under control."

Now, you might remember that Ernie is Trevor's young cousin and Trevor is always getting them both into trouble. Trevor spends just about all of his holidays in Barbados and his parents in Trinidad are always happy to let him go.

Ernie was referring to that awful time when they found themselves in the depths of a Halloween nightmare and it was Ernie's little sister, Nyna, who saved them from the clutches of a writhing mass of evil spirits.

"Look," Trevor continued, "All I want to do is go Trick or Treating up in the village. We dress up in skeleton costumes, take a bag and we'll come home with lots of treats. We can even take Rusty, your old dog, and Nyna. So, what do you say?"

Ernie had to admit that it all sounded safe enough so he reluctantly agreed.

The village that Trevor was talking about is just up the hill from his Uncle Sol's cottage on the wild Atlantic coast just over the rise from the old sugar valley known as Sweet Bottom.

> *'Ernie knew the night was going horribly wrong'*

So it was that on Halloween night at about ten o'clock, Trevor, Ernie, Nyna and the old dog Rusty, started out Trick or Treating. The boys wore their costumes made of black skeletons painted on old flour bags and Nyna had dressed up in her fairy dress and carried her magic wand. They knocked at all the cottages and when the mother opened the door and paid the Treat, the sight of the horrible skeletons made the little children scream with fright, which set all the dogs barking, but at last their bag was filled with biscuits, apples and lots of sweets.

As the children were hungry by now, they stopped on their way home and Trevor, sitting on a rock, shared out some of the food, giving Rusty two biscuits that he gulped down quickly. Midnight seemed a long way off, so it wasn't until Rusty's hair suddenly stood straight up on his back and he took off for home like a bat out of hell that Ernie knew the night was going horribly wrong.

Almost immediately, low moaning sounds came out of the darkness followed by screams and cackling laughter. All these sounds now came into sight as faint glowing forms springing from the bushes. Ernie was paralyzed with fright, Trevor shivered and shook while little Nyna buried her head in her frilly fairy dress. But it got worse. Green-fanged spirits spat blue slime at them, red-eyed dragon creatures tried to claw at them with sharp purple talons, and wraiths like floating gossamer tried to wrap them up in their spider-like webs.

"Trevor, Trevor, do something!" Ernie managed to squeak. But Trevor just sat frozen to the rock and thought that this time they really were done for. Someone had to do something and the faster the better, and as little Nyna didn't want to be taken by evil spirits, she jumped up and shouted to the boys to grab hold of her. She knew that she needed the three of them if they had any chance of getting away from the evil spirits. Stumbling off towards home, Nyna waved her magic wand. Golden sparks flew from the silver star at the top and the Halloween demons shrank back but followed on.

Nyna, terrified as she was, managed to croak out "Demons, get back", over and over again, until they reached home, but even so the demons would have slipped into the cottage with the children but for Aunt Serafina's goats. It's a known fact that demons fear goats, and Aunt Serafina's two goats, who usually sneered at such things, were on the lookout. When they saw the horrible evil creatures, they sent a mighty blast of unearthly fire straight into their black hearts, which incinerated them on the spot, leaving nothing behind, not even a fleck of ash.

Safe at last, the children sneaked into their beds, throwing off their costumes along the way. The bag with all the Treats was lost back somewhere in the dark. Tucked up in his nice warm bed, Trevor chuckled. "Well, that was a bit more than I expected but what a great Halloween story to tell the boys at school when I get back home!"

Ernie turned his back and ground his teeth.

THE END



WHAT BUGS YOU THE MOST?

Cruising is a lifestyle envied by many — but cruisers know that it's not all a bed of frangipanis with umbrella drinks on the side and Jimmy Buffett crooning softly in the background.

What bugs you most about cruising, and what (if anything) do you do about it?

Let us know at sally@caribbeancompass.com, and we'll share the hideous truth with the world in a future issue of *Compass*!



BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

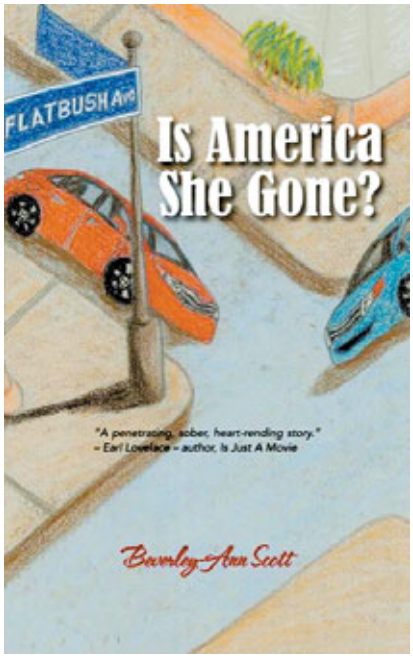
WHO'S LISTENING?

Is America She Gone?, *by Beverly-Ann Scott. AuthorHouse ©2012, 332 pages, ISBN-978-1-4772-8277-9.*

Who's listening? Certainly not Andrea, who questions her mother, Sandra, on her return to Trinidad about what life was like in America when she went to "do a six months" — and ended up staying ten years.

"Things different up there, Andrea. Take what I telling you. You have two small children. Stay and mind your children." But Andrea does not heed her mother's advice. "Is America she gone. Is America she gone." These are the very last words in Trinidadian author Beverly-Ann Scott's novel of the same name. They are spoken by Sandra when an old neighbour meets Sandra with Andrea's two children and enquires about the children's mother.

And so the cycle continues. Just as Sandra left her two young children — Andrea and her older brother, Antonio — to be brought up by their grandmother, Maye, Andrea leaves her children to be brought up by their grandmother. The only difference is that Sandra went with her mother's encouragement and support. Maye was glad when Sandra left her drunken, abusive husband who never provided for his family. Sandra's salary at the S&S grocery store could barely make ends meet.



Sandra's cousin Patsy, with whom she stays in Brooklyn, meets her at the airport and the very next day takes her to a job placement agent, a Trinidadian, Mrs. Goodridge, who secures a job for her as a caregiver to two elderly, bed-ridden sisters at US$500 a week. Sandra is elated with the pay and immediately starts calculating the conversion rate, but getting paid the full amount, and on time, is another matter. Sandra soon finds out that not reading the fine print of a contract has dire consequences.

When Maye passes, Sandra is inconsolable. She tries to get time off to attend Maye's funeral but Mrs. Goodridge tells her, "Well, I really am sorry for your loss and everything Sandra but the problem is that right now I have a girl from Barbados who want a work bad… Yes. That is the problem you see. Once you come out of a job, it always have somebody to fall in your shoes. Is plenty competition. And I mean I could probably get another job for you but it may not be right away and I know your time is short so by the time I get something else it might be time for you to go back to Trinidad… you understand?"

Meanwhile, those back in Trinidad think the worst of Sandra for not attending her mother's funeral. But Sandra has to keep her job. All she wants to do is to improve her pay packet and make a better life for her family, mistakenly thinking that the money orders and barrels of goods she sends home, and the money she manages to save, can compensate for her absence.

Sandra tried holding down two jobs at the same time. It was Lindy Jeeteram from Guyana who introduced Sandra to network marketing. "Lindy loaned her the four hundred dollars for the start-up kit and the three hundred dollars for some of the top-selling herbal products. She would owe Lindy eight hundred dollars. One hundred dollars was the cost of borrowing." When she realized she had neither the time to sell nor the clientele to sell to, Sandra wanted to return the products, but again, Sandra had failed to read the fine print in the contract.

Scott not only focuses on what Sandra has to cope with, she moves her story easily between Brooklyn and Trinidad, illustrating the perilous effects of absent parents on "barrel children".

