

December 2019



SisterShip

women on the water

Free Issue!

DESTINATIONS:

Tonga

Patagonia

GRAB BAGS

Giant Cuttlefish

Racing to Hobart!

KAYAKING THE GULF OF CARPENTARIA

Cruising the Coast of Scotland: Part 5

PLUS Barge Boats, Dogs Who Sail, photos, and more!

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Celebrating real women on the water

AUGUST 2019



LEFT: Relaxed kite trimming while testing out the lifeline tension during the 2018 Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

AMY GOFF, AUSTRALIA.

RIGHT: ALIS WOOD and MELANIE LEIGH ROBERTS were dancing to 'sisters are doing it for themselves' while anti-fouling Alis' boat recently!

Tasmania, AUSTRALIA.

JUNE 2019



LEFT: VIKI MOORE AND VICTORIA MURDOCH crossing New Zealand's notorious Cook Strait aboard Victoria's boat *High Voltage*. Viki and Victoria are training to do the around North Island two-handed race in 2020.

NEW ZEALAND

DECEMBER 2018



Send your 'Page 3' photos to
editor@sistershipmagazine.com

The bowsprit

From the editor

Welcome to the special December 2019 issue of *SisterShip* magazine!

Our December issue is a 'sampler' of what *SisterShip* is about and includes stories from the last 12 months plus new content. We also welcome and introduce three new contributors from opposite ends of the globe, Jennifer Harkness, Deborah Wallace, and Michele Ableson. We'll be hearing a lot more from Jennifer, Deborah, and Michele in future issues.

SisterShip's ethos is *women supporting women on the water*, and as such, in each issue we feature a Shero story. Our definition of a Shero is someone who has pushed themselves and achieved something new on the water, no matter how big or small. We love sharing these stories and include all our 2019 (and Dec 2018) Shero stories for you in this issue. If you have a Shero story you'd like to share, please email it to us!

Undoubtedly one of everyone's Sheros, record-breaking solo sailor Lisa Blair is about to undertake a new challenge, this time alongside *SisterShip's* own Jackie Parry! You can read about their plans on Page 30. *SisterShip* magazine is proud to be a sponsor of Lisa and Jackie's campaign and look forward to bringing you a follow-up story after their adventure.



The recent haulout of the *SisterShip* magazine webpage www.sistershipmagazine.com is almost complete. This should make subscribing and checking back issues a lot easier. The web also showcases our team, highlighting what a talented and diverse community of women on the water bring you these stories each issue. Have a look and follow the links to their own webs and blogs.

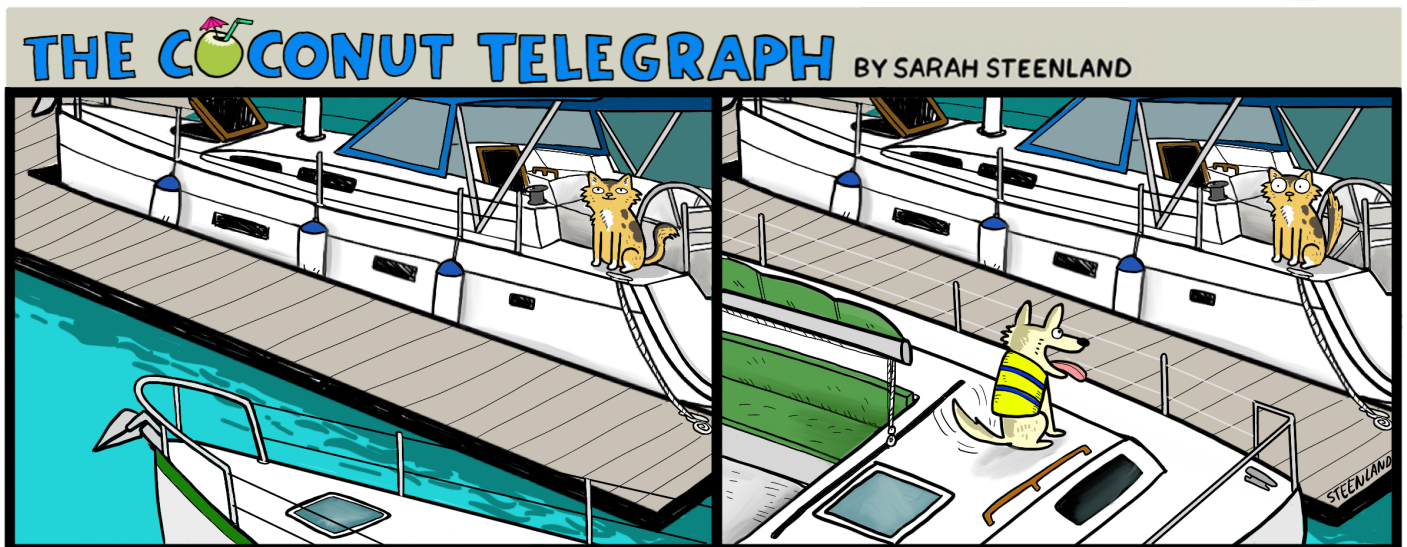
This is also the time we announce some of our year's prize winners! We choose not to 'judge' our contributions (it's far too difficult as we love them all!) so our entries for Pearls of Wisdom and Watercolours (photos) for the year go into a draw and a winner chosen randomly. I am delighted to announce the winner of our 2019 'Watercolours' photo competition is Cheryle Matthew. Our 2019 Pearls of Wisdom winner is Terrie Connellan. Thanks for your contributions and congratulations!

In addition to our regular Dogs Who Sail

feature, we include two sailing pet stories, Ivy the mischievous sailing Labrador, and Pancake the fearless cruising kitty! It is therefore fitting that we share the 'toon below (with permission) from the talented cruising cartoonist and *SisterShip* supporter Sarah Steenland. Check out Sarah's web www.sarahsteenland.com for more cruising comics.

Thanks for joining the *SisterShip* voyage, and as always, look for the dolphin!

Shelley Wright



SisterShip Magazine cruises along with an international flavour. Our contributors hail from every corner of the globe. We encourage writers to maintain their voice and therefore their local spelling.

Measurements and navigation aids (IALA A and IALA B)* are different too. As valued readers, we just want to keep you on board with our ethos of a less regimented style, and a more international spirit!

*The International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA, previously known as International Association of Lighthouses) is an Inter Governmental Organisation founded in 1957 to collect and provide nautical expertise and advice.



Message in a bottle

Send your letters to

editor@sistershipmagazine.com

February 2019

Editors' note.

When we relaunched *SisterShip* magazine in 2018, the magazine's founder, Ruth Boydell, gave us a box of papers dating back to 1988. It was with great excitement that we dived into these treasures. We are in the process of tracking down as many of the original *SisterShip* correspondents as possible and are delighted that we can share some of the results so far.

In this issue is the tale of a letter and cheque dated 1988 from Peter Heathwood, father of well known sailor and freelance writer Petrea McCarthy. When a friend of Petrea's attended a recent *SisterShip* Coastal Navigation course at Lake Macquarie, it was



the perfect opportunity to surprise Petrea and her father with the original letter and a set of 1988/89 *SisterShip* back copies. The following is Petrea's account...

Hi Shelley and Jackie,

I was surprised when Karen handed me the parcel from *SisterShip*. But I was absolutely astonished when I saw it contained my long awaited *SisterShip* magazines, plus Dad's original letter and cheque for a Christmas gift subscription.

I'm looking forward to catching up with all the news from 1988. I've already browsed issue #1, in which *SisterShip* founder Ruth Boydell published several letters of encouragement for the concept of a magazine for women on the water. One of those letters was from my sister Tania, who met Ruth while cruising in Brazil. Tania and Ruth also cruised in company in the Caribbean, from where Tania continued westwards, and (I believe) Ruth headed for the USA.

Issue #1, published in April '88, shows how recently women began to be accepted into the marine industry. Mandi Swan had lately become the first female sailmaker in New Zealand; Newcastle Tech had just started teaching navigation to women; and less than 1% of students at the Australian Maritime College were female.

Kay Cottee was about to become the first woman to circumnavigate non-stop and unassisted, Jessica Watson was not even thought of, and Cathy Hawkins was in the midst of her successful short-handed ocean racing career. Multihulls were still considered radical and unsafe, and banned from most ocean races. In December 1987 I had joined Cathy and partner Ian Johnston on their 12 m trimaran *Verbatim* to race unofficially in the Sydney-Hobart. Although starting well after the fleet, we were just pipped by line

honours winner, the maxi-yacht Sovereign.

The *SisterShip* photo of Cathy sailing *Verbatim* must have been a few years old, as it shows her wearing a pair of PVC wet weather pants tied up with string. By 1988, state of the art wet weather gear was the new, soft PVC Dorlon gear. Still only available in men's sizing, it was far more comfortable, if just as sweaty.

Issue #1 also featured an article on sexism, showing how some things have not changed enough. Another article pleaded with us not to release balloons, an ongoing issue today.

While the original *SisterShip* may have been too far ahead of its time to continue, the present version shows that the idea of women afloat in their own right is now very powerful. A lot has changed in thirty years, but one thing that remains the same is *SisterShip's* subscription price. If that's not good value, I'll eat my PVC sou'wester!

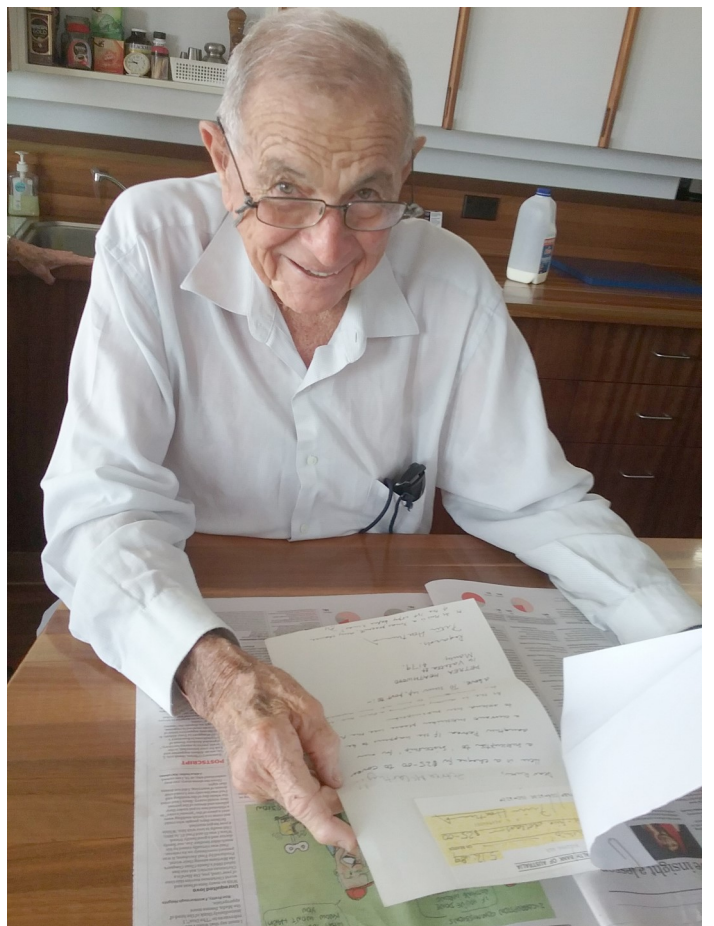
Cheers,

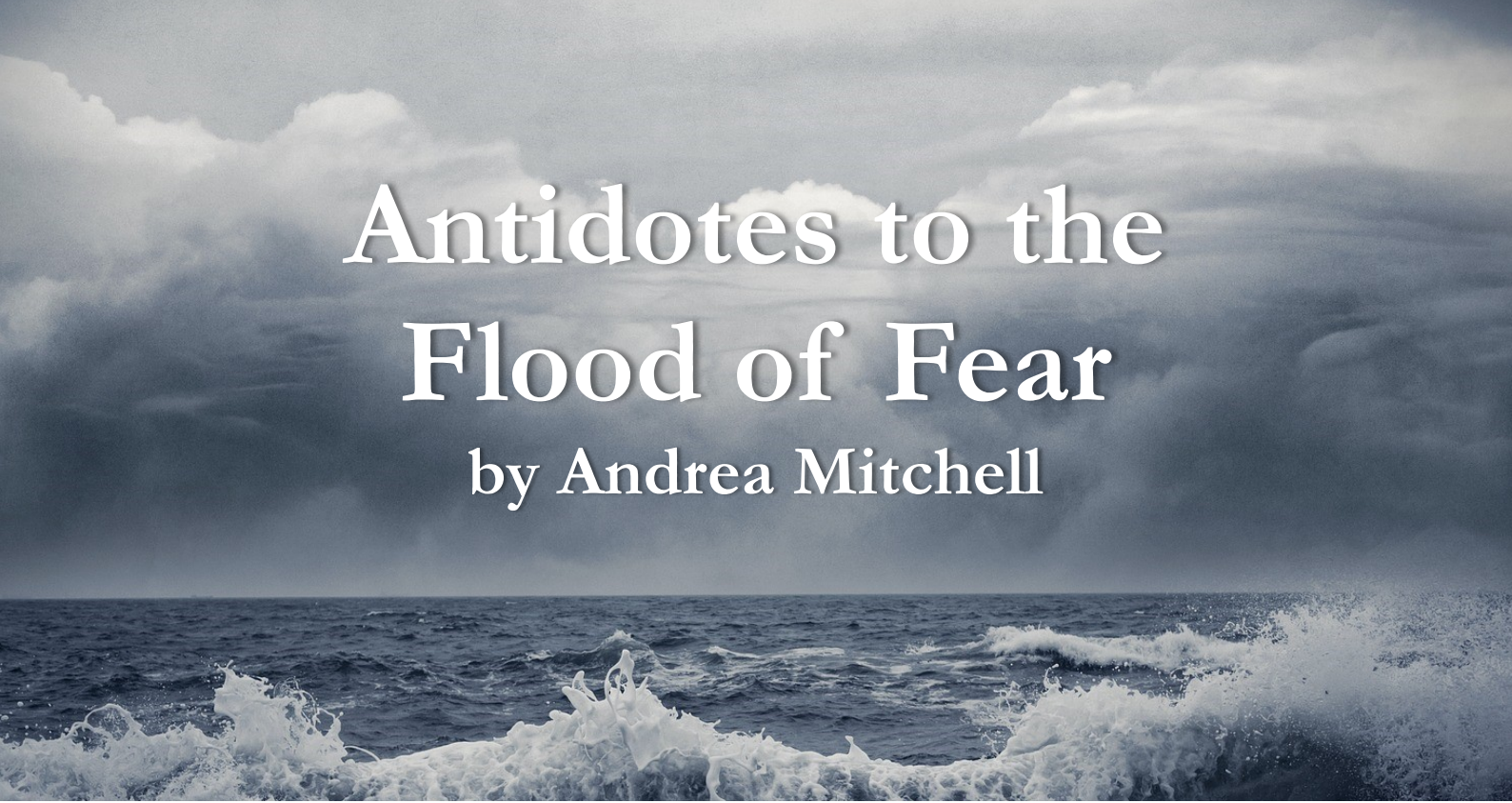
Petrea McCarthy



ABOVE: Petrea McCarthy receiving her surprise parcel.

BELOW: Peter Heathwood reading the letter he sent to *SisterShip* in 1988.





Antidotes to the Flood of Fear

by Andrea Mitchell

Majuro to Kiribati, 355 nautical miles, a short ocean passage in the North Pacific equatorial zone. A reasonably benign forecast had made leaving seem a good idea one Thursday in 2014. It turned out not so. The mysterious ITCZ (Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone) was 3,000 nm to the east near Kiritimati Island when we left Majuro. But it suddenly turned up, as it can, overnight, just after we left. Winds, predicted to be 10-15 kts for the whole trip, turned into 20-25 kts with banks of squalls adding to the excitement.

Marco the autopilot, our beloved third crew member, decided to take a holiday soon into the trip, leaving us hand-steering, two hours on, two hours off, for 36 hours. Thankfully the seas settled enough on Saturday morning for the skipper to grab a chance to pull out Marco's control head and convince him/her that we really needed him/her back on deck! The seas between Majuro and Mili were boisterous compared to other parts of the ocean, maybe as a result of sea mounts and up-wellings, and different wave trains were moving the boat in jarring and difficult ways. Traditional Pacific navigators mapped these different wave patterns to help locate themselves, and the Marshallese have lovely schematic wave charts made out of coconut

battens, dotted with shells to mark the various atolls.

Still, it was exhilarating helming in the confused seas, and a really good work out for the upper arms. It certainly made us appreciate Marco a whole lot more!

The stronger-than-forecast winds and Marco's little nervous breakdown were not to be the end of our trials during that passage. Two days into our anticipated four-to-five day journey we were into the swing of it. We had managed to cook and eat a reasonably substantial early dinner. The sun was close to going down, and darkness, not always our old friend, was deepening. It was my watch, and the skipper was just getting ready for some shut eye when the winds started to climb again and the rapidly developing black squall to our east suddenly took over the entire sky. Reluctantly I called him back on deck. We struggled quickly into rain gear, re-attached the tethers to the lifelines. We barely got the third reef in, the headsail pulled in to a handkerchief, and the storm boards in place, before we were into the gale; the heavy rain horizontal. The winds were now consistently 35-45, gusting to nearly 50 kts, with rapidly building seas.

I was not a happy camper. An acrid taste began to gather in the back of my mouth, my heart pounded wildly. All rational thought whipped away in the howling wind. Communication was almost impossible, words disappearing in the gloom, shared looks telegraphing the anxiety and building fear. We were already tired after two days of hand-steering into strong winds, but I would have given anything for the winds to drop to 25-30 kts. Already used to the yawing and gyrating of the last two days, our poor mono was well and truly heeled over, moving insanely, as I tried to steer a course to spill the wind. The moderate sounds of our small yacht banging to windward turned into a berserk raging crashing dissonance, jangling my nerves more at each unexpected and unexplained noise. How was the rigging holding up, what about that spreader, had a sail torn? Would the skipper get back to the cockpit safely, what on earth was he doing up there, what was taking so long?

And then it happened, I accidentally put the boat into a heave-to position, sheets tangling and catching on the foredeck. Things became blurry after that, a momentary blank, as the skipper returned and took over the helm – shock and anxiety freezing out the possibility of acting. I don't remember how I got there, but I found myself crouching, tethered on the cockpit floor, my eyes shut tight – as terrified as I have ever been in my life, yelling, screaming loudly, as each new gust hit. After a few long minutes of self-absorbed venting I dared to open my eyes and make sure my precious skipper was still at the helm. There he was, ensuring we stayed heaved too, doing what had to be done. He looked at me and smiled.

'We're ok,' or at least that's what I thought he said before I closed my eyes again.

With the boat stabilised I was eventually able to keep my eyes open, realising that it was harder just hearing the noises and not seeing what was going on. I even remember

watching the awesome powerful beauty of the huge waves effortlessly lifting our small home. We were still hove-to, sort of... the winds settling into consistent 35-40 kts. We were able to talk, or rather shout above the noise, about what had to happen next. I needed to take back the helm; he needed to go forward to disentangle a snagged headsail sheet to get the boat sailing again. There was no one else on board, it had to be me, unless I wanted to go forward while he helmed. Several deep breaths later, some reassuring words from the skipper, and a bit of internal self-talk, I took back the helm so he could go forward.

I have decided I don't like winds above 40 kts at night, (daytime is not so bad), and four years on from that passage, and with more ocean passages under my belt, I still have work to do on my 'fear management strategy'. I think of all those amazing antipodean women solo sailors, Kay Cottee, Jessica Watson, Lisa Blair, who have always inspired me, my private soothing mantra being, 'if they can do it, so can I'. And I am not even sailing alone! One of Lisa Blair's blogs was comforting, her admission that winds over 50 kts in a trans-Tasman crossing temporarily reduced her to tears before she knuckled back down to managing the boat. That was before her epic solo Antarctic circumnavigation.

I know I need to keep learning, keep working on my boat handling skills and confidence. To keep building my faith in myself, my partner, and our strong ocean-going haven. I know my fear is normal, but I can't let it paralyse me, I can't let fear flood through me.

Wet from the rain and rogue waves, we were still bouncing and crashing through the gradually calming seas. It was 11 pm before we were able to relax again as the winds came back down to a steady 25 kts. We were still heavily reefed down, with more squalls in the offing. Despite the good strong sailing winds, the rough seas meant we couldn't take

advantage of the conditions to race on to Tarawa, and so we settled into a slow but steady 3-4 kts for the rest of the night, before eventually becoming becalmed and drifting for five-to-six hours. Such are the vagaries of wind.

While routinely checking the boat's power systems we realised the wind generator had blown its 'foo foo' valve, probably during the peak storm gusts. We had been too focussed on getting the sails reefed to remember to turn it off, and it was now whirling aimlessly, making an ominous clanking. With raining overcast skies, and no solar power input, we had to shepherd our on-board power very carefully to ensure enough power for navigation equipment and other vital boat functions. All through the trip we were reporting – morning and night – over the HF

radio to the Majuro and Vanuatu cruiser nets, so at least someone knew where we were, and what conditions we were experiencing. More importantly, those fantastic volunteer nets provided a daily and very reassuring connection to friendly calm voices with weather updates and locations of other boats underway. Knowing we were not alone and hearing others enduring similar conditions buoyed our tired spirits.

Once we had passed Butaritari the ITCZ influence decreased and we were blessed with a lovely sunny sail back into Betio, Tarawa, reviving both us and the onboard power levels. Check-in all went smoothly and by 7.30 pm Monday night we were safely at anchor, grateful to be back in sight of land, our wind generator fixed thanks to a replacement fuse.

From left to right: Tony Mitchell, Sean Mitchell, and Andrea Mitchell, on board *Irish Melody*, Vuda Marina, Fiji, prior to departure to New Caledonia, November 2017.



Why do I get scared sometimes when sailing, or anytime? Why does fear lurk beneath the watery surface of each voyage, sometimes each day? Because nature can be powerful, the sea unforgiving. Because life can be dangerous, because you can get hurt, physically and emotionally, or because, worst of all, you can lose loved ones, maybe even die.

But as long I can live and love, I must keep building 'dikes of courage'. Being out there is worth it, sailing is worth it, being with the ones you love doing something you love is worth it.

Andrea started sailing in her late 40s, after years of reading all about it. Starting out as a bay sailor, it was 2011 before she braved a blue water crossing from the Philippines to Darwin with her DH (Dear Heart). She currently co-owns a 1983 38-foot C&C Landfall *Irish Melody*, which has travelled far more nautical miles and crossed many more oceans than she has.

<https://www.sailblogs.com/member/irishmelody/>

You can read more true stories about dealing with fear on the water in *Facing Fear Head On*, available as both an eBook and paperback from Amazon or www.sistershippress.com



**A collection of 46
inspiration and
practical stories from
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Vava'u

Vaka Eitu anchorage.

I awaken as the engine under my head fires into life. I don't have to look to know where we are, as I can feel it – the waters are calm beneath me, as if we sail in a lake. After only 40 hours of sailing since leaving Niue, this calm tells me we've arrived into Tonga.

We've arrived into the islands of Vava'u, the most popular Tongan island group for visiting cruisers. The entrance to Neiafu is wide and well-marked, with plenty of room for us to follow the markers into the harbor. We press on towards the islands without hesitation, even with a scheduled arrival in the wee hours of the morning. With a five-minute warning, I'm at the helm as my husband, David, pulls up the mooring ball in Neiafu and secures our lines. As a harbor, Neiafu is deep. It's better suited for picking up a mooring ball than anchoring. Confident that *Starry Horizons* is secure, we head back to bed as there are still a few hours until customs opens.

Before we go to clear in, we tune into VHF channel 26. Channel 26 is repeated throughout the island group, and the morning net is well organized. The extenders allow boats up to 40 miles offshore to

communicate with the island group. Each day of the week has a different net controller, many of whom are expats from Canada or the States.

After clearing in and grabbing fresh provisions, the first stop is one of the most beautiful places I've ever seen: Port Maurelle. The visibility in the water isn't great, but snorkeling is not why you come to Port Maurelle. You come because the water is electric blue. There are no buildings in sight, yet it's seven miles to the services in Neiafu Harbor. The beach is the perfect place to host morning yoga or a beach bonfire. It's paradise and the perfect place to wind down after a passage.

While anchored in Port Maurelle, we team up with friends to snorkel Swallow's Cave. The cave mouth stands at the point of the peninsula and it's easy to spot. Tour companies offer trips to Swallow's Cave to snorkel with the bait ball of fish that play in the entrance. Our tender, *Little Dipper*, bobs in the water while we snorkel with the fish and sea snakes. Abandoning our snorkel gear, we climb up into the cave. Squeezing through a small opening, we find a large room with a



Kayak in Port Maurelle.

natural oculus in the ceiling. The King of Tonga used to hold feasts in this room.

On our dinghy ride back to Port Maurelle, we question our plans for the next day. Our goal was to dive Mariner's Cave, which is even further away. The dinghy ride to Swallow's was almost two miles, and we were beating into the waves. We aren't exactly sure where Mariner's is located. Would taking the dinghy be a mistake?

Mariner's is the most popular scuba dive in Vava'u, although it can be accessed by a good free diver. The cave itself is hard to find, and the cliffs form a steep drop off into the deep waters. Changing our plans, we load up dive gear onto *Starry Horizons*. There are six cruisers coming, and we're the least experienced divers in the bunch. We weigh anchor and motor *Starry Horizons* over to the supposed entrance of Mariner's.

There are two entrances, both completely underwater. I let the engines idle while we send our friend Kyle in for a reconnaissance mission. Shortly, Kyle's head popped up. 'I see the entrance!'

