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Happy Birthday!
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Click Google Map link below to find the Caribbean Compass near you!
http://bit.ly/1fMC2Oy
In 1994, TP Parson decided that Caribbean Boating was too Vi oriented and launched All at Sea. He said All at Sea would give coverage to not only the whole Caribbean but would also have articles covering major yacht races outside of the Caribbean and cover sportfishing, which Jim had ignored. From inception until Chris Kennan bought the magazine, it staggered along. Now it is a slick color magazine featuring racing and always a large section of sportfishing.

In 1995, Caribbean Compass was launched, initially to cover the Southern Caribbean, which had largely been ignored, and to appeal to a wide spectrum of sailors. Soon the area of the Caribbean covered expanded until now news and advertisements cover the entire Caribbean. The breadth of interesting articles is extraordinary, something for everyone — the racing sailor, the marine-oriented businessman, the cruising sailor, the sailors who like to explore ashore, those that are interested in what is under the sea rather than on top of the sea, the stargazer, and last but not least, the kids! Every adult who cruises with children, and sailors based ashore who have sailing-oriented children, have to fight with their offspring to grab and read Caribbean Compass first.

As a wandering sailor who reads free yachting publications in the States, the UK and Ireland (“Never miss a freebie, mate”), I say without fear of contradiction, Caribbean Compass is the best free yachting publication in the world.

The first issue of Caribbean Compass — all 16 pages of it, in glorious black and white — was published in March of 1995, with the design and technical help of a young cruising couple, Mandy Pirimona and Graham O’Neill, who continued on their voyage from England to New Zealand the following year. Tom and I were pretty average sailors for the time — having cruised, raced a bit, worked in what’s now known as “the yachting industry” and been customers of marine businesses — and we figured there would be others who would like to read the same kind of things we did. We roped in friends to help — Chris Doyle and Bob Berlinghof, who wrote in issue number one, remain regular contributors two decades later — and just as friends became contributors, over the years many contributors have become friends.

Chris writes:
I remember the very beginnings of Compass when the pages were still pasted up in the office and shipped out to be photographed. Caribbean Compass has come a long way and is now the most important and popular weekly newspaper in the Caribbean, and likely, the world. Congratulations Sally! Tom, Wilfred and the team. As racing reporter, occasional crime reporter, commentator, paint tester,iquer at large and sometime trouble stirrer, I am proud to have been part of this endeavor. We have occasionally righted wrongs, stopped stupid developments, and gotten politicians to listen. It has all been fun, and I am not about to give up my self-made, laminated journalist ID tag which has gotten me into boat shows and much more. Let’s do another 20!

By 1996 the Compass had expanded to 24 pages (and since doubled in size) and was being printed on its signature “bright white” paper instead of ordinary newsprint — a unique magazine in newspaper format.

—Continued on next page
Noel Mawer remembers the low-tech early days:

It was not till 1996 that I became involved for a spell with Compass. I had known Tom and Sally since their return from their circumnavigation, and had watched the birth of the paper here on Bequia.

Sally told me in early 1996 that their original partners were leaving to continue their voyaging, and asked me to find out if my girlfriend, Roxanne, might be interested in joining the Compass Crew to replace the departing designer. She was indeed, and in the summer of that year, we shipped her computer and (at the time) huge CRT monitor down to Bequia, along with a bundle of other high-tech stuff.

I joined in with help on the technical side and with setting up a bookkeeping system. I think back in amazement when I recall what was involved with the monthly creation of the paper: Dial-up... Syquest 44MB (yes, MB!) drives... Apple-talk networking... font hell... sending the finished Quark files to Trinidad by LIAT or even by boat for printing! In retrospect, it was always a wonder when the printed papers actually arrived. All in all, a great adventure every month.

And now it’s 2015, and still the readers wait with trembling hands (yes, some of us are getting on a bit!) for the next month’s edition, now in glorious colour and slickly sent to press over a “speedy” internet connection! Here’s to the next 20 years!

When Roxanne Thoeny returned to the US after establishing the general look of the Compass we know today, photographer, graphic designer and former yacht skipper Wilfred Dederer joined the Compass Cockpit Crew as Design and Production Manager in 1998 and has been our right hand ever since. From 1998 until 2003, Nicola Redway gave invaluable support as our first Assistant Editor, an indispensable position held since then by the eagle-eyed Elaine Olivierre. Bookkeeper Debra Davis joined the crew from 1998 to 2011, followed by Shellese Craig, who has continued to keep the numbers, and much more, in order.

Our office, thanks to our lovely landlady, Dreana Hughes, has remained at the peerless address of “Brick House, Back Street, Bequia” for 20 years. There is still an avocado tree out front, and a pigeon pea patch in the back.

Except for two issues, the Compass has always been printed by Guardian Media Ltd. of Trinidad & Tobago, and from Trinidad hard copies are sent — thanks to Leonard Doolgar — by ship, island schooner and plane to key distribution points around the Caribbean.

—Continued on next page
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—Continued from previous page

Before we began this endeavor, we asked then Prime Minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Sir James F. Mitchell, for his advice on doing business in the regional economy. It was succinct: “Just make sure you can get the advertisers to pay.” Fortunately, this has rarely been a problem. Being independently owned and operated, and thus free of corporate constraints, Compass has always steered a course based on the sincere belief that content comes first: good content makes and readers, and having a passionate and loyal readership — rather than offering “puff pieces” or cut-rate deals — is the very best thing we can give our advertisers. Advertisers who hopped aboard during our first five years of publication have been with us ever since include regional businesses Doyle Sails Caribbean, Chris Doyle’s Guides, Iolaire Enterprises, Island Water World, Northern Lights and LAY, DSY Yachting and Rodney Bay Marina of St. Lucia; Barefoot Yacht Charters, Fernando’s Hideaway, Grenadines Sails and Genesalves Lagers of St. Vincent & the Grenadines; Art Fabrik, B&C Fabrik, Carriacou Real Estate, The Food Fair, Grenada Marine, Island Dreams Yacht Services, McIntyre Bros., Neil Pryde Sails, Spice Island Marine Services and Turbulence Sails of Grenada; Echo Marine and Power Boats of Trinidad, and Venezuelan Marine Supply and Xanadu Marine of Venezuela. New advertisers continue to come aboard nearly every month.

The Compass’s content has evolved over the years, being shaped more by writers’ ideas, experiences and talents than by a rigid editorial policy. We’ve made mistakes and learned together. Our core content comes from people “out in the field” who truly care about what they’re writing about. They don’t write because they’ve been given an assignment; they write because they are motivated to tell something. Compass contributors have included a wide cross-section of the visiting cruising community, of course, and resident expats, as well as numerous Caribbean voices such as Telfor Bedeau, Owen and Herman Belmar, Iesha Odinga Blair, Sandra Chouthi, Redhsia Compton, Kurt Cordice, the late Norman Faria, Shirley Hall, Oscar Hernandez, Billy Jno-Hope, Geryln John, Orbin Ollivierre, J. Willie Pinheiro, Audrey Alleyne Quiniou, Jo-Anne Sewal, Vanessa Simmons, Don Stollems, Almut Thomas, J. Wynner and Rangel Zabala. Compass contributors have ranged from amateurs whose writing could be so good that, as Nicola said, “It makes the hair on the backs of your arms stand on end” to luminaries such as New Yorker cartoonist Mick Stevens. Having Mick walk into our office and offer Compass his cartoons was like having Robert Plant show up and ask if he could sing with your band (which actually happened to the local band SOS; wonderful things happen in Bequia).

Compass is pleased to be able to provide a platform for all these contributors, readers, government agencies and advertisers, providing linkages toward greater understanding in the context of the recreational marine scene. Over lunch one day a few years ago with Fatty and Carolyn Goodlander, we were talking about our writing and publishing goals, and Fatty remarked, “Aha, the Compass is a community-building project!” Well, we’d never quite thought of it that way before, but it turns out, judging from many of the comments from readers and writers you’ll see spread throughout this issue, that Fatty was right. It’s a successful publishing business, it’s a publication, and yet it’s become so much more.

Meanwhile, thanks to demand from both advertisers and readers, our original Southern Caribbean coverage quickly expanded to cover the entire Wider Caribbean Region. Since 2007, Caribbean Compass has been free online for the entire world. An estimated 30,000 to 40,000 people now read the Compass every month. Looking back, we are blown away.

So here’s to everyone who ever said, “Hey, I can do that!” and went cruising, started racing, joined a rally, wrote an article, opened a marine-related business, supported an organization, or otherwise got involved in the Caribbean marine scene. Past, present and future, we’re all part of the band. Play on!

Since the very first issue of Caribbean Compass, sailor, cruising guide author, photographer, ‘trouble stiver’ and friend Chris Doyle has been an integral part of the Crew. [Watch that Very Strong Rum, Chris!]
KNOW-HOW.

For over 25 years, Spice Island Marine Services has been known for reliable customer service. The most secure, insurance approved storage in the Southern Caribbean ensures peace of mind with optional steel cradles, yacht tie-downs throughout, and welded stands. This full service boatyard can accommodate yachts up to 70 tons, 85 feet long, and 25 feet wide for your hauling, storage, and repair needs. Centrally located in Prickly Bay, Grenada, near amenities and with its on-site Budget Marine chandlery, Spice Island Marine Services will exceed your expectations.

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Blue Flag Certification in Trinidad
Las Cuevas Beach in Trinidad was selected last year as the pilot beach for the implementation of the Blue Flag Certification program, a voluntary eco-label developed through compliance with a strict criteria dealing with environmental education management, water quality, safety and other services.

The 2015 Blue Flag season for Las Cuevas Beach, now the only certified beach in the English-speaking Caribbean, is January 16th to November 16th. During this period, beachgoers can view the Blue Flag Information Board, which will display monthly updates on the water quality and on-site environmental education activities. The Information Board also provides a description of essential services available at the beach and the designated Blue Flag zone.

Visit www.blueflagtrinidadandtobago.com for more information on Blue Flag Trinidad & Tobago.

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Eight Bells
GINNY FILIATRAULT
Seven Seas Cruising Association Lifetime Commodore Ginny Filiatrault passed away on January 18th. The SSCA is the oldest and largest non-profit organization of voyaging cruisers in the world.

Born into a California sailing family in 1936, Ginny built her first boat at age 12 with her father and was living aboard her third boat before her 20th birthday. She left California in 1959 and sailed Pacific Mexico, Central America and spent five months in the Galapagos Islands. She and her husband sold their 37-foot Hanna-designed Carol ketch, Bojac, in Panama in 1963 and moved to New Orleans where she lived on a 50-foot Alden ketch, Windalong, her home for more than ten years. She then moved to south Florida in 1975 and lived aboard there for many years. Ginny joined SSCA in 1955, and served as Commodores’ Bulletin Editor, Board Member, Treasurer, Office Manager, Historian and more.

VIRGINIA WAGNER
Captain Virginia A. Wagner passed away on January 30th in Newport, Rhode Island. According to SailingScuttlebutt.com, Virginia was among an elite sorority of professional female yacht captains and spent much of her 28-year career in command of traditional sailing vessels including the 135-foot Corwith Cramer and the 125-foot Westward, as well as the 90-foot Ocean Star, the 125-foot schooner Galaxy, the 158-foot Clipper City, and the 140-foot Schooner America replica. She also captained private and charter yachts including Malou, True North, Ana, Moonlight II, Shiwara, and Cara Coco.

Holding both a 3,000-ton USCG license and an MCA Ocean Master license, Virginia logged over 400,000 nautical miles and was always quick to add.

—Continued on next page
“Most of those miles were navigated by sextant.”

In 2012 Virginia dropped anchor in Newport, Rhode Island and joined the Nicholson Yachts Charter Management team.

AL RAPIER

Alfred Cyril Rapier, founder of the CSA Rating Rule, passed away on February 3rd at age 85. Born in Grenada and later settling in Trinidad, he developed the Caribbean’s first indigenous yacht racing handicap rule, the West Indies Yachting Association Rule, in the 1960s. This rule went through several name changes over the years and is now known as the CSA Rating Rule. Al Rapier was recognized with the Caribbean Sailing Association’s highest award, Honorary Lifetime Membership, in 2002. Current chief measurer of the CSA Jeffrey Chen said, “There could not be a more fitting tribute to Al than knowing that his creation of the Rule will continue to provide racing sailors of all ages, all nationalities, sailing in all manner of boats, handicap results that are both fair and consistent.”

Tobago Jazz Experience

Tobago Jazz Experience, April 18th through 26th, tours through Speyside, Signal Hill, Scarborough, Castara and Pigeon Point Heritage Park. Each community will host performances by regional and international music icons including Grammy Award winning artists Jill Scott, Jennifer Hudson and Kool and the Gang. All the events take place on the beautiful beaches of Tobago, consistently rated as some of the best in the world. Visit www.tobagojazsexperience.com for more information.

Department of Corrections

The photo on page 5 of the February 2015 issue of Compass, showing the launching in Barbados of the schooner Ruth, should have been credited to Caribbean Aerial Photography. See their website at caribbeanaerialphotography.com for a unique perspective of Barbados!

Tobago Goat Races

On Easter Tuesday, April 7th, the coastal village of Buccoo, Tobago comes alive with the Buccoo Goat Races, an event drawing in thousands of spectators every year. Visitors are encouraged to check out this unique cultural experience indigenous to the island of Tobago since 1925. Goat-handlers, known as jockeys, race specially trained goats for a year’s worth of bragging rights. The event starts with a street parade where booths offering crafts, T-shirts, food and drink line the streets. Many residents even open up their homes and provide delicious, authentic cuisine.

Visit www.visittobago.gov.tt for more information.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of Caribbean Compass we welcome new advertisers the Black Pearl restaurant of Bequia, Cruising With Children books, and Ocean Aerial Art all in the Market Place section, pages 49 through 52. Good to have you with us!
BUSINESS BRIEFS

Rodney Bay Marina Wins Superyacht Award

IGY Rodney Bay Marina in St. Lucia was named runner up for the Superyacht Marina of the Year Award presented at the London Boat Show by The Yacht Harbour Association (TYHA). The winning marinas are considered the best by their customers in the UK Coastal, UK Inland, International and Superyacht categories. "We are thrilled to be considered one of the top superyacht marinas internationally, and we thank The Yacht Harbour Association once again for bestowing another honor to Rodney Bay Marina," said Kenny Jones, EVP of Operations for IGY Marinas.

Rodney Bay Marina can accommodate superyachts up to 285 feet and provides high-speed fueling, provisioning, electrical and other vessel services that go beyond what the large vessel market demands. The property boasts restaurants, bars, and a convenience store, and holds several events throughout its seasons for its customers. St. Lucia has made tremendous headway in the yachting sector by bringing more vessels to its shores year after year. RBM General Manager Simon Bryan was recently elected the official Representative of the St. Lucia Hotel & Tourism Association for Yachting and Maritime in St. Lucia. The primary tourism private sector agency in St. Lucia, the SLHTA is responsible for facilitating tourism sector development and management.

For more information on Rodney Bay Marina see ad on page 10.

Team Grenada Marine Are Champions

Congratulations to Grenada Marine Team for their excellent performance at Grenada Sailing Week 2015 — winning Best Performing Yacht and First Place in the Race Cruiser Class 2. Captain Jason Fletcher and the Grenada Marine crew of Apero, sponsored by Island Water World and with crew from Grenada Marine, are champions! See related story on page 20.

For more information on Grenada Marine see ad on page 20.

Curaçao Marine: One Year of Hauling Large Yachts!

Nicole van Beusekom reports: It’s been a little over a year since Curaçao Marine put a second slipway trailer into operation. At Curaçao Marine we saw great potential in hauling out larger yachts. Before, many large yachts couldn’t be hauled out on the island. Now they can, and Curaçao Marine has the space and expertise to accommodate and service these yachts on the hard. The past year we have had the opportunity to haul out many large sailboats and motor yachts.

— Continued on next page

STORAGE SPECIAL
New Yearly Contract Holders Receive a FREE Annual Silver Caretaking Package!
ANNUAL VALUE USD $1400.

IGY Marinas terms and conditions apply.
Guides are not only the best but also the cheapest pilots to the Caribbean!

Don Street reports: Pilotage information is timeless. The pilotage information found in my 1996 guide is still valid today. I recommend that my guides — pilots, in fact — be backed up by Simon and Nancy Scott’s guide for the Virgin Islands, and Chris Doyle’s guides for the Windward and Leewards, as these have lots of shore side information updated approximately every two years. But above and beyond what is provided in the Scott and Doyle guides, my guides offer detailed inter-island and harbor pilotage information and cover every anchorage in the Eastern Caribbean. In the Virgin I give piloting directions to many quiet anchorages that are not in the Scotts’ guide. In the Windwards I cover a number of east coast anchorages not mentioned by Doyle. I once said, “If anyone can come up with an anchorage in the Lesser Antilles safe for a boat drawing seven feet that I have not mentioned in my guides, I will buy the drinks.” Thirty-five years later I still have not had to buy drinks.

My guides (and in fact all guides) should be used in conjunction with the relevant Imray Iolaire chart. Study the back of all Imray Iolaire charts for tidal information, weather info, anchoring advice and up-to-date piloting directions to anchorages so small they are not shown on the chart. The tidal information is useful, as sailing on a weather-going tide makes inter-island passages easier. The information is also useful to the diver, as expeditions should be done on a weather-going tide. Imray Iolaire charts are the only charts available to the sailor that can be regularly updated and corrected by going to www.imray.com. These are often not corrections per se, but rather information on what has happened since the last printing of the chart that should be added to the new chart.

