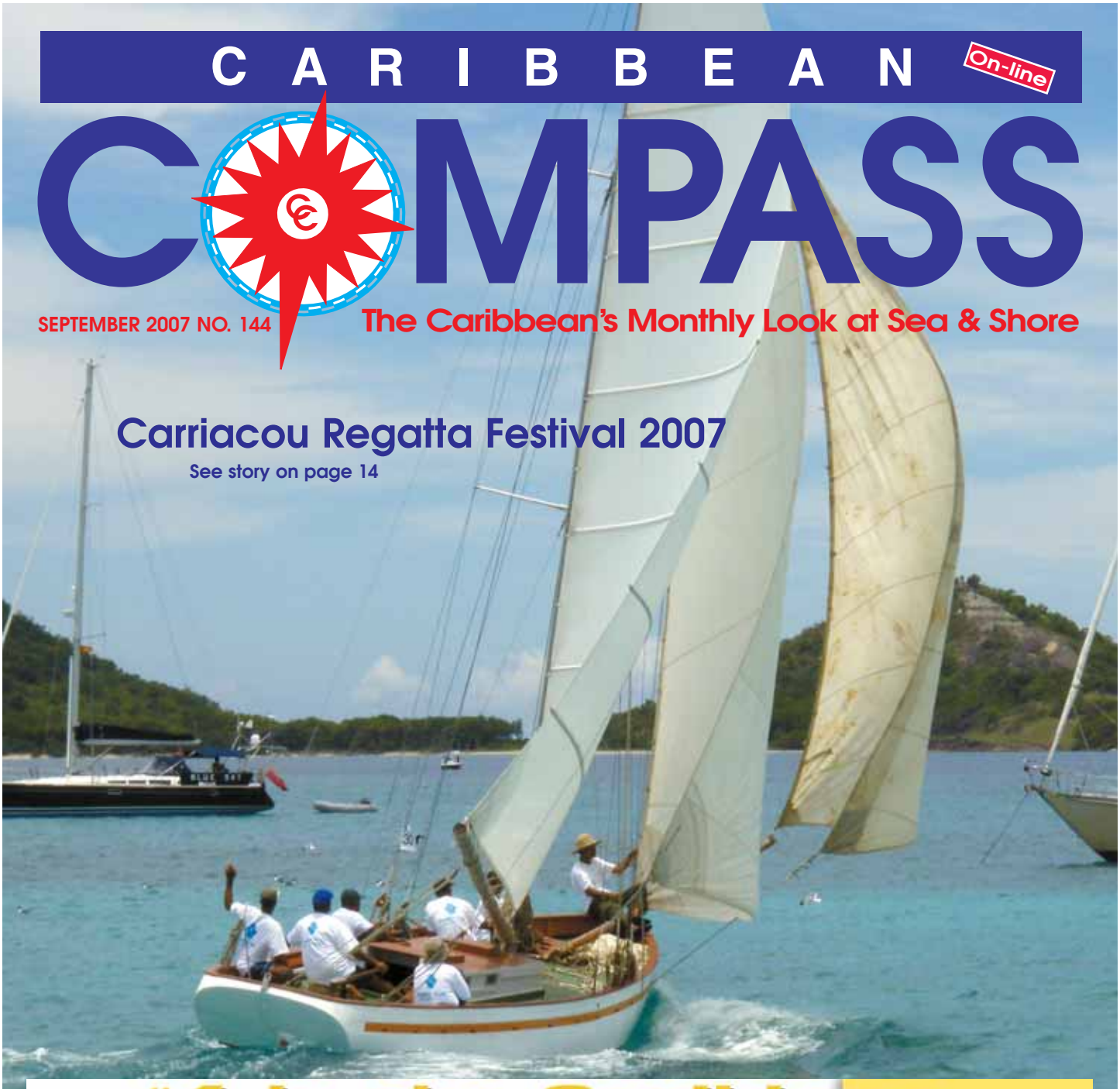
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The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

Carriacou Regatta Festival 2007

See story on page 14



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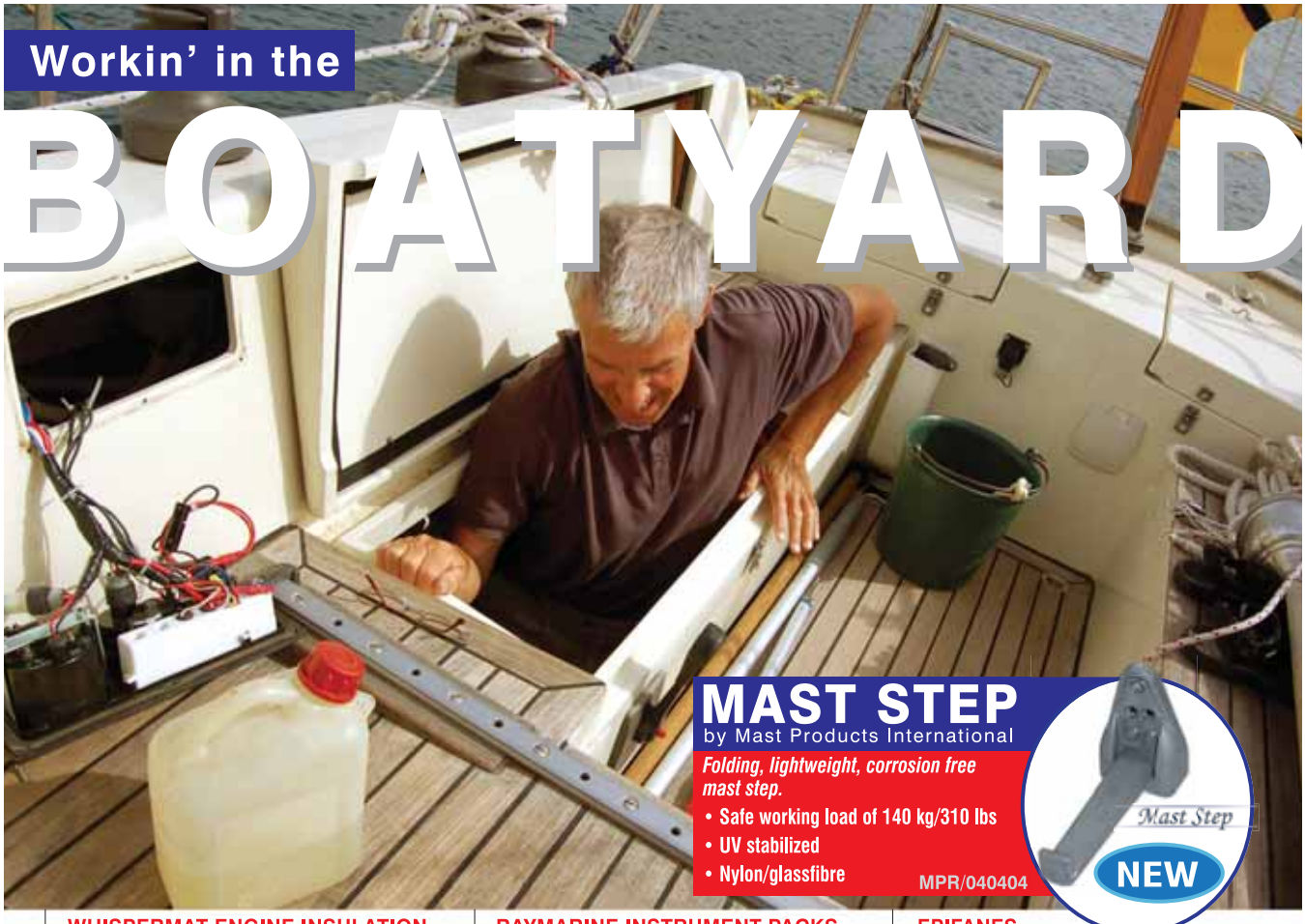
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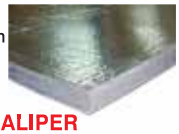
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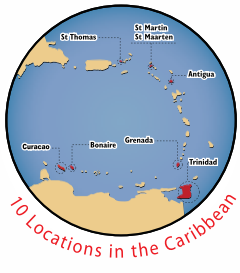
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Info & Updates

New Rules for Yachts in CARICOM
Yachts traveling from country to country within much of the English-speaking Eastern Caribbean are looking at more paperwork.
Legislation has been passed which requires all air and sea carriers to submit passenger information in advance when arriving at, and departing from, each of ten Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM) member states. Participating CARICOM member states are Jamaica, Antigua & Barbuda, St. Kitts & Nevis, Dominica, Barbados, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Grenada, Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana. These countries are collectively known as a "Single Domestic Space" (SDS). *Compass* is informed that the term "sea carriers" includes both private and charter yachts.
To comply with the new regulation, you fill out a form (available by registering at www.caricomeapis.org) which asks for information such as passengers' names, nationalities and passport numbers, and the vessel's dates and times of departure and arrival.
There are three ways the form can be submitted:
• By sending as an e-mail attachment to maritime@impacsjrcc.org
• By filling it in on-line
• By faxing it to (246) 228-4040.
When arriving in the SDS from a port outside of the SDS, the form must be submitted no later than 24 hours before arrival.
When departing from the SDS to a port outside of the SDS, the form must be submitted no later than 15 minutes after departure.
When traveling between countries within the SDS, the form must be submitted no later than one hour before departure.
For more information contact Diane Hazzard at (246) 429-7931 or diane.hazzard@impacsjrcc.org.

The Dean Report
Hurricane Dean swept through the channel between the islands of St. Lucia and Martinique on August 17th as a Category 2 storm. According to the US National Hurricane Center, at 5:00AM local time the center of Hurricane Dean was located near latitude 14.3 north, longitude 60.9 west. Maximum sustained winds were near 87 knots with higher gusts.

—*Continued on next page*


LEE KESSEL

Usually unruffled, the sea off Tapion Point on St. Lucia's northwest coast was whipped into breakers by hurricane-force winds extending some 25 miles from Hurricane Dean's eye

We are fortunate to have such a guaranteed excellent read every month.
Richard Roxburgh
s/v Mirounga

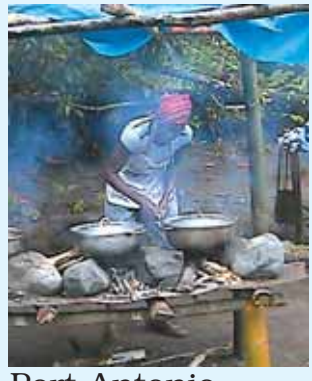
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See Writers' Guidelines at www.caribbeancompass.com. Send submissions to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

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—Continued from previous page

From Martinique, Ciarla Decker reports that although some buildings were damaged and trees toppled, and the island suffered considerable losses to banana and sugarcane crops, the yachting sector fared relatively well. Her own Sea Services chandlery in Fort de France was unharmed, and Ciarla says, "Annie Zaghes of the Ponton du Bakoua marina in Trois Ilets reports no infrastructure damage. The Ponton is up and running, as are the restaurant and the mooring buoy system. Owners of boats in front of the Ponton had moved them to safe hurricane holes and Mme. Zaghes has not heard of any damage to them."

Ciarla also spoke with manager Eric Jean-Joseph of Marin Yacht Harbor on the island's south coast. "Eric reports that the marina at Marin suffered absolutely no important damage, and all the boats moored correctly within the marina were unharmed. All the marina docks held and marina buildings resisted the wind. The various services of Marin village were, for the most part, also saved from destruction. "However, about 30 boats anchored out in the Bay of Marin were swept away, and four sank. Eric notes that owners who had problems with their boats after the passage of Hurricane Dean are owners who did not adequately prepare their boats. The worst of it is that these owners, by their negligence, have caused damage to other yachts which would otherwise have had no problems."

From St. Lucia, Lee Kessell reports that at the popular anchorage of Pigeon Island, the shorelines on both sides of the causeway were battered, with the bay side being eaten away by many feet. The jetty was severely damaged, and some damage was done to virtually all of the National Park structures. The Park will re-open slowly as areas are restored. The new dock at nearby Gros Ilet village lost its wooden planking. However, it was reported that the dock had been designed to lose its planking before the stress of the waves could damage the concrete structure, and restoring the planking is a simple job.

Also in St. Lucia, Rodney Bay Marina manager Cuthbert Didier reports that the marina, located inside a lagoon, "stood up to the onslaught, successfully sheltering more than 200 yachts." Cuthbert said the marina had put its own emergency plan successfully into effect. "We were able to allow each vessel to tie up in a double slip so Rodney Bay Marina was able to berth 115 vessels in slips, and another 95 on dry dock. We kicked in our emergency plan and everything worked — there was no damage to the facility." Cuthbert complimented all the staff, dock attendants, security and boatyard staff for their work in ensuring that each vessel was properly secured. He said: "Rodney Bay Marina markets itself as safe and secure and our staff has lived up to this promise in this storm. We have braved several storms in the past and our track record proves that we are in fact a safe haven for yachts in times of a storm."

Cuthbert raised the matter of re-insurers who were reluctant to cover yachts berthed in this part of the Caribbean. He said: "We run a marina that is ideally located and while people are quick to say that we are in the hurricane belt, we have proven that we can survive very bad weather. We have also proved that the decision of re-insurers against covering yachts in the south of the Caribbean is misguided."

In Castries Harbour, a fishing boat was washed up onto the road and against the market steps, and a small old iron ship was washed onto the rocks along the shore near the Customs shed. Lee Kessell echoes Eric Jean-Joseph's sentiments: "The owners of derelict vessels should be liable for the damage they cause." She also says, "Since the mangroves and reefs of Pointe Seraphine were destroyed and given over to the building of the large shopping complex, complete with its breakwater, the Petit Carenage (Vigie Creek) has suffered grievously. The storm surge sweeps unmolested right through to the wharves and docks and whereas the mangroves absorbed the onslaught, the breakwater now whips the waves right into the Carenage. The Coalpot Restaurant, recently closed for two months for a remake, is now destroyed, and the docks along with it."

The inner part of Marigot Bay on the west coast of St. Lucia lived up to its reputation as a hurricane hole. The southern edge of the eye of Hurricane Dean hit Marigot at 4:00AM, with winds gusting to 75 knots from the southwest and five-metre breaking seas sweeping into the outer part of the Bay. In the inner bay, The Marina at Marigot Bay and the mangroves were packed with yachts seeking shelter. Molly McDaniel reports: "No serious damage was caused to any yacht in Marigot Bay and any minor damage was only caused by inadequately moored boats in the mangroves. The Marina and Marina Village, Discovery at Marigot Bay, Chateau Mygo, JJ's Paradise and the Rainforest Hideaway were completely undamaged. Doolittle's at the Marigot Beach Club lost a jetty and suffered some roof damage but opened for business as usual on the following evening. The Shack restaurant, built over the waters of the outer part of the bay, is badly damaged."

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page
The Marina remains ready should severe weather threaten the island again.
Farther south in St. Lucia, at the Soufriere Marine Management Area, manager Kai Wulf reports: "We lost three yacht moorings during the passage of Hurricane Dean and the Soufriere Foundation jetty is damaged. The use of the facility has been prohibited until further notice. But the waterfront has already been cleaned up by the fire service and the repair of the jetty will start soon. A comprehensive assessment has been scheduled, when we will dive key areas for potential structural problems and environmental impacts. However, we don't expect extensive storm-related destruction, since there was no major wave action within our area. Generally there has been little disruption." Lee Kessell adds, "From Marigot south, scuba diving was not affected to any degree."
Farther still from Dean's eye, Hubert Winston of the Dominica Marine Center and the Dominica Marine Association says: "Days before the hurricane was due to hit the Leeward Islands, yachts were heading south like crabs heading to their usual hole. For years, it has been the cardinal rule that boats go south for cover — without much regard to weather patterns. At the Dominica Marine Center in Roseau, the last charter yacht headed south to Martinique after off-loading its passengers just 24 hours before Dean was due. Most local boats waited until the last minute, probably thinking Dean would change course or their boats would be spared by divine intervention. Due to the lack of suitable dry dock facilities, haul-out services, trailers and lift mechanisms, the local port authority was overwhelmed as these boatowners barraged the port berth for the use of its crane, almost all at the same time."
Meanwhile, at Portsmouth in the northern part of Dominica, boats ranging from small wooden water taxis to cargo vessels measuring up to 130 feet sheltered in the mouth of the Indian River, the deepest river in the country. However, Hubert reports that a new bridge planned to replace the old one over the Indian River will not provide adequate clearance for many vessels to reach safety.
Hubert notes that "the Dominica Marine Association is working with all stakeholders in trying to create solutions for local boat problems during hurricane season, and also on making Dominica one of the Caribbean's hottest spots for yachties." Plans are being made for a marina in Dominica's Cabrits National Park that will accommodate yachts up to 130 feet with modern amenities and facilities.
From Guadeloupe, yacht rally organizer Stéphane Legendre reports little effect from the storm, which brought a maximum wind of 45 knots. He notes that some beaches and seaside restaurants suffered, but Marina Bas du Fort at Pointe-à-Pitre was completely unaffected. He adds a navigation note: "Caution should be observed at Ilet Gosier anchorage as a small wreck moved from one side of the mooring to the other, losing its superstructure in the process. The wreck is very visible on the west side of the islet on a sand bank. The superstructure is lying one foot underwater, close to the islet pontoon — so watch out!"
And although Hurricane Dean passed just south of Jamaica on its westward track across the Caribbean Sea, Christine Downer of the Errol Flynn Marina at Port Antonio on the island's northeast coast reports: "The Errol Flynn Marina suffered no damage to its marina or boatyard facilities. There were a number of vessels in our wet slips and also on dry dock and there was no damage to any of these boats. Port Antonio and Errol Flynn Marina and Boatyard stand ready to accommodate yachts, and supply fuel and boatyard services as usual."

Mexican Tall Ship Bound for Curaçao
On invitation from the Curaçao Sail Foundation, the Mexican sail-training ship *ARM Cuauhtémoc* will visit Curaçao from October 13th to 18th.
For more information contact ceo@curacaosail.com.

Excuse Us, We're Lost
The photo caption on page 24 of the August issue of *Compass* should have read "Bocas del Toro", not "Bocas del Rio". Apologies for any confusion caused.

Welcome Aboard!
In this issue of *Compass* we welcome aboard new advertiser Sea and Sail of Guadeloupe, page 47. Good to have you with us!

Boats Found Adrift
On August 20th, the catamaran *S/V Kit-is* (see photo) was found approximately 51 nautical miles west of Dominica by the oil tanker *Goodrich Bay* and towed



Dismasted but afloat, this cat was found adrift three days after Hurricane Dean passed through the St. Lucia Channel

to Point Lisas, Trinidad. It seems to have been damaged by Hurricane Dean. Ship's papers in French were found on board but the owner's name is indiscernible.
Anyone with knowledge of this yacht or its owners is asked to contact the Caribbean Marine Association at info@caribbeanmarineassociation.com or (868) 634-4938.
Also, a white 27-foot Albin Vega named *Lorelei* was found adrift off the south side of St. John, US Virgin Islands, on August 22nd. The sloop's anchor was down, and a French passport in the name of Jacky Millet was found aboard.
Anyone with knowledge of this yacht or its owners is asked to contact Lindy at yachts@islands.vi or (340) 998-5149.

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CARIB CANOE'S LEEWARD ISLAND EXPEDITION

by Aragorn Dick-Read

Gli Gli is a traditional Carib sailing dugout canoe, built in Dominica in 1996 from the trunk of a gommier tree. In 1997 she sailed with ten Carib crew from Dominica's Carib Territory down the Windward Islands chain, through the Orinoco Delta and into the river systems of northwest Guyana. Accompanying *Gli Gli*won that voyage was *Carmela*, a 120-foot Dominica-built trading schooner, which carried a multinational film and support crew. One of the main purposes of that expedition was to create awareness of the current status of the Carib people. Expedition members researched the surviving customs, language and material culture of the Caribs in their original homelands.

On May 26th 2007, *Gli Gli*, with a crew of 11 Kalinago Caribs from Dominica and accompanied by the support vessel *Fiddler's Green*, arrived in Tortola after a 20-day expedition through the Leeward Islands from Antigua to the BVI, with stops at Nevis, St. Kitts, St. Barths, St. Maarten/St. Martin, Anguilla and Sombrero.

Antigua

Having been based in Antigua for a year, and participating in two Antigua Classic Yacht Regattas, the *Gli Gli* crew was sad to leave its new friends. Our stay in Antigua was a training ground for the new crew members as well as an opportunity to generate awareness of Carib culture in Antigua. During the year, *Gli Gli* got a lot of attention from both the local media and the yachting community. It was the first time a truly indigenous Caribbean boat had participated in the Classic Yacht Regatta, which resulted in a lot of heads turning. Seeing *Gli Gli*'s ancient dugout design sailing amongst the most glamorous classic yachts in the world, gave her Carib crew great pride and the fellow participants a positive insight into an aspect of Caribbean culture most barely knew existed.

The *Gli Gli* crew gave a musical performance in front of the Admiral's Inn as a tribute to the late Desmond Nicholson, who had spent much of his life researching the pre-Columbian peoples of Antigua. His daughter, Nancy, was *Gli Gli*'s special host, and we give our thanks to her as well as the Antigua National Trust, the Yacht Club, the Yacht Club Marina staff and many others who did so much to make Antigua a perfect starting point for our expedition.

On May 6th we sailed out of Nelson's Dockyard accompanied by the topsail schooner *Fiddler's Green*, owned and rigged by Captain Doug Watson of Australia. Under full sail and with light winds on our stern we set our course for Nevis.

Nevis

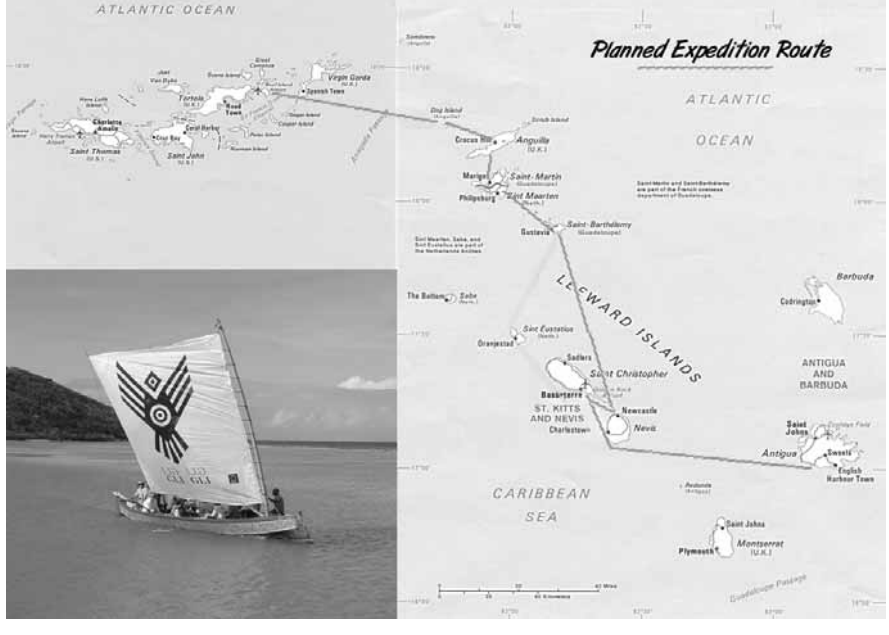
On arrival in Nevis our host, John Guilbert from the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society, and a thick crowd had gathered on the Charlestown waterfront. Within minutes it seemed, we were at the Nevis museum, being officially greeted by the Hon. Minister Hensley Daniel. We then gave the first of our presentations in the packed courtyard.

We showed the BBC film of our first expedition and the *Gli Gli* band performed traditional Carib music. Under the masterful leadership of Paulinus Frederick, the chief spokesperson and musician of the expedition, speeches on Carib culture and lively drumming performances were to become a major feature of our trip.

The generosity of the people of Nevis was overwhelming, from the Nevis Tourist Board to Teach, the Carib taxi driver, and the Yearwood family of Oualie Beach Resort: we were given everything from a free lunch to island tours and resort accommodation. On leaving we were very happy to give our hard-working host John Guilbert a sail to St. Kitts — starting something of a tradition on the trip of taking our hosts with us to the next island!

St. Kitts

Once again blessed by good sailing conditions, we sailed into Port Zante marina to the delight of a massive crowd of excited school children, the public and the press. Our generous host here was Hazel Brooks from the St. Christopher Heritage Society, who worked extremely hard to arrange a smooth arrival for us with the authorities and conjured up island-wide support for our visit through the media. That first evening Paulinus spoke outside the museum and the *Gli Gli* band performed to a huge crowd that was intrigued to see "real Caribs".



—Continued on next page

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Kalinago Caribs play an important part in the historical lore of St. Kitts, though sadly most noted for their last stand against British and French invaders and their final massacre at Bloody Point. It was here we were taken the next day by a very interesting Kittitian of old European descent, Greg Pereira. Greg



Gli Gli's *arrival in St. Kitts, where Kalinago Carib lore plays an important part in local history*

has a lifelong passion for the pre-Columbian history of his island and has made a business sharing that knowledge as a tour company owner. At Bloody Point we were met by a large group of school children and their teachers, who accompanied us on the walk to Bloody River to see the site of the massacre and the numerous petroglyphs carved on the cliffs. This was a very moving place for everyone in the group. John Francis, the Gli Gli project's co-director, led a ritual of remembrance for the fallen ancestors by singing the ancient Carib spirit-calling songs. We also took the opportunity to hold a minute's silence in honour of Prince Hamlet, one of the key men on the 1997 *Gli Gli* expedition, who passed away three years ago.

We left Bloody River to visit the old British fortress at Brimstone Hill where, in one of the store rooms, Paulinus discovered the bones of some of the victims of the Bloody River massacre packed up in cardboard boxes. We all gathered around to contemplate this physical encounter with the remains of the souls we had just been with. It was something of a shock to be holding the skulls of those who fell 400 years before. Paulinus made a pledge to ensure that the authorities of St. Kitts show due respect to his ancestors and rebury their remains in a monument to their honor.

St. Kitts was a powerful experience for the *Gli Gli* crew. We were sorry to have to leave so soon, but we made sure we took our host Hazel for a sail in the harbour and Greg a passage to Nevis, where we prepared for the crossing to St. Barths.



At various island stops — here Phillipsburg, St. Maarten — the Gli Gli band performed traditional Carib music

St. Barths

The St. Barths crossing began with fair breeze. We had an enlarged flotilla as three yachts from Antigua had caught up with us: *Rush, Jadie* and *Cooie*. This gave our camera crew the first opportunities to shoot *Gli Gli* and *Fiddler's Green* sailing together.

We were also glad of the extra safety boats, had we needed them. *Gli Gli's* most dangerous point of sail is dead downwind in rolling seas and as we lost sight of St. Kitts in the Sahara haze the swells started to pick up, nearly swamping us a couple of times. Etiene "Chalo" Charles, builder and captain of *Gli Gli*, called for shortened sail, so we dropped the sprit and retied the upper clew three feet lower down on the bamboo. We haven't reduced sail in this way before; normally we take out the sprit completely and sail with a folded lateen rig. However it worked very well to reduce the roll of the canoe as we slid down the swells, allowing us to continue safely through the afternoon heat to St. Barths.

Having waited a while at the eastern tip of the island for *Fiddler's* to catch up and deliver the drums and cameraman, we made our way into Gustavia. We were greeted by a happy gathering — something close to the elite of St. Barths, including our good friends Lou Lou and Jenny Magras, our very gracious host Daniel Blanchard (an ex-mayor, now in charge of Club UNESCO), Raymond, Lou Lou's brother (another ex-mayor), and the current mayor, Bruno Magras, and his deputy Yves Greaux. A bond of language was immediately made between the Carib crew and our hosts, who all spoke the same Creole French.

The *Gli Gli* crew was given very special treatment by Club UNESCO. We were accommodated in the municipal lodge, used for visiting sports teams, and we were provided with a mini-van. Our cultural expedition turned into something of a relaxing island sojourn for a few days, a big change from the confined conditions and hammock-and-mat sleeping routine aboard *Fiddler's Green*.

The pre-Columbian heritage of St. Barths is somewhat lost in the cosmopolitan luxuries of this once tranquil island. Aside from historical records of the first settlers being forced off the island by Carib warriors and the few artifacts in the museum, there is little evidence of Carib culture, except, as we discovered, that the traditional fishing boats of St. Barths were once dugout sailing canoes.

For an island with no trees to speak of this was a strange choice of vessel. We learned from Daniel and his cousin Edouard, the *pirogue*, or dugout, hulls were brought over from Guadeloupe or Dominica and then fashioned into fishing boats on St. Barths by the application of frames and boardage to raise the freeboard.

By co-incidence, before Daniel knew anything about *Gli Gli's* intention to visit St. Barths, he and his cousin had ordered the building of one of these boats. They had contacted Prosper Paris in the Carib Territory of Dominica and commissioned an 18-foot pirogue to be made. Prosper gave the job to Chalo, his wife's father. Before we arrived, Chalo had finished his work and shipped the hull to St. Barths, where we met it set up and being worked on in Edouard's workshop. They were very excited to have the two master canoe builders of the Caribs and their apprentice sons come to view the work. It was very interesting to see a canoe being made in a neat workshop with all available tools; you could see Chalo and Papa Merlin's eyes light up at the sight of it.