The men suit up first and plunge into the water. Given the 'all okay' signal, I motor *Starry Horizons* a safe distance and cut the engines. We drift for 40 minutes, switching on the engines if we float too close to the cliffs. When the divers pop up and signal for a pick up, I maneuver *Starry Horizons* stern-to, and we perform a switch.

With Kyle's wife Shelley as our lead, Jessie and I submerge. We find the cave entrance about three meters under the swell. A second entrance lies twelve meters down. The hole is large, an easy pass through, and once clear of the entrance I turn up to surface inside the cave. Our three heads bob with the swell as it pushes and pulls the water. The light from the sun reflects through the depths and up into the cave, like blue pool lights at night. Each push compresses the air inside the dome of the cave, forming a fine mist over the water. Our giggles bounce against the cave walls and echo around us.

We lift our regulators back into our mouths and descend once again, exiting the cave and turning left to explore the wall. The coral and marine life is interesting, but the real show is purely audio; the humpback whales serenade us as we swim.

After a few more days of relaxation in Port Maurelle, we head further out to Vaka Eitu. This small anchorage has the best snorkeling we've seen in Vava'u. The trick is to maneuver over the shallow water in your dinghy without capsizing or scraping the coral. Patience is required while waiting for high tide. Once on the other side, you swim among dense, vibrant reef with the occasional turtle darting along. Again, the soundtrack for our swim underwater is whale songs.

We leave Vaka Eitu and head back to Neiafu. Through VHF channel 26, we coordinate taking part in of Vava'u's big attractions: swimming with humpback whales and a Tongan feast.

The biggest tourist activity in Tonga is the humpback whale migration. Tonga is one of the few places in the world where it is legal to swim with humpback whales. We book our trip with Beluga Dive and arrive bright and early at the dock for our excursion.

Companies like Beluga Dive are certified



Up close with humpback calf.

through the Tongan Whale Swim Operator program. This program regulates the industry to protect the humpback whales. In a small community like Neiafu, everyone knows everyone, and self-policing keeps the tour companies in line. Our boat carries five tourists onboard and two guides. As the boat leaves the safety of the islands, we pitch up and down in the ocean swell. Our new friends, not being boaters themselves, look a bit green around the gills.

Whale spotting leaves us no time to be sick. 'One spout over here!' someone calls. 'A mom and a calf out to port,' a shout from the other side. No shouts are necessary when two whales pop up 20 feet from our beam. Through all this activity, the guides watch the whales for clues. If the whales are on the move, there is little point in diving into the water, as we can't keep up.

We watch and wait for the right moment, and eventually it arrives: the water breaks right in front of our boat as a 20-foot calf breaches.

'Go! Go! Go!' We dive in with our snorkel gear and fan out on the surface.

The water is deep here – over 500 feet, deep

blue, and the light beams cut through the depths around us. About fifty feet below, sits a full-grown whale, the mother of the calf. Even further below her, another adult whale relaxes vertically, floating in the water as if it were air (just seems odd to say it is floating). This male whale is fulfilling the role of an escort. Escort males travel with the baby and mother, protecting them in the hopes of breeding with the female next season.

The main show is the whale calf. In a rambunctious display of energy, he breaches again and again in front of our little group. From our perch on the water's surface we watch him dive down to his mother. As he points back up to the surface, his tail pumps harder and harder, propelling him up to break the surface. He launches out of the sea, his fins splay out, a personification of joy.

Our little group is ecstatic. The whale calf's body splashes down, our roar of excitement is muffled by our snorkel gear.

We continue to watch, even when the show is over. The calf swims down to his mother and parks under her body to rest, shielding himself from our view. Every few minutes

the calf surfaces to breathe. Every ten minutes or so, all three whales surface together for air. By now, other tour groups have joined us and we take turns. There's never more than five people in the water; four tourists and a guide. It is always amazing to see whales on the water's surface from our boat, *Starry Horizons*, but the spectacular show the whales puts on for us while we swim with them is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Our day is not over. Our dive boat anchors in a protected bay for lunch and a snorkel before returning us to the dock in the early afternoon. We hustle back to *Starry Horizons* to prepare for the evening festivities.

For our feast, we pick 'Utulei My Tongan Home' and meet the shuttle boat at the dock in Neiafu. It is a short ride across the water to the home, where plumeria (frangipani) flowers and beverage service are offered upon our arrival.

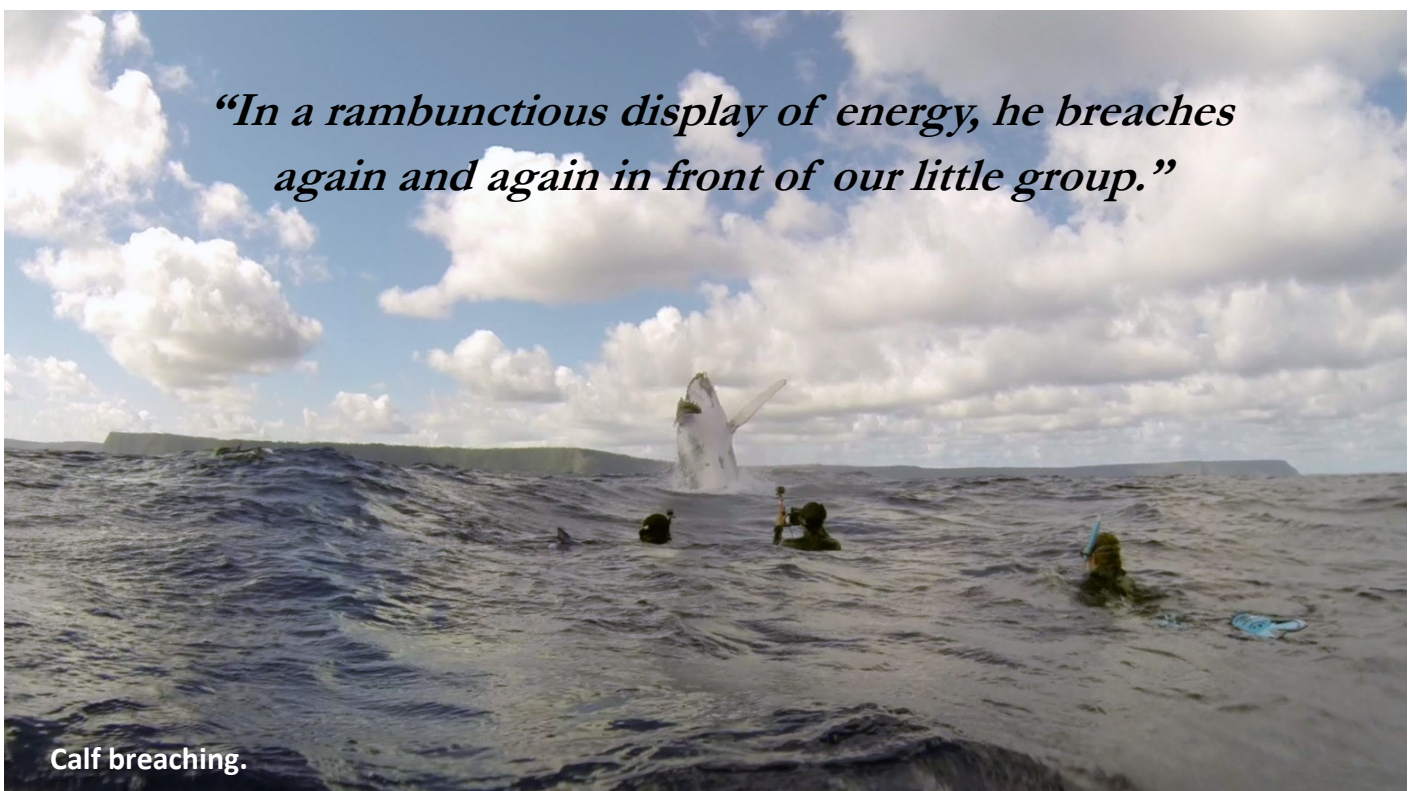
Before dining, there is a series of dances. Young girls dance in traditional outfits and skin slick with coconut oil. Their knees bend and their hips sway, but most of the movement is through the arms. In contrast,

the men dance with a wide stance, stomping their feet, clapping their hands, and yipping. They perform a distinctive head snap with the music. The dancers encourage the guests to join them, which leads to laughter as the music runs faster and faster.

The sun sets, and it's time for a kava circle in the dark. Each person announces where they are from and claps twice. The young girls serve the kava in coconut shells to each guest to drink. I decline to take part, but David has his first taste of kava in the South Pacific. The muddy brown water tastes like mud and leaves a small tingling sensation on his lips.

Finally, the staff open the buffet dinner. The table is laden with a wide variety of food – roast pig, fish with coconut milk, salted beef, and marinated seafood. I help myself to a little bit of everything, sampling Tongan fare, but my favorite is the fish with coconut milk, known as *ota ika*. This dish has various iterations throughout the South Pacific: in Fiji, it's known as *kokoda*; in French Polynesia it's *poisson cru*; and the Cook Islands, *ika mata*. Whatever you call it, it's one of my favorite dishes from my travels and I've adopted into my own galley. It's perfect with a freshly caught tuna.

“In a rambunctious display of energy, he breaches again and again in front of our little group.”



Calf breaching.



Starry Horizons approaching Kenutu.

With our two big tourist activities done, we're ready to leave Neiafu again. We still have more anchorages to explore. Hunga Lagoon, with its narrow entrance, offers shelter if you can squeeze through. Inside the lagoon is Hunga Haven, home to Barry and Cindy, Canadian expats who welcome cruisers to their mooring balls. They have small guest houses for rent, although taking the 'ferry' from Neiafu to Hunga is not for the faint of heart!

Sailing far out into the outer islands, we anchor off Kenutu Island. This uninhabited island connects to its neighbors during low tide. The walk around the three islands provides us with tide pools and swimming holes to explore. We identify dozens of snakefish sea cucumbers, brittle starfish, and rock boring sea urchins.

Before we know it, it's time to head back into Neiafu, to clear out.

Tonga is beautiful, but cruising Tonga can present some challenges. While we were there, Tonga experienced a fuel shortage. The new Tongan fuel ship was too big to make the turn into Neiafu, and thus could not deliver petrol or diesel. Fuel was arriving via

barrels on the ferry, and thanks to the ex-pat network in Neiafu we were able to secure enough to make it to Fiji.

With such an incredible first season in Tonga, it's no wonder we came back for a second the next year.



Amy and David have been sailing on their boat, *Starry Horizons*, for four years. They document their journey on OutChasingStars.com and on YouTube. In 2020 they will complete their circumnavigation by crossing their wake in the Caribbean.

PERSONAL SAFETY FOR WOMEN:

The Best Weapon is Your Brain

Jennifer Harkness

As sailors, we talk about safety at sea often. Sailing is a balance of preparation, practice, and presence for when the unknown happens. That's because the unknown always happens at some point on the water. I learned recently that personal safety is similar in prevention tactics after taking a women's safety course through my local Seattle, WA, USA police department.

The global statistics that violent crimes are mostly against women are staggering. Why? To speak in gross generalizations, we are often physically smaller than men and unable to overpower them, and we are often enculturated to be more accommodating and submissive. Likewise, men around the globe are influenced by messages that they be tough and entitled. Many have witnessed violence against women in their personal lives and in media, giving it more exposure and permission. This makes us easy and socially acceptable targets. It is important to note that not all men are perpetrators. In fact, most people, and men, are kind and helpful. The trouble is that people who commit crimes are generally repeat offenders and crimes go unreported or not prosecuted frequently. Sadly, most violence against women is domestic and carried out by someone you know and even love. United Nations (UN) Women reports thirty-five percent of women are assaulted in their lifetimes by a stranger, this does not include harassment. Seventy percent of women have experienced assault either physical or sexual from an intimate partner or family member. Of the women killed intentionally last year, half were by

someone they were close to. While domestic violence is clearly a global epidemic and we need many more resources to combat it, in this article I am going to focus on safety around people you don't know.

When we think about personal safety, we often think of self-defense classes and learning different ways to physically fight back. We think of mace, tasers, Kubatons, even guns, and visions of checking our surroundings, especially at night, not traveling alone, or of alarm systems and locked doors.

I am going to list five key things that can potentially save your life and may not be what comes up top of mind when thinking about



assault. None of this is meant to bring up fear of attack, but to empower women to be informed and have strategies to prevent harm and respond if they are.

The first is a basic understanding of trauma. When something happens where you feel your life is threatened, there is great danger, or your survival is in question, it classifies as a traumatic event. This can be from playground bullying, losing a job, illness, to assault and war. It's a spectrum. Physical assault of any kind is a big trauma, and everyone responds differently to these events depending on factors like biology, support systems, and resilience.

Universally, brains are wired for protection and our response is either fight, flight, freeze, or faint.

These are autonomic functions we have little control over initially. We either go into action and face the threat head on, run away from it, lock up and are unable to think or move, or literally pass out. For reasons we don't

completely understand women are most likely to go into freeze response under violent duress. This is when we hear of stories where a woman is attacked, and she couldn't scream or move even if she wanted to. As a mental health therapist and trauma specialist, I've known black belts in karate who were raped and found they couldn't move while being assaulted. It was not from lack of preparation or skill; it was their body responding out of their control. There is no shame in that, it's also terrifying.

People with ongoing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) almost always responded with a freeze response and had little proper emotional support after the event. Symptoms are exacerbated by a blame the victim mentality of what they could have done differently or how they were not prepared or safe enough. Please know that assault is always one hundred percent the fault of the person perpetrating the crime.

You can be trained and prepared and still go into freeze. Knowing this is a possibility, there are some things we can mentally and physically do to prepare and hopefully even



help move through freeze state if it starts to happen. The baseline here is expectations. We need to understand that when trauma happens it is going to suck, it's going to hurt, and we need to do something as soon as possible. We need to move. Being informed, preparing our minds, and being realistic are the first step in fighting back.

As sailors we are trained in navigation as a safety protocol. There are no road signs on the sea, so we need to be constantly monitoring where we are at, so we stay on course. We also must pay attention to many details on a boat, sail trim, wind angle, waves, other boats, people on board. We are constantly scanning to ensure everything is safe. We need to bring that situational awareness into everything we do in public spaces.

It's not about having constant paranoia or hyper vigilance, it is about being aware of your surroundings, exit points, people, potential threats.

When I took the safety class the police said that crimes are the center of a triangle. The sides are means, motive, and opportunity. The one side you have control over is not giving people an opportunity to perpetrate on you. This means observation and preventing someone from easily accessing you or your belongings. Secure your bags so they cannot be snatched, don't wear headphones so you can hear, lock doors, walk toward traffic and not with, stay in the center of sidewalks, don't be intoxicated in public spaces alone, take alternate routes regularly when walking, and generally take safety seriously and don't let your guard down.

The third step is something we should be talking about more and that is intuition. Your body has a profound wisdom in assessing situations. We've all had a time when our gut

instinct rings an alarm. Many sailors tell me stories of their gut saying, "reef the sails." The ones who responded quickly have safer stories. We don't always get confirmation on our intuition, but this is why we have the slogan 'better safe than sorry.'

When we are in certain environments or around certain people or experiences, we also have alarm bells that ring. Many women ignore these signals and don't want to seem rude or make a fuss. They dismiss their intuition. Don't do that. Walk to the other side of the street, disengage, ask for help. Listen to your feelings and be assertive and act. It's okay to walk into a business or to another person and say, "I'm uncomfortable, can you help me." The police said this saves people more than anything.

On different online groups I have read a lot about what weapons are best on a boat to prevent pirates, break ins, and assault. I've heard everything from wasp spray to guns. According to the police I spoke with, they said to use weapons of opportunity.

Grab whatever is around you and go for the soft spots: eyes, nose, throat, and balls.

They suggested you look around your home and know where things are you could use in a situation like that. Strategically place items in each room you could use and either physically or mentally run through what you would do with them. For walking long docks or in parking lots they said to carry your key between your pointer and middle finger like a shiv to stab with. They emphasized that for women elbows, knees, and palms of hands are the best for striking with. There are many videos online and classes out there for self-defense to practice and they certainly recommended them. They didn't put down the tasers, mace and knives, but they did say they all have their downsides that can either be ineffective or not work at all.

Ultimately, your best weapon when under attack is your brain.

This brings us back to the first step, which is understanding that it might be momentarily impaired when scary things happen. Just like we practice docking with no wind for future stormy days, we need to practice in our minds for assault.

Running through what you can do either physically or mentally helps if a moment arises and you need it. The police suggested running through “what if” scenarios and coming up with techniques on how you would get away and get help.

Have your friend or partner gently and slowly grab you so you can feel what it's like to try to get out of it. Practice screaming, “NO! HELP! POLICE!” This all can give you muscle memory to help in the moment of trauma. Making noise when under attack is critical. The one item they emphasized having is a small air horn or noise maker.

It's also important to practice being assertive both physically and verbally in your public life. Show you are not an easy target and walk straight with your head up and with awareness.

Give eye contact and show that you are friendly but also acknowledging. Being able to say, “Please step back and give me space, or I don't like to be touched like that,” is important. If you can't verbalize, the police suggest you fake sneeze on them and apologize for being sick. Most people, when you set a boundary or sneeze back away apologetically. Perpetrators tend to blame you

or get upset; this is a red flag and time to get away. This is also time to get help. Know all the emergency numbers in the area you are at. Put them in your phone and have them accessible. Go to the nearest person or business and ask for help, do not be shy or hold back. Rely on the statistics that most people are good Samaritans and want to help.

Perpetrators of crimes generally don't want to be seen, heard, or hurt. They want to perform their crime in stealth and get away with it. Being purposeful in your public actions and in your home makes you a difficult target and is a deterrent. One message that hit home for me was that if someone attacks you and tries to take you somewhere with them, this is generally premeditated. The statistics say they have intent to kill. You need to fight like hell and get away, or even kill them if you can. The police were clear this is self-defense and warranted. If you are getting mugged, give them your stuff, it's not worth it to fight.

If you are a victim of an assault or crime, please know you are not alone. Seek resources both judicially, physically, and mentally/emotionally to help you work through this trauma. One of the things I learned as a new therapist is that how others respond to trauma in the first 24 hours has a huge impact on recovery rates and whether the person ends up with PTSD or not. Service providers and loved ones need to ideally respond with “I believe you; this is not your fault; I am here for you.” If they can help resource you and keep you safe from there forward, victims of crime are much more likely to go through a period of acute stress but recover in a shorter period.

I know many of us sailors hail from ports all over the world and travel internationally. Cultural differences and norms can change the way we communicate and show up at times. This is part of the situational awareness and knowing what is normal and how to resource in each place. Do research.

Some places are safer for women than others. This awareness also applies to the laws and structures to help if a crime happens. I hope you all stay safe out there and I wish you fair winds and peace.

Jenn Harkness is a mental health therapist, art therapist and sailor in Seattle, WA, USA. She has a blog at <https://skipperjenn.com> where she writes about sailing, feminism and mental health. Her Ranger 29, *Poop Deck*, is her home, spirited love child and muse. Her heartfelt desire is to create more community, compassion and health in the world on water and land.



Yoga4Yachties



Hi, I'm Leanne Hembrow, John and I run the 'Down Under Rally' but I am also known as Yoga4Yachties. I have been a practicing yogi on board our sailing vessels for 10 years travelling ports of the world and a qualified Yoga Teacher since 2013.

I share my love of Yoga with Down Under Rally Participants and my Sailing Community in various anchorages from Australia to Fiji, check out my website www.yoga4yachties.com to join one of my Yoga Retreats and see my yearly class schedule. Our Catamaran Songlines displays my Yoga4Yachties Logo, please come and say "Hi" if we are anchored nearby, I would love to share a class with you.

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April

Sailing the desolate outer edges of Patagonia

Ventisquero Gordon*

Eastern Stream in front of the glacier in Seno Pia.

Minke Lohrengel

After staying in the marina of Puerto Williams for a while it is time for us to set sail again. On our route to Puerto Williams we have already sailed the Brazo Sudoeste. But this time we want to do the whole ‘famous’ glacier-trip. We have been told it is beautiful, with impressive tidewater glaciers, small anchorages, and only nature around you. It is also an area with a huge history of sailing and exploring. We’re curious when we leave the dock to set sail. It feels a little bit like sailing in the footsteps of Charles Darwin on the HMS *Beagle*.

According to the weather forecast it’s a good day to leave. But when we just exit the bay of Puerto Williams and enter into the Beagle Channel, I hear Jaap say, ‘Look at that rain that’s coming in’. In front of us the sky turns grey and I see white foam crests on the water. Before we know it, we have 35 to 40 knots on our nose with waves. My stomach turns while our boat lifts up and down in the bumpy seas. It’s difficult to make any speed at all. After two hours and five miles we call it a day and

drop our anchor in the first protected bay we can find.

This is sailing in the southern Chilean Channels. High and low pressure systems pass by quickly, and rain and wind can change the weather rapidly. You can have a calm sea with no wind at all, 40-50 knots of wind funnelling through the channel, and everything in between. But I love it. It makes the sailing here really attractive. We sail when it is possible and stay at an anchorage when it is necessary.

Slowly we come closer to the Brazo Nordoeste, while the scenery is changing. The Beagle Channel narrows, there is more snow on the mountains, and you can spot waterfalls on almost every mountain slope. In the water and on little islands we see penguins, seals, and sea lions. ‘Jaap, Look! Over there! You can already see the Cordillera Darwin!’ We are still far away, but the big icecap on Tierra Del Fuego is impressive. Massive blue ice running over the

tops of the mountains. In some of the bays, you can sail right up to the glaciers coming from this icecap.

Sailing to the glaciers

We choose to go to Seno Pia, a long Y-shaped inlet hiding a magnificent tidewater glacier at the head of each arm. A *moraine in front of the entrance makes it a little difficult to enter the bay. We look for rocks and in the water, searching for the best spot to pass. According to the Cruising Pilot we can pass the bar by measuring the distance between two rocks and pass at twice that distance. Feeling a little nervous I steer the boat in that direction. Coming closer I can see the waves passing the moraine. This should be the spot. And with still eight meters under our keel we sail into Seno Pia. I have to laugh a little at myself. Feeling nervous was not necessary at all and yet it still happens every time.

A lot of ice flows from the western arm. But we are too curious to see the glacier and we

give it a try. Slowly we navigate through the chunks of ice looking in front of the boat, trying not to hit the big parts. Above the water the ice often looks small but is bigger below the surface. Even with a steel boat we don't want to bump into it.

***“It makes me realize how small
I am as a human and how
powerful nature is.”***

The inlet is five miles deep and slowly we draw near, while the glacier exposes herself more. We sail to the glacier as close as we dare and stop the engine. The view of the wall of ice next to us is overwhelming and there are only the sounds of the wind and the ice in the water ticking against our boat. The glacier is active, occasionally we hear a thundering and rumbling noise from inside the glacier, often followed by a piece of ice breaking away and falling into the water. The force of nature is impressive here in Patagonia. I sit in the cockpit with a cup of tea. In silence, just enjoying the view. It

Finding our way through the ice in Seno Pia.



makes me realize how small I am as a human and how powerful nature is.

Bad weather anchoring

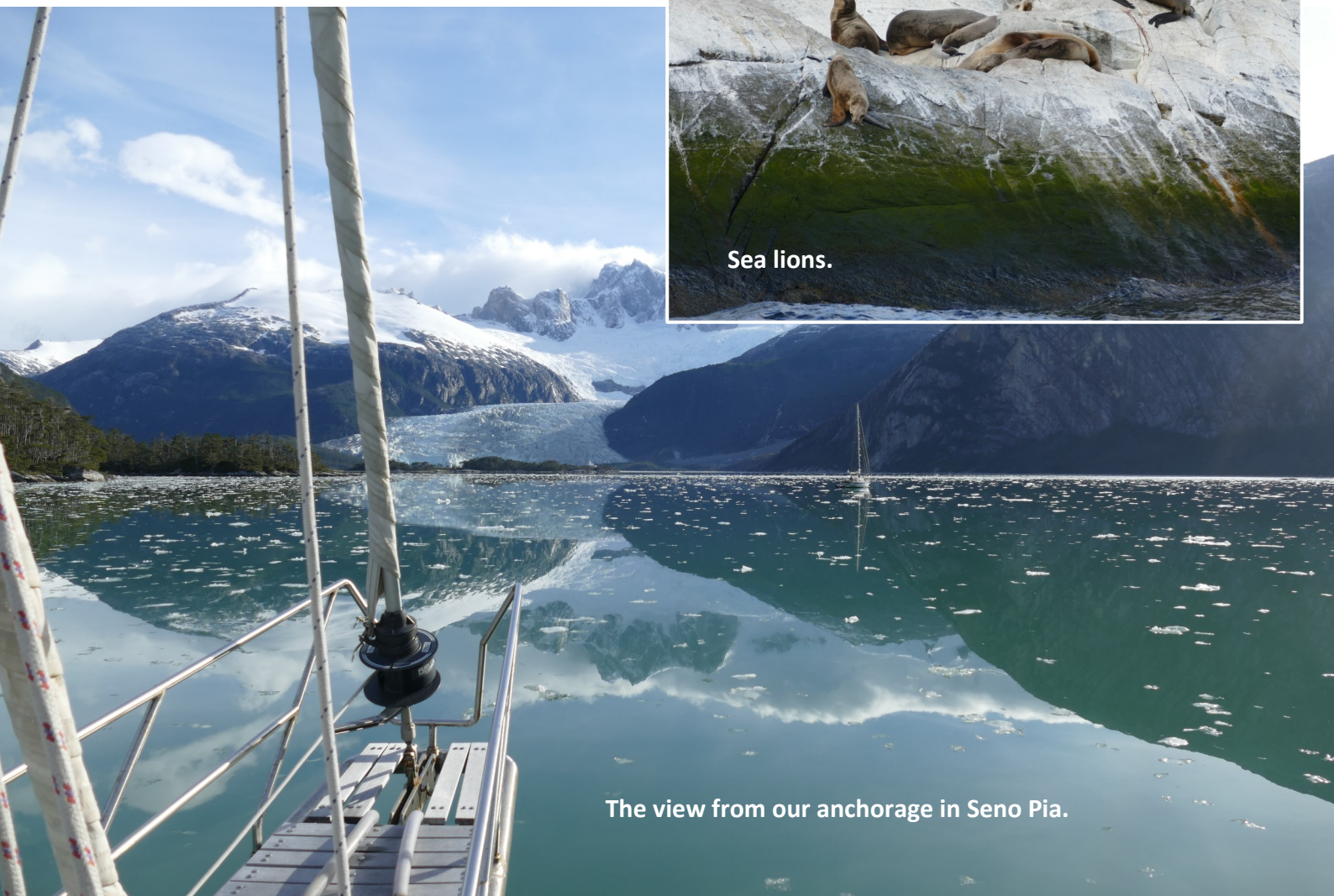
Anchoring with an incredible view of one of the glaciers makes it hard to set sail again and leave Seno Pia behind us. But the weather forecast is clear. Staying longer means a couple of days waiting for a depression to pass by and this wide bay is not the best place to be in that situation. So, we cross the Brazo Noroeste and anchor in Caleta Cinco Estrellas. In English this translates to The Five-Star Bay, and that is exactly what it is. The entrance is small and hard to find. After entering this bay the anchorage looks bullet proof for all weather conditions. We drop our anchor and fasten four lines to the trees. There she is, our *Eastern Stream*, in the middle of a small private pool, with the constant noise of a waterfall dropping its water our pool.