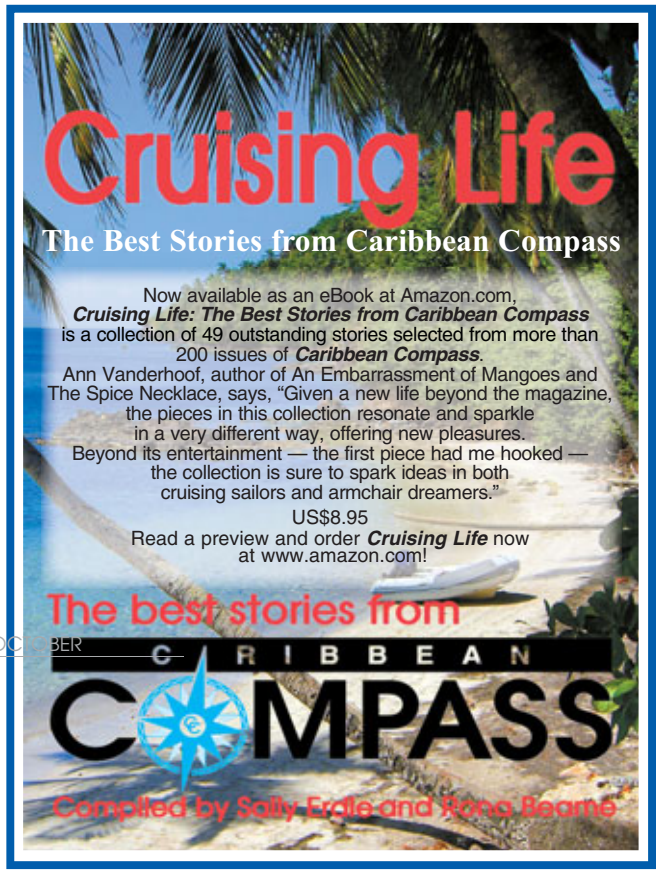
Both Antonio and Andrea pine for their mother's love. After their grandmother's death, Andrea is taken in by Ms. Barbara, a childless neighbour with a dying husband of whom Sandra is not too fond. But Ms. Barbara likes the child and tries her best with her. However, by the time her mother returns to Trinidad ten years later, Andrea is a single mother with two children.

Antonio drops out of school and is introduced to girls and sex by his wayward cousin Martin, who Sandra did not like him hanging around with. Antonio gets involved with a notorious gang led by a barbaric killer, Psycho. Eventually, Antonio is shot. He was afraid: "The men who had tried to kill him would try again. The day he left hospital, Psycho had been shot dead by police in Tacarigua. There was talk of returned gunfire and a shoot-out but Antonio suspected it was a police hit… he knew he needed to get far away from the men he had been associating with and decided that he would go to Moruga by his uncle Gerald and stay with him and his family for a while."

With this novel, Scott is holding up a mirror of Trinidad's society, relating the social ills that Trinidad is immersed in. She accurately portrays the crime scene with its related rise in gangs and gang warfare, and the breakdown of family life.

It is as if Scott (to paraphrase Vincent Canby's review of the film *Bim* in the *New York Times*), "intended primarily to speak to Trinidadians and to other Caribbean people and only incidentally to others, who, when they read it, are in the position of eavesdroppers."

But, are those for whom the book is primarily intended listening?
Is anybody listening?



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Dolphin and Dog Wrestle at Play

by Tina Dreffin

I awakened with a start. A familiar sound echoed through the twin hulls of our catamaran, dubbed *Freebird*, a 42-foot Grainger. Clambering out of the berth, I dashed up a set of stairs and tumbled into the cockpit, landing in a messy heap. I pulled myself up to see my husband, Peter, bending in half nearby. He stood on the sugar-scoop end of the port hull, peering into turquoise waters clear as gin. We were anchored in the pristine waters of Georgetown, Great Exuma, Bahamas — the preferred waters for bottlenose dolphins. "Is it her?"

"Yes! And two more!"

"Let's go then! Heloise is back!" I quickly donned mask and snorkel, grabbed my underwater video camera and dove into Elizabeth Harbor. As soon as I broke surface waters, three fins sped towards me. My heart thudded into my ears. If I didn't know better, I might have considered I could easily become bait since the fins closely resembled the most feared predator of the sea — the shark. But in actuality, I knew my friends had come to play with Bella, our little black Schipperke dog. I was the resident cheerleader. The promised show was about to start.

SPASH! Bella launched off the back of our catamaran and landed in a belly flop right behind me. Underwater, her short legs churned the waters like a powerful paddlewheel boat. She sprinted ahead of me and met the dolphins head on. In a dramatic display of roiling waves, the dolphins and dog collided. Squeaks and barks resounded across still waters.

I languished, simply posing quietly in place, treading water while taking in the unfolding scene. The dolphins were here to be entertained by us and we were eager to show them a good time. Bella was overcome with excitement. She galloped towards the biggest dolphin, keeping a sharp lookout for the shape beneath the water. The dolphin swam in circles around Bella. She chased after it, yelping with glee.

I knew I had to keep Bella close to the boat; otherwise, she'd have me trailing her for miles. My dog was bent on boarding that dolphin, taking me to China — if I let her.

"Bella, come!" At my beckon, Bella turned and swam back towards me. So did the dolphin. When Bella reached me by the boat, the dolphin finned beneath Bella and stopped short a mere foot from her belly. Underwater, it looked as if the dolphin was standing on her tail in three feet of shallow water. When the great beast performed a 360-degree spin on her tail and came toward me, my heart raced wildly. I dove down to meet her and stopped on the seafloor to wait. I wanted the beautiful beast to take the initiative, giving her loads of space. After all, it was a wild mammal, one to be respected and revered.

The dolphin slowly approached at face level. Her liquid blue eyes bored into my soul. When she halted directly in front of my face only inches away, it appeared as if we were having a virtual conversation with our minds. Her eyes seemed to be saying: *Hello. Come play with me!* I reached out to touch her — an irresistible urge. I couldn't help myself. She was so close that her snout alone filled the frame of my viewfinder. And my camera was fitted with a wide-angle lens too.

By then, Bella was upon us and the dolphin finned away to wreak havoc with the dog. The beast circled her rapidly three times, dolphin tail dragging sideways and wildly across surface waters just inches from Bella's snout. Suddenly, the dolphin darted down three feet into the shallow waters, plucked a blade of turtle grass from the seafloor, surfaced, and tossed it at Bella. It landed on her snout and fell into the water where it floated, and then started to slowly sink. The dolphin finned after the blade, grabbing it in her snout, and swam over to Bella, where she again tossed it at Bella. The dog went berserk. She barked and stroked fiercely, trying to catch the shiny fin that always remained just out of reach.

Suddenly the cat-and-mouse game ended and the dolphin sped to the bottom, performing a 360-degree flip. I knew what was coming.

With a powerful stroke of her large tail, she soared up, up and up! Shooting to the surface, she bolted out of the water and executed a dizzying somersault over the black canine. When she landed, the end of her tail flicked, sending a wet *whack* right across Bella's snout. Bella's eyes went wide with fury. Tiny black feet churned the waters ever harder to catch the beast that plagued her.

This time when the dolphin darted back down again to the bottom to repeat the act, she blasted out of the sea on the opposite side of Bella, somersaulted over her and went down again. Three times the magnificent beast somersaulted over Bella. Poor Bella changed directions to meet her every time, only to be tricked when the dolphin sneaked up from behind her to execute the jumps. I couldn't stop laughing. Dog and dolphin were wrestling at play.