The next day we went up into the bush at la Grand Fond, to cut some *poywe* (white cedar) ribs to attach the boardage. The moon was good and the chain-saw working. It was fun to go "*en bois*" again with the *Gli Gli* canoe-building team, along with our new friend, looking for the right shape of branch for the job.

St. Maarten

After taking our hosts for a sail on *Gli Gli*, we had to move on. There was a strong wind and rolling sea, so after a short stop at the dry and rocky Isle de Fourche, we reduced *Gli Gli's* sail to a lateen and flew the 15 miles downwind into Philipsburg, St. Maarten, catching a good-sized tuna en route.

St. Maarten was fully awakened to the *Gli Gli* visit. Our hosts, the St. Maarten Heritage Society, run by Elsje Bosche, assisted by our friend Zdenka Kiric, had spread the word and when we arrived to show our film and perform some Carib music at the public library it was standing room only. We are grateful to Ans Koolen, who runs the library, for setting up this opportunity.

Many friends and family members of the crew, some long lost, came out to see *Gli Gli* and give their support to our mission. Being a regional economic centre, St. Maarten has attracted many Kalinago Carib people from Dominica, who came in search of work. Some of them, under the leadership of Lindo Frederick, have come together to form the Kalinago Support Group, which raises money and awareness for issues back in the Carib Territory .

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Elsje Bosch, the energy behind the Heritage Society, has created a wonderful museum full of artifacts. We had lunch there with various officials and the International Association of Caribbean Archaeology's Jay Haviser; acting Lt. Governor Mathias Voges dropped by. An interesting debate ensued about pre-Columbian canoes and whether or not sails were in use before Europeans arrived. No hard evidence has been found of an ancient sail, possibly because sails are usually made from fast-decaying material. For me, the lack of evidence does not write off the possibility that some form of sail was used before 1492. Trying to paddle a canoe the size of *Gli Gli*, or bigger, in the swells of the Caribbean Sea is no easy task. Chalo firmly believes his ancestors used a sail of sorts. He concedes that *Gli Gli's* sprit rig is quite possibly influenced by the early French Breton sail type, but it could well be a modification of a pre-Columbian design. The debate is on-going.

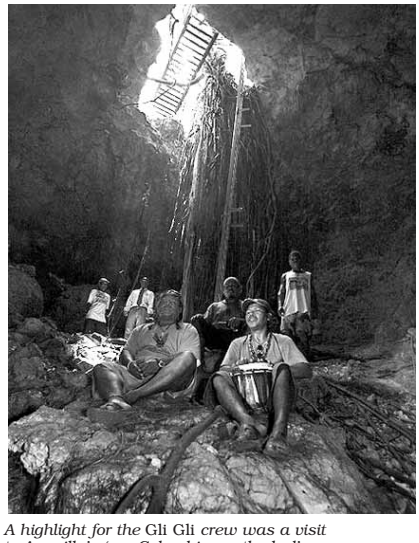
The museum has a steady contact with the Carib territory as Elsje buys crafts from there to sell in the shop. At some point she had ordered a four-foot model pirogue to be made for the museum's Carib display. Chalo spotted the canoe and recognized his own handiwork!

A gentle sail down the coast to Simpson Bay took us to the beach bar Picante for another dinner and musical event. The next day, after rowing under the bridge and a relaxing sail across the flat waters of the lagoon we left the Dutch side of the island and entered the French side, where we were glad to use a free night to relax and prepare for our next leg to Anguilla.

Our flotilla increased yet again at this point, with the addition of *Breath*, captained by my good friend Peter Muilenburg from St. John in the Virgin Islands. With classic lines and rig, his home-built double-ender was a good visual companion to *Fiddler's Green*. Peter has been writing about the Caribbean for years and was commissioned to write an article for *Caribbean Travel and Life* on *Gli Gli's* voyage.

Anguilla

Our sail to the flat island of Anguilla was picture-perfect with smooth seas and an easy breeze. We invited Zdenka to join us, and her sailing skills were a great addition. What was to be a short trip around the western tip of Anguilla and up the north side to Sandy Ground turned into a long day's sail, delayed by a picnic lunch at one of Anguilla's irresistible sandy coves, and extended by a dying breeze and an up-wind haul to the bay. By late afternoon, still making long tacks across the sound, we got the message on the radio from our host, Damien Hughes, that the welcoming crowd was getting impatient. It was only when we got within sight of the beach that we quite understood what he had meant by crowd — 1,500 boat-loving people of Anguilla had turned out and *Gli Gli* was hauled up the beach by a hundred hands. It was an overwhelming response that goes down in *Gli Gli's* history as the mother of all welcomes!



A highlight for the Gli Gli *crew was a visit to Anguilla's 'pre-Columbian cathedral' cave*

The Anguillian people blessed us with shore-side accommodation right behind the beach. Sydans guest house donated two rooms, and former prime minister Sir Emile Gumbs, who lives next door as his family has done for generations, gave us his backyard cottage. A skeleton crew was left on *Fiddler's Green* and *Gli Gli* stayed high up on the beach to be admired by the population.

Our next few days and nights were something close to a fully fledged rock star tour, which doubled as an intense Carib culture educational road show. One of our first invitations was from Bankie Banks, Anguilla's international reggae star. We spent a great evening out at his driftwood palace, "The Dune Reserve", feasting and sharing musical inspiration.

Our official host, Damien Hughes, arranged our stay down to the last detail. The first two days we undertook a tour of almost every school in Anguilla. At each stop, under the now expert leadership of Paulinus, we gave the children a brief talk about Carib history and culture, followed by a musical performance. The response was astounding; aside from intelligent questions and genuine interest in the Carib legacy, the children (sometimes to the dismay of their teachers) went wild at the sound of the Carib music.

We managed to squeeze in a press session at the National Trust office that soon turned into a general discussion about the pre-Columbian history of the region. Later we attended a workshop on Carib craft, traditional drumming and cassava bread at Ijahnya's cultural centre. Ijahnya is a culture-woman in the Rasta tradition, who has built a space for all people to come and share and learn. Here the afternoon was spent teaching groups of school children various elements of traditional Carib culture, including basket-making, calabash carving, drumming, and, working with a lively 85-year-old Anguillian lady called Ruby Read, baking cassava bread. It was a wonderful afternoon that illustrated how many aspects of what we call Caribbean Culture are directly inherited from the pre-Columbian inhabitants.

The people's enthusiasm for the Gli Gli expedition was one thing, but the real highlight of our visit to Anguilla took place out of sight of the public, in a sacred cave that has been closed to visitors since it became recognized as a major archaeological site 20 years ago. The Fountain can be described as a pre-Columbian cathedral, a cave 60 feet underground that houses petroglyphs and carvings of the complete pantheon of the Amerindian gods as well as a spring of crystal clear water. Archaeologists rank this site as one of the most important cave sites in the Caribbean and the evidence found inside it suggests that it was a major ceremonial centre. Shards of pottery from as far away as South and Central America have been found inside, indicating that it was an important shrine for travelers from throughout the region. We were honored to have been allowed into the cave by the Anguilla National Trust and hope that our visit will help the Anguillians' bid to get it recognized as a World Heritage Site.

The Anguillian people's love of wooden boats made us feel very much at home. Evenings like the one spent at Laurie Gumbs' bar, The Pump House, made leaving Anguilla hard.

We decided to change our sailing plan to the BVI. Instead of crossing the Anegada passage in one long run, we plotted a course for Sombrero, a tiny rock a little north of the rhumb-line. Sir Emile knows more about this desolate rock than anyone. Having been the owner of the schooner *Warspite* that once supplied the lighthouse keepers, he had many tales to tell of visiting in all conditions. His advice to us was "Go! The seas are flat and the forecast says no wind; you don't get many opportunities like that in a year to visit Sombrero." So we slid out of Sandy Ground with a light breeze coming from the southwest, *Fiddler's Green* captained by Sir Emile for old times' sake. As we reached Dog Island, the Gumbs family departed in their speedboat. The wind dropped to nothing and so we unstepped *Gli Gli's* mast and *Fiddler's Green* towed her the 20 miles to Sombrero through a flat glistening sea and schools of dolphins.

Sombrero

Sombrero is a sheer, rocky outcrop not more than 400 metres long and 100 metres wide, alive with birds and sea life. The whole flotilla managed to tie to the rocks surrounding the tiny inlet by the island's landing ladder. Our team dispersed for a day to wander the island, explore the abandoned lighthouse, fish, eat and laze around. After the previous 20 days of high-profile presentations throughout the Leeward Islands, being in an empty space, a total cultural void, where we could immerse ourselves in pure nature, was a needed psychological relief.

Two hours ahead of schedule nature told us clearly when it was time to leave. A north swell came in with little warning and our lines began to strain dangerously. The conch shell was blown and within ten minutes *Fiddler's Green* and *Gli Gli* pulled out of the rocky hole under power. There was still no wind, so after much planning and anticipation for our biggest crossing under sail, it turned out that *Gli Gli* was to make the rest of the Anegada passage under tow. This was something of a let-down for the core sailors of the Carib crew, but a chance for all to wind down and prepare for the end of our voyage.

Tortola

The welcome in the BVI was intentionally low key. Family and friends gathered in Trellis Bay for a relaxed dinner and an impromptu slide show of our adventure. The Kalinago spirit was celebrated amongst ourselves with drumming and singing around the fire. *Gli Gli* was back on the beach in its palm-shaded boat house and *Fiddler's Green* sat lighter in the water, as all the equipment and project team were removed to our beach camp. The *Gli Gli's* mission was accomplished for now.

Business Briefs

Tohatsu Outboards Choose Budget Marine
Japanese outboard engine manufacturers Tohatsu have signed a formal agreement giving Budget Marine the rights to be the distributor of the Tohatsu brand in the Eastern Caribbean.
In July, Budget Marine Group Manager Robbie Ferron visited Tohatsu's headquarters in Tokyo and new state-of-the-art manufacturing plant in Komagane, which has a production capacity of over 200,000 units per year. He was guided by representatives of the export agency handling the Budget Marine account in the persons of Messrs Akita and Fujita of Santai Trading. The agreement was signed on behalf of Tohatsu by Mr. Sanada and on behalf of the Budget Marine Group by Robbie Ferron.
Budget Marine, which has ten chandlery outlets within the Caribbean, started retailing Tohatsu's two-stroke engines in 2004. It quickly became apparent that these reliable, compact and affordable outboard engines, with their terrific horsepower-to-weight ratios, provided an ideal solution for Caribbean boaters who



regularly have to lift and stow their motors on board. As the demand for low emission, high fuel economy outboard engines increases, Tohatsu's four-stroke and award-winning TLDI series (direct fuel injection system, precisely controlled) that exceed EPA and CARB requirements, are also being introduced in Budget Marine stores.
Robbie Ferron says: "Our chandlery group is in an ideal position to provide after-sales service for Tohatsu outboards throughout the island chain. We stock a very broad range of Tohatsu parts and in June 2007, as part of ongoing staff training, a Tohatsu delegation made a presentation to our top technical sales and purchasing personnel, reinforcing Budget Marine's understanding of, and commitment to this brand and its bright future in the Caribbean."
For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.

Second Loft for Turbulence in Grenada
Turbulence Ltd, Grenada announces the opening this month of a new Turbulence sail loft at Grenada Marine, St. David's Harbour, in addition to their existing loft at Spice Island Marine Services at Prickly Bay. The new loft, equipped with three new sewing machines, can accommodate even large catamaran mainsails. Genoas and mainsails for boats up to 45 feet can be fabricated on site. A full range of canvas work, from winch covers to full awnings, is also available.
As the agent for Doyle's Sails in Grenada, Turbulence can provide its customers with D4 racing sails (see www.doylesails.com/sails-d4-home.htm). Also available is the latest in Hydra-net sails — a non-laminate woven material that will not separate or attract mildew, and which offers a great weight saving for large mainsails.
In addition, Turbulence's rigging department will set up your catamaran or monohull with bowsprit and improve your deck layout for the trouble-free use of gennakers. Turbulence Ltd. also has a NAVTEC hydraulic repair station at Spice Island Marine boatyard where their in-house approved technician can perform repairs on vangs, backstays and multi-function systems. All common seals are in stock.
For more information on Turbulence Ltd. see ad on page 14.
For more information on Doyle Sails see ads on pages 1 and 16.

MYBA Acquires St. Maarten Charter Show
The Mediterranean Yacht Brokers Association (MYBA) has acquired the St. Maarten Charter Yacht Exhibition. MYBA is a trade association founded in 1984 by a group of prominent yacht brokers with the aim of promoting standards of professionalism and ethics in the yachting industry.
The acquisition of the Sint Maarten exhibition will allow MYBA to offer charter brokers a winter charter show run specifically with their best interests in mind, as well as those of their fleets' owners, captains and crews. The show, which will continue to be managed on behalf of MYBA by the St. Maarten Marine Trades Association (SMMTA), will now be known as the MYBA St. Maarten Charter Show. The first show under the new arrangement will take place in Sint Maarten from the 3rd through 7th of December, 2007. Registration will be open for all qualified brokers, yachts, press, and exhibitors at the new show website: www.mybacaribbeanshow.com.
Both the MYBA and the SMMTA are committed to bringing the same standards and quality which has become synonymous with the MYBA sister show in Genoa while at the same time preserving the Caribbean flair of Sint Maarten.

New Luxury Marina Complex for Anguilla
Island Global Yachting (IGY) held a groundbreaking ceremony on July 9th to announce their selection as the master developer and operator of a new luxury five-star marina and upland facility at Altamer Resort on Anguilla.
The development, which will serve as the official port of entry to Anguilla, will feature a 101-slip marina of which 30 percent of the berths will accommodate megayachts. Additionally, the complex will include 740,000 square feet of upland space which is currently slated for a 164-unit resort plus a duty-free shopping and restaurant promenade. Scheduled to open in late 2009, the project is a partnership between IGY and Altamer Resort owners Michael and Rebecca Eggleton, and will be the first marina built on Anguilla.
For more information visit www.igymarinas.com.

The Moorings Expands Tortola Base
The Moorings yacht charter company announced that construction has commenced on a US$10-plus million project which will enhance its flagship base in Road Town, Tortola. The Moorings' new village will be located on the southern end of the current property, which is being extended. The complex is designed to take advantage of the ocean views, with an open plaza for retail shops and concierge-style customer service. There will be a new customer reception area and lounge with wi-fi service, multimedia-equipped briefing area, club-style shower facility, over-the-water gazebo bar and restaurant, a new conference area and new oceanfront hotel suites. The new retail shops will open onto an outdoor dining plaza overlooking the harbor.
As part of this expansion, a new breakwater will be built to provide additional slip space and the new waterfront area on the main harbor. The new docks and jetty will allow for additional dockage of approximately 120 yachts and provide easier access for the beamier designs of the new monohulls and continually expanding fleet of catamarans. The environmentally responsible new breakwater is designed with multiple channels to increase the natural seawater flow into the harbor. Natural circulation will further be assisted through seawater pumps that move existing water from the harbor entrance into the innermost portion of the harbor, with filtration to enhance its quality.
"The Moorings is proud to unveil this project which will be the most environmentally friendly charter facility in the Caribbean," commented The Moorings' president, Lex Raas.
The construction is expected to be completed during early 2008. The existing hotel, pool, restaurant and bar along with the dockside amenities continue to remain for the use of all guests of Wickhams Cay II marina.
For more information on The Moorings visit www.moorings.com.

Grenada's Port Louis Marina Helps *Hildur* to New Home
A major part of the Port Louis Marina project in Grenada has been the extensive clean-up of the southwestern shores of St. George's Lagoon. Port Louis Grenada has reportedly already spent more than EC$9 million dredging and removing garbage, scrap metal, pylons and abandoned wrecks from the marina area. The latest of the wrecks to be removed is the *Hildur*. Once a cargo boat sailing the Caribbean Sea, *Hildur* became a casualty of both time and Hurricane Ivan. Port Louis work crews spent 12 weeks patching and welding the vessel, which was recently towed out to sea and sunk in open waters outside of the village of Moliniere. The *Hildur* will add to the many dive sites off Grenada's coast.
Port Louis marina manager Danny Donelan explained the significance of the careful removal of the *Hildur* to their overall vision of the marina project: "We are spending millions to clean up the marina," he said. "We are doing this not only because we want the best and most beautiful marina in the world, but because we want this marina to enhance the environment and not degrade it."
For more information on Port St. Louis Grenada visit www.portlouisgrenada.com.



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CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Young St. Lucians Learn 'Ridge to Reef'

By far the greatest sources of marine pollution are those that are land-based. These include agricultural run-off (sometimes containing pesticides), sewage, waste water and sediment. In the Caribbean, all too often rivers and drains are used as dumps for both solid and liquid waste.

In July, 30 students in St. Lucia learned about watershed issues and their impact on coral reefs at a Ridge to Reef Watershed Training Camp, hosted by the Forestry Department at their rainforest camp near Micoud. The students braved intense rain storms to learn the connections between the rainforest and the coral reefs, and how land-based activities can affect the sea.

Students explored their home watersheds, went on a photo safari, learned how to test water for contaminants, hiked in the rainforest, and viewed the reefs through the glass bottomed boats at the marine park. Many also learned to snorkel to see the fish close up.

Kiawa from Marigot couldn't believe all the fish she saw. As the group members viewed each others' photo safaris, she asked, "So what can we do about the sediment going onto our reefs?" The students' creativity was evident as they suggested ways to



reduce erosion and also catch the sediment before it reaches the sea. At the end-of-camp talent show, the students dramatized different ways to protect the water.

The students and teachers who participated are now designing watershed monitoring and improvement programs in their home watersheds, using the training in environmental education and watershed improvement techniques they received from Al Stenstrup, Curriculum Director at Project Learning Tree, a Washington DC-based environmental training organization and Dr. Padgett Kelly, professor of environmental education at Middle Tennessee State University and board member of National Marine Educators Association, as well as Caribbean SEA (Caribbean Student Environmental Alliance) Executive Director, Mary Beth Sutton.

The innovative programme was led by Caribbean SEA and the Sustainable Development and Environment Unit of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and funded by NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program. Communities and schools represented included Vieux Fort Comprehensive School Campus B, George Charles Secondary School, Dennery Primary, La Caye Primary, Soufriere, Choiseul, Canaries, Dennery, Marigot and the Mabouya Valley.

The students also developed creative action plans for improving the water in their local rivers. They will now set up water monitoring in their home watersheds, implement strategies to improve the water and continue to monitor to see if they are successful. Next year they will present their findings to local officials and make recommendations based on their results.

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REGATTA NEWS

Guadeloupe Goes Radio Racing
Stéphane Legendre reports: A new sailing activity has been born in Guadeloupe, to occupy racing enthusiasts during the summer when major regattas are over. Fourteen owners of remote-controlled model Lasers


STEPHANE LEGENDRE

and the restaurant Le Plaisancier have initiated the July Radio Controlled Lasers regatta series at Bas du Fort marina at Pointe-à-Pitre.
For the inaugural race series, held July 4 to 25, a space was cleared close to the restaurant area of the marina for spectators to attend. Four very official races included judges and security on the water. Races started at 7:00PM and ended around 9:00 or 10:00PM. The evenings did not end there, though — sometimes race-goers were at Le Plaisancier until 4 o'clock the next morning!
This year's series winner is Stéphane Squarcioni from WayPoint Electronics. When do we organize trans-Caribbean regattas?
For more information visit: www.sailrclaser.com or http://rclaser.fr

St. Lucia Juniors' Season Wrap-Up
Ted Bull reports:
July 6th saw the St. Lucia Yacht Club junior sailing programme's 2007 end-of-season fun day, with sailing, swimming and shoreside team events.
During the season these youngsters attended regular sail-training sessions, starting with the very basics, progressing through various stages of instruction, and finally sailing solo in Optimist dinghies. From there they took advanced instruction in safety, boat maintenance, first aid and finally the art of racing. At age 15, the young sailors progress to the Olympic class Laser dinghy.
The all-day, season's-end celebration was organized by coach Benjamin Todd, junior sailing events administrator Lily Bergasse, and assistants Jennifer Spiegelberg, Sue Milner and Ulrich Meixner.
Twenty-five young sailors were on the water and later



received recognition for their achievements over the period. The Chris Renwick Laser Championship Trophy went to Dominic Lovell, with Luis Meixner in second place and Fredrick Sweeney third. The Home Services Optimist Championship Trophy was won by Raina Bergasse, followed by Stephanie Lovell and Marcus Sweeney. The Red Team, captain Luis Meixner, won the team event. Special Achievement Awards went to Sophia Spiegelberg, Most Determined; Mateo Heinemann, Most Enthusiastic; and Dario Daniel, Most Improved. Merit Certificates were received by Dylan Charles, Andre Felix, Marion Bardies, Luc Chevrier and Mark Spurway.

Caribbean Kids Sail Internationally
Some of the Eastern Caribbean's talented and hard-working junior sailors are gaining world-class racing experience at major international youth regattas. Trinidad & Tobago sent five young sailors to the Laser Radial Youth Worlds, held in the Netherlands. As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, after five races with one discard, Andrew Lewis is in 34th place out of 205 sailors; Stuart Leighton is 98th, Alistair Affoo 175th, James Leighton 181st and Matthew Scott 198th. Reports say that the North Sea's big waves and strong currents are providing a real challenge to those accustomed to Caribbean conditions.
Meanwhile, St. Lucian youth sailors Fredrick Sweeney and Luis Meixner have set their sights on the 2012 Olympics. In preparation, Fredrick competed in the 2007 North American Laser Championships, where he sailed a Laser Radial among the 58 competitors forming the Silver Fleet, earning a very creditable 14th place. As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, Luis is in Canada, racing a Laser Standard at the 2007 Volvo World Youth Championships.

Trinidad's Southern Caribbean Regatta
The Guardian Holdings Group will again sponsor the Southern Caribbean Invitational Regatta, held in the waters of Chaguaramas, Trinidad. This year's dates are December 27th through 30th.
The organizing authority is the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association. Classes include Optimist (two age groups), Laser Standard, Laser Radial, MR 15 (a two-man dinghy with asymmetrical spinnaker) and SR Max (a three-man keelboat with spinnaker). Boats will be available for charter.
Pre-registration begins this month, and is on a "first come, first served" basis. Complete registration takes place on Thursday 27th December from 9:00AM. Off-island participants — ask about the interesting option of staying with a local sailing family!
For more information visit www.ttsailing.org.

Register Online for St. Maarten Classic
Online registration for the St.Maarten-St.Martin Classic Yacht Regatta, to be held the third week of January 2008, is now open at www.ClassicRegatta.com.
Regatta entry fees have been set at US$4 per foot if the registration is received on line. Registration in St.Maarten on the day before the start will cost US $6 per foot.
Organizers hope to attract over 30 classic yachts to the event. The St.Barth's-based *Lone Fox*, captained by Ira Epstein, has already been registered on line for the 2008 event. *Lone Fox*, a 65-foot ketch, was built in 1957 for Colonel Whitbread of Whitbread Breweries, the original sponsor of the Whitbread Round The World Race.

2008 Yacht Rallies Announced
Want to sail in company with like-minded boaters to Trinidad for carnival next year? The third annual Route du Carnival rally will gather at Port du Marin, Martinique, on January 26th, 2008, enjoying two free nights at the marina. Rally participants will then sail to the Grenadines for an overnight stop in Bequia and two nights in the Tobago Cays, before sailing on to Trinidad where special arrangements are made to see "the greatest show on earth".
Or, if you'd like to join a rally heading to Cuba, the 9th edition of the popular Transcaraibes will depart in late March 2008, from Marina Bas du Fort, Guadeloupe, bound for Santiago de Cuba with fun-filled stops in St. Martin, the BVI, and the Dominican Republic.

—Continued on next page



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—Continued from previous page
Both the Route du Carnival and the Transcaraibes are organized by Club Transcaraibes. The organizer speaks French and English.
For more information visit www.transcaraibes.com.

Rolex 2008 to Offer IRC Division
For the 35th annual running of the International Rolex Regatta in March 2008, St. Thomas Yacht Club, USVI, will welcome yachts sailing under the IRC rating rule as well as those sailing under the CSA rating rule. The move — a first for the Rolex and possibly setting a trend for other Caribbean regattas — is intended to make it hassle-free for racing sailboats from the United States and Europe to compete. IRC is the only rule endorsed by ISAF (the International Sailing Federation) as an international rating rule and accepted throughout the world.
"With the majority of new racing sailboats being designed to IRC, it makes sense to allow them the chance to race under the IRC rule in one of the world's best venues," said Regatta Co-Director John Sweeney. "We aren't abandoning CSA; we are simply offering options to the sailors, and with that, encouraging a larger international fleet." Sweeney further explained that CSA certificate holders are eligible to obtain an IRC rating as well. "We encourage owners to investigate the requirements, and local measurers can assist in the process," he said.
"With this development, we expect to see competitive racing under both rules and a growing potential for IRC throughout the Caribbean," said US-IRC Executive Director John Mendez, adding that the event will again be part of the US-IRC Gulf Stream Series. "Yachts that are from the US and already have their certificates can easily join the regatta; I view it like a passport that travels with you wherever you wish to sail."
The three-day International Rolex Regatta, scheduled for March 28th through 30th, 2008, is an annual favorite on the Caribbean racing calendar, catering not only to handicap yachts but also to one-design sailboats of at least 24 feet and beach cats.
For more information on the US-IRC and CSA, visit www.us-irc.org and www.caribbean-sailing.com. For information on the International Rolex Regatta visit www.rolexcupregatta.com.

Fishing Lines
32.54LB KINGFISH TOPS ST. THOMAS TOURNAMENT
Nikolas Murdjeff of Florida fished last year's Annual Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament in St. Thomas, USVI, and caught nothing. Not so this year. The 14-year-old, who has spent summers with his father in the Virgin Islands for the past seven years, reeled in a 32.54-



pound kingfish from aboard a 30-foot Water's Edge Sports rental boat to win the Largest Kingfish and Best Junior Male Angler prizes.
Murdjeff pocketed US$2,000 in cash for his Largest Kingfish, sponsored by N.E.M. (West Indies) Insurance Limited, managed in the USVI by Red Hook Agencies, Inc, and also a weekend for two at Divi Carina Bay Beach Resort & Casino, with airline tickets compliments of Seaborne Airlines, that his father is sure to enjoy. Murdjeff also won US$250 in cash from Offshore Marine and Yanmar for his Best Junior Male win.
The Second Largest Kingfish prize went to Ernest Quetel, Jr., who caught a 29.40-pounder aboard *4Q2*. Quetel won US$750 in cash sponsored by FedEx Express. Junior angler Peter Turbe, fishing aboard *WETKYAT*, reeled in a 29.17-pounder to win the Third Largest Kingfish cash prize of US$500, sponsored by Offshore Marine and Yanmar.
With 16 fish caught total, Capt. Howard Griswold aboard *Gone Ketchin*, won Best Boat and Best Captain, and was awarded US$1,000 cash for each title, from Offshore Marine and Yanmar. Ernest Quetel, Jr.'s, catch of a total of 76.29 pounds of fish also earned him Best Male Angler, and a US$500 cash prize from Offshore Marine and Yanmar.
Marcia Griswold, aboard *Gone Ketchin*, reeled in a total of 62.39-pounds to pick up the Best Female Angler award and a US$500 prize from Red Hook Agencies. Joanica Aubain caught 18.83 pounds from aboard *Rosaly* to win Best Junior Female Angler and US$250 cash from Offshore Marine and Yanmar.
All 34 registered junior anglers were eligible for a "Catch In The Hat" award, sponsored by Hull Bay Hideaway and Dan Perry. The first 16 names drawn from a hat received US$50 cash and the last two won US$100 dollars each. All registered junior anglers were treated to complimentary Island Oasis fruit smoothies.
Each year, the Northside Sportfishing Club makes donations to community organizations and individuals. This year's beneficiaries were The Joseph Sibilly School, St. Thomas Rescue, the American Red Cross, Kidscope and the Family Resource Center. The Club also awarded college scholarships to Shanelle Brin and Jason A. Brin.

NEW VENUE FOR ST. LUCIA BILLFISH EVENT
The Marina at Marigot Bay, St. Lucia, will be the new venue for the St. Lucia Game Fishing Association's annual billfish tournament. The 17th International Bill Fishing Tournament, to be held September 25 to 29, is being hosted by the SLGFA in conjunction with the Marina and Discovery at Marigot Bay, the island's newest five-star resort and marina village. Traditionally the tournament has been held at the Rodney Bay Marina in the north of the island, however organizers decided to move the event to take advantage of Marigot Bay's central location and new facilities. Over 100 anglers from throughout the Caribbean and from the US are expected to take part in the event which will feature activities on and off the water at Discovery and neighbouring JJ's Paradise, Chateau Mygo and Doolittles.
The overall winner of the event wins entry into the 2008 Rolex/IGFA Offshore Championship and prizes including fishing tackle, a 225-horsepower outboard engine and a tournament trophy. In addition, there is a prize of a Sports Utility Vehicle for breaking the tournament record for blue marlin, currently held by Jean-Francois Fredonic of Martinique who caught a 707-pound fish in 1996. Last year's winner was *Hard Play* from Trinidad & Tobago who reeled in a 407-pound blue marlin.
There will be cash prizes for tag-and-release catches of white marlin, sailfish, long-bill spearfish, swordfish, mahi-mahi, tuna and wahoo, and prizes for the best female and junior anglers.
For more information phone Annie Hamu (758) 716-8124.