This anchorage is not only beautiful, but the way of anchoring is typical for the Chilean

Channels. Because of the strong westerly wind that blows here most of the time, you anchor in small inlets. Inlets where you sometimes can't even turn the boat around. So that means that we drop the anchor outside the inlet and motor backwards into it. While Jaap is steering the boat backwards as close to the shore as possible, I climb into the dinghy and carry the lines ashore to tie them to a tree or rock. This process is repeated until finally we are safely caught in a spider web of lines, protected from the wind because we are so close to the land and the trees. It feels very safe to have all our lines ashore and makes me sleep very well.

On our way to Brazo Sudoeste

Officially we're not allowed to sail the small channels which run between Brazo Nordoeste and Brazo Sudoeste. But considering the weather forecast, sailing via



Sea lions.

The view from our anchorage in Seno Pia.



Anchored in our private pool at Caleta Cinco Estrela.

the main channel, with an open connection to the Pacific is not a smart plan either. Waves will run in, which would not be very comfortable. We turn off our AIS and take the shortcut to the other side of Isla Gordon. We are curious if we will be fined when we return to Puerto Williams. But we hear nothing about it. Lucky us.

Brazo Sudoeste is not connected to the Cordillera Darwin. However, the channel is still outstanding and does not only offer beautiful nature and hiking opportunities, but stunning glaciers and fine anchorages. We love Caleta Coloane, where we sail deep into a protected bay. We stay here for almost a week and hike around to the glaciers and up the mountains to take in the magnificent view on the Channel. We can hike so close to the glacier, we can almost touch it. I just love this place, it's like anchoring in a big lake.



Jaap manoeuvring the boat in the ice.



On our way to the glacier in Brazo Sudoeste.

The good thing about reaching Brazo Sudoeste is that from now on the prevailing winds come from the stern again. We can shut down our engine and do some real sailing again. It is lovely to sail the channels with only the sound of the wind, watching the sea lions resting on the rocks and the birds flying by. In a few days we sail back to Puerto Williams.

This glacier trip was beautiful. We enjoyed it to the maximum. But we also learned a lot about sailing in the channels during the windy summer. And I'm still wondering how those expedition ships in the early days did this. We had all the maps and technical equipment, and an engine to use. They discovered this area with a lot less equipment on board and no maps or charts at all!

* The name the Armada (Chilean Coastguard) use for the route we sailed. If you sail this route you go as far as Seno Ventisquero and around Isla Gordon. On the Zarpe this route is mentioned as "Ventisquero Gordon"

** A moraine is any glacially formed

accumulation of unconsolidated glacial debris that occurs in both currently and formerly glaciated regions on Earth, through geomorphological processes.



Minke and her boyfriend Jaap left the Netherlands aboard the steel ketch, *Eastern Stream*, in 2016. After reaching Panama they sailed to Easter Island (Rapa Nui) and from there to Chile. They have lived in Chile for more than a year now, exploring Patagonia.

Minke's blog can be found at: www.easternstream.nl



Flat bottomed girl

Views from the canal

VALERIE POORE takes the helm of our regular barge boat column.

The meaning of greening when cleaning

Nowadays, I think we can all agree that the word 'green' is no longer simply associated with the colour of grass, the leaves on the trees, or even particularly verdant veggies. Today, we use the word in a much broader context and going 'green' or even 'greening' is more often used in the discussion of being kind to the environment and all that goes with it, a much nobler connotation than a mere colour. I mean, if we talk about green countryside now, it would probably not be about the lush hills and valleys, it would more likely be about how sustainable the farming methods are, wouldn't it? Nonetheless, in both cases, it is synonymous with all that is good and fresh and natural. But – and it's a big but – there's one type of green that no one likes, especially not boat owners.

I'm sure you all know what happens to objects left outside during wet winter months. The mould forms and the moss grows, turning everything to a not so pretty



shade of rather turgid... yes... you've guessed it... green. This is especially true when it comes to boats and barges in the northern hemisphere countries where damp cold is the prevailing condition in winter rather than crisp, frosty, sunny weather. Now, the Netherlands is about as damp and cold as it gets in Europe; they even have a word for it here: *waterkoud*. A typical winter's day is marked by a sodden, chill mist that hangs in the air and clings to everything, but especially to anything made of wood. This kind of weather is the perfect breeding ground for moss and one of the main problems with old barges is that it manages to grow in the most awkward to get at places; as if it's determined to cause the maximum trouble possible.

In the case of my barge, *Vereeniging*, I have more wood than most: the side panels are wood; the rubbing rail, which runs right around the hull, is wood; the bases of the bollards on the foredeck and at the stern are also wood, as are my hatch boards. And into

all these parts, the winter moss creeps. It grows in the cracks between them, on narrow ledges and behind the steering mechanism. It even grows on the underside of my mast. What's worse is that it flourishes in places where I have to fold myself into shapes only a professional contortionist would deem comfortable to try and clean it out. It's either that, or I have to hang perilously over the side of the barge to scrape and scrub the insidious growth off the panels and rubbing rail. This, I should say, is the most nerve-wracking.

The problem is that the *Vereeniging* has no gunwales. It is also normally sandwiched between two other much larger barges. Using my grubby (and mouldy) rowing boat is therefore not an option. Defying death by faith in my ability not to slide off the hatches and between the moored vessels is the only thing. Such a scenario is not one of the upsides of owning a barge, I have to say. In fact, I've often thought that householders have it easy. After all, they only have bits of paving and patios to scrub. They rarely need

to spring-clean the whole exterior of the house the way boat owners do.

I love my *Vereeniging*, as everyone who knows me is aware, but this is one mouldy (sorry) job that I would gladly do without. Each year, I look for ways to try and prevent it, but barring waging chemical warfare on the surrounding waters, I have yet to find a good solution. The only way to deal with it is elbow grease, plenty of vigour and a five-litre container of natural cleaning vinegar. Oh and yes, that death defying faith. I need that too.

The sight of me embarking on my annual scrubbing activities in spring is enough to halt the tourists in their tracks along the quayside. Not because I'm in any way lovely



The bases of the bollards are wood too.



Barges all in a row.

to look at, I hasten to say; rather, because I give a new meaning to the expression 'bottoms up'. My rear end is actually about all they can see as I lie on the hatches and dangle over the side, and that's not a pretty view, I can assure you. I'll guarantee they're all just praying for the moment I lose my grip and slither into the murky depths of the harbour. It's a kind of minimalist disaster tourism, if you like, or at least, breathless anticipation.

Well, I'm keeping them entertained again this year too. My crop of moss and mould is just as well established as it was last winter, and although I managed to do some cleaning during an unseasonably dry spell in February, there's still plenty more. In fact, by the time I've finished, it will be autumn again, just in time for the new growth. So, since the fish don't deserve to swim round in an evil soup of my making, I shall just have to bite my own bullet and send myself into suspended animation over the side once more. Weather permitting, of course. For as the great bard



once wrote, there's the rub. The weather in the Netherlands doesn't exactly dry up in summer; the rain just gets warmer, which results in an even more enticing breeding ground for that horribly mean green.

I can, however, console myself that at least these types of jobs are something all women on all boats can share. Whether we be sailors, river cruisers, or barge owners, the list of chores never ends and we do more cleaning and scouring than a Victorian kitchen maid. Happy scrubbing everyone!



VALERIE POORE was born in London, England, and grew up in both north London and the west of Dorset. She moved to South Africa in 1981 but returned to Europe in 2001, which is when she began her love affair with the lovely Dutch flat-bottomed barges (hence the page title). She has lived on a barge in Rotterdam's Oude Haven since then, but summers see her and her partner on the Belgian and French canals. Val teaches writing skills at the local uni for a living, but has written several memoirs about her waterways life. Writing is a lifelong love as well as being her work.

Lisa and Jackie's ORCV 'Westcoaster' challenge!

On December 27th, Lisa Blair and Jackie Parry will set out aboard Lisa's Hick 50 *d'Albora's Climate Action Now* to become the first all women double-handed team to compete in the gruelling *Ocean Racing Club of Victoria's* (ORCV) Melbourne to Hobart Yacht Race.

Known as the 'Westcoaster', the Melbourne to Hobart Yacht Race fleet will cross the notorious Bass Strait before heading down the rugged and remote west coast of Tasmania—known for its huge Southern Ocean swell and storms—then around the southern tip of the island and north into the Derwent River, 440 nm in total.

Both experienced sailors and circumnavigators, Lisa and Jackie have never sailed together before. The delivery trip from Sydney to Melbourne in early December will be their first time on the water together. Lisa says, "The delivery will be good training".

Lisa skippered an all-women team in the 2017 Sydney to Hobart and is no stranger to ocean racing. For Jackie, while an experienced circumnavigator and rescue skipper, this will be her first offshore yacht race.

The race starts off Portsea Pier. All information can be found at the ORCV's web www.orcv.org.au

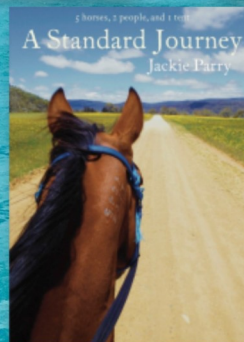
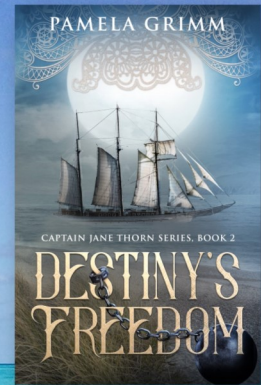
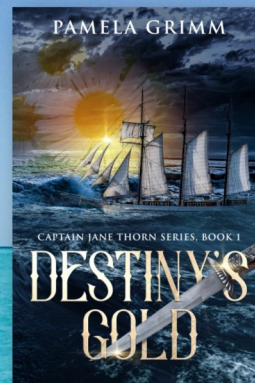
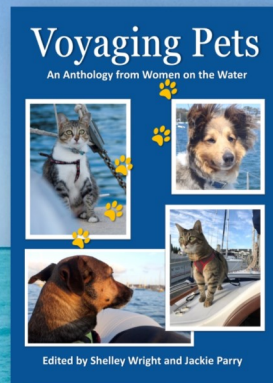


BELOW LEFT: Lisa Blair aboard *d'Albora's Climate Action Now* (Dean Coopman).

BELOW: Jackie Parry aboard *Orac* (Shelley Wright).



Books by women on the water and
available from SisterShip Press



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Check out the new web www.sistershipmagazine.com

Ditch Bag, Grab Bag, Flee Bag



Circumnavigator and maritime educator, Jackie Parry looks at how to prepare for when the unthinkable happens...

The grab bag has several different names: ditch kit, jump and go bag, flee bag (sounds like my old dog), but whatever you prefer to call it when creating your bag, ask yourself what would *you* need. Who is on board and where you are going? And does everyone on board know where the grab bag is?

While underway we kept ours near the companionway hatch – always ready to grab.

Also, align your inclusions with distance. You don't have to worry too much about season, as on the water we can experience all four seasons twice in one day. However, thinking

about the sea temperature is important; hypothermia has an insatiable hunger.

The sea gods also have an unquenchable greed and anything in your boat that you think you need should have a piece of string (lanyard) fitted, to give you a fighting chance of keeping in your possession, I mean fitted on your grab bag not every item in it – although for some items it isn't a bad idea.

The bag obviously needs to be watertight and waterproof. A bright reflective colour is a good idea as boats don't just sink during the day (and an emergency kit would be hard

Liferaft practice.



enough to spot during the day anyway).

I've noticed, over the years, that some of the contents of the grab bag can be very much a personal choice; some people include their obituaries – which I think is quite odd! Other cruising buddies suggest a mattress! Then there's the younger crew: 'Please include my favourite toy', and the older crew: 'Put in the fine Scotch dear', both I am sure, would argue that their life depends on it.

That's all very nice, but I can think of several more important items. I'd rather have an extra bottle of water.

The obvious

At the very least have water, flares, and attention grabbers. Surviving is nice, but being rescued is even better.

The ditch kit should contain items for immediate use and possibly some months – that's quite some thought! But it does happen.

Short-term, think about injuries, hypothermia, and signalling devices. Mid to long-term think survival, i.e. water and food. Are you going to make water or catch it? Can you catch fish? And provision for the prevention of sun exposure is imperative if you don't want to end up looking like a crisp.

How much?

Over the years of cruising all over the world, I have seen bags made up for short-term (minutes to hours), mid-term (hours to days), medium-term (days to weeks) and long-term (weeks to months). All very useful but how do you know which bag to collect when your boat sinks? Do you take all four?

Recently though, a comment in the Women Who Sail Australia Facebook group made me rethink this idea of numerous bags. She said, "We have three grab bags. They are positioned in order of importance. Depending on the situation we would grab

the first bag only. But if we were able to, we would take all three or at least throw the second and third bag in the water to grab later if we could. The second and third bags have double-ups of the first bag, more flares, water, food, another torch, matches, bucket, second Satphone, etc.

This makes perfect sense and the additional weight to stabilise the liferaft is an added bonus. You just have to have room on board.

Should the unthinkable happen, as part of the 'grabbing' process (if we have time, of course), we would grab the water jugs and tie them to the liferaft. They will float as seawater is denser than fresh, so you can leave the freshwater jerry cans almost full and they will still float. Test it for yourself.

However, we must be ready for having very little time and we must also think 'necessity' not 'holiday'.

Other things to consider

Can the bag be snatched quickly? It's pointless stowing it carefully buried in a dark cupboard, you may only have moments to grab it.

Paperwork is a good one, your passports and boat papers have to be somewhere, why not in the grab bag? Add a few dollars (American dollars are the most widely accepted if you are travelling overseas). Think of all the bureaucratic bits of paper that cause major headaches and gnashing of teeth, if you had to replace them, they may as well be stowed in your grab bag.

As terrifying as it sounds, one day you might need it; and now's the time to think carefully about what it should contain. Grab bags provide thought-provoking conversations to everyone on the water.

We've met a survivor whose boat took fifteen minutes to sink. He had, he says, all the time in the world, to grab stuff from cupboards. He now thinks all boats take this long to be

swallowed into the deep. Most of us know a story where a boat vanishes within seconds; those brief moments may give you enough time to grab your survival bag.

Our bag

We had one big bag on our boat, which ideally should be split into two: (1) Absolute necessities; and (2) Necessities. Our bag included years of ideas gleaned from chatting to other people on boats as to ‘what’s in yours?’. It had (in no particular order): survival suits, sunglasses, wind up torch, handheld radio (VHF) and spare batteries, spirulina (nutrient source in powder form), survival sheets (space blankets), hand Watermaker, toilet roll, water, string, fishing hooks/line, signalling mirror, knife, seasick tablets, First Aid with extra strong painkillers, flares, sanitary products, wet/baby wipes, tea towel, plastic bags, sea marker dye, lighter, paperwork (passports/boat papers/money), sunscreen, t-shirts, whistle, barley sugar,

handheld GPS and batteries.

I think these days there are better alternatives than barley sugar – but that’s what we had.

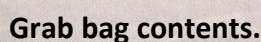


Our liferaft included extras like spare spectacles, t-shirts, sunblock, medication. When you have your liferaft serviced it's a good idea to watch the raft being popped (especially if you haven't done any training)

Watermaker

He says that while his wife was screaming at him to jump in the liferaft he was standing in the boat with water rising up to his knees wondering what to grab next. He grabbed the Watermaker. “We wouldn’t be alive today if we didn’t have it,” he says.

So before setting sail into the mighty Pacific, we purchased a small, mobile Watermaker. The emotions of coughing up the equivalent



of almost a thousand Australian dollars were an odd mix; unwillingness to part with a large chunk of our cruising budget, conflicting with the thought that should we find our lives depended on it, it would seem a remarkably small amount of money. The Watermaker is still in its bag, unused and lonely, long may it remain so!

Sage advice

Remember – a liferaft should be entered from the water or stepping UP from the sinking boat – ie when you can no longer stay on your boat as it is almost sunk. If it is possible it isn't always that easy or that simple.

Seasickness may be a huge factor on board the liferaft. Have you ever sat on a waterbed? This is a million times worse and of course likely to be used in bad weather. So, pack

plenty of seasick tablets even if you've never had the need to take one before.

A six-man liferaft for two people can be dangerous – as there will probably not be enough weight to keep it stable.

And I cannot recommend enough, completing a sea survival course.



After nine years of sailing around the world with her husband, Noel, Jackie became a commercial skipper working on an array of different vessels in different countries. Jackie has spent three years in the French and Belgium canals on an 18.5 metre, Dutch barge, sailed the Pacific Ocean twice, and traversed The Great Loop in America. As well as writing five books, she taught commercial skippers' tickets at TAFE.

Jackie is co-owner of *SisterShip* Press and founder of *SisterShip* Training. After creating a successful Navigation Course, she is now writing more maritime courses while caring for four rescued horses. When time permits, she gives talks, hosts a podcast show (Turning Your Cruising Dreams into Reality), creates tutorial videos and helps other sailors and writers. She's looking forward to writing a fiction book and another memoir on their travels in Europe.

You can hear the full story of Jackie's 'Grab Bag' podcast at...

<https://sistershiptraining.com/cruising-dreams-into-reality/podcasts/>



ChardonNay

A Kayak circumnavigation

Lyn Battle

Waving farewell and setting off from beach to start the circumnavigation.

We girls all love a challenge, right? Pushing ourselves beyond our comfort zone helps us grow into better sailors, yes? Rise up to become the best version of yourself, etc, etc. These thoughts all travelled through my mind as I struggled to stay upright in my 15-foot sea kayak while another white-capped wave reared up to test my nerve. When I didn't flip over, the wave slid contemptuously beneath me like a big shark shrugging me off for another day.

I was paddling my 18-year-old Perception Contour sea kayak *ChardonNay* through a choppy southeaster about a mile off Sweers Island, in Australia's south eastern Gulf of Carpentaria. Training to become the first female to paddle around the island, and the first person to do it non-stop. (American visitor Nick Zajak had paddled around the previous year, picnicking on a beach along the way).

It is about 30 kilometres around the island, depending how far offshore you must go to avoid the reefs (which depends on the height of the tide). I planned to do the

circumnavigation on a calm day, preferably during neap tides to minimise current.

As we operate a tourist lodge on the island and I needed a free day for the paddle, it was not easy to tee all these things up on the same day!

Why this challenge? In April I took on a 30-day Alcohol Free Challenge with the UK-based International OYNB (One Year No Beer) group, giving up my chardonnay habit and putting the money saved into an old wine bottle (can't steal from that piggy bank 'til you smash the bottle at the challenge end!). OYNB recommends a physical challenge to keep you focussed and utilise the non-drinking time to get healthy and fit. Most members take up running or mountain climbing – both in short supply on Sweers Island – so I opted for a water-based activity. "Aim high," they said, "Something you cannot do right now, but with time and training is achievable in a month or so."

I thought of Nick's paddle round the island and how I used to kayak on Irish rivers and

canals nearly 40 years ago – surely sea kayaking couldn't be all that much different?

L... O... L...

The first challenge was the boat. I didn't even OWN a sea kayak. Synchronicity to the rescue and I found a second-hand boat for a very good price online. I arranged transport by truck and barge to the island. Old but well cared for, the boat seemed perfect for this project. It was even PINK, although previous owner Cliff insists it is "faded purple". LOL again.

I named it *ChardonNay* since it was saying "Nay" to my chardonnay wine habit that brought about this whole seafaring adventure. I contacted the manufacturer Perception (now Mission Kayaks) in New Zealand and was delighted to learn that their makers mark on the hull dated her to November 15th 2000, the 174th one made, and shipped to Australia just before Christmas that year. Howzat for Ancestry Dot Com for Kayaks!

My dear husband (DH) was bemused but supportive. It turned out that several friends and guests were into kayaking and gave me lots of tips. Well known sea kayaker Stuart Trueman called into Sweers during his circumnavigation of Australia and had lots of good advice. I even had sponsors – including surfski paddler Trev and his wife Sandy who own the Australian company AlcoFree, selling great tasting alcohol free wines, beers and yes, even spirits – for those ladies who are now (Eskimo)* rolling their eyes at the thought of giving up wine at sundowners.

I climbed in and started paddling. First just along the sandy shore, venturing a little further each day, gaining confidence and remembering old strokes and bracing techniques. On windy days I spent hours in the shallows practicing falling out of the kayak, then flipping it over, draining out the water and trying to find the most graceful way to haul myself back in. Until I had seen



Boat arriving on weekly barge *Carpentaria Venture* from Karumba, after arriving on truck from Cairns, being carried ashore by Lyn and Linda.

paddler Ann in Townsville do her amazing side-saddle-slide into the cockpit, I thought there was NO graceful way to climb back into the boat; thank you Ann for inspiring me to learn a new challenge instead of my clumsy-cowboy-clamber up the back deck! Oh, to be able to do the Eskimo Roll!

I also had heaps of fun researching and buying safety gear. A manual water pump; paddle float; lines to attach my paddle and myself to the boat; a spraydeck – this was more fun than buying new shoes (especially living on a sandy island where the shoe fashion oscillates between thongs in summer and Ugg boots in winter). I chose a nylon one with a zipper at the front and a snug neoprene waistband. It probably won't keep water out in a roll, but for a long paddle in tropical heat, it meant I could easily access water bottles, food, and radio stored in the cockpit.

I downloaded a GPS app to my mobile phone (Polaris GPS Waypoints Navigator for Android – it was the most accurate plotter of those that I tested) and learned how to use it. I bought an Australian made 'Paqua' waterproof pouch for the phone and DH gave me a little waterproof camera for my birthday – pink of course.

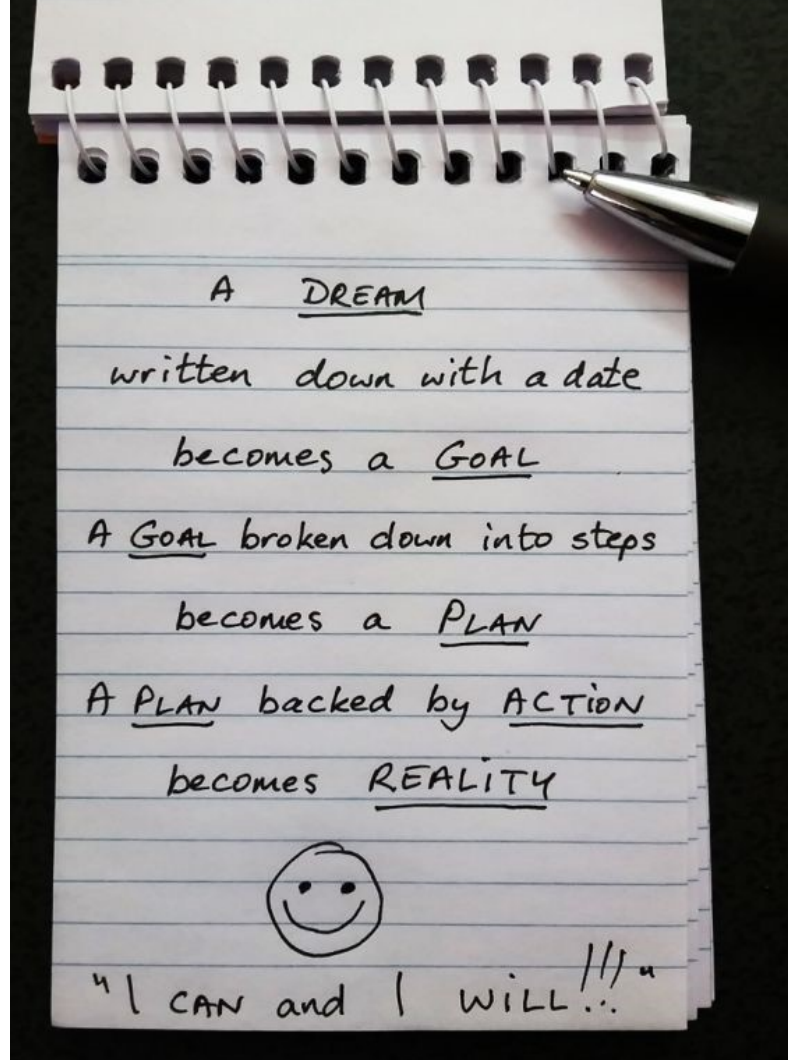
Perhaps the most important, if not the most glamorous gadget required, was a means to go to the toilet inside the cockpit, so that I wouldn't have to go ashore for a comfort stop, and although I had practiced it, I

wouldn't have to lever myself out onto the back deck to "Go", it's okay on a calm day but dangerous in rough seas. Some pilot friends came to the rescue and gave me a plastic pouch called a 'Travel John' to test out. It worked a treat! Upon contact with liquid, the crystals immediately solidify to an odourless gel, the press-seal top seals it all in and you just toss it up the front of the cockpit until you get ashore.