Underwater, I heard dolphin whistles that were long and melodious. Rapid-burst pulse calls were answered by the other two dolphins. They were busy scouting scallops across the sandy bottom. Shifting sands clouded around shiny snouts as they dug into tiny holes for crustaceans.

After another two hours of dog-and-dolphin wrestle, I saw that my trusty dog was becoming dangerously overwhelmed. She couldn't control her appetite of engaging with dolphins. No wonder, too: they were quite a tease, this group! Bella's signs of exhaustion were panting, frothing at the mouth, and violent shaking. When I held her in my arms, her heart raced wildly. It was time to end this game. There's always another day.

I felt blessed to be invited to play with these magical creatures in the wild. My husband Peter refuses to step into a zoo. Seeing gorgeous animals in captivity sends him into a fury. No wonder.

But times are changing for the better. Scientists are recommending that dolphins are so intelligent they should be given the same status as humans. Experts say it is now time for dolphins to be treated as "non-human persons" after research showed their brains have many features associated with high intelligence. They claim it is cruel to keep such intelligent animals in amusement parks.

Lori Marino, a zoologist at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, studied MRI scans to map the brains of dolphins. Her studies revealed that many dolphin brains are larger than our own.

—Continued on next page



'My friends had come to play with Bella, our little black Schipperke dog...'

Street's Caribbean Cruising Guides



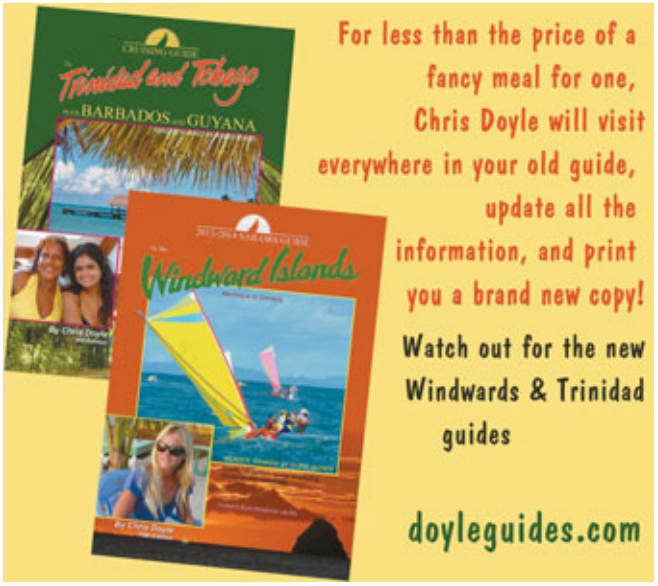
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CARIBBEAN Don Street Street CRUISING GUIDES



—*Continued from previous page*

The cerebral cortex and the neocortex of bottlenose dolphins are so large that "the anatomical ratios that assess cognitive capacity place it second only to the human brain".



The dolphin circled Bella, its tail just inches from her snout. The dog's tiny black feet churned the waters ever harder to try to catch the beast…

Just witnessing how these dolphins communicate in a group is astounding. Every time I hear them "talk", I feel as if I'm inside the Discovery Channel. In fact, bottlenose dolphins produce three main types of sound that keep me hanging on every sound: echolocation clicks, burst pulse calls and whistles. Echolocation clicks are used to sense their environment. These I hear when a dolphin approaches our boat. Burst pulse calls are used for social communication in aggressive situations. And the most common dolphin call is the whistle. Whistles are much like our own and are used for social communication in friendly interactions. Each dolphin has its own signature whistle, which is like saying its own name. Whistles are used when dolphins become separated and are trying to reunite with particular individuals.

I recognized Heloise's signature whistle immediately. She emitted a short buzzing sound followed by a high whistle, then a rapid buzz. Although Bella can hear the calls below-decks, I can't, as the dolphins' low-frequency vibrations are inaudible to my ears. I can only hear them when free-diving. Their clicks and whistles become symphonic music to my ears every time I hear them. It makes my heart swell immensely.

This family of dolphins has resided in these waters of Exuma for 30 years or more. Since we reared our sons here, they've known these dolphins since they were very young boys. The larger female dolphin gained notoriety early on when our son, Warren, tried to abort a math lesson one day long ago.

"Mom, what's that sound? It feels like someone is shaking the bow line." Unusual sounds drifted across the early morning breeze at the bow of the boat. We were then aboard our steel monohull, dubbed *Scud*. Steel acted as a perfect conductor, sending low-frequency sound waves echoing through the sides of the hull. Scallops often danced a busy staccato at night, lulling me to sleep. So when Warren was alerted to the new vibration, my ears pricked up. "Um, nice try. But let's get back to schoolwork."

But then, I felt it, too. "Oh my!"

"It's coming from the bow of the boat!" Adam shouted. *Forget school!*

We sprinted to the bow to see a torpedo shape circling the anchor rode. "It's a dolphin! But what is it doing?" Adam asked. The dolphin repeatedly rolled onto her back, rubbing it against the coarse rope. The rope acted as a massage tool, scraping away dead skin cells, sending remoras scattering.

School was over for the day for sure. We hollered for Peter in the engine room to come join us, and then we all dove into the sea to see what this dolphin was all about. After three hours of sprinting underwater, we dragged ourselves out of the water to collapse in exhaustion. We decided to name the dolphin Nikki because of the small nick in her dorsal fin.

Ever since that first day of play 30 years ago, Nikki has been a regular visitor around our boat. She seems to locate us whenever we change anchorages. We often encounter her en route during our regular morning swim, too.

Today, three decades later, Nikki is still finning by to romp with our little black dog. But today was very special, for Nikki had brought her beau and baby. We had dubbed the baby dolphin Heloise. The beau — daddy of Heloise — rarely approached us unless accompanied by Nikki. So, as he was more standoffish, we never got around to naming him.

Aboard *Freebird*, I have a beach décor sign that reads:

ADVICE FROM A DOLPHIN
Have a playful spirit.
Be curious.
Find someone you click with.
Sound out new ideas.
Glide through the day with ease.
Find your life's porpoise.
Jump for joy!

I read it every day, forever appreciative that I live aboard a boat with my honey and regularly swim with dolphins in turquoise waters clear as mountain air. We've been bluewater cruising for 35 years now. Each year is better than the last, thanks to the dolphins. They still come — up to five now!



Tina Dreffin has been cruising with her husband for 35 years and reared their two children aboard their boat in the Bahamas. In 2008 they completed a circumnavigation with their teen-aged boys. You can view her website at BahamasCatCharters.com. She is a regular contributor to Caribbean Compass, *having written 12 other articles. You can find her story "Night Shock" in the anthology* Cruising Life: the Best of Caribbean Compass *at Amazon.com.*

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LOOK OUT FOR...

The Shortleaf Fig — A Strangler on the Loose!

by Lynn Kaak

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



As you wander away from the beaches and into the less salty areas of an island, you may come across organic architecture, or artwork: an intertwining of trunks and roots, embracing a tree or even some ruins. This is the Shortleaf Fig tree, also known as the Strangler Tree or Fig, and sometimes as the Banyan.

There are a number of "stranglers" out there, and some other vines and other trees also being opportunistic, but few in the Caribbean are as striking as the *Ficus citrifolia*. The Latin name is derived from the fact that it is a member of the fig family (ficus) and the leaves appear similar to the leaves of some citrus trees (citri = lemon, folia = leaves). The English name, Shortleaf Fig, seems pretty self-explanatory. The Portuguese name for the tree, *Os Barbados* (the bearded one), might just be the origin of the name for the island of Barbados. That country's crest features a Shortleaf Fig on it. Other possible names are bearded fig and evil tree. Banyan has become a general term for these trees, although it refers more specifically to the Indian tree.

