CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
SEPTEMBER 2015 NO. 240
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore


GOODINGS



ERDLE


HARRIS

FIRST-TIMERS' TIPS FROM 'OLD SALTS'

See story on page 20

KAY WILSON



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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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SEPTEMBER 2015 • NUMBER 240



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Caribbean Compass is published monthly by Compass Publishing Ltd., P.O. Box 175 BQ, Bequia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines.
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ISSN 1605 - 1998

On the cover: Dreaming of Caribbean cruising? 'Old salts' including Lynn Kaak and Ken Goodings of Silverheels III, *cruising guide author Chris Doyle, and Bill and JoAnne Harris of* Ultra *share their top tips just for you in this special issue!*



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

"I discovered the *Caribbean Compass* while taking the American Sailing Association classes in St. Lucia in 1995. I have been a loyal reader since, always looking for the 'inside story' of what is happening in the Caribbean and especially enjoying the personal stories, recipes and tips for sailors."
— John Lupien
Toronto, Canada

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Info & Updates

Caribbean Sailing Film Wins Award

Alexis Andrews, Director/Producer of the film *Vanishing Sail*, reports: The Rhode Island International Film Festival has awarded our film a Grand Prize Directorial Discovery Award. This award is presented to a director whose outstanding work on a short or feature film represents a new, unique and compelling vision that will resonate well into the future.



ALEXIS ANDREWS

Filmed in the Grenadines, *Vanishing Sail* tells the story of trading by sail in the West Indies, and follows a community of boat builders in Carriacou.

Many thanks to all who came out to support the US Premiere of *Vanishing Sail* at a sold-out screening in Newport, Rhode Island on August 5th — what a wonderful audience! We have more screenings coming up this month:

- September 4th, SAIL IN Film Festival, Bilbao, Spain
- September 14th, Caribbean Tales, Toronto, Canada
- September 24th, Ambacht in Beeld Festival, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Visit Vanishingsail.com for more information. Please check our Facebook page for further updates.

Carriacou Regatta: Supporting Children's Education

Mary Turner reports: Carriacou Regatta 2015, held July 27th through August 3rd, proved once again that the community of Carriacou, with locals, tourists and yachties from many parts of the world, can come together for days of water-themed fun, and at the same time raise money for one of the education projects on the island: the Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF). Alongside the racing activities, there were two CCEF fundraising events: the Pot Luck Barbecue and the Annual Auction.

The CCEF has been assisting the children of Carriacou since 2000 and each year the donations increase, the numbers and enthusiasm of volunteers rise and the events are well attended and successful. The youngest volunteer this year was five-year-old Maliah Thomas, granddaughter of Phyllis Matheson, manager of the Auction venue, After Ours. Maliah set up the children's table and was helpful to everyone throughout the sale.

This year has seen an effort to increase donations for the Auction, with collection points in Grenada, too; Budget Marine have been very generous and have organized this locally, with donations transported by the *M/V Amelia* to Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou. George and Connie from Arawak Divers took everything in and Frank Matheson of After Ours has given the use of his building for the Auction and for storage throughout the year. People give in many ways to CCEF, but a special mention must go to Harm and Lizzy on *S/Y Horta* who work so hard to publicize, organize and supervise the events.

With rain interrupting the merriment to be had outside Tanty Lizzy's venue, the Pot Luck Barbecue on July 29th was a cozy affair inside. Gordon and Judy, who normally oversee this event, were missed. The turnout was small but the atmosphere was warm and friendly and the raffle prizewinners enthusiastic.

The following day doors opened at 3:00PM for a general sale and the Auction started at 4:00PM. Backed up by the technical expertise of Harm, Richard of Lumbadive was the chief auctioneer and proved to be a natural, managing both to whip up the prices and keep the crowd entertained.

Some of the people touched by the efforts of CCEF were there; Thereia Lendore, principal of the Harvey Vale Government School, was volunteering on the household table. She said that CCEF money provides daily lunches for 14 to 18 less fortunate children and is hugely appreciated.

—Continued on next page



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Blue Lagoon

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Christiansted

DOYLE CARIBBEAN

—Continued from previous page

Susan Peters, Social Worker for the islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, volunteers every year and said that CCEF helps purchase uniforms, shoes, socks and book bags for disadvantaged children throughout Carriacou.



TURNER

Five-year-old Maliah Thomas preparing her children's table for a sale to benefit the Carriacou Children's Education Fund

Brian Lendore, the principal of the Hillsborough Secondary School with 250 children, said that CCEF enables two (and last year three) students, chosen for their academic success, to continue their education in advanced studies. Two recent graduates, Antonia Joseph and Martin Jones, both 18 years old, were very clear that without these two-year scholarships they would not have been able to achieve the results they have and want to continue studying and working in their communities.

The Pot Luck Barbecue and the Auction raised EC$12,222 (US$4,560) for CCEF this year. This is a fantastic result and brings the total donated since 2000 to EC$245,237 (US$91,506).

Visit www.carriacouchildrenseducationfund.org for more information.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertiser Regis Guillemot chandlery of Martinique, on page 17. Good to have you with us!

MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2015

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!

September 2015		21	1812	11	1045
DATE	TIME	22	1905	12	1127
1	0102	23	2000	13	1210
2	0257	24	2056	14	1254
3	0352	25	2152	15	1340
4	0447	26	2248	16	1427
5	0551	27	2344	17	1516
6	0635	28	0000 (full moon)	18	1607
7	0727	29	0041	19	1658
8	0817	30	0138	20	1751
9	0906			21	1845
10	0953	**October 2015**		22	1938
11	1038	1	0235	23	2032
12	1121	2	0331	24	2127
13	1204	3	0427	25	2222
14	1246	4	0521	26	2319
15	1328	5	0613	27	0000 (full moon)
16	1412	6	0703	28	0016
17	1456	7	0750	29	0114
18	1542	8	0836	30	0212
19	1635	9	0920	31	0309
20	1720	10	1002		



Hurricane History 1851 to 2013 - Source: NOAA



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Business Briefs

Raymarine in Freediving Challenge Bonaire

The Deepsea Challenge 2015 held in June put Bonaire on the map as one of the best places in the world to practice freediving. Although international freediving champion Carlos Coste couldn't reach his goal of breaking the Variable Weight world record, with a single breath and with the help of a sled he descended to a depth of 126 metres at a speed of approximately 1.6 metres per second.



CASPER DOUMA

Carlos Coste preparing to attempt record-breaking dive in Bonaire

Although Coste remained at that depth for several seconds, discomfort in his left ear didn't allow him to equalize and reach his goal of 146 metres. He decided to leave the sled at the bottom and began his journey back using only a monofin. Three and a half minutes later, Carlos reached the surface.

During the competition, judges used the Raymarine Dragonfly to keep close watch on what was happening. Pam Werdath from Budget Marine, which sponsored the Raymarine unit, says, "Until recently, using a high-definition fishfinder for verification and safety was only a recommendation, but this is now a requirement for freediving. We provided Carlos Coste with a Raymarine Dragonfly with WiFi to meet this requirement as the judges needed a reliable image to 500 feet." Coste mentioned on his Facebook page, "Freediving is evolving! The technology is helping to keep a high level of safety in our event. This is why I want to say thank you to our safety team and our sponsors Budget Marine and Raymarine who provided us with top-level WiFi sonar."

Coste has broken 11 freediving world records during his career, and was the first in the unassisted freediving discipline to pass the 100-metre depth.

See ad on page 2 for information on Budget Marine.

Sea Hawk Introduces Epoxy Training Video Series

Sea Hawk Paints has introduced a new series of Hawk Epoxy training videos to provide marine service professionals and do-it-yourselfers with proven techniques for protecting and enhancing the longevity of their vessels.

Each video provides viewers virtually instant understanding of the wide range of application-specific solutions the Hawk Epoxy system provides, making it quick and easy to translate the video instructions to real world applications. The first five videos in the series focus on specific solutions for using Hawk Epoxy to perform everyday boat repairs. The topics addressed include Proper Measuring and Mixing, Sealing a Fiberglass Hull, Patching Holes in a Boat, Hardware Replacement Adhesion, and Fairing Hull Imperfections.

The foundation of the Hawk Epoxy system is premium quality R1 epoxy resin, which is augmented via four unique catalyst agents and six special adhesive and fairing fillers that can be combined to provide 24 different combinations of application-specific epoxy blend options making bonding, fairing, coating, waterproofing and air exchange reduction simpler and more economical than ever. Hawk Epoxy resin, catalysts and fillers are sold in a variety of sizes to accommodate both small and large jobs and can be purchased through discerning Sea Hawk authorized distributors and retailers.

The Hawk Epoxy video series can be accessed at www.SeaHawkPaints.com/videos

See ads on pages 7, 9 and 11 for more information on Sea Hawk Paints' products.

Parts & Power and Northern Lights Hold Service Training

Guy Phoenix reports: Dealer participants attended the Caribbean Service Training, hosted by Parts & Power and Northern Lights Inc from July 14th through 16th in Tortola, BVI.

Service Trainer and Technical Director Dan Durbin has been conducting service training since the 1960s and does Northern Lights customer training events in Florida. Northern Lights Dealer Service Training is challenging because of the various backgrounds of the dealers participating. Some are mechanics looking for more information on DC and AC electric. Others are electricians looking for more information on diesel engines. Dan is very good at getting the theory and hands-on training across.

Northern Lights Southeastern Regional Service Manager, James Newball, attended the training to explain service issues that the factory is seeing around the world. It was James's first visit to the Caribbean to meet the dealer network and hear, first-hand, the challenges faced by Northern Lights dealers and customers in the Caribbean.

Participants learned about changes to the CaribbeanNorthernLights.com website, which recently received a major facelift thanks to the efforts of Jennifer Dowling and Scott Putnicki at Northern Lights factory headquarters in Seattle, Washington. Information for customers and dealers is available on the website, as well as links to Northern Lights parts and operators' manuals, the dealer secured website, "Ask a Tech" inquiry link and service tips. A parts special offer was revealed that is only available to customers who visit the CNL.com website.

Diesel engines are a continually changing product owing to the changes required to maintain emissions compliance with various regulatory organizations.

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There are new products being introduced every year to meet customers' increasingly sophisticated power demands, which make generators more complicated. "One of the best features of Northern Lights Generators," commented Parts & Power Managing Director Tom Gerker, "is that their DC logic has remained largely unchanged for over 40 years." It worked well in the 1970s and works well today. Despite that, Northern Lights are always striving to improve their systems, so the product continues to evolve. That is the reason that Northern Lights and Parts & Power put on regular regional training for their Caribbean dealers.

Northern Lights Inc and Parts & Power extend their gratitude to the 12 participants who attended the training. Their dealerships will receive a "Golden Wrench" next to their dealer name on the Northern Lights Dealer Directory and on the CaribbeanNorthernLights.com website. They also extend thanks to the hard-working staff at Parts & Power for making the event such a great success.

See ad on page 22 for more information on Parts & Power.

Barefoot Charters Helping Children in SVG

In 2015, Barefoot Yacht Charters, of Blue Lagoon, St. Vincent, completes its tenth year of helping the World Pediatric Project assist and save the lives of sick children in St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

For many years, the WPP, based in Richmond, Virginia, USA, has provided free care to critically ill children in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. WPP also works in Belize and the Dominican Republic. Their program equips local doctors and nurses to diagnose and treat critically ill children by providing training and diagnostic tools, and improving hospital infrastructure. Local healthcare providers are eager to provide for the children, they simply need access to resources in order to do so in a world where 90 percent of the population has access to only ten percent of the available health care.

WPP's volunteer nurse from St. Louis, Katy Frankel, is helping to strengthen the WPP's vision in the Eastern Caribbean. Through Katy, the WPP is working to make sustainable improvements in the care for newborns in St. Vincent and beyond. Last year 16 nurses from the region attended a two-day workshop called "Helping Babies Breathe", part of the programme that has been developed at St. Vincent's Milton Cato Memorial Hospital.

In another example of the WPP work supported by Barefoot Yacht Charters, 17-month-old Kimmy from St. Vincent suffered from a congenital cataract in her eye. Kimmy was referred by WPP's volunteer medical team for treatment in Richmond, Virginia. In June 2014, Kimmy had surgery there to remove the cataract. Her eyesight has been steadily improving ever since and Kimmy can see now clearly as she approaches her second birthday.

Barefoot helps every year by donating inclusive, captained yacht charters, which are then sold at auction in the USA. Tens of thousands of dollars have been raised each year and Barefoot is proud to have played a small part in this hugely important project and now urges other companies and yachtsmen to do whatever they can to assist.

For more information, contact World Pediatric Project: sfarley@worldpediatricproject.org

See ad on page 19 for more information on Barefoot Yacht Charters and Marine Center.

The Multihull Company Recycles in Grenada

Chrystal Young reports: The Multihull Company and LTD Sailing in Port Louis Marina have implemented a recycling program for their office and sailing school. Now, glass, aluminum/tin cans, and plastic bottles will be recycled rather than thrown in the garbage. Chris Rundlett, Associate Broker and owner of LTD Sailing says, "We are happy to be part of the solution for the growing problem of how to handle garbage on the island. We make it easy by using different bins for each type of item and educating our team on proper preparation of the material." Clean glass is recycled at the Le Phare Bleu marina's Young Entrepreneur Project where they grind it up or create beautiful art objects. The rest is taken to Spice Island Recycling where it is prepared to be shipped out to other recycling programs.



With just a little bit of effort, every business in Grenada can start its own recycling program to join in on being part of the solution. It's the right thing to do!

See ad on page 35 for more information on The Multihull Company.

Cruisers' News from Blue Lagoon, St. Vincent

Barry Doyle reports: The newly refurbished Blue Lagoon Hotel & Marina has at last opened the beautiful pool area for business. Come and get the salt water off in this delightful pool surrounded by ferns and comfortable lounge beds. Three food options are also on site together with full marina service, and Customs and Immigration office.

You could also stay a couple of nights off the rolling briny in the beautiful bedrooms at the low season rates. Just US$99 plus tax and service for a standard room and US$149 plus tax and service for a premium room. That's a whopping 25 percent discount off the standard rate. Plus, Indigo Dive will do a special of US$55 per tank during September for Blue Lagoon guests.

See ad on page 18 for more information on Blue Lagoon Hotel & Marina.

Ongoing Upgrades at Grenada Marine

Tracy St. Louis reports: Within the last year, Grenada Marine has introduced, and trained administrative and technical staff on, a powerful cloud-based boatyard and marina management software called PierVantage. This has impacted the overall operations positively and improves the boatyard's capability to make better future projections.

We are proud of our eight newly American Boat and Yacht Council (ABYC) certified staff within the three technical departments: mechanical, composites and electronics/electrical systems. Certifying members of the teams helps to reassure customers that work is executed to international standards. Maintaining and encouraging training of our human resource is a very important part of our business strategy.

Another point of interest is that our method of mosquito control definitely seems to be working! The mobile unit is placed for short periods in various locations and the verdict is that the mosquito population is certainly down.

As our yard is long and narrow, clients have mentioned it can be a long walk from the top of Yard 4 to Yard 2. Therefore a new building housing two complete bathrooms has been constructed with upscale tiles and fittings, creating a little touch of luxury in the yard. This has set a benchmark for upgrading our other buildings over time.

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We have hired several new and qualified personnel who are contributing to more efficient service and customer satisfaction. In our expanded Project Management Department, Michael Otway has joined the team with years of experience in the technical and mechanical disciplines and customer relations. Tracy St. Louis has transferred from the Customer Service and Marketing department and has joined our Project Management team in the area of purchasing. While recently attaining her Master's degree in International Business, Tracy brings professional skills, ideas and enthusiasm to the administration department. Our Accountant, Noreen Lewis, has worked diligently on acquiring her Association of Chartered Certified Accountants certification.

We are confident that things will continue to improve as we gain more and more experience in the fascinating yachting industry.

See ad on page 13 for more information on Grenada Marine.

Customers' Palapa at Curaçao Marine

Nicole van Beusekom reports: Curaçao Marine is known foremost as a technical marina — besides mooring at the wet berths, motoryachts and sailboats can be hauled out with our 40-ton and 60-ton trailers for maintenance or storage on the hard. Even though our marina and boatyard is the only marina on the island close to the vibrant historical city centre and within walking distance of many shops, bars and restaurants, we decided to answer the request of our customers for a social area on the premises. We are happy to have finalized our palapa, which is now a place where sailors come together for drinks. It has free WiFi, a TV, music, comfy couches, a hammock and a self-service bar. We organize weekly happy hours and once in a while a barbecue with snacks on the house. Come and enjoy our great technical services, and now a social spot as well!



See ad on page 12 for more information on Curaçao Marine.

St. Vincent Shipyard, Your New Option in Marine Services

Maria Goncalves reports: St. Vincent Shipyard Limited strives to make your boating experience as pleasurable and as safe as possible by offering a wide range of services coupled with an experienced multilingual staff on location that provides a high level of service.

St. Vincent Shipyard's location at Ottley Hall on the southwest coast of the island of St. Vincent offers deep-water access that is geared for boats of all shapes and sizes to perform their maintenance work and repairs. The shipyard is equipped with a travel lift as well as a clean outside storage area. Hull cleaning and antifouling services are available, and full workshop services include all aspects of marine engineering, maintenance and repair.



Dry dock services for a variety of classes of marine vessels are available.

The St. Vincent Shipyard Limited team approaches each project with the same goal: to deliver the highest level of services promptly and safely, while exceeding customer expectations. Our highly skilled and experienced technical team is dedicated to quality.

For more information call (784) 456-2640 or e-mail info@svgshipyard.com.

Sparrow's Beach Club on Union Island

Tucked into the beautiful sandy beaches of Union Island's north coast is Sparrow's Beach Club. Owner Bertrand Sailly, a long-time Union Islander, brings imagination, enthusiasm and a keen eye for detail. First-class cuisine, a wide selection of fine wines and drinks, luxury beach chairs, private beach lounges, VIP beach services and thatched shade structures characterize the new Big Sand Beach.

Sparrow's offers a wide selection of freshly caught seafood presented in French-Caribbean style. Go for the food and stay for the beach, the sun and the seaside VIP service. The attentive Sparrow's staff will make sure your wine is delivered beachside in its own ice-water bath. Rather have a crisply cold Hairoun? Raise your hand (or your glass!), *et voilà!*



As the sun sets over Union's Mount Olympus, Sparrow's Bar opens and the music begins to play. Visiting sailors and Union Islanders dance under the stars.

All that dancing, of course, may lead to stiff muscles the next day. Why not treat yourself to a full body massage? Sparrow's Beach Club has its own spa. And finally, should you need a new shirt, new sandals or a present for home, Sparrow's Boutique is there to serve you.

There's a free shuttle service to and from Clifton's market square.

Contact sparrowsbeachclub@gmail.com for more information.