Imray Iolaire charts are now available print-on-demand (POD) in the States from Landfall, West Marine and any other chart suppliers that have POD facilities. Sailors using Navionics, Garmin, Jeppesen/C-Map and Map Media electronic charts are sailing on Imray Iolaire charts, as the above companies use Imray Iolaire charts as their basis. Imray sends these companies all the corrections/changes/additions that Imray inserts in the chart correction section of www.imray.com, and then insert the corrections in their electronic charts. Electronic charts can be updated by going to www.imray.com and pulling out the corrections to the area you are cruising. These corrections/changes/additions are applicable to charts published by the British Admiralty, the US DMA, NOAA and France.

Charts are the only charts available to the sailor that can be regularly updated and corrected by going to www.imray.com. These are often not corrections per se, but rather information on what has happened since the last printing of the chart that should be added to the new chart.

MARCH 2015     CARIBBEAN COMPASS     PAGE 11
In 2008 I walked into the Compass corporate headquarters in beautiful downtown Bequia (it’s actually hard to find) with only half an idea that I could write a monthly column about naked eyeball astronomy for cruisers (with the occasional Steiner’s). Shockingly I found myself in room with the ENTIRE STAFF of the Compass. A ready experience I can tell you. In the months and years that followed, I truly enjoyed the back and forth with the staff as I submitted my columns (mostly on time!). As a former cruiser I know that with the iffyness of internet in the islands, the back and forth involved I truly enjoyed the back and forth with the staff as I submitted my columns (mostly on time!). As a former cruiser I know that with the iffyness of internet in the islands, the staff my friends.

Scott Welty, Chicago, Illinois, USA

OMG… 20 years! Seems like yesterday when you published your first issue. So much has changed in the ensuing years and you have managed to keep on top of it. I am involved in the evolution of sailing in the Caribbean. The Compass has been an invaluable resource to me and I am grateful to have been a part of your success. We would be lost without your publication.

Melina Parke, Washington, USA and Bequia, SVG

Excited by our National-Geographic-style adventure up the Magareo River in Venezuela in 1999, we turned to the popular Caribbean Compass magazine to share our story with other cruisers. Thus began a long and sweet relationship with a magazine dear to all Caribbean cruisers. Fast forward to 2013 when I received a request to write a letter of recommendation for folks we met in Panama who were candidates to “boat sit” in Spain. What a lovely surprise when the boatowner responded, “Oh, I love your Compass cooking articles on board!” Over the years, even before we all connected with Facebook, and Twitter and Google could answer any question we might pose, the Compass gave us a connection to sailors around the world, the evolution of sailing in the Caribbean, the Compass has an amazing database of cruisers who are always happy to help and share their knowledge.

Jim Uli, S/V Merengue

—Continued from previous page

Economy Dockage in the Exumas

With the economy on the ropes in the Bahamas, check out Emerald Bay Marina’s newly opened economy dock area (B Dock). This is an unimproved floating dock without utilities with rates at 50 cents US per foot. There is a 40-foot minimum charge and a three-day minimum booking. What’s the catch? The dock is located on the northern perimeter of the marina and is about 500 feet farther from the marina office than the improved docks. Visit www.mainaemeraldabay.com for more information.

New Visitors’ Slips in Cartagena, Colombia

As of this month, the Club de Pesca in Cartagena, Colombia, will have 18 new slips available to enlarge its existing capacity to welcome visiting international cruising yachts. Founded in 1938, this prestigious private club is located below the hurricane belt in well-protected inner Cartagena Bay, within walking distance of UNESCO World Heritage site of historic Old Cartagena and within easy cruising distance to the San Blas Islands. The Club provides excellent direct security, wifi, pump-out, and minor repair services such as painting. A synchro line is offered, for boats up to about 35 feet can be booked by visitors if needed. For more information visit www.clubdepescadecartagena.com or contact gerencias@clubdepescadecartagena.com.

Mimar Sailing School Joins Global Online Booking Site

Mimar Sailing School at Jolly Harbour, Antigua is one of the selected RYA training schools listed on SailPowerCourses.com. Launched in January, sailpowercourses.com is offering a full online booking service for individuals wishing to attend a RYA-approved training course worldwide. Practical and theory courses can be searched by location, dates and course title. New schools are added every two weeks. There are over 60 course types to choose from, ranging from absolute beginners to professionals. Professional crew and skipper courses essential for employment in the industry are also available, e.g. First Aid, Fire Training and the MCA Approved Engineer Course. The site also offers a detailed boating guide to all the destinations on offer and an online chat facility to an instructor who can answer any queries. There is also an interactive course generator to ensure that you book the correct course for your current level of skills and knowledge.

Tradewinds: A Tale of the Caribbean

Melinda Parke, Washington, USA and Bequia, SVG

—Continued on next page

Jolly Harbour, Antigua’s new fly-in facility ready for installation

Jolly Harbour Marina has also completed the refurbishment of the male showers after last year’s renovation of the female shower facility. Visit www.jollymarina.com for more information.

Economy Dockage in the Exumas

Better security, wifi, pump-out, and minor repair services such as painting. A synchrofline is offered. For boats up to about 35 feet can be booked by visitors if needed. For more information visit www.clubdepescadecartagena.com or contact gerencias@clubdepescadecartagena.com.
In his novel *Tradewinds: A Tale of the Caribbean*, Chris spins the tale of Captain Jack McLeod. Shipwrecked on the small Caribbean island of Petite Silhouette after the Great War, Aussie Captain Jack builds a new life as a smuggler, schooner captain, boatbuilder and family man. But dark clouds loom on the horizon. World War II sees the Caribbean become a battleground between the Allied Forces and the marauding U-boats of Nazi Germany, and the captain and crew of the schooner *Roulette* become embroiled in espionage and intrigue as they use their wits, experience and local knowledge to battle a ruthless and unseen foe. Splicing historical fact with fiction, *Tradewinds* takes the reader on a thrilling ride through the Caribbean at a time when the outside world invaded these idyllic islands, changing them forever. Visit www.tradewindpublishing.com for more information.

**New Edition: Dancing Nude in the Moonlight**

*Dancing Nude in the Moonlight*, Antiguan writer Joanne C. Hillhouse’s novella about love across cultures, was published a decade ago to critical acclaim in the Caribbean. The book is taught in Antiguan and Barbudan high schools, and gives a touching picture of the problems a young couple face as they attempt to build a life together.

In addition to the original novella, the newly published edition includes “fan fiction” and poetry based on the story, and other short stories and poems depicting life in Antigua. Hillhouse’s clear-eyed social observations and deep understanding of the issues facing women in the modern Caribbean make these stories tender and powerful. Visit jhohadli.wordpress.com and wadadlipen.wordpress.com for more information.

**Cartagena Boat Show This Month**

The third Cartagena International Boat Show (CIBS) will take place March 21st through 23rd at the Cartagena Convention Center, where the organizers expect to draw close to 5,000 visitors from around the world. After two successful years of forging partnerships between buyers and sellers, this nautical show has become the most important boat show in Latin America.

In its second year, the CIBS grew considerably, with a 165-percent increase in the number of visitors and a 126-percent increase in exhibitors, which positions the city and the region as an attractive destination for marine businesses. “The numbers from previous years speak for themselves, which leads us to believe that this event is an important experience, not only for boating enthusiasts but for the city of Cartagena,” says Juan Pablo Hernández, director and partner for easyFairs Latin America, the organizing company. EasyFairs works in partnership with local and national authorities, who aim to promote tourism in the country at an international level. “CIBS has been a platform for Colombian nautical companies to come to the market and for distribution of international brands to settle or have a presence in the Colombian Caribbean. In 2014, 29 international brands had a presence at the show along with a complete range of United States companies,” said J. Alfonso Diaz, chief executive officer for the Cartagena Chamber of Commerce. According to estimates by the Colombian Government, the marine lifestyle and the arrival of vessels to the Colombian coast could generate more than a thousand jobs during the boating season.

Organizers have already confirmed major brands for the 2015 event, including AB Inflatables, Azimut Yachts, Bavaria Motorboats, Bavaria Sailing, Beneteau, Boeing 60, Cummins Fairline, Ferretti, Fractional Yachts, Garmin, Hamilton, Hobie Cat, JL Audio Marine, Kawasaki, Khalela, Kites F-One, Lagoon, Unifemas Fennix, Lemcor Group, Logmar, Marine Jet, Motamarin Boats, Nautica, Pershing, Prestige Series, Princess Yachts, RayMarine Jet, Ronautica Marinus, Salona, SCUBAPRO, SeaRay, Suzuki Marine, Viking Yachts, Wave Runner, Yamaha, Eduardinho and Alfor Colombia. The National Marine Manufacturer’s Association (NMMA) will once again sponsor the USA Pavilion, where 20 specialty booths will be showcased. Visit www.cbshow.co for more information.

**Second Annual Island Water World Fishing Tournament**

The second Annual Island Water World Fishing Tournament, organized by the St. Maarten Sportfishing Foundation, will be held April 19th and will end with a Fish Fry and Party at IWW Cole Bay. First prize will be given for Biggest Mahi; second prize for Second Biggest Mahi; third prize for Most Weight Overall (all species); fourth prize for Largest Wahoo; and fifth prize for Largest Tuna. Entry forms will be available in all IWW St. Maarten/St. Martin Stores.

For more information on Island Water World see ads on pages 11, 13, 29 and 56.
REGATTA NEWS

CSA Launches Multihull Rule

The Caribbean Sailing Association (CSA) has announced the launch of the CSA Multihull Rule. The rule was used successfully in 2014 under the name “Multihull Ratings” and after extensively testing it against results from previous regattas, the CSA is officially adopting the rule as its official multihull rule. The rating system for multihulls was conceived to adapt the well-established Texel Rating system to the local requirements of multihull racing in the Caribbean. The formulae and calculations used in the rating system are based on those used successfully for the Texel Rating and its derivatives. Therefore, rather than inventing a new rule the Texel Rating System has been adapted to achieve four key objectives: bring the method of sail area calculation in line with what is already in use by the CSA; Monohull Rule: accommodate yachts with different sizes and types of daggerboards; accommodate yachts that use foils to reduce their wetted surface area; and simplify the formula to directly produce time correction factors that will assist regatta organizers to process results.

Development of the rule was carried out by CSA measurer Stuart Knaggs. Of the rule development he says, “I was assisted by fellow measurer Alfred Koolen, Paul Miller of Regattaguru and Nico Boon of the Texel Rating System. It has been found to return tighter corrected times that reflect yacht potential better than comparable systems. Development of the rule will continue to adapt over time to address new innovations in yacht design.”

With the inclusion of the Multihull Rule, chief measurer Jeffrey Chen sees an important objective for the year to be recruitment of new measurers. Chen states, “For the sport to continue to grow and have the potential development of the Multihull Rule will continue to adapt over time to address new innovations in yacht design.”

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The rule was tested extensively by groups at various regattas, each year the event lives up to its worthy motto: Serious Fun. For full information on the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2015, March 5th through 8th, visit www.heinekenregatta.com.

Triskell Cup 2015

In its new time slot, the popular Triskell Cup 2015 will run from March 11th through 15th. There will be classes for Cruising monohulls, Racing monohulls, Racing with CSA monohull rating; Cruising multihulls (Multi) with CSA multihull rating; and a Rally for multihulls and multihulls without a rating. There will also be one-design classes for Class 8 and Surprise, Metges 24 and Figaro. Visit www.triskellcup.com for more information.

Good Timing for Bequia Easter Regatta!

April 2nd through 6th, 2015 will mark 34 unbroken years of the not-for-profit Bequia Sailing Club’s annual Easter Regatta, which is now recognized as the biggest and most popular regatta in the Southern Caribbean — an accolade of which both the Bequia Sailing Club and Bequia itself are rightly proud. Although much increased in size and status over all those years, the Bequia Easter Regatta has never lost its unique small-island appeal. The sight of at least 30 locally built spirt-rigged double-ender boats competing with legendary skill in their own separate races, but on the same waters as 50 or so yachts of all shapes and sizes, has no equal in the Caribbean regatta calendar, whether you are a competitor or a spectator. Following on from their record-breaking 53-yacht entry in 2013 — when Easter was also at the very beginning of April — the organizers are anticipating another strong turnout for their 34th edition this year. —Continued on next page

Below: The 34th Annual Bequia Easter Regatta will feature a long weekend of races for racing and cruising yachts, keen competition among dozens of the famous local double-enders, and much more.
No fewer than 80 boats and 1,000 sailors are expected to compete at the 2015 event. Visit www.lesvoilesdesaintbarth.com for more information.

YACHT RACES

- Racing, Cruising & I & II Classes
  Fri 3 April: Mount Gay Friendship Bay Races
  Sat 4 April: Around Bequia Races
  Sun 5 April (Layday): Hairoun S/H Around Bequia Race
  Mon 6 April: Admiralty Bay Triangle Races

- J/24 & Surprise Classes
  Fri 3 April: Mount Gay Admiralty/Southside Races
  Sat 4 April: United Insurance 3-Race Challenges
  Mon 6 April: J/24 & Surprise 2-Race Challenges

LOCAL DOUBLE-ENDER RACES

Sat/Sun 4/5 April: 1st and 2nd Hairoun Challenges
Mon 6 April: Mount Gay Challenge

LAY DAY SUNDAY FAMILY FUN

Sandcastle Competition & All Day Family Layday @ Bequia Beach Hotel, Friendship Beach
Round-the-World Rally Makes First Colombian Stop

by Sally Erdle

A major indicator that Colombia is now firmly on the international sailing destination map was the arrival at Santa Marta of the World ARC 2015-16 fleet. The fleet of 15 boats from eight different countries tucked into IGY Marina Santa Marta in mid-January, having sailed 815 nautical miles since the start of the globe-girdling yacht rally in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia on January 10th.

Organized by World Cruising Club, the now-annual circumnavigation event lasts 15 months and covers a total of 26,000 nautical miles. As boats join in at different stages, the World ARC 2015-16 fleet is expected to total 25.

English sailor Caroline Frew aboard the Oyster 575 *Juno*, the first boat to arrive in Santa Marta after the brisk downwind leg from St. Lucia says, “We had winds of 20 to 25 knots, good for *Juno*,” which enabled a passage of exactly four days. Scottish skipper Peter Jennett aboard *Exody*, a Sadler Starlight 39 that arrived the following day, says, “We had lots of wind, with 45 knots in squalls. *Exody* is a good sea boat, and we were mostly under double-reefed main and poled-out jenny.”

Another boat’s crew contained family members ranging in age from 82 years to two months. “All in all it was a pleasant trip with the wind and the waves behind us. We spent five nights at sea — we took it easy for the grandparents.”

All boats were in by the 16th. Since everyone arrived with no major problems, the marina’s still-expanding maintenance facilities weren’t tested.

In previous editions of the World ARC, the first stop after the St. Lucia start was Panama. Stopping in Santa Marta not only cuts nearly 300 miles off the challenging shakedown leg, but it also provides a knockout first port of call: a still-lively Spanish colonial city founded in 1525. Colombian Coast Guard boats, WCC and marina staff and local media greeted the arrivals.

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Participants then enjoyed a week of city and national park tours, a beach barbecue, live music and dance performances, dinners and parties. Running throughout was the famous Colombian hospitality. Marina Manager Mauricio Culcalon says, “The World ARC is important for us, and of course we want everything to be perfect. But the warm, friendly welcome we give — for us Colombians, that’s normal.”

WCC director, Andrew Bishop, tells Compass, “We’re excited about adding a new stop on the Caribbean coast of Colombia to introduce World ARC participants to a culturally rich stopover and give them the opportunity to explore a different part of South America in addition to Brazil near the end of the rally. Another advantage for participants is breaking the potentially longest leg of the rally, from St. Lucia to Panama. The participants have all arrived having had a cracking sail from St. Lucia and have been overwhelmed by the tremendous warmth of their welcome in Santa Marta. They now have the opportunity to explore a country they might not otherwise have considered visiting — and arriving by boat is very special.”

“It’s a great stop for any rally, and World ARC has organized excellent tours for us,” acknowledges Caroline Frew.

After the announcement was made at a press briefing in the marina on January 14th that World ARC would be making a stop here for at least the next five years, Manuel Julián Dávila, owner of Marina Santa Marta, said, “This is a great win-win.” It’s a Caribbean bonus for the participants — a quite different experience from the Lesser Antilles — and a stellar opportunity for Santa Marta to promote itself as a sailing destination.

Many cruisers don’t realize how much Colombia has changed in recent years, and the rally’s arrival was a chance to demonstrate to a group who will be talking to other sailors around the world that it’s a fun, friendly, interesting, and above all safe place to visit. Several World ARC participants remarked on the friendly welcome they received from men in Armada uniform when completing arrival formalities. Coast Guard Captain Diaz, in charge of the Santa Marta area, says that the change is often noticed in the way officers now interact with yachting visitors. He explains that Colombian coast guard personnel were once trained to approach yachts cautiously, killed during routine inspections when vessels turned out to be smuggling drugs. Now we can balance a welcome with maintaining security.”

Changes being made to simplify yacht clearance procedures are also being noticed. And although the World ARC fleet won’t be able to take advantage of it, the maximum length of stay in the country has been extended from six months to one year, and is renewable.