This paddling challenge led to all sorts of new skills and mini-challenges, so that the project became all about the journey and not just kayaking around the island. I gained fitness and grew new muscles – something that totally surprised me at my age, especially never having been a sporty person or having any upper body strength. I surprised myself as I mastered the cowboy-clamber** without needing the paddle-float, and returned from two-hour paddles saying, "I only went for a short one today."

I breezed through the 30-day Alcohol Free (AF) period and upgraded to the next level: the 90-day Challenge. I discovered alcohol free wines and beers, less calories than soft drink and more fun than soda water. My social life continued with all the perks and none of the downsides, I wasn't missing alcohol at all.

I was introduced to a terrific motivational training tool called 'Virtual Mission' (developed by a Kiwi) whereby you tot up miles in your chosen forward-moving



activity and log it online to a pre-set course on Google Earth. This way you can "see" (compare) your progress along routes such as Crossing the English Channel, The Grand Canyon or my current mission: Australia's Great Ocean Road.

It was my DH who suggested I practice in bigger waves, in case the weather came up half way round, forcing me to contend with the infamous Gulf chop. So, after a day spent clawing my way up and down steep waves barely a boat's length apart, I knew that 15-20 knots of wind was my limit for forward motion.

A weather window appeared around September fourteenth; neap tides, no guests, and forecast wind of 10-15 knots from the northeast.

Based on my paddling pace of around 6 km per hour, I estimated anywhere from five-to-six hours to travel around, depending on wind and current. I loaded up the kayak the



of bananas and hard boiled eggs, inflatable PFD (Personal Flotation Device), VHF marine radio, UHF radio, EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon), signalling mirror and sea-dye, bailing bucket and pump, sunscreen, waterproof camera, mobile phone in waterproof case to record the GPS trail, Travel Johns, gloves, spare paddle and my trusty little rubber Deck Duck*** for company.

Atop my head I wore a bright pink straw hat. I am not a 'hat person' at all, I hate wearing hats, but I needed sun shade and thought what the heck, this was all about Girl Power, so I might as well embrace my pink side. We just happened to have a hot-pink hat on the island and hey, it was high-viz if I got lost at



Safety equipment, VHF radio, EPIRB and PFD.

sea.

The wind was forecast to increase to 15 knots by 9 am, then peak around high tide at 11 am and start dropping off around noon. I set off at 8 am and made great progress on the first leg along the western (lee) side of the island. Rounding MacDonald Point and after a VHF check-in call back to the lodge, I turned into the rising easterly and made slow but steady progress along the south end of the island. DH had arranged to come out in a tinny and guide me through the 'Gap in the Reef' – he was a bit concerned about how choppy it was, but I was making good forward progress, and so long as the wind stayed this side of 15 knots, I knew I could do it. (The maximum gust that day reached 17 knots). He went through the gap first to check the sea state on the long east side of the island, returning to say it was no worse, and with just a couple of hours to go til it was due to start dropping, I decided to keep going. He guided



The wonderful Travel John!

me through the narrow gap in the rocky reefs, then I continued alone up the east coast, staying well offshore due to the low tide and slop over the shallow reefs. The waves were side-on, but *ChardonNay* is a very stable craft, and we only took a couple over the deck. There were several times I dipped my paddle only to find it clawing air in the troughs, it was hard work, but I slowed my pace and dug in for a steady slog up the east side. After an hour or so I saw DH on the beach, having ridden the quad bike across from the other side, checking to see if I was bailing out or continuing. I kept going, pausing regularly for water, food, and yes! – the toilet stop! It was such a relief to be able to do that, as it meant I did not restrict my fluid intake and stayed well hydrated throughout the circumnavigation.

Seabirds flew from shore to check me out, fish darted under the hull, turtles gasped nearby. As I approached the northeast tip of the island, the wind eased and the seas began to drop. I called our staff member Rachelle on the VHF: 'I'm passing the last bailout beach and going around the top now. She let out a YAY as she knew this meant that unless something awful happened, it looked like being a successful circumnavigation. But it's not over til it's over, and despite making good time up to now, and the tide now running in my favour, I was starting to tire and slow down.

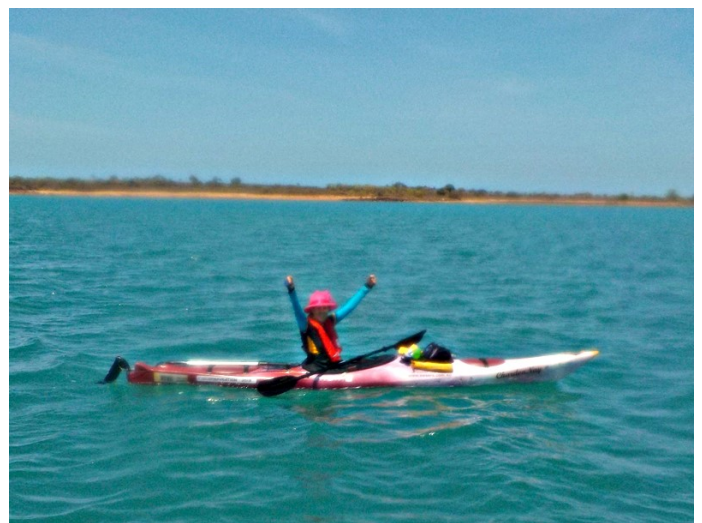
As I rounded the final northwest tip of the island, DH once again appeared in the dinghy to check my progress. It was 1:30 pm, and it usually took me an hour-and-a-half to get from this point back to the Filleting Table. He raced back to rustle up the welcome party. They told me later they waited and waited, as the tiny dot on the horizon gradually got closer! I just plodded along, knowing that so long as I kept paddling, I would get there eventually. About a half mile out I paused and used another Travel John, so that when I landed on shore I could celebrate in style and

not have to bolt to the loo first thing! After training for months for this moment, it really was all about the destination at this point, and the bottle of alcohol-free champagne that was waiting in the esky under the tree!

During all those months of paddling up and down the shores of the island, I had seen countless fish, birds, and turtles, but to my dismay I had not seen a dolphin. Imagine the thrill, when in that final mile, a grey fin broke the surface beside me and a bottle-nosed dolphin smiled across at me. Just to make sure I did not think I'd imagined it, he rolled again, keeping the moment special between us by not lingering long enough for me to get a photo to show the others.

As I neared the shore, Rachelle paddled out to meet me, also wearing a bright floppy hat! She'd started paddling a few weeks earlier, and it was a real thrill to have someone accompany me on the final leg home. She graciously let me touch shore first, and I tried to get out of the kayak without falling over, while everyone took photos and cheered and hugged and cheered some more! It really was a team effort, and I hope everyone got as much of a kick out of the whole project as I did. Six and a half hours after I left the beach that morning, we sat in the shade of the tree and sipped champagne; alcohol-free, cold, and delicious. Yes, the guys had a 'real' beer!

As everyone drifted back to the lodge, I was left alone on the beach. I walked over to



ChardonNay, unpacked my gear and carefully hosed her down with fresh water. I couldn't wipe the smile off my face. This 18-year old boat had carried me safely around the island, First Ladies both of us – next adventure please!

*Eskimo roll: a way of righting a capsized kayak.

** Cowboy Clamber: a re-entry technique involving straddling the kayak like a horse.

*** Deck Duck: A mascot

MORE INFO LINKS:

Sweers Island: www.sweers.com.au

OYNB: www.oneyearnobeer.com

AlcoFree: www.alcofree.com.au

Virtual Mission Program:
www.theconqueror.events

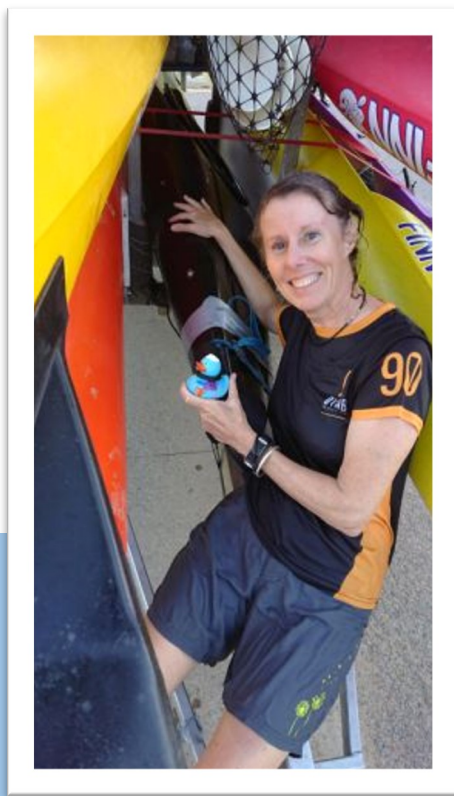
Mission Kayaks: www.missionkayaking.com

Polaris GPS App for Android: <https://polarisnavigation-system.soft112.com>



My Deck Duck – he's my paddling buddy. I found him in an airport shop in Munich several years ago, bought him to put in our desalination tank as we had to desalinate for two years due to no rain topping up our wells! I got him as a companion for yellow duck who was already bobbing round in there. They were retired when we got rain, and had no jobs to do til I started paddling. I said to a friend that I ought to have a mascot with me as I paddle solo – I said how it couldn't be the usual fluffy toy or it'd get wet. He said, 'Ducks don't get wet' and I remembered the blue plastic duck in the desal tank, with all the countries of the world marked on him, perfect for the International OYNB group to share my journey and progress! So he came with me on the training paddles plus the circumnavigation. He has been on holidays with me and learned to Eskimo roll!

I mailed the yellow one to my ham radio friend who also took up paddling recently. She is out in the big surf off the coast of Wales and training to become a guide. She has a beautiful yellow and white Romany kayak so the yellow one looks right at home there...



LYN BATTLE has lived for over 30 years on Sweers Island, in Australia's Gulf of Carpentaria, where she runs a small fishing lodge with her husband Tex. After the circumnavigation, Lyn raffled off her pink hat for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Queensland, and raised over \$2,000 for this worthwhile charity that supports not just those who live in the Outback but also visitors to the more isolated parts of Australia. She is still alcohol-

free, aiming for the full 365 Day Challenge of OYNB. Lyn also recently mastered the Eskimo Roll, fulfilling another lifelong dream. Along with her kayak rolling coach, she hopes to make the Sweers Island Challenge a regular event, with more paddlers taking the opportunity to explore this isolated but beautiful part of Australia's coastline.

HAVING WINGS YOU CAN FLY



BY DEBORAH WALLACE

The countdown is on with only a few weeks until the start of the 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race (RSHYR, also known as the S2H). The media focus is usually on the big boats and their famous crews. I thought I would take this opportunity to share stories from the other end of the fleet and the weekend warriors that are the everyday face of this famous Category 1 RSHYR.

For those who are not familiar with the race, here are some of the statistics: 628 nautical miles; record holder is *LVD Comanche* at 1 day, 9 hours, 15 minutes and 24 seconds; 19 women currently have completed 10 RSHYRs; and Adrienne Cahalan was the first and only woman to complete 25 S2Hs.

Whilst it's the 75th RSHYR this year, the first women to compete were Jane Tate and

ABOVE: Left to Right – Janease Erin Graham, Elyse Guevara-Rattray, Janelle Orth, and Katy MacDonald are taking on the challenge of sailing on *WINGS* this year.

Dagmar O'Brien in 1946. Jane completed the race but unfortunately Dagmar's boat retired. The Jane Tate Memorial Trophy, which has been presented to the first female skipper over the line in perpetuity since the 50th edition in 1994, was created by the daughter of Mrs Tate, Kath Worbey, in memory of her late mother, to commemorate her achievement.

Since the beginning of the race only a small percentage of the crew members have been women. However, as more and more women gain the skills, experience, and confidence to take up sailing as their preferred sport these numbers have been increasing. Owners of competitive boats have embraced and

recognise women's skills and abilities, including them as valued members of their S2H crew. In 2018 there were approximately 1000 registered crew members and approximately 85 were women.

I had the opportunity to meet with the team of S2H entrant *WINGS* at Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club (RPAYC) bright and early one Sunday morning before they headed out for a day of racing.

Ian and Lindy Edwards' life has seen them working and sailing around the world for over 20 years, before returning to Australia four years ago. They purchased *Firefly*, their first

Australian owned yacht, before two years later becoming the proud owners of a brand new Delar 46 called *WINGS*. Since 2007 Ian has been competing overseas in the One Design Lightening Class.

This year Ian will compete in his second RSHYR, with one third of his crew first timers. These four women are also very passionate about sailing, specifically offshore. What stood out for Ian was their depth of experience, conviction, and commitment over the past six months - to *WINGS*, the team, and the program.

These women share their experience, training, qualifications and their individual stories.

JANEASE ERIN GRAHAM

In her younger days Janease sailed dinghies and was introduced to twilight yacht racing by Jan Howard and Mary Holley, from the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club. From there

BELOW: WINGS' team. Back row from left to right: Karol Klich (main), Paul Edwards (trim), Stephen Prince (bow), Ian Edwards (owner-skipper), Jim Whittle (navigator/skipper).

Front from left to right: Katy MacDonald (helm/bow), Janease Graham (watch/pit), Janelle Orth, (pit/grind/trim), Elyse Guevara-Rattray (bow).



she joined NCYC's Women's Team. Initially Janease found yacht racing intimidating, and a very male focused sport.

Jan and the NCYC women's community encouraged her to take courses, venture offshore, and join deliveries of Newcastle boats returning from major east coast regattas. Janease progressed from smaller boats onto the larger boats in Newcastle doing weekend racing around Merewether and some racing up to Port Stephens.

Last year, through MySail*, Janease was connected with Ian Edwards, the owner of *WINGS*, and completed a delivery sail back to Sydney with him. Ian said that delivery was harder than the S2H race, longer - taking five days upwind, and with a smaller crew. Janease was impressed with the team, the way the boat was run, and the support to continue sailing in offshore races after the boat's return.

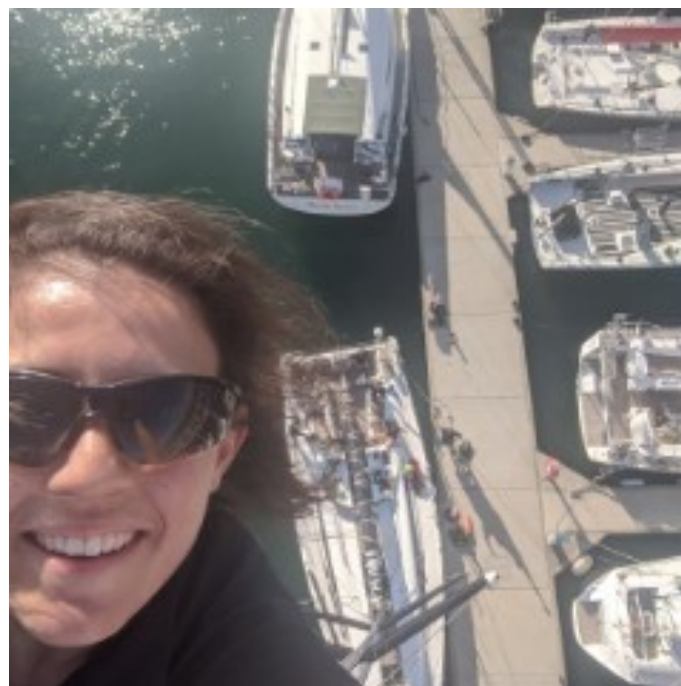
Delivery is a steppingstone to racing and you gain a lot of experience.

With a strong contingent of women racing out of Newcastle, the club recently sent two teams up to Townsville's 'Gals' Regatta, where Janease skippered a Sydney 40. She was the delivery skipper back to Newcastle after the regatta.

Ian had no hesitation in announcing that Janease will be one of two the watch skippers for *WINGS* in this year's RSHYR.

I asked Janease what advice she would give her younger self, "Confidence, feel like you belong and don't feel like you don't belong. If you put the time in, learn as much as you can, take advantage of the opportunities that come your way and make connections with others, you'll be seen as a sailor."

In the early days Janease says it was assumed she was with her boyfriend or family and was coming along for bit of a sail. But through



ABOVE: Elyse: a bird's eye view.

groups like SheSails, Women Who Sail Australia, and Sailing Women's Network, it's becoming normal when seeing women at sailing clubs to know they are there to sail as serious competitors.

ELYSE GUEVARA-RATTRAY

Elyse started sailing nine years ago when her mother purchased a sailing lesson for her birthday. Growing up, Elyse listened to her father, a keen sailor himself, tell stories of his sailing adventures. The combination of sailing stories and her first sailing lesson was the catalyst for her own sailing adventures.

She has sailed continuously since catching the sailing 'bug'.

Starting off at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia (CYCA) and getting into dinghies at Gosford Sailing Club (GSC) and keelboats at Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron (RSYS), Elyse found value in being a member of all three clubs, which gave her access to sailing programs and other like-minded sailors and mentors. She met her partner through sailing..

Each of these clubs has continued to be extremely supportive of her goals, including

her aspiration of being an offshore skipper and tackling the RSHYR.

Like Janease, Elyse also met Ian through MySail. A try out on *WINGS* was organised and she was invited to do the Blue Water Point Score.

Embracing the challenge of a new boat, a new team, and gaining valuable skills, Elyse is looking forward to the excitement of the RSHYR on *WINGS*.

KATY MACDONALD

I first met Katy MacDonald during this year's winter sailing series on a FARR 40, *Finn*, racing out of the CYCA. It was great to catch up again recently, to learn a lot more about Kate's passion and sailing experience and get an idea of her journey so far.

Katy grew up in a family rich in sailing history. At the age of seven she started

dinghy and skiff racing at Cronulla Yacht Club. She moved to Sydney and joined the CYCA's Youth Sailing Academy in the Elliot 6s and 7s, training in the Development, Women's, and the Advanced squads. She has been working on Sydney Harbour, for the past five years, as a commercial skipper and sailing instructor.

Katy set her sights on the 2019 RSHYR and scaled back her instructing commitments to start working towards her Hobart goal. She's still on the water doing some charter skippering and working as an event manager. By working part-time, it has allowed her to enjoy more weekends of racing.

Katy has completed many passages up and down the east coast. Her first big delivery was a 10-day Sydney to Bundaberg, since then other voyages include Sydney to Hamilton Island return and lot of instructing and training up and down the coast. This year

The crew.



began with a delivery back on a FARR 55 and the Sydney to Gold Coast Race in July. Being a RYA Yachtmaster instructor and AMSA coxswain with hundreds of on-water hours, made her a perfect crew member for Ian's team.

Katy's advice is, "Give it a go! Even if you have a no, or very little, experience have a shot, get on a boat and continue to work your way up. There are opportunities out there, and more opportunities as your skills develop. "

JANELLE ORTH

Ian introduced Janelle as the *WINGS*' fund raiser, first aider and, along with Ian's wife Lindy, coordinator of important supplies for the race. Janelle asked me to make special mention of the lasagna and the shepherd's pie prepared by Lindy that is loved by all the crew! Food is important on the water and *WINGS*' crew only has the best.

Janelle has returned to sailing after many years away, and Pittwater is her home club. She started sailing on her best friend's grandfather's boat during school holidays and on weekends at Pittwater.

Like many of us Janelle watched the start of the S2H race from Vaucluse every Boxing Day. She pledged to her sister one year, "I'm going to do the Hobart Race!"

Janelle started working on the Northern Beaches (of Sydney) and her boss was also into sailing. He would close the office early on Thursdays and take all the staff to the yacht club for Thursday twilight racing. These 'twilights', almost 20 years ago, lead the way for Janelle to do her first major offshore race from Pittwater to Coffs Harbour, and the delivery back on *Buckle Up*.

After marriage, kids, and a change of lifestyle away from sailing, Janelle found herself back in Sydney two years ago. With the love of sailing still a fond memory she was keen to

get back into the sport and work towards her goal - to fulfill her dream of one day competing in famous RSHYR.

Janelle completed her competent crew and other courses, including Safety and Sea Survival (SSSC) with Katy through EastSail, to qualify for ocean racing. Networking via the courses, Janelle found herself on two former S2H boats, *Patrice* with Tony Kirby and then on *Reve* with Kevin and Jayne Whelan. With these boats already having regular crew for S2H races, one of the obstacles Janelle faced was finding a boat that wanted new crew and would take someone with only a few years of experience.

Knowing that she had to do more, Janelle headed up to Magnetic Island for race week. She volunteered to do the delivery back from Magnetic with Ian and the crew on *WINGS* and was invited to join the crew for Hobart. Having now completed over 1500 nautical miles and experienced 40 knot-plus winds, she has some experience of what challenges may lie ahead of her, no matter what the race weather forecast is.

Janelle and Katy faced many obstacles to get to where they are now, both in doing the Sydney Gold to Coast race earlier this year and finding themselves a supportive boat to tackle the Blue Water Series in lead up to the RSHYR. It's a testament to their resilience and courage of conviction that they persevered and pursued their dreams.

Janelle says, "Persist and keep going, doesn't matter what obstacles are in your way, or what happens, keep pushing to reach your goals".

RACING FOR A CAUSE

The *WINGS* team is raising money for "The Kids' Cancer Project" and aims to raise \$75,000 to celebrate the 75th RSHYR. Janelle is the key person behind this year's fund-raising efforts, as she herself suffered from cancer and knows firsthand how this can

impact your life and your families.

Please visit the link below for the “The Kids’ Cancer Project” to support this important cause:

<https://rolexsydneyhobart19.everydayhero.com/au/wings>

THE WOMEN ON *WINGS*

The participation of women in sailing offshore is increasing, slowly, it important to mention that these four sailors, like any other, have invested hours on and off the water, learning, doing deliveries, actively racing and building knowledge and confidence in their personal skills to become valuable crew members. *WINGS* is a perfect example of gender equality and inclusion and is one of the participants in this year’s race who are now setting the standard for years to come.

*MySail: <https://mysail.team/>

**Blue Water Point Score Series: <https://bwps.cyca.com.au/>



ABOVE: Janease, Ian, Janelle, and Lachlan (Janelle’s son).

BELOW: Lindy and Ian Edwards.



DEBORAH WALLACE is the founder of Sailing Women's Network Australia.

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Sailing Women's Network is a private group of like-minded women who enjoy and participate in inshore and offshore yacht racing, Australia and worldwide. The group was formed with the idea to encourage networking and promote participation at all sailing events around Australia and overseas. As the site has grown, we have shared inspirational stories, world sailing news, and sailing events from our shores and around the globe. Open to those who actively participate in weekly racing, volunteering, and key industry professionals, our group supports all levels of sailing skills and works with those who have a vision of participating in yacht racing. In the coming year we will be developing partnerships that should benefit our members, more opportunities to connect with other sailors from around Australia and possibly overseas. We welcome women with a passion for yacht racing at all levels.

You can find Sailing Women’s Network Australia on Facebook.

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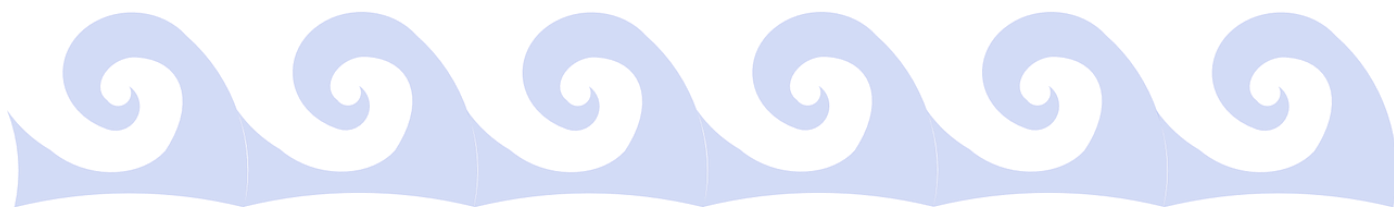
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ELLEN JACOBSON	ELLEN JACOBSON	ELLEN JACOBSON
Murder at the Marina	Bodies in the Boatyard	Poisoned by the Pier
		
A MOLLIE MCGHIE SAILING MYSTERY #1	A MOLLIE MCGHIE SAILING MYSTERY #2	A MOLLIE MCGHIE SAILING MYSTERY #3

Life on a sailboat can be deadly.

Humourous sailing mysteries at ellenjacobsonauthor.com/books

From the Galley

Stuffed Mini Capsicums (1 serve)

Ingredients

2 small red capsicums
120 g turkey mince
1 Tbs homemade taco seasoning (*see tip below*)

Salad:

2 cups cos lettuce
1 small Lebanese cucumber
½ avocado
1 tomato
2 Tbs Italian parsley
Juice of half a lemon
Optional good quality Greek or coconut yoghurt

Method

Wash your capsicums well and pat dry. Cut the tops off to make a little cap. Remove some of the white flesh inside if you need to in order to make enough space for the filling.

Sprinkle the insides of the capsicums with ½ Tbs of the taco seasoning and then stuff with turkey mince until filled. Sprinkle the remaining seasoning on top of the mince. You can either bake or cook in an air fryer for 20 - 25 minutes at 180 degrees Celsius. Sit the lids separately to cook on the tray, not on top.