Traditional Boats Race 'Round Guadeloupe

by Stéphane Legendre

The Round the Island Race for the traditional sailing craft of the French West Indian island of Guadeloupe was held this year from July 13th to 21st.

For the sixth running of this hotly contested event, the course was different and interesting. A fleet of 35 open boats gathered in Les Saintes archipelago, south of the butterfly-shaped Guadeloupe, then moved up the leeward coast of Basse Terre, the butterfly's western wing, for three races before heading to the windward coast of Grande Terre. Eight legs in total were sailed between Les Saintes and the village of Saint François on Grande Terre's southeast coast. A weather forecast predicted a tropical wave to strike right in the middle of the event, just to make things a bit more difficult and selective than usual. But an even bigger selection process was going to take place along the windless leeward coast of Basse Terre, where local knowledge is essential to succeed.

The jury came all the way from Martinique, neutral because from a different island. Do not forget that Guadeloupe is also nicknamed the "land of passions" and there is a lot of passion during this event!

All the leaders on the traditional boat scene were present, many with new boats. Skippers came from Les Saintes, la Desirada, Vieux Fort, Carénage (Pointe-à-Pitre), Sainte Anne, Deshaies, Saint François and Marie Galante. Claude Thélier, the four-time winner of the event, and the well-known Forbin boatbuilding family also took part.

Although the first day's starting signal was given with little wind, the breeze picked up as the fleet reached the Saintes Channel and a good 20 knots from the northeast pushed the fleet for a fast crossing to Vieux Fort at the southwestern tip of Basse Terre. Things became difficult as the wind died in front of Basse Terre city and the finish line. Claude Thélier, on *Foutefe*, won that leg with a comfortable lead over the others and took the lead in the regatta.

Legs Two and Three, to Vieux Habitants and Pointe Noire respectively, were two days of nerve-racking competition. Thélier's leadership was challenged and, choosing a disastrous option in Leg Two, he lost his chances of winning overall.

Then appeared the Forbin's family strategy: always be close to the leader and above all never take a risky option which you would have to "pay for in cash". That strategy worked well for Patrick Forbin, on *Ijala*, who was always close to the winner of the day.

Thélier tried, during what remained of the regatta, to catch up by winning five of the eight races, but unfortunately it was not enough to keep Patrick Forbin from winning overall by only one point. Thélier came second overall with 36 points, and last year's second place winner Alain Dabriou came third, with 52 points, on *Calin du Matin*.



Boatbuilder Patrick Forbin (inset) used a low-risk strategy to sail Ijala *to overall victory in the eight-day regatta*

The Forbin's family success story was confirmed during this event: on Patrick Forbin's winning crew was one of his sons; his brother Jean Forbin came fifth, with 59 points, on *Ti Bred'la*; and another brother, Mathieu Forbin, was 12th only because he had to abandon one race due to boat damage. Three of the four Forbin brothers run boatyards, and one son is working with his father, a family tradition which was transmitted by the deceased father to all his sons. On average, Jean and Patrick build five to six traditional boats per year. This incomparable experience of both building and racing them explains the success of this family in managing these difficult boats.

The Round Guadeloupe Race for traditional boats has reached a new level and needs to be managed more professionally, like the famous Martinique yole races. The skills of the participants have reached a very high standard, and the championship is disputed all year long. New boats are built to improve performances within the rating.

Public attendance is greater every year. The beaches at starts and finishes are packed with people, which creates a friendly atmosphere during the summer holiday for kids and parents. Tents are installed to serve food and host sponsors' products.

This year numerous media representatives were there for the first time, and they followed every race from beginning to end — fitting for a major popular event, which this race has become.

The conclusion to all this positive development is that more professionalism in organization and jury must be put in place to avoid endless discussions at protests.

Guadeloupe locals do not naturally turn towards the sea and its activities, and this event is a real opportunity to foster appreciation of this new field of marine recreation for many. Children are keen to learn and a few schools are now teaching traditional sailing — a very good sign for future generations.

See you all next year!

For more information visit www.cgvt2000.com.

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LIGHT AIR, HOT SUN, LONG OPEN BOATS

by Orbin Ollivierre

Is August de 4th an' ah standin' on de beach at Lesterre, Carriacou. Yo' want to know what's up? Is de start ah de first boat race in de 42nd anniversary regatta. An' ah tell yo', is ah replica ah last time ah been here, two years ago. It hardly got ah cloud in de sky, ah ain't seein' no wind on de water, de sun shinin' hot like fire. Ah sorry fo' dem poor sailors out dey today.

Well, is ah open race, dat mean no matter what size yo' be, all sailin' together, call it ah party race! Eight boats altogether: *Bluff*, *Cloudy Bay* an' *Limbo* from Bequia, an' *Passion*, *Ace*, *Out Rage*, *East Wind* an' *Ghost* from Carriacou an' Petite Martinique. As ah say, 12 o'clock dey start after ah long wait. On de course map, dem put down 11 o'clock start but, fo' tell yo' de truth, when in Carriacou, stop worryin' 'bout time; after all, 11 ain't far from 12. Anyway, dem start. De wind dead light an' dem snailin' dem way up to de mark in Hillsborough. As dem reach dat mark, it look like dem not goin' any further. De little air say, "Ah done wid dat": ah say dem go' call it off. Not to be, yo' see, in Carriacou, dem accustom to dem conditions, dat is why ah 20-foot boat got sails bigger dan any in de other islands. Dem sailmakers does smile when dem walk in! Dey slammin' to de outer mark den downwind an' back up. Ah cyan't watch dem fo' long, de sun glare on de water hurtin' me eye. An' I on de land — sorry fo' dem in de boats all white sails out dey. Ah hope dey got Raybans, ha ha! About 3 o'clock, de first one finish: *Passion*, she slip past *Out Rage* right at de finish, den *Ghost*, de others slammin' dey way up. Ah hope we got better luck next day.

Ah decide fo' tek ah tour out to Windward, see how de party goin'. Yo' see, dem sloops does race around de island on de Saturday an' do dem party fo' demself up dey. Well, ah was ah bit shocked when ah see de erosion dat tek place durin' Ivan an' Emily. Most ah de mangrove an' de manchineel trees gone, de water almost up in de road, an' de shore line up wid small steel boats rustin' away. Yo' notice ah say shocked, well, Windward famous fo' its wooden boat-buildin' so ah surprise fo' see so much iron on de beach. Good news, though. Ah see two new sloops building dey; might be ready fo' next year Regatta.

—*Continued on next page*

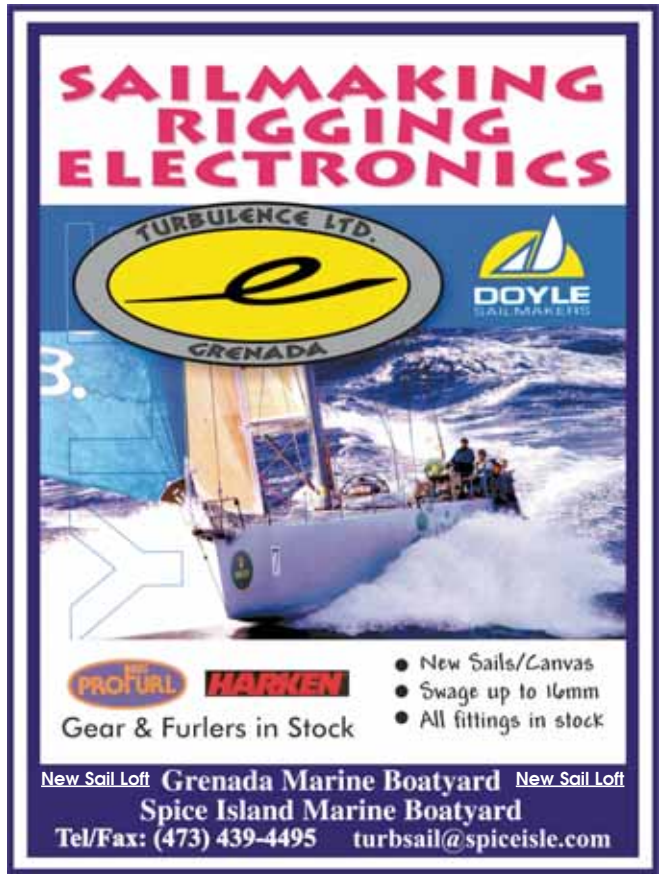




ALL PHOTOS: MERRIMANBARTHOLOMEW

The Grenadines' open boats were originally designed for fishing. Built for handiness and speed, they are well suited to racing





—Continued from previous page

Well, all dem sailors partyin' an' arguin' who mek bad tack an' who go' get dem ass cut tomorrow, very good, back to town.

Well, is Sunday mornin' an' ah look down on de harbour an' fo' tell de truth, it pretty fo' so but fo' swimmin' an' snorkellin' not fo' sailin'. Is like glass on de water. It got ah small tanker in de harbour — ah was wonderin' if she pump out she oil in de bay, it so calm. Eleven o'clock now an' ah feelin' ah little air on me skin an' ah shadow on de water, good sign. De little air comin' from de south so de land tekin' half. Dem got two races today, about 40 boats sailin' including eight deck sloops, nice fo' see dem increasin'. Last time ah was here, dem had t'ree left after de hurricane but now dem buildin' back. Dey does look so nice downwind wid all de pretty spinnakers. Well, as ah say, 40 boats out in de harbour, lookin' good, but my eyes on de long open boats as dey call dem down dey. We also got *Tornado, Divine, Worries, Sweet Image* an' *My Love* from Bequia. Ah don't know all de names so, as de old people say, ah go' tell yo' what ah know. Dem do dey laps an' comin' to de finish, *Passion* in de lead, *Bluff* in second place — but not fo' long. De wind cut about 100 feet from de finish. Ah stand up 'pon de end ah de wharf, me heart in me mouth. *Cloudy Bay* 100 yards behind an' got ah puff comin' wid ah bone in she t'roat. Bam! She pass *Bluff* 20 feet to de mark an' tek second place. Ah couldn't believe it although ah see it happen already right here in Carriacou. *Limbo* beatin' *Ace* by a long way, *Sweet Image* just' beatin' out *Worries*, an' *Tornado* behind by ah long shot.



Some 40 indigenous boats coming from seven islands raced in ten classes at this year's Carriacou Regatta Festival

De second race start about half past two, still de same conditions, same course, not much change only dis time, *Bluff* in second place. So yo' know who behind. Ah hope it blow ah little wind tomorrow but de weatherman say stable conditions affectin' de islands — we go' see.

Well, Monday is here. Last race today an' no change in de harbour, calm like a pond as dey say. Eleven o'clock reach an' not much difference, only some clouds hangin' about, puttin' doubt in dem skipper mind it go blow or not: yo' t'ink we should change de sail? Yo' t'ink we should carry mo' ballast? Well, ah tell *Bluff* go wid what she carry yesterday, blow or not — she stiff, she go' stand up. Dem start; downwind dem go, *Passion* in de lead, *Bluff*, *Cloudy Bay*. Dem in de second lap now an' same position but de wind doin' ah shift aroun' every now an' den. As ah say, *Passion* in de lead, *Bluff* right behind. Is de first time in de four races dey ha' fo' tack, *Passion* on starboard, *Bluff* on port — watch it! *Bluff* tack fo' get out she way an' mo' tack to de finish, *Passion* still in front. About 100 feet to de finish, de wind drop. *Passion* stop in she tracks, *Bluff* jump she sheets, tek de little air an' slide right past *Passion* fo' tek de first! Ah know me friend Leo nah like dat. But, after all, he know anyt'in' over 12 knot, *Bluff* is better dan *Passion*. *Cloudy Bay* trudgin' behind, *Limbo* way ahead ah *Ace*, *Sweet Image* way ahead ah *Worries*. Imagine, wind at five knots an' *Worries* capsizing. Fo' all de year ah know Andy sailin', he cyan't complete ah regatta without swimmin'!

All in all, ah enjoyed meself. It was ah very good regatta, ah bit low-keyed, but so ah like it. I must thank Leo an' Bernard an' de rest ah de regatta committee for mekin' my stay an enjoyable one an' puttin' on ah good show. Hats off — see yo' next year.

Carriacou Regatta 2007 Winners

Small Open Boat A
1) *Ark Royal*, Roy Delisle, Petite Martinique
2) *Pimpy*, Verrol Compton, Carriacou
3) *Wet*, David Noel, Carriacou

Small Open Boat A1
1) *Sweet Image*, Robert Hazell, Bequia
2) *Worries*, Andrew Mitchell, Bequia
3) *Tornado*, Kingsley Stowe, Bequia

Small Open Boat B
1) *Now For Now*, Clayton DeRoche, Petite Martinique
2) *Parasite*, Clint Bethel, Petite Martinique
3) *Perceive*, Adlion Bethel, Petite Martinique

Small Open Boat C
1) *My Love*, Stanley Harry, Bequia
2) *Bad Feelings*, Samuel Forde, Mayreau
3) *Hard Target*, Victor Hazell, Mayreau

Small Open Boat D
1) *Swift*, Sean Martin, Sauteurs
2) *Classic*, Ted Richards, Gouyave
3) *Passage*, Nicholas Bethel, Sauteurs

Long Open Boat A (Budget Marine)
1) *Passion*, Matthew Joseph, Carriacou
2) *Bluff*, Lashie King, Bequia
3) *Cloudy Bay*, Arnold Hazell, Bequia

Long Open Boat B (Budget Marine)
1) *Limbo*, Alec Daniel, Bequia
2) *Ace*, Devas Joseph, Carriacou

Stern Boat
1) *Out-Rage*, Emmanuel Bethel, Petite Martinique
2) *Ghost*, Emmanuel Clement, Petite Martinique
3) *East Wind*, Gerald Bethel, Petite Martinique

Large Decked Sloop (Republic Bank)
1) *Margeta O II*, Bernard Compton, Carriacou
2) *Glacier*, Cheesman Patrice, Carriacou
3) *Marie Stella*, Michael Bethel, Carriacou

Small Decked Sloop (Republic Bank)
1) *Rosalina*, Petroc Patrice, Carriacou
2) *Run Away*, Javid McLawrence, Carriacou
3) *Small Pin*, Hope McLawrence, Carriacou

Round-D-Island Race (PSV Resort)
1) *Glacier*, Cheesman Patrice, Carriacou
2) *Marie Stella*, Michael Bethel, Carriacou
3) *Margeta O II*, Cyril Compton, Carriacou

Long Open Boat Saturday
1) *Passion*, Leo Joseph, Carriacou
2) *Out-Rage*, Emmanuel Bethel, Petite Martinique
3) *Ghost*, Emmanuel Clement, Petite Martinique





'Benign' Race Weekend for Yachts

by Jerry Stewart

One thing you can count on when holding a Caribbean regatta in August is the uncertainty of the weather. That, coupled with the ability to track tropical waves while still over the African continent, caused a mass exodus of visiting yachts from Carriacou when a low pressure system formed in a wave several thousand miles to the east of the island. The low filled in, but at this year's annual Carriacou Regatta yacht races, held August 3rd through 6th, Tyrrel Bay didn't quite see the numbers of competitors as previous years.

Nonetheless, 20 yachts were on the start line for Friday's Doyle Offshore Sails-sponsored two-handed Round Carriacou Race, ranging from Phil and Fay Atkinson's *Tramontana* at 52 feet to the Laser sailed by Michael Weber and crew Ryan.

With conditions of 12 to 16 knots of wind and a flat sea, once again the day's "cruise" went very well, with almost everyone finishing in time for the afternoon's fundraising auction. (*See story on page 17.*)

Taking just over three hours, the Australian *Tramontana* was fastest 'round the island, dropping to third place on corrected time, with Phil Renfro's Hughes 38 *Otra Mundo* showing us how they win races in Texas. Carriacou-based regatta regular Andy Smelt aboard his Spencer 44, *Yellowbird*, corrected to second.

The CSA Fun Rule worked very well in this regatta, with such disparate yachts as Dominique Weber's *Sanctus*, a Jeanneau Sun Kiss 47, correcting just 18 seconds in front of Uwe Gerstmann's Joshua *Salai* for fourth and fifth places.

This regatta has always attracted unusual yachts. This year, "Speedy" John Everton's 50-foot, Manuel Campos-designed ketch *Gaucho*, at 60 years old, added a classic touch to the fleet.

In CSA Class, Tim Sudell's Grenada-based S&S 44 *Saga* won line honours but on corrected time Carriacou-based yachts dominated: Roy Hopper's Beneteau First 38 *Windborne* recorded a convincing victory, with my Hughes 38 *Bloody Mary* placing second.

Three multihulls joined us this year. Featured as "the battle of the cruising multis", all at about 12 meters long, they sailed boat for boat. Surprising some, but not Irish owner Paul O'Regan, the Wharram cat *Stillus* finished over 30 minutes in front of Dutchman Bram Van Dijk's trimaran *Bad Dog*, with British Petra Kopp's Joubert Nivelt cat *Kayen* two minutes behind in third place.



CAROL EBERHART

Looks like fun! Yellowbird *placed second overall in the Fun Class*

The evening's celebration at the Lazy Turtle pizzeria featured free Mount Gay rum punch, courtesy of regatta sponsor Mount Gay who also provided a bottle of extra old rum for all competitors.

Saturday's Island Water World-sponsored race started punctually, as do all races controlled by race officer James Benoit, who kindly came up from the Grenada Yacht Club once again to run the yacht regatta. This year, the strong south coast currents did not feature and the lighter winds gave crews the opportunity to appreciate the colours and surroundings offered by the south coast of Carriacou as nine boats raced between the scattered offshore islets.

In CSA Class, once again *Windborne* sailed to a comfortable win over *Bloody Mary* and *Saga*, whose long lead gained by the enthusiastic young crew was destroyed by the handicap system.

Tramontana beat *Yellowbird* into second and *Sanctus* into third.

This evening's party was held between Twilight restaurant and the newly reconstructed Old Rum Shop, with entertainment from the Harvey Vale Drummers.

As in previous years, Sunday was for watching the decked sloops race in the local boat regatta that the Carriacou Regatta Committee also run over this weekend. The light winds which were a feature of this day, were to continue through Monday.

In Monday's race, sponsored by Budget Marine, again starting in Hillsborough, ten boats commenced in less than ten knots of wind. The occasional five-minute hole to contend with made the day a little frustrating. Nonetheless, the pattern of results established over the previous two races remained — CSA Class: *Windborne*, *Bloody Mary* and *Saga*; and Fun Class: *Tramontana*, *Yellowbird* and *Sanctus*.

The Carriacou Yacht Club provided the venue for prizegiving on Monday evening. Overall, it was no surprise that *Windborne* won CSA Class and *Tramontana* Fun Class — in what proved to be a typically benign August weekend.

This low-key regatta receives prizes from Mount Gay Rum, Doyle Offshore Sails, Budget Marine, Island Water World, The Round House Restaurant, Lumba Dive, Lazy Turtle Restaurant, Fidel Productions (T-shirts) and After Hours Supermarket. Logistical support was provided by Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout. Race officer James Benoit was assisted by Barbara Greenwood and Gus Pierre on the committee boat. The organizers give thanks to all.



Regatta-Time Benefit Breaks Record for Carriacou Kids

by Marjorie Mowry

The "Lucky" 7th Annual Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF) benefit, staged in Tyrrel Bay during August's Carriacou Regatta Festival 2007, was a runaway success. The benefit's various fun — and fundraising — activities raised a record-breaking EC$16,152 (almost 30 percent over last year's tally) to provide educational assistance to local school children. At this waypoint, over EC$60,000 has been contributed by yachtspeople and locals to the CCEF benefit, which was initiated during the 2000 Regatta by cruisers wishing to express their appreciation for Carriacou's warm-hearted hospitality.

Again, the lively CCEF Auction, held on August 3rd, proved to be the fundraiser's highlight. A bumper-crop of auction inventory had already been stockpiled at the Carriacou Yacht Club during the year, thanks to the combined generosity of CYC management and visiting cruisers. Eclectic additions included original watercolor paintings, rare NASA memorabilia, a boatload of bakery treats... even a seltzer-shooter! Magnanimous contributions from local businesses included a Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout package; scuba sessions from Arawak Divers; and gift certificates from Genevy's Massage, Lambi Queen Restaurant, Patty's Deli, Lazy Turtle Pizzeria and Twilight Restaurant. An extraordinary and lucrative auction prize was volunteered by the hospitable owners of visiting Texas mega-yacht *Champagne Cher*. Their five-star "party package" of onboard brunch, bubbly and branded boatwear sparked a fierce bidding battle amongst a posse of fellow Lone Star cruisers.

When the dust finally settled, a record high of over EC$11,000 had been bagged by veteran CCEF auctioneer Mike Jordan of yacht *Rhumb Runner*. A "Bargain Bilge" sale, craft table, shoreside diversions and cash donations helped top up the kitty.

This year, an expanded menu of Tyrrel Bay shoreside events was well-attended by islanders and an impressive diversity of international cruisers. At least 20 nations — including Iceland, New Zealand, Ecuador, Thailand and the Philippines — were represented by over 60 visiting vessels, which ranged from the humble home-brew to mega-yacht class.

The fun and fundraising got off to a good start on August 1st at the 10th Annual Welcome Potluck hosted at the Carriacou Yacht Club. Organizer John Pompa honored the anniversary with a recap of the decade's achievements and a presentation of commemorative plaques to longtime CCEF supporters. The evening's entertainment included a raucous guitar-and-banjo sing-along (thanks to pickers Steve Wolfson, Richard Haner and John Womack); plus a "Dry T-Shirt Contest" (as opposed to the infamous "wet" variety), in which sartorial sailors competed in "Best Pirate-Wear," "Most Likely To Get You Arrested," and "Best Tall T-Shirt Tale" fashion categories. "Happy Hour" met the midnight hour as the camaraderie continued.

Another crowd-pleaser, the Beach Fun Day, featured Arawak Divers' Kayak Klassic, Dirty Potato-Sack Derby, Tipsy Tug-of-War, the hotly-contested Beer Chuggin' Challenge, and an Underwater Treasure/Trash Hunt. Event entry fees, a dominoes tournament and book sales all contributed to the collection plate.

Finally, Carriacou Yacht Club's grand finale barbecue marked the end of a week's worth of work and play. Hats off to hard-working volunteers from Arawak Divers, *Cayuga, Dreamcatcher, Drisana, Horta, Liward, M'Lady Kathleen, Nomad, North Stand, Peregrine, Possible Dream* and *Second Millennium*.

Cruisers and local supporters presented the 2007 CCEF tally to Susan Peters, the Social Worker attached to the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs. Guided by Ms. Peters' conscientious management, the Fund provides needy local children with school uniforms, textbooks, supplies and other educational assistance. CCEF's steady growth has also enabled the creation of two new initiatives: "Meals from Keels," a school lunch program; and a set of full scholarships to Carriacou's T.A. Marryshow Community College. Since its inception, CCEF has provided educational assistance in over 400 qualified cases; it's estimated that this year's Fund can support another hundred or more.



Visiting cruisers and local supporters present a record-setting tally to Social Worker Susan Peters for the benefit of local schoolchildren

Although it's our "Lucky 7th" anniversary, good fortune has less to do with CCEF's ongoing success than the hard work, dedication, vision and generosity of its supporters. Congratulations go to organizers Melodye and John Pompa of yacht *Second Millennium*; Carriacou Yacht Club's owners and staff for their gracious hospitality; and managers of Tyrrel Bay Haul Out for their loyal support. Special thanks go to all sponsors, volunteers and participants, as well as cruisers who could only be present "in spirit" through donations and cash pledges.

CCEF volunteer Marjorie Mowry is cruising the Caribbean aboard S/V North Stand.



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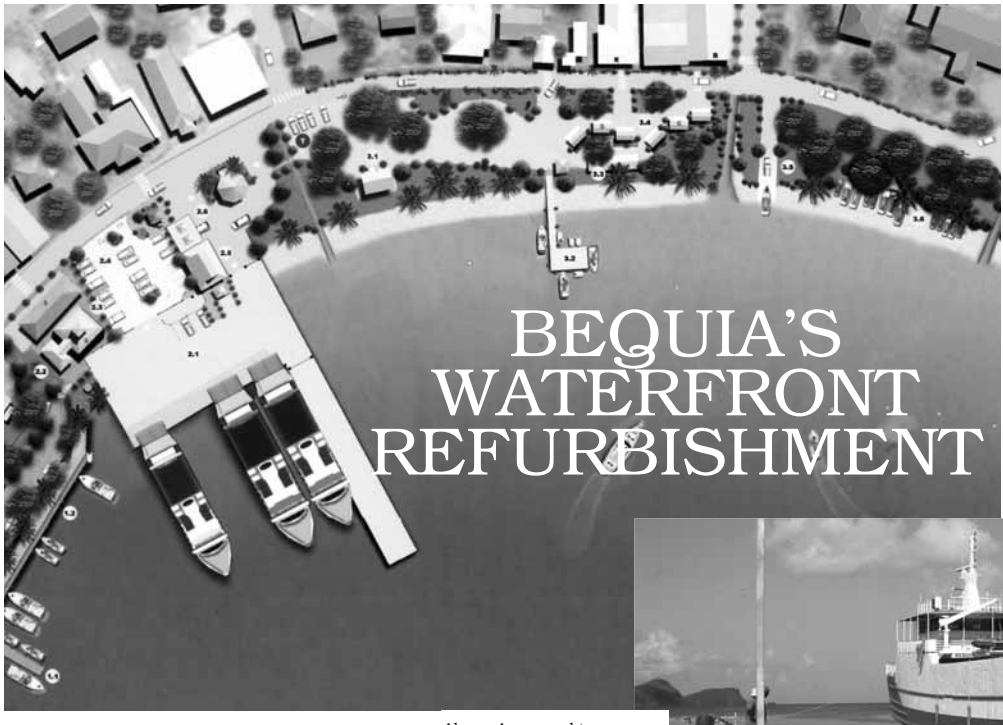
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BEQUIA'S WATERFRONT REFURBISHMENT

Bequia has always been known for its superb natural harbour, Admiralty Bay. From Amerindian canoes thousands of years before Christ, to today's ferries and cargo vessels, it has provided a safe haven for boats of all sorts. Royal Navy officers wrote glowing reports of the harbour during the Napoleonic Wars. For yachts, it has been a favorite since Fritz Fenger island-hopped from Grenada to St. Thomas aboard the sailing canoe *Yakaboo* in 1911 and Carleton Mitchell cruised from Trinidad to Maryland on the 46-foot ketch *Carib* in 1946.

In 1970, Don Street wrote in the *Dukane Yachting Guide to the Grenadines*, "All true sailors love Bequia… [it is] popular with yachtsmen as Admiralty Bay is an excellent anchorage in all weathers." Douglas Pyle noted in his book about boatbuilding in the islands, *Clean Sweet Wind*, that "Port Elizabeth, at the head of Admiralty Bay, was still an active schooner port in 1972…."

The island's population is increasing, tourism has taken hold, development is taking place. Careened schooners, whaling tryworks and thatched huts have been replaced by villas, apartments and restaurants. And harbour front redevelopment has not been forgotten.

Recently, Vincentian journalist Amal Thomas decided to look at a project in progress: refurbishment of the commercial wharf used by ferries and cargo ships. He got two exclusive interviews: one with Brent Bailey, a civil engineer, and the other with Johnny Ollivierre, Port Officer for the Grenadines Islands.

Interviews on the Wharf by Amal Thomas

On the 18th of June, I journeyed from St. Vincent to Bequia on the ferry *M/V Admiral I*. As the ship entered the harbour, I noticed workmen with equipment working studiously on the wharf. As I disembarked, I was greeted by Johnny Ollivierre. He then introduced me to the project manager, Brent Bailey.

Mr. Bailey told me that he has had experience in port construction on a large project in Trinidad at Point Lisas, and this is his second time around on Bequia. This project started 11th May and is expected to finish 11th August 2007, at an estimated cost of EC$200,600.



WILFRED DEDERER

Above: A proposal to upgrade Port Elizabeth's waterfront includes new small-craft berths near the market (lower left) and a paved launching ramp for trailerable boats (upper right)

Right: As Amal Thomas reports, work has already been done on the main commercial wharf

He then explained the reasons for the refurbishment: "Firstly, the wharf was in a hazardous condition and people may not have known that. The exposure of steel, and the cracks, are a potential threat to lives and the environment. We saw the need to replace fenders on the wharves, preventing boats from hitting against the structure, replacing pile caps, bollards and concrete curves. All this will help to keep the wharf safe and able to withstand pressure. I think it's a good project in the interest of people and the environment and it's good that you can take the time to interview me."

I then targeted Johnny Ollivierre, who explained further about the project at hand: "The work being carried out is on the wharf and the ferry ramp area. There are areas with damaged beams, and piles that are broken, and this weakens the deck infrastructure. So we decided on the replacement of piles, beams and fenders, making the wharf safe for vessels and lives."