The Shortleaf Fig does not have the typical life cycle of most trees, and this contributes to the "creations" that occur. The seeds have a tendency to be sticky, which allows them to stick in crevices of another tree or even a convenient rock formation. Once growth starts, roots are extended down to the ground, embedding themselves into the soil and becoming thicker. If another tree becomes the unwitting host of the new Shortleaf, it may eventually find itself caught in a nest of entwining roots, becoming squeezed. The host tree's roots will have to compete with the Strangler's, and the leafy canopy of the fig may shadow the host tree. Eventually, the host tree will succumb to the "evil tree", and die. With time, this can create a hollow inside the Shortleaf, making a home for animals.

This growth cycle may also occur on rocks or buildings. Since the rocks won't rot away, this can make for an intriguing plaiting of the tree's roots between the rocks or the ruins. A quite impressive display of this can be observed at Cabrits National Park in Dominica, if you walk to the farther batteries and the old Commandant's Quarters.

The Shortleaf also has a special relationship with one kind of wasp. This wasp feeds exclusively on the fruit of this fig, and it pollinates the flowers that exist in the open-ended fruit. Other animals eat the fruit, but they sometimes cause allergic reactions in humans.

This tree has been found to have antiseptic, antibiotic and anti-inflammatory properties, and the bark has been known to be used for treatment of wounds by some of the indigenous peoples.

Organic sculpture or malevolent tree?

YOUR USED SAILS WANTED!

Designed to benefit fishermen in Haiti, **SECOND LIFE SAILS** is a Clean Wake Project of the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA) in a joint venture with Free Cruising Guides.

Donations of used sails and fishing equipment can be sent to either Minneford Marina at 150 City Island Ave., Bronx, NY 10464 (www.minnefordmarina.com) or to Marina ZarPar in Boca Chica, Dominican Republic (www.marinazarpar.com). School and first-aid supplies are also welcome. A receipt for your donation will be given upon request.

Frank Virgintino, developer of Free Cruising Guides, will take all donated items to Haiti during February 2015 and distribute them to fishermen in a number of communities.

For more information contact Frank Virgintino at fvirgintino@gmail.com or SSCA board member Catherine Hebson at cmvhebson@gmail.com.

MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2014

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!

DATE	TIME				
1	1750	21	0956	10	0230
2	1846	22	1040	11	0320
3	1943	23	1126	12	0409
4	2038	24	1214	13	0456
5	2134	25	1304	14	0541
6	2238	26	1356	15	0624
7	2322	27	1451	16	0707
8	0000 (full moon)	28	1546	17	0750
9	0016	29	1642	18	0833
10	0110	30	1737	19	0918
11	0204	31	1832	20	1005
12	0257	**November 2014**		21	1055
13	0350	1	1925	22	1148
14	0441	2	2018	23	1243
15	0530	3	2110	24	1339
16	0617	4	2203	25	1436
17	0702	5	2256	26	1533
18	0746	6	2349	27	1628
19	0830	7	0000 (full moon)	28	1722
20	0912	8	0043	29	1814
		9	0137	30	1906

The Sky from Mid-October to Mid-November

by Jim Ulik

Imagination

Looking into the night sky you might see something that you are not familiar with. Your imagination takes over to find an explanation. Is it another UFO? Last month, Iridium flares were mentioned as a possible explanation. This month, a possible reason is the light refraction of stars caused by the atmosphere. Stars appear to twinkle because of air turbulence combined with temperature differences in the atmosphere. The lens in your eye or the lens in a pair of glasses may amplify this effect. The effect is greater near the horizon than directly overhead. When the conditions develop that cause greater turbulence or temperature variations, some of the star observations can be mistaken for UFOs by the unknowing eye.

Imagination is not only for children. Look into the sky and imagine what is there. Even if you can't see the satellites or celestial objects you may know where they are located in the sky and imagine their significance.

"It takes imagination.... to look beyond the limitations of what's currently known, and see what could possibly be... and even more imagination to make sure this venturing beyond current understanding still stays within the bound of reason and known rules of science." — Phil Plait

Saturday, October 18th

Comet C/2012 K1 PANSTARRS should be nearing peak brightness. Before dawn, observers can watch for it low in the southern sky in Puppis, the stern or the poop deck of the ship Argo Navis. The comet could brighten enough to be visible with the unaided eye or through a pair of binoculars. Look toward the southern horizon and you will find Carina, the keel of Argo Navis. In this constellation you will find the Carina Nebula and the star Eta Carinae. Just imagine that Eta Carinae is 100 times more massive than our Sun and unstable. It could explode at any time, possibly shining brighter in the sky than Venus. Most of the radiation from the explosion should be deflected by the Earth's magnetic field. Because the Carina Nebula is lower in the sky it can put on a light show that has some people imagining a UFO.

Sunday, October 19th

Eyes are on Comet C/2013 A1 Siding Spring as it makes a close approach to Mars. If Mars were Earth, comet Siding Spring would pass by at about one third of the distance between the Earth and Moon. The comet will pass close enough that the comet's atmosphere or *coma*, at 12,000 miles (19,300 km) in diameter, may envelop the planet. The comet will produce 220 pounds (100 kilograms) of dust particles per second. These particles will be traveling at 125,000 mph (56 km/sec). One particle hitting a Mars rover or orbiter would end its mission. Imagine being on Mars and viewing the comet and the resulting meteors or dust hitting the Martian atmosphere. Hopefully one of the Mars explorer's cameras will get some images of the event.

On October 19th, Mars will be 151 million miles from Earth, located in the constellation Ophiuchus and visible low in the southwestern sky at dusk. Find Mars below Sirius then look for the comet. Comet Siding Spring may be bright enough to be seen through binoculars. Also look nearby in the constellation Ophiuchus for the globular cluster NGC 6401.

Wednesday, October 22nd

The Orionid meteor shower will peak tonight. There could be 25 meteors per hour passing through the night sky. The apparent source is near the constellation Orion. These fast-traveling meteors originated from Comet Halley. They travel at about 148,000 mph (66 km/s) into the Earth's atmosphere. Begin looking for Orion in the eastern sky at 2300 hours. When searching for any meteors, look 90 degrees away from the source. Viewing the meteors will be good because the Moon will reach the New Moon phase tomorrow.

Saturday, October 25th

Venus is making a transit on the far side of the Sun. This point in Venus's orbit will mark the transition of Venus from being visible in the morning to becoming an evening planet over the next few weeks. The Moon, Mercury and Saturn are also in the direction of the Sun.

Tuesday, October 28th

I recently had a reader ask me about finding deep space objects. Tonight there will be a conjunction between Mars and a Messier object named M8, NGC 6530 or the Lagoon Nebula. The center of the Milky Way is located in the constellation Sagittarius, which is where the Lagoon Nebula can be found. M8 is a favorite target for amateur astronomers because it can be easily seen with binoculars or a small telescope.

Saturday, November 1st

It will be the best morning appearance of the year for Mercury. From our vantage point, Mercury will be the farthest distance from the Sun. Even though Mercury will only be 50 percent illuminated it will appear brighter because there will be less than normal interference from sunlight. However you have to be up early. Mercury will rise at 0449 hours and reach 10 degrees above the eastern horizon at 0529. The Sun rises at 0600.

Wednesday, November 5th

The Taurid meteor shower will reach its maximum rate of activity. This will be the first peak of the month. Taurid meteors radiate from the sky not far from the Pleiades star cluster in Taurus. Unfortunately the Moon is also reaching its maximum illumination rising at 1650.