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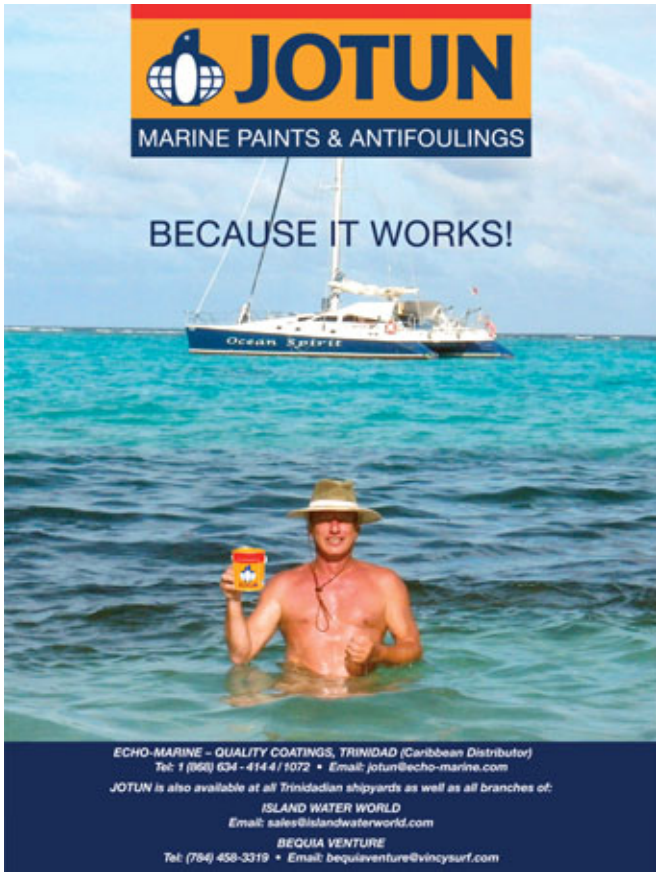
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'THERE IS AN AIR OF OPTIMISM IN GRENADA'

So stated Dr. the Right Honourable Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada, Carriacou & Petite Martinique on August 5th at a ceremony marking the completion of Phase One of the rebuilding of Clarkes Court Boatyard & Marina on Grenada's yacht-dotted south coast. Confidence in the country's recreational marine sector was exemplified by the official "launching" of the yard's new 242-ton boat lift. Dubbed "The Hulk", this huge mobile boat hoist — the largest in the southeastern Caribbean — raises Grenada's growing yacht service industry to yet another level.

As Clarkes Court's developer and Director, Kelly Glass, explained, obtaining a boat hoist of such capability "future-proofs" Clarkes Court as catamarans become increasingly popular, longer and wider; and boats of all sorts become ever larger. The lift will accommodate monohulls up to 130 feet long with a 13-foot draft and multihulls with a maximum beam of 38 feet.

At the ceremony, Tourism Minister Yolande Bain-Horsford said, "This [yachting] sector makes a major economic contribution to Grenada, Carriacou & Petite Martinique. Marine support services and the overall yachting industry provide great potential and excellent opportunities to address the provision of sustainable livelihoods for our people." However, she noted, "All of the persons employed in Grenada's yachting sector must be well-trained. The Government of Grenada is therefore committed to continuing its work with the National Training Agency, the TA Marryshow Community College, and the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG) in making additional training opportunities available to the people employed in the yachting sector." She stated that so far this year marine training and certification has been provided for approximately 40 Grenadians. "This on-the-job training and certification programme continues, and so we expect to see more trained and highly qualified persons coming out of the yachting sector." (*See related item on page 14.*)

The Tourism Minister added that, "the private sector plays a very critical role in helping to build the international and regional recognition of the high level of quality that is consistently shown in Grenada's yachting businesses and industry. To the 30-plus yachting businesses that are registered in Grenada today, I therefore extend grateful thanks on behalf of the Government of Grenada."

Also speaking at the event was the Honourable Alexandra Otway-Noel, Minister for Implementation, who noted, "Grenada's yachting industry provided approximately 17 percent of its stay-over visitors in 2014, and we are sure to see this number rise in the coming years." The Grenada Tourism Authority worked with the OECS Commission in 2014 and continued in 2015, to market Grenada's yachting products and services in Canada and North America. The Minister for Implementation also related that yachting's annual contribution to Grenada's economy is in excess of EC$130,382,099 (approximately US$4,865,000) and that employment and on-the-job training are provided for more than 1,000 persons at Grenada's nine marinas and four boatyards.

MODERN PHOTO STUDIO (2)



Left to right: CCBM Site Manager Carlyn Haynes, Hon. Yolande Bain-Horsford, Kelly Glass, Dr. the Rt. Hon. Keith Mitchell, Republic Bank Managing Director Keith Johnson, CCBM General Manager Conor Holmes, Hon. Alexandra Otway-Noel

During the first construction build-out phase of the Clarkes Court Boatyard & Marina, which began in August last year and included the replanting of mangroves as well as boatyard construction, 100 persons were employed. This number is expected to increase as the project progresses through its second and third phases, prior to the full completion of the boatyard and marina in 2017. Future phases of the project will include the marina (including a dedicated berth for a Marine Protected Area vessel), a chandlery and a sail loft, Customs and Immigration offices, a boutique hotel and spa, a restaurant and provisioning services.

There will also be facilities for "weekend warriors" — those who, as Director Kelly Glass says, "want to splash their boat on Friday or Saturday, haul back out on Sunday afternoon, get a wash-down, flush their engines, and be parked next to their own storage locker with water and power outlets under a covered area to save their boats from the UV rays of the sun."

Compass asked Kelly, best known in his adopted homeland of St. Vincent & the Grenadines for introducing cable television and for the recent refurbishment of Blue Lagoon Marina, why invest in marinas now? "Because I love boats — and marinas are the future." Why Grenada? "Below 12 degrees north, great people, and excellent governance with a public service that works with the private sector. I am happy to endorse Grenada as a great place to do business and get things achieved."

Thanks to Arlene Telesford and Lynn Fletcher for information in this report.
For more information on Clarkes Court Boatyard & Marina see ad on page 23.

REGATTA NEWS

Cuba Racing on the Rise

As reported in our July issue, on May 16th, the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba welcomed participants of the Havana Challenge Race comprising 13 motorboats, two keelboats and five Hobie Cats from Key West, Florida. More than 100 US citizens participated in this race. On May 19th, the waters surrounding the Malecon in Havana were the stage for a Hobie Cat 16 Race, with the participation of four US teams and five Cuban teams. Cuban Victor de la Guardia won the first Havana Challenge back in 2001, followed by George Bellenger of the US. This year Nino de la Guardia, son of Victor de la Guardia, ranked first, followed again by George Bellenger.

On May 21st, the participants in the Havana Challenge Race returned to the United States and that same day, the participants in the Bone Island Regatta arrived in Hemingway Marina, with four US-flagged boats from the Sarasota Yacht Club and the Cortez Yacht Club.

The 65th Ernest Hemingway International Billfish Tournament took place from May 25th through 30th. A dozen US vessels participated in this tournament.

Commodore José Miguel Díaz Escrich of the Hemingway International Yacht Club reports: "The most important element in these three events is that the participating vessels received licenses from the US Commerce Department to go to Cuba, which had not happened since 1978. The United States government established, by Proclamation 7757 signed in 2004 by then President Bush, that US vessels needed an export license issued by this Department in order to go to Cuba.

"On August 1st, the US racing powerboat *Apache Star* set a new Key West-to-Havana speed record: one hour and 30 minutes over a distance of 110 nautical miles.

"Now the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba is working with the Pensacola Yacht Club in organizing the Pensacola-Havana Regatta to be held on October 28th, and with the Key West Yacht Club in the Havana Thunder Challenge on November 17th. We are also organizing with the Association of Kayakers of San Francisco Bay, the crossing of ten US kayakers from Havana to Key West, between September 5th and 15th.

"Currently, the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba has received proposals from US boating institutions for organizing numerous other events of this kind in the coming year."

For more information contact Commodore Escrich at yachtclub@cnih.mh.tur.cu.

Antiguan Aims for Youth World Sailing Championship



Antigua's Jules Mitchell participated in the ISAF Youth Worlds Emerging Nations Training Program hosted by Antigua's National Sailing Academy from July 14th through 21st. Both sailors and their coaches participated in the training sessions and in the sailing section of the program, Jules finished in fourth place in a fleet of 20 sailors. That qualified Jules to participate in the 2015 ISAF Youth World Sailing Championship to be held in Malaysia from December 27th, 2015 to January 3rd, 2016.

Fundraising for Jules' participation in various sailing championships has been ongoing but additional funds are required to ensure Jules will be able to take advantage of this tremendous opportunity. Several individuals have made generous donations to date and Jules has also been generously sponsored by Antigua Yacht Club, all of which have assisted him in getting closer to his goals.

If you would like to make a financial contribution towards Jules' campaign, visit www.indiegogo.com/projects/antiguan-jules-mitchell-to-youth-laser-worlds#/updates.

50th Carriacou Regatta Festival

The 50th running of the Carriacou Regatta was held July 27th through August 3rd.

Twenty-four yachts entered in three classes: CSA-Rated, Fun and Multihull. In Multihull Class, last year's champion, *Jig Saw*, was again victorious. In Fun Class, *At Last* was the winner, with last year's winner, the Carriacou-based Spencer 44 *Yellow Bird*, in second place, followed by the Jeanneau 40, *Banyan*. Richard Szyjan's modified Hobie 33 from Grenada, *Category 5*, dominated the CSA Cruising Class, winning every race. In Cruising Class's second place was the perennial contender *Bloody Mary*, a Carriacou-based Hughes 38, and the Beneteau 38.5 *Tulaichean II* out of Grenada took third.

The Decked Sloops and Open Boats races featured some 30 boats, with double-enders from Bequia making a good showing. The winners in each class were: Small Open Boats A, *Wet*; Small Open Boats B, *Bad Feelings* (Mayreau); Small Open Boats C, *Endeavour*; Small Open Boats D, *Camille* (Bequia); Long Open Boats A, tie between *Black Berry* (Bequia) and *Skyler* (Petite Martinique); Long Open Boats B, *Eclipse* (Bequia); Small Stern Boat B, *Alive*; Large Deck Sloops A. *Glacier*; Small Deck Sloops, *Marie Stella*. *Black Berry* was also victorious in the Open Race, as was *Glacier* in the Decked Sloops Round the Island Race. Races for Optimists and Lasers were also held.

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However, it seems as though the main emphasis this year was less on the boats and more on the shoreside "festival" aspect of the weekend, which included

DAVON BAKER



Carriacou sloops have raced in home waters since 1965

Calypso performances by icons Alston "Becket" Cyrus and Winston Soso, a beauty pageant, donkey races, greasy pole, dances and much other entertainment. All well and good, but next year we hope that the organizers don't lose track of the fact that the word Regatta means not "all sorts of fête" but literally "a series of boat races". Festivals are held everywhere, but only Carriacou can boast having the oldest ongoing regatta in the entire Caribbean.

ON THE HORIZON…

CSA Annual Conference Next Month

The Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA) Annual Conference will take place October 23rd through 25th. Over the last two years the event has been held in Puerto Rico and Antigua, and returns to St. Maarten this year. That island's central location within the region will assist representatives from as many islands as possible to attend the conference.

The event started as a Regatta Organizers Conference some years ago, and latterly included the Annual General Meeting. In 2015 the event expanded with the addition of a Measurers' Meeting and a session on youth sailing development.

The CSA Annual Conference will bring together key stakeholders in sailing from throughout the Caribbean and provide a unique opportunity for measurers, race officers, member national authorities, regatta organizers, yacht clubs and other interested parties to network. With the inclusion of industry representatives, participants will gain updates on all the critical issues affecting our sport and hear from industry professionals about everything from marketing to the latest rating rules, sponsorship, regatta management and all the latest developments in yacht racing.

Peter Holmberg, President of the CSA, hopes that all interested parties will attend. "The Caribbean has become a premiere destination on the international race circuit, and our sailors a true powerhouse in the sailing world. I encourage everyone dedicated to the region or the sport of sailing to attend and help shape the course of this organization and the sport of sailing."

A conference package is being created to offer delegates a discounted fee to cover the costs of breakfast, lunch, snacks and drinks as well as the conference facilities. For those who cannot attend all three days, a daily rate will be offered.

Attendance is open to CSA members including member national authorities, yacht clubs, sailing associations, measurers, regatta organizers and individual (corporate) members as well as any other yachting stakeholders who are interested in finding out more about the CSA. Limited corporate sponsorship opportunities are also available.

A dedicated website will be launched soon with the complete conference details. Until then please contact vp@caribbean-sailing.com.

NARC Goes to St. Maarten & Dominica

The 16th annual North American Rally to the Caribbean (NARC), which is free for participants to join, departs November 1st (or best weather window near that date) from Newport, Rhode Island, USA. The NARC's primary purpose is to encourage boats that are heading south from the US East Coast to join together for socials, discounts and shared weather routing.

"The NARC started in 2000 as a way to move the Swan charter fleet to the islands, and over the years it has morphed into a much-anticipated event for boats making the annual pilgrimage south," said Hank Schmitt, organizer of the NARC and CEO of Offshore Passage Opportunities (OPO), a crew network service. "We make a stop in Bermuda and end up down island."

New for the Rally this year is the addition of sponsor St. Maarten Yacht Club, organizer of the annual St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. The sponsorship puts new emphasis on the NARC's finish in St. Maarten where the yacht club will host the final party and offer an early sign-up discount for this year's St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, scheduled for March 3rd through 6th, 2016.

Also new is an opportunity to participate in the first annual PAYS (Portsmouth Association of Yacht Services) "Yachtie Appreciation Week" on the island of Dominica. PAYS is a non-profit organization aimed at providing yacht services and security to visiting yachts, thereby assuring future development of the yachting industry in Dominica. Scheduled for February 14th to 21st, 2016, the Yachtie Appreciation Week has been organized to celebrate the installation of a new mooring field that Schmitt — working with PAYS, the Tourism Board of Dominica and generous OPO members and other sailors — has been orchestrating in Prince Rupert's Bay.

"All the major rallies go to popular and large islands that can accommodate their numbers," said Schmitt, explaining that in addition to the NARC finishing in St. Maarten, the ARC finishes in St. Lucia, and the Caribbean 1500 and the Salty Dawg rally finish in the BVI. "Sometimes, as cruisers, when we explore the smaller, less populated islands and get to know the people, we start thinking not 'what can you do for us?' but 'what can we do to help you?'"

Schmitt, who has been stopping in Dominica for several years and two years ago shipped materials there for local "boat boy" Albert Lawrence to build a boat, said that the island has no marina of any kind and almost no marine services, so it felt right to make the philanthropic move of buying and shipping materials needed for the mooring field. The materials include 50 new anchors, mooring balls and all the appropriate tackle. During Yachtie Appreciation Week, all visiting yachts will receive free mooring, discounted island tours and nightly socials. As a bonus, St. Maarten Yacht Club will help organize a rally/race to get boats from the island of Dominica to St. Maarten in time for the St. Maarten Heineken regatta.

Visit www.sailopo.com for more information on the NARC.

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80th Anniversary Mount Gay Round Barbados Series

Alene Krimholtz reports: The 80th anniversary Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series will be held from January 16th to 24th, 2016. With three days of inshore Coastal Racing, the 60-nautical-mile Round Barbados Race and a 300-mile Ocean Passage Race to Antigua, all of which can be entered independently of each other, there is something for all sailors to enjoy.

The signature Round Barbados Race on January 21st gives competitors the chance to break records in 13 different classes (size, one-design, single- and double-handed) and all offer the ultimate prize: your skipper's weight in Mount Gay Extra Old Rum.

Off the water there's fun for all the family with a special Lay Day exhibition Regatta Polo Match and of course no visit to Barbados would be complete without a trip to the home of rum, the Mount Gay distillery!



There'll be a great line-up of local and international yachts competing in 2016, and for those wishing to charter there's a multitude of possibilities ranging from J/24s to Volvo 70s and everything in between. Join us in January for a great regatta on and off the water!

For more information see ad on page 5.

Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta for April

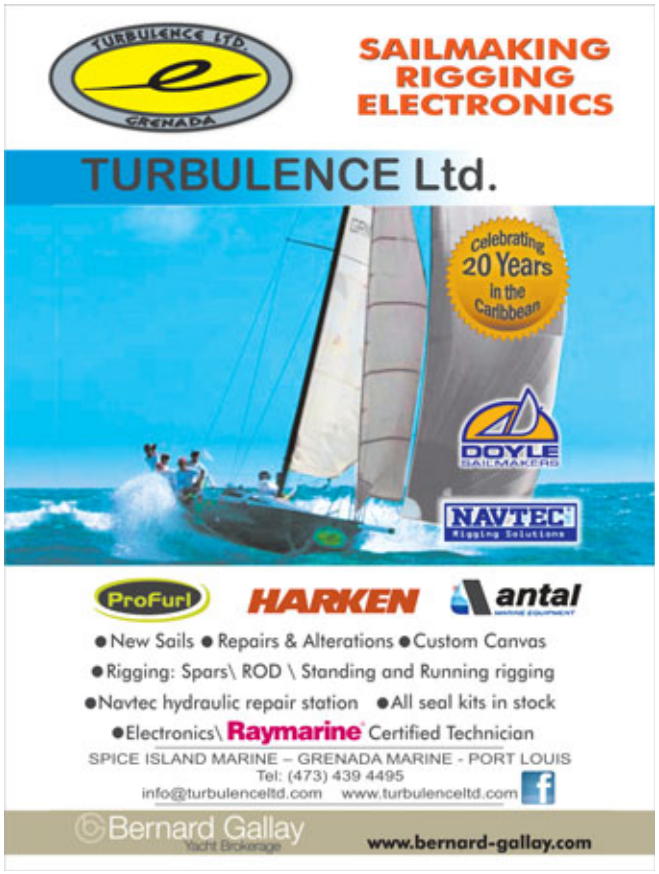
Since 1988, the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta has been hosted by the Antigua Yacht Club. While it has retained its Corinthian spirit, the regatta has evolved into the most famous classic yacht regatta in the region, frequented by a unique fleet of yachts from the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe.

A vast diversity of yachts attend Antigua Classics, including traditional craft from the islands, classic ketches, sloops, schooners and yawls making the bulk of the fleet, together with the stunningly beautiful Spirit of Tradition yachts, J Class yachts and Tall Ships.