Combine salad ingredients together and top with lemon juice and parsley.

TIP: Taco seasoning: combine the following and store in a jar – 2 Tbs chilli powder, 2 Tbs ground cumin, 1 ½ tsp onion powder, 1 ½ tsp garlic powder, ½ tsp cayenne pepper, ½ tsp black pepper, ½ tsp Murray River pink salt, ½ tsp oregano.



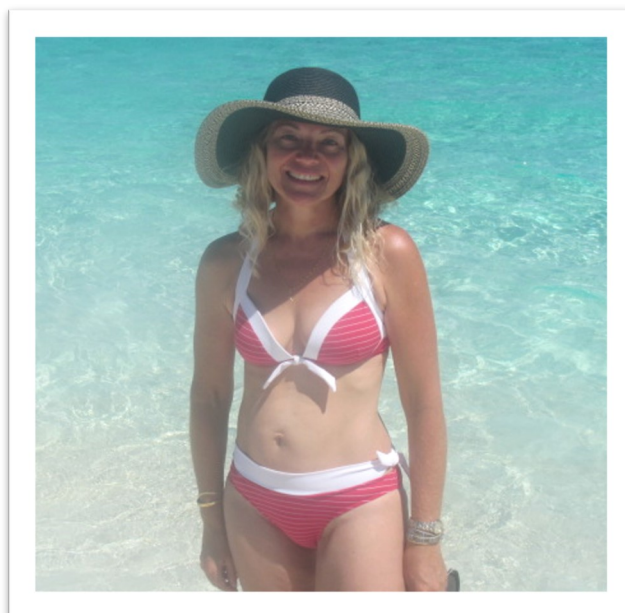
By Lyndy Atkinson

Lyndy Atkinson:

Love Your Gut Health is a healthy eating program focused on improving gut bacteria and flooding the body with good nutrition. The benefits of getting your digestion in order vary for everyone, but many are noticing changes in weight, skin condition, and moods.

I live on a boat and I love to cook. I understand how tricky it can be to create something healthy in a small space when you don't want to spend all day in the galley! If you're interested in learning more, please join our Facebook group Get Gutsy with US where we share heaps of free recipes like the one featured this month, or contact Lyndy directly – lyndy@gutsyhealth.com.au

To purchase Linda Anderson's cook book *Love Your Guts* please pop her an email to artistinthebush@gmail.com



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Have you heard about the influence gut health has over your weight, moods and skin? Finding it hard to stay healthy as a liveaboard or cruiser? I did it and you can too. Ask me how!

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Get Gutsy with Lyndy Atkinson

Pearls of Wisdom

AUGUST

Terrie Connellan shares her tips for growing greens on board.

Storing greens and herbs on board can be a challenge, especially in Queensland (Australia) summers, so I decided to grow my own. These little babies love the fresh air and sunshine.

Cane baskets are perfect containers onboard as they are good drainers, easy to move in and out of the weather, and are cheap from most op shops.

Start by lining a basket with an old tea towel, t-shirt, or old shorts/jeans. Make sure they've been rinsed in fresh water. Lining will allow for drainage while retaining the soil.

Next, fill with organic soil then plant seedlings. I like to plant lettuce, parsley, basil, and baby spinach together as they have the same water needs (ie sage, rosemary, oregano, and thyme don't like much water).

Cover the soil with cane mulch (or tea leaves) to retain moisture. Lastly, give them a good water.

I water my basket daily and give them a spray of water. Catch and use rainwater where possible. Once a fortnight, or when needed, I give them some food such a spray of diluted Eco Seaweed.



When plants are thriving remember to pick lettuce leaves from the outside to allow for continued growth.



Send your 'Pearls of Wisdom' to editor@sistershipmagazine.com



Ivy's escape

Liveaboard sailor LANISE EDWARDS shares her account of typical day in the life of boat-dog Ivy...

We were well overdue to haul *Easter Rose* out of the water for antifouling and maintenance. The last time this expensive chore was completed we stayed in a holiday house for three days. This time, with three weeks of hard work ahead of us, we decided to stay onboard. Fortunately, the boatyard in Bundaberg had actual steps rather than a ladder, which made access to the boat possible. A ladder was not going cut it for myself or Ivy our old Labrador.

The steps were steep and initially Ivy refused to climb them as she could see the ground beneath, this unnerved her. After some consideration we tied shade cloth underneath the steps. Ivy was happy to walk up and down with us following and holding her lead. With that hurdle overcome we began a daily routine of sanding and grinding to prepare the hull for a thorough paint and overhaul. Ivy spent most of her days on a lead sleeping in the cool shade of the boat or on deck as we worked on *Easter Rose*.

After 10 days on the hardstand Ivy had a good routine and waited for us to escort her

down the steps for her morning walk. I guess I became comfortable and secure in the knowledge that Ivy would not attempt the steps alone. I should have known her better. In hindsight it was very likely she had been scheming her 'great escape' for several days! This is Ivy's style, and I underestimated her tenacity and cunning.

One morning I woke early, let Ivy off her lead in the cockpit and ventured back below decks to prepare a well-earned coffee. Still in my mismatched PJs I eventually came back on deck with coffee in hand, noticing Ivy was not in the cockpit. Aching all over from the previous day's hard work and noticing last night's shower had not removed residue paint from my hands and feet, I glanced around. Still no sign of Ivy. Surely, she was not brave enough to go down the steps alone? I was mistaken.

As my foggy morning-brain stepped up a gear, I knew I had to act quickly. Our old Labrador was more than capable of sneaking off once my guard was down. And it was. Ivy could not have chosen a worse time! My antifoul splattered body and odd pyjamas looked a sight, not to mention my knotted hair also sprinkled with primer and other paint residue.

There was no time to waste, with a busy road

out the front and miles of river and esplanade, not to mention trucks and workmen with forklifts. Ivy could be in danger and oblivious to it. I bolted down the steps without further thought and paced around the large yard peering in every corner. No sign of Ivy. Surely, she could not have gone far? How long had she been gone? I had no idea. I figured it was early and no one would be around, so I chanced running out onto the road in my PJs. I noticed some workman on the road and asked if they had seen a black Labrador. They glanced at me slightly oddly, I obviously didn't realise how I looked. They both pointed, stating that she had gone one of two different directions. I was confused and had to take a guess which direction she would head. This meant crossing the road and walking to the esplanade pathway. I scanned up and down and kept calling her name in an increasingly loud, agitated manner, as I became aware that the world was waking up and people (normally-dressed people!) were appearing.

Too late to return to the boat, I forged on. Finally, in the far distance I spotted a black dog near the seafood co-op skip bins. This had to be Ivy. Ivy loves a rotten smell to investigate! I ran back to the road and towards the co-op. Now many people were present. Some just stared. I must have looked like a madwoman on a mission, covered in weird blue paint with war-like smears of silver primer on my face and in my hair. My mismatched PJs, lack of a bra, and crazed look must have topped it off. I yelled to Ivy as I could see it was definitely her. She froze, and I thought my search was over.

Ivy glanced around, then turned her back to me as if she had no clue who I was and could not hear me. Her hearing is acute; however, she had no intention of stopping or responding. By now I was a woman possessed, frustrated and cranky. I scolded her from a distance and demanded that she, "Come now!" I was infuriated. My voice obviously loud, people enjoying a relaxing

morning coffee at the cafe stared. Beyond embarrassment at this point, I was hellbent on catching Ivy before she ate some gruesome morsel of rotten seafood that would result in a very messy aftermath!

I ran quickly towards her, approaching the bins as Ivy snorted, sniffed and kept chewing something revolting on the ground. Still completely ignoring me, she was obviously obsessed with her find. I took advantage and cornered her. Once an arm's length away Ivy looked up at me as if to say; "Oh I didn't see you, what's the problem?" Grimacing I attached her lead and pulled her away from the bins. I had her in my grips and she acted as if she did not have a clue why I was angry or what the drama was!

I marched her back down the road, appearing like an abusive crazy dog owner as I muttered more than a few expletives under my breath. By this time the road was busy, workmen and boat yard staff had arrived. Yachties and locals were strolling by the café, enjoying their morning walks. I wished I could have shrunk into the asphalt as I became excessively aware of my PJ-clad appearance. I trudged back to the boatyard with Ivy.

Entering the yard people were out working on boats. I held my head high and picked up my pace towards *Easter Rose*, shoving Ivy up the steps and collapsing in the cockpit. It was then that the humourous side of my morning hit me and I began to laugh hysterically. Emerging from the cockpit my husband asked where I had been. I rolled my eyes and replied, "Oh just for a walk!"

Lanise Edwards lives full-time aboard SV *Easter Rose*, a 37-year-old monohull, with husband Tyler and ageing dog Ivy. "Currently we are travelling north and have been doing so very slowly for three years, with a few pauses in our journey. I enjoy our life on the sea with all its challenges and beauty."

Lanise's story about Ivy appears in the anthology *Voyaging Pets* from SisterShip Press.

Sailing with Pancakes

Lauren Demos

Sailing with cats. It should be easy, right?

That's how Hemingway (polydactyl*) cats came to the US, and sailing was an accepted form of travel for cats for many years. Cats were shipboard creatures on many sailing vessels, since they kept the rodents at bay, and thus the communicable diseases like tularaemia and bubonic plague that the rodents carried.

But today, it's more of a rarity.

I'm a feline-only veterinarian. I'm new to sailing myself. I never thought I'd be out sailing, let alone that I'd find a feline companion to be a fellow sailor.

Earlier this year I bought a sailboat. I had already been taking my cat, Pancake, (and yup, she resembles one) paddle boarding with me. I wanted to show people that cats are great adventure companions – superior to dogs, in many ways. Smaller, they travel more easily, eat less (so less supplies to carry), and occupy less of a sleeping footprint (helpful on a paddle board or small sailboat). I figured I may have met the perfect first mate.

So, when she tolerated a PFD and would go for neighborhood walks on a harness, I figured sailing was in both our futures. We started by spending a night or a day at the dock, on the boat. It went well. The night herons were a bonus and highly intriguing to Pancake – who knew birds that big existed? The dock staff dusting cobwebs in the morning were also intriguing but greeted with much less enthusiasm.

Eventually, we decided to see how an actual



day sail would be with a cat. Humored by my good friend Steve – and on an 18-foot sailboat none-the-less, the most excitement came when the sails were dropped through the front hatch: “Really? I was sleeping here, guys!”

This summer, I upgraded to my own Contessa 26. Legendary as a boat. And legendary for its feline passengers as well (Tanya Aebi and Tarzoon quickly come to mind). Why couldn't Pancake and I do the same?

After spending most of the summer sailing my new boat from Maine to Michigan (with more help from Steve and others, and more humoring) my boat was finally in home-waters and ready to be ‘Pancake-tested’.

The marina occupants found this idea... hilarious? Amazing? Dubious? I had a mixed bag of reactions, but everyone was smiling, no matter their assessment. “A cat on a

sailboat?” they asked. They were incredulous.

We did two nights at anchor on our first weekend, with a 30-mile open water crossing in-between. If anything, the struggle for Pancake was finding the best sunny spot through the portlights – tough day. The next day involved some tame sailing, and some scenic gazing through the lifelines was in order.

Sailing with cats is an adventure.

Now, don't get me wrong, it's not all easy as (Pan)cakes.

At 3 am, Pancake had found out the location of the sandwich fixings and managed to wrangle those out for a bite.

At 4 am, Pancake decided that the quarter berth was the only spot suitable for sleeping, who cares that a grown human can barely find the room to stretch out there.

At 5 am, Pancake learned that by standing on said human, she could now see out the portlights.

Once safely back to the marina, the situation quickly deteriorated. Everyone now wanted to stop and talk about their cats, and how they could get them out onto their boats: sailing or motor vessels. It's tough to eat dinner that way, with a steady stream of people wanting to stop and pat the cat but gratifying to see the engagement. And it's exactly the reason I want to do this: cats have long had the short end of the stick. And it's time for that to change.

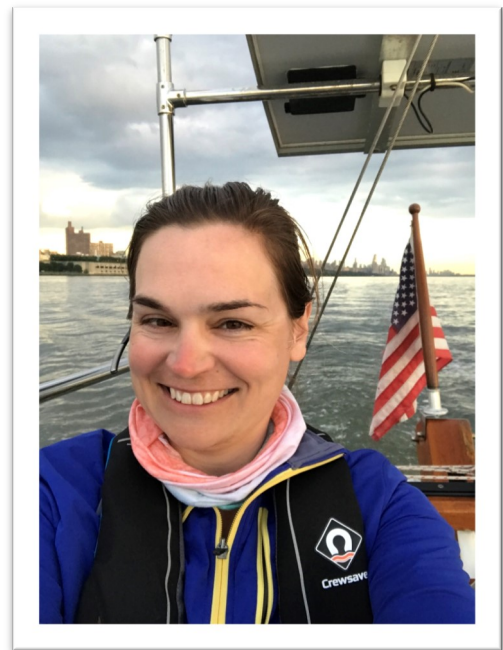
So how does it start?

Find the right cat. Some cats are cats, and some cats are basically dogs. Pick a dog cat to start. Gregarious. Curious. It helps if they are slightly cute or have a distinguishing feature like my one-eyed cat named Dude – everyone loves Dude.

Train them to have a harness, but find ways to make it enjoyable with treats, and positive reinforcements. Use a harness that is meant for dogs – the 'H' style harnesses for cats don't fit well, I would imagine are uncomfortable, and don't secure well. Keep the harness on at all times when the boat is open to the environment, so you have a grab point (think man overboard with a boat hook).

Sailing with Pancakes is a joy. Every time I go out, I look forward to those cats' paws: both outside the boat, as we all do, but I love having the cat's paws inside, as well.

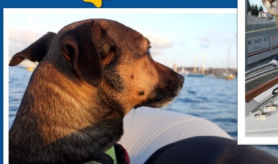
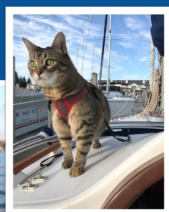
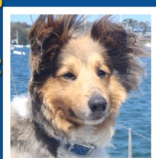
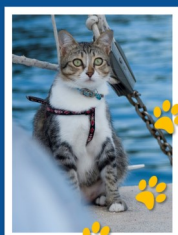
* A polydactyl cat is a cat with a congenital physical anomaly that causes the cat to be born with more than the usual number of toes on one or more of its paws. They became known as Hemingway cats after Ernest Hemmingway was given a white, six-toed cat called Snowball by a visiting sea captain.



Lauren Demos BGS BSc (Vet Biol) BVMS Hons (Vet Virology), Past President, American Association of Feline Practitioners; Board of Directors, Veterinary Information Network VIN Associate Editor; Feline Internal Medicine. Lauren sails a Contessa 26. Lauren's story about Pancake appears in the anthology *Voyaging Pets* from SisterShip Press.

Voyaging Pets

An Anthology from Women on the Water



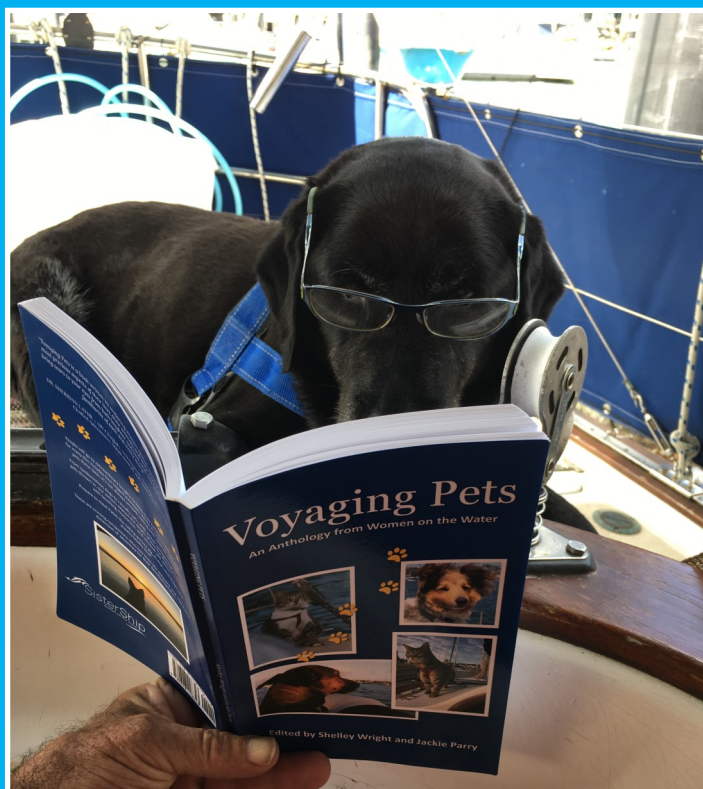
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Voyaging Pets:

An Anthology from Women on the Water



Dogs Who Sail is dedicated to dogs on boats around the world

If you have a dog who sails and would like to connect with other dogs who sail then this is the place for you.

If you are thinking of getting a dog who sails but have a few questions then this is perfect for you too.

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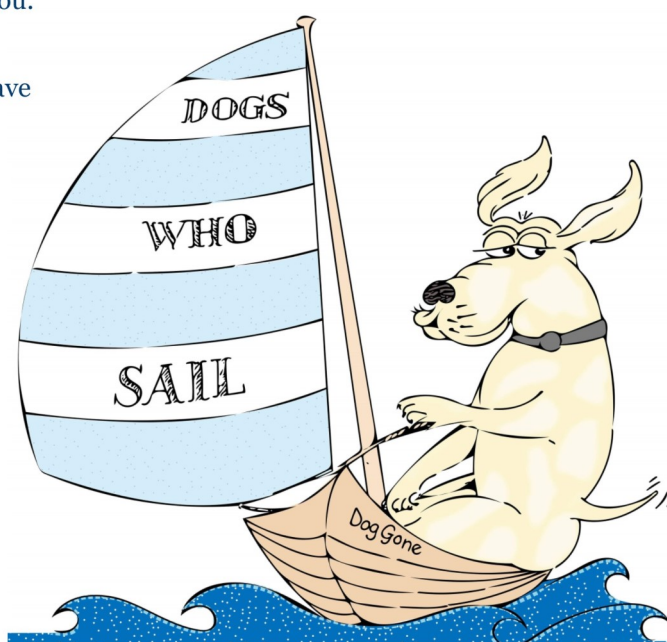


Find us on the web:

dogswhosail.com

Facebook: Dogs Who Sail

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Welcome Aboard Dogs Who Sail!

My name is **TANYA RABE** and I look forward to spending time with you within the pages of *SisterShip Magazine* to share the stories, experiences and knowledge of some salty sea dogs.

What is the best type of dog for a boat?

People often ask me, what is the best breed of dog for a boat? I have met over one thousand dogs who sail and of them, there are hundreds of different breeds enjoying life aboard, all over the world and on different types of boats.

Our boat dogs are Cocker Spaniels, the previous owners had Weimaraners who were twice the size of our Spaniels. I have met Seagles (aka sailing Beagles), Staffys, Malteses, Jack Russells, and to my surprise working dogs; Kelpies, Blue Heelers, and Border Collies who are a long way from home. Let's not forget the designer crew of Labradoodles, Cavoodles and Cockerdoodles.



There are also sailing greyhounds, bitzers and dogs who have escaped death row by mere moments. Some love life on the water and others are only there out of an undying loyalty to their owner.

I have known someone spend thousands on the perfect 'Boat Dog' only to discover their new furry crew member loathed being on the boat. So, in my humble opinion, the question is not necessarily *What is the best type of dog for a boat?* but *Who is the best type of person for a dog on a boat?*

I encourage everyone to do their research to discover a breed of dog that will suit your needs. I have included a couple of resources at the end of this article to assist you with your decision making. Many boaties start out with three desires on their Boat Dog Wish List:

- a non-shedding doggy,
- a dog who enjoys the water; and
- one that can get by without a backyard.

At the end of the day, no matter what type of dog you decide on, they all share the same primary need, you.

In my experience with hundreds of furry crew members, regardless of the breed, your





dog needs you to be responsible for their safety and wellbeing on the boat and all of the other obvious things like food, exercise, love, and attention.

When you decide to include your dog in your boating lifestyle whether it be for a couple of hours, a weekend, or long-term cruising, there are four necessary characteristics *You* must have or be willing to develop for your boat dog: Acceptance, Patience, Perseverance, and Peace.

One of the first things I advise Dogs Who Sail members is to accept that furry four-legged crew will likely determine your sailing itinerary on many occasions. Some of the most beautiful anchorages are within national and marine parklands. As a responsible dog owner, you really shouldn't let your dog onto these protected lands. We all know there are fines if we do, and I agree, not all of the rules may seem fair, but you will need to accept that's the way that it is at the moment, and seek anchorages and marinas where dogs are allowed.

Patience is truly a virtue when bringing a doggo onboard, especially when you expect your dog to go to the toilet on demand because *You* want her to. There will be times when there is a cold, howling southerly seeping into your bones as you stand on the

bow waiting for Bella to stop procrastinating and do her business. Perhaps, like many others, your dog goes beyond procrastination and downright refuses to go to the toilet on the boat. Remember to exercise patience at this time when you are dinghying to shore so your dog can go to the toilet in comfort on stable ground.

The third attribute I encourage boaties with dogs onboard to master is perseverance with training. If you teach your dog anything, persevere with the Stay and Release commands. Combined with other resources, this training will keep your dog from jumping off the boat when they shouldn't, remaining in the dinghy until you see he is safe to go ashore and, if you are on a sailboat, keep your dog from leaping down into the main saloon from the cockpit. The best type of person for a dog on a boat, is someone who is vigilant about their dog's safety onboard.

Above all, this final characteristic is possibly what will make or break how your dog adapts to sailing life. These wonderful creatures have a great sensitivity to how we respond to what's going on around us. They know when we are happy, their tails wag and you can see them smiling and wanting to play. They know when we are sad because they soften and come to comfort us. You bet they know

when we are angry too. Maxy and Mel would vanish at the hint of a raised voice. Learning to manage your own anxiety and frustrations onboard, vowing to uphold a peaceful sailing experience for you, your crew, and your dog, will make a world of difference to any breed onboard.

All I ask of every dog owner is to exercise empathy. Your dog doesn't have a voice, so put yourself in their paws and feel what it is they need. There is no perfect breed of dog for a boat. It is your attitude that will make your unique dog the best boat dog you could wish for.

Fair Winds,

Tanya



Tanya co-founded Dogs Who Sail with her two Cocker Spaniels Maxy and Mel. What began as a space to share their own story as liveaboards has now grown into a global community of dogs on boats. Tanya devotes her life to caring for dogs, celebrating their individuality and promoting responsible dog ownership.

www.dogswhosail.com

Ask to join Tanya's closed Facebook group Dogs Who Sail.

Discover different breeds of dogs through these questionnaires:

Bow Wow Meow have developed a comprehensive list of questions to help match you with a dog that will suit your needs and requirements. They offer a number of recommended breeds based on your answers and back up their suggestions with extensive information on the breed, videos, and where you can connect with one these dogs.

<https://www.selectadogbreed.com/>

Animal Planet offer another well considered questionnaire. It is good but they only offered me one breed of dog. Mind you, it was a very cute dog and appropriate recommendation (Border Terrier). The breed information they offer is well researched and useful for decision making.

<http://www.animalplanet.com/breed-selector/dog-breeds/questionnaire/page1.html?question=1>





Thalassophile

Lover of the Sea

Michele Ableson

From the Greek word *thalassa*, meaning “sea,” a *thalassophile* can be defined as “a lover of the sea.”

Why do we love the sea? As yachties, we spend so much time looking at the water. Sometimes for hours at a time. Apart from maybe the TV or computer, we don't do this with anything else. We wouldn't spend hours continuously staring at buildings, or a nice park, or mountain. The ocean draws us, and then invites us to stay for a while.

To navigate safely we study the changing tides, depths, and swell. As sailors we become almost obsessed with the effect of the wind on the water, the waves, the colours, and ripples. We look for the direction of the flow and how fast it's moving. As much as we try to then predict and categorise, she still surprises us. Often with her unpredictability, power, and beauty.

Most of the time though, we are staring at the water for different reasons. We are drawn by its mysterious nature and what might lie hidden beneath. We delight at seeing glimpses of life. Dolphins playing, whales breaching, turtles bobbing their heads up to take a look around, sea snakes wiggling, crocodiles meandering, fish jumping, baby jellyfish floating past, starfish on the shoreline,

colourful coral and swaying sea grasses, darting stingrays, and shell homes that crawl along. There are also the birds soaring above and then diving like torpedoes to scoop up their meal. If you look hard enough on a cold foggy night you may even think you see a mermaid or two, or sea monster slithering along.

Our eyes take in the beautiful colours. So many shades of blue, and aqua so bright you need to put your glasses on to cut the intensity. There are days of rich cobalt, misty rainy greys, murky browns, deep shiny black, and dark emerald greens. We watch the foamy white peaks of the top of the waves roll past one after the other and the way the sunlight sparkles like stars dancing about. Everyone loves the magical quality of the reflection of the clouds or stars on a large still body of water. We take pictures of the sun setting and rising as it turns on spectacular pink and golden hues that reflect across the water. We marvel at the size and power of a huge swell and crashing waves that seem to stretch forever. Sometimes it is just blue, blue, and more blue, chopping up and down for as far as you can see, rhythmically hypnotising. And still we stare.

Maybe it is because of the emotions that being around water evokes in us. For some

this can be fear and anxiety, but mostly being around water brings positive emotions. This is especially true if you are a *thalassophile*. There is this feeling of freedom. Freedom to roam, to explore, and spread out. A freedom to be ourselves.