The 53 sailors who were fortunate to be in World ARC’s inaugural Santa Marta visit did, however, pack a lot into their stay. Highlights included a visit to the historic former sugar estate of San Pedro Alejandrino where South American liberation hero Simon Bolívar Clockwise from left: Local media interest in the event was keen. Here WCC director, Andrew Bishop, is interviewed for television; Stalls set up in the marina gave sailors a chance to purchase local handicrafts; On Tropical Party night, hot Colombian rhythms loosened up the sea legs spent his last days, joining in with a high-energy local dance troupe at the marina’s Tropical Party, and being whisked by local sportsfishing boats to Bahia Concha, set in the splendid Tayrona National Park.

Throughout the rally, the participants were the guests of Manuel Julián Dávila, who organized the laid-back beach barbecue as his personal welcome. In association with the Red Cross and Marina Santa Marta, the sailors also engaged in a fundraiser for Fundehumac Foundation, a charity for underprivileged children in Santa Marta. On the ultimate night of their stay, a gala prizegiving dinner for the first leg of World ARC 2015-16 was held at the elegant century-old Club Santa Marta, adjacent to the marina.

The fleet departed Santa Marta on January 20th, with horns blowing, cameras clicking and water spouting from tugboats. The Swedish crew of the 42-foot double-head-sail sloop Agama wrote in their log, “A sad but wonderful send-off from Santa Marta, her charming and friendly people and all the amazing hospitality we were given.”

Trinidadian Marian Bordé at Exocty says to anyone thinking of joining World ARC, “Have a go! Give it a try!” Her husband, Peter Jennett, grins, “I heard somebody call it ‘concierge sailing’ — but it’s really good!”

Thanks to ProColombia for making Compass’s first-hand coverage of this event possible. Visit www.worldcruising.com/worldarc for more information on World ARC.
Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series 2015

Records Breaking, International Interest Building

by Sue Pelling

The Mount Gay Round Barbados Race Series, incorporating three days of coastal racing and the Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race, concluded on January 24th. Overseas competitors, who made up a large part of the 36-strong fleet, represented 11 countries including the UK, New Zealand, the USA, Lithuania, Slovakia, France, Poland, Germany, Argentina and many neighbouring Caribbean islands. The event was organized by the Barbados Cruising Club in association with Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. and Mount Gay Rum.

Although the winds throughout the series were generally lighter than expected, all five fleets enjoyed four days of tactical racing.

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Above: Demonstrating different downwind styles, dueling J/24s College Fund$ and Glory Daze catch up with the brigantine Tres Hombres

Below: Absolute Multihull record holder, Silver Bullet

The impressive standard of sailing in the nine-strong J/24 fleet helped to make the event extremely spectator-friendly. Most of the eight-race, closely fought J/24 Coastal Series took place in Carlisle Bay on windward/leeward courses. It was also the first time the J/24 class had been granted fleet status in the Mount Gay Rum Round the Island Race. This created a lot of interest, particularly when Jason Tindale was the first skipper to establish a new record time of 9 hours, 6 minutes, 38 seconds. For this he won his weight in Mount Gay Rum: 21 cases of it. The team also won Round the Island CSA division.

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Interest in the Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race is steadily building among big boat racing teams who are keen to challenge for the outright record. Although the record remains with the British VO70 Monster Project, which set a record of 4 hours, 42 minutes, 28 seconds last year, it was good to see some serious challengers this year, including Conviction, two VO60s, and a Farr 72.

The highly contested CSA Cruising division in the Coastal Series went to the British Virgin Islands-registered Beneteau Oceanis 473, Leonora, sailed by David Spieler, which won all three of that division's races. One of the most competitive classes was the Non CSA division. Although Richard Inniss from the USA and his team on Other Business (a Beneteau Idylle 51) scooped an overall win, a local team on Mandy (a Hunter 30) headed by Bruce Robinson, didn't make their life easy. Robinson and team won the first race and constantly challenged for the lead throughout the series and finished just one point astern overall.

William Griffith, CEO of the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc., said the future of the event is assured. "This is mainly because it is ticking all the right boxes as a tourism product. This year we attracted more international competitors than any in previous years, so the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.'s aim, which was to open the event to new markets, has already started to take effect in a most significant way."

Peter Gilkes, Consultant to the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. for Yachting Development, who has been involved in the organization of the event for many years, added: "The event has grown with each passing year and this has not gone unnoticed by those who are charged with making the decisions within the tourism arena. As part of our effort to continually improve, our plan is to create new berthing arrangements in the Shallow Draft area so we can accommodate more visitors: up to 70 yachts. The event is starting to get the best in the world... As the event continues to grow at this top end of sailing therefore, our product can only get better with each year."

The dates of next year's 80th anniversary event have been confirmed for January 16th through 24th. Visit https://app.regattaguru.com/bec/100086/results for full results. Visit http://mountgayrumroundbarbadosrace.com for more information.

Anniversary note: Here's an excerpt from Norman Paris's coverage of the Mount Gay Regatta in 2000 — "Alex, the Bogars couldn't stop the Trini, though it was fairly close. In the Racing Class, the Trini Beneteau First Class 10, Ten-Shun, took class honours. The helmman is part-owner David Rostant. The consistent Andrew Burke and his crew on the 30.5-metre-long Countdownto, designed and built by him in Barbados, came second. An almost identical (its keel shape is slightly different) boat to Ten-Shun, the Rajun Beneteau 10 Braggaduc was third. Owner and long-time supporter of the intra-regional regattas, Ralph Johnson was at the tiller."
ISLAND WATER WORLD
GRENADA SAILING WEEK 2015

Innovations Add Even More Spice!
by Ruth Lund

Sunny, breezy, lively and testing race days out on the water plus sleepless, music-filled nights ensured that the Island Water World Grenada Sailing Week 2015, January 29th through February 3rd, lived up to its promise to "Spice it Up in Grenada"!

Boat numbers have increased each year since the first 2013 edition and this year 39 boats registered from 11 different countries, with racing crews hailing from many more nations. Grenada’s best sailors did well against strong contenders, particularly from Barbados, St. Lucia, Trinidad, the UK, Canada and the USA.

In Racing Class there was a close battle between winner, Richard Szyjan’s modified Hobie 33, Category 5, from Grenada and second placed Peter Lewis’s J/105, Whistler, from Barbados. Category 5 has been knocking on the door for two years and their persistence paid off when they won by 1.5 points. Trinidad boats have always been strong in this class, but this time Mark Chapman’s KER 37, Dingo, took third, closely followed by Paul Solomon’s Henderson 35, Enzyme.

New this year was the option for Racer Cruiser Classes 1 and 2 to fly spinnakers and there was much debate in the bar beforehand as to which way to go. An offset on the windward mark helped spread the boats for better safety, given the variety of designs taking part in terms of size, speed and maneuverability.

The increase in larger-sized boats registered this year meant tight competition in the Racer Cruiser Class 1, ultimately won by long-time campaigner Ralph Johnson’s Beneteau 53, Rapajam, from Barbados, after considerable challenge from second-placed Piccolo, a USA-registered Dufour 44 with a UK owner, Andrew Yates. Piccolo’s best dressed, spirited crew were hard to miss in brilliant pink to match their spinnaker. Scott Watson’s Jeanneau 51, Boxer, from Canada came third.

In Racer Cruiser Class 2, Jason Fletcher’s Albin Stratus 36, Apero, dominated with six firsts and three seconds. His Grenada Marine team was doubly delighted when the boat was named Best Performing Yacht of the regatta. Despite being one of the smaller boats, with relatively inexperienced crew, Apero elected to fly a spinnaker and worked hard to triumph in this class that had the most boats. Peter “Champy” Evans’s Elan 37, Julie Rule, also from Grenada was second, and the evergreen Swan 43 Rasmus, owned by Austrian Dieter Huppenkothen, took third.

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The J/24 One Design Class was newly introduced in 2015. With short up/down courses and a leeward gate to suit their preference, seven hardy crews completed 16 races over four days, with more than half being sailed in bouncy water off Grenada’s south coast that had two crewmembers from Glory Daze overboard. The enthusiastic presence of this class added a new dynamic to the regatta and certainly pulled the average age of participants down. A huge effort was made by Robbie Yearwood and his long-time crewman Patrick Brathwaite to encourage J/24s to compete in Grenada. The generous assistance of True Blue Resort and Horizon Yachts in providing accommodation for the J/24 crews made all the difference in bringing the J’s to this regatta. Robbie Yearwood’s Island Water World Die Hard won, chased by Stephen Bushe’s Ambush from Trinidad, which was second, notwithstanding the knot that would not stay knotted in the first race causing the mainsail to come down, costing them two races. Third was Fredric Sweeney’s young and limber team on Attitude from St. Lucia.

In the Classic Class, introduced in 2014, five graceful yachts spread their large sails for specially designed longer races. Judd Tinnis’s 1899-built 70-foot yawl, Galatea, was doing well until the top part of her rig came down on Race Day 3. With great sportsmanship Galatea completed the entire course with a jury rig on the fourth and last day, managing to take third place overall. The winner was Richard Oswald’s impressive 1902-built 80-foot schooner, Coral of Cowes, with Matthew Barker’s 1930-vintage 65-foot cutter, The Blue Peter, just arrived from an Atlantic crossing rally, placing second. The well-known 58-foot Lily Maid and Grenada’s 43-foot island sloop Savvy, with an exuberant Scottish charter crew, did well to compete with these giants.

Camper & Nicholsons Port Louis Marina, Victory Bar and Yolo Bar provided the ideal welcome sailors have come to appreciate and expect. On the Saturday night, the first ever all-inclusive Grenada Sailing Week Music Fest was held at Virgin Beach with four great Grenadian bands keeping everyone dancing into the early hours. On the Sunday Lay Day, sailors match-raced St. George’s University Sunfish dinghies in front of Mt. Cinnamon Beach Cabana and enjoyed the picturesque Grenada Sailing Festival workboat racing off Grand Anse Beach. Then it was Prickly Bay Marina’s turn to wind up the regatta in spectacular style with a steel pan band, the Tivoli drummers, fire dancers, fireworks and the amazing Grenadian band Soul Deep.

Special thanks go to title sponsor Island Water World; associate sponsor, Grenada Tourism Authority; and Race Day sponsors Mount Gay, Sea Hawk Premium Yacht Finishes and Spice Island Marine Services. Also to St. George’s University, Mount Cinnamon, Netherlands Insurance, Dream Yacht Charters, The Moorings, Ace Hardware, L’In, Turbulence, Doyle Sails, Palm Tree Marine, Grenada Marine, Island Dreams Yacht Services, FlyingFish Ventures Marine Survey, Bluewater Sailing Grenada, Real Value IGA, Sails Restaurant, L’Anse Aux Epines Cottages, Lisa’s Grenada, Coconut Beach Resort, L’Anse Aux Epines House & the Sugar Mill Tower, Sol Petroleum, Underwater Solutions, Glenelg Spring Water, Colombian Emeralds, Conch Bar and Art & Design.

Next year’s Grenada Sailing Week dates are January 28th through February 2nd. Visit http://grenadasailingweek.com for more information.

Anniversary note: In the very first issue of Caribbean Compass (see this month’s cover) I wrote a report by Jeff Fisher on the 2nd Annual Grenada Sailing Festival, which then comprised both workboats and yachts [Champy Evans raced in that edition, too]. The yacht races have since branched out into today’s Grenada Sailing Week. We’ll cover the Grenada Sailing Festival for workboats in next month’s Compass.
I enjoyed contributing and it kept me "on my toes" with deadlines. It was my first platform for seeing my writing in print, and I still have those copies of the Compass with my articles! It encouraged me to continue writing after leaving the Caribbean — I now have written 140 articles on our cruising experiences. One of these I promise myself I'll get all together to publish, even if only for myself. Alfred and I have spent many years enjoying the Pacific and Southeast Asia, but are still hoping to complete the circle and return to Europe. As it were, we are on count down to leave Malaysia for South Africa within a few weeks.

With all good wishes, Rosemarie Alecio, S/Y Ironhorse

Back in 1995 we were still working in Bermuda and taking holidays when we could on Lorensu. This usually meant July through August to fill the educational year, so we were in the Windwards for peak mango season and avocado season. Now we do the "sailing season" and Lorensu is in a Minquinge boatyard in the hurricane months. Looking back at the log, '95 was the year that we sailed down from St. Maarten to haul out in St. Lucia, thus avoiding hurricanes Luis and Marilyn that devastated Simpson Bay Lagoon. Somewhere in our island hoppin' we may have picked up our first copy of Compass — did the distribution extend that far in '95? I recall then subscribing to have a copy mailed each month. I remember the bright S/V stamps on the wrapper and the uncertainty of when it would arrive. I remember Tom once mailing about 20 copies of an October Compass for me to distribute in Bermuda to boats on their way south. I took them to the Customs centre in St George's. A crew checking in immediately took a copy each; I had to ask them to take one per boat, as these were all I had.

Later it became too expensive to mail out copies and as subscribers we received a password to read Compass online. I remember that the last three mailed copies arrived together in my mailbox about two years later! In one of them (the July 2008 issue) was my recipe for banana bran muffins, part of an article promoting Windward Island bananas. I still prefer the paper copy to the online version. I start with letters, go on to recipes, then feature articles and business news. If I get really desperate, I might look at the regatta stuff. Then feature articles and business news. If I get really desperate, I might look at the regatta stuff. I still prefer the paper copy to the online version. I start with letters, go on to recipes, then feature articles and business news. If I get really desperate, I might look at the regatta stuff. I still prefer the paper copy to the online version. I start with letters, go on to recipes, then feature articles and business news. If I get really desperate, I might look at the regatta stuff. I still prefer the paper copy to the online version.

The warm welcome in the Bequia office remains unchanged. Thank you, Compass Crew.

Sue and Peter Simons, Lorensu

I discovered the Caribbean Compass while taking the American Sailing Association classes in St. Lucia in 1995. Have been a loyal reader since, always looking for the "inside story" of what is happening in the Caribbean. I especially enjoy the personal stories, recipes and tips for sailors. Happy 20th and long life.

John Lupien, Toronto, Canada

When Caribbean Compass first appeared in March 1995, it was a long overdue breath of fresh air to an industry that is much more than just sailing. Informative, well-written, covering an incredibly wide range of topics, fun to read and appealing to folks of all ages and from all walks of life, not just sailors. Over the past 20 years, it has not simply maintained its standards but has developed and improved to the point where it today is one of the most widely respected sailing news outlets anywhere in the Caribbean. Myself and many others look forward to the new issue each month, and when a new issue was once a few days late arriving at our office, five of us planned jumping into one of our ex-military landing craft and storming Port Elizabeth. Fortunately the newspaper appeared before we had donned our combat fatigues and had our pointman's raid was aborted.

Many congratulations to Tom and Sally, Wilfred, Elane, Shellene and every other individual involved in the production of Compass past and present — you should be very proud of yourselves.

Narendra ("Seh") Sethia, Barefoot Yacht Charter, St. Vincent
—Continued from previous page

Karel’s will take you twice a week to Van Der Tweels supermarket, a more upmarket store with lots of fresh stuff and a great deli. The goods are mostly Dutch, and you can get beer for US$8 a case here, as opposed to the normal $32. Euro Shopper labels are well worth checking out, also the AlI labels (it stands for Albert Heijn, the big Dutch supermarket chain). The Warehouse is across the street; pop in there too.

Donkey Sanctuary. These animals are always busy, the conditions good, the onlookers many, and if you get blown there and they’re moving. Private beach is exercise enough. They’re out standard high. Just watching from the shelter. (717-4889), it’s about 45 minutes walk out of town (so maybe go when you do a round-the-island trip by car). These guys do a great job educating people about how to bring up pets. Our one-year-old cat, Annie, is a tribute to this. We got her last January and I don’t know when I’ve met such a happy, balanced bundle of joy. There are several good vets. Ask at the shelter.

For us humans, medical possibilities have developed a lot in the last few years since Bonaire became part of Holland in 2010. There are private dentists and doctors in town who are efficient and have that small-town friendly attitude, hard to find these days. Our doctor has actually returned our phone call for a chat. Barry, my husband, had a cyst removed from his arm and five neat stitches, all for US$50; the biopsy was around a hundred. Also in town is the hospital (715-8900). X-rays, echo scans… short of a triple bypass, you’re good to go.

While you’re waiting for your biopsy result (about three weeks), there’s plenty to do. Bonaire is a fun place. Get a car, a map and brochures from the Tourist Office will help out. Ask around.

Next — kiteboarding. The beach is always busy, the conditions good, the standard high. Just watching from the beach is exercise enough. They’re out there and they’re moving. Private lessons are available and if you get blown offshore they’ll come get you before you get to Curacao. Inland a bit, visit the Donkey Sanctuary. These animals are so sweet and deserve all donations. They’ve been around forever but are slowly losing ground to motorized vehicles, development, etcetera.

On the east side of the island is Lac Bay, famous for its windsurfing; you can learn that, too, if you want to. Bonaire’s windsurfers are the best in the world; they don’t surf, they fly! Sitting with a margarita and your feet in the sand at Jibe City and watching them is an inspiring experience, and the more margaritas you sip the faster the windsurfers go!

At the opposite northern end of the island (it’s 16 miles long, so hardly a trek) is the Washington National Park. Educational and informative, it’s worth a visit and a drive round. Then there’s the Cadushi Distillery, where you can buy a liqueur made from cactus. I haven’t tried it but the man on the brochure looks pretty happy.

Having done all that, you’ll be exhausted. Go home, flop into the hammock and then watch the sunset with a cold beer or two.