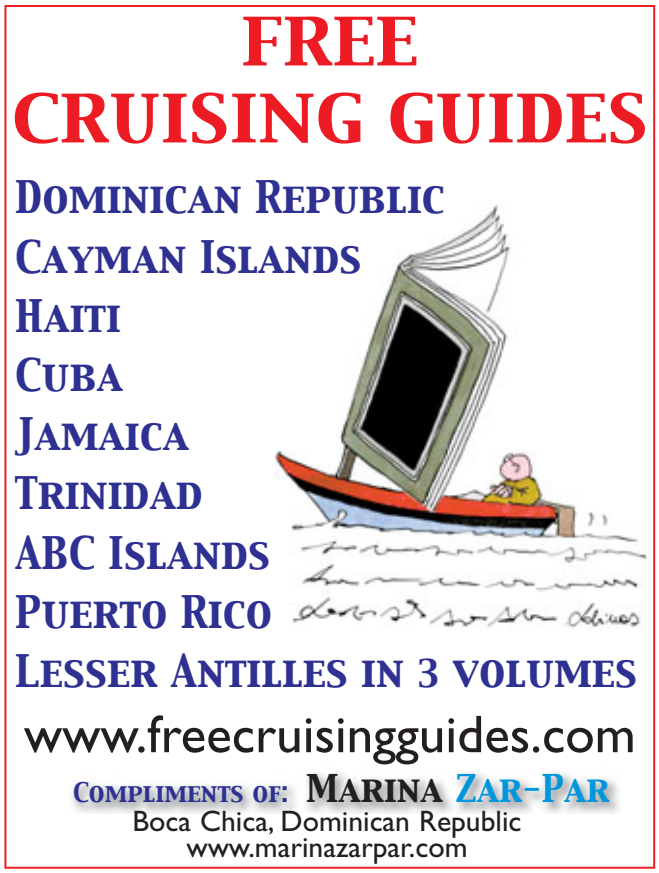
So what is a classic? To be eligible for the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, all entries should have a full keel, be of moderate to heavy displacement, built of wood or steel, and be of traditional rig and appearance. Yachts that do not fit these criteria can attend, subject to approval by the Committee.

The 28th edition of the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, sponsored by Panerai, will take place April 13th through 19th, 2016.

Visit www.antiguaclassics.com for more information and on-line entry.







COLLABORATION IS KEY

Youth2Adult – Y2A – is a series of articles celebrating sailing's role in youth development.

"Collaborative apprenticeship." That is what Anita Sutton calls the work that the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG) has started in conjunction with the American Boating & Yachting Council (ABYC) to bring formal marine service certification to Grenada. A recent report from MAYAG states: "The American Boat & Yacht Council worked with the MAYAG group in an effort to certify competency of marine service technicians using the ABYC certification training and examinations as a basis. It is relevant to note that ABYC created these certifications over a 20-year period working with a well-known certifying body in the US known as NOCTI (National Occupational Competency Testing Institute). ABYC is the pre-eminent engineering and construction standards writing body in North America for the marine small craft industry."

Grenada has had a need for formal certification in technical skills for some time. This bodes well for youth who want to make a livelihood in the marine industry as an adult.

From March through May of this year MAYAG conducted certification tests on the current marine service workforce to find out where Grenadian workers stood compared to ABYC standards. After initial testing, in areas including composites (hull repair), diesel engines, marine electrical technician, gasoline engines and marine systems, Grenadian workers scored below the required 80 to 84 percent passing mark. But, after three and a half days of exam preparation classes, scores came in ranging from 74 to 90 percent. Of 51 participants attempting certification, 31 achieved success. It is noteworthy that the marine industry is held to higher standards in order to receive certification than its cousin industry automotive. For example, in the US automotive certification process, 60 to 65 percent correct are passing marks.

Marinas, boatyards, boatbuilders of Grenada rejoice. Here is a summary of the number of newly certified professionals in each field: three in Composites, ten in Diesel Engines Support Systems, five in Marine Electrical Systems, nine in Gas Engine Support Systems and four in Marine Systems including air conditioning and refrigeration. Oscar Cain obtained ABYC Master Technician status by passing in three different disciplines.

Going forward there will be approximately 40 Grenadians in pilot programs based on eligibility for apprenticeship. Instead of bringing five ABYC instructors in annually, Grenada is training their own to run things. The Marine Institute of Newfoundland is assisting with an apprenticeship model. Grenada's TA Marryshow Community College will offer a series of courses. Boatyards and other on-site facilities will also be utilized for training.

Having earned certification, participants will be able to legitimize their worth to employers. Employers, in turn, will be able to charge customers hourly labor fees that are commensurate with offering professionally certified work. This is a win/win.

Grenada's youth can look forward to well-paying careers by availing themselves of marine apprenticeships that can now lead to professional certification. For young people, junior sailing can be an introduction to the marine world and, with well-trained, well-informed instructors and coaches, become a gateway to gainful employment as adults.

Y2A Featured Youth
Morgan Thomas, 16 years old
Student: Good Hope Country Day School, St. Croix, USVI
Favorite boat: J/36



Morgan Thomas is crewing aboard a J/36 regularly. "I started sailing about two and a half years ago when Stan Joines, who was then my band teacher, introduced me to his sailing team. I have been racing with him since," Morgan says. Using an all-youth crew, the J/36 *Paladin* races actively in the Virgin Islands area. Sponsored by St. Croix Marine, the racing campaign includes practicing on Saturday mornings.

"Morgan is a huge asset to our crew. He is the biggest and the strongest and a fine sailor, too," says Stanford Joines.

Stan has taken student crews racing in the Puerto Rico Heineken, BVI Spring, STIR and St. Croix regattas. Stan has applied to the Boy Scouts of America for Explorer Scout status for *Paladin*. This will, at least, cover the insurance-related costs he experiences.

Stan continues, "The J/36 is a good fit because it is competitive but it can also sleep the whole crew aboard when we are at away regattas on the different islands. The fractional rig is great; with a masthead rig, the kids would have to be handling bigger jibs and downwind sails that could overpower them." In May, the team took fourth in a tightly contested PHRF Jib and Main Class at the Puerto Rico Heineken International Regatta.

"I really enjoy the tactics that go into winning a race and being part of a team, but just being out on there, seeing all the other boats on the water and the landscapes of the new and always beautiful islands has to be my favorite aspect of sailing," Morgan says. After school and weekends, Morgan works in his mother's shop when he's not working on the charter boat *Jolly Mon*. "Growing as a sailor and being part of the team has helped me to mature and to develop leadership skills."

Y2A Featured Adult
Kevin Banfield, 28 years old
Employment: Boat repair and youth sailing instructor, Grenada

Kevin Banfield is a son of the parish of St. John in northwestern Grenada and has lived the majority of his life in Gouyave, which he describes as "the fishing capital of Grenada, the town that never sleeps." Kevin has two daughters. He lives with his mother and sister.

"In my community, you must know how to swim. You go to the pier and watch. Then you jump in!" Self-taught to swim at age nine, it was also seeing other children sailing Mosquitoes (a locally produced fiberglass one-design dinghy), that launched Kevin into sailing. "I live near the beach. I saw them and asked if I could have a boat to sail. They said yes." Those boats were part of the newly formed Gouyave Sailing School (GSS). At 12 years of age, Kevin crewed on local workboats. By 15, he was at the helm with a five-person crew.

At 14, Kevin traveled for his first off-island event to Trinidad's Guardian Regatta. Remembering the thrill of being on a starting line with 50 other Optimist sailors: "It was the first day of the event. I was feeling nervous. All different countries, France, Martinique, were there. I did pretty good the first race and felt comfortable for the next races." He came in 35th over all.

He's raced in Tortola, St. Lucia, SVG and "at age 16, I went to St. Maarten; I was the only junior sailor. It was match racing in Sunfast 20s (keelboats). I learned a lot because I was the only teenager. Now, I really understand it. I prefer match racing to any other racing."

Of sailing throughout his formative years, Kevin says, "It made me a more mature person. Kids came from different communities. Teaching them and winning their respect were benefits for me."



Kevin took electrical and plumbing classes at a local college but returned to the marine industry fiberglassing Mosquitoes and, later, Catfish (a two-person/two-sail dinghy). For several years, Kevin was the director and instructor for GSS. Currently, he is doing big boat repairs and paint jobs. "Starting July 18th, I'll be the instructor for junior sailing in Woburn" (on Clarkes Court Bay, southern Grenada). Volunteering on regatta organizing committees, he has forged relationships with the Grenada Sailing Association. With his level of commitment and enthusiasm for the sport of sailing, he has made a name for himself.

Kevin shared his one-year goal: "to have two new clubs in two communities." Beyond resurrecting the Woburn youth sailing program, which has been dormant for years, he wants to develop similar programs in St. Patrick (on Grenada's north coast) and St. Andrew (on the island's northeastern coast) parishes. "Right now they have working boats, no youth sailing.

"I wish that kids would take sailing more seriously in whatever boat (one designs or local workboats). I want to see our kids in the Worlds and Olympics. The Caribbean should be taking over these events."



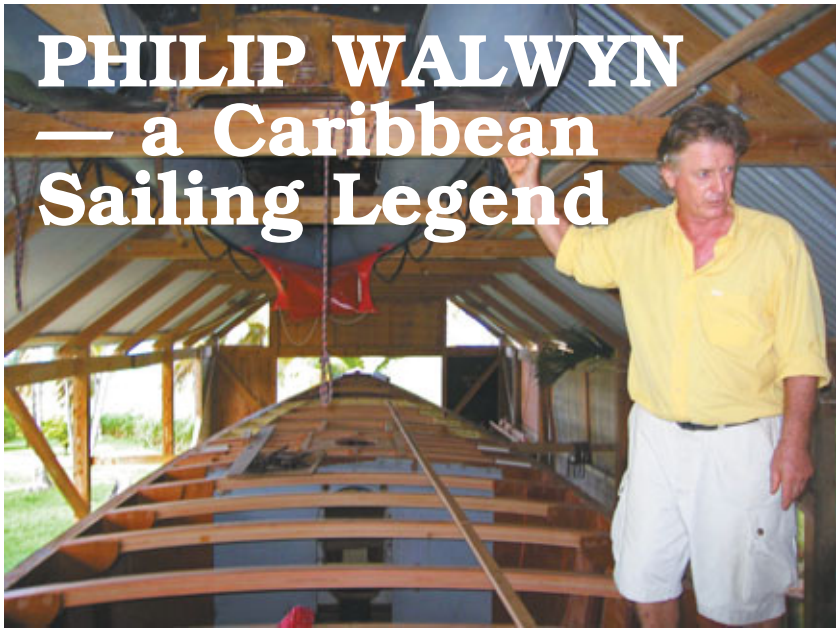
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PHILIP WALWYN — a Caribbean Sailing Legend



Above: Philip Walwyn with Kate *under construction at his Mount Pleasant Boatyard on St. Kitts*

by Chris Doyle

It is hard to beat the tribute to Philip Walwyn posted on the St. Kitts Yacht Club home page:

"It is with great sadness that we bring this news to you today, August 3rd 2015, of the passing of a great man, a legend in his own right. We say goodbye to one of the world's utmost sailing icons, and our past Commodore, Philip Walwyn. Philip was in the midst of his 17th transatlantic sail when tragedy struck. Philip is a man that has come into so many people's lives and has given his heart and soul to everyone and everything he's ever encountered.

"We all give thanks to Philip, to his knowledge and his love of the ocean. Philip will always be remembered for his heroism, his honor and his very witty sense of humor. His beautiful wife, Kate, is in our hearts and prayers as well; she is just as strong and as memorable as Philip is.

"Philip will forever be in our thoughts and our hearts, and we will all remember the wisdom that he has bestowed upon us. Philip, you have touched so many people worldwide… thank you. Woop Woop!"

I last saw Philip in St. Kitts earlier this year. I had been walking around the southern peninsula when his car drew up and stopped. Soon we were off to Reggae Beach Bar for a long, entertaining session with his friends. Whenever I saw Philip he was affable and had a charming, gentlemanly insouciance. He never seemed in a hurry and always had time to talk, which belied his determination and ability to get things done.

Philip was born and educated in England, but his family had owned the gorgeous Rawlins Plantation in the north end of St. Kitts for many years and he took it over in 1968 with his former wife, Frances, and ran it as a small hotel. I first met him in association with this lovely establishment, which, it seemed to me, was the best possible place to sample St. Kitts hospitality. I got to know him because of his connection to yachting in St. Kitts where he, Peter Dupre, and Douggie Brookes were among the main protagonists.

Conversations with Philip always turned to boats, and in this case, the old days. In 1979, Philip, with David Stranger, started the St. Kitts Boat Building Company. They built eight multihulls, from 40 to 75 feet long, including two famous Spronk-designed cats, the 45-foot *Skyjack*, which went four times transatlantic, including the Route du Rhum and the Round Britain Race, where they won their class, and the 75-foot *Spirit of St. Kitts*, which crossed the Atlantic six times and did well racing, including a first in class in the Round Britain race.

During this time, one of his more understated achievements was, with David Stranger, to start the yacht building and repair industry in St. Kitts, which thrives and is growing today. They inspired a host of workers with rudimentary building skills to become superb craftsmen able to build first-class yachts to international standards. Philip was always a force for yachting in St. Kitts, often trying to persuade a reluctant government to be more open minded. His work set the foundation for the rapid and open embrace of yachting we now see in St. Kitts.

Philip loved traditional metre-class boats and in the mid-1980s he became involved in the Six Metre class, a type popular in the early 20th century. He commissioned an International Six Metre, *St. Kitts*, designed by Ian Howlett, to be built in England. (He later built her sister ship.) He came sixth in the Six Metre World Championships held in the USA and a year later became the British and European Six Metre Class champion. This gave him enough clout to host a multinational Six Metre regatta in St. Kitts.

Philip did an incredible amount of building, racing and sailing, including building a 30-foot craft for the OSTAR (Observer Singlehanded Transatlantic Race) with a canting keel and all-carbon swing rig. He sailed her across the Atlantic, but her rig was too experimental and not well enough developed for success. And it was after this that he turned for a while to power. He built a 30-foot Cigarette-type speedboat from a kit, powered it with twin 200-horsepower Yamaha outboards, and with his new wife, Kate Spencer, the well-known Caribbean artist, set off in 200-mile hoppity-hop spurts all the way to St. John, New Brunswick.

One time when I visited, Philip's attention was still on power. There, sitting in Dieppe Bay, was a gorgeous, 94-foot-long classic powerboat called *Tiger*, which he bought with Kate. She was teak planked, with oak frames, and they were in the middle of rebuilding her. A couple of years later, Philip described the denouement. They had had made some interesting cruises in her, including visiting Venezuela twice and going round Cuba, when they got in some bad weather and sprung a plank. They put out a distress call and were taken off by the US Coast Guard. The boat was going down, but not yet sunk. Philip, not wanting to leave her as a hazard to navigation, invited the Coast Guard to use it for target practice. They obliged, and he watched her go down. He reportedly said, "I'm never having anything to do with boats again."

However, he could not stay away. A couple of years later I took a trip to Rawlins Plantation, which he had sold some years previously, and found my way down to Philip and Kate's land just below. Here, settled in the foothills of St. Kitts' mountain range, some 350 feet above sea level, with a panoramic view over miles of sugarcane fields to the sea, was Kate's lovely art studio and Philip's Mount Pleasant Boatyard. Mount Pleasant Boatyard was an open shed with stacks of wood where Philip had just started on what turned out to be his final epic creation: the building of a classic International Twelve Metre class boat from a 1908 Alfred Mylne design. It took four years to build with a three-man team: Philip; lead carpenter Leroy Carey, who had been to trade school in St. Kitts but had no boatbuilding experience; and assistant Marvin Harris, who went from being an inexperienced apprentice to building the interior joinery. Among other jobs, they cast the 11.5-ton keel out of lead salvaged from local wrecks. Unlike the original, *Kate* was built using the strip-plank system, which makes for a more seaworthy vessel.

Below: Kate *racing, before she was converted to a yawl*



This old International Twelve Metre design suited Philip's style, which was to have things seaworthy and simple and to avoid all the complications of modern gadgets and machinery. *Kate*, like several of his other boats, was launched, cruised and raced without an engine.

Kate was one of the most interesting and beautiful boats built and sailed in the Caribbean in recent years. Her sleek 60-foot hull pressed by huge billowing canvas attracted photographers at every event in which she took part, including ten classic yacht races in venues such as St. Maarten, St. Barts, the BVI, and Antigua, where she won four firsts. *Kate*, while very beautiful to watch, was not easy to sail. With her massive mainsail she could develop wicked weather helm, and Philip eventually converted her to a yawl.

On his final voyage, Philip was sailing *Kate* from Nova Scotia to England via the Azores. This was his 17th transatlantic voyage; he was sailing solo. *Kate* was discovered unmanned just off the Cornwall coast. Philip was found seriously injured by a passing yacht, brought aboard and then helicoptered to hospital, but did not recover.

The ending seems untimely, as Philip at 68 was still energetic, sailing a traditional 60-foot boat singlehanded. But Philip had a magnificent life, always following his dreams wherever they went, and he never let caution stand in his way. Along the way he inspired generations to appreciate the beauty of sail and the art of boatbuilding. He died still dreaming, this time of building a much more ambitious Nineteen Metre Class boat. These huge boats, nearly 100 feet long, carried some 6,000 square feet of sail and were precursors of the J Class yachts. Like all his dreams, it was a good one. Those of us who were fortunate enough to know him are all richer for it.

PUERTO VELERO

An Alternative Destination in Colombia

by Deb Woods

Aboard *Orion1*, our much-loved ageing (1979) Amel Maramu, we were in Aruba for nearly four weeks waiting for the right weather window to head towards Colombia. During that wait my partner, John Fesel, and I had plenty of time to plan and, taking some advice from an Italian friend, we finally decided to head for Puerto Velero in Colombia, identifying Cabo de la Vela as a possible overnight stop on the way if the weather should kick up.

As it turned out the weather was good — 20 to 25 knots behind us — and we decided to carry on, hoping that we would be able to pass the port city of Barranquilla and the entrance to the Magdalena River in comparative daylight. We had been advised that this area would be potentially difficult as the river makes the sea state unpredictable, there is a strong current, there can be a lot of debris and the wind funnels down from this region out to sea.

We stayed well off the coast, hoping to lessen the effect, but as we passed Santa Marta the wind picked up and the last ten hours or so of our passage resulted in some pretty heavy-weather sailing! However, as we turned towards Puerto Velero, three days after leaving Aruba, both the wind and the seas dropped and, keeping the green buoy well to starboard, the passage into the large, sheltered bay was easy.

Puerto Velero is a large bay with a long sandy beach littered with beach huts and little restaurants selling food in the daytime. If you are into kitesurfing this is a good place to learn. Every day the kitesurfers fly across the bay at high speeds! The place comes alive at weekends when many locals come to enjoy the beach and watersports facilities. It is possible to anchor out, but we chose to go into the new Marina Puerto Velero (10°56'49"N, 75°2'22"W, www.marinapuertovelero.co).