Thursday, November 6th

The Moon will rise at 1740 and reaches the Full Moon moment at 1823. There will also be a conjunction between Mars and M22. The pair will be visible in the west in the early evening sky in the constellation Sagittarius.

Wednesday, November 12th

Look for round two of the Taurid meteor shower. The actual date range of the shower is October 12 to December 2. The theories behind the two peak dates are that the comet was broken apart by or its orbit was changed by the mass of Jupiter.

In the News

Rosetta, a European Space Agency (ESA) mission, is the first in history to rendezvous with a comet, deploy a lander and escort the comet as it orbits the Sun. The Rosetta mission team is working towards a landing date of November 11th, 2014.

Comets are time capsules containing primitive material left over from the epoch when the Sun and its planets formed. By studying the gas, dust and structure of the nucleus and organic materials associated with the comet, the Rosetta mission should become the key to unlocking the history and evolution of our Solar System, as well as answering questions regarding the origin of Earth's water and perhaps even life. Imagine that.

BOB KING FIGURE 1



HALLEY MULTICOLOR CAMERA TEAM, ESA FIGURE 2



FIGURE3



Figure 1
Atmosphere and star twinkle

Figure 2
Comet Halley, the source of the Orionid meteor shower

Figure 3
Venus passes behind the Sun

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

Jim Ulik is a photographer and cruiser currently based in Grenada.



THE TROUBLE NOT BEING WITH THE SEA

by Lee Woods

A singular, indifferent wave slapped the port side hard, sending spray over the rail and into the cockpit, dousing the whole of Jim Thompson: his hair, his face, his clothes and his cheese sandwich, now soggy and drooping between his fingers like a Dali painting. He tossed the sandwich over the side, wiped the saltwater from his beard and took a deep breath. It's okay, he thought. No problem. Won't happen again. Not to worry. He took another deep breath and gripped the wheel. Suddenly he imagined the horizon swelling up into a wall of raging blue water. He clenched his eyes shut, muttered something about stupidity, then looked out over a perfect sea, perfect sky, perfect breeze.

"Forget it," he told himself, "let it go."

The fears had begun slowly, gradually, on his first day in the Gulf, haunting him throughout the Florida Straits and into the Atlantic. Would he get knocked down by a freak wind, swamped by a rogue wave? Crushed by a ship? What if the boat came apart and sank — would he drown? What if he hit something or the stove blew up? Wasn't there a story about a Great White that had eaten a boat and crew somewhere off the coast of Peru? And what about hallucinations, the narcosis that drugs the mind after days and nights alone at sea? Could that really happen? The question gave way to a sudden image of himself standing in the cockpit, delirious, the boom hurtling across and knocking him over the lifeline. He leaned his head back and closed his eyes.

He visualized easing into a slip, cleating lines with a nonchalant flip of the wrist…

With St. Thomas just over the horizon, he visualized easing into a slip, cleating lines with a nonchalant flip of the wrist, then making his way step by step to the bathhouse, a cold brew in hand. He tried to hold the image but it dissolved to a stronger one, the memory of a nightmare that had awakened him in a hot sweat two days ago. A giant blob of seaweed, big as a house, with flaming red eyes and a hundred slithery arms, rose from the sea and crushed the boat like a walnut.

He looked at the compass, then up into the rigging, trying to block the vision, but others replaced it, others from long ago when he was a kid growing up in Missouri: the night he walked home after his first Boris Karloff movie, down the center of the street, away from the trees because it was darker under the trees. He remembered whistling as he walked, his mouth trembling, then when he could see his house at last, suddenly running. And all those nights when he was awakened by a sound, a limb in the wind, scraping the side of the house, a thump in the attic, a rustle in the basement. How many times had he sat up in the middle of a nightmare, gotten up and turned on every light and looked behind every door? It seemed as though his mind was calling up every fearful moment he had ever experienced.

He turned his cheek toward the sun, trying to enjoy its warmth, but now he was having trouble swallowing, as though his saliva had evaporated; and despite the hiss of water rushing alongside and the hollow slap of a halyard, he was sure he could hear his heart. He stood up, formed a tiny circle with his mouth and tried to inhale. Breathe slow and even and deep, he thought; oxygen to the brain was supposed to help. Even with sweat trickling down his back, he could feel cool tingles in his knees and elbows.

"How 'bout some music," he said, "something with a beat." He went below, pushed a tape into the player then climbed back into the cockpit. Behind the wheel again, he swayed back and forth to a Latin rhythm, trying to imagine his smiling face on a dance floor in St. Thomas, a gorgeous woman following his every move. He hummed and snapped his fingers. Still, he could feel a trembling in his stomach. Cursing, he pounded the wheel and looked over the side, into the steady, undulating flow of dark blue water.

"Hey Neptune," he shouted, "where are ya, fella? You're supposed to look out for me, remember?"

What silly things we do at sea, he thought. He looked at his watch, anticipating the noon chime, then engaged the autopilot and went below. Just the thought of land, a dock, grass on a hill, anything besides water, seemed to ease the sensation in his chest. Sighing out loud, he sat at the nav station, cupped his face in his hands, and retraced his track from Tampa, reliving warm days and clear nights. He glanced at his watch, then tried again to imagine his arrival, gliding into Charlotte Amalie, people waving, smiling. And the dock at Yacht Haven Marina, solid and secure beneath his feet.

He picked up the chart, his binoculars, and stood on the ladder. Peering through the bow pulpit, he saw a tiny bump on the horizon, then another. He smiled, knowing it was St. Thomas.

"Finally," he said, "the good ole hard stuff!"

During the next hour, he wandered fore and aft, back and forth, fiddling with lines, tugging on stays, then hung off a shroud and watched the bumps grow into living green hills, rising and spreading out before him. He remembered something he had read, something about the trouble not being with the sea but with all the hard stuff around the edges. At this moment, he did not agree. He knew at this moment that he was fearing the sea and longing for the land, the hard stuff, safe and secure.

He gnawed on a pencil and looked around the cabin. Pretty tidy, he thought, nice and neat. Then, glancing down, he was sure he saw water streaming in from under the port settee. The boat was leaking! Filling with water! He fell to the sole on hands and knees and slid his hand over the wood No! Wait! It wasn't water. Sunbeams, just sunbeams, flickering across bright varnish. He hung from the grab rails and sucked cool air into his lungs, breathing slow and deep. "Go back to the cockpit and relax," he whispered, "it's almost over."

He studied the approach one last time, then strolled forward and dropped the jib and stuffed it down the forehatch. Then the main, rolled and tied. On his way back to the cockpit, he slapped the boom as if it were the rump of an invincible thoroughbred. On tiptoes, he smiled and gazed across the water, watching his daydream become reality: Long Bay, cruise ships, Hassel Island to port, Rupert Rock to starboard, markers. He disengaged the pilot, stood up, and draped himself over the wheel, steering with his shoulders. He could see rows of masts now, buildings, people walking. Then, finally, Yacht Haven Marina.

He shifted to neutral and coasted, looking for the gas dock. Announcing himself on a handheld VHF, he steered as a monotone voice directed him to a T-dock. Fifty yards... 25 yards... almost there. He could see it now. Ease into neutral one last time and a slow turn to starboard. Coast... slow ...slow... in! He tossed a bow line to a man in tan shorts and dropped the boarding gate, stem line in hand. How nice this breeze, he thought, watching it ease the stem against the dock. He stepped off and twirled a figure eight around a cleat, then stood for a moment, grinning, rocking back and forth on the planks beneath his feet.