Now you’re bound to be hungry. Restaurants abound. If you like ribs, look no further than Bovember’s right opposite the moorings or just follow the aroma — I think they do it on purpose; it lures us all. It’s open weekends only (including Friday nights) and take-outs are big business. Call (717-4783), and then send the most energetic person ashore. It doesn’t get any easier. If you want to be more fancy, dinghy down to the Harbour Village Marina and go to Pasa Bon Pizza. There are many more deals on Wednesday nights (you have to book). A short walk south from there is Pasa Bon Pizza. There are many more options; a brochure from the tourist office will help out. Ask around.

To talk work for a moment, there’s a developing boatyard just up from Captain Don’s run by a Swedish guy called Lennert Davidson. He’s expanding all the time. It’s called El Navegante and he can be reached at navegante@telbonet.an. Last I heard he was looking at bigger haul-out facilities for yachts; he was only doing small before.

Bonaire isn’t for serious boatwork, though; Curacao’s the place for that. More about that next month!

So, hang out and enjoy this beautiful island. Bonaire’s a great place to visit and a hard place to leave.

Blindingly white salt hills contrast with the pinkish hue of the saltpans...
WE departed the Colombian island of San Andrés on a multiple overnight passage to the much-anticipated Kuna Yala nation, the San Blas Islands. This is an archipelago consisting of almost 400 mostly uninhabited islands with turquoise waters and countless pristine beaches dotted with nut-laden coconut palms.

Panamania Part 1: WE FOUND ULTRA SATISFACTION IN THE SAN BLAS ISLANDS

by Bill and JoAnne Harris

History
During the first decades of the 20th century, the Panamanian government attempted to suppress many of the traditional customs. This was bitterly resisted, culminating in a short-lived yet bloody but successful revolt in 1925 known as the Tule Revolution (“people revolution”), led by Ignacio Báltica Nele Kuntule of Ustupu and supported by American adventurer and part-time diplomat Richard Marsh. A treaty was created in which the Panamanians agreed to give the Kuna some degree of cultural autonomy.

The Kuna women were once again free to wear their traditional clothing, including gold rings through their noses and long strands of beads wrapping their arms from elbows to wrists and legs from knees to ankles to keep them thin. In their culture, it is considered beautiful to have small wrists and ankles. These long strands of beads are pronounced “weenie” in Kuna. Bill is having fun saying that JoAnne was given a “weenie” as a gift from our Kuna friends and now has been “wearing a weenie” for the last eight months.

Traditionally, Kuna families are matrilineal, with the bridegroom becoming part of the bride’s family and taking her last name.

—Continued on next page
We were told that only women could own land in Kuna Yala. The men work as hunters and fishermen, and the women seem to do everything else. As in parts of Polynesia, transvestites are a normal part of society here. We were told that if a community does not have enough girls, some boys are brought up as women to keep the tradition of the matrilineal society. The two best mola makers we have seen in San Blas, Lisa and Vinancio, are both transvestites.

**Sea Life**

The snorkeling in the San Blas is outstanding! The brightly colored coral is teeming with fish, lobsters, giant crabs, conch, reef sharks, nurse sharks and at least two really fat bull sharks. However, we heard from other cruisers who have been in this area for several years that overfishing has seriously depleted the abundant seafood supply. It is sad to witness the careless acts of some of the native fisherman who will take any size fish, lobster, conch or crab from the sea and attempt to sell them to the boaters. Most cruisers refuse to purchase the small catches and especially the catches holding eggs. But if the catches of the day don’t sell to the cruisers, the natives use them to feed their large families that night. We tried to educate a group of Kuna natives about the importance of reef conservation and the damage that they are doing, but to no avail.

**Fresh Food Delivery**

When our first Kuna fishermen approached, they sailed up to Ultra with extreme precision. They arrived with a boatful of gigantic crabs; the claws were as big as Bill’s hand. The crabs were so big, they did not fit into any pot that we have onboard. So we removed the claws and even then we had trouble cramming them into a pot. Amazing!

The produce boats showed up almost every week, bringing a bounty of beautiful fresh fruits and vegetables from the mainland. They were much appreciated, since the San Blas Islands are remote and the stores here don’t carry produce of this high quality. Along with the produce, we were able to buy eggs, boxes of wine, flats of beer and bottles of rum.

The currency of Panama is in Balboa coins. Everyday business transactions can be conducted in US paper currency, US coins or Balboa coins. The exchange rate is one Balboa to one US dollar.

**It’s Like The Old West Regarding Coconuts**

Do not even think about taking any coconuts, from anywhere! Even if an island is uninhabited, the Kunas still own every coconut on every island. The coconuts are sacred and are a staple in the Kuna diet, as well as a part of their livelihood. They can sell them to cruisers or to the Colombian trader supply boats that cruise through these islands. It is stealing if you take a coconut without asking. Note that the Kunas will collect your aluminum cans and sell them to the Colombian traders as well.

Next month in Part 2 of our San Blas adventures: Things That Go Bump, Our ‘Sea World Experience’, and Arts & Crafts with the Chief.

**Anniversary Note:** Among Compass’s newer contributors, Captains Bill and JoAnne Harris are from Kemah, Texas and are on their sixth year of cruising aboard their tri-maran, Ultra. Their enthusiasm for the Caribbean cruising life makes it all new to us again. They are currently exploring Panama and Colombia, soaking up the intoxicating Latin culture and working on their Spanish. Their blog is at www.jandbyachtultraadventure.blogspot.com
“Where are these yellow buoys, then?” I grumbled, as we motored up and down Charlestown anchorage looking for the Customs buoys our cruising guide said we should tie up to in order to check in. Eventually we decided to hover around the waterfront where Customs could see the boat while Kevin went ashore in the dinghy. When he came back he reported that the yellow buoys had been washed away and we could have picked up one of the white buoys off Pinney’s Beach. (Okay, I know the information has probably been updated in the latest edition of the cruising guide or on the internet and we could have saved ourselves a lot of trouble if we’d checked.)

Stepping ashore in Charlestown, the main town of the island of Nevis, is like stepping back in time. Many of the old colonial-era buildings have been preserved, so that the narrow streets are filled with stone warehouses and shuttered wooden buildings in candy colours — pale blue, mint green and sunshine yellow — with balconies and wide overhanging roofs. More than once, a glance through a stone archway revealed a hidden courtyard. Nevis is part of the twin-island nation of St. Kitts & Nevis. The local people are friendly and courteous. Many are the descendants of African slaves, but we also noticed quite a few people speaking Spanish; it’s not too far from here to Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic.

While exploring the town we stopped to quench our thirst at Vic’s Bar in one of the small buildings in candy colours called “The Museum of Nevis History”. Standing on the waterfront, stands on land once owned by Hamilton’s grandfather. The exhibition covered the history of Nevis from the early days when America was a wilderness to the present day. It was quite a lot to take in before you can knock a nail in you have to drill a pilot hole and even termites won’t eat it. In 1628 English settlers arrived from St. Kitts. More followed from England, mostly men hoping to make their fortune, which meant that the ratio of men to women on the island became ten to one. Women arriving from England would be eagerly snapped up at the wharf and hustled off to the church to be married. Sugar cane production meant that plantation owners amassed vast fortunes: “As rich as a West India planter” was a well-known expression and Nevis’s sugar was said to be the best in the West Indies.

Later I discovered that “Amazing Grace” has a connection with nearby St. Kitts and Nevis. Coming to Nevis while he was stationed in Antigua to enforce the British Navigation Acts, Charles Nelson was eager to get married. (You can get a map from the Museum of Nevis History.) Nelson came to Nevis on a trading mission to earn money to help provide for his family. Later he married a Nevisian widow and I understand he went on to be Lord Nelson, the famous English admiral, who led the British fleet to victory at the Battle of Copenhagen. Nelson’s English Battle of Copenhagen. Nelson’s English victory in the Battle of Copenhagen led to the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Outside the museum is a poigniant memorial to the 227 people who drowned on August 1st, 1970 when the St. Kitts–Nevis ferry Christoforus rolled over and sank in The Narrows. When we commented to the museum guide that it was sad that many families lost several people in the disaster she smiled and explained: “A lot of people tell me that. But because they have the same surname it doesn’t necessarily mean they were related. Slaves arriving in the plantations took the name of the plantation owner.”

Stepping into History

ALL ASHORE...

The Museum of Nevis History

This was our first visit to Nevis and I had been looking forward to it because I knew that Lord Nelson, the famous English admiral, had married a Nevisian widow and I also wanted to find out who Alexander Hamilton was. The Museum of Nevis History, on the waterfront, stands on land once owned by Hamilton’s grandfather. The exhibition gives a good overview of the history of Nevis. The island was originally settled by Amerindians. Christopher Columbus anchored overnight in November 1493, naming the island San Martín as it was first sighted on St. Martin’s Day. But by 1540 maps showed the island’s name as “Nieves” — from the Spanish word for snow. It seems that the cloud that often hides the top of Mount Nevis resembled snow to passing sailors. By the late 1500s Europeans were visiting the island to cut down lignum vitae trees. This must have been a difficult task as the wood is so dense it won’t float; before you can knock a nail in you have to drill a pilot hole and even termites won’t eat it. In 1628 English settlers arrived from St. Kitts. More followed from England, mostly men hoping to make their fortune, which meant that the ratio of men to women on the island became ten to one. Women arriving from England would be eagerly snapped up at the wharf and hustled off to the church to be married. Sugar cane production meant that plantation owners amassed vast fortunes: “As rich as a West India planter” was a well-known expression and Nevis’s sugar was said to be the best in the West Indies.

Near to the museum you can see the ruins of the slave market. From 1671 Nevis became the centre of the Caribbean slave trade. Between 1674 and 1689 around 7,000 slaves were brought to Nevis to be sold. Plantation owners on other islands complained that the Nevisian plantation owners always got the pick of the best slaves, so to placate them, occasionally ships would call first at other islands.

The Nelson Museum is a short walk out of Charlestown in the direction of Fort Charles. (You can get a map from the Museum of Nevis History.) Nelson came to Nevis where he was stationed in Antigua to enforce the British Navigation Acts, which prohibited trade with all but British Empire ships except in an emergency.

—Continued on next page
—Continued from previous page

In Charlestown Harbour he found four American ships, which he promptly impounded. The Nevis merchants, to whom the confiscated cargoes belonged, tried to sue Nelson for damages and such was the uproar that Nelson was forced to stay on board his ship for two months until the lawsuit was decided in his favour. Rather generously, one of the plantation owners, John Herbert, stood bail for Nelson and even invited him to his plantation. This was where Nelson met Herbert’s niece Frances Nisbet, a widow with a young son, who impressed Nelson with the efficient way she ran her uncle’s large estate. The two fell in love and were married at Fig Tree church on Nevis, where you can still see the entry in the Parish Register. The relationship later turned sour and Nelson took a mistress, Lady Emma Hamilton. After his death at the Battle of Trafalgar, Nelson’s body was returned to England in a barrel of brandy to preserve it on the voyage and he was given a State Funeral attended by 2,000 people. Two people were conspicuous by their absence — his wife and his mistress.

Near to the Nelson Museum the Bath spring emerges from the ground at a temperature of 107° Fahrenheit. It runs down a rocky channel overhung with trees to a small pool and bathhouse that are still in use today. When I went to put my hand in the water of the stream a local stopped me: “Not there — it’s too hot. Go down there.” Even further down, the water was still the temperature of a hot bath. We hadn’t brought swimming costumes and towels, but we could have bought them from a lady who also sold cold drinks and snacks. We almost felt guilty we didn’t, as she was trying very hard to sell us something, but not in a pushy way. The Bath stream water has healing mineral properties and has been used for bathing since Amerindian times, which I assume is why they called Nevis Oualie — ‘land of beautiful water’.

The imposing Bath Hotel is reputed to be the oldest hotel in the Caribbean. Built around 1778, at the height of its popularity it was surrounded by landscaped grounds known as The Gardens of Jericho. A ball to celebrate Nelson’s wedding was held there and in the 19th Century the first nine-hole golf course in the Caribbean was built in the grounds. Abandoned and re-opened several times since then, it now houses the Premier’s Ministry.

Opposite the Bath Hotel is an area of scrubland and sparse trees. I caught sight of a movement out of the corner of my eye: a troop of green vervet monkeys had emerged from the trees and was scampering across the grass. These small, timid monkeys were originally brought to Nevis by plantation owners as pets. Most of them are now wild, but we did see a few unfortunate specimens in cages outside bars, presumably as tourist attractions.

Nevis is a delightful mixture. Charlestown is “the Caribbean as it was 20 years ago” — a charming colonial town whose residents are down-to-earth and welcoming, while many of the former plantation houses on the slopes of Mount Nevis have been turned into elegant boutique hotels.

The slogan on the tourist brochure we picked up was “Come discover the most enchanting little island in the world”. We were glad that we had.

Christine and Kevin Gooch are sailing the Caribbean in their 38-foot Prout catamaran, Sweet Sensation.
where do we begin to express what a pleasure it brings us to share our cruising adventures with others — especially the joy we feel in our hearts when we inspire others to go for their dreams? we will celebrate our sixth year of full-time cruising — over 30,000 nautical miles — this month. after cruising the us south and east coast and the eastern caribbean, we have been exploring the western caribbean. we have had so many amazing adventures while cruising and some of the most extreme highlights have been encountered in the caribbean. the cruising life is an amazing life, but it is always important to know and to be informed, whether it be information about great cruising areas, a calendar of upcoming fun events, security, how to repair this or that, etcetera. the compass is the perfect tool for those currently cruising or for those who live vicariously through others. it is a great way to spread a wealth of information both on and off the water.

we have visited places of which we have heard both positive and negative comments, and we take into consideration all of those comments. it is essential for the boating community to have the capability to gather this information and all of the facts about cruising areas. these comments can save money, property, health, and even your life. i believe that there are some other publications only want to print positive comments and others just negative comments, however, we feel compass prints the facts — the good, the bad, and the ugly — in order to keep us all informed.

we commend compass for staying true and publishing the fun as well as the facts, and giving us yet another resource to gather information.

by jo-anne sina seuwal

for one week in mid-january 2015 i had the pleasure of visiting the island of st. eustatius, or “statia” as it is commonly called, to do a biological survey of the spiders found there. statia is located in the southern leeward islands, to the southeast of the virgin islands and northwest of st. Kitts & nevis. st. eustatius together with saba and bonaire make up the netherlands antilles.

although dutch is taught in the schools on the island, most of the population speaks english or the dialect that you commonly hear in all of the english-speaking islands in the caribbean. st. eustatius is a melting pot. when you visit you will also hear some people speaking spanish, as there is a small community from the dominican republic. you will also notice that the street signs are in dutch and that many signs are bilingual.

we arrived on a saturday afternoon and found to our surprise that most of the stores were closed. our host told us that the reason was that the majority of the population are seventh-day adventists who observe the sabbath from 6:00pm on saturday to 6:00am on sunday. as a result, stores open after 6:00pm on saturdays and stay open quite late. many stores will also be open on sunday mornings.

this tiny island, measuring only 21 square kilometers, has a lot to offer in terms of ecotourism. in order to carry out the survey, my colleagues and i had to do a lot of hiking, which is excellent here. statia also has impressive reefs and provides hours of enjoyment to the snorkeler and scuba diver.

this article gives a brief summary of the hiking available on the island if you want to fill up a spare week in your cruising calendar.

the urban areas are basically separated into two areas. one is a small area concentrated within walking distance of the airport. the second is the capital, oranjestad, which is separated into two sections: upper town and lower town. lower town, as its name suggests, is located closer to the coast.

with such a small population — about 3,500 people — and compact urban area, there is no public transport on the island and people get around with bicycles, mopeds or motor vehicles.

when it comes to hiking, st. eustatius national parks (stenapa) has cut and maintains seven hiking trails: quill, courtiau, around the mountain, papanora point, mazinga, botanical garden and crater. stenapa is also in charge of three national parks on the island: marine park, miriam schmidt botanical garden and the national park, which is in two parts: a dormant volcano called the quill (the english translation of the dutch word for “pit”), and white wall.

to access the hiking trails you pay the annual national park entrance fee (us$6), which includes a hiking tag and a mini-guide with a trail map.

the most popular trail is the quill trail. as you hike up the quill it is not uncommon to see a chicken or goat in the understorey vegetation. at the end of this trail you are presented with many choices of other trails to follow. the around the mountain trail takes approximately four hours and goes around the quill a bit above its base. it is one of the easiest trails in the national park system. along the way you pass white wall, a sheer limestone cliff on the south side of the volcano.

the mazinga trail leads up to the highest point on the island at 600 metres. another popular set of trails, consisting of three ridges and the butterfly trail, is on Gilboa hill on the north of the island. the butterfly trail is the easiest, and the second ridge the most difficult. the vegetation here is a stark contrast from that found at the quill and consists of thorny shrubs and cacti growing in clusters among the grass. most of the rain is caught by the quill, as the clouds move over it and the rest of the island is left in a rain shadow.

the trails are marked with flagging tape and with arrows on wooden signs that are hung on trees. however, where trails cross it is easy to get turned around, even if you are following the arrow as you jump over to another trail. although the terrain is manageable it is quite easy to get lost. therefore, it is advised to hire a tour guide for the more challenging hikes such as the mazinga or the crater trails. (it is advisable to hike with a partner or in a group on all of the trails in case of injury.)

gill brook is quite tricky in that the trails are quite narrow and really just trodden pathways in the grass; an inexperienced hiker could be following a goat trail instead of the official trail. on gilboa hill you see many low stone walls. these were constructed using slave labour to prevent erosion when the torrential rains came, usually around november, and to mark land boundaries.

the most challenging hike is the crater trail. it is not the hike up to the crater’s rim that is difficult, but the hike that goes down into the crater itself. just a few feet in, the dry evergreen forest turns into a lush rainforest. at one time the trail was more accessible, but after a period of heavy rain in 2010 much of the path was eroded, so be prepared to do some serious climbing as you make your way in and out of the crater. there are ropes to aid you along the way. owing to the rain and the fact that the rocks are quite slippery and a badly placed step could result in injury.

hiking guides can be arranged for at the stenapa office and at the tourism office located in fort oranjestad in the capital.
Bay offers a wide selection as well as postcards. They open afternoons from 1:00 to 6:00 PM.