The marina is still a work in progress, however the floating pontoons have both water and power. While we were placed on a finger there are also lazy lines that can be taken to ensure that the boat stays well off the quay in strong winds. The showers are excellent, there is a laundry service, and WiFi is available on the pontoons free of charge. In late July, I counted about 18 boats there, most having been left while crew travel inland or go home, and that was part of our reasoning for staying here, too. Situated between Barranquilla (about 30 minutes away) and Cartagena (just over an hour), both with good air links out of Colombia, it was convenient. We were able to stay here for two months for the cost of one month at any of the other ports we had enquired at so it suited our purpose just fine.

The marina has a pool, although it is only open Thursday to Saturday. There is a very good restaurant onsite, El Kiosko, run by a Sicilian chef, Franco Basile, who is both welcoming and helpful; we enjoyed many good meals there.

We were able to check into Colombia here and the marina took care of all the paperwork. The only thing we had to do was go to Immigration in Barranquilla to get our passports stamped. The marina arranged a taxi that dropped us outside the Immigration office and picked us up an hour or so later, giving us a chance to get a feel of the city, the fourth largest in Colombia. It is a busy, modern city with shopping malls and supermarkets and is a good place to provision. It is not the easiest place to get to but if you share a taxi it is reasonable.



Built on a low finger of land reaching into the Caribbean Sea, Marina Puerto Velero is protected from the waves but enjoys the breeze

An alternative is to take a motor taxi (motorbike) from the marina to the main road and then pick up the bus that comes along about every 15 to 20 minutes. The motor taxis (helmets provided) were quite fun and a cheap way to travel. We took one to Puerto Colombia, a typical Colombian town that lies between Puerto Velero and Barranquilla. Puerto Colombia has a good feel to it and there are many places to eat, ATMs and local shops where you can buy good fruit and veg.

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Though you do need to brush up on your Spanish, we managed. A walk along Puerto Colombia's seafront finds many different statues highlighting the town's connection with the sea, and there is a magnificent view from Castillo de Salgar stretching from Puerto Velero to the entrance of the Magdelena River. If the thought of another motorbike ride back is not appealing then you can catch a cab from the rank there, but it is always good to negotiate a price first. We found Gregor, a driver from Puerto Colombia, took his number and used him for most of our trips while at the marina.





DEB WOODS (3)

Puerto Velero is about 50 miles away from Cartagena. We left the boat and went to Cartagena overland, spoiling ourselves with a few nights in a hotel to take in the sights of this beautiful city. It is possible to catch a bus to Cartagena from the main road; they run every hour. But again you need to get a motor taxi from Puerto Velero to the main road. This can be unwieldy if you are on the way to the airport with luggage. A taxi would cost you about US$80.

We knew that *Orion1* would be safe and generally, for the whole of our time there, the security was good with the coastguard positioned at the end of the pontoon and having seen the marina staff check the lines of other boats every day.

Clockwise from below:
As the marina is built on sandy ground, boardwalks link the docks with the main buildings' area
Street scene in Puerto Colombia: a donkey cart clears away out-of-date produce
Motor taxis — the inexpensive and fun way to travel!



The marina is developing, still having some way to go in terms of providing a range of facilities for yachts, however the basics are there and it suited our needs perfectly. We wanted to be able to travel from the marina and know our boat was safe, and also explore the area immediately around the marina. The marina is part of a project that hopes to see the development of haul-out facilities in the coming year, and as it grows I am sure that it will develop its transport links and services for its clients. The friendly staff are always willing to help and at present Puerto Velero provides a good place to chill for a couple of days as you hop down the Colombian coast or a cost-effective and safe place to leave your boat if you are traveling in Colombia or beyond.



Santa Marta to San Blas:

Our Past 36 Hours Aboard M/V Cardea

by Marilyn and Kent Sharpe



Above: Marilyn and Kent have cruised for a decade aboard their 56-foot DeFever, Cardea

Left: Marilyn's kickboxing buddies at the Santa Marta Fitness Center, overlooking Marina Santa Marta

Below: Our Wiwa friends, Lorenzo and Arbijo, came aboard in Santa Marta to bid us farewell

Leaving Santa Marta, Colombia was very emotional for both of us. Rounds of good-byes brought tears to our eyes many times in the few hours before departing.

"Adios" to the tug and pilot boat crews who were berthed as our neighbors for the last six months. "Gracias, amigos" to all the Marina Santa Marta dockhands and office staff who had watched our boat in our absence and joined us for dinner and drinks on our boat in our presence. "I will miss you" to all of Marilyn's health club friends whom she joined every 6:00AM on the roof of the condo building overlooking the marina, to practice kick-boxing aerobics and to dance the Rumba.





And "tenga buena vida" to the two young indigenous men from the Wiwa tribe who left their mountain villages and journeyed to the boat to wish us "fair seas". Lorenzo and Arbijo had been Marilyn's guides on her six-day trek to "La Ciudad Perdida", the ancient but recently discovered spiritual site of the early (800 AD) Tayrona Indians of this region.

We topped up the diesel in our 1,400-gallon capacity tanks, signed away Marilyn's two-month pension check, and cruised out into four-foot seas. Leaving port is always a double-edged sword. Entering port is always a double-edged sword. In the marina, life is simpler. Hooked into shore power and shore water, we are no longer vigilant about what Kent calls "power management": ensuring the batteries have enough charge to keep the refrigerator and freezer and all power-eaters alive. And we don't have to make fresh water with our reverse-osmosis desalinator.

At the dock we have WiFi or cellular communication. We have easy access to grocery stores, hardware stores, chandleries, restaurants, and sometimes even movie theaters. We don't have to be checking the weather and checking the security of our anchorage all the time. We have the opportunity to explore a new culture, stroll the streets of town day or night, make new friends, learn a new language. It is like having your own traveling condo that is parked on the coast frontage of a beautiful city. But you're in bustling civilization, you are dependent, and you are tied in, plugged in and stuck.

Going out to sea is freedom. It is self-sufficiency, independence, self-containment. We make our own water, generate our own power, are provisioned with months of food and we can catch fish. We can go wherever we want, stay as long as we want.

We can gaze at the stars, feel the roll and rocking of the sea, breathe the clean salt air, clap at the dolphins riding our bow wake, and anchor in beautiful deserted bays where we swim, snorkel on pristine reefs abundant with fish, and then move on.

The whole world is our oyster.

But there is a burden. There is responsibility. Something is always breaking down and in need of repair. Maybe we have the know-how to fix it... and maybe we don't.

But with Kent's remarkable problem-solving brain, honed by now ten years of cruising experience, our confidence is somewhat boosted.

On this journey out to sea we are again reminded of the 64-hour cruise (diagonally from northeast to southwest across the Caribbean Sea) from St. Martin to Bonaire, which we made in March of last year. Sixty-one hours with no sight of land, boats or human civilization; just us alone, bobbing like a cork across the vast Caribbean Sea. And out there in the middle of nowhere, with 10,000 feet of water beneath us and endless space around us, the boat started exaggerated rolling and we knew we had lost our stabilizers. Marilyn took the helm and navigated the least rolly course (even though off course) and Kent went below into the 140-degree engine room to attempt a repair. Thankfully, he devised an ingenious temporary fix until we could call our installers in Ft. Lauderdale and have them talk us through a permanent fix once we reached land.

So now, leaving the port in Santa Marta we are again filled with the excitement and anticipation of all the beautiful things about going to sea, and also filled with the anxiety and edginess of the unexpected, and the weight of the responsibility of this lifestyle.

We had chosen a seemingly ideal weather window for the 15-hour jaunt from Los Rosarios, the vacation getaway islands of the Cartagenians, to the sparsely inhabited islets of the San Blas archipelago dotting the Caribbean just west of Panama's border with Colombia.

The passage is tranquil: two-foot seas, slightly abaft of beam on our starboard quarter. Weather conditions rarely get any better than this for motorvessels. We had chosen a night crossing so we could arrive and anchor in good morning light. But the night is long. We spend hours gazing into the vast black darkness of sea and sky, punctuated only by billions of tiny pinpoints of stars.

We are humbled by our insignificance in this massive universe where nature's power is so palpable. At the same time we are inspired and elated by the feeling of being one with all things, part of the infinite. Tiny and ant-like, but simultaneously all-encompassing and boundary-less. We journey through the night with only one large cargo ship passing four miles off our port to tell us we are not all alone on this vast stretch of sea.

The San Blas Islands of Panama are renowned for their pristine beauty: white sand beaches lined with palm trees, a façade behind which stretch lush green rainforests on the interior of the islands and of the mainland; and clear water supporting extensive reef systems,...

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...the delight of snorkelers and the dread of boaters wending their way through minefields of coral. So far this year alone four boats have met their fate on the reefs of these San Blas islands. We did not want to be the fifth!

So arriving in the morning, as the eastern sun rising behind us would shine light down into these shallow reef-strewn waters, seemed like a good idea. What we hadn't accounted for was the local climate difference only 150 miles away from where we started.



Our San Blas landfall after the rain

The area we had left, coastal Colombia, is almost desert-like in its year-round climate. Positioned to the west of northern Colombia's tall Sierra Nevada mountain range, the coastal towns of Santa Marta, Barranquilla and Cartagena are all in the rain shadow of the 18,000 foot peaks and suffer the arid consequences. Here, across the sea to the west, we are in a seven-month rainy season, in a rainforest, and (go figure) as we arrive, it is raining.

Visibility is piss poor. An hour out, as we approach Isla Piños, our first charted destination, we are besieged by squalls, torrential rains, and very turbulent seas. For the last three hours we have been surrounded by dry electrical storms with bolts of lightning following only two or three seconds later. Kent rushes to put all our portable electronic equipment into the microwave (a Gaussian shield) to protect it in case of a lightning strike.

We have multiple electronic chart redundancy (no surprise to those of you who know Kent) to ensure safe navigation. Two of our electronic charts are loaded onto a portable Garmin and onto an iPad. These are both crammed into the microwave which now sports a bold red-lettered warning, scribbled with Kent's Scripto, "DO NOT USE THE MICROWAVE!!!" (as if we would turn it on without any food in it, just for the hell of it!).

So, as the thunderstorm bears down on us and the radar screen shows a four-mile radius of almost solid black dots, we decide to turn the boat around and head back out to sea. If the storm continues we will circle in the area, eight miles out in 2,000 feet of water to avoid any risk of reef encounters closer to shore.

Marilyn is at the helm and scanning the seas to ascertain, in this limited visibility, the direction of the swells. By pointing the boat at a 30-degree angle into oncoming swells we can minimize our pitch and yaw and cut down on the number of unsecured items that slide off shelves or across the salon floor. But the seas are so angry and confused there is no clear best angle. So we slow down and circle through the rolling and bouncing... like riding a lazy bronco.

Three hours later, with no sun visible, the rain begins to abate. The storm clouds turn from black to slate and a low grey cloud cover descends upon the coast, bringing bands of mist and fog to enshroud the coastal lowlands. We turn back toward our island destination and make our way toward shore.



Welcoming us to the San Blas islands, or Kuna Yala, our new Kuna friend, Joaquin, in his dugout canoe

Other boaters have told us that ALL the popular electronic navigational charts are unreliable in these islands. Many boaters thought they were navigating into ten-foot-deep anchorages according to the charts, only to find that the position of the charted anchorage was actually in the middle of an island.

Only one set of paper charts, those of Eric Bauhaus, has accurately captured correct soundings and topography of this remote and sparsely populated part of the world. We had been living in anticipatory trepidation about the prospect of navigating these islands without accurate electronic charts with their accompanying GPS systems. The beauty of electronic charts is our ability to electronically track our exact boat position (within the tolerance of GPS accuracy) on the detailed maps of the area. Entering the reef of Isla Piños without any good light to "read" the water and see the underwater coral was possible only because we had the good fortune to have Eric's waypoints from his paper charts, which we were able to program into our electronic charts.

Slowly, vigilantly, with one pair of eyes on the water and the second pair on our new charts, we wended our way from waypoint to waypoint to a 16-foot anchorage (which on every other chart showed 60 feet of water!) in the protection of Isla Piños... out of the sea swells, out of the wind chop, in the lee of a hilly rainforested island that blocked the northeast tradewinds. We dropped anchor, let out 150 feet of anchor chain, let out a huge sigh of relief, and retreated, exhausted, to the chairs of the cockpit, each of us with a glass of 15-year-aged rum on ice.

It was 12:00 noon (5:00PM somewhere) and we drank a toast to our arrival, to our outstanding collaboration, to being "on the road again", to being safely at our new temporary home in Panama. We toasted to our partnership, to the benevolent Poseidon and to all the gods that might be looking out for us. We toasted to our trusted *Cardea*. We toasted to all our friends and family who care about us and whom we so deeply treasure. And we toasted our good fate and fortune for being alive and healthy and aware, doing what we most want to do and in this most magnificent expanse of nature. We are immensely grateful to just be here, just us, just now in just this moment in time.

Kent and Marilyn have spent ten years aboard their 56-foot DeFever, cruising the eastern seaboard of the US, the Bahamas, and for the last seven years the eastern and western Caribbean. M/V Cardea is their first and last boat.

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TIP-TOP TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME CARIBBEAN CRUISERS

Planning your first Caribbean cruising experience? We asked a wide selection of experienced Caribbean cruisers for their top tips just for you. Their suggestions ranged from navigation advice to island etiquette enlightenment, and several common themes emerged. And there's more to come in future issues!

Many thanks to everyone who so generously shared the wisdom of their experience.

• OBJECTIVE ADVICE

NAVIGATION

Nikki Segal, *Skipping Stone* (Pearson 530)

Make easting! As the current generally sets to the west between the Eastern Caribbean islands, we always try to make as much easting as possible, early on in the trip.

Matthew Watters, *Lady Marigot* (Privilege 585 catamaran)

Make a point of checking for northerly swells. They can make many usually comfortable anchorages untenable. Check sites such as Stormsurf.com (www.stormsurf.com/locals/barb.shtml) and look at the "surf" animations. If you see lots of south-facing arrows and dramatically coloured bands entering the islands, then it's time to select anchorages that are sheltered in the north and open in the south. Adjust your route to avoid any bays exposed to the north during periods when the swells are at their worst.

The Meteo France Antilles Large forecast (www.meteo.fr/temps/domtom/antilles/pack-public/marine/sea.pdf) will also warn of any prolonged northerly swells reaching the Eastern Caribbean. These swells are generated when major storms affect the mainland USA and roll out into the Atlantic. So if you're hearing about major snowstorms up north, a few days later it is likely swells will be appearing in parts of the Caribbean.

Really bad swells can even make usually navigable channels untenable, as swell and surf action stirs up the bottom and makes eyeball navigation difficult.


Don Street

Don Street, formerly of *Iolaire* (44-foot 1905 engineless yawl)

Author of Street's Cruising Guides, www.street-iolaire.com

Do not enter harbors at night. When entering and leaving harbors forget about your chart plotter: use eyeball navigation. When relying on eyeball navigation do not head east before 1100 or west after 1400.

The Eastern Caribbean is a fabulous cruising area and despite what is said to the contrary it is not overcrowded if one is willing to get off the beaten track.

ANCHORING

Rosie Burr and Sim Hoggarth, *Wandering Star* (44-foot custom steel cutter)

Invest in the best possible anchor(s) and gear and go at least one size up from the recommended size. Anchoring technology has improved markedly in recent years and upgrading is a big improvement if your boat has one of the older designs. Having faith in your anchor is one of the must-haves for Caribbean cruising and leaves you free to worry about more important issues (like have we got enough ice for the sundowners).


Ellen Birrell and Jim Hutchins

Ellen Birrell, *Boldly Go* (Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 40)

Be aware of anchoring. Just about the time you think you really get it, a new set of conditions arise and you get to learn more, more, more. (Mooring balls present their own set of challenges: "renter beware"!)

Ellen's husband, **Jim Hutchins**, further explains:

Discuss techniques and considerations with fellow cruisers; there are many issues concerning proper anchoring. How are the other boats around you attached to the ground? All boats need space to swing, not just the big ones: basic scope should be five times depth plus one boat length.

The anchor must be set. There are several ways to set one but first you'll need a bottom that gives it a chance. Stay with the boat until you are sure the anchor is set. I'm never sure until I've correctly pulled back with full throttle and then only if there is no wind shift.

After you have a proper position and a well-set anchor, stay aware of the weather at all times: aboard, onshore, awake or asleep. A good skipper awakes to a weather change like a mother to the rustle of her newborn child.


Monica Pisani and Captain Jonathan

EQUIPMENT

Monica Pisani, *Journey* (42-foot Tatoosh sloop)

Two years ago, when we started our sailing adventure, we made two technology purchases that stood out as they were used repeatedly providing information of all kinds.

One was a WiFi booster. After extensive research, we purchased the Ubiquiti Bullet from Island Times PC. It came packaged in a waterproof case with an antenna, which we mounted on our bimini support. It consistently provided us with WiFi at some of the most unexpected places.

The second item was our iPad with the Garmin Blue Chart App. The iPad has to have a GPS antenna built in, so it works via satellite signal, not needing to be connected to the internet. The iPad was our backup chart plotter and our trip planner. It is integrated with Active Captain, giving us access to detailed information on marinas and anchorages, plus reviews from other yachties. Extremely helpful, and we used it constantly.

Tony Sanpere, *Cayenne III* (51-foot Beneteau Idylle), ***Cayennita Grande*** (J/36), ***Nauticayenne*** (Catalina 30), ***et al***

Carrying lots of spare parts is very important. Nothing's worse than to be stuck in an anchorage or marina waiting for a part to arrive. Also, my boat's shore power let me plug in at both 110 and 220 volts.

Angelika Grüner, *Angelos* (Colin Archer steel double-ender)

If you need boat parts from Europe, there is a company in the UK called www.ship2ship.co.uk. Parts will arrive in the Caribbean within three to five days for a very reasonable price.

Don Street

Equip yourself with a full set of Imray Iolaire charts of the area that you plan to cruise. Read the backs of the charts to find information on tides, anchoring, ground swells and harbor piloting directions needed to enter some of the small harbors.

Jan deGroot, *Ring Andersen* (114-foot 1948 ketch), ***et al***

I have cruised the entire range of Caribbean islands quite extensively. I was the operator of a large charter yacht during the Seventies and have since returned by chartering a bareboat on many occasions. I know every rock, reef and bump in the area. My most important piece of advice is: Don't be as cocky and arrogant as I am. Read the cruising guides.

Last February with some friends I chartered a boat in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia for a trip to Grenada. We set sail for Soufriere, where we intended to spend the night before heading for St. Vincent. When we entered the Bay, a fellow in a small speedboat came alongside and said that he would direct us to one of his mooring buoys. I said okay and followed him. After helping us tie a line to the buoy, he offered to take us ashore. I thought that would be a good idea: we wouldn't have to go through the rigmarole of launching our dinghy and attaching the outboard motor. I asked him what the cost was for the use of his buoy and the shore ferrying. He did not answer, but I thought it would probably be a reasonable charge. That was my first mistake; I should have insisted on a price.