Stepping back aboard, he went below and grabbed his toiletry bag, a towel and fresh clothes. Time to go ashore, time to relish, time to smell the jasmine. His first step to the dock landed successfully, his weight distributed evenly over the bottom of his left foot. As he followed with his right foot, he glanced one last time toward the horizon and smiled, silently mocking the demons that were no more. In that instant his right foot lost its aim, landing at an angle. Jim Thompson felt his ankle snap, then his body fall. Bag, towel and clothes flew skyward, arcing into the water. Landing on his side, he rolled over on his back and reached for the stabbing pain in his ankle.

A couple strolling the dock ran, stopped and leaned over, studying the writhing figure below them.

"Looks like you sprained your ankle, friend."

"It's swelling bad," the woman said, grimacing at the sight of tan skin turning purple.

"There's a doctor next to us," the man said. "Stay put, I'll get him."

Jim Thompson heard the voices above him, and something about help on the way, but he was thinking more of the solid planks beneath him, and the sweet smell of land. The woman reached down and touched his shoulder. "You're okay now," she said, trying to lighten the moment, "you'll be okay now."

Jim Thompson looked into her compassionate eyes, and then gave into a sudden and irresistible impulse. He laughed, and kept on laughing until all he could hear was the sound of his own incomprehensible laughter.

Lee B. Woods, a US Coast Guard-licensed charter captain and sailing instructor in the Bahamas and the Caribbean, spent time as a foreign correspondent in Europe.



CHANGES IN ST. LUCIA

Dear *Compass*,

Last year, St. Lucia with a lot of fanfare passed a Yachting Act that has been considered a good step forward. Now it is their turn to take a couple of steps backward. Happily they are not big steps, and we can work around them.

The first is the raising of the Customs overtime fee from around EC$15 to EC$100. I don't know how other yachtspeople are, but I never used to think about what time I cleared in, and was happy to pay the overtime. This remains true for me up to about EC$40, but at EC$100 a pop, I will only enter during overtime hours in St. Lucia when I really need to.

The second is, as reported in last month's issue of *Compass*, that everyone arriving has to fill in a paper Immigration form. This very much complicates the process, just when we had begun to get rid of paperwork with sailclear.com. I don't mind giving authorities information but in this computer/smart phone age, this incredibly last century system of collecting endless written forms, with the same details on them every time you visit, is just so passé.

If only the skipper goes in to clear, unless you already have the forms on board, it means two trips to Immigration: one to collect the forms, and one to bring the filled-out forms from everyone aboard back. Luckily the forms have been posted; I give links both to the government PDF version and the fillable Word version on the Windwards updates page of doyleguides.com.

It will be noted that nearly every question asked on this form has an answer already given on sailclear.com.

I think my way around this is going to be to keep a file for each crewmember who sails with me, with all the essential information on it. Then rather than continually re-entering all this data, I can just cut and paste it into the Immigration form or SailClear.

But there again, I move from island to island so often that I may have more of a distaste for filling in forms than others.

Chris Doyle
Ti Kanot

DON'T CALL RACISM DISCURSIVE

Dear *Compass*,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the review of *The Cruising Guide to Haiti 3rd edition* that appeared in the September 2014 *Caribbean Compass*.

You stated, "*A Cruising Guide to Haiti* goes to great lengths to explain significant elements of Haitian life… Some readers will find this content interesting, important and thought provoking; others… might find such extensive background material a bit discursive for their taste."

The word discursive can be defined as digressing from subject to subject or rambling, digressive and even lengthy or wordy.

I was aware that such detail of this subject matter could cause some people to bypass it when I wrote the new edition of *The Cruising Guide to Haiti*. As difficult as it may be for many of us to consider the subject of slavery and racism, it is a topic whose relevance in the entire Caribbean cannot be denied. The greatest numbers of those that reside in the Caribbean, the distinct majority (about 75 percent), are of West African descent. Notwithstanding that slavery has been abolished, all through the Caribbean, it is a part of the history of every person of such heritage. The question of slavery, racism and the lack of equal opportunity are just below the surface for most that have been affected by it. The great disparity of income and jobs is the basis for poverty and ignorance and many times that has given way to crime; a fact that every cruiser is affected by.

W.E.B. Du Bois in *The Negro* (1915) wrote: "The slave trade and slavery spread more human misery, inculcated more disrespect for and neglect of humanity, a greater callousness to suffering, and more petty, cruel, human hatred than can well be calculated. We may excuse and palliate it, and write history so as to let men forget it; it remains the most inexcusable and despicable blot on modern human history."

Every word of this quote falls like a heavy hammer, and the more you travel throughout the Caribbean, the more meaningful the quote will become.

If we fully understand what Du Bois said we could never find this subject matter discursive, as to do so is to overlook something that has had a terrible impact, not only on those that were enslaved and subject to its effects, but also on all of us due to the ripple effect of this terrible evil.

While "it may not be to our taste" to want to deal with it, it cannot be overlooked as to do so is to move through an area without understanding the forces that are in play.

Cruising in the Caribbean is not a ride at Disney World where we know that our safety is being looked after. When we cruise, we must be responsible for ourselves and the best way to do that is to be informed as to the winds and currents, reefs and rocks and also the social climate that prevails. How the people who live here think and feel is a major factor that will impact us. To be a member of the Seven Seas Cruising Association, one has to agree to "leave a clean wake." Whether one is a member of this organization or not, all of us should leave a clean wake. In the words of Buckminster Fuller, this means to leave a place better than you found it. This obligation extends to those with whom we will interact and to that end, the more we know about their human experience, the better.

While we may see the Caribbean as a cruiser's paradise with great tradewinds, white sand beaches and blue skies, many of those who live in the Caribbean must cope with the impact of poverty and lack of opportunity whose roots can be easily traced back to slavery. What we fail to learn and understand is always the biggest risk we face.

For those who are cruising the Caribbean, be sure to make a stop in Curaçao and visit the Slave Museum that is located there (Kura Hulanda). The sculptures at the entrance are the face of the majority of faces that you will meet in the Caribbean. So much of what affects us today can be traced back to what you will see and learn in this museum.

Frank Virgintino, Author
Free Cruising Guides

WHAT CONSTITUTES 'SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR'?

Dear *Compass*,

I'm anchored in Grenada now. There have been a few cruisers' boats robbed. Recently, two were robbed sometime during the night when the crews were asleep. One boat had a family aboard, so even if someone heard some movement in the saloon they'd think nothing of it — "Must be someone going to the head."

The Grenada Cruisers' Net (VHF 66 International 0730 Monday to Saturday) starts with some good advice: "Use anchor and dinghy lights at night. Remember to lock your boat and dinghy at all times. Report suspicious behavior to police and coast guard."

Now the problem is deciding what constitutes "suspicious".

At 2:00 on a Saturday afternoon — the middle of the day — a call came on the VHF: "General announcement. There is a boat with four locals in it. I've called the Coast Guard and they are on the way to check them out."

On the following Monday, on the "safety and security" part of the net I asked what they were doing that was suspicious, whether the caller had seen then committing a crime, and if so, whether the Coast Guard had caught them.

The person who called the Coasties said, "Turns out they were fishing, but I hadn't seen them here before."

Another cruiser got on and said, "I saw them; it was plain to see they were just fishing."

We cruisers are GUESTS in this country. These are THEIR bays. Fishing while Black is not suspicious behavior.

I am from Canada. If a foreign-flagged boat came into a bay in Canada and had the Coast Guard come and check me out for fishing from my dinghy I'd be outraged!

So, if your racist upbringing makes you nervous when Black people fish near your boat in their bay, in their country, perhaps you should go somewhere citizens aren't allowed to move about freely.

