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COMPASS
SEPTEMBER 2020 NO. 300
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

GETTING TRINIDAD BACK ON COURSE

— Story on page 10

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SEPTEMBER 2020 • NUMBER 300



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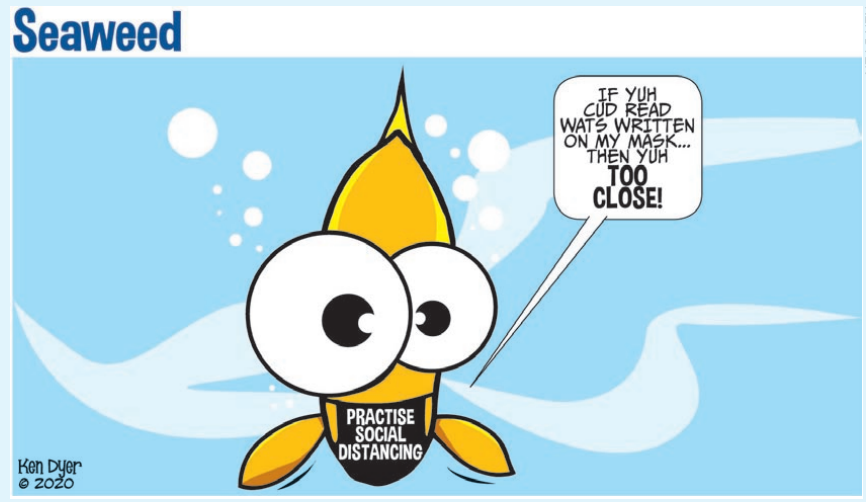
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On the cover: Yachts hauled out at Peake Yacht Services in Chaguaramas. Trinidad's yachting association, YSATT, is working hard toward the yacht service sector's revival. *See story on page 10.*



Info & Updates

Welcome to the 300th issue of Caribbean Compass*! This milestone issue arrives in our Silver Jubilee 25th year of publication. We are proud that our readers, contributors, staff and advertisers together have brought us to this landmark occasion, and we look forward to sharing many more issues with you of The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea and Shore.*

Cruising Through Covid with Noonsite

Sue Richards reports: Having survived the storm of border closures in March/April, we are now seeing the majority of countries starting to open up again: some cautiously with tight restrictions in place including prior permission and a negative Covid test, others flinging open the doors with nothing more than a health questionnaire to complete prior to arrival.



DAVID CAREY

Be prepared: conditions may have changed by the time you arrive at your next destination.

Right now, any skippers thinking of cruising between countries should be aware that rules and regulations are in a constant state of flux during the pandemic and borders are tentatively open. As cases of Covid-19 spike once again we are seeing regional border closures and concern over a second wave in many parts of the world. Travel bubbles mean that one day your country of departure may be low-risk, and the next high-risk, so freely cruising is still a complicated process.

Be prepared: conditions may have changed by the time you arrive at your next destination, so have all possible paperwork in order, including a comprehensive crew list and cruising history for the boat at least for the last six months, plus a well-kept log of all crew on board and their health status including daily temperature checks. (You might not be asked for all this, but it's good to have in case.) Bear in mind that quarantine may be required on arrival so have plenty of food, water and fuel on board. You may only be granted entry if all crew have negative Covid test results obtained 48 hours prior to departure from your last port. Have enough cash on board to cover tests on arrival should this be needed. Consider employing an agent (which in many countries is now obligatory) to ease entry, prepare all the correct paperwork, and keep you informed should the situation and/or requirements change while you are on passage.

Keep abreast of all the latest requirements through Noonsite's country biosecurity sections at www.noonsite.com

Devices That Can Save Lives

Glenn Tuttle of Boatwatch.org reports: This is a plea to bluewater cruisers. Please have multiple means of long distance two-way communications on your vessel.

The most common and efficient is an SSB radio and a Garmin inReach. I have no financial interest in any product, but I can tell you that both devices can save your life. The problem with an EPIRB alone is you can't be sure the distress signal has been received and is being acted upon.

A Garmin inReach uses the Iridium system of satellites which are in service throughout the world. Pushing the SOS button enables you to trigger a distress signal, receive confirmation that help is on the way, and maintain a two-way text conversation with the GEOS emergency monitoring center. GEOS is standing by 24/7 to assist with your emergency, track your location and notify the most appropriate emergency response for your unique situation. Whenever, wherever — the GEOS team will stay in communication with you until your situation is resolved.

The SPOT tracker, which uses the Globalstar satellite system, does not provide true global coverage. There are areas of no satellite coverage in the mid-Atlantic, for example — not good for transatlantic cruisers.

If you don't think you need a satellite tracker, Boatwatch.org recently worked with the wife of a missing sailor who would have given anything if her husband had installed a working satellite tracker on board. If you don't do it for yourself, do it for your family and friends who may be anxious when a vessel is overdue or missing.

Eight Bells

• DAVE THOMAS

Jeffrey Izzaak reports: Dave Thomas, who was a member of the *Gli Gli* Carib canoe sailing expedition (1997), has died. His lifeless body was found in the Hillsborough Bay, Carriacou, on Friday, July 10th. Reports say that earlier in the day, …

—Continued on next page



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…Dave was seen on the streets of Hillsborough and then swimming. A resident whose property adjoins the beach noticed the floating body just offshore and raised the alarm. His death was determined to be as a result of drowning. He was 50 years old.

Dave, whose maternal grandmother was brought from Venezuela to Carriacou as a child in 1910, was recognized to be of Carib ancestry by the Caribs of Dominica, who were retracing the voyage made by their ancestors from the South American mainland, in the *Gli Gli*, a 35-foot traditionally-built dugout log canoe. He joined them on their stop in Carriacou, hoping to find some trace of his grandmother's relatives. The *Gli Gli* expedition entered the Orinoco delta and then sailed to Guyana where they were hosted by the Carib community of the upper Pomeroon River.



IZZAAK

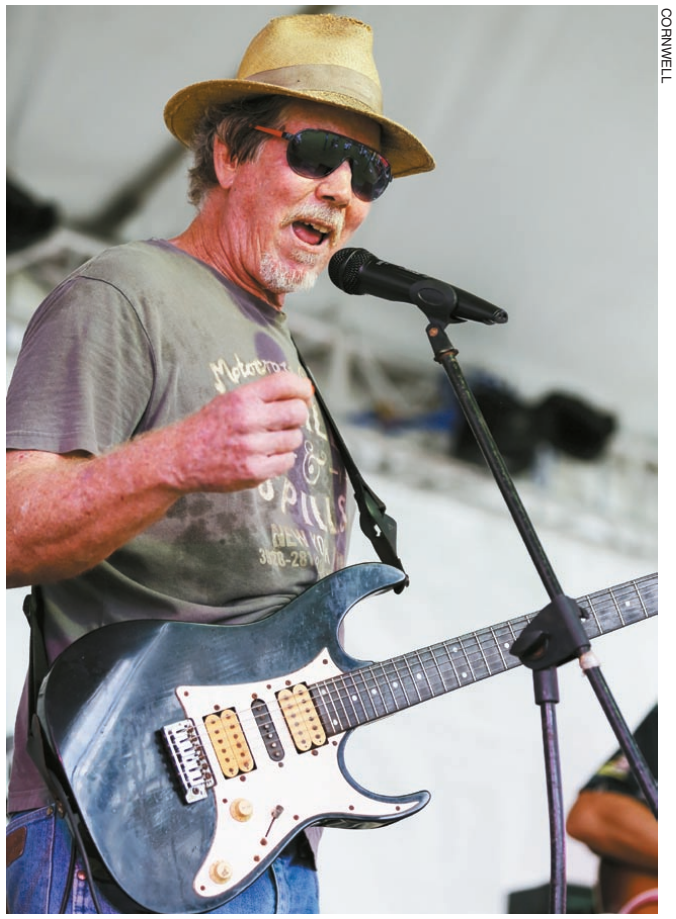
- ROBERT "BOB" BERLINGHOF

Best known to *Compass* readers as a long-time book reviewer and writer of island-based fiction, Bob Berlinghof passed away in the US on July 14th while undergoing cancer treatment. He was 69 years old.

Born in Pennsylvania, Bob loved sports and learned to sail in his youth. He received a Bachelor's degree in English from Yale University, where, as a pacifist, he led demonstrations against the Vietnam War. After travels in India and the Middle East, and a stint as a house painter in San Francisco, in 1977 Bob came to St. Vincent & the Grenadines to run his father's charter boat, *Apogee*, an Alan Gurney-designed Carib 41 that had just come out of the CSY bareboat fleet at Blue Lagoon.

Music was central to Bob's life. He arrived in the islands with two guitars and a banjo, and throughout his life continued to make music with a number of groups in St. Vincent and Bequia, including cruiser favorite the Bequia Blues Band, which was a regular at the annual Bequia Music Fest.

Moving ashore on Bequia and establishing the popular Maranne's Ice Cream with his wife (Maranne, of course), he became known as "Ice Cream Bob." They raised two sons, Bret and Ross, on the island.



CORNWELL

A celebration of Bob's life will be held in Bequia on September 19th.

—Continued on next page

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MEDITERRANEAN ► US EAST COAST			
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Mar 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Apr 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	May 2020
Taranto	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Aug 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Sep 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Sep 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Oct 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Oct 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Nov 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Nov 2020

MEDITERRANEAN ► CARIBBEAN			
Genoa	-	St. Thomas	Apr 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	St. Thomas	Oct 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Le Marin	Nov 2020
Genoa	-	Le Marin	Nov 2020

US EAST COAST ► CARIBBEAN			
Ft. Lauderdale	-	St. Thomas	Nov 2020

CARIBBEAN ► US EAST COAST			
St. Thomas	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Mar 2020
St. Thomas	-	Ft. Lauderdale	May 2020
Le Marin	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Nov 2020
Le Marin	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Dec 2020

US EAST COAST ► MEDITERRANEAN			
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	Mar 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Genoa	Apr 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Genoa	May 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	May 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Taranto Italy	May 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Genoa	Sep 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Genoa	Oct 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	Oct 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	Nov 2020

CARIBBEAN/US EAST COAST ► SOUTH PACIFIC			
Le Marin	-	Papeete, Brisbane, Auckland	Nov 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Papeete, Brisbane, Auckland	Nov 2020



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—*Continued from previous page*

• HOWARD "HODGE" TAYLOR

Born in 1943 in Darbyshire, UK, Hodge Taylor sailed into the Grenadines aboard *Ticonderoga* in the early 1970s. He had learned to sail at the Burton Sailing Club in Derby, England, and worked for Lloyd's of London as a marine surveyor.



FORD

At Petit St. Vincent, Hodge met assistant manager Betsy Baldwin, who became his wife. They settled in Bequia, where Hodge continued his surveying work and ran a chandlery in Port Elizabeth in the location that is now the Chameleon Café. Their son, David, was raised in Bequia.

Hodge was a founding member of the Bequia Sailing Club (see story on page 7), and raced his double-ended 33-foot 1925 gaff cutter, *Moonbow*. Bequia Easter Regatta legend has it that the crew of *Moonbow* was allowed to take its own race finish times, as they always crossed the line after the race committee had gone home. But if *Moonbow* was not a racer, Hodge was an excellent tactician, helping the Bequia team to wins at the regional match races once held in St. Lucia aboard modern boats.

Interested in music and writing as well as sailing, Hodge wrote an unpublished children's book called *Dingolay* and sat in on congas whenever music jams were held.

He died in the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital in Kingstown, St. Vincent on August 3rd and was buried in the Port Elizabeth cemetery in Bequia.

New SSCA Webinar Series

Joan Conover reports: The Seven Seas Cruising Association has announced a new monthly SSCA Webinar series featuring our worldwide Cruising Station Hosts (CSH) as panelists.

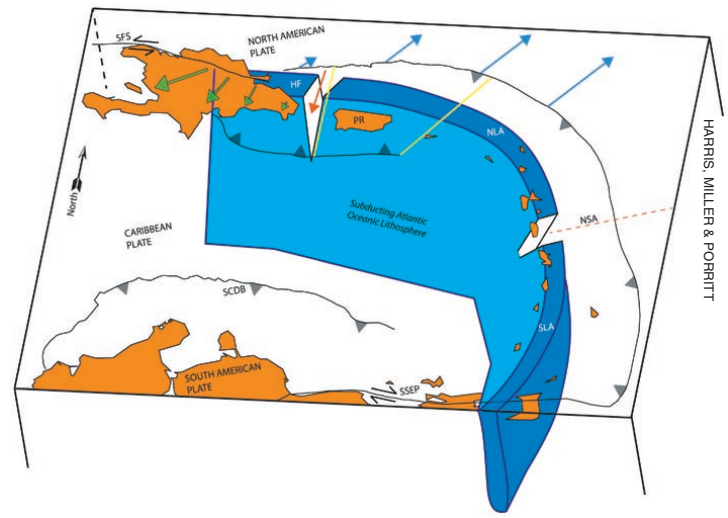
Our CSH program has over 100 hosts worldwide, all cruisers or active in the marine industry. They are a welcome presence for boats coming into foreign ports, can help with information and local knowledge. We are proud to be able to now offer faces to these people who support cruisers worldwide. The SSCA CSH program goal for these presentations is to help inform cruisers of what is happening in almost any place cruisers visit.

The first presenter will be the well-known Jesse James, Trinidad & Tobago Cruising Host, who will provide information on what the marine industry, the communities and visiting boaters are currently doing in T&T, what boaters should be aware of, and what has changed due to Covid. This first session will have limited attendance as we ramp up the program. Should you miss the live interview, it will be posted on SSCA YouTube channel soon after the live call.

The webinars are open to the public. Register on the www.SSCA.org website to attend; from a link on the website, you can sign up and obtain instructions on dates and times. See the first webinar at https://youtu.be/ypRfkaxE_v4

Livin' on the Fault Line

Don't forget that the Eastern Caribbean island chain was created by the meeting of two tectonic plates.

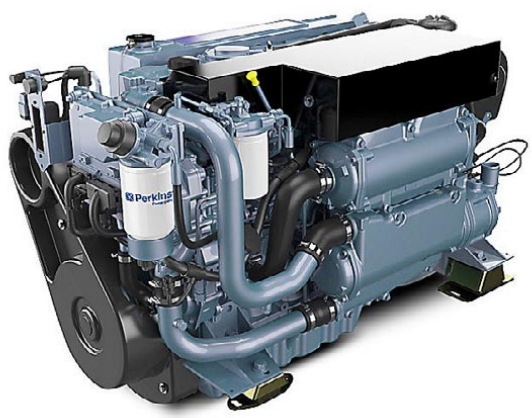


Get the latest information about the area's frequent earthquakes — many of which are submarine — and volcanic activity at http://uwiseismic.com

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Hodge Taylor and the Bequia Sailing Club

by Sir James Mitchell

Hodge Taylor many moons ago sailed into Admiralty Bay and became a vibrant part of Bequia. He made an outstanding contribution to the yachting that is now an integral theme in our progress.

In the late Sixties, Caribbean Sailing Yachts took up home in Blue Lagoon in St. Vincent. Vincentians who were without boats could rent one for a weekend. A St. Vincent Yacht Club came into existence, created by distinguished lawyer Alec Hughes and based on his property, also on the lagoon.

Thus began the Whitsun Regatta, sailing from St. Vincent around Bequia and back to Villa. Sir John Compton (Prime Minister of St. Lucia on three occasions: briefly in 1979, again from 1982 to 1996, and from 2006 until his death in 2007) and I had bought our first boat, which was idling in a corner of Castries Harbour, a twin-keeled Westerly Centaur designed for squatting on the fluctuating tides in England — not really racing material.

The St. Vincent Yacht Club eventually folded, which meant no Whitsun Regatta. I decided to find a way to bring the regatta to Bequia.

On the beach in front of St. Mary's Anglican Church I ran into Hodge one afternoon and the conversation concentrated on yachting. I proposed to Hodge that we form a sailing club in Bequia to continue the Whitsun Regatta and base the event in Bequia. Hodge's knowledge of calibrating the yachts for the handicaps was an area of my silence, and I knew he could take this on.

I told him clearly that I did not want a "yacht club," which sounded too elitist for Bequia, but a sailing club that would embrace the Bequia fishermen with their double-enders, the skippers of visiting yachts, and any resident, local or foreign, with an interest in the sport of sailing.

I duly called a meeting one night at the Frangipani Hotel, with Hodge, Ermina Antrobus, Kenneth Allick and my wife, Pat. Although it was proposed that I become commodore, I declined, pointing out that I had recently created a political party (the New Democratic Party, 1975) and that I wanted our Bequia Sailing Club to be free of politics. Hodge accepted the leadership as commodore, with Pat appointed secretary and Ermina and Kenneth to coordinate the participation of the fishermen. Ours was to be a fun regatta, with Hodge bringing in the other captains to set the courses around Bequia and the timing of starts for each category of yachts. As the Frangipani Bar became central to the club's administration, Kenneth's La Pompe International rum shop became the center of the planning of the fishing boat activities. There the meals were cooked to be shared among the fishermen at the conclusion of the races, under the supervision of Ermina.

We did not intend to match the formidable structure of Antigua Week with shining trophies that we could not afford. The fishermen were pleased with their prizes of paint and engine oil, and the yachtsmen were happy with their prizes of model boats built on the island.

But Whitsun (the seventh Sunday after Easter) was not a great time for the regatta in Bequia. After Easter, most yachts moved north to Antigua and then on to Europe or the United States.

Then, in March of 1979, came the revolution in Grenada. Most of the yachts based there rushed to Bequia, as they were seen by the revolutionary government as a threat, possibly bringing in weapons to destabilize the new Communist regime. I proposed that we seize the opportunity to capture Easter on the Caribbean racing calendar. By the time Grenada recovered from the revolution, the Bequia Easter Regatta would be firmly established.

> *By the time Grenada recovered from the revolution, the Bequia Easter Regatta would be firmly established.*

In all this exercise, Hodge Taylor played an equal role — and he loved it.

The Bequia Easter Regatta became a national festival, bringing in more tourists and foreign exchange than Carnival.

Hodge Taylor leaves a legacy that is linked to yachting in our islands.

May he rest in peace.

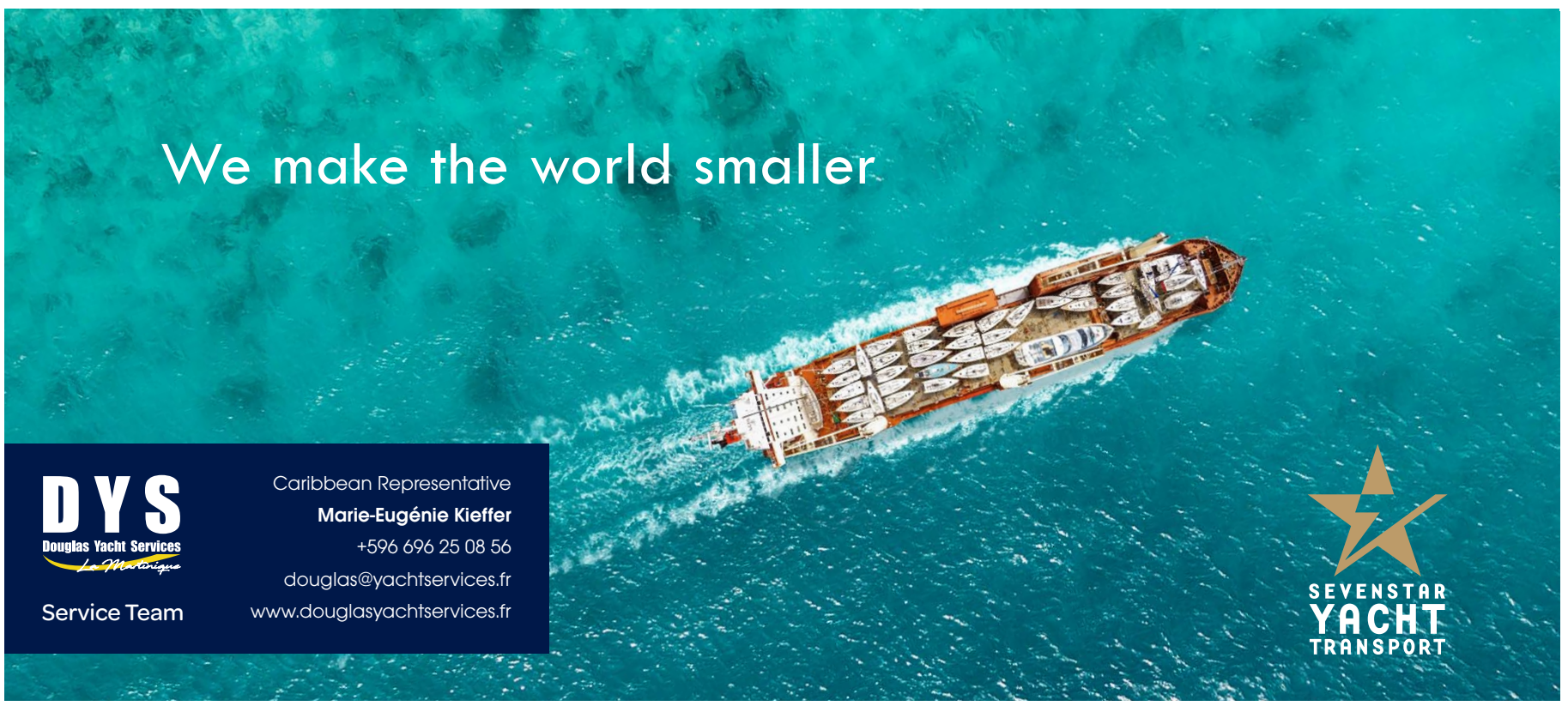
Admiralty Bay, Bequia Easter Regatta 2011

Inset: Hodge Taylor



WILFRED DEDERER

TIPI PUNNETT







BUSINESS BRIEFS

DYT Lays New Semi-Submersible Vessel's Keel

DYT Yacht Transport, together with CIMC Raffles Offshore, hosted the keel laying ceremony for the H485, a Y-Type semi-submersible vessel. The keel laying celebration, held in Yantai, China, marked a major milestone in the construction of DYT's new *Yacht Servant*.



"We are not only celebrating the laying of the keel, it also marks the start of a new era in yacht transportation," said Laura Tempest, DYT's General Manager. "This will be the largest semi-submersible vessel dedicated to transporting yachts built to date."

DYT's mission is to serve the global yachting community with safe, reliable, and on-time yacht transport to the most sought-after destinations in the world.

The keel-laying ceremony is an old maritime tradition to symbolize good luck wishes for the construction of the ship and throughout her life. During the ceremony, a commemorative coin, a dollar coin, and a euro coin were placed under the keel to wish the vessel and her crewmembers good fortune and safe passage.

Note: In the photo you will see attendants of the ceremony standing in close proximity to one another. There had been no new cases of Covid-19 in Yantai before the ceremony, so social distancing measures were scaled down. The yard continuously observes all safety measures.

Visit www.yacht-transport.com for more information, and see ad on page 5.

Rodney Bay Marina Welcomes Yachts

Shane Macauldy (Marketing Manager – IGY Rodney Bay Marina) reports: It has been over two months since the reopening of St. Lucia's waters to pleasure yachts, a move which was welcomed with much enthusiasm by the yachting community. A stroll on the grounds of the marina shows that the vibe is back, albeit under the new normal with masks donned and social distancing in practice.

St. Lucia officially reopened to yachters on July 1st and, mirroring the rules for tourists coming in by air, the yachters are classed into two categories based on the last port of departure: countries within the "Caribbean Travel Bubble" and all remaining countries. The rules of entry and protocols differ based on the country of departure. For the most up-to-date information visit www.igymarinas.com/article/rodney-bay-marina-info-covid-19

Rodney Bay Marina has introduced a wristband system for all yachters in the marina who have arrived from within the Caribbean Travel Bubble as well as all yachters from the remaining countries who have completed their 14-day quarantine. They are all given "Sailing within the Caribbean Bubble" blue wristbands. It is now becoming apparent that, in addition to the blue wristbands serving as a pass to the marina's docks, they are also helping in allaying the fears of residents who might otherwise have spotted the yachters roaming the island and jumped to the conclusion that they were "runaway tourists" from resorts.

Formalities before arrival:

Reserve the space with the marina (rbm@igymarinas.com) no later than 72hrs before arrival.

Contact the marina's Port Health Office (porthealthigymarina@gmail.com) no later than 48hrs before arrival with the following information:

Name of vessel, arrival date and ETA.
Passport picture pages of all onboard.
Completed Maritime Health Declaration Form (one per vessel).

For the Customs declaration it is advisable that pre-clearance is completed via the online platform www.sailclear.com

NOTE: This information is for persons planning on coming into Rodney Bay Marina; Marigot Bay Marina has different details with a different contact e-mail for their Port Health Office, etcetera.

All services at Rodney Bay Marina are available. Spaces are still available for last-minute storage both in the marina and the boatyard.

For reservations and further details on entry requirements and protocols at Rodney Bay contact the marina at rbm@igymarinas.com

Clippers Ship Chandlery Opening Hours

For the month of September, the Clippers Ship chandlery, located in the Artimer Zone at Le Marin, Martinique, is open Monday through Friday, from 8:30AM to 1:00PM and 2:00PM to 5:00PM.