After we had strolled around the town, he took us back to our boat. I asked, "What do I owe you?" He answered, "Three hundred dollars." "What?" I said, "You've got to be kidding!" After going back and forth, we finally settled on a price that I thought was still outrageous.

As I settled in my bunk that evening, I turned the pages of Chris Doyle's *Sailors Guide to the Windward Islands*, a copy of which was part of the boat's inventory. So far I had paid no attention to this book since I figured there wouldn't be anything in it that I didn't already know. I was wrong! The section about Soufriere clearly states that the buoys belong to the Soufriere Marine Management Association and Rangers will come and collect the fee, which amounts to EC$54. It also says that if you need help to tie a line to the buoy, a fee of EC$5, maximum EC$10, is the norm.

So, don't be a know-it-all like me! Check Chris Doyle's and other cruising guides before letting go of your mooring lines or lifting the anchor.

Kumploy Gomes, *Dee* (Gulfstar 45 Hirsch)

Bring enough money and some more! Get ready for high-priced items, from nautical stuff to imported food and clothes. And, if you love bread, learn how to bake it yourself.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

Sean Fuller, *Kaiso* (Sovereign 40)

Protecting a boat's systems against the Caribbean's strong UV and high humidity is vital. The humidity in particular leads to much higher rates of corrosion than we are used to in the north.


Sean Fuller

After a day of sailing, or when leaving the boat laid up for a while, use a hose to wash out any salt crystals which may linger and cause problems further down the line. Keep a good selection of oil and silicon lubricants and cleaners onboard. Chandleries and auto stores tend to keep a large selection of these products, with each serving a different purpose.

Regularly hosing down and protecting exposed parts will increase service life. Get canvas covers for the wheel steering and the winches, and protect any areas more prone to corrosion, i.e. between dissimilar metals. (I once had a big problem with my steering system because the stainless steel bolts welded themselves into the aluminium casting that the compass binnacle sits on.) Lanocote, made from natural lanolin, is excellent for protecting boat systems against corrosion. If you have a traditional Lewmar steering system with exposed bolts in contact with aluminum, you may find it preferable to remove the bolts, coat them in lanolin, and then re-tighten them.

Pay special attention to the stopcocks. Some European boats have stopcock handles that are made of poor quality steel and these will soon rust in the tropics. It may be best to have them changed earlier on or kept well coated in grease.

Spraying the engine with a lubricant like WD40 should help prevent surface rust, but some rusting may be inevitable.

Chrome fittings are prone to fast rates of corrosion and should be regularly washed down and polished, especially in areas such as the heads that may have less ventilation.

→

The strong UV will damage safety equipment and other fittings where they have plastic components exposed to the sun. All hatches made of acrylic should have canvas covers. Sails' stitching and UV strips will break down more quickly, so keep an eye on these.

Ruth and Niels Lund, *Baraka* (Endurance 43)

Be aware that during their busy season, marine service companies on the islands are usually fully stretched, so book ahead and don't assume instant attention is always possible. Waiting is hard when you want to get sailing, as is paying a little more, but it beats having to redo less than professional work and waste more time and money.

Obtain more than one quote and ask the right questions about guarantees, delivery expectations, materials and work methods. Use the local cruisers' networks (VHF radio and internet) to confirm excellence and seek out the core of technically skilled people that exist throughout the island chain.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

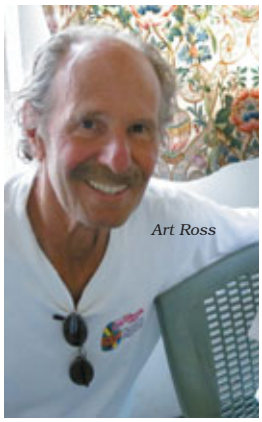
Ken Goodings, *Silverheels III* (Niagara 35)

Security is a consideration. When at anchor, never retire to bed in your unlocked boat with a dark cockpit. A moderately bright cockpit light combined with a well-secured companionway is a good deterrent to would-be boarders.

Candy Colley, *Syrius* (Endurance 40)

The Caribbean Safety and Security Net (www.safetyandsecuritynet.com) should get a mention.

Art Ross, *Coaster* (1966 Pearson), ***Stewball*** (Compac 19)


Art Ross

As a USCG Auxiliary Officer and a Certified Vessel Safety examiner, I preface my safety lessons with this:

Whether or not you're a motor boater or a sailor, or you've seen the Southern Cross or have crossed the equator, the green flash or the high latitudes, we each have the opportunity to improve our lives that comes with the promise of "another day". When teaching safe boating classes I keep this saying by Larry Pardey on the blackboard: "No amount of skill, no equipment, and no boat will keep you from disaster if you don't develop the most important seagoing skill of all: a complete fear of falling overboard."

• **SUBJECTIVE ADVICE**

GET ON ISLAND TIME

Joao Gomes, *Dee* (Gulfstar 45 Hirsch)

Bring a lot of patience to deal with the Caribbean time, especially if you plan to do some work while sailing and living aboard in the Caribbean.

Chris May, *Troubador* (Beneteau Idylle 15.50)

Patience. Island life moves at a different pace. Don't forget why you wanted to escape when you're waiting for an official or for your lunch check.

Nicola Cornwell, *Pandora* (Hanse 470e)

Have patience. You're on island time now. Once you realize this you'll learn to love it.

Sue Klumb, *Orion* (Out Island 41)

Don't compare. Just because things are handled in different ways doesn't make them wrong. Relax, feel the spirit of the island(s), embrace the change of pace and enjoy the culture.

Chris Doyle, *Ti Kanot* (42-foot catamaran)
Author, Doyle's Cruising Guides, www.doyleguides.com

After an Atlantic passage there will usually be a bunch of things broken down. But right after arrival is the worst time to get them fixed because all the other arriving boats have the same problem. If the broken bits are not that important, consider waiting to get them fixed, or go sailing and fix them somewhere else.

Meanwhile, have fun! Enjoy our beaches; they are probably what you have been dreaming about. But the Caribbean also has some magnificent rainforests, spectacular waterfalls and great hiking: explore ashore.

Get to know locals. Visit our yacht clubs, take part in informal races, maybe go on a run with the Hash House Harriers, ask about hiking clubs.

But you don't have to do it all on the first day. Take it easy and enjoy!

Willie Haskins, *Liahona* (Nautical 60 ketch)

Spend enough time on each island to appreciate the people, food, music, arts, crafts, and natural wonders of each island. Too often we encounter cruisers who speed-sail through the Caribbean on their way to the Pacific, and think they have seen it all after spending a couple of days here and a couple of days there. We've been in the Caribbean for five years, and still have not seen it all.

A corollary to this advice is to not be put off by what others have said about someplace being "dirty" or "unsafe". We have found each island/country we visited to be unique and worth exploring, and some of our favorite places are those that others have advised us to not bother going to visit!

MAKE FRIENDS

Mark Denebeim, *Sanctuary* (Island Spirit 37 catamaran)


Mark Denebeim

Get to know local people (other than tour guides, bartenders and Customs officers), and not just fellow cruisers. After all, it is a people world!

Tor Pinney, *Silverheels* (Pearson 424 ketch)

Remember, we're self-invited guests here. Be friendly, be patient, be respectful, be grateful.

Devi Sharp, formerly of *Arctic Tern* (Island Packet 45)

Say "hello" or "morning" to islanders on the street. You are a visitor and it is expected that you will reach out first. You might be rewarded with a big smile or a return "morning", or you might end up in a conversation with a friendly person. This simple act will open doors to the island.

Eat local food. Go to the fresh produce markets and try new fruits and vegetables. If you do not know how to prepare a fruit or vegetable, just ask the market vendor. People love to share their advice with you and you will have a new friend at the market.

Petra and JanWillem Versol, *Witte Raaf* (ALC40 ketch)

Don't shoo away the boat boys. Try to give them some business; they have a right to earn a living. Always try to negotiate a fair deal. Paying too much will spoil the market for other cruisers; paying too little is unfair. If you are fair with them, they will be fair with you and once you have earned their respect, they will even welcome you at their homes and you'll learn a lot about the Caribbean way of life — from the inside.

Angelika Grüner

Because many local people live on relatively small islands, everybody knows everybody. If you behave badly everybody will know it. Don't think you are something special because you own a boat.

In some islands locals come to the anchored yachts in their little boats or on surfboards, offering fruits and vegetables. Please consider that this is the only source of income for many of the islanders. Try to buy at least one thing. The produce might be a bit higher in price than at the market, but it is brought directly from the garden to you. Additionally you get a nice contact. Most locals now have a cell phone, so when sailing up and down the islands you can text your favorite veggie vendor, and when you arrive in the bay all your ordered goodies will be waiting for you.

Explore not only wind and sea, but also the people, their food, their islands. Hire a local guy who will guide you into his forest, to the waterfalls, maybe to meet his family.

Most important: People are very nice and kindly if you accept them as they are; don't try to change them. If you are long enough in the Caribbean, it is you who will change, and get adapted to the Caribbean lifestyle.

Tom and Harriet Linskey, *Hands Across the Sea* (Dolphin 460 catamaran)

Get off the tourist/yachtie track and go visit a local school — the further removed from the anchorage or marina, the better. Introduce yourselves to the principal, offer to help out, and volunteer your time at the school. It's fun and rewarding and you'll discover the true beauty of the Caribbean: the lovely kids.

Carl and Mary Heckrotte, *Camryka* (Westerly 36)


Mary and Carl Heckrotte

Wherever in the Caribbean you may anchor or dock, get off the boat, see all that your new location has to offer and meet everyone you can, both locals and fellow cruisers. When all is said and done, the friends you meet along the way and the places you visit will become a part of your heart and soul for the rest of your life. Yes, you need to take ordinary precautions to keep yourself and your boat safe (maybe more so than 20 or 30 years ago) but keep in mind that 99.9 percent of the folks along your path are good and interesting and will respond positively to your friendliness.

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

Frank Virgintino, *Raffles Light* (65-foot Garden ketch)
Author of Free Cruising Guides, www.freecruisingguides.com

Jumping to conclusions can destroy an adventure like cruising through the Caribbean. Reflect carefully on everything before making a decision. You are outside your culture, outside your geographic area, outside all of what you know about cruising except the actual "being on the boat" part. This advice applies to all areas of cruising in the Caribbean.

For example, do not assume that every boat boy is there to harass you or steal from you. Do not assume that for each repair, every person who comes to fix the boat is dishonest. Do not assume that just because you saw another sailboat sail out of the bay to the east that you can do it also; their draft may have been less than yours or it may have been high tide when they left. Do not assume because there is a spigot that you are allowed to take water or that the water is potable. Etcetera.

Mary Stone, *M/V Ms. Astor* (Californian 42 trawler)

I may not qualify as a seasoned cruiser, but it feels like I am seasoned and even overripe sometimes! I have only been cruising single-handed on *Ms. Astor* for 20 years. My advice is broad and related to the whole context of thriving in the Caribbean. It covers all topics, events and issues.

Mary's 4 Laws of Thriving in the Caribbean
1) You will figure it out.
2) Then you will get over it.
3) It will always take longer and cost more.
4) But by then it doesn't matter; move on.
... and some days it is short cycle: reset, go to Number 1 and start over.
This free advice comes with a money-back guarantee. Your mileage may vary.

Bill and JoAnne Harris, *Ultra* (53-foot custom trimaran)

Many of our days are filled with scuba diving, hiking, exploring, making new friends, fun cruiser events, and more. However, there are the days or sometimes weeks that are full of boat repairs or projects, waiting for a good weather window, etcetera. So a positive attitude with a huge side of patience and flexibility gets us through these difficult times when they arise.

Cruising the Caribbean, you will learn much about yourself, since you will sometimes be pushed to your breaking point. An extremely long passage might end up being quite different than expected, or you might have to perform a tremendously difficult task that you have never done before. After waking up and planning an amazing day of exploration in your new anchorage, you discover a broken head that must be repaired ASAP. Since there is not an 800 number to call, you are the guy for the job. This can easily turn into an all-day project. However, at the end of the day, when you are sipping your rum and Coke, you will feel proud of yourself for what you have accomplished.

So the best advice we can give is, before you set sail, be sure to stock your "spice rack" with the most important seasoning of all, great attitude! A little dash of it every day will be the best recipe for a very happy and fulfilling life aboard.

Finally, a plug for Caribbean Compass. *If there is a Caribbean cruising topic you are interested in, visit our Back Issue Archive at www.caribbeancompass.com and use the easy "search" feature. There's a wealth of information there, reflecting many years of Caribbean cruisers' first-hand experiences. And stay tuned for more!*

MAKING SAILS LAST

Part One:

Preserving Mains and Mizzens

This article is strictly for the cruising sailor who uses good old white Dacron sails or one of the long-lasting offshoots of Dacron developed for classic yachts. It is based on my personal experience of more than 70 years of maintaining sails, often under difficult circumstances, and backed up by information from Graham Knight of Antigua Sails, who has been repairing sails in Antigua since 1970. I extended the life of my engineless yawl *Iolaire*'s sails to the point that often sailmakers/repairers said to me, "It is good that everyone does not take as good care of their sails as you do, because if they did it would really cut into our sail-repair business!"

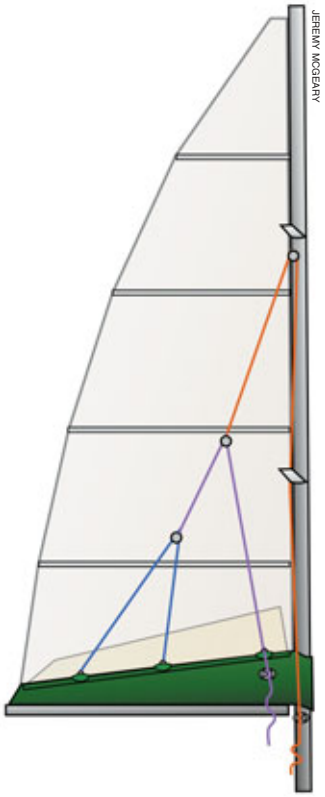
The three things that destroy sails are weak stitching, flogging and UV degradation.

Problem One: Weak Stitching

I rapidly learned the hard way that sails usually split from the leech in, seldom from the body of the sail out. When a sail starts splitting from the leech in, before you can get the sail down it will usually split all the way to the luff.

To prevent this, take your sails periodically to a sailmaker and ask him or her to check the seams and re-stitch as necessary, especially on the leech and foot of headsails. Double-stitch all seams three feet in from the leech, and also along the batten pockets if the stitching looks suspiciously weak — this will substantially increase the life of the sail.

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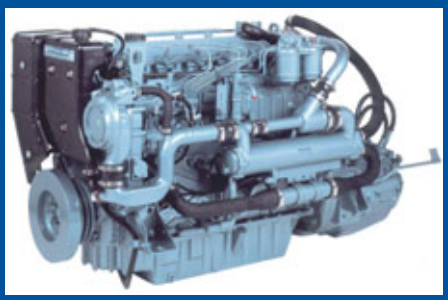


JEREMY MCGEARY

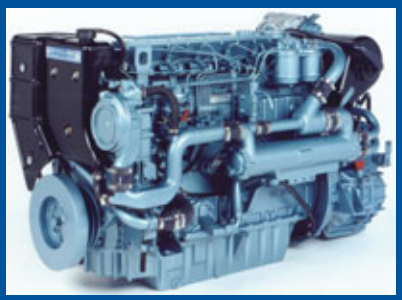
Lazy jacks as employed on Iolaire:
The upper 'coarse tune' line (red), led through a block just below the upper spreader, is used for slacking and setting up the lazy jacks
The middle 'fine tune' span (mauve) leads through a block at the end of the upper leg to a cam cleat on the sailcover
The lower span (blue) leads through a block at the end of the middle span. Its length is set when the lazy jacks are first installed
A batten supports the top edge of the sailcover and a membrane holds the sailcover flat against the hoisted sail. To facilitate removing the membrane and the cover for racing or repair, the cover is attached to the foot of the sail with a zipper and the membrane is attached to both the cover and the sail with zippers

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Also, once the sail is two or three years old the sailmaker can ascertain where the sail is chafing on shrouds and spreaders. He or she should glue on reinforcement patches for spreaders and cut narrow strips to cover the seams where they chafe on shrouds. If all this is done the life of the sail will be increased considerably.

Problem Two: Flogging

Flogging is another great cause of sail damage or destruction. My problem of flogging mainsail was solved in 1989 when Robbie Doyle gave *Iolaire* one of his first "stack packs" with a fully battened mainsail to test. We discovered a few problems as the stack pack was originally conceived. The lazy jacks were dead-ended at the masthead with adjustments via tackles at the tack. This made it impossible to obtain enough slack in the lazy jacks to allow us to set our full-length awning. Also it was impossible to set the sail unless you were absolutely head to wind. Even then there was difficulty with the lazy jacks fouling the full-length battens.

After some head scratching we came up with the solution. Install a block just below the upper spreaders. Then we lead the end of the lazy jack that was dead-ended at the masthead, through the block below the upper spreader, and down the mast to a cleat on the mast. In this way, once the main was down the lazy jacks could be eased and carried forward, allowing us to rig our full-length awning. We would leave them forward until the main was hoisted, then set them up, We used the lazy jack adjustment at the tack as the fine tuner, the one up the mast through the block below the upper spreader as the coarse adjustment.

Once the problem was solved I explained to Robbie how we rerigged the lazy jacks and his manual was rewritten for the lazy jacks to be installed in the *Iolaire* method. (See illustration.)

A fully battened sail installed in a Doyle stack pack or one of the similar units now on the market will last virtually forever.

One problem with the stack pack was in the final assembly: sewing the cover to the foot of the sail, the membrane to the cover, and then the membrane to the sail. This was a three-person job, one pulling, one pushing and one sewing. Also it was virtually impossible to repair the cover or the lower section of the sail unless you found a sailmaker who had a deep throat machine and was willing to put three people to work to do the repairs. Thus I urged that when making future stack packs the cover be secured to the sail via a zipper, the cover to the membrane via a zipper, and the membrane to the sail via a zipper. Not only would this make the stack pack easier to build, but also it would make it easy to remove the cover and membrane for repair. Built in this fashion if someone wanted to go racing it was easy to remove the cover, membrane and lazy jacks, and reinstall them once the racing was finished.

Iolaire's original stack pack was installed in 1989. After six hard seasons in the Caribbean and a transatlantic passage, it was replaced with a "Street Pack": a Doyle stack pack installed with zippers. The original was replaced not because the sail was worn out but because the cover and membrane were falling apart. Since it was all sewn together it was too difficult to repair and was replaced. The new Street Pack was installed in 1995. The cover and membrane have been removed and repaired three times but the sail was still going strong when I sold *Iolaire*, 17 years later.