I asked about plans for Admiralty Bay for the coming high season and Mr. Ollivierre replied, "During the high season, we make sure the ship channel is clear of anchored yachts. And for the next season we are hoping to get an updated chart provided by the maritime agency showing where yachts, ferries and other vessels are supposed to dock or anchor. The authorities are organizing to purchase a vessel to oversee all the ports in the Grenadine Islands to make management more efficient."

As more commercial vessels use the port, I asked, "What is going to be done with the ferry wharf when there are more boats?" Mr. Ollivierre told me, "Well, it was built for four ferries and if there's any problem, they will have to rotate to allow a smooth flow. If problems still persist the authorities will step in and ask for cooperation."

"Is there anything you would like to say in closing?" I asked.

"Well," he said, "I would like to say Bequia is moving to higher heights. I would also like to add that work on the Canouan jetty will be started soon after Bequia is finished. We also did some work on the Ashton jetty in Union Island, and that is completed.

"And there is another project coming soon, whenever the government is ready. This project is to give the harbour proper navigation aids, to control water taxis and yachts, and ensure safe zones for sea bathers. And a facelift will be given to the Port Elizabeth waterfront."

Belmar's Waterfront Plan

What will this facelift be? Under the auspices of Deputy Director for Grenadines Affairs, Herman Belmar, a project proposal has been drawn up for "Bequia's Harbour Front Development 2007", which includes items of special interest to yachts using Admiralty Bay.

The jetty located near the vegetable market is used by yachtsmen and fishermen, and sometimes as an entry point for cruise ship passengers. According to the project proposal, the jetty is not properly maintained and the area surrounding it needs to become ISPS (International Ship and Port Facility Security) code compliant. This could be accomplished, according to the proposal, by extending the fenced area around the ferry wharf to include the area at the foot of the jetty. The proposal also includes plans to install sheet piling and backfill along the existing rubble beach to provide bow or stern-to berths within the fenced area for small watercraft. Between the fence and the berths will be a seaside walkway leading from the jetty to the main wharf area.

On the other, south, side of the wharf, the area around the popular public dinghy dock is slated for major enhancement. As this area, under the historic almond trees, is often the site for public events, for which stages must be erected and then disassembled each time, the proposal calls for construction of a permanent bandstand under a gazebo. The almond trees will be preserved. And as the market jetty would be within the new ISPS compliant zone, the ISPS-inspired chain-link and razor-wire fence currently at the foot of the dinghy dock could be removed.

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Bikinis and Bow-Ties:
A Boater's Wedding

by Summer Westman

A birthday party at a beach bar in the Virgin Islands was interrupted when a slim, dark-haired girl climbed onto the gift table and called for silence. When all eyes were turned toward her, she announced, "True love is not about finding someone you can live with, it is about finding someone you can't live without. So on Valentine's Day I asked him and he said, 'Yes.' We're getting married!"



The celebrating friends — and a few tourists — cheered and demanded details. Where, when and what could they do to help? "Where" was to be on the beach at White Bay, Jost van Dyke, "when" was ten weeks away, and the list of things to do was promptly commandeered.

The wedding couple, Michelle "Smo" Smothers and Kevin "Mongo" Raymond, made their wishes plain: no muss, no fuss, all their friends would gather on the beach with them to witness their marriage and celebrate afterward. A simple beach barbecue would make these long-time St. Thomas residents happy. The groom figured about 30 people would show up; the bride knew that 30 people showed up for their birthday parties. Perhaps they needed to make a guest list and take a head count.

Friends flew into action: reserving rooms at the Sandcastle, Perfect Pineapple, and Ivan's on Jost; arranging for the barbecue at Gertrude's; and calculating the amount of champagne to buy (lots). The bride's wishes were respected for the most part, except for one thing: her girlfriends insisted that she buy a new white bikini to wear at her wedding. Four friends dragged the shopping-phobic bride-to-be to the Bikini Store at Port of Sale Mall to buy one.



The wedding day dawned clear and fair. Relatively flat seas allowed a hundred or so of the wedding couple's closest friends to make the trip from neighboring islands and anchor their boats just off the beach. Guests waded or dinghied ashore, where they donned their black bow-ties, visited and drank champagne while eagerly anticipating the big event.

Finally, the crowd quieted, the music started and the bride danced through a flowered arch down to the water's edge. Two tall friends carried her to the back of the boat where her fiancé and the minister waited. Family and friends — and a few tourists — gathered in the water and on the beach to witness the couple vow to love each other forever, and cheered when the minister pronounced them man and wife. It was just what they wanted.

Capt. J. Summer Westman lives in St. Thomas, USVI, with her husband, Bill. When not out on their boat, Excellent Adventure, *Summer writes boating articles and designs websites. Reach her at summervi@earthlink.net or www.livingbydesignvi.com.*

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

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

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

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

September 2007			21	1941		11	1153	(new)
DATE	TIME		22	2034		12	1235	
1	0300		23	2126		13	1319	
2	0354		24	2216		14	1405	
3	0452		25	2306		15	1455	
4	0552		26	2356		16	1546	
5	0653		27	0000	(full)	17	1639	
6	0753		28	0048		18	1732	
7	0849		29	0142		19	1823	
8	0940		30	0242		20	1914	
9	1028					21	2002	
10	1112		**October 2007**			22	2057	
11	1154		1	0343		23	2141	
12	1234	(new)	2	0446		24	2232	
13	1314		3	0547		25	2326	
14	1355		4	0645		26	0000	(full)
15	1437		5	0738		27	0024	
16	1522		6	0826		28	0126	
17	1610		7	0911		29	0231	
18	1700		8	0953		30	0335	
19	1753		9	1033		31	0436	
20	1847		10	1113				

Were There Submariners at the Cinema?

by Norman Faria



Gaylord Kelshall of Trinidad researched this little-known theatre of the Second World War

In 1988 I read Gaylord Kelshall's interesting history of the Allied forces' defeat of the German submarine offensive in the Caribbean during World War II. While in Trinidad recently, I sought him out.

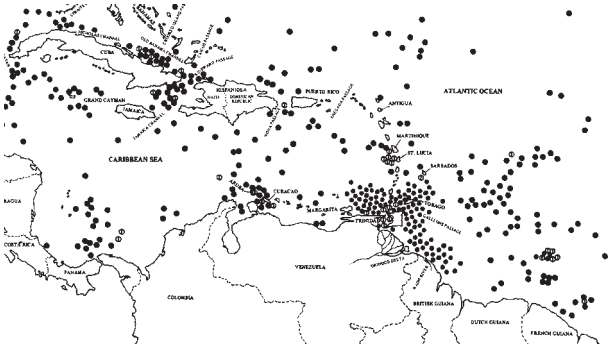
He is now curator of the Trinidad Military and Aero Space Museum, not far from the multitude of marinas and boatyards in the Chaguaramas area to the west of the capital, Port of Spain, and I went there one Monday afternoon to talk with him.

He was sitting in his study in a house made of joined-up 40-foot steel containers. Ten metres in front of his verandah, the surprisingly clear waters of the Gulf of Paria lapped onto what was once the concrete ramp of a World War II seaplane base whose hangar still stood next door.

After the pleasantries, I decided to start with a query about the base, where US forces were stationed during the War. It was the largest in Trinidad, wasn't it?

"No. They actually had 225 bases in Trinidad & Tobago during the war. The largest was Fort Read, in which Waller Field air base was located. Fort Read alone comprised 241 square miles."

If you asked him, Kelshall could probably tell you the names of all the commanding officers at the facilities. Among his personal library of 12,000 books, mostly on military history, are several the 67-year-old former Trinidad & Tobago Coast Guard pilot has himself authored, including the *History of Aviation in Trinidad and Tobago*. He is perhaps more widely known though, and certainly received more royalties than from any other book, for his book on the anti-submarine campaign. *The U Boat War in the Caribbean* (ISBN 976-8054-11-5), as it is titled, has been reprinted in the US and translated into German for sale in Europe.



This map from Kelshall's book on 'the U-Boat War' shows shipping losses in the Caribbean during 1942-1943

It is a seminal work. In February 1942, five German submarines ("U-boats" in popular terminology) were sent to the Caribbean area. The Allied forces (USA, UK, Commonwealth countries and USSR) were unprepared. The submarines wreaked havoc. By the end of that year, according to *The U Boat War in the Caribbean*, 36 percent of all worldwide merchant shipping losses had occurred in the Caribbean theatre. Three hundred and thirty-seven ships totaling 1.87 million tonnes were sent to the bottom. Many were laden with valuable oil and bauxite, war materials from Trinidad and British Guiana destined for Britain. But the Allies built up their forces, including stationing anti-submarine planes in Trinidad. By the end of 1943, the U-boat threat had been smashed. Kelshall chronicled this little-known theatre of the War through excellent research over a ten-year period that involved tapping the U-Boat Archives in Germany and the US Navy Historical Division.

Kelshall's book is fascinating from another viewpoint: it speaks of the bravery and suffering of soldiers, regardless of which side they fought for. There was a need for Allied governments' instilling of fervent patriotism during the War to maintain commitment and productivity and even sacrifice, as some of the exhortations on period posters in the museum reflect. He feels though, in retrospect, it is good for all to look at the side of the ordinary soldier of both sides.

Kelshall insists that the German submarine service, despite having appalling casualties (32,000 of 40,000 enlisted perished), was not affected by a type of "politics" as was, perhaps, the German Army which included the fanatically murderous Nazi SS. "These [submariners] were ordinary servicemen. Generally speaking, both the officers and rank-and-file sailors didn't believe in the Nazi thing, those who actively promoted Hitler's undemocratic, racist regime. There was only one German submarine captain, Heinz Eck, who was tried and executed after the War for machine-gunning survivors of a sunken ship," said Kelshall.

Along with monuments in the Museum's yard to Allied servicemen and women, including Trinidadians (58 died in air force action alone), there is a smaller memorial (a large plaque really) to the German submariners. It was erected by German veterans who had reunions over the years at the Museum, in the same way Allied vets have their get-togethers. Though it may seem insensitive to some, it can in no way be compared, argues Kelshall, to the type of monument like the Yaksukini shrine which venerates the WW II Japanese armed forces, including war criminals, and which right-wing ultra-nationalist politicians use to try to revive militarism. A bust of the great South American Independence fighter, Francisco de Miranda, is also on the Museum compound, donated by the local Venezuelan Embassy.

U-boats ranged as far as the Gulf of Mexico and the northern coast of South America during the war. Did the Germans ever come ashore in the Caribbean? Kelshall answers: "I would say it was possible. There were many places where the home defence could not guard. But, strangely, they didn't commit any sabotage, such as blowing up a pipeline, in Trinidad. They did, however, shell oil facilities in Curaçao."

What of the story told of the German submariner who, when captured, was found with two ticket stubs to a Bridgetown, Barbados, cinema in his jacket pocket?

"A Captain Adden, the skipper of a Trinidad vessel, reported after the War that he was taken on board a German submarine and shown ticket stubs from the Globe cinema in Port of Spain and was told 'I recommend the show. Go and see it'. But there are variations of the story in French Guiana, Curaçao and Barbados," said Kelshall, who wondered if it really happened.

Another story is that the U-boat skippers took on local seafarers, perhaps from isolated islands, to help guide the subs through dangerous and uncharted channels. Kelshall: "I have no evidence of that. What I do have is that they stopped at isolated islands to get fresh fruit."

Kelshall said the residents of the British territories, including then British Guiana, were committed to British rule. They served honourably, for example, in home defence units and overseas in Allied armies. For example, Kelshall's father, Ralph (who died in 1998), was Chief of Civil Defence in the southern Trinidad city of San Fernando and the surrounding environs in addition to serving as a sterling role model for his sons in instilling from an early age a lifelong interest in military history. Among the duties of home guard and civil defence was to ferret out German spies, several of whom were nabbed, including the head of the SS office in Caracas, Venezuela. German nationals were also rounded up and detained. "People at the time had a feeling they belonged to something, to the home country, the British Empire. They were very patriotic. This is reflected in the lyrics of the calypsos at the time."

Kelshall sees the maritime dimension of his Museum as an important one. He laments the dearth of maritime artifacts locally with very few historic boats of yesterday, for example, preserved. One exception is the yacht *Humming Bird II*, in which his countrymen Harold and Kwailan La Borde circumnavigated the world, the first Trinidadians to do so.

A local archaeology group has dived on a Spanish galleon wreck in coastal waters, Among the items recovered are "pieces of eight", silver coins, and blocks and cordage, which are in the Museum.

Still writing everything long hand ("Don't know how to use the computer — I let my secretary handle that," he says), Kelshall looks over the Gulf of Paria waters as I leave. He is daydreaming. Perhaps of the time when the harbour was full of cargo boats, destroyers, and tankers waiting to set off in convoy to the UK. And as we shake hands until next time, there is a glance below to the still serviceable concrete ramp from where the armed seaplanes once departed to see the ships safely off.

Norman Faria, Compass's *man in Barbados, recently vacationed in Trinidad. Next month: "Changing Times at the Mission for Seafarers".*



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The 'Dangers' of Trinidad & Tobago

by Phil Chapman

For Yvonne and me the biggest dangers of Trinidad and Tobago are the people. That's right, the people who tell you not to go there! Throughout our cruising in the Windward chain we have met many new friends and spoken to numerous people in the local hangouts. We discuss our current cruising grounds and our plans for the future.

Many so-called cruisers told us "Don't go to Trinidad" or "You need to lock everything everywhere" or "On your own head be it". It annoys me when people spread this scaremongering. If you have been to Trinidad or Tobago and have some useful criticism or advice, great — we can all benefit. But many of the "don't go theres" haven't been there themselves. They've gotten their alleged "facts" from other "don't go theres"; they've read reports on websites that tell us of the dinghy theft and the robbery. They forget to say (or maybe don't notice) that these events have taken place spread over five or six years. I read one report from a well-known writer and cruiser that said "south of Antigua is dangerous, the exception being Bequia".

I'd like to share experiences of our short visit to the wonderful twin-island state of Trinidad & Tobago and its people. I'll briefly speak of our visit to Tobago because there was a lovely article about Tobago in the July 2007 issue of *Compass*.

Our daughter Susie booked a flight for herself and her boyfriend to join us in Tobago. We'd not seen them since we left Spain. Yvonne and I sailed south from Grenada at the end of June for Trinidad (we had a watermaker problem and the makers are there). We arrived in Scotland Bay and spent the night there prior to going into Chaguaramas. What a wonderful entry into a new country! Scotland Bay was like being in a creek in the jungle surrounded by parrots, pelicans and vultures. The coastline at Chaguaramas is superb.

On arrival at the Customs dock, we cleared in and explained our situation to the Customs officers. We had already arranged for the repair of our watermaker, so we knew we would only be in Trinidad for one night before heading off to Charlotteville in Tobago. Customs were so helpful, clearing us in and explaining that they would need to sign and stamp our departure the following day and that upon arrival at Charlotteville we'd present that same paper to Customs who in turn stamp and sign it. On departure from Tobago we'd get it stamped again. So no problems there, and no charge.

We arrived in Charlotteville two days later, having motorsailed from Chaguaramas to Gran Riviere on Trinidad's northeast coast to overnight and get a better shot at Tobago. This worked well and we had a good daysail north past Store Bay right up to Charlottesville, arriving at 3:00PM.

The following day, after having our papers stamped by Customs, we sailed back south to Store Bay to anchor and wait for our daughter and her boyfriend. Yvonne and I dinghied ashore and walked to the airport. After all the hugs and kisses, we grabbed their bags and walked down the road to the beach, stopping for a couple of cold ones on route, of course. Our dinghy isn't the biggest in the world so we made two runs out to *Chaser II*. "What a way to start a holiday!" they both said.

A fortnight goes only too quickly so Yvonne and I were keen to show our guests as much as possible of Tobago; it was new to us as well. Store Bay is the commercial end of the island, though hardly Las Vegas, but there were a couple of hotels and a fast-food joint, together with some lovely restaurants.

During our travels we stopped in Buccoo Bay, Mount Irvine, Plymouth Bay, Castara Bay, Englishman's Bay and Charlotteville. We also took a maxi to Scarborough and toured the falls and rainforest. The highlights for us were Mount Irvine Bay, Castara Bay and Charlotteville. All the guide books tell us of Charlotteville and it is truly charming, as are the local people we met, Streetly and Hilda to name two, a lovely old couple.

However, Castara Bay, little mentioned in our "Doyle Bible", was probably our favorite, followed closely by Mount Irvine and Englishman's Bay. Castara Bay has local charm, beautiful beaches and amazing snorkeling — the best we've seen on our travels so far.



What, me worry? Not in tranquil Tobago...

Restaurants are quaint, charming and inexpensive. The Cascreole restaurant is right on the beach. It's in the Bible, but the Bible fails to mention the separate bar and snooker room, which is huge, with four pool tables and one table tennis table. It's well-used too, by local people, holidaymakers and cruisers alike. Don't get me wrong; it wasn't heaving, it wasn't noisy, nor was there any of the bad behavior, violence or bad language that often frequents these places. It sure is a lovely place to spend an evening.

In fact, we spent three nights in Castara Bay. Once we had a very good late local meal in Loris and Hazel's restaurant (L&H). In the morning we bought some supplies: bread, rum, beer — you know, the kind of things you need when you're on holiday. The bakery was a treat: a large clay oven in a field behind the Cascreole Restaurant. Just tell the lady your needs and she'll have it for you in an hour, if she hasn't baked it already.

Our family time was over quickly. While waiting with our daughter at the airport, we asked Customs if they would mind stamping and signing our piece of paper rather than us having to bus back to Charlottesville. The officer in charge sat us down, got out his rubber stamp and pen, asked us a couple of questions (like, "Have you had an enjoyable stay?"), then told us to have a good voyage. Excellent!

So that is our brief insight into Tobago. We walked the streets at night, no hassle, no muggings; in fact we never even chained the dinghy. Were we just lucky? I don't think so.

So on to Trinidad. Having spent just the two nights or so there previously, Yvonne and I were really looking forward to returning and exploring what appeared to be a lovely country.

Let's get the crime thing out of the way first. Trinidad has 1.3 million people concentrated in a relatively small area. Of course there is crime, some is drug related, but you get that throughout the world. Yvonne and I live in Spain, a beautiful country, but it too has its share of murders, thefts and muggings. So you don't walk some of the streets at night, you lock anything that you leave in what one would consider a "dodgy" area.

Now, *Chaser II* is in Chaguaramas at Powerboats Marina, our first real marina for many months. As usual, we need to give some money to the local businesses in exchange for some services. They have all been prompt, efficient and the quality of the work very good. We've walked from one marina to another visiting the sailmakers, chandlers, supermarkets and once or twice the on-site bars and restaurants. If you don't want to walk and can't use your dinghy, YSATT provide a shuttle boat and for TT$5 (less than US$1) it'll take you from one place to another. Just call on VHF 68.

From a marina and service-centre point of view, Chaguaramas has all you could wish for and more, more being Jesse James at Members Only taxi service. Jesse's business is to cater for cruisers, and what a service he offers! He'll arrange sightseeing tours, shopping trips, market tours, turtle-watching, dentists, you name it. He even arranged our yellow-fever jabs. Not that Yvonne and I need help, but it certainly makes our stay here run smoother. We like the tours, help and advice, but we also like to do our own thing and Jesse can even advise how we can do that!

Maxi buses stop right outside the marina gates. In fact they'll stop anywhere if you put your arm out, or even if you don't, if the bus is half empty! Several times we jumped on a maxi to a shopping mall or supermarket down the road, or to go to Port of Spain, a bustling city with good stores and history. The bus drivers were all polite and the passengers all say good morning as they get on. You don't get that in the UK!

We've met some very nice people during our stay here. Some are expats who've lived here for many years, like Richard and Sue of Dockyard Electronics at CrewsInn; a great service they provide, too. And there's Michael, the chairman of Powerboats Marina, who has offered to take us for a tour and lime around some of the small local islands.

So listen up all you "don't go theres". In our opinion, Tobago is a lovely place with beautiful beaches, and Trinidad is the best island for services we have traveled to so far. If we have a problem here, I'll write and let you know. Hopefully we won't, but it can happen anywhere. So if any cruisers out there are considering coming to Trinidad, DO IT! I'm sure you won't be disappointed.

Yvonne and I are glad we came. We wish we could stay longer, but we have commitments in Venezuela, another "don't go there" place. I only hope it is as nice there as it is here in Trinidad. In fact our plans constantly change, and we are now thinking that if we survive the turbulence of Venezuela, the drug runners of Colombia, the Panama pirates, the communists in Cuba and the voodoo in Haiti, we'll probably come back south to Trinidad — unless of course, we find somewhere even nicer, before returning to our home in Spain and a Mediterranean cruise.

Viva Trinidad and Tobago!



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Cuba: Fair Winds and Friendly Faces

by Bernie Katchor

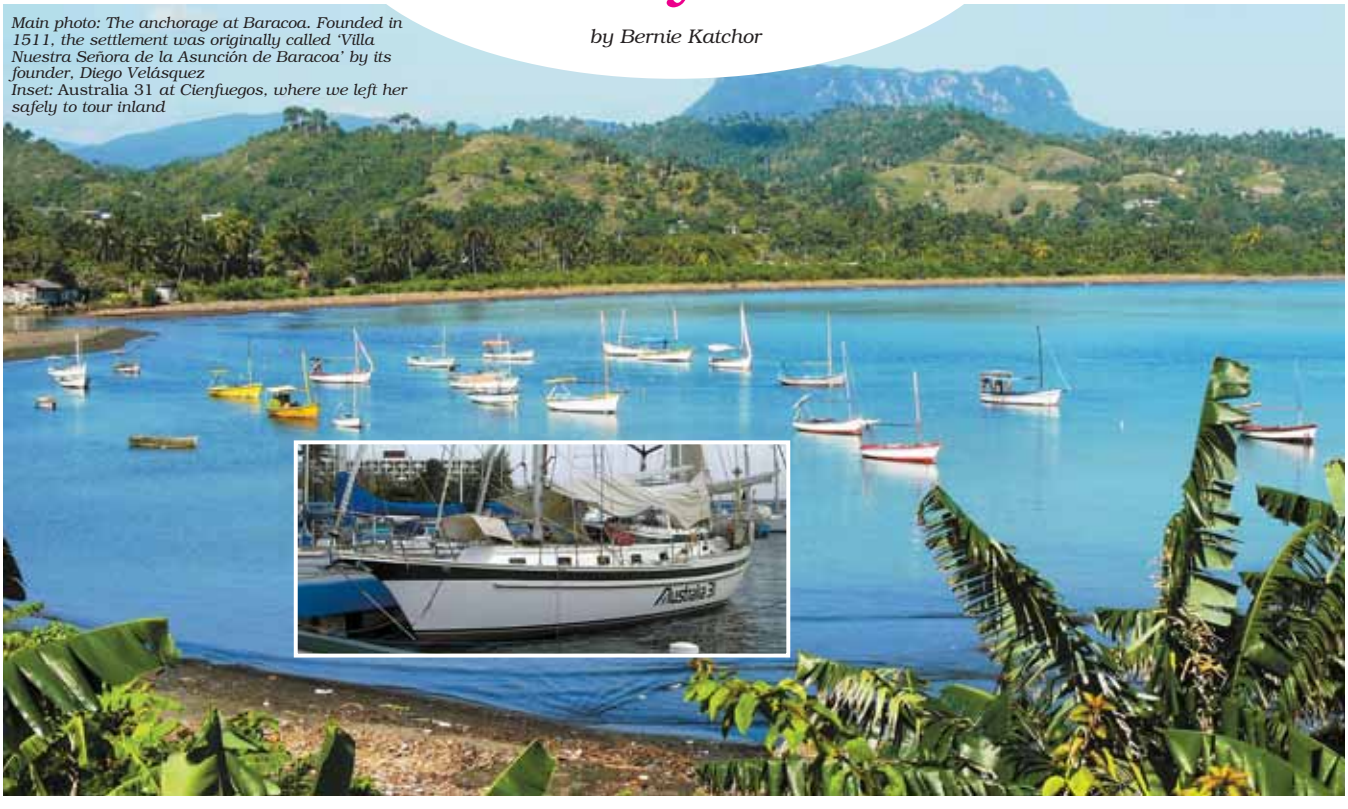
Cuba, which we cruised in May and June 2007, is the safest country we have ever been in. We had gentle winds all along the Cuban coast, often able to sail wing-and-wing with the genoa poled out and the spinnaker sheeted to the main boom. The people are poor but most generous; everyone we met wanted to give us something or feed us as we wandered the country. Truly a wonderful experience.

My wife, Yvonne, and I sailed our 1978-vintage Endeavour 43 ketch, *Australia 31*, from Jamaica, arriving at Santiago de Cuba on the southeast coast. Entering the narrow harbour, we headed for the marina. We never use marinas, but Cuba insists we use them wherever available. Luckily, there are only four on the south coast. However, they were very secure and we left our boat often to travel inland.

"Wait, the authorities are coming," the marina manager told us in perfect English. Come they did, for the rest of the day. About 30 in all. We began to see how many public servants Cuba has. We were boarded by three doctors with assistants; health, veterinary and plant quarantine personnel; etcetera. Customs brought two beautiful sniffer dogs aboard. When I produced my camera, I was told that photos were forbidden but finally I was allowed just one picture of the great Labrador who gallivanted excitedly inside our boat.

—*Continued on next page*

Main photo: The anchorage at Baracoa. Founded in 1511, the settlement was originally called 'Villa Nuestra Señora de la Asunción de Baracoa' by its founder, Diego Velásquez
Inset: Australia 31 *at Cienfuegos, where we left her safely to tour inland*





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I must add that everyone here, unlike all other countries where we'd been boarded by officialdom, took off their shoes and walked our decks barefooted (except for one who donned cotton operating theatre shoes over his old boots). On and on they came, all delightful people, doing the job as best they could, apologizing for the intrusion, then sitting and sipping the cool drinks we offered before inviting us to their houses or offering advice on what to do and where to go in their district. Some boaties whine and say they keep losing days because of the authorities, but we enjoyed them.

Santiago de Cuba was our major check-in port. At other stops, the officials would



Above: Some 'luxury items' may be in short supply in Cuba, but not cigars

Right: At some stops, officials would row out to us in a fisherman's dinghy to check passports and visas. I offered to tow them back to shore but this was forbidden

row out to us in a fisherman's dinghy to check passports and visas. Again, they were always polite. In one case, they told us we could not come ashore directly, but suggested we go to a port of entry 40 miles away then come to their village by hire car to see the magnificent lighthouse. I offered to tow them the mile or so back to shore (so I could photograph this structure) but my devious plan was foiled as this was forbidden, and they paddled away in the overloaded dinghy, bailing as they went.

The currency the tourist uses, and Cubans use for all luxury items, is "CUC" — convertible pesos. Luxury items include soap, shampoo and clothing for example. The CUC shops were stocked with goods ranging from refrigerators and TVs (both seemed subsidized) to toys and foods considered luxury, such as pasta and tinned foods. One CUC equals one US dollar, or currently 24 Cuban pesos. Soap costs one CUC, so a Cuban must take 24 Cuban pesos (eight percent of an average monthly salary) to a government money changer to get the CUC to buy soap. In one of the tiny villages we anchored off, a woman burst into tears after we gave her a cake of soap. She was a fisherperson and traded her catch for stuff she needed: pork, vegetables, etcetera, and had not seen a CUC for years. "Soap is the most wonderful gift you could have given me," she cried as she showered us with coffee, cake and fish.

You can buy CUC from the money changers, but if you tender US dollars, they are devalued by 20 percent. We had Euros, which are taxed only two and a half percent when changed.

At Santiago de Cuba, after all the authorities had inspected us, our vegetables, our tinned food, our music CDs, the inside of each drawer and cupboard, we were free to enjoy Cuba. We walked to the bus stop, where a horse and cart awaited. We were armed with some Cuban pesos someone gave us in Colombia. "One CUC," the man holding the reins asked.

"But that lady paid five centavos; why should we pay 120 times as much?"

"The fare for foreigners is one CUC, while the fare for Cubans is five centavos. If I am inspected, as I often am, and cannot show CUC when I have foreigners aboard this government-owned transport, I will be put in jail."

We explained we had no other money as we had just arrived and were heading to a bank. He told us to hold the money until we were getting off and hopefully at that time no one would see us and ask him to show CUC, as he had none. A woman aboard saved the day by asking for 26 pesos for the CUC she offered. All aboard chastised her for asking too much and we were ordered by those gathered to give her 50, as she passed two CUC to the man at the reins. This was a lesson in Cuban sociology, as no one complained while this ten-minute transaction and discussion took place — they just waited. Public transport is very unreliable, except for buses that carry tourists. Often on the country roads, we saw hundreds of people waiting for a bus that did not come. Private transport is uncommon in the Cuban countryside. When we had a hire car, people waved CUC as we passed, trying to get a lift.