Visit www.facebook.com/ClippersShip for more information.

Budget Marine St. Maarten Store

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, Budget Marine's SXM store is temporarily closed.

For more information visit www.facebook.com/BudgetMarine

USVI Charter Show Covid-19 Protocols Announced

Carol Bareuther reports: In this climate of the Covid-19 pandemic, the organizers of the USVI Charter Yacht Show, the Virgin Island Professional Charter Association (VIPCA), are taking the matter of protecting its show attendees, exhibitors, vendors, and staff very seriously.

More than 40 yachts are registered for the 2020 USVI Charter Yacht Show as of August 1st, with over 70 yachts expected to show. The show fleet includes a diverse mix of vessels: sailing monohulls and catamarans up to 80 feet and longer and motor yachts in the 100- to 150-foot range. Over 150 individual charter brokers from the Caribbean, United States, and Europe attended the 2019 USVI Charter Yacht Show and over 100 are expected to attend this year's "must-do" show for international yacht charter professionals.

In preparation for the November 12th through 15th show, VIPCA has developed a revised schedule of events with crowd-free alternatives to gatherings and procedures for a safe, hygienic, productive, and high-quality event. VIPCA carefully…

—Continued on next page

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PHIL BLAKE

…developed its show protocols to provide charter brokers and yacht crew with the necessary assurance that they will be able to safely connect during the event. These protocols will include compulsory Covid-19 testing and thermal screening for all participants, the use of personal protective equipment, heightened cleaning and personal hygiene, and physical and social distancing, as well as individually (compostable) pre-packaged food and beverages.

"I believe every broker will assess their own personal risk factor in traveling to the VIPCA show. For me, the protocols and changes adopted by the organizing committee to protect every broker, crew, and individual going to the show is the reassurance I needed. Every aspect, from registration to yacht-hosted lunches to evening events, has been painstakingly analyzed to conform to best safety practices," said Nancy Van Winter, charter yacht consultant with Envy Yacht Charters, based in Maryland, USA, and the International Yacht Charter Group Inc., headquartered in Florida, USA.

"For brokers, it is in our best interest to attend the show to see firsthand the new measures each yacht has in place to not only protect our clients, but to give them feedback as they approach this charter season. Those who do attend the show will benefit by being able to have more meaningful discussions with their potential clients as well as their existing client base," she concluded.

Visit https://vipca.org/covid-19-safety-protocols for all protocols.

Conservation Kayak Tours Reopens

Lexi Fisher reports: We are excited to announce a cautiously optimistic, partial reopening of Conservation Kayak in Grenada.

We have been closely following the global and local responses to Covid-19 and our team has decided to make our tours available to the local, long-term resident, and yachting communities here in Grenada. We hope to be able to safely offer tours to the rest of Grenada's visitors in the near future.

In order to protect our staff and guests, we will strictly follow the government-endorsed contact tracing and sanitation protocols, while also limiting the size of our groups and available tours.

We will offer Birder Tours in the morning and afternoon for groups of no more than four people, or families (from the same household) of no more than six people.

We appreciate your continued support and are excited to see you back on the water! We are grateful that kayaking is an outdoor sport that can be easily social distanced — if we can touch paddles, we're too close!

Visit www.conservationkayak.com for more information.

Outdoor World is Invincible's Caribbean Dealer

Invincible Boat Company, the premium saltwater sportfishing and high-performance boat brand headquartered in Florida, continues its move into international markets with the appointment of marine specialist Outdoor World in the Caribbean. With bases in Antigua and St. Maarten, Outdoor World will represent Invincible from St. Maarten to St. Lucia.

"The Caribbean is an important part of our international expansion plans, with its healthy market for offshore fishing alongside great leisure boating," said Ian Birdsall, Vice President International Business.

For over ten years, Outdoor World Antigua has been the official distributor for Yamaha and houses the regional training center for Yamaha Motors in the Caribbean. The company has a strong reputation for technical ability and customer service.

Visit www.outdoorworldanu.com for more information on Outdoor World.

Tall Ship Picton Castle Will Sail around the World

Maggie Ostler reports: Like so many people's and companies' futures, the training ship *Picton Castle's* plans were changed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Had they proceeded, the ship would be in the Galapagos Islands right now, one stop on a year-long voyage to the South Pacific.

In April this year, it became clear that *Picton Castle* would not be able to set sail from Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, Canada to start that voyage. Its journey was first delayed until July, then October, and just recently until the spring of 2021.

This much of a delay gave key personnel, including the ship's master, Captain Daniel Moreland, a chance to reconsider the route.



"While a South Pacific voyage would have been charming, a world circumnavigation gives us more operational flexibility. Besides, who doesn't want to sail around the world?" says Moreland.

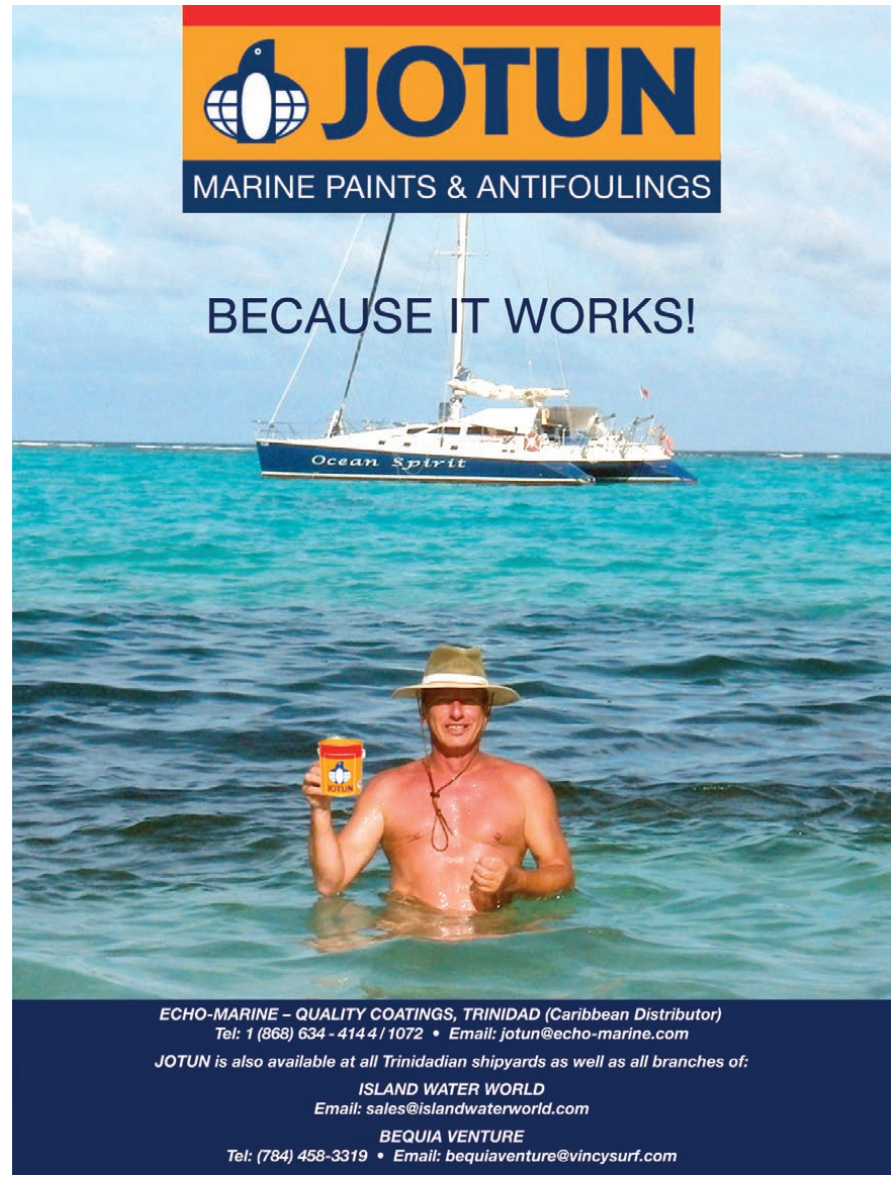
The global circumnavigation route will cover 30,000 nautical miles in just over a year, visiting more than 20 ports, including Panama, the Galapagos Islands, Pitcairn Island, French Polynesia, the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji, Vanuatu, Bali, Rodrigues, Reunion, Cape Town, St. Helena, the Eastern Caribbean, and Bermuda. The voyage will start and end in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, beginning in May 2021 and wrapping up in June 2022.

Picton Castle is no stranger to these international waters and ports, having completed her seventh world circumnavigation in June of 2019. While the ship would have continued sailing on other routes, the most recent world tour was scheduled to have been her last.

"Yes, we thought that this past circumnavigation would be the last for a number of reasons, but like in so many other areas of our lives, the current times have caused that thinking to evolve," says Moreland.

Picton Castle is an award-winning tall ship best known for her adventurous international voyages to exotic ports and islands around the world. Ordinary (but adventurous) people sign aboard as trainee crewmembers, with no previous sailing experience required. Trainees learn seamanship skills through hands-on practice and formal workshops, with the guidance of the ship's captain and professional mariners. *Picton Castle's* apprentices are adults (ages 18 and up) and come from many different countries and backgrounds. Trainee applications for this world voyage are open now.

Visit www.picton-castle.com or contact info@picton-castle.com for more information.





Trinidad Fights On to Save Its Yachting Industry

Up until press time of this issue of *Compass*, Trinidad & Tobago's air and seaports remain closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There was recently a spike in the number of confirmed cases of the virus and the government confirmed that there was an outbreak in community spread.

The Grenada Lima program allowed yachts to enter Grenada this summer under controlled conditions worked out between Grenada's marine trades group, MAYAG, and the Grenada government in order to support that island's yachting businesses while not risking the spread of the coronavirus. A proposal first put forward in May for a similar program in Trinidad has yet to be approved.

The governments of other Caribbean yachting destinations, such as Antigua, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines, have also provided ways for foreign yachts to shelter in their waters during the 2020 hurricane season despite the coronavirus. No transmission of the virus from visiting yachtspeople to anyone ashore has been reported.

Jesse James, a board member of Trinidad & Tobago's marine trades association, YSATT, tells *Compass*, "We continue to fight to save our industry here in Trinidad & Tobago."

According to the Trinidad & Tobago Ministry of Trade and Industry, there are approximately 180 companies throughout Trinidad that cater to the yachting industry with approximately 140 of them located in Chaguaramas. Approximately 1,700 persons are employed full time.

YSATT submitted a proposal in May detailing how the intake of yachtspeople could be managed. It was proposed that they be quarantined on their boats at Chacachacare Island anchorage, which can hold up to 100 boats at a time. While in quarantine they would take their temperature every day and take two Covid-19 tests, which would be submitted to YSATT who would share the information with health ministry officials. If anyone needed essentials while in quarantine they would be provided.

YSATT met with all the government agencies that would be involved with entry of yachts: Customs & Immigration, the Coast Guard, the Maritime Services Division, North Post Radio, and the Ministry of Health, all of which supported their proposal for the safe re-opening of the yachting industry. Jesse reports, "At a [subsequent] meeting with the Minister of National Security and the Minister of Finance, on June 9th, while we were given a fair hearing to the plight of the yachting industry, the Minister of National Security was adamant that borders will remain closed until the virus is under control and nationals can return home."

But the fight to support T&T's yachting industry began even before the impact of Covid.

Early this year, Trinidadian economist Dr. Indera Sagewan wrote, "T&T, with comparative and competitive advantages the envy of many, allowed a once booming yachting industry to languish. An industry, mind you, which generates 100 percent foreign exchange with extensive stimulating tentacles into the tourism, entertainment and agriculture sectors.

"Since early 2000, successive governments have identified the yachting industry for development to reduce our dependence on the hydrocarbon sector. It was and still is according to the current (early 2020) government's Yachting Policy 2017–2021 a priority new growth sector in the context of a non-energy diversification agenda....

"In 2004, Grenada was devastated by Hurricane Ivan, but by studying our mistakes, it designed enabling policy and supported industry actions. The result? Between January and July 2017, 3,604 yacht arrivals compared to Trinidad's 494. St. Lucia, too, leapt ahead with 6,216 yacht arrivals....

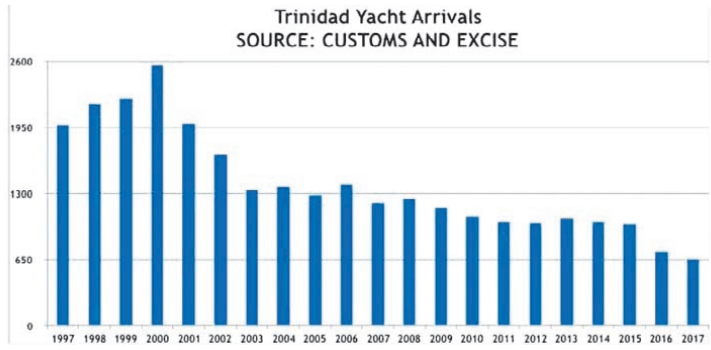
"In 2020, the industry suffers outdated infrastructure, business closures, loss of skilled tradesmen and women, heavy competition for yachting ambiance from oil tankers, Immigration and Customs inefficiency, and the list goes on; all the things improving and expanding in the islands around us.... Then there are 16 [yacht clearance] forms versus the one harmonized form required by our sister isles. We seem intent on driving the cruisers toward our competitors...."

Then came Covid, and the calls to rescue T&T's yachting industry were renewed with greater urgency.

Kiran Mathur Mohammed, in a June 25th *Newsday* article titled "We Must Save the Yachting Industry," wrote, "Our harbours can draw boats and foreign exchange as we emerge from lockdown. But only if we cut the lines holding the yachting industry back.

"Even before Covid-19, a graph of industry revenue looked a bit like the progress of the *Titanic*.... Covid-19, however, has turned an already difficult situation into a dire one. With vessels banned, most have gone to shelter in Grenada — just in time for hurricane season. Meanwhile, even larger industry players are on the brink."

Yacht Arrivals Graph - 1997 to 2017 inclusive



In 2000-2002, in the peak season, there used to be about 2,800 yachts in T&T, but after the 2008 recession, rumors of piracy, and the increasing development of other hurricane season destinations, the numbers dropped to about 800 yachts a year.

Mohammed interviewed Peter Peake of Peake Yacht Services, who said, "Now we have to send home workers. There is no work. We managed to pay everyone during the lockdown but now that we can come out to work, we (have) nothing to work on. It's destroying the industry. I now have my employees on one week on with pay and one week off without pay. I can('t) even continue that for very long."

But Peake told Mohammed that the yachting industry is better prepared than most for reopening: "The system to quarantine vessels from sea had been in place for hundreds of years. No need to reinvent the wheel. These folks can easily be held offshore for the quarantine period onboard their own boats."

Mohammed continued, "There is a glimmer of opportunity to save the industry and even capture market share. We should not wait to have the conversation about what needs to be in place for vessels to return. Covid-19 does not necessarily mean doom. More boats are in harbours than ever before. Meanwhile, more people are likely to choose yachting as a safer alternative to crowded city vacations.

"Anyone sailing to T&T to spend their foreign exchange should be welcomed with open arms and a jaunty smile — with all their documents fast-tracked. Our Immigration authorities should also permit longer stays for yachties bringing their vessels in for haulage....

"The Government can make a difference supporting the industry's efforts here. Small outlays of cash and connections can bring in serious business. Successive governments have long praised yachting in diversification plans. As a matter of self-preservation as much as growth, we now have no other option but to act."

Despite that call for action, YSATT's proposal had still not been approved as of July 28th, when Andrea Perez-Sobers wrote in the *Trinidad Express*, "T&T's yachting industry is on the brink of collapse due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago noted that the industry was already on the decline within the last few years, and the situation has now been exacerbated as no foreign yachts are allowed to enter T&T waters due to the closure of borders....

"[Jesse] James hastened to explain that YSATT fully understands the Health Ministry protocols that are in place and the National Security Ministry's position of keeping the borders closed in order to manage the virus. But he said the association would have preferred some kind of exemption for at least 200 foreign yachts that would have liked to haul out their boats in Chaguaramas as the hurricane season is upon us.

"The YSATT board member, breaking it down into dollars and cents, said if the Government facilitates the yachts that want to shelter in T&T waters during the hurricane season for five months, the economy can earn approximately US$6.3 million. James said the industry has lost close to 300 yachts coming into T&T waters for the hurricane season."

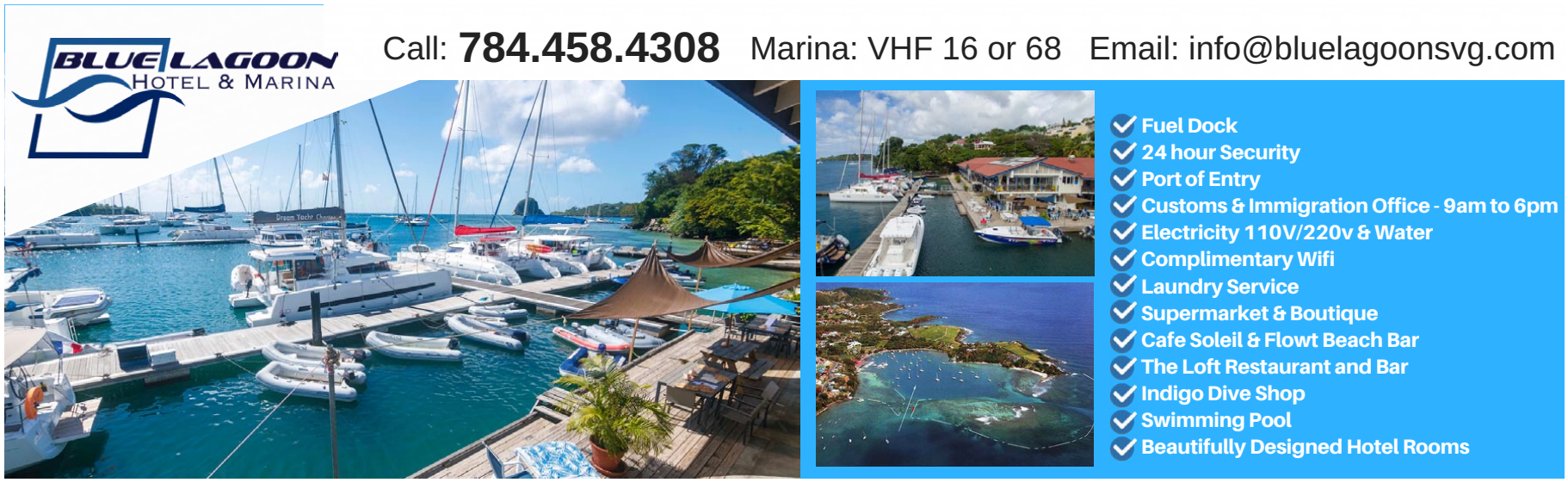
James said with no yachts able to come to Trinidad over the last five months, the industry is barely hanging on. Several marinas and yachting services had to let go some of their staff and are operating with the bare minimum of employees in order to try and survive, as there are only about 40 to 50 yachts in Chaguaramas this summer.

Perez-Sobers added, "James is hopeful that things can turn around when Covid eases up and he said that YSATT is willing to work with the Government in using the industry to help diversify the economy. The promotion of T&T as a vibrant centre for yachts would also help with the shortage of foreign exchange that country continues to face, James said."

On August 4th Jesse James told *Compass*, "I have been working with the Chief Medical Officer on the proposal. As directed by the CMO, I had some consultations today and had to make some changes; they are understandably being very detailed [regarding] putting all measures in place to prevent any further importation or spread. But I think it's way, way overdue now for our industry to open up. We not asking for borders to be reopened, but just some form of exemption. We submitted the final proposal on August 3rd and are hoping this will bring much needed results."

T&T's newly inaugurated Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Rowley, was sworn in on August 19th and YSATT looks forward to working with him and his cabinet to find a way forward in seeking a safe reopening of the nation's yachting industry, which contributes to the livelihoods of approximately 10,000 citizens of both Trinidad and Tobago.

Meanwhile, it's good news, however, that T&T's entry paperwork is to be streamlined. In June, Attorney General Faris Al Rawi passed a bill enabling yachting visitors to use a single harmonized entry form, replacing the daunting 16 forms currently required. Once the President signs the bill into law, entry into Trinidad & Tobago will be much easier for yachtspeople. When you can come.





BOB GARRETT

The CA's Blue Water Section encompasses the Caribbean. This is Anguilla.

A Crucial Support Network for Long-Distance Cruisers

by Peta Stuart-Hunt

The Cruising Association provides its more than 6,300 members — cruising sailors and motorboat owners — with an unrivalled support network and information hub wherever they are in the world. Here is an overview of this global resource that represents members in 43 countries, highlighting what it can offer Caribbean-based sailors.

The Cruising Association (CA) is a not-for-profit association dedicated to those who cruise on yachts, both sail and power. Its extraordinary mass of first-hand information, collected and shared by its members, is of unequalled quality, quantity, breadth and relevance. Its members are encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge — pros and cons — as well as recommending the fun stuff, to get the most out of your cruising, wherever you may be.

The organisation also provides members with an array of benefits and discounts, services, information, help and advice. Founded in 1908, it has become a favourite resource for many of the best-known names in sailing. Sir Robin Knox-Johnston says, "Whether you want to circle the globe or just enjoy the satisfaction of navigating yourself, friends and family safely and enjoyably from one place to another, I commend the Cruising Association to you."

The Blue Water Section is your hub

The CA's Cruising Sections cover the Mediterranean, Baltic, Biscay, Celtic, Channel, European Inland Waterways, North Sea, and Blue Water areas; the latter encompasses the Caribbean.

The Blue Water (BW) Section came into existence in 2010 after six CA members met on a beach in Barbados after an Atlantic crossing and decided that a worldwide section would be a useful adjunct for CA members who had set their horizons farther afield than Europe and the Mediterranean, where various other sections already existed. It is now is run by Sandy Duker, assisted by Mike and Anne Hartshorn.



BERYL CHALMERS

The Captain's Mate App lets you automatically download and store thousands of cruising reports.

BW members are encouraged to keep in touch with each other as they sail away from home waters. Separate e-mail groups are set up, allowing those cruising in the same areas to exchange information and share experiences, help each other if needed, and meet up in port to have a drink and swap stories.

It's also possible to use the CA's Section Forum to ask questions which can be answered by BW members who have already "been there, done that." All this is also backed up by the CA's proprietary app, Captain's Mate, containing all the cruising reports posted by members about harbours and anchorages around the world, as well as the Find a Friend and discount information which are more recent enhancements to this clever piece of technology.

Run annually, the Atlantic Crossing (East-West) Group is the largest group in the BW Section, with 32 CA member yachts having crossed between November 2019 and March 2020. Some were on rallies and others were sailing independently. Updated information lists are regularly sent out to this e-mail group along with advice regarding paperwork needed, long distance provisioning, shopping ideas and recipes, lists for first-aid kits and much more.

BW members mainly sail from the Caribbean to the United States to cruise the East Coast during the Caribbean hurricane season. Others pass through the Panama Canal to sail the Pacific, Australasia, Asia, eventually returning to the UK or the Med to complete a circumnavigation in anything from two to ten, or even 20 years.

Honorary Local Representatives

CA members have access to a worldwide network of Honorary Local Representatives (HLRs). They help with practicalities such as sourcing emergency repairs, finding moorings, securing visas, translations, explaining local customs and bureaucracy, and providing advice on provisioning, land transport and excursions. If they can't help you themselves, they'll know someone who can.

HLRs in the Caribbean region include Christopher Lloyd in Tortola, BVI, Commodore Escrich in Havana, Cuba, and Debbie Armstrong in Varadero, Cuba. Anita Sutton is our HLR in Grenada, Richard Bayle is in Guadeloupe, Jose Mendez is in Puerto Rico, and Jesse James is our go-to guru in Trinidad & Tobago (Jesse's advice and regular updates have been much appreciated in keeping CA members advised throughout Covid lockdown). Additionally, Marina Resort Waterland in Para, Suriname, offers a CA discount and has been helpful to members who couldn't get into Trinidad during lockdown.

CA members Richard and Brigitte Hunter, who usually keep their Moody 46 in Grenada, returned to the UK in late May after three months in lockdown in Guadeloupe. They too have nothing but praise for the local HLR, as well as the islanders. As Richard reported to the Moody Association, "After some initial quite stressful times sorting out the boat, insurance, accommodation and getting our daughter and her family, including their 18-month-old baby, home, we loved it. This was really due to the amazing hospitality, helpfulness and friendliness received from many people but not least from the CA HLR in Guadeloupe, Richard Bayle. Not only did he show me how to prepare the boat for a hurricane, but he also gave me six old T-shirts to wrap round old car tyres, rescued from the dump, to protect the boat; definitely above and beyond the call of duty of an HLR!"

The sharing of information is the lifeblood of the Association and is encouraged at all times. Cruising enthusiasts join the CA for many reasons, but all in all, the CA is worth adding to your list of go-to organisations if you're planning to cruise any distance in the short or longer term.

Visit www.theca.org.uk for more information.