Now there are many versions of the stack pack available. Before you order one, make sure the sail, cover, membrane, if it is fitted, are all connected with zippers rather than being sewn together. The lazy jacks should be rigged as per *Iolaire*, coarse adjustment alongside the mast, fine adjustment at the tack.

Fully battened sails are nothing new. The Chinese had them on their junks 2,000 years ago and in the last years of the 19th century and early years of the 20th century the sailing canoes almost all had fully battened sails. Fritz Fenger, author of that wonderful little book, *Alone in the Caribbean*, sailed his 18-foot rudderless cat ketch canoe, *Yakaboo*, from Grenada up through the islands to Saba where he had to quit because of sunstroke. *Yakaboo* was a cat ketch with stayless masts. The sails had full-length battens and were almost flat topped. As it has often been said, it is very difficult to invent anything to do with sailing. If you look back far enough in time it was done before. The new inventions are usually an old idea that works better today because of modern materials.

I will not get into the argument as to whether fully battened sails are faster than battened soft sails, but from the cruising man's standpoint the fully battened sails beat the soft sails. When you are reefing the full-length battened sail, it does not flog. If a squall comes through that the skipper feels will only be a short one, the main can be eased, completely depowering it, yet it will not flog. It may take some strange shapes but will be depowered. Once the squall passes it can be re-trimmed.

On *Iolaire*, a yawl, we left the mizzen up when at anchor so she would lie head to wind rather that tacking back and forth against the anchor rode. When it was blowing hard the soft mizzen often set up a rather bothersome chatter. However, with the fully battened mizzen there was no chatter, just a "clunk" as the battens filled port or starboard.

Problem Three: UV Degradation

In the tropics, Dacron is subject to rapid UV degradation. (Which firm makes the most UV-resistant Dacron is not a discussion in which I am willing to become involved.) The solution is simple: use a 'stack pack' or make covers of Sunbrella or a similar sun-resistant fabric — and use them *every single minute* that the sail is not in use. Make sure that the sail covers for mainsails and mizzens completely cover the entire head and luff of the sail, preferably wrapping right around the mast, and that they reach all the way back past the clew.



Don Street at the helm of the engineless Iolaire

In summation, sails are damaged or destroyed by stitching failure, flogging and UV degradation. Reread this article and follow the advice given. If you are using modern high-tech racing sails, be resigned to short life expectancy of your sails. But if you stick to plain ordinary Dacron or similar material, your sails will last for many years.

Next month: Preserving Headsails.



Tradewinds and Windows: a Caribbean Wind Primer

by Frank Virgintino

What are These Tradewinds?

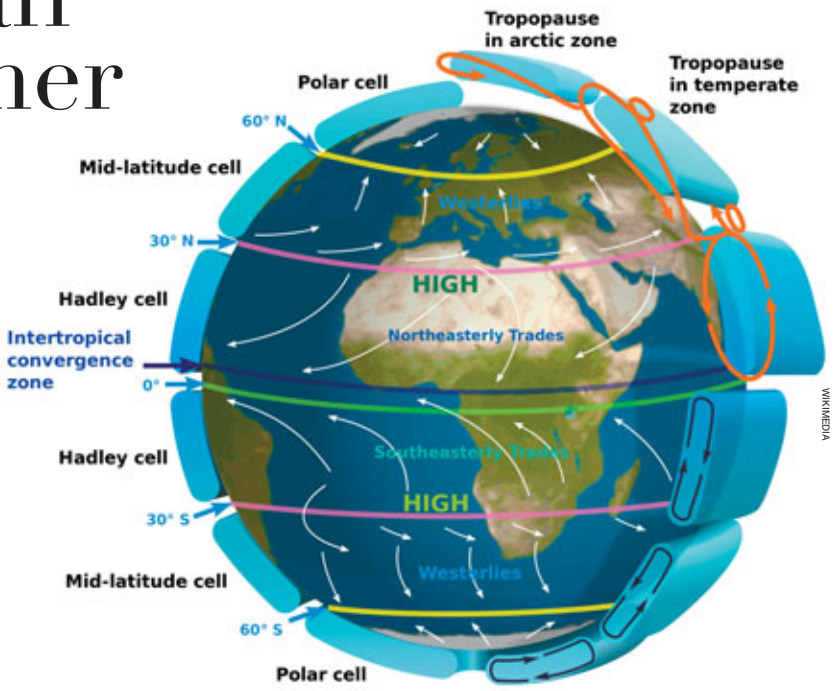
The tradewinds of the Caribbean are the prevailing pattern of winds within the lower portion of the Earth's atmosphere, found in the tropics near the Earth's equator. Sailing vessels have used the winds for time on end and cruising sailors smile at their mention. They blow predictably from east to west. In the Northern Hemisphere, the winds blow predominantly from the northeast and from the southeast in the Southern Hemisphere. Owing to what is referred to as Hadley cell circulation, surface air flows toward the equator while upper airflow is towards the poles.

How this affects Caribbean cruising sailors depends largely on the time of the year. During winter months, tradewinds are normally in the range of 15 to 20 knots. However, they are not consistent: at times they do not blow at all, while at other times they can blow at 30 knots or more for days on end. The winter trades are also dry and comfortable, having come from the African continent, passing over the Sahara Desert.

During the summer months, the tradewinds are east-southeasterly and blow in the 15- to 20-knot range and are much more consistent. These winds are not dry, like the winter tradewinds, as the wind passes from the southeast and carries a great deal of moisture and humidity. They can also bring low-pressure systems that can develop into storms and even hurricanes.

In general terms, you can sail around the Caribbean Sea during the winter months with tradewinds that are a joy to sail in with never a worry. Sailing north and south in the Lesser Antilles can be an experience without equal. Many other areas of the Caribbean Sea are easily routed, providing you are heading east to west.

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WIKIMEDIA



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One of the best strategies you can use to avoid sailing straight downwind is to crisscross the Caribbean Sea, on some type of reach. From any part of the Lesser Antilles, this makes for a good strategy. Coming from west to east is a greater challenge. The easiest way to effectively move against the prevailing wind is to employ strategies based on the idiosyncrasies of different areas.

The first is to not try to come east on the south side of the Caribbean Sea. In the area of Colombia, the fetch produces very high seas, there is an adverse current, and the winds blow stronger in that area on the average. Even if you were to sail east from the ABC islands, you would still have to buck very strong winds and stronger than average adverse currents off the coast of Venezuela. If you move in close to Venezuela to try to reduce adverse current, you risk heightened danger from what has become a crime- and piracy-ridden coast. If you stand offshore, you will have stronger winds and higher seas to contend with.

The best strategy to sail west to east in the Caribbean Sea is to utilize the southern sides of the islands of the Greater Antilles (Jamaica, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico). These islands have very considerable mountain ranges, with the Dominican Republic having the highest at over 10,000 feet. Cold air from the tops of the mountains descends (actually slides down like a river) after the sun sets and most often, if the tradewind has not been above average during the day, these katabatic winds will stall the tradewinds within three to five miles of the coast. In such cases you will find that if you use these winds after sundown, that there will be no "slog to windward." In fact on many nights, you will sail east on a port tack in light offshore winds all the way to eastern Puerto Rico.

Many cruising sailors arrive in the Caribbean Sea with the misconception that sailing is always a reach in moderate winds. That is not the case and to cruise the Caribbean, or any part of it, requires an understanding of methods to cope with the exceptions and intricacies of the trades. It is a matter of understanding and not a matter of force over nature.

You can definitely fight the tradewinds but you cannot fight them indefinitely. When you reach a point where it is simply not fun anymore, consider that you might be doing something wrong. Understanding and insight are the keys to dealing with the forces of nature. Use the tradewinds to your advantage.

The Caribbean Sea is a potpourri of winds. Some of the special wind movements that can be studied and used to one's benefit include the following.

Beware Northers

Early in the tradewind season (November through March), north winds blow from North America, sometimes with a great deal of force. These winds can extend as far south as Colombia and as far east as the Virgin Islands. Skies become grey and clouds wispy. Temperatures drop. Most often these winds can stall the tradewinds. The north shores of the Greater Antilles can become very dangerous at times of strong northers. The entire distance from Cuba to the Virgin Islands can become a dangerous lee shore. This is one of the reasons, if coming from Florida or the East Coast of the US, I favor entering the Caribbean Sea through the Windward Passage. I can sail eastward — not on a lee shore in the Atlantic, but rather in a more "user friendly" sea: the Caribbean.

In an area such as the waters around Colombia within 150 miles in any direction, tradewinds blow from the Lesser Antilles and a fetch of that distance creates higher than average tradewinds. When a strong norther interacts with such tradewinds, the area becomes virtually untenable and the winds are often referred to as "strengthened tradewinds" or "reinforced trades". Those who want to cruise to Colombia and surrounding areas might well consider heading there in April when the season for northers comes to an end. It is also a good idea as Colombia is out of the hurricane zone and late season sailing in that area is a way to avoid that danger.

Dealing with Squalls and Storm Cells

During the normal tradewind season, there can be periods of bad weather. I am not referring to hurricanes, as those mega-storms are a special class unto themselves.

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A typical Caribbean squall. When you see a rising cloud and falling rain, expect a burst of wind



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Hurricanes are not part of the normal tradewind season. Squalls are part of Caribbean weather.

A squall is a sudden, sharp increase in wind speed usually associated with "active" weather, such as rain showers and thunderstorms. Joseph Conrad wrote, "Any fool can carry on, but a wise man knows how to shorten sail in time." The most important part of dealing with squalls is to be ready for them. If you have to ask, "should we reef?" it is most likely too late!

Squally weather is predictable. The weather will be overcast and normally grey. This is not the time to be flying a genoa or large headsail. A reef in the main and a smaller headsail make good sense. The helmsman needs to know when and how to either run off or head up to heave to. Squalls pass quickly and will normally dump a great deal of rain on you. Properly handled, they are harmless.

Storm cells are a different matter and much less often encountered. Be very careful of these little "mini storms". Wikipedia tells us: "A storm cell is an air mass that contains updrafts and downdrafts and that moves and reacts as a single entity, functioning as the smallest unit of a storm-producing system." You will see them on your radar screen as a group of small round objects. They move quickly and pack a punch that can exceed 50 knots with little or no warning. If you cannot reduce sail in time, run off. The cells pass over quickly as if in a rush and are usually gone in a matter of minutes. They are most often encountered closer to land.

The Subtleties

Early in the tradewind season, when the trades blow, they normally blow harder than average. We refer to these winds as Christmas Winds. Instead of 15 to 20 knots, look for 20 to 30 knots.

Remember that wind is often predicted as "gradient wind". Gradient wind is not the same as surface wind, the wind that you will actually sail in. Surface wind is most often a few knots less than the gradient wind. Gradient will accelerate when it follows a coastline. If the weather forecast is for winds 15 to 20 knots, and you are following a long coastline, the wind may very well be five and even ten knots higher.

This is related to how wind reacts when it goes around a cape, even a small cape. The wind follows the headland and when it comes to a cape, it hits the cape at an angle and veers off, increasing in force significantly. Many times, when rounding a cape, cruisers believe that the wind is heading them, regardless of their course. If you do not follow the shore and bear off, the wind will abate and return to normal speed.

The space between islands is often referred to as a channel. As the wind blows through the channel or cut, it is "bottlenecked" and comes out the lee side of the cut at a higher velocity — and seemingly always in your face. Depending on which way you are navigating a cut between islands (i.e., into the wind or with the wind with you), you must draw a diagram in your mind to understand that the wind is shifting in every direction it can as it passes through. This becomes very important in areas like the Lesser Antilles. As you head north or south, and leave one island to make for the next, you will transit the channel. It is essential that you understand how the wind will affect you as you depart from one island and how it will affect you as you approach the next island. Many newcomers bear off as the wind heads them, only to find that they must then close the shore with the wind on the nose because they have wandered too far off a reasonable course that could have been held with a few short tacks.

These factors are exacerbated by those who insist on rhumb-line sailing. They draw a course line from one point to the next point and then try to sail it regardless of all the variations of wind that they will encounter. So often I see a boat with her headsail up and trimmed in tight and her engine working hard to maintain course. Rhumb-line sailing is dumb-line sailing. Follow the tradewinds and the peculiarities involved in tradewind sailing and forget rhumb lines. Tack, sail "full and by", and let the boat do what it was designed to do.

Low Pressure Systems and Hurricanes

During the "off" season in the Caribbean, roughly June 1st to October 31st, low-pressure systems pass through the Caribbean with regularity. Some of these systems become storms and some of the storms become hurricanes. This article is not intended to discuss hurricanes in any depth. The best thing to remember, if you are in the Caribbean during hurricane season, is to not be in an area where hurricanes normally pass through! Stay south of latitude 10 degrees north and the probability of experiencing a hurricane is reduced to near zero. If you follow latitude 10 degrees north across the Caribbean Sea, that is most likely where you will want to be.

If you cannot get that far south in time to avoid the storm, then you must find a "hurricane hole". The best hurricane hole is to be out of the hurricane zone during those months. Eugene O'Neill wrote, "The sea hates a coward." O'Neill has it right, but I have sailed the Caribbean for more than four decades, and I am no fool!

Understand the wind in all its variations and then integrate that understanding with a good weather forecast. The late author Donald Hamilton summed it up well when he said, "Being hove to in a long gale is the most boring way of being terrified I know."



The author with a friend

Frank Virgintino is the author of Free Cruising Guides www.freecruisingguides.com



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BOAT PETS AND POISONS ASHORE

by Jim Barry

MY wife, Corinna, and I, along with our Blue Heeler/Husky mix, Jack, left the US from Charleston, South Carolina on Thanksgiving Day 2014. Our 35-foot steel ketch, *Ixion*, managed well on the rough trip south and after five days of heavy weather sailing, we made landfall in the Abaco group of the Bahamas. Following a rest, we began the long crawl to windward, aiming for the Virgin Islands.



In the USVI, we had a two-month enforced break from beating to weather, as we had to have a variety of tests and shots given to Jack, so that his paperwork would be complete to legally land him on the various rabies-free islands of the West Indies. By the time Jack's test results were filed and permits were issued, the calendar had turned to June and I was anxious to be on our way down island for hurricane season.

After a hard pound to Anguilla, we finally began to enjoy some good sailing, island hopping down the Leeward chain and then on to the Windwards. After a normal amount of procedure in each country, Jack's paperwork satisfied all official requirements and he was legally cleared in to enjoy the beaches and trails. We made for Grenada, finally stopping in Carriacou on July 10th, 2015.

On our fourth day on Carriacou, Corinna rowed Jack ashore in Tyrell Bay for his morning exercise. Departing town, they walked along a winding lane that travelled through a mix of residential and agricultural properties, watched as they went by flocks of sheep and goats. Eventually leaving farms behind, Corinna arrived at what looked like open countryside that sloped downward to a remote beach on the south side of the island. She unleashed Jack and allowed him to roam the rolling terrain ahead. In 15 minutes they made it down to the beach. Suddenly Jack's breathing became heavy. He started slobbering and his ears began to twitch in an unusual manner. Corinna, who is a veterinarian, immediately suspected that he had eaten something bad and rushed with him back to the last farm gate she had passed.

By the time they made it to the gate, Jack was acting quite drunk and collapsed. Corinna called for help and was soon attended to by the property's owners. Jack began to have seizures as the farmer tried to get a mix of sugar water and milk down his throat. Some of it went in, but as the seizures grew worse, Jack could no longer swallow and Corinna called a halt to it. Jack's heart stopped beating, his pulse was gone, and his breathing became agonal. The lady of the house brought up her pickup and suddenly Jack came back, but launched straight away into another seizure. Corinna and Jack were quickly loaded into the bed of the pickup and a hair-raising race to Carriacou Animal Hospital in Hillsborough ensued, Jack seizing all the way. At the clinic, Jack was immediately given atropine, the antidote for the most commonly used poison. This stopped the worst of the seizures and he stabilized. He was put on IV fluids and admitted for the night.

The next afternoon, the veterinarian in charge determined that it would be safe for us to take Jack with us. We rented a small apartment near the harbor in Tyrell Bay, brought a few things from the boat, and settled in to nurse Jack back to health. During the fourth night, Jack couldn't get comfortable. Corinna checked his vital signs and they were slipping in the wrong direction. As early as we could, we found a taxi and departed for the Animal Hospital, but on the ride in, Jack died in Corinna's lap. A couple of hours later, we found ourselves, shocked and overwhelmed, digging a hole to bury our poor dog, in the back garden of the kind gentleman who had rented us the apartment.

Some people are unlucky, some unwise. After this loss we are still trying to reconcile ourselves in that spectrum. We knew about the existence of poisonous animals on the islands, such as cane toads, but Jack had shown no interest in them and we deemed this risk minimal. Likewise, earlier this year, a fellow cruiser had mentioned the use of poison on some of the islands, but we thought we would be safe in remote places, beyond the houses, beyond the farms, beyond the interests of man. Sadly, we have learned that poison is ubiquitous here, and there is no way to evaluate a place for safety from such an invisible hazard.

Jack was given the last drop of atropine in the Animal Hospital to stop his seizures. Shortly before our arrival, there had been a series of dog poisonings on the beach in Tyrell Bay. From that time on, we began hearing stories from local people who had seen their dogs poisoned or knew someone who had. While I can't verify these anecdotes, I have no reason to doubt them. We were told at the Animal Hospital that there was a poison in use that didn't have to be ingested, but merely inhaled deeply; mixed with a little chicken it makes an effective doggy death trap. We heard more than one story of local dogs being poisoned in their own yards, "baited" from over the fence. I must acknowledge that farmers have had real problems with feral dogs and manicou killing their livestock, but poison is an indiscriminate killer and its uses and effects travel far beyond the good husbandry of goats and sheep.

We have been told that Lannate and Gramoxone are two of the products used to poison animals here. They are both acutely toxic to humans in the concentrated form they are sold in. Their employment to kill dogs and manicou would be thought of as an "off label" use. Lannate is the trade name for methomyl, made by DuPont Chemical. It is sold as an insecticide and is licensed for use in many countries, including the US and Canada. The EU has discontinued its license for the time being. Lannate has a sobering list of warnings that come with it, saying that it can be lethal if swallowed and may be deadly if inhaled or absorbed through the skin. It kills by interrupting nerve transmissions, eventually stopping the breathing of the victim. Atropine is the antidote.

Gramoxone is the trade name for paraquat, a powerful herbicide made by Syngenta. Its active ingredient is bipyridium dichlorate. An ingredient in consumer products in many countries, it is also sold in concentrated form for farm use. Gramoxone also has a label you would want to run away from. It is toxic via all routes: ingestion, inhalation and through the skin. It can be particularly devastating when inhaled. Like many poisons, Gramoxone causes muscle twitching and seizures. Fatal accidents have occurred while mixing it and some people have taken it to commit suicide. It kills by starting a cascade of free radicals and super free radicals burning away at tissue, and is accelerated by oxygen. It can kill as much as 30 days after contact. Dogs often die in three to five days after exposure. There is no antidote.