When the water is calm, we experience feelings of serenity and tranquillity. At other times there is a sense of childlike playfulness, joy, and happiness. Staring at the water for longer periods seems to invoke a meditative state. Our thoughts slow and flow towards wonder and beauty, forgiveness and love. We lose ourselves in the rhythms and moods of the moon and its effect on the tides as it draws and then releases.

These feelings are amplified when we submerge ourselves in water. The pure sensual pleasure of floating instantly refreshes and relaxes us. When we are surrounded by water, such as when we are diving or snorkelling, we cut ourselves off

from life's stressors as we are taken completely into our underwater world. Perhaps this is why we feel an instinctual need to go where there is water to relax and play.

In times when we are not near a large body of water, we seek this same experience through fountains, aquariums, baths, and paintings of water. We arrange our holidays and play time around the water by going to the beach, fishing, surfing, sailing, swimming, stand-up paddle boarding etc. Even running under the sprinkler can inspire joy.

Those of us that are lucky enough to spend a lot of time on the water in boats, tend to feel and crave an even deeper connection. We are rocked to sleep and wake up to sounds of waves lapping or crashing on the side of the boat or shoreline. We start our days looking out at the water around us and the life it supports. The day ends staring up at all the stars and watching the moonlight shining



paths to new adventures. We walk in water along the shoreline and feel the spray on our faces as we traverse in the dingy. We even enjoy the exhilaration of a slap in the face from a huge wave as it crashes over the bow. When we sail, we feel the connection between us and the wind and the water and the boat. Becoming one. We get a sense of being able to master our environment while at the same time fully respecting all that mother nature is. Each day is a new adventure.

So why has it become the norm, locking ourselves away working in white boxes all day? Then returning home to a different box to watch yet another large electronic box or the smaller one we hold in our hands. We feel a need to earn lots of money to attempt to make our environments more pleasing. To buy better boxes and make our lives easier.

Yet still most people are stressed and unhappy. I too used to do this! Feeling the stress from my disconnection. I think we forget. We forget and underestimate how good being near the water, near the sea, makes us feel. Then when we do go out for a day on the water, we are pleasantly surprised. We take photos to post on social media, we play and talk about it and sleep very well that night. We feel so much better and as a result we are nicer to those around us and can think more clearly. Once a friend said to me, “All problems are soluble in saltwater”. We are refreshed, revived and can handle stress much better. And then we, ‘do the Dory’ and forget yet again.

Science tells us that we feel better because we are getting our vitamin D and melatonin levels restored, but this cannot happen in just one day. Or perhaps it's because our bodies



are made up of mostly water, just as our planet's surface is more water than earth. Some say it is a primal remembering of when we were in the womb. Or could it be simply the effect of staring at the water. The feeling of connection. What this does to focus our minds and our emotions and how it brings us closer to our true happy selves.

If stress and the lifestyle habits we create to deal with increased stress is the cause of almost all ill health, then why is it that we are not prescribed a day or two at the beach or told that we need to relocate to be closer to the water. Instead we decide to take many pills, including vitamin D and something to help us sleep. We would rather go on restrictive diets and eat artificial food we don't enjoy, and run on machines that are crushing for the soul, than to step outside in the sea air. We would rather wait until our lives are so uncomfortable, so painful and out of whack. Until we are told we need to go and stay in another much larger white box where the windows don't open. To sleep under artificial light, stare at white walls and hear only the sounds of machines bleeping. Spend our time talking with others who also focus on problems rather than beauty.

Thalassophiles love the sea for many reasons.

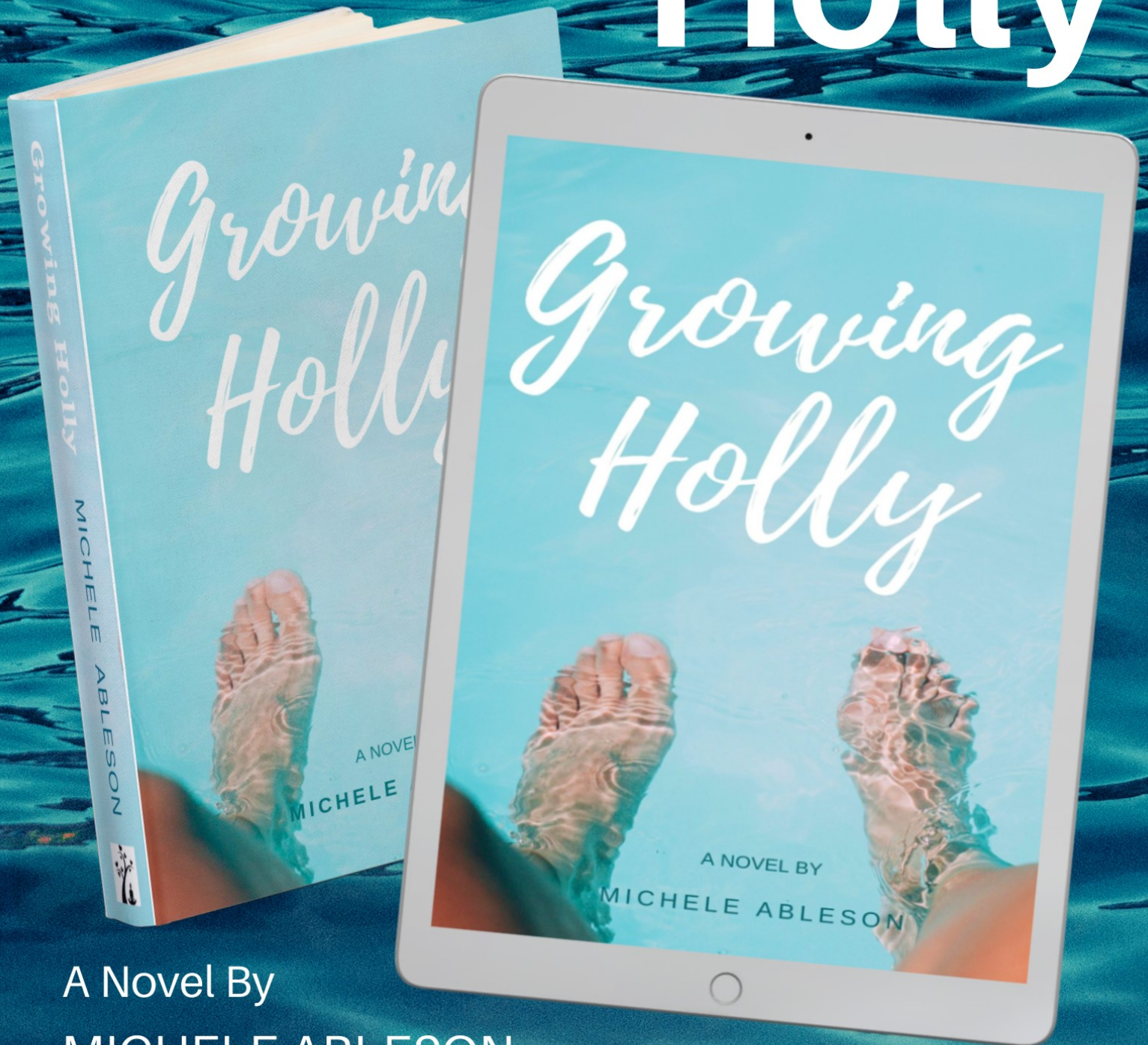
Michele Ableson lives mainly on the east coast of Australia with her partner Scott on a 60-foot schooner called *IO*. She is a registered nurse, NLP practitioner, hypnotherapist, yoga teacher, and author with a passion for personal growth and happiness. She is the author of two books: *Doing The Happy Thing* and *Growing Holly*. She also writes a blog called Ripples. Other stories you might enjoy include: 'Weird Things Sailors Do'. You can find out more at www.micheleableson.com



Mostly it's because it opens us up to happiness and invites us to stay and play. Some of us choose to live on it so that we are reminded of this every day. Why do you love the water?



Growing Holly



A Novel By

MICHELE ABLESON

What do you do with your life when you
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Pearls of Wisdom

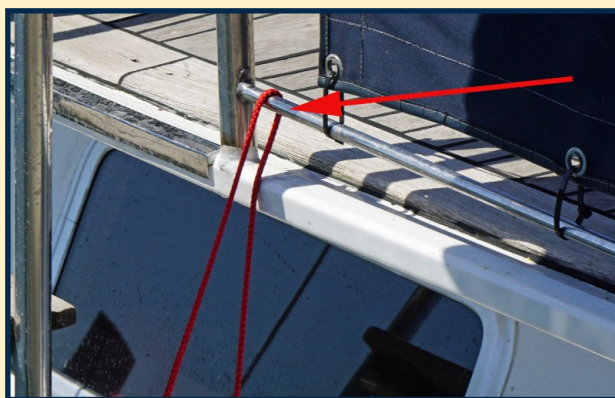
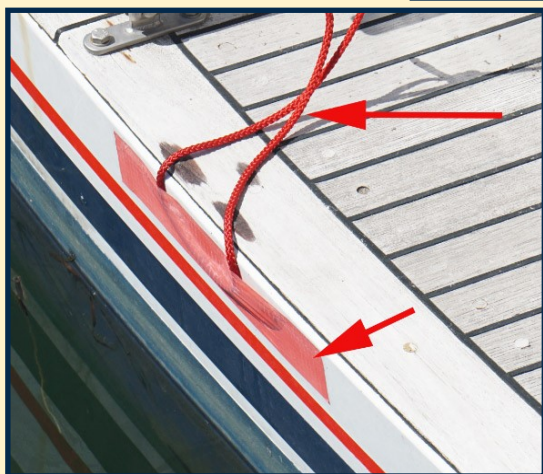
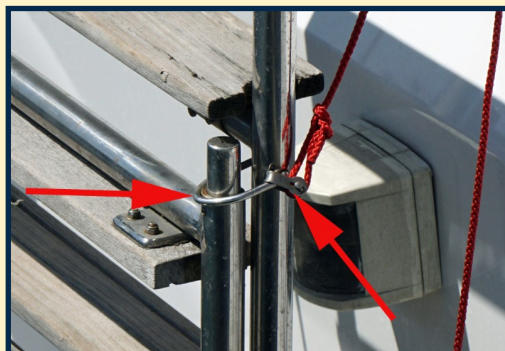
APRIL

Carol Littlewood shares her tip for securing a boarding ladder.

When we bought *Paddington V*, a Dutch Steel Polaris Enduring 1300 Motor Yacht, we realised that if one of us fell in they would not be able to pull the swimming ladder down because of the safety catch which keeps it up. So we rigged a red rope, see photos, which if tugged will pull the catch up and then the rope which pulls the ladder up after swimming, which you can see on the left of the ladder lying on the bathing platform, can be used to pull the ladder down into the water. (Obviously the pull up rope must never be tied up tightly.)

Carol and James Littlewood

Paddington V



Send your 'Pearls of Wisdom' to editor@sistershipmagazine.com

Subscriber draw winners:



Gillian Chidgey

Jane Jarratt

Ruth E Allan

Emmaline Froggatt

Jessie Mackelprang-Carter

Please contact us at editor@sistershipmagazine to claim your prize!

Meet our 2018/2019 Sheroes!

DECEMBER 2018

PATTI STICKLE

SEW MAD REGATTA

We all know what incredible trust, friendships, and bonds are formed with your sailing buddies. We trust our lives to each other, we depend on one another... it's part of the sport. If you are lucky enough to have these friends, well, you are lucky enough.

I am fortunate to be part of a great yacht club that supports active women sailors... and there are a bunch of us! Every year we have one all-ladies regatta named SEW MAD. The name seems a little strange until you learn that the letters are the initials of the two women that started this regatta 28 years ago. The event grows every year. This year we had over 50 women racing at Lake Canyon Yacht Club on Canyon Lake, Texas.

This year's race was dedicated to one of my best friends and sailing buddies, Joy. Joy passed away early this year after a short battle with a leukemia related cancer. For years, our families and friends raced in our annual Leukemia Cup Regatta to raise money to fight this disease. Little did we know this year's Leukemia Cup Regatta would also be in memory of our close and dear friend. We were all numb and couldn't believe we were racing without her. It was during this time we realized how sailing was helping to heal our grief.

For the SEW MAD Regatta Joy's partner had asked me to be on helm of their boat...truly an honor. It was one of those races from



hell... everything went wrong, starting (or rather not starting!) with a dead battery. We finally got out to the regatta late, blew out a jib, finished all three races, turned on engine key... dead battery again. We were a crew of four women with everything thrown at us that could go wrong, but we never gave up. That's what we women do... just keep sailing.

All the boats had lavender and white streamers flying aft... Joy's favorite colors. I know she was looking down on the women in the regatta and smiling. I know she was proud of us on her boat, was smiling, then laughed her ass off!

On a good note... we did win the Floppy Sail Award!*

*The award presented to the team that is in last place for each of the fleets. Their sails must have been 'flopping' during the race.

PHOTO: Patti and crew in SEW MAD Women's Regatta racing with over 50 women sailors!

Our Sheroes: February 2019



Stephanie Burgess

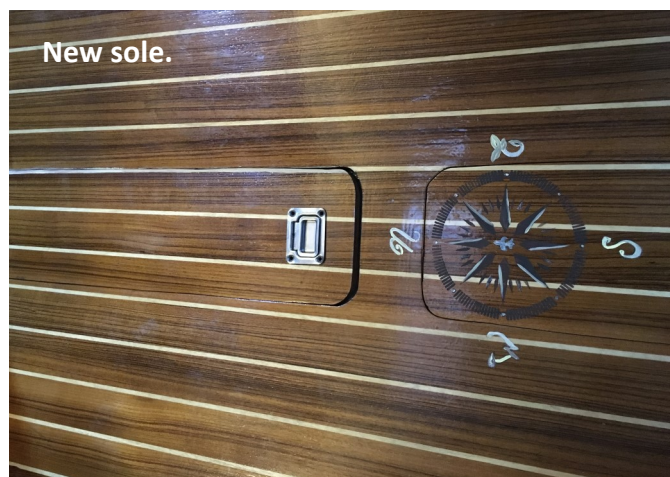


My grandfather always said education is something no one can take away from you. Sometimes this education comes in the classroom and sometimes from mentors and by challenging yourself. After a 20-year marriage ending in divorce, I wanted to get back into the sailing I had done in Middle School through College on the Western Branch of the Chesapeake Bay, Virginia and Lake Hartwell, Clemson, SC. I raced on larger boats for the first five years in Lake Erie and eventually was encouraged to find my own boat. With kids headed to college I needed a project boat that was inexpensive. The advice given was that you can always put a For Sale sign on it later. I read many blogs and project descriptions and Don Casey's books on boat repairs.

I found my Sabre 28-2 through a local broker after I called to look at another I had seen online. It was a good price as the family lived out of town. The boat was built in 1977 and had been well cared for over the years but basic maintenance had been neglected and it was dirty from a winter left uncovered. I started out with easier things like cleaning the deck and scrubbing the teak toe rail. From there I learned how to change the oil and spark plugs, clean the fuel filter, replace the impeller, propeller and alternator.

I had some experience with woodworking and replaced the teak eyebrows and

refinished the interior and exterior woodwork. Since 2015 I have rebbed hardware, refurbished woodwork, installed new trim, floors, sub floor and sole in the cabin, fitted new electrical and plumbing. I made the asymmetric sail. The biggest change was replacing the foam and upholstery inside which made the boat so much more comfortable. I raced in the Lake Ontario 300 (LO300), a 300 kilometer race around Lake Ontario, as well as other regattas and the local weekly races, and prepared the boat for offshore racing. Probably my biggest single accomplishment was single handing her to Toronto and back. That gave me the confidence that I can take care of myself. It's been hard work and a big learning curve. You don't know what you can do until you try. You never know where life takes you and you have to enjoy the journey along the way because things may not turn out like you planned.



Shero!

Cynthia Matthews



Seas starting to climb and getting rougher off NW Tasmania.

My husband and I retired in October and we are sailing our 40-year-old sturdy 38-foot steel ketch *Horizon* around Australia. Currently we are in Tasmania and we have enjoyed our time here immensely. It's not all been easy sailing though and our overnight sail from King Island to Strahan was an adventure indeed. This is the story: We left Grassy on King Island at about 0700 and sailed and motor sailed all day and into the night heading for Strahan. At stupid o'clock the next morning (ok about 01:30) the copper pipe carrying coolant to the engine sheared off at the flange where it joins the engine and we had to shut the engine down.

No problem, it's a sailing boat, but in order for it to move effectively you need a consistent wind, not too strong. Well we kept looking for it and it just didn't come. We weren't becalmed, we made way at about 2-3 knots in messy seas and huge swell. All through the night Michael did his best to fix it. I remembered we had kneading self-hardening metal putty but even after four

attempts to join and seal the pipe it just kept on leaking.

Meanwhile in the cockpit I spent a lot of time between looking out for dangerous things in the water, steering or adjusting the Autohelm, and going green and feeding the fish! Not my finest hours. There was only one thing I could do that didn't make me throw up and that was to lay down in a blanket in the cockpit, groan a bit and sleep. Meanwhile while I slept Michael was correcting our course, engaging the Autohelm and ducking below every hour or so to fix the leak.

Being an ideas woman (and not to brag but I had some beauties between chucks, which Mike implemented) my best idea for the engine was to connect a pipe to our external fresh water tap (easier to fit a hose to) and to run water as needed to the header tank. We did it and ran the motor. Enough got through to keep it cool BUT it meant that I had to sit on the top step just inside the cabin with the engine going, rocking around and

signalling to Mike to turn the hose off and on! We did this for about three hours when a weather change brought in 30 knot winds and 3 metre seas.

We had been in contact with Marine Rescue Strahan and on the last contact we made the decision not to attempt Hells Gate, the passage between the Macquarie Head and Entrance Island, and stay at sea. We did this for an hour in winds and seas that reminded me of film we saw of the 1998 Sydney to Hobart, but just as quickly as they had built the winds died off. Mike wanted to stay out for the night to stay safe but after 36 hours of us being awake or for me, sick, I just couldn't see this as an option. I suggested we just sail close to the harbour entrance to see if there was a chance for us to 'duck in'. The wind died off a bit and all looked good and our confidence returned when wham, back the weather came! Just as we thought it was time to turn back out again, there coming out of the harbour were two fishing vessels sent to help - yippee!

No sooner had we encountered the first boat the weather became more placid and the decision was to start the engine, with me pouring and filling water from the galley tap into the header tank and that's just what I'm doing now as I write! It takes just over 1 litre of water and I've propped a dolphin torch against the header tank to shine through so I can keep a check on the level—so hi-tech!

We should be moored within the next 15 minutes.

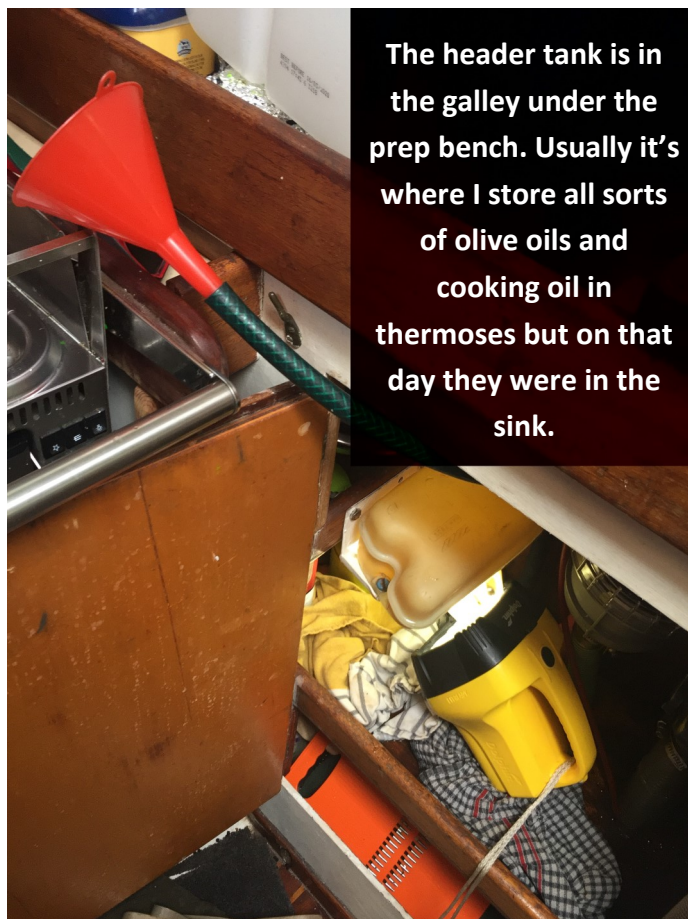
About me: I was scared, I did cry, I got to a stage where there was nothing to throw up but my body still tried making horrible animal noises, I felt revolting for 80% of the trip but I had the best person ever with me and together we achieved another journey to a beautiful place.

About him: outwardly calm at all times, briefly nurturing when between jobs (I couldn't and didn't expect more), has had maybe 1.5 hours sleep (neither of us have eaten anything anywhere near substantial since a sandwich yesterday lunchtime), multi skilled and tenacious in resolving issues, able to laugh and forgive my frightened temper and not afraid to show his own, readily listened and implemented my ideas—even if some didn't work, and now just exhausted.

Now for some chicken and chips, a big scotch and a warm bed for at least 12 hours... nighty night!



Safely moored at the wharf in Strahan with a very kind welcome and tying up help from Trevor who runs Stormbreaker in Macquarie Harbour.



The header tank is in the galley under the prep bench. Usually it's where I store all sorts of olive oils and cooking oil in thermoses but on that day they were in the sink.

Emily Davidson

The pictures are of me concentrating hard as I helmed our monohull through the Panama Canal in July 2017. I love these pictures because they capture the moment. I was only able to concentrate on the task in hand because I knew our two children were stationary — attached to the boat, fascinated with what was going on, and busy with a lolly! We came through exhilarated and unscathed but could easily have been otherwise!

These pictures were on the way up through the locks. On the second day, on the way down to the Pacific side, we were tying and untying at each lock to a day cruise ship. The ship had a guide onboard talking the passengers through what they could see. At one point, he pointed out that we were a British family onboard with our two kids. “And look,” he said, “The skipper is a woman! Let’s give her a round of applause.” We all had a giggle onboard. Tell me that’s only news in Central America! (In truth, my

husband is the skipper in title but as is the way with these things, we run the boat and family life together.)

Emily Davidson

SY BONARE

Currently in New Zealand



Jo Ann Boussouar

After my son, Sgt Kyle Thomas, was killed while serving in the military I had this big idea that I wanted to learn to sail. I felt it would help with my grief and get my mind focused on learning something new. Kyle was killed two years ago on the night of Memorial Day in a M1 Abrams battle tank roll over. He left behind his girlfriend Jessica and a 28-day old baby girl named Devina Jayde. Devina was born with albinism and is now a beautiful two-year old with pure white hair! I also have two daughters and a total of six grandchildren.

I started looking at boats suitable for a beginner, that wouldn't break the budget, and purchased a Chrysler 22. It needed a little work but nothing I couldn't handle. I cleaned the boat inside and out, got a newer outboard, and replaced some wiring, navigation lights, and the bilge pump. I named her *Gold Star* since I am a Gold Star* mom.



Kyle and Devina.



Today, I sailed solo for the first time. I had a wonderful time all *Gold Star*. by myself on Pensacola Bay in Florida. I had dolphins swimming beside me! I just love it and it's very healing for my soul to be out on the water. I have the boat in a slip at a small marina just two miles from my house. I still have a lot to learn!

*American mothers who lost sons or daughters in service of the United States Armed Forces.

Sarah P Gibson

I've finally left my mooring and it's because of a book. I fell away from writing my sailing blog not because of time or disinterest but because I stopped believing in myself. I saw no way forward to the place where I want to be; sailing and cruising and a life on the water. Feeling this way, it was too upsetting to read my normal sailing books and instead I wandered around the library feeling lost. I was definitely washed up on a ledge and feeling pounded to pieces.

I drifted into summer. The boat swung on the mooring, every day sunny with a perfect breeze. I would row out, clean, polish, and lie on the settee, feeling sad. Why didn't I go sailing? Because I can't take the boat out myself! What if something happened? It would not be 'prudent' to take this risk. I needed to wait for the return of my always-away merchant marine husband who was also making noises about buying a tractor and becoming a 'dirt dweller'.

Then, in that mysteriously serendipitous internet way, a magazine called *SisterShip* appeared in one of my searches. Intrigued by the name, I bought an online copy and began reading about women sailors of all types. I flipped a page and there appeared the cover of the book: *Facing Fear Head On*. And knew, exactly in that moment, the answer to my problem. I was afraid to take the boat out alone.

Well, duh. But it had been hidden from me because I wasn't a new sailor who would expect to be afraid. Get this; I grew up sailing, worked on a windjammer, have sailed up to Canada, down to Florida, and back. We



have owned our 34-foot catamaran for seven years and I am the Captain (my husband is the Engineer). I know, I know... how could I possibly be afraid? But I was.

I ordered the book. I rowed out to the boat, lay on the settee, and read every story in it. And thought of the quote from *Chicken Run*, one of my all-time favorite movies, "Fowler, you have to fly the plane. You're always talking about back in your day, well, TODAY is your day!"

I decided I could do it;

I decided I would do it;

Take the boat out alone...

TRIP 1: SAILING ALONE AROUND THE ISLAND

The chosen day arrived warm, sunny and with a perfect breeze. Rats, no excuse to *not*

go sailing. I rowed out to the boat and the engine started right away. She was raring to go; I was less so. Just in case you are thinking what a sniveling coward, I will explain some of the challenges of sailing in my location: a roiling river current, boats moored all around me, a nine-foot tide, a bay full of unmarked ledges, and gobs of brightly-colored lobster pots EVERYWHERE.