Reasons to Join the CA

- The exclusive CAptain's Mate app lets you automatically download and store thousands of cruising reports, find a nearby member or one of our Honorary Local Representatives, and access hundreds of discounts. You can download reports when you're online for offline use when sailing.
- You have access to online and offline information and advice about cruising in small boats.
- 16,000 member-only pages on the CA website encompass just about everything you ever need to know, and Forums cover every topic you can think of.
- You can access a network of Honorary Local Representatives.
- You can enjoy an extensive lecture and social activity calendar (Covid permitting).
- CA House, ten minutes from the City of London in Limehouse Basin, offers you overnight accommodation at competitive rates in its riverside cabins.
- A Crewing Service matches skippers to crew and vice versa.
- You have the opportunity to fly the CA's blue ensign.



Members Richard and Brigitte Hunter praised the CA's Honorary Local Representative in Guadeloupe.

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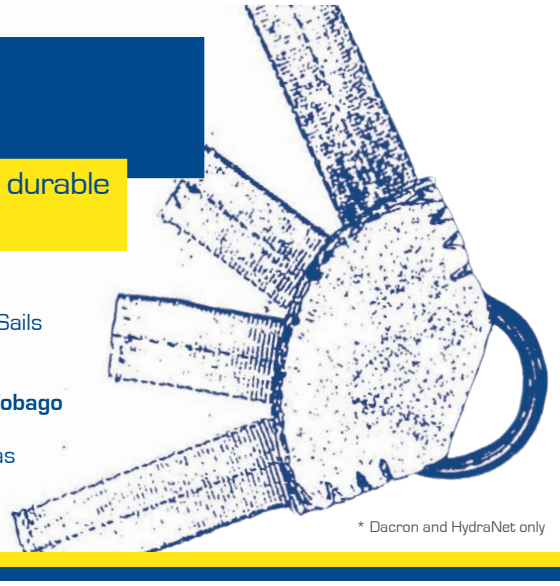
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CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

BVI National Parks in Jeopardy?

According to a report in the UK's *Telegraph* newspaper, conservationists have warned that Britain's overseas national parks risk falling into the hands of poachers as tourism has declined during Covid lockdown. In early August, the National Parks Trust of the British Virgin Islands warned that their funding has fallen so dramatically they might have to close down soon.

A lack of tourism has meant the BVI have lost 75 percent of their income, just as they were being rebuilt after Hurricane Irma in 2017. The trust needs to fill a £450,000 shortfall to survive the rest of the year. Conservationists argue that without the trust's protection, important nature reserves would be exposed to loggers, poachers and grazers as residents struggle with the economic downturn. Park employees would also lose the year-round work needed to maintain beaches and trails.

The BVI are important habitat for many unique creatures, including the Anegada Rock Iguana, of which there are only 200 remaining. Their young are currently being raised by the trust, so without help, they may become extinct. Other threatened reptiles unique to the islands include the Carrot Rock Anole, the Carrot Rock Skink, and the Anegada Skink. The islands are also home to many fragile butterflies and moths that can only be found there and rely on the painstakingly preserved habitat for survival.

The trust's most successful projects so far include protecting coral reefs from anchor damage, mangrove reforestation, establishing the Anegada Rock Iguana Sanctuary, and reintroducing the roseate flamingo to the salt ponds of Anegada. Flamingos once roamed Anegada by the hundreds but the population was wiped out by hunting 50 years ago. After the Bermuda Aquarium & Zoo donated captive flamingos in 1991, these birds have thrived in Flamingo Pond.

Trust director Dr. Cassander Titley-O'Neal said, "Before the pandemic struck, we had big plans to open another eight parks to help protect more of our islands for wildlife and those who love it. But now [the trust's] very future is under threat.



INTERNATIONAL IGUANA FOUNDATION

The BVI are important habitat for the Anegada Rock Iguana; there are only 200 remaining.

"Without tourism we have little or no income, and this comes at a time when our work has never been more vital in the region and as part of the global effort to save nature. Working in the Caribbean for almost 60 years, we have always overcome adversity and the damage caused during hurricane season, but we are seeing the effects of climate change first-hand with stronger and more devastating hurricanes."

Martin Harper, director of conservation for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said, "It would be a tragedy if [the British] government turned a blind eye to what is happening in our overseas territories."

Read the full story at https://digitaleditions.telegraph.co.uk/data/309/reader/reader.html

Union Island Turtle Monitors Get Covid Relief Grant

As reported in the *Searchlight* newspaper, the St. Vincent & the Grenadines Environment Fund (SVGEF), gave a grant of EC$9,980 (approximately US$3,700) to the Union Island Environmental Attackers (UIEA) to conduct turtle monitoring on the beaches of Union Island in the Grenadines for the period of July through September. The UIEA has been doing turtle patrols for the past ten years.

The UIEA has seen a fall-off in their income in recent months as few tourists are on the island to participate in their turtle watching tours. As a result, turtle monitoring has been on the decline and there has been a rise in poaching. The SVGEF has stepped in to bridge this gap. The funding will provide a stipend for 12 members of the UIEA to continue turtle patrols.

The SVG government declared a total ban on the killing of sea turtles, as well as on the disturbance of any nests or eggs, on January 1st, 2017. The implementation of this ban is possible through the work of community groups such as the UIEA with support of the local police.

During the first week of the project, the UIEA witnessed the hatching of a nest of leatherback turtles and the nesting of a hawksbill and a green turtle on different beaches on Union Island.

Critical Lesson on Saving Mangroves

Mangroves are disappearing at an alarming rate, with conservationists across the Commonwealth striving to save them from local extinction. In a recent webinar organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat to mark



A project in Trinidad indicated that mangroves naturally recolonizing a restored area fared better than transplanted seedlings.

World Mangrove Day, July 26th, scientists and policy experts discussed how to unlock the wealth of mangroves by regenerating these extraordinary ecosystems.

Despite their ecological and economic value, mangroves are perishing at least three to five times faster than overall global forests. Half of the world's mangroves have already been lost over the last 50 years due to human activity such as coastal development and pollution.

Reversing this decline has not been easy and is one of the main focus areas of the Commonwealth Blue Charter — an agreement by 54 countries to actively work together to solve some of the world's most pressing ocean issues.

During the webinar, experts shared their experiences in preserving and regenerating mangroves around the world. Rahanna Juman, Deputy Director at the Institute of Marine Affairs in Trinidad & Tobago, cited a mangrove-replanting project in an area that had been cleared to construct a pipeline. To bring back the mangroves, her team first restored the natural topography and flow of water to the area, then replanted more than 260 seedlings.

However, very few survived in comparison to mangroves that naturally recolonized the area once it was back to the original environmental conditions. Dr Juman advised, "Mangrove planting should be the last option."

Carriacou Launches Re-Use of Plastics in Concrete

Richard Laflamme reports: World Nature Conservation Day 2020, July 28th, saw the launching of a new project by the No To Single Use Association in Carriacou that uses granulated discarded plastic as an ingredient in concrete blocks. The United Nations Development Programme's Global Environment Facility approved a grant of US$22,141 for this project, whose purpose is to convert any plastic to aggregate for hollow concrete blocks meeting the requirement for Class A block at the Grenada Bureau of Standards.

Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs Permanent Secretary Rholda Quamina said, "We have a serious problem with single-use plastic. If our sisters and brothers from Carriacou and Petite Martinique are aware that plastic will be reused in another product and not dispersed in nature, they will separate plastic at home. The Ministry offers its support to this initiative."

Myrna Julien from the Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority welcomed the reuse of plastic which may extend limited space of landfill in Grenada and Carriacou. She said: "GSWMA is pleased to partner with No To Single Use Association. Government and private partnership is key to addressing the long-term plastic problem."

Kadijah Edwards, National Coordinator for UNEP's Small Grants Programme, said, "Carriacou, as small as



you are, has an opportunity to make a big footprint in recycling plastic. A lot of countries tried other ways. Most were not successful. We are looking for a big success. Carriacou's concept can extend to other islands."

Ingrid Lewis, Project Manager of the No To Single Use Association, noted, "People like plastic. It is an excellent product, strong, light weight, inexpensive and re-usable. If we could discard all plastic in concrete as an aggregate replacement for sand or gravel, we will not need to find alternatives to plastic, which may very well create new problems."

For additional information about this project, search for "plastic pollution carriacou solution" on YouTube.

Abandoned Fiberglass Boats Polluting the Environment

Corina Ciocan reports at theconversation.com: Where do old boats go to die? The cynical answer is they are put on eBay for a few pennies in the hope that they will become someone else's problem.

As a marine biologist, I am increasingly aware that the casual disposal of boats made out of fiberglass is harming coastal marine life. The problem of end-of-life boat management and disposal has gone global, and some island nations are even worried about their already overstretched landfills.

The strength and durability of fiberglass transformed the boating industry and made it possible to mass produce small leisure craft. However, boats that were built in the fiberglass boom of the 1960s and 1970s are now dying. We can sink them, bury them, cut them to pieces, grind them up or even fill them with compost and make a great welcoming sign, right in the middle of roundabouts in seaside towns.

But there are too many of them and we're running out of space. To add to the problem, the hurricane season wreaks havoc through the marinas in some parts of the world, with 63,000 boats damaged or destroyed after Irma and Harvey in the Caribbean in 2017 alone.

Most boats currently head to landfills. However, many are also disposed of at sea. Some say that dumped fiberglass boats will make suitable artificial reefs. However, very little research has been done on at-sea disposal and the worry is that eventually these boats will degrade and move with the currents and harm the coral reefs, ultimately breaking up into microplastics.

Human health hazards arise from chemicals or materials used in boats: rubber, plastic, wood, metal, textiles and oil. Moreover, asbestos was employed extensively as an insulator on exhausts and leaded paints were commonly used as a corrosion inhibitor, alongside mercury-based compounds and tributyltin (TBT) as antifouling agents. Although we lack evidence on the human impact of TBT, lead and mercury are recognized as neurotoxins.

The fiberglass is filtered by marine shellfish. The particulate material accumulated in the stomach of shellfish can block their intestinal tracts and eventually lead to death through malnutrition and starvation. There is huge potential for these tiny specks of old boats to accumulate in bigger animals as they are transferred up the food chain. Those microparticles are the resins holding the fiberglass together and contain phthalates, a massive group of chemicals associated with severe human health impacts from ADHD to breast cancer, obesity and male fertility issues.

We really must start paying attention to the hazard dead boats pose to human health and the threats to local ecology.

Corina Ciocan is a senior lecturer in marine biology at University of Brighton, UK. Read the full article at https://theconversation.com/abandoned-fibreglass-boats-are-releasing-toxins-and-microplastics-across-the-world-143857

Grenadines Seabird Guardians Continue Surveys

Natalia Collier reports: The transboundary Grenadines, split between St. Vincent & the Grenadines (SVG) and Grenada, are gaining recognition as the most important region for breeding seabirds in the Lesser Antilles.

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

With three seabird colonies of global significance and 18 of regional importance, more than 54,000 pairs of 12 species rely on these remote uninhabited islands for nesting. Many more types of seabirds pass through both nations, relying on them for their productive feeding grounds and safe places to rest.

Most seabirds return to the same islands each year to nest and raise their chicks, making it essential that the health of their nesting islands is preserved. Despite protective laws, enforcement and monitoring activities at Grenadines nesting sites have been limited due to the inaccessibility of most islands and high cost to visit. This is a reality that Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) is working with local partners to change.



QUINCY AUGUSTINE

Members of the Grenadines Seabird Guardians surveying nesting areas.

With EPIC's efforts, seabirds are now uniting people with very different skills and experiences, across SVG and Grenada, through the "Grenadines Seabird Conservation Network." This group consists of government officials, enforcement officers, researchers, non-governmental organizations, students, tour operators and fisherfolk from both nations, who regularly communicate about shared seabird issues in the Grenadines island chain.

Since 2016 EPIC has trained over 60 persons in both nations in seabird identification, monitoring techniques and reporting of threats at remote Grenadine islands. These individuals, known collectively as the "Grenadines Seabird Guardians," are a core part of the Grenadines Seabird Conservation Network, collecting vital information on the status of seabird populations and threats to their survival in the region. The Grenadines Seabird Guardians have conducted a record number of seabird surveys throughout the island chain in 2020 — a remarkable achievement in light of Covid-19 restrictions and limitations.

Most notably, throughout July several small groups mobilized near-simultaneously to conduct seabird surveys. In the SVG, a total of ten persons traveled to nine nesting islands. Participants included SVG Forestry Department, Mustique Company, Science Initiative for Environmental Conservation and Education (SCIENCE) and fisherfolk of Bequia, Mustique and Mayreau. In the Grenada Grenadines, ten more persons, representing fisherfolk, the Grenada Birding Club, marine biologists, a veterinarian and Ocean Spirits, conducted surveys at 14 islands, spanning from Carriacou to Grenada.

The Grenadines Seabird Guardians noted thousands of nesting seabirds at remote islands, and in one case documented a Gull-billed Tern – a seabird species that had not been recorded in Grenada in more than 130 years.

While this was the first time some of the participants had traveled to these remote islands, they were accompanied by experienced seabird monitors who were able to assist the new recruits with identification and surveying methods. EPIC's Project Coordinator Juliana Coffey noted "A major strength of this program is being able to mobilize teams with very different backgrounds and skills. In this way, all team members can benefit from the diverse knowledge of each member, particularly contributions from fisherfolk who have detailed knowledge of the offshore islands and the seabirds."

Unfortunately, the seabird monitors also encountered significant threats, ranging from invasive species (such as goats, sheep and a cat) in abundance, to marine litter and evidence of illegal harvesting of seabirds. Lystra Culzac, a Conservation Biologist with SCIENCE reported: "the population of goats encountered was alarming, with several persons expressing concern on the amount of damage that growing feral goat populations are causing on these sensitive islands."

The information collected through the Grenadines Seabird Guardians program is intended to contribute to the conservation of seabird populations and biodiversity at offshore islands, such as by feeding into national and regional management and conservation plans.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Grenadines Seabird Guardians, or for more information, contact Juliana Coffey, Project Coordinator at juliana@epicislands.org or on WhatsApp at (709) 770-6877.

Dive Belize Virtually

Would you like to dive into the waters of Belize to learn about how to protect our marine ecosystems?

Join the United Nations Environment Programme's Wild for Life for a virtual, immersive journey through three unique but connected marine ecosystems — mangroves, seagrass and coral reefs — that are threatened by human activity such as tourism development, fishing and pollution.

The marine journey allows users to explore underwater magic as three different personae, showing how biodiversity functions to deliver vital goods and services to humanity, the threats these ecosystems face and how simple actions can help to better protect the interconnected habitats.

The personae — a tourist, recreational boater or fisher — are chosen to represent people visiting the ocean for holidays, those who live near the ocean and enjoy it recreationally, and people who operate a business involving the ocean. Each has unique motives and presents a unique threat, as well as a unique opportunity to protect ecosystems. Users are encouraged to try all three.

Belize is home to a 300km stretch of the Mesoamerican barrier reef, upon which nearly 200,000 people depend for tourism and fishing. The country is renowned for its innovative marine strategies geared at protecting oceans.

Marine Journeys seeks to mobilize and inspire people to conserve our valuable underwater ecosystems.

The model follows another innovative product. In March 2020, Wild for Life launched the Reef Rider Journey, a virtual underwater challenge that allows you to experience a coral reef through the eyes of a sea turtle to understand its unique role in maintaining nature's balance.

Visit https://wildfor.life/dive-in-and-learn-how-to-protect-our-oceans-belize

Trash Island Through the Lens

by Alex J. Coyne

When people imagine the Caribbean, they think of picturesque seas, unforgettable cuisine and vibrant music – but what about Trash Island?

"Trash island" is the name given to a formation first spotted off the coast of Honduras, composed entirely of throwaway items and forgotten objects.

We interviewed photographer Caroline Power about her famous photographs of the Caribbean trash island – and how far its impact could reach.

From Horizon to Horizon

Photographer Caroline Power saw her first glimpse of a typical trash island about ten years ago. "I was out diving and spotted a large white line that stretched from horizon to horizon."

Ever since, she's documented these trash island sightings with the dedication of a UFO expert looking for flying saucers in the sky. "It's rarely planned, and not as easy as heading to one particular spot."

Caroline says islands have been spotted off the coast of southern Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras.

Trash islands don't just appear; they form over a long time, and Caroline says that conditions have to be specific. "Even if there is a large amount of trash in the area, the winds, tides and currents have to be just right – otherwise the plastic is spread over a much larger area."

When conditions line up, we see the appearance of plastic islands.

Trash Island Up Close

Caroline says plainly that her photographs don't do the trash island justice.

"Every time I see trash of this scale, it is heartbreaking, it is disgusting, it is devastating. It makes me hate humanity, and become acutely aware of how horrible our impact is as a species."

On the surface, Caroline describes trash islands as made up out of small pieces of plastic and Styrofoam that have been weathered by wind and waves.

Caroline says that as with the iceberg that sunk the Titanic, most of the impact lies under the surface.

"It's not just the surface of the water that is covered in trash. Underwater, you see plastic bag after plastic bag, hovering just under the surface. Plastic bags of all shapes and sizes: chip bags, ziplocks, grocery, trash, snack bags. Some are whole and the rest are just pieces.

"There are also a seemingly infinite number of plastic forks, spoons, drink bottles and plates. Broken soccer balls, toothbrushes, TVs, soda caps and shoes and many shoes and flip flops."

This, she says, can only stop when single-use plastics are banned – and multi-use plastics are made to biodegrade. So far, some islands in the Caribbean have already taken this step forward.

The Impact of the Island

"It's estimated that over 100,000 marine animals die annually from plastic ingestion and entanglement," says Caroline. "Plastic can take 500 years or more to biodegrade, depending on the type – and the impacts are far-reaching.

"Many animals mistake plastic for food, but even when the plastic has killed, it still isn't over."

Caroline elaborates: "When the animal decomposes or gets eaten by another, the plastic is released back into the environment to continue its death march."

From there, she says that plastic can become entangled with seaweed mats and other natural habitats for already-endangered species such as sea turtles and the albatross. "When the sargassum seaweed mixes with the plastic, this sanctuary becomes a polluted wasteland."

When plastic finally decomposes, Caroline points to the next step in the destruction: microplastics.

"Microplastics have been found in almost all commercially available fish species. They've been found in rain water, and they've been found inside humans. They are literally everywhere, and it is only getting worse."



CAROLINE POWER

'People are using single-use masks, gloves and take-out containers – but most of this is unnecessary.'

The environmental impact of plastic starts to resemble that of radiation after the atom bomb.

"Impacts are far-reaching," says Caroline. "There are economic impacts from loss of tourism, loss of fishing revenue and impacts on shipping — but the worst impacts are environmental."

Covid-19 and the Plastic Crisis

Caroline says that many countries have chosen to ban single-use plastics – but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some have postponed their preventative measures at the worst possible time.

"The plastics industry has been advertising and lobbying with claims that their products can protect people. People are using single-use masks, gloves and take-out containers. Businesses have banned reusable bags and refillable cups – but most of this is unnecessary."

"The virus may be around for another year or decade; however the plastic waste it has created as a byproduct could be here for the next 500 years or more."

"Photographs can invoke passion, create awareness and motivate people to make changes so desperately needed. We need photographers to share their causes with the world, and not just photos of cute animals or stunning landscapes."

Even as we take every precaution to stay safe from coronavirus, let's continue to carefully consider the purchase, use and disposal of any single-use plastic items.



This paradise is worth defending.

The Nature Conservancy works throughout the Caribbean to protect the ocean, coasts and coral reefs on which we all depend. We need your support to create a bright, resilient future for nature and communities.

Help us preserve the way of life that makes the Caribbean islands so unique.

To learn more about our work and make a lasting impact on conservation, visit **nature.org/caribbean**.

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The Nature Conservancy

REGATTA NEWS

Lagoonies Regatta Tradition Continues

Robbie Ferron reports: On the weekend of July 26th, the Lagoonies Regatta was held in St. Maarten, with seven Jeanneau 20 one-designs enjoying first class competition.

This regatta has been an annual event for many years and the owner of Lagoonies restaurant wanted to make sure that her involvement with the marine sector isn't dissipating. Lagoonies is one of the most popular watering holes and feeding troughs for boaters on Dutch St. Maarten.



The final Lagoonies run ended with Robbie Ferron squeezing ahead.

So, under the Covid-19 circumstances, it was decided to continue the event with the Jeanneaus, plus three of the new Quest dinghies of the Sint Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC). Five of the Jeanneaus are now owned by IGY marinas, who made the dramatically refurbished boats available.

The regatta consisted of five races. At the end of the fourth one, the Jeanneaus helmed by Ian Martin and myself had equal points. The final race would determine the championship!

Conditions in the lagoon were interesting as always, with variations in wind speed and direction being as rapid as the current changes in border controls in the Caribbean.

During the fifth race, the leadership changed twice and at the last buoy, yours truly was inches behind. The details of the final run are not for publication but ended with me squeezing ahead and taking the final win.

Third place went to the family Morton crew helmed by Shags Morton, probably St. Maarten's most accomplished seaman.

In the Quest class, the winner was Jolyon Ferron, whose skills in keeping the boat upright prevailed over Ryan Hope Ross and Justin Pieterse.

The finish boat was the Budget Marine-owned committee boat, made available to the SMYC. It is outfitted with all the equipment required for committee boats: shade, seating, two directional horns, signal flag holders, and good anchors.

Organizer (and newly appointed commodore of the SMYC) Garth Steyn thanked Lagoonies owner Olivia Roudon for maintaining the tradition of the Lagoonies regatta.

Sailors' Presence Prompts Schoonbeek Regatta

The Schoonbeek Regatta, held on August 8th, was added to the St. Maarten sailing calendar because more sailors were on the island than usual. Its name was determined as a way for the Sint Maarten Yacht Club (SMYC) to honor past commodore Cees Schoonbeek, one of the most adventurous and interesting characters to have led the SMYC in the 40 years of its existence. Schoonbeek was an eye doctor and tugboat captain — an unusual combination of skill sets! He left this world in 2019.

The day's winds were fickle, which led to numerous frustrated and some elated helms.

In the Pico Class, Veronica Destin beat Melina de Vries, with Jayden Aventurin in third place. In the Quest class, Nils Jannichsen and Adrian Coppelmans beat Arthur and Cai Banting by just one point.

In the largest class, the Lasers, Ryan Hope Ross won the first race, but Jolyon Ferron grabbed the next two. The end result had Jolyon in first place, followed by Justin Pieterse and Ryan Hope Ross.

The Jeanneau 20 Class was dominated by Ian Martin. He was followed by Han de Bruyn Kops, whose extensive talent is not regularly seen on racecourses. Iain Mobbs took third place.

The race was managed by the highly experienced team of Paul Henriquez and Corinne Draesner.

This was the final event before the peak hurricane months. SMYC's small boat sailing is scheduled to restart in October.

Visit www.smyc.com for more information.



Veronica Destiin won first place in the Schoonbeek Pico Class.

ON THE HORIZON

BVI 'Spring' Regatta Set for October

The postponement flag that was raised earlier this year has been lowered. The 2020 BVI Spring Regatta is now scheduled for October 23rd through 25th.

The regatta was postponed by the BVI government on March 13th, just days before the scheduled start of the event's 49th edition. Multiple classes, three days of great racing, and a Regatta Village for parties mean the stage is once again set for the 2020 BVI Spring Regatta.



The Sports Multihull class is ready for next month's BVI Spring Regatta.

ALASTAIR ABREHART

Registration starts on October 22nd at Nanny Cay Resort and Marina, the hosting sponsor of the Spring Regatta for over 15 years. "We are prepared for some challenging racing," says Robert Phillips, Chairman of the Race Committee. "The three-day regatta will include racing around Tortola for the Nanny Cay Cup, the second Mount Gay Race Day, and courses that use the islands themselves as extraordinary nautical marks for long distance. The Race Committee can design multiple races, creating satisfying courses to fit the day's weather conditions."

The event is seeing more one-design boats with the newly added class of Sports Multihull. The sleek trimarans are fun and fast; the fleet is increasing and ready to compete. "The thing I like best is fierce competition," said 2019 Sports Multihull winner Mark Sanders on *Island Hop*. "The class has really taken off in this way, with potentially more boats joining the ranks."

If you don't have your own boat here, you can charter a racing-equipped bareboat from The Moorings or Sunsail. There are many classes to choose from and this year, organizers have added a Fun Class for cruisers.

The daily fun will continue at the Regatta Village, located at the Nanny Cay Beach Bar.

Visit www.bvispringregatta.org for full details.

Salty Dawg Fall Rally to the Caribbean is a Go!

Barbara Theisen reports: The Salty Dawg Fall Rally to the Caribbean will be heading from the Chesapeake Bay in the United States to Falmouth Harbour in Antigua this November. If things ease up in the Bahamas, boats can also make landfall at Harbour Island, Eleuthera.

Departure is scheduled for November 2nd (weather permitting). Prior to take-off, veteran Salty Dawgs will be available to help with passage preparations.

—Continued on next page



Last year's Salty Dawgs in Antigua.