Both of these chemical compounds are supposed to be handled by trained applicators using long-sleeved gloves, respirators and face shields. Exposure at nonlethal levels can still have terrible health consequences, including cancer and Parkinson's disease. The people laying out these poisons, or even using them for their intended purpose on the farm, are quite likely harming themselves. There is also considerable controversy over the lasting environmental effects of these poisons.

Although we will never know for certain, the way Jack died makes me think he had been exposed to more than one poison.

Finally, this is intended as a word of warning. It is not my purpose to knock Carriacou. Carriacou is lovely and we have met some very kind, good people here. The holding is good in the bay, crime against humans is low and the diving is reportedly spectacular. If you come with your dog, you have a few lines of defense:

- Leave your dog aboard.
- Ask around on shore about the use of poison and other hazards. Look for a local who is walking their dog.
- If you take your dog ashore, keep him or her on a short leash. Some people have suggested using a basket muzzle.
- On longer walks, carry a big bottle of oversaturated sugar water. Lots of sugar. The locals have told me more than one story of saving their dogs by making them swallow this before the onset of seizures. This may block some of the effects of Lannate.
- Know where the closest vet might be.

Carriacou Animal Hospital, in its third year of operation has spayed or neutered almost a thousand dogs and cats, in addition to other good, compassionate work they do on animals in the community. One can hope that as the population of strays is brought under control, there might be a shift in public opinion on the use of poison. There are petitions to stop animal poisoning in locations all over the world, but beyond this issue is the larger question of whether it is good for anyone to have these deadly chemicals so readily available in our societies, both where we come from and where we visit. Death by poison, whether quick or lingering, is a cruel ending.





Editor's note: The poisoning of dogs, cats, manicou, rats and other animals is by no means confined to Carriacou, and the dog-walking precautions Jim suggests are wise in many Caribbean islands.

Jim makes a good point that "One can hope that as the population of strays is brought under control, there might be a shift in public opinion on the use of poison." There are many local groups currently working to reduce the numbers of stray dogs and cats via free or inexpensive spay-and-neuter programs. In addition to the Carriacou Animal Clinic (www.carriacouanimalclinic.com), these include the Grenada Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (www.gspca.gd), the Vincentian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (www.vincentianspca.org), the Trinidad & Tobago Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (www.ttspca.com) and many more. We urge you to support their work.

The Sky from Mid-September to Mid-October

by Jim Ulik

The *New Horizons* spacecraft photos of Pluto are continuing to come in. In 1979 Don Dixon painted an image of Pluto. He created that image 36 years before the *New Horizons* spacecraft revealed what Pluto actually looks like. The similarities between the photographic and painted images are striking. See the image at www.cosmographica.com/spaceart/pluto-predicted.html.

Some artists inspire us with their vision of the celestial heavens that we cannot yet see through telescopes or from available spacecraft. Other artists may generate innovations that influence technology and its vision. In modern times studying the arts gets less respect. Yet it is the people who pursue these subjects as careers who allow us to enjoy theater, movies, paintings, sculpture, music, literature, etcetera. Around the time of the Renaissance, a study of the visual arts was required and an integral part of an education at a university, along with math, astronomy, literature and music. Artists of that era depicted the ancient gods, planets and other celestial objects as nude human forms. The artists also incorporated science and mathematics in their paintings or drawings while scientists incorporated art and design in their innovations or inventions. Artists and scientists, either individually or together, open up new ways of seeing, experiencing and interpreting the world around us.

The following events or observances that take place this period are being held to both enhance public awareness and education.

Wednesday, September 16th

Happy International Day for the Protection of the Ozone Layer! Named in 1995, this day celebrates the successes of the Montreal Protocol on controlling substances that deplete the ozone layer. The day recognizes the broad coalition of governments, scientific researchers, and others who have developed smart, flexible, and innovative approaches to protecting human health and the global environment.

Thursday, September 17th

The International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) will hold a summit in Mexico City. The conference hosted by the Mexican Space Agency (AEM), and sponsored by the CNES and Lockheed Martin Corp. will address all aspects of the contribution of space activities to the understanding and solving of the challenges of climate change and disaster management.

Saturday, September 19th

Astronomy Day! Local astronomical societies, planetariums, museums, and observatories will be sponsoring public viewing sessions, presentations, workshops, and other activities to increase public awareness about astronomy and our universe.

Sunday through Saturday, October 4th through 10th

It's World Space Week. The World Space Week Association (WSWA), founded in 1981, is coordinating the network of events. In 2014 there were more than 1,400 events in 80 countries that celebrated the benefits of space and space exploration including the contributions made through space science and technology. The theme for 2015 is "Discovery". Currently the closest event is in Poza Rica de Hidalgo, Mexico.

Following are the dates for viewing some celestial events.

Thursday, September 17th

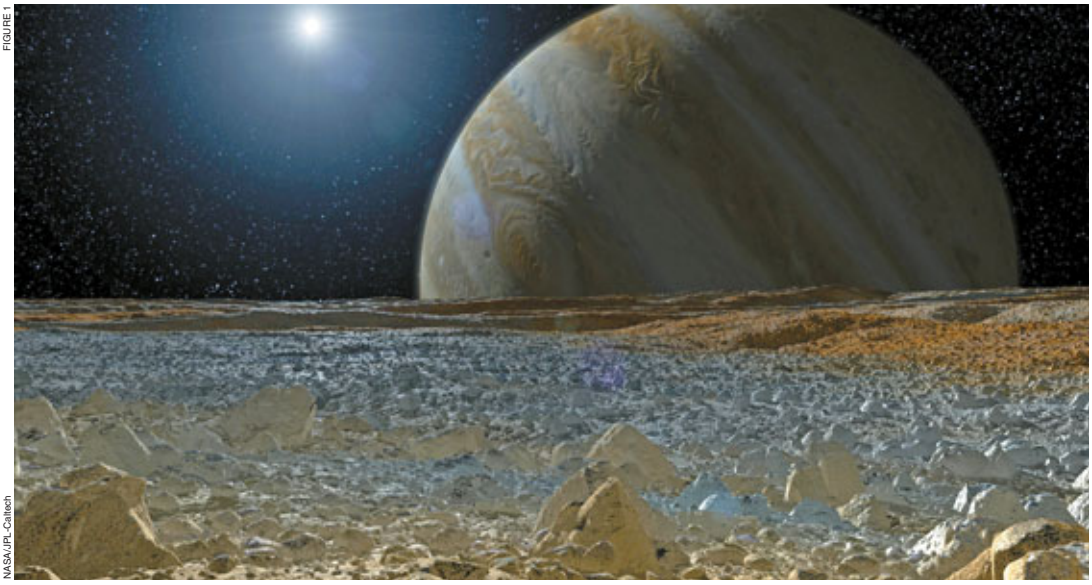
If you are up before the sun rises at 0556 you will see Jupiter near the horizon below Mars and Venus in the eastern sky. For those following the Zodiac, the Sun enters the constellation Virgo the Virgin.

Friday, September 18th

Look west around 1900. Can you spot Saturn? The ringed planet is going to be fully illuminated and less than three degrees south of the Moon.

—Continued on next page

FIGURE 1



NASA/JPL-Caltech

An artist's concept of the surface of Europa, stirring the imagination of life under that moon's oceans

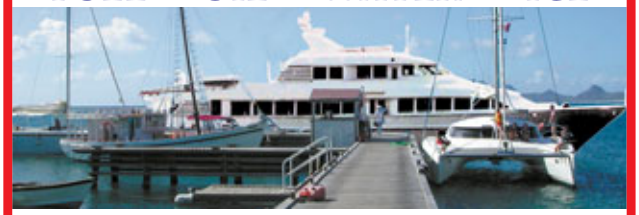


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—Continued from previous page

Wednesday, September 23rd

The Autumnal Equinox occurs at 0422. The sun will shine directly on the equator and the length of day and night is nearly equal. Sunrise is at 0556 and sunset is at 1806.

Thursday, September 24th

It will be another early morning if you want to see Mars. Shortly before sunrise Mars will be less than one degree north of the star Regulus in Leo the Lion. The red planet and the blue star will be nearly equal in brightness. You will still see Jupiter and Venus near Mars in the morning sky.

Sunday and Monday, September 27th and 28th

There will be a fiery red Full Moon on September 27th. The Moon will rise at 1747, reaching the Full Moon moment at 2250. As the Moon reaches the full stage, the Earth's shadow will begin to cover the Moon's surface. The eclipse starts at 2107. It will reach the maximum eclipse three minutes before the Full Moon. The eclipse will end at 0027 on September 28. Right at the stroke of midnight will be the second of three Supermoons for 2015. The Moon has reached its closest orbital point to Earth during this full phase.

Thursday, October 1st

Comet C/2013 US10 Catalina may reach naked eye visibility for us in the northern hemisphere. Just after sunset, find a clear view of the southwest horizon any day after September 16th. Search for the comet between 220 and 230 degrees west and ten degrees above the horizon. C/2013 US10 will continue to get brighter through October but will also become more difficult for us to see as it progresses below the horizon after October 6th. See Figure 2. The comet will be positioned at "1" on September 16th, at "2" on September 21st, at "3" on October 1st and at "4" on October 6th.

Friday, October 2nd

There is no way around it: you have to be up at night to see the stars. This morning is no exception if you want the Moon to help identify the Bull's eye star, Aldebaran, in Taurus. At 0500 Aldebaran will be about two degrees west of the Moon.

Thursday and Friday, October 8th and 9th

Back in the wee hours of the morning is the rising threesome. That would be Venus, the Moon and Regulus in a triangular arrangement in the eastern sky at 0500. What did you think I was writing about? Anyway, on October 9th the trio will be the Moon, Mars and Jupiter.

Sunday and Monday, October 11th and 12th

One day before the New Moon finds Mercury one degree north of the tiny sliver of a Moon at 0515.

Monday, October 12th

October 12th brings on the New Moon as the Moon and Sun rise and set together. If you happen to be up at 0400 you might try and see a tiny blue-green dot 30 degrees above the horizon in the western sky. That is Uranus, the farthest planet that can be seen without a telescope, at its closest approach to Earth. The planet was discovered on March 13th, 1781 by William Herschel, an English musician and amateur astronomer.

In the News

The WOW signal that was received in 1977 is still having an influence on the search for life on other planets or maybe even extraterrestrial intelligence. The WOW signal was a radio signal of apparent celestial origin received on a single frequency. It is forbidden for terrestrial transmitters to use that frequency.

Today NASA's mission to Jupiter's moon Europa is in the development stages.

The Kepler mission, a search for habitable planets, has currently found 1,030 confirmed planets and 4,696 planet candidates.

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 of S/V Merengue is a photographer and cruiser currently based in Grenada.

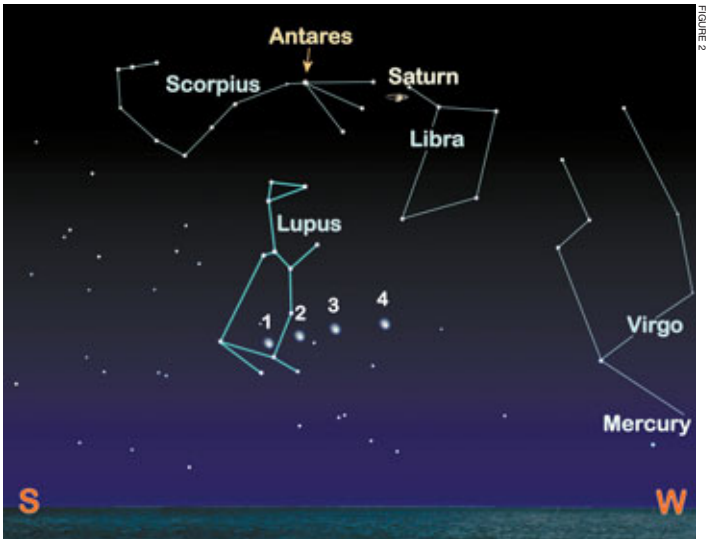


FIGURE 2

Above: The progression of Comet C/2013 US10 between September 16th and October 6th

Below: The location of the WOW signal as shown on August 15th, 1977 at 2000 hours

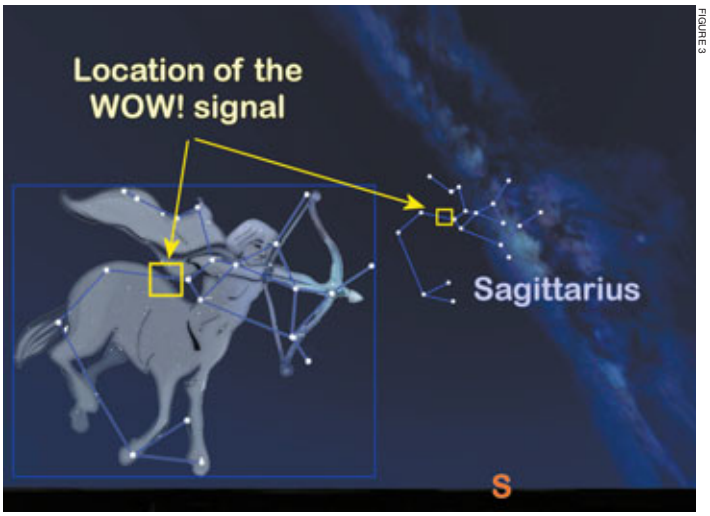


FIGURE 3

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LOOK OUT FOR...

A Peek at the Pineapple

by Lynn Kaak



As you travel through the Caribbean, every month there's something special to look out for. The pineapple (*ananas comosus*), while often associated with Hawaii and the Pacific, is actually native to South America. The indigenous peoples of the Caribbean carried and propagated this fruit throughout the islands of the Caribbean, where the plants continued to flourish. Eventually the Europeans stumbled upon this delicious fruit (some say Columbus encountered it in Guadeloupe in 1493) and took it to the Pacific.

The scientific name is derived from the Tupi word for the fruit, *nanas*, which means "excellent fruit". "Comosus" means tufted, referring to its spiky crown. Many languages including French adopted the name "ananas" for the fruit. The name "pine apple" is derived from a bit of mistaken identity, as the Europeans thought that the fruit resembled a pinecone. The Spanish simply call it "piña", and you'll hear some folks on the English-speaking islands also call them "pines".

The pineapple is a bromeliad, making it part of a group of plants that originated almost exclusively in the Americas; Spanish moss is a bromeliad, too.

The pineapple plant itself has a short stalk and large spiky, waxy leaves, and can attain heights of 1.5 metres (five feet). The plant actually looks quite a bit like the top of a pineapple. The 200 or so flowers that are produced join together into what will eventually become the fruit. The ovaries of the flowers turn into berries, which then coalesce into the flesh that we know of. This fruit grows from the stem, getting taller and wider with time.

The succulent fruit grows best where the temperatures are 20°C to 30°C (70°F to 85°F), and requires a moderate amount of water, although the plant is able to retain some moisture in its leaves. Pineapples also love sunshine. It takes roughly 12 to 20 months for a new plant to get to the point that it creates flowers, and six months more before the first fruit ripen. The first fruit from each plant tend to be small, but they become progressively larger over the next couple of years of fruit bearing. Small offshoot growths, called suckers, are also created, and may be removed and replanted, or left on the plant to create more fruit. A plant can also be started by cutting the top off the fruit and planting it.

The fruit and plant are good sources of bromelain, a natural meat tenderizer, and the fruit is considered a natural anti-inflammatory. The qualities that make it a good meat tenderizer also make pineapple more difficult to work with in gelatins and jams. Once picked, a pineapple will not become riper, so saving it a few more days after purchase won't make any difference in taste; however, it may start to perish. It should be okay for about two days without refrigerating or about a week if you put it in the cooler.

Now, piña coladas anyone?

EASY-PEASY ONBOARD ENTERTAINING

Tide's Table

By Ross Mavis

Entertaining guests on board should never be onerous. As a matter of fact, it should be just the opposite. It should be enjoyable for both guests and hosts.

I would often get trapped into thinking that the most elaborate recipes — taking much time, effort and expense — were necessary. My wife, however, being much more intelligent than I, would tell me to ease my mainsheet. "You don't need to impress people with your culinary talents," she wisely would counsel. "Our guests are here to visit with us first and foremost and any food and drink is an added treat." Only after getting much older and should I say, somewhat wiser, my entertaining efforts have been put "in irons" — and the guests don't seem to mind. Simple and succulent, inexpensive and less time-intensive snacks will be met with much favor.

The other evening, we had a few unexpected folks on deck for some cold beverages and light snacks. The gathering was fun for all and couldn't have been easier. My wife opened a couple of tins of smoked oysters and smoked mussels, spread some lightly toasted rye bread squares with mayonnaise and put an oyster or mussel on



each piece, adding a sprinkle of chopped fresh herbs from our potted deck garden and voila, finger food fit for royalty.

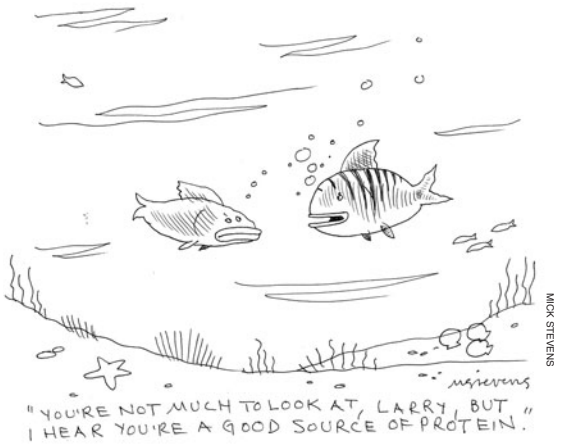
When making a Thai dish for my wife and myself, I toast some extra sesame seeds and store them in a jar. Then, with little more than the always-handy peanut butter and commercial sweet chili sauce we keep on board, I'm ready to turn leftover cooked chicken or beef bites into a finger food fiesta. A box of simple commercial whole grain crackers lightly spread with peanut butter, topped with cooked chicken or beef, drizzled with sweet chili sauce and enhanced with a sprinkle of toasted sesame seeds will bring guests to their feet with shouts of *olé*!

Dishes of pickles, cheese chunks, nuts and chips can be added to round off any modest offering. Cold beverages offered to quench one's thirst and your entertaining success is guaranteed. Nothing could be easier. If I had only learned this many years ago, I could now have been living aboard a much larger yacht. I'm sure I wouldn't be any happier, however.

This weekend we are going to a party onshore and here is what we will take as an appetizer: a packet of sliced ham, spread with cream cheese and wrapped around pickles and stuffed olives. Once these rolls have chilled slightly in the icebox we will slice them into finger-size bites. They, like us, are always well received.

So if the next occasion to welcome guests on board has you in a turmoil, remember "easy-peasy", "Bob's your uncle" or any other catch phrase that will put your mind into simplicity mode for onboard entertaining. I know you will get kudos from your guests.