In closing: Yes, be cautious. Yes, lock your dinghy and your boat. Yes, be aware of your surroundings. Yes, watch for suspicious activity. But please, use a little common sense. Every society has a few "bad guys" but the vast majority are fine, honest folks. Really look and think before you call the authorities.

Jock Tulloch
S/Y Unleaded

Dear *Compass* Readers,

We want to hear from you! But sometimes we run out of room. If you don't see your letter here, please look in next month's issue of Compass.

CC



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Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

Improve Your Reaching Performance
Cruising Time: Spend It Well
A Trip by Inter-Island Schooner

… and much more!

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

3	Public holiday in St. Lucia (Thanksgiving Day)
5 - 11	47th Bonaire International Sailing Festival. www.bonaireregatta.org
8	FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Pinney's Beach, Nevis
11 – 12	Quantum IC24 International Regatta. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, sailing@royalbviyc.org, www.royalbviyc.org
12	Public Holiday in Venezuela (Indigenous Resistance Day) and in Colombia (Día de la Raza)
13	Public holiday in Belize (Pan American Day)
14	Public holiday in the Bahamas (Discovery Day)
17	Public holiday in Haiti (Anniversary of the Death of Dessalines)
18	Willie T Virgin's Cup Race, BVI. RBVIYC
20	Blue Food Festival, Tobago
20	Public Holiday in BVI (St. Ursula's Day)
21 – 25	Martinique International Sport Fishing Tournament. martiniquebillfishassociation@gmail.com
22 - 29	28th Annual Pro Am Regatta, Virgin Gorda. Bitter End Yacht Club (BEYC), tel (312) 506-6205, binfo@beyc.com, www.beyc.com
23	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Diwali)
24	Public holiday in Jamaica (National Heroes' Day)
24 - 26	World Creole Music Festival, Dominica. www.wcmfdominica.com
24 – 26	Annual Caribbean Sailing Association Conference, Antigua. www.caribbean-sailing.com
25	17th Foxy's Halloween Cat Fight (catamaran regatta), Jost Van Dyke. www.foxysbar.com
25	Public holiday in Grenada (Thanksgiving Day)
25	Woburn Thanksgiving Regatta, Grenada
25 – 26	Barbados J/24 Match Racing Championship. Barbados J/24 Club. www.facebook.com/BarbadosJ24Sailing
27	Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Independence Day)
30 – 31	FestiVoile, Guadeloupe. www.lgvoile.com
31 – 2 Nov	25th Discover the Caribbean Series, Puerto Rico. www.discoverpyfc.com

NOVEMBER

1	Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Independence Day), and Colombia and Haiti (All Saints' Day)
2	Public holiday in Haiti (All Souls' Day)
2	Start of Caribbean 1500 and ARC Bahamas rallies from Virginia, USA to Tortola, BVI and Green Turtle Cay, Bahamas. www.worldcruising.com/carib1500
3	Public holiday in Dominica (Independence Day)
6	FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Pinney's Beach, Nevis
8 - 10	Triskell Cup Regatta, Guadeloupe. www.triskellcup.com
11	Public holiday in Colombia (Independence of Cartagena)
9	Start of ARC+ from Gran Canaria to St. Lucia via Cape Verdes. www.worldcruising.com/arc
14 – 16	St. Croix International Regatta. www.stcroixyc.com/regatta
18	Public holiday in Haiti (Battle of Vertieres Day)
19	Public holiday in Belize (Garifuna Settlement Day) and Cayman Islands (Remembrance Day)
19 - 23	St. Barth Cata Cup (F18 catamarans). www.stbarthcatacup.com
22	Round Tortola Race, BVI. RBVIYC
22 - 23	Jolly Harbour Annual Regatta, Antigua. Jolly Harbour Yacht Club, Antigua (JHYC), www.jhycantigua.com
22 – 29	17th Annual Hobie Fun Week, Virgin Gorda. BEYC
23	Public holiday in Montserrat (Liberation Day)
23	Start of ARC from Gran Canaria to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia www.worldcruising.com/arc
25	Public holiday in Suriname (Republic Day)
28 - 29	Thanksgiving Regatta, St. John, USVI. henstjohn@yahoo.com, (340) 513-4955
28 - 30	Course de l'Alliance, St. Martin. www.coursedelalliance.com. ***See ad on page 11***
28 - 30	Mango Bowl Regatta, St. Lucia. http://stluciayachtclub.com
29	Gustav Wilmerding Regatta, BVI. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), (284) 496-8685, martin@sailsistership.com
30	Public holiday in Barbados (Independence Day)

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*

We are on-line:
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WHAT'S ON MY MIND...
Port Antonio, Jamaica: The Beauty and the 'Buts'

by Brenda Webb

Jamaica's verdant rolling hills with the spectacular Blue Mountains as a backdrop were a welcome sight as our Moody 46, *Bandit*, rolled her way towards shelter.

The passage from Haiti had been notable only for the confused seas and dying breeze and as we neared the harbour of Port Antonio on Jamaica's northeast coast we wallowed uncomfortably in the swell. Landfall was going to be extra good!



'One day we did a tour by taxi and were taken to some gorgeous spots...'

We arrived in the beautifully sheltered Port Antonio just on dusk, thinking of a landfall rum and a long sleep. But as we prepared to anchor we were waved onto the dock. It was a Friday evening and we'd figured we were too late for check-in, but it wasn't to be. Our rum was postponed as we dealt with a raft of officials — all friendly and welcoming, but there was a long queue of them.

One seemed particularly interested in the contents of the drawers and cupboards in our cabin. When I asked what he was looking for he replied "Drugs." Hmmm.... surely people take drugs out of Jamaica, not in? When I politely pointed that out to him he looked at me blankly and continued his search, which was, I might point out, empty-handed.

Check-in was free, which is always good news for cruisers given the amount we spend in these places anyway. But we have since heard authorities were making noises about charging, so check on noonsite.com for any updates.

The Port Antonio Marina is surrounded by wonderfully restful gardens full of majestic royal palms, leafy banana trees and colourful hibiscus and bougainvillea. Marina facilities are good: washing machines, showers and a cheap and cheerful bar playing plenty of loud reggae music and a menu that features inexpensive burgers, local beers and a damn good rum punch at happy hour.

The marina charged us a daily anchoring fee of US$12, which included use of their dinghy dock and facilities. The fee had to be paid regardless of whether you used the dinghy dock or not. Since management welcomed suggestions, we put forward the idea the marina instead charge a daily dinghy-dock fee, which seemed to make more sense, given we cruisers don't like to think we are paying for anchoring. That didn't go down well with the manager, who insisted that "all other places" in the Caribbean charge for anchoring. Maybe, but we haven't come across them yet!

The "anchoring" charge applies to the entire harbour, so there is no avoiding it. (Boats can anchor in the eastern bay but the swell during our stay made it untenable and there is no safe dinghy landing.) There was also a mandatory $3 rubbish fee, whether you took rubbish ashore or not. I may be nit picking, but all these charges do add up and are annoying when you don't use them.

After a few days at anchor, and given the warnings of penalties for discharging waste in the harbour, we opted to use the marina's pump-out facility to empty our holding tank. Given we'd just spent a season on the east coast of the USA where pump out facilities were generally free (or dirt cheap) we stupidly didn't bother to ask the price.

The process was long-winded with a barely functioning pump that left us with as much in the tank as it removed. We were stunned to be hit with a US$30 bill and, thinking it was surely a mistake, we queried it. The rather rude reaction from the marina staff left us with a bitter aftertaste. They told us in no uncertain terms that $30 was "standard" (not quite sure where, but the most we ever paid in the States was $5 and that was for a pump-out boat to come alongside).