—*Continued from previous page*

With Covid-19 concerns, our social activities will be limited. We'll conduct webinars in lieu of in-person seminars and Zoom conferences instead of in-person general meetings and Q&A sessions.

As with our recent Homeward Bound Flotilla (Caribbean to East Coast US), we will have a Government Support Unit, a first for our Fall Rally, to keep organizers and participants up to date on restrictions at departure and arrival locations.

Once underway, our PredictWind-sponsored "Follow the Fleet" tracking system will follow your progress based on the position reports you send electronically or by radio. Friends, family, and armchair sailors can see your track. Each captain receives daily weather updates by e-mail from Chris Parker at Marine Weather Center and can access personalized weather routing suggestions if needed. Daily SSB radio nets keep boats in contact with each other. In addition, our Shoreside Team monitors your progress and becomes an important element of our response in case of emergency. *Visit www.saltydawgsailing.org/salty-dawg-fall-rally-to-caribbean for more information.*

ARC 2020 Start Dates Confirmed

World Cruising Club (WCC) reports: Due to the additional requirements expected for entry into St. Lucia, it has been agreed that the ARC arrivals will be spread over a longer time period rather than being concentrated. Therefore, the proposed split start for ARC (direct route) will not take place. All ARC (direct) boats will leave on November 22nd; the start for ARC+ (Cape Verde route) boats will be November 8th.

Current evidence indicates that the incubation period for Covid-19 is three to 14 days with an average of five to six days. To ensure that crews go to sea virus-free, they should self-isolate for 14 days before setting sail across the Atlantic. For most crews, this is not practical. Therefore, a number of measures are being considered to reduce the period of self-isolation while mitigating the risk. This will involve Covid-testing for crews in Gran Canaria a number of days before the start.

WCC will issue further guidelines to skippers to ensure that everyone aboard is virus-free on start day. The crew should form a "bubble" for minimum seven but preferably 14 days before departure, working and living together. All ARC-participants must join their yacht at least seven days before their start date.

Further details about the programs for ARC and ARC+ will be published closer to departure. With a one-week isolation period before each start, activities during that time will only be virtual.

Under current protocols, the St. Lucia Health Authorities require that arriving visitors show a valid negative Covid-19 PCR test result, taken within seven days of departure to the island. This applies to all ARC+/ARC-participants, even though the seven-day requirement cannot be met. To facilitate a test before departure, arrangements are being made with a clinic in Las Palmas.

Although most visitors must quarantine for 14 days on arrival in St. Lucia, it has been agreed with the St. Lucia Chief Medical Officer that time at sea during the ARC will count toward those 14 days, meaning that only those participants with crossing times of less than two weeks will need to spend some time in quarantine upon arrival.

WCC continues to monitor the situations, protocols, and regulations in the start and finish ports for the ARC and ARC+. The measures required now might no longer be appropriate in November. Flexibility, understanding, and acceptance are essential to a successful event. It is important that everyone involved with the ARC complies with the framework for a Covid-secure rally.

Visit www.worldcruising.com/arc/event for more information.

WORLD CRUISING CLUB



Arriving in St. Lucia with the ARC is always a cause for celebration.





FESTIVAL CANCELATION DOESN'T STOP CARRIACOU RACES

by John Everton

Although the 2020 edition of the annual Carriacou Regatta Festival was officially called off several months ago, that didn't stop the local sloops from Windward and Petite Martinique competing in the Around the Island Race on Sunday, August 2nd, and in a race from Windward through Hillsborough, around The Sisters, and back to the main dock on the August Monday bank holiday.

The turnout was good with *ZZZ* taking both races. She was built by Calvin Patrice's son Benson, who managed to beat his father's boat, *Glacier*, which had finished first in the last several regattas. In third place was was *Free in St. Barths*, built by Alwyn Enoe's sons Cal and Terry several years ago in Windward. Fourth place went to *Mageta O*, still actively fishing with Uncle C (Cyril Compton). *Mageta O* was built by his brother Bernard to replace the first *Mageta*, which was lost in Hurricane Emily in 2005. Next boat to finish was Michael (Neg) on *Marie Stella*, a Class B vessel and also still actively fishing. After this was Danny Donelan's *Savvy*, which was built in Petite Martinique by Baldwin de Roche and charters out of St. George's, Grenada. Bringing up the tail end of the fleet was Hope McLawrence with *Runaway*.

The racing conditions were ideal and the ladies of Windward as usual did a wonderful job of keeping everyone well fed — boatmen and spectators alike. Thank you! The atmosphere was a pleasant low-key one, one which harkened back to years gone by, before the years when the Regatta Festival saw a heavy influx of visitors.

The following weekend, the cruisers got their chance for a limited edition of Carriacou Regatta by holding a "Non-Regatta Regatta Around the Island Race." Nicely organized by Paul and Sally O'Regan, the festivities kicked off at the Slipway Restaurant. The entry fee for the race was the price of one drink per person. Thanks for the donation of the Mount Gay red hats and T-shirts for all participants go to Jerry Stewart and Daniela Angelico.

Saturday August 8th dawned squally, with intermittent rain showers which continued for most of the day.



RONIN EVERTON

The 15- to 20-plus-knot winds, drenching rain showers and choppy seas gave everyone the exhilarating feeling of an open ocean bashing. (Our entire crew on Frank Pearce's schooner, *Samadhi*, having neglected to bring foul weather gear, experienced it to the full!) After four months for many of us not sailing due to the Covid lockdown and restrictions, it was what we all needed, and it brought home once more that it's easy to break destructive shoreside habits by going to sea again, if only for a few hours. I think a lot of us had started to forget why we live on sailing vessels!

An impressive fleet of 25 yachts started, and all but two of those finished the race, which definitely had its challenging sections of wind against tide, and numerous rocks, reefs and shoals. There were two gaffers in the race: the diminutive 28-foot 1913 cutter *Sauntress*, the prettiest boat in the fleet, and the ferrocement Colin Archer ketch *Penguin II*, which sailed up from Grenada to participate. The smallest boat was a 22-foot Yngling. More typically there were several multihulls of various shapes and designs, the fastest of which was *Cudjoe*, a compact catamaran which finished second, just after *Adrianai*, a monohull first to cross the finishing line. *Samadhi* was third over the line.

Thanks again to Paul and Sally of the Gallery Café for organizing this much-needed and fun event.



LISA OESCHGER

Y2A BY ELLEN BIRRELL

Youth Sailing in a Time of Covid

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

Y2A reached out to youth sailing leaders around the Caribbean asking for updates on their activities since "Covid Time" began. Here's what we have to share.



NICOLA CORNWELL

Antigua. Elizabeth Jordan of the National Sailing Academy (NSA) says, "We are not allowed by government to start youth sailing groups at the moment. We expect the rules to change in September as long as schools resume — even if with new protocols. At present, we are offering private lessons to youth and adults.

"There will be a new general manager at the NSA beginning October 1st: Alison Sly-Adams. I will remain president but will not be full time in the office."

Bequia. Older members of the Junior Sailing Academy of Bequia (JSAB) are sailing double-enders and younger children are sailing dinghies on Saturdays.

Rose Kaye says, "The training was stopped for three months due to Covid-19, restarted in the end of May, and closed again first Saturday in July due to reports of persons testing positive for Covid-19 coming to SVG on American Airline flights. The management had to make the stop and start decisions to protect our members, as their safety is very important to us. Training resumed again the first of August.

"Covid-19 has made this year a very difficult one in raising funds. We had to initiate new means, so we organized a Ladies' Afternoon Tea, which took place on July 9th at Bequia Plantation Hotel. More than a hundred local and visiting women attended, including JSAB members' mothers. We raffled items donated by local artists and businesses in Bequia. With the Plantation Hotel donating all of their food and services, we netted EC$$10,000 (US$3,700) including donations.

She adds that, nevertheless, "With the increased number of older members, the Academy needs another double-ender boat to meet demand. Also, John Nicholson will start another ten-week RYA course soon for six members who have expressed their interest and are vetted to do the RYA courses. Finding funds to pay for the courses is a challenge. Donations to JSAB would help greatly."

St. Lucia. According to James Crockett of the sail training company Jus' Sail, "Covid has brought us to a standstill. No plans for training this year. The usual funding is now required for emergency support to the tourism industry. We have day boat operators with staff laid off, their business shrunk beyond recognition in the past few months. We can't see training more young persons for a sector that cannot absorb any of our trainees this year. Best to postpone until 2021 and hope things improve in the meantime."

Bahamas. On July 13th, Bahamas National Sailing School resumed. See www.bahsailingschool.org for more information.

Many island nations' youth sailing groups did not respond to this Y2A survey. Perhaps James Crockett said it best when he suggested that, as in St. Lucia, many island nations are holding on, postponing training, jobs and career advancement of local children, youth and adults, and doing the best they can to get through this challenging year in the hopes that things will improve for all people who rely on the flow of visitors and the economic support they bring.

Ellen Birrell and Captain Jim Hutchins are taking a reprieve from running six-day STEM charters in the USVI due to Covid-19. Instead, Ellen is involved with community advocacy, grandparenting and racing Elliott 6-metre boats, while Jim enjoys his first summer back on his native Utah turf in 11 years.

Left: Junior sailors' mothers and supporters attended a gala fundraising tea party.

Below: Older JSAB youth members with the double-ender Kiss.



ROSE KAYE

Where Will My Hurricane Be?



'Iris in 1995 has the record for hitting all islands between Martinique and St. Martin when it tracked up the chain'.

by Bill Woodroffe

As I write this in July, most cruisers in the Caribbean have taken cover for the hurricane season. We hope Trinidad will do the same for us some time soon. As the official hurricane season is well underway, all eyes look to September and the peak of the season.

Needless to say, boats and ships try to avoid these destructive named storms. Islands, unfortunately, don't have the luxury of moving out of the way. Insurance companies don't like them either. Most insurance policies explicitly spell out that there is no or limited coverage during the "season" in the specific hurricane "box" – move it or lose it! As was once said, the best hurricane hole is where the hurricanes are not.

So I asked myself, "Where, oh where, will my hurricane be?"

That brings up the crystal ball forecasts that NOAA and many others issued before the hurricane season began: "It's going to be an above/below/average season, with such-and-such number of storms." On May 21st NOAA predicted an "above-normal" season with 13 to 19 named storms. A full-throated justification with all sorts of detailed theories, reasons, analysis, percentages etcetera of why this would be so was circulated. Interesting, but what use was it? How should I react, knowing that the entire region will get 16 storms (maybe) rather than an average of 14 (maybe)? All it takes is one to ruin your day.

NOAA has public records of all weather forecasts (to verify how accurate they were), but what I was interested in was the actual track of the hurricanes and named storms in the Eastern Caribbean (Virgin Islands to Trinidad) over the last 30 years. NOAA publishes a track map for each year, which I looked at.

What did I find? The number of named storms in the Atlantic, from 1998 to 2019, totaled 431. Of those, only 59 crossed over or through the East Caribbean islands. That is less than 14 percent of the total number of named storms, or about one out of seven. Of the storms that affected the Eastern Caribbean, six were tropical depressions, 34 were tropical storms, and ten were hurricanes (nine major hurricanes). Meaning only 19, or 4.4 percent, of all Atlantic named storms during that period were hurricanes that hit one or more Eastern Caribbean islands.

The official hurricane season is June 1st to November 30th. However, Atlantic named storms have occurred from April to December. One storm, Hurricane Alex, in 2016, tracked from January 12th to 15th in the central Atlantic. In the Eastern Caribbean islands, all named storms only occurred during the official season. In four of the years — 1991, 1992, 1997, and 2003 — there were no storms at all in the Eastern Caribbean.

Of the 59 Eastern Caribbean storms, the majority, 76 percent, were tropical storms. Hurricanes accounted for 42 percent and tropical depressions were 11 percent.

Where were they? This became interesting.

It is popularly believed that Trinidad has no storms and as you go north from there the numbers, and therefore the chances of getting one, increase. But even before Gonzalo, a look at the numbers over the last 30 years shows that Trinidad had five storms: two were depressions and three were tropical storms. (None were hurricanes.) Grenada had 11 storms: one depression, nine tropical storms, and one major hurricane. All the way up north, the Virgin Islands had ten storms, of which seven were hurricanes.

Between Grenada and the Virgin Islands the range varied from five to eight storms each — in an almost even distribution. The takeaways are that Trinidad did indeed have the lowest number of storms, and that Grenada is not as immune to storms as believed. In fact, Grenada is only second to the Virgins in number of storms. Most other islands had considerably fewer, but not as few as Trinidad.

It is noted, however, that the strength of the storms increased as you go north from Trinidad to the Virgins. The Virgins had four hurricanes, with three of them being major hurricanes.

Other interesting points. All storms formed east of the Eastern Caribbean islands and traveled westward except three: Sebastien in 1995, Lenny in 1999, and Omar in 2008. All three had a track with an easterly component. Both Lenny and Omar were major hurricanes when they were in the Eastern Caribbean. Lenny was also interesting because just a month before, Hurricane José tracked the same path but in the reverse direction. Iris in 1995 has the record for hitting all islands between Martinique and St. Martin when it tracked up the chain.

Finally, what was the trend overall of storms during the last 30 years? Named storms in all the Atlantic trended up. Storms in the Eastern Caribbean may also show that trend, but not as pronounced. Storms per year ranged from seven to 28. Twenty-eight in 2005 was off the chart! The average number of all storms was 14.3 per year (13.8 if you delete 2005). The Eastern Caribbean's average was two.

Bill and Maureen Woodroffe sail aboard their 47-foot Vagabond ketch, Kalunamoo. *Read their blog at Kalunamoo.com*

Forecast: One of the Most Active Hurricane Seasons

Following a record number of Atlantic Ocean storms in June and July 2020, on August 6th the US National Weather Service updated its forecast for the remainder of the hurricane season, saying it was likely to be extremely active.

Gerry Bell, the lead hurricane season forecaster with the climate prediction center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said there could be 19 to 25 named storms — those with sustained winds above 38 miles an hour, or 61 kilometres an hour — by the time the season ends on November 30th. Of these, seven to 11 could be hurricanes, with winds of 74 mph (64 knots) or higher, including three to six major ones.

"We've never forecast up to 25 named storms before," Dr. Bell said. But he said that it was unlikely the season would be as active as 2005, when there were 28 named storms and the Weather Service had to resort to using the Greek alphabet for the last few.

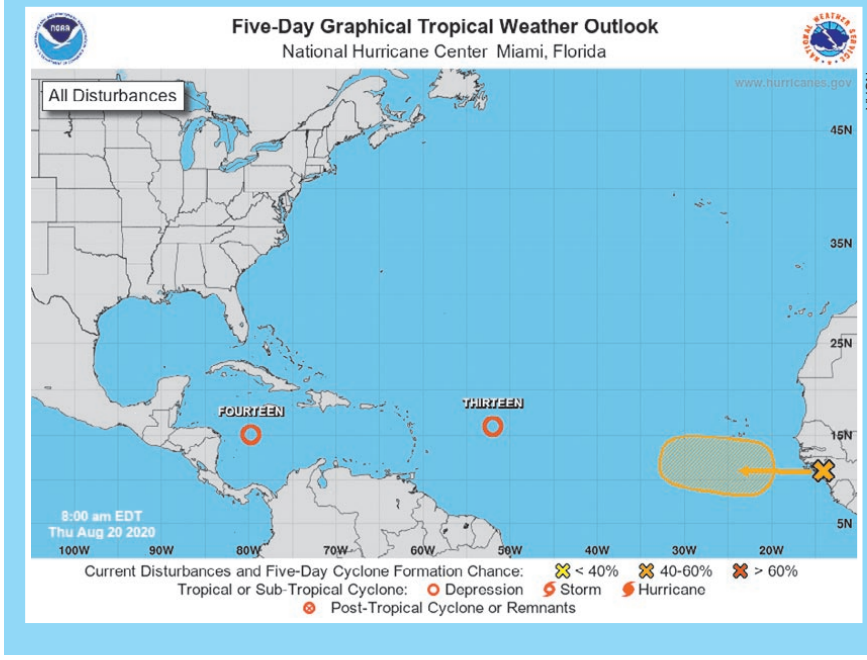
And the forecast for major hurricanes, those with winds exceeding 110 mph (95.5 knots), was unchanged from the scientists' preseason predictions, issued in May.

Dr. Bell said that, while it is more likely that storms would make landfall during an extremely busy season, forecasting the number that will do so is not possible, because landfall is affected by shorter-term weather conditions.

Dr. Bell also said that it was too early to tell whether climate change was contributing to the activity this season. Hurricane activity in the Atlantic is greatly affected by two elements of the planet's climate system: natural variations, over decades, in sea surface temperatures in the North Atlantic, and shorter-term temperature variations in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

The North Atlantic variability has led to increased overall hurricane activity since 1995. This year conditions in the equatorial Pacific — cooling sea-surface temperatures as the climate pattern known as La Niña starts to emerge — may be helping to increase activity as well by affecting wind patterns in the tropical Atlantic and Caribbean.

But Dr. Bell said that whatever the contribution of climate change to this season's activity, global warming affects the impacts of storms. Rising sea levels increase the danger of storm surges, he said, and warmer air temperatures generally make storms bring more rainfall.



NOAA

A RACER RENOVATED IN TRINIDAD

by Peter Morris

As a result of the coronavirus all the boatyards in Chaguaramas, Trinidad, had very little work to do. The fleet of yachts that would normally have come to the island during hurricane season for shelter, maintenance and repairs was barred by the border closure. To provide employment and get my 35-year-old Frers 43 renovated, I arranged with Allen Dowden (ymsad@tstt.net.tt) and Jonas Romell (trinidadrigging@yahoo.com) to completely refurbish *Jaguar*.

Jaguar is a Nelson–Marek Frers 43 design optimized for racing under the IOR (International Offshore Rule). Originally named *Marloo II*, she was built in 1984-1985 at Cookson Boats in New Zealand for Nicholas Girdis. She was the 15th yacht built at Cookson's and one of the first yachts constructed in Kevlar, Nomex and carbon fibre. Because of these materials, which were very advanced for the time, the original cost of her hull alone was US$550,000.

While Down Under, *Marloo II* competed in two Sydney Hobart Races as part of the Australian National Team, and missed racing in the Admiral's Cup by just one point. How she got to the US I don't know, but former Trinidad & Tobago coast guard commander Reginald Williams inspected the boat in Los Angeles and trucked her overland to Miami. Then he and his wife sailed her from Miami to Trinidad, where I purchased her (then called *Titan M*) in September 2008.

Since then, *Jaguar* has raced in the following Caribbean regattas:

Antigua Sailing Week (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013)
Bequia Easter Regatta (2009, 2014)
Grenada Sailing Week (every year from 2008 to 2020)
Guadeloupe to Antigua Race (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013)
Tobago Sailing Week (2009)
Trinidad Carnival Regatta (2012)

Jaguar is now in almost-as-new condition, thanks to the high quality work done by a team at Power Boats Mutual Facilities (a.k.a. Power Boats, www.powerboats.co.tt) in Chaguaramas. Although she is ready to hit the starting line again, she hasn't been re-launched yet — Trinidad is locking down again due to more Covid infections. It's starting to look unlikely that there will be any racing for us in the early part of the season. Our long-term plans are to sail *Jaguar* back to Auckland when entry to New Zealand is allowed again.



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM (2)





Work underway in July at the Power Boats yard.

Left Inset: We chose the new hull colour, 'Jaguar Velocity Blue,' based on the car's color.

Above & left: After 35 years of racing, Jaguar *and virtually all of her parts have been beautifully renovated.*

Top photos: Jaguar *is a well-known regional regatta competitor.*

Below center: The refit provided employment to workers, who did a high quality job.







A Tale of Two Old Salts

by John Everton

One of the many advantages to anchoring in Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, is the number of Old Salts who spend time here due to its excellent shelter, its proximity to a "hurricane hole" and two boatyards, and the friendly people ashore. Two such Old Salts were here recently, Trevor Robertson and Leonard Longsdorf.

Of the two, Trevor has many more years of sailing experience, having started sailing in dinghies when young in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) where he was born in 1949. In 1954 he moved with his family to Western Australia, where at the time there were no cruising boats. He left Australia in 1975 on a 34-foot wooden boat with one crew and sailed 3,500 miles to the island of Rodrigues in the Indian Ocean. From there they sailed to Mauritius and on to the Seychelles, where they weathered hurricane season and saw the coming of independence after a bloodless coup.

Trevor sailed engineless and mostly single-handedly on to Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, where he spent three months. In 1977 he rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed on to the Caribbean. Here he lost the boat in 1978 when he sailed onto the reef to windward of Petite Martinique. His next boat was a 30-foot fibreglass sloop with an outboard, on which he circumnavigated. One of the most memorable events of that trip occurred near Aden in the Red Sea, when he was caught in a crossfire between gunboats engaging in tribal warfare. Upon returning to the Caribbean, he found a job working for Stevens Yachts in St. Lucia,



where he met Sally Erdle, working as a charter cook before her *Caribbean Compass* days, and Chris Doyle, also employed there as a charter skipper. In 1997 Trevor launched *Iron Bark*, a 35-foot steel gaff ketch he built in Queensland, named after the hardwood he used for the interior joinery. She was six years in the building, during which time he also built a house and took on several other jobs.

In *Iron Bark* Trevor has spent two winters in Antarctica. In 2009 he was awarded the Blue Water Medal from the Cruising Club of America. He has sailed twice around Cape Horn, and once through the Beagle Channel and the Straits of Magellan. His longest non-stop passage was from Newfoundland to Western Australia: 171 days. Trevor's comment: "Not a good trip." Now, after sailing 150,000 miles, *Iron Bark* is up for sale. In the meantime Trevor is fitting out *Diva*, an Aloha (a double-ender similar to an Atkins Ingrid) for more high-latitude cruising. The only reason Trevor is selling *Iron Bark* is because every ten years he removes the engine and the entire interior to check on any necessary maintenance, treat any rust, repaint the hull, and then re-install everything. He is a meticulous boatowner. In another ten years he will be 81 and doesn't think he'll be up for the job.

Leonard, by contrast, didn't start bluewater cruising or even learn how to sail until 2010 when he was 74 years of age. He was born in Harbor Beach, Michigan, on Lake Huron, in 1936. Both of his grandfathers were from London, England. One sank aboard an ore carrier in the Great Lakes in 1917. Leonard started working with heavy equipment when he was 16 and moved to Florida in 1960, after which he moved and lived between California, Michigan and Florida. He bought his first and only boat in Titusville, Florida, in 2008, a 44-foot steel full-keel sloop named *Kainos*, designed by Van de Stadt and custom-built in South Africa.

Leonard's first mate, Julie, being a sailor and cruiser, first introduced him to the concept of boat-life. His son now runs the heavy equipment company that he built up after becoming a crane driver, which gave him experience for rigging boats. He and Julie worked and lived aboard for two years, and then, in 2010, they left for the Bahamas. Leonard taught himself how to sail along the way as they sailed between Freeport and Nassau twice. He had a pilot's licence, which helped him to learn sailing; as he explains, there are many similarities between flying and sailing. From the Bahamas they crossed the Atlantic to Flores and Terceira in the Azores, then to Portugal, Spain and Gibraltar, back to Portugal, then on to Agadir, Morocco, staying for two or three months. Then they proceeded to Lanzarote, Canary Islands,

JULIE ON KAINOS



Above: Leonard with the dogs that did most of the Atlantic crossings on Kainos.

Left: Trevor, the author, and Leonard met up in Carriacou.

Below: Trevor has sailed Iron Bark *twice around Cape Horn.*

and back across the Atlantic, to Carriacou.

Since then they have crossed six more times from Carriacou to Agadir by way of the Azores, altogether making 14 Atlantic crossings.

When my wife and I first met Leonard and Julie our boats were were hauled out next to each other and I watched him build an elaborate wooden staircase for their three dogs. When I next met him in Carriacou earlier this year, he told me that he'd been up the mast in the bosun's chair a couple of days before arriving in Tyrell Bay, and while rolling around up there had bruised his shins, ribs and shoulder. Not many 84-year-olds are fit enough for that type of experience. It's hard enough to undertake when you're young, which I was when I had to go aloft underway in a sea-



way! As I write these words, Leonard and Julie, accompanied by their three dogs, are four days out from Carriacou en route for Morocco. Fair winds and following seas, Old Salt!





Nathan and Vivian: 'You don't have to be affluent and wealthy, you don't have to be part of a fancy club, and you don't have to own a pair of deck shoes to fit in.'

Funding the Cruising Dream:

A Trusted Business Partner, Commercial Licenses, Ocean Miles, and Plenty of Can-Do Attitude

by Erin Carey

For those willing to trade in the nine to five, the house, the car, and the comforts that land life offers, there is another world beckoning to be experienced, and it's found on the water. Selling all your stuff is one thing, but moving onto a boat and starting a small business to fund this new lifestyle is another. It's a phenomenal challenge, a challenge that Nathan Zahrt and Vivian Vuong, aboard their 47-foot sloop *Ultima*, were willing to accept.