Bead Bar and Restaurant on Gallows Bay. The Chinese store located at the end of Saddlerwey sells what I would call smackies. It offers half portions of fried chicken for US$3 or a portion of ribs for US$4. They also sell Johnnycakes, which are the small round fried breads typically found in the Eastern Caribbean. You can get a plain one for US$1 or one with cheese for US$2.50.

On our last full day on the island we got to go on an archaeological dig at the Fair Play Plantation, where Reese Cook, the Director of Archaeology at the St. Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research, gave us a brief history of the island and the estate. It was a sugar estate, although the harsh conditions on the island, which include a lack of water, did not make for a thriving agricultural sector. However, the island was wealthy in colonial times because there was no tax, which kept down the cost of imports. One could get almost anything on Statia, which was the trading centre of the Caribbean for approximately a century. This reputation earned the island the nickname “The Golden Rock.”

Some of the structures on the Fair Play estate include the Great House, where the plantation owner lived and where they are currently excavating, the boiling house, and a windmill (only the stone base has survived). There is evidence of gears, indicating that animals (or slaves?) were also used to provide power. Other structures include quarters for the overseer and the slaves. Compared to other islands in colonial times, we were told that everyone on Statia had a better standard of living, and this included slaves. They had larger living quarters, housing on average two to five persons, complete with a hearth for cooking. In hiding places in these living quarters archeologists found plates of Chinese porcelain — castoffs from the great house, no doubt — rather than the earthenware plates found on other islands. The layout of the estate is strategic in that the production started at the highest point on the estate and the finished product ended up down the hill, making the work easier.

The archeologists are also studying Statia’s famous blue beads. Beads were used as currency in the slave trade; slave traders would trade with tribal chiefs their prisoners of war from other tribes. It is also believed that these beads were given to slaves as a form of currency. The different shapes of the beads represent the countries they are from. The round beads are African trading beads, but the five-sided ones are unique to Statia. However, the legend of blue beads has evolved over the years. It is now said that you have to give the first blue bead you find to a friend, and that if you do that, you will eventually find another one. It is also said that if you find a blue bead, the island has chosen you to return. However, keeping blue beads or removing them from the island is illegal, as they are historical artifacts. If you do find any you have to turn them in at the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute located on Saddlerwey.

Nevertheless, if you are looking for a souvenir that is uniquely Statian, you have to get blue beads. Replicas of these beads are sold at the dive shop opposite STENAPA’s office in Galloway Bay for US$20. The other dive shops along that stretch sell loose African trading beads: the large ones are sold for US$10 and the small ones for US$8. The blue bead leg- end is quite popular on the island and one of the first restaurants you will see is the “Blue Rock.”

Jo-Anne N. Sewlal of the Department of Life Sciences of the University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus is the Editor of the Environment Tobago newsletter and the Secretary of the Trinidad & Tobago Chapter of the Caribbean Academy of Sciences.

Anniversary note: Betty Karl, writing in the September 2002 issue of Compass, said, “We enjoyed our visit to Statia and were glad we stopped. We’ve found that the smaller islands seem to be the friendlier ones, especially when most cruisers bypass them. So, visit the islands people don’t talk about much: you’ll be pleasantly surprised.”
We cruised the Caribbean on Windolee.

Pushing through the Daily Newsner, I saw my own Caribbean Compass to have it. And, it held a high quality, bright blue-and-white photo on the front cover. It portrayed a classic English sailing yacht rounding the mark, someplace down island in the Caribbean. It was love at first sight.

The Compass had stories, pictures and insider information about exotic places that we dream of visiting someday. It was going to be done in a brightwork-laden little schooner by the name of Windolee. The mate and I did it a few years later.

We cruised the Caribbean for a year, and then came home to St. Thomas to rejoin the moneymaking regattas. But I kept my sanity for five years by doing a regular monthly column for the Compass, starting in 2001. It delved lightly into whatever caught my eye, aptly titled “Eye On the VI.”

The article that I remember most is that very first one that I wrote, pounded out in Windolee’s fo’c’s’l in Grenada. The title: “The Caribbean Basics,” I wrote about what I felt white still a cruiser. The article had a crude humorous drawing that I sketched in about three minutes that still gives me a smile. I think it was my best. Funny thing about that.

Rob Kunkel, St. Thomas, USVI

Twenty years ago I had just published my first book, Rums of the Eastern Caribbean, and was one of the least experienced writers I knew who had actually published a book.

Writing for Compass gave me an opportunity to grow as a writer but more importantly led to meeting a man who became a very important friend and mentor to me and several other Caribbean writers. A fellow cruiser, Cleo Boudreau, had retired as the head of the language department of Suffolk University in Boston about the time I headed to the islands, but it was during the time I was writing for Compass that he offered to help me craft words into something more than sentences. On bar. In Martinique, with a coffee cup in one hand and my latest draft in the other, Cleo would read my words and tell me what a terrible writer I was (seriously). But, without any effort at all. Early friendships Cleo had told me, “Everyone needs an editor.” And then, “Don’t hate your editor.”

I miss that time in my life when I could spend two or three days putting together one story column about my favorite drink. I would then go to Cleo’s boat, actually enjoy hearing him tear it apart so I could rewrite it over the next few days.

About ten years ago, I helped Cleo sail Mekiba to Florida. When we arrived at MI Jupiter Inlet, Time magazine was waiting on the dock to interview me for an upcoming story about rum. Several more books and numerous articles for all manner of publications later. I’m importing rum from Guyana, St. Lucia, Puerto Rico and Jamaica for the Hamilton Ministry of Rum Collection.

Thanks Compass, I hope the next 20 years will be as good as the last 20 have been.

Ed Hamilton, www.ministryofrum.com
Samaná Bay has long been a stop for cruisers on route from the east coast of North America to the Eastern Caribbean.

In terms of logistics and total nautical miles, taking into consideration that sailing from Montecristi to Cabo Enguíno by the northeast zone is 250 nautical miles and from Montecristi to Isla Saona by the Windward Passage is 640 nautical miles, the south zone is a reasonable sailing option if the objective is to explore the natural beauty offered — and that is a lot! However, if the objective is to have a planned route from the East Coast of the US to Trinidad, including all the chain of islands, the Windward Passage is off route.

I had the opportunity to sail and live for some years on the north coast, especially at Luperón Bay, as well as in Boca Chica in the south coast, and my personal opinion is the same as that of the sailors who have participated in the Hispaniola 360 Challenge. To the Eastern Caribbean? By the Mona Passage!


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CC: CLODS

The Caribbean Compass was a big part of the best years of my life. March 1995. Tony and I lived in a condo in Alexandria, Virginia. On one wall was a poster of a 51-foot sloop anchored in Devil’s Bay, Virgin Gorda, which was our way of visualizing our dream of sailing/racing in the Caribbean together after Tony’s retirement.

November 1995. We started sailing our 35-foot sloop from Annapolis to St. Croix, arriving in Fajardo, Puerto Rico, in time for the 1996 Heineken Regatta. That was when I first laid eyes on a classy-looking free waterfront magazine, the Caribbean Compass.

July 1998. We flew to Tortola and purchased a 51-foot sloop, sisterhip to the one in the poster. We loaded our gear in St. Croix and sailed to Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, where I was pleased to find the English-language Caribbean Compass at the marina. Reading the Compass was the best way to get news of the sailing community, regattas and destination information, and repair advice.

Our mid-Caribbean rescue story was big news in the marinas, and one cruiser suggested I send a write-up to the Compass. I did write a real magazine article before. I gave it a shot and took some photos of the two men we had rescued halfway between St. Croix and Venezuela. The cruiser said she’d send it to the Compass. The story appeared in the September 1998 edition. Since then, the Compass has seen fit to publish much of what I’ve been inspired to write and photograph. I found that writing about the wonders (and nightmares) of my cruising life was cathartic, defined and preserved unique experiences, and filled a creative need I didn’t know I had.

Meeting Sally and Tom and several other Compass writers brought me fulfilling long-term friendships, a fringe benefit I would not trade for the world. And now, as a Cruiser Living on Dirt (CLOD) on St. Croix, my few pages of fame have followed me, creating instant “old friends” in the most surprising places.

Thank you for everything, Compass — you added a valuable dimension to my cruising days and really made a difference in my life.

Ellen Duff / Ellen Sanpere, St. Croix

"I didn’t know there were any single-handed sailing ladies!" Sally told me that a male sailor said this to her, on reading one of the articles I contributed to Caribbean Compass. Well, I won’t be the only one, there were, to my knowledge, two others, but I was certainly the oldest, having set sail from the UK in 1996 at the age of 63 and arriving in Trinidad five years later, after crossing (with a little trepidation) from the Gambia and then the Cape Verdes. But how happy I found I was in Trinidad! Many factors contributed to that, but chiefly, basically, was the wonderful publication Caribbean Compass, in which was every sort of information I could ever need. That paper was for me a sort of haven; I could relax in my little boat (Moonriver, a 30-year-old Apogee), and comfortably learn about the islands, the seas, and best of all, people. What a fantastic introduction! I would use key that unlocked all sorts of doors for me and was fun and stimulating to read.

Although I have long since stopped sailing, guess where my heart still is? The two years, on and off, I spent in and around Trinidad were the happiest of my life, and I’m still in touch with some of the friends I made. I even brought back to the UK with me a large pile of — yes, you guessed — the inimitable CC.

Eleanor Tims, UK

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Street’s Guides describe some of Donald Street’s favourite Caribbean cruising grounds, many of which are not even covered in most of the other sailing guides — including east coast of Grenada (Grenville and Sandy Islands), south coast of Curaçao, east coast of Curacao (Grand and Watering Bay — protected by four miles of barrier reef), east coast of Curacao (Windward Bay — protected by a mile of barrier reef) and some wonderful cruising options and anchorages for the east coast of Martinique.

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An Ounce of Prevention: What Is a Condition Survey?

by Frank Virgintho

When we think of surveys and surveys, we generally think of either buying or selling a boat. Marine surveyors have a broad range of services that they can provide and perform in a number of roles. While there is no single agency for marine surveyors, they are mostly sought based on their experience and knowledge. There are associations that surveyors can belong to, such as NAMS (National Association of Marine Surveyors) and SAMS (Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors) but there is no “one way” to become a surveyor. Yacht surveyors who specialize in pleasure craft can come from many different backgrounds. Those who are excellent develop reputations based on their experience and it is not too difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Even if you are not planning on selling it, it is still very much in your interest to seek out an excellent surveyor and have him or her survey your entire boat, stem to stern. It does not make much difference how well you think you know your boat. Your relationship with your boat is subjective and it is difficult, if not impossible, for you to review your boat in a completely objective way. Boats are complicated and sometimes something innocent-looking can be overlooked, only to cause a major problem later.

There are a number of different types of surveys, some of which are more detailed than others. The survey that you should consider having done to your boat will be a condition survey.

Before you do any work on your boat, including upgrades that you have planned, it is always best to have a complete survey so that you know your starting point. You may plan to do an upgrade on your boat without realizing that there are related areas that can impact the work. There may be unsuspected deficiencies that need to be attended to first.

Before you do any work on your boat, including upgrades that you have planned, it is always best to have a complete survey so that you know your starting point. You may plan to do an upgrade on your boat without realizing that there are related areas that can impact the work. There may be unsuspected deficiencies that need to be attended to first.

Boats can be a great joy. However, a boat whose condition is not well managed can be a hazard and a source of constant upset. Tremendous stresses are placed on boats, even in normal sea and wind conditions, and failure and damage can occur that can put those on the boat in a dangerous position. No matter how knowledgeable a sailor you are, breakdowns often happen unexpectedly.

I have owned and managed many marinas all of my adult life and have had a great deal of sailing experience. Some years ago, I decided to change all the standing rigging on my 65-foot ketch, Ruffles Light, while the boat was in Trinidad for hurricane season. Part of the rigging change I had planned was to remove the wire rigging that holds the teak bow platform in place against the upward pressure of the foresail. As a result, I had two tooled stainless steel bars made up to replace the wire that made up the dolphin striker. The wire rigging that had been in place led from a very large turnbuckle just under the teak bow platform. I had all the rigging completely replaced — except for the turnbuckle. The turnbuckle was old but looked to be in excellent condition. Both the stainless steel fabricator and the rigger agreed with me, and our little committee voted to keep the existing turnbuckle. About a year later, sailing south of Guadeloupe on a reach in 15 knots of wind, the turnbuckle failed and the bowspirt broke in half, which in turn took the toerail and the teak bowspirt with it. A tremendous amount of damage happened in slow motion in mild conditions in a matter of just a few minutes. I had not overlooked the turnbuckle, or left it in place to save money, but simply thought (as did others) “it looked good”. Instead, I had replaced the damage with Billy Wray, a Lloyds of London approved surveyor of many years’ experience, he said that he would have recommended that the turnbuckle be changed owing to its age and the change in loading caused by the solid rigging. There is no question that we all make mistakes, but the mistake I made was an avoidable one. No one was hurt, but the inconvenience and subsequent cost of repairs left me chagrined.

Billy Wray has his office at the Peakes’ Boat Yard in Chaguaramas, Trinidad. He has delivered boats all over the world over a period of five decades and has surveyed more than 500 boats. He has an excellent reputation in the Yacht business.

The turnbuckle was old but looked...
Frank: “How about the expense, Bill; do you think it is worth it?”

Bill: “A full survey, both in and out of the water, can cost between US$10 and $20 per foot or more. A 40-foot boat can average US$500 to $600 for a complete written survey of the boat and her systems. If the survey is done properly, it is a true bar-

gain. The price of surveys is also affected by the type of survey requested. A pre-

purchase survey is normally the most detailed and thus the most expensive.

Insurance and condition surveys may be priced lower.

“Once the survey is completed, the owner will have a frame of reference that

will provide an insight, not only to the boat’s current condition, but also to what

should be considered in the way of maintenance over the years to come. A boat whose

condition is not properly managed can present a very real danger to its owner and his

family, guests and crew. The adage that ‘an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of
cure’ is very applicable to boat ownership and maintenance.”

I also had the opportunity to communicate via e-mail with Frank Pearce, who is a

Master Marine Surveyor certified by the US Surveyors Assn. He is based in Carriacou and

not only surveys cruising yachts but also manages refit projects.

He had this to say about the opportunity to review the findings with Billy Wray and

how Frank feels that the benefits of periodic surveys are extensive. Many boatowners think that “if it

works, don’t touch it.” This type of thinking is what I call “convenient ignorance”.

None of us want to confront something that is not currently problematic. As one

friend of mine said, “If you don’t like bad news — understood!” However, when your vital interests are at stake, it is

incumbent upon a boatowner to be well advised and extremely clear on every aspect

of his vessel and its condition in all areas.

Frank Pearce points out that he agrees with Billy Wray on the importance of

surveyors having the time to communicate with the surveyor, so that I am sure that I am sure!

Frank also reflects on the need on GRP boats for a periodic check with a moisture

tester, every four years. That way the owner has advance warning of poten-
tially serious problems that can be dealt with at less expense if caught in time.

Frank adds, “This can save nasty shocks if the yacht is later surveyed for a

potential buyer.

Regarding failure of stainless steel fittings and rig failure, particularly for boats

cruising in potentially squally conditions in the Caribbean, Frank points out that “there are too many incidents of rig failure.” Rig failure is a very dangerous matter as it can cause damage, injury and even loss of life. He believes that rigging should be

inspected by a reputable rigging specialist on a periodic basis. I have found that when I have the boat surveyed, I can also have the rigging specialist review the rig-

ging and confer with the surveyor, so that I am sure that I am sure!

Surveys can also include valuations that address the question of what the boat

is really worth. This can come into play with your insurance company to assist you in avoiding problems of under-insurance and co-insurance where if you do

have a claim, you are not paid in full because you failed to insure the boat for its

market value.

Additionally, when the time does come to sell the boat, the surveys you have on file can assist you with both the pricing as well as the history of the boat; a survey is an independent opinion about your boat and allows for documentation that can be seen

by third parties as objective.

If you have not done a survey in recent years, find a good surveyor and discuss your

boat with him or her. Explain how you use it and ask for a condition survey as well as valuation estimates.

When you receive your survey, read it carefully and comply with remedying any

deficiencies that may be noted. Keep the survey on your boat as part of the boat’s

equipment, as you will refer to it many times.

Most surveyors I have dealt with over the years are insightful experienced people.

I love having my boat “checked and gone over” and when the survey is concluded and

complied with, my sense is that the horizon is now obtainable. I set sail with a

sense of confidence that allows me to focus on cruising without much worry regard-

ing unexpected problems and failures.

If you have not had your boat surveyed in the last four years or so, this is a great
time to give it some thought, so that the next time you haul out, you can get her gone over”. When you receive your report, you may not like all of the findings,

knowledge is power: having a good survey under your belt makes a great deal of sense.

Anniversary note: Frank Virgintino, author of Free Cruising Guides (www.freecruis-
guide.com) has been in the marina business since 1978 and has built, owned and

managed marinas in the United States and the Dominican Republic. He has obtained

degrees in finance and in education, and taught as a college professor for 13 years.

He has sailed in the Caribbean for more than 40 years, and has contributed regularly
to Caribbean Compass since 2010.
For years I've collected guidebooks the way an avid beachcomber gathers prized seashells. Rough Guides, Fodor's, Frommer's, Lonely Planet, and especially Insight Guides with all their lucent, glossy pictures, line my bookshelves, each volume an inspiration to explore distant shores. Some have accompanied me to Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and Grenada, while others entertain the armchair traveler in me. More recently, I've amassed subscriptions to travel magazines, with their tempting descriptions of beaches, ancient sugar mills, and romantic boutique hotels. But my newest fixation? That would be travel blogs. Somehow, the focus and insight that a blog allows, along with its personal tone and one's ability to trace the author's adventures has utterly captured my imagination.

Perhaps you also have travel and cruising blogs you regularly follow. It astonishes me how much creativity there is, particularly among folks who love the Caribbean. In case the world of travel blogs is new to you, however, I'd be honored to introduce four excellent websites with brilliant images and engaging writing.

One of the very best, and possibly the gold standard for West Indian blogging, surely must be Uncommon Caribbean (www.uncommoncaribbean.com). Founded by two brothers from St. Croix, Steve and Patrick Bennett, this blog posts new stories every day. Their specialty? Eschewing overexposed subjects in order to present readers with an authentic slice of the Caribbean. One day they might film a video of delectable “doubles” being prepared on the streets of Port of Spain, the next might chronicle an enchanting afternoon at one of Martinique’s best oceanfront bistros. What won’t you find on the Bennetts’ blog? Clichés or generic descriptions of a region they care about deeply, and travel through constantly. Not only do I subscribe to their weekly newsletter, I also follow them on Facebook, so I never miss a post.

Certainly one of the most enthusiastic and fun-loving Caribbean blogs is Rum Shop Ryan (www.rumshopryan.com). The creation of Ryan VanDenabeele, this website has become wildly popular with people who can’t get enough of the tropics. The writer named his creation “Rum Shop Ryan” because, as he puts it,...—Continued on next page
--Continued from previous page--

West Indian rum shops are where “friends come to socialize or ‘lime’ as they call it. People from all walks of life just conversing over a flask of rum as equals.” Needless to say, on Ryan’s blog you’ll find stories about various Caribbean rums, off-the-beaten-track beach bars, and instructions for concocting a wide variety of drinks. His “Caribbean Weekly Wrap Up”, posted each Friday, collects the best regional travel stories from a variety of sources. Follow his blog and you’re automatically a member of the merry crew Ryan calls the “Castaways.”

The latest blog I’ve fallen for bears the intriguing title “Women Who Live On Rocks” (www.WomenWhoLiveOnRocks.com). The brainchild of writer, touran trainer, and BVI resident Chrissan Nickel, this is one website whose posts always leave me smiling. (And in many cases laughing out loud!) Some tourists imagine that daily life on a tropical island involves simply lounging on the beach and sipping umbrella drinks. As Chrissan and her many contributing writers know, existing on a “rock” requires patience, guts, and an unflagging sense of humor. Whether describing the dangers of outdoor showers or getting lost in the bush, these fish-out-of-water stories make for hilarious reading.

Rum Therapy’s slogan, “When all you need is a little tropicaution”, truly says it all. This fourth blog’s mission involves celebrating island life and particularly island rum drinks. On their website (www.rumtherapy.com), you will find an impressive library of home-made rum cocktails, illustrated with colorful photographs. The husband-and-wife team enjoy discovering new rum bars, from Anguilla to Jamaica and St. Maarten. Want to vicariously spend an afternoon on Mayreau’s Saltwhistle Bay Beach? Or learn where to quench your thirst on Bequia? Their blog directory conveniently organizes their posts by island, so you can quickly access the tips you’re seeking. Like the other three blogs I’ve mentioned, Rum Therapy maintains a lively social media presence, including a Facebook page brimming with gorgeous island snapshots.

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Outside of writing and going barefoot from one island to the next, I have always been a book hound. When I was a child, the presence of a new book was like a ray of sunshine on a grey day. As an adult, I feel the same way; there is something magical about the act of turning pages and reading. It is a source of joy and relaxation and a means of escape. I have always enjoyed reading about the Caribbean, about other cruisers and about all the happenings. When we met, Des and I were both avid readers. Our favourite e-mail from the Connoisseurs was a personal message from Jack Foard, with Des and Lady Pitkeathly, formerly aboard S/V Famous Potatoes: “We were very interested in reading the latest Compass — the latest carry-on — and we have had a great time reading it. We really enjoyed the stories and the photos and we laughed out loud at the good stories! We are looking forward to your return to the Caribbean.”

“Sueños” and “Chiri” are two of my favourite Spanish words. “Sueños” means a dream, a fantasy, or a wish. It is a wonderful word that conveys a sense of possibility and hope. “Chiri” is a term that is often used in the Caribbean to describe something that is really good, delicious, or satisfying. It is a word that is both playful and practical. It is a word that is fun to say and easy to remember. It is a word that is perfect for describing a delicious meal, a delicious drink, or a delicious island. It is a word that is perfect for describing a dream, a fantasy, or a wish. It is a word that is perfect for describing the Caribbean. It is a word that is perfect for describing the Caribbean Compass.

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CC: FROM FREELANCERS

Cruising the Caribbean with the Compass is all-encompassing! The Compass... so much more than a compass, used—or not—on cruising boats. It is the one and only compass all Caribbean cruisers have in common and should not live or travel without. It is the Caribbean Compass, a magazine written by cruisers for cruisers, a magazine teeming with useful information, exciting events, interesting stories, intriguing waters, insightful poems, tasty recipes, illuminating pictures, thought-provoking letters and much more. It is a magazine that provides an all-encompassing insight into the Caribbean’s heart and soul. Its culture, sights, people, food, activities, festivities, destinations in, on and along the water, its attraction and attractions, its being the way it is. And, the Compass has been guiding the reader with this unique mix of topics for 20 amazing years! The Caribbean Compass “spoke” to me when my husband, Mark, and our dog Dash arrived in the Caribbean in 2006. For three years, we looked forward to reading it and each time we visited a marine store or other boat-related venue, I would pick up the newest issue and read it from cover to cover. Once we left the Eastern Caribbean—and even now, years later and thousands of miles further west—I grab the PDF on line monthly and read the pages at my leisure. My favorite parts are the stories submitted by other cruisers, the poems and the letters section.

While in the Caribbean, I loved the magazine and its composition so much that I wanted to be part of it, and managed to share some stories as well. For a writer, Caribbean Compass provides a lot of freedom in regards to content, voice, word count, structure and creativity. The Compass crew does an incredible job putting every issue together and the result never fails to please. Congratulations Compass Crew on all your achievements and thank you for providing Caribbean cruisers with this monthly dose of information and entertainment. For 20 years! Liesbet Collaert, S/V Irie

One of the many reasons why cruisers love this fantastic monthly review is that it delivers news and fun, and has kept locals and visitors to the Caribbean up to date with sailing, cruising, recreational boating, tourism, fishing, environmentalism and more for 20 years. Caribbean cruisers anticipate every issue, and every month avidly read it from cover to cover. It means that you guys at Compass are doing a nice job. But Compass has also given space to us, the Caribbean cruisers, to share our stories, knowledge and experience, no matter how limited they might be (like in my case). It has been just a few short months since I first set foot on a sailboat, and for the first time this season I had the pleasure of cruising in the Caribbean with my family aboard our very first sailboat, Fata Morgana. It’s been the most exciting time of my life. It has been just a few short months since I read my first issue of Caribbean Compass as well, and decided to submit a story from our Caribbean adventures for publishing. It got accepted and I even saw one of my pictures on the front page! How extraordinary! I suddenly became “a journalist” and my entire life as a cruiser changed. I was now sailing and visiting islands thinking about the next story to write. I even started interviewing people and getting access to places presenting myself as “a writer for Compass” which in turn gave me an opportunity to visit many sites and learn many new things that I otherwise wouldn’t have done. But you see, you don’t have to be a journalist to have your story published in Compass. If it’s enough to have a story, because Compass is a cruising publication for cruisers by cruisers, and that’s the beauty of it — a community based on sharing. Thank you, CC for this opportunity, and I am so glad you are there for us and I do hope you will always be there for the Caribbean cruisers in the next many years to come, one month at a time. Maya, 11 years old, S/Y Fata Morgana

I also wanted to write a thank you letter to CC for letting me write in their awesome Caribbean newspaper. Thank you, thank you very much and happy birthday! Hope you have a nice cake to celebrate! Maya, 11 years old, S/Y Fata Morgana

Congratulations on your 20th Anniversary! Wow! What a landmark. I remember reading the legendary Compass for the first time over a decade ago when we were new to cruising in the Eastern Caribbean, soaking up all the great stories and ideas. So when the publication had to offer. I still have clippings tucked away from our early days to this day. In fact I kept enough of the newspapers to sink a boat — thank goodness for the online edition.

As Sim and I became more familiar with the islands, Compass allowed me the privilege of contributing to this wonderful magazine, which I am very proud to be part of. Everybody knows, the Caribbean Compass is essential reading for anyone who is sailing, cruising or related to the water in any way in the Eastern Caribbean. It is always thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining to read — which (whenever I have a hard copy) I always do from back to front, for some reason. Although the Caribbean is our home away from home, we are currently cruising the Bahamas and North America but keep up to date with current “going on” vicariously through your magazine. Congratulations again and keep up the good work. Rosie Bum, Wandering Star

Rosie Bum, Wandering Star

MARCH 2015 CARIBBEAN COMPASS PAGE 36
LOOK OUT FOR...
The Benevolent ‘Bashie’ (Calabash)

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

_Crescentia cujete_, commonly known as the calabash tree, can be found throughout the tropics. While no one is positive where it originated, although Central America looks possible, these trees have certainly been welcome wherever they grow. The tree and its components have proven beneficial to humans, and the fruit is rather attractive as an ornament.

The most obvious part of the calabash tree is the gourd-like fruits that develop on almost any part of the tree, including the trunk. This green or brown fruit can vary in size from ten to 30 centimetres in diameter, and may be round or oval in shape. There are seeds and a whitish pulp inside the fruit, with the untreated pulp being poisonous although possessing some medicinal qualities. There is no specific season for the fruit.

The young fruit is soft, but upon maturing it develops a hard shell. These shells have been used for millennia by various cultures as bowls, cups, scoops, storage vessels and ornaments. To this day, there are still people in the Caribbean who readily use “bashie bowls” or “boleys” to enjoy their meals. Decorations or designs can be etched into the shell, which will create a two-toned relief pattern. They are also often painted or varnished. One can find finely made examples of these bowls for sale in island straw markets and craft shops.

The tree can grow to about ten metres (33 feet) in height. It tends to grow in the drier areas of the Caribbean, especially in places with full sunshine. They can be cultivated by planting seeds or cuttings that take readily, but grow slowly. The bark is rough, affording an excellent place for orchids to grow. There are large nodes in the twigs and trunk. The leaves are spoon-shaped and grow in clusters along the twigs and trunk.

Calabash flowers bloom at night, when they are pollinated by nectar-seeking fruit bats, and by noon the next day the flowers will wither. The bell-shaped blooms are light green in colour, and they give off a slight scent.

In addition to the utility of the gourd-like fruit, the tree has other uses. The wood is strong and springy, making it desirable for a number of purposes. Blocks of the wood may be used in orchid cultivation. The leaves and bark are used for their disinfectant properties, while the pulp is utilised for respiratory problems and other medicinal purposes.

The “bashie” is truly a benevolent and giving tree. Recognized as such, the calabash has been elevated to the status of St. Lucia’s national tree.

While some boating magazines proudly announce, “We don’t publish poems”, Caribbean Compass has never been afraid to venture into these waters; sometimes even doggerel is a hoot, and we’ve had lots of high class acts, too. There must be something about the motion of the ocean that inspires people to express themselves in rhyme.

Happy 20th, Compass!

Twenty years of publishing, by any yardstick measure
The Compass is a magazine that island sailors treasure.
News and information for the yachtsman, that is clear,
Regatta dates, tales and reports that racers hold so dear,
Letters to the editor where sailors vent their spleen,
Controversy and challenge: nothing dull or “in between”.
At distribution points you may hear yachtsmen make a rumpus,
“What do you mean? You must be mad! You gave away my Compass?”
So dear Compass Crew, thanks, and keep the good work up,
For we appreciate it and to you we raise a cup!

— Nan Hatch
Who’s ‘Footprints’?

“Footprints” is a humpback whale whose tail flukes were photographed in the winter of 2011 in the breeding grounds of Agga’s Marine Mammal Sanctuary off Guadeloupe. “Footprints” was also photographed in 2008 on the feeding grounds in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in the US Gulf of Maine.

What’s the Fuss? This humpback, between feeding and breeding grounds was recently discovered by Allied Whale’s North Atlantic Humpback Whale catalogue, whose humpback database just tallied its 8,005th individual.

What’s the Buzz—They’re ARRIVED! Allbeit not by jet plane or sailing vessel, humpback whales are arriving — cavorting, sauging, romancing — in the Caribbean. They are international citizens — acknowl- edging no sovereignty but their own — traveling through international waters of the North Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea without a passport.

Who’s WHO? Humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) are characterized by variable natural pigmentation patterns and scarring marks on the underside of their tail flukes and other regions of the body. The ability to recognize individual humpback whales from photographs of their tail fluke pigmentation and scarring patterns was first realized by researchers in the 1970s. Since that time, the technique of photo-identification has been widely used on humpback whale populations around the world to determine many aspects of their biology, ecology, and behavior.

Your Photos Can Provide SAFE PASSENGER for Humpbacks CARIB Tail is enlisting cruisers and other loasers to help track the movements of humpback whales between their North Atlantic feeding grounds and their breeding grounds in the wider Caribbean region.

Until recently, over the past 30 or 35 years in the Eastern Caribbean only 60 tail fluke photos had been taken. Thanks to sailors now contributing their photos to CARIB Tail, in less than a year five new tail fluke photos of individual whales have been added to the catalogue. The very first CARIB Tail fluke photo of 2015 was taken on the British Virgin Islands — and it’s a match! It’s a whale called “Face-06” who was seen in 2007, 2009 and 2013 in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

Send your whale tail photos to www.caribtails.org to be part of this project.

CC: FROM AGENTS TO ARACHNOLOGISTS

Remembering the times when it was Tom and Sally’s dream to have their own publication (and Sally doing cartoons such as “Fish Lips Jell-O”, “Obeah Copyright” and “Tropical Depression”) in the first editions of Chris Doyle’s (cruising guides), 20 years later it seems like Caribbean Compass has always been around, spreading a high-quality message to the yachting community. Here’s to being around for another 20! I believe an Island Agent proved to be such a great job I could only pass it on to my daughter, Karen. Congratulations!

Alan Hooper (with Shirley and Karen) Grenada

I have been with Caribbean Compass for more than 12 years now, first as an Island Agent in Guadeloupe and now in St. Martin/St. Maarten. It has been a great pleasure working with friendly and passionate people who, above all, love the sea, sailing and meeting new friends thanks to Caribbean cruising.

The sailors’ community of the Caribbean has a goal every month: get the latest issue of the Compass to hear the latest cruising news, and happy and also unhappy events occurring around this part of the world. Thanks for the fantastic job you are doing!

Stéphane Legendre, St. Martin

I have been grateful to read and write for the Caribbean Compass over the past two decades, and I hope to have the pleasure continue. The Compass with its fine admixture of features and ads, and information and opinion, is an invaluable resource for sailors and expatriates. You have created a useful and entertaining magazine that captures the community it serves and helps sustain it. Cheers!

Richard Dey Needham Heights, Massachusetts, USA

Twenty years. It’s a long time, enough to master the fine details, sharpen the skills and hone the expertise it takes to build and produce a successful publication. The success of the Compass should be proud of their accomplishment and we should congratulate them on their acumen and perseverance.

My relationship with the Compass began before the publication of the monthly. Sally Jenkins, the editor, is one of my oldest and dearest friends. It was she who first introduced me to sailing, the West Indies and Bequia. On every visit, she grounded me in the life and lore of the Windward Islands. Over the years, she teased and, sometimes, cajoled words from a didactical and bookish writer. She and her husband, Tom, gave me the freedom and solitude of their house where I could sit of my porches, on the deck or in the backyard, and hone the expertise it takes to build and produce a successful publication. Sally’s desk was across from him. Both rooms were covered with past issues, memoran- du, paste-ups and books and magazines.

In the end what can you say about such benign people who opened their lives to you and showed you a new world, piqued your deep ongoing interest, and, of course, favored you with an occasional by-line? How can your response be any- thing but profound gratitude and love?

Paul Tyler Rochester, NY, USA

In 1998, I moved to Tortola and shortly thereafter decided that my 14-foot-long, two-foot-wide, fiberglass, hand-driven (no paddle) paddleboard could become a tiny cruising yacht.

To prove this point, guided by just a compass and hand-held GPS, carrying water, boiled potatoes and minimal gear, I connected all 60 British Virgin Islands, hand paddling between them, prone or kneeling, tagging each island as I passed by.

In 1999, I paddled the Grenadines from St. Vincent to Grenada, stopping on all islands. That year I paddled from Grenada to St. Vincent.

In 2000, I paddled the Grenadines and relieved all the islands.

I was introduced to the Bahamas by an old friend of mine. He showed me some of the islands, and I had the idea of paddling between them. As a result, I paddled the Bahamas in 2001 and 2003.

In 2002, I paddled the Spanish Main and the Virgin Islands, and then I paddled the Virgin Islands in 2004.


In 2008, I paddled the Lesser Antilles and the Leeward Islands. I paddled the Grenadines in 2009, and then I paddled the Grenadines and the Lesser Antilles in 2010.

In 2011, I paddled the Lesser Antilles. I paddled the Grenadines and the Lesser Antilles in 2012.

In 2013, I paddled the Lesser Antilles. I paddled the Grenadines and the Lesser Antilles in 2014.


I came to the Caribbean in 1980, definitely ten years too late. But I still witnessed a healthy thriving group of islands that welcomed visitors for friendship, not only income. During the intervening years I have met many Caribbean characters, boozers, losers and cruisers and they have contributed to my writing. Nothing remains the same and change is sometimes good, yet the mega-hotels, mega-yachts, GPS, and the demand for tourism has polluted the friendship as melting ice dilutes rum. Thirty- four years later, my best day is easily remembered: winning the 1988 Round Carriacou Race with Hope McIver at the helm of his traditional schooner. Carriacou Race permitted each to throw in their two cents, and that is worth a million.

Ralph Trout, Trinidad

I do not remember exactly how I stumbled across the Caribbean Compass but ever since I wrote my first article for their pages eight years ago, I have never looked back. I am an arachnologist and since spiders are not found in the ocean I can be regarded as a terrestrial biologist. So what is a "landlubber" doing writing in a magazine aimed at the yachting community? The common thread we share, both writers and readers, is that we love the sea and explore. Fortunately my grandfather has taken me to many islands to collect data. But of course money is always a factor and in order to be thrifty I have had to live like a local during my stay. Time and money will always be important factors influencing how much we explore a country. So through my articles I aim to guide readers on how to experience as much of an island as they can, as quickly and economically as possible. But the Caribbean Compass acts not only as a guide for explorers but it also documents the life and lore of many islands in the Caribbean. I am very grateful to the Compass.

The editor has never been less than encouraging and I have met wonderful people who have even helped me organize my research.

Jo-Ann E. Sewell, PhD., Trinidad & Tobago www.caribbean spiders.com

Who’s ‘Footprints’?

“Footprints” is a humpback whale whose tail flukes were photographed in the winter of 2011 in the breeding grounds of Agga’s Marine Mammal Sanctuary off Guadeloupe. “Footprints” was also photographed in 2008 on the feeding grounds in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in the US Gulf of Maine.

What’s the Fuss? This humpback, between feeding and breeding grounds was recently discovered by Allied Whale’s North Atlantic Humpback Whale Catalogue, whose humpback database just tallied its 8,005th individual.

What’s the Buzz—They’re ARRIVED! Allbeit not by jet plane or sailing vessel, humpback whales are arriving — cavorting, sauging, romancing — in the Caribbean. They are international citizens — acknowledgment no sovereignty but their own — traveling through international waters of the North Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea without a passport.

Who’s WHO? Humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) are characterized by variable natural pigmentation patterns and scarring marks on the underside of their tail flukes and other regions of the body. The ability to recognize individual humpback whales from photographs of their tail fluke pigmentation and scarring patterns was first realized by researchers in the 1970s. Since that time, the technique of photo-identification has been widely used on humpback whale populations around the world to determine many aspects of their biology, ecology, and behavior.

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Your Photos Can Provide SAFE PASSENGER for Humpbacks CARIB Tail is enlisting cruisers and other loasers to help track the movements of humpback whales between their North Atlantic feeding grounds and their breeding grounds in the wider Caribbean region.

Until recently, over the past 30 or 35 years in the Eastern Caribbean only 60 tail fluke photos had been taken. Thanks to sailors now contributing their photos to CARIB Tail, in less than a year five new tail fluke photos of individual whales have been added to the Catalogue. The very first CARIB Tail fluke photo of 2015 was taken on the British Virgin Islands — and it’s a match! It’s a whale called “Face-06” who was seen in 2007, 2009 and 2013 in the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

Send your whale tail photos to www.caribtails.org to be part of this project.

Connect the Migration Dots

How many miles did “Footprints” travel on the migration from US Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary to Agga’s Marine Mammal Sanctuary in the French Antilles? How many miles round-trip?

A. “Footprints” traveled approximately 3,728 miles round trip, or approximate- ly 1,864 miles one way (2,999 kilometers or 1,620 nautical miles).
Anniversary note: Dr. Nathalie Ward has been contributing to Caribbean Compass since 1996, when she created our very first marine environmental column, “Sea Soup”. She is a marine biologist, conservation educator and marine mammal policy consultant. She is the Founder and former Director of the Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Network (ECCN) and has conducted research on humpback whales in the Caribbean since 1978. She is the Sister Sanctuary Program Director for the United States’ Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Program and the marine policy consultant for United Nations Caribbean Environment Programme. Dr. Ward has developed marine protected areas educational materials and programs in the Eastern Caribbean since 1984. She has authored numerous scientific publications and marine mammal field guides as well as children’s books on whales, dolphins, sharks and coral reefs. She resides in Bequia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Woods Hole, Massachusetts.
The Sky from Mid-March to Mid-April

by Jim Ulik

Play ball! And I don’t mean American baseball, although opening day is April 5th and the Chicago Cubs play the St. Louis Cardinals. Will this game be the fifth opening-day loss in a row for the Cubs?

Where am I going with this? Long before Columbus “discovered” and claimed the land for Spain, the Caribbean islands were populated by the Ciboney, Arawak, Taino and Carib people. These groups migrated and had settlements throughout the Caribbean and South America. The Taino settled many islands including Puerto Rico. There they constructed the Caguana Ceremonial Ball Courts or the Parque Ceremonial Indigena de Caguana. Was there a big game between the Arawak Diamondbacks and the Taino Bonitos? Who knows? Taino ball courts were found in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The other ball courts throughout the islands were likely destroyed by the future civilizations claiming ownership of the land. It was determined that these ball courts were aligned according to specific astronomical events. The rocks outlining the ball courts have engravings that resemble both astronomical objects and human figures. The courts were used for ball games, rituals, dances and astronomical observations. The ancient civilizations placed great importance on astronomy in their everyday lives.

This month, as you view the night sky, leave the navigational stars of Canis Major and Minor, mentioned in the last issue, and move toward the ecliptic (the path of the Sun in the sky). The previously mentioned navigational stars are beginning to set in the west. Figure 1 shows three more navigational stars that are now rising higher in the night sky. They are Pollux, Regulus and Denebola. Pollux is the brighter of two bright stars in the constellation Gemini and marks the immortal twin. It means “much wine” and is the 17th brightest star in our sky. Pollux also has an orbiting planet. Regulus is the “heart of the Lion” in Leo. Denebola, “tail of the lion”, is the 62nd brightest star in the sky.

The Sun’s noon position over this period will move from two degrees south latitude to ten degrees north latitude. The Sun has left Aquarius and resides in Pisces throughout this period. Mercury will be in near alignment with the Sun on April 9th and 10th. During this period it will be a little easier to identify a few planets or stars because the Moon will provide a reference object. The conjunction dates between the celestial objects and the Moon are as follows.

- March 18th – Mercury will be five degrees south of the Moon
- March 21st – Mars is positioned less than one degree from the Moon. If you are south of Grenada you may see Mars disappear. You can only see about two percent of the Moon but it will pass in front of (occult) Mars. Look for that to happen after 1814 and just before both objects set at 1944.
- March 22nd – In the western sky tonight you will be able to see eight percent of the Moon and a bright Venus that is situated northward. Mars is located just below and nearly 100 percent illuminated.
- March 25th – Aldebaran is less than one degree south of the Moon. It will reach that close point at 0255 hours.
- March 30th – It is Jupiter’s turn to appear north of the Moon with five degrees of separation.
- March 31st – Now Regulus will be four degrees north of the Moon
- April 4th – Spica takes its place three degrees south of the Moon
- April 8th – The last lunar conjunction this period is when Saturn appears two degrees south of the Moon

——Continued on next page——
—Continued from previous page

The rest of the celestial events during this period are below.

Tuesday, March 17th
Mercury rises at 0514. You will have to use your imagination, but know that Neptune is positioned right next to Mercury.

Thursday, March 19th
You can see a sliver of the Moon as it rises this morning at 0523. The Moon is up all day and is at its closest point to Earth (1538 AST) so watch those tides.

Friday, March 20th
The New Moon moment occurs at 0536. There is also a solar eclipse at 0546. Unfortunately the eclipse will only be viewable just before the Moon rises in the Caribbean. Moonrise is at 0614.

The March or Vernal equinox occurs at 1844 hours. This is also the first day of spring. The Sun is shining directly on the equator. "Equinox" originates from Latin and means "equal night": there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night. It was determined that the aforementioned Caguana Ceremonial Ball Courts were aligned with the solstice and equinox events.

Thursday, March 26th
Because I have written about a few of the navigational stars, I thought I would mention that Nathaniel Bowditch was born on March 26th, 1773 (he died on March 16th, 1838). Bowditch wrote The American Practical Navigator, the "Epitome of Navigation" that was first published in 1802. This volume has extensive tables, formulas and other information that apply to navigation, including celestial.

Wednesday, April 1st
The Moon is at its furthest orbital point from Earth today.

Saturday, April 4th
We are going to miss part of the lunar eclipse this morning. The Moon is just minutes from being full when you look west at 0503. The Earth’s shadow will just begin to touch the Moon’s face. The maximum part of the eclipse occurs at 0556 as the Moon touches the horizon. Either look at Figure 2 or find a high vantage point overlooking the water. If you can climb the mast that early in the morning, more power to you.

Wednesday, April 8th
At 2000 hours, Venus will be setting in the west. Directly overhead find Jupiter positioned in Cancer two degrees away from the Beehive Cluster. The cluster will be slightly west of Jupiter. Grab a pair of binoculars and you may see some of Jupiter’s moons: Europa will be right next to Jupiter. Europa harbors an ocean twice the size of all Earth’s oceans combined. NASA is planning for the Europa Clipper. That spacecraft and probe will be the first phase to see if there is life under its oceans of water.

April 8th is also the 55th Anniversary (1968) of Project Osma. That was the first Radio SETI by Frank Drake. SETI is still in business and searching space. What if there is life on other planets? Are aliens using fiber optics for communication, making the signals harder for us to detect? What does it mean to us if there isn’t life out there?

Sunday, April 12th
Look in the west around 1900. Venus will be visiting the Seven Sisters (Pleiades). Yuri’s Night - World Space Party. Yuri’s Night is a global celebration of humanity’s past, present, and future in space. Yuri’s Night parties and events are held around the world every April in commemoration of April 12th, 1961, the day of cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin’s first manned spaceflight and the inaugural launch of NASA’s Space Shuttle on April 12th, 1981.

In The News:
There will be two more satellites launched to become part of Europe’s Galileo navigation constellation. The planned launch date is March 28th. When all satellites (30 are planned) are in orbit, anyone anywhere in the world will be in sight of a minimum of four satellites. From most locations, six to eight satellites will always be visible. Now you can plan your trip to the Polar Regions.

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

Anniversary note: Sailors have always looked to the stars. Caribbean Compass’s first column about the night sky, written by the late Jane Gibb, appeared in 1999. Jane was succeeded as our “star writer” by Jeannie Kuich in 2002. Scott Welty took over as our chief stargazer in 2009, and he turned the big telescope over to Jim Ulik in December 2013. Thanks to you all for keeping us in touch with the heavens.
BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

Protagonist as Villain


What a book! Prospero’s Daughter. The story, however, has more to do with Prospero than his daughter. The main character, Prospero is one of the most unlikable protagonists you’d ever encounter, holding himself up as a model of learning and good upbringing, and all that is noble and wonderful to be emulated. He sees himself as the superior being to those around him. He is, however, eventually removed from his position. He is evil and almost loathed for the way he envisions himself. He is every bit the evil genius. He sees himself as a scientist working in his garden laboratory looking at, the inner island leper colony, Chacachacare (the setting of yet another novel by a Trinidadian author).

Prospero is vile: he’s a thief, a liar, a racist, a martinet, he’s incestuous, and in short what you’d call a s**t! He is English, born Peter Bidwedder, who later changed his name to Peter Gardner, and still later was renamed Prospero by his wife, a Trinidadian author. Since I cannot speak about sailing — absolutely no experience — I can only speak about writing. I started contributing to Compass about 15 years ago, and I have indeed enjoyed putting up words in my coverage of the ASC when I lived in St. Lucia for about four or five years: my short fiction, “Benny”, destination pieces: generally profiles, the three or four recipes, and most recently book reviews. I have always found Sally a firm editor and loyal to the Caribbean, e.g., when I...
Hall. Ross Mavis has been writing for individual submissions, we've enjoyed boat-friendly Caribbean recipe columns by part of Boil water, vinegar, pickling spice and salt until mixture is clear. At this point you beet juice will color the eggs pink. Using your own pickle mixture allows you to add carefully placing each ball into a pan with about one inch of hot oil. Roll eggs in pan encase egg inside meatball. Lightly dust meat-covered eggs with flour and then roll around each egg, forming it into a ball with your hands. Pat firmly to completely Take boiled eggs and roll them in flour to lightly coat them. Place a sausage patty meat into six equal portions and powder, salt and pepper. Divide bowl and set aside. In another small remaining two raw eggs in a small and then peel. Meanwhile beat eggs when having a cold beer. Pickled eggs will keep in a cool or refrigerated spot for a couple of weeks or more. Perfect snacks for underway! When wanting hardboiled eggs, place them in a pot of cold water over high heat. When the water comes to a rolling boil, turn off the heat and let eggs and water sit for 15 or 20 minutes. Plunge eggs into cold water and crack shells to ease peeling. Here are some of my favorite egg recipes that are great for an evening appetizer or for adding to a salad course.

Eggs in Kilts
That's what I called this recipe in my cookbook Yule's Table. You may know them more commonly as Scotch Eggs — they're delicious by any name. 6 eggs, boiled and peeled 2 eggs, beaten 1 1/2 pounds spicy sausage meat 1/4 Cup finely chopped fresh parsley leaves 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder 1 teaspoon sea salt 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper 1/3 Cup flour (for dusting) 1 Cup breadcrumbs vegetable oil (for frying)

Boil six eggs to hard stage, chill and then peel. Meanwhile beat remaining two raw eggs in a small bowl and set aside. In another small bowl, mix sausage, parsley, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Divide meat into six equal portions and flatten each into a patty shape. Take boiled eggs and roll them in flour to lightly coat them. Place a sausage patty around each egg, forming it into a ball with your hands. Pat firmly to completely encase egg inside meatball. Lightly dust meat-covered eggs with flour and then roll in beaten egg. Remove and roll in breadcrumbs. Pat again with your hands before carefully placing each ball into a pan with about one inch of hot oil. Roll eggs in pan until nicely browned. Remove and place on a baking tray to finish if you wish at 350°F. (I only do this step if I am not happy with the egg browning nicely all over.) Let eggs cool and then slice either cross ways or lengthwise before serving. A dollop of spicy mustard or sweet chili sauce is an excellent condiment to add.

Pickled Eggs
1 dozen medium or small eggs (you can use large if you wish) Enough water to boil them in 1 1/2 Cups white or cider vinegar 1 1/2 Cups water 1 Tablespoon pickling spice 1 teaspoon salt

You can add pickled beet juice or juice from a bottle of dill pickles if you wish. The beet juice will color the eggs pink. Using your own pickling mixture allows you to add herbs or spices of your choice. Boil and peel eggs to hard stage and cool. When cool, load them into a Mason jar. Boil water, vinegar, pickling spice, water and salt until mixture is clear. At this point you can add herbs or other spices of your choosing. Pour mixture over eggs in jar and let cool. Close jar and let them sit or pickle for a couple of days before serving. Deliciously!!!

Anniversary note: A well-fed crew is a happy crew, and recipes have been a popular part of Caribbean Compass since the beginning. In addition to innumerable excellent individual submissions, we’ve enjoyed boat-friendly Caribbean recipe columns by Owen Belcher, Mary Heckman, Captain Konrad, Michael Hall, Capt. Paul and Shirley Hall. Ross Mavis has been writing for Compass regularly since 2008.
The Food Fair

The Carenage:
Monday - Thursday
8 am to 5:30 pm
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Tel: (473) 440-2588
Grand Anse:
9 am to 5:30 pm
Friday & Saturday until 7:00 pm
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Hi, Compass Readers,
Thought you’d like to see this — from the front cover of Compass, I think it was February or March 1998.

It was taken during the Carnival Fun Race at the Trinidad & Tobago Yachting Association (TTYA, now TTSA) in 1997. I played Barbarossa in ‘97 and ‘98, creating some of the best memories of my life. Mitch Witt, former Barbarossa Warrior of Vesta’s Wind, hit the reef!

Currently sailing in the Grenadines

Don Street

MY FIRST SURVEY

Dear Compass,
She was a lovely little English yawl, in a slip in Vigie Creek Marina in St. Lucia in 1972, with the pumps going 24 hours a day to keep her afloat. She had been built in 1898 in a well-known yard in England, all out of Burmese teak, and had been sailed to the Caribbean in the early 1960s by her English owners when they were in their late seventies; now they were in their nineties, back in England, and had no idea what to do with their little yawl, nor her current condition. I had sailed into Vigie Creek a few months earlier with my 60-foot English cutter, Clover, and, as it happened, the manager of Vigie Creek Marina was Beverly Pringle — no relation to me, she hastened to assure me; it was her divorced husband’s name!