Clipping and clopping towards the town centre was an adventure in itself as we talked to the six other passengers about markets and moneychangers. When I produced my camera, they ordered the cart stopped while I alighted to photograph the waving passengers. The town was clean and had a wide pedestrian street crowded with shoppers and controlled groups of tourists. Ice cream, at five Cuban pesos, was my first purchase. The line was long, as the chocolate ice on a stick had just arrived. We learnt to buy what we saw when we saw it. No point coming back later, as it would be sold out.

We found a travel agency and Yvonne, a bird-watcher, organized a car and driver to take us to her beloved birds. This was expensive and in CUC, but anything for tourists is not cheap by our standards. A guide was compulsory and ours held a doctorate in biology, and several other degrees. We soon learnt that many highly qualified people turn to tourism as a guide or taxi driver, because a US$5 tip is half a month's salary. Our guide was exceptional and found a Bee Hummingbird for us to see, the smallest bird in the world. Cuba has many endemic species and Yvonne was delighted with each birding expedition.

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Nevis – A Gentle Walk on the Wild side

by Bill Bate

ALL PHOTOS: BATE



Above: The view from our anchorage of Nevis Peak; it's unusual to see it not shrouded in clouds

Left: The welcoming Charlestown waterfront is clean and colorful

Nevis is a land of wonderful tropical trails. You can walk through the rainforest on a carpet of fine grass growing over small cobblestones laid in the 1700s. Masked in the shadows under the canopy and behind the shroud of green, you catch glimpses of the sugarcane fields and cisterns of long ago. The air is still and cool and only disturbed by the sounds of chirping birds and the call of a monkey. The peaceful silence allows the imagination to run wild, envisioning horse-drawn carts burdened with piles of sugarcane on their way to the mill.

We arrived on Nevis somewhat skeptical of what we would find. We had only heard of it in passing from another cruiser, who said he preferred to anchor at Nevis and travel to St. Kitts by ferry. We selected this option, as we favored the winds and weather by sailing on the east side of St. Kitts rather than the traditional west side. This route took us through The Narrows passage between St. Kitts and Nevis.

We soon arrived at our planned anchorage in Nevis, at the south end of Pinney's Beach, which proved to be secluded, sheltered from the south and beautiful. There is a long sandy beach extending for three and a half miles to the north. Along the south end of the beach is a plantation of tall palms fronted by a rich, green shrub windbreak. In the background is the towering Mount Nevis with her peak shrouded in cloud. When Columbus first saw it he thought it looked like snow and named it "Our Lady of the Snows" — Nuestra Señora de las Nieves — and from that grew the name Nevis.

The anchorage proved, through our four days on the hook, to be one of the kindest and most beautiful we have experienced so far. Only five minutes to the south at the commercial dock is a dinghy dock lined with automobile tires. Leaving our dinghy chained to a tire, any fear of dinghy theft was immediately dispelled for at the end of the dock was a public market and square where we were greeted by friendly, smiling faces. We had a sense that we'd have no worries about crime while on Nevis. What a refreshing change, especially after our first few days in St. Maarten, where 15 boat break-ins had occurred in one week.

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The Botanical Garden of Nevis, where, although it was dry season, we found wonderment at every turn

—*Continued from previous page*

As we entered the town we felt like we had gone back in time. The buildings had been perfectly restored and preserved. This was pleasing to the eye and confusing to the mind, as the only evidence of this modern age was the flow of automobiles. What a great entry to a new island for us and a pleasant surprise. No pushy cabbies and no hucksters flogging wares greeted us. People just went about their business, but taking the time to give us a glance and a greeting.



Above: At Golden Rock Estate we were greeted by Pam Huggins Barry, a descendant of the original owner

Our first day was a day of discovery which meant visiting the tourist office, conveniently located on Main Street next to the post office and near the dinghy landing. We explored the downtown area and found the sidewalks narrow or non-existent. We just copied the locals as they negotiated the traffic on the streets. At one point there was a pick-up truck stopped on the street and from the back the driver was selling a load of bright yellow honeydew melons. Locals were gathered around and he was passing out samples. We also had a sample and purchased the juicy, sweet fruit. Also, to our delight, we paid the same price as the locals.

Back at our boat it didn't take long to start investigating what else Nevis offered, as our first day was completely delightful. The information obtained from the tourist board office revealed an island that has taken great care to preserve the evidence of their past and maintain the natural beauty of their island. (Guess what, no garbage strewn around.) Among the main island attractions are the preserved sugar mills whose towers can be easily seen from a distance.

On Day 2 we caught a local bus from Charlestown to a side road leading to Golden Rock Estate, a sugar plantation dating back to 1801. A fine quality resort has replaced the crude sugar refining equipment, and a 50-foot, mountain-spring-fed swimming pool was originally built as a cistern. This resort has been managed since 1975 by Pam Huggins Barry, a direct descendent of the original owner. The management encourages artists and eco-minded tourists to enjoy their resort. For hiking, there are marked nature trails which wind their way through the plantation grounds and up Mount Nevis to the top. Another choice is a shorter 30-minute route through the plantation, which has been consumed by the rainforest. If exploring on these trails from mid-afternoon onward you are highly likely to spot wild African Green (Vervet) monkeys. The monkeys occupying the forested plantation grounds are nourished by mango trees which are in abundance.

We arrived at the plantation around noon and were greeted by Pam Huggins Barry who provided us with maps and intriguing stories about the plantation's past. Before heading out to hike, we had lunch, enjoying a delicious carrot soup and a cold beer in the outdoor restaurant. The menu suggested high quality cuisine choices with moderate prices. The peace and quiet allowed us to focus on the beautiful gardens and lush tropical surroundings.

With great anticipation we set out, with a hand-drawn map provided by Pam, along a rainforest trail marked Upper Round Road with hope of seeing the monkeys. The trail marker is a black circle and has a triangle with a U in the center. This road runs midway up Mount Nevis and was the interconnecting road around the mountain for the sugar plantations built in the late 1600s. This trail follows the contour of the mountain and though designed to carry heavy carts, with a bedding of smooth round stones carpeted in short grasses, it makes for excellent walking, biking and horseback riding. It can take up to five hours to cover the nine-mile trek of the complete road; however, our trek was but a short section of it giving us a sample of the pure magic of this ancient road through the rainforest. Here we spotted at close range a Green Monkey who stopped momentarily on the road and looked at us in as much surprise as we looked at it. Then in a single leap it went over the embankment and disappeared into the forest.

We exited the forest, taking a short-cut back to town on a residential road. Reaching the main road, we hailed a bus and rode back to the main dinghy dock.

Day 3 began with another visit to the tourist board office to ask whether the Botanical Gardens were open. The tourist office phoned them and confirmed they were. Learning we were cruisers, the staff in the tourist board office became enthusiastic and informed us that the islanders are very serious about developing the island as a cruising stop. They then introduced us to the Nevis Air and Sea Ports Authority General Manager, Spencer Hanley. Mr. Hanley informed us that beginning in August 2007 they would commence the progressive installation of 100 moorings for yachts up to 60 feet. The moorings will run along the west coast of the island from Oualie Beach to Charlestown (including Pinney's Beach). In addition there will be a designated area for mega-yacht moorings. They will also be improving their dinghy dock and providing cruisers' services such as showers, internet access, laundry services and water. Full boat-maintenance services are being planned for the future.

We then visited a rustic mineral-spring bath facility which is a 15-minute walk from the dinghy dock. Located above the spring are the remains of a hotel dating back to 1778. The mineral-rich spring, with a faint sulphur odor, is believed to contain healing qualities. A large concrete bath and a natural spring-fed creek which runs alongside the Bath House are both available for public use at no charge. We tested the waters and they were comfortably warm.

To reach the Botanical Gardens you can take a bus to the road access, followed by a one-mile walk. We arrived to find ourselves the only visitors. As it was July, at the end of the dry season, the flora and fauna was burned by the sun and only the hardiest flowers were in bloom. There was still interest and wonderment at every turn. During the moist months, this property (according to photos) transforms into a tropical wonderland of lush colors and textures. The Botanical Gardens are known for their unique variety of orchids.

A one-half mile trek up the road led us to the Montpelier Estate. On the left side of the road is a very large, old, silk cotton tree where the British naval hero Lord Nelson married Fanny Nisbet, a beautiful Nevisian widow, in 1787. (Imagine a tree living that long.) A short jaunt up the road was the sugar mill for the plantation which has been converted into a luxurious resort. We were free to roam the grounds and house properties. We found them all very interesting, inviting and well-preserved including many photos and paintings dating back to the 18th century. We hiked back to the main road where we caught a bus to Charlestown for EC$2.50 each. (Taxis are also available for all locations.)

On Day 4 we took one of the hourly ferries which run between Charlestown and Basseterre, the capital of St. Kitts. The one-way fare per person was US$8 for the ferry and EC$1 for the port tax. The crossing took about one hour on the *Sea Hustler*, though the faster *Carib Surf* cat ferry takes only 35 minutes for the same price. (We came back on *Carib Surf*.) We explored Basseterre's downtown area, which included a dressed-up cruise ship dock facility and town square called Circus, fashioned after London's Piccadilly Circus.

Changing gears from the romantic Nevis to the metropolitan area of St. Kitts, we found ourselves hurrying along to the bus depot by the harbour. From there we caught a bus marked "Sandy Point" heading north along the coast road to Brimstone Hill Fortress. The ride was a shock as the bus drivers maneuver their vehicles as though they were in a Grand Prix race, completely ignoring road speed limits and any measure of safety. We found ourselves tense, white-knuckled and totally uncomfortable although the locals appeared relaxed. This gave us some confidence that the buses actually reach their destination.

The climb to the fort is a mile and a quarter up a paved, steep and narrow winding road. Taking our time, we reached the fort in about 40 minutes. On the way up we stopped at a fascinating lime kiln which was apparently built in the 1700s to manufacture lime for the mortar used in building the fortress. This kiln is a large stone cauldron with fire pits around the base and steps leading to the top for loading. It was amazing to see the quality of the construction and to imagine labourers carting containers of limestone or coral to dump into the cauldron. These are things we have never seen before in our travels as in most locations time has destroyed the evidence of the engineering tools of the past. This gave us even more excitement about what we would find at the top of the hill.

The name Brimstone is well suited as the fortress is built on an 800-foot volcanic dome which still emits a slight sulfurous odor. The fort tour cost US$8 each plus an optional single cost of US$5 for an audio guide of the site which we highly recommend. Though recognized by the world as one of the best preserved 18th century military architectural accomplishments, we found the fort more interesting from the point of view that it was a military assignment designed to protect Britain's sugar interest on the island which was threatened by France. Around the fort in all directions lie the remains of sugar plantations including current sugarcane fields. The site is in excellent condition considering its age.

Arriving back in the city we were quick to get to the ferry dock and catch the first ferry back to the tranquility of Nevis. The contrast between the two islands is dramatic and we found ourselves longing for the beautiful anchorage where our floating home was waiting. On the way, as we passed our anchorage about a half mile offshore, we spotted a bright yellow dinghy adrift. It appeared to be our neighbouring yacht's dinghy (as no other yacht in the area that we were aware of had a yellow dinghy). We decided we would recover the dinghy for our neighbour, so as soon as we got off the ferry we hopped into our dinghy and headed straight for it. Our neighbours later explained they had left the dinghy on the beach and the tide and wind had drifted it away. They were pleased to recover it.



Taking a ferry to St. Kitts one day, we toured the 18th century Brimstone fortress

Our four days spent in this anchorage provided some of the most peaceful, interesting and eco-centered adventures we've come across since leaving the Bahamas. We cannot help but think that cruisers who sail right on by Nevis are missing one of the cruising life's best-kept secrets. It truly is a walk on the wild side where man has kept the wild preserved and safe.

Bill and Bev Bate are cruising the Caribbean aboard S/V El Shaddai.

Exploring Jamaica from Port Antonio

by Bev Bate

We sailed to Errol Flynn Marina in Port Antonio, Jamaica, from Santiago de Cuba near the end of January 2007. The rugged setting is lush, tropical jungle with towering, mountains in the background. My husband, Bill, and I drank in the breathtaking beauty as we approached. The marina is a wonderful, modern facility with helpful, efficient staff and skilled workers to take care of your boating needs. We stayed on a mooring ball for US$10 a night (US$7 a night for long term), with free wireless.

We learned that actor Errol Flynn, famous for starring in pirate movies such as the 1935 "Captain Blood", first came here to Portland parish in 1946 when inclement weather ran his yacht ashore. He was so impressed with the place he made his home here. One day we took our dinghy and explored Navy Island, across from the marina, which was previously owned by Errol Flynn. As we munched on our brown-bag lunch in the breezeway of his former home, now in decay and consumed by time, we imagined him entertaining a host of famous Hollywood types, like Bette Davis and Ginger Rogers, in elegant style.

Port Antonio

Port Antonio is an active little town, a bit rugged and for the most part unscathed by tourists. The open market, with an abundant variety of stalls with fresh produce, souvenirs, wood carvings, music and even meat is bustling every day of the week except Sunday, when the town virtually shuts down. When the sun goes down, other vendors set up charcoal fires and the aroma of sizzling jerk-seasoned pork and chicken drifts over the market area. Free samples are offered, tempting the taste buds to want more. Despite our enjoyment of "hot and spicy" their jerk seasoning was a little over the top for us.

The promenade leading from the marina along the waterfront, thoughtfully planted and well groomed, was a favorite place for us and the locals to go for a stroll, or to sit and visit on the many benches along the way. The ice cream parlor with multiple flavors attracts non-stop traffic.

Jamaica's reputation for high crime was quickly dispelled in Port Antonio. We felt so secure we left our boat on a mooring ball for five weeks while we returned to Canada. (The only other country we have traveled where we would have felt safe doing that was Cuba.)

Rafting on the Rio Grande

We asked other boaters for their recommendations on sights to see from Port Antonio. The top item on everyone's list was a rafting trip down the Rio Grande.

We arranged with friends on *S/V Oasis* to go together. The taxi ride was along winding, narrow roads through remote villages. Houses were perched precariously on mountainsides among the lush vegetation. In about 30 minutes we reached the check-in point where we were assigned two separate handcrafted bamboo rafts with captains (US$48 per raft). Albert Harley, our captain, took particular care by arranging fresh-cut flowers in the cup holders on the raft and having an umbrella available in case of rain. None of the other rafts displayed such TLC. He had been guiding rafts along the Rio Grande for the past 20 years. Although we didn't realize it at the time, passengers can request specific captains for the trip. We would highly recommend Captain Albert.

We sat in the bamboo seat as Albert guided the raft by standing at the front of it poling his way along the river over calm waters, small rapids, shallow and deeper sections. The scenery was spectacular with towering mountainsides covered in thick jungle foliage in a mass of varying shades of green and dotted with red, white and purple flowers. The peace and tranquility was awesome. Along the way we spotted some men dragging rafts up the river on foot. Apparently there is an initiation period where all potential captains spend about two years doing this. It looked like a long and arduous task pushing against the current but they'd sure get to know the river intimately.



Above: Sweeping Long Bay is popular with surfers, but this day there were none in sight

Below: Everyone's number-one outing — rafting on the Rio Grande



About halfway along the route we stopped for a lunch break and a chance to take a refreshing dip in the river. We had no deadlines to meet so were happy to enjoy all the perks along the way. The bathroom facility was a squat in the bush.

A pleasant, cheerful lady, Belinda, prepared lunch over an open fire: fried chicken, dumplings, bok choy, peas and rice, breadfruit, and ackee and saltfish (the national dish). Belinda does preliminary preparation at home before carrying her load of food on foot about one hour to the river. She then boards a raft that ferries her to the other side. From there she hikes another 20 minutes or so to the lunch spot. At the end of her day her pots are stashed in the bushes nearby as it is physically impossible for her to cart everything home each day. She inherited and learned from her mother how to do the business. The care and attention Belinda put into the meal and the variety of spices and seasonings including onions, thyme, jerk sauce, allspice, salt/pepper, was amazing.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

A friend of Belinda's arrived on foot carrying a load of refreshments in a basket on her head: beer, soft and fruit drinks. We had the most delectable, truly authentic Jamaican meal we experienced during our entire stay.

The rest of the ride was filled with a mixture of rain and sun but remained beautiful. We saw egrets, white and blue herons and vultures along the way. Albert not only guided the raft skillfully but also sang songs such as the famous "Jamaica Farewell" as we glided along. The boat captains rely on tips and in our case the service was first class.





Above: Jamaica's famous chefs du jerk *concoct a tasty barbecue*

Left: We also dined at Errol Flynn's home… but the house is romantically derelict and we brought our own picnic

Boston Jerk and Long Bay

One day we took a route taxi to Ferry Hill where we had an appointment at a local school to learn about the education system and the needs of the school. Afterwards we walked along the road a short distance, stopping briefly at picturesque Winnifred Beach which showed signs of being a public area in the past but is now vacated in preparation for development. Not far beyond is Jamaica's world-famous Boston Jerk barbecue center. Several vendors had rustic lean-tos where they prepared and served jerk-seasoned chicken and pork. We had a tasty lunch, but we weren't convinced it was worthy of the title "Jamaica's best".

Catching another route taxi, we continued along the scenic coast to Long Bay. The beautiful beach was practically deserted. The pristine turquoise waters and large surf make it a popular hangout for surfers, however, that day there were none in sight. We walked along the beach and marveled at the beauty and privacy we enjoyed.

Reach Falls and Blue Lagoon

Another day our destination was Reach Falls. We took a route taxi to the turnoff where another route taxi was waiting for a fare to the falls. We considered walking but the climb was long, winding and steep and we chose to ride. Reach Falls is a tourist destination and very commercialized. The admission was US$15. The scenery was spectacular, with Reach Falls set in a rainforest with several cascading falls tumbling over limestone rock formations. A guide is available to guard your belongings and to assist tourists wishing to climb from one side to the other, over the top of the falls. He patiently helps plant one's feet to ensure a solid grip. We swam in the pool, enjoyed the cool, refreshing water and visited with other tourists.

When we emerged we expected a route taxi would probably be waiting to take tourists to the bottom. This was not to be, so we began the long descent on foot to the main road. Going down was not that difficult and we enjoyed stopping along the way, taking photos of the awesome scenery with the misty Blue Mountains in the background. We stopped frequently and chatted with locals, including a man doing woodcarving. He invited us to view his room full of beautifully handcrafted carvings where I spotted Jesus and Buddha sitting side by side on a table.

On the return trip we stopped at the Blue Lagoon for a quick look. The Blue Lagoon (known as the Blue Hole by the locals) was made famous by the movie "Blue Lagoon" starring Brooke Shields, which was filmed there, and by Jacques Cousteau who did a 52-meter dive. It is fed by freshwater springs and displays every imaginable color of blue, emerald green and turquoise throughout the day. We learned that the Blue Lagoon has recently been purchased and future development planned.

Next month, Bev and Bill moor at Turtle Bay and continue their exploration of Jamaica.



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Skybird's Final Caribbean Season:

PROVISIONING AT PORLAMAR

by Mary Robinson

We left Prickly Bay, Grenada, before dawn, heading for Venezuela's offshore islands of Los Testigos, and made excellent progress under mizzen and genoa. The equatorial current sped us onwards all day and was sweeping through Los Testigos at a good three knots as we made our way to Breakthrough Bay, where we dropped anchor for the night. The palm trees and sandy beach tempted us to stay, but we didn't want to inflate and launch the dinghy just in order to check in with the Guardia Nacional. Their office on Isla Iguana was three miles away; three miles against wind and current would be no small undertaking in the dinghy. Instead we set sail at dawn the following morning for Isla Margarita.

We reached the anchorage at Porlamar in the afternoon. Behind the high-rise blocks that line the shore, the sun was shining over the mountains. A few white clouds clung to the summits. Pelicans, boobies and frigate birds paraded through the air or perched precariously on our pulpit.

There were some 60 yachts anchored in Porlamar Bay. The water boat and the fuel boat wandered amongst the yachts with cries of "Agua?" or "Diesel?" This was our fourth visit to Venezuela and we were delighted to be back. Next morning we listened to the local VHF radio "cruisers' net". There were no security problems. CJ gave an excellent weather forecast.

Going ashore, we were greeted on the dinghy dock by a big Venezuelan in a straw hat. He took our line and our bag of rubbish with a welcoming smile and a "*Buenos dias*". The marina owner, Juan Baro, who is also an agent for Customs and Immigration, took our papers and passports, which he returned to us later that day together with a cruising permit. The cost was about US$56 including his own fee. He also exchanged a quantity of dollars for Venezuelan Bolivars at what certainly seemed to me to be a good rate. We then sat outside his office, listening to the strains of Mozart over his speaker system to await the shoppers' bus.



An overnight stop at Breakthrough Bay in Los Testigos broke the trip from Grenada and allowed us to rest up for a big shopping spree in Porlamar

The bus runs to a giant out-of-town supermarket and shopping mall. There are unbelievable bargains in beers, wines and spirits and excellent value Argentinean steak and almost every variety of groceries. Perhaps a few items on our shopping list might be out of stock. (This time — in the spring of 2007 — they had no tinned sardines and no tonics. Last year they had been short of coffee. They never seem to stock wholemeal bread flour or ginger ale.) We forget any shortcomings when we see the fruit and veg area which is piled high with mountains of pineapples, passion-fruit, bananas, plantains and almost every vegetable I could wish for. Avocados and mangoes were nearly as big as rugby balls. I certainly hadn't seen such variety and quality since we left Trinidad in November 2006 to cruise the Grenadines and Grenada.

We reached the checkout with a couple of seriously overladen trolleys. Paying our bill, some furious mental arithmetic confirmed that the hundreds of thousands of Bolivars that we had been charged for groceries amounted, in pounds sterling, to less than half of what I might expect to pay back in the UK. Wine, also, was about half British prices; beer and spirits were barely ten percent.

It was then that the full merits of the shoppers' bus service became apparent as our purchases were taken over by a polite young man who packed everything into boxes. He couldn't have been more careful. Nothing soft or vulnerable was placed where it might get squashed; the box containing eggs was marked "eggs/huevos" so that neither English nor Spanish speakers could make any mistake. Every box was numbered and the young man then took the whole lot away, leaving us free to wander round the shopping mall or to visit the cafeteria.

The bus departed at one o'clock back to Juan's dinghy dock. There our boxes reappeared like magic to be unloaded, identified and sorted for us. The bus run is free, provided by the supermarket; but one is expected to tip the box handlers. An adequate tip for a good service is part of Venezuelan custom. In the past, yachtsmen who might have spent the equivalent of a couple of hundred US dollars or more in the supermarket often only used to give a few cents as tip. Nowadays, Juan insists on a minimum tip of US$1 per person. As our pile amounted to 11 large boxes, such a tip seemed barely adequate.

The man with the straw hat now appeared on the scene with a big barrow on which he offered to trundle our purchases to the far end of the dinghy dock. He would also help to load the dinghy if needed. Again, the customary tip is expected, but where else in the Caribbean would one get such friendly, helpful and unassuming service? When prices ashore are no more than a fraction of what one would pay up the island chain, it is only reasonable that a tiny part of the profits are passed on in return for such valuable assistance.

The tide was low, and there was less than two feet of water at the dinghy dock. An even shallower sand bar lay a short distance offshore where small waves would develop into breakers. A bit of careful navigation, timing and luck would be needed if we were to keep the contents of our overladen dinghy dry. But we made it safely back to *Skybird* and Alan heaved the heavy boxes up onto the deck. I hastily stowed the more vulnerable items into the fridge and we opened a bottle of wine.

Margarita is an anomaly. Porlamar is a concrete jungle of high-rise hotels and apartment blocks. Some are in use; a few are partly built and apparently abandoned. The largest of all is the empty shell of what had once been a luxury hotel, closed since a disastrous fire some 17 years ago. In any gaps amongst the high-rises are the shantytown dwellings of the Venezuelan poor. Here, empty plastic bags line the roadsides and small children play amongst the rubbish. It is not unusual to see a young man scouring through the contents of a rubbish skip in search of empty beer cans to sell for scrap. Small wonder that there is a certain element of crime coupled with such poverty. It is also commonplace to see heavily-armed police wandering round the streets and in the shops.

Venezuelan crime exists. But it has also become the subject of much exaggeration. A fleet of between 50 and 100 visiting yachts regularly anchors in Porlamar. Many yachts stay for months and return year after year. Relative to these numbers I don't think there are any more incidents in Porlamar than in many other anchorages in the Caribbean. True, we are all advised to lift our dinghy without fail every night. And true, there are certain "no go" areas ashore. Would not the same be true for many seaside towns the world over? At the same time I don't wish to underestimate the problem. I could name at least five excellent Venezuelan anchorages which we have ourselves visited over the years but which we have decided not to visit this year due solely to reported incidents. Even in past years we have never dared to explore much of the mainland coast and have always stood well clear of the Paria Peninsula.

After a few days, once we had our fill of retail therapy in Porlamar, with our lockers loaded with whisky and wine and our veg nets and fridge filled to bursting, we set sail without delay. Our next destination was another Venezuelan offshore island, but a very different one.

Next month: Splendid isolation at Isla Blanquilla.

BOATLESS IN PARADISE

by Julia Bartlett

I have come to the conclusion that I might be addicted to boat shopping. Having just made a jaunt out of Panama through Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, San Salvador and into Guatemala and the Rio Dulce and returned boatless I'm getting slightly uneasy.

One danger sign is that I liked lying back on a squishy bus seat, with twice the room of economy class on a plane, and a foot rest. I liked having a pillow tucked under my head and a soft blanket thrown over me, new movies shown to me, and no squally night watches. I liked having a charming young man peeling grapes for me (let a woman have her fantasies, will you?) after serving me food and beverages. Most of all I liked Customs and Immigration coming to ME! I didn't even have to get out of my seat.

Then there are all the reunions as I keep meeting up with old friends. In every anchorage there are parties waiting. Plus, boat shopping is a great way to make new friends and see new places. I am having a ball. And I get to spend my days exploring other people's boats.

There might be another problem. I might know too much about boats. I can do the arithmetic of putting a boat right in my head as I just glance around.

When I bought my first boat I was a believer. When the owner showed me the green gasoline-driven monster in the narrow dark cave and said "What do you need an engine for anyway? It's a sailboat," I thought, "He's got a point." Duh!

There might be another problem.

I might know too much about boats

God looks after drunks, fools, sailors and first-time boat buyers and I was probably all four. My first boat was a gem and it fitted me like a glove. I am no longer a first-time buyer, and I'm savvy when it comes to boats., I've been for ashore for nine months so I'm not sure I even qualify as a sailor. That only leaves one out of four. I think that I might be on my own on this one.

The boats are entertainment in their own right. Take this one. The ad said Yanmar engine. I like Yanmar engines because I am familiar with them. On board I found a Yanmar prototype dating from 1066. It didn't bear any resemblance to today's engines. The 20-something French male owner had thoughtfully left starting instructions that went something like this: Open the seacock, put in neutral and crank like hell. This time I am not exaggerating. I am female, weigh 110 pounds, and am nearer 70 than 20 so I thought that particular boat might be a tad ambitious for me.

The next one advertised that it was ready to go to sea, everything was included; all I had to do was step on board. There were a couple of minor oversights; I'll mention just a few. The foredeck was sort of sprung, like a trampoline, a lightning strike had taken out the advertised autopilot, GPS and VHF, and when the mast had been restepped, they had forgotten to hook up the electrics.

Then there was the sexy Fiji ketch with tan sails that I fell seriously in lust with, only to find it was being eaten from the inside out by termites and the owner wouldn't accept my offer, which perhaps was a blessing.

I also found a pretty, but decrepit, pilot cutter where I would have had to lean over the boomkin to haul up the outboard that drove it, a maneuver which the young male owner, this time Italian, admitted periodically defeated him.

One owner showed me over his boat himself and he talked so fast and so loud that I was reeling around like a cartoon character by the time I got off. All I can remember is that he kept repeating that the boat had lots of Stuff, and that most of the Stuff appeared to be rusty.

A beautiful Tartan almost seduced me until the owner admitted that the gasoline engine was a bit of a problem because it had seized up when he got water in the oil. I wasn't too keen on the fact that the gasoline tank was under a berth in the salon, either, and he was rigid on a price that didn't reflect the minor inconveniences of shipping a new engine in to a remote location.

Maybe I'm just a tad too fussy or, more likely, I just don't have enough money for a boat that I really want.

What do I want?

Just an old fibreglass boat that's pretty enough to make me swoon, with rigging that isn't about to fall down, a long keel, a tiller, perhaps a neat little Yanmar and some nice woodwork. A windvane steering system and tan sails would clinch the deal. Is that too much to ask for US$10,000? I promise I'd cuddle it every night.

Sailor and writer Julia Bartlett has done extensive research on subjects as diverse as port rot, pets aboard and Caribbean hurricane holes. She can be contacted at juliamary2000@yahoo.com.

Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

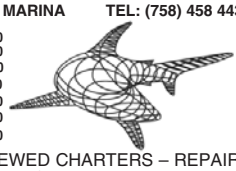
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SEPTEMBER 2007

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Your sense of humor will help you afloat in dealings with argumentative crew or cruising pals. Don't get your sails aback at how silly it all is.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
A female crewmember or buddy-boater will be emotionally high maintenance and demanding of attention in the second half of the month.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
This will be a good time to patch the sails in any misunderstandings with crew. You may be in for a pleasant surprise after the 5th.