Realizing that coastal sailors, potential cruisers and adventure seekers were interested in gaining blue water experience, they started a business called Ocean Passages, where they take people of all levels of experience out into the deep blue sea, to show them how to successfully plan, provision, maintain and sail an ocean passage. When they're not teaching others the skills of passage making, they deliver yachts on behalf of clients in need of a move from point A to point B, calling on their ocean miles and experience to ensure yachts arrive at their destinations in the same condition that they left their origin.

Having worked in the marine industry on superyachts, refitting old boats, carrying out deliveries, and running charters in the Grenadines, Nathan, age 36, and Vivian, 31, caught the eye of legendary ocean passage maker John Kretschmer, who has teamed up with the couple as part of John's offshore sail training business. With the backing of such a well-known and trusted business partner, commercial licenses, ocean miles, and plenty of can-do attitude, this young couple hopes for a successful future.







Ultima *at anchor, during refit and underway with Vivian at the helm.*

I caught up with Nathan and Vivian and asked them about their journey.

What was a defining moment that led you to where you are today?

Nathan: *We both had this dream of a life on the water, and as we pursued sailing as a professional career we met some amazing mentors, including John and Tadji Kretschmer. When we were in a position to finally buy our own boat, they offered a partnership in their offshore sail training business. This offer gave us a tremendous boost of confidence and we didn't want to pass up on an opportunity to be backed by one of today's most legendary sailors, so we did everything possible to get Ultima, our South African built Compass 47, bluewater ready.*

What challenges have you had to overcome?

Nathan: *When we left our land life behind, we were living out of suitcases, jumping from boat to boat, trying to find any work we could in the marine industry, learning everything we could about maintaining, refitting, and delivering yachts. At one stage, we were apart for four months when Vivian scored a job on a 108-foot superyacht. She was the first mate, in charge of keeping the boat, along with a 32-foot tender, in pristine condition. She worked until her fingers bled. At the same time, I was delivering a 50-foot Swan from Maine to England via the Azores, and then took an Outremer from France to the Canary Islands through Gibraltar. Those times apart were very tough, but we managed to get through them.*

What kind of people are your clients?

Vivian: *We operate out of the US East Coast and the Caribbean. Our clients are typically those who seek an adventurous life at sea but haven't had much experience sailing long, offshore, and overnight passages. They are generally professionals who have experienced success in their field and our goal is to empower them to apply their specific talents and skills to the realm of offshore voyaging. Running Ocean Passages together also gives us the unique opportunity to work with couples and give perspective on how a boat can be run by two people working in tandem. They can be of any age sex or nationality, as long as there is a desire to go to sea and a willingness to learn.*

What makes your service unusual?

Vivian: *I think the fact that we are a married couple who run the business together is unusual: we can provide perspective from both male and female viewpoints. It's no secret that women are well and truly present now on the sailing scene, and having a strong female presence on board encourages women new to offshore sailing to give it a try.*

Nathan: *We can both perform any task aboard a functioning vessel, from celestial navigation to gourmet cooking and routine maintenance. We have a combined total of around 65,000 sea miles, have delivered over 20 yachts, and have worked in the marine industry for many years. We can give married clients who are considering making the change to this way of life honest, authentic advice on what to expect — the highs, the lows, and everything in between.*

Vivian, you're an American with Filipino and Vietnamese heritage. How have you found the sailing industry considering you as a young woman of color?

Vivian: *It can be a struggle at times. I had a tough childhood, so I have learned to roll with the punches and to not let your past get in the way of your future. I am often the only Asian female attending or speaking at events at yacht clubs, crew parties, and boat shows. As I have become more experienced in the marine industry, I've gained the skills to work on superyachts, deliver boats across oceans, run charters, and carry out repairs. When people realize I can walk the walk, and that I'm competent in the bilge, at the helm or in the galley, they are grateful I am around! I'd like to be someone who empowers minorities to sail. I want to show everyone that you don't have to be affluent and wealthy, you don't have to be part of a fancy club, and you don't have to own a pair of deck shoes to fit in.*

In a world where some people are trading adventure for a desk job and a mortgage, those who inspire us to live life differently can be scarce. Nathan and Vivian have created a business and a lifestyle with passion, determination, and hard work. They are an example of what can be achieved if you dare to dream.

Nathan and Vivian can be contacted at https://johnkretschmersailing.com/new-sailing-opportunities

Hailing from the land down under, Erin and her family recently cruised the Caribbean for two years before crossing the Atlantic Ocean aboard their Moody 47, Roam. Erin now runs her own PR agency, called Roam Generation, helping fellow sailors and adventurers share their unique and inspiring stories. Erin can be contacted at www.roamgeneration.com

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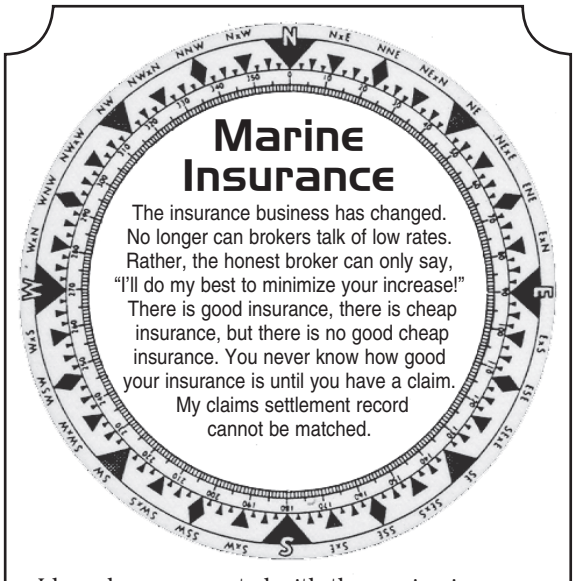
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Island Poets

UNTITLED

My silly thoughts
come in the form of haikus,
travel light, live light.

We live on a boat,
conditioning is for chumps,
sea breeze for me please.

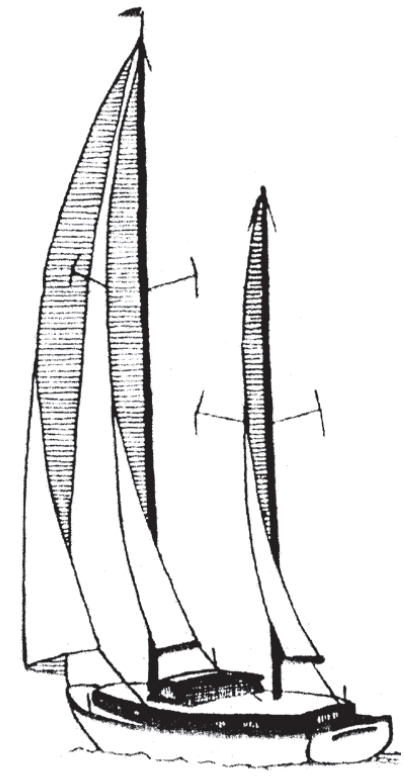
We live on a boat,
With not a single TV,
Kan't Keep Up with Kim.

We live on a boat,
no room for kitchen soccer,
glory days are through.

We live on a boat,
with a dancing stove and pot,
the tea to our souls.

We live on a boat,
so far so good, still afloat,
or zero to be wrote.

— *Seapine*



Overnight Passage

Glistening droplets fall from the chain
as we release the boat from bondage.
Fresh breeze fills the sails.
Hull cuts through the sea
truly underway.

Ritual begins two hours out.
Sun retires,
sky ignites in reds and golds,
spectacular exit with
a promise of tomorrow.

Night sky fills with stars,
fellow travelers so far away
they could be merely ghosts of
worlds vanished in some past age.
The Southern Cross confirms our course.

A full moon rises,
bathes the sea in pale yellow.
Moonbeam twinkles
mark our path
by dancing in our wake.

At the first rays of the new day
the stars retreat into the coming night.
The Sun reclaims the sky.
Grenada materializes on the horizon,
offering new adventures.

—John Rowland

From John Rowland's book One Foot in Front of the Other, *available at https://artcityjax.com/collections/art-city-books/products/one-foot-in-front-of-the-other-poems-by-john-rowland*

SOMETHING FISHY

by Ralph Trout

Sassy Cassy was now a sorry sight; she'd seen better days, but Dag knew she would sparkle and shine again. Thick, dark brown algae covered the mooring lines and the boat's bottom. It looked like the cabin-cruiser hadn't moved in a while. Probably hadn't been scraped in at least a year and the bottom needed anti-fouling paint. The sweeping hull needed repeated polishing with rubbing compound followed by several applications of wax. No scratches, or worse, were apparent. From the stern cleat a small, badly painted, square-ended, blue dinghy rode slack on its line. Only one homemade oar, a flat board nailed to bamboo, was visible propped over its stern.

Dag blew his nose and rubbed his closed eyes as he remembered "that" day. Some memories never fade, but only get better, enriched by adding the imagined "what should have happened."

First, he recalled that the sun's glare had been brutal in July of '99. It was a scorcher and mama had slathered the three children and herself with sunscreen and made them all wear long-sleeved shirts. His eyes had watered from the sweat mixed with lotion. Dag pulled hard on the brim of his ball cap to keep focused on the baits dragging three waves behind *Sassy's* stern as she trolled far west of the island of Canouan. He'd been out on day trips with his dad since mama permitted it after his sixth birthday. Now, he had to compete with Tim who had just received the same birthday present.

Four deep-sea rods were securely lodged in their holders. Three had black Penn 8-0 reels rigged with skirted ballyhoo, but one was his father's prized gold Penn International. It was baited with a small bonito tuna. His father had taught him to snap the larger bait's backbone and thread it with a longer needle than was used string the sleek, silver ballyhoo. This was their "secret" trick to have the bonito correctly trail without flopping through the wave troughs. The three-pound tuna was a teaser and lurched through the water another wave distant from the other baits.

That day the entire family was aboard, sitting on the lower deck bench seats that bordered the door to the interior V berth. Mother and daughter were on the port side bench while the two boys sat rigidly silent on the starboard. They'd been taught to be polite, only speak when asked a question. It was torture, watching and not being able to participate. But that was better than staying at home.

> *'This was a charter, a moneymaker. Never distract, dismay, or interfere with the angler who was paying for the trip.'*

Every time Dag started to rise, his mother would point at him to sit and keep quiet. This was a charter, a moneymaker. Never distract, dismay, or interfere with the angler who was paying for the trip. Late summer meant raising many fish every day. This particular week only one man, a foreigner with a weird accent, was staying at their fish camp. The previous day they'd had seven hookups, and twice as many fish had been seen. The stiff, Scottish angler had managed to lose all but one. He'd caught a 70-pound yellowfin tuna and it'd been grilled for dinner. The angler, as they all did, came for billfish. The marlins and sailfish were there in numbers during the late summer months. Pop said it was their season. Spring was for the mighty, leaping golden dorados. Then May brought the deep-running schools of wahoos. Heavy tunas and bigger sharks were always lurking along the western drop-off.

Cheesy had been the first mate almost since the beginning of Sunset Bay, and that was before Dag's time. Eric Chessman was a large, hulking, red-faced, never tanned man from London. He always wore the official khaki working man's outfit topped with a blue Penn cap. The shirt sleeves were neatly rolled up. This week he was coddling Mr. MacDougal, a middle-aged, now sunburned tourist from the continually mentioned "much more temperate bogs." The Scot's nose and ears, smeared with bright white zinc oxide, were a stark contrast to his deeply sun-reddened cheeks and neck. Cheesy had provided a wide-brimmed, sombrero-style straw hat, creating a humorous caricature swaying in the centered fighting chair.

Father, Captain Harry, was attired identically to Cheesy, but wearing a white captain's hat that had seen better days. They were a team and dressed the part of professional, expert, well-worn fishermen. Cheesy provided the small talk and an infrequent cold drink, only if the paying angler had adequate sea legs and wasn't blue in the gills. Harry stayed quiet, aloof and aloft in the upper steering station. Both constantly wary, watching for birds. Birds followed small fish; big fish followed smaller fish. This was the essence of the Caribbean Sea's food chain.

Harry waved his cap and Cheesy approached the seated angler with the gold-reeled rod and placed it into the chair's gimbaled holder.

"Better get ready, sir. Harry sees a billfish working close to the bait," Cheesy said quietly. Never taking his eyes off the stern wake, he reached and flicked the drag a few seconds so the reel free-spooled about ten metres farther back. Harry slowed the engines so the bait would sink.

"Really?" the Scot-infused accent asked, "Really, he can see one coming?" At that precise moment, the rod bent and the reel screamed as the angler was jerked forward to the task.

All eyes widened as a huge blue marlin rocketed out of the water thirty metres behind the boat and tail walked, splashing fine rainbows, another 20 metres across the stern wake before diving down into the cobalt depths.

"He's sounding, going deep. Hold on. Loosen the drag, Cheese!" Harry shouted from the tower as he throttled back. The engines were quiet, only the reel squealed as more monofilament line peeled out.

"No, don't wind, just hold on," the mate said, busy cranking in the other reels to prevent a tangle. Then Cheesy tried to clip the straps from the chair's harness to the reel, so it couldn't go overboard if the angler lost his grip, which they often did. But the intent angler pumped the arched rod and told him to hold off and back away.

The Scotsman grimaced with each pump back and forth in the varnished oak fighting chair. Again, the huge fish shot up, out of the sea, and plowed through the waves. Marlin are probably the strongest of all the game fish, continually rolling and lashing their bills as a bull would thrust its horns when it entered the ring facing the matador. The angler was tied to the monster fish by a thin, almost invisible line. This was a war of muscle.

The Scotsman lurched, twisted out of the fighting chair. Cheesy flung his arms around his shoulders and pulled him back into the seat.

Mama Cassy, sister Mia, and brother Tim all stood silent at the spectacle, mouths agape. In the action, the tourist's straw hat went with the breeze. Then he lost his grip on the rod and reel, later blaming sweaty hands. Luckily, the line snagged in the transom gate and the rod's tip-eye wedged on the deck with the reel still screaming out line. Cheesy helped the flushed angler. Dag scooted across the stern, grabbed the rod, and cinched it tightly with a line from a fender float. The nine-year-old knew enough that if the expensive equipment went overboard, Pop would be pissed.

The young boy smiled as he looked for confirmation from a scowling Harry who climbed down the ladder.

"Someone damn well better grab that rod!" Harry proclaimed loudly as he snatched it himself. "Cheesy, tend to the customer's bruises. Dag, get in the chair. Let's see what you can do!" Harry untied the rod and loosened the drag lever. With the line free spooling, there was no pull from the big fish. He was able to lock the rod butt to the chair.

Dag remembered and reveled in his first slight taste of early maturity as his small left hand grabbed the stock of the rod above the reel before Harry switched the drag lever back on. Dag's right hand made a few easy cranks rolling in the slack line and then he felt the awesome weight of the fish. It wasn't his first big fish, but it was his first huge fish. His toothy grin quickly changed to wide-eyed gasps. Harry slipped the *Sassy Cassy* into reverse and adeptly backed down, chasing the marlin in reverse so Dag could rapidly reel in line.

A full smile returned as he remembered his mother's arms surrounding his small body, trying to lock him to the seat as a human safety harness. Cheesy found a few seconds to snap the safety clips on the reel before returning to their anguished guest.

Everyone watched Dag on center stage fighting his first big blue. His small arm muscles strained as sweat soaked his shirt. The Scot had enough composure to rummage in his shoulder bag, find his movie camera. He began filming while still being braced by Cheesy.

Dag's small hands quickly cranked the reel as the reversing boat cut the distance to the billfish, but his arms were aching. Waves hit the transom and made a continuous prism.

"Harry! Harry! Don't!" he remembered his mother shouting, but he didn't know why. Even then Dag knew the worst that could happen was he'd lose the fish. And what were they going to do anyway except release it? He concentrated on cranking in the line.

"He's old enough. Let him try," he heard his father's return and it elated him. Harry's words provided more energy to pump the rod and crank the reel. Tim and Mia each sat low, between the chair and the transom. They helped push the rod up so Dag could wind in a few more metres of line. All knew their family was about fishing and fishing was the family.

Harry upped the throttles in reverse. The fish's dorsal sliced through the wake, 20 metres off the stern.

"Pull boy, pull. Mother, get the camera. This is one of those Kodak moments if there ever was one," Harry proclaimed.

Cheesy snatched the leader's swivel, meaning this was an official catch. Harry came down and grabbed the rod. "Son, step on the dive platform and get your picture taken. Be careful, don't slip off. Sharks undoubtedly lurking."

"Harry!" Mother yelled.

"It'll be okay. This blue played himself out. We gotta get the boy some pictures."

Cheesy had a good grip on the leader as Dag carefully walked through the stern gate and onto the dive platform. The Scotsman's Honeywell-Pentax 8mm camera had captured the struggle on celluloid.

The family's Instamatic clicked as the fish thrashed. Dag jumped, stumbled, caught his balance, and then dove over the transom to the safe deck space. Cassy wrapped him again in her warm arms and the two, mother and son, both rocked back and forth. The boy felt young and protected, yet also mature and immortal.

Dag remembered beaming more at this catch with the family than when he officially experienced sex for the first time. Next, his father's arm was wrapped around him and carried Dag again to the fish still resting on the diving platform. Brother Tim took another two photos, above, from the tuna tower. Spectacle finished; the fish was pushed back into the sea. They all saluted as it swam away into the deep.

After the release, "Son, you did good, real good. Mother, don't coddle the boy. Let him be, he did great. That's your first blue. Probably goes 300 plus, but, you know, we had to release it." Harry glanced, smiling at the Scotsman, "If you were a paying customer, we'd might have killed it, and given it to the taxidermist. Then, you could have a dust-collecting trophy to brag about. But, as it is, you'll have the photos to show your kids one day, like you've seen mine with my dad. Maybe this man will be so gracious to send you a copy of the movie."

The Scot winked with a nod and a thumb up. Years of watching that film wore it out until they had to splice the pieces together with clear cellophane tape.

Harry tussled Dag's shaggy hair. "Hey, Mr. MacDougal, you don't want to call it a day, do you? Cheesy, get set up. Check all the baits and get the lines back out. Set up the International with another bonito. What do you say?" he shouted, "Let's go fishing. I can smell another big blue out there 'specially for you. Let's go raise another big one. Hell," he glanced at his watch, "it's only one; we got time to raise another half dozen!"

Harry grabbed a Budweiser long-neck from the ice chest and toasted, "This one's for you." Dag knew it was said to him. Mr. MacDougal believed it was meant for him, but Harry had raised the brown bottle to Neptune and Poseidon, the fishing gods and ushered his usual fish prayer, "Jesus, Jehovah, Neptune, Poseidon, Allah, Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, please give us a fish. I think I covered them all. Oh yeah, please give us a big billfish."

Cheesy readied every rod again. The Scotsman was back in the chair and Dag was adulating with hugs from tiny sister Mia. Tim slapped him on his back. "Knew you could do it, bro; never doubted you for a minute." They all laughed and then sat back and quietly watched the remainder of that afternoon late show.

This is excerpted from the novel Something Fishy *by Ralph Trout from Libertad Publishing. The complete work, set in the Southern Grenadines, will be available later in 2020 on Amazon, along with Ralph's other Caribbean adventures,* Soucouyant – The Caribbean Vampire *set on Trinidad, and* The Wreck, *set on Carriacou.*

HEARTY BUT HEALTHY GALLEY TREATS

by Shirley Hall

These recipes first appeared in the January 2013 issue of Compass (www.caribbeancompass.com/online/january13compass_online.pdf). *We're celebrating our 25th Anniversary year by sharing recipes and other articles from past issues. Enjoy!*

Everyone loves to be able to offer unique, exquisitely tasty food when entertaining guests, whether with a crowd at the potluck or just watching the sunset with a few friends aboard.

Nothing says these tasty bites have to be difficult, messy, or unhealthy. All too often a case of the munchies is satisfied by some prefabricated, high-calorie, starchy snack-in-a-bag. With a bit of planning and a little effort you can enjoy healthy treats. None of the recipes below require excessive kitchen skills or equipment.

Pak Choy Tuna Rolls

1 Tablespoon yellow mustard
1 Tablespoon mayonnaise
1 bunch pak choy
1 Tablespoon oil
1 small onion, chopped fine
1 clove garlic, minced
1 pound fresh tuna (or two cans tuna in water)
1 tomato, chopped small
1 sweet bell pepper, chopped fine
1 teaspoon ginger soy sauce
salt to taste

Mix mustard and mayonnaise and set aside. Wash the pak choy well. Separate the largest pak choy leaves and carefully steam slightly (for less than a minute) to soften. Use tongs to handle hot leaves safely. Let cool.

In a frying pan heat oil on medium heat; add onion and garlic. Separate tuna into small pieces or flakes and add to pan with tomato and sweet pepper. Smaller pak choy leaves may be chopped small and also stir-fried. Cook, stirring, until tuna is cooked. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly.

Put a spoonful of the cooked mixture onto the center of each steamed pak choy leaf. Wrap as cigars and secure with a visible toothpick. Serve either warm or chilled with the mayo-mustard sauce. These may be either an appetizer or a main course, depending on size.

Fried Eggplant Bigani

1 medium eggplant
1 teaspoon salt
1 Cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 Cup milk
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil for frying

Slice eggplant into rounds about a half-inch thick, or into strips. Place in a large bowl, cover with water and sprinkle with salt. Let soak one hour, and then drain and pat dry with paper towels.

In a bowl combine flour, salt, baking powder and Italian seasoning. Add beaten egg and milk. Beat until smooth.

In a deep frying pan, heat oil over medium heat. Dip dry eggplant pieces in batter, and fry until golden brown. Drain on paper and serve hot.

Curried Green 'Figs'

No, these aren't the sweet, seed-filled Mediterranean fruit. In the Caribbean, we call a certain type of bananas "figs."

One hand (about two pounds) green fig bananas
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 Tablespoon curry powder
1/2 medium onion, chopped small
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 Cup water
3 leaves chadon bene, chopped very small
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin (jeera)
salt and pepper to taste

Peel green bananas and cut into half-inch pieces.

In a frying pan, heat oil and add curry powder, onion, and garlic. Add three Tablespoons water to this mixture. When it starts to expand, add the banana slices and salt. Stir until the banana pieces are coated with the curry.

When it starts to stick to the frying pan add the remaining water and stir. Reduce heat, cover, and let simmer with occasional stirring for 20 minutes.

Uncover, add chadon bene and cumin, and stir. Cook for five more minutes. Cover and let sit for another five minutes or longer to absorb the flavor.

Serve with crackers, hard bread, or roast "bakes" (West Indian biscuits), or simply skewered with toothpicks.

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THE PERFECT ANTIDOTE TO LOCKDOWN BLUES

by Peter and Robbie Nuttycombe



BRUCE AMLICKE

Above: A great group of eight cruisers — plus Jesse — enjoyed a post-lockdown Taste of Trini tour.

Below: On our southerly course we found pepper roti in chicken and veggie versions.

After about three months of being confined to the Chaguaramas area, a group of cruisers was more than ready for a road trip around Trinidad. Fortunately, Jesse James — cruisers' friend and advocate, from Members Only Maxi Taxi Service — felt the same way. And so the latest incarnation of Taste of Trini came about. Jesse proposed taking a southern route around Trinidad rather than the more usual north and eastern one. It was a good call. Chaguaramas "weatherman" Bruce Amlicke was consulted to determine the best day of the chosen week. His was a seriously good call.

So early in July we set off. Much to the surprise of those in the group who thought they were familiar with street food in Chaguaramas, our first stop was right at the marinas' front gate, between Power Boats and Peakes boatyards. There we were treated to our first taste of Trini breakfast: sada roti, bhaigan choka and tomato choka. It was the first of several "breakfasts." We made our way through Carenage village where we sampled fried bake with saltfish buljoh, fried ochro and salad, and progressed a little farther to taste potato pie with mango sauce and chadon beni



PETER NUTTYCOMBE

The statue of Hanuman, the monkey god, is the largest murti (statue of a deity or mortal in Indian culture) outside India.

sauce. After stopping by a traffic junction vendor for a bag of chennett (fruit), we continued through the streets of Port of Spain — very slowly — as we tried smoked herring with bodi and spicy fish pie. Once we headed south there was cow heel soup, dhalpourie, "mother-in-law" (a spicy condiment), and fried carallie, all washed down with pure cane juice.

Jesse kept up a running commentary on Trinidad food and cooking methods. He is extraordinarily well informed, in a way that could only have come from extensive experience! But Jesse is much more than simply a gastronome. His knowledge of Trinidad is extensive, her history and people together with the many cultures and the geography of the island. He enjoys a receptive audience. And we so loved learning much more about the beautiful island of Trinidad. In Port of Spain he pointed out the old railway station, now home to the island's public bus service. Apparently, the appearance of the automobile ultimately led to the phased closure of the railway. Presumably, this was about the time of the disappearance of the whaling industry — there was no longer a "whale weigh" station!

We had a short stop at the Hindu temple in the village of Waterloo at Carapichaima, to appreciate the amazing statue of Hanuman, the monkey god. At 85 feet tall, this is the largest murti outside India. The beautiful temple and grounds included other murti, such as Ganesh, a remover of obstacles, and was a place of tranquility and quiet beauty. We made another stop close by, at the Temple in the Sea, which was built by an indentured labourer from India determined to keep his promise to build a temple despite every obstacle thrown his way. It took him 25 years to fulfill this promise. We were also treated to the sight of a flock of flamingos feeding in the shallow waters nearby. Of course we also found more local food to sample — veggie pilau, bhaji and pumpkin with a drink of mauby to keep the liquids up.