I argued that the pump-out had been inefficient and asked if they'd consider halving the bill, but was greeted with a flat refusal. From then on it's not hard to figure out what we did — and I'd point out that after one of Jamaica's daily heavy rainfalls the Port Antonio harbour was a sewage pit anyway. It rains a lot in Jamaica — absolutely torrential downpours that cleaned *Bandit* and filled our water tanks and, yes, disguised any discharge from anchored boats.

Port Antonio is best described as a lively town. It's busy, dirty and incredibly noisy and even the local supermarket pitched in. Shopping became a battle of wits as I tussled with the locals who constantly pushed in front of my loaded trolley ("I've only got two items, let me past") and the reverberating music booming out through the shop's loudspeakers.

—Continued on next page

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Walking the streets we were constantly assailed by loud music and local musicians trying to hawk their own CDs. "Listen to this, mon — it's my own compilation, it's da best," they'd say as they thrust a grubby headphone at you.

As well as our eardrums getting a hiding, our olfactory senses were constantly assailed by whiffs of marijuana. This is no surprise as Jamaica's mountains and hills are clad with lush green tropical vegetation and the island as a whole is blessed with a balmy climate.

Who knows if it's legal? Obviously no one cares. Whenever we went walking we stumbled across groups of Rastas sitting around playing dominos and smoking dope. "Rum shop" is a euphemism for drug shack — they might sell rum but the customers all seem to have large spliffs in their fingers!

Being at anchor in Port Antonio was a lovely refuge from the mayhem in the town, although we grew to enjoy our visits to the chaotic marketplace. Fruit and vegetables were abundant and cheap and the street food being cooked everywhere cast a spicy aroma that competed with the marijuana.

The supermarket produce was good and we even found tinned cheese, which we'd never seen before. Beware, though, that the famous Appleton's rum is expensive. After buying a few bottles we discovered it half the price in Panama!



Above: Being at anchor was a refuge. We appreciated the delivery of a stem of bananas to the boat

Below: A little hard to decide what some 'shops' were selling...



Visiting Jamaica comes with a warning — take care, don't go out at night alone and keep valuables hidden. On our second day we met a young Australian backpacker who confirmed that reputation. He'd been followed back to his room, beaten up and left empty-handed after aggressive thieves stole his camera, laptop, phone and wallet.

Jamaica is scenically beautiful with those fabulous Blue Mountains a startling backdrop to some lovely beaches, but it's one of the edgiest places we've been and whenever we ventured outside the marina we never felt 100-percent comfortable. Walking the streets of Port Antonio, a town regarded as safe, we were often hassled; sometimes it was just a "look" but most often they wanted money. Our refusals did result in a bit of abuse, however, having just visited neighbouring Haiti (*see 'Leaving Our Hearts' in the February 2014 issue of* Compass *at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/february14compass_online.pdf*), where we did give generously, we felt that in comparison Jamaicans were better off.

One day we did an island tour by taxi and were taken to some gorgeous spots including Reach Falls and the famous Blue Lagoon, where the movie of the same name was filmed. However, our aggressive and incompetent driver was one of the worst we've ever had, driving far too fast and passing in stupid places. I giggled inwardly when he suddenly pulled to the side of the road. The radiator had sprung a leak so we were forced to sit and wait in the shade while he let it cool down before refilling it. The enforced stop didn't cool him down, though, and he continued at high speeds towards our lunch stop at beautiful Boston Bay. This is where the island dish of jerk chicken was created, so we did what all good tourists do and bought some from one of the dozens of local vendors and sat and ate it while the car cooled down yet again. This time we were hassled by the local population of miserable and sad-looking stray dogs, all hopeful for a snack once we finished. They were lucky; the chicken was delicious but the sausage that came with it was dry and tough.

Kingston was unfortunately off the list. While the ageing Bob Marley fan in me would dearly love to visit the museum, it was a $200 taxi ride away. Like everything in Jamaica, the price was too high and we were not sure our nerves could deal with another hazardous taxi ride.

Fellow cruisers had told us that Montego Bay, farther along the coast, was a nice stop… but the weather window was good to head to the San Blas Islands.

Jamaica, farewell.

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continued on next page ⟶

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—Continued from page 8

October Full of Action at Grenada Marine

Laura Fletcher reports: October is looking pretty busy, not only with returning clients but with several events going on at Grenada Marine!

The Italian musical virtuoso and sailor fondly known as Barracuda will perform once again at Grenada Marine on Saturday, October 11th. "Barry" and his band provide an amazing crowd-pleasing range of songs, ranging from Caribbean and international hits through to opera-inspired tunes. The concert is free!



Micah Mathura, Andy Drume and Barracuda, ready to entertain you at Grenada Marine

Attempts to get the Grenada Marine Sailing Club off the beach and into the water are galvanizing as this issue of *Compass* goes to press. It is hoped that funds raised at a barbecue to be held on Friday, October 24th (the eve of Grenada's Thanksgiving Day) will go towards the club's flotation.

Then comes our Second Annual Halloween Party, taking place on October 31st. Any boat kids are welcome to sail in and enjoy some spooky stories (Grenada Marine turns into Grave's End just for one evening) and sweets, of course! Advance notice of numbers would be appreciated.

We look forward to seeing you sailing in!

For more information on any of these events call (473) 407-1040 or e-mail thegalley@grenadamarine.com.

For more information on Grenada Marine see ad on page 24.

Eastern Caribbean to Feature at Annapolis Show

At last year's United States Sailboat Show, better known as the Annapolis Boat Show, a meeting was held with many Eastern Caribbean stakeholders to discuss how the sub-region could be better represented. Now, thanks to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which led the initiative, the OECS member states will have a joint presence at the 2014 Show, to be held October 9th through 13th.

Every October, sailors from around the globe gather on miles of docks in historic Annapolis, Maryland for the United States Sailboat Show. This internationally acclaimed sailboat show is the largest and oldest in-water sailboat show in the world. General Manager of the Annapolis Boat Shows Paul Jacobs says, "This year's event will be the best show yet."

The boat show area called the Vacation Basin is dedicated to chartering, travel, vacations and charter boat ownership. Boat show enthusiasts can browse among dozens of charter companies, speak with tourism boards, explore fractional ownership, take advantage of boat show discounts, win valuable vacation-oriented door prizes, and explore adventure travel and exotic destinations.



The "East Caribbean Village" will occupy its own tent, featuring displays and representatives from all but two of the OECS member states.

For more information visit www.annapolisboatshows.com/united-states-sailboat-show.

Cartagena International Boat Show 2015

The Cartagena International Boat Show 2015, which will run from March 21st through 23rd, is expected to draw 5,000 visitors, 30 in-water yachts and 90 landside exhibitors to the Cartagena de Indias Convention Center overlooking Bahia de las Animas on Colombia's Caribbean coast.

In its third year, the show will exhibit luxury motor and sailing yachts, sportfishing boats, kitesurfing equipment, kayaks and electric boats; display electronics, engines and accessories; and host boating education seminars and demonstrations. The US National Marine Manufacturers Association again is sponsoring a USA Pavilion showcasing 20 specialty booths.

"By leading the efforts again on a USA Pavilion, the NMMA is ensuring our members are positioned to maximize their exposure at CIBS, as it's the perfect venue for the industry to gather and establish contacts while strengthening business ties in this blossoming market," says NMMA export development director Julie Balzano.

Colombia will host Nautical Destination Colombia, a pavilion promoting ten nautical tourism destinations in the country.

For more information visit www.easyfairs.com/events_216/cartagena-international-boat-show-2015.

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