I decided leaving the mooring under sail would be suicidal. But leaving using the engine was still daunting because, did I forget to mention I also had no reverse? Our cat has a driveleg, usually a great asset as it raises up out of the water when sailing, but last year we hit a log. So, now it works but only in forward gear (until the parts arrive from the UK).

I dropped the mooring line before that little voice saying, 'don't do this, you idiot' got any louder. I scrambled back to the cockpit, grabbed the wheel, squeezed between the boat behind me and the shallow spot, carefully avoided the stern of the expensive Hinckley, and swung out into the river current.

As the current swept us slowly out to sea, my heart stopped pounding. OMG, I was sailing!

Well, almost... When the current slowed as we entered the bay, I rolled out the genoa jib. Once it filled I turned off the engine and cranked up the driveleg.

Ahhh... silence except for wind and water. Now I was sailing...*alone*.

The End.

Oh, come on, this is sailing. You and I know the s*** was going to hit the fan at some point. I did, however, have a glorious two hours sailing around the large island near my mooring. Then I tacked around the northern tip right into a lobster boat hauling traps (they have the right of way), and a sunfish zipping everywhere as I turned.

No problem; I started the engine, dropped the driveleg, and started to roll the sail in. Which, of course, stuck halfway while the wind piped up and I caught a buoy on my port rudder. The Sunfish folks plus lobsterman were now staring at the catamaran spinning in a circle with the sail flapping and an idiot at the helm. Sigh...

'*Stay Calm*,' I repeated over and over as I ran to the stern and pulled up the rudder to pop off the buoy. I tightened the jib sheet and sailed with half a sail downwind, out of the way of the lobsterman and the annoying Sunfish. Then I pulled the jib out and rolled it in slowly. I puttered up the channel, gave the middle finger to the Sunfish (nah, just kidding), turned into the wind at my mooring, grabbed my line, and cleated it off.

I collapsed on the deck, stunned it was over and that I hadn't hit a ledge, gone aground, or wrapped a line in the prop. Yes, crap happened but I hadn't panicked. Wow!



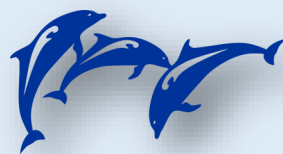
Wing on wing and toes.



I can do this;

I will do this;

Sail our boat alone.



Sarah P. Gibson is a sailing librarian who writes *Water Traveler*, a blog about sailing stories, with a new side page about the now up to six solo sailing trips she has taken, each a bit further out to sea.

<https://watertraveler.wordpress.com>

www.sarahpgibson.com



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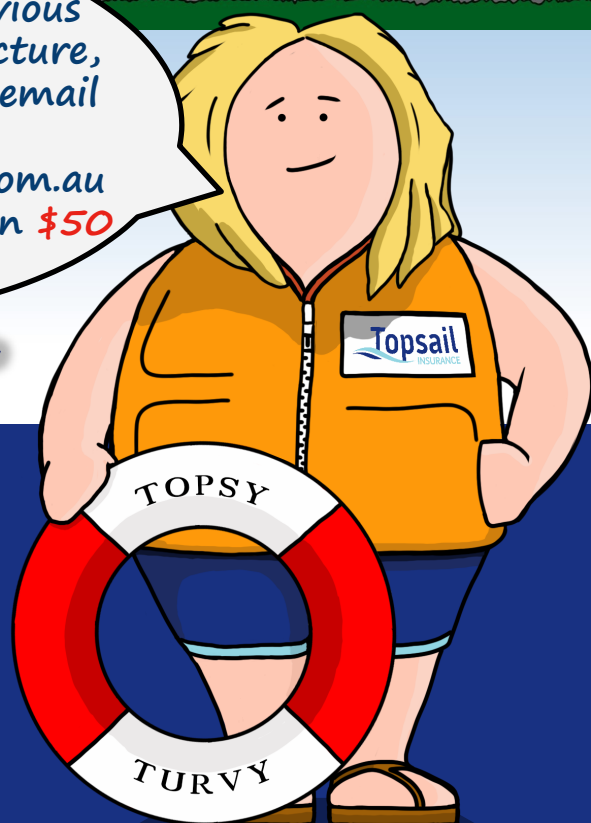
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The beauty of a small boat



Lati, Spain.

Small boats are lovely to look at. They can also be brilliant to sail, but one of the most important considerations is whether they are comfortable to live on. This is especially important if there are two people.

My first experience with offshore sailing was in a 24-foot (7.3m) Primaat, a Van der Stadt plywood yacht, in 1980. I was young, innocent, and knew nothing about sailing. My adventurer husband Bill could barely contain his excitement when he found a boat we could afford berthed in Sydney harbour. I was happy to quit my job in a paint shop in Canberra and quench my yearning for travel. She was the first 'little house' we could own, floating on the water to go wherever we wanted.

With \$1,000 in the bank, our active cattle dog, and the disbelieving faces of my parents, we set out on our adventure. The previous owner left us with charts for Australia and not much else. The dinghy was an inflatable and had to be blown up by mouth. Weather forecasting was a quick look in the newspaper weather map before we left, and the VHF radio gave us occasional weather forecasts. No self-steering, no



Lati, Cephalonia Greece 2013.

sounder, and no toilet. Beds were two bunks and cooking was done on a kero stove. I didn't expect there to be a shower or refrigeration as I knew no better. It was more luxurious than camping.

Alouette was her name and we sailed her from Sydney to Brisbane crossing almost every bar so Jane, our dog, could go to the toilet (and us too), as all we had was a bucket. I suffered with sea-sickness and sometimes couldn't

wait to get off. But there were other times where the sea, sky, and being together made for magnificent days of, 'Wow! We can go anywhere! The wind is free!' *Alouette* sailed well which put the most satisfied and happy face on my captain. There were times where the anchor dragged, we hit a bridge, we ran aground, and things broke but we kept going. Bill is the sailor, he can fix anything and is calm and assuring by nature. I complained about the lack of space and comforts, but this did not stop me becoming pregnant with our first child on this virgin voyage. So, a bigger and more comfortable boat was our plan. This took many years.

Skip forward to 1994, two teenage children later, a mortgage, and full-time jobs. We had just launched our dream yacht, another plywood monohull (designed by Gary Lidgard), some 45 foot (13.7m) long that Bill built with a mate from a bare hull in our back yard. *Valiam* (combination of our kid's names Vashti and Liam – yes, a play on words!) is sleek, fast and comfortable. We eventually circumnavigated the world in her, our life-long dream. You would think that this would be enough of a boat for us and indeed it was for me.

But not so for Bill. Unknown to me he continued perusing eBay advertisements for boats; small boats. One day he sheepishly announced that he had the winning bid for a boat in the US Virgin Islands, in the Caribbean. *What? Was he mad?*

After a few days of tears, I decided to support this crazy whim of his. This boat was a timber yacht built in 1965 and a design he always admired – a 31 foot (9.4 m) North Sea by Kim Holman.

When we arrived and I first laid eyes on her she was in a horrible condition; ransacked, almost stolen by pirates, looking pitiful and disgusting. Luckily, we had friends with a comfortable catamaran to stay on nearby. For three months, after a lot of sweat, money,



and a few tears, this forlorn boat *Lati* emerged like Cinderella from the dusty mosquito ridden boat yard. She was a feral, homeless child that we adopted, and I grew to love her.

Comforts? Back to single bunks in the v-berth and no refrigeration but she did have a toilet. We were too old to get pregnant this time in our 50s! The plan was to sail *Lati* to Europe and the Mediterranean. The locals, who knew us, watching our progress thought we were crazy. People our age don't sail small boats across oceans. Besides she still looked worn, despite the repairs and paint job. The sails were old, and the engine had its issues. It was one of the biggest headaches as it had seized up, but somehow Bill got it going again. *Lati* sailed well taking us safely across the North Atlantic to the Azores after 25 days at sea, our longest ocean passage. Her engine was a pain, but we could rely on her sails.



Valiam, Fiji 2009 (Bronwyn Zemanek).



Lati, Poros Greece 2014 (Elizabeth Tyler).

After a delicious break in the Azores of two weeks we arrived exultant in Portugal after another 13 days at sea. The engine had spat the dummy (broken water pump) so we had to anchor without it, in the busy harbour of Lagos in 25 knot winds. I couldn't believe we had arrived in Europe! It was always my dream to sail the Med and I was disappointed we didn't get there during our circumnavigation on our mother ship *Valiam*. This was Bill's reasoning in buying *Lati*.

For the next three years we enjoyed summers in Europe sailing *Lati* as far as Greece and Turkey. *Lati* was not the big comfortable boat I would have preferred, but she made friends everywhere we went with her pretty blue hull. Whenever the engine broke down, we made more friends. She was easier to manoeuvre into small harbours where many boats were jammed in. A small boat is cheap to berth, even in marinas. We would tie up, step off on to a paved street to enjoy the tavernas a few metres away. Small pretty anchorages with deep clear blue water fringed with pebbly beaches in the Greek islands were the highlight.

Each winter we left her on the hard, which was very cheap for a monohull her size. *Lati's* electrics were simple, so less stress about keeping the essentials charged. I always made sure our satellite phone and iPad were charged as these were our life line. There is something special and beautiful about sailing a small boat that keeps you safe across oceans, even if she doesn't have all the mod cons of large expensive boats. Eventually we sold her but for some reason we missed her terribly.

This is not the end of this small boat story. Recently Bill bought *another* small boat. Did I throw my hands up in exasperation? Yes, and probably more than that. At least this one is in Australia this time. She's a 26-foot Folk Boat named *Bohemian*. I've been on board once and she's lovely, but not comfortable for me. She is much like our first boat



Bohemian, Port Stephens 2018 (Kristi Foster).

Alouette with no headroom, two single bunks, and no toilet. Lucky for me Bill managed to find male crew to sail her up to Iluka from Port Stephens. A boy's adventure trip with me as land crew, following them and giving weather forecasts. I lived the trip with them and felt relieved when they arrived safely. *Bohemian* will be enjoyed on the Clarence River where Bill hopes to take our grandchildren sailing.

When I view *Bohemian* bobbing about on her mooring from the shore, she's such a pretty little thing, reminding me so much of those first exciting adventurous days on *Alouette* nearly 40 years ago.



Linda aboard *Bohemian*.

LINDA FRYLINK ANDERSON:

Linda set sail to circumnavigate the world with Bill aka 'Captain Underpants' aboard a boat built in their backyard. Armed with her satellite phone and laptop, Linda could write her blog anywhere in the world. Enjoying her tales, readers of Linda's blog encouraged her to write a book. Linda published her first memoir 'Sailing in my Sarong, Around the World – a 30-year dream' colourfully illustrated with her original art and photography in 2010. Proudly now in its 6th edition and being enjoyed by thousands around the world.



Linda's second book 'Salvage in my Sarong, The Mediterranean dream in a rescued boat,' tells the remarkable story of how Captain Underpants surprises her (and himself), by winning an online bid for a wreck of a boat in the Caribbean. *Latí* had been abandoned, ransacked, and almost stolen by pirates. Eventually a romantic cruise through the Mediterranean to the Greek islands became a reality.

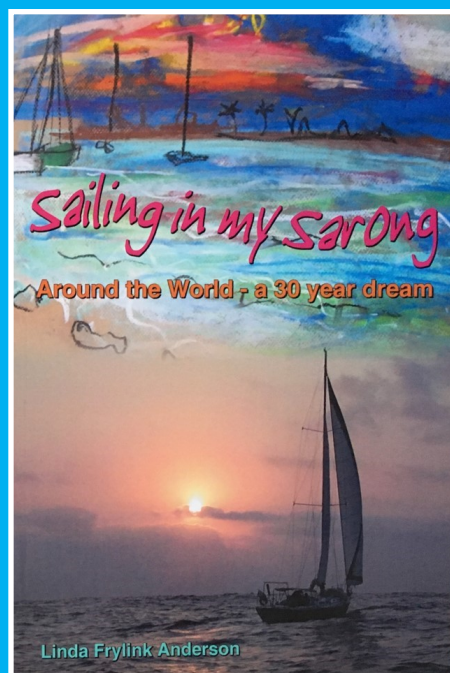
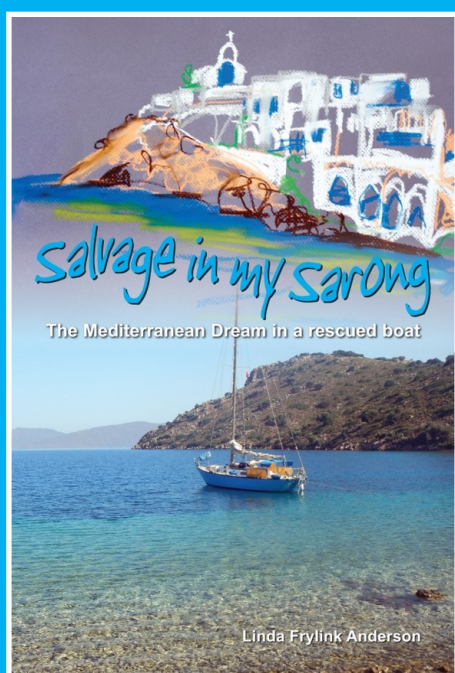
Linda still likes to wear sarongs and loves nothing more than sharing her passion for art and travel, encouraging and motivating others to live their own dreams. These days she escapes the world to her bush studio in northern New South Wales and heads off to sea when she hears the call of the ocean.

www.valiam.com.au (to order books signed by Linda)

Facebook Page: Sailing in my Sarong

Email: valiam1@hotmail.com

www.lindafrylink.wordpress.com (Linda's artwork)



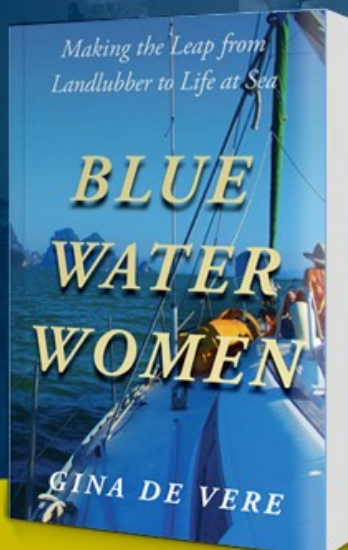


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Shelly Galligan busts medical myths and offers advice for medical emergencies on the water.

When I was working in the ER, I was always lobbying to have a bright red “hot phone” installed in the department for anyone who was thinking of doing something dicey. You call me and I’ll tell you what I think. Fairly often I’d have to say, “Please don’t do that!”



In offshore medicine circles, I am asked questions that bring back thoughts of my old “hot phone” idea. This is where my beloved red phone meets paper. We’re going to bust medical myths, kick a few Old Wives’ Tales to the curb, grab Urban Legend by the ears and maybe learn a thing or two about handling medical emergencies on the water.

Today we clean up nosebleeds — or epistaxis, the fancy medical word for bleeding from the nose. Nosebleeds can be a big mess and the amount of blood can be scary. Additionally, bleeding in general tends to invoke anxiety for the patient and caregiver alike. We’ve all heard that the first thing to do in the event of a nosebleed is to tip your head back. PLEASE DON’T DO THAT! It will not help and could potentially make things worse. Ice packs won’t help either.

Tipping the head back allows the blood to run down the back of the throat and into the stomach. Blood is very irritating to the stomach and can cause vomiting which, in turn, will increase the pressure inside the nose thus compounding the problem. Worse yet, the blood draining down the throat can plug up the airway, making breathing difficult.

The proper position when trying to get an uncomplicated nosebleed to stop is sitting up, relaxed, with the head tilted slightly forward. This allows the blood to drain out through the nostrils (better out than in) and facilitates easier breathing. Avoid the head-between-the-knees

position as well. This also tends to increase the pressure inside the nose. Keeping the head above the heart, if possible, is the best option.

The first line of defense for any bleeding is to apply direct pressure. This is absolutely the case where the nose is concerned. When a blood vessel inside the nose begins to bleed, it is most often one that is located toward the front of the nose, nearest the nostrils. Direct pressure is easily applied by pinching the nose closed with the thumb and index finger on the fleshy part of the beak. Feel down the sides of your nose with me now, starting at the bridge and going down toward the nostrils. Notice the hard, bony part that runs about halfway to the tip, then ends abruptly? This is NOT the part to pinch closed. Pinching the hard, bony part will not compress the bleeding vessel inside the nose. Instead, apply pressure just below that on the softer, lower part of the nose. Hold pressure here for 15 minutes. No peeking, no picking! We may have to hold pressure longer for someone taking blood thinners, which is just one reason we should always know what medications our crew is taking. If you sail short-handed, consider investing a few dollars in a nasal clip. It’s a kinder, gentler medical

clothespin for applying hands-free pressure.

Squirting a little over-the-counter nasal decongestant spray containing the ingredient oxymetazoline, such as Afrin®, Neo-Synephrine®, or Dristan®, up the bleeding side of the nose, then holding pressure, can be effective for hard to stop bleeds. Oxymetazoline acts by shrinking the blood vessels of the nasal passages. These sprays, however, are only for short term use. Overusing them can cause stuffiness.

Once the bleeding has stopped, avoid bending over, straining, heavy lifting, blowing, and/or picking the nose which could cause re-bleeding. It's important to give the schnoz a few days for the broken vessel(s) to heal.

Some common causes of nosebleeds include dryness, picking, injury, high blood pressure and blood thinning medications such as warfarin, aspirin, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories. Most nosebleeds can be handled on the boat, but some may require medical care.

Prevention goes a long way. If the cause is dry air: consider a humidifier or vaporizer; the application of topical moisture (like petroleum jelly) to the inside of the nose; or moisturizing saline nasal sprays. Limit the use of over-the-counter blood thinning drugs like aspirin and ibuprofen. Avoid using cold and allergy medications too often as they also dry out the nose. Follow your physician's instructions regarding the use of prescribed blood thinners. If you have high blood pressure, talk to your doctor and get it under control. It's damaging more than just your nose. Don't smoke and use nice, soft tissues when blowing. Be kind to your nose!

When do you need help? Seek emergency medical treatment if: you can't get the bleeding to stop despite applying pressure in the correct place, firmly enough and long enough; the bleeding is more than you would

expect from a nosebleed, causes weakness and/or dizziness; the bleeding affects your ability to breathe; there are other injuries that require care like broken facial bones or a head injury.

The good news is that most nosebleeds appear worse than they really are, can be stopped easily with direct pressure, and usually don't require emergency medical attention.

Your own internet search may give other advice but remember that you can't always trust Dr. Google. He's only as good as the questions we ask him, and he doesn't have malpractice insurance.

Have a medical myth you want busted? I'm all ears. Contact me and we'll get to the bottom of it!

Medical Disclaimer: I am not a physician. I am an offshore medicine certified RN with 20+ years of ER experience and a heck of a lot of common sense. Follow up with your healthcare provider for any questions or concerns. Read my full disclaimer here. (<https://shellygalligan.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Terms-and-Conditions-180708.pdf>)



SHELLY GALLIGAN is a USCG 100 ton Captain and a registered nurse with over 25 years of Emergency Room experience. She joyfully shares her experiences with other water lovers, preparing them to intervene effectively in offshore emergencies. Shelly is passionate about life on the water and life in general.

AUGUST

Green on blue

Environment

Giant Cuttlefish

Wendy Johnson

Every year between the months of May and August, Port Lowly near Whyalla in the Spencer Gulf of South Australia, comes alive with the annual giant cuttlefish (*Sepia apama*) migration — all in the name of a whole lotta cuttlefish lovin'. Nowhere else in the world does it occur on this scale.

This annual love-fest seemed worth checking out so three of us hired a car in Adelaide and made the five-hour drive to Whyalla. We found not much in Whyalla besides the steel export port, a moderately sized country town, and lots and lots of cuttlefish looking for a mate before they die (this is tragically what the cuttlefish do after they have mated and laid their eggs).

After finding our weekend accommodation we set off to the local dive shop, Whyalla Diving services, where Tony kitted us out with thickish wetsuits and all the other gear we needed for the cold July waters. They also provided us with a map of where to find the cuttlefish and advice on what to look for before sending us on our way. The directions were clear, and it all seemed reasonably easy and, even though we managed to get lost on the way, we found the right place to go diving.

July in South Australia, on the edge of the ocean, is chilly and getting ready to dive I did question whether we were mad to be doing this, however we had come too far to not go ahead. We braced ourselves for the cold and headed on in. The entry to the water was a bit of a scramble over rocks — challenging in full dive kit — but the entrance is set up with



Giant cuttlefish looking very handsome.

a rope or two to hang on to and we made our way in without too much trouble and only one or two bruises.

As is often the case when you are looking for something very specific, we spent a short while looking hard and thinking we had missed the action, then suddenly we saw one cuttlefish, then two, and before we knew it we were surrounded. The number of these amazing creatures was incredible, far too many to count. There was a plethora of colours and sizes, mostly over about 40 cm (16 inches). They were hanging out in pairs or small groups, rarely on their own, and they appeared not in the least interested in us at all. They were all far too busy “getting busy” to be bothered by us it seemed.

These amazing beasts have the ability to change their colour, shape, and texture, and they do this in order to either blend in with their surroundings or to dazzle their friends and find that someone special. Despite their quite peculiar features, their dramatic colouring gave them an almost glamorous look.

Males greatly outnumber females, so competition is fierce and tactics are frequently bizarre. It is not unusual for younger, smaller males to pretend to be females so they can sneak in and make a play for a female while the larger bull cuttlefish are looking the other way. Bull males use all their tricks with colours and bravado to warn off interlopers with variable success. I thought the females looked quite happy to sit back looking pretty while watching the males do their thing.

The Spencer Gulf is an inverse estuary and the effects of changing water temperatures and the local environment might have devastating future effects for the cuttlefish. Fortunately, when we visited the numbers seemed healthy and those present were doing their best to contribute to the future of the species.

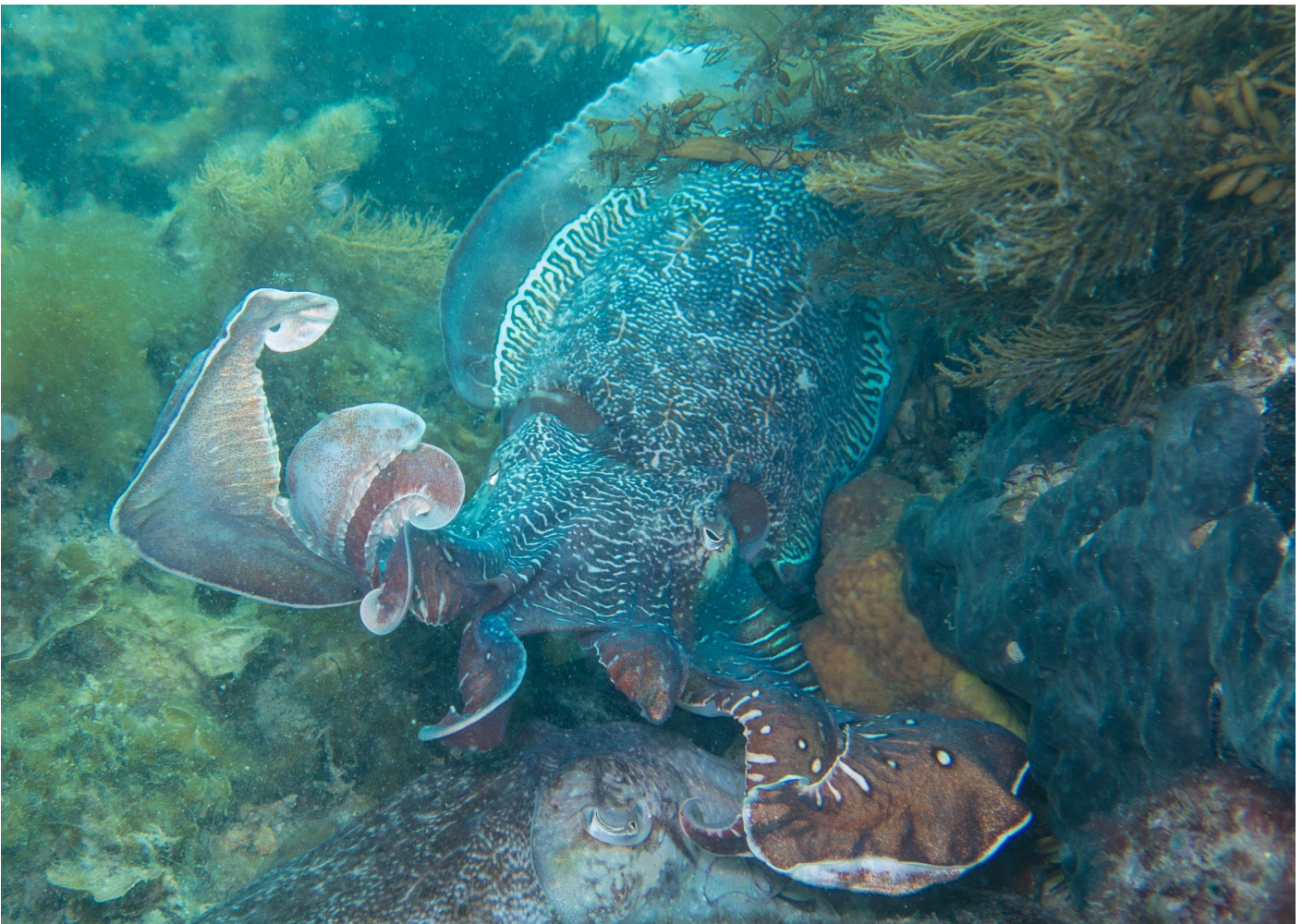
We spent about 40 minutes observing these fascinating creatures before the cold got the better of us and we headed for the car with

its waiting hot water bottles and hot drinks.