As we passed through Couva, Jesse noted the hospital built to make the most advanced medical services available to the people of Trinidad & Tobago. Now it serves as one of Trinidad's quarantine facilities for Covid-19.

We were heading for "doubles corner" in the town of Debe. There we tried saheena, bhagi eggplant pie and of course doubles. By that time, when Jesse asked if we were still hungry, there was a rather more muted reply. But there was more to come as we continued on our southerly course. There was kachouri, geera pork, pepper roti in both chicken and veggie versions, and pineapple chow from a roadside food stall where we bought all the mangos, honey and chow available. Cruisers are a hungry lot! And Jesse was still on the lookout for chicken to match the description of the "delicious Cuban chicken" described by one of our crew. Jesse was not to be beaten. He found Trini style chicken, both barbecued and fried. Apparently it was as tasty as the Cuban version. The rest of us found it finger-licking good!



BRUCE AMLICKE

Finally we reached the southernmost point of the journey, Los Iros Bay. From there we could see across to Venezuela at one of the shortest distances between the two countries. At anchor were about a half dozen of the tankers, apparently from Iran, that have defied US sanctions to supply



PETER NUTTYCOMBE

Above: The beautiful temple and grounds were a place of tranquility and quiet beauty.

Below: Jesse is extraordinarily well informed on Trinidad food and cooking methods, in a way that could only have come from extensive experience!

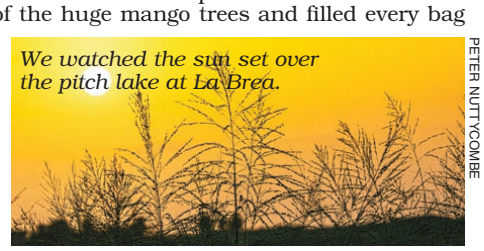


BRUCE AMLICKE

Venezuela with fuel. A little closer were lots of Trinis enjoying the warm water of the Serpent's Mouth. Some of us managed to get our feet wet and wished we could have had time for a quick swim. But we had one more objective before we turned back to the north and west.

Down a rutted track of a road we found the path to one of the mud volcanoes, neatly hidden in a small forest a short distance from our parking place. It was a muddy path too but no-one came to grief and we were suitably impressed at the mud pool where the large bubbles seem to erupt from nowhere; in reality they are making their way up from deep underground. Despite the onset of rainy season, Trinidad has had an extremely dry "dry" season and so the level of the mud volcano is not as high as usual. But it was a strange and interesting phenomenon worthy of the paddle through the mud.

The day was getting old as we headed north for the return trip. It was time for some traditional Trini sweets: jellybean, pholourie, kurma and tullum. Sweet enough for any sugar addict! Jesse stopped for shark bites and chicken wings since it was getting close to dinner time. And a Trini twist on White Oak rum — a new version has sorrel in it. It was delicious. We drove through the town of La Brea, the location of the pitch lake which is the largest natural deposit of asphalt in the world. We stopped at a view point and watched the sun set over the pitch. Just a little farther along the road we stopped under one of the huge mango trees and filled every bag we had with mangos. Can't beat that for fresh. And free as well!



We watched the sun set over the pitch lake at La Brea.

PETER NUTTYCOMBE

Just one more stop before Western Main Road back to the boatyards — Western Main Road in St James, the town that never sleeps — for wonderful locally made ice cream. What a way to top off a full day of Tasting Trini. And roll on the next adventure!

Cruisers travel on their stomachs and my wife, Pat, and I are no different. In fact the first question we ask when we land someplace is where is the market?

Like swimmers riding the surf, Pat and I strained our necks and urgently surveyed the swirling mass of faces before us as we were swept by a wave of humanity into the farmers' market in the town of Santa Marta, Cuba. A boom box was blasting out a distorted din of salsa music that despite its obvious lack of audio quality exuded an energy that seemed strangely appropriate as the soundtrack to the organized chaos of the weekly market. There were no scientifically designed, buying behavior enhancing Muzak tracks here!

Our favorite butcher, Mr. Big Finger, was nowhere to be seen.

Moving in the opposite direction was an equally impressive tide of shoppers who had already made their purchases for the day. An old woman, clutching a paper plate bearing a large chunk of cake and icing, stopped in midstream to lick icing off her forearm as she was jostled in the crowd. Men pulled various wheeled contraptions ranging from milk crates tied to baby carriage wheels to more orthodox bag carriers, all of which were laden with fruit and vegetables. Others, perhaps less well equipped but no less game, approached with elbows up and an assortment of plastic bags and straw baskets containing everything from fresh meat to bottles of raw unpasteurized honey and trays of eggs, all hanging from their forearms.

Young and old, black, white or brown, able bodied or in scooters and wheelchairs, the townspeople of Santa Marta, a suburb of Varadero, came out in force to partake in the weekly ritual of grocery shopping Cuban style. Many of the youngest were paraded about in their finest clothes by doting parents who used the occasion as both an opportunity to fill the larder and to socialize. And more than one person used a few shuffling samba steps to approach and greet a friend with hugs and air kisses. In a country where organized religion is less prevalent and six-day work weeks are common, the weekly *ferria*, as the market is known, is both a necessity and a celebration of the things ordinary Cubans find important. Family, food and friends.

ADDISON CHAN



Mr. Big Finger will confidently whack rough yet deliciously familiar cuts of meat from the hog carcasses in his stall.

Where is Mister Big Finger?
Grocery Shopping, Cuban Style

by Addison Chan

Dressed in our boat clothes, wearing tired Tevas and sporting our obligatory cruisers' backpacks, Pat and I stood out as the obvious *extranjeros* (foreigners) that we were. Still, we had been back in Cuba for over a month, and our weekly forays to the market had given us a sense of how the chaos works. Unlike a sterile walk through the freezing cold aisles of a supermarket back home, shopping in Cuba is a participation sport that can be played either as an individual or as a team. For the crew of *Threepenny Opera*, Pat and I have discovered that the best tactic is to divide and conquer, she with the fruits and veggies and me with the meats.

Here one cannot rely on colourful packaging and labels to identify the contents of processed food products. The food here is real. There are no little Styrofoam trays with UPC labels identifying the type and size of cuts of meat, nor are there helpful tags with suggested serving directions around the stalks of strange fruits whose names have not yet found their way into our vocabulary. In Cuba you buy food with all of your senses and your instincts, not just your intellect. Each trip to the market is an expedition and an exploration of both the familiar and the new and, for Pat and me, is the highlight of our week. For those who find that trying a new flavour of store brand frozen pizza is a walk on the wild side, Cuba may prove to be a worthy challenge.

BERNIE KATCHOR



For those who find that trying a new flavour of store brand frozen pizza is a walk on the wild side, Cuba may prove to be a worthy challenge.

Despite the throngs, there is an order to the madness. A shopper is entitled to walk up to a vendor's stall and examine the merchandise in any way they see fit. Examination can include handling the goods, prodding, poking, smelling and even requesting a taste. Often the merchants offer samples without being asked. Sometimes the offering is part of the sales process and other times it is just a neighbourly thing to do. Pat came home with a basket full of tomatoes a couple of weeks ago because the tomato sauce vendor wanted her to see the goodness of his raw materials. He asked for nothing in return and sent Pat on her way with a friendly wave. The tomatoes were delicious and since then his recycled 1.5 liter water bottles full of rich homemade tomato sauce have been added to our list of ship's staples. At a dollar apiece they are a bargain.

Once the decision to buy is made, however, the shopper is required to inquire who is the *ultimo*, or the last in line, and take their place at the end. "*¿Quien es el ultimo?*" It doesn't seem to matter how bad your Spanish is, the unspoken rule is that the crowd sorts itself out and you are accorded your proper place in line. Likewise, you have to keep you ears tuned to the next shopper who inquires "*¿Ultimo?*" as you will have to raise your hand to show the newcomer where they must go.

What is not guaranteed, however, is that the merchandise you originally selected and stood in line for will still be available by the time you are served, as the goods are sold on a first come first served basis. More than once I have lined up for a choice cut of pork, only to have the customer ahead of me scoop up the very piece that I was eying. In that case I can leave the line and move on, or I can take my time re-selecting another. Nobody complains if I take my time!

"Hey, Chino!" Mr.Big Finger picked me out of the crowd, and was furiously beckoning me to his stall, this week in a different aisle than usual. He spotted me before I saw him, likely because I have become a regular customer for his best cuts and also because a six-foot Chinese guy is a little obvious in the crowd. Being called "Chinaman" back home might have gotten my hackles up, but here it is the way it is done. There are no undertones of racism and the name only expedites identification, and I've learned to embrace it.

Pat coined the nickname Mr. Big Finger because he has hands like a bunch of sweet bananas. His short thick fingers can grab his *macha*, a dangerously sharp cross between a meat cleaver and a machete, and confidently whack rough yet deliciously familiar cuts of meat from the hog carcasses in his stall. Pork chops in Cuba, as they do everywhere, start as part of a whole pig. The difference in Cuba is that the pig probably walked to the market under his own steam earlier that morning. The first time I went to the market I was alternately fascinated and horrified at the scene: fascinated because here was fresh food presented in all of its organic glory and horrified at the thought of actually having to eat the hairy, fly-swarmed pieces of soft, slightly warm flesh.

He pointed his *macha* at one of the carcasses that had been split so that the loin end was exposed. Some days the loin is too big, which means tough dinner-plate-sized chops; other days it is too fat, which means trimming a lot of waste. Today the loin was perfect, a nice balance of meat on either side of the T-bone. Using a motion familiar with butchers everywhere, he hefted the carcass in his right hand and leaned forward to push the meat in my face, as if to assure me that the quality I saw at a distance was just a good inches from my nose. I gestured with my hands to indicate the size of the piece I wanted and with two whacks, I was presented with a jiggling chunk of meat that, once back aboard *Threepenny Opera*, I would trim into tender and flavourful center cut pork chops.

It's true you have to work a little harder here to buy food, but there is plenty of food available to buy. Cubans eat, and they eat well. For our efforts we are rewarded with the freshest, most additive-free food we have enjoyed in years. Ingredient listings are not needed here! To eat the same way back home, if it is even possible these days, would require an equal or greater amount of effort to seek out the boutique organic merchants. And the bill would be astronomical and out of reach on a continuous basis for all but the wealthiest and finickiest foodies. Our weekly grocery bill here has never exceeded the Cuban peso equivalent of US$20 and, to date, our freezer full of frozen meat from Florida remains almost untouched.

I chuckle at the warnings in the cruising guides on Cuba that exhort cruisers to plan for a voyage to Mars, to expect a paucity of everything, and to anticipate stores filled with dusty and empty shelves. While this might be true in some remote corners of the island, nothing could be farther from the truth in any of the ports we have been in. There is plenty of food, although what is lacking sometimes is selection. A couple of weeks back every produce vendor had bok choy for sale. We ate the stuff with almost every meal until it was coming out of our ears but we haven't seen it since. I'm told that another crop is coming ready shortly, so I expect to see the delectable stalks on our dinner plates very soon. The downside of eating truly garden fresh is that when it's picked, its gone!

—Continued on next page

LOOK OUT FOR...

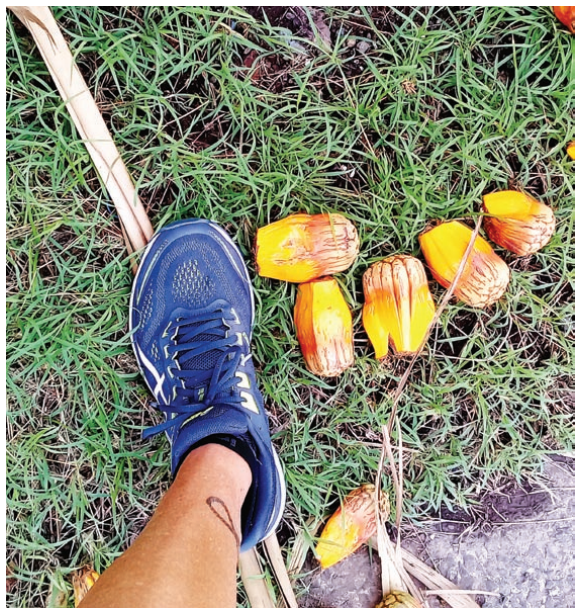
Screw Pine: Screwy in its Own Way

by Lynn Kaak

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

From the roots to the leaves, and everything in between, there is a use for the pandanus, or screw pine. European settlers probably brought it from the Pacific to the Caribbean as an ornamental novelty.

The fruit of *Pandanus tectorius* is quite recognizable



— it looks like a pineapple that has been jacked up on steroids. The fruit typically gets to the size of a volleyball or larger. Thankfully it doesn't tend to fall in one great big piece, but sheds segments or *phalanges* as it ripens. Each fruit can have anywhere from 40 to 80 "keys." As it ripens, it develops from green to yellow and orange. The segments have the appearance of candy corn for giants, complete with the progressing spectrum of colours. Towards the inside of the segment, the flesh is pulpy, but it becomes very fibrous and even woody towards the exterior. Each segment will typically hold two seeds. The pulp and the seeds are edible, but cooking is required. The ripe segments have a slightly sweet smell.

The tree typically gets to an average height of around seven metres (23 feet). At first glance, it looks like a big clump of grass (especially if it is short), while a taller tree may resemble a shaggy-headed hippy with green hair, but closer investigation shows less grass-like tendencies and a more typical tree structure.





Left: As it ripens, the fruit sheds segments that look like giant candy corn.

Above: The fruit looks like a pineapple on steroids. At first glance, the tree looks like a big clump of grass.

Right: Pandanus leaves are used in handicrafts such as placemats, baskets, hats and bags.

Branches start spreading out at roughly half the overall height of the tree, and provide a framework for the crown. The leaves are enormous blades that grow to around 65 centimetres (two feet) in length, but are only about five centimetres (two inches) wide. In the shorter trees, air roots may provide greater stability, and the root system is quite wide, providing a stable base for the tree where other trees may not be able to get much of a toehold.

This tree is generally not self-pollinating, and has a distinct male and a female version. The male flowers are white and grow in a cluster, surrounded by big white bracts (specialized leaves that resemble petals, but aren't). These fragrant flowers only last one day, but are produced at a rate of once every two months or so. The female flowers look like petite pineapples, and are seen from once to three times a year. Once pollinated, it will take seven months to develop a ripe fruit.

No surprise, this child of the tropics is not fond of the cold. It can handle brief brushes with temperatures close to freezing, but it thrives in the warmth. In the Pacific, it is often found just at the edge of the sand on the beaches. It has no problem growing in sand; the elaborate root system helps by anchoring it. In the Caribbean, where it isn't so ubiquitous, pandanus trees will be found as part of the landscaping.

In some areas, the fruit is eaten. There are various medicinal uses for the various components of the tree. The fibers are used for weaving, as are the leaves. The male flowers are used in Hawaii to make fine mats. This tree was of great importance to the people of the Pacific long before the Europeans arrived, and still has economic and commercial uses. In the Caribbean, pandanus leaves are used in handicrafts such as placemats, baskets, hats and bags, in Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, Jamaica and Haiti.



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Craft "straws" are obtained by first boiling the green leaves for about 30 minutes and then bleaching them in the sun. The wet leaves are spread out in direct sunlight but not allowed to dry. When the green colour has changed to tan the damp leaves are rolled end-to-end to prevent them shrivelling during the final stage of drying. The coiled leaves are allowed to dry naturally in the shade and are finally split into strips of useful width.

Look for the trees in gardens and parks, and for attractive long-wearing craft items in gift shops and markets.

—Continued from previous page ...Mr. Big Finger

Some of the foods we're used to, however, are hard to come by. Ice cream, for example, is available as an inexpensive treat everywhere, yet fresh milk has totally eluded us. Apparently it is rationed for the young and those with a "medical" need. Beef is even more elusive than milk. To date the only beef we have found available in retail outlets is in the form of eight-ounce tubes of soy-extended Chilean hamburger. While it is tasty enough for a chili, it would make a pretty gristly and gamey tasting hamburger. Beef is strictly controlled, and despite the large herds of very healthy looking Angus and Brahma cows found in the interior, unless one is staying at an all inclusive tourist resort, "Where's the beef?" might apply in Cuba.

Gaps in the supply chain are often filled by a vibrant and pervasive black market. Unlike the vendors in the *ferria*, who deal in the national pesos, the underground vendors deal only in hard currency convertible pesos. They are able to provide everything from 15-dollar single malt Scotch to Uruguayan or Canadian beef, to Italian parmesan, and anything else a gourmet first class hotel might need to satisfy their foreign guests. A few weeks back, vacuum packed three-pound slabs of Nova Scotia smoked salmon were making the rounds at $10 apiece, and whole beef tenderloins were $18.

Participation in the black market is highly illegal and will result in jail time for the vendors if they are caught. Foreigners might have their purchases confiscated and in extreme cases there is the possibility of a substantial fine, so the risk and reward equation must be evaluated by every participant. If one decides to proceed, a few discreet inquiries within the cruising community, or to the baristas and bartenders in local establishments, will usually result in a clandestine tap on the shoulder from an interested vendor. Getting to know "some guys" is a personal decision, but if you figured out how to buy pot in high school, you'll be fine down here!



BERNIE KATCHOR

This little piggy... Each trip to the market is an expedition and an exploration.

At the end of the day, wherever you acquire your groceries; you will not starve in Cuba. Pat and I always have some reserve supplies, but almost anything we would normally buy in Florida or Canada can be found here, although the brands might be different. One could theoretically show up here with empty lockers and be able to completely re-supply for a very reasonable sum.

As I put the finishing touches on this, it is Sunday morning, and as soon as I close the lid on the PC Pat and I will be off on our weekly foraging trip. We have a rough idea of what we are looking for, but the end result may be very different from our original intentions. All we know is that we will eat well this week and if you are what you eat, then we must be in pretty good shape, too.

Addison Chan is the co-author with Nigel Calder of Waterway Guide – Cuba, *the most comprehensive and up-to-date guidebook to Cuba for cruisers. It is available from www.cruisingguides.com/products/waterway-guide-cuba. He also started the Facebook groups "Cuba, Land and Sea" and "Bahamas, Land and Sea," which contain a similar style of relevant content.*

The Sky from Mid-September to Mid-October

by Jim Ulik

What do we want?
Time travel!
When do we want it?
Whenever!
— Anonymous

Time travel. Would it be hard to pick a year besides 2020 which is on track to be the longest year on record? Curious about the future? Well, flying cars and living in space were already supposed to be the norm. I am still waiting for the Jetsons' conveyor belt shower. When tired, a person would stand on the conveyor belt, enter on one side and exit clean, dry and dressed. Infatuated with the past? Hundreds of years and some things haven't changed.

In 1889 it was commonly thought that "microbes developed by the electric light" caused the flu of 1889-1890 even though vaccines and vaccinations were invented in 1877. Comets and meteor showers' debris engulfing Earth have also been associated with the cause or omen of pandemics and disease. Throughout history many people have committed suicide based on falsehoods spread by conspiracy theorists with little evidence. Thirty-nine people lost their lives (Heaven's Gate – 1997) because they believed there was an alien spacecraft following comet Hale Bopp. Bringing it back to today, some believe that the current pandemic was caused by the introduction of 5G broadband and radiation from cell towers. What will be perpetuated in the future is anyone's guess.

Anyway, the Perseids meteor shower has passed but the Earth will pass through other debris fields of a number of smaller showers this period. One hundred metric tons of space dust falls to Earth every day.

Thursday, September 17th

Virgo embraces the New Moon over the next three days. The New Moon phase occurs on September 17th at 0700 hours. The Moon is currently located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun so it will not be visible in the night sky. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere. If the sky is dark it could be a good time to spot the Andromeda Galaxy. You may not notice but the galaxy is speeding towards us at over 400,000 km/h (250,000 mph)! Over the next few nights you can find Mars in the east. From Mars look towards the north to find a fuzzy spot in the northeast. Image 2 will show the location. The mass of stars that makes up the Andromeda Galaxy may appear dim and small but from our perspective it actually extends three times the diameter of the Moon.

Friday, September 18th

A few minutes after sunset you will see a close approach of the Moon, Mercury and Spica low in the western sky. Higher above towards the southwest is Antares. Antares is a red supergiant star that is 700 times the sun's diameter, or large enough to engulf the orbit of Mars. This star is nearing the end of its life. Looking towards the northwest you can spot Arcturus. This giant orange star is about 26 times the size of the sun. Arcturus is among a group of stars comprising a stellar current that is not in the plane of the Milky Way galaxy.

Monday, September 21st

Mercury hovers around ten degrees above the western horizon from September 16th to October 1st. For the next two days Mercury can be seen next to Spica. There is less than one degree separating the pair, so a better view may be through binoculars after 1830.

Tuesday, September 22nd

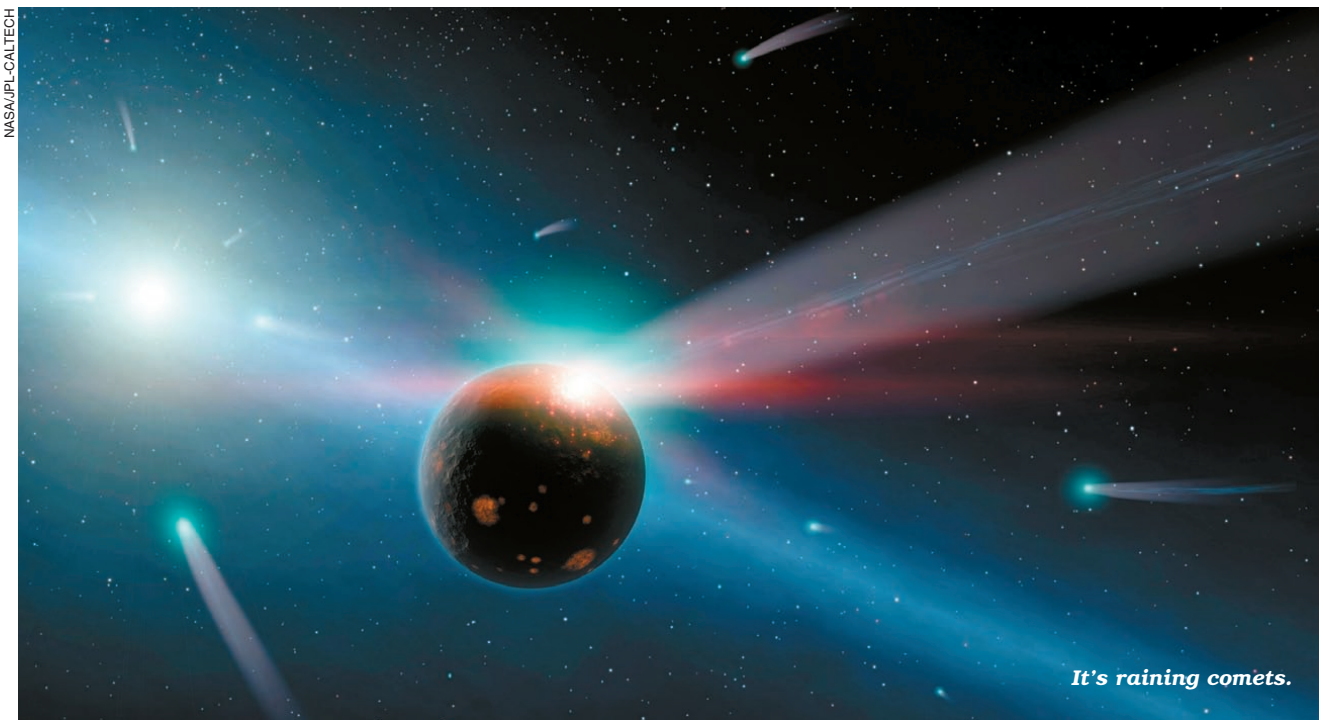
The Sun will cross the celestial equator at 0915 AST. During the September equinox the Sun will shine directly on the equator. There will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of fall (autumnal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of spring (vernal equinox) in the Southern Hemisphere.

Wednesday, September 23rd through Friday, September 25th

The Moon reaches first quarter on September 23rd at 2145 as it shares the night sky with Jupiter and Saturn. Over the next 24 hours the Moon will cross over the Milky Way for a close approach with Jupiter. The Moon's daily transit eastward shift puts it right next to Saturn on September 25th.