♋ **CANCER (22 Jun - 23 Jul)**
Misunderstandings may cause choppy conditions most of the month, but in the last week, insight into the problem will be like oil on the waters.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
Your love life will seem to be in irons until the 9th, when good times and romance sail your way.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
Your renowned attention to detail in business will be the right sail to hoist on the 3rd. With creativity in your sign now, you should be able to use this aspect to chart any course you want.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
This will be a good time to review and clear up any imbalances that have remained from the past few months, and get everything back on an even keel.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
You may find contrary currents in love this month, especially after the 9th. Try to maintain your sense of humor and not be too picky with your mate.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
While male crew or cruising companions will seem to resist everything you ask, the females will be helpful and stimulating, especially after the 9th.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
You'll be feeling a rising tide of creativity, so take the opportunity to develop new ways to deal with difficult problems left unsolved until now.

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
This will be a month of verbal opposition and garbled communications. The last half of the month will be the most trying. Unplug the radio and get out the signal flags.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
You will have romantic rough seas and could end up on the rocks. But remember that every ending brings a new beginning.

Crossword Solution

ACROSS
1) BOAT
3) TAIL
6) LOOSE
8) OF
11) CATTING
14) CLAWS
15) SO
16) WIND
18) LEE
19) HOOKS
22) EVEN
23) ABEAM
25) CAT THE
26) GUT
29) IDLE
33) AT
34) PURCHASE
35) RATS
37) TOM
38) HOLES
40) PILOT
41) ROPE
43) O' NINE TAILS
45) SAND
46) ROW
47) ODE

DOWN
1) BLOCKS
2) SEA
3) TACKLES
4) LOT
5) RIG
6) LASH
7) OLD WIFE
9) FISH
10) HARPINGS
12) THE ANCHOR
13) NOOK
17) NORM
20) KNEE
21) CATHEAD
24) AND
27) SET
28) LAP
30) LARBOARD
31) FALL
32) STOPPER
36) SHIP'S
38) HEAD
39) SKIN
42) PAW
44) TO

Island Poets

Irie Member

Ghosting along,
outward bound
from the Bocas,
slipping by
iridescent
Grenadine shores,
with a cargo of
Angostura bitters,
casked rums,
cayenne and cocoa beans.

Ocean currents
leave feathery,
foaming traces
among inshore reefs,
home to the
violet-black Negrita.

Far out at sea,
in the
Islas de Barlovento,
summer squalls
loose
sparkling showers
from slanting,
slate-coloured
virga.

A passing pirogue
Named *Dignité*,
crimson
like a Caco bird,
fishes peacefully,
gently rocking,
dipping to the swell.
"Wha' hoppenin' dere, mon?"
the owner shouts.

While farther out,
the weekly
Geest-boat arrives
with the dawn,
seeking green gold.

Sliding past
a sea-graped shore
where,
under leaning,
wind-swept palms,
amongst
tangled mangroves
standing proud
on a jungled shore,
a boat's a-building —
a new generation,
to replace these
tired old timbers
of aged Acajou.

— Nicholas Lee

DINGHIES TODAY

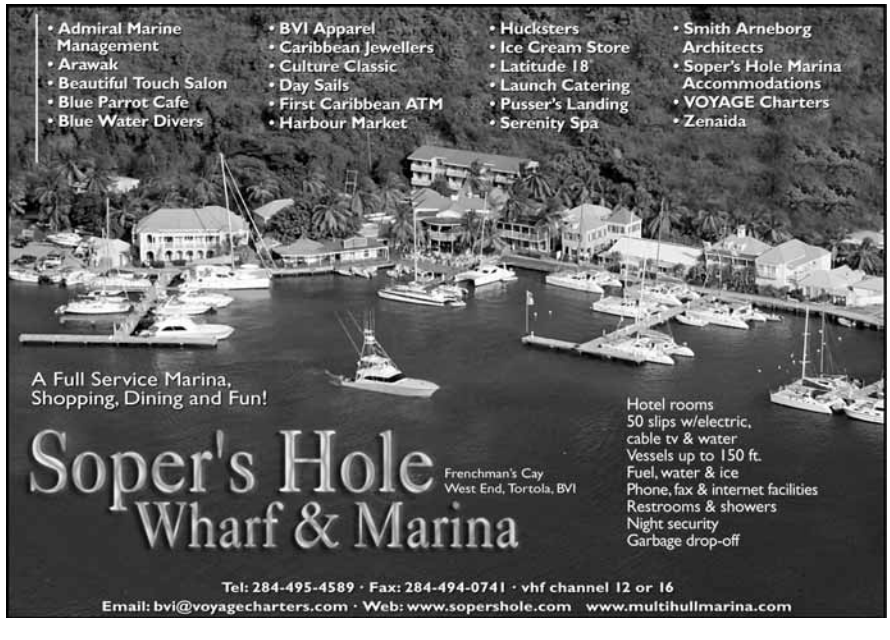
Whizzing through the anchorage,
Why do you drive so fast?
Have you a pressing engagement?
What's the difference between this life and your last?

If you drive more slowly,
You have time to stop and say hello,
To watch the turtles bobbing up,
See the myriad shades of blue below!

To look at all the different boats,
And ponder whence they came,
To see their national flags and wonder
The derivation of their names.

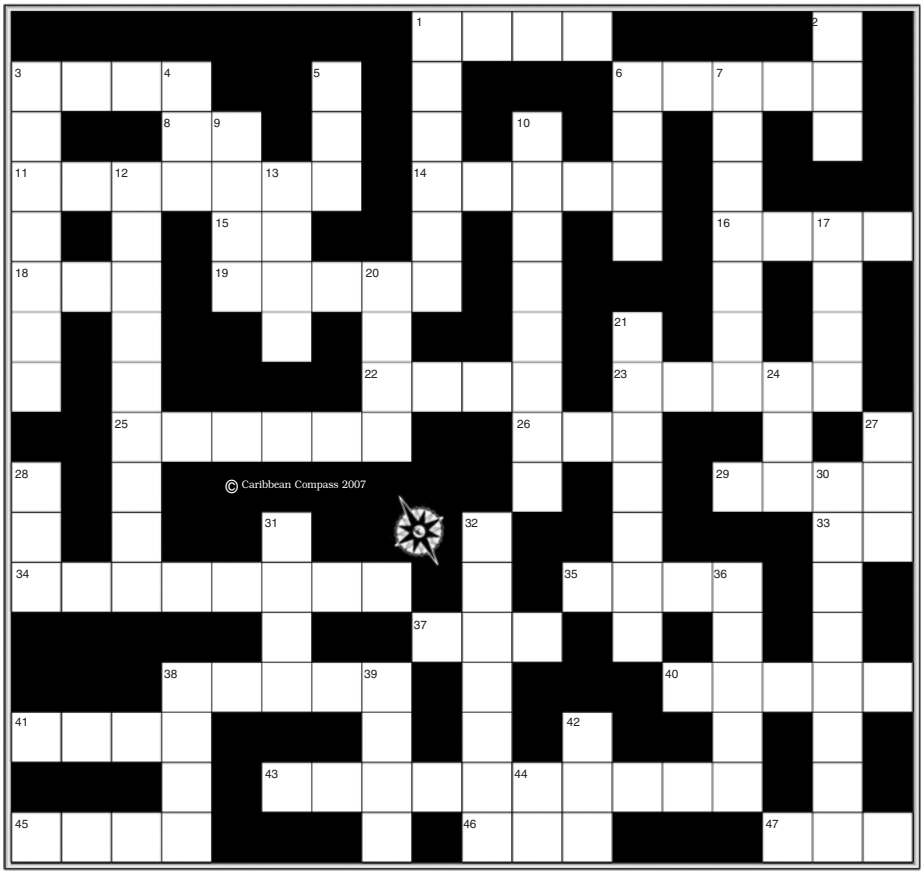
So why not drive more slowly,
Chat and wave to cruisers new.
Or better still lift your engine
And row — it's good for you!

— Susie Stanhope



Compass Cruising Crossword

'CATS'



ACROSS

1) Cat ____: beamy yacht with only one sail
3) Cat ____: inner part of 21 Down
6) Let go
8) What "o" means in 42 Across
11) Act of heaving anchor with 1 Down and 3 Down
14) What cat does off lee shore?
15) Order to quit hauling on a 40 Across
16) Breeze or wrap
18) Downwind side
19) Catch anchor rings with cat____
22) Catamarans sit on an ____ keel
23) At right angle to the vessel's length
25) ___ ___ anchor with 1 Down and 3 Down (2 words)
26) Cat___: a tough cord used in music, sports and surgery
29) Someone taking a cat nap is this
33) What cat and rat have in common
34) Mechanism that increases force applied
35) Ship's cat's prey
37) Male ship's cat
38) Cat _____: spaces in the quarter for springlines
40) Book of sailing directions
41) Cat-back-____: line for hauling 19 Across
43) Cat _ _____: whip (3 words)
45) Litter box filler
46) Use oars
47) "____ to a Cat": poem

DOWN

1) Cat _____: rollers that pull anchor on board
2) ___ cat: Caribbean name for octopus
3) 1 Down and _____
4) Crew's allowance
5) Cat ___: single mast carried well forward, often with gaff
6) Small cord forming cat 42 Across
7) Triggerfish (2 words)
9) Cat's favorite food
10) Cat_____: short ropes taking up slack in shrouds
12) Cat or raise ___ _____ (2 words)
13) Corner where cat sleeps?
17) It is the ____ for catamarans to be beamy
20) Support for 21 Down
21) This suspends anchor clear of the bow
24) A cat ___ mouse game
27) Make sure the anchor is this
28) Cat ___: slang for weak tea
30) Port
31) Cat ____: rope rove for 34 Across to raise anchor
32) Rope or chain woven through anchor ring
36) _____ cat: vessel's rodent hunter
38) Where a ship's toilet is located
39) Outer hull planking
42) Cat's ____: ruffled surface of water caused by puff
44) Word with broach, heave or stern

— *Solution on page 30*

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MEETING CHALLENGES

An Ocean to Cross: Daring the Atlantic, Claiming a New Life, *by Liz Fordred. McGraw-Hill, ©2001. Paperback, 272 pages, ISBN: 0071373942*

Don't Kill the Cow Too Quick: An Englishman's Adventures Homesteading in Panama, *by Malcolm Henderson. Iuniverse Inc, ©2004, paperback, 230 pages, ISBN 10: 0595319491*

Last month I read two stunning books that are different in many ways but they are both true stories, both are told with heart-warming honesty without a trace of self pity and I will never forget either of them.

The first, *An Ocean to Cross: Daring the Atlantic, Claiming a New Life*, is written by Liz Fordred who built a boat with her husband, Pete, and then sailed it from South Africa to Florida. That on its own is quite a feat but consider doing it when neither partner has the use of their body from the chest down. It perhaps takes someone who has spent time in a boatyard to get near appreciating the difficulties a wheelchair must present. Then imagine coping with a storm at sea, getting to the head, being seasick and getting in and out of a dinghy.



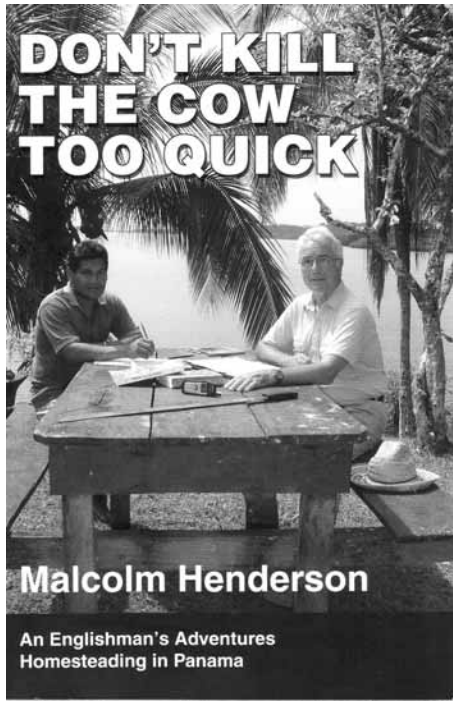
The obstacles they met were not just physical, they were financial, emotional and social, such as the blatant prejudice from authorities who wanted to veto the project by refusing to allow them to go to sea after all their hard work.

That was contrasted by the hard work and support of friends and family: food just appearing on the dock, a small donation arriving by mail every month from an old lady they never met, and the selfless sharing of knowledge, expertise and time from other sailors.

The yacht was built in Liz's mother's garden. Parts that had taken months to complete had to be sawn off on its way to the ocean and it was dropped before making it into the water.

This is truly an inspiring story that moved me to tears more than once, and I have sincerely promised myself that I will never take my legs — sea, or land — for granted again.

The other book, *Don't Kill The Cow Too Quick*, by Malcolm Henderson, is the story of a retired English art dealer starting to homestead on one of the islands in Bocas Del Toro on the Caribbean coast of Panama.



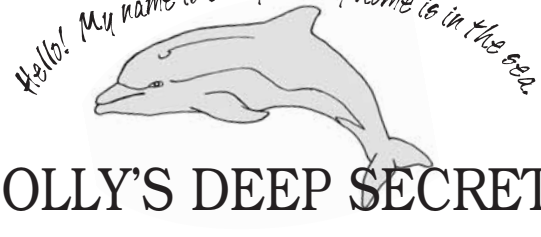
Why would boaters be interested in this book? Boats are an essential part of life in the Bocas and the stories Malcolm tells about learning the art of boating are hilarious; I could identify with more than one of them. One night, about midnight, I was rolling around in bed, doubled up with laughter and with tears rolling down my face unable to put the book down. The next day I got some queer looks from my Panamanian neighbours. Perhaps they thought that I had snuck a man into my apartment.

There is a percentage of cruisers who are quietly on the lookout for that special slice of paradise where they could settle when they move ashore again, and this book captures exactly the sort of learning experience they can expect. I have heard similar stories from other sources but Malcolm tells them with a charming honesty and all the jokes are at his own expense, reminiscent of James Herriot's style in his famous vet books. He paints wonderful pictures of what it is really like to live immersed in a Caribbean culture on a small island. If you are looking for a quiet life, don't do it!

I had a "blind date" with Malcolm one night because he wants to buy a larger version of the cat boat he already has and a mutual friend recommended that he ask my advice about sailing it from Carolina to Panama. At 75, Malcolm looks 60 and his enthusiasm for life permeates every page of his book. I wish he would find time to write another.

Both books are available from Amazon.com.

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DOLLY'S DEEP SECRETS

by Elaine Ollivierre

Let's continue our look at fish farming. Perhaps one of the most unusual marine creatures farmed for human consumption is the **puffer fish** (hedgehog or porcupine fish in the Caribbean). There are many different types of puffer fish worldwide, ranging in size from a few inches to over two feet but they all have the same defence mechanism. The skin of a puffer fish is very tough, has no scales and is covered with spines. When the puffer fish is in danger, it gulps water into its body so that it swells up like a prickly balloon. This makes it difficult for a predator to catch hold of it. The puffer fish also has a mouth which is strong enough to bite off a finger!

So, why is this strange fish so much in demand?

The puffer fish is called **fugu** in Japan. It is a delicacy at certain Japanese restaurants which is surprising because parts of the puffer fish are very poisonous. The liver in particular contains a deadly toxin called tetrodoxin. A tiny amount of this poison paralyses muscles and causes respiratory arrest. There is no known antidote. In Japan, the government has regulations on who can prepare and serve fugu so that no one dies by mistake!

When puffer fish are spawning, there may be more poison in their bodies, so fugu is served mostly outside of the reproductive season. Japanese fishermen who catch the puffers when the price is low often keep them in cages in the sea until the price rises. Fish kept this way turned out to be less poisonous than wild puffers. Researchers at Nagasaki University bred some puffer fish in captivity and altered their usual diet of crabs, shellfish and starfish. Their puffers turned out to have no poison at all.



The demand for fugu led the Japanese to raise puffers on fish farms because the farmed fish are less of a risk to the consumer. However, there have been reports of chemicals added to purify the water there which may actually be harmful to humans. Still, whatever the risk, fugu continues to be an expensive but attractive option for gourmet diners.

By the way, when the tetrodoxin is *very* diluted, it can be used as a painkiller for rheumatism and arthritis.

ELAINE OLLIVIERRE 2007 ©

BOOK REVIEW BY BOB BERLINGHOF

Buccaneers vs. Pirates

***In Search of the Buccaneers**, by Anthony Gambrill ©2007. Macmillan Caribbean. Hardback, 258 pages, with illustrations, maps, glossary, index, and bibliography. ISBN: 978-0-333-97652-4.*

Anthony Gambrill has been interested in buccaneers since obtaining a rare copy of Alexander Exquemelin's *Bucaniers of America*, published in 1684. He has lived in Jamaica for 50 years and is chairman of a large advertising agency; in 1998 he received his Master's degree in History. Mr. Gambrill has created a thoroughly researched and beautifully illustrated text covering the glory days of the buccaneers, from 1630-1700.

He posits that the buccaneers (whose name derived from their practice of smoking meat over a wooden barbecue grill, or *boucan*) were not pirates, though their exploits — such as raping, pillaging, and plundering — came perilously close to piracy. The difference, and it is a fine legal one, was that the *boucaniers* were mercenaries who were usually (but not always) engaged in state-sanctioned terrorism against their enemies. Furthermore, the buccaneers experimented with a form of democracy a century before Thomas Jefferson. This allowed the Dutch, French, and English buccaneers to ally in sacking Spanish cities in the Caribbean. The buccaneers' six decades of success and eventual dissolution ultimately led to the encouragement of greater colonization in the West Indies by Spain's European rivals.

After Columbus, Spain ruthlessly pursued the New World's gold, silver, sugar and dyes; they outlawed colonization by their rivals, and even trading with other European powers was forbidden. This was as unenforceable as it was impractical, and rogue traders from other nations found markets for their goods with Spanish merchants. French pirates and "privateers" (those with Royal sanction) such as Hawkins and Drake attacked Spanish settlements with gusto in the 16th century, forcing Spain to fortify its ports. As the mineral-rich mainland settlements at Vera Cruz, Cartagena, Portobello and Nombre de Dios drew colonists away from Santo Domingo, many farms in Western Hispaniola (Haiti) were abandoned and their livestock roamed the countryside. In 1605 a Spanish decree was issued to abandon all remaining *haciendas* in Western Hispaniola, since the Crown couldn't afford to defend them. Owners were ordered to move to the city of Santo Domingo, which was heavily fortified.

The *boucaniers* were frontiersmen living off the wild cattle and pigs from these abandoned Spanish settlements on the north and west coasts of Haiti. Rough and rugged, they honed their marksmanship skills by hunting, and they survived by trading meat and skins for gunpowder and shot, living in camps much like the indigenous Taino Indians. They cured their meat over open fires on raised sticks of *lignum vitae*, lived in conical huts held up by a centre pole, and slept in hammocks. Their members consisted of shipwrecked sailors, deserters, English and French colonists escaping religious persecution or Spanish retribution, former indentured servants, freed slaves, and even a few Indians.

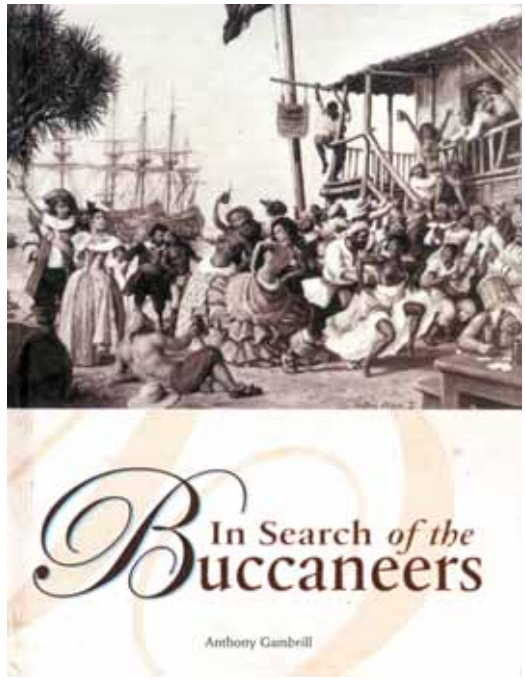
They were not averse to taking Spanish ships as prizes, which they originally attacked from dories, until they became a nascent naval power. As their numbers increased, the Spanish tried to wipe them out. This forced them to pool their resources and develop leaders and plans for their common defense. Eventually, many made the two-mile journey to the island of Tortuga, off Haiti's north coast, to get farther away from their Spanish tormentors and built a defensible port.

Tortuga before 1630 had so many wild hogs that it was called the Island of Pigs (*L'isle de Porceaux*). Some of the settlers were English colonists from Nevis who had been displaced by the Spanish attack there in 1629. Tortuga became the first colony in America not governed by a colonial power. Alas, the experiment in democracy was unsuccessful as the English and French settlers fought, and in their weakness they were attacked again by the Spanish. Eventually Jean LeVasseur was appointed governor, but once in power he became a despot solely interested in amassing a fortune. A fort was built overlooking the harbour, and LeVasseur reigned like a king for 12 years.

The English buccaneers, meanwhile, had joined the armies of General Venables and Admiral William Penn (the father of the founder of Philadelphia) in 1655 and taken the island of Jamaica from Spain. Port Royal, the capital, became the Sodom and Gomorrah of the western world and the base for such notable leaders of English buccaneers as Christopher Myngs, Edward Mansfield and Henry Morgan. As governor of Jamaica, Sir Thomas Modyford sold "commissions", or letters of marque, for 20 pounds each, legally allowing buccaneer captains to pillage Spanish ships and towns so long as the Crown got its cut — 16.66 percent.

Meanwhile, on board the buccaneers' ships, captains could be voted out if they lost favour with their crew, and the crew's pay was strictly determined by a percentage of the booty obtained ("no purchase, no pay" or "no prey, no pay"), after expenses. Morgan's looting of Portobello, Panama, in 1668 netted his crew — over 700 men on 12 ships — a massive 120 pounds per person, while his more daring feat of taking Maracaibo, Venezuela, in 1669 netted a crewman only 30 pounds. This money was generally squandered on drink and women in Port Royal, whose purveyors were the great beneficiaries, but merchants and other colonists were also positively affected by the sudden influx of such great wealth. The marvelous cover art of *In Search of the Buccaneers* depicts such a debauched scene and is taken from a French painting that now hangs in the Marine Museum in Paris.

The chapters of this book describe the buccaneers' campaigns geographically,



rather than chronologically, and are mind-bogglingly comprehensive in describing the various Dutch, French, English and Spanish leaders, governors, admirals and captains of the day. It is a little confusing to be backtracking in time during some chapters, but the number and range of hostilities reported lead one to conclude life was not easy for the early colonists, who were constantly being preyed upon by agents of hostile nations as well as being victims of smallpox, yellow fever, dysentery and tuberculosis.

The buccaneers' story ends around 1700, although piracy flourished for another half century and has continued to this day. By the 18th century the buccaneers' type of legalized piracy was considered counterproductive by their rulers in Europe — the galleons of Spanish gold and silver were in decline, and peace briefly flourished among the old adversaries. Instead of bringing in wealth, the buccaneers' exploits were hurting the fragile stability of the colonial planters and deemed bad for business.

In 1692 Port Royal suffered a cataclysmic earthquake; thousands drowned when two-thirds of the port slid into the sea. By that time, Henry Morgan had been jailed to appease the Spanish, released from the Tower, knighted, and had lived out his years as lieutenant-governor of Jamaica. When he died in 1688 he left an estate worth over 5,000 pounds, but his grave sank into the sea when Port Royal was submerged, a fitting end for the world's most famous buccaneer.

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A Medical Emergency, a Hazardous Night-Time Entry, and a Silver Lining

by Aubrey Millard

Departure

Planning a 1,200-mile passage to Cuba on our 1978 Ontario 32, *Veleda IV*, we departed English Harbour in Antigua by 0800, January 4th, with a double-reefed main, as the winds were predicted to be 20 to 25 knots for a few days. Within an hour we had shut off the engine and were cruising along "wing and wing" at six knots in brisk Force 6 easterly winds. The following seas caused quite a bit of yawing, but the Raymarine self-steering system worked quite well and held *Veleda* on course in spite of the three-metre (ten-foot) overtaking swells. At least we were going in the right direction, as we were heading west on a magnetic course of 288. Coming back from Cuba will be a totally different situation, against these same winds!

In the evening, we followed our usual sea routine whereby my wife Judy went to bed shortly after supper while I took the first watch from about 1900 to 2400, with our friend Doug enjoying a nightcap of whiskey with me after doing the dishes before he went to bed. The winds held easterly at Force 5 to 6 (15 to 25 knots) all night and into the morning, with three-metre swells. Judy had the middle watch from 2400 to 0400, and Doug the morning watch from 0400 to 0800. We enjoy having Doug on board again, especially as he assumes the role of "galley slave", in which he insists on doing all the dishes after meals (maybe that's why he always wants to take us out to local restaurants while at anchor) and getting coffee and tea ready for us first thing in the morning.

The Medical Emergency

I got up at 0700, and Doug apologized for not having my coffee ready as he thought I would not be up before my 0800 watch. He went below to start getting it for me. I asked him if he was sure he wanted to do so in this heavy following sea, to which he said, "We'll see."

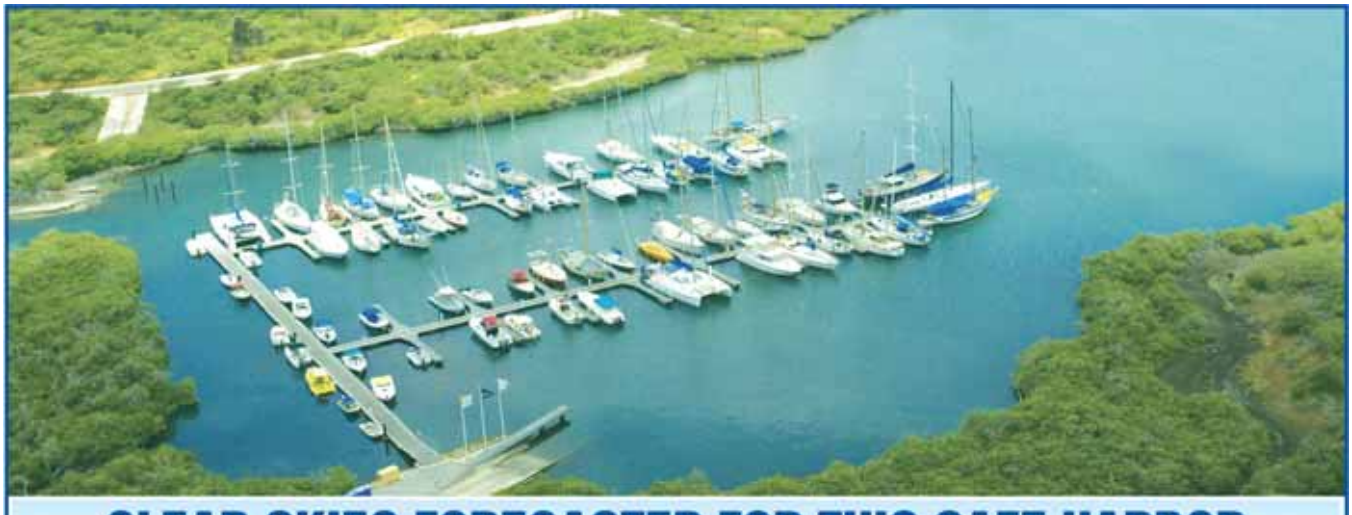
In the cockpit, I was familiarizing myself with the morning weather and sea state when I looked below to see Doug having some problems with the coffee. We use a conical plastic basket with a paper filter and set it on top of a steel thermos in the sink, pouring hot water through the ground coffee. He had spilt the basket and had the right sleeve of his white knit cardigan messed up with coffee grounds. At first I thought he had just spilt the basket and was cleaning up the mess. He seemed busy at getting the thermos and basket under control, and I thought, "I too have occasionally spilt the basket, with appropriate curses as I was cleaning up the mess". Doug didn't curse. In fact it was not until I noticed skin peeling from his left wrist down his thumb that I was aware he had badly scalded himself. I immediately called Judy and went down to see how serious it was.

It was bad! Rather than holding the basket, he had held the thermos, and when the basket tipped the boiling water he was pouring spilled over his left wrist and hand. He still didn't yell or curse, and I think he was still trying to clean up the spilt coffee grinds. I took the thermos and basket out of the sink while he flushed his hand with cool water from the tap to clean the wound. I then got a two-litre measuring cup filled with chilled water from the refrigerator to plunge his hand in while Judy got some burn cream and bandages to dress the area.

—Continued on next page



Veleda IV *in Antigua, prior to departure for — we thought — Cuba*



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AT SPANISH WATER

—*Continued from previous page*

She dressed his wrist and hand with Flamazine, a burn cream recommended by our doctors before we left Toronto in 1998. (We have a very extensive medical supply prescribed by our doctors before we left, and fortunately have not had to use much of it other than a few bandaids and a couple of antibiotic treatments for cuts.) To keep the cream in contact with the burned area, she wrapped Saran Wrap around it, and taped it off. We made a sling out of some netting material we had left from the curtains Judy made for the main cabin, and gave Doug some Tylenol 3 to ease the pain. He was very stoic about the situation. If it had been me, I would have hollered loud and clear when I did it and been cursing myself for the accident and the pain. Not Doug. We got him settled down on the port settee, his bunk while with us, and started to consider our options.