But we chartered out of there, in particular for Borden Stevenson, Adlai Stevenson’s younger brother, who had a house on the saddle between the famous Pitons. He was an eccentric host, and Clover frequently sailed over to Martinique to buy cases of wine, cognac and rum for him, and smuggle it back into St. Lucia. We also hosted a few dinner parties on board Clover anchored at Vigie Creek for Borden and his friends, whom we ferried back and forth in our Zodiac, since Clover’s 90’ draft prevented us from entering the marina.

So Bever Pringle saw me as a knowledgeable sailor and captain, and she had an old leaking yawl in a slip, and an aged couple who wanted to know what to do with it. Should they hire someone to sail it back to England? Fix it up, and for how much? Bever didn’t know, so she asked me to look at it. (As usual, I owed her money.)

—Continued on next page

Read in Next Month’s Compass:
Convenient Curaçao
Taking Refuge in Vieques
A Most Extraordinary Boat

... and much more!
Bilge pumps. When they disconnected the resources of her owners, she was a goner. It did not look good: planks bulging out from their sails in rags, tottering masts on ancient rigging; even topsides, and hear the non-stop pumping. As a novice could see daylight through the shrunken planks of the English craftsmanship had once been a little jewel, - Continued from previous page

William Pringle

Marine Surveyor

TRY A NATURAL REMEDY

Dear Compass Readers,

In late July 2007, a dignified older gentleman joined the Windward Islands, I learned that many locally found plants are used to supplement pharmacists and herbalists for their suggestions and methods of use. Generally, wash leaves, don’t mix herbs, and strain before use. If you have allergies, see a doctor before trying “bush remedies.” Good things to know about are the leaves of the neem tree, cocoyam, allano (fruit, seeds and/or leaves), aloe, ganja, “Christmas bush,” “vomit tree, coconut oil, okra seeds, papaya (fruit, seeds and/or leaves), and a wonderful gentleman, I have uploaded his DVD “Into the Ice” to my YouTube Channel. Here are the links to both of Roger’s DVDs:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVlast0P9P8 (“Into the Ice: The NorthWestPassage 2005”)
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtvqjMI5Qak (“Into The Ice 2007: successful voyage”)

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

Send your letters to sally@caribbeancompass.com.
LOST IN LABORIE

Dear Compass Readers,

This is my first real opportunity to communicate since running on a reef at Laborie in St. Lucia on the 17th of January. The GPS directions I used for entering the harbor were totally wrong. Some of the guides (Chris Doyle's Sailor's Guide to the Windward Islands, Fatsushii) have been corrected recently and in fact the entry is perfectly feasible.

Using the motor I managed to get my sailboat, Tybini, back into deeper water, but the hull had been holed due to the swell that lifted the boat against the rocks/reef. At this point I looked down the companionway and saw water over the floorboards. A minute or so later I could see water welling up very fast near the toilet bulkhead. At some point the boat lost her keel.

I had two crew on board, and only just had time to get them into the dinghy, grab my bag and my computer before Tybini turned in on itself with only the rails above water, buoyed up by the air trapped in the port side of the hull. She is a very wide boat (5.64 metre) LOA 15.77 metres) and the bulge of the beam provided a good reserve of air. Later, when a few more people clambered on the hull, she sank in about seven metres of water about 300 metres from the beach. The water was so murky it was impossible to see the hull from the surface.

In the next few days we refloated her with airbags and dragged her up the beach, but between an English expat who claimed salvage, and another who was most hospitable and generally a great help and who ended up with a lot of useful items, there was not much to sell except the dinghy and the winches.

If she hadn't lost the keel (2.5 tons) I would have considered rebuilding her, but repositioning her hull on the keel on the beach was just not feasible. Also, despite my instructions, she was pulled too close to the beach where there was another small reef, and she stayed there for two days while we dived on her to retrieve odds and ends (waiting for the builder to be repaired so we could haul her out) and during this time about three metres of the starboard side were shove in from the constant pounding contact with the reef in the small swell. Diving inside the hull was pretty perilous and visibility was down to about two feet, even with torches. A great quantity of sand came in through the breach and made salvage even more difficult, while many personal items were washed out through the hole. My credit cards and loose cash disappeared, too. I was not insured.

In the nine days I was there two other boats touched the reef but got off with only superficial damage. In recent times at least two other cruising boats have been lost there. Beware of instructions on the GPS, as mine were radically wrong (my charts hadn't been updated in the last six years).

There is a project in hand for buying the entry, and this is expected to be finished by December 2015, finances have already been obtained. Now it's just a question of how and when — but too late for me!

The people of Laborie were sympathetic and helpful, many people expressed their sympathy for my plight. Many locals helped without any thought of reward. I also received offers for a room at a heavy discount after the first three free days for the three of us.

Now I still have to finalize the disposal of the hull, which will probably be cut up and taken to the dump (at my expense). In the meantime it is used as an adventure playground by the local children.

Laborie is well worth a visit, but go carefully and be sure to take a recently updated guide!

Jeremy Hobday
Martineau

Editor’s note: Jeremy Hobday has been cruising the Lesser Antilles for many, many years. He has written to Compass on subjects ranging from avoiding fishpots to the proliferation of anchoring restrictions.

Laborie is often recommended as an alternative to Vieux Port for those wishing to anchor on the south coast of St. Lucia. We regret that Jeremy didn’t manage to see what Den Street wrote in the November 2005 issue of Compass:

"From Beannont Point come hard on the wind and head for Laborie — the most attractive village in all of St. Lucia. You are hard on the wind for only six miles. It is long port tacks and short starboard tacks: stay close to shore to avoid the current and stay in relatively calm waters.

"Forget the fathometer and the GPS: this is navigation with 'Eyeball Mark 1'! Keep your eyes well peeled, as Balembouche Rocks extend 600 yards off shore, as do Laborie Reefs, but the entrance to the Laborie harbor is easy to see in good conditions. See Street Guide, page 40, chart 15 and read the cautions and directions for entering this harbor very carefully.

"There are about nine feet of water inside the harbor. Years ago this was a favorite anchorage for the very small coastal schooners that plied this trade, but the slippers warned others not to try to enter in rainy weather. Water in the shallows will obscure the reefs."
Guides, Pilots and 1869
Sailing Directions
by Don Street

Pilot book:
The first written aid to coastal navigation was the pilot book, or periplum, with which the courses to be steered between ports were set forth in terms of wind and tide directions. These books, of which examples survive from the 4th century BC, describe routes, headlands, landmarks, anchorages, currents, and port entrances. — Encyclopedia Britannica

Guide book:
A book of information about a place, designed for the use of visitors or tourists. — Oxford Dictionary

In the late 1970s and early 80s, cruising guides to the Caribbean added the various ports thereof, in Spanish, French, German and English, sprang up like mushrooms. Of the guides that were written in that era, the only ones that are still regularly published and updated are Simon and Nancy Scott's Cruising Guide to the Virgin Islands, now in its 17th edition, and Chris Doyle's Sailor's Guide to the Windward Islands (17th edition) and Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands (13th edition). All are excellent guides.

In 1996 the late John Lethbridge, an enthusiastic ocean racer, a member of the Royal Yachting Club of Canada, and a marine civil engineer, produced a Yachtsmen's Guide to Jamaica and surrounding waters (e.g. the Morant Cays and San Pedro Bank), it was republished in 2002 by Zone Publishing. Again, this should not be regarded as a guide but rather as a timeless pilot. Frank Vigninmito, who started the Free Cruising Guides series several years ago, obtained permission from John and Maurice to use some of John's charts in his Free Cruising Guide to Jamaica. (It would urge Maurice to have his guide reprinted in its entirety as a pilot — with the pilotage information updated by an experienced Jamaica sailor as necessary — to be used alongside Frank's guide.)

In the western Caribbean, Nancy Schleider and Tom Zybler explored the Panamanian coast and San Blas islands for three years in the 38-foot engineless yawl Mollymawk. They produced in 1995, and updated and reprinted in 2001 (by Seaworthy Publications), The Panama Guide: A Cruising Guide to the Isthmus of Panama. Like Noel and Lethbridge's books, it is really not a guide: it is more of a pilot, a source of information that will still be valid 50 years hence. As more and more yachts head west toward Panama. Eric Bauhaus produced The Panama Cruising Guide in 2002 with updated sociales information, good charts and plenty of pictures, including a lot of aerial photos. Bauhaus regularly updates his guide: it is now in its fifth printing.

The latest guides on the scene are those of Frank Vigninmito and Steve Paradie. Frank has produced an extensive series of self-published free guides covering the Greater and Lesser Antilles. Steve has extended his series of guides to the Bahamas eastward and south through the Lesser Antilles. Whether these guides will stand the test of time, only time will tell. They will suffer if they are not regularly updated, as the Scotts' and Doyle's guides.

My 1966 A Cruising Guide to the Lesser Antilles is considered by the old timers to be the guide that opened the Caribbean to the cruising yachtsman and made bareboat chartering possible. This was revised, expanded and published by Soil magazine in 1974 and in 1978. In the early 1980s, WW Norton took over. Now available at www.trade-winds.com.

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PIECE UP!

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

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Bailey's Supermarket
Cat Club Marina Office
Falmouth Harbour Marina
Jane's Yacht Services
Lord Jim's Locker
Mad Mongoose
OnDeck (GYC upstairs)
Sea Breeze
SkiffHugger
Congratulations on your 20th anniversary. We cruised the Caribbean from 1999 to 2007. During that time we always looked forward to the latest issue. We even wrote a few articles. Now that it is online, we are reading the Compass again since we live inland in Panama and don’t often see a hard copy.

We have always felt that the Compass had a great balance between being informative and being entertaining. Cruising between Florida and Panama by way of the eastern island chain and back and forth between Venezuela and Puerto Rico, it was always so nice to have the perspective of other cruisers who went before us. Knowing ahead of time that certain anchorages might be full of great snorkeling, or perhaps full of pirates, often helped us plot a safe course. A series of articles about sailing along the Colombian coast was especially helpful to us. Although we have been living without a boat for eight years, our great memories of cruising the Caribbean are right with us all the time and the Compass is a big part of those good memories. Keep up the good work!

Stephanie Martin and Tom Lane, Formerly aboard Mima

Congratulations to the crew of the Caribbean Compass for 20 years of service to the cruising community in the Caribbean. It is not always true that you get what you pay for: the Compass is free for the taking and full of useful information.

In our early cruising days I saved articles about Venezuela, Colombia and Panama, land excursions on islands and recipes using local fresh produce. I had several folders of useful information that received a lot of use. The beginning of a new month heralded a new Compass filled with hours of reading and entertainment. Before reliable Wi-Fi and electronic books, a cruisers could actually run out of reading material and a new Compass was a gold mine. Before digging into the feature articles I read the letters to the editor to find out relevant news (and gossip) brewing in the cruising community. I am also a big fan of the Caribbean Eco-news section. Many of the islands are trying to address issues of pollution and habitat destruction and positive press helps their efforts and informs us of new or impending regulations. I strongly feel that the content of the Caribbean Compass represents the interests of the cruising community and yacht-support businesses in the Caribbean islands.

As our horizons broadened and my husband, Hunter, and I began to have our own adventures, I started to write articles for the Compass about our hikes, local food and current events on the islands. I considered it an honor to be published in the Compass.

Devi Sharp, now a CLOD in North Carolina
Formerly on S/V Arctic Tern

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yacht Model</th>
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<tr>
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<td>40' Passport 40 1981</td>
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<td>38' R&amp;C Leopard 38 99</td>
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<td>38' Catalina Morgan 38</td>
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It is such an honor for me to make this contribution to the Compass on its 20th anniversary. I can remember when I was writing for the Compass from almost the beginning, and all these years have passed. I've just gone into my archives and found all of these cherished clippings and copies that I have kept over the years. It's really nice to remember over the beautiful memories of marine-related activities and writing for the paper.

I also found cherished notes from Sally. One of these was dated November 11th 1997, complimenting me on one of my stories. At the end of that letter were congratulations on my first anniversary with Compass and compliments and thanks for my “bright and enjoyable articles” that had been a “definite asset” to the paper in an effort to build a voice for the Southern Caribbean marine community. Next I found another letter of congratulations dated March 4th 1998, once again thanking me for my contributions over the past year. Also informing me that I had been elected to the “Caribbean Compass Contributors’ Hall of Fame 1998.” Enclosed in the envelope was a check as a small token of appreciation for the “relatively high standard” of my contributions.

I remembered then that I had once performed the hat trick with three consecutive cover stories, and I found the first of them, entitled “Trinadads Top Martinike Fish Fest,” dated December 1996. I had written this following my visit to Martinique to cover the game fishing tournament specifically for Compass. When I knew I was leaving Trinidad for the United States in 1999, I made a special effort to visit Sally and Tom and all the wonderful people at Compass. I attended the Easter launch and was warmly received. I spent a wonderful weekend in their company and also in the company of two Bequia guys — Mackie Simmons and Otis Gilchrist, whom I had met at Tobago Regatta in 1993, and who had introduced me to writing for the Compass.

I’ve served on the staff of the Caribbean Compass God’s blessings and continued success in publishing the paper, and increased readership. Long live Caribbean Compass. Happy Anniversary!

Audrey Aliney Quiniou, Fort Wayne, Indiana, USA

Heartiest congratulations to Caribbean Compass on its 20th anniversary. I have enjoyed writing for the paper.

I have been writing for the Compass since May 2001. Since then, I have been amazed at how the paper has grown, and the connections for the Compass family — an appreciative audience that has grown multifold, waiting for the mail boat to come once a month, on Tuesdays. By 2007, the first issue provided a home-awake-news and news, and marine-related businesses. It’s a one-of-a-kind read — whether it’s recipes, viewing night skies or cruising with children. It was such a kick to see my words and photos in print. If I didn’t see anything I liked, I simply suggested the good editors at Caribbean Compass.

I am a Trin with who has had the good fortune to visit almost every island. It is easy to realize the priority of each; just as every sailor/cruiser does, islanders must eat to exist. Yet populations are growing while supplies dwindle and costs inflate. The Compass has given me a platform to showcase all the exotic food growing on these islands and how to prepare good, inexpensive and nutritious meals. No need to continually buy blocks of canned goods; on every boat grows something, and it will help you attain greater understanding of this called nature. Just because you are on a boat, the only green thing doesn’t have to be your coffee cup.

Shirley Hall, Trinidad

A few years ago when I was living in the Caribbean on my sailboat, I would search wherever I was to find the newest issue of the Caribbean Compass. Compass was the only magazine and website that published the Compass that I was able to check the Table of Contents first to see if one of my articles was published — it was such a kick to see my words and photos in print. In 2009, I received a letter of congratulations and thanks for my contributions. I was very much being a part of the Compass.

When I left the Caribbean, and even now, I go online and check out what’s being published in the Caribbean Compass — it’s been online since 1997. A few years ago, I got an e-mail saying that the Compass was going to publish a book — Cruising Life. The Best Stories from Caribbean Compass — and since my permission was needed to publish the book. The book has been part of my diet for 20 years — as an earnest attempt to extend its reach beyond yachters and cruisers to aficionados in far latitudes. Published in April 2009, it has been part of my ever-expanding vision. I am thankful for their making contributions by the writers, cartoonists, photographers and poets, whose words are sung by ordinary individuals doing extraordinary things. I enjoy the profuse feedback from readers. I congratulate the staff on their ever-evolving humor, consistent effort and desire to encourage new beginnings in the possibilities of what can be or are limitless.

Nathalie Ward, Woods Hole, Massachusetts, USA

CONTRIBUTING RELAXED READERS

David and I read our first copy of Caribbean Compass back in 1997 when we chartered a boat in Tortola. We dreamed of the day when we’d be able to sail off into the sunset on our own. We have since been to several Caribbean destinations. In 2000, we finally moved aboard Nine of Cups and Caribbean Compass published my very first story in 2003. What a thrill. Nearly 60,000 nautical miles and 12 years later, we visited Caribbean Compass in a Happy 20th Anniversary. Congratulations on a job well done keeping Caribbean Compass informed and entertaining the world wide sailing community.

Marcie Connelly, Lynn of Nine of Cups

I have enjoyed your publication for all 20 years. Having lived in the Caribbean for five years (off and on), I use your online magazine to keep up with current events. Keep up the good work.

I always look forward to the next issue.

Dick Schue, S/Y Keeper

1995? You must be kidding! How was it possible to be so young then? How can I thank you for keeping me alive? For continuing to be part of my life?

William Pingley, Barbados

Vacationing on Bequia back in 1952? 2003? last week?) I found a copy of the Compass and perused the changes on the beach and got the feeling of many sunbombs I collected there over the years. I’m a cartoonist for the New Yorker magazine and tend to doodle almost wherever I go, even on vacation, so I decided to ask the good editors of Compass if they would be okay with publishing a few of my cartoons, mostly on the subject of vacationing, the ocean, boats, fish, sharks, and tourists like myself. To my delight they said yes, and even paid me! I came back to the island several times and ended up taking an orphaned brown puppy back home on my next visit. If you’re still living and cruising here in Florida, I wish you continued success in publishing the Compass.

Ian and Trudi Smyth, Bequia

Hello, Compass. Happy 20th anniversary! Happy 20th anniversary! Congratulations on a job well done keeping the Caribbean sailing community happy and entertained. It is such a thrill to receive the mail on Tuesdays. We blog daily at www.justalittlefurther.com.

Thanks for publishing my stories. I’m still cruising and writing after all those years! It is such an incredible honor.

Mike Strodes, Florida, USA
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