—Continued on next page

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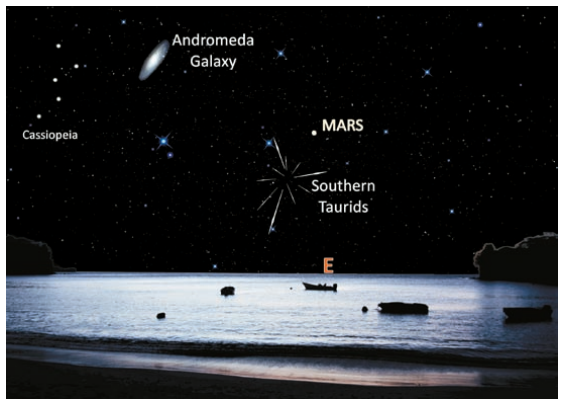
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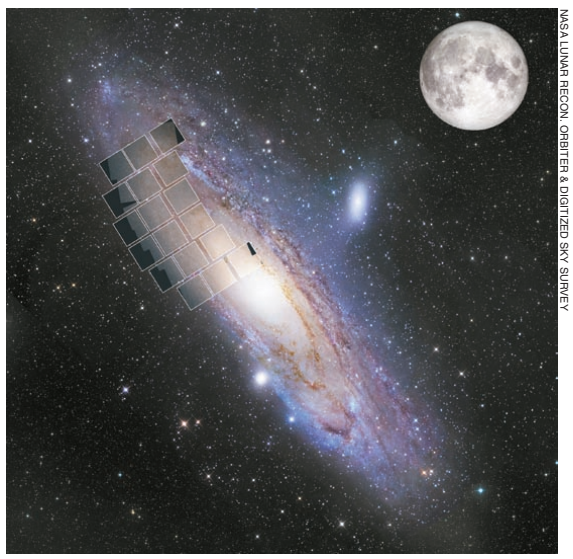
Thursday, October 1st

Take your pick of names for the Full Moon tonight. For one, the Harvest Moon is the Full Moon that occurs closest to the September equinox each year. Traditionally, people in the Northern Hemisphere spent the month of October preparing for the coming winter by hunting, slaughtering and preserving meats for use as food. This led to October's Full Moon being called the Hunter's Moon, Dying Grass Moon, and Blood Moon (not associated with a Total Lunar Eclipse) or Sanguine Moon. Then there is the Travel Moon. Is that because it is time to head south for warmer climes? Works for me.



Above: Mars will reach its brightest in a few days and is located near the Andromeda Galaxy around 2200 hours.

Below: Actual size of the Andromeda Galaxy compared to the Full Moon.



NASA LUNAR RECON. ORBITER & DIGITIZED SKY SURVEY

The planet Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation of 25.8 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury, since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look for the planet low in the western sky just after sunset.

Friday, October 2nd

If you happen to be up before dawn, Venus and Regulus will be paired up in the eastern sky. Maybe you will spot a meteor or two from the Daytime Sextantids meteor shower. The radiant of this minor shower is rising a few degrees south of Venus. Look straight overhead in a dark area of the sky to find a shooting star. If a meteor shoots out of the sky north of Orion it is part of the Delta Aurigids meteor shower.

Beginning on the morning of October 2nd the Moon slowly makes its approach to Mars. By nightfall both the Moon and Mars appear very close to each other. By midnight Mars will seem to touch the Moon, making it difficult to find without binoculars or a telescope.

Tuesday, October 6th through Saturday, October 10th

The Draconids Meteors fly out of the dark northern sky from October 6th through 10th. Draconids is a minor meteor shower that will peak on October 8th. These slow moving shooting stars entering the atmosphere originated from dust grains left behind from a comet first discovered in 1900. The Draconids is an unusual shower in that the best viewing is in the early evening instead of early morning like most other showers. The second quarter moon will ensure dark skies in the early evening for what should be a good show. Best viewing will be in the early evening from a dark location far away from city lights. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Draco, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

Saturday, October 10th

Another shower this period will radiate from an area near the Seven Sisters. The best time to begin viewing shooting stars from the Southern Taurids is around 2100 hours. Interference from the Moon will begin after midnight blocking all but the brightest meteors that fly overhead towards the west.

Tuesday, October 13th

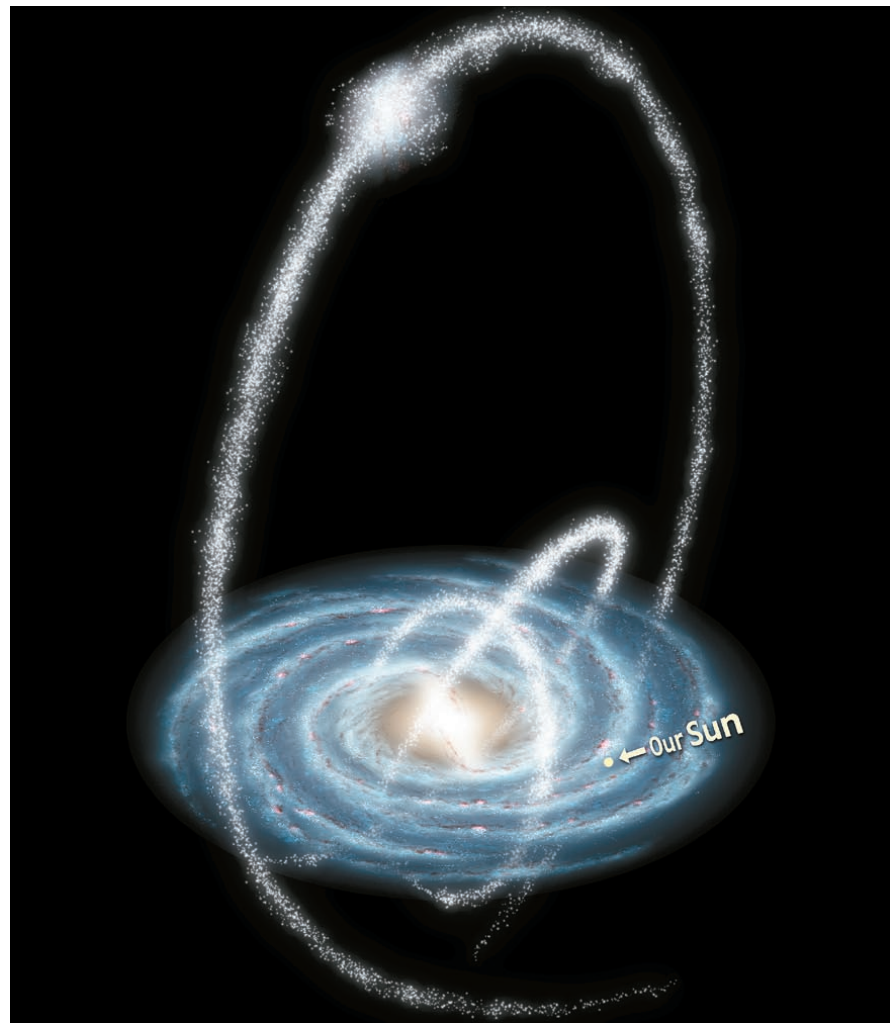
The red planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph Mars. A medium-sized telescope will allow you to see some of the dark details on the planet's orange surface.

Wednesday, October 14th

The Moon and Venus will make a close approach, passing within four degrees of each other. The pair will be visible in the dawn sky, rising around 0330, two and one half hours before the Sun.

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

Jim Ulik sails on S/V Merengue.



Stellar currents surrounding the Milky Way.

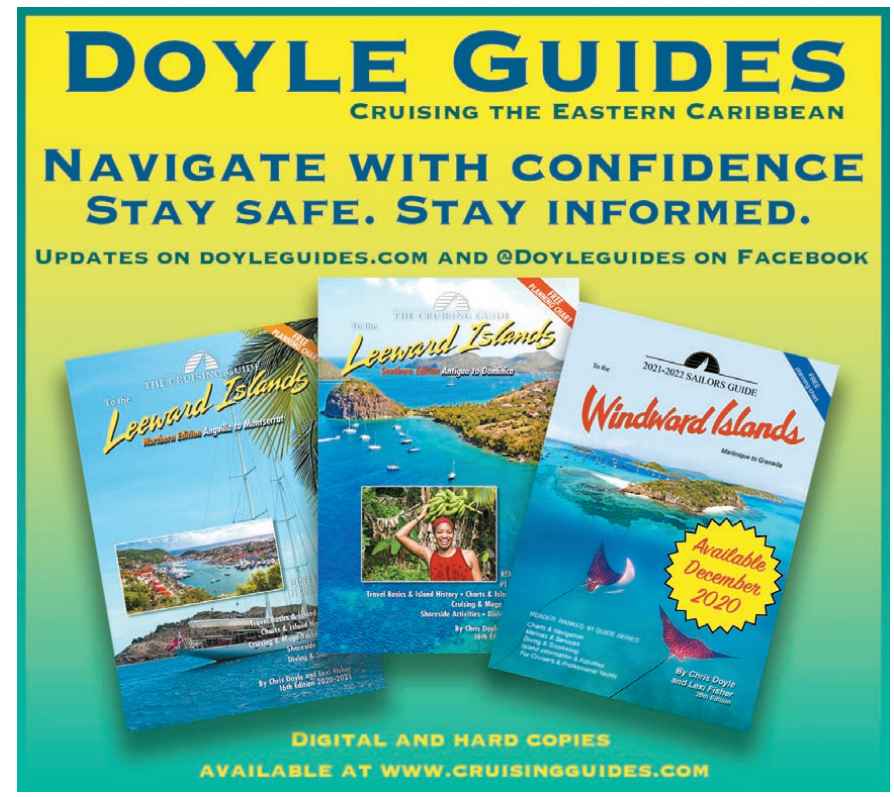
PICK UP!

Ahoy, *Compass* Readers! When in Grenada, pick up your free monthly copy of the *Caribbean Compass* at any of these locations (advertisers in this issue appear in **bold**):



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The Reclusive Mangrove Cuckoo

When I first heard the call of the Mangrove Cuckoo, I had no idea that it was a bird I was hearing; the call was a rather guttural — *ahrk-ahrk-ahrk-ahrk-ahrk* — and sounded to me like a large frog laughing, or burping after a big meal. At times it seemed as if the frog was growling — *kruk-kruk-kruk-kruk* — the rapid staccato notes running together to become one. It didn't take long to realize that the mad croaking coming from high up in the trees was a bird calling.

Finding the croaker was the real challenge. I heard it infrequently, kept my eyes fixed on the trees, but the bird eluded me every time, its croaking rattling the air in plain mockery. Then one day, I followed the call to a nearby tree and found a lovely



bird watching me from the roadside — I must confess it took me a moment to associate the froggy croak with the pretty cuckoo in front of me. The Mangrove Cuckoo (*Coccyzus minor*) is an elegant medium-sized bird with peach-coloured ventral parts, a long black tail with white-tipped feathers, a greyish-brown mantle and black face mask. Its two-toned, decurved bill is black on top with an orange-yellow lower mandible and a dark grey tip. The eye ring ranges from grey during the breeding season to bright yellow during the rest of the year.

The Mangrove Cuckoo can be confused with the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, especially on islands where the species overlap. However, the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo does not have a black face mask and has white, rather than peach-coloured, ventral parts. Additionally, its call is higher pitched and faster paced than that of the Mangrove Cuckoo.

The Mangrove Cuckoo is native to the neotropics and a year-round resident on most islands in the West Indies, where it can be found skulking in the mangrove swamps. As its English name suggests, it was once thought to be entirely confined to mangrove forests — but it is now clear that the species is found in a broader range of habitats. In Grenada, for example, I have observed individuals perched in the mangrove canopy and pecking at the sea grapes growing above the ocean surf. I have heard their call drifting from thickets of thorny coastal shrub and from shady cocoa plantations. I have noticed their presence in higher-elevation humid forests and in windswept cloud forest.

This pretty bird belongs to the Cuculidae family, an ancient group of birds more often heard than seen, having a preference for dense vegetation. Like most cuckoos, this is a bird clad in mystery; it is a secretive, solitary creature that spends most of the time hidden from view and is often only seen when vocalizing. It remains motionless for long periods, rotating only the head at great angles in order to locate prey. It moves slowly and methodically, walking or hopping along branches, its long tail flaring out as an aid to balancing. It rarely breaks cover, except when moving from one area of cover to another and then it flies in a direct line with several strong wingbeats followed by a glide. To help it navigate the branches, the Mangrove Cuckoo has zygodactyl feet, with the two middle toes facing forward and the two outside toes facing backwards.

The young mangrove cuckoos, who look like disheveled versions of their parents, spend the time between meals climbing and hopping from branch to branch.

The Mangrove Cuckoo is an insect eater, feeding mainly on both hairy and hairless caterpillars, insect larvae, grasshoppers, cicadas, stick insects and other large insects. It will also feed on berries, frogs and lizards; in fact, in Grenada they feed mainly on anole lizards during the dry season.

In the West Indies, the breeding season coincides with the rainy season, from May to November, when there is a spike in the insect population. During courtship, the male lures the female by raising and fanning his elegant tail to display striking white-tipped feathers. Once he has caught her interest, he cements their bond with food offerings by perching on her upper-back while clasping the food morsel in his bill; she will then rotate her head and point her bill skyward to accept the offering. Oddly, the female does not beg to be fed, so courtship feeding is done voluntarily by the male at random times and it's not a pre-condition for copulation. Pairs are monogamous, but it remains unclear how long their bonds last.

Although about two-fifths of the Cuculidae family are known to engage in brood parasitism, the Mangrove Cuckoo is a law-abiding creature that builds its own nest. True to its reclusive nature, it builds a solitary nest deep within the dense canopy, concealed with plant matter to avoid detection by predators. The female lays two to four cerulean-green eggs, which both sexes incubate for about nine to 11 days. During incubation, birds have been known to swoop aggressively down on predators, including house cats that get too close to their nest.

The tiny hatchlings are born altricial — utterly helpless, featherless and dependent on their parents for food and protection. The cuckoo parents take their responsibilities seriously and take turns at maintaining a constant watch over their offspring, emitting alarm calls to alert one another whenever a predator is nearby. Thankfully, the chicks grow rapidly and fledge the nest to nearby branches as young as six to ten days old. The youngsters, who look like disheveled versions of their parents, spend the time between meals climbing and hopping, taking short flights from branch to branch, watching and learning from their parents, until the time comes when they must go their own way and become solitary cuckoos themselves.

Known as the "Rain Crow" due to a tendency to vocalize more on cloudy days, the Mangrove Cuckoo has acquired a reputation for predicting rainfall and yes, it does often rain after the cuckoo calls.

So, if you have not yet been captivated by the froggy vocals of the Mangrove Cuckoo, then I suggest that you take a kayak or a rowing dinghy and head quietly to the mangroves. Don't look for movement, just listen carefully for the froggy croak and follow the sound — but remember to expect a prince.

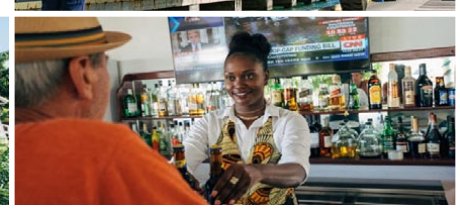
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Backbones are Overrated: More Caribbean Invertebrates to Discover

by Darelle Snyman



White encrusting zoanthids form thick mats that encrust dead corals and other hard substrates.

I have always been fascinated by the spineless creatures that share the world with us, especially the marine varieties, which represent 98 percent of the known animal species in the ocean. The Caribbean has its fair share of these wonderful and sometimes bizarre creatures that truly form the backbone of life on our blue planet. Here are a few of these special creatures that have caught my eye while exploring the beautiful Caribbean.

Spotted Sea Hare

The spotted sea hare (*Aplysia dactylomela*) was a fun discovery on the sandy bottom between the seagrass in the shallows at Isla Mujeres, Mexico — a unique-looking critter with its rabbit-ear appendages and ruffled back. It is from these distinctive head appendages, called rhinophores, that it has inherited its common name. This frilly looking marine mollusk is related to sea slugs and nudibranchs, but seems to have lost the genetic lottery when compared to the delicate beauty of its colorful nudibranch cousins. These large, bulky creatures vary from pale yellow to green in color and the presence of irregular, ring-like splotches on the dorsal part of their bodies distinguishes the spotted sea hares from their other sea hare relatives.

The sensory rhinophores on their heads have endowed them with an excellent sense of smell, allowing them to detect even the faintest scent of food. Sea hares are herbivores and can typically be found in the shallows feeding on red and green algae. Their coloration tends to correspond with the algae they have been feeding on.

This vulnerable looking critter has a much reduced internal skeleton that provides little protection. Instead, the protective role has been taken over by the frilly, wing-like flaps of skin called parapodia that can fold over the mantle, protecting the gills and other organs. These appendages also allow the sea hare to swim through the water, but crawling slowly along by means of its muscular foot remains its preferred method of travel.

For an easy-looking snack spotted sea hares actually have very few predators, thanks to an interesting array of anti-predatory defenses. I have witnessed and unfortunately caused the use of one of these defenses in my eagerness to photograph a specimen. As a first line of defense when disturbed sea hares release a bright purple cloud of ink into the surrounding water. Pigments found in their diet of red algae are responsible for the ink's deep purple color. Studies have found this toxic ink to be irritating and distasteful to would-be predators. The ink cloud is not their only form of chemical defense; they also exude a sticky, milky-white substance called opaline that has been shown to be very effective in deterring hungry spiny lobsters by blocking their sense of smell.

Sea hares often form mating chains of three or more animals, even though they are hermaphrodites with fully functional male and female reproductive organs. In such a chain the animal in the front acts solely as a female and the one in the rear solely as a male and the animals in between act as both males and females.

Caribbean Reef Squid

A group of more active mollusks that is always a treat to watch as they swim towards you, usually in linear formation, are the torpedo-shaped Caribbean reef squid (*Sepioteuthis sepioidea*). Most often they beat a hasty retreat when they spot me, so a stunning reef squid picture still eludes me — a bit disappointing as they and their other cephalopod cousins the cuttlefish and octopuses are considered to be very curious critters. Their curiosity clearly does not extend to me, though. Their caution is understandable considering the fact that on average a poor squid shoal gets attacked four times an hour by a variety of carnivores, especially fast-moving jacks and imposing barracudas.

The alien-looking reef squid with its large eyes can be distinguished from its squid relatives in having fins that extend nearly the entire length of its body. An interesting tidbit: for its size, squid have the largest eye-to-body ratio in the whole animal kingdom.

Their mouths are surrounded by eight arms and two feeding tentacles that are put to good use, as they are voracious predators themselves. They consume 30 to 60 percent of their body weight daily, preying on unsuspecting small fish, crabs and shrimp. They use jet propulsion to swiftly propel in almost any direction to pounce on prey or to avoid becoming prey themselves. Sometimes predator escape requires more desperate measures. That is when the squid rely on their jet propulsion to leave the water altogether and fly.

Another fascinating aspect of these strange creatures is their ability to rapidly change body color and pattern to communicate with fellow shoal mates and to blend into their surroundings. Their specialized skin cells, called chromatophores, allow them to flash over 40 shimmering light messages and even more impressive, they can exhibit a different pattern on either side of their bodies at the same time, relaying different messages to the squid on either side of them. Light messaging is also an integral part of their elaborate courtship display that involves dancing and can last for over an hour. Sadly, these amazing little creatures do not live very long; they are referred to as being semelparous, which means they die shortly after they reproduce.

Rough File Clam

Another special mollusk, whose vibrant red mantle will immediately attract your attention, is the rough file clam (*Ctenoides scaber*). These bivalves are also commonly known as flame scallops, but they are not at all related to scallops. The edge of the mantle bears numerous bright red or white tentacles that continuously comb the water for food particles. The red color is due to the large amounts of carotenoids found within their body. I found the beauty in the photo tucked away in a rocky crevice at English Caye, Belize.

The rough file clams, unlike many of their more sedentary relatives, are able to relocate when the need arises. They propel themselves through the water by flapping their rough shells and ejecting a stream of water. Unlike scallops that swim with the hinge of the two shells facing towards the back, file clams swim with their hinge facing forward.

Golden Crinoid

The golden crinoid (*Davidaster rubiginosus*) is a favorite photographic subject of mine. It makes a stunning portrait with its elegant, golden-to-orange arms billowing out into the current. This beautiful feather star is a member of the class Crinoidea, an echinoderm class that also includes the delicately stalked sea lilies. This graceful crinoid lives in holes and other shelters on the reef with its arms reaching out into the passing current, trapping drifting food particles in its sticky arm grooves. Just like its echinoderm relatives, it can also regrow arms that were damaged or lost by predation.

These beautiful creatures may seem fixed in one place but are actually able to relocate by either swimming, floating or even walking. When moving short distances they inch along the substrate using tiny leg-like appendages called cirri.

White Encrusting Zoanthid

Last but not least is the white encrusting zoanthid (*Palythoa caribaeorum*), a relative of corals and sea anemones. This white to beige colonial species forms thick mats that encrust dead corals and other hard substrates. They are characterized by having fleshy polyps surrounded by two rings of short tentacles, which are closed when they are not feeding or disturbed.

These tentacles are also equipped with stinging cells and the toxin used by this species, palytoxin, is considered to be one of the most toxic non-protein substances known. As a result the white encrusting zoanthid has very few enemies, and the only vertebrate known to feed on it is the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*). It is an aggressive competitor for space on a reef and is able to kill or inhibit the growth of nearly all other sessile reef invertebrates.

Next time you're in the water, keep an eye out for these beauties.



Sea hares can typically be found in the shallows feeding on red and green algae.



The Caribbean reef squid's specialized skin cells allow it to flash over 40 shimmering light messages.



I found this rough file clam tucked away in a rocky crevice at English Caye, Belize.



The golden crinoid is a favorite photographic subject of mine.



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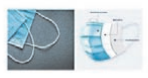


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OPERATION: LOVE BOAT

Dear *Compass* Readers,

We refer to it as "Operation: Love Boat." Recognizing we live in interesting times where our travel options can be severely limited, we felt fortunate to be able to help two lovers reunite.

Our boat, *Kindred Spirit*, was registered with Grenada Lima to depart Union Island, SVG, and arrive in St. George's Grenada on July 1st. Our friend, Shelly Gordon (from the Green Boley bar and restaurant in Bequia), was recently engaged to Nick from Grenada. Nick returned to Grenada while the airports were still open; however, Shelly's plans to travel to Grenada were cut short when the Grenada airport closed.

They reached out to us, knowing that we were sailing off to Grenada and also knowing we might be the last option for Shelly to get to Grenada for a long time. Of course we said yes and then connected with Grenada Lima to make a last-minute change to move our arrival date back a day and add Shelly to our crew list. All that went smoothly thanks to the good people at Grenada Lima.

Shelly jumped on the next ferry from Bequia to Union Island where we caught up with her and got her aboard. The conditions as we departed Union Island were "sporty" and the crossing was something that Shelly was not looking forward to. She kept her spirits up, but was quite uncomfortable in the building swells.

Upon our arrival in Grenada we all still had a quarantine period to endure and Shelly was introduced to the rolly conditions in the quarantine area of St. George's anchorage — again more discomfort for her. However, on the positive side, it was a very enjoyable time as we talked about Bequia, cooking, fishing and all manner of interesting topics. Shelly liked our cooking and had fun fishing for snapper with our handline. We also introduced her to the cruisers' time-honored tradition of sundowners, which she enjoyed.

The day finally came where we were released from quarantine and at Port Louis Marina Shelly was again re-united with her fiancé. Smiles and hugs were in abundance. We then invited them onboard for a dinner to celebrate their reunion.

Shelly and Nick had been in a difficult situation, given the travel restrictions they faced, and we were pleased we were able to assist them and to relish the good memories we have about carrying out "Operation: Love Boat".

Darcy and John Dillon, *S/V Kindred Spirit*

FINISHING THE JUNE *COMPASS*

Dear *Compass* Readers,

My August letter of kudos for June's *Compass* wasn't originally intended for Forum. When *Compass* said they wanted it, I didn't have time to finish reading the issue or rewrite. My old eyes have since plodded through the rest of the June *Compass*, so I'll complete the job.

I have been around Caribbean Grackles since I arrived in these parts in '94 and, cumulatively, have spent countless hours watching them. But I hadn't realized how remarkable they really are until I read Bela Brown's June article on them. (That doesn't mean I like them stealing my banana bread.) Bela told of sub-species differences, including distinct songs island to island and, in some sub-species ("Bequia Sweets" for one) females being a lighter color. To add an observation of my own, Bequia grackles often let the female beg or scout out food then fly in and take it away, which I haven't seen in Carriacou grackles. Many traits of the birds that Bela describes remind me of humans — except that we practice all the foibles whereas birds are species specific. Male grackles are keen on sex and jealous but have no interest in building nests — the female does that. Males of other species range from hit-and-run artists to partners that fully participate and go the distance.

(In last month's Forum I referred to a fellow writer as a "wise guy." Maybe I am one too.)

Julianna Coffey's book, *Birds of the Transboundary Grenadines* (specific to my cruising ground) helps find and identify birds, Bela's articles tell me who they are. (Julianna is also in June's *Compass*, "Eco News").

Jim Ulik's "Caribbean Sky" keeps me oriented and I like the thoughts that preface his monthly tour — in June, clean, clear air.

Then smack, right in the eye, two pages full of color depicting another world. For June, "Those Splendid Sponges" by Darelle Snyman. Nice.

Have I missed anything? Yes, the picture of the beautiful little gaff cutter with square sail in "Speedy" John's book review of *Sauntress*. Also, it's good to have hurricane stories this time of year lest we get complacent. "Give it some thought before you get caught." (I just made that up.)

And how about that old dude, Walters, who had just rowed in from the Canary Islands?

Oh, and I had a piece in there too, "Back to the Cave."

I already said that *Compass* remains "relevant and useful." Let me add "entertaining."

Now, Sally reminded me that I don't have to wait for the hard copy. I can get *Compass* free online the day it's published... If I have the electricity, a signal, the inclination and my device is working.

I read the hard copy in the cockpit, where I can gaze into the view to rest my eyes every several paragraphs. And I keep one in my backpack for when I have time to kill while ashore.

#

This is *Compass's* 300th Issue – big up!

I'll repeat part of what I said in their 200th Issue: "Information, ideas, opinion, entertainment, a running supplement to the cruising guides, sponsored by products and services that many of us want or need, *Compass* has been my community newspaper since Issue One in '95."

#

Of the millions of stories that have and will be written about the virus, I have written three, my "Virus Suite." The first two are in June and July *Compass*. The third, "Was That Really Necessary?", remains unpublished — the editor felt you were getting "virus fatigue." I am pushing a cause characterized by the title of my July story, "...Less Money, Noise and Pollution...." At first, I'd thought it was a minority cause — I'm not so sure now. If you'd like the whole set, I'll email it to you as an attachment — request it from hutchambia@hotmail.com. It will be sent by my amanuensis, a part-time assistant I hired when she lost her job at lockdown. We work remotely by phone and messenger, she ashore (with good WiFi), me aboard. My retirement income continues to roll in, her income (as many incomes around the world) has simply stopped. I'm deliberately spending more than before. I'm not lecturing, I've heard many reports that we visitors are being generous. Big up.

Fair Winds,

Jim Hutchinson, *S/Y Ambia*

KUDOS ON THE AUGUST ISSUE

Dear *Compass*,

Kudos on your August issue, from start to finish. What an evocative cover shot! I found every article, story, etcetera, entertaining and informative. One of the highlights of the issue was John Smith's poem, one of his best literary efforts to date. I enjoyed Don Street's wrinkle on how the Scots got to Windward, Carriacou via North Carolina, Canada, and the Bahamas — none of which proved to be as magical a place as Windward to end up. Learning about the nesting habits of the cow bird in Bela Brown's monthly column was especially educational.

On a sad note relating to my article "*Pole Star* Days," when we were in Grenada shortly before lockdown I learned from Kirk that Ashley Pilgrim was no longer with us, having fallen off the scaffolding while working on a wooden Barbados ketch hauled out in Grenada. He was 78. That leaves only Kirk and Bones surviving among the gang which helped me to repair *Pole Star* and reinforced holding spiritual values above materialistic ones.

Caribbean Compass just continues to get better and better. Please, keep up the good work!

Speedy John, *S/V Second Star*

CIRCUMNAVIGATORS PLEASE!

Dear *Compass* Readers,

I have a request. I'd like to compile a list of yachtsmen and women and names of their boats who have sailed around the world and anchored at some point in our Admiralty Bay, Bequia. The circumnavigator(s) can be yourself, or sailors you know of.

Please send the information to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

Thank you in advance for your response.

Sir James Mitchell, Bequia

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU! What do you want to say?

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We do not publish anonymous letters, but your name may be withheld from print if you wish.

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Send your letters to sally@caribbeancompass.com



Letter of the Month

WHITHER EASTERN CARIBBEAN YACHTING?

Dear *Compass* Readers,

In the yachting industry in the Caribbean there are many wondering what the coming season will bring.

While nothing is certain and much can change, as it has been doing the last number of months, there are a number of drivers that give some indication of what might happen.

First, the high-end wealth in the world has not been affected by the Covid pandemic. Stock markets are up. There may be some asset write-downs in some industries but there are still plenty of persons with discretionary spending power. Many of these people will be wanting not just to escape the northern winters, as they do every year, but they will also be wanting to escape the anxiety and risk of virus infection in metropolitan areas and the chilling ambiance that goes with it. They already know that many Caribbean jurisdictions have contained the virus and that small jurisdictions can do this better than large ones. So the ultimate solution for persons thinking this way is to commit to an extended stay in the Caribbean in circumstances that are low risk. Mia Mottley, the Prime Minister of Barbados, wants to get them into private villas in Barbados. There will be many that will rather consider a private yacht that further enhances risk management and usually allows for changes of scenery when desired. In order to get to the Caribbean a private jet will reduce infection risk hugely. It certainly looks to me like superyachts should have a good season.

But smaller yachts should do very well too and the already significant cruising community should be expanded. We already know that the ARC and Salty Dawg rallies have been confirmed for 2020 even though the organizers will have to deal with complicated quarantining and other conditions.

The biggest limitation to a decent season is the possibility of some closed borders and consequently a limitation of destination options. But it looks likely, from where we are, that it will improve, and that there will be numerous cruising options open to next year's visitors.

It should also be noted that in total there are probably more yachts in the Caribbean this off season than there usually are, so even the starting point is good.

Robbie Ferron
St. Maarten

'There are probably more yachts in the Caribbean this off season than there usually are, so even the starting point is good.'

Dear Readers,

Spurred by Robbie's positive forecast for the coming season, coming from an active participant in the private sector, we wondered what Eastern Caribbean governments could do to ensure that the sub-region's yachting industry will thrive.

In 2011, the then-Director General of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS*), Dr. Len Ishmael, herself a sailor from St. Lucia, spoke about steps being taken for the OECS countries to form a "single yachting space." She said in part, "…a series of mandates from the OECS Council of Tourism Ministers seeks to synchronize tourism development activities in the region….The OECS Council of Tourism Ministers has agreed on a number of strategic interventions, including facilitating the adoption of a common policy and approach to the clearance of vessels into and out of OECS sailing waters in an efficient, seamless and business-friendly manner without compromising border security…. The Secretariat… initiated discussions between St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada on the concept of the Grenadines as a single maritime space…. The potential of this industry is too vital to the social and economic development of the OECS to be left to the vagaries of chance; it represents an incredible resource literally on our doorstep and must be given the attention it deserves. It lends itself exquisitely to the development of a common policy framework, and members of the yachting fraternity have always been willing partners in the bid to ensure the growth and viability of the sector." (*See more of Dr. Ishmael's April 2011 address at www.caribbeancompass.com/oecs_brunch.html*)

Dr. Ishmael acknowledged, however, that at the time, "these initiatives have not developed the traction required for their follow-up."

Has the time come for the idea of a single OECS yachting space to gain traction? (The readily introduced concept of the CARICOM Covid "bubble," which currently facilities inter-island travel, might be a sign.) Cruisers have weighed in:

BW: I'm half of a cruising couple who has visited the Eastern Caribbean for the last seven years, spending the "hurricane summers" in Trinidad. We spend days, weeks or perhaps a month or more on each island, and having uniform regulations and procedures would be of tremendous benefit. A few years ago the US started the Small Vessel Operator system to facilitate Customs and Immigration entry for US recreational boats between the Bahamas and Florida. If the East Caribbean islands issued something like a "cruising permit/background check" for the islands to cover say, 12 months, renewable (with a modest fee to cover costs), it may benefit both the islands and the cruisers. I'm sure some of my cruiser friends will be horrified to see a proposal that could be a door to increase costs and target cruisers to support (questionable) island expenses ("…yachting sector to contribute to the development of the OECS"). That is certainly a concern. Hopefully the fee would just replace the various entry costs on the islands with added convenience and even safety. In any case the permit should not be mandated as boats could opt out and continue enter individual islands if that proved less expensive for them.

The idea of this is to help standardize the administrative burden on each island's Customs and Immigration system with regard to cruisers and to enhance the "maritime space" envisioned.

Inter-island coordination would benefit all, realizing that local conditions/requirement are recognized.

One of the appeals of the Eastern Caribbean is the differences among the island states. No one wants to see the differences disappear but coordination of regulations, procedures and security would benefit all without losing island individuality.

CD: Absolutely, but St. Lucia to Grenada might be manageable and good first step.

IW: Yes. No discussion needed.

SD: That would be amazing.

TW: Excellent initiative! And — in the Covid era — could a coordinated response to pandemics be negotiated so that yachties are less likely to be trapped? Good suggestion to start with smaller groupings (e.g. St. Lucia to Grenada) to get the ball rolling. Thank you to all involved in moving this idea forward! Please keep us in the loop & let us know if/how we can help.

TW's request to let cruisers know how they can help is a good one. If you're in favor of the idea of an Eastern Caribbean single yachting space, start by contacting the various islands' marine trades associations and soliciting their support in this initiative. Talk to businesspeople in the marine industry's private sector and explain how you think an OECS single yachting space might help everyone. Write to the islands' tourism ministries/authorities expressing your views. Write to the local newspapers.

As Robbie writes, "The biggest limitation to a decent season is the possibility of some closed borders and consequently a limitation of destination options. But it looks likely, from where we are, that it will improve, and that there be numerous cruising options open to next year's visitors."

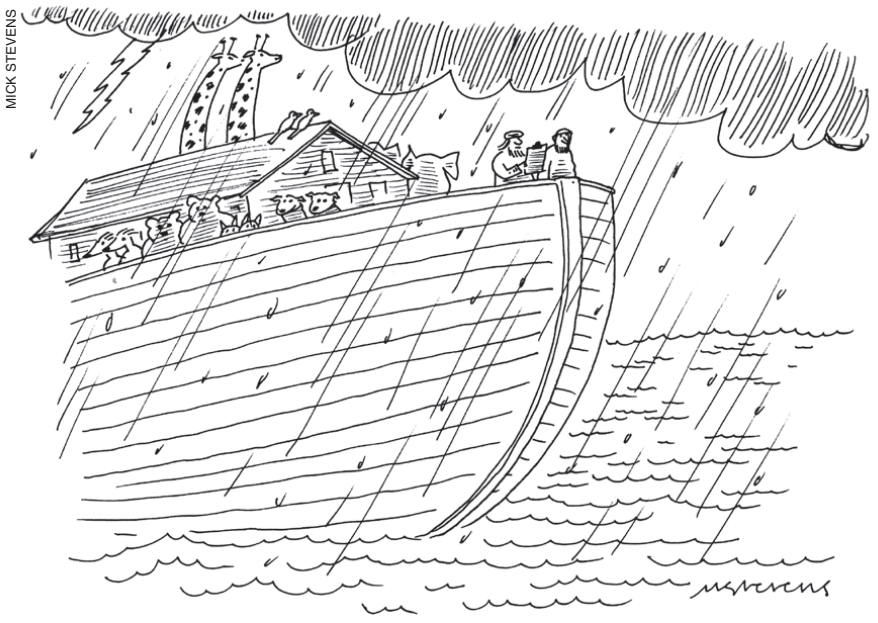
Is now the time to optimize that improvement?

CC

* The OECS is comprised of the full Member States of Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

COMPASS CARTOON

MICK STEVENS



"THAT'S TWO OF EACH, INCLUDING NOAH AND HIS GIRLFRIEND."

MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2020

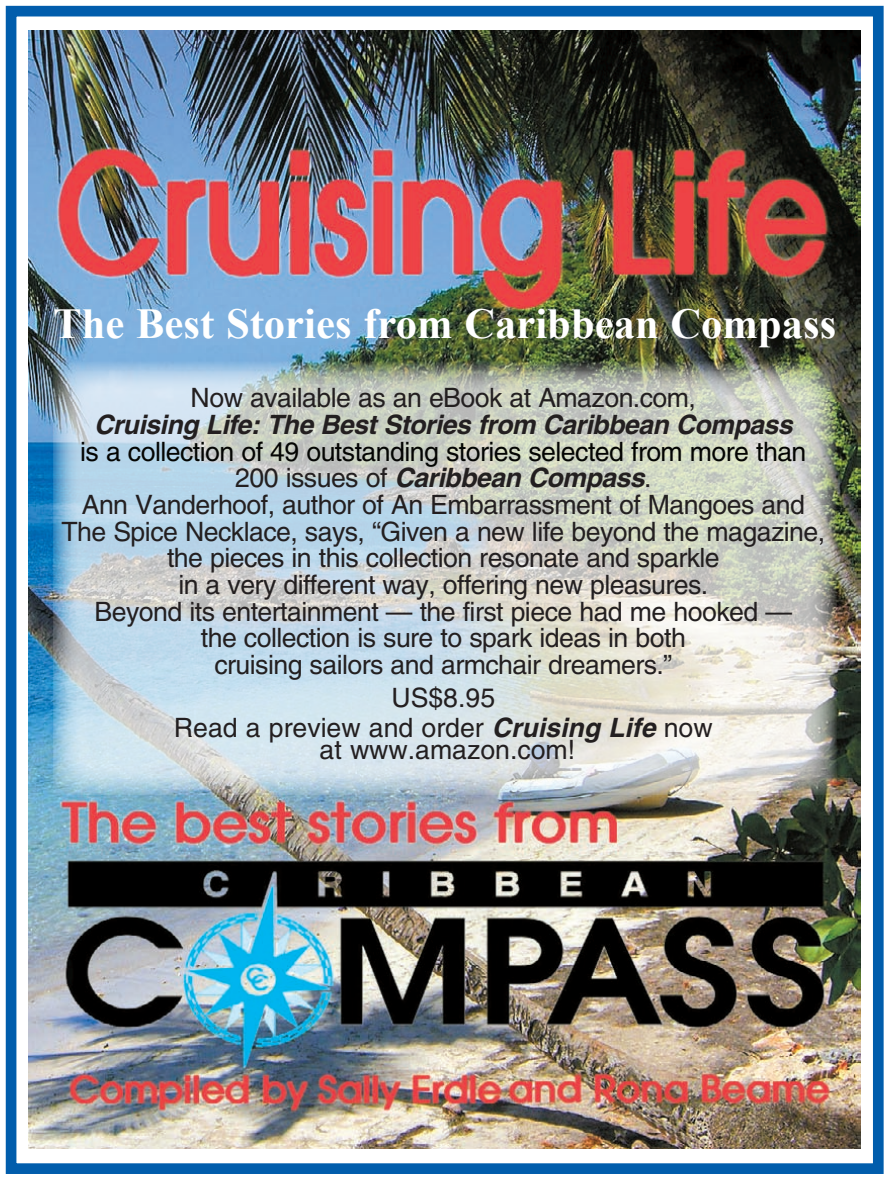
Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this 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					
DATE	TIME	21	1540	11	0706
1	2357	22	1636	12	0801
2	0000 FULL MOON	23	1734	13	0855
3	0041	24	1831	14	0948
4	0123	25	1926	15	1041
5	0203	26	2019	16	1135
6	0244	27	2109	17	1229
7	0325	28	2155	18	1325
8	0408	29	2234	19	1423
9	0453	30	2321	20	1523
10	0542	**October**		21	1622
11	0633	1	0000 FULL MOON	22	1720
12	0722	2	0002	23	1815
13	0823	3	0042	24	1906
14	0919	4	0123	25	1954
15	1016	5	0205	26	2028
16	1111	6	0250	27	2121
17	1205	7	0336	28	2201
18	1258	8	0426	29	2242
19	1351	9	0516	30	2322
20	1445	10	0611	31	0000 FULL MOON



WHAT'S ON MY MIND

AUGUST ONE

by Jeffrey Izzaak

These reflections did not begin here and now. They did not begin with or on August 1st.

Rather, a few days ago, I realized that this would be the regatta weekend, and wondered: "Should I post something? Something like what? Well, there are photos and videos from 2007 and other years." But then I thought that to qualify for worthwhile posting, pictures of an older vintage would be more authentic, representative of the Carriacou Regatta, in what would have been the 55th year since it began — as we know it — in 1965.



Workboats line the beach — Carriacou Regatta 2006

My uncle came to mind: his detailing of how the festival began, and his involvement as a government official at the time. He voiced his irritation with the oft-repeated "official" narrative that usually highlighted the role of one contributor to the exclusion of others who were just as pivotal in its establishment and organization — and especially in its fledgling years when government's financial and administrative support was crucial.* He felt that those speaking on behalf of the regatta need only do a little research to unearth the fuller truth, which was neither too deep nor distant. (I briefly pondered whether the statement in Matthew's gospel about a prophet without honour in his country, was apt, which is really part of another story.)

His difficulty was not with an unravelled mystery shrouding the regatta's history, just that people who should know better were too lazy to get the story out clear, of broader scope and greater inclusivity. But why should they? I didn't know or consider that so many parties were actually involved in making it happen, until he told me. I too, would have repeated whatever I'd heard. Not that he was seeking anything, just adamant that they should get their facts straight. Maybe it irritated him all the more so as someone who was there while it was happening, someone who knew the ins and outs. (Then I remembered that I should not be at all surprised by his stance. He also demanded proper speech — correcting flawed pronunciations — proper table manners, posture... Something bequeathed to men of his generation [1925] by their upbringing and a solid colonial education. And after all, he was a headmaster.)

Someone else who spoke about how the regatta began was Sonnel Allert, a veteran of all things seawater. He was there before 1965, and there up to last year.

I was remembering him being interviewed for a documentary on the festival for its 50th anniversary.There are others of his vintage who can speak with the same knowledge and authority, but as the years go by, the number of these veterans dwindles.

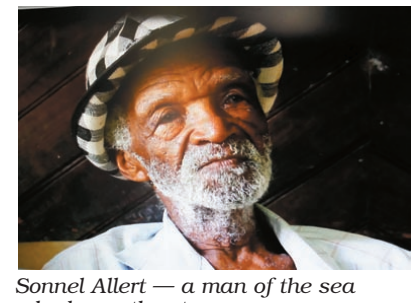
Anyway, I thought of Sonnel in no particular order, just random images, the day of the funeral; a poem I wrote, but hid – "one not worth it." As I write this, I've taken a fresh look, and here are a couple verses:

BALLAST DOWN
Sonnel Allert

The traditions slowly sink
A wail raised over Union
Sound of the ole iron
Fiddle & Drum
A final twist in the sand
Time come
Man gone

Down

Like ballast
Like the faithful on mourning ground
Like the seine on the bay
L'Esterre, Clifton & Ashton
Pull in the lines
Brace the jib &
Let her sail
Down the ocean...



Sonnel Allert — a man of the sea who knew the story

A first draft not good enough, perhaps, but I did get a special picture of the man in the sand, Regatta 2012. He was squatting on the "beach in Town," rolled up trousers, staring out across the bay. I couldn't tell if he was really looking out or looking in, but I imagined what he was seeing, reflecting, and wrote (another poem) from that scene. It is a special picture, of the intimacy of a man and the sea, or something else maybe.

This is not to say I knew Sonnel, because I didn't. Yes, I spoke with him, yes I admired how he sauntered across L'Esterre village, hands clasped behind his back, nimble on his feet as he was when wheeling a figure to the quadrille, and he was polite, or maybe of soft voice. These things about him I probably do know, but my concern is not about knowing the man or some long story, or the fullness of thought about this day – about emancipation and slavery. It is just to say there is no Regatta this year, and that there is no Sonnel Allert either.

Notes:

Irvin Sonnel Allert was awarded a British Empire Medal in 2000 "for services to fishing and culture."

He died on December 13th, 2019, aged 91.

Before the annual Carriacou Regatta began in 1965 under the chairmanship of Linton Riggs, local boatmen organized races as part of the annual fisherman birthday celebrations. Sonnel was a participant.

Although there was no official regatta this year, "a weekend of sailing," including the Round-the-Island boat race, was organized by the Northern Development Action Committee (N-DAC).

The above article was posted on the 13 Square Miles Poetic Duty Facebook page.

** The Grenada government remains the largest single financial contributor to the Carriacou Regatta Festival, providing an annual grant. In 2017, this grant was EC$100,000.00, paid by the Ministry of Carriacou & PM Affairs. Other government ministries and departments also provide support, including the Grenada Tourism Authority and the Ministry of Culture.*

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

2	FULL MOON
7	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Labor Day)
10	Day historically most likely to host a hurricane
13 – 19	St. Lucia Dive Week. www.stlucia.org/en/experiences/festivals-events
16	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (National Heroes' Day)
19	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Independence Day)
19 - 22	St. Lucia Food & Rum Festival. https://eventssaintlucia.com/saint-lucia-summer-festival/saint-lucia-food-rum-festival
23	Autumnal Equinox
TBA	Back to School Regatta, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org

OCTOBER

1	FULL MOON
1	Public holiday in St. Lucia (Thanksgiving Day)
3 – 9	Pure Grenada Dive Fest. www.grenadagrenadines.com
8	Public holiday in the Bahamas (National Heroes' Day)
12	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Columbus Day)
14 – 17	Bonaire Regatta. www.infobonaire.com/event/bonaire-sailing-regatta-53rd-edition-2020
23 – 25	BVI Spring Regatta, Tortola. www.bvispringregatta.org
24	Willy T Virgin's Cup Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org/racing/willytvirginscup.html
23 – 25	World Creole Music Festival, Roseau, Dominica. www.dominicafestivals.com
25	Public holiday in Grenada (Thanksgiving Day)
25	Jounen Kweyol (Creole Day), St. Lucia. www.stlucia.org/en/experiences/festivals-events
27	Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Independence Day). Gum Boat and Coconut Boat Races at Union Island.
31	FULL MOON
TBA	Columbus Day Regatta, St. Thomas, USVI. https://stthomasyachtclub.org/sailing/regattas/columbus-day-regatta
TBA	St. Lucia Arts & Heritage Fest. www.stlucia.org/en/events/arts-heritage-festival

***NOTE**: All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of* Compass *went to press — but plans change, especially due to changing Covid regulations,*
so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation.
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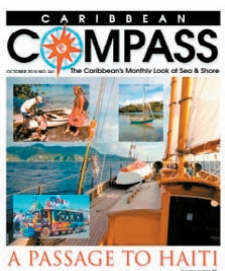
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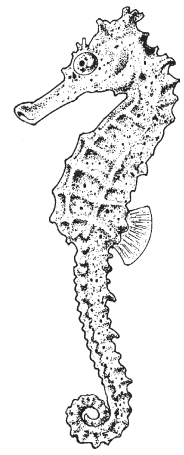
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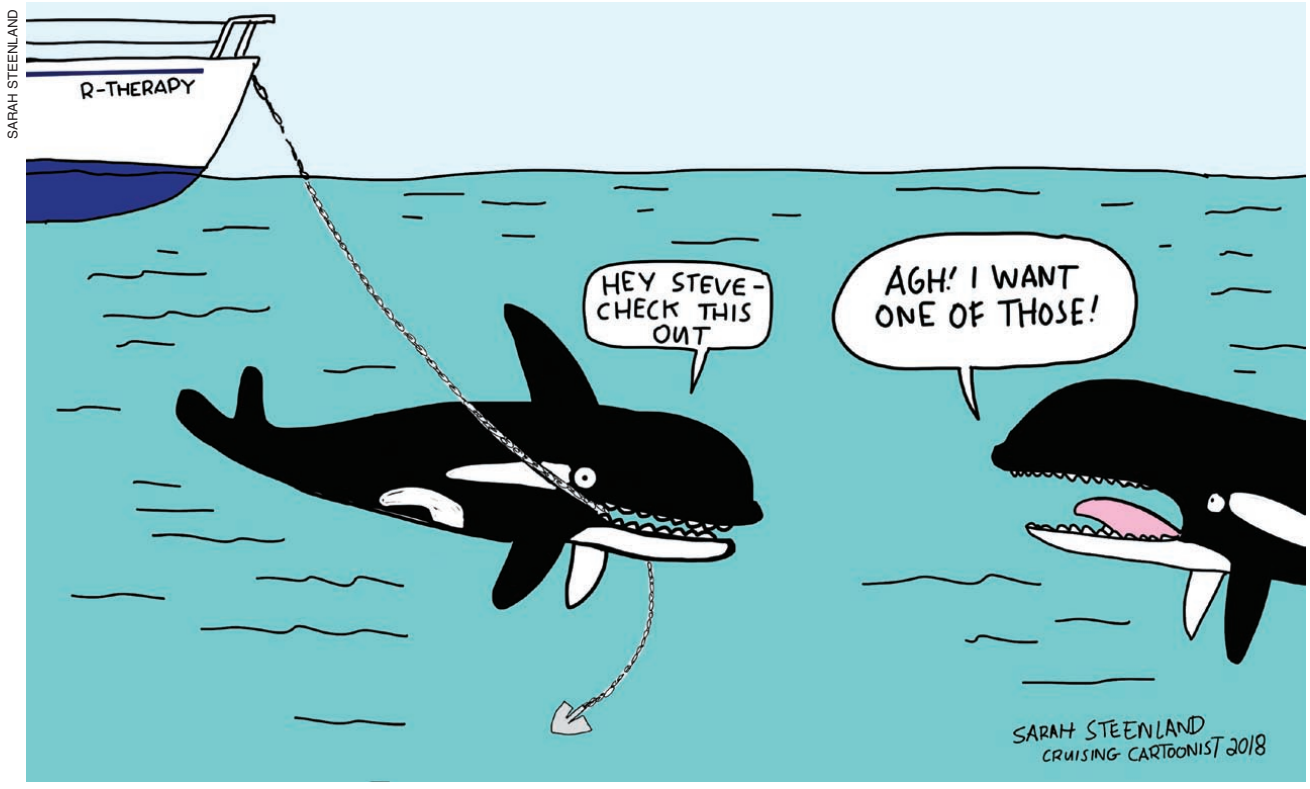
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