COMPASS COMICS







THE WINDYTY.COM WEBSITE

Hi, *Compass*,

I have just become familiar with your magazine and have thoroughly enjoyed it. I am anxiously awaiting the next issue.

When you printed the weather websites in the June issue, the WindyTy.com website was overlooked. It is a great site showing the speed and direction of the wind for 14 days in about three hour increments. Obviously neither is that accurate after two days, but it is a great way of seeing what may be coming. Please mention them in a next issue.

Love the magazine!

Henk Koornstra
S/V Windhover

THANKS TO THE SCOTTISH CAPTAIN

Dear 'Scottish Captain',

You have written an excellent article in the July issue of *Compass*, outlining your thoughts for cruisers planning to remain in the Windward Islands during hurricane season. It is pleasing to me to find someone who has read and analyzed what I have written over the years regarding hurricanes.

My one difference of opinion with what you have written is that I feel that the boats that left Grenada before Hurricane Ivan and headed west to Venezuela would have been better off if they had headed south to Trinidad, but not to Chaguaramas. Rather they should have continued south to Point-à-Pierre. They would have been at 10 degrees north, 120 miles south of the center of the hurricane. With good anchoring gear they would have had no trouble.

Thanks again for your article,

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

ARUBA CHECK-IN PITFALLS

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

I read Mira Nencheva's article on Aruba in the August issue, and while I would agree with some of the "rose tinted glasses" content I really would like to qualify the statement that Aruba is easy to check in and out of.

My partner, John, and I arrived on June 10th in strong winds (there are always strong winds around Aruba!) having put the hook down overnight in Rogers Lagoon in order to arrive in daylight. On contacting Aruba Port Control when 30 minutes or so away we were instructed to wait outside the Port for an hour and then try again.

It was blowing 30 to 35 knots and waiting in a sailboat was uncomfortable but hove to we waited and tried to contact Aruba Port Control again but with no success. We were not alone: there were two other boats trying to do the same. Finally after nearly two hours we lost our patience, called Renaissance Marina and asked if they could help. Xiomara at the marina said she would call on the telephone and see what was happening, which she did and — hey, presto! Suddenly Aruba Port Control was contactable.

We made our way to the Customs Quay, tied up to bollards and waited. It is indeed true that the Customs and Immigration come to you but even with springlines we bounced against the big black tyres on the dock, waiting to complete the process for three and a half hours. It was easy, yes, but also very frustrating! Oranjestad is a commercial port, there are cruise liners arriving and departing every few days, and yachts appear to be low in their list of priorities. With black marks all along the port side of *Orion1*, our Amel Maramu, from the tyres, on leaving we had to repeat the process all over again but this time we were prepared with the port side lined with fenders to get black this time.

Clearing out was different again. Having checked and been told we were clear to go around to the Customs Dock by Aruba Port Control, we got there to find a large barge tied to the quay with its long lines taking up half the quay and a small container ship reversing out just as we were docking. This time Customs and Immigration could not wait to get rid of us, stamping our passports and paperwork in 20 to 25 minutes and then telling us we must be out of the dock in five minutes as there was a large ship coming in!

Tourism and cruise ships are two of the important drivers of the economy in Aruba but yachts are not high on their list of priorities. The staff at Renaissance Marina were great and indeed apologetic for the pitfalls of checking in and out, reportedly having tried on countless occasions to get the Customs and Immigration to come to the marina to at least check yachts out but the reply has always been an emphatic no!

So, yes, once you are on the quay the check-in process is easy if not frustrating, but if you are single-handed or the weather is poor and there are commercial vessels due in, then it is tricky and by no means an easy process.

Deb Woods
Orion1

GIVE THEM ENOUGH ROPE

Dear *Compass*,

We have a 42-foot catamaran. Our stay in Aruba was marred by a persistent pelican. This brute delighted in poo-ing over large areas of our foredeck. As Nan Hatch commented in her poem in the August issue, the poo dried, very rapidly, into concrete.

Every device imaginable was used to deter the pelican: black plastic bags, CDs strung along the lifelines, and the like, all to no avail. It even landed on the flapping plastic bags!

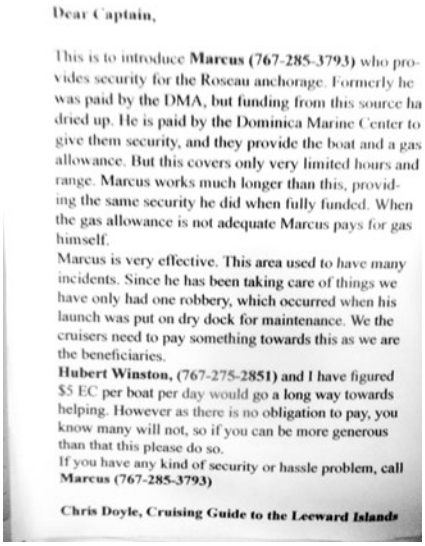
The solution to my woes dawned on me: rope! I criss-crossed my foredeck with line, about two feet off the deck, not dissimilar to a draughts board, creating two-foot squares of space — small enough to prevent the beast from landing or taking off, but wide enough for me to "hurdle" across the foredeck. The pelican gave up and I had a clean deck!

Regards,
Bernard Logan
S/V Beesmej

SECURITY IN ROSEAU, DOMINICA

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

I thought you and your readers might like to know of recent developments regarding the security in the Roseau anchorage area in Dominica.



Dear Captain,

This is to introduce **Marcus (767-285-3793)** who provides security for the Roseau anchorage. Formerly he was paid by the DMA, but funding from this source ha dried up. He is paid by the Dominica Marine Center to give them security, and they provide the boat and a gas allowance. But this covers only very limited hours and range. Marcus works much longer than this, providing the same security he did when fully funded. When the gas allowance is not adequate Marcus pays for gas himself.

Marcus is very effective. This area used to have many incidents. Since he has been taking care of things we have only had one robbery, which occurred when his launch was put on dry dock for maintenance. We the cruisers need to pay something towards this as we are the beneficiaries.

Hubert Winston, (767-275-2851) and I have figured $5 EC per boat per day would go a long way towards helping. However as there is no obligation to pay, you know many will not, so if you can be more generous than that this please do so.

If you have any kind of security or hassle problem, call **Marcus (767-285-3793)**

Chris Doyle, Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands

For the last few years security has been very good here due to the security provided by Marcus in his RIB, funded by contributions from the Dominica Marine Association (DMA), the local trade body.

We were disappointed to discover that, on our last visit to Roseau, in June, this funding is no longer in place and that while Marcus is still providing security this is now reliant on the generosity of his employer, the Dominica Marine Centre, and Marcus' conscientious work ethic. To meet the shortfall in funding he is asking for voluntary contributions of visiting yachts of EC$5 per boat per day. It is a shame that the DMA funding is no longer in place as we believe it was a small cost to all business involved.

While we were happy to make our contribution to the security during our visit, perhaps the DMA could look at re-instating the funding, as good safety and security benefits all in the area, and it appears that there are those who are benefiting without contributing.

—Continued on next page



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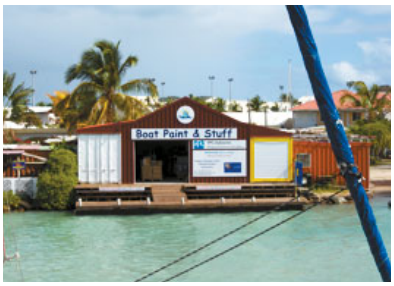
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—*Continued from previous page*

I have attached the 'flyer' that is being handed to boats regarding the funding situation.
Richard Mayhew
S/Y Galene

Dear Richard,
We forwarded your letter to Hubert Winston of the Dominica Marine Centre and cruising guide author Chris Doyle, who has assisted Marcus, for their responses, which follow.
CC

This is a flyer I designed and printed for Marcus. The problem is that the Dominica Marine Trades Association is defunct. I think it is great that DMC, as a private business, is already partially funding Marcus. We did talk to the Minister of Tourism to see if the government of Dominica could take over the funding. This may or may not happen. In the meantime we, the yachtspeople, are the obvious beneficiaries, and I think we should be happy to make a contribution to our own security. From a personal point of view, I appreciate the work Marcus does and gave significantly more than the recommended contribution, because at that point he was basically working for free. But if we are all willing to chip in a little, it should work.
Chris Doyle

I have copied Richard's e-mail to the tourism department; I also copied Chris's response to them and I think it has started to move a few people towards hearing our cries.
Meanwhile, I am still paying for the security boat, security boat fuel and Marcus, security personnel.
Will keep you guys posted.
Hubert Winston, Dominica Marine Center
18 Victoria Street, Roseau, Dominica
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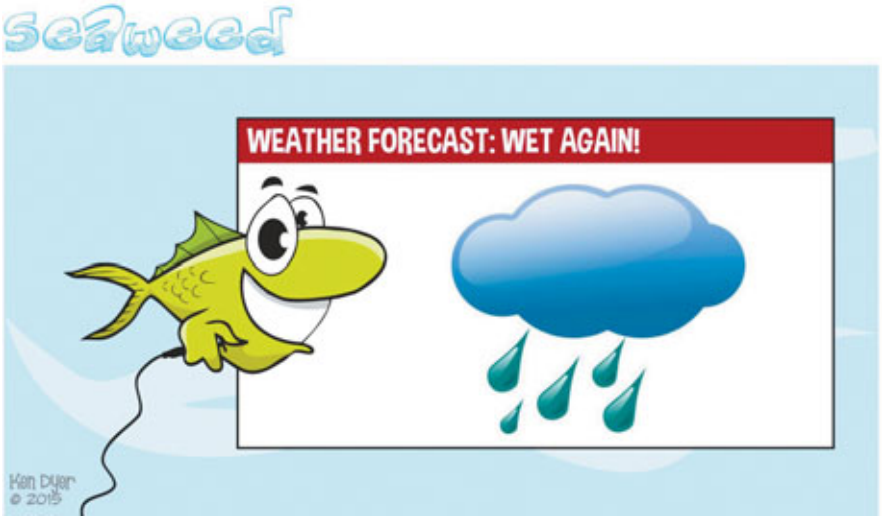
AN ARTIST IN PORTSMOUTH, DOMINICA
Dear *Compass* Readers,
In our second year in the Caribbean we finally had the chance to visit one of the best-known touristic places in Dominica. Personally I'm not very attracted to tourist locations but this one, after spending one year hearing everyone we met talking about it, had to be visited!
In our previous stop in Dominica we had decided to stay in its capital, Roseau, after an ordeal of several days at sea with technical problems on board. Roseau was a welcoming and a safe port for us to lick our wounds! However, staying in the capital of the Nature Island didn't give us the chance to visit other places and we were too tired to move anywhere. So, this time, we went directly to the place everyone told us to visit: Portsmouth.
My wife and I had the chance to meet a very interesting artist one night in one of the few restaurants in Portsmouth that were serving dinner at that time of the year.
We are against giving money to beggars and avoid even donating money to charities because we never know where it will end up. When someone asks us for money we always ask if they want to eat. If they say yes we would buy them a meal or invite them to join us at the table.
However, this time we were surprised that the "beggar" didn't just ask us for money for food or drinks, he promptly told us that if we gave him some money he would draw us a picture. We were inclined to invite him to our table, but the restaurant management made it clear that he was not welcome inside the place. Those were the owner's orders, explained the waitress.
The artist didn't seem bothered with the situation and stayed in the sand doing his work on a piece of paper he found somewhere while we had our dinner overlooking the bay at night.



When we finished eating he came near us, approaching the veranda of the restaurant from the beach side, and explained his artwork. It was the bay with its hills at sunset and with our sailing boat, *Dee*, in the background.
We heard the waitress trying to hide a merciful laugh when she saw the paper he gave us. But for us, even if the drawing was of bad quality and childish, what counted was his attitude. He didn't beg for money or food, he worked for it and felt proud of his work. And, art is art, it doesn't matter in what form you do it.
We have kept the drawing until today: we have it in our boat on the wall near the navigation desk. It's a naive work, but it made us feel warm and happy with this man after being disappointed in some other ways with our stop in Portsmouth.
If you decide to stop here on your next trip to Dominica, look for Sheldon Hamilton from Lagoon village, because he deserves a visit. He does other artistic work with wood, too, but we didn't get the chance to see it because we were leaving the Nature Island the next day for Martinique.
Joao Gomes
Yacht Dee

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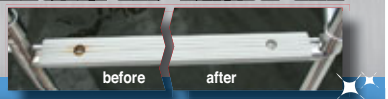
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3	Nereid's Rally start from Chaguaramas, Trinidad. www.marinaslm.com/rally
6 and 20	Barbados National Dinghy Championships. Barbados Yacht Club (BYC), www.barbadosyachtclub.com
6	Public holiday in Bonaire (Bonaire Day)
10	Public holiday in Belize (St. George's Caye Day)
15 – 29	Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival. www.ttfilmfestival.com
16	Ozone Layer Preservation Day. www.un.org/en/events/ozoneday
16	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (National Heroes' Day)
19	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Independence Day)
19 – 20	Back To School Regatta, Tortola. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), www.royalbviyc.org
21	Public holiday in Belize (Independence Day)
23	Autumnal Equinox
24	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Republic Day)
25 – 27	Palito Seco International Regatta, Barahona, Dominican Republic.
27	FULL MOON

OCTOBER

2 – 3	Caribbean Sea Jazz festival, Aruba. http://www.carnifest.com/events
3	Public holiday in St. Lucia (Thanksgiving Day)
4 and 18	Barbados National Dinghy Championships. BYC
7 - 10	Bonaire International Sailing Regatta. www.bonaireregatta.org
10	Public holiday in Curaçao (Curaçao Day)
11 – 12	Columbus Day Regatta, St. Thomas USVI. St. Thomas Yacht Club (STYC). www.styc.net
12	Public holiday in the Bahamas (National Heroes' Day), Colombia (Dia de la Raza) and Venezuela (Indigenous Resistance Day)
13	Public holiday in Belize (Pan American Day)
16 –18	Caribbean Dinghy Championships, Puerto Rico. Club Náutico de San Juan (CNSJ). www.nauticodesanjuan.com
17	Public holiday in Haiti (Anniversary of the Death of Dessalines)
19	Public holiday in BVI (St. Ursula's Day)
23 – 26	Caribbean Sailing Association Conference, St. Maarten. vp@caribbean-sailing.com
24	Public holiday in Jamaica (National Heroes' Day)
25	Foxy's Halloween Catfight (catamaran regatta), Jost Van Dyke. BVI. www.foxysbar.com/halloweencatfight
25	Public holiday in Grenada (Thanksgiving Day)
27	FULL MOON
27	Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Independence Day)
30 – 1 Nov	Trophée Jeff Campana (ex Triskell Cup) www.triskellcup.com
30 – 1 Nov	World Creole Music Festival, Dominica. www.wcmfdominica.com

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

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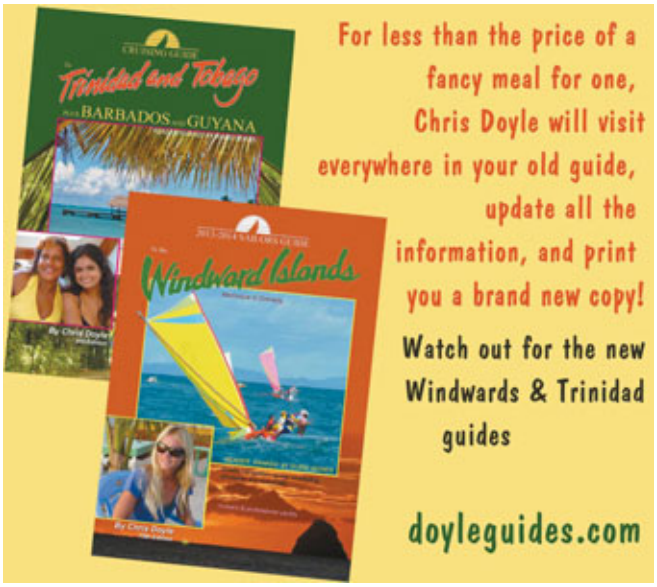


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A Speck of White in the Deep Blue

by Monica Pisani



Deciding what to do for hurricane season 2015 was painful, as my captain and I struggled with our own conflicting desires and needs. Once all points were considered, and reason spoke over heart, we both agreed that, although it was a bit late in the season, we should sail back to the USA with as few stops as possible. Although it felt great to have a plan, my heart felt vulnerable and a bit sad.

We left at mid-morning for a longer journey than usual. It was one of the last days in May and we were leaving St. Thomas and dear friends behind.

We sailed through Puerto Rico, once again, and we were reminded of how the island's music brought friends and families together on weekend-long life celebrations.

Once we left the Dominican Republic and headed towards the Bahamas, we had a few overnights and long days ahead, which meant a lot of uncommitted time — a perfect breeding ground for reflection.

Captain and *Journey* (our 42-foot Tatoosh) were happy. We were sailing on a broad reach, *Journey's* favorite tack; the seas were perfectly calm and a steady easterly trade of 15 knots filled her sails. The sun was setting on the port bow, and the moon, still low in the sky, could be seen behind us, preparing to illuminate our path during the night ahead.

As far as the eye could see, there was nothing but sky, horizon and ocean. No land in sight, no sailboats, no cargo or cruise ships, just us. A little speck of white on the deep blue sea as we navigated across some of the deepest waters on the planet. The sound of the water, as *Journey* glided through it, was exhilarating. It conveyed freedom and the adventure of a journey one can only fully grasp if experiencing it firsthand.

I felt overwhelmed with gratitude. Gratitude for being one of the chosen few to experience life at sea, as we had for the past two years. The scenery was, as always, incredibly beautiful, and often surreal with its mix of blues, greys, silvers, and a daily dose of orange, pink or tangerine. We lived our days surrounded by nature and its creatures, our energy came from the sun, and we moved because the wind blows.

Although living in a sailboat is an amazing life, it does not come without its share of compromises and challenges. At first, it seemed like a simple life, and in many ways it was. But living almost off the grid, and having a series of situations that require new skills, brought self-reliance to a new level, and also redefined "simple". On the personal level, coping with the emotional, physical and mental challenges was exhausting. Only once the new life became routine, the focus on this awesome lifestyle and appreciation for the opportunity was reinstated.

The night fell; thunderstorms could be seen far away behind us, the moon lit up the night as I sat behind the helm with my reliable companions, Garmin and the very noisy autopilot. As my captain slept soundly, I contemplated; I absorbed the moment, as the smoothness of the seas hypnotized me. *Journey*, oblivious to me, moved gently in a rhythmic stride, leaving behind a trail of white lace that would soon dissolve into the blackness of the sea, eliminating all evidence of our presence.

'We had a few overnights and long days ahead... a perfect breeding ground for reflection'



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Published by Compass Publishing Limited, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and printed by Guardian Media Limited, Trinidad & Tobago