This was the second day out and we still had 1,000 miles to go to Cuba. Looking at the computerized chart, Judy thought of Puerto del Rey in Puerto Rico, 145 miles away to the west-northwest. We had already passed Montserrat and Nevis, and would have had to beat back against the wind to return to either. We thought it best to get Doug to a clinic as soon as possible to assess and clean the burn, and to consider if he could stay with us for the rest of the voyage or if he should head immediately back to Canada for treatment which we could not provide on board. Looking at the charts again we realized that St. Croix in the US Virgin Islands was only 75 miles to the northwest, and so at 0830 we altered course for Christiansted on St. Croix's north coast. This meant a night-time first entry into a port.

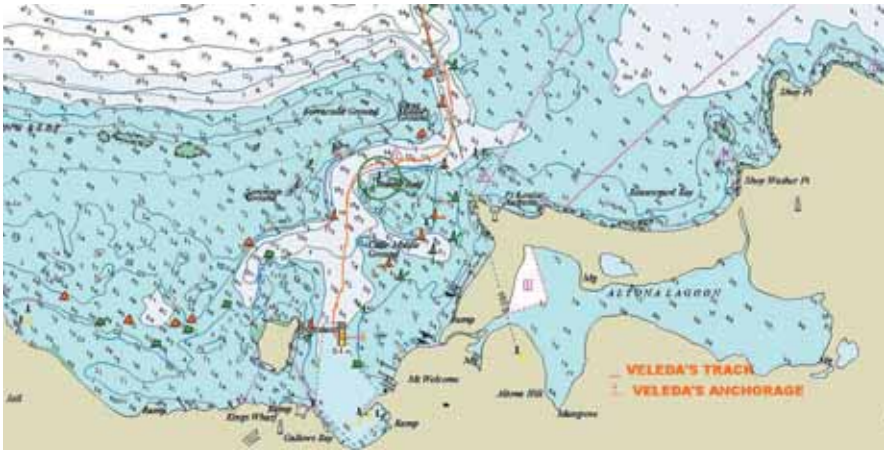


Chart showing our nocturnal course into Christiansted Harbour and the Gallows Bay anchorage

A Hazardous Night-Time Entry

We made good time on a broad reach with the 25-knot winds on our starboard quarter. We had a limited amount of information on St. Croix, other than a 20-year-old Virgin Islands pilot and our computerized mapping system. No other charts! The last sentence in the pilot on the entry to Christiansted said, "It is imperative that the entrance into Christiansted Harbour be made in daylight..." as the entrance around the east end of the island is shoal-studded between Buck Island and the main island, and the actual entrance into the harbour is a zig-zag course between several shoals and offlying islands. Without a doubt, this was our most difficult and dangerous night entry.

Judy did a great job of plotting the multiple legs on the C-map on our laptop, and had it hooked into our Garmin 128 GPS for our night entry to Christiansted. The just-past-full moon didn't rise until after we were in, and as a result we had a very black night with nothing but shore lights and the few lighted navigation aids to guide us. We could not see the shoreline or the crestline of the island. We were totally dependent upon the C-map, GPS, and our limited "mark one" eyeballs (our depth sounder was not working, and we have no radar). As we rounded the east end of St. Croix down the channel between it and Buck Island, the wind kept up at 30 knots astern of us, with one-metre following seas, causing *Veleda* to yaw ten to 20 degrees to port and starboard of our GPS course line. I was steering using the ship's compass rather than the GPS, as I didn't know how much leeway we had in the channel. The compass did not have an operational compass light, and I wore a red LED headlamp to see the compass course. Judy was down below at the laptop screen directing me from the C-map, and calling up the magnetic course I should be steering.

Once past Buck Island we called the marina by radio, just in case anyone was there. No such luck! However, we got a response call from *Avalon V*, a Canadian boat we met down at Hog Island in Grenada. They were at anchor behind Protestant Island, at the far side of the harbour, where we had anticipated going if not to the marina. They recommended not going to that anchorage, as it was quite crowded, and informed us that the fuel dock was at the far side of the marina.

To make matters worse, there was a one- or two-knot tidal current astern of us, setting us down towards the various navigational buoys, some of which were not lighted. On a couple of legs we were set down below the next buoys and had to crab our way against the current to round, but not overshoot, them. Another time Judy said there should be a buoy dead ahead, and we should turn to port. But — there was no buoy in sight! Turn anyway! Okay!

—*Continued on next page*

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—*Continued from previous page*

Additional confusion was created by the sight of other buoys marking a secondary channel north around Protestant Island, a direction we were not taking. Seeing these flashing green and red buoys in a featureless black harbour created a degree of uncertainty: were they for our intended channel or the other channel? Both Judy and I trusted our C-map more than the confusion of flashing buoys. The situation reminded me of "Blind Pilotage" exercises I did for my watchkeeper's certificate in the Canadian Navy when all the bridge windows would be covered up and I had to navigate on instruments only.



After Doug's galley mishap, he donated burn dressings which we presented to Nurse Pansy François at Woburn, Grenada

As we worked our way cautiously around the last few buoys towards the marina, we still could not see the docks, or have any idea of how they were laid out. There were no lights on the docks, just a black indistinct shoreline which frightened me to even approach. I saw a couple of sailboats anchored to my port, outside of the entrance channel, and decided to go towards them and if possible anchor between them. I had no idea of the depths outside of the channel markers, but thought if they could anchor there, so could we, as we draw only four and a half feet. I crept *Veleda* up to the starboard quarter of the outermost anchored boat and dropped the hook. By the time we settled to a secure anchor, our stern was a few feet out into the channel, but what the hell, we were secure in the ominously named Gallows Bay at Christiansted (17°45.02N, 064°41.96W) after a scary night-time entrance.

Next morning we dinghied in to the fuel dock and informed the people at the marina chandlery of our situation. They were most helpful, checking with the emergency department of the hospital and calling Homeland Security at the airport for us to be able to check in to US territory. We walked to the Customs and Immigration office a couple of hundred yards down the harbour where we met with a very co-operative officer. He called a cab for us from his mobile phone to send Doug and Judy to the emergency clinic at the hospital, and I remained to do the check-in formalities, after which he drove me to the hospital.

I filled out an entry and a departure form. The forms were for a 48-hour period, and if we were there longer we would need to come back for more paperwork. There was no charge for the completion of these forms or any overtime incurred. I was mildly surprised at this relatively simple efficient entry formality, as I know airport security for the US involves personal and baggage searches, and would not have been surprised if he requested a search of *Veleda*. The reasonableness and co-operation of the Homeland Security officers was greatly appreciated.

At the hospital, we waited from 1100 to 1530 before Doug was seen. The scald was inspected, cleaned and re-dressed with Silvadene cream (basically the same as the Flamazine we had used) and wrapped with gauze bandages. We were told the burn was bad enough (deep second and possibly third degree) that he should return to Canada for further treatment. Doug flew out next afternoon. We were sad to see him go, but further treatment was far more important than his continuing with us.

This was the first serious injury we have had on board during our nine years of cruising. We are aware that any mis-step could result in a major accident causing a broken limb, head injury, crushed fingers, burns or scalds, or even a man overboard situation. This incident has caused us to be that much more vigilant — and I have made more instant coffee at sea since Doug's accident, rather than the more precarious filtered coffee!

A Silver Lining

In Toronto Doug was well cared for as an outpatient, and he was given a large batch of dressings to protect the wound between debriding sessions while it was healing. He had many dressings left over, and gave them to us on our spring visit to Canada to donate to a medical facility on our travels.

There is a large international cruising community in the Hog Island anchorage near the village of Woburn on the south coast of Grenada. In July, we donated the dressings to the Woburn Medical Station, presenting them to Nurse Pansy François, who then gave us a tour of the facility. The medical station was re-commissioned by the Basic Needs Trust Fund Programme in February of this year after damage from Hurricane Ivan which devastated Grenada in September 2004. The rebuilding was funded by the Government of Grenada, the Caribbean Development Bank and the Canadian International Development Agency. However the station is still short of some equipment and furnishings. We returned later in the day to donate an electric kettle, and a gas bottle with regulator and hose for their cooker, which we had noted were needed.

Thanks also go to Deborah and John Gerber of *Sea Witch*, long-time liveaboards located at Hog Island, for the information about the needs of the station and for transportation to and from the facility. We would encourage more cruisers to donate to worthy causes in communities in which they anchor or hunker down in marinas, in addition to just buying groceries and supplies as their contribution to the economy.

PS — We never did reach Cuba, as after leaving St. Croix we had to divert to Kingston, Jamaica, due to storms and to repair steering problems. We arrived at Kingston without charts or pilot book, but at least this time we entered in daylight.

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FCMmarinas

—Continued from page 23 ...Cuba

Music was a highlight, too. Towns and villages had "music houses" where for a dollar you could hear exceptional jazz groups from 4:00PM to whenever. We bought CDs from many groups and relive Cuba as they play.



Cuba: No amps, no bling, no problem

Tourism is enormous in Cuba; the few US citizens who visit enter via Canada and Mexico. The resort hotels are all-inclusive, keeping tourists away from the real Cuba and the Cubans. We sat down at one such hotel's restaurant and ordered a bowl of pistachio ice cream (the first for a month) and beers. We did offer to pay, but the staff were confused at the offer of money. A one CUC tip solved the matter. At another hotel's bar, I was challenged, "Are you in the marina?" I was asked as I looked down at my wrinkled yachtie clothes. "If not, you must pay CUC 17 to be on our grounds," the waiter said. Then he added, "But that is ridiculous, so leave us a tip and you can drink and eat all day."

Yvonne's brother, David, and his wife, Irene, arrived in Cienfuegos, where we were waiting, and we toured inland before heading for the offshore islands and lobsters. It seems there are no small lobsters in Cuba. Fishermen in rusty concrete boats with bits falling off would throw lobster on our decks looking for a trade. A dollar's worth of rum gave us five grand lobsters. We also ate stingray and turtle given us. Many islands had good snorkelling but due to the many gifts of seafood, we had no need to shoot fish. David did land an enormous tarpon, which we released.

Havana has some wonderfully restored buildings (as well as dilapidated, unrestored buildings) and we delighted in walking for miles. The Capitol, where the one-time democratic parliament operated, was a masterpiece and we spent hours exploring its nooks and crannies.

The Cuban family unit is very strong. Grandma is always in the house to look after children while both parents work. Unless the family owned the house before 1954, all houses are government owned. The extended family lives in one house; we found four or five generations crammed into a house as best they could manage. On our inland trips, we stayed with families in beautiful homes which operate as guest houses. All the pre-1954 furniture, paintings and porcelain are displayed. There were 18-foot ceilings, delicate interior courtyards and, of course, delightful, generous hosts. We paid CUC 25 for a night, the Government-prescribed amount. The owner pays a monthly fee to the Government and we filled out papers as we arrived. Authorities can arrive at any moment to check the books of such a house, and jail or large fines heavily punish any cheating. Neighbours count the number of guests and report in. To one particularly generous family we tried to offer a gift of an old electric drill. The head was aghast, "If I took that the neighbours would report it and how could I explain? Why, I could end up in jail."

Private enterprise does exist and we bought great pizzas from a vendor with a street oven for five Cuban pesos (20 US cents) but these are intended for Cubans to buy, as tourists are not meant to have Cuban pesos, only CUC.

Two months was all we were allowed in Cuba. We were headed next for Norfolk, Virginia, to refit our boat. As Australians, we had been treated as inferior beings by USA embassies in Colombia and Jamaica, who wanted us to wait months for an appointment to get a visa for the States. In Havana, at the United States Interests Section of the Swiss Embassy, our visas were issued the next day. One fact that impresses or depresses the USA citizens is that the United States Interests Section is a seven-storey building within at least three acres of secure fencing and has a very large staff. The USIS is processing over 200 visas a day for Cubans (as well as two Australians) to visit the USA.

After David and Irene departed from Isla de Juventud, we sailed for Maria la Gorda at the western end of Cuba, to check out. Then, before June 1, came Tropical Storm Barry, the first named storm of 2007, so we sheltered along the northwest coast of Cuba, island hopping each day. As soon as the weather improved, we sailed for Beaufort, North Carolina, and entered the USA. Interestingly, the Customs simply told us we could not come from Cuba to the USA and took my Cuban cigars. We showed our US visas, issued in Cuba, which amazed them.

We look forward to seeing many USA mates or at least talking to them when we get to the internet.

Bernie and Yvonne Katchor have been cruising on Australia 31 *for 13 years. His book* Around the Next Bend, *about* Australia 31*'s voyages in the rivers of Venezuela and Guyana, is available at www.adventurebooksofseattle.com/comingattractions.htm.*



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FOWL PLAY

by Betty Fries

A large part of what's so appealing about the cruising life is the variety of peoples and places we experience. Sometimes these experiences are a bit different than we are used to, but that's the islands, Mon.

Fowl

Annually, we live aboard for a while in our favorite boatyard. Cooking is a chore so when the marina's grocery store bought a rotisserie, we took advantage of the spicy chickens they cooked.

This was a chicken night. The Captain left me sipping a "dark and diet" and admiring the golds of the evening creeping over the harbor, while he went for the chicken. He was gone a while, but the Captain's a sociable type, so I didn't worry. Eventually he was back with a warm bag. Plopping it on the table, he said, "You're not going to believe this. I went into the store and looked to make sure there were chickens in the machine. Yes. So I went up to the cashier…."

He says, "Is one of those chickens available?"

She says, "No, would you like to pay for it now?"

Pause, try again.

"Is one of those chickens available?"



This photo was taken 552 miles north of St. Thomas en route from the Chesapeake. There was no wind, so Captain Larry grilled — what else? — chicken

"No, would you like to pay for it now?"

Longer pause, look around.

"Can I *have* one of those chickens?"

"Yes, would you like to pay for it now?"

We chuckled all the way through dinner.

Fowler

Being a bit insular, we don't speak French. That doesn't stop us from enjoying some of the lovely advantages of the French islands. However, provisioning can be an adventure.

Stopping in the town of St. Pierre, on Martinique, we headed for our favorite grocery, two streets back from the wharf. Paté is always on the list, but this time we were looking for a chicken for the grill. Happily, there are usually pictures on the food wrappers. We brought our purchases home. Now, the Captain has some very firm ideas about cleaning chickens, so he goes at it. In a few minutes I hear:

"Mate!" (That's me.) "There's no breast on this chicken!" Sure enough, no breast. Still, enough for two people for dinner. Shortly, plates are loaded with grilled chicken and sides.

Bounce goes the fork. More determinedly, the steak knives come out. No go. This is the original rubber chicken!

Plan B: 24 hours later we have chicken soup, Yum.

Most Fowl

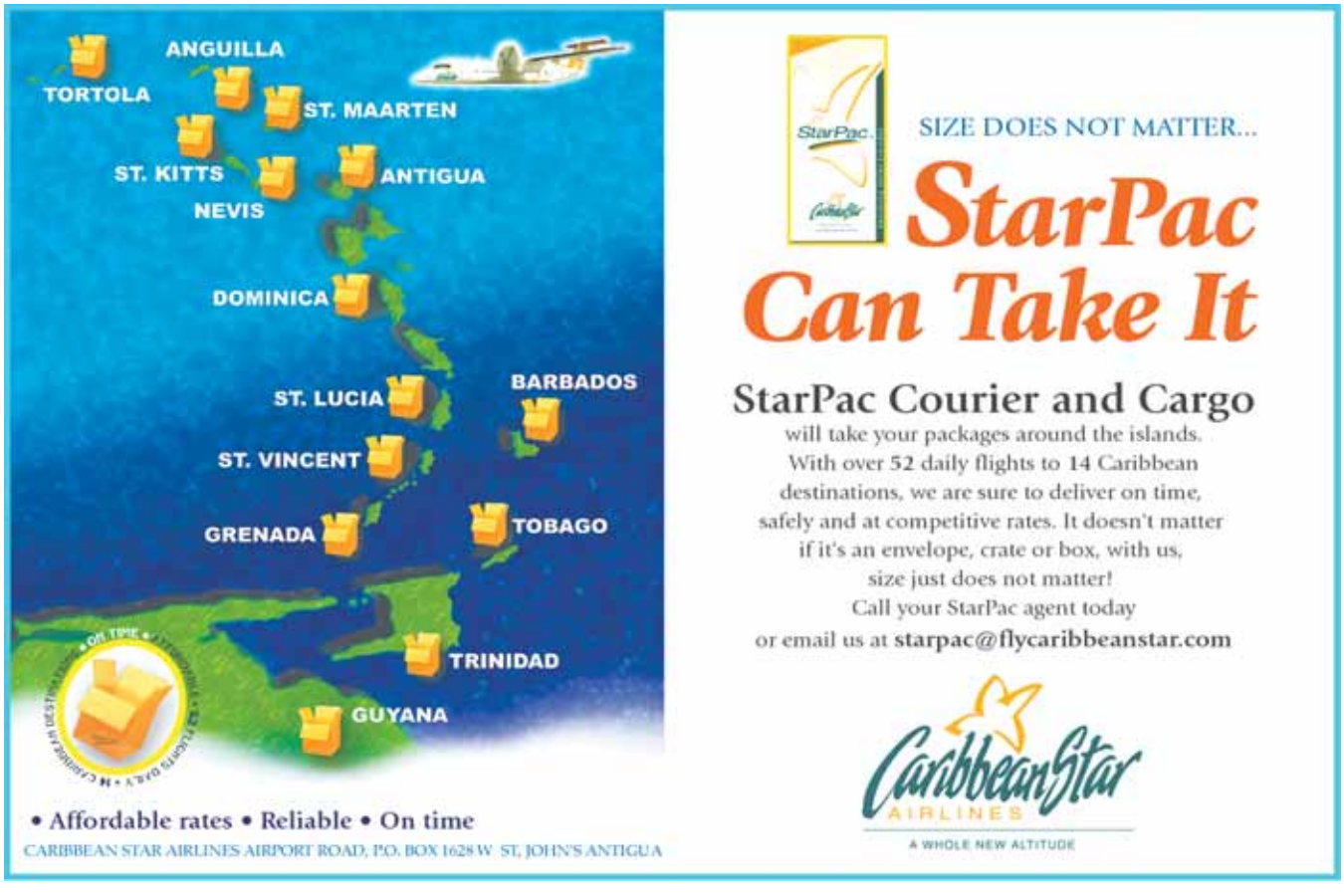
There ought to be a law in Tortola, BVI, that every man, woman and child must eat roast chicken for Sunday dinner. That ought to eliminate the genetically defective birds that start crowing at 1:00AM thinking it's morning.

Sort of Fowl

We were in one of the Grenadine islands, and opted for grilled chicken and rice from a roadside stand. Taking our hot foil packages, we sat under a tree looking out over the bay. Unwrapping my chicken, I looked at it for a moment before I realized the drumstick was eight inches long! Oh well, tastes just like chicken… sorta.

Absolutely the Fowlest!

According to the pickup truck driver turned impromptu tour guide in Great Inagua, Bahamas, traditional Christmas dinner was/is roast flamingo. Makes me think that Inaguans must be great fans of gravy, with that much neck to work with. I also have to wonder how they fit those drumsticks into the oven!



The Versatile Christophene

We eat a lot of crunchy christophene in stir-fry. The flavor is similar to a zucchini summer squash, but christophene has only a single seed. My husband calls it the "West Indian mushroom" since it tends to acquires the flavor of whatever is cooked with it.

Christophene is a pear-shaped member of the squash family which originated in Central America, cultivated by the Mayan and Aztec Amerindians. Christophene is now cultivated in the world's tropics from Australia and Madagascar to China and Algeria. It has many names, christophene to the French, chayote in Spanish, custard marrow to the Brits, cho-cho for West Indians, and vegetable pear or mirliton in the US. There are two basic varieties, smooth or prickly.

One cup of christophene has only 25 calories and almost no fat or carbohydrates. However, it is a source of sodium (salt). It also has some fiber and Vitamin C. A tea made from christophene leaves is a bush treatment for hypertension and is reported to dissolve kidney stones. Christophene is very versatile and can be eaten raw (grated or sliced) or cooked: boiled and mashed, fried (especially good in stir-fry) or baked. Raw christophene juice is difficult to wash off, so oil hands lightly before peeling.

Baked Christophene
4 christophene, halved and seeded
2 Tablespoons olive oil or melted butter
1 bunch chadon bene, chopped
Salt and spice to taste

Wash, but do not peel christophene halves. Place in a baking dish with the cut side down. Brush with olive oil or melted butter and sprinkle with the chadon bene, salt and spices. Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes.



Christophene Soup
4 Tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves of garlic, peeled and sliced thin
1 large onion (red preferred), chopped
2 christophene, peeled, seeded and cubed
4 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
1 bunch chadon bene, chopped
Salt and spices to taste
Half of a hot pepper, seeded and minced (optional)
1/2 Cup water
Grated cheese and/or breadcrumbs to garnish

In a large skillet heat the oil before adding the garlic and onion. Then add christophene, tomatoes, chadon bene, salt, spices and water. Simmer for half an hour. Top with grated cheese and/or breadcrumbs.

Christophene Onion Quiche
1 large onion, chopped
3 christophene, peeled, seeded and cubed
1/4 Cup butter
1 firm tomato, chopped
1/2 Cup grated cheddar cheese
Salt and spice to taste
2 eggs, beaten
1/4 Cup milk
1 medium red sweet pepper, sliced into rings
1 unbaked pie shell

Sauté onions and christophene in butter until cooked but still firm. Mix in the tomato. Add half of the cheese, salt and spices and pour into the unbaked pie shell. Mix the eggs with the milk and pour into shell. Cover with remaining cheese and pepper rings. Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes, or until the egg mixture is cooked.

This can be changed into an omelet by omitting the pie shell.

Christophene Sweet Pepper Salad
2 christophene, peeled, seeded and sliced very thin
1 large sweet pepper, preferably red, cored, seeded and cut into matchsticks
1 Tablespoon olive oil
Juice of 2 limes
Salt and spices to taste

In a bowl, well mix the christophene and sweet pepper pieces with the oil, lime juice and seasonings. Let stand for at least 20 minutes before serving.

Christophene Casserole
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 pound minced beef (or chicken)
2 Tablespoons canola oil
1/2 sweet bell pepper, chopped
2 Cups christophene peeled, seeded, and cubed
1/4 Cup tomato sauce
1 leaf chadon bene, chopped
Salt and spice to taste
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine
1/4 Cup breadcrumbs



In a frying pan brown the onion and garlic with the minced meat in the oil, then add sweet pepper and christophene pieces. Mix in tomato sauce, chadon bene, salt and spices before dumping into a buttered casserole dish. Cover with breadcrumbs before baking at 350°F for 45 minutes.

For the Gardeners

Perhaps you have seen the christophene plantation on the road from Arima to Blanchisseuse in Trinidad. Christophene grows as an attractive vine, but it takes a lot of attention to grow. This vine loves the sun, but also needs plenty of water and humidity, and a fence or a *jammrah* (trellis). The easiest method to grow this vegetable is to locate a farmer and beg a plant. Failing that, select two christophene at the market. Ask the vendor if they have any that are over-ripe and budding. If not, set the christophene in a warm window, but not in direct sun. In a few days it will start to shrivel and wrinkle and soon sprout a bud. Plant the seed, bud upwards, in a clay pot with sandy soil. Lightly fertilize with 12-24-12. Once the plant catches, move it outdoors where the vine can climb. Provide it with some shade, such as a banana leaf or a board. Do not fully cover it. Water regularly and use 12-12-17-2 mix when it begins to blossom. Christophene tends to produce better the second season. Although christophene is self-pollinating, it seems to like having brothers or sisters around. You'll probably get more fruit if you plant a second vine on a nearby fence.

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COMPASS FICTION

HAUL OUT

by Peter Ashby

Our beautiful Cabo Rico, *Spectre*, got hauled out here last week and joined the boats on Row D. We have cleaned up everything inside (I admit I am fastidious) and put on the tarp. Tomorrow we head back to the city, leaving the boat here until the next cruising season.

It is a good yard: a bit pricey perhaps, with lots of rules, but well-run and responsible. Trees all around give great protection. With the sun on your skin and the sand firm underfoot, it is a pleasant yard to work in. Besides; we have lots of friends here. Billy and Dawn, that couple we met in Sainte Anne, have their Tayana 37 in our row. They have been cruising for years. I don't think I have ever known a couple more "at one" with their boat. Next to them is that family of keen racers we met in Antigua with their brand-new Beneteau. They sail everywhere. I suspect the engine is too small. The two teenage sons talk about carbon fiber and sheeting angles all the time. Beside them is that reserved Canadian couple with the Alberg 37 who seem very content with it.

You have to love the shape of boats. When they are up on the stands you get a chance to admire their underwater lines: the sleek overhangs of the Alberg; the chubby cheeks of the Tayana; the delicate bowl of the Beneteau poised on its fin keel. Each one is a different creature.

We did not get very far this year because we had to stay somewhere convenient for the grandchildren. We read a lot and I did odd jobs around the boat. I must say the jobs have been a little harder this year. My body seems stiff. My loyal wife and longtime cruising companion has evidently noticed it too. Last week she was unusually blunt.

"Look at you. You are all hunched over like an old man. Your hand trembles when you walk."

She made me go to a local quack who prescribed some tablets. I don't believe in pills but I took one with my coffee this morning just to keep her happy.

The travel lift is grinding up the yard with another boat for our row. I have seen that beat-up Morgan before. I remember the bent pulpit and the scars along the topsides. It must have been hard aground on its side at one time. Now I recollect the owner too. We met him in Marathon, a single-hander with a ginger beard who was arguing with the marina staff. He will be next to us in the yard so we will have to get along. And here he comes, choking mad about something.

"Look at this." He is brandishing the marina brochure. "They charge two hundred effing bucks to put the boat on the stands and, on top of that, twenty-five bucks every time you want to move a stand to paint the bottom. Twenty-five bucks to move a frigging stand? What a rip-off. No way, José!"

Well, it takes all sorts.

That pill I took this morning. It's quite remarkable. I feel distinctly different, more limber. Look, I am walking upright. My hand is not shaking. The doc said to take one a day but I think I will try a few extra this evening and see how I am in the morning. That way I can find out what these pills can really do. Anyway it is encouraging. Perhaps I can get back to my old self and be more adventurous next season.

It is our last night. The boat is shut up so we are bedding down in a friend's trailer. God, it is stuffy. My wife is snoring gently. I can't sleep. I will go for a walk until I get tired. I tip-toe out of the trailer. It is curious, all my perceptions seem heightened. My muscles are on edge, like a racehorse in the starting gate.

What a beautiful night!

How strange the yard looks in moonlight. It is quite transfigured. The sand has turned to dazzling snow. The black trees stand stiffly, alert as sentries, holding their breath with expectation. The boats have grown larger. Their swelling bodies lurk in deep shadow. In the bluish light their covers gleam like wet fur. I imagine that I have strayed into the secret dormitory of some huge marine mammals, giant walruses perhaps. When the night breeze moves the covers these creatures seem to stir in their sleep. I hide in the shadows so as not to disturb them.

What was that?

I thought I heard a voice. A cold shiver grips my neck. I must be imagining things. I have noticed that when it is very quiet, the mind makes sounds of its own.

No, there it is again, a moaning female voice.

"I am glad it is over...."

Now I am wild with fear, my hearing acute.

"They push me too hard...."

The voice is coming from that Beneteau! Some poor woman has been left on board.

"We are always pounding upwind, straining the rigging."

I should rush to help but my limbs seem paralyzed.

Then, right behind me, an intake of breath. I turn with horror. On the hull of the Tayana, close to the bow, an eye has appeared, a small, shrewd elephant's eye, with lashes. It closes and opens again.

A deep voice speaks: "The things we put up with. But listen; if they look after your gear you will be safe enough. Eventually they will get tired of it too. Long ago I made a point of performing poorly up wind. It took a while, but our lot finally gave up trying and waited until they could get to places on a reach. When they do that I try to give them a smooth ride."

The Beneteau shakes her covers. I can see the hull move as she takes a breath.

"I don't mind carving upwind in flat water. That is what I am made for. But this pounding...."

The lips on the plumb bow compress tightly.

"You have to be patient." This quiet Canadian voice is coming from the Alberg. "For a while, my couple carried too much sail. I had to pitch everything out of the galley onto the cabin sole a few times before they caught on. Now we get along fine."

I can hear other voices murmuring all down the row. My eyes catch the open sores on the Morgan's flanks oozing in the moonlight. The Morgan is talking to its neighbour. Its neighbour? That is our boat! I refocus my hearing.

The Morgan said "I would kill him if I got the chance. He is so incompetent. Half the time he is drunk. We have been aground, hit docks, hit other boats. He never fixes anything. I am ashamed to be seen like this."

I can hear fluttering all around now. Conversations are starting up all over the yard. I am frozen with fear.

"At least you go places."

That is our boat answering! An eye, a moist, black, whale's eye now glistens at the bow. A crescent of white appears as the eye turns to the Morgan.

