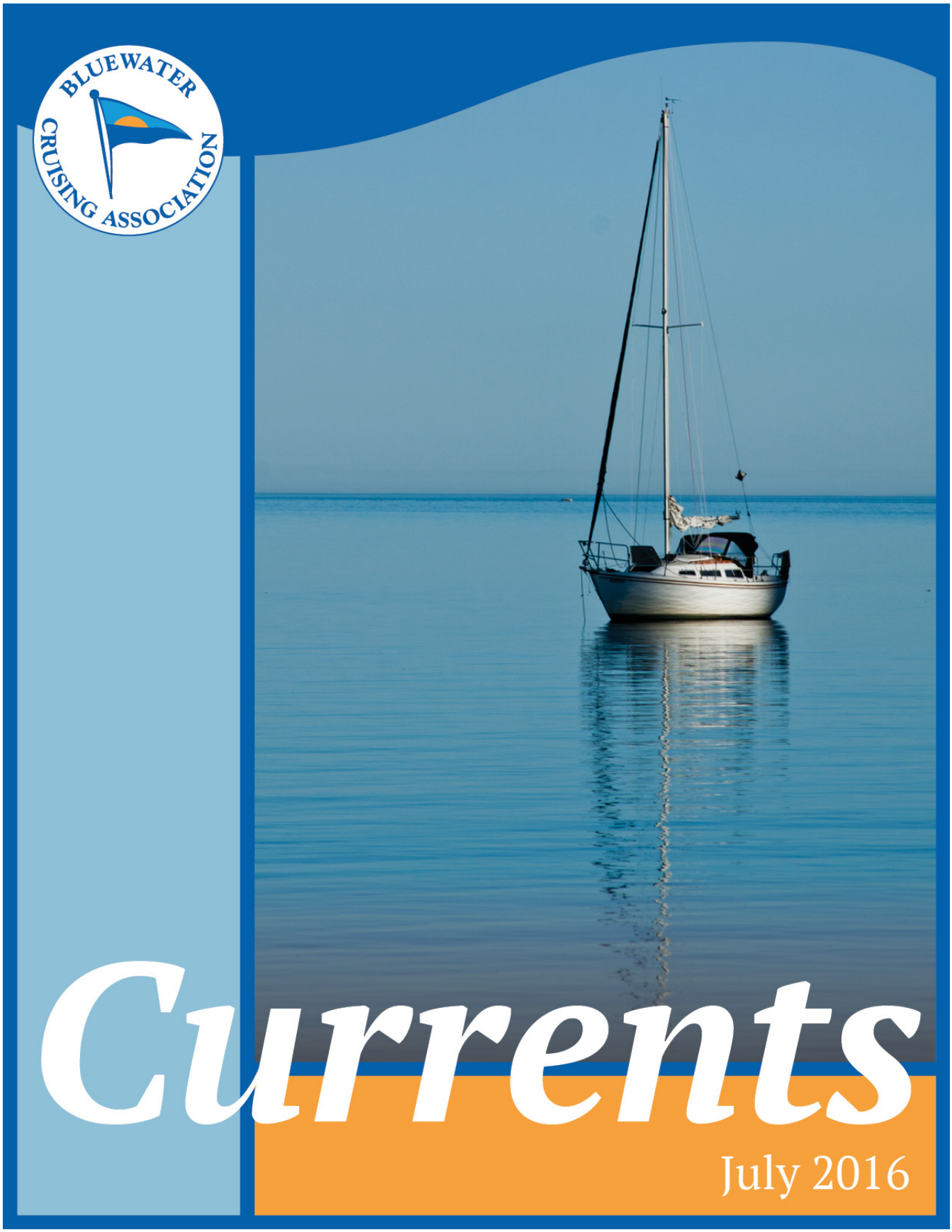
BLUEWATER
CRUISING ASSOCIATION
Currents
July 2016

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Commodore's Rendezvous - Gorge Harbour

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/events/commodores-rendezvous-gorge-harbour/

Hang out with some of BCA's "northern" members at the Commodore's Rendezvous in Gorge Harbour, Cortes Island on August 27-28 and enjoy a relaxing weekend in a beautiful part of the Salish Sea! What a great way to end your summer cruising in Desolation Sound or waters further to the north.

Hosted by longtime members, Amanda and Barry Glickman, and a crew of willing assistants, this will be a casual, end-of-summer rendezvous, complete with a pig roast on a floating barge. With over 100? of dock space in front of their waterfront home (the "pin" on the image above marks the spot), there's plenty of room for dinghies to tie up, socializing and the BBQ itself.

There will be an AppyHour for those arriving on Friday August 26, time to swap stories, share experiences and check out each others' boats. The pig roast will be Saturday evening (potluck salads, desserts, etc provided by attendees), and no doubt there will be breakfast on the dock too.

If you have never been to Gorge Harbour and/or need a quick refresh of what's there in terms of amenities and services, check out the article published earlier this year for details.

A number count is needed for the BBQ, so please RSVP online if you plan to attend (look for "RSVP for this event" in the event listing). The cost per person will be $10, payable upon arrival to the hosts. As weekend events are scheduled, they will be posted on the BCA calendar.

Please contact Barry and Amanda if you have any questions about either the Rendezvous or alternate travel / accommodation arrangements if you are not able to attend by boat.

Cruising in Southern California's Channel Islands

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/cruising-southern-californias-channel-islands/

With 30 kts of wind behind and waves chasing us, we headed southeast. Occasional sideswipes by swell from other directions prompted us to keep a hand ready to spin the wheel to assist Hellena (our self-steering) in returning to course. ***Hoku Pa'a*** had rounded Point Conception that morning at about 11miles off, and was blasting through the beautiful blue water of the Santa Barbara Channel. Spirits were high after three nights at sea, from reaching another milestone, the exciting sailing, and the prospect of being parked before nightfall. Channel Islands, here we come!

By 1615h, we had crossed the shipping lane, dodged a few freighters that popped up between the swells, and altered course for the anchorage. Our haven beckoned. Sunshine and warm Southern California waters lured us into peeling off our foulies. What a pleasure to air ourselves out in the sun and wind after 3 days of bundling up in banana suits! As we headed up, our apparent wind speed increased by about 12 kts. This shouldn't be surprising, but somehow we didn't really anticipate it. Our heel increased and within minutes a large transparent blue wave broke into the cockpit, giving Bjarne and his clean dry sweatshirt an unwanted saltwater bath. That didn't seem a very friendly welcome, but we carried on with only slightly dampened spirits. By 1645h, we were anchored in Bechers Bay, off Santa Rosa Island – just

in time for happy hour.

A month and half earlier, (Sept 2nd) we had departed Victoria, having moved onto ***Hoku Pa'a*** the evening before. Our first stop was an easy two and half hours away in Becher Bay (yep, almost the same name). Although we left one day later than tentatively planned, we deemed this pretty impressive. Eleven years ago, we had moved onto ***Freya*** on the morning of departure, three weeks later than intended, and proceeded to bash our way out the Strait of Juan de Fuca, with the next stop Hawai'i. Back then, we had begun a 26 day passage already exhausted. This time, in our wise old age (?), we opted for a more leisurely start.

Although many folks check into the States in the San Juans or Port Angeles, then wait in Neah Bay for a good time to go south, we chose to hang out in the Deer Island group near Bamfield. Here we re-grouped, enjoyed the scenery, relaxed, did a few more of those tasks that didn't get done before leaving the dock, and waited for good weather. We avoided one port stop, postponed check in paperwork, and didn't yet need to start buying things in the US with our devalued Canadian dollar. The day before departure, we topped up our provisions in friendly Bamfield and headed offshore.

Getting to San Francisco

Strong north winds gave us a fast downwind sail, allowing us to glide under San Francisco's Golden Gate in only 6 days, 20 minutes. We spent an enjoyable month in this attractive (and expensive) city, sight-seeing, dealing with repairs, and re-acquainting ourselves with the cruising life. Timing one's departure from San Francisco has the additional constraint of dealing with the bar conditions (unfortunately I don't mean the types that serve rum). Although it may be that those with local knowledge will brave a greater range of conditions, warnings in the guidebooks had us feeling cautious. We decided the best approach was to depart when the bar conditions were good, but only go the 20 or so miles to Half Moon Bay – so it wouldn't matter as much the time of day when we left. When thick fog encased us about 2 miles out, at least we didn't have very far to thread through it. We enjoyed peaceful Half Moon Bay (except for the plethora of flies). From there, we by-passed the next towns on the Coast and made straight for the Channel Islands.

There isn't a right or wrong about harbour-hopping vs. the just-go-for-it approach; nor about urban vs. wilderness, except to consider what you yourself is interested in and what you can tolerate. Some of the things we like about sailing are connecting to nature and wildlife, and experiencing the self-reliance that comes from visiting more remote areas. Having just spent a month in the big city of San Francisco, the idea of hanging around more towns was unappealing. Admittedly, once we've had sufficient time away, we are happy to return to urban life to reconnect with people and restock rum and other important supplies. It's not our intent to advocate where or how to go; nor to provide a comprehensive travel guide, but since we don't recall having read much in *Currents* about the Channel Islands we thought we'd share some of our experiences.

Channel Islands charts

We had the pleasure of visiting four of the eight Channel Islands. Although each island has its own history, flora and fauna, they all share a hilly ruggedness and a dry climate. Access is restricted in some islands and areas, either as part of conservation efforts, military presence or private ownership. To get a permit, one needs to plan well ahead – we didn't visit any locations where one was required. There are few if any places that would be considered all-weather anchorages. When deciding where to go, it is necessary to factor in both wind direction and strength, as well as swell height and direction. One needs to be prepared to deal with sudden weather changes as well. For most of our time in the Channels there was significant swell and wind from multiple directions, so almost every anchorage was exposed to something. The swell also influenced our ability to go ashore. Nonetheless, we enjoyed our time here, especially in the less developed islands.

Santa Rosa Island

Santa Rosa is the second island from the west. The large anchorage is protected on two sides by steep, reddish hills and cliffs – the rest is open to the sea. There were no other boats, but a long pier remains from when there was an extensive cattle ranch here. A lone horse was spotted grazing in the distance. We anchored about 300m offshore, behind the steep cliffs that protected us from waves. However, the strong winds blasted right over top and kept our rigging singing for most of the night. We did not go ashore, deeming the conditions to be too windy and swelly.

Anchored in Santa Rosa Island.

Although Santa Rosa provided welcome respite following our rounding Point Conception, in these conditions it was not really peaceful, so we moved on downwind the next day.

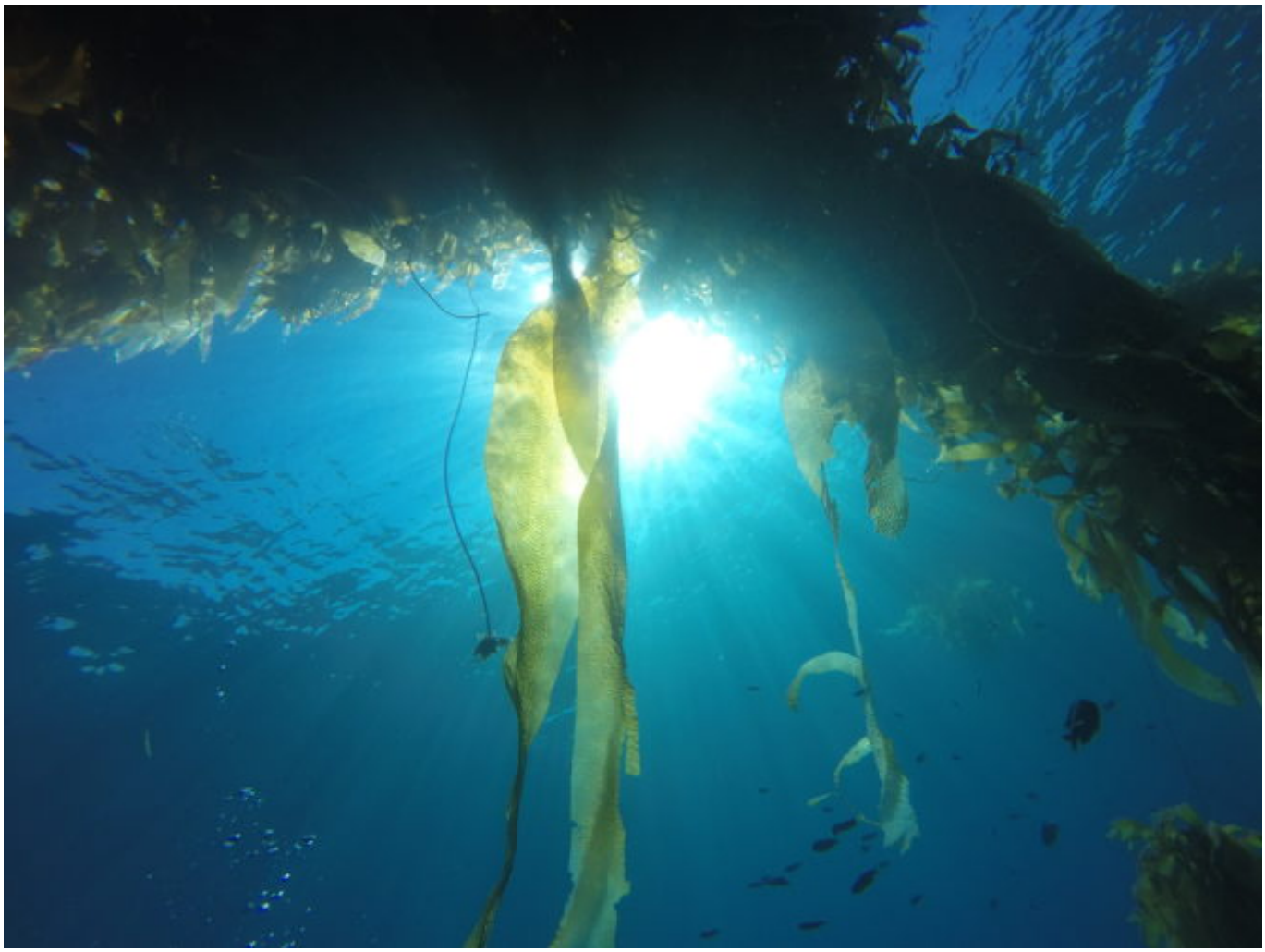
Santa Cruz Island

We visited two of the several anchorages on this Island. One could easily spend many more days exploring the various places, all depending on the weather of course.

After a couple of hours sailing from Santa Rosa, we tucked into Albert's Anchorage, on the south side of Santa Cruz Island. The high cliff just 50m west of our boat, dominated the scenery. It appeared fairly uniform, dark and resulted in an early sunset. However, the morning sun on the wall revealed a greater array of colour and texture – surprisingly beautiful. In front of the small beach at the head of the cove was a reef that followed the shore and paralleled the cliff. Without a permit, one isn't allowed to go ashore here, but there is no restriction on being in the water.

Despite the disappearance of the sun just after our arrival, it didn't take long for Bjarne to don his mask and snorkel. I chose to wait for the morning light and warmer air temperature. The snorkeling highlight of this cove, in addition to the fact that the water was getting warmer, was the kelp. Great tall strands

reached up to the surface, while rays of sun streamed into the water, lighting up the graceful swaying green leaves. A keen eye could spot some well-disguised fish hiding in the kelp leaves, with just the right shades of yellow, green and brown to blend in. It was not unusual for small power boats to settle here for the night – sometimes checking the crab traps that had been left in the kelp bed.



Santa Cruz kelp

Smugglers' Cove, on the east end of the Island, was more of an open road-stead. We dropped anchor in clear blue water, near the US Coast Guard mooring ball. Waves built into interesting large curls and crashed onto the long beach shoreline as the swell rolled in relentlessly. We had hoped to snorkel over a wreck marked on the chart, but couldn't find it. From a snorkeling perspective there was little to see, but the swimming was pleasant. We heard that the water in Southern California was warmer than usual this year, mainly due to El Nino. and we did our best to take advantage of it. A wet suit wasn't necessary, but it did allow one to stay in the water for a longer time. A Coast Guard cutter arrived shortly after sunset and grabbed the mooring ball. It took them a long time to extinguish their running lights; we amused ourselves by contemplating how they would react to a VHF reminder about their anchor light. "Oh, were you requesting a free safety inspection, sir?"

No permit was needed for going ashore here and we looked forward to a hike. Disappointingly, a dinghy trip through the large onshore breakers did not look feasible. Well, adaptability is a crucial cruiser

characteristic. Bjarne had no trouble swimming through the surf, but he grew up on the west coast and spent summers playing in waves. It required much coaxing and coaching to convince me go through those waves – they don't get nearly that big on the Great Lakes! Once ashore, we we were able to walk a short distance in our swim gear to inspect the olive and eucalyptus trees – all looking very dry. The days were warm and sunny and the evenings were a pleasantly comfortable temperature for lingering in the cockpit, as the sun went down and the stars gradually appeared.

Santa Barbara Island

Santa Barbara Island began as merely a tactical choice, to break up the longer passage direct to Santa Catalina Island. It turned out that we enjoyed it immensely.

In the wee hours before dawn, we left Santa Cruz Island. Nice to have some stars to steer by. Clearing the shore, soon we detected a breeze and canned the motor. We had given ourselves a good amount of time to cover the 40 miles to Santa Barbara Island, so we had the freedom to sail slowly, keeping engine use to a minimum. Numerous dolphins were spotted, but none stuck around; presumably we were too unexciting. Approaching Santa Barbara, the fins started to look different. Wait, those are sea lion flippers! We were amused to see some of these excellent swimmers drifting by on big clumps of free-floating kelp rafts. I guess everyone appreciates a free ride now and again.

Santa Barbara Island channel.

Santa Barbara Island is home to a sea lion colony. On our first night at anchor (we arrived just before 1700h, aka Happy Hour) quite a few individual lions swam around the boat, checking us out. We've seen sea lions perched on fairly high buoys, thus wondered if they could get up into our boat. Half expecting to wake up to a sea lion in the cockpit, we closed the hatches and went to bed with the moon and a fishing boat to keep us company. Thankfully, we had no overnight visitors, although we have heard stories of sea lions doing a fair amount of smelly damage to boats that they could board. Again, the snorkeling was not great, but some sea lions did swim by below us. They were clearly scoping us out, but presumably deemed we were not enough fun. Although very exciting to be in the water with these wonderful creatures, there was also some relief that they were not closely interested in us.

The anchorage at "St. Babs" is really just a patch of shallower sand-bottom along the eastern shore, and has a landing allowing access to the island.

Santa Barbara Island landing place

To go ashore via dinghy, one rows up to the tall dock, times the surge from the swell to grab hold of and climb the ladder, and then uses the crane to lift the dinghy up about 20 feet onto the dock. (A similar system is used at Niue in the South Pacific, although when we were there, it wasn't functioning due to a

recent cyclone.) That seemed like more trouble than it was worth, so we stuffed a few things in a dry-bag and swam ashore for a tramp on the Island. From the friendly volunteer naturalist, we learned about work to restore the Island to its pre-human ecosystem in order to encourage more birds, including some endangered ones, to stop over. It took over 30 years to eradicate the rabbits brought to the island by a family that tried unsuccessfully to farm there. Good plants included the prickly pear cactus and a type of inedible cucumber. The ground-covering ice plant, although coating the island in an attractive reddish hue, is invasive and on the hit list.

Santa Barbara Island ice plant.

It was good to stretch the legs and get the heart pumping a little on this dry, hilly Island. The views from the other side of the Island, with small Sutil Island just off the southwest shore, were lovely. We would have happily traipsed around more, but we had plans to be anchored at the next island by dark that day.

Santa Catalina Island

Regretfully, we had to motor quite a bit to reach Santa Catalina Island before night fell. Upon reaching Catalina Harbour, we were frustrated to discover that the bay had been thoroughly infested by mooring balls, which one could rent for a fee. They use a two ball mooring system here. Older information from the guide books still showed some anchorage space available. As dusk fell, we found what we took to be a clearing between some moorings and happily settled in for a fairly calm (i.e. not too rolly) night. Unfortunately, before breakfast, the harbour authority informed us that our location was unacceptable. Apparently, we were in a fairway (not on the chart) and they claimed there were unused but un-recovered mooring chains littering the bottom. The search for a more suitable spot was difficult. It took two tries and the use of our stern anchor to park ourselves in a narrow spot fairly close to some rocks. We figured

the stern anchor should hold us off. We kept an eye on things for a couple of hours and then went ashore.

Santa Catalina Island is mainly privately owned and is the most developed of the Channel Islands. Almost every decent bay is filled with private mooring balls. We counted 121 in Catalina Harbour, of which about 1/5 were in use. Apparently they are fairly full in the summer months. The Island itself is quite beautiful. It too is hilly and dry, but there is more vegetation than the other Channel Islands and the earth has lovely reddish tones. We were amused to discover the arid equivalent of a water-hazard on the disc golf course – a large stand of cactus!

Santa Catalina Island disc golf hazard.

We wandered into the small town of Two Harbours and amused/shocked ourselves by looking at some of the prices. The small Red School House reported that it was closed this year, as there were only two students registered. According to a hiker we encountered, there is a very challenging trail running the length of the island. We travelled along a small portion of it, eyed the next long hill and decided we'd gone far enough (good thing really, when one considers what was happening back at ***Hoku Pa'a***). We did take some photos of the beautiful bay.

Two Harbours in Santa Catalina Island

Coming back down, we were quite surprised to see a buffalo! That explained the buffaloes on the local tourist t-shirts, and the piles of dung that we thought came from very big horses. We also had the good fortune to spot a small fox; they are apparently quite shy and not encountered regularly.

Buffalo in Santa Catalina Island.

Upon return, the tide had dropped and ***Hoku Pa'a*** was uncomfortably close to some very pointy bits. Yet another re-anchoring put us in a ridiculously deep (65 feet) part of the bay, which meant that our scope for the anchor was poor. Fortunately, we held through the calm night (kept the anchor alarm on) but after breakfast, we noticed ***Hoku Pa'a*** was straying. Enough of this. Off we went to the south part of the Island. If you plan to visit Santa Catalina Island, you might find it easier to fork over what Bjarne calls "the extortion fee" for a mooring. Some of us however, are very stubborn.

We anchored in a rather exposed spot on the south part of Santa Catalina Island, called Silver Canyon. During the afternoon it wasn't bad – not too rolly and the anchor held well in the wide sand bar. We were content to stay there until our planned departure for the mainland at 0300h the next morning. How bad could it be for just a few short hours? The wind picked up and swung more southerly over the afternoon. By dark, we were making like a salad (tossed that is). Despite an early bedtime, we got little sleep in the violent motion. At least the anchor held very well. It was a relief when it was time to get up for our early departure. Under a bright moon and a few stars, we set sail for Oceanside and our friends, not feeling too regretful about changing this channel.

We were in the Channel Islands for a week and half (Oct 18-29, 2015). If we'd allowed more time, we could have seen the seal and sea lion rookeries on rugged San Miguel, checked out the diving on

Anacapa, visited more anchorages on Santa Cruz, gone ashore on Santa Rosa, hiked more on Santa Barbara, and so on. On the other hand, if we'd stayed longer, we probably would have encountered one of the dangerous Santa Ana winds, or more importantly, run out of rum. One can't do everything; we were pleased with our decision to spend less time in San Diego, for the chance to explore these interesting islands.

Some books that were helpful (two of them loaned to us courtesy of Lynn and Debbie on ***Dolphin Tales***):

- Fagan, Brian (1988). Cruising Guide to California's Channel Islands. Canadian publisher is Gordon Soules Book Publishers, Vancouver, BC.
- Fagan, Brian (2002). The Cruising Guide to Central and Southern California: Golden Gate to Ensenada, Mexico. including the Offshore Islands. McGraw-Hill, USA.
- Douglass, Don & Hemingway-Douglass, Reanne (2003). Exploring the Pacific Coast: San Diego to Seattle. Fine Edge, USA.

Adapted from Barb and Bjarne's website.

About The Author

Barb Peck & Bjarne Hansen

Hoku Pa'a - Niagara 35

From 2004-2006 Barb and Bjarne sailed the South Pacific on Freya, their 30' Hunter-Vogel. Upon returning to Victoria they have participated in the VI Watch and supported fleet members preparing to go offshore. After some wonderful cruising in local waters they recently ventured into the Sea of Cortez. Hoku Pa'a, their Niagara 35, sits in Guaymas patiently awaiting their return.

The Southern Seas Are Calling Our Name

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/southern-seas-calling-name/

We are a slow sail home on ***Lemanee***, our Alden 44, from the BCA Victoria Day Rendezvous at Poet's Cove in Bedwell Harbour. We had a blast! We met '*Dreamers*' and '*Doners*' as well as the crews who are heading south this season. "WooHoo Wanna Rendezvous."

YouTube Video

At the potluck dock party, we received our 'Leavers Package' from the Bluewater Cruising Association's Commodore, Jennifer Handley. This morning we heard "Bon Voyage", "God Speed", "Have a great trip" and "Safe Sailing" from our fellow BCA members.

Kandyce and Dennis receiving their BCA Leavers' package.

The entire event replays in our hearts and our heads. We have finally made the commitment. Excitement, anticipation and fear vibrate through us. Are we ready? Have we crossed everything off our list? Sometimes it feels like planning a family. You do whatever you can, but are you ever 100 percent ready?

We have been planning this voyage since 1999. We realized we had to have a dream and set ourselves a goal to get through the years of a busy household, children and two careers. We researched and planned: types of boats; routes; destinations; timelines, finances and hazards.

We purchased ***Lemanee*** last spring, after a very extensive search encompassing both coasts and the Great Lakes. We finally found her in Sidney and she is beautiful. Everything we wanted in a bluewater boat.

Lemanee, Alder 44

We have sold everything we owned and have jumped into the deep end. We have taken pride in our accomplishments. We have let our imaginations go wild and we dream sweet dreams of a slower lifestyle, a strong community and sunshine. We have harnessed our fears and are ready to cast off the bowlines. We will sail the BC Coastline for the summer, and in September it will be a true Bon Voyage, God Speed and sweet sailings.

About The Author

Kandyce Hiebert

Lemanee - Alden 44

Kandyce and Dennis are 2016 leavers searching for warmer climes and adventure as they sail down the coast to Mexico this year.

August Rendezvous: Seamanship

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/events/august-rendezvous-seamanship/

This year, the BCA peeps get together at Newcastle Island Provincial Marine Park again to celebrate Seamanship, Hollywood style! So, think safety at sea … think Gilligan's Island… All Is Lost…you name it, and **dress-up as your favourite character** from a sailing/boating movie or TV show. There will be prizes for the two best costumes (individual or group)! In the meantime, dig up your best potluck recipe and be prepared for a great weekend full of activities and fun.

Weekend Events

Saturday

- **Check in** with host boat ***Counting Stars*** anytime after noon on Saturday.
- Receive your welcome package and pay the **$5.00 per person** fee.
- Welcome **Appie Hour** at group picnic area
- **Movie night!** Feature

Sunday

- **Breakfast** at group picnic area
- Seamanship activities
- **Floating lunch**
- **Potluck dinner: BCA provides the roast beef!** Please bring a **side dish, or salad AND appetizer or dessert** to the

Monday

- Breakfast at the picnic area
- Check-out!

presentation – All is Lost (with audience participation!)	potluck. Come dressed-up in your costume and gather at the group picnic area • **Leavers' Packages** presentations • Award of the Cup for the **Peterson Cruising Rally**. • Bring your own musical instrument for the impromptu and infamous BCA sea-shanty sessions

All members are invited, even if you do not have a boat yet. Camping is allowed on Newcastle Island, so be ready to pitch your tents, or your kids' tents for that matter! There is room for 15 tents for free – first come, first served.

RSVP

Please RSVP at the BCA website by **July 22** (so we know how much meat to get.

No boat, but would like to attend?

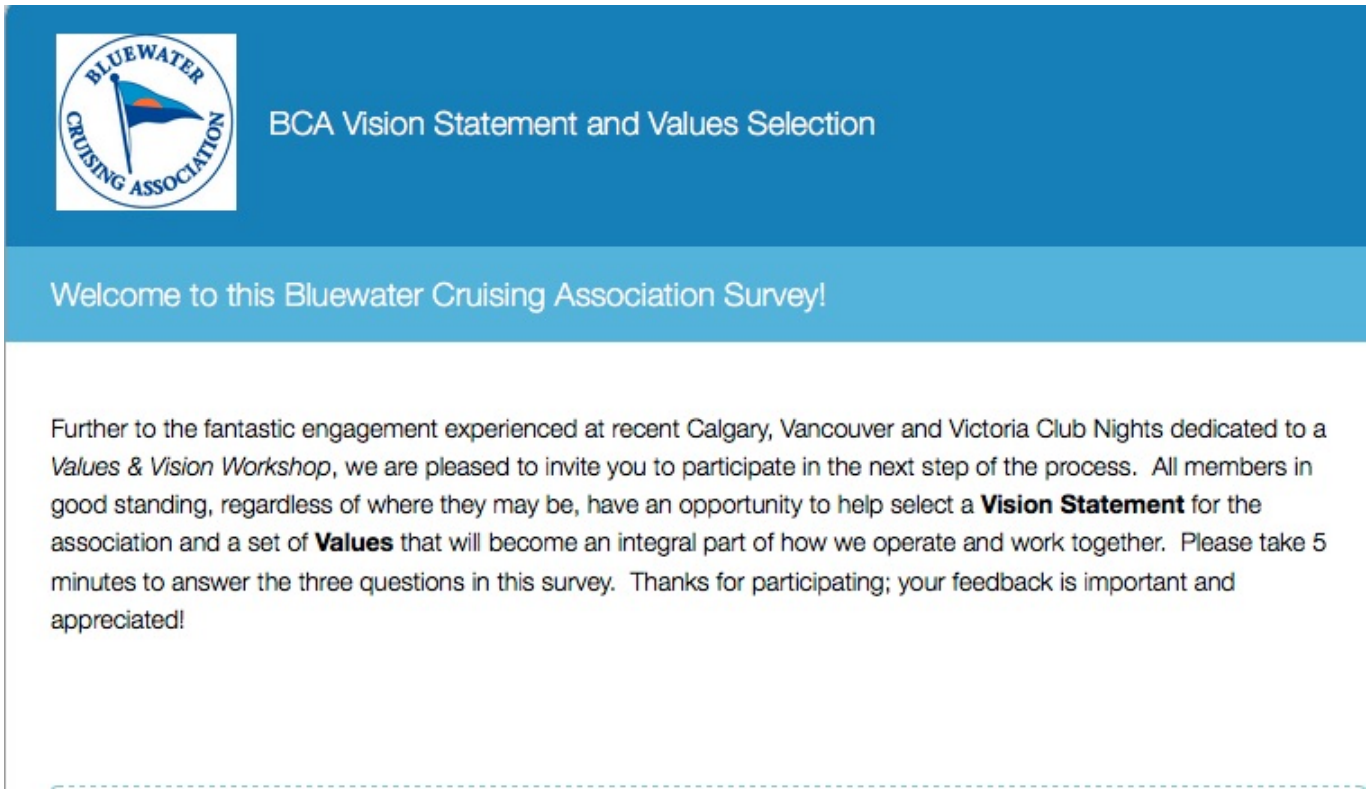
If you would like to attend and don't have a boat, or if you have a boat and would like some crew, please post a message in the Events forum. Hopefully you will be able to connect and plan a ride.

Miscellaneous

We ask that you bring your own plates, napkins and cutlery to all events. Garbage removal is available on site. Alcohol consumption is permitted on the group picnic site. Please be responsible and respectful.

Wanted! BCA Members to Complete Vision and Values Survey

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/news/wanted-bca-members-complete-vision-values-survey/



Cruising season is upon us, but no matter where this finds you, you are invited to participate in a very brief, 3-question survey that will guide the selection of a **Vision statement** and a set of **Values** for BCA.

When BCA was established in 1978 with a Constitution and Bylaws, a Mission statement was created that describes "***what***" we do and "***how***" we do it ("Fostering seamanship and friendship for people with an active interest in offshore cruising") but the creation of a Vision statement (the "***why***" we do what we do) and a set of Values (the principles that "***guide***" our decision making at all levels of the association) was left unfinished until now.

Recently, approximately 15% of the membership engaged in a one-hour Vision & Values workshop held in each Chapter that were facilitated by BCA member, Helen Roberts. The great work done at each of those workshops was consolidated and a survey was created so that all BCA members can participate in this process. The survey only consists of two multiple choice questions and one open question, so it really won't take more than a few minutes to complete!

Vancouver and Victoria Vision & Values Workshops

The survey was launched on Canada Day by means of an email sent to all BCA members by Commodore Jennifer Handley. Members who share an email address with a spouse/partner or whose spouse/partner's email has not been provided to BCA are asked to share the email with their partner so everyone has the opportunity to participate.

Response to date has been very encouraging and most interesting; if you have not yet completed the survey, please do! Deadline is Sunday, July 17. If you did not receive the email with the link to the survey, please contact Jennifer.

BCA's Board of Directors looks forward to sharing the results with everyone in the fall. Thanks for participating!!

About The Author

Jennifer Handley

Camdeboo - Lavranos 50 Cutter-Rigged Sloop

Jennifer Handley and Campbell Good sailed Camdeboo to the South Pacific in 2006 with their two

daughters, a niece, nephew and Jennifer’s brother. By the time Camdeboo returned to Victoria in 2011, she had 25,000 nm under her keel, visited 14 countries and 27 people had come aboard as crew. Jennifer is Commodore of BCA.

My First Offshore Trip

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/first-offshore-trip/

Larry and I got together in 1992 and we discovered that we had sailing in common. It seemed like a promising mutual interest, except that our experience levels were vastly different. I'd co-owned and sailed a C & C 27 on the Ottawa River above the Lachine Rapids (for which only 1 chart was needed). I'd learned about tides and currents and navigational aids via CYA courses, but for me these were mostly theoretical and limited to the constrained waters of that river.

In contrast, Larry – who'd also learned to sail in Ontario – had headed off on an Atlantic circuit in his Contessa 32. He'd taken a year's leave during a downturn in the airline industry – and had returned and sold ***Traversay*** by 1980. When we met, Larry described the offshore passages and adventures he'd had. He also told me of his dream to retire on a boat. He then introduced me to ***Traversay II*** (a 37' Jeanneau Sunshine), moored in his current home city of Vancouver. The combination of man, boat and city proved to be irresistible.

So I moved to Vancouver and started training for the adventures that lay ahead. My desire to Captain the boat involved a few misadventures. A visiting Ottawa friend was quite impressed with my harbour tour, until I fell in the water while tying up at the dock! My next Captaincy took several women friends further afield to Bowen Island. While I was anchoring for lunch, the anchor chain "got away" and, barefoot in a

dangerous situation, I had to watch helplessly while the entire chain ran out. I was forced to motor around the chain while the rest had lunch. The dinghy was launched and enough chain handed up to give the windlass a purchase on retrieving the rest of the chain.

By the time of my first overnight trip, my performance as Captain was quite successful. However, the toilet failed and with three women aboard this could have been a disaster. I accessed the outflow with a coat hanger – a nasty business – and we persuaded the toilet to flush, but only by pouring in a bucket of seawater each time. I found out later that we'd misinterpreted a diagram in the toilet manual and had replaced an essential part upside down.

During this preparatory time, I learned to provision and cook with the available storage and an icebox. Not being aware of any cruising clubs at the time, I prepared by reading the Glenan Sailing Manual and numerous books.

Alice and I in Hawaii, celebrating a narrow escape from a hurricane in a red convertible.

Somewhere along the way, a plan to see if we could sail offshore together was formulated. Our destination would be Hawaii – a place Larry had visited, crewing ***Traversay II*** with friends and relatives, twice – most recently in 1990 when he did a circuit of the Marquesas (a 28-day passage) and Hawaii during a 3-month leave from work. I researched books about Hawaii – its history and culture and the birds and sea life we might encounter. I also took up scuba diving, initially to partner Larry in cleaning the hull and clearing unwanted ropes off the propeller and shaft.

Our trip alone together to the Haida Gwaii and back had worked out well, but I was worried. Would I be frightened, out on the vast ocean? Would I have the strength and endurance to cope with fifteen-plus days at sea? Hearing about a recently returned boat docked nearby at Bayshore Marina, I went over to ask how they had fared. Would my recently-run marathon prepare me for the endurance I would need? They discounted the marathon and were more concerned about our small crew of just two – they recommended a crew of four, like they had.

I was anxious to try it and finally the day came for us to leave. My log reads:

"**Friday June 25 0930h**: We can see the lighthouse on Race Rocks – it's a beautiful sunny day. We filled with water, called my mother and left the dock at 0800.

We've had two wonderful days – our party in Vancouver netted a great number of fascinating books and some helium balloons inscribed with 'Bon Voyage'. Larry entertained our friends in Vancouver by inhaling some of the gas (rendering his voice preposterous) and then saying "Helium's a Gas!"

Speaking of preposterous – we've both attached the nose-guards to our "glacier" sunglasses and we resemble nothing else on earth! Last night after coming back from a nice meal, which June (Larry's mother) treated us to, we released the remaining helium balloons and watched them until they were just 3 tiny dots in the sky. We're both wearing seasickness patches – I hope they work!

When we got off Victoria harbour, I practiced the "man overboard" routine. All the equipment works, although I hope I'm quicker about dispatching it over the side.

My turn to cook and clean today. We'll reach the real open sea tomorrow, and Larry offered to do the job then. What will I cook?

Tuesday June 29 1900h: A beautiful sail these 2 days – have seen absolutely fabulous sights. We now have an interested, black-footed albatross friend I've nicknamed "Buddy" – he appears 2 or 3 times/day (sometimes with a mate) and handles flying and dipping over the water in a most magnificent fashion – I could watch for hours – heavenly! And speaking of 'heavenly', both last night and tonight, with the sun fairly low in the West – its rays have spread out the most elegant carpet of sheer Botticelli gold – a filigree without parallel. Next to this golden pathway, I noticed a frothy, delicate plume of spray – we watched as the plumes progressed parallel to the golden carpet and then turned resolutely north … a whale making for its summer home in the Arctic.

… and more wonders to report … the billions of stars and the Milky Way – the progress of Venus in the early morning … tonight – the biggest and most intact rainbow I've ever seen – perhaps like the one Noah saw! It dipped into the water at both edges!

Wednesday June 30 1300h: At 1130 hrs last night, I was wakened by Larry calling: "The dolphins are here!" I rushed out and in the light of the moon, which made a bright path just starboard of the bow, I saw all these agile, little dark forms leaping all around the boat. One could not imagine a more joyous revelation of the energies and excitement of being alive than these little creatures embody. The way they leap right in front of the bow, chris-crossing and playing all sorts of gymnastic tricks – it was wonderful. Later, I stayed to revel in the view – the sea, struck by moonlight – looked like a large platter with the

sides gently sloping upwards, all washed by the most pearly white, diamond-studded moonlight.

The skin on my hand is peeling, so I'm using Polysporin and a bandage on it. A few days ago, I neglected to exercise caution or wear rubber gloves while handling boiling water. In choppy seas, I poured a poultice of coffee grounds and boiling water over my hand. It doesn't hurt too much anymore. I'm trying to break my caffeine addiction, so I have a headache. Luckily, I think I finally have my "sea legs", so look forward to no more patches and no more nausea.

We're making magnificent time; we've had wonderful winds. We're already through about a third of the trip!

Friday July 2 1315h: Hurrah – seasickness overcome (finally) – after two Transderm V patches, I've achieved my "sea legs" – or rather, my "inner ear" (balance?) has been beaten into submission and no longer wants to confuse and upset my stomach with valid but inappropriate messages regarding where the level should be. {*My glee at conquering seasickness was premature … my log was abruptly curtailed after the July 6th entry because of seasickness. I finished writing about the trip at a later time that year.*}

Apart from seeing 'Pal Buddy', (the black-footed albatross) and his mate for a short time last evening, we have seen no other sign of life. No ships, no lights from planes, no jet streams, NOTHING!

Our noon calculations today showed we've gone about 1,060 miles, with about 1,300 left to go. By tonight we'll be halfway there! We've now turned, so the wind will be coming more and more from behind us, (Trade Winds) and we can continue on the line Larry's drawn on the chart straight to Hilo.

The Loran isn't working any more. The Loran works by measuring the distance to a chain of shore stations and we're now out of range. It won't work again until we're nearer to Hawaii, so Larry's taken to using the sextant. He's so wonderful at navigation. He double-checks everything. I would never have been able to have had this experience alone. We've changed the watch schedule somewhat. Six hours 'on' is just too long. So last night, I watched from 2000h to midnight. Larry watched midnight to 0400h and I got 0400h to 0800h again. Larry does all the cooking today, and then tonight I get the 8 hours (interrupted) sleep. It's nice to have a day off and be lazy.

Actually, 80% of the time I like standing watch – I usually just sit at the top of the stairs and lean on the hatch cover. The dodger protects me from wind, rain and big waves – and I like listening to and watching the changing panorama of sea and sky. The dawn really "sneaks up" on a grey day like this morning. The grey of the clouds starts to lighten as they are back-lit by the sun, which has seldom made an appearance for the last 2 days!

The worst part of standing watch occurs when you suddenly give in to the motion and tiredness and sit down on the couch. If you do this, you have to get the alarm set to wake you every 15 minutes. It's awful when you're having to "piece" your way in 15 minute segments, from 0600h to 0800h. When 0800h finally appears, much as you love your shipmate, there is no money on earth that will keep you from waking him exactly at 0800h or even at 0755h!

I've been trying to learn astro-navigation, following a book called "Self-taught Navigation" by Robert Kittredge. I was not too far off today. Larry explained what I did wrong. I'm also finding it difficult to

stabilize the sextant.

Sunday July 4 1430h: Well – we've slowed down somewhat over the last few days. Our day's run noon July 3 to noon July 4 was only about 120 nautical miles. The motion is pretty comfortable. We're sloshing gently from side to side – wing on wing – moving forward at 5 knots and sideways at 4 knots, Laurenzo says! If we continue this slowly, it may be another 10 days to get there. However, it's a beautiful motion.

I haven't seen my albatrosses since Friday night when there were three! The last exciting thing I saw, at around 0600h, was a pineapple headed north of us! So, we must be going in the right direction. We discovered 2 opalescent squids dried onto our foredeck, when Larry went up there to change the headsail. We don't know when they leaped up!

So far, I've read: Michael Caine : "*What's it all About?*"; Margaret Visser "*Much Depends on Dinner*"Larry McMurtry : "*Some Can Whistle*"; Johnny Wray : "*South Seas Vagabonds*"; Richard Bach : "*Bridge Across Forever*"; Mavis Gallant: "*Home Truths*"; and Patrick O'Brien: "*Master and Commander*".

Tuesday July 6 2000h: It's beautiful – sub-tropical weather. I exceeded my sun quota today. I'm ever so slightly pink. Larry found a tiny flying fish on board. The temperature outside is 24 degrees. The water is still pretty cool (I know from the bath I had!)

We had an amazing sunset last night: dark clouds; a purple dome over the sky; florescent pink, orange and yellow in the small cloudless space between sea, and clouds and the waves all fuchsia, and dark purple with white crests. Truly explosive!

Yesterday, masses of Portuguese Men of War expanded across to the horizon for an hour; then suddenly nothing! We've spotted a total of three airplanes and that's all the life we've seen since the ship last Wednesday.

We're looking forward to eating out. Eating a green SALAD and indulging in ICE WATER. We might also see real musicians and dancers playing and performing to that steel-guitar music we'd been hearing on the radio.

Monday July 13: ARRIVED in Hilo last night, in the middle of the night, after a trip of 18 days and 4,800 nautical miles. This morning, I'm sitting in the cockpit relishing the (somewhat squalid) view of a Hilo trucking lot, which contains GREEN palm trees and a RED cardinal. Something besides BLUE!

Many magical and exciting moment followed on my first offshore trip. The Hilo Customs officer came aboard with a large bag of papayas, which were shared around the Radio Bay anchorage. We dove on a charter at Molokini Island – my first warm-water dive. We followed this up with dives on Maui and Oahu, after filling our tanks ashore.

In Honolulu, Larry went back to work and I stayed aboard at the Ala Wai Marina. Waiting for my daughter Alice to arrive, I went on a tour of Iolani Palace and learned more about the history of Hawaii's Royal family – the loss of sovereignty and the death of all members of the Royal family. I wandered into

the intriguing, massive stone building of Kawaiaha'o Church, and instantly saw the large, protectively covered Grand Piano. Hawaiians (led by the Royal family) embraced Christianity in the 1800s, and had the Church built and opened by 1842. It has been dubbed the "Westminster Abbey of Hawaii".

Inside the church, the Bosendorfer instrument I played in 2014.

Once in the Church, I was lucky enough to meet a kindred spirit, George Free, a church member and music lover. I was shown the many magnificent oil paintings of Hawaii's Royal family. The Royals also granted valuable lands in perpetuity to their people, and endowed the Kamehameha Schools for Hawaiian children. Descendants living on the Mainland are encouraged to come back for high school, and are provided with residence on the school grounds.

These monarchs were quick to embrace all innovations from Europe – they sought to emulate the best of European culture and they became accepted peers of European royalty.

The Hawaians had a strong tradition of music-making (including chanting, singing, nose flutes and ceremonial conch shells) and the well-travelled Royal family learned to love European classical music. They imported instruments and teachers to introduce this music, and quickly learned not only to write music but also to play it. Queen Liliuokalani (Hawaii's last monarch, who died in 1917) was a concert pianist who wrote beautiful music for her people.

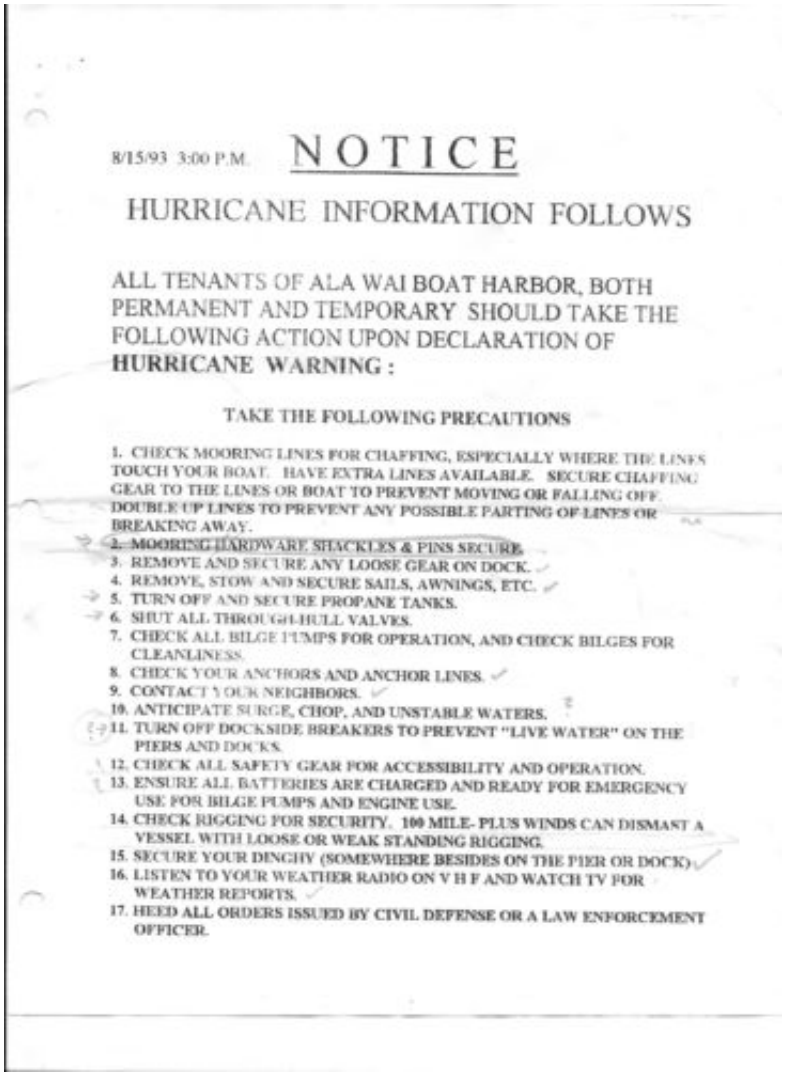
Kawaiahao's Church music program had also benefited from an endowment over the years, prospering under the genius of Richard (Buddy) Naluai – a concert organist and multi-talented person. George introduced me to the Church's magnificent Steinway Concert Grand piano, and upon playing it, I fell in love with the piano. When Buddy heard me, he asked me to play for the Sunday broadcast on August 16th – it would be heard over all the Hawaiian Islands, along with the bilingual service.

Myself and my friend Buddy (Richard) Naluai, organist extraordinaire, chef, flower arranger.

Buddy and I became close friends and he introduced us to the local and cosmopolitan foods of Honolulu (he had once run a catering business). I watched him organize the huge Ikebana floral arrangements, which graced the front of the Church. His mother, Abigail adopted me as her 'haole daughter' and I was accepted as a member of her 'ohana' (family).

Just before my first appearance at the Church, Larry started warning me from Vancouver about a weather system, which was endangering the Island of Oahu. All of a sudden, the approaching hurricane became a reality. The New York Times published a headline: "Hawaii Is Put on Alert As Storm Intensifies". Our official warning about *Fernanda* arrived as a Hurricane Alert notice from the Harbour Master, on the afternoon of August 15, along with 17 precautions we must take. Many of them involved tough operations and I worried about my hands. Alice was quite blasé about it all – we had rented a car and loaded dive gear, water and tinned food into the trunk. She envisioned running a profitable salvage

operation after the event.



8/15/93 3:00 P.M.

NOTICE

HURRICANE INFORMATION FOLLOWS

ALL TENANTS OF ALA WAI BOAT HARBOR, BOTH PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY SHOULD TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION UPON DECLARATION OF **HURRICANE WARNING :**

TAKE THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS

1. CHECK MOORING LINES FOR CHAFFING, ESPECIALLY WHERE THE LINES TOUCH YOUR BOAT. HAVE EXTRA LINES AVAILABLE. SECURE CHAFFING GEAR TO THE LINES OR BOAT TO PREVENT MOVING OR FALLING OFF. DOUBLE UP LINES TO PREVENT ANY POSSIBLE PARTING OF LINES OR BREAKING AWAY.
2. MOORING HARDWARE SHACKLES & PINS SECURE.
3. REMOVE AND SECURE ANY LOOSE GEAR ON DOCK.
4. REMOVE, STOW AND SECURE SAILS, AWNINGS, ETC.
5. TURN OFF AND SECURE PROPANE TANKS.
6. SHUT ALL THROUGH-HULL VALVES.
7. CHECK ALL BILGE PUMPS FOR OPERATION, AND CHECK BILGES FOR CLEANLINESS.
8. CHECK YOUR ANCHORS AND ANCHOR LINES.
9. CONTACT YOUR NEIGHBORS.
10. ANTICIPATE SURGE, CHOP, AND UNSTABLE WATERS.
11. TURN OFF DOCKSIDE BREAKERS TO PREVENT "LIVE WATER" ON THE PIERS AND DOCKS.
12. CHECK ALL SAFETY GEAR FOR ACCESSIBILITY AND OPERATION.
13. ENSURE ALL BATTERIES ARE CHARGED AND READY FOR EMERGENCY USE FOR BILGE PUMPS AND ENGINE USE.
14. CHECK RIGGING FOR SECURITY. 100 MILE- PLUS WINDS CAN DISMAST A VESSEL WITH LOOSE OR WEAK STANDING RIGGING.
15. SECURE YOUR DINGHY (SOMEWHERE BESIDES ON THE PIER OR DOCK).
16. LISTEN TO YOUR WEATHER RADIO ON V H F AND WATCH TV FOR WEATHER REPORTS.
17. HEED ALL ORDERS ISSUED BY CIVIL DEFENSE OR A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.

I was worried about how ***Traversay*** would fare, but I also looked forward to playing that beautiful piano in my first broadcast performance! It was scheduled for the day of the dreaded hurricane, Sunday August 16. I decided to play. The Chopin Etude went well and luckily the hurricane's arrival was still pending. After the service, Alice and I rushed back to Ala Wai and with the help of friends, we attacked the Harbour Master's list. The hurricane passed us by and on Monday, August 17th, the headline on one of the local papers read: "Phew!" … We were relieved. The Island surfers had some terrific waves.

I have returned many times (by jet airplane) to perform in Hawaii and to visit my Hawaiian 'ohana' – once playing while flanked by the Queen's portrait.

That incredible first visit to Hawaii fixed my determination to continue the adventuring. We had ***Traversay III*** built by Waterline Yachts of Sidney, BC, and in the summer 2014, after eleven years and a circumnavigation, we finally returned to Hawaii by sailboat. I again played the same Etude at the Church and visited with Buddy, George's son, David Free, and 'Mama' Abigail, who was then over 100 years old, came to hear me play her piano.

About The Author

Laurence Roberts and Mary Anne Unrau

Traversay III - Waterline 43', Cutter-rigged steel hull

Laurence and Mary Anne have sailed over 90,000 miles in the boat since her first launch. They have crossed every meridian and reached latitudes from 65 S on the Antarctic Peninsula to 80 N at the northwest tip of Spitsbergen. Ports of Call have included such diverse spots as Pitcairn, South Georgia, Hamburg, Darwin and the Northwest Passage with lots of places between.

In 2013 they sailed from St. Katharines Marina, London in late March and voyaged to Victoria, British Columbia in October via south English ports, the Irish Sea, the Hebrides, Iceland, Greenland, the Northwest Passage and Alaska.

Their most recent voyage started and ended from with a departure from the Causeway Marina, Victoria in mid-April 2014 in a North Pacific circuit with stops in Mexico, Hawaii, King Cove Alaska and a return to Victoria heading south from a Canadian landfall in Prince Rupert.

Caribbean Regattas

http://currents.bluewatercruising.org/articles/caribbean-regattas/

After spending the past three years cruising in relatively remote regions, we decided to embark on a tour of the numerous regattas that the Caribbean offers up each sailing season. In 2014, we had brought ***Curare*** up along the Brazil coast, through Suriname to Barbados and then Martinique, before turning back south to store her in Trinidad for the hurricane season. While in Trinidad, we took advantage of the skilled labour force and ready supply of boat equipment to undertake an extensive refit on ***Curare***. So when we launched in December, 2014, the old girl, now celebrating her 40th birthday, was in great shape. We gave her a facelift by removing the entire gelcoat from the hull and repainting in Awlgrip. The cabin tops and cockpit were repainted as well. Numerous other minor repairs, upgrades and maintenance were completed, since this was the first time since Panama that we had access to such a great selection of boat parts.

Distances in the Eastern Caribbean are seemingly small. It is only 450 miles from Trinidad in the south to the Virgin Islands in the north; a few days sail if we set our minds to it. But we wanted to see what the cruising aspects of this well-trodden area were like. With the trade winds blowing a steady 20 to 25 knots out of the east, you would think it would be an easy beam reach sailing to traverse the north – south

oriented islands of the Greater Antilles. Not so, as the southern half, known as the Windward Islands, require winds south of east to make comfortable northing. Given the steady westerly flowing current, any winds north of 090T make for a heavy beat. Guidebooks and local lore tell of numerous ways to deal with this; like waiting for a full moon, going with the currents or mostly just waiting for favourable weather. We didn't do any of that and beat our way north in 25 knots NE winds and 2 meter seas. By the end of the 95 mile passage from Chagauramas to Grenada, our spotlessly clean boat was in need of a major salt removal cleanup.

Grenada hosts one of the largest cruiser-friendly communities in the Eastern Caribbean, with several popular anchorages and a friendly morning cruisers Net to fill everyone in on the endless gatherings, swap meets, grocery runs, etc. It is also an Island that is very easy to get around on, with an efficient mini-taxi (bus) service. After enjoying a quiet Christmas potluck with other cruisers in St. David's Bay, (one couple we had last seen at Easter Island!) we decided to get underway and make tracks north.

Heineken Regatta

The *Caribbean Compass* is a locally produced, (Bequia Island) monthly newspaper that contains informative details on all of the Eastern Caribbean activities. Nearly every day throughout the cruising season there is a carnival, music festival, regatta or yacht race to attend somewhere in the Caribbean. We couldn't do it all, so had to make crucial decisions of what we wanted to see and where. On our agenda

for the 2014/2015 cruising season was an aggressive, perhaps optimistic, list of regattas that we hoped to attend. The ones we were most interested in were the RORC 600 Caribbean race and festivities; the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta; the St. Bart's Bucket, and the grand daddy of all regattas, the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. Fortunately, the races and regattas were spaced out over several months, allowing participants and spectators to travel between venues. Several other big name events were scheduled throughout the region; but time, distances and getting overwhelmed by all of the activities kept us from hitting them all.

Moonbird, Ganesha, Rainbow

A large majority of sailors arrive in the Eastern Caribbean islands from either the north (US mainland) or the east (European vessels crossing the Atlantic). Hurricane season officially ends November 30, but most boats start arriving earlier in the month. ARC participants coming from the Canary or Cape Verde Islands arrive in St. Lucia early in December and with an influx of over 200 boats, this is a significant event. As we moved north up the island chain, we encountered more and more of the ARC participants proudly flying their colourful burgees as a badge of honour, or perhaps to attract other participants.

A competitive start: Antigua Classic

We were in Falmouth Harbour, Antigua for the start of the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) Caribbean 600 race, which had a hundred or more very serious boats competing in the 600 mile race, that winds among the neighbouring Leeward Islands. We departed the day after the start for an overnight sail to Saint Maarten, and encountered several of the front runners blasting along at 18 knots or more; and later that night, a few others moving somewhat slower. One boat came so close to us on a reciprocal course that we had to take evasive action, in spite of being on starboard tack, nav lights on and our AIS transceiver broadcasting our location. Even after hailing the sailboat on the VHF using their boat name, as they also had AIS, they did not respond until the last second. A very close call!

After the race: Heineken Cup

We arrived in St. Maarten for the very popular and famous Heineken Regatta, which this year was held March 5 to 8. Up to 300 boats participate in this three-day event, with many people flying in to charter a boat for the races. It's a great venue, with relatively flat water and generally a stiff trade wind to move everyone around the course, which changes each day. As most boats are located within Simpson Lagoon, the battle to get out with the first bridge opening in the morning is nearly as entertaining as watching the boats return at the end of the day. The St. Maarten Yacht Club facilities are located right on the channel at the entrance to the lagoon, and a group of volunteers rate the costumes and antics of the returning race boat crews. The parties held each night of the regatta were incredible, with top name bands flown in to entertain all of the racers. And with the beer flowing so freely, it's a wonder how Heineken managed to produce so much amber liquid!

Get out of our way, 1 billion dollars of yachts!

Next up on our Caribbean regatta tour was the St. Bart's Bucket. This is a showcase for some of the wealthiest in the world to race their multi-million dollar yachts against each other, and take home the bragging rights and a beat-up silver bucket. Participation in the regatta is by invitation only, with yachts ranging from the 55 meter ***Adela,*** built in 1903, to the modern styled 33 meter ***Inoui*** and 46 meter ***Elfje,*** to Ron Holland's latest *Perini Navi*, the 60 meter ***Seahawk***.

Seahawk in Barts Bucket

There were two J Class boats participating this year: ***Rainbow*** and ***Hanuman;*** along with several other superb yachts, for a total fleet of 36 yachts divided into four divisions.

Rainbow and Rebecca start

The amount of teak around Gustavia Harbour represented a whole forest! For the first time, the Bucket Rule that provided a means for handicapping these dissimilar vessels was tossed out, in favour of the Offshore Racing Council's Superyacht rule to more fairly provide ratings.

Classic woodwork

These rules are necessary because these yachts are aggressively raced. At the skippers meeting one morning, we overheard the race committee chairman state that yachts should not get within 45 meters of each other; but he did not specify how much clearance a 55 meter yacht had to give a 60 meter yacht. Do you measure from the bow, the stern?

Elena of London, Axia, Drumfire

We took ***Curare*** out amongst the racers and with our diminutive 3.5 meter beam, we could not have fit between some of the racing yachts. These boats are huge – the boomvang for the yacht ***A Better Place*** weighed as much as ***Curare***! Famous America Cup helmsmen and tacticians were crewing on some of the most serious boats, competing for the Bucket and the night events were just as competitive. Each night, we watched truckloads of Grey Goose, champagne and beer get loaded onto the mega yachts that lined the inner harbour. Yes we mean truck loads each night! The social scene was equally entertaining. With St. Bart's already an exclusive hangout for the rich and famous, each afternoon and into the night the RAF's would come out in their finery, to be seen and strut around the $15+ million dollar yachts. Quite a spectacular event and one we are not soon to forget.

Dock party: Bucket Regatta

The last regatta that we wanted to experience during our cruising season in the Caribbean was the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, held April 16 to 21 in Falmouth and English Harbours, Antigua. 2015 marked the 28th anniversary of this event, that brings the world's most elegant and beautifully constructed classic yachts together for five days of fun, but serious racing, right off the entrance to English Harbour.

The start gun at Antigua Classic

The fleet of up to 60 yachts is divided into five classes for the start. There is a single handed race the first day, followed by four separate courses the following days. Most yachts are provided space at the Antigua Yacht Club docks, where guests are permitted to wander around the docks and marvel at these incredibly elegant sculptures of craftsmanship. Geoff managed to secure a spot on board the committee boat as a steward, serving the Race Committee tea, cake and sandwiches throughout the day. He also managed to be on the aft deck of the committee boat, the 90 foot tug the ***Flying Buzzard***, when each of the yachts came racing across the finish line.

A very close finish in Antigua

It was incredible to witness these massive and well-sailed yachts, hurtling towards a solid block of riveted steel at well over 12 knots, skimming past her transom with meters to spare. The wrap-up party, after the final day of racing was complete, was also a superbly organized event and the awards ceremony commemorated some of the most well-known classic yachts in the world. Also included were several of the lesser known, such as ***Sally B***, a gaff rigged, 12 meter schooner that had arrived from England the day before the races started, and left for home the following day. It was a spectacular regatta, well organized by the volunteers of the Antigua Yacht Club.

With our season of participating in Caribbean regattas behind us, we sailed down to Tobago early in May. There, we found a peaceful, quiet little bay to relax and unwind for a couple of weeks before taking ***Curare*** down to Trinidad and her haven for the 2015 hurricane season.

About The Author

Geoffrey and Linda Goodall

Curare -

Currents Bluewater Cruising

The Bluewater Cruising Association

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