Yet again I find myself appreciating the weird and wonderful world we live in and how lucky I am to be able to see, with a little effort, some of the unique beings that live beneath the sea.

The experience was well worth the journey and the 11-degree Celsius water and I would recommend others pay Whyalla Diving Services and the Spencer Gulf a visit.

Wendy Johnson is a qualified Dive Control Specialist with a love of interacting with marine creatures big and small in their natural environment. Until recently Wendy has lived in Newcastle, NSW working for over 20 years as a nurse manager. In 2018 Wendy and her husband Alex moved aboard their yacht *Ansoba* and embarked upon a cruising lifestyle starting with a trip to New Caledonia in May with the Down Under Rally. Wendy's aim is to experience as much of the marine environment above and below the water as possible armed with her underwater camera.





BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS WITH THE DOWN UNDER RALLY

Whether you are westbound on a circumnavigation and considering your options for cyclone season or you are already in Australia and looking to make your first offshore voyage, the **Down Under 'Go West' or 'Go East' Rally** can assist.

2017 Go East Participants 'Gadji' - New Caledonia

Image Credit: Luke Ludemann - DIY Sailing

GO EAST

CRUISERS RALLY
AUSTRALIA TO NEW CALEDONIA

If the adventure of sailing to and cruising in new countries appeals to you but you would prefer to make the voyage in the company of likeminded people then the **Go East Rally** can help turn your cruising dreams into reality.

Each year the **Go East Rally** departs Queensland for the 780nm voyage to New Caledonia.

The **Down Under Rally** believes that New Caledonia is the best-kept secret in the Pacific.

Cruising in New Caledonia offers the opportunity to sail and explore literally hundreds of miles of sheltered waterways inside the largest barrier reef fringed lagoon in the world. The lagoon is truly a sailor's paradise and offers those who cruise there clear blue water, pristine coral reefs and literally hundred's of uninhabited island and atolls and just as many uncrowded anchorages.

The **Down Under Go East Rally** can help you prepare for the voyage, make the voyage and enjoy the destination.



Sailing, Sydney NSW
Mandatory Credit: Tourism Australia
Photographer: Hugh Stewart

GO WEST

CRUISERS RALLY TO AUSTRALIA

To sail halfway around the world and not visit & spend time cruising in Australia is simply a travesty, yet year after year many international cruising yachts choose to do just that! Why?

In years gone by, Australia earned the reputation of not being 'cruiser friendly' and this came about as a result of a few poor experiences that were caused by a lack of readily available information about what to expect and how to prepare for arriving in the country by yacht.

The **Down Under Rally** has remedied this situation and in the past 3 years more than 100 international yachts have joined the rally and entered Australia without a problem. They have then gone on to tick off many bucket list items, such as sailing under the Sydney Harbour Bridge and being on their own boat and witnessing the spectacle of the world famous Sydney New Years Eve Fireworks.

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OCTOBER

Division 2 start (left to right) *Sequin*,
Abracadabra, *Freaky*, and *On Appro*.

Brilliant sailing marks Mud House Wines Women's Keelboat Regatta

Over a hundred sailors delivered some stunning performances on the water over the weekend during the third Mud House Women's Regatta hosted by the Waikawa Boating Club. Racing in a wide range of conditions the best women sailors in the country clashed in the four race event. A best-ever turnout of seventeen boats saw crews from all parts of the country put their skills to the test.

With over sixty percent of the sailors visiting from other parts of the country the social program was also an important facet of the weekend. Sailors were treated to a wine tasting, with regatta sponsors Mud House Wines hosting the crews at a superb venue in scenic Kumutoto Bay.

Racing got underway late on Saturday due to a lack of wind however the programmed two races were completed before crews returned to shore. The regatta dinner on Saturday evening featured an interview with top New Zealand sailor Jo Aleh MNZM. Winner of

multiple World Championships and Olympic medals (Gold in London and Silver in Rio), Jo spoke of the challenges facing aspiring young athletes in their quest to be the best.

Sunday dawned much drier than Saturday with extremely light winds testing the capabilities of crews in these conditions. As the breeze filled in later in the day Race Officer Viv Butcher was able to set a tight and testing windward-leeward course as the final act of the regatta. With crew ranging from relative racing novices to current and former national champions the racing featured high spots for many.

Close racing in Division 2 saw a fine double from Lyttleton skipper Karen Selway with her Young 88 *Abracadabra*. Selway sailed a near perfect regatta, taking line honours in all four races as well as winning three of the four races on handicap. The Division 2 podium was rounded out by Waikawa boat *Freaky*, the Farr 727 helmed by experienced ocean sailor Jill Bethell with Waikawa's Nicky

Jenkins sailing the Hanse 385 *On Appro* taking third place.

Division 1 delivered some fine racing from many of the best women in the country. Regatta guest Jo Aleh took to the water aboard *Satellite Spy* helmed by Carla Bennet and contributed to a perfect four from four for line honours to the Ross 40. Current national women's keelboat champion Sally Garrett brought her crack crew from Auckland and despite stepping aboard less than 24 hours before the regatta began, Garrett and her crew sailed an immaculate regatta, winning four races from four on handicap aboard the David and Jo Grigg owned Beneteau 36.7 *Global*. Showing exceptional ability to multi-task, regatta coordinator Juliet Abbott helmed the Young Rocket *Oldsmobile* to second place in the regatta, the racing so close that the final result was decided on countback with *Satellite Spy* taking third, one point clear of New Year

regatta champion *Kaimai Flyer*.

With dates for the 2020 event set and visiting crews already committing to the event, the regatta looks to have a strong future. Regatta spokesperson Duncan Mackenzie said, "The event is rapidly becoming a 'must do' on the calendar of top women sailors nationwide. We're looking forward to growing the event alongside our foundation sponsors Mud House Wines".

Full results here:

<https://waikawaboatingclub.co.nz/mud-house-womens-regatta-results/>

For further information:

Duncan Mackenzie (Club Development Officer)

Waikawa Boating Club

events@waikawaboatingclub.co.nz

Photo credit: Karmyn Ingram.



Division 1 start (left to right): *Kaimai Flyer*, *Global*, *High Voltage*, *Khamsin*, *Satellite Spy*, and *Oldsmobile*.

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Upon a painted ocean: Cruising artists

Margaret Coulson

My husband Glen Battershill and I purchased *Tailana*, a DeFever 44, three years ago and spent a great deal of time (and money) getting our pleasure cruiser ready for this trip and many to come.

My art background was drawing people and architectural landscapes in graphite, pantone pens and ink, as a young adult and I only discovered pastels a few years ago. In recent years I have refined my pastel painting and oil painting techniques, becoming particularly interested in the many facets of water and the reflective compositions that the element of water helps create. Architectural landscapes and portraits also continue to be a focus.

My works have been accepted into a number of competitions and I've has produced several pastel portraits on commission.

These paintings were just quick stretches while on our Tasmanian cruise using a combination of watercolours, ink and watercolour pencils.

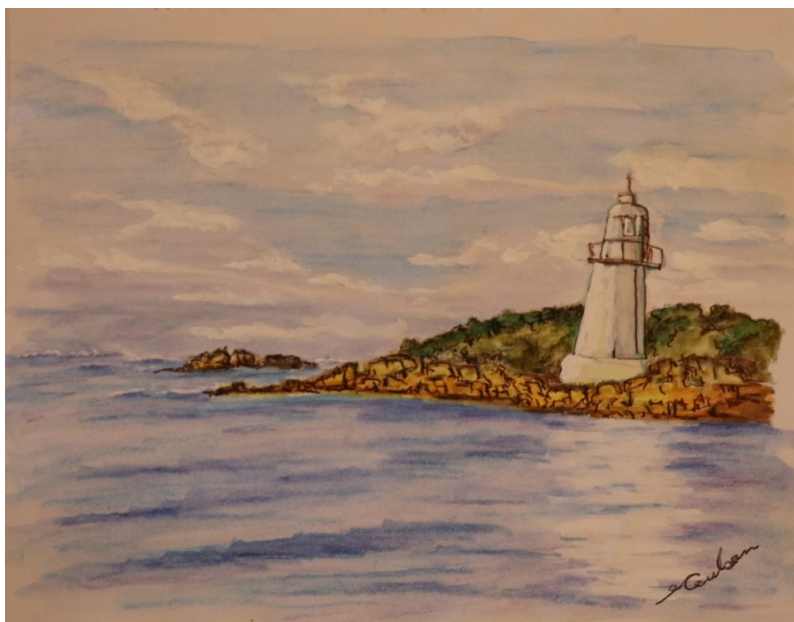
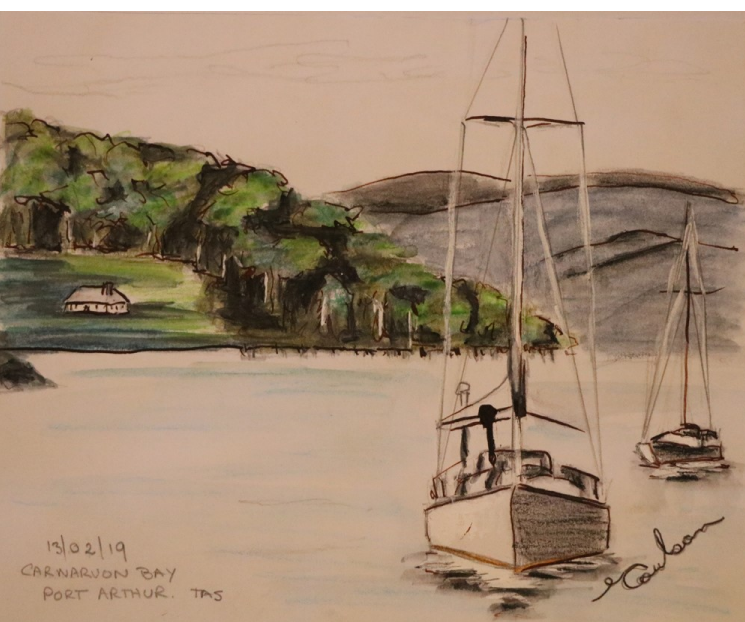


TOP: Strahan, Tasmania.

ABOVE: Creek Inlet, Bramble Cove, Port Davey.

BELOW LEFT: Carnarvon Bay, Port Arthur.

BELOW RIGHT: Hells Gate, Macquarie Harbour.





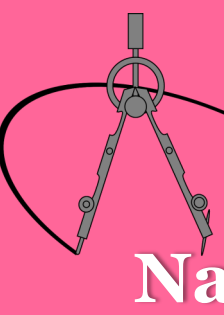
ABOVE: Seal swimming, Cygnet.



LEFT: Passing sailing boats through Schouten Passage.

BELOW: Claytons Corner, Bathurst Harbour.





Coastal Navigation with Jackie Parry



**OCTOBER/DECEMBER ISSUE CHALLENGE: CAN YOU
ANSWER THIS QUESTION?**

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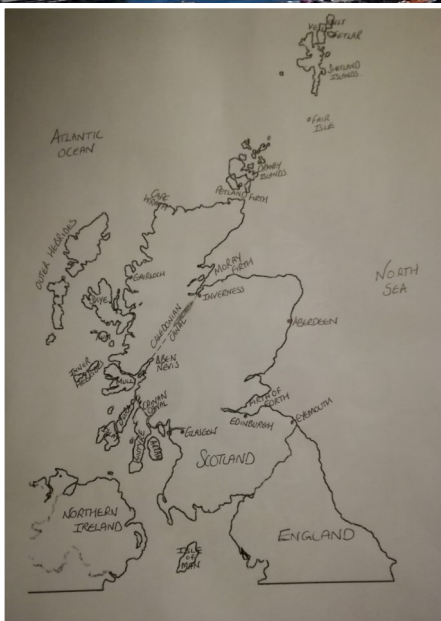
***Tools not included**



The coast of Scotland: A photo essay

By Sarah Rutt

Stromness looking out to Scapa Flow.



Noltland Castle, Westray.



Stromness.

ORKNEY ISLANDS

I hope you might like to join me in a little piece of northern paradise, while it's not bathed in wall to wall sunshine (in fact it rains quite a lot) the scenery is spectacular, the wildlife amazing, and it's not overcrowded with boats. Our forays around northern Europe have taken us to many different countries but Scotland is one of our favorite destinations. I hope the following photo journey will give you a small peek into a wonderful place.



Balfour Castle, Shapinsay.

**Neolithic Standing
Stone.**



Neolithic ring of Brodgar.



Westray.



Stromness.



Old Man of Hoy.



AUSTRALIA—SOUTH COAST
VICTORIA

T POINT TO CAPE LIPTRAP INCLUDING WESTERN PORT

FROM LATEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN R.A.N. HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE 1967.

Based on Australian Geodetic Datum 1966.

Underlined figures express, in Feet, Drying Heights above Chart Datum.
All other Heights are expressed in Feet above Mean Higher High Water
For abbreviations see Admiralty Chart 5011.

SOUNDINGS IN FATHOMS

(Under Eleven in Fathoms and Feet)

NATURAL SCALE 1 : 150,000 (at Lat. 38° 38')

Projection — Mercator

Watercolours

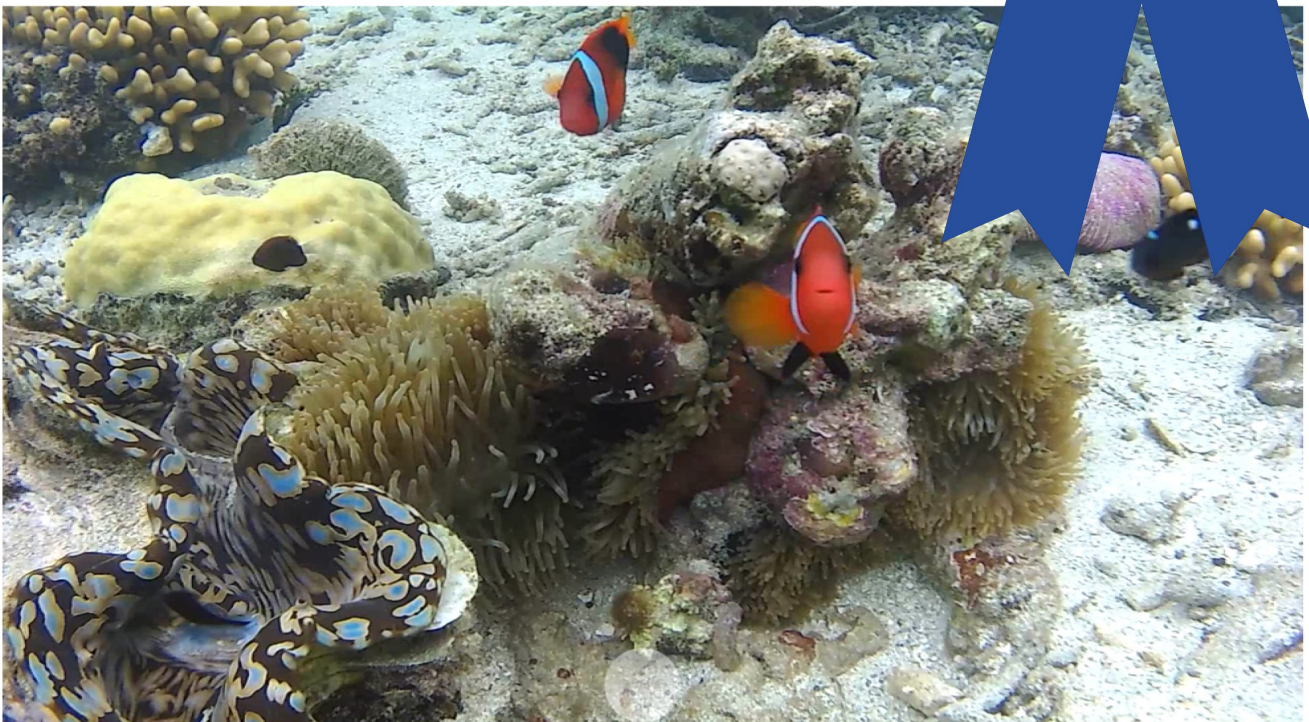
All photos published go into a draw at the end of the year to win SisterShip merchandise!

2019 Winner!

BELOW: Aore Island coral under jetty, VANUATU.

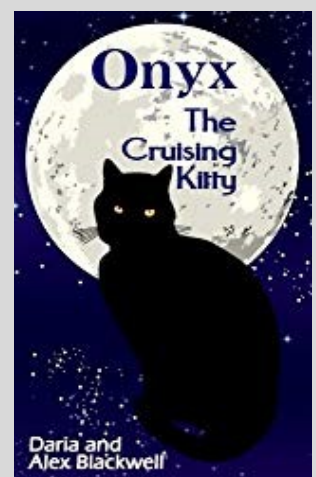
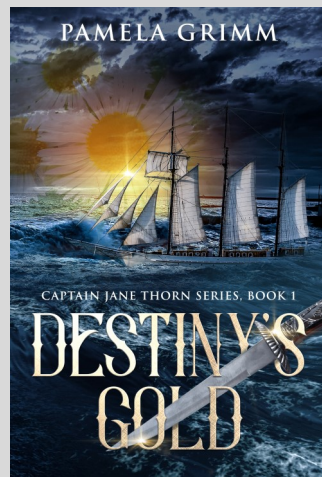
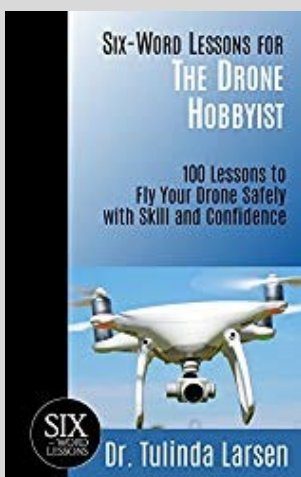
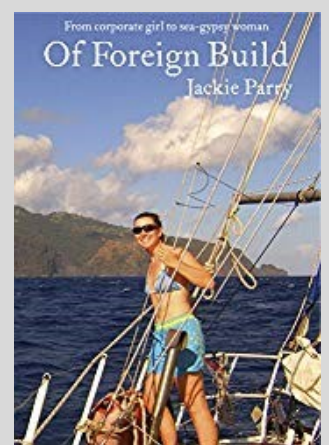
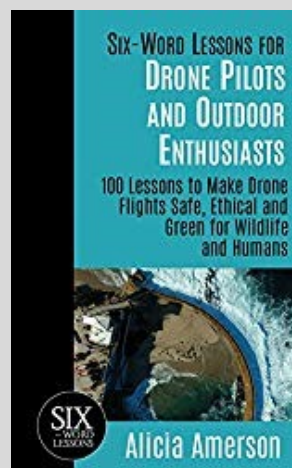
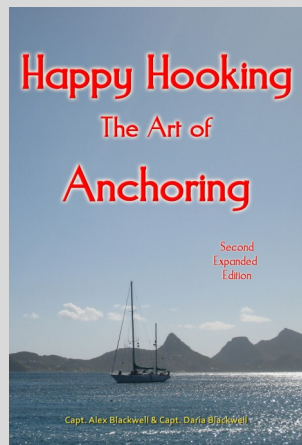
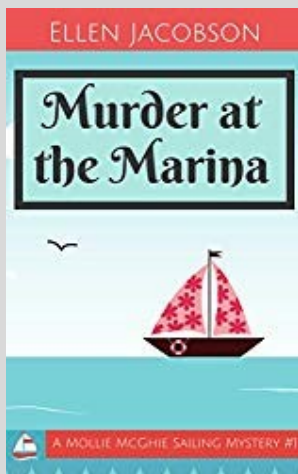
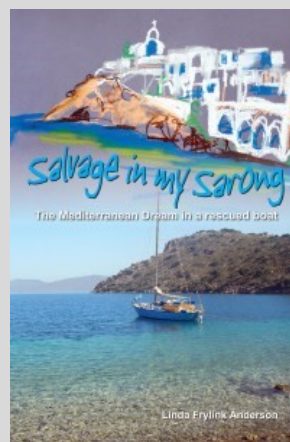
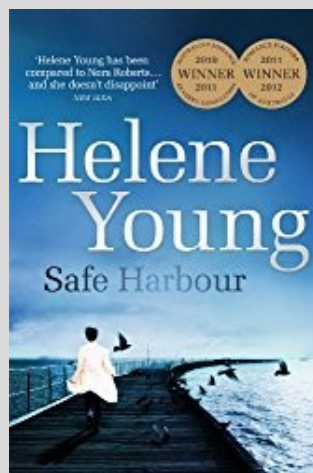
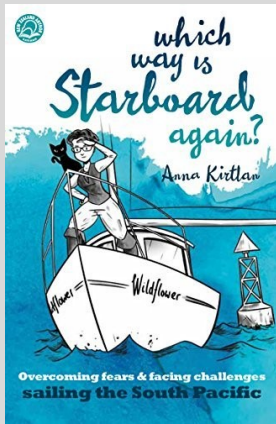
Taken by CHERYLE MATTHEW

1st



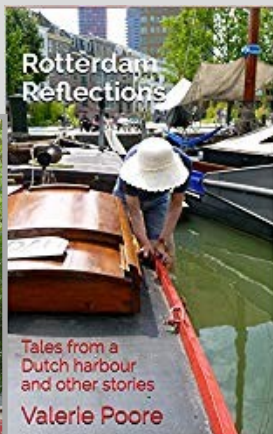
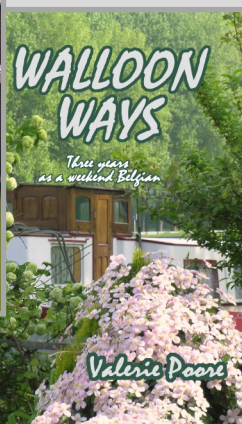
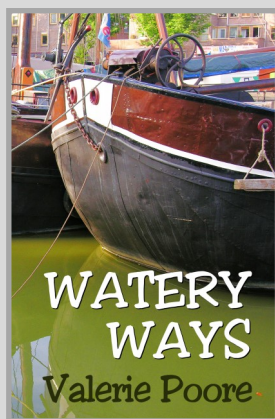
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Valerie's books can be found at the following Amazon links:

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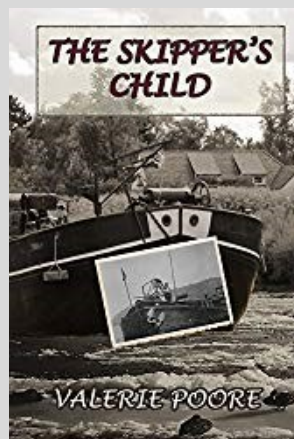
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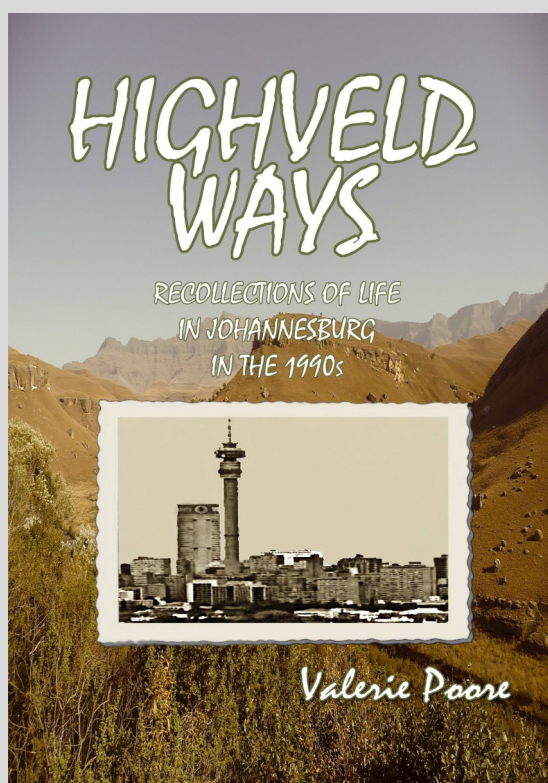
Rotterdam Reflections: <http://geni.us/5pSxcgs>

The Skipper's Child: <http://geni.us/PBwQnP>

Watery Ways: <http://geni.us/lusDZT>



New from Valerie Poore....



This is the third book about the author's life in South Africa. In Highveld Ways, Valerie and her children join her husband in Johannesburg and begin a decade of life in and around the city. During the years that follow her arrival in 1989, Valerie explores the Highveld area on which Johannesburg is built and learns to love every aspect of South Africa's biggest, baddest city. The family move house five times and each new home brings its own memories and adventures, along with trips to Namibia, Zimbabwe and other parts of South Africa. The backcloth to this memoir is the turbulent political upheaval of the early 90s as well as the emergence of the New South Africa under Nelson Mandela. While no story about South Africa at the time can escape the often violent lead-up to the changes, Valerie's memories are focused on the events, the places and above all, the people who filled her life at the time.

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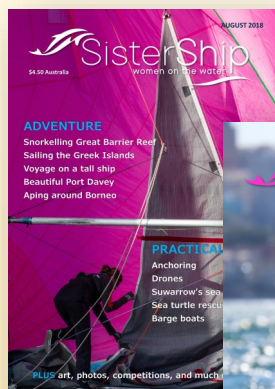
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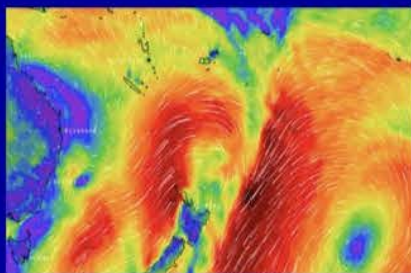
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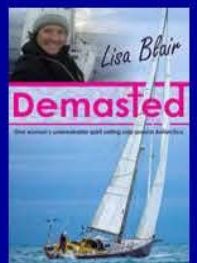


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