"I have a couple of old farts who never go anywhere. Can you believe three months in Vero Beach? On a mooring? Sure, they fuss about varnishing and removing every speck of rust, but what for? I am an ocean boat. I just wish they would sell me to a younger couple who want to do blue water. I would show them what a real boat can do."

I am furious! Old farts? I burst out into the moonlight.

"How dare you say that? We did the whole Caribbean several times."

All the boats are suddenly hushed. A silence sweeps across the yard like a hiss. But I can tell they are just holding their breath, listening. The whale's eye closes and fades back into the hull.

"Come back," I shout.

"John. Is that you?"

It is my wife calling. She is coming down the yard in her nightie and yellow sailing boots.

"Who on earth are you taking to? You sounded angry."

We are back in the city now with all its noise and hurry. I have been dragging around to specialists. They say I have a neurological disorder. It is progressive but it can be slowed. I am taking different pills now. They seem to control the stiffness, and they don't keep me awake all night.

Reluctantly, after repeated family discussions, I call the boat yard.

"We have to sell our boat, *Spectre*. It is on Row D."

"Row D? Just a minute." A young cheerful voice. He must be new on staff. I can hear shifting papers and voices in the background.

Someone in the distance says, "Is he calling about the Morgan?"

"No, *Spectre*."

There is more mumbling, then the young voice comes back on the line.

"It is okay. Your boat is okay. So we will tell the broker that '*Spectre*' is for sale and have him advertise it. You may be in luck. There was a young couple here yesterday looking for a boat like yours to sail to New Zealand."

He sounds way too glib and cheerful for a serious moment like parting with a boat.

"Thank you. Please have the broker call me...what was that about the Morgan?"

"Are...are you a relative?"

"No. Why?"

"Well I was not here at the time. I just started last week. Apparently the owner moved the stands to paint the bottom. We don't allow that, you know. Anyway the boat fell on him."

THE MILLIONAIRES

by John Guy

At a marina somewhere south, former stockbroker Jack Chap joined J.P. Morgan on J.P.'s 56-foot *Morgan Rico*.

It must have been a bad day for J.P. "I tell you, Jack." said J.P. "This boat will eat you alive. My annual expenses are at least a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. This marina wants more than eight hundred a month, plus electricity. And everyone wants a bit of me, like that Manuel, the dock worker, always trying to get a bit more out of me, and out of you. And my stockbroker. I called him last night, around ten, and he would not take the call. I know my account is small, less than five million dollars, but he could at least take my calls, after all the years I've been loyal to the guy."

Next day, they went out to dinner. J.P. bought them a bottle of wine for $20. "Jack, even this meal is expensive. Look, my bill for this food, if you call it that, is going to be at least twenty-five bucks, yours probably the same. But what really irks me today, and I mentioned it to you last night, are these dock workers. What do you pay Manuel, by the way?"

"Around four dollars an hour."

"Ahh, you are the one! I've been loyal to Manuel. I promised him several months of guaranteed business, and you know what he did? He said that you asked him to wash your boat, and he's leaving mine undone until tomorrow. But the bigger problem is that you are paying him too much! Everyone else here pays around two seventy-five an hour, but then you come along, a stranger to the marina, and you accept whatever he asks, taking him away from me, and raising the general level of expenses for all of us. We had a pretty solid agreement to stop that, over in Puerto La Cruz, I think it was, but every once in a while some innocent neophyte, like you, comes in, pays more, and causes problems for the rest of us. Damn it, Jack! Look what you've done!"

Every once in a while some innocent neophyte, like you, comes in...

At this point, Jack was not counting on a long-term friendship with J.P., but he only commented "Well, J.P., I've gotten to know Manuel pretty well. His work is fine, and cruisers like him. Of his sixty years, he has worked here almost thirty. But he lives day to day, without benefits, except some minor government programs, and there were a couple of times I had to advance him a few pesos just so he could get over here to work. At the rate that you say is the going rate, he takes home $23 per day, for him and his wife. Most weeks he works six days, some seven, but occasionally no work is available from the cruisers. So, I give him a little more."

"Cut it out, will you Jack?" said J.P. "These people are just out to get us for all we've got, as though our vaults were filled with gold. You just want to be sure he works for you instead of me, right? I've got to get things done here too, you know. Hey, want another bottle of wine?"

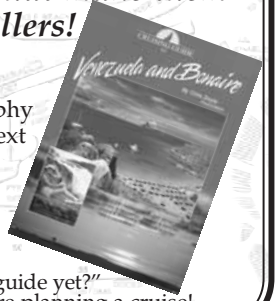
The next morning, about five o'clock, Manuel came by, knocked on Jack's boat, and said he had to get someone else to do Jack's boat, and he was going to try to make special arrangements for J.P. and others he had promised to help, but could not for a day or two. Jack asked what was going on. Manuel said, "My mother died last night. I've got to go the funeral. It is in my pueblo, a couple of hours from here. Jack, can you advance me some bus fare?"

CHRIS DOYLE'S GUIDES

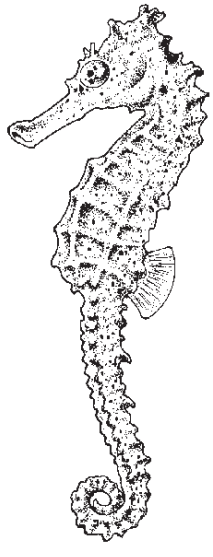
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Dear *Compass*,
Further to the ongoing discussion of the use of strobe lights on boats.

I am one of those totally anarchy-plagued, survivalist-type chaps who left the USA for more than half my life and one of the first things that I learned was *en pais qui vai uzenzo que trove*, which means "in countries where you go, use what you find there".

In Venezuela, I find countless hundreds of fishing boats using single D-cell fisherman strobes, visible a maximum of two miles, usually set fairly low to the water and just about the only thing that works when seen against the backdrop of towns like Juangriego or Porlamar here in Isla Margarita. It ain't exactly a cardinal light by any stretch of imagination, but it does get the old attention and forces folks to take a second look — because, after all, it is what works, not what suits all the maritime lawyers.

I was run over twice and now use whatever works to keep this old engineless gaffer singlehander fool out of harm's way. If you see a low intensity strobe — well, back off. Maybe I am 45 miles of shark-filled longline. As an oft-becalmed drifting gaffer, *Mermaid* pretty much fits the description of a drifting longliner — except my fishing line runs vertical, and might contain only four hooks. Short of flying two vertical red lights, signifying a vessel not under command, a singlehander who reduces sail to catch a bit of a nap often benefits by posing as a drifting fisherman. When I lie ahull or reduce speed, my normally towed surface fishing line becomes a deep line and *Mermaid*, in fact, remains a fishing vessel — a mini-longliner, if you will — and her hull becomes my marker pole and I use my fisherman's "marker strobe". Hopefully most marine lawyers and pinball wizards might see the difference between a marker strobe and a high-intensity masthead rescue strobe.

I have spoken with several operators of ocean tugs, large fishing vessels and even an occasional cruise ship captain, all of whom agree that second to maintaining a good watch (sometimes awkward when singlehanding) a low-intensity strobe does get their attention and that is exactly what I want to do. My small strobe and often-encumbered running lights seem to indicate a small fishing vessel alongside of or hauling gear. Then a small course change on their part of as little a five degrees will keep their hull clear of any potential fouling gear and, most importantly, clear of my hull.

I replaced the single D-cell battery in my fisherman's strobe when I left Sint Maarten over three weeks ago and it still is working, as are similar lights on most of the vessels surrounding me here in Juangriego, and I have no intention of turning it off.

On another safety matter, datura, called Burundanga in Venezuela, Borrachio in Colombia, and Angel's Trumpet or Zombie Cucumber in the English-speaking islands, has hit the nightclub/party scene. Persons under the influence of these nightshade-family drugs can be asked to release passwords, empty bank accounts and engage in sexual acts without their consent or even their full knowledge. "The victim cannot say no," says Dr. Camilo Uribe, head of Bogota's foremost toxicology clinic, "It is like chemical hypnosis, and from the moment it is given the victim remembers absolutely nothing of what happened." This substance can be given by liquid, cigarette or inhalant. It is tasteless and odorless. So, with the way things are with Burundanga just now, forget sidewalk romance! Flirting with a stranger could lead to a real Lost Weekend. There are probably countless people trying to figure out what happened to them on that long night out that they can't remember when they were not careful with their drinks and woke up penniless and lost.

Still no engine, still not a lot of sense, but plenty of success of the "stay afloat and be a sailor" kind.

John Smith
Mermaid of Carriacou

Dear *Compass*,
After anchoring I usually snorkel out to check on the anchor and after seeing the patterns made by anchor chains as they scour the surface of the seabed have clambered back aboard feeling guilty and a bit depressed knowing that my anchor is going to be doing the same and not knowing what to do about it.

I am one of the poorer folk afloat and have been an instigator of campaigns to keep anchoring fees down. Also I have treasured the right to drop my hook wherever I like. But those days are gone because we pleasure cruisers have already done too much damage in popular anchorages by our numbers, thank-you Mr. GPS. Now I welcome Frank Pearce's suggestion in his letter in the July issue of *Compass* that we should support the provision of moorings in popular anchorages and maybe make some suggestions about their type and maintenance.

For example, the moorings in Chaguaramas, Trinidad, are a nightmare. During the several months I used one, I tried every which way to stop the rode winding around the eye and the metal can from banging against the hull. From my favourite watering hole I could watch the can spin in the wake of passing boats. Eventually the rode was so short that when more wake came the yacht yanked its bow straight up. This action had led to the sand screws being pulled out on occasion.

It would help me feel that I was getting value for money if the port authorities had leaflets describing their moorings, the installation and the maintenance of them; perhaps even including a recommended method of tying up to them for those of us unfamiliar with that particular type.

Julia Bartlett
Another Old Fart in Paradise

Dear Julia,
We asked Sharon McIntosh, General Manager of the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago (YSATT), to comment on the mooring situation in Chaguaramas. Her response follows.
CC

Dear *Compass* Readers,
Chaguaramas is an extremely vibrant multi-use harbour. The yachting community shares the bay with the fishing industry, energy sector, commercial maritime industry and local pleasure boat users. At all times, there are high levels of activity in the bay. Owing to the large and varied number of marine craft using Chaguaramas Bay, the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT) was mandated by the Marine Pilots to restrict the anchoring of yachts to a specific zone and provide clearly defined access channels to the inner parts of the bay. Maritime Services Division, the Marine Pilots and YSATT worked together to establish this anchorage zone.

YSATT responded by establishing moorings to demark two entrance channels — one runs east/west along the northern shore and the other runs north/south along the eastern shoreline, that is, along CrewsInn's ship dock. Within this area, yachts may go on anchor or rent one of the moorings that have been placed and are managed by YSATT. There are moorings in the bay that have been placed and are managed by private persons, however, the YSATT moorings are the only moorings approved and recognised by Maritime Services Division and the Marine Pilots Association. YSATT cannot account for moorings placed by other persons and users of these other moorings must be aware of this.

Once a yacht takes up a YSATT mooring, the procedure is to immediately register with the YSATT office. Upon registration, the office supplies "Information for Users" to the cruiser with the following information:

1) Each mooring consists of a 2,000-pound (approximately) concrete block, one-inch-thick nylon rope and three-eighths-inch chain attached to an orange floating buoy. There is a steel hoop at the top of the buoy for attachment of the boat's bow rope. All moorings are clearly marked with "YSATT" and a number.

2) There are only six to eight feet of extra line (scope) between the mooring block and the buoy. If users prefer to lift the mooring buoy slightly above the water to prevent banging, the buoy MUST be released at least 12 to 15 feet from the boat in times of bad weather. This allows the boat to ride the waves without lifting the mooring block. For this reason, when a boat is left unattended on an YSATT mooring, even for just a few hours, the buoy must be released by 12 to 15 feet. Chaguaramas Bay can be subject to unpredictable weather, particularly between the months of June to November.

3) Boats that weigh more than 15 tons or have particularly large superstructures are not permitted to use the moorings.

4) Moorings are available on a first-come-first-served basis. Boats are welcome to attach to an available mooring but must register at the YSATT office, located in the Shipwright's Building at Crews Inn, as soon as possible. The cost of a mooring is TT$30 per day or TT$750 per month (30 days).

—Continued on next page

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5) The moorings are checked every four months to ensure that they are in good condition. If necessary, maintenance work is carried out at that time. Should you notice any problem or wear, please report this immediately to the YSATT office.

We have also posted information about the moorings on our website at www.ysatt.org and in the YSATT office. At the YSATT office, we are always ready to listen to and discuss the concerns of the visiting cruisers and encourage cruisers to provide us with constructive feedback in order for us to improve our service to them.

Kind regards,
Sharon McIntosh, General Manager
Yacht Services Association of Trinidad & Tobago

Dear *Compass*,

I thought that your other readers might be interested in some background to Stephen "Nara" Bourassa's article "Prankster Pilots" in July's edition.

Steve is one of the Caribbean's characters. He wanders around, often shoeless or in odd flip-flops, maintaining his boat with ingenuity. If you don't need something, Steve will find a use for it or will pass it along to someone else along with a helping hand in fitting it. I would class him as a sailor rather than a cruiser and he is one of life's gentlemen.

What shone through the whale tale was his immense experience, compared to most of us, in sailing these waters and his familiarity and comfort at close quarters with the some of the largest wild creatures left on the planet.

Steve told me this story and many others back in Trinidad but he was a bit shy about taking up my suggestion to send them to *Compass*. I am pleased that he overcame that shyness and I hope that other readers enjoy them as much as I did.

Nice one, Steve.

Julia Bartlett
Still Boatless in Paradise

Dear *Compass*,

After reading the article "Common Sense, Common Knowledge and Common Decency" in July's *Compass*, the pencil touched the pad and I couldn't help myself!



'Look darling, what irresponsible, dangerous behavior! Sailing in restricted waters...They can run someone down!'

Sincerely,
Bela Almeida
Merlin of Seixal

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Please include your name, boat name or address, and a way we can contact you if clarification is required.

We do not publish individual consumer complaints or individual regatta results complaints. (Kudos are okay!) We do not publish anonymous letters; however, your name may be withheld in print at your request.

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Retired Cruiser Shares the Dream

Millie and Earl O'Laughlin, of Rochester, New York, set sail in 1982 to cruise full time aboard their Youngsun 35, *Sequin*. The lived aboard for the next 22 years, spending much of that time in the Eastern Caribbean. Millie lost Earl to cancer in 2003. The year before, Earl had made his last trip: a return to Grenada to prepare *Sequin* for sale. It was sold to a British couple with a similar dream of using early retirement to sail the world.



Although no longer cruising, Millie's heart is still at sea. According to an article by Mike McLaughlin in the July 19th edition of the *Laurel Leader* newspaper of Laurel, Maryland, Millie now gives a weekly presentation, "Sailing Aboard Sequin", for residents of Morningside House Assisted Living Center. Every Wednesday, the octogenarian recalls one of the many places she and Earl visited by using detailed recollections, plus charts, photos and other visual aids.

McLaughlin wrote: "Millie knows the map of the world like the back of her hand. And like any good sailor, she knows the work involved in making the time between places enjoyable, despite the distances traveled. She makes the world smaller for her listeners, and allows them to experience the joy of the journey. What really makes 'Sailing Aboard Sequin' work, however, is Millie's love of the places she's been and the people she has met. And of course, her love of sailing."

Friends can contact Millie at mnolaughlin@verizon.net.

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47 Stevens, 1981	$ 210,000
44 Beneteau Oceanis , 1994	$ 185,000
44 CSY walkover, 1978	$ 79,000
42 Hunter Passage, 1995	$ 159,000
42 Catalina MKII, 1996	$ 121,900
40 Passport Sloop, 1981	$ 75,000
38 Morgan/Catalina, 1996	$ 119,000
37 C&C, 1985	$ 48,600
36 Frers, 1985	$ 48,500
36 Cabo Rico Ketch, 1976	$ 28,000
34 Tartan, 1988	$ 49,000
POWER	
55 Cheoy Lee LRC, 1980	$ 329,000
50 Marine Trader, 1980	$ 149,000
45 Silverton MY, 2003	$ 415,000
42 Hershine Trawler	$ 40,000
42 Cruisers Express, 1999	$ 249,000
41 Sea Ray Express, 2001	$ 245,000
37 Fountaine Pajot Power Cat	$ 445,000
27 Grady White, 1997	$ 40,000

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1999	30' Henderson 30 (Racing Yacht)	US$ 60,000
1988	30' Jeanneau Sunlight 30	US$ 40,000
1989	35' Hallberg - Rassy	US$ 124,000
1986	36' Lavranos Tosca	US$ 53,000
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1977	37' Gin Fizz	EU$ 42,500
1968	39' Cheoy Lee Off Shore 40	US$ 95,000
1978	40' Atlantic 40	US$ 70,000
1985	40' Offshore 40 ***(REDUCED!!!)***	US$ 149,000
1987	42' Ta Chiao Mermaid 42	US$ 80,000
1999	43' Wauquiez Pilot Saloon	EU$ 247,500
1999	44' Finngulf	US$ 240,000
1992	45' Fortuna	US$ 150,000
1991	50' Celestial Pilothouse	US$ 268,000
1987	51' Beneteau Idylle 15.5	US$ 160,000
1995	53' Super Maramu ***(REDUCED!!!)***	US$ 329,000
1982	53' Hatteras Luxury Cruiser	US$ 254,000
1994	55' Oyster 55	US$ 776,000
1973	56' Visch Motor Yacht	US$ 150,000
MULTIHULLS		
1993	36.5' Dean Catamaran ***(REDUCED!!!)***	US$ 99,500
2002	37' Fountaine Pajot	US$ 325,000
1998	47' Gancel Catamaran	US$ 168,000
1980	54' Norman Cross Trimaran	US$ 295,000
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Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

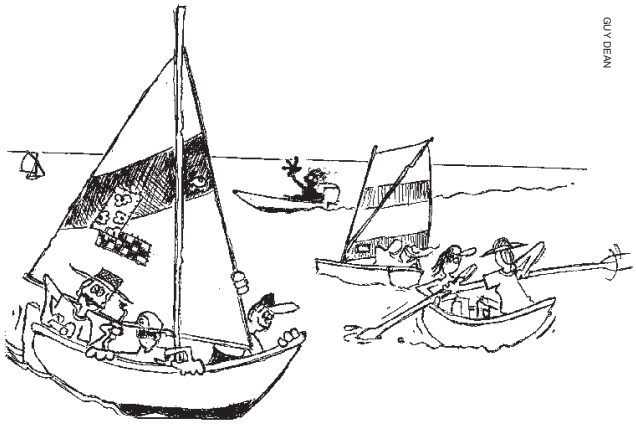
The July issue's What's On My Mind contribution, titled "Common Sense, Common Knowledge and Common Decency", claims some common truths that are mostly nonsense — though I'll bet lots of readers fell for some of them.

The "Common Sense" assertion is that "sailing a large, heavy boat in a restricted area is dangerous". Two examples are given. One is of a 32-foot boat sailing into Tyrrel Bay while the writer watched from a floating bar. "But moments before, a young girl had slid off the bar to swim back ashore...." There, of course, one sees the mortal danger — which is of twice the weight because it's a "young girl". Apparently the young girl would not be endangered by a "large, heavy boat in a restricted area" coming or going *under power*. Apparently she was not endangered by all the yacht dinghies blasting back and forth at several times the speed of a sailboat, doing a hundred times the mileage in the anchorage of the occasional yacht sailing in, back and forth all day and late into the night, including to and from the floating bar from which the young girl had slid, where some of the drivers were drinking — the author himself says he was "enjoying a cold one". I think this is another case of a bored yachtie looking for a cause.

Nonetheless, bored yachties (and others looking for cause) endanger my lifestyle. There will eventually come a time when, for instance, sailing into an anchorage is banned. And by then, someone will have noticed that yachts motoring in without a bow thruster also endanger young girls in the water. Unlimited blasting back and forth through the anchorage in dinghies will remain unnoticed — we need our sporty utility vessels. They are the car we once had in the lifestyle that we are trying to bring with us. Or the lifestyle from which we are commuting, as the case may be.

And so, this is all as it should be! The article asserts, "many of us know we can competently sail onto and off an anchor, or at least hope we can in an emergency." No! If you are not practiced at sailing in harbors, don't do it when you have an emergency! If you are preoccupied with an emergency and learning to sail in restricted waters, you are endangering the young girl in the water — and the other yachts! It probably won't endanger her as much as all the dinghy trips for e-mails, faxes, Customs, and such to repair whatever the emergency was, but it will endanger her more than if you knew what you were doing. Likewise, if you can't steer your boat without a bow thruster, don't come in when it is broken. That's just common sense.

The other example is of a yacht sailing out of Rodney Bay under mainsail. The author says it would have been okay under headsail. That shows how open-minded


GUY DEAN

the writer is — if you do it his way. Raising the main in harbor conditions, however, has serious advantages (effort, comfort, noise, and safety) over raising it in a seaway. But the article's question is, "How could the skipper stop the boat if necessary?" I could spend several pages answering that (is anybody interested?), mostly things you'd want to do instead of stopping, but also, stopping. The writer proposes a ludicrous maneuver and says you'd "have more chance with a stern anchor or sky hook!" He's right! Stern (or bow) anchors are real good tools! Though probably not for the stated situation. I'd stick with the sky hooks, the sails. All sorts of marvelous things can be done under sail, even steering around swimmers! I'm not saying that everyone knows how to do it, or that every boat is capable....

The "Common Knowledge" section of the article tells us "it's common knowledge for cruising folk, and should be for all [all?] that the text-book 'three times' scope is a bare minimum...." I'd burn that text book. But that may explain some of the yachts that drag down on us.

Finally, the article gives us a fill on "Common Decency", regarding peeing over the rail — and worse. Peeing over the rail has already been discussed in the *Compass*, but since it's here again.... He uses the example of a yacht at 20 meters and implies the guy is deliberately peeing toward him. That's pretty close to be anchored, so there may be some cause and effect here. But that's far enough that anything he actually sees is mostly in his mind's eye. Skinny dipping and such are okay, he says, it's the "not so attractive parts" he doesn't like — which in today's world, is a matter of taste, so to speak. But here's my system: I pee over the rail unless I have close neighbors, or am within, say, 200 meters of shore. Then I use a jar. But if someone anchors close enough that I can fling it onto their boat, I just might. Same thing for dinghies blasting by as close as they can. My range is five to ten meters, depending on the wind.

But let me end with this: sailing yacht, motoring yacht, planing dinghy, sailing dinghy, or rowing boat, we are all required to keep a lookout. And the young girl in the water almost always has the right of way. And she should keep a lookout, too.

Jim Hutchinson
Ambia

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CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

3	Labor Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
6	Bonaire Flag Day. Public holiday in Bonaire; boat races
8	Virgin of the Valley Festival, Venezuela. Religious boat parades
15	International Coastal Cleanup Day. Coastal Cleanups in many islands, plus Underwater Cleanup, Bonaire (www.dive-friends-bonaire.com)
17	National Heroes day, Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis
19	Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis
24	Republic Day. Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago
26	FULL MOON
TBA	24th Annual International Blue Marlin Tournament, Havana, Cuba. CNIH



CASIMIR HOFFMANN

OCTOBER

3	Thanksgiving Day. Public holiday in St. Lucia
6 - 7	Pete Sheals Match Racing, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, fax (284) 494-6117, www.rbviyc.net
7 - 13	40th Bonaire International Sailing Regatta. www.infobonaire.com
8	Columbus Day. Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI
10	War of 1868 Anniversary. Public holiday in Cuba
13	Willy T Virgins Cup Race, BVI. RBVIYC
13	5th YSATT Marine Trades Show, Chaguaramas, Trinidad. *See ad on page 9.*
14	Chinese Arrival Dragon Boat Festival – Kayak Centre, Chaguaramas, Trinidad. maggi1902@wow.net
15	USVI Hurricane Thanksgiving Day (Public holiday in USVI if no hurricanes occurred)
20 - 22	Trafalgar Race, BVI. RBVIYC
21	Antillean Day. Public holiday in Netherlands Antilles
21	St. Ursula's Day. Public holiday in BVI
21	Blue Food Festival (local cuisine), Bloody Bay, Tobago.
25	Thanksgiving Day. Public holiday in Grenada; boat races
26	FULL MOON
26 - 28	11th Foxy's Cat Fight multihull regatta, Jost Van Dyke. West End Yacht Club (WEYC), Tortola, tel (284) 495 1002, fax (284) 495-4184, mvh@surfbvi.com, www.weyc.net
27	Independence Day. Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines
30	Independence Day. Public holiday in Antigua
TBA	Ladies' Laser Open, Antigua. Antigua Yacht Club (AYC), tel/fax (268) 460-1799, yachtclub@candw.ag, www.antiguayachtclub.com
TBA	Laser Team Racing Championship, Antigua. AYC

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

If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to •sally@caribbeancompass.com

WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Chaguaramas from a Local Point of View

by Arlene Walrond

A lot has been written about Chaguaramas in the past year or so, most of it negative, mostly about escalating crime in the area. But no one seems to be aware of the real issues that are affecting Chaguaramas from a local standpoint.

I decided to write this piece after reading an article in a magazine that caters to the yachting community. The writer was of the notion that Chaguaramas was a wild and uninhabited place when the Americans arrived in 1941. This is very far from the truth.

Chaguaramas has a rich history that not many people seem to be aware of. Originally inhabited by Amerindians who named it for the majestic Chaguaramas palms that grew there profusely, many other families later moved in — these were mainly of African descent with a few whites and some French Creoles.

Many villages existed there: Petit Bourg, Nicholas, Haskott, Chaguaramas, Tetron (where Trinidad's army barracks are situated) and Larry, to name a few. When Trinidad was under British rule, land was bought under Royal grant directly from the Crown. Ranging in size from one to 377 acres, parcels of land were bought by independent families paying one shilling (24 cents) tax per acre per year.



Today, Chaguaramas seems to mean 'forest of masts', but the area was named for the handsome palms that were once its most prominent feature



As the United States became involved in the Second World War, the US government gave Great Britain 50 ships in exchange for the right to establish military bases in strategic British colonies: the Bahamas (Great Exuma), Jamaica, Antigua, St. Lucia, British Guiana and Trinidad. When the United States leased the Chaguaramas peninsula from the British Government, signing a 99-year lease in 1940, Chaguaramas was a thriving place with many plantations and holiday homes, and Staubles Bay was the gateway for people from other parts of the country who wished to go "down the islands", that is, visit the islets off Trinidad's west coast.

According to my sources, the majority, if not all of the homes and other buildings were demolished by the Americans to make way for their specialized military structures. My two uncles worked on the "American Base" during the construction period. (I wish they were still alive to tell me what it was like. It's so true what they say: "You never miss the water till the well runs dry".)

Contrary to media reports over the years, not all former residents received compensation for their lands. I was told this by Mr. Augustine Noel, a former resident of Chaguaramas who was five years old at the time of his family's displacement. He has been at the forefront of a group of people (children and grandchildren of landholders) who have been agitating to get restitution for their properties, and travelled to England to stage a demonstration in front of the Trinidad & Tobago High Commission in July 2006. According to him, their claim is valid since the leases and deeds were not signed on takeover. Some of these leases go as far back as 1886.

Mr. Noel says he has documents to support this claim. He also has in his possession documents that prove the disparity with which payment was made to the different racial groups. White residents were given $1,000 per acre while the Africans and others were given as little as $30 per acre. He also claims that some residents got no compensation whatsoever. He believes it was the biggest land scam ever perpetrated in this country.

When in 1960 our then Chief Minister, Eric Williams, led a march of protest against the American occupation, the former residents of Chaguaramas (the majority of whom were relocated to Carenage; some went to St. James and Diego Martin) had hopes of regaining their lands. But instead, when the peninsula was finally returned to Trinidad & Tobago's control in 1977, he vested it to the Chaguaramas Development Authority, rather than restoring the properties there to those who had owned them before the war. This was a bitter blow for the former residents who felt cheated — from being owners of acres of prime agricultural land they were reduced to being 99-year leaseholders of one lot of land barely big enough to fit a house.

Apparently it's not easy for these people to sit back and look at the development taking place in Chaguaramas today while some of the descendants of the original landowners are struggling to make ends meet and others are turning to drugs and crime. This, then is the bone of contention among former residents — they want their land back or to be compensated fairly.

PRODUCT POSTINGS

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Check out www.sail-the-net.com.

New CD from Ed Teja
Former long-time Caribbean cruiser, *Compass* contributor and musician Ed Teja's new solo CD, "Soft Dreaming Blues", is coming out this month from Morrhythm (a label of Outstanding Records) in California. It contains 11 songs and two instrumentals, all loosely categorized as smooth jazz. You can hear the title track on Ed's myspace page (see below). All the tunes are originals (some written with cowriters) and the CD will initially be available only via the record company's website www.outstandingmusic.com. However, diehard fans can get an autographed copy for just US$12 including shipping by ordering direct from Ed. "It's quite a different musical direction for me, and one I think you will enjoy, too," says Teja..



For more information e-mail EdTeja@gilanet.com or visit www.myspace.com/